Chief Academic Officer
Job Code
110040

INTRODUCTION: CONTEXT AND MISSION

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) serves approximately 35,600 students in 99 schools/programs.

In 2012, the Greater Cleveland community united behind the collective goal of ensuring every child in Cleveland attends a high-quality school and every neighborhood has a multitude of great schools from which families can choose. Cleveland’s Plan for Transforming Schools or The Cleveland Plan defines CMSD’s approach to the reinvention of public education and holds our community accountable for the success of Cleveland’s school children. This plan was reaffirmed by the greater Cleveland community in 2021 when a refreshed Cleveland Plan was publicly released.

The Cleveland Plan is supported by Ohio House Bill 525, which provides much-needed flexibility and autonomy for the district and its schools. Our schools have autonomy over human and financial resources in exchange for accountability for performance. The Principal has primary responsibility and accountability for establishing their school as a high-quality, high-expectations academic center with a focus on personalized instruction, professional support for teachers, and school-wide practices that lead to measurable results. Learn more about The Cleveland Plan at www.clevelandmetroschools.org/theclevelandplan.

It is CMSD’s vision that, in our pursuit of a more fair, just, and good system of education, we want each of our learners, both each of our scholars and each of their educators, to be individually and collectively engaged with academically and intellectually complex tasks that are worthy of their productive struggle and allow them authentic opportunities to demonstrate their work and their learning of academic content and transferable skills in a joyful and adventurous environment. Making this vision a reality for each learner every day will require deep investments in four intersecting design elements (competency-based education, anytime/anywhere learning, whole human learning, and personalized learner pathways) and three shifts in practice (learning, culture, and tools). All of this work must be designed and implemented intentionally with equity and inclusion at the forefront of all decision-making. Learn more about CMSD’s Learning Vision at www.clevelandmetroschools.org/learningvision.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Chief Academic Officer serves as a key member of the Chief Executive Officer’s ten-member senior team and works closely with the Chief Executive Officer and Chief of Schools to lead the development and implementation of programming and supports our schools need in order to achieve their academic goals in alignment with the district’s vision.

The Chief Academic Officer is responsible for the leadership of a wide variety of services including curriculum and instruction, early childhood education, career and college pathways, athletic and extracurricular programming, integrated health services, intervention services, multilingual/multicultural services, and social-emotional learning supports. The Chief Academic Officer is responsible for leading and managing a team that drives educational performance; oversees curriculum and instruction and assessment; establishes instructional standards benchmarks, and accountability measures; creates
appropriate school and classroom learning environments; and, manages professional development programs. The Chief Academic Officer leads an educational team that will serve the District’s students by providing them with the quality education they deserve. The Chief Academic Officer in collaboration with the Chief of Schools spearheads the planning, development and implementation of targeted services and initiatives directly to schools and coordinates those efforts of the academic team and the school network support leaders and their teams to effectively provide cohesion within all academic divisions.

In pursuit of CMSD’s learning vision, the Chief Academic Officer is a deliberate, purposeful, action-oriented, results-driven person who leads in both word and action with an entrepreneurial and innovative spirit and a “get to yes” attitude.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

THE CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OVERSEEING AND LEADING EFFORTS TO:

- Develop, adopt, curate, and implement the learning resources and opportunities needed to amplify student passions and integrate real-world problem-based learning
- Establish and incentivize a cohort model for educators (e.g., vanguard teachers, trailblazers) who prototype innovative practices that accelerate and help shape the path forward for the larger school system
- Assess the effectiveness of current school-based educators’ capacities to implement reimagined learning experiences and design and implement aligned adult learning to strengthen that capacity
- Assess the effectiveness of current central office-based educators’ capacities to implement reimagined learning experiences and design and implement aligned adult learning to strengthen that capacity
- Design and implement systems of professional learning and differentiated support to build educators’ capacity to implement a fair, just, and good system of education anchored in equity and inclusion
- Expand CMSD’s repository of high-quality Tier 1 instructional resources and intervention supports
- Strengthen and expand the implementation of current social-emotional learning efforts both for scholars and educators to meet all whole human needs
- Adopt the needed policies, resources, and tools to transform traditional seat time and pacing into reimagined learning experiences, including: 1) disrupting seat time and pacing (master scheduling, multi-age groupings, anytime learning, self-paced learning); 2) monitoring and credentialing of student learning (grading, credits) and, 3) access to content (learning management systems, anywhere learning)
- Transform the use of learning structures such as time, space, and groupings to enable maximum flexibility
- Revise organizational commitments and guardrails related to autonomy and accountability to clarify expectations and flexibility for school-based educators as they design and implement reimagined learning experiences

QUALIFICATIONS

- Master’s degree, eligibility for Ohio Department of Education Administrator Certificate
- Minimum of five years of experience working in a senior role in education or other complex environment with demonstrated success leading and managing a large staff and an aggressive change agenda
- Firm understanding of The Cleveland Plan and the district’s vision and change agenda
• Experience in leading the research, design, prototyping, and implementing of innovative instructional programs and operations in a large urban school district
• Ability to assemble, lead, and manage cross-functional work teams to achieve the district’s vision and priorities
• Ability to work effectively and cooperatively within a community with diverse dimensions of identity including race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, ability, age, citizenship status, sexual orientation, gender-identity or expression, socio-economic status, title or other dimensions of identity
• Leadership experience in working with administrators and community groups to solve significant educational and/or organizational challenges in a large urban school district
• Proven systems thinker and fixer with the ability to build front-line capacity in a complex organization that supports the desired organizational change
• Superior knowledge of school-level operations, systems, instructional planning, delivery, and evaluation and academic accountability systems and services
• Knowledge of and demonstrated practice in effective administrative, managerial practices, distributed leadership, and the ability to implement them
• Knowledge of staff development and professional development resources
• Knowledge of school-level operations and systems
• Strong analytic and problem-solving skills; ability to break down complex issues
• Strong oral and written communication and presentation skills

WORKING CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL DEMANDS
• Expected moving, walking and standing consistent with an office environment and occasionally lifting up to 15 pounds
• While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to stand, walk and sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; and reach with hands and arms
• The employee is frequently required to talk and/or hear
• Specific vision abilities required for this job include close vision, color vision, depth perception, and ability to adjust focus
• While performing the duties of this job, the employee is exposed to a normal office environment
• Local travel may be required for training/meetings