



Director, Policy and Advocacy

Prepared for CCSESA Executive Board

August 23, 2021

Position Title: Director, Policy and Advocacy
Department: Governmental Relations
Reports to: Senior Director, Governmental Relations and Legal Affairs, and Executive Director
Location: Sacramento, CA
Posting: Public (three weeks minimum) upon approval by Board of Directors

Position Background and Need

Over the past year, CCSESA has significantly expanded its presence as one of the state's most effective advocacy organizations for K-12 education. Leaders within the Governor's administration and Legislature have come to recognize the credibility and influence of CCSESA's membership. We have seen this come to bear on the state's school reopening plan in early 2021, updates to *Williams* (Assembly Bill 599, Jones-Sawyer), new funding for county independent study programs, the new rules for independent study, the budget act, public health guidelines for schools, and numerous pieces of legislation.

Notwithstanding CCSESA's strong impact on policy this year, we are still building the new team.

First, we must continue to backfill essential duties. CCSESA has yet to replace three professional-level policy staff, which is quickly diminishing our capacity for effective legislative and agency advocacy. CCSESA also lacks coverage in various subject matters. This extends to our ability to staff steering committees, two of which still have no director-level staff liaison. As new issues emerge, additional staff with policy background will be essential. Consider, for example, our ability last year to shift immediately to tracking and communicating the evolution of public health guidance, Covid testing, and vaccination issues. Remaining effective at our current staffing level is unsustainable.

Second, in light of CCSESA's forthcoming Strategic Plan, we must "forward-fill" our staffing gaps with candidates who possess the skills and background to nimbly adapt to new initiatives, especially those related to policy and advocacy. Specifically, the Director of Policy and Advocacy will support multiple objectives outlined in Fern Tiger's update on the Strategic Plan (presented to General Membership, June 28, 2021):

- Expanding advocacy (beyond legislation) to the Governor's administration, State Board of Education, CTC and other state agencies.



- Driving the legislative conversation by sponsoring bills, not simply reacting to them.
- Publicizing CCSESA's annual policy agenda to influence the statewide narrative.
- Writing white papers that investigate and formulate solutions to COE needs, which feeds into future policy priorities.
- Providing talking points for superintendents to facilitate legislative advocacy and ensure common messaging.
- Growing CCSESA's capacity to respond to the needs of smaller counties.
- Communicate the value of CCSESA's work to policy makers, statewide organizations, and the media.
- Dive deeper into the big three issue areas we focus on during the year.

At this point, CCSESA has just three professional-level staff who touch lobbying and advocacy: the Executive Director (who is still under a one-year prohibition on certain state contacts), the Senior Director of Governmental Relations and Legal Affairs, and the Director of Communications and Strategy (whose chief role is external affairs, not policy analysis and lobbying). To round out our efforts, we have a one-year contract with the Santa Clara County Office of Education for coverage on major topics, including mental health, student wellness, Medi-Cal, and special education.

To sustain CCSESA's presence as a premier policy and advocacy organization, CCSESA must onboard additional high-quality staff with expertise in K-12 education and state-level policy making.

Impact to CCSESA Budget

The position and expenses associated with this position, "Director, Policy and Advocacy," are accounted for in the FY 2021–22 budget, which was approved by the Board of Directors and General Membership in June.

CCSESA Bylaws

Bylaws (approved Jan. 29, 2013) at (VII)(G)(5)(a), pp. 32–33:

Executive Director: Duties

"The duties of the executive director shall include but not be limited to: [...] Hire and supervise staff as positions are approved by the Board."

Position Overview

The Director of Policy and Advocacy is a legislative and policy advocate who will help lead advocacy efforts at the state and federal level. By working directly with the 58 county superintendents of schools, the Director of Policy and Advocacy will help advance a student-focused approach to education policy that prioritizes equity. Advocacy will focus on the



California state legislature, state departments, the state budget act, Governor's Administration, and federal policy makers.

The Director of Policy works as part of a dynamic and collaborative CCSESA team on the (members on the) association's initiatives and will report to the Senior Director of Governmental Relations and Legal Affairs and the Executive Director.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Managing key elements of state and federal legislative, budget, and regulatory advocacy, including:
 - Advancing a student-focused approach to education policy that prioritizes equity and outcomes.
 - Developing policy strategies that incorporate statutory research, political awareness, media, partnerships with other stakeholder organizations, and the relationships held by county superintendents of schools.
 - Interpreting and drafting statutory and regulatory language.
 - Proactively researching the ways public education can and should improve student outcomes and advance equity goals.
- Adapting and responding, on a day-to-day basis, to emerging challenges facing our educational system.
- Communicating issues of policy and politics in a clear and confident way to county superintendents (and their staff), legislative and policy staff, and the public.
- Developing policy expertise in multiple subject areas pertaining to public education in California.
- Serving as the liaison and policy expert to various CCSESA Steering Committees: business and administration, curriculum and instruction, personnel, technology, and student services and programs.
- Implementing CCSESA's strategic plan (in development with adoption expected in late 2021).
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

Any combination of experience and training that would provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. These may include, but are not limited to, the following.



Education. Bachelor's degree.

Experience. At least five years' of progressively responsible experience in California public policy, ideally with in-depth experience concerning K-12 public education in California. Examples of relevant policy experience: work with state legislation, the state budget, the California State Board of Education, the California Department of Education, lobbying and advocacy, etc.

Knowledge. Strong knowledge of California's public school system, trends in K-12 education, education policy or practices. Knowledge must include state and federal legislative process, budget process, and political landscape.

Skills and abilities.

- A strong reputation for building collegial relationships inside and across organizations.
- Excellent communication skills, including:
 - ✓ Ability to compose objective and persuasive written communication that concisely and comprehensively explains the legal, policy, practical, and political implications of an issue. Written communication includes research briefs, formal letters, talking points, and other written correspondence.
 - ✓ Ability to verbally articulate messages in diverse settings, such as public hearings, or with policy makers and staff, other stakeholders, and CCSESA members.
- Ability to interpret and apply the law, including:
 - ✓ Locating and understanding applicable statutes, regulations, and legal opinions.
 - ✓ Applying a set of facts to applicable law.
 - ✓ Ability to communicate technical information in an understandable way.
 - ✓ Making policy or practical recommendations based on the law.
 - ✓ Ability to draft revisions to law, such as bill language or amendments.
- Ability to create a policy and political strategy to solve issues, including:
 - ✓ Creating strategic partnerships and coalitions.
 - ✓ Assessing the external/media implications of a scenario to make recommendations based on those factors.
 - ✓ Drawing useful connections between a particular problem and larger political and policy trends.



CCSESA

California County Superintendents Educational Services Association

1121 L Street, Suite 510, Sacramento, CA 95814 ■ P 916.446.3095 ■ F 916.448.7801 ■ www.ccsesa.org

- Proficiency with email software, web applications, spreadsheet software, word processing software, and internet video communication.
- Must be able to handle multiple projects simultaneously and in a self-directed fashion.