

Job Description
Director of Strategic Advocacy
Washington State School Directors' Association

Department: Strategic Advocacy **FLSA:** Exempt **Updated:** January 2025

Reports to: Executive Director **Supervises:** Advocacy and Policy Analyst,
Advocacy Consultant

General Description and Responsibilities:

This position has primary responsibility for directing WSSDA's year-round legislative advocacy efforts. This includes facilitating the development of WSSDA's legislative positions and priorities; supporting school directors with year-round legislative advocacy efforts and communications; and establishing and maintaining positive and collaborative relationships with legislators, legislative staff, and K-12 education association partners and stakeholders.

Directing Government Relations

- Advise the Executive Director and WSSDA staff on daily legislative issues and members' legislative advocacy support needs.
- Develop strategic objectives for the branch that assure year-round advocacy support for members, effective legislative action, and that are consistent with the member-adopted positions, as well as the goals and objectives of WSSDA's strategic plan.
- Oversee all aspects of the branch budget, including development, monitoring, and adjusting, when necessary.
- Provide ongoing support and direction for the Advocacy and Policy Analyst.
- Provide guidance and support on legislative issues to other staff and/or interns, as necessary.

Developing & Directing the Delivery of WSSDA's Advocacy Program for School Directors

- Serve as the primary support for WSSDA's Legislative Committee. This includes collaborating with the Legislative Committee chair to:
 - Plan and facilitate relevant and timely agendas and meeting materials for four, two-day committee meetings each year focused on the development and dissemination of WSSDA's annual legislative positions and priorities.
 - Work with the Advocacy and Policy Analyst to prepare for Legislative Committee meetings, including regular review and update of committee meeting materials and resources.

- Provide advocacy and legislative support as needed for other WSSDA committees and task forces, including but not limited to the Trust Lands Advisory Committee (TLAC), Student Representative Network (SRN), and Federal Relations Network (FRN).
- Collaborate with WSSDA's Leadership Team to design the annual proposal solicitation process. This includes:
 - Facilitating the work, as needed, of the WSSDA Positions Subcommittee in the annual review of WSSDA positions.
 - Work with school board members and the Legislative Committee to develop and refine proposals for consideration by the General Assembly each year.
- Plan and execute in partnership with the WSSDA Leadership Team the annual General Assembly
 - Develop an agenda, position materials and resources, and secure presenters for any program offerings.
 - Work with the Legislative Committee Chair and WSSDA parliamentarian to review the assembly handbook, develop scripts and related materials, and prepare for the assembly.
 - Supervise event planning and site logistics, choreograph activities.
- Co-plan and execute annual Legislative Conference in partnership with the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) and the Washington Association of School Business Officials (WASBO). This includes:
 - Collaborating on overall event planning/logistics, program content, and design.
 - Supporting communications and outreach to members.

Establishing & Maintaining a Year-Round Communication and Advocacy System for Advocacy Issues and Priorities

- Develop WSSDA's annual Legislative Priorities document in collaboration with WSSDA's Legislative Committee and for adoption by the board of directors.
- Develop and deliver regular legislative advocacy workshops at WSSDA professional learning events, including but not limited to WSSDA's Annual Conference, Legislative Conference, Legislative Representative Network, and Student Representative Network.
- Assist school directors when they testify or meet with legislators in Olympia.
- Respond to inquiries from school directors, media, and stakeholders about legislation and legislative issues.
- Develop and/or identify educational materials and resources for members' continued learning on K-12 education policy issues.
- As requested, provide legislative and advocacy updates at WSSDA meetings and events.
- Contribute content for the WSSDA Direct quarterly publication.
- Provide weekly legislative updates for the Legislative Committee and school board Legislative Representatives during the legislative session.

- Develop weekly written legislative updates for WSSDA membership that includes status of education-related bills and key education issues in the legislature during the legislative session.
- Complete a final Session Summary that includes a comprehensive list of the education bills that passed during the session and an updated to impacted K-12 budget and policy issues.

Developing & Maintaining Strong Relationships with the State Legislature, and K-12 Education Association Partners and Stakeholders

- Establish a regular communications system during the legislative session and throughout the year with state legislators and other elected officials and staff, education policymakers, and K-12 education association partners.
- Testify and coordinate testimony before legislative committees on education policy and budget issues.
- Work with legislators and other K-12 partners to support bills aligned with WSSDA's priorities and seek amendment or oppose bills that are not.

Leadership Team

- Serve as an active member of the WSSDA Leadership Team and staff by contributing to and supporting the decisions of WSSDA's Leadership Team; and by providing assistance to team members with their efforts on agency work, events, and special projects.
- Provide on-site support for other WSSDA events as requested and necessary.
- Attend and support WSSDA Board meetings.

Essential Functions:

- Work professionally and collaboratively with a variety of individuals, including elected officials and partner associations.
- Establish, maintain, and promote non-partisan relationships and partnerships with legislators, partner associations, and WSSDA members and committees.
- Communicate effectively and persuasively, orally and in writing, in adherence to the member-approved positions of the WSSDA platform.
- Work independently and use good judgment.
- Supervise Strategic Advocacy staff and maintain a positive work environment.
- Participate in staff development to improve knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Work well under pressure with competing deadlines.
- Be available for evening and weekend work, and travel by air or automobile.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree in a field that compliments work in education policy or public administration.
- Five years of experience in government relations, preferably in Washington state.
- Familiarity with K-12 education reform and policy issues in Washington State, including familiarity of key K-12 education policy organizations and stakeholder groups.
- Extensive knowledge of the Washington state Legislature and legislative process, state education statutes and regulations, and local school district requirements.
- Excellent organizational, time management, and multi-tasking skills and abilities.
- Proficient with Microsoft Office platform with emphasis on Word, Excel, Outlook, and PowerPoint.
- Demonstrated strength in speaking, writing, and listening.