



VISTA DEL MAR  
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Director of Education

VISTA SCHOOL  
LOS ANGELES, CA



## About Vista Del Mar

With over 100 years of service to children and families with special needs, Vista Del Mar is Los Angeles's pre-eminent child and adolescent-serving agency. Founded as an orphanage serving the Jewish Community, Vista Del Mar has developed a broad array of services designed to support children with emotional, behavioral and developmental needs and their families. Our 18 acre campus in West Los Angeles displays the variety of services we offer: mental health counseling, adoption and foster care, training and research and our school of 350 students. Vista Del Mar receives the majority of its funding from government contracts with entities such as the Los Angeles Unified School District, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, and the Department of Child and Family Services. Vista Del Mar's school, The Vista School, is one of the organization's core programs and is highly visible to the community.

### ***Our Mission***

Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services' mission is to provide comprehensive, family-centered social, educational and behavioral health services that encourage children, adolescents and their families to lead self-reliant, stable and productive lives.

### ***Our Values***

Our primary concern is the well-being of those we serve without regard for ethnic or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religious preferences, or physical challenges.

We value professional quality and excellence in all aspects of our treatment, evaluation, training and research.

We value all staff and volunteers, striving to be a workplace which achieves equal opportunity, mutual respect, and teamwork.

We take a leadership role which anticipates and responds to rapidly changing needs in the community.

## About The Vista School

A Non-Public School and a Therapeutic learning environment for children and adolescents.

California's nonpublic schools (NPS) are specialized private schools that provide services to public school students with disabilities. NPS's are private, non-sectarian schools that enroll individuals with exceptional needs pursuant to an individualized education program (IEP). The tuition of a student in an NPS is paid by the Local Education Agency (LEA) that places the student in the NPS based on the student's individual needs. When a child's needs are not being met in a public school, the LEA will refer students to an NPS as an educational alternative. Additionally a variety of support services such as counseling, mental health, speech and language, and behavior management may be provided per the IEP. Each NPS is certified by the California Department of Education as well as a variety of other certifying organizations.



The Vista School is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and offers children who have struggled in other settings an opportunity for academic success. We provide children identified with learning disabilities or developmental challenges, as well as those experiencing emotional problems, behavior problems or other mental health issues, with classes that can meet their special needs while encouraging them to grow emotionally and academically.

### *Achieving Potential*

The Vista School is successful because we believe that each student can achieve. Our staff serves as models and encourages students to both learn and grow, recognizing that they are here for more than academics. When students leave Vista, they need to be prepared both academically as well as socially to re-enter local schools, go to college or vocational school or, for some, to enter the work force. Over the past several years, more than 65% of our graduates have enrolled in college, community college, paraprofessional training, or vocational school.

The Vista School complies with all state mandated curriculum and is geared for children at each academic level:

*The Baron School for Exceptional Children*

One of the most significant components of the Vista School is the Baron School for Exceptional Children. This innovative, accredited, non-public therapeutic school is designed for children ages three through eleven with severe emotional problems, behavioral challenges, learning disabilities, autism, autistic spectrum disorders, and developmental delays.

Individual Education Plans (IEP) incorporating play therapy, sensory and motor skill integration, and speech and language therapy are prepared for each student by a team of educational therapists and mental health professionals. Parent involvement is required, and the goal is to return the child to a community setting as soon as possible. The Baron School offers special opportunities for individualized success, including:

- Individual and group instruction
- 1:4 teaching staff to student ratio
- Speech and language services
- Social skills training
- Occupational therapy
- Touch screen computerized learning
- Parental involvement
- Structured floor time
- Picture Exchange Communications System (PECS)
- Neurofeedback Training



*Kindergarten – 12th Grade*

For children with learning disabilities, or those experiencing social problems, emotional problems, behavior problems, autism spectrum, or other mental health issues, the Vista School offers youngsters from kindergarten through 12th grade a specialized learning environment that can help these students achieve.

**THE VISTA SCHOOL AT A GLANCE**

Founded:	1972
Number of Students:	Pre-K,4; Elementary, 117; Middle, 44; High, 134; Post-High School, 19.
Budget:	\$11,000,000
Number of Faculty/Staff:	130
Accreditation:	WASC, State Department of Education Certification
Affiliations:	CAPSES, National Association of Special Education Teachers, National Association of Private Special Education Centers

Vista School offers:

- Individual and group instruction
- Classes with only 12 children
- 1:6 teaching staff to student ratio
- Speech and language services
- Social skills training
- Physical education and sports program
- Performing and creative arts
- Clinical and behavioral interventionists
- Individual and group counseling
- Psychiatric and psychological assessments
- Medication evaluation and monitoring
- Life skills courses
- Independent living skills
- Vocational assessments and career counseling
- Computer lab
- Photography
- Neurofeedback Training



*Arts Enrichment*

Vista Del Mar Arts Enrichment Program is designed to incorporate different methods of expression through acting, dance, voice, drumming, photography, Art and music production which is implemented in the daily schedule of classes at the Vista School – providing students from elementary through high school the opportunity to develop their creative potential and benefit therapeutically from participating in the enrichment program. Classes culminate in live stage performances, giving every student the opportunity to experience the “magic” of theatre. We are building self-esteem through creative expression to succeed not only on stage, but in life.

*The Vista school offers many special opportunities, including:*

- Athletic program
- Indoor heated pool
- Computer lab
- Woodshop
- Photography lab
- Music, dance, drama, choir
- Life Skills training and experiential cooking classes
- Classes at local colleges
- Canine Connections program
- Equine Therapy
- College advisement
- Scholarships for graduating seniors
- On site and off site employment opportunities (16 and older)



## About The Position

### *Director of Education*

Reporting to the President/CEO, and a member of the senior management team, the Director of Education will directly supervise Assistant Principals, the Mental Health Director, and the IEP Coordinator. The Director of Education will have proven leadership abilities, will provide strong management, and work collaboratively with school staff and senior leaders of other areas of the organization.

In our new strategic plan the Board and management have endorsed a path that will create a Non-Public School (NPS) that will be a Center for Excellence in serving children with emotional, learning and developmental disorders. Vista Del Mar is committed to providing the necessary resources for an outstanding education for children who have mostly experienced failure in school. The Director of Education is empowered to design and implement their vision of innovative and high quality special education.

The Director responsibilities will include the fiscal management of the school and s/he will work with the CEO and Finance department to ensure fiscal sustainability. The Director of Education is responsible for the school's compliance with all state and local education requirements, assures all school accreditations are maintained, manages and negotiates contracts with school districts, and oversees Vista School grants.



## About The Position *(continued)*

### **Traits and Characteristics:**

Leadership—set clear goals, inspire staff, students and their families, be accountable for results

Build relationships with the Los Angeles Unified School District and other local districts—forge strong working relationships with our referring districts

Collaboration—Work well with internal stakeholders and the broader education and mental health community to enhance our offerings and ensure that quality educational services are delivered

Financial acumen and working with budgets—help ensure the fiscal sustainability of the school by managing budgets and making smart investments in our classrooms

Thoughtful leader in special education—be current with the leading trends in special education and bring fresh, innovative ideas that can be implemented in the school

Technologically savvy—be comfortable with technology and the latest educational software and evidence-based use of technology in the classroom

Passion—care deeply and be committed to serving a population of students who are disadvantaged and need intensive, special care to get them to fulfill their potential as learners

### **Qualifications:**

- M.A. or equivalent postgraduate education in psychology, education, or related field
- Clear California credential(s) preferred
- Administrative credential preferred
- Teaching and administrative experience with children and adolescents who are emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, autistic and/or developmentally delayed
- Management and supervisory experience

## Other Information

### Vista's Website

Please visit Vista Del Mar's website, [www.vistadelmar.org](http://www.vistadelmar.org), to learn more about Vista School and all the other wonderful programs at Vista.



### Application Procedure

For initial consideration, please email a resume and cover letter to [LeslieAskanas@vistadelmar.org](mailto:LeslieAskanas@vistadelmar.org). Please reference "Director of Education" in the subject line. Sending letters of reference is optional at this time.

*Vista Del Mar is an equal opportunity employer. We evaluate all applicants without consideration of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.*



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