



Ready for School, Ready for Life

Chief Executive Officer

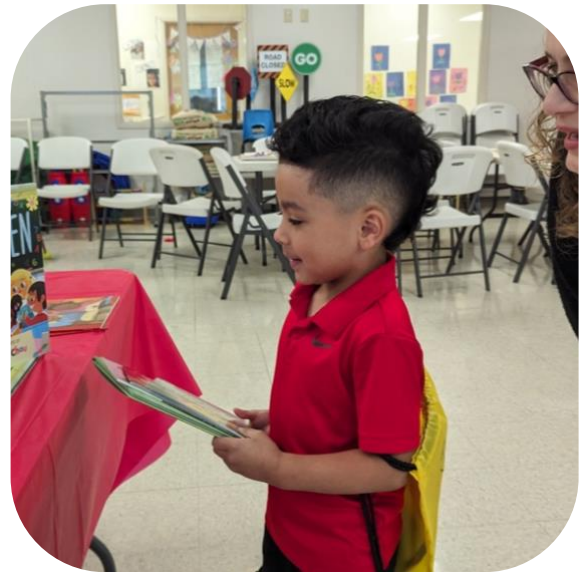
Greensboro, North Carolina

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About Ready for School, Ready for Life

Ready for School, Ready for Life (Ready Ready) is a collaborative effort to build a connected, innovative system of care for Guilford County's youngest children and their families to ensure that children are ready for kindergarten. Utilizing a collective impact approach, Ready Ready serves as the backbone organization for a group of community-based organizations serving families with children from prenatal through age 5 in Guilford County, North Carolina. Ready Ready is executing against a collective vision to coordinate, support, integrate, and elevate the work of partners to create population level change in kindergarten readiness.



Ready Ready's focus on families and children is grounded in well-documented brain science and socio-economic research that demonstrates the value of high-quality experiences from the pre-natal stage through age eight. Studies show that when children enter kindergarten developmentally on track, their chances of success in school, reading well by 3rd grade, and life increase dramatically. Serving as a backbone organization for more than 300 sector partners, Ready Ready has built a collective vision for assessing what families want and need, connecting them with the right services at the right time, using data to drive decisions, and rigorously measuring outcomes and impact. For families, Ready Ready streamlines the process for accessing support services, ensuring that their children have the foundation they need to thrive in school.

Ready Ready was born in 2007 from a community effort focused on reducing poverty in Guilford County. In 2018, The Duke Endowment, North Carolina's largest private foundation, and Blue Meridian Partners, a national partnership of results-oriented philanthropists, joined the effort to promote economic and social mobility in Guilford County. As transformational investors in Ready Ready, they support the organization in building a long-term, comprehensive, evidence-based approach to creating systemic change through building the capacity for partner organizations so that collectively, their work will fundamentally improve childhood outcomes for Guilford County. This is system-building work at its core and Ready Ready aims to serve as a tangible demonstration of the ability of communities across North Carolina and nationally to set all children up for success.

With an entrepreneurial spirit and dynamic culture, Ready Ready has an operating budget of \$6M and a talented and diverse team of 18. In order to support the collective in ensuring that every child in Guilford County is ready for kindergarten, Ready Ready supports partner organizations and public agencies providing direct service with the following:

- Expansion and integration of evidence-based programs
- Design and execution of an integrated data system
- Design and execution of a family-friendly navigation system

- Implementation of continuous quality improvement practices among service providers
- Rigorous evaluation of implementation and impact
- Implementation of an early literacy strategy
- Enhancing pre-K to Kindergarten transition
- Expanding work to include children prenatal to age 8

Ready Ready enhances this direct service through its collective impact backbone (intermediary) role in guiding vision and strategy, supporting aligned activities, establishing shared measurement practices, building public will, advancing policy, and mobilizing funding.

Ready Ready is built on core values and principles that guide the organization in all of its decision-making and strategy. Ready Ready believes in being family-led; inclusive; equity-driven; responsive to evidence; transparent; and collaborative.

You can learn more about organizational values, partners, and mission on the [Ready Ready website](#).



About Guilford County

Approximately 6,000 children are born in Guilford County each year and about half of these babies are born into poverty. The County is home to approximately 29,000 children under the age of 5 and in 2022, 44% of children lived in poor or low-income households.

The county's diverse population of approximately 550,000 people live primarily in the cities of Greensboro and High Point, the state's 3rd and 6th largest cities. Guilford County Schools, one of the 50 largest school districts in the country, boasts a student population with 120 languages spoken. Just over 41% of 3rd grade students scored proficient in reading in 2022-2023.

The Opportunity

Ready Ready is seeking a creative and purpose-driven leader to serve as its next Chief Executive Officer to move the organization into its next phase of impact. The organization is at a critical inflection point where initial efforts to build systems and capacity for partner organizations can serve as the launching pad for increased impact and long-term success. Strategically relational and with the ability to inspire through influence, the new CEO will provide leadership and motivation to partners and staff to work towards bold community goals, demonstrating the unique value that a backbone organization can provide to an ecosystem.

Balancing inclusion and collaboration with change management and accountability, the new CEO will embody the principles of the organization and demonstrate a commitment to open communication, transparency, and equity to continue to build trust with a wide variety of constituencies. The new CEO will be a collaborative leader with deep appreciation of and respect for the communities that Ready Ready serves. Operating with humility, the CEO will understand that collaboration takes time but is required for systems-change. They will also balance a sense of urgency in the work with patience, given the long-term nature of the impact Ready Ready seeks. This position is a unique opportunity for a passionate, data-driven and community-oriented relationship-builder to implement a system that will serve as a state and national model within the early childhood development space.



The CEO will report to a highly engaged Board, including partners from The Duke Endowment and other funders. This Board configuration represents a unique opportunity to partner closely with funders to develop and deliver on goals while also requiring deep and trusted partnership and communication. A strong fundraiser, the new CEO will build on existing funder relationships and create new relationships to ensure long-term sustainability.

Currently, Ready Ready has a team of 18 talented and dedicated professionals looking for strong and thoughtful leadership to build a culture that is centered around the value of a collective impact approach and that is both supportive and committed to excellence and impact. The CEO will ensure strong communication, transparency and

collaboration internally to maximize the time and talents of the team, and to provide them with the supports needed for success.

The ideal candidate will be a proven and respected leader in the social sector, ideally with experience in a collective impact effort and/or as a leader in a backbone/intermediary organization. They will likely bring experience in the education and/or human/social services field, with demonstrated experience operationalizing a strategic plan, prioritizing stakeholder engagement, and leading revenue generation efforts. They will bring significant experience building trusting relationships and creating buy-in to a shared vision and working with expert staff, consultants, funders, service providers and policy makers to create systems and build capacity to increase results – influencing decisions without formal authority. Since long term sustainability is critical, the successful candidate will bring experience with fundraising from a variety of sources, both for their organization and as a support to partner organizations. In addition, the CEO will ideally possess strong experience in the public policy arena and bring an ability to balance passionate advocacy with practical reality.

The CEO will be someone of the highest personal integrity with the ability to serve as an inspirational change agent and internal culture-builder, inviting and valuing a wide range of voices and perspectives.

Key responsibilities of the CEO include:

Collective Impact Leadership:

- Provide visionary and collaborative leadership to the Ready Ready team, Board, parents, partners, and funders to ensure progress against bold goals.
- Build knowledge of and buy-in to a collective impact approach, demonstrating the value to individual partners and the system of care, inspiring participation and service improvement through influence.
- Manage, align, and activate a network of community-based partners who at times hold divergent views and different interests so that all feel involved and valued, and are comfortable and committed to working together to create a seamless suite of services to meet shared objectives.
- Serve as an external face of the organization, building trust in Ready Ready through transparency, communication, and inclusion.
- Serve as a consistent voice in regional and state conversations regarding early childhood development and influence policy to advance the County's support to children and families.
- Oversee the continued development and implementation of an integrated data system to track shared outcomes and indicators, using results to inform learning and continuous improvement.



Organizational Leadership:

- Inspire and motivate staff to execute against a complex set of organizational priorities, providing clarity, communication, accountability, and modeling of collaborative leadership.
- Build and execute a staffing plan to ensure effective leadership and implementation of organizational priorities.
- Provide strong and strategic financial and operational management, aligning resources to needs, ensuring effective stewardship of funder resources, and utilizing systems to increase efficiency and effectiveness.
- Be a champion for collaboratively adopted values associated with the organization including family voice, equity, and sustainability.
- Effectively guide, engage, and collaborate with the Board of Directors.
- Build and maintain a sense of confidence in their leadership throughout the community to ensure buy-in and support.

- Model the use of data-driven decision-making and ensure that appropriate data is collected, integrated, and shared across the organization for continuous learning.

Sustainability:

- Partner with the Board of Directors to build and execute on a long-term sustainability plan, including increased funding through existing and new sources, both private and public; this will include significant levels of funding for organizational support as well as funding for shared initiatives and continuation of work done by partner organizations.
- Create and execute on a workplan to meet the goals of the sustainability plan.
- Ensure that all reporting and accountability requirements of current funders are met.
- Working with a small team and a sense of urgency, lead ongoing fundraising efforts, including identifying potential funding sources, creating a cultivation and stewardship plan, aligning funder priorities with Ready Ready's work, soliciting funding, and ensuring effective tracking and reporting to funders.
- Build knowledge of Ready Ready, the shared goals, and the work of partner organizations in the community through strategic communications and community engagement strategies.



Candidate Profile

The Ready Ready Board is open to considering a variety of professional backgrounds and recognizes that no one individual will possess every qualification outlined. As a successful candidate for the Chief Executive Officer role, you will bring many of the following professional qualifications and personal attributes to this role:

A Collaborative Leader

The CEO will believe deeply in the power of collective impact and the importance of backbone organizations. They will naturally and intentionally involve varied constituents in building on the organization's vision and executing on the strategies necessary to meet bold goals. That said, they will be adept at triangulating constituent input into clear, actionable priorities that the community and team can champion, even if not every individual perspective is fully integrated. Working within the existing organizational vision, the CEO will use creative and innovative thinking to collaborate on effective strategies to accomplish the work. The CEO will practice humble leadership, recognizing the value that others bring to the work and effectively organizing resources in support of organizational impact.

A Passion for the Mission

The CEO will have a demonstrated passion for serving children and families and a deep belief in both the power of collective impact and the need for systems change. They will lead with a nuanced understanding of how systems disproportionately impact and influence family outcomes. With a strong commitment to the inclusion of family voice in every aspect of the early childhood system of care, including governance, the CEO will recognize the diversity of Guilford County as an asset and embrace Ready Ready's history of working in partnership with the community and its focus on equity. The CEO will bring cultural competence and an ability to work effectively with the Board, funders, staff and community partners, including public institutions as well as neighborhood partners, all in service of the mission of improving outcomes for children in Guilford County.

Executive Management

The CEO will be a seasoned executive with strong organizational, fiscal, and performance management experience. An experienced and talented fundraiser, the CEO will bring a tenacious commitment to meeting bold fundraising goals to support Ready Ready's ongoing work. With a track record of sound financial and performance planning, oversight, and accountability, they will be committed to frequent, transparent reporting on organizational performance to the Board, funders and other partners. With experience leading through change and transition, they will assess and build on the current strengths of the organization and team while identifying areas of opportunity in collaboration with those closest to the work. They will inspire and motivate the team while providing required direction and resources to be successful. The CEO will build a culture that is supportive, high-performing, and focused on shared goals. While the CEO will oversee every function, they will be the lead external champion and fundraiser for Ready Ready, building support and visibility for the organization. Experienced in managing a large and diverse Board, the CEO will possess the knowledge and ability to ensure that the Board is achieving its primary responsibilities of strategic vision, governance and fundraising.

Community Orientation

The CEO will bring a deep connection to Guilford County and/or communities with similar demographics and characteristics, including an abiding belief in the strength and resilience of families and communities. They will also demonstrate commitment to the history and goals of Ready Ready and the organization's priorities around being family-led. The CEO will recognize and value the importance of establishing strong relationships with all constituents and will be (or become) a community-trusted

leader through deep and active listening and delivering on support for identified solutions and initiatives. The CEO will broker productive collaboration between neighborhood-level actors and public institutions to ensure resources and programs truly serve residents' greatest needs and build trust. With strong communication skills and a commitment to transparency, the CEO will effectively articulate and convey Ready Ready's mission and vision to a range of constituents including donors, partners, families, the Board of Directors and staff. With a sharp focus on delivering what is promised, the CEO will be a highly ethical and transparent leader with a willingness to serve as a partner to others and embrace community ownership of the effort.

Systems Thinker

The CEO will bring awareness of the various systems that impact children and families in Guilford County and will have experience navigating through similar systems. They will recognize the inter-related nature of systems at the local, regional, state, and national level and can develop strategies to create systems change in support of Ready Ready's goals. Over time, the CEO will increasingly advocate for and integrate the data, work, and innovations of Ready Ready into North Carolina-wide strategies that make policies, practices, and resourcing better for all NC children and families, including Guilford County's.

Compensation & Benefits

The salary range for this role is \$200,000 - \$225,000 with a benefits package that includes:

- 100% employer paid medical, dental & vision for employee only
- 401K with 4% employer match after vesting
- 20 days of PTO annually and 13 paid holidays
- Hybrid work schedule

Ready Ready operates a hybrid schedule, with some in-person work in one of the shared offices in Greensboro or High Point, North Carolina and some remote work. The CEO will need to reside in Guilford County. Relocation assistance is available if needed.

Ready Ready is a proud equal opportunity employer. We work diligently to recruit a broad pool of candidates and to hire and promote qualified individuals whose personal experiences, characteristics, and talents reasonably reflect the diversity of the communities served by Ready Ready. Our equal employment opportunities apply to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training. We encourage applications from women, minority groups, veterans, and people with disabilities.

Contact

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About Koya Partners

Koya Partners, a Diversified Search Group company, is the nation's premier search firm dedicated to mission-driven leadership. Since its founding in 2004, Koya has had an exclusive focus on mission-driven clients and was founded on the belief that the right leader can transform an organization and have a deep and measurable impact on our world. Koya works with nonprofits & NGOs, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

Diversified Search Group is consistently recognized by Forbes on its top 10 list of "America's Best Executive Recruiting Firms" and is an industry leader in recruiting transformational leaders for a changing world. The firm is deliberately different in its approach, with best-in-class teams who have decades of experience in cultivating inclusive leaders, understanding the dimensions of diversity, and building equitable teams. Learn more about Koya Partners | Diversified Search Group via the [firm's website](#).