



Polaris Tech

CHARTER SCHOOL

News Release

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Polaris Tech hires experienced Chicago-area educator as new executive director of school

Dr. Fred Hunter, an experienced educator in the Chicago area, will join Polaris Tech Charter School as its new executive director effective July 1.

The Polaris Tech Board of Directors voted Tuesday night to hire Hunter after a three-month search and interviews March 20.

Hunter is a middle school assistant principal at an 800-student charter school in the Chicago area. Prior to that, he was principal at an elementary and middle school in Illinois and has more than 20 years of experience in K-12 education.

He earned his Doctorate in Urban Educational Leadership and Master of Education in Educational Leadership from National Louis University and his Bachelor's degree in elementary education from Illinois State University.

“It is a great honor to be selected to join the outstanding team at Polaris Tech, and I look forward to joining this unique school’s journey to excellence,” Hunter said. “I enjoyed touring the beautiful facility and meeting with the Board of Directors, but now I am planning to visit later this spring to meet the navigators and staff and to observe the school in action.”

While Hunter will start work July 1, he is likely to visit the school this spring for several days to meet with staff, review the proposed school budget and other activities.

The executive director position came open last fall when Dr. Melissa Crosby resigned in November due to family health concerns not related to COVID-19.

“As we continue to work through the pandemic and its impacts on education, as Jasper County leaders start to fast-track the Jasper Ocean Terminal port project, and as the work we do at Polaris Tech becomes even more important to the young people of the Lowcountry, choosing the right executive

director is a critical decision,” said Gen. Lloyd “Fig” Newton, chair of the Polaris Tech board, one of the school’s founders and a Jasper native.

“Dr. Hunter brings exceptional experience and vision to lead Polaris Tech, and I am confident we will soon be moving forward at a very good pace,” he said.

Hunter worked closely with his charter school’s virtual instruction program during COVID, has helped students improve their academics through safe Saturday school and Sunday tutoring, and has led STEAM instruction – Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math.

“One of the many things that struck us about Dr. Hunter is that he listens and seeks to understand,” said Kim Statler, vice-chair of the Polaris board and a member of the search committee. “He wants to learn and he wants to help students and the community – that came through loud and clear in his interview.”

More than 30 candidates from around the world applied for the position and were reviewed and screened by the board’s Search Committee and John Williams of Williams Group PR, which provides public relations support to the school and has assisted in executive searches for other charter schools and school districts.

Keeping COVID-compliant, candidates were interviewed March 20 in a large room and people sat socially distanced throughout the day.

Polaris Tech is a state-approved charter school serving fifth grade through high school students from Jasper County and the Lowcountry. It is a free school (no tuition), that focuses on preparing young people for successful work and college.

Student applications still are being accepted for grades 5-12 next year – visit www.polaristech.org to apply.

The Polaris Tech academic emphasis is on six career areas, starting with: Aerospace, Health Sciences and Business Management.

The new school is located on Grays Highway across from the Ridgeland Airport. Young people from Jasper, Colleton, Hampton and Beaufort counties attend.

To keep updated about Polaris Tech Charter School, follow them on Facebook and at www.polaristech.org. For specific questions, email info@polaristech.org or call 843-645-0605.

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