



## *Position Description*

### **General Legal Counsel**

*Salary Level: Based on Individual Contract*

*Contract/Benefits: Based on Individual Contract*

*Department or Area: District Wide*

*Reports To: Superintendent*

*Prepared Date: January 28, 2020*

*Prepared by: Anthony Pidgeon, Executive Director of Human Resources*

*Approved By: Jennifer Ramos, Deputy Superintendent*

### ***Position Description:***

Provide legal support to the Superintendent, Board of Directors, and designated staff. Advise the Superintendent, 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 to ensure maximum protection of its legal rights and to maintain operations within the limits prescribed by law. Provides strategic guidance, consultation, and support to the Superintendent, Board of Directors, and senior staff on a comprehensive range of legal and associated issues involved in carrying out the mission and vision of the school district.

### ***Qualifications:***

1. J.D. from an American Bar Association accredited law school; at least 10 years of experience directly related to the duties and responsibilities specified.
2. Member of the Pennsylvania State Bar and in good standing with the State Bar of Pennsylvania.
3. Knowledge of local, state, and federal laws and regulations relating to public education
4. Excellent legal research and writing skills.
5. Thorough knowledge of the legislative process.
6. Ability to read and interpret documents such as law, regulations, policy, and procedures.
7. Ability to communicate effectively in both written and oral forms with all levels of management, both internal and external to the district.
8. Excellent communication and organizational skills, including proficiency in use of Microsoft Office software for purposes of sending/receiving email; creating, storing and sharing documents and spreadsheets; and accessing work related information via internet.

Note: To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

### ***Summary***

The General Counsel is responsible for legal services to the Board of Education and for providing legal counsel to the superintendent of schools and staff. The General Counsel 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 Board of Education.

### ***Essential Duties and Responsibilities***

1. Provides legal counsel and guidance to the officers of the school district and other upper management on all legal matters relevant to a large public institution, including personnel law, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations, and laws pertaining to students, real estate transactions, contracts and grants, tax matters, worker's compensation, liability and insurance matters, public monies and purchases, affirmative action, and other laws and regulations.
2. Anticipates and identifies legal issues and counsels administration of the district and other upper management in order to develop legal strategies and solutions, often in situations of great political, public relations, or financial risk or significance, and with limited time for assessing alternatives.
3. Reviews, researches, interprets, and prepares both written and oral opinions on a wide variety of legal issues.
4. Drafts, reviews, and approves policies and procedures, regulations, bylaws, and other legal documents.
5. Reviews contracts, leases, and other legal documents; researches legal issues and recommends revisions as necessary.
6. Represents or oversees the representation of the institution and upper management in judicial and administrative proceedings, and in negotiations with other state agencies.
7. Assumes the role of Lead Negotiator in all contractual negotiations
8. Assumes the responsibility for grievance responses in a timely manner
9. Selects and retains outside counsel, as required, to obtain legal opinions or to handle claims and litigation.
10. Supervises legal work of other attorneys, paralegals, and outside counsel; consults on difficult or sensitive issues.
11. Serves as the District's Right to Know Officer; researching and responding to all requests.
12. Provides training to the district as necessary or requested on various legal issues through seminars and meetings.
13. Maintains professional growth and development through seminars, workshops, and professional affiliations to keep abreast of the latest developments in employment and education law and in other related areas.
14. Performs miscellaneous job-related duties as assigned.

### ***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; rewards and disciplinary actions; addressing complaints, and resolving problems. Carries out supervisory responsibilities in accordance with the District's policies and applicable state and federal laws.

### ***Competencies***

To perform the job successfully, an individual should demonstrate the following competencies:

#### ***Interpersonal Skills***

Manages difficult or emotional employee situations judiciously; Responds to employee requests for service and assistance; Meets commitments made to Administrators and District community; Maintains confidentiality; Demonstrates objective approaches to communicating with staff and constituents; Exhibits objectivity and openness to the views of others; Speaks clearly and persuasively in positive or negative situations; Listens and

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solicits clarification; Responds appropriately to questions; Writes clearly and effectively; Edits work for spelling and grammar; Presents numerical data effectively; Works well with others.

*Leadership Skills*

Develops workable implementation plans; Makes self-accessible to Principals and Staff; Looks for ways to improve and promote quality; Demonstrates accuracy and thoroughness; Adheres to safety and security procedures; Identifies and resolves problems in a timely manner.

*Organizational Skills*

Works with accuracy when monitoring all cost-related tasks; Shows respect and sensitivity for cultural differences; Follows policies and procedures; Completes administrative tasks and reports correctly and on time; Supports District's goals and values.

*Personal Competencies*

Exhibits sound and accurate judgment; Treats people with respect; Works ethically and with integrity; Respects confidentiality; Demonstrates persistence and overcomes obstacles; Prioritizes and plans work activities; Uses time efficiently; Approaches others in a tactful manner; Reacts well under pressure; Demonstrates accuracy and thoroughness; Follows instructions, responds to supervisory direction; Takes responsibility for own actions.

***Physical Demands***

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an administrator to successfully perform the essential duties of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential duties.

While performing the duties of this job, the administrator is regularly required to talk or hear. The administrator is frequently required to walk, climb stairs, and bend. The administrator is required to use hands to fingers or handle documents, telephone, etc. The administrator is occasionally required to stand, sit, and reach with hands and arms. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, and ability to adjust focus. Regular, but not extensive, local travel by car is required.

***Evaluation***

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

Reviewed and read by: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Individual serving in this position*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_