

Now Seeking: School Change Leader Committed to Catalyzing Public Education Innovation
1/14/2020

Position: AceraEI School Change Leader

Focus: program management, school success assessment, research, and collaborations

Job Description Overview

Acera's mission is to transform education; enable learning at schools to be purpose-filled and engaging to students' innate drive and curiosity. Through our lab school program (Acera School) and our outreach entity (AceraEI) enable educational practices which are evidence based and will develop the next generation of innovators, scientists and leaders for our world. As AceraEI School Change Leader, galvanize results for public schools.

Acera School in Winchester is a lab school where we invent and pilot test evidence-based school norms and STEAM-rich / hands-on curricula linked to real-world needs and innovations. AceraEI is our outreach arm; we partner with public school districts to support translation and implementation of our pilot-tested tools and educational approaches in ways that align with districts' goals.

This position requires superior program management and follow through, excellent communication, teamwork and perspective taking, rigorous analytical thinking. This role requires knowledge and experience with school change approaches, knowledge about educational research methodology, and engagement / interest in bringing innovative assessment methods and tools into practice to catalyze educational innovation and change - through engagement of teachers as change agents and through data. Past and current research collaborators and partners have included Boston University Social Learning Lab, Tufts Center for Engineering Education Outreach, MIT Media Lab, Brigham & Women's Hospital and One Brave Idea medical innovations institute, and Harvard Graduate School of Education.

*The Job is based on site at our school in Winchester, MA. Please send resume and cover letter to hire@aceraschool.org
www.aceraschool.org*

Acera - Who We Are:

History & AceraEI Priority Projects

AceraEI is the outreach entity affiliated with Acera School. AceraEI is focused on translating Acera's educational norms, approaches and curricula to catalyze change in public education. Acera School is a bootstrap start-up school which has gone from an idea (in 2009) to a progressive elementary and middle school day program with 130 students, and 550 students who attend our summer enrichment programs. Join AceraEI as our School Change Leader to galvanize results through these current programs:

- Catalyze Whole School Change: We have a 3 year whole school partnership with a K-8 urban school in Lowell, MA
- Re-invent Life Science Education: Define a new set of units and path for HS Biology which links learning to real-world innovations, with free professional development workshops for biology teachers
- Re-define the Purpose of School: Shift the national conversation about schooling through development and implementation of scalable school success measures which prioritize students' authentic growth in core capacities (systems thinking and problem solving, creativity, emotional intelligence and leadership, etc.), school culture, student wellbeing, and shifts to evidence-based educational practices
- Engage Students Curiosity and Sense of Purpose, Nationally: Launch of AceraEI Tools to Transform Schools via supporting fundraising efforts, and partnering with public school districts, and setting the stage for national rollout and impact

Our Mission

We envision a world in which schools engage students in meaningful learning, in which teachers are freed as entrepreneurs in their classrooms, and in which students can become the best version of themselves, given each students' unique capacities, needs, and passions. The Acera lab school program provides students with unbounded access to learning, offering gifted students opportunity according to their ability not age. We keep alive students' innate curiosity and love of learning. We also partner with organizations beyond our walls, creating programs rich in science, technology, engineering, creativity and the arts. We operate both as a lab school and a microcosm of what is possible for other schools. We seek to grow students' emotional intelligence and enable them to become the best version of themselves. Our mission, across our core school day program, enrichment programs and within our

partnerships, is to develop the next generation of innovators, leaders and creative thinkers who can make a positive impact in the world. Please read more about core capacities and philosophy on our website at www.aceraschool.org.

School Change Leader Job Description:

Do you want to change the world of education? We do too. Acera is looking for a leader with passion, high energy, and a commitment to progressive education. Help us to build and improve our curriculum collaboration partnerships and novel pilot programs, leverage Acera’s lab school setting and galvanize change within public education. Help identify new ways to make progressive learning goals visible and valued by the world beyond our walls.

Lead definition and pilot testing of a School Success Dashboard within Acera. Manage and grow participation by public school teachers in our Life Science Change Agent Workshop series. Define and manage research partnerships and studies with scientists, labs and institutes. Be a lead member of our Education Innovation Team.

Priority Programs for Focus	Outcomes and Results Sought
<p>1. Lead our School Success Dashboard Project to measure what matters in education, intended to be a customizable tool at the core of all of our work with public school districts. We seek to find and define effective and scalable assessment tools which can be offered to school districts nationally, which catalyze a new conversation around the purpose of education. “Build the engine while flying the plane” -- concurrently develop, implement, and evolve strategies which measure growth in capacities (instead of knowledge and basic skills acquisition). Categories for a School Success Dashboard, which extend the conversation far beyond standardized testing, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Growth in students’ core capacities</u> and habits of mind (systems thinking, problem solving, emotional intelligence, creativity and innovation, ethical decision making, initiative and leadership, collaboration, and perspective taking) Instead of “knowledge acquisition.” • <u>Schooling habits and practice which imbue evidence based pedagogy</u> rather than schooling habits which are not backed by the literature • <u>Evaluation of students’ overall well being</u>, including authentic engagement in learning, emotional health, an experience of optimism about the future, and happiness • <u>Evaluation of positive school culture</u>, with positive relationships between teachers and students, and norms which bring out the best in students and create a path for initiative, empowerment, and growth 	<p>Clarify a <u>School Success Dashboard Template</u> which includes best-in-practice assessment norms, yet balances needs for scaleability and ease of adoption, broadly.</p> <p>Partnering with Acera School Director, Dir of Faculty, and teachers/counselors, adapt dashboard and <u>employ it to assess results at Acera Lab School</u>. As with all of AceraEI’s “Tools to Transform Schools” leverage Acera as a lab school to pilot test approach.</p> <p>Continue to <u>evolve School Success Dashboard at Pyne Arts school in Lowell, MA</u>, partnering with school principal, STEAM change agent teacher team, and AceraEI Director of Public School Programs. Interweave dashboard in all planning and PD’s at Pyne.</p> <p>Clarify, with <u>public school partner teachers and administrators</u>, a version of the dashboard to help clarify <u>goals, galvanize administrator buy-in and engagement, and to assess results</u> as they implement science lab units.</p> <p>Leverage School Success Dashboard to assess program effectiveness and <u>mine data to use in PR and fundraising efforts</u> to further fund AceraEI</p>
<p>2. Grow our Life Science Change Agent Teacher Program, supporting school districts and biology teachers, assuring effective units, training, and implementation of new units to transform high school biology, linking it to real-world innovations through hands-on science labs</p>	<p>Partnering with area school districts, and targeting urban and urban rim cities, <u>galvanize school district partnerships and raise participation rates at LSCAT Workshops and implementation rates of AceraEI HS Biology units</u>; Create a plan to scale and grow impact and assessment of results of LSCAT program which can be used to further evolve, fund, and prove efficacy of programs.</p> <p><u>With AceraEI Team, develop and grow use of AceraEI Virtual Curricula Toolkit & Community Engagement Platform</u> as backdrop to host curricula, keep it updated with current innovation, support teachers to implement units, and track results and data to be used for program evolution, PR, and fundraising.</p>

<p>3. Support our Whole School Change pilot program, a 3 year effort in Lowell MA focused on the development of students' conceptual problem solving skills, creativity, and initiative as well as school-wide adoption of innovative and evidence based pedagogy. Enable progress of this effort in ways which leverage best-in-class philosophies about leading organizational and school change efforts, partnering with our Director of Public School Programs as the project unfolds, including co-facilitation of on-site PD workshops</p>	<p>Help develop the whole school change plan over time, partnering with AceraEI team and Pyne Arts planning team.</p> <p>Be available to co-facilitate or support as needed all Pyne Arts planning meeting and PD workshops. Be an active teammate with our Dir of Public School programs who leads these efforts.</p>
<p>4. Manage and Run Research Partnerships and collaborations with academic institutes and labs.</p> <p>OBI Project: Manage implementation of the Acera / OBI education & research project, to enable 120 middle school students to learn about health and wellbeing while concurrently being enrolled in a study on effective measures of wellbeing and Fitbit data. Manage curricula creators within Acera Lab School. Run Pilot Test of program within Acera and implementation of program in public school(s).</p>	<p>Engage school leaders and finalize their commitment to participate in OBI project. Concretize participation by enrolling 120 students in the study, including engaging family sign-off on participation.</p> <p>Find the right research partner who will advise on the OBI study, analyze results, and be lead author in the paper to be published thereafter.</p> <p>Re-activate our BU Social Learning Lab partnership with Peter Blake. Sustain our partnership with Tami Lieberman's Lab at MIT. Identify, gatekeep, and partner other high value research endeavors.</p>
<p>5. Assess, Hatch Data and Proof Point & Evolve Acera Program Effectiveness</p> <p>Consciously plan to mine and hatch data which proves results for AceraEI's work. Retroactively "mine" data from acera's core program to show efficacy of the Acera approach.</p> <p>Focus data around school's adoption of Acera curricula and tools and methods (PD and change management) and the impact this has on teachers' practices, student's attitudes and growth, school's migration to evidence based pedagogy, positive school climate, and overall student wellbeing; make results of school change work visible.</p>	<p>Supply anecdotes and data, as needed and feasible, to support fundraising and marketing efforts.</p> <p>Over time, create a data 'story' built from use of School Success Dashboards, which shows impact of Acera's programs, tools, projects on student growth and successful schooling communities</p>

AT THE CORE OF ALL ACERA EI PROJECTS:

Role of School Change Leader re: SCHOOL SUCCESS DASHBOARD

- Define and test ways to measure students' growth in core capacities, in positive school culture, in student wellbeing, and in use of evidence based pedagogy. Support adoption of a School Success Dashboard within Acera and within all of our AceraEI partner schools. Enable us to make learning more visible with data to back up copious anecdotes of impact. Support development of a base tool which can be customized for each school setting and used to show our programs' effectiveness and impact, to inform program upgrades and evolution, and to influence adoption of new education practices beyond our walls. Partnering with our Director of Public School Programs, define and measure the impact of AceraEI's work at Pyne Arts School in Lowell, MA. These assessments will be key as we seek to partner with public school districts, engage in professional development with public school teachers, and partner with other organizations
- Lead point and identify ways to assess efficacy of our programs, generally, and particularly our novel educational approaches, curricula, and pedagogy which we hope to share out, broadly, with public education.
- Understand and build organizational habits and strategies to show how the evidence within neuroscience and psychology maps to educational approaches. Have ability to implement assessment practices, partnering with our Director of Faculty and teachers, to show how Acera's learning approach aligns with evidence based practice from psychology and neuroscience (not on educational habits of the past) and how it enables student learning and growth.
- Design School Success Dashboard based on Acera Core Capacities (can be found at www.aceraschool.org).

Required Skills, Background, and Mindset:

- 5+ years of work experience

- Graduate degree preferred but not required. Graduate degree could be in public policy, educational research and change, organizational development, or psychology.
- Experience in team management of projects and results. Experience and skill in the management of others' effectiveness.
- Experience teaching in public schools preferred but not required
- Superior organization, professionalism, and follow through skills
- Ability to facilitate workshops and meetings in ways which are highly engaging and support new ways of thinking within groups
- Superior written and verbal communication skills
- Superior analytical and critical thinking skills, combined with a sense of resourcefulness and creative invention
- Excellent Power-point skills, meeting presentation and facilitation skills
- Mac proficiency
- A bring-it-on, can-do, let's make it happen, whatever it takes attitude!
- A kind heart, a thoughtful mind, and a generous spirit
- Belief in progressive educational approaches and ideals
- See challenges as opportunities for invention. Positive, the "glass is half full" orientation.
- Able to manage conflict to create satisfying resolutions
- Flexibility to step in, help out, roll up sleeves, and do what it takes as part of a collaborative team
- Thrive in a busy, ever- changing environment

Salary & Benefits

- Salary commensurate with experience. Full time, year-round position.
- 4 weeks of paid school breaks. Full time year-round employees are also eligible to accrue up to 80 hours of paid vacation time per year.
- Health and dental benefits, SIMPLE IRA, available.

Application:

- Please submit cover letter, resume, education philosophy, and description of your previous experiences in high intensity environments to: hiring@aceraschool.org

Anticipated start date: Once hired

Equal Opportunity Employer

Acera is committed to maintaining a work and learning environment free from discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, pregnancy, gender, sexual orientation, marital/civil union status, ancestry, place of birth, age, citizenship status, veteran status, political affiliation or disability as defined and required by state and federal laws.