



Director of Neurodiversity and Learning Optimization

Dunn School

Los Olivos, CA

Salary: \$84,000 - \$97,000

Position Overview

Since 1973, Dunn School has been a pioneer in supporting bright, college-bound students with learning differences within a rigorous college-preparatory environment. Building on this legacy, Dunn is launching the Dunn Neurodiversity Center as a hub for innovation, support, research, and schoolwide capacity building in neurodiversity education, executive functioning, learning optimization, and student flourishing across grades 6–12.

Dunn School seeks an entrepreneurial, visionary, deeply collaborative educational leader to serve as the Director of Neurodiversity and Learning Optimization. The Director will inherit a strong foundation in individualized and small group learning support and will be charged with strengthening, integrating, and elevating that work into a coherent, evidence-based, future-oriented model that supports students across academic, residential, social-emotional, and executive functioning domains.

This leader will help Dunn capitalize on its distinctive strengths: a low-stigma, student-centered culture; a day and boarding environment that allows support to extend across the full student experience; a flexible and entrepreneurial school identity; and meaningful market-facing potential with families, peer schools, professional organizations, advancement partners, and the broader independent school community.

Reporting to the Associate Head of School, the Director will serve as a senior institutional leader responsible for supporting students, families, faculty, and staff; advancing professional learning; partnering with admissions and advancement; demonstrating student growth and program value through data; and helping Dunn reclaim and expand its place as a thought leader in neurodiversity education.

About Dunn School

Dunn School is a community centered on educating the whole student. Its curriculum, co-curricular programs, advisory systems, evaluative practices, and pedagogy are grounded in the belief that students thrive when they are known, challenged, supported, and empowered. Founded in 1957, Dunn carries forward an entrepreneurial spirit reflected in its motto, “Ne Tentes Aut Perfice,” translated as “attempt not, but achieve.” Dunn is also a Round Square School dedicated to character development through the IDEALS in practice: Internationalism, Democracy, Environmentalism, Adventure, Leadership, and Service.

Located in Los Olivos, California, in the Santa Ynez Valley near the Pacific Ocean, Dunn offers students and professional community members a distinctive setting for rigorous academics, outdoor learning, relationship-building, and whole-student growth.

Strategic Leadership and Vision

- Lead the Dunn Neurodiversity Center and articulate a coherent, research-informed philosophy of neurodiversity education that reflects Dunn's mission, whole-student approach, and commitment to strengths-based learning.
- Develop and implement a long-term strategic vision for neurodiversity support across grades 6–12, preserving what works in Dunn's current model while building stronger systems, clearer roles, and more integrated support.
- Position Dunn as a national leader in neurodiversity education through conferences, publications, partnerships, admissions events, advancement storytelling, open houses, and professional networks.
- Help define and communicate the public message of the Center in ways that are accurate, compelling, family-facing, and affirming rather than stigmatizing for students.
- Stay current on emerging research, best practices, assistive technologies, artificial intelligence, and innovations in neurodiversity education.

Student Support and Program Oversight

- Oversee student accommodations, educational support systems, learning plans, and related documentation across grades 6–12.
- Use neuropsychological data, teacher feedback, student progress, and family input to design interventions, track growth, and demonstrate impact over time.
- Expand and strengthen Dunn's Executive Group model, with emphasis on executive functioning, self-advocacy, resilience, independence, and student ownership of learning.
- Ensure the Center helps students understand how they learn best and move from dependence on adult support toward skill-building, independence, and self-advocacy.
- Leverage Dunn's boarding and day school environment to support students across academics, residential life, behavior, organization, social-emotional balance, and student life.
- Teach and advise a small caseload of students while maintaining a visible, trusted presence within the program.

Faculty Development and Institutional Capacity Building

- Design and lead practical professional development for faculty and staff that translates neurodiversity learning expertise into usable classroom strategies.
- Serve as a coach and consultant to teachers, advisors, coaches, residential faculty, and staff in understanding neurodiversity, executive functioning, ADHD, anxiety, and individual learning profiles.
- Support faculty in implementing evidence-based instructional strategies, strengths-based practices, accommodations, and shared accountability for student learning.
- Solicit regular feedback from faculty and use it to maintain responsive, effective learning plans that reflect students' evolving needs.
- Build institutional capacity so neurodiversity education is not isolated within one department but is woven throughout the academic and student-life experience.

Admissions, Family, Advancement, and Community Partnership

- Partner closely with Admissions to evaluate applicants, support enrollment decisions, and communicate Dunn's approach to neurodiversity education to prospective families.
- Build clear communication systems with families, including expectations, guardrails, progress measures, and transparent explanations of program goals and outcomes.
- Collaborate with Advancement to identify grant opportunities, cultivate philanthropic support, and tell the story of the Dunn Neurodiversity Center.
- Represent Dunn with confidence and credibility at conferences, admission events, parent programs, partner schools, and professional gatherings.
- Strengthen parent confidence by clearly articulating how Dunn supports students while also building independence, resilience, and self-advocacy.

Research, Innovation, Data, and Technology

- Lead ongoing assessment and evaluation of program effectiveness, student growth, and outcomes.
- Develop schoolwide systems for measuring progress in executive functioning, self-advocacy, learning independence, and student flourishing.
- Partner with Educational Technology to explore how assistive technologies, artificial intelligence, and emerging tools can optimize learning and support neurodiverse students.
- Use evidence and data to demonstrate program value to families, faculty, school leaders, and advancement partners.
- Engage in substantive research and program development to ensure Dunn remains at the forefront of neurodiversity education.

Leadership, Team Development, and School Life

- Serve as a major direct report to the Associate Head of School and an active member of the school's leadership team.
- Supervise members of the Neurodiversity Center team and support their growth through coaching, mentorship, evaluation, trust-building, and thoughtful change management.
- Clarify roles, workflows, and systems among learning support, academics, admissions, counseling, residential life, health services, families, and faculty.
- Participate fully in the life of the school, including advisory, residential, co-curricular, outdoor education, leadership, mini-term, enrichment, and community programs as appropriate.
- Bring humility, humor, curiosity, steadiness, and relational credibility to a visible leadership role that requires both strategic vision and day-to-day care for students and adults.

Core Competencies and Qualifications

The ideal candidate will demonstrate many of the following characteristics, experiences, and skills:

- Deep expertise in learning differences, neurodiversity, executive functioning, ADHD, anxiety, accommodations, neuropsychological evaluations, and evidence-based interventions for adolescent learners.
- Experience leading, building, redesigning, or significantly improving educational programs, ideally in middle and/or high school settings and preferably within independent schools.
- Ability to assess existing practices, preserve what is strong, build trust with an established team, and lead change with clarity, patience, and momentum.
- Skill as a teacher coach and professional development leader who can observe instruction, offer useful feedback, and build faculty confidence.
- Strong communication skills with students, families, faculty, administrators, and high-expectation parents, including the ability to explain student needs, progress, and program value clearly and directly.
- A collaborative systems orientation and the ability to connect learning support, academics, residential life, counseling, admissions, advancement, and student life into a coherent whole.
- A student empowerment orientation centered on self-advocacy, executive functioning, resilience, independence, and strengths-based learning.
- Data-informed, outcomes-oriented leadership, including the ability to define progress, measure growth, and use evidence to refine practice.
- Public-facing presence, credibility, and confidence to represent Dunn in admissions, advancement, conference, and professional settings, and willingness to participate meaningfully in the opportunities afforded by a boarding and day school environment.
- Personal qualities including openness, kindness, approachability, confidence, resilience, resourcefulness, flexibility, cultural awareness, humility, humor, curiosity, and a deep belief in the potential of young people.

Preferred Education and Experience

- Master's degree or advanced study in education, learning differences, neurodiversity, school psychology, special education, executive functioning, Universal Design for Learning, or a related field.
- Certification, advanced study, extended learning, or training relevant to neurodiverse learners and adolescent development.
- Experience working with students in grades 6–12; independent school experience preferred.
- Experience collaborating with families, admissions, college counseling, residential life, counseling, and faculty teams.
- Familiarity with assistive technologies, emerging applications of artificial intelligence in education, and systems for monitoring student growth and program effectiveness.

Compensation and Benefits

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This is a full time, exempt (salaried) position, which is eligible for Dunn School's full benefits package including: medical, dental, vision, retirement match up to 7.5%, life/AD&D, tuition remission, housing, and meals in our dining hall.

The salary range for this position is \$84,000 to \$97,000. Actual salary will be dependent upon experience.

How to Apply

Apply using the link below:

[Dunn School Employment Opportunities](#)

Submit with your resume a list of all previous school or educational institution employers, including city and state, in accordance with CA SB 848. Dunn School is being assisted with this search by [DRG Consulting](#).

[**Submit an application**](#)