



## **Progressive Alternative HS looking for a Dynamic Principal...**

Pay: **based on experience – starting between \$95,000 - \$115,000**

Employment Type: **full-time**

**Qualifications for El Centro’s principal (from Big Picture Learning’s *Principal Guide*):** El Centro de Estudiantes (El Centro) is a Big Picture Philadelphia alternative high school, re-engaging over-aged and under-credited youth through restorative practices and by eliminating barriers to student engagement. Capitalizing on relationships, real-world experiences, and resilience, El Centro’s mission is to enable and encourage underserved youth to develop their passions, strengths, and independence towards becoming positive contributors in their communities.

El Centro is a place where everybody knows everybody, where everybody is different and that’s expected and accepted. All El Centro students and staff are treated the same regardless of their race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, gender identity and expression. The school works with each student, one person at a time. The Principal is committed to this vision, and is willing and able to defend it on behalf of El Centro’s 200 students and 25 staff.

Every morning, the Principal of El Centro gets to school early and talks with staff, several students, or parents before the school day gets going. The Principal is at once fun-loving and thoughtful, spontaneous and strategic. The Principal shares their own passions and interests, and, by example, encourages others to do the same.

During the school day, the Principal of El Centro is with students about half of the time, talking with them individually or participating in their advisory. The Principal is with teachers about one-third of the time. The rest of the time the Principal is reaching out to the community, meeting with parents, and planning. The Principal is responsive to community and school. At least one day every other week the Principal supports advisors and students at Learning through Internship (LTI) sites. When students are formally exhibiting their learning at the end of each trimester, the Principal goes to as many exhibitions as possible.

The Principal of El Centro checks in with advisors regularly, and because the principal is curious, they listen intently and notice a lot. The Principal asks supportive yet challenging questions. The Principal follows up on ideas and suggestions and concerns because they are organized and are committed to following through. Students, staff, families, community members, and alumni can count on the Principal.

As a leader, the Principal of El Centro is able to make decisions, but their priority is helping staff and students make decisions. The Principal has a knack for putting families at ease, even as they cultivate their participation in school events. A signal of El Centro’s success is that once one



child attends, younger siblings or friends and family enroll in subsequent years. The Principal knows these families.

The Principal of El Centro sees connections between students' interests and opportunities in the community. The Principal is good at knowing everyone and everything that goes on, without being controlling. The Principal is reflective and uses publications, materials, and many kinds of data well. The Principal is political in the best sense: is aware of and understands the world around El Centro, including, but not limited to, issues of institutional racism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia and the school to prison pipeline. The Principal is able to engage in public relations, hire the best people, and create wise budgets. The Principal sees learning as a journey— for students, staff and all of the families and community members. The Principal is good at motivating people, helping them organize to accomplish great things.

The Principal of El Centro is a high-energy, visionary, and dynamic educational leader who is driven by a strong vision of high academic achievement for a diverse student population, is committed to social justice, and has exemplary leadership skills. The Principal will model effective leadership defined by integrity, clear and open communication, restorative justice, fairness, high standards, and an understanding of the needs and interests of a diverse community. The Principal is a keeper of the vision, and an instructional leader of the school. The Principal must be committed to Big Picture philosophy and vision and willing and able to fight for it as it is defined and applies to El Centro. The Principal influences school culture by working well with students, faculty, and staff; and building a program with clear goals, high standards, and a willingness to support every student in the school.

*El Centro de Estudiantes is a Big Picture Philadelphia school. Big Picture Philadelphia is part of the national Big Picture Learning network of more than 70 schools nationwide. Big Picture Philadelphia, a regional nonprofit dedicated to starting and supporting transformative, student centered schools, oversees El Centro and manages El Centro's contract with the School District of Philadelphia. El Centro is an alternative High School in the School District of Philadelphia's Opportunity Network.*

#### Position Responsibilities:

1. Support the creation of an academic structure and academic culture for the School
  - 1.1. Support, refine and provide input into the implementation of the School's academic program
  - 1.2. Collaborate closely with the Servant Leadership Team to plan and prepare for academic, social, fiscal and other transition issues

- 1.3. Work with advisors and staff to create a consistent and comprehensive focus on character, leadership, and exemplary behavior.
- 1.4. Build and maintain strong ties to students.
- 1.5. Be present at important school events (Open Houses / Back to School Nights, Mock Interviews, Student Exhibitions)
2. Lead in the institutional focus on student achievement
  - 2.1. Utilize an accountability system that allows teachers, students, and parents to know what students have learned and what further work is required.
  - 2.2. Regularly assess and address the potential for gaps between what El Centro is accomplishing academically, versus what is desired.
  - 2.3. Ensure an integrated, inquiry-based curricular approach that prepares students for the world of work and education and leads to improvement on required district testing.
  - 2.4. Oversee Special Education programming, ensuring that students' Individual Education Plans are in compliance.
3. Create a High Performance, Sustainable Educational Enterprise
  - 3.1. Use data to chart the course of students' learning.
  - 3.2. Support the planning for ongoing quality professional development and performance coaching, with planning time built into the daily calendar to allow for collaboration with and amongst colleagues in the development and implementation of the post-secondary and learning through internship programs.
4. Inspire, Train and Retain an Excellent Staff
  - 4.1. Advance El Centro's culture that maintains a relentless focus on motivating students to achieve personal and academic growth and encourages collaboration to meet the full range of student needs.
  - 4.2. Lead a Hiring Process that includes feedback from El Centro key stakeholders, develop staff contracts with clear expectations and oversee the process of all staff documents, including contracts, benefits, criminal background checks and tax documents.
  - 4.3. Utilize a system for the ongoing evaluation of advisor performance that supports improvement and expects measurable results.
5. Respond to and engage with national and local partner networks, including the School District of Philadelphia and Big Picture Philadelphia / Big Picture Learning, preparing needed reports and leading presentations.



6. Help to build a culture of caring and compassion, justice and integrity, competence and affirmation among the staff and the student body.
7. Treat each member of the school community with fairness, dignity, and respect seeking a spirit of unity and harmony as we join together to achieve our common mission.

Practical Requirements for all El Centro principal candidates:

- Experience working with Reengaged High School Youth (over-aged and under-credited)
- Experience as School Leader (preferably five years)
- Experience in an Urban Setting (preferably in North Philadelphia)
- Hold a PA Principal Certificate

El Centro is looking for an experienced School Leader. If you are a highly organized, hard-working individual interested in joining our learning community, please email a resume and a cover letter to David Bromley, Executive Director at [dbromley@bigpicturephiladelphia.org](mailto:dbromley@bigpicturephiladelphia.org). We are currently accepting applications.