



Diploma Plus with Third Sector New England (TSNE)
Is Seeking

Diploma Plus Executive Director

Diploma Plus, a nationally recognized non-profit education organization, is seeking a *dynamic, visionary, and highly-qualified Executive Director* capable of leading this initiative as it deepens its work, grows to more localities, expands its funding base, and impacts significantly more youth who have been failed by traditional education.

The Organization

Diploma Plus' **mission** is to create small high schools and programs that incorporate a supportive school culture, a performance-based approach, future focus, and effective supports to increase opportunities and decrease disparities for students who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out of high school, so that they have the ability to graduate college- and career-ready.

DP's **vision** is to be a leader in the movement to increase the academic rigor and improve the student outcomes of small high schools for underserved students in the United States.

DP has a set of **core values** as an education organization rooted in social justice. DP believes the greatest act of social justice is to prepare all young people for future academic, career and civic success.

Diploma Plus is currently working with 29 schools in five geographic networks, with three more schools to open this year. DP is developing a new strategic plan and expects targeted expansion over the next five years. For 2009-10, the DP budget is over \$5 million, and there are 15 FTE staff across the country.

In the current year, 4,162 students are enrolled in DP schools; 44% are Black or African-American, 36% are Latino(a), 13% are Caucasian, and 7% are other. The average student age is 17.3, with almost all students coming to DP at least one year off-track from graduating. 69% of students are eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch. DP's outcomes for students have been notable and have earned it national recognition as a rigorous, relevant, and student-centered innovation able to transform students' learning experiences so they can achieve success in high school, college, and careers. For *examples*:

- DP has improved academic performance: Regents Exam participation and passing rates are higher than at comparable schools in the NYC, in some cases significantly so; the Stockton, California school had the highest point growth in the district in its Academic Performance Index score; students in the Indiana schools demonstrate much higher academic performance than at their previous schools.
- DP schools have higher graduation rates than comparable schools. In 2009-10, the average graduation rate was 89%; this rate has been steadily increasing—up 8.9% from 2006-07.
- By the time they graduated, 82% of students had already applied to and been accepted at college. In those sites where we were able to track students, 70% of DP graduates entered college within a year after graduation



- DP was featured recently in the American Youth Policy Forum’s publication, *Success at Every Step: How 23 Programs Support Youth on the Path to College and Beyond*,¹ and was selected by the National Dropout Prevention Center as a model program.
- In his pre-election Plan for Lifelong Success through Education, **President Barack Obama included Diploma Plus as one of two “Evidence-Based Models to Help Students Graduate.”**²

More detailed descriptions of Diploma Plus, and its impacts and outcomes: www.diplomaplus.net

The Position

The Executive Director serves as the Chief Executive Officer: the leader, visionary, decision-maker, manager, Board developer, and the public face of the initiative to funders and school partners.

Building on and strengthening Diploma Plus’ successful track record, the Executive Director will:

- report to and support the Board of Directors, including managing the strategic planning process;
- develop and manage the annual budget;
- lead fundraising planning and implementation;
- manage the design and development of program components;
- lead successful implementation of the Diploma Plus vision, strategic plan, and program components in existing and emerging DP networks;
- market the Diploma Plus model;
- identify best practices that will support administrators and teachers on program design and small school start-up and implementation;
- represent DP with funders, policy-makers, educators, and other stakeholders;
- be a strong partner with other education projects and associations to benefit DP.

Essential Functions

- Provide leadership and direction in all aspects of implementing and growing the Diploma Plus model and networks of schools. This includes providing project management, budget development and oversight, and planning and implementing strategic development of the initiative.
- Be the “face” of Diploma Plus, participating in national forums, networking with other leaders in the field; creating partnerships and collaborations.
- Create a consultative relationship with local partners and school staff to facilitate the implementation of the Diploma Plus initiative; apply the principles of change management and small group processes to structuring the introduction of Diploma Plus into existing local structures, needs and philosophies. Facilitate the planning and management of Diploma Plus program design and implementation.
- Create or oversee creation of written reports addressing projected goals and accomplishments on as needed basis. Reports may be for internal staff or for outside audiences.

¹ <http://www.aypf.org/publications/SuccessAtEveryStep.htm>

² Obama Education Policy Paper. Source: <http://thepage.time.com/obamas-education-policy-paper/>



- Oversee work with educational leaders and teachers to enrich curriculum and their approach to teaching and learning as well as work with leaders and teachers to strengthen curriculum and apply new pilot approaches within their schools/programs and classrooms. Work with local staff or state partners to utilize curriculum products with unique or original content and learning methodologies (e.g. project based learning using competencies and benchmarks as performance measures and in portfolio development and assessment).
- Oversee the design and implementation of workshops, institutes, and seminars addressing a range of program design, curriculum planning/delivery or small-group process topics; create workshop materials as needed; complete workshop delivery and facilitation; use and apply the principles of adult education to the design and facilitation of experiential learning events.
- Supervise, manage, and evaluate performance of senior team members. Motivate and provide support to the team.
- Oversee documentation of program design, tools developed for use in Diploma Plus schools and programs, performance measurement, and evaluation.
- Effectively integrate various Diploma Plus strategies and elements – e.g., policy, program design, implementation support, funding, teaching and learning.
- Other job related duties as assigned.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Advanced degree in, and/or experience in education or organizational management required.
- Significant board development, fundraising, marketing and fiscal management experience essential.
- Ability to structure and plan own work and project work.
- Strong knowledge of process consultation practices and methods, and strong problem-solving skills.
- Experience with large-scale project management practices and strategies;
- Senior management of a national organization highly preferred.
- Strong knowledge of education reform literature, demonstration efforts, and approaches.
- Classroom experience at the secondary level or in alternative schools.
- Experience in working with diverse populations, in urban areas, and/or with students of color required.
- Knowledge of adult education and experiential learning approaches.
- Strong writing, editing, communication, and interpersonal skills required, including skill in writing proposals, analytical reports, or non-profit marketing documents.
- Demonstrated coalition building and negotiation skills.
- Commitment to educational excellence and social justice including the ability to approach work with a culturally-responsive lens.
- Demonstrated ability to recruit, retain and work with diverse staff.
- Travel required.



We are especially interested in candidates representative of the communities and schools with which we work and candidates with a demonstrated commitment to social justice, un-doing racism, and improving educational outcomes for all youth.

How To Apply:

We strongly encourage online applications. To apply, visit the employment section of TSNE's website at www.tsne.org. We accept applications by mail or fax. Send to Third Sector New England, NonProfit Center, 7th floor, Attn: Employment Manager, 89 South Street, Boston, MA 02111 or by fax to 617.523.2070.

**Third Sector New England/ Diploma Plus
AA/EOE Employer**