

Sweetwater Union High School District

GENERAL COUNSEL

Purpose Statement

The job of General Counsel is done for the purpose of planning, organizing, controlling and providing direct professional legal counsel and representation for the Superintendent, staff and the Board of Trustees on District matters; Provide quasi-legal office management services through oversight of the District Legal, Labor Relations, and Compliance offices; Prepare and conduct litigation and administrative law hearing as directed by the Superintendent and as authorized by the Board of Trustees; supervise and evaluate the performance of assigned personnel.

Essential Functions

- Prepare and render legal opinions upon request of the Board of Trustees or the Superintendent.
- Prepare and conduct litigation and administrative law hearings as directed by the Superintendent and as authorized by the Board of Trustees; perform duties necessary or desirable in conjunction therewith on behalf of the District, including, but not limited to, the preparation of pleadings and trial and appellate briefs, negotiation between parties, the conduct of trial and hearings at the level of original jurisdiction or on appeal, and other court or hearing appearances in order to represent most effectively the interests of the District as such interests are interpreted by the Superintendent and/or Board of Trustees.
- Attend and provide legal advice at meetings of the Board of Trustees and such other meetings as the Superintendent directs.
- Plan, organize and implement long and short-term programs and activities designed to develop assigned programs and services; prepare documents related to the noticing, calling and conducting of school bond elections.
- Provide leadership to the overall District labor relations function, services, and staff. Advise the Board of Trustees and Superintendent on all matters related to negotiation law, practice, and strategy. Assist in actual negotiation process as needed or requested.
- Provide leadership to the District compliance function and staff. Ensure that staff is appropriately trained and knowledgeable of all compliance policies, regulations, and practice.
- Provide legal assistance in the drafting of legal documents, rules and regulations, resolutions, applications of diverse kinds and other legal or quasi-legal papers upon request.
- Provide legal assistance in the drafting of State legislation proposed by the District for presentation to the California State Legislature.
- Train and evaluate the performance of assigned staff; provide for continuing departmental staff training programs; develop work schedules; interview and select employees and recommend transfers, reassignment, termination and disciplinary actions.
- Interpret the impact of legislation on the interests of the District as such legislation is being considered by the State legislature.
- Maintain files on policy action of the Board of Trustees and supervise periodic revision of the rules and regulations of the Board.
- Provide technical expertise, information and assistance to the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent regarding assigned functions; assist in the formulation and development of policies, procedures and programs; advise the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent of unusual trends or problems and recommend appropriate corrective action.
- Direct the preparation and maintenance of a variety of narrative and statistical reports, records and files related to assigned activities and personnel.

- Communicate with other administrators, personnel and outside organizations to coordinate activities and programs, resolve issues and conflicts and exchange information; develop policies and procedures to encourage effective and efficient management controls.
- Develop and prepare the annual preliminary budget for the Legal Services department (inclusive of labor relations and compliance office staff); analyze and review budgetary and financial data; control and authorize expenditures in accordance with established limitations.
- Attend and conduct a variety of meetings as assigned; establish and maintain relations/membership with local, State, and federal agencies and associations to remain current on programs and issues that affect District legal services; present reports and initial findings.
- Actively support the District integration program and encourage support of staff and community; provide leadership in the development and implementation of integration programs as appropriate to assigned department.

Other Functions

- Performs other related duties as assigned for the purpose of ensuring an efficient and effective work environment.

Job Requirements: Minimum Qualifications

Skills, Knowledge and Abilities

SKILLS are required to perform multiple, highly complex, technical tasks with a need to periodically upgrade skills in order to meet changing job conditions. Specific skills required to satisfactorily perform the functions of the job include: leadership; developing effective working relationships; operating standard office equipment including utilizing pertinent software applications; planning and managing projects and programs; overseeing program activities; preparing and maintaining accurate records; and administering personnel policies and procedures.

KNOWLEDGE is required to compose a variety of documents, and/or facilitate group discussions; and analyze situations to define issues and draw conclusions. Specific knowledge required to satisfactorily perform the functions of the job includes: pertinent laws, codes, policies, and/or regulations; state and federal equal opportunity laws principles of human resources law; personnel processes; negotiation practices, and standard business practices; basic budgeting; contract administration and communications systems.

ABILITY is required to organize a significant number of activities, meetings, and/or events; often gather, collate, and/or classify data; and use job-related equipment. Flexibility is required to independently work with others in a wide variety of circumstances; analyze data utilizing defined but different processes; and operate equipment using a variety of standardized methods. Ability is also required to work with significant diversity of individuals and/or groups; work with data of widely varied types and/or purposes; and utilize a variety of job-related equipment. In working with others, independent problem solving is required to analyze issues and create action plans. Problem solving with data requires analysis based on organizational objectives; and problem solving with equipment is significant. Specific abilities required to satisfactorily perform the functions of the job include: adapting to changing work priorities; communicating with diverse groups; maintaining confidentiality; meeting deadlines and schedules; setting priorities; working as part of a team; and working with detailed information/data.

Responsibility

Responsibilities include: working independently under broad organizational guidelines to achieve unit objectives; managing a department; and supervising the use of funds. Utilization of significant resources from other work units is routinely required to perform the job's functions. There is continual opportunity to significantly impact the Organization's services.

Working Environment

The usual and customary methods of performing the job's functions require the following physical demands: some lifting, carrying, pushing, and/or pulling; some stooping, kneeling, crouching, and/or crawling; and significant fine finger dexterity. Generally the job requires 50% sitting, 25% walking, and 25% standing. The job is performed under a generally hazard free environment.

Physical Requirements

Hearing and speaking to exchange information; seeing to perform assigned duties; sitting or standing for extended periods of time; dexterity of hands and fingers to operate a computer keyboard and other office equipment; kneeling, bending at the waist, and reaching overhead, above the shoulders and horizontally, to retrieve and store files and supplies; lifting light objects.

Education and Experience

Juris Doctor from an accredited law school and ten years of experience in the practice of law, including substantial responsible experience as counsel for a public jurisdiction; directly related school law experience, including labor and employment law, is desirable but not required.

Required Testing

None Specified

Certificates Required

License to practice law in the State and Federal courts of California
Valid Driver’s License

Continuing Educ./Training

None Specified

Clearances

Pre-placement Physical Exam; TB Clearance; and Criminal Justice
Fingerprint/Background Clearance

Sweetwater Union High School District programs and activities shall be free from discrimination based on age, gender, gender identity or expression, or genetic information, sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation; the perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.” *SUHSD Board Policy 0410*

*Management Job Description
Adopted by BOT 04/27/15*