

Brief Job Description: Portfolio Strategy Chief Executive Officer

Job Objectives: The Portfolio Strategy CEO will work toward the ultimate goal of ensuring every child in every neighborhood has a great school. The CEO will both lead the system of schools and overhaul that system to ensure the central office supports principals and teachers and frees them to use their best ideas to ignite student learning. The CEO will provide oversight and visionary leadership to instill a performance-based, continuous improvement culture system wide, thereby attracting top-level talent at all levels. The CEO will lead implementation of the portfolio strategy, creating diverse options for families in all neighborhoods by giving all schools control of their programs, budgeting and hiring; opening new high-performing, autonomous schools; and holding schools accountable to similar performance standards. As the strategy's public face, the CEO will communicate the mission to the public and build internal and external support for it. Additionally, the CEO will work to challenge or change laws or policies that block progress. The CEO will drive results; focus on innovation, performance and equity; build relationships; set direction; develop talent; and manage an efficient system focused squarely on students' needs.

Qualifications: We recognize that good leaders come from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds. We are open to considering candidates who possess the experience, skills, and abilities outlined below.

Experience: Demonstrated ability to think and act strategically, coordinate people and resources, communicate clearly and with integrity to different audiences, successfully manage organizational change, work collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders, authentically engage the community, delegate effectively, and manage conflict.

Responsibilities and Essential Functions: The following leadership and management duties are representative of performance expectations.

- Explaining the portfolio strategy to the public and building support by clearly framing the strategy around its impact on students
- Leading a small leadership group to transform the central office's mission, and in so doing, greatly reduce the office's size
- Hiring a cabinet that understands the portfolio strategy, gives the strategy top priority, and has the necessary implementation skills
- Creating the conditions needed to attract the most promising school leaders and providers, both locally and beyond
- Managing performance contracts with schools (via a central Portfolio Management Office), which provide schools with autonomy in exchange for high-level accountability
- Reviewing the annual slate of school openings, closings, and expansions from the Portfolio Management Office and recommending actions to the school board

- Building a diverse citywide coalition of community support for the portfolio strategy including political figures, business leaders, foundations, and families; building support from within among the school board, principals and teachers
- Working with unions and existing district bureaucracy to build systems that enable portfolio implementation (often against strong resistance)
- Using legal advice to formulate actions that will hold up if challenged
- Leading fundraising efforts to secure additional dollars as needed for the transition to portfolio

Skills and Abilities Required: These characteristics are important for the successful performance of duties.

- Ability to make hard judgments about schools and not think of them as permanent institutions
- Ability to delegate responsibility to others, supervise on consistency of actions with overall strategy
- Strong conflict-management skills in order to navigate the strategy shift successfully
- Capacity to explain portfolio actions to a broad variety of audiences, both internal and external
- Willingness to be open and clear about decision criteria
- Strong relationship/coalition builder who can cultivate the political support needed at the local and state level as needed
- Willingness to rethink the status quo, including a willingness to consider facing litigation and challenges to fully explore what is possible for the district or city
- Ability to work with a diverse array of individuals in order to move the district or city forward

March 5, 2015