

**Smart Start of Mecklenburg County**  
**Executive Director**  
*Position Overview*

**Organization**

The Mecklenburg Partnership for Children, better known as **Smart Start of Mecklenburg County** (“Smart Start”), is a nationally recognized initiative to expand and improve services for young children and families in our community. Smart Start facilitates the delivery of a high quality, collaborative and accountable system of care for every child beginning with birth. A public-private partnership, Smart Start provided more than \$12MM in funding last year to a variety of innovative programs in early childhood education, family support and health. All Smart Start programs work toward the mission of preparing every child to be ready to learn when they enter kindergarten.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.smartstartofmeck.org/>

**Executive Director - Position and Responsibilities**

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will be responsible for leading and managing all aspects of Smart Start of Mecklenburg County. He/she will serve as the leader, advocate and convener of all early childhood initiatives and elevate Smart Start’s brand in the community. In addition to internal management and organizational development accountabilities, the Executive Director will have broad community-facing, partner, and advocacy roles.

Responsibilities include:

**Organizational Development**

- Work with the Board of Directors to develop the strategic plan and agenda for Smart Start.
- Oversee the development and evaluation of all Smart Start programs and funded activities to maximize the quality and effectiveness of those services in achieving the organization’s vision, mission and goals.
- Provide compelling leadership for the Smart Start team, generating excitement around the vision for the organization; ensure the right people are in place to meet the objectives; enhance communication and accountability throughout the organization.

**Systems Change**

- Act as key leader and convener of early childhood services in Mecklenburg County; collaborate with partners and other community stakeholders to ensure early education, family support and health needs are met for children ages birth to five in Mecklenburg County.
- Increase the community’s capacity to deliver services to children and families, which have been locally designed and planned.
- Actively advocate at the local and state levels for systemic improvements which will support and enhance the development of children and families.

**Public Outreach and Engagement**

- Position Smart Start as the driving force behind early childhood initiatives; ensure all messaging and branding is consistent with the organization’s mission.
- Be the face of Smart Start to the community and to all stakeholders; act as chief spokesperson and articulate Smart Start’s vision, mission and goals in a wide variety of forums.

### Fund Development

- In collaboration with the development staff, lead the effort to raise public and private funds by developing relationships with both state and private funding sources.

### Financial Administration

- Oversee the finances of the organization, including developing and managing the annual budget, supervising the administration of all Smart Start funding to ensure fiscal accountability and adherence to accounting policy and procedures and defining and executing all contractual obligations.

### Qualification Requirements

Key qualifications include the following:

- A passion for the mission of Smart Start; a compelling desire to advocate and lead early childhood education and development initiatives in our community;
- Track record of success in senior leadership and management roles in either the nonprofit or for-profit sector;
- Proven management skills; at least three years of management experience with at least two of those years supervising staff with total responsibility for performance reviews;
- Financial administration experience is required; candidates must have a strong grasp of accounting, financial planning, budgeting, etc.
- A data-driven mindset; an appreciation and utilization of evidence and evaluation to guide strategy and strengthen the early childhood system;
- Compelling and passionate leadership skills; the ability to create and maintain excitement and broad consensus around a vision; a trust builder who leads by example and makes things happen;
- Exceptional communications skills; the ability to engage, encourage, inspire and motivate diverse stakeholders including donors, partners, volunteers, business, community and government leaders, staff, the public - and those in need of services; comfortable making presentations to groups of varying sizes and compositions; a thoughtful listener;
- Fundraising experience is preferred; the successful candidate will bring the skills necessary to excel in fundraising and be committed to playing a key role in donor development and ongoing activities;
- Bent for collaborative partnerships; a commitment to building strong community relationships with a wide variety of public and private sector groups and individuals; a belief in the power of coming together around common goals and minimizing differences; political savvy;
- An innovator and entrepreneur; creative; ability to embrace change and effectively lead an organization to respond and thrive in a new environment; a responsible risk-taker with the self-confidence, integrity, intellect, and perseverance that inspires trust and confidence;
- Open, transparent and collaborative board relation skills; the ability to attract and retain new board members and help existing board members grow in their understanding and ability to make a difference;
- Unquestioned integrity, transparency and humility;
- Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration or related business field, Public Administration or Public Policy, Education, or human services-related field; Masters preferred in the areas above.