

**CHOICE FOUNDATION
NEW ORLEANS, LA**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CHOICE FOUNDATION [<https://www.choicefoundation.org/>] seeks a dynamic, focused and accomplished leader to assume the position of Executive Director on or before July 2019.

The successful candidate will be an inspiring leader and communicator, be skilled at fostering a climate of excellence, innovation, cooperation and growth, have significant hands-on administrative experience, strong technical skills, an accomplished background in management and assessment, budgeting, strategic planning, and be enthusiastically aligned with the Foundation's philosophy, mission, values, culture, as well as the concept of a charter school.

The ideal candidate will provide strong, decisive, energetic leadership to the organization and schools, and foster an environment of excellence in education. The Executive Director will maintain positive and open lines of communication with community leaders, neighboring school districts, state and national charter schools, local business leaders, as well as local and state legislators. He/She must be a visionary leader, an open collaborator, an effective delegator, be willing to further knowledge of best practices on a continuous basis and foster an environment of educational and personal growth. The Executive Director must be responsible, thoughtful, and transparent fiscally and strive to ensure the continued financial stability of Choice Foundation and its schools.

He/She must be passionately committed to children, possess strong organizational, operational, interpersonal and public relations skills, have experience working with a Board, and with urban city populations, be a flexible and creative problem solver, able to communicate effectively in writing and orally, demonstrate an ability to focus on attaining rigorous academic goals for all students, and be accountable and committed to achieving, academic goals based on comparative and longitudinal measures.

OVERVIEW

Choice Foundation, a non-profit corporation, was founded in 2004 to promote school choice issues in Louisiana. The founding trustees believe that parents should have the flexibility to choose the right school for their children. No child should be condemned to stay in a neighborhood school that does not meet the needs of the child.

Following Hurricane Katrina, as the state of Louisiana stepped in to take over New Orleans struggling schools, Choice Foundation applied for a Recovery School District charter, and was awarded the charter for Lafayette Academy. The school currently has 978 students in grades Pre-K - 8. In June of 2010 Choice Foundation was awarded the charter to take over Esperanza Charter School. Esperanza has 531 students in grades K-8.



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Each of the schools is open enrollment. That is, there are no selection criteria, and they must admit any student for whom there is an open seat. All of the schools are "takeovers of takeovers." That is, each school was operated by another organization, and CF was assigned the school by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education after successfully negotiating a rigorous application process. All schools serve high poverty populations almost exclusively [90%+ at each school], and all schools provide special education services.

Esperanza Charter School fulfills a special role in the public education landscape of New Orleans by providing a welcoming and high expectations environment for immigrant families. While approximately 6% of public-school students citywide are English Language Learners, Esperanza's student population is approximately one-third English Language Learners. More importantly, all students at Esperanza achieve strong academic growth. This year, Esperanza was one of only two open-enrollment elementary schools in New Orleans recognized by the Louisiana Department of Education as an Equity Honoree for demonstrating excellence in educating students with disabilities, students who are English learners, and students who are economically disadvantaged.

In brief, CF schools are thoroughly focused on aligning every resource, every teacher, and every activity with rigorous educational standards. Data of all sorts is used throughout the operations to make sure that every decision is made in the best interests of students. And, CF provides as much school- and community-based support as it can to serve the needs of students and their families.

GOVERNANCE

The thirteen-member Board of Trustees of Choice Foundation is a dedicated and hard-working group, with a variety of backgrounds and experiences, and are committed to the delivery of a high-quality education for students and their families.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

The Executive Director will be a distinguished leader with demonstrated experience as a successful teacher, in school leadership as a division head, head of school principal, executive director at a charter, traditional public, independent school/organization or experience as a non-profit leader and manager.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

- Degree[s] requirement – Master's degree preferred
- Leadership experience in a charter school/charter organization would be an asset
- Leadership and experience in urban setting/populations
- Understanding of/willingness to learn about the unique culture of CF schools, populations and communities
- Successful background in high performing and high expectation school settings
- Deep understanding and proven ability in curriculum/program development/design and the implementation of best practices
- Expertise in developing, evaluating and growing faculty and staff
- Financial acumen and fund-raising expertise
- Visionary and mission driven
- Collaborative and delegative
- Excellent oral/written communication and presentation skills



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- Sense of entrepreneurship and innovation
- Proven problem-solving skills
- Demonstrated self-motivation and initiative, as well as an ability to perform under pressure
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Strong organizational skills and ability to prioritize, multitask, and work in a fast-paced environment
- Classroom experience would be an asset
- Proven ability to maintain a high degree of confidentiality

REQUIRED ABILITIES

The Executive Director will believe, and act upon the belief, that all children can reach high levels of academic achievement regardless of background, need or ability. The ED must:

- *Be passionately committed to children.* The Executive Director's love for learning, focus on children, and confidence in their ability to learn will be apparent in every aspect of his or her leadership style.
- *Be an inspiring leader and communicator.* The ED must possess the confidence and ability to continuously articulate high expectations for academic achievement by every student, as well as the capacity to inspire teachers, parents, children and potential funders/donors to embrace that vision. He or she will be positive, projecting energy and enthusiasm, will enjoy public presentations and will have stage presence and self-assurance.
- *Be an articulate, spontaneous speaker and effective writer.* The ED will communicate the school's vision to the community and will build constructive relationships of trust with the staff, parents, teachers, and community leaders. He or she will value parents' input and will be comfortable working with them and utilizing their talents and energies as resources.
- *Genuinely value, and have affirmatively demonstrated a strong commitment to, cultural, racial and economic diversity.* The ED will have knowledge of, commitment to, and the ability to reach traditionally underserved populations within the district in order to build a strong, diverse community.
- *Be a strong, organized and independent manager.* The ED will be a critical thinker, relentless achiever, and an independent-minded self-starter who thrives in a setting that rewards autonomy and accountability. She/He will establish high performance standards; be accountable and hold others accountable and focused on goals and priorities; identify and remove barriers to objectives; show a willingness to strategically take tough, principled stands even when unpopular; ensure that adequate resources are available to achieve objectives; and make decisions that benefit our mission and continuing financial



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viability. He or she will involve faculty and staff in decisions that affect them and address performance issues promptly – with fairness, firmness and consistency.

- *Be a proven team builder with strong people leadership skills.* The ED will assist in the retention and recruitment of a superior and diverse faculty and staff and manage their performance and growth by assessing, coaching and developing their potential. He or she will work collaboratively with all staff/leadership team and resolve issues that affect them while maintaining clear focus on meeting the needs of children.
- *Be persevering and personally effective.* The ED will be capable of thinking clearly and staying focused under pressure and will demonstrate a willingness to take responsibility for mistakes and work to avoid repeating them. He or she will possess and project unwavering awareness and confidence in his or her personal capacity, be a constant learner, take personal initiative to achieve the school's goals, and set a high standard for work ethics and personal effectiveness that goes beyond the traditional school day.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Certain personal characteristics are essential for success as the Executive Director of Choice Foundation. There is an expectation that the Executive Director will:

- Possess the highest standards of integrity and a strong moral and ethical character.
- Candidates must be relentless achievers who enjoy working “hard and smart”. Have the ability to bounce back after setbacks and achieve results even when circumstances are adverse and who are prepared to serve as the primary role model in the school community.
- Genuinely enjoy meeting new people and listening to their points of view.
- Be approachable, accessible, and highly visible.
- Have a “deep keel” – a secure sense of self that results in steady, unflappable leadership.

This is an extraordinary opportunity for an exemplary leader. A highly competitive compensation and benefits package [commensurate with qualifications and experience], and relocation assistance will be provided to the successful candidate. Qualified candidates interested in this opportunity are invited to submit a resume by attachment and in WORD or PDF to:

BARRY ROWLAND
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