



Position Description

Chief Legal Officer

Salary Level: Based on Individual Contract

Prepared Date: December 5, 2025

Contract/Benefits: Based on Individual Contract

Prepared by: William Seng, Executive Director of Human Resources

Department or Area: District Wide

Approved By: Herman James, Chief of Talent Management and Labor Relations

Reports To: Superintendent

Position Description:

Provide legal support to the Superintendent, School Board of Directors, and designated staff. Advise the Superintendent, School Board of Directors, and designated staff in legal performance of their duties. This position will oversee and manage the provision of all legal services to the Allentown School District, ensuring the maximum protection of its legal rights and maintaining operations within the limits prescribed by law. Provide strategic guidance, consultation, and support to the Superintendent, Board of Directors, and senior staff on a comprehensive range of legal and related issues involved in carrying out the school district's mission and vision. Serve as the primary liaison to the District's Solicitor, proactively coordinating on emerging legal matters to ensure timely, aligned, and consistent interpretation and application of applicable laws, regulations, and legal guidance across the District.

Qualifications:

- Juris Doctorate from an American Bar Association and an accredited law school.
- Member of the Pennsylvania State Bar and in good standing with the State Bar of Pennsylvania.
- Minimum of 7-10 years of progressively responsible legal experience, with substantial practice in education law, public sector law, or governmental legal services.
- Demonstrated expertise in PreK-12 education law, including federal and state education statutes and regulations, special education law (IDEA, Section 504), student rights and discipline, Title IX and compliance, and public records, open meetings, and transparency laws.
- Strong litigation management experience, including oversight of outside counsel and risk mitigation strategies.
- Knowledge of local, state, and federal laws and regulations relating to public education, employment law, labor relations, and risk management.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to translate complex legal issues into practical guidance for non-legal audiences.
- Thorough knowledge of the legislative process.
- Ability to read and interpret documents such as law, regulations, policy, and procedures.
- Ability to communicate effectively in both written and oral forms with all levels of management, both internal and external to the district.

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below represent the knowledge, skills, and/or abilities required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Summary

The Chief Legal Officer is responsible for legal services to the School Board of Directors, Superintendent/CEO, and school district's staff. The Chief Legal Officer must possess special knowledge of Constitutional law and Pennsylvania school and employment law, knowledge of Pennsylvania statutes pertaining to schools, and knowledge of the regulatory powers, limitations, authorities, and responsibilities of the School Board of Directors.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Serve as the Chief Legal Officer and provides legal counsel and guidance to the Superintendent/CEO, School Board Directors, District officers, and senior leadership on all legal matters affecting the District, including but not limited to: employment and labor law; student rights and discipline; special education compliance; real estate transactions; construction and facilities matters; procurement, contracts, grants, and public purchasing; taxation and municipal law; workers' compensation; risk management, insurance, and liability; public finance; civil rights and affirmative action; and compliance with Pennsylvania School Code, federal statutes, and regulatory requirements.
- Collaborate closely with the District's Solicitor to ensure alignment on legal strategies, compliance matters, and risk management.
- Coordinate with external legal counsel as needed for specialized matters.
- Ensure the district adheres to all local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and policies.
- Evaluate and advise on legal risks and issues, providing strategic counsel to District leadership to develop legally sound solutions under conditions that may involve heightened political, financial, public relations, or operational risk and frequently within limited timeframes.
- Conduct legal research and analysis and prepares clear, timely written and oral opinions and recommendations on a wide variety of complex legal matters affecting district operations and governance.
- Review, draft, revise, and approve District's policies, administrative regulations, bylaws, resolutions, procedural manuals, contracts, and other governing or legal documents to ensure legal compliance and operational clarity.
- Negotiate, review, and approve contracts, leases, service agreements, collective bargaining agreements, intergovernmental agreements, MOUs, and grant documents, recommending revisions and ensuring alignment with applicable law, Board policy, and fiscal safeguards.
- Represent the District or oversees representation in litigation, arbitration, administrative hearings, mediations, investigations, and negotiations with regulatory agencies and governmental bodies, ensuring effective defense and risk mitigation.
- Serve as the District's Lead Negotiator for all collective bargaining negotiations, coordinating with District administration and participating in strategy development, proposals, mediation, and settlement discussions.
- Oversee grievance administration and responses, ensuring that contractual grievance processes are executed timely, lawfully, and consistently with collective bargaining agreements, Board policy, and labor law requirements.

- Select, retain, and manage outside legal counsel and vendors as necessary for specialized legal matters, litigation, investigations, or compliance reviews, including oversight of performance, scope of work, and budget alignment.
- Provide supervision and leadership to labor relations personnel, and contracted counsel; assign work, review deliverables, and provide consultation on complex or sensitive legal matters.
- Design and deliver professional learning and training for School Board directors, administrators, supervisors, and staff on legal compliance topics, including labor law, special education, student discipline, investigations, ethics, mandated reporting, civil rights, and public governance requirements.
- Leverage a solution-oriented and growth-focused mindset to evaluate challenges with rigor and openness, advancing continuous improvement, operational efficiency, and measurable outcomes across the District.
- Maintain professional expertise through ongoing participation in legal education, professional associations, and regulatory briefings to remain current in evolving state and federal laws affecting public education and employment.
- Perform other duties as assigned consistent with the scope and responsibilities of the Chief Legal Officer's role.

Supervisory Responsibilities

Supervises office staff; responsible for the coordination and evaluation of these individuals. Responsibilities include interviewing and recommending non-certificated employees for hiring; planning, assigning, and directing work; appraising performance; rewarding and disciplining employees; addressing complaints; and resolving problems. Carries out supervisory responsibilities in accordance with the District's policies and applicable state and federal laws.

Evaluation

The incumbent filling this position will be evaluated according to the administrative evaluation procedure adopted by the Allentown School District.