

Namaste Charter School

Head of School Job Description

Position Title: Head of School

Reports to: Board of Directors

Reporting to this Position: Instructional Leaders, Director of Operations & Finance and Director of Development

Job Summary

The Head of School serves as the leader of Namaste Charter School and, in partnership with the board, is responsible for the success of Namaste Charter School. Together, the board and the Head of School assure Namaste Charter School's relevance to the community, the accomplishment of Namaste Charter School's mission and vision, and the accountability of Namaste Charter School to its diverse constituents.

The board delegates responsibility for management and day-to-day operations to the Head of School, and he or she has the authority to carry out these responsibilities, in accordance with the direction and policies established by the board. The Head of School provides direction and support to the board as it carries out its governance functions.

Accountabilities

1. Legal compliance

– Assures the completion and filing of all legal and regulatory documents, and monitors compliance with relevant laws and regulations for ISBE, the Chicago Public Schools and all other relevant agencies.

2. Mission, policy, and planning

– Helps the board determine Namaste's values, mission, vision, and short- and long-term

goals.

- Helps the board monitor and evaluate Namaste's relevancy to the community, its effectiveness, and its results.
- Keeps the board fully informed on the condition of Namaste and on all the important factors influencing it.
- Identifies problems and opportunities and addresses them; brings those which are appropriate to the board and/or its committees; facilitates discussion and deliberation.
- Informs the board and its committees about trends, issues, problems and activities in order to facilitate policy-making. Recommends policy positions.
- Keeps informed of developments in public education reform, the charter school movement, not-for-profit management and governance, and philanthropy and fund development.

3. Management and administration

- Provides oversight of all Namaste Charter School activities, manages the day-to-day operations, and assures a smoothly functioning, efficient charter school.
- Assures program quality and charter school stability and sustainability through development and implementation of standards and controls, systems and procedures, and regular evaluation.
- Assures a work environment that recruits, retains, and supports quality staff and volunteers. Assures process for selecting, development, motivating, and evaluating staff and volunteers aligned with the mission and core values of the school.
- Recommends staffing and financing to the board of trustees. In accordance with board action, recruits personnel, negotiates professional contracts, and sees that appropriate salary structures are developed and maintained.
- Specifies accountabilities for management personnel and evaluates performance regularly.

4. Academic Oversight

- Develops and manages performance of the instructional leaders, instituting accountability systems to ensure that charter promises are met and exceeded.
- Develops and leads process for assessing the needs of the instructional program, planning, implementing, and evaluating short- and long-term academic goals
- Supervises the processes for recruitment, selection, initial training, ongoing professional development, and evaluation of teachers and staff.

5. Governance

- Helps the board articulate its own role and accountabilities and that of its committees and individual members, and helps evaluate performance regularly.
- Works with the board chair to enable the board to fulfill its governance functions and facilitates the optimum performance by the board, its committees, and individual board members.
- With the board chair, focuses board attention on long-range strategic issues.
- Manages the board's due-diligence process to assure timely attention to core issues.
- Works with the board officers and committee chairs to get the best thinking and involvement of each board member and to stimulate each board member to give his or her best.
- Recommends volunteers to participate in the board and its committees.

6. Finances

- Promotes programs and services that are produced in a cost-effective manner, employing economy while maintaining an acceptable level of quality.
- Oversees the fiscal activities of the charter school, including budgeting, reporting, and auditing.
- Works with board to ensure financing to support short- and long-term goals.
- Assures an effective fund-development program by serving as the chief development officer or hiring and supervising an individual responsible for this activity.
- Helps guide and enable the board, its fund-development committee(s), and its individual board members to participate actively in the fund-development process.
- Helps the board and its development committee design, implement, and monitor available fundraising plan, policies, and procedures.
- Participates actively in identifying, cultivating, and soliciting donor prospects.
- Assures the availability of materials to support solicitation.
- Assures the development and operation of gift management systems and reports for quality decision-making.

7. Community relations

- Facilitates the integration of Namaste into the fabric of the community by using effective marketing and communications activities.
- Acts as an advocate, within the public and private sectors, for issues relevant to Namaste, its services, and constituencies.
- Listens to students, parents, volunteers, donors, and the community in order to improve services and generate community involvement. Assures community awareness of Namaste's response to community needs.
- Serves as a spokesperson for Namaste, assuring proper representation of Namaste to the community.
- Initiates, develops, and maintains cooperative relationships with key constituencies.
- Works with legislators, regulatory agencies, volunteers, and representatives of the charter community to promote legislative and regulatory policies that encourage a healthy community and address the issues of Namaste's constituencies.

Physical Demands/Working Conditions:

This is a high-stress position based on full responsibility for Namaste operations.

- Handles detailed, complex concepts and problems, balances multiple tasks simultaneously, and makes rapid decisions regarding administrative issues.
- Plans and implements programs. Establishes strong and appropriate relationships with board, committees, volunteers, staff, donors, and clients. Develops smooth and constructive relationships with executive colleagues, outside agencies, charter schools and individuals.
- Plans and meets deadlines. Maintains a flexible work schedule to meet the demands of executive management. Hours may be long and irregular.
- Conveys a professional and positive image and attitude regarding Namaste and charter school movement as a whole. Demonstrates commitment to continued professional growth and development.

Qualifications: A bachelor's degree is required with a minimum of three years experience in a senior school leadership position. Advanced degree preferred.

Namaste Charter School is located near the heart of the Latin American community of Chicago with many Spanish-speaking students and parents. Namaste offers bilingual Spanish-English as well as English only classes to best serve this community. Proficiency in Spanish is preferred.

As Head of School, this individual demonstrates critical competencies in four broad categories: commitment to results, business savvy, leading change, and motivating.

Commitment to results: The Head of School is a systems thinker who is customer focused and goal driven. This individual identifies relevant information and helps transform this information into individual and organizational knowledge and learning. The Head of School is action oriented and innovative. He or she translates broad goals into achievable steps. He or she anticipates and solves problems and takes advantage of opportunities, is a self-starter, and team player.

Business savvy: As Namaste's leader, this position requires an individual with knowledge of and experience in management and administration. The position requires demonstrated experience in integrating and coordinating diverse areas of management.

Knowledge in the following areas is required: human services, finance and personnel; oral and written communications; planning and evaluation; and governance.

Some experience in the field of philanthropy, not-for-profit management, and governance, and community relations is preferred. Some general knowledge of fund development is also preferred. A high level of personal skills is required to make formal, persuasive presentations to groups and to deal effectively with people from all segments of the community. The individual must be comfortable with diversity and respectful of a wide range of faiths, beliefs, and experiences.

Leading change: The Head of School possesses the skills and implements the functions of a leader. He or she shares Namaste's values, mission and vision. He or she consistently displays integrity, models behavior, develops people, and builds teams. This individual deals effectively with demanding situations and designs and implements interventions.

Motivating: The Head of School manages continuity, change, and transition. This individual knows how to influence and enable others. He or she addresses the impact of attitude and action on the Namaste and its participants.