



Director of Early Learning

About Us:

The Powerhouse is Southwest Colorado's STEAM engine, empowering curious young learners through interactive experiences, discovery, and play. Launched as the Children's Museum of Durango in 1994 in a small attic space above the Durango Arts Center, the museum expanded to its current riverfront location and has welcomed 300,000 visitors since its opening in 2011. The Powerhouse has expanded to include a licensed, large child care center for approximately 40 toddler- and preschool-aged children.

Job Title: Director of Early Learning

Reports To: Director of Education

Hours and Term: Full-time, exempt

Start Date: Q1 2026

Compensation: \$55,000 – \$62,500

Travel: Less than 10%

Benefits: Flexible PTO, ICHRA health plan insurance plan, SIMPLE IRA with 3% employer match, monthly phone reimbursement

Roles and Responsibilities:

Reporting to the Director of Education, the **Director of Early Learning** is responsible for the overall operational and logistical management of the Early Learning Program. This role oversees daily operations of the child care center, including staff supervision, family engagement, enrollment management, and compliance with all legal and quality standards. Additional duties include teaching classes as needed and managing program expenditures.

The Director of Early Learning operates within the broader structure of the Powerhouse Responsibilities such as facility maintenance, fundraising, financial management, and governance are managed by other Powerhouse departments. This position is fully on-site and not eligible for remote work.

Success in this role requires strong problem-solving and communication skills, proactive leadership, fiscal responsibility, and a commitment to confidentiality, inclusion, and advocacy for early childhood education. The Director must value the individuality of each child, family, and teacher while fostering a cohesive and supportive program community, and should represent the Powerhouse's mission and vision positively within the wider community.

Program Leadership

- Develop and manage annual program goals, objectives, and budget
- Hire, train, schedule, and manage early childhood education staff
- Ensure excellence, effectiveness, and efficiency of program operations within the guidelines of developmentally appropriate practices, licensing requirements, public health standards, and program philosophy
- Participate actively in community and professional networks to maintain relationships, build awareness of the museum, inform best practices, and explore opportunities for collaboration
- Respond promptly and appropriately to family concerns, involving teachers, families or external support as needed
- Establish and maintain systematic communications with all constituencies

Program Management and Evaluation

- Develop and implement program and operational policies for staff and families
- Develop procedures and be the point of contact for disaster and emergency situations
- Develop and implement enrollment and financial aid policies, including an annual lottery
- Lead ongoing evaluation and improvement of programs through formal evaluation measures
- Coordinate with Finance Director for invoicing and payment of tuition and fees
- Coordinate with Operations Manager regarding facility maintenance needs
- Negotiate and approve program service contracts and introduce new families to the program
- Maintain inventory of furniture, equipment, and supplies as needed
- Coordinate and facilitate visits with San Juan BOCES and Durango School District CHILD FIND for special needs referrals and services
- Report suspected abuse and/or neglect to the appropriate agency

Licensing and Compliance

- Secure licensing through the Colorado Department of Early Childhood by September 2026
- Maintain up to date child files, personnel files, and ColoradoShines program information
- Ensure all staff are acquiring 15 or more hours of professional development training annually and maintaining up to date PDIS accounts
- Apply for a Colorado Shines rating and/or NAEYC accreditation within the first three years of operation

Program Delivery

- Support teaching staff in implementing curriculum and child assessment that aligns with the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines.
- Interact daily with children, families, and staff in order to facilitate a positive program culture
- Model effective instructional practices and positive, pro-social approach to classroom management
- Assist during transition periods throughout the day and substitute as needed (Estimated to be less than 20% of time)

Museum Collaboration

- Represent early Early Learning Program in organization-wide meetings
- Collaborate with the Gallery Manager to coordinate early learning programs for museum visitors and opportunities for classes to utilize museum spaces

Requirements:

- A graduate degree in early childhood education is preferred. Candidates with Bachelor's degrees or other educational credentials alongside significant relevant experience will be considered.
- Minimum of a Level 3 Colorado Shines Early Childhood Credential 3.0 or the ability to demonstrate equivalency while obtaining credential.
- Obtain all required Colorado Large Child Care Center PDIS training within 30 days of hiring.
- Minimum of three years' experience working in toddler and/or preschool-age classrooms preferred
- Minimum of one year of supervisory/administrative experience preferred
- Ability to pass a background check
- First Aid/CPR certified, or the ability to obtain prior to program opening
- Excellent presentation, writing, computer, interpersonal, & organizational skills
- Ability to multitask with ease on a variety of projects

- Ability to lift up to 50 pounds, walk, bend, stand, squat or sit on the floor (with children) throughout an 8-hour day , and physically respond quickly in an emergency

Email resume and cover letter to earlylearning@powsci.org. Priority consideration will be given to applications received by January 15, 2026. Application open until filled.