

## CHIEF TALENT OFFICER

College Achieve Public Schools is currently searching for candidates to fill the position of Chief Talent Officer (December 2021).



### WHO ARE WE?

College Achieve Public Schools (CAPS) was founded to address the legacy of unequal education and lack of opportunity for Black and Brown Americans in our public education system. This work starts with one community, one neighborhood, and one school at a time. Imagine if the college graduation rate of a neighborhood went from nine percent (the national average for low income students) to 35 percent to 50 percent to 75 percent? We believe that if a school can prepare its students to excel in and graduate from college that community will be transformed.

We know that all children regardless of race, zip code, national origin, and economic status need and deserve access to a world-class education. This legacy of “separate and unequal” is still with us today despite the ideals and the promises made in our founding documents—the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution—and reaffirmed in the landmark Supreme Court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education*. The mission of CAPS is to prepare our students to excel in and graduate from the top colleges and universities in the nation. Every child deserves to be respected as a scholar.

Including students and faculty, our theory of change posits that through education and college achievement our students will transform themselves, their families, and their communities. Our intent is for our scholars to make the dream of equal education and opportunity for all a reality.

College Achieve Public Schools was founded in 2013 and has grown from one small elementary school in Plainfield, NJ serving just over 300 students to nine schools in Plainfield, North Plainfield, Paterson, Asbury Park, and Neptune, serving over 3,000 students as of the 2021-22 school year. Considering we did not open our first school until September 2015, our growth has been meteoric.

We have over 250 faculty and staff, and prize excellence and diversity. Over half of our senior leadership team is Black or Hispanic, as is nearly half of our faculty and staff. Together, we collectively educate our 2,700 scholars. More than 70 percent of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch, nearly one-third are English language learners, and 98 percent identify as Black and/or Hispanic.

Our model calls for us to grow each region to serve PK-12<sup>th</sup> grades. College Achieve Central will have its first graduating class in 2022, with College Achieve Paterson and College Achieve Greater Asbury Park graduating their first classes in 2024. We expect the first CAPS college graduations to occur in 2026. While the national graduation rate for low income students is only nine percent, and the best charter schools in the country have a six-year college graduation rate of approximately 50 percent, we have designed the CAPS experience such that college graduation rates will surpass 80 percent.

CAPS is committed to a diverse and pluralistic workplace. We strongly encourage applications from all qualified individuals. As such, CAPS is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunities for all applicants, employees, volunteers, and interns. CAPS makes employment decisions based on the merits of each candidate and employee.

### WHY WORK AT COLLEGE ACHIEVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

Above all we are looking for faculty, staff, and leaders who believe in our values and our mission. If you are looking for a place to make a difference, surrounded by colleagues who share your values and

commitment to the schools' vision and mission, then you have come to the right place. Dreams begin with responsibility, so we dream, work hard, and reflect on how we can improve. We are not perfectionists, but we do believe excellence is possible and aim to make excellence a hallmark of what we hold most dear.

We care about the whole person and believe it is essential to be as warm as we are demanding. We approach changing the world with humility. It is an awesome undertaking that is sure to have setbacks, disappointment, and failures. But we learn from our failures, own our mistakes, and work hard to get it right (as many times as it takes). We choose to be warriors for equity and education, but happy warriors who find joy in our work, and actively seek moments of gratitude, humor, and deeper purpose for ourselves and with each other.

## **POSITION OVERVIEW**

At CAPS, the Chief Talent Officer (CTO) is our #1 people leader. The CTO co-creates and holds a talent vision for CAPS that puts racial equity squarely at the center of our work so that we can attract the strongest talent in our sector and develop and deploy them to cultivate a spirit of self-determination and possibility in our communities. YOU should consider this role if you are...

### **A Big Thinker (who sweats the details)**

You understand that we want to achieve our mission by honoring and developing each scholar's gifts and talents. There is a vision for our schools to transform the community in true partnership with parents and the community while at all times respecting our scholars, their families, our faculty, and our staff. You are a visionary who encourages continuous learning and inquiry into how things are done. You are a facilitative leader who is curious and who can co-design a vision with people at all levels of the organization, capturing that vision in a talent strategic plan that will unite the talent team behind a theory of action in which the threads of the strategy are stronger than the sum of their parts.

### **A Culture Leader**

You have deep beliefs and strong views about what makes a culture great, and you can paint a compelling picture of what CAPS can be for all of our employees. You deeply understand and can model how to build an outstanding adult culture, both with your cross-school talent teams and within CAPS' executive team. The most important goals you will own relate to building a culture of high equity/ high excellence teams and retention of school-based staff, so experience working directly on these or similar challenges will be highly valued.

### **Talent First Strategy**

For CAPS, talent first is a strategy. What is our plan to fulfill our mission? Hire the best people and make sure we have the right people in the right jobs.

### **Prioritizing Talent for Strategic Imperatives**

CAPS believes that the highest leverage goals are:

- All students should be reading on grade level as measured by the NJSLA by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.
- All students should pass the NJSLA Algebra 1 exam.
- All students should learn how to write a 1,200-word argumentative essay free of mechanical error in a readable style before going to college.

These three imperatives set the priorities for our hiring strategy. We must find or develop the best K-3 reading teachers, 4-9 math teachers, and secondary writing teachers, and this must be the obsession of the CTO, executive directors, principals, vice principals, grade-level leaders, and department chairs.

### **A Technical & Tactical Talent Expert**

You will leverage your talent and human resources expertise to ensure that CAPS has best-in-class systems to evaluate, nurture, train, and reward staff and the tremendous talent that exists in our schools, so that those who work with students every day are maximizing their professional potential. You will oversee initiatives to improve human resource management functions and build and support internal systems designed to support equity and minimize organizational risk.

### **An Equity Champion**

Your charge includes getting to the root of adaptive challenges and tackling organizational systems and structures that block leaders of color from thriving and ascending. You are an empathetic leader who values and elevates the experience of people of all identities at all levels of the organization.

### **MAJOR DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

*All of the duties and responsibilities outlined below are essential job functions subject to reasonable accommodation. This job description should not be construed as an exhaustive statement of duties, responsibilities, or requirements. Individuals may be required to perform other non-related instructions as requested by their supervisor, subject to reasonable accommodation.*

#### **Set the strategy and drive results through others.**

- *Team Leadership.* Set and refine our talent strategic plan (goals, priorities, tactics), oversee strong sub-plans (recruitment, sustainability, etc.) and set up strong systems to monitor progress and course correct to ensure CAPS is best-in-sector at attracting/selecting, developing, engaging, and retaining top talent with no gaps along lines of race.
- *Managing Up.* Serve as a member of the CAPS senior cabinet, acting as a major player in key discussions and decisions about the direction of the organization, thereby requiring the gravitas to effectively manage up and, occasionally, a willingness to push colleagues when necessary and have courageous conversations in order to do what is best for scholars.

#### **Build and develop a team of talent leaders.**

Manage and support a talent team of consultants in order to:

- Ensure that each CAPS employee receives the most competitive and comprehensive compensation and benefits packages, that all CAPS core HR policies are best practice aligned and advance equity, and that our teacher-career pathway represents an empowering and equitable path for our network's teachers.
- Ensure we are recruiting the best and most diverse talent and that all schools are led by a highly effective leader

#### **Nurture organizational culture.**

Oversee the organizational culture of the entire network, including:

- Playing an active role in building organizational culture, including robust internal communications that reinforce our core strategy and values
- Partnering with other senior leaders to ensure strong adult culture in all areas of the organization
- Overseeing implementation of the bi-annual organizational health survey
- Setting clear goals for our organizational health pertaining to adult culture and aligning all talent teams and levers to delivering on those goals
- Executing robust analysis of survey data from our organizational health and adult culture surveys

## EXPERIENCES & QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will have the following experience and characteristics:

- A minimum of 10 years of professional experience with a majority of time spent in talent management roles coupled with a strong track record of experience and equity-driven results at a senior level
- Specific expertise in attracting, selecting, developing, and retaining diverse talent
- Deep familiarity with the talent recruitment and management challenges facing urban schools strongly preferred (especially issues of principal/teacher development and retention)
- A human capital professional with broad exposure to all HR functions who understands how various talent systems—and their corresponding legal and policy implications—impact employees and fuel (or hinder) equity within an organization
- A track record of pursuing equity
- An exceptional manager, coach, and team leader
- Excellent communication and influencing skills to interact effectively with all levels of the organization and the school network
- Experience bringing strategic, analytical, and critical thinking skills as a member of an organizational leadership team
- Advanced degree in organizational leadership, human resource management, or related field preferred

## KEY RELATIONSHIPS

*Reports to:* CEO

*Manages:* Two consultants on our talent team (recruit, leadership, talent operations) and a Director of Talent at each charter school

*Collaborates with:* Chiefs, Executive Directors, and Principals

## COMPENSATION DETAILS & BENEFITS

This is a full-time, exempt, chief-level position with a competitive base salary commensurate with experience. Compensation includes a generous benefits package with medical, dental, vision, retirement savings plan, paid vacation, floating holidays, sick leave, and professional development opportunities.

**Anticipated start date is February 2022.**

## To Apply

Upload a current résumé and robust cover letter (1-2 pages) that answers, at a minimum, the questions below to this web portal: <https://collegeachieve.org/apply>. Please address the cover letter to Michael Piscal, CEO and be sure to specify the position you are applying for in your cover letter.

- Why do you want to work for College Achieve Public Schools?
- What makes you well-qualified for this position?
- What excites you about this position?
- What motivates you in a work environment?

**The application deadline is rolling and candidates will be considered as applications are received.**

The candidate consideration process may include a phone interview, work-task completion, and at least one in-person or on-screen interview.

## Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

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College Achieve Public Schools prohibits discrimination based on an individual's race, color, religion (including all aspects of religious beliefs, observance or practice, including religious dress or grooming practices), sex (including gender, gender identity, gender expression, transgender, pregnancy, and breastfeeding), sexual orientation (including heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality) national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, marital status or registered domestic partner status, uniformed service member or veteran status, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic characteristics or information, or any other basis protected by law. College Achieve Public Schools will afford equal employment opportunity to all qualified applicants, employees, volunteers, and interns as to all terms and conditions of employment, including, without limitation, compensation, hiring, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, and termination.