



## **JOB SPECIFICATION**

ORGANIZATION: Alliance for Connecticut Charter Schools (ACCS)  
POSITION: Founding Executive Director  
LOCATION: Connecticut  
REPORTS TO: Board of Directors

### **Background**

The Alliance for Connecticut Charter Schools (ACCS) is a new membership-based advocacy organization dedicated to expanding high-quality charter schools, securing equitable funding, and advancing pro-charter policies in Connecticut. ACCS will be the primary policy and advocacy force behind a collective movement to dramatically expand charter school access over the next decade.

### **Why ACCS?**

Connecticut has one of the largest achievement gaps in the nation, disproportionately impacting low-income and minority students. There are currently nearly 11,000 students attending [21 public charter schools across 30 campuses](#) statewide, yet more than 5,000 students remain on waitlists due to legislative and political barriers. In the 2022-23 school year, 95% of all Connecticut charter schools outperformed traditional public schools serving similar student populations.

For far too long, entrenched special interests and outdated policies have blocked charter school growth in the state of Connecticut. ACCS exists to break through these barriers, advocate for fair funding and streamlined authorization, and empower families with more educational choices.

ACCS will launch under fiscal sponsorship, but will evolve into a stand-alone nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization starting in December with membership open to public charter schools. The Founding Executive Director will also work to raise funds for, establish, and lead a sister 501(c)(4) organization.

### **Opportunity**

The Founding Executive Director (ED) of ACCS will be responsible for developing and implementing the strategic, operational, and financial management of this new education advocacy and policy organization. The ED will lead policy initiatives, legislative advocacy, fundraising, and coalition-building while driving measurable results for charter school expansion in Connecticut.

The ideal candidate is a politically savvy, results-driven, and action-oriented leader who can:

- Mobilize stakeholders and build bipartisan support for pro-charter policies.
- Raise significant funding to sustain and expand ACCS's impact.
- Engage in direct lobbying and political strategy development through a new 501(c)(4) arm.



This role is an opportunity to lead a game-changing movement, securing policy wins, new charter seats, and sustainable funding to transform the educational landscape in Connecticut.

### **Strategic Priorities and Key Responsibilities**

The Founding ED will drive impact across five core areas:

#### **Policy and Legislative Leadership**

- Develop and execute a statewide legislative strategy to pass at least one major charter-friendly bill per session (e.g., increased per-pupil funding, streamlined authorization).
- Direct lobbying efforts with the Connecticut legislature, governor's office, and regulatory bodies.
- Monitor and defeat anti-charter legislation, ensuring policies remain favorable for charter school growth.
- Strengthen bipartisan legislative alliances, securing at least five new legislative champions for charter schools.
- Serve as the primary spokesperson for the charter school movement, engaging with media, policymakers, and education leaders.

#### **Advocacy and Political Mobilization (501(c)(4) Capabilities)**

- Launch and oversee a 501(c)(4) arm, which will engage in direct lobbying, grassroots organizing, and electoral influence.
- Manage independent expenditure efforts, PACs, and voter engagement initiatives to support pro-charter candidates and policies.
- Work with partner organizations on large-scale parent and community advocacy campaigns, mobilizing supporters annually to influence lawmakers.
- Work to secure the funding for the Danbury and Middletown charter schools in the 2026 legislative session and beyond.
- Develop accountability metrics for legislators, publicly tracking their voting records on charter policies.
- Organize and mobilize the state's charter school community toward common advocacy objectives; ensure that the charter community is tangibly engaging in advocacy work that will strengthen the movement.

#### **Charter School Growth and Sector Development**

- Expand the number of high-quality charter seats over the next decade.
- Ensure that 35 new charter schools are approved and funded in the next 10 years, increasing access for families.
- Lead advocacy efforts for the North Star Fellowship, ensuring fellows secure charters and full funding.
- Secure ongoing CSP funding and develop a sustainable, long-term funding strategy for charter growth.
- Regularly convene charter operators across Connecticut to share learnings, deepen relationships, provide resources, and build community.



### Organizational Effectiveness and Sustainability

- Recruit, build, manage, and develop a small, diverse, high-performing team of professionals, fostering a culture of accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvement.
- Ensure the financial health and sustainability of ACCS through effective budgeting, resource allocation, strategic partnerships, membership dues, and fundraising \$2 million+ annually.
- Raise funds for and lead a (c)(4) arm.
- Report regularly to the Board of Directors on organizational performance, strategic initiatives, and financial status.

### External Relations and Communications

- Develop a unified narrative and vision for the Connecticut charter sector and drive coordinated and proactive external communications to positively influence public opinion and improve public perception.
- Counter misinformation and opposition attacks from unions and anti-charter advocacy groups.
- Develop and execute a crisis communications strategy, ensuring ACCS remains a trusted and authoritative voice.
- Engage with business leaders, faith-based organizations, and civil rights groups to build broad-based support.
- Act as the spokesperson for ACCS, articulating the organization's mission, vision, and goals to diverse audiences.
- Elevate the brand of ACCS as a reliable, trustworthy source for policy, advocacy, and charter school services support.
- Participate in and support federal charter advocacy and communications efforts via the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools and other avenues.
- Foster a collaborative environment within the charter school ecosystem to promote cooperation and share best practices.

### Qualifications

#### Experience

- At least ten years of professional experience in education policy, advocacy, nonprofit leadership, or political strategy; experience leading and managing others, ideally as an Executive Director or Chief Executive Officer;
- Proven track record of passing legislative reforms and leading high-impact advocacy campaigns;
- Experience with 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) operations, including lobbying, political campaigns, and independent expenditure efforts;
- Strong political instincts/savvy and the ability to navigate complex power dynamics;
- Knowledge of the charter school sector, and a passion for charter schools required;
- Deep knowledge of Connecticut's education landscape and legislative process preferred.

#### Skills

- Exceptional strategic planning and execution skills;
- Ability to mobilize diverse stakeholders, from grassroots advocates to high-level policymakers;



- Strong communication and public speaking skills to drive the narrative and influence public opinion;
- Proven financial management and fundraising capabilities.

#### Mindset/Values

- Optimism: a deep belief in the potential to grow the charter sector in Connecticut and in what is possible for students;
- Commitment to educational equity, access, opportunities, and outcomes for families; a champion for charter schools;
- Track record of leading with integrity, including building long-term relationships that engender trust;
- Relentless drive and the grit necessary to persevere in achieving policy and advocacy change in a challenging political ecosystem;
- Flexibility to act and lead in an entrepreneurial, roll-up-your-sleeves environment.

#### Education

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree in education, public policy, business administration, or a related field preferred.

#### Compensation

The salary range for this role is \$175,000 to \$250,000 annually, commensurate with experience, in addition to a comprehensive benefits package including health insurance, retirement contributions, and performance incentives.

#### To Apply

If you are interested in this opportunity, please email your resume to [jobs@k12searchgroup.com](mailto:jobs@k12searchgroup.com) with the subject line: "ACCS Founding ED." The initial application deadline is **midnight ET on April 25, 2025**.

The Alliance for Connecticut Charter Schools is an equal opportunity employer and values diversity in the workplace.