

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER SEARCH

RIPPOWAM CISQUA SCHOOL

Bedford, New York

rcsny.org

Start Date: July 1, 2024



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

Rippowam Cisqua School creates independent thinkers, confident communicators, and engaged leaders who respect and contribute meaningfully to a diverse and increasingly complex global society.

At a Glance



Established
1917



Total enrollment
375



Financial aid awarded
\$3+M



Students of color
25%



Student-faculty ratio
6:1



Total faculty
70



Campus size
35 acres

Faculty of color: 7%

Students receiving aid: 40%

Endowment \$11M

Annual operating budget: \$16M

Competitive sports: 13



Overview

A commitment to interpersonal relationships forms the core of Rippowam Cisqua School (RCS), a PreK - Grade 9 school located in Westchester County, where the faculty understand that depth of knowledge is best attained by forming strong bonds with each and every student. The foundation for each child's learning experience is rooted in the school's joyful learning environment and engaging integrated curriculum that inspires and challenges each child academically, artistically, and athletically while also nurturing character and individual social-emotional development.

In 1916, the small town of Bedford, New York, was beginning to establish itself as a thriving suburb of New York City. Various excellent educational options existed for boys, but none for girls. Six prominent Bedford women met to devise a solution to the problem of their daughters' educations, and the Bedford-Rippowam School opened in September 1917. By 1920 the school became co-ed and moved to its current location. And then finally, in 1972 the school merged with the child-centered, progressive Cisqua School to form the school and educational philosophy of the current Rippowam Cisqua School.

Now, the school is seeking a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to partner with the Head of School to build a more automated, digitized, and service-oriented experience for all school constituencies. Key to this role will be a strong orientation toward strategic thinking that demonstrates a deep understanding of the entire school and a decision-making mindset focusing on the organization's long-term sustainability. The school is interested in onboarding an exceptional communicator who appreciates the benefits of transparency and collaboration.



Opportunities and Challenges

The next CFO of Rippowam Cisqua School will have many opportunities to make an impact both at the strategic and tactical levels of the organization. The first consideration will be the appointee's ability to provide useful, timely, and accurate reporting and data to the Head of School and Board. In addition, there will be a need for a strategic partner who can synthesize the information into a broad understanding of the school to help aid strategic decision making. The Head desires a strategic partner in his decision-making process who possesses an aptitude for financial modeling and an understanding of the cause-and-effect of adjusting the school's financial levers.

On the tactical side there will be many opportunities throughout the school and within the business office for efficiency gains and role refinements. An immediate need will be to overhaul the budgeting process for the school with a particular emphasis on transparency and accountability. The next CFO will be aided by a dedicated team that includes a talented Controller and full-time HR Director. Other desired projects include better training on the Blackbaud accounting system, adopting technology for digital invoicing, and further exploration in ways the processes that run through the business office can be digitized, automated, and sped up. In addition, there is a desire for more transparency and partnership on the budgeting process.

Finally, it will be particularly important for the next CFO to be an excellent communicator. Whether presenting to the Board, dealing with other key administrators, or working with the business office, this position must place timely and clear communication with all parties as its highest priority.



Responsibilities

In addition to embracing Rippowam Cisqua School's mission, supporting its Head and leadership, and representing the school at professional and public forums, the new CFO has a number of primary responsibilities:

- Provide strategic leadership, analysis, and management of finances and operations.
- Establish financial and capital strategies that are consistent with strategic priorities.
- Serve on the Head of School's Administrative Team and lead, co-lead, or participate in several other teams and committees.
- Oversee all business office functions including all financial reporting to the Head of School, Board of Trustees, and various committees.
- Serve as chief staff liaison to Board committees.
- Build and/or maintain the school's short- and long-term strategic financial models.
- Oversee the administration of the school's endowment.
- Oversee school operations including personnel, maintenance, and vendors.
- Maintain strong relationships with banks and lenders to ensure that funding is secured for the needs of the school and compliance with loan terms.
- Administer and manage all employee benefit programs including health insurance, retirement, worker's compensation, life insurance, and other related plans.
- Manage insurance programs including property, casualty, medical, workers' compensation.
- Ensure compliance with all local and state reporting requirements.
- Collaborate effectively with Advancement, Enrollment Management, and other departments.
- Participate in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging professional development.
- Coordinate closely with the Director of Operations and Technology on oversight of the physical plant, grounds, and construction functions.



Qualifications and Personal Attributes

- Bachelor's degree required, MBA or CPA preferred;
- 10-15 years of senior-level experience creating and executing financial planning and management strategies;
- Experience in an independent school preferred, though all individuals with strong financial and leadership skills are welcome;
- Experience managing a team, setting clear goals, responsibilities, expectations, and clear methods of accountability;
- Experience managing a team with both in-office and remote members, successfully creating cohesion among the team itself;
- Proven record of accomplishment designing, implementing, and managing large-scale organizational change;
- Superb communication skills; excellent written, verbal, and presentation skills;
- Demonstrated ability to understand complex subjects, distill them, and then communicate them to varied audiences;
- Experience on senior administrative teams and working with non-profit Boards;
- Demonstrated experience in measuring and improving organization-wide productivity;
- Demonstrated experience in the development of analysis for strategic decision-making, such as key cost drivers, competitive analysis, market analysis, organizational strengths, and weaknesses, etc.;
- Experience in human resource management, employee benefits (including pension plans), and payroll procedures. Knowledge of business and not-for-profit accounting policies, procedures, practices, facilities, and software programs. Blackbaud experience a plus;
- Ability to think and plan strategically and creatively;
- Ability to supervise, manage, and delegate multiple functions and activities;
- Ability to remain calm, flexible, and work effectively under pressure;
- Skilled at negotiating and initiating contracts with external vendors;
- Aptitude for high customer-service standards;
- Consistent demonstration of an entrepreneurial mindset;
- Demonstrated commitment to equitable and inclusive practices;
- A track record of strong integrity.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Rippowam Cisqua School.

[School Website](#)

[College Matriculation](#)

[History and Traditions](#)

[About Bedford, New York](#)

[Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#)



To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
- A current résumé;
- A list of five professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

Greg Britton

Chief Operating Officer, Search & Consulting Group
ggb@carneysandoe.com

Sara Shulman

Practice Leader – Development and Finance
sara.shulman@carneysandoe.com

The full-time equivalent salary range for this position is \$200,000-\$225,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors that include years of experience, education level, and expertise.