



Executive Director, Nutrition Support Services

25000282

Posting Date : Jul 15, 2025

Primary Location : Central-42 West Madison Street (Nutrition Support Services)

CPS Non-Union Job Grade: S12

Position Type: Non-Union Position

Overtime Status: Exempt

Final salary offers are dependent upon candidate qualifications.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is a district on the rise, serving over 325,000 students in 500+ schools and employing over 45,000 people, most of them teachers. CPS has set ambitious goals to ensure that every student, in every school and every neighborhood, has access to a world-class learning experience that prepares each for success in college, career, and civic life. Aligned with our transformed philosophy, we are steadfastly focused on ensuring that the District provides resources equitably to support every student, every school, and every community. Six core values guide the work we do every day for our students – student-centered, whole child, equity, academic excellence, community partnership, and continuous learning. Each role in the district supports our vision that every student deserves a rigorous, joyful, and equitable learning experience.

Nutrition Support Services (NSS) is responsible for supporting the District's academic community by providing nutritious and appealing meals with excellent customer service, in a safe and clean environment to every student each school day. NSS serves over 60 million meals to 300,000+ students daily. As an active sponsor in various federally-funded and state-administered Child Nutrition Programs, CPS is committed to operating these programs according to all federal and state regulations. Each Child Nutrition Program is operated under a separate set of regulations, monitoring standards, and record keeping requirements.

Job Summary:

The Executive Director of Nutrition Support Services is a visionary and strategic leader responsible for designing, implementing, and overseeing all aspects of CPS's school food operations. This role drives system-wide priorities to increase student meal participation, reduce food insecurity, transition to scratch cooking, and advance nutrition equity. The Executive Director ensures that CPS delivers high-quality, culturally relevant meals while managing vendor partnerships, regulatory compliance, labor relations, and multi-million-dollar operations across more than 600 school sites. This is a full-time, exempt position that will be paid for the time worked on a salary basis.

The Executive Director, Nutrition Support Services will be held accountable for the following responsibilities:

- Provide strategic leadership & vision.
 - Lead the district's long-term food strategy in alignment with CPS's goals on equity, whole child development, and academic achievement.
 - Develop and implement multi-year plans to expand access to healthy, appealing, and culturally relevant meals across all schools.
 - Serve as a senior advisor to the Chief Operating Officer and executive leadership on food services, health policy, and nutrition equity.
 - Drive the district's transition from pre-packaged meals to scratch and speed-scratch cooking models that emphasize quality, freshness, and student engagement.
 - Oversee communication and engagement strategies with students, families, school leaders, and community organizations to elevate the student experience.
- Provide operational oversight and ensure regulatory compliance of District nutrition programs.
 - Direct the district's participation in all federal and state child nutrition programs (NSLP, SBP, CEP, CACFP, SFSP), ensuring full compliance with USDA and IDHS regulations.
 - Oversee health and safety protocols including Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), Chicago Department of Public Health inspections, and foodborne illness response.
 - Collaborate with Facilities and Capital departments on design, renovation, and modernization of school kitchens, cafeterias, and commissaries.
 - Establish and monitor department-wide key performance indicators (KPIs) related to compliance, meal quality, student satisfaction, and service delivery.
- Manage NSS labor agreements, vendors, and partnerships.
 - Provide leadership to a complex labor environment, including coordination with union partners (e.g., SEIU Local 73), collective bargaining participation, and resolution of labor-related concerns.
 - Manage all external food service management companies and procurement vendors to ensure high performance, cost efficiency,

- and accountability.
- Lead contract development, performance monitoring, and continuous improvement with vendors providing food, delivery logistics, technology, equipment, and compliance services.
- Foster partnerships with public agencies, foundations, local food producers, and peer school systems to promote innovation and shared learning.
- Manage NSS financial operations and continuous improvement.
 - Serve as NSS financial steward, developing and managing the department's multi-million-dollar annual budget, including general funds, federal reimbursements, and capital allocations.
 - Identify opportunities for cost savings, revenue generation, and grant acquisition to support service improvements and sustainability initiatives.
 - Analyze data and trends to inform operational decisions, forecast resource needs, and measure impact on student outcomes.
 - Champion internal systems modernization efforts (e.g., POS systems, menu planning software, compliance tracking).
- Other duties and workstreams as assigned.

In order to be successful and achieve the above responsibilities, the Executive Director, Nutrition Support Services must possess the following qualifications:

Education Required:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is required.
- Bachelor's degree in Public Health, Nutrition, Food Systems, or Business Administration is preferred.
- A Master's degree (MPH, MBA, MPA, or equivalent) is strongly preferred.
- Registered Dietitian (RD), School Nutrition Specialist (SNS), or similar credential is preferred.

Experience Required:

- A minimum of ten (10) years of experience in the food service industry, including the following is required:
 - Minimum of seven (7) years of progressive responsible experience in an education food service operation and/or institutional food service background.
 - Minimum of five (5) years of executive or senior-level management experience, including direct supervision of teams and oversight of labor unions, vendor contracts, and multi-site operations.
 - Proven track record of leading organizational transformation, building high-performing teams, and improving service delivery in public or mission-driven environments.
 - Multi-unit food service management experience.
 - Experience successfully managing large, complex budgets and federal reimbursement models.
 - Experience monitoring and documenting school operations performance for local, state and federal (USDA) compliance.

Other Requirements:

- Flexibility; some evenings/weekends are required.
- Routine physical activities, which may include visiting construction sites, and exposure to extreme cold and/or heat within food service facilities, are required.
- Must possess a valid driver's license and be able to drive across various school sites.
- Prompt, regular attendance in-person and availability to work on-site during regular business hours and as needed is required.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Ability to write reports, business correspondence and procedure manuals and to effectively present information and respond to questions from groups of principals, staff, customers and the general public as required.
- Deep knowledge of USDA child nutrition programs and food compliance regulations.
- Strong skills in strategic planning, data analysis, and continuous improvement.
- Proven track record of working under pressure while managing multiple tasks/individuals simultaneously.
- Ability to design and implement short and long-range objectives.
- Ability to maintain relationships with union representation.
- Ability to interact with staff (at all levels) with a high level of professionalism.
- Effective communicator with ability to engage internal and external stakeholders, including families, school leaders, advocacy organizations, and policymakers.
- Possess integrity and tact when dealing with confidential information and sensitive situations.
- Ability to calculate figures and amounts such as discounts, interest, commissions, proportions, percentages, area, circumference and volume.
- Superior organization and time management skills.
- Strong leadership skills and the ability to influence others without formal authority. Exhibits leadership through collaboration, modeling of openness and integrity, empowering others, and leading through values and vision.
- Employ a good knowledge of applicable statutes, laws, rules and regulations.
- Possess performance management, resources management and leadership skills including the ability to hire, motivate individuals to excel and develop a team of professionals.
- Knowledge of contract-managed service experience.
- Knowledge of best practices/processes with demonstrated experience in applying principles.
- Extensive knowledge and training of current food service principles, laws, rules, regulations, specifically including cafeteria equipment and nutrition education.
- Strong budget management experience.
- Strong decision-making ability.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Proficiency in business software including Microsoft Office Suite, Google Workspace, and food service management systems.

Conditions of Employment

As a condition of employment with the Chicago Public Schools (CPS), employees are required to:

- **Establish/Maintain Chicago Residency** - Employees are required to live within the geographic boundaries of the City of Chicago within six months of their CPS hire date and maintain residency throughout their employment with the district. The Chicago residency requirement does not apply to temporary/part-time positions; however, all CPS employees must be residents of Illinois.

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