JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Executive Director

Cooking with Kids | Santa Fe, New Mexico

Cooking with Kids is seeking a dynamic, people-first leader to be our next Executive Director.

For more than 30 years, Cooking with Kids has put a knife, a cutting board and a fresh, local ingredient into the hands of children, and watched healthy eating take root. We are looking for an experienced nonprofit leader who will honor that legacy, deepen our partnerships with schools and communities, and grow our reach so that many more children can learn to cook, taste and love healthy food.

This is a rare opportunity to lead a respected, mission-driven organization at a moment of real momentum. The need is great, the model is proven, and the Board is ready to partner with a leader who can take Cooking with Kids to its next chapter.

About Cooking with Kids

Cooking with Kids educates and empowers children and families to make healthy food choices through hands-on learning with fresh, affordable food from diverse cultural traditions. Founded in 1995 and based in Santa Fe, New Mexico, we partner with public schools to bring fun, impactful cooking and tasting lessons to more than 7,000 preK–8th grade students each year.

- **Reach:** 31 public schools across northern New Mexico (Rio Arriba, Santa Fe and San Miguel Counties)
- **Approach:** Classes bring academic subjects to life, build classroom-to-kitchen bridges that support healthy eating at home, and draw on research showing that when kids help prepare healthy foods, they are more likely to eat and enjoy them.
- **Culture:** Fresh, affordable food from diverse cultural traditions, and deep respect for the communities we serve.
- **Scale:** Annual operating budget of approximately $1.3M and 30 staff including PT educators

Cooking with Kids has grown steadily, adding school communities and expanding the scope of its programming. Many more schools are waiting, and the organization is poised to expand further.

About the Position

The Executive Director provides overall strategic and operational leadership for Cooking with Kids, overseeing programs, development, staff and financial health. Reporting to a volunteer Board of Directors, the ED ensures organizational stability and thoughtful growth in keeping with our mission and Board policies. The ED is the key management leader and the public face of the organization, cultivating the community partnerships that multiply our impact.

Key Responsibilities

1. **Board Partnership and Governance:** Work with the Board to fulfill the mission, set strategic direction and ensure effective governance. Provide timely, accurate information so the Board can make informed decisions, and help grow the Board and its committees to meet the organization's needs.
2. **Program Quality and Growth:** Guide the development, evaluation and reporting of programs that remain faithful to the Cooking with Kids curriculum and its evidence base. Lead communication, planning and contracting with school district leadership and other program partners.
3. **Fundraising and Development:** With the Development Director, develop and carry out fundraising strategies that sustain programs and operations. Oversee donor cultivation and stewardship, grants management and the growth of new revenue streams.
4. **People and Culture:** Build a strong, healthy work culture that attracts and develops a talented, diverse staff. Oversee hiring, training and performance reviews, and work with the contracted HR firm to ensure compliance and support employee retention.
5. **Community Engagement and Advocacy:** Cultivate relationships with community leaders and organizations, advocate for policies that advance our mission, and serve as primary spokesperson and media liaison.
6. **Financial Stewardship and Compliance:** With the Finance Committee and the contracted accounting firm, develop, implement and monitor the annual budget and financial policies. Oversee the annual audit and Form 990, maintain 501(c)(3) and New Mexico requirements, and protect CWK trademarks and curriculum copyrights. Establish and maintain agreements with government agencies and funders.
7. **Risk Management:** Anticipate risks and develop policies and procedures that keep workplaces and programs safe. Maintain adequate insurance coverage.
8. **Reporting and Communications:** Ensure timely, accurate program and grant reporting, and work with the Communications Director to engage stakeholders and promote the mission.

Qualifications and Core Competencies

The Board seeks a dynamic, innovative and strategic leader who will advocate for and uphold the Cooking with Kids mission and sustainably expand its reach across northern New Mexico. Qualified candidates will bring the following:

Experience

- Nonprofit leadership in an organization comparable in size and scope to Cooking with Kids
- Fundraising and community relationships: cultivating donors, funders and community partners
- Financial management and planning: creating and monitoring budgets, reading and interpreting financial statements, and planning for long-term sustainability

Skills

- Board partnership and governance: working effectively with a volunteer Board of Directors and its committees
- People management and organizational culture building: developing a talented, diverse staff and an inspiring team
- Cultural competence and responsiveness in working with the diverse children, families, educators and communities we serve
- Strategic planning and sound judgment about when and how to grow
- Clear communication with a wide range of stakeholders, including the Board, funders, staff, school administrators, teachers, parents and children
- Familiarity with the nonprofit, food and education sectors
- Competence with MS Office and Google Workspace
- Bilingual Spanish/English preferred

Requirements: valid driver's license; successful completion of a background check before employment begins.

Compensation and Benefits

Status: Full-time, exempt. Reports to the Cooking with Kids Board of Directors.

Salary range: $95,000 – $105,000, depending on experience

Location: Santa Fe, New Mexico. Office based, but with significant community work and occasional work from home permissible. Occasional travel to partner schools across northern New Mexico is part of the job.

About Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico

Nestled in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, Santa Fe is the oldest state capital in the United States and an internationally recognized center for arts, culture, and creativity. Northern New Mexico is a place where Native American, Hispanic, Caucasian, and other diverse cultures come together, creating a rich tapestry of heritage, food traditions, and community. For organizations dedicated to children, few places offer a more inspiring setting, where food, culture, education, and connection intersect to help young people thrive.

Application Process

Cooking with Kids has engaged Alexander|Carrillo Consulting to lead this search and a diverse Search Committee representative of many of CWK's stakeholders.

1. Submit a resume and a cover letter describing your interest in Cooking with Kids, your relevant leadership experience and why this mission matters to you to **apply@do-good-better.com**. Please include "CWK ED Application" in the subject line. Applications without a cover letter will not be considered.
2. Applications are reviewed as they are received. To ensure consideration, **apply by December 31, 2026.**
3. Highly qualified candidates will be invited to a phone screening as applications are received and no later than January 4, followed by Zoom interviews with the Search Committee beginning the week of January 18.
4. Finalists will be invited to a full-day site visit that includes meetings with Board members and staff during the week of February 22.
5. The Board hopes to extend an offer in March 2027, with a **target start date of April 1, 2027** or soon after.

Cooking with Kids is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees. Cooking with Kids does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

Cooking with Kids is committed to providing a safe and non-discriminatory environment for all members of our community and, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs and activities. A background check is required for all employment offers.