



Executive Director
CSU Statewide Central Office
for the Advancement of
Black Student Success

POSITION PROFILE

The California State University invites nominations, expressions of interest, and applications for the position of Executive Director, CSU Statewide Central Office for the Advancement of Black Student Success, hosted at California State University, Sacramento.







The California State University

The California State University (CSU) is the largest four-year public university system in the United States — and one of the most consequential engines of social mobility in the country. Established in 1960 under the California Master Plan for Higher Education, the CSU enrolls more than 460,000 students across 22 campuses, employs more than 63,000 faculty and staff, and produces more than 110,000 graduates annually — the highest number of bachelor's degrees of any university system in the nation. The CSU's mission is to provide high-quality, affordable, student-focused higher education that prepares Californians for leadership, workforce success, and civic engagement. More than half of all undergraduate degrees earned by California's Latinx, African American, and Native American students are conferred by the CSU, and its alumni form the backbone of the state's economy, public sector, and civil society.

Yet for all of this reach and impact, the CSU's own data reveals a gap. Closing persistent equity gaps in retention, graduation, and post-graduation outcomes for Black students is among the system's most urgent unfinished commitments. Of Black students who enrolled as first-year students in fall 2016, only 48 percent earned their degree within six years — compared to 62 percent systemwide. The CSU Black Student Success Workgroup Report (2023), titled *Advancing Black Student Success and Elevating Black Excellence in the CSU: A Call to Action*, documented this gap and issued 13 systemwide recommendations across three categories: supporting Black student success directly; supporting faculty and staff in facilitating that success; and building systemwide infrastructure. The CSU committed \$10 million over three years toward implementation. The establishment of the CSU Statewide Central Office for the Advancement of Black Student Success is the most significant structural investment in that effort — a direct expression of the CSU's recognition that closing this gap requires dedicated, sustained, system-level leadership.



THE HOST INSTITUTION: CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

The Central Office is physically housed at California State University, Sacramento (Sacramento State), located in the heart of California's state capital. As the only public university in California's seat of government, Sacramento State is uniquely positioned to advance both institutional and policy-level change on behalf of Black students. The campus holds multiple federal equity designations — including recognition as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) — and in a historic first, was designated the first Black Serving Institution (BSI) in California, making it a fitting home for this work.

Sacramento State's commitment to Black student success is institutionalized through the nationally recognized Black Honors College, the MLK Scholars Center, and the Sac State Black Student Success Initiative. All employees of the Central Office are employed by Sacramento State and operate within the University's human resources and financial systems, while maintaining accountability to the CSU Chancellor's Office. To preserve its integrity as a neutral, system-serving entity, the Central Office does not oversee Sacramento State's own campus-level Black Student Success programs.



ABOUT THE CENTRAL OFFICE

The CSU Statewide Central Office for the Advancement of Black Student Success is a first-of-its-kind initiative within the California State University. Established through a MOU between Sacramento State and the CSU Chancellor's Office, and supported by \$1.3 million in permanent, ongoing annual funding from the Chancellor's Office, the Central Office is housed at Sacramento State and is overseen by Inclusive Excellence within the Division of the President. It serves the full 22-campus system.

A defining statutory responsibility of the Central Office is overseeing the implementation of [SB 1348 \(Chapter 627, Statutes of 2024\)](#), signed into law in September 2024. SB 1348 establishes the formal Designation of California Black-Serving Institutions, recognizing campuses across all four segments of California postsecondary education — the CSU, UC, California Community Colleges, and independent institutions — that excel at providing academic resources to Black and African American students. The legislation formally designates the Central Office as the managing entity for this designation process: developing application criteria, processing applications, and presenting them to a governing board. Designations are awarded for five-year terms.

The Central Office's approach is grounded in the concept of institutional servingness — the idea that true equity requires asking not merely whether Black students are enrolled, but whether an institution's systems, policies, resources, and culture are intentionally designed to foster their thriving. The Central Office operationalizes Black-servingness as a systemwide performance standard, supporting campuses in moving from designation to demonstrated impact. It is not a compliance function — it is a strategic catalyst and capacity-building partner to the 22 campuses committed to this work.

The Central Office operates in partnership with all 22 CSU campuses, managing the system-wide allocation process, building a statewide community of practice, and advancing philanthropic and legislative support in coordination with the CSU's Office of Advocacy and State Relations. The Central Office is established at Sacramento State through spring 2029, with the possibility of reapplication following a Chancellor's Office review.

For more information, visit: csus.edu/president/inclusive-excellence/black-student-success-co



THE POSITION

The Executive Director (ED) of the CSU Statewide Central Office for the Advancement of Black Student Success is a senior Management Personnel Plan (MPP) position in the Division of the President within Inclusive Excellence at California State University, Sacramento. The ED reports to the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) of Inclusive Excellence, with dual operational oversight from the Chancellor's Office, as established in the CSU Chancellor's Office (CSUCO)–Sacramento State MOU.

The President of Sacramento State, Dr. J. Luke Wood, serves as the appropriate administrator. At the system level, the ED is accountable to the CSUCO through quarterly engagement, annual reporting of activities, budget, and performance outcomes, and participation in an Advisory Council with CSUCO representation. The Executive Director directly supervises the Central Office personnel and holds full fiscal and operational responsibility for the Central Office.

The Executive Director serves as the organizational catalyst for Black student success across all 22 CSU campuses — identifying, investing in, and amplifying promising practices systemwide. A primary responsibility is managing the Central Office's system-wide call for proposals and allocation process, ensuring equitable, transparent, and accountable distribution of programmatic funding to campus Black Student Success Centers. The ED provides direct technical assistance and capacity-building support to campuses as they develop and implement their Black Student Success action items, and serves as a strategic thought partner to campus CDOs, BSSC (Black Student Success Center) directors, and student affairs leaders.

The Executive Director leads the development and facilitation of a statewide community of practice, a sustained professional network through which campus leaders share evidence, learn from one another, and build collective capacity to improve Black student outcomes. The ED establishes shared frameworks, common data definitions, and assessment tools that allow campuses to measure and communicate progress consistently. A central and time-sensitive responsibility is overseeing CSU campuses' implementation of SB 1348, providing technical assistance, data support, policy guidance, and advocacy as campuses pursue and maintain Black Serving Institution designation. As required by statute, the Central Office serves as the neutral managing entity for the BSI designation process for all four segments of California postsecondary education.

THE POSITION CONT'D

The Executive Director is responsible for the overall operational health of the Central Office — leading a team of professional staff, establishing a high-performing, mission-aligned culture, and ensuring that all administrative functions meet CSU and Sacramento State standards. The ED manages the Central Office's annual budget, ensures compliance with applicable fiscal policies and reporting requirements, and maintains full accountability for the stewardship of CSUCO funding and any allocation or externally funded resources. The ED is responsible for all human resources functions for Central Office staff, including hiring, onboarding, performance management, professional development, and, where applicable, compliance with collective bargaining agreements.

The Executive Director convenes and staffs the Black Student Success Center (BSSC) Advisory Council, preparing agendas, facilitating meetings, and ensuring follow-through on commitments. The ED produces required annual reports to the CSUCO and Sacramento State campus leadership, and ensures that all operational documentation, policies, procedures, and program records are current, accessible, and aligned with institutional requirements.

The Executive Director develops and maintains a multi-year strategic roadmap for the Central Office, aligned with the CSU Strategic Plan and the recommendations of the Black Student Success Workgroup Report. This includes establishing systemwide performance metrics, building data reporting and accountability frameworks across all 22 campuses, and producing regular assessment reports that document progress toward equity goals. The ED translates data into actionable guidance for campuses and communicates findings to the CSUCO, campus leadership, and the broader higher education community.

Externally, the Executive Director serves as the primary face and voice of the Central Office, representing the CSU in state and national forums, building relationships with legislators, state agencies, philanthropy, and community partners, and actively cultivating the philanthropic and legislative funding streams necessary for long-term sustainability. The ED works in close coordination with the CSU Office of Advocacy and State Relations on state and federal budget advocacy, and is expected to build the Central Office's national profile as a model for system-level investment in Black student success.



A photograph of two young women walking on a paved path outdoors. The woman on the left is wearing a light purple top and blue jeans, holding a white water bottle. The woman on the right is wearing a black top and dark pants, carrying a white bag. They are walking towards the camera, with lush green trees in the background.

KEY PRIORITIES & CONSIDERATIONS

Incoming Executive Director

The incoming Executive Director steps into a role that is simultaneously historic and unfinished. The Central Office is new, its statutory mandate is expanding, and the stakes for Black students across California's largest public university system are high. The following themes define what the work will demand of its next leader.

Building a New Statewide Institution

The Central Office has no established template. The incoming Executive Director will define its culture, governance practices, program models, and accountability frameworks from the ground up — with the full backing of the Chancellor's Office and \$1.3 million in permanent annual funding. That is a rare and meaningful opportunity. It also carries real organizational risk: systems and procedures must be built while simultaneously meeting the demands of a 22-campus mandate, operationalizing the allocation process, and aligning with the Advisory Council. The ability to move quickly from vision to operational reality, without losing quality or stakeholder trust, will be essential from day one.

Leading SB 1348 Implementation

The Central Office's statutory designation as the managing entity for Black Serving Institution designations across all four segments of California postsecondary education is among the most consequential and time-sensitive aspects of this role. The Executive Director will help shape how the BSI designation is defined, applied for, and evaluated, with Sacramento State's status as California's first BSI providing a powerful proof point and platform. At the same time, the work is complex: application criteria must be developed, a governing board coordinated, and technical assistance extended to diverse campuses while the regulatory framework itself is still being operationalized. Clear, credible direction will be required before all the answers are settled.

Building A Community of Practice Across 22 Campuses

The Central Office's most enduring contribution may not be its direct programming, but the systemwide community of practice it cultivates, transforming historically disconnected campus efforts into a coordinated movement. Done well, this network becomes self-sustaining, with the Central Office serving as convener and catalyst rather than sole engine. Building it authentically across 22 institutions of widely varying sizes, capacities, and commitments requires generating shared ownership without coercion and maintaining trust at every level — from chancellors to frontline BSSC staff. That combination of relational depth and political sophistication is among the most demanding qualities this role requires.

Advancing Accountability Through Data

The CSU is one of the most data-rich university systems in the country, and the Executive Director will have the opportunity to build the first systemwide accountability infrastructure specifically designed to track and improve Black student outcomes at scale. Disaggregated reporting frameworks, performance dashboards, and shared assessment tools can make the CSU's commitments visible and verifiable to students, policymakers, and the public. The complexity lies in designing systems that build campus ownership rather than defensive compliance, navigating real tensions around institutional transparency, data governance, and comparability across a diverse 22-campus system.

Securing Long-Term Sustainability

The \$1.3 million in permanent CSUCO funding is a strong and credible foundation and a signal to external funders of the system's seriousness. The Executive Director can leverage the Central Office's unique position, statutory authority, and, for the first time, direct access to the Chancellor's Office to attract philanthropic, federal, and legislative investment. At the same time, the MOU extends through spring 2029 with reapplication required, and fundraising must be balanced against a full operational portfolio. Building the long-term case for the Central Office's value begins on day one.

Navigating A Multi-Stakeholder Governance Environment

The Central Office operates at the intersection of Sacramento State, the CSUCO, 22 campus administrations, the California Legislature, philanthropy, and the national higher education community. That positioning is a source of influence as much as complexity — the ED has direct access to system-level decision-makers and the standing to convene conversations no single campus could initiate. Sustaining that position requires maintaining the confidence of both Sacramento State and the CSUCO simultaneously, serving 22 campus partners with competing needs, and never losing sight of the students this work is meant to benefit.





QUALIFICATIONS

The Central Office seeks a leader who combines strategic vision with operational discipline, someone who can build institutional infrastructure from the ground up while maintaining the credibility to drive change across a 22-campus system. The successful Executive Director will bring deep professional grounding in Black student success, a track record of working across complex governance environments, and the relational range to engage authentically at every level, from students and campus staff to university presidents and state legislators. The qualifications below define what that preparation looks like in practice.

Required Qualifications

Education

- Earned doctorate degree, or an equivalent combination of senior executive leadership experience and graduate-level education in higher education, public administration, education policy, or a closely related field.

Experience

- A minimum of five years of progressively responsible senior-level experience leading programs, departments, or offices in higher education with a focus on student success, educational equity, or related areas, including demonstrated fiscal accountability and budget management.
- Demonstrated professional experience working directly with Black student populations and/or Black-serving programs, centers, or initiatives in an institutional setting.
- A minimum of three years of experience managing a professional staff team, including hiring, coaching, evaluating, and developing employees; experience supervising managers or program leads.
- Experience developing new programs, offices, or organizational structures from concept through implementation, including designing policies, procedures, and operational frameworks in complex institutional environments.
- Experience with fund administration, campus allocation management, or oversight of externally funded programs, including responsibility for compliance, reporting, and stewardship of public or philanthropic funds.
- Experience operating across complex governance structures involving multiple institutional stakeholders and accountability relationships.

Required Qualifications (cont'd)

Knowledge Skills and Abilities

- Demonstrated knowledge of the systemic and institutional barriers that affect the academic success, retention, and degree attainment of Black students in higher education, and a record of developing, implementing, and assessing programs or initiatives with measurable outcomes addressing those barriers.
- Knowledge of relevant federal, state, and local legislative and policy frameworks affecting Black student access and success in higher education, and experience engaging with legislative or advocacy processes in support of equity-focused programs.
- Demonstrated ability to build and sustain collaborative relationships with a broad range of institutional and community stakeholders — including senior leadership, government agencies, community organizations, and philanthropic partners — to advance educational equity goals.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including experience preparing and delivering formal reports, presentations, and strategic communications for senior leadership, governing bodies, and external audiences.
- Commitment to maintaining a welcoming and inclusive work environment with diverse colleagues and constituents, including students, faculty, staff, and community members.
- Ability to travel statewide and nationally as required.



PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

Education

- Advanced coursework, certification, or professional development in African American Studies, equity-centered leadership, higher education administration, or a related field.

Experience

- Experience working within or alongside the California State University system, including familiarity with CSU governance structures, academic senates, collective bargaining environments, and system-wide policy processes.
- Experience working with or navigating a Chancellor's Office or system-level higher education governance body, including engagement with academic affairs, student affairs, advocacy, or budget functions.
- Experience administering multi-campus or system-wide programs, including building cross-institutional networks, communities of practice, or peer-learning structures across diverse campuses.
- Demonstrated experience pursuing and securing philanthropic support, including cultivating donor relationships, writing or overseeing grant proposals, and meeting funder reporting requirements.
- Experience engaging with state legislators, legislative staff, or higher education advocacy coalitions to advance equity-focused policy or secure public funding.
- Experience managing represented employees in a collective bargaining environment.

Knowledge Skills and Abilities

- Knowledge of the CSU Black Student Success Workgroup Report (2023), the barriers it identifies, and/or direct experience implementing equity initiatives that address those findings at a campus or system level.
- Knowledge of SB 1348 and the Black Serving Institution (BSI) designation criteria, including experience with related legislative, policy, or institutional compliance frameworks.
- Demonstrated professional knowledge of culturally responsive program design, including familiarity with African American Studies, anti-racist pedagogy, or community-centered models for serving historically underrepresented student populations.
- Demonstrated skills in program evaluation and data-driven decision-making, including the use of disaggregated student outcome data to assess equity gaps and measure programmatic impact.
- Demonstrated emotional intelligence and political acumen in navigating high-visibility, politically complex institutional environments with diverse and sometimes competing stakeholder interests.
- Ability to work independently with minimal direction, prioritize across a complex and evolving portfolio, and consistently deliver results in a dynamic organizational context.



APPLICATION PROCESS

The Executive Director Search Committee will begin reviewing applications immediately after the priority review date of April 16, 2026 and will continue to accept applications and nominations until the position is filled. All applications and nominations will be handled with confidentiality.

Applicants must submit:

- A curriculum vitae or resume
- A letter of interest describing the applicant's relevant experience and qualifications as they relate to this position
- Contact information for three to five professional references (references will not be contacted without prior notification to the applicant)

Nomination letters should include the nominee's name, title, institutional affiliation, and contact information.

Submit Applications at: <https://careers.csus.edu/en-us/listing/>

RECRUITMENT TIMELINE

- Week of April 13: Preliminary Interviews
- Week of April 20: Search Committee review applications
- Week of May 4: Search Committee interviews candidates (Zoom)
- Week of May 25: Finalists will visit Sacramento State campus

***Recruitment timeline subject to change.**

Questions and applications should be directed to:



Email: lori.king@csus.edu
Lori King
Recruitment Analyst
California State University, Sacramento
6000 J St, Sacramento, CA 95819

Include "Sac State ED" in your subject line

Sacramento State is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and has a strong institutional commitment to the principle of diversity in all areas. We consider qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, medical condition, marital status, veteran status, or disability. Sacramento State hires only those individuals who are lawfully authorized to accept employment in the United States.

Candidate selected will be required to provide proof of eligibility to work in the U.S.

Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act and Campus Fire Safety Right-To-know Act Notification. For additional information, visit:

<https://www.csus.edu/campus-safety/policedepartment/>