

**CATALYST SCHOOLS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
JOB DESCRIPTION**

Title: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Reports to: Chairman of the Board

Background: Catalyst Schools Chicago is a non-profit 501c3 organization dedicated to transforming inner-city communities by developing highly educated, concerned, committed citizens of character. Since 2006, Catalyst has operated public schools committed to providing a quality educational choice for students and families in low-income communities of Chicago. Catalyst is searching for a leader to strengthen its original school model and to manage its growth from a two campus operator into a multi-campus charter network.

Catalyst currently operates two successful charter and contract schools in the Austin and North Lawndale communities, serving grades K-8. The organization expects 2009 enrollment of 600 students with the expansion of its Austin campus. Catalyst anticipates opening multiple charter and/or contract schools over the next three years.

The Catalyst methodology is an educational model rooted in the Lasallian tradition and its core values. In addition to a rigorous academic program which focuses heavily on math and reading, Catalyst promotes the Character Counts curriculum through which students learn core ethics and important character traits.

The Catalyst model incorporates an extended school day coupled with a rich program of extracurricular classes offered by community partners. As Catalyst Schools seeks to become an anchor as well as a change agent in its neighborhood, these community partners and student families are an integral part of the model, playing an active role in programming as volunteers, tutors and mentors. The organization also offers a graduate support program to prepare its 8th graders for a smooth transition into high school and to assist students through high school graduation.

As part of Renaissance 2010, a Chicago initiative to create 100 high-performing schools in communities of need by the year 2010, Catalyst schools are held accountable for performance while being given autonomy to create innovative learning environments. In 2008, approximately 70% of Catalyst operating revenue was provided through government sources with the remainder generated from private and corporate donors. The schools are non-tuition based and open to the public.

Position: The Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for all aspects of the Catalyst network and its growth, including the academic performance and operations of the existing schools and future campuses. The CEO will lead the development of a strategic growth plan for the organization, including strengthening the academic model and further developing the administrative and support capabilities required to manage a network of charter/contract campuses. The CEO will lead the financial planning process for the school and drive the required development efforts.

4/20/09

Responsibilities:

• ***Culture Development***

- Preserve and promote the Lasallian mission with associated core values, philosophy and culture
- Incorporate national and regional Lasallian programs and materials where appropriate
- Participate in Lasallian professional development opportunities, workshops and training sessions

• ***Strategic Planning***

- Work with the Catalyst Board of Directors to develop a strategic plan to grow Catalyst into a high performing charter network
- Oversee the allocation of resources and school model decisions to drive the best balance between financial, operational, and academic concerns
- Hire and oversee performance of senior-level staff whose jobs will be to support/lead the operations, academic performance, and marketing and development work described below
- Develop an overall human capital strategy and establish career paths within the network

• ***Operations***

- Lead the development of the school/network financial projections to support the recommended growth plan
- Oversee network operations: budgeting, accounting, human resources, contract management, compliance, etc.
- Work with outside counsel to support the legal needs of the organization
- Manage any required facility acquisition, maintenance and renovation efforts

• ***Academic Performance***

- Oversee academic performance of all schools in the Catalyst network
- Drive increased performance in the current schools and further definition of the academic model
- Oversee network level human capital development efforts including: recruiting, training and evaluating school leaders and the development of hiring practices, policies, and evaluation protocols for all teachers and school-based employees
- Build a high performing, consistent data-driven culture across the network and at all levels of its operations

• ***Marketing and Development***

- Lead development efforts to fund the Catalyst school model, support network and back office growth, and secure and renovate any required facilities
- Oversee capital fundraising and development of new charter and/or contract schools
- Manage the external representation and image of the Catalysts schools and the overall network

Required Qualifications:

- 5-7+ years of experience in managing and leading a high performing organization including strategic development and operations
- MBA and/or equivalent management experience
- Entrepreneurial drive and proven track record in launching new ventures or major initiatives
- Experience running or operating in a charter school network or extensive knowledge of new schools
- Superior relationship management skills, including external and internal stakeholders/clients
- Passion for education reform and a commitment to serving children in Chicago's underserved communities

Preferred Qualifications:

- Experience launching and designing new schools
- Experience working with urban schools and engaging residents of urban communities
- Direct classroom or instructional leadership experience
- Prior fundraising experience

Direct Reports: 4 Full-Time Equivalent Positions

- Chief Academic Officer
- Vice President of Operations
- Director of Culture and Community Relations
- Director of Development and Communications

Compensation: Commensurate with experience

Start Date: Position currently available

Application: To apply, please email your cover letter and resume to HR@Catalystschools.org. Phone inquiries are not accepted.