

Staff Attorney Position Description

[Education Law Center \(ELC\)](#) seeks a full-time Staff Attorney to join our legal, policy, and communications teams advancing the rights of public school students through litigation, advocacy, and community engagement. The Staff Attorney will participate in all of ELC's core areas of legal and policy advocacy, with a primary focus on protecting and enforcing the education and civil rights of New Jersey students through ELC's Student Rights Project (SRP). This position offers a unique opportunity to make a significant impact on education justice through both individual case representation and systemic reform.

The position is primarily remote, but applicants must reside close enough to New Jersey to attend periodic in-person meetings, hearings, and community events.

Through SRP, ELC provides free legal representation to students in New Jersey who experience barriers in accessing appropriate educational services and programs. In addition to individual advice and case representation, SRP works to identify and address systemic problems in programs and practices at the school, district, and state levels. SRP currently handles cases on a wide range of school law issues, including:

- Special education for children with disabilities, including eligibility, classification, placement, services, program appropriateness, and discipline;
- Suspensions, expulsions, and other forms of discipline in general education;
- School residency disputes, including cases involving the education of homeless children;
- Harassment, intimidation, and bullying; and
- Bilingual and language-appropriate education for multilingual learners.

The Staff Attorney may also help expand SRP's legal and advocacy work into new areas of civil rights, including discrimination, and efforts to combat classroom censorship—such as attempts to restrict teaching or discussion of topics related to race, sex, or LGBTQ+ issues.

While the focus of the work will be on New Jersey, there will also be an opportunity to work on students' rights issues nationally.

In addition, the Staff Attorney may participate in other key areas of advocacy which include:

- Supporting ELC's ongoing efforts to ensure fair and adequate school funding and to secure the equitable provision of resources essential to fulfilling students' constitutional right to a thorough and efficient education in New Jersey and other states.
- Contributing to ELC's national campaign ([Public Funds, Public Schools](#)) to prevent the diversion of public funds to private school vouchers and fight school privatization through litigation, research, and policy advocacy.

About ELC

Founded in 1973, ELC serves as a leading voice for public school children and has become one of the most effective advocates for equal educational opportunity and education justice in the

United States. Widely recognized for groundbreaking court rulings on behalf of low-income students, ELC also promotes educational equity through coalition building, litigation support, policy development, communications, and action-focused research in states nationwide and at the federal level. ELC's legal and policy advocacy continues to advance the causes of fair school funding, high quality early education, safe and adequate school facilities, and protection of students' education and civil rights.

Job Responsibilities

The specific duties include but are not limited to:

- assisting and participating in civil trial and appellate litigation in state and federal courts;
- representing clients in individual education cases in administrative and judicial proceedings (advocating, filing legal actions, negotiating, litigating, as necessary);
- assisting with operation of ELC's intake system, including advising parents and updating materials;
- monitoring relevant litigation, providing technical legal assistance, and preparing or reviewing amicus briefs;
- tracking, reviewing, and commenting/testifying on legislation and proposed rules and regulations for legal and equity impacts;
- coordinating with attorneys and other staff at ELC and partner organizations on litigation and other advocacy activities;
- drafting tools for legislative advocacy;
- producing news articles, policy briefs, community education materials, and reports;
- building networks and collaborating with those engaged in related work;
- providing technical assistance and information to other advocacy organizations;
- supervising law fellows and students; and
- assisting in the preparation of grant proposals and reports.

Qualifications

- **New Jersey bar admission required within one year of starting the position;**
- at least three years of legal experience beyond law school;
- some experience in civil rights work, with experience in education law and/or policy preferred;
- some knowledge of special education law;
- a demonstrated commitment to education equity and racial justice in education;
- experience working with or in diverse communities, including with people of color, LGBTQ+ people, youth, multilingual communities, immigrants, persons with disabilities, or low-income individuals;
- a desire to litigate;
- excellent legal research and analytical skills;
- excellent written and verbal communications skills, including through social and other media;
- excellent organizational, networking, and relationship-building skills;
- demonstrated ability to work in collaboration across organizational boundaries to achieve agreed-upon goals;
- ability to attend periodic in-person meetings and hearings in New Jersey; and

- commitment to the mission of ELC.

Salary and Benefits

The salary for this position is \$100,000 - 125,000, depending on experience. Paid vacation, holiday, and sick leave will be provided. ELC's benefit package includes medical, dental, life and disability insurance, as well as a retirement savings program with an employer contribution. This position is contingent on continued grant funding.

How to apply

Please submit a cover letter, resume, writing sample and law school transcript to Theresa Luhm at tluhm@edlawcenter.org.

Deadline

The position will be open until filled.

ELC is committed to attracting, developing, and retaining exceptional people, and to creating a work environment that is dynamic, rewarding, and respectful toward all employees. ELC is an equal opportunity employer that respects the full spectrum of races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities, religions, beliefs, cultures, socio-economic backgrounds and levels of physical ability. ELC encourages persons of color, women, LGBTQ+ persons, persons with disabilities, and members of other underrepresented communities to apply.