



RE

RANSOM EVERGLADES SCHOOL

Chief Technology Officer

SUMMARY

Location | Coconut Grove, FL

Post Date | February 5, 2020

Application Deadline | March 1, 2020 at 5:00pm PST

Remote Semifinal Round | March 6 and 7, 2020

On-site Final Round | March 16 – 18, 2020

Decision Announced | March 31, 2020

Start Date | July 1, 2020, or earlier by mutual agreement

Reports to | Head of School



Ed Tech
RECRUITING



SUMMARY

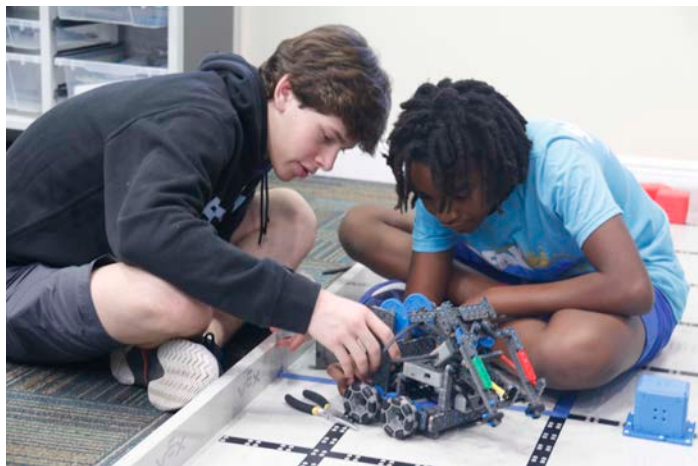
In the Coconut Grove district of South Florida is a school with a glorious history behind it, an enviable waterfront location next to it, and an exciting future in front of it. Founded in 1903, Ransom Everglades is a two-campus, grades 6-12 independent school that promotes values of identity, community, and integrity—along with academic excellence and intellectual growth—to prepare students to give more to the world than they take from it.

This vibrant, multicultural, and diverse community of 1,100 students and 200 faculty and staff eagerly awaits its next chief technology officer to oversee all aspects of technology across both campuses. The school seeks a thought leader for instructional innovation, an enterprise manager for data and systems, and an operational director for core infrastructure and IT services. In that same spirit of giving that Ransom Everglades instills in its student body, administrators, faculty and staff are all ready to engage with *and* support their next technology leader as the school continues to expand and redesign both its campus and academic program. The chief technology officer reports to the head of school and will start July 1, 2020—or earlier by mutual agreement.

MISSION

Guided by the words of Paul C. Ransom, Ransom Everglades School produces graduates who "believe that they are in the world not so much for what they can get out of it as for what they can put into it."

The mission of Ransom Everglades School is to provide an educational environment in which the pursuit of honor, academic excellence and intellectual growth is complemented by concern for the physical, cultural and character development of each student. The school provides rigorous college preparation that promotes the student's sense of identity, community, personal integrity and values for a productive and satisfying life, and prepares the student to lead and contribute to society.





VISION AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

VISION

The Ransom Everglades (RE) community has embraced a four-point vision that is specific, aspirational, and humane.

- **GROW:** We will continue to evolve as individuals and as an institution.
- **LEARN:** We will acquire and apply knowledge in areas ranging from academics, personal resiliency and sportsmanship to public service and environmental stewardship.
- **EXCEL:** We will seek to achieve the highest standards as students, teachers, coaches, activists, philanthropists, and volunteers—and as an institution.
- **SERVE:** We will forever send out graduates that put more into the world than they take out.

FIVE STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

To achieve this vision, the school has established five key initiatives that all lead toward building an even better school for the future.

1. Enrich the curriculum

RE will continue to raise the bar for academic excellence and innovation.

2. Build the best faculty

RE will recruit teachers from the schools its students are preparing to enter.

3. Integrate technology creatively

RE will accelerate the learning process and make its classrooms global.

4. Upgrade buildings, facilities and spaces

RE will transform the campus: learning spaces create learning experiences.

5. Develop RE as an institution

RE will be recognized as one of the finest preparatory schools in America.





THE STEM CENTER

Science, technology, engineering and math will soon have a brilliant new home on the Upper School campus of Ransom Everglades. The STEM Center will be a three-story, 45,000 sq. ft. facility optimized for formal and informal learning. Located at the campus entrance, the STEM Center will create new opportunities for the kind of indoor/outdoor/experiential learning that has been central to the school's curriculum from its founding.

Construction began in December of 2018; the STEM Center is scheduled to open in the fall of 2020. When completed, the STEM Center will include:

- 10 flexible classrooms
- 11 labs for earth science, biology, chemistry, and physics
- Integrated fabrication and maker labs
- Rooftop outdoor lab for modular agriculture
- Aquatics lab
- A variety of informal learning and collaboration spaces
- A reconfigurable, multipurpose space with room for 200 people

The next chief technology officer will play a key role not only in helping to bring this building online and ensure that the instructional technology program is aligned with the new STEM Center, but also in designing future learning spaces as both campuses continue to evolve.





THE NEXT 100 YEARS: A NEW MASTER PLAN

Built on a record of academic distinction, community service and environmental stewardship, Ransom Everglades School (RE) has reached an important point in its history. Unfolding now is a master plan to rejuvenate the Upper School campus, beginning with an impressive STEM building and including large quads, facilities, and tree-lined walkways. RE is sailing into exciting waters.

The master plan envisions a 14-acre campus, more than twice its current size, combining flexible learning environments and open green spaces—exactly what’s needed for a student body three times larger than it was 40 years ago. RE is building extraordinary new learning spaces, strengthening an already powerful faculty, and enhancing the curriculum to ensure RE students will be able to take the lead in meeting the challenges of the 21st century. Much will be new, but the goal will remain the same: to produce high-achieving, public-minded, supremely capable graduates.



The plan provides for the reconstruction of nearly everything presently in place. The recent acquisition of a neighboring property has enabled something remarkable and timely: the construction of a campus custom-built to support the implementation of the Five Initiatives aforementioned in this document. But just as important, in keeping with Paul Ransom’s commitment to natural preservation, the new campus will maintain acres of the Grove in its natural condition. An RE will continue to maintain Paul Ransom’s vision of educating students who will leave the world better than they find it.



BACKGROUND AND OPPORTUNITIES

Ransom Everglades School (RE) is an exceptional school with an exceptional vision—and for July 2020 it seeks an exceptional chief technology officer to lead the technology program as school moves forward with a variety of curricular, operational, and strategic changes.

Recent history

Like many schools, RE has evolved its technology department over the years to reflect current needs and strategic priorities. As recently as five years ago, the school had a split department model: IT and educational technology were separate functional units. IT reported up to the CFO, and the middle and upper-school technology programs were managed within their respective divisions. As the school's reliance on technology increased, the leadership team recognized the need for a more centralized model.



In 2016, the school hired its first chief technology officer. During this time, investment in technology increased significantly—and faculty began to see even more possibilities of leveraging technology for their classes. As a result,

many changes came quickly. For some people, the centralization of technology management allowed for a more efficient and responsive department. However, in a large, two-campus, multidivisional school, centralization is not always easy—particularly at an organization that for so many years functioned at a high level without leaning heavily on technology. Nevertheless, this rapid growth period was an important learning phase for the community, which now sees huge possibilities in front of it for the technology program.

A snapshot of today

At the end of the 2018-2019 school year, the CTO announced his departure to pursue an opportunity closer to family roots in a different part of the country. The school decided not to make a snap hire in the summer of 2019, but rather treat the 2019-2020 as an interim opportunity to pause and take stock. The school contracted with a consulting firm with which RE had a prior relationship to provide interim departmental leadership for the 2019-2020 school year. That outsourced management model will end by July 2020 once the next CTO is onboard.



The school remains confident that the centralized model continues to be the best way for technology management. However, based on lessons learned the community seeks a leader who brings above and beyond a collaborative, cooperative, and inclusive mindset. At a recent discussion with faculty and administrators, the following attributes came up most frequently when respondents thought about the qualities desired in the next CTO:

- Curious
- Faculty-centered
- Forward-thinking
- Inspiring
- Knowledgeable
- Passionate
- Patient
- Proactive
- Strategic
- Visionary



At the moment, there are four positions in the department, in addition to the CTO. Two IT professionals are stationed at each campus, though sometimes one of the technicians assigned to the middle school works on the upper school campus, which is larger in terms of people and devices. Two educational technology positions came open recently, but the school made the strategic decision not to fill them during this interim period.

Current needs

Ransom Everglades remains committed to instructional technology support for, and inspiration to, the faculty. The leadership team will be looking for input from the next CTO to identify appropriate staffing needs. Some teachers in each division appear ready to play a more visible role in both their use of instructional technology, but also in their support and training of peer faculty. More broadly, the next CTO will be empowered to evaluate all roles in the department and identify staffing gaps. In a way 2020-2021 will itself be a transitional year—but under the tenure of a permanent CTO as a new technology strategic plan is developed and rolled out.

Thus, the school is hoping to find a CTO who in 2020 will engage and support various instructional initiatives where possible—and not require an army of specialists on day one. At the same time, the school does not want the CTO to live in the tactical weeds of support day in and day out. Ransom Everglades is simply too big of a school for a single person to be everywhere at all times. To this end, the CTO will work closely with the head of school, CFO, and the associate head of school to rethink staffing, redefine roles, and plan future hires.



In terms of backend infrastructure, the school has been virtualizing and moving servers to the cloud—but this work continues. As the campus footprint changes and expands, and as new buildings come online, the CTO will need to oversee numerous large-scale IT projects, from wireless to AV to cameras to fiber—and more. Ticketing and inventory systems need to be upgraded. In all, many projects are scheduled for this coming summer and beyond.

From an operational perspective, help desk is working well. Most end-users report that the department is responsive and helpful. Where there is the most room for improvement is in proactive leadership and staff development. In many ways, these two needs are interrelated. A strategic-minded CTO will understand how to empower staff to anticipate needs, to recognize problems that are coming, and to serve as project management counsel for major initiatives. This need is particularly acute in the areas of data and systems, which for many academic and non-academic departments is a critical lifeline. Department heads and divisional managers seek both guidance and support from the technology department in this growing area of importance for schools.





Looking ahead

In front of the school are some important conversations that the next CTO will need to launch, steer, and facilitate. One of those is a discussion on faculty devices, which currently conform to a single PC standard. But the student device program also warrants strategic reflection. The Upper School is BYOD, and the Middle School has managed carts of MacBooks and iPads. Both divisions are ready to engage in an assessment of where their respective models meet needs, and where they might need some adjustment.

In the short term, a savvy CTO might partner with key faculty innovators in each division to explore new options at a small scale while the community discusses major decisions for the future. As other transitions occur in the coming years, technology integration support could organically evolve into the more contemporary domain of instructional design—led by a pedagogically passionate CTO who sees departments like the library and computer science as natural partners.



In the long term, RE has big changes in front of it—from new buildings to campus expansions to new models of teaching. The new STEM center is just one of many exciting transitions that the school will be launching in the years to come. Technology is now so critical to RE that it is one of the five key strategic initiatives the school has called out. Thus, when the next CTO arrives on campus on July 1, 2020, the school will be more than ready for a highly motivated and collaborative leader to oversee a department that is as mission-critical as any other on campus.

A DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE, EQUITABLE COMMUNITY

Ransom Everglades School is an inclusive community that welcomes and benefits from diverse experiences and perspectives. Our students and faculty embrace multiculturalism and appreciate the unique potential of each individual. During their time at RE, everyone benefits from the contributions of each member, while honing skills and sensitivities that prepare them to excel and lead in a global community.

The commitment to diversity at Ransom Everglades informs our curriculum, community outreach, co-curricular activities and admission process. We implement programs, offer workshops and craft learning opportunities that reflect our core beliefs. Living by this philosophy ensures that our students develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be productive global citizens.



KEY STATISTICS

Founded: 1903

Location: Two campuses in the Coconut Grove district of Miami, about two miles apart from each other; the Upper School comprises approximately 10 acres and will be expanding as the result of a 7-acre adjacent land purchase; the Middle School comprises approximately 7.5 acres

Students: Over 1,100 students in grades 6-12; over 53% of students come from multicultural backgrounds; approximately 20% of students speak languages other than English at home

Sports: 73 teams in 26 sports

Faculty and staff: 111 teaching faculty; average length of service 20 years; one-third of faculty are persons of color; 76% hold advanced degrees; 20% hold doctoral degrees

Accreditation: Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS); AvancedED

Relevant Associations and Memberships: Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS); National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS); Center for Spiritual and Ethical Education (CSEE); Independent Curriculum Group (ICG); Mastery Transcript Consortium (MTC); Global Online Academy (GOA)

Tuition: \$41,750

Financials: Operating budget of about \$45,000,000; endowment approximately \$39,000,000 as of June 2019

Financial aid: Over \$6,000,000 awarded annually to 18% of students; average tuition award over \$30,000

Website: www.ransomeverglades.org

QUOTE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

"Student-centered, discussion-based learning built on a pedagogy of inquiry still characterizes Ransom Everglades, whether around tables where literature and historical texts are analyzed or in computer and physics labs where students define problems and create solutions. As exciting changes like the new STEM center occur, technology will play an essential role to students and faculty."

Penny Townsend, Head of School



CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER

SPECIFIC DUTIES

Instructional Technology

- In partnership with the leadership team, develop and coordinate a strategic vision for instructional technology.
- Design, deliver, and evaluate faculty trainings across the divisions to help grow and evolve the teaching and learning program vis-à-vis instructional technology.
- Inspire, collaborate with, and support various academic leaders, program coordinators, team leads, and teachers to explore, implement, and assess innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

Data / Systems

- Work with senior leadership and various operational and academic departments to ensure they have the necessary access to, and reporting of, data.
- Support and partner with divisional and departmental directors in their relationships with vendors.
- Serve as a project manager for enterprise-wide data transitions.

Infrastructure and IT services

- Oversee technology services, and ensure that the department remains responsive to support needs.
- Oversee and evaluate the deployment of all hardware, software, and systems from various perspectives, including: cost-effectiveness; customer satisfaction; compliance; asset management; migration and transition; and performance.
- Ensure IT data security, risk management, disaster recovery and planning processes are in place and receive regular review for currency and adequacy.

General Leadership

- Serve as an active member of the leadership team and report to the head of school.
- Establish and maintain local, regional, and national partnerships to support the strategic goals of the school's instructional and technology programs.
- Manage the departmental budget, and hire and supervise all technology staff.
- Perform other duties as assigned.



RE IS LOOKING FOR CANDIDATES WHO CAN DEMONSTRATE...

Professional Qualifications:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is a minimum requirement, though a graduate degree is highly desirable
- Experience leading departments and supervising employees, preferably in an educational institution, and/or in a department of technology
- Experience designing, implementing, and overseeing professional development
- Experience with technology planning and management in one or more of the following areas: enterprise IT, client services, data and systems management, and instructional technology and design

Leadership and Personal Qualities:

- An ability to plan and oversee concurrent technology-related programs and projects, combined with strong motivational skills to ensure completion and success
- Passion and interest for managing all areas of technology—IT, data/systems, and instructional—even if prior experiences in these areas are not equal
- A thoughtful but determined approach to departmental objectives and individual staff growth—while remaining attuned to the school's mission, values, and goals
- Immersion in diversity work, both in training and in implementation
- Inspirational, pragmatic, and diplomatic leadership that is sensitive to the needs of a dynamic and diverse faculty
- An ability to build consensus among diverse groups, facilitate critical discussions, and provide confidence to colleagues during times of transition
- A collaborative, cooperative, empathetic, collegial, innovative, and patient mindset
- Strong communication skills: written, verbal, presentation, and training
- Genuine commitment to growing formal leadership capacity in a structured, dynamic, complex program with other leadership team colleagues
- An understanding of the diverse technology needs and organizational complexities of a large, high-achieving, multidivisional, and independent school
- A commitment to the mission and values of Ransom Everglades
- Confidence and humility, together with a sense of humor and warm personality



HOW TO APPLY

Ed Tech Recruiting is acting on behalf of Ransom Everglades School to identify exceptional technology leaders to fill this extraordinary opportunity. Please direct any inquiries to:

Gabriel Lucas
Principal, Ed Tech Recruiting
jobs@EdTechRecruiting.com

APPLICATIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED THROUGH MARCH 1, 2020.

All applications must be submitted online, via:

www.EdTechRecruiting.com/jobs/RE

An application requires submitting four PDFs:

- Cover letter introducing yourself to the Ransom Everglades search committee
- CV or résumé
- A list of four references (include each person's name, current organization, title, phone number, email, and past connection to you—though we will not contact any references without obtaining your permission first)
- A response to the following prompt:

At a two-campus, two-divisional school, what are some essential elements for a technology strategic plan that can inspire innovation but also ensure a level of cohesion across a 100-year-old institution that is re-imagining its curriculum and exploring new methods of instruction?

