



Chief Operations Officer

Agenda for Children is a non-profit organization founded in 1984 to make Louisiana a state in which all children can thrive. Agenda for Children works to improve child well-being in Louisiana through three key strategies:

- improving the quality of early childhood and education through “on the ground” work in the early care and education sector in Southeast Louisiana;
- informing public discussions on children by monitoring the well-being of children at the state and parish levels through the KIDS COUNT project; and
- advocating for better policies and programs to serve Louisiana’s children throughout the legislative and regulatory processes.

For more information, please visit www.agendaforchildren.org.

Job Description

Agenda for Children seeks a Chief Operations Officer (COO) to enhance its operating capacity and strategy execution as the organization transitions from a small nonprofit child advocacy and early childhood education direct service organization into a more robust organization that can play a larger leadership role in the education sector through the upcoming launch of our new Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (ECPDI). The ECPDI will offer a range of professional development services to early learning centers, schools, Head Start programs and families.

This is a new position at Agenda, requiring a seasoned, mission-focused, and process-minded individual with experience executing on vision and strategy through day-to-day operations, financial oversight, and staff management. The COO will be the primary strategic and management partner to the Chief Executive Officer and will oversee and execute the operational functions of the organization. The COO will maintain the highest professional standards, producing rigorous work product in a timely manner and earning the trust and confidence of everyone involved in the organization.

The successful candidate will have a high degree of maturity and personal integrity, very strong interpersonal skills, and will be self-motivated and comfortable in an evolving, and growing organization. S/he must excel in managing finance and operations, including experience with developing an organization’s workflow, internal communications, and critical business processes. The successful candidate will be highly collaborative, with an exceptional ability to listen and foster productive working relationships among the staff.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

Responsibilities for this position will include, but not be limited to the following:

Leadership and Organizational Development

- Provide organizational leadership, support, coordination and communication throughout all operating areas of the agency.
- Participate in board of director meetings, providing updates to-and seeking feedback from board members on the organization's operating performance and effectiveness.
- Promote a culture of creative, high achievement and inspire open lines of communication.
- Represent the agency at meetings, conferences, special events, etc., as requested by the CEO.
- Assist the CEO in maintaining positive relationships with all client organizations, with all sources of funding for the agency, with all peer organizations, with all relevant government entities and representatives, and with the public.
- Work, at all times, to promote and protect Agenda's reputation as a responsible and effective social service agency and to ensure the efficacy of its programs.
- Assist in the ongoing formulation of the agency's overall promotional strategy and the development of associated marketing materials and initiatives, with a special emphasis on marketing the Early Childhood Professional Development Institute.
- Provide leadership and assistance in the development and ongoing revision of a comprehensive agency business model designed to achieve financial sustainability within a framework of services that is aligned with the mission of the agency and consistent with the business plan developed for the Early Childhood Professional Development Institute.
- Assist the CEO in achieving Agenda's growth and development goals, in a timely fashion, consistent with the agency's evolving business plan and its annual budgets.

Management and Operations

- Assume overall responsibility for the day-to-day performance of all of the functions and activities that are supervised by agency managers who report to the COO.
- Directly supervise the Director of the Early Childhood Institute, the Director of Child Care Resource & Referral, the Director of Administration & Employee Benefits, the Director of Marketing and Business Development, and the Director of Communications.
- Directly supervise any additional agency personnel as assigned by the CEO.
- Assist in the ongoing development of needs assessments and program quality assessment tools to identify next steps and areas of opportunity for the agency and to support an ethic of continuous quality improvement for all agency services.
- Lead the development of a sustainable plan to support targeted, professional development for Agenda's employees.

- Oversee the organization's infrastructure requirements, including appropriate information technology and work environments in the New Orleans, Houma, and Mandeville offices.

Finance and Legal Compliance

- Develop a risk management approach that is appropriate for the organization's scale, mission, and exposures and that enables effective oversight by the board.
- Assume overall budget compliance responsibility for all of the functions and activities referenced above.
- Assume overall contract compliance for all of the functions and activities referenced above.
- Report any material deficiencies in any of the areas outlined above, whether current or anticipated, as soon as identified, to the CEO or, if serving as acting CEO, to the Directors.
- Assist the CEO and the Director of Finance in the development of agency-friendly financial management and reporting strategies and in the refinement of a set of management metrics to predict outcomes.
- Ensure that employee benefits and compensation are aligned with the organization's goals.
- Work, at all times, to carry out the fiduciary responsibilities of Agenda and to ensure agency compliance with all applicable rules, policies, procedures, laws, and regulations.

Undertake such other tasks and responsibilities that are consistent with the position of COO, as assigned by the CEO.

Qualifications

The successful candidate will have the following minimum qualifications:

- Enthusiasm for Agenda for Children's mission and an unwavering commitment to making Agenda a high-performing nonprofit organization.
- 10+ years of operational and financial management experience in a for-profit or nonprofit business.
- MBA or relevant graduate degree in management, public administration, education administration, or a related field.
- Self-starter who takes initiative, using sound, independent judgment and discretion and seeks guidance and feedback where appropriate – a doer as well as a manager.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills; highly organized with concern for detail and a commitment to rigor.
- Demonstrated experience with scaling up organizational infrastructure.
- Experience with creating and leading a diverse and energetic staff, including an ability to motivate individuals and foster team spirit.

- Knowledge of human resources and experience setting individual and team performance goals and evaluating their execution.
- Knowledge of risk-management and the ability to develop effective risk-management strategies.
- Familiarity with state-of-the-art organizational development tools.
- Excellent verbal, written, analytical, and interpersonal skills.
- Strong time management skills and the ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously.
- Professionalism, empathy, and the ability to work as part of a team, maintain a sense of humor, and interact with a diverse array of people all walks of life.

Benefits

Agenda for Children offers an excellent benefits package.

Salary

Commensurate with experience.

To Apply

Please send your cover letter and resume to hr@agendaforchildren.org by May 26, 2017.

No phone calls, please.

Agenda for Children is an Equal Opportunity Employer and considers all applicants on the basis of merit without regard to race, gender, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status or disability.