CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Technology Systems Manager

SUMMARY

Location | Burbank, CA

Post Date | February 15, 2018

Application Review | Priority given to applications received by March 26, 2018

Start Date | July 1, 2018 *(or earlier by mutual agreement)*

Reports To | Executive Director

BACKGROUND

The California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS) is the leading organization of independent schools in California. The Association serves and strengthens its schools by setting standards of academic quality and ethical conduct, by providing for the professional growth of faculty, administrators, and trustees, and by promoting ethnic and socio-economic diversity.

Technology has become an increasingly vital component of the organization's mission and services to member schools. One important system is the CAIS accreditation portal, which is a web application that was built in partnership with a third-party development firm. The accreditation portal has been so successful that other regional associations have licensed the portal. Meanwhile, CAIS maintains an active website and multiple FileMaker databases, all of which power various internal and external-facing data-driven projects and tasks.

CAIS seeks a technology-focused, customer-centered systems manager who can lead the overall environment of applications and databases deployed at CAIS, but also work at the tactical level when necessary to ensure that each system is working properly and meeting end-user needs. This position reports to the executive director and begins in July, or earlier by mutual agreement. This is an on-site position; CAIS offices are in Burbank, CA.

CAIS MISSION STATEMENT

The California Association of Independent Schools establishes ambitious educational standards, fosters respect for the diversity and dignity of humanity, and promotes collaboration and social responsibility. The Association supports and challenges its schools through an innovative accreditation program that provokes deep reflection, analysis, and institutional commitment to action, as well as through the offering of professional development, relevant research, and informed counsel to the heads and trustees who endeavor to lead those schools effectively. Strengthening schools since its founding in 1941, CAIS strives to bring a compelling and compassionate voice to statewide and national conversations about education, advocating for the continual improvement of learning environments for all children and adolescents — both in CAIS schools and beyond.

KEY STATISTICS

Founded: 1941

Website: www.caisca.org

Location: Burbank, CA

Membership: 228 schools: 105 schools in Northern California, and 123 schools in Southern California

School profiles: CAIS schools range in size from 45 to 2030 students, with a mean enrollment of 399. The oldest CAIS school was founded in 1850; 54 were founded before 1950. Eighteen CAIS schools have a boarding component.

Students served: CAIS schools serve some 90,000 students.

Diversity: Approximately 45% of CAIS school students are people of color. 24% of CAIS school teachers are people of color. Fifteen CAIS schools are all girls, and four are all boys. Ten CAIS schools are dual language immersion.

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Financial aid: CAIS schools provide significant financial assistance to families, granting over $300 million to 15,000 students annually.

CAIS staff: CAIS has eight full-time employees.

For a short history of the association, please watch this four-minute video: http://bit.ly/2A69zn4
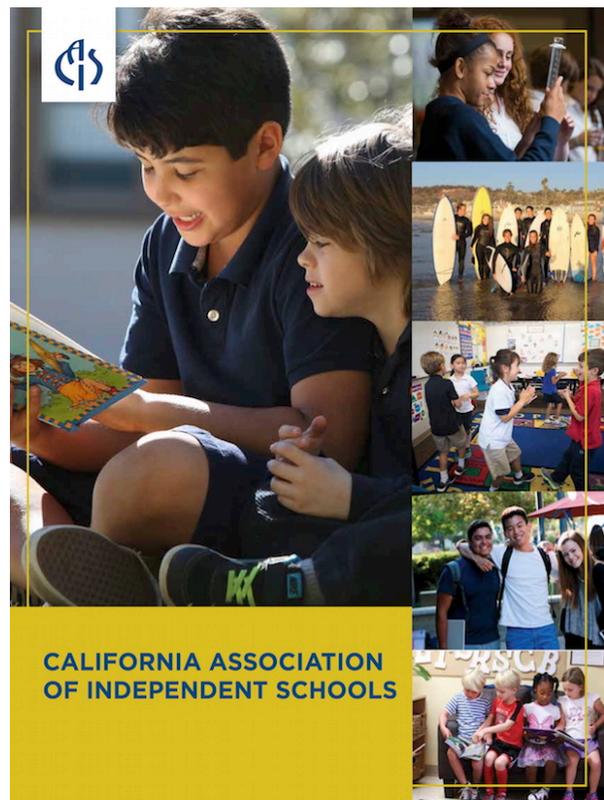
CAIS STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

The current CAIS strategic plan identifies six major areas of strategic focus.

1. UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

Assist schools in better serving underrepresented students — particularly Latino and Latina students — so that CAIS school communities more clearly reflect local, regional, and state populations.

2. SCHOOL FINANCIAL STRENGTH

Explore financial models for CAIS schools that are less tuition-reliant and that build long-term stability and security.

3. INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Research trends and projections regarding the continued integration of technology in teaching and learning, and inform member schools about the implications, cautions, and opportunities for educational programs.

4. RESEARCH

Conduct and review research relevant to CAIS schools, and disseminate findings about trends, practices, and model programs that hold the highest potential value for members.

5. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

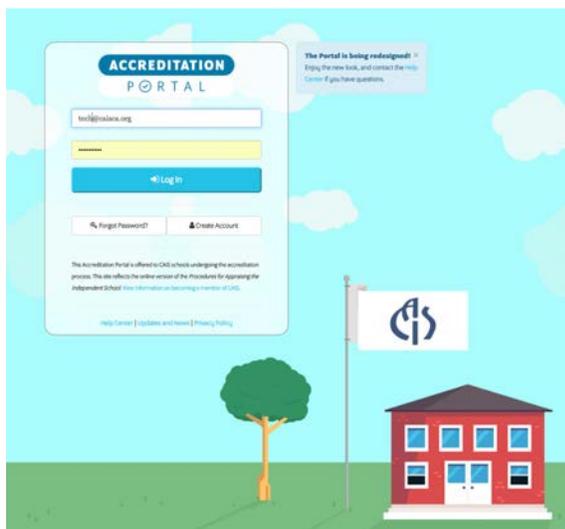*Actively promote effective governance throughout CAIS schools.*

6. ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP

Provide professional learning opportunities for heads and senior administrators that will enable them to lead their schools with vision, inspiration, competence, and integrity.

TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS AT CAIS

All CAIS employees agree: one of the best aspects of working at CAIS is the ability to have an impact on such a diverse and broad set of schools. As CAIS introduces new systems, improves workflows, and delivers professional development resources, those initiatives can benefit over 200 schools and some 90,000 students. It is important to note that CAIS employees have minimal connection with teachers and students, so this is not the right job for someone who is seeking an "on-the-ground" educational technology role in a school. However, for a technologist who wants to make a vital contribution to the overall independent school ecosystem in California, this unique opportunity could be a perfect match. The technology systems manager will be at the nexus of several exciting initiatives at CAIS. Some initiatives are well underway, some are just getting started, and some are still in design phase.

The accreditation portal is an example of a technology system that is well underway. The portal helps coordinate the time-consuming and data-intensive self-study and accreditation processes, which CAIS schools undertake once every seven years. What used to be run by a series of disconnected documents and files is now powered by a centralized, server-based application that manages work flow, data collection, and user access. The portal has been so successful that other associations license the system for their regional communities.

The next systems manager will assume technical oversight of the portal. A third-party firm does most of the development work, under the direction of the systems manager. The primary internal stakeholders at CAIS are the director of accreditation and the director of services for governance and accreditation. CAIS would like to find a systems manager who is willing to get trained in the application environment—Ruby on Rails—but also capable of managing outside vendors and serving as "technical translator" during the design cycle.

Other technology-based systems will also be important projects for the new systems manager. CAIS maintains several databases and data systems, some entirely on the back-end, and others connected to front-end websites and content management systems. Although CAIS is not seeking to develop more applications as complex as the accreditation portal, the CAIS team has seen the value of implementing more user-friendly,

interconnected data systems. For example, CAIS maintains separate databases to manage personnel assignments for accreditations, presentation participation for conferences, and administrator profiles at its schools. CAIS would like to explore commercial solutions for managing and integrating these database needs, and when possible develop interconnectivity between these databases to front-end websites and even the accreditation portal itself.

CAIS has long-term goals with other technology services. As one example, the executive team would like to explore technology-powered professional development offerings. CAIS schools are geographically scattered across the state, and it is not always easy for school administrators to attend in-person events. Technology could play a major role in giving school administrators alternatives for participating in different events and trainings. As a second example, CAIS is committed to enhancing its research initiatives. CAIS has partnered with NAIS (National Association of Independent Schools) on major data collection and aggregation initiatives, and it is exploring a similar collaboration with Cal-ISBOA (California Independent Schools Business Officers Association). CAIS itself has its own rich sets of data, some of which come from internal research, and some of which come from the annual accreditation cycles. In the next several years, CAIS would like to deliver reports and analysis of aggregated national and regional data to its member schools.

Other components of this technology leadership position are more operational in nature, but no less important. The systems manager is the point person for all technology deployed to CAIS staff. Major annual events, which usually leverage third-party A/V vendors, nonetheless require some coordination of technology services. CAIS maintains listservs and other communication tools, both for member schools and the CAIS staff. The systems manager should have a customer-service and team-first mindset, demonstrating a willingness to support technology initiatives big or small. In doing so, the systems manager will be helping to improve the education of tens of thousands of students statewide.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CAIS TEAM

James McManus | Executive Director

Jennifer de Forest | Associate Director

Teal Gallagher | Director of Services for Governance and Accreditation

Lorena Macias | Administrative Assistant

Jeanne Marcoux | Executive Assistant

Mariana Robles | Director of Accreditation

Cathy Shelburne | Director of Professional Development

TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS MANAGER

SPECIFIC DUTIES

- Oversee the development of, and improvement to, the major CAIS technology systems, including the accreditation portal, website, and backend databases.

- Supervise third-party technology consultants, developers, and vendors that support the major CAIS technology systems.

- Facilitate project meetings with internal CAIS employees, third-party developers, and external stakeholders throughout the design and development cycles of the major CAIS technology systems.

- Evaluate system performance in terms of speed, security, functionality, and errors, and ensure the implementation of any necessary fixes and improvements.

- Support members of the CAIS team in identifying and implementing technology-based solutions that support major CAIS strategic initiatives.

- Deliver trainings and produce support materials that help the internal and external CAIS communities leverage the technology services and systems of CAIS.

- Manage the deployment of any hardware and software to CAIS staff members.

- Ensure that support requests are addressed in a timely and professional manner.

- Coordinate technical production services for CAIS events.

- Administer technology-based collaboration and communication tools for the CAIS community.

- Other duties as assigned

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

CAIS is looking for candidates who can demonstrate...

- Experience deploying and administering ERP software, applications, and/or databases.

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.

- Experience evaluating and overseeing third-party vendors and consultants for software development, system implementation, and/or database design.

- Experience working with internal stakeholders to identify programmatic goals, conduct needs assessments, and evaluate and implement technology solutions.

- Experience designing and delivering technology trainings and developing technology support materials.

- Excellent relational and communication skills — oral and written.

- Strong project management skills.

- Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills.

- A collaborative, cooperative, and patient mindset.

CAIS does not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, marital status, age, sex, or sexual orientation in the hiring or in the administration of its hiring and employment policies.

HOW TO APPLY

Ed Tech Recruiting is acting on behalf of CAIS to recruit exceptional technology professionals to fill this unique opportunity to serve a diverse set of schools.

PLEASE DIRECT ANY INQUIRIES TO:

> Gabriel Lucas
> Principal, Ed Tech Recruiting
> gabe@edtechrecruiting.com

PRIORITY GIVEN TO APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY MARCH 26, 2018.

Candidates should send the following four separate PDF attachments to jobs@edtechrecruiting.com:

- Cover letter introducing yourself to CAIS search committee

- CV or résumé

- A list of at least four professional references (include each person's name, organization, title, phone number, email, and relationship with you — though we will not contact any references without obtaining your permission first)

- A summary of two enterprise technology projects to which you made a major contribution. Each summary should be no more than one page. For each project, be sure to include:

    o The organization for which you worked
    o The high-level tech specifications of this project
    o The goals of this project
    o The years you were involved on this project
    o Your role on the project
    o Any URLs that provide further insight into the project, such as live links or references to a digital portfolio of your work