



Position Title: K-12 Education Policy Director

About Children First

Children First (formerly Public Citizens for Children & Youth, PCCY) is a regional policy/advocacy organization devoted to improving the lives and life chances of children by defining and building public will behind policies that increase opportunity and address educational and health inequities, racism, structural barriers to upward mobility and family instability. Children First is a fast-paced organization that uses research, people power, and coalition building to create the momentum for reform of public policies that enable more children to grow up healthy, well-educated, and ready to take the reins of their communities.

Position Summary

Children First plays a leadership role in setting and advancing local and state policy priorities that improve the quality of education available to students attending public schools, particularly within the lowest wealth school districts in the state; these school districts educate a majority of the state's Black, Hispanic and low-income students who benefit from our advocacy.

To advance our priorities, Children First builds new narratives for education reform, sets a strategy to put those reforms in place, and strategically engages leaders, residents, and youth to advocate for reforms.

Our work is built on the premise that we must improve racial equity as we reform public schools and that to do so requires building bi-partisan support for reforms among the lawmakers in southeastern Pennsylvania in ways that enable lawmakers in other regions of the state to support these efforts. We have a forty-year track record of success and a highly effective staff to which we are eager to add a highly motivated, experienced professional with advanced policy development and advocacy skills to lead our Education Team.

Key Duties:

- Lead the development and implementation of advocacy strategies to advance state and local level K-12 policy priorities
- Craft compelling messaging documents including reports, briefs, commentaries, and fact sheets and regularly make public speeches/presentations to increase the public discourse to support the policy reforms
- Draft and present testimony to legislative bodies on key k12 policy issues including privatization, school finance/funding, racial equity, and teacher quality,

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- Recruit and inform community leaders, parents and youth and engage them to build support for our policy priorities among local, state, and federal lawmakers and appointed officials
- Create, expand, and lead broad-based coalitions focused on K-12 policy goals
- Develop and maintain relationships with local school leaders that engage them in efforts to influence state elected officials and other key decision-makers throughout the region.
- Generate ideas for innovative initiatives or projects that build public support for our k-12 policy priorities.
- Community organizing experience preferred

Position Description:

- Regularly hold effective meetings with key policymakers regarding K-12 priorities
- Monitor trends and collect and analyze data on K-12 policy in order to identify unmet needs and persistent challenges, and establish priority issues
- Create and implement strategies to maintain engagement of new and existing partners in Children First’s advocacy efforts
- Oversee and write research and reports, issue briefs and other publications on K-12 issues; this work involves data review, analysis, and presentation of data
- Create and execute plans for report dissemination and popularizing report findings on social media and news platforms
- Work in partnership with the Development Team to craft proposals and reports that increase the resources supporting our education policy/advocacy efforts
- Supervise county-based outreach staff in their work on K-12 issues
- Recruit and supervise interns who assist with K-12 research and outreach

Qualifications, Education, Experience & Skills:

- Knowledge of major PA state K-12 policy issues including school finance, governance models, racial equity, school board politics and teaching and learning
- Experience understanding and advancing legislative goals
- Advanced skills leading coalitions and implementing processes needed to support effective relationships and operations with coalitions
- Familiarity with local and state news sources and experience/ability creating relationships with reporters
- Ability to organize, mobilize and facilitate widespread community participation and engagement at rallies and other events
- Proficiency in data analysis associated with school finance, demographic analysis and related data-related research
- Track record of effective collaboration and work with organizational leaders such as superintendents, school board members, non-profit executives, and business owners
- Advanced written and oral communication skills
- At least three years management experience with supervisory responsibilities
- Experience using social media tools to boost advocacy impact
- Strong desire to lead the K-12 team with a spirit of collaboration and empowering your team to help achieve team goals

Other Duties as Assigned

- Educate communities about important K-12 policies and initiatives
- Attend and present information at Children First board and board subcommittee meetings as requested
- Plan, orchestrate and assist with outreach events which occur in the evening and/or weekends
- Attend and participate in staff meetings and staff committees
- Actively support Children First fundraising efforts

Important Skills:

- Ability to work independently and with others
- Works well under pressure
- Detail oriented
- Ability to prioritize and manage multiple projects
- Ability to collect, interpret and simplify large datasets
- Very strong written and oral communication skills
- Ability to travel to communities across the region - must have driver's license and access to a reliable vehicle
- Proficient in excel, word, google and social media platforms

Reports To: Executive Director

Salary: \$95,000 plus benefits, including health care for you and your child(ren) and generous paid time off

Apply: Resume and cover letter to info@childrenfirstpa.org.