



JOB SPECIFICATION

ORGANIZATION: Idaho Charter School Network
POSITION: Founding Executive Director
LOCATION: Boise, Idaho
REPORTS TO: Board of Directors

Background

The Idaho Charter School Network's (ICSN) mission is to improve student achievement and expand choice among high-quality public schools by advancing and supporting Idaho's charter schools. ICSN supports efforts to strengthen Idaho's charter school movement and the national charter school sector. The organization is currently operating as a 501(c)4 and working to establish a 501(c)3. A group of the state's highest-performing public charter school operators has come together to serve on the ICSN board and provide leadership while building the organization. Over the next few years, the newly established ICSN 501(c)3 will use school membership dues from Idaho charter schools to develop financial sustainability while directing greater resources to the (c)4 and, ultimately, PAC side to protect and expand Idaho's vibrant charter sector. ICSN will develop the advocacy, marketing, and communications capacities to support pro-charter policies and consistently tell positive stories about Idaho's public charter school operators, students, and families.

Idaho has been and is projected to continue being one of the nation's only states adding new K-12 students annually. While other states have seen a decline in their overall K-12 enrollment, NCES projects an increase of 11% in Idaho's enrollment. With the support of [Bluum](#) (a 501(c)3 organization), the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation, a federal Charter School Program (CSP) grant, the Charter School Growth Fund, as well as local support, the state is committed to creating at least 8,825 new charter school seats over the next seven years. Additionally, the Idaho Legislature and Governor have been strong supporters of charter schools and have worked over the last decade to create more flexibility for schools and help with facility financing. While the conditions are ripe and Idaho's charter school sector is flourishing, as Idaho's charter schools continue to grow and add students, opposition is growing to their increasing market share. A strong and independent ICSN with a (c)3 and (c)4 will ensure that Idaho's charter school successes will be sustained and expanded over the next decade.

ICSN is well-positioned to advance the charter movement in Idaho. It has strong political support at the state level, a coalition of funders locally and nationally, and a diverse group of over 70 charter schools poised to unite under the organization's mission and vision.

You can read more about ICSN [here](#).

Opportunity

The ICSN Board of Directors seeks a credible, politically savvy charter school advocate to serve as the founding Executive Director (ED). The ED will work closely with the Board, Bluum, member organizations,

and partners to strengthen and expand a broad, diverse coalition of support for charter schools in the state and engage with a wide array of stakeholders to advance ICSN's priorities.

The Board of Directors has identified the following priorities for the founding Executive Director:

- Clarify the mission of the organization and align key stakeholders around a vision for impact, including creating a multi-year strategic plan with clear goals and milestones;
- Build relationships with key stakeholders in the Idaho charter landscape;
- Educate, inform, and advocate within the public dialogue about the benefits of charter schools and school choice, while working to dispel myths and misinformation and reemphasize the importance of high-quality charter schools;
- Coalesce a very diverse group of charter operators and instructional approaches around a shared policy agenda and more deeply engage members in advocacy and policy efforts;
- Develop strategies to increase the influence of the charter school sector in the Idaho legislature;
- Increase the number of dues-paying members, implement a consistent membership-collecting structure, and lay the groundwork for financial sustainability, including a fundraising strategy for the 501(c)3.

Responsibilities

Strategic Executive Leadership

- Develop a multi-year strategic plan in conjunction with the Board and key stakeholders that clarifies the strategic direction, mission, and vision of ICSN, 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 Idaho;
- Partner with the Board and Bluum to support the growth and influence of ICSN;
- Ensure that both the 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) are working effectively to advance the progress of charter schools in the state;
- Represent Idaho and the Idaho Charter School Network at national conferences and conversations.

External Relations

- Develop a unified narrative and vision for the Idaho charter sector;
- Drive coordinated and proactive external communications to positively influence public opinion and improve public perception of the sector, including writing articles, leveraging social media, speaking at conferences, meeting with districts and authorizers, and coordinating school tours;
- Deepen relationships and influence with key policymakers and elected officials;
- Develop a fundraising strategy for the organization by cultivating new and leveraging existing relationships, as well as diversifying ICSN's funding base to ensure financial sustainability;
- Elevate ICSN's brand as a reliable source for policy and advocacy.

Partnership/Coalition Building and Mobilization

- Strengthen trust among charter school leaders, board members, and other stakeholders to improve information sharing and inform priorities;
- Serve as a collaborative peer leader among Idaho 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 opportunities, unhindered access, and life-impacting outcomes for families; a champion 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 complex political environment;
- A balance of urgency and focus;
- Flexibility to act and lead in an entrepreneurial, roll-up-your-sleeves environment;
- Focus on culture; values listening and learning over process.

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 listen to, empathize with, and understand the perspectives of others;
- Strong emotional intelligence, the humility to receive and act on feedback, and a track record of continuous improvement;
- Effective organizational skills, time management skills, and ability to work efficiently, prioritize, and thrive in ambiguity;
- Ability to effectively utilize social media and other communication tools to connect charter schools and strategically engage in relevant political conversations;
- Understanding of education policy and how it informs organizational positions and stances.

Experience

- At least ten years of professional experience;
- Experience leading 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 diverse 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 Idaho 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 starting salary for the Executive Director role is \$150,000 annually, commensurate with experience.

To Apply

If you are interested in this opportunity, please email your resume to jobs@k12searchgroup.com with the subject line: "ICSN ED." Applications must be received by midnight MT on January 5, 2025.