

**Legislative Policy Specialist**  
**Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA)**

**Job Description**

**ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW**

**WSSDA is people.** WSSDA is the Washington State School Directors' Association, comprised of the 1,477 locally elected school board members from across the state. All public-school board members are WSSDA members per RCW 28A.345.020, which states, "The membership of the school directors' association shall comprise the members of the boards of directors of the school districts of the state." That means all board-superintendent teams are eligible to take full advantage of the supports, services, and opportunities that WSSDA provides. WSSDA can be thought of as a school director's professional association, though it is also a state agency (without regulatory authority).

To facilitate networking, professional development, and legislative advocacy, WSSDA employs a nonpartisan [staff](#) of approximately 15. The staff provide services and supports for school board members with oversight from the member-elected WSSDA Board of Directors via WSSDA's [Action and Accountability Plan](#).

Our member-adopted equity statement, mission, vision, goals, beliefs, and positions can be found on our [Who We Are webpage](#). This is the WSSDA platform and guides how the organization engages in the work of advancing public education and policy.

**POSITION OVERVIEW**

Are you interested in public education and the policy that shapes it? Do you want to help school leaders advance policies and practices that improve student outcomes?

The Washington State School Directors' Association is eager to onboard a committed and passionate policy professional to join the Strategic Advocacy (STRAD) team as the legislative policy specialist. In this role, you will be a key contributor providing support to school board members by tracking and analyzing policy, communicating implications of proposed and enacted policy, and building relationships with partners and policymakers.

This role is your chance to make a lasting impact on the lives of students and staff across the state by supporting the locally elected school boards and school directors who are foundational to effective public education. You will get to do this mission-critical work while working in a dynamic and collaborative environment.

This is a hybrid position, with a general expectation that staff are in the office three days per week, typically Tuesday-Thursday. Most staff members telecommute on Mondays and Fridays, depending on events and workload. This schedule varies during the legislative session

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

**Advance WSSDA's legislative strategy and operations through core policy and advocacy functions, including:**

**Policy Analysis:** Conduct in-depth analysis of proposed legislation using WSSDA's internal tools to assess potential impact(s) on school districts and evaluate alignment with WSSDA's advocacy platform. Translate findings into actionable insights for internal and external stakeholders. Respond to inquiries from staff, school directors, legislators, and education partners.

**Partner Engagement:** Assist in building and maintaining relationships with key education partners, including legislators, government officials, and education partners.

**Legislative Monitoring and Bill Tracking:** Track and analyze proposed legislation during each legislative session using current and evolving systems and software. Ensure timely updates and status reporting to support responsive advocacy.

**Testimony Development:** Support the creation of compelling, data-informed legislative testimony by contributing legislative insights, analysis summaries, and relevant background. Ensure testimony reflects WSSDA's member-adopted positions and priorities.

**Legislative Strategy:** Provide technical assistance to school directors on the legislative process and how/when to engage to effect change.

**Legislative Session and Implementation Summary:** Support the production of the annual legislative session summary document containing summary of laws changed and WSSDA model policies that need to be updated as a result.

**Provide strategic guidance, policy expertise, and logistical coordination to WSSDA committees, networks, and task forces: This includes but is not necessarily limited to:**

- Federal Relations Network
- Trust Lands Advisory Committee (TLAC)
- Legislative Committee
- Resolutions Committee
- Student Representative Network

**Support internal operations, communications, and cross-agency coordination for the strategic advocacy branch, This includes:**

- **Advocacy Communications & Partner Engagement:** Partner with the Director of Strategic Advocacy, other staff, and education partners to prepare targeted advocacy communications during legislative session and interim periods. This can include legislative updates, policy briefs, articles, podcasts, etc.
- **Branch Communications & Content Management:** Partner with WSSDA's communications team to draft, edit, and maintain accurate and timely content related to strategic advocacy operations on WSSDA's website and social

media. Ensure clarity and consistency across platforms.

- **WSSDA-wide Communications Support:** Contribute articles, data, and information to agency publications including WSSDA's blog, *Direct* magazine, and *Policy and Legal News* magazine.

#### **Other/General Responsibilities**

- **Commitment to Public Education, Nonpartisanship, and Inclusivity:** Support respectful dialogue and contribute to the organization's mission to advance public education through nonpartisanship and inclusive representation of all school board members.
- **Communication with Membership:** Collaborate with the Communications team and other colleagues to develop content and inform messaging for the public, ensuring accurate representation of WSSDA membership.
- **Partner Engagement:** Coordinate with other education partners to understand policy proposals and related messaging.
- **Project Management:** Lead and manage special projects and initiatives as assigned by senior management.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Stay informed about best practices in government relations and policy analysis to continually enhance the agency's efforts.
- **Support Successful Committee Meetings:** Attend regularly scheduled Legislative and Resolutions Committee meetings throughout the year.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS**

Equity is foundational to the work of WSSDA. Educational equity can only exist when a student's level of opportunity and achievement cannot be predicted based on race, characteristics, or circumstances. Therefore, we must identify and eliminate any discriminatory practices and prejudices within our state's public education system. To do so, we encourage applicants with firsthand lived experience as a member of a community that has been historically and systemically underserved.

Your unique perspectives and experiences will be valued as we work together to create a more inclusive education system. Availability to be present in Olympia during the legislative session is essential for this position.

#### **REQUIRED**

- Understanding of legislative process, state government, and policy.
- Experience conducting policy analysis, with the ability to synthesize and translate complex information into easy-to-understand language.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, with proficiency drafting policy briefs and delivering presentations.
- Familiarity with Washington's public K-12 education system, policy issues, and laws impacting Washington schools and districts.
- Commitment to public education, nonpartisan advocacy, and inclusivity, with the ability to engage in respectful dialogue and continuous learning in these areas.

- Demonstrated ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with legislators, government officials, advocacy groups, and other partners.
- Work well under pressure to meet sometimes competing deadlines with strong attention to detail.
- Maintain confidentiality and use good judgment.
- Willingness and ability to co-create with your colleagues a welcoming, supportive, safe, affirming, and respectful work environment.
- Proficient in the use of various technologies common in office settings
- Willingness to work a varied schedule, which may occasionally include evenings and weekends including additional / non-regular hours during legislative session.
- Available to work in-person at WSSDA's office in Olympia, WA at least three days a week, and likely more during the legislative session.

## **PREFERRED**

- The qualities below are preferred as they would contribute to success in this role. However, they are not all required. You may be a good match for this position even if you don't possess all the qualifications listed below.
- Bachelor's degree in law, government, public policy and/or education and a minimum of two years related professional experience OR at least six years of job-related experience in public policy, government, and/or education.
- Experience planning and facilitating meetings, committees, or workgroups, especially within a governmental or educational context.
- Firsthand lived experience as a member of a community that has been historically and systemically underserved.
- Experience leading efforts to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging within a professional setting.
- Demonstrated positive experience in working productively with a diverse team
- Experience as a school board member is ideal. Current Washington school board members would be required to leave their elected position if hired. Experience working with school boards, education associations, and/or in K-12 education or college-level education system(s) also desirable.

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Legislative Policy Specialist

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Director of Strategic Advocacy

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Executive Director

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Date