



# Outdoor Educator / Naturalist

## Job Description

Are you an experienced, imaginative, and collaborative educator who believes in progressive gifted education? Do you enjoy creating meaningful learning experiences, and being part of a diverse, supportive and talented community? If so, please consider joining our team at Tessellations. We are currently accepting applications for multiple full-time Outdoor Educator / Naturalist positions within our unique Nature Connections program, to start in August 2026. Competitive salary and full benefits available.

Tessellations is a modern, innovative PreK-8th non-profit school for gifted learners based in Cupertino, CA. Our mission is to provide challenging experiential education that recognizes and nurtures the individual strengths of gifted learners, empowering them to confidently express who they are, pursue a meaningful life, and advance an equitable and sustainable world.

At Tessellations, community is a core value. A strong community was instrumental in launching our school during the pandemic and has facilitated our rapid growth and success since then. Our team consists of passionate, qualified and dedicated staff from diverse backgrounds and includes a nationally renowned gifted expert. We believe that it is time to open a new chapter in 21st century gifted education by forging a model that fosters a cultural ecosystem within the school that promotes innovative thinking and intellectual risk taking. Moving on from an antiquated model born during the industrial revolution, we favor transferable skills over compliance and rote memorization, and collaboration over competition. We believe that assessments should function as guidance for depth and complexity of learning rather than for judgment or sorting.

The Nature Connections program consists of weekly Outdoor Education classes provided to all students and takes place at our Nature Campus in the nearby foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains as well as local parks and on our main campus. Naturalists facilitate a wide range of outdoor experiences to allow students to deepen their connection with and sense of belonging in the natural world. Our blossoming Nature Journey curriculum is connected with students' on-campus experiences and Homeroom Journeys, and is designed to be a blend of emergent Nature Connection experiences and project-based learning.

## Primary Responsibilities

### **Educational Instruction**

- Work collaboratively with the Nature Connections team, staff and administration to plan and deliver an educational program in line with the mission, vision, and values of the Tessellations organization.
- Support the growth and development of the whole child.
- Create and foster a safe and supportive learning environment for all students.
- With the support of administration and the Nature Connections Team, develop outdoor education curriculum and related projects that integrate Environmental Education, English Language Arts, Social Studies, Art, Indigenous History, and Science.
- Plan, implement, and iterate lessons, activities, and assessments while differentiating for the intellectual, physical, and social-emotional needs of students as they arise.
- Regularly assess the effectiveness of lessons and the extent to which they achieve instructional outcomes.
- Regularly use and maintain documentation of multiple forms of assessment to gauge student learning and inform next steps in teaching.
- Facilitate and document student learning experiences and share with the school community as appropriate.
- Maintain effective organizational systems in physical and digital space.
- Maintain engaging and organized learning spaces that reflect school identity, program values, and student identities, voices, and learning.
- Plan, organize, and lead fieldwork and overnight/camping trips.
- Prepare newsletters, family communications, and report cards.
- Lead and contribute to school events and educational experiences, such as Tessie Gatherings, student socials, student and family centered events, field trips, and explorations as needed.
- Aid in the maintenance and management of school vans and the transportation of students.
- Obtain and maintain appropriate driving license and safety training to ensure Nature Connections program operations and transportation requirements.

### **Staff & Family Partnership**

- Regularly communicate with families and colleagues to share program learnings and activities and to make student skill acquisition and learning standards visible.
- Provide clear and detailed communication about individual student strengths, areas of growth, as well as areas of challenge through formal and informal verbal and written communication (such as conferences, class dojo, emails, report cards).
- Communicate in a timely manner and with the appropriate protocols (SST, Alma Incidents, admin consultations, family communications, etc) when you have cause for concern about a student.
- Response to family concern is handled professionally and with cultural sensitivity.

### **Collaborative Professionalism**

- Arrive on time to classes, meetings, and supervision assignments.
- Ensure proper supervision of all students under your care.
- Utilize curiosity, questions, respect, and empathy in community conversations.

- Honor professional commitments.
- Seek out opportunities for professional development and/or make an effort to conduct action research and/or try new strategies and approaches.
- Welcome feedback from colleagues and supervisors and take action.
- Actively participate in committee and department meetings, always offering suggestions and helping to carry out action items.
- Seek support and utilize resources as needed to ensure execution of educational program and professional commitments.
- Model and foster respectful and collaborative communication practices across the community.
- Support the Tessellations admissions and hiring processes as needed.
- Be proactive in serving the community (such as picking up trash, supporting a colleague, volunteering to help cover an emergency absence, etc.).
- Complete other duties and responsibilities as required to ensure student safety and educational instruction.

## Required Qualifications

- Prior experience teaching students in Elementary and Middle School
- Prior studies, familiarity with, and experience learning and teaching Natural History and science
- Prior experience teaching in the outdoors
- Proficiency with technology (Google Suite in particular)
- Within 6 months of hire, acquiring a Commercial Driver's License (class C) + Passenger Endorsement for the purpose of driving a 12-passenger vehicle to transport students (School will pay training costs)
- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Social-emotional teaching experience
- Enthusiastic life-long learner
- Experience in a school setting
- Openness and flexibility in designing improved learning experiences
- Passing a criminal background check upon hire

## Preferred Qualifications

- Experience with Primary (K-3) learners and/or Middle (6th-8th) learners
- Experience teaching gifted learners
- Curriculum development experience for programs spanning one semester or longer
- Familiarity with and commitment to DEIJ work and restorative justice practices
- Prior experience coordinating and leading fieldwork and camping experiences with students
- Work experience in the Earth and/or Life Sciences

# Compensation

Salary range: \$77,000 - \$110,000

Benefits include medical, dental, vision, life, 401(k), short-term disability insurance, flexible spending account, paid time off, holidays, and school breaks.

## To Apply

Please submit a cover letter and resume to [careers@tessellations.school](mailto:careers@tessellations.school). For more information about our school, visit <http://www.tessellations.school>.

*Tessellations is an Equal Opportunity Employer — we do not discriminate against any employee or job applicant on the bases of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, sex, or reproductive health decision making.*