



**Search for the Chief Executive Officer  
The Accelerated Schools  
Los Angeles, California**

**THE SEARCH**

[The Accelerated Schools](#) (TAS), a leading charter school cluster in South Los Angeles that serves students in grades TK-12, seeks a strategic, tested, and inspirational leader to serve as its next Chief Executive Officer (CEO). In partnership with a dedicated board of trustees, a highly effective leadership team, and a deeply talented staff, the CEO will build upon TAS' core commitments to academic excellence and strong community engagement to deliver the highest quality educational experience and outcomes for TAS students.

Founded in 1994, as one of the first charter schools in California, TAS was guided then, and the charter cluster still is today, by the founding belief that all students can excel when nurtured in an environment that combines high expectations and active involvement from parents and the community. Through an innovative, rigorous curriculum coupled with intentional guidance and instruction, TAS strives to graduate students who are lifelong learners and engaged citizens, well-prepared to succeed in college and beyond. The next CEO will inherit a dynamic community of three schools located on the same street, with state-of-the-art, modern campuses, and separate charters — brought to life by 1,770 students and 231 staff, with a positive reputation, top-notch facilities, and an exceptionally strong financial position—poised for continued success.

In its next CEO, TAS seeks a highly skilled educational leader who will partner with stakeholders across the organization to develop a galvanizing and inclusive strategic vision for the schools' next chapter. The CEO will model transparent and collaborative leadership, will cultivate a strong sense of community and belonging across the organization, and will set a high bar and ambitious goals for TAS' future—all in service of providing the very best academic experience for the schools' students. The CEO will be an effective manager of people and processes; will work towards consensus and act decisively when needed; will celebrate the diversity of TAS' community and foster a culture in which every community member feels valued, seen, and heard; and will represent TAS effectively, and with enthusiasm, with current and prospective families, community leaders, and partners across Los Angeles.

The Accelerated Schools have engaged Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this important search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

## **THE ACCELERATED SCHOOLS: PAST AND PRESENT**

Founded by Johnathan Williams and Kevin Sved, two Los Angeles Unified School District teachers, TAS started as a single school in space rented from a nearby church with 50 students in grades K-4. The duo strategically combined the best qualities of two models: the community and parent participation characteristics of charter schools and the high expectations of an accelerated learning program, where every student is treated as gifted and expected to succeed. Utilizing innovative strategies to foster academic achievement, the two teachers created an intensive learning environment where students discover the benefits of articulation from grade to grade. In 2001, TIME Magazine named TAS the Elementary School of the Year, calling it one of the nation's most accomplished K-12 institutions, and it continues to build upon its celebrated history today. That first school has since grown to encompass a warm and thriving community of three schools that continue to serve as an example of successful urban education in South Central Los Angeles.

Today, the TAS schools comprise a dedicated, innovative community of teachers and administrators focused on rigorous academics with a college-centric culture. Serving students from transitional kindergarten through high school, TAS' emphasis on excellence in academic achievement and supporting every student, combined with the organization's commitment to employee professional development, ensures a rich and continuously improving learning environment that prepares TAS graduates for success in college.

Currently, the three schools serve approximately 1,770 students in grades TK-12 that include the following demographics: 98% Hispanic, 1.3% African American, 0.3% White, 12.6% Students with Disabilities (SWD), 33% English Learners (EL), 0.4% Foster Youth, and 97% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged. The TAS community supports these diverse student identities, effectively meeting the needs of multilingual learners and providing additional services to address the socioeconomic challenges some of their students face. Students are accepted by lottery, regardless of where they live or which school they currently attend. The three schools are located on the same street with state-of-the-art, modern campuses and excellent facilities. All three school sites prioritize providing a culture of care that promotes learning, and students recognize TAS as a safe space in their community.

TAS provides ongoing developmental support for teachers and staff through comprehensive professional development and employs an annual retention bonus for teachers and certain certificated and classified support staff. The TAS administration has a productive and positive relationship with both the teachers' union and the classified staff union. To support school-wide ownership of learning across departments, TAS utilizes Collaborative Learning Rounds, where teachers, administrators, directors, and executive-level employees work collaboratively to observe teachers, find patterns across classrooms, and determine next

steps for teachers at the classroom level and for the school site. The strong sense of community, support structures, and stability of TAS today result in over a 90% teacher retention rate.

Following the instability and prolonged remote learning of the pandemic, which impacted schools and school systems across the country, TAS is now focused on returning to the academic success it achieved pre-pandemic, including providing additional learning support to address the learning loss during the Covid years. For example, TAS recently launched an initiative for after-school tutoring, which has been widely beneficial in addressing learning gaps and empowering student growth. Across all three schools, test scores in the core subjects of math and English show just under half of students scoring above state-level standards, and the average attendance rate for the three school sites has been 94.2% so far this physical year. Each school site recently completed a Local Control and Accountability Plan, which outlines identified needs, root cause analysis, and specific goals for comprehensive support and improvement.

TAS is supported by a dedicated, well-versed seven-person board of trustees, including two new parent representatives. The board provides fiduciary oversight for the schools and works in close partnership with the CEO. Regular meetings of the board are public and open to the TAS community for input and participation. The board is proud to report strong financial stewardship supporting TAS, which affords the schools ample resources and a healthy budget.

For more information on the individual TAS schools, please see Appendix 1.

## **KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE CEO**

This is an exciting and consequential moment for a new leader to join the TAS community, building on the organization's impressive history and strong fundamentals to continue driving an unwavering, unapologetic commitment to high student achievement and a rich student experience. In service of this work, the CEO will be a skilled builder of culture, an inspirational and clear communicator, and a powerful champion of excellence and equity in education for all students. The CEO will report to a seven-person board of trustees and will oversee a team of seven direct reports, including the Chief Business Officer, Chief Human Resources Officer, Director of Operations, Director of Access, Equity, and Compliance, Director of Elementary Education, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, and an Executive Assistant.

Specifically, the next CEO should be well prepared to address the following opportunities and challenges:

***Work collaboratively with the TAS cabinet, site leaders, teachers, staff, students, families, and board to establish and operationalize a unified strategic plan for future success***

The arrival of a new CEO provides the perfect opportunity for a collective and intentional discussion about the strategic priorities and objectives for TAS in the years ahead. It will be key to center the organization's founding ethos in this effort (i.e., the high expectations of an accelerated learning program) and, at the

same time, build on the impressive work happening across each of the three sites day-to-day. The CEO will prioritize amplifying academic achievement, as evidenced across various metrics, including standardized tests, co-curricular offerings, and the continued promotion of a college-going culture in WAHS. Relatedly, the CEO will engage with the community and prioritize family involvement with an open line of communication that focuses on student success. Current realities related to state and local funding for charters, demographic shifts, and the impact on student enrollment numbers must also be part of these strategic conversations. At the heart of this visioning exercise, of course, will be supporting, motivating, and celebrating TAS' students and the communities that TAS serves. The next CEO will have this north star in mind at all times.

***Support and empower TAS teachers, staff, and administrators***

The next CEO will inherit a dedicated and talented cohort of colleagues in roles across the organization. On the heels of the challenges of remote teaching and learning during Covid, and the arrival of many new leadership team members in the last few years, there is an opportunity now to capitalize on the cohering happening at both the site and organization-wide levels. There is a strong sense of camaraderie among teachers and administrators on each of the three campuses and among the cabinet team. The CEO will build on these strengths, ensuring clear, efficient, and transparent pathways for communication and problem-solving across the organization and with key external partners.

Essential to this work will be the way in which the new CEO joins and comes to really know the TAS community, actively listening and learning from those with deep institutional knowledge and taking the necessary time to understand the schools' current approaches and priorities while supporting improvement and innovation.

***Partner effectively with the board of trustees***

The CEO reports to the TAS board of trustees, and will work productively with the board on all key governance issues and determine a unifying set of strategic priorities for the schools' future. It will be important that the CEO builds strong relationships with the members of the board, including the two recently added parent trustees. Meetings of the TAS board are governed by open meeting laws in CA, and ideally, the next CEO will bring experience partnering with a school board in this context. Many of the trustees are long-serving members, who bring deep loyalty and institutional knowledge to their position on the board; they will be important partners to the new CEO in coming up to speed about TAS—its past, present, and future ambitions. Prior experience reporting to and managing a board would be an asset.

***In achieving all of the above, continue to cultivate and champion an inclusive community where diversity and equity are core to the work.***

The new CEO must share TAS' commitment to advancing equitable and culturally relevant student learning and should bring a track record of fostering inclusive learning climates that strengthen community and celebrate diverse identities. The CEO will lead the organization with compassion and an open mind, recognizing that an institutional commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion is an ongoing effort that requires consistent attention and work. Above all, the CEO will ensure that all members of the TAS community—students, families, teachers, and staff—feel heard, represented, and cared for.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

While no individual will possess all qualifications in equal measure, the successful candidate will bring many of the following experiences and values to the role:

- An unflagging commitment to educational excellence;
- Demonstrated success as a CEO or top leadership experience in a school system or institution dedicated to innovative teaching and learning;
- Knowledge of issues and concerns related to public education and the administration of an urban school system;
- Demonstrated track record of success improving academic outcomes;
- Attention to and care for issues of diversity, community, and access;
- Highly articulate in matters related to education policy and practice;
- Demonstrated organizational, management, leadership, and supervisory skills;
- Demonstrated successful administrative and teaching experience;
- Superior human-relations skills and experience working with community organizations and other advocacy groups;
- Superior verbal and written communication skills;
- Experience with bargaining units or union environments;
- Technology literacy and knowledge of technology infusion in instructional design and delivery;
- Ability to work collaboratively with a board of trustees; and
- Doctorate or advanced degree strongly preferred.

## **COMPENSATION**

This is a permanent, full-time position in Los Angeles, CA, with a targeted starting base salary range of \$250,000 - \$300,000. The specific base compensation offered to a candidate may be dependent on a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the candidate's experience, special qualifications, and other factors.

## **APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS**

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. All inquiries, nominations, referrals, and applications (CVs and letters of interest) should be sent electronically and in confidence to:

Katie Rockman, Partner  
Jaime Morgen, Managing Associate  
Emily Willis, Associate  
Maria Connor, Managing Search Coordinator  
Isaacson, Miller  
263 Summer Street  
Boston, MA 02210

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/accelerated-schools/ceo>

***The Accelerated Schools intend that all qualified persons shall have equal opportunities for employment and promotion.***

## Appendix 1 - The Schools

[The Accelerated School](#) (TAS K-8) was founded in 1994 on the premise that good schools transform communities, that “community” is created by shared values and common goals, and that all children can learn and achieve. Equally significant is the role education plays in cultivating a prosperous and fulfilling life, as well as its power to inspire and rejuvenate communities. TAS focuses on the evidence-based strategies of learning outcomes, success criteria, goal setting, and progress monitoring adopted from John Hattie’s research, as well as an emphasis on student dialogue and discussion rather than teacher monologue. TAS has additionally adopted a feedback-based model for educators that supports all teachers through coaching, goal setting, and weekly observations. Through constant reflection and intentional improvement, TAS staff and teachers work alongside families to help ensure students are prepared to succeed and thrive in high school.

[Wallis Annenberg High School](#) (WAHS) opened in 2003 and serves students from 9th to 12th grade. Made possible in part by a generous \$10 million gift from Wallis Annenberg and the Annenberg Foundation, WAHS students are encouraged to achieve personal success and a strong sense of self and community, along with a deep appreciation for the art of learning. Ultimately, WAHS graduates are prepared to be independent critical thinkers and decision-makers who recognize that learning is a lifelong process. Embedded in every student’s schedule is a College and Career Readiness (CCR) course that includes mindfulness, academic support, goal setting, and SEL lessons. Intentional college preparatory work allows many graduates from WAHS to go on to succeed at top-tier schools in California and across the United States. The Class of 2023 had a 98% graduation rate, with 85% of those students eligible to attend four-year colleges and universities. WAHS utilizes a student support matrix that focuses on student well-being, attendance, and student academic performance, which allows for a more complete understanding of the students and how to best support them. Last year, WAHS was named to the AP School Honor Roll by the College Board, in addition to previous accolades by U.S. News & World Report for being a Top High School in the country.

[Accelerated Charter Elementary School](#) (ACES) was established in 2004 and features a distinctive dual-language immersion model—providing 50 percent of classroom instruction in Spanish and 50 percent in English—in a unique, academically challenging environment that allows students in grades TK-6 to learn from one another in a project-based setting. ACES uses the Gomez & Gomez Dual Language Enrichment model, allowing students to develop English and Spanish language skills, as well as valuable self-expression and multicultural skills. This dual-language program is designed to enable students to develop literacy skills in English and Spanish simultaneously. In addition, ACES has a variety of ongoing partnerships with local institutions, such as The American Heart Association, Lorax Teaching Gardens, and the USC Viterbi School of Engineering, which increase student access to real-world problem-solving and sustainability. Through the specialized ACES curriculum, students are thoroughly prepared not only for entry into TAS K-8, and ultimately WAHS, but also for greater participation in the larger Los Angeles community and a wider range of options in the bilingual, bi-cultural workforce of the future.