

## JOB SPECIFICATION

ORGANIZATION: Tennessee Charter School Center  
POSITION: Chief Executive Officer  
LOCATION: Nashville or Memphis  
REPORTS TO: Board of Directors

### **Background**

The Tennessee Charter School Center (TCSC), as it is known today, is the merged product and evolved impact of two of Tennessee’s previous charter school support organizations: the Tennessee Charter School Incubator and the Tennessee Charter School Association. Since 2013, TCSC has served as the primary charter support organization to the growing charter sector in Tennessee.

TCSC is raising the bar of excellence and ensuring all children in Tennessee have access to high-quality education. Its mission to develop and support high-performing public charter schools and drive change in public education stems from a belief in quality and equity, diversity, collaboration, and integrity.

TCSC is well positioned to advance the charter movement in the state. A clear policy window exists over the next few years with pro charter elected leadership. Recent studies have shown that charter schools in Tennessee provide a high-quality education experience for low-income students and students of color. There is a committed group of funders who are eager to invest in the sector. Finally, there is a mature coalition of advocacy organizations working on a wide range of education issues in the state. You can read more about TCSC [here](#).

### **Opportunity**

The Tennessee Charter School Center seeks a credible, politically savvy, charter school advocate to serve as Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”). The CEO will lead and grow a small team of professionals that can anticipate and respond to the sector’s changing needs and build a broad coalition of support for charter schools in the state and engage with a wide array of stakeholders to advance the priorities of TCSC.

TCSC has advanced important legislation and achieved key policy wins, especially when it comes to facility access and funding. Moving forward, the organization has an opportunity to capitalize on the current favorable landscape and make a more significant impact on students and families across Tennessee. The Board has identified the following priorities for the incoming CEO:

- Reframing why TCSC exists and aligning core stakeholders around a vision for impact and a five-year strategic plan with clear goals and milestones;
- Significantly increasing the number of dues-paying members and charter operator engagement in advocacy and policy;
- Owning the narrative around charter schools to dispel the myths and misinformation and reemphasize the critical nature of high-quality charter schools;
- Facilitating and generating buy-in within the existing charter sector for continued quality growth through CMO and single-site replication and expansion and new charter school incubation;

- Advancing and safeguarding the movement through a strong advocacy agenda that continues to prioritize facilities access, funding, and authorization and defending the movement by lobbying against anti-charter bills, specifically those aimed at limiting charter autonomy and adding compliance burdens to school operators;
- Developing strategies to increase the influence of the charter school sector in the Tennessee legislature;
- Increasing financial sustainability by stewarding existing funders and cultivating relationships with potential partners to broaden the base of support for TCSC.

## **Responsibilities**

### Strategic Executive Leadership

- Develop a five-year strategic plan in conjunction with the Board and key stakeholders that clarifies the strategic direction, mission, and vision of TCSC, establishes priorities, and sets measurable goals for the organization;
- Define the organization's advocacy agenda with significant input from charter school leaders and other stakeholders;
- Pursue strategic legislative and policy changes and protect existing supportive policies that will strengthen charter schools in Tennessee;
- Partner with the Board to support the growth and influence of TCSC.

### Team Management

- Recruit, build, manage, and develop a diverse, high-performing team, including managing a lobby team and other contractors;

### External Relations

- Develop a unified narrative and vision for the charter sector and drive coordinated and proactive external communications to positively influence public opinion and improve public perception of the sector;
- Deepen relationships and influence with key policymakers and elected officials;
- Develop and expand fundraising efforts by cultivating new and leveraging existing relationships, as well as diversifying TCSC's funding base to ensure financial sustainability;
- Elevate the brand of TCSC as a reliable, trustworthy source for policy, advocacy, and school services support.

### Partnership/Coalition Building and Mobilization

- Strengthen trust among charter school leaders, board members, and other stakeholders to improve information sharing and inform priorities;
- Lead the coalition of statewide advocacy organizations on all things related to charter sector priorities;
- Serve as a collaborative peer leader among a coalition of TN education organizations working to advance improved outcomes for all students;
- Connect and liaise with leaders driving charter sector work in local communities and balance their needs and priorities with those that exist at the state level;

- Organize and mobilize school leaders, staff, parents, board members, and other stakeholders to support pro-charter efforts.

### **Qualifications**

#### Mindset/Values

- A passion for educational equity, access, and opportunities and outcome for families combined with a deep respect for charter schools;
- A deep-seated commitment to (and history of) leading with integrity, including building long-term relationships that engender trust;
- The grit necessary to persevere in achieving policy and advocacy change in a challenging, complex political environment;
- A balance of urgency and focus;
- Flexibility to act and lead in an entrepreneurial, roll-up-your-sleeves environment.

#### Skills

- An ability to persuade, gain support, and motivate a diverse group of stakeholders to action by building strong internal and external relationships;
- A clear and effective communication style and an ability to empathize with and understand the perspectives of others;
- Acumen for building an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued and leveraged to achieve the vision and mission of the organization;
- Understanding of education policy and how it informs organizational positions and stances.

#### Experience

- At least ten years of professional experience;
- Experience leading and managing others in an organization focused on education, policy, campaign organizing, and/or advocacy;
- Political savvy, including a demonstrated track record of effectively navigating complex power dynamics and systems;
- Experience operating or at least familiarity with 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), candidate PACs, and independent expenditure committees;
- Experience uniting different groups/entities around a common goal and/or message and mobilizing others to take action;
- Knowledge of the charter school landscape/sector and a personal connection to education; local relationships in the Tennessee charter sector a plus;
- Experience building, nurturing, and supporting high-performing teams to achieve ambitious outcomes;
- Experience building and stewarding external partnerships and serving as the external face of an organization; fundraising/development experience a plus;
- A track record of successfully overcoming obstacles in challenging environments.

Compensation

The proposed salary range is \$225,000 to \$250,000 annually, commensurate with experience.

To Apply

If you are interested in this opportunity, please email your resume to [mmitchell@k12searchgroup.com](mailto:mmitchell@k12searchgroup.com) with the subject line: "TCSC CEO." Applications must be received by midnight on **June 23, 2024**.