



Position Description & Application Process for Founding Director of Advocacy & Engagement Sumter STEAM Charter: A School of Inquiry, Innovation, and Impact

Overview

Sumter STEAM Charter (SSC), a tuition-free public charter school has been approved by the South Carolina Public Charter School District to open in Sumter (SC) with a projected opening in the Fall of 2021. The first-ever of its existence in the community, SSC will serve scholars in grades PK-12 at its build out with grade levels being phased in over time to ensure quality educational programming is offered to all enrolled scholars.

This is a unique opportunity to open a school that will offer its founding staff autonomy and leadership opportunities. The school's core design is predicated upon a general theory of action that has been well-communicated by early supporters who believe if a school existed which emphasized a focus on STEAM career fields through project-based learning and personalized learning, seeking to provide scholars with a blend of rigorous & relevant academic and workplace learning experiences, then its graduates will leave with the competencies necessary to be successful in college or career. By leveraging innovative practices common to some of the state and nation's top performing public schools, the proposed charter school is ready to shatter the opportunity gap for all scholars. In addition to a project-based learning approach with an integration of the STEAM curriculum, scholars will be provided with a strong foundation in literacy to help define and achieve their dreams.

Assembling a World-Class Faculty & Staff to Deliver on our Promise of Excellence for all Scholars

The SSC founding faculty and staff will be champions who believes all scholars are capable of greatness and achievement far beyond what society has been conditioned to accept. If you have what it takes, then keep reading. You will be demanders of excellence for yourself and your scholars, encouraging and accepting nothing less than scholars' best and most thoughtful work. You are already a passionate learner who is hungry for professional development and thrives on feedback.

Here, you will cultivate classroom cultures built on strong structures, communication and lasting relationships. You will be part of a powerful team that is all aligned around the same goals. Every day, your hard work will prepare scholars who will go on to become graduates who will be thoughtful and engaged citizens prepared to take on the leadership challenges of the 21st century. And you'll grow. Your growth matters to us. Because doing what's best for kids means doing what's best for teachers, too. *This is a full-time position located in Sumter, South Carolina.*

The Challenge

Sumter is not immune to the issue that has plagued rural communities of the Palmetto State and indeed the nation for the last several years – the local public school system is not producing enough graduates prepared to enter a rapidly changing skills-based economy. Make no mistake about it: Sumter is at an important crossroads and bold, dynamic innovation is a must if our community is to move forward and

increase its global competitiveness. A 21st century education system must be centered around preparing our young people to participate in an ever-changing economy. Key supporting stakeholders of the school's concept strongly believe that when kids leave school with an industry recognized credential or some kind of skill, trade, or even a degree, they are able to take those high-wage, high-demand jobs that we desperately need to fill locally in order to further grow our Sumter economy.

Solution

The creation and establishment of a “no excuses” tuition-free public charter school focused on STEAM career fields through project-based learning supported by industry is the way forward.

SSC will work to provide all scholars with equal access to a world class K-12 education in an academically rigorous and scholar-centered learning environment, creating graduates who will be thoughtful and engaged citizens prepared to take on the leadership challenges of the 21st century. SSC's vision is as follows: In partnership with our families and the community, our vision is to provide real-world interdisciplinary, personalized, and project-based learning experiences through a STEAM-based academic program where graduates become the next generation of leaders, employers, and employees who contribute to the economic well-being of their communities and families.

Multiple career pathways will be offered to scholars to include industrial & engineering technology, health sciences, computer technology, and early college. The school will hold a deep commitment to cultivating an inclusive & supportive community where everyone is focused on learning. Our community leaders believe this will positively impact local education as a whole and also, more importantly, encourage further development throughout our community, improve the quality of life, and be a mechanism to recruit new families to Sumter while providing a world-class education system for those that already call Sumter home. The founding committee is deeply intrigued with the East Lake model in Georgia, focusing on the academic achievement and growth at Charles R. Drew Charter School. Charter schools like Drew, with a clear purpose, have shown positive and profound effects on the community while improving quality of life and education opportunities for its residents.

Founding Director of Advocacy & Engagement

The Founding Director of Advocacy & Engagement will join SSC at a critical juncture as we recently expanded to a two-member leadership team. Reporting to the Founding Executive Director, this position will be at the center of this work— designing and leading the school's strategic initiative within the Sumter community, focused primarily on advocacy and family & community engagement. This individual will be SSC's ambassador in the Sumter community and will serve as the primary community and family engagement lead, cultivating relationships with key partners in and outside of Sumter to include community-based non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, the military community, business leaders, workforce development leaders, elected officials, and other community leaders. Other areas of responsibility include motivating families to join SSC, managing scholar enrollment, as well as school-wide marketing & communications. Further, this individual must embody a deep sense of humility and desire to serve families and scholars as well as the ability to quickly build trust and adapt to changing situations and environments. This position is critical to the success of SSC – it will be dynamic and challenging and, for the right person, extremely rewarding as we create a high-quality school option to transform lives and our community.

Advocacy Engagement and Strategic Projects

- Under the direction of the Founding Executive Director, support SSC's advocacy goals and lead engagement strategy and plan to actively involve the broader community in the growth and expansion of SSC.
- Design and execute a fundraising plan to manage specific outcomes and events, with key milestones and indicators of progress.

Recruitment and Enrollment

- Design and execute a scholar recruitment strategy, monitoring goals, producing informational assets to aid recruitment, mobilizing parent volunteers, and supervising all local outreach. Work with the leadership team to prepare for community outreach efforts, provide community events for recruiting.
- Effectively communicate the mission, vision, values, and academic program and ensure all outreach collateral is translated into both English and Spanish.
- Design and implement a scholar enrollment process that adheres to the board's policy, including document collection, external communications, and waitlist management.
- Create and execute a vision for the Summer Student Academy and Home Visits by building an active team of family advocates and leaders to support this critical level of engagement.

Family Engagement

- Oversee implementation of a family engagement structure that includes family preview sessions for prospective families, and parent captains. Support family open houses and tours as well as logistics for regular family events.
- Build relationships with families and scholars that aligns to school vision, and indicates high-levels of parent investment.
- Provide resources, tools and one-on-one support to school staff to build strong family engagement culture on campus as well as workshops, trainings for families that align with their interests and professional development goals.
- Collaborate with school staff to create opportunities for authentic family involvement in schools (Parent Teacher Association, School Improvement Council, STEAM Advisory Board).

Community Outreach and Engagement

- Forge relationships with local organizations including houses of worship, schools, universities, and community-based organizations as well as working with government officials and civic leaders to promote SSC's mission and build favorable conditions for new growth.
- Regularly attend and plan community events, become part of local coalitions, report back important information to support broader community engagement strategy.

School Operations

- As a member of the SSC leadership team, work closely with other school leaders to fill in where needed to ensure smooth school operations.

- Active member of day-to-day operation of the school, including scholar supervisory duties (arrival & dismissal), lunch, recess, field learning experiences, etc.
- Help create and refine structures and systems to help the school run smoothly.

Desired Qualifications

- Deep knowledge of working with scholars and families from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Experience in the school setting and community organizing.
- Strong written, verbal communication, and presentation skills with keen attention to detail.
- Growth mindset; adept at thinking strategically, translating plans into action, and exhibiting excellent judgement.
- Integrity and commitment to SSC's mission, vision, core values, and core beliefs.
- Strong project management skills, with the ability to motivate and engage diverse groups of individuals, vendors, partner agencies, and other stakeholders.
- Ability to quickly build trusting relationships with a broad set of people, including families, external stakeholders, and school faculty & staff.
- Ability to understand data and use data to influence and advocate for families.
- Ability to self-direct and prioritize among competing goals, exhibit flexibility in work hours, and drive for results in a fast-paced environment.
- Spanish fluency or proficiency highly desired.

Educational Background and Work Experience

- A bachelor's degree from a competitive college or university with a GPA of at least 3.0; master's degree preferred with 3 or more years of relevant experience leading projects or programs in a diverse community

Compensation

- Salary for this position is very competitive and commensurate with experience. Additionally, Sumter STEAM Charter offers a comprehensive benefits package.

To learn more about SSC, please visit www.sumtersteamcharter.org. SSC is an equal opportunity employer and an organization that values diversity. People from all diverse backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply.

Use Your Talents and Pasion to Help Deliver Life-Changing Opportunities for Kids...Apply Today

Interested applicants should complete the online application via Google forms that requires a cover letter, resume, list of references, transcripts, and responses to several short answer questions. The position will remain posted until filled.