



COUNCIL FOR AMERICAN PRIVATE EDUCATION

“the voice of private education in America”

BACKGROUND FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH

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About CAPE

The Council for American Private Education (CAPE) is a coalition of national organizations and state affiliates serving private elementary and secondary schools. There are over 33,000 private schools in America; in fact, one in four of the nation’s schools is a private school. More than five million students attend them. CAPE member organizations represent more than 80 percent of private school enrollment nationwide.

Mission

CAPE's mission is to preserve and promote educational pluralism so that parents have a choice in the schooling of their children. Founded in 1971 to provide a coherent voice for private education, CAPE is dedicated to fostering communication and cooperation within the private school community and with the public sector to improve the quality of education for all of the nation’s children. By speaking as one national voice, CAPE...

- promotes the vital role of private schools in American education and their significant contributions to educating the public and promoting the common good;
- promotes the rights of parents to educate their children in the schools of their choice;
- encourages excellence and pluralism in education and promotes the right of private schools to fulfill their unique missions;
- fosters the participation of the private school community in shaping the nation’s education agenda, and develops and promotes positions on education policy;

- advocates the equitable opportunity of private school students to participate in appropriate state and federal education programs;
- monitors and analyzes legislation and regulations affecting private schools;
- provides information about private education to policy-makers and the public;
- keeps the private school community informed on issues and programs.

Activities

CAPE's activities include:

- Communicating the public purpose of private schools; their effectiveness at producing informed, caring and committed citizens; their role in educating the public at considerable savings to taxpayers; their direct and immediate accountability to parents; and their promotion of the common good.
- Providing lawmakers and policymakers with information on matters of interest and concern to private schools, including school choice, educational excellence and pluralism, school reform, learning technology, tax policy and equitable opportunities for private school students under government programs.
- Interacting with Congress, the Administration, the U.S. Department of Education and other government agencies to ensure consideration of the private school perspective.
- Sponsoring meetings to enable representatives of CAPE member organizations to communicate directly with members of Congress and other policymakers.
- Working with the state CAPE network to achieve CAPE's goals at the state and local levels.
- Publishing Outlook (a monthly newsletter), periodic issue papers, resource documents, news releases and e-mail updates on public policy issues.
- Maintaining a web site (www.capenet.org) for communicating with the general public about private education.

Governance

The executive director reports to the CAPE Board of Trustees. The Board is comprised of 24 individuals and is led by the officers and the Executive Committee. The Board meets twice a year in Washington, September and March, and committees meet as needed.

The Opportunity

American private education represents a rich diversity of schools—some rooted in religious tradition, some that provide intensive academic experiences, and some that are specialized for specific populations. CAPE member organizations are themselves diverse. Out of that diversity, they seek to arrive at policies, practices and projects that promote educational freedom and pluralism. CAPE's board of directors is motivated by the concepts of opportunity, choice, pluralism and excellence in education. The members are interested in participating in the debate on the future of education in America and are ready to share a perspective shaped by private school experience. The next leader of CAPE should have the wisdom, skill, and judgment to advance CAPE's mission and purpose.

This position has a start date of no later than July 1, 2018 (or before, depending on candidate availability).

Key Responsibilities

The Executive Director provides strategic direction and overall management for CAPE and with the Board, develops a strategic vision for the organization. The Executive Director oversees a budget of \$335,000 and, currently, a staff of one.

The Executive Director will also:

- Advocate on behalf of CAPE with policy makers, the media, and the public-at-large. This work includes attending relevant meetings, engaging in outreach, preparing policy and issue papers, among others.
- Communicate with essential audiences about CAPE policies and initiatives through multiple outlets including the CAPE website, newsletter, and listserv as well as social media and public presentations.
- Administer the U.S. Department of Education's National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, CAPE's Annual Fund, Corporate Sponsor Membership as well as all HR responsibilities.

Professional Experience and Qualifications

The ideal candidate will exhibit:

- Professionalism
- Effective communication and networking skills
- Knowledge of the private school universe
- Respect for the broad spectrum of American education, public and private
- Confidence and desire to advocate for educational freedom and equity
- Consensus-building skills
- Familiarity with national education policy
- Comfort in an independent work environment
- Experience in legislative lobbying/advocacy

The position requires proximity to Washington D.C. and organizational capacity for global thinking, social communication skills and administration. An ecumenical spirit, collegiality and consensus-building are core to the CAPE culture.

Education

A bachelor's degree in relevant fields is required.

Compensation

A competitive compensation package will be offered to attract outstanding candidates.

CAPE does not unlawfully discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability. Employment decisions will be based on merits, qualifications, performances, and abilities which support the mission of CAPE.