



Tennessee State Board of Education: Staff Attorney

The Tennessee State Board of Education (“State Board”) is seeking a full-time Staff Attorney to handle educator license discipline cases from intake of educator misconduct reports through case resolution. The Staff Attorney will gather investigative materials, analyze cases, prepare discipline recommendations, negotiate consent orders, and represent the State Board in administrative hearings, mediations, and settlement discussions for assigned educator discipline cases. The Staff Attorney will work closely with other licensure discipline team staff attorneys, paralegals and interns. In addition, the Staff Attorney is responsible for maintaining and building positive relationships with internal and external stakeholders to magnify and improve the Board’s licensure discipline work, and communicates with districts, educators, law enforcement, and other stakeholders regarding license actions. The ideal candidate will have a proven ability to communicate effectively, multi-task, work with a variety of stakeholders, and manage a diverse, high-volume caseload. This position is an important opportunity to ensure Tennessee continues to uphold a high bar for educator licensure and student safety, and further the Board’s efforts to ensure that all students have access to great teachers and leaders.

About the Tennessee State Board of Education

The Tennessee State Board of Education’s mission is to ensure policies and systems are in place so that all students are prepared for success after graduation. We work closely with stakeholders across the state to ensure equity, oversight, and transparency in K-12 education policy.

The State Board is charged by law with complete jurisdiction over the issuance of K-12 educator licenses in Tennessee. This includes the intake of reports of educator misconduct, and responsibility for determining appropriate license discipline action including denial, formal reprimand, suspension, or revocation of an educator’s license.

Job Responsibilities

The Staff Attorney is responsible for the following:

- Managing an assigned caseload of educator license misconduct cases, including opening new licensure cases reported to the State Board, gathering investigative materials relevant to assigned case files, formulating discipline recommendations based on applicable facts, rules, and laws, and seeing cases through resolution. This includes:
 - Supporting management of the State Board case review committee, including preparation of license action recommendations, and presentation of cases before this committee.

- Docketing cases with the Secretary of State's Administrative Procedures Division and representing the Board at administrative hearings.
- Drafting motions, orders, discovery, and other filings.
- Presenting and explaining license discipline recommendations to the Board at quarterly meetings.
- Participating in mediation or negotiating settlements when appropriate.
- Participating in regular check-ins with the Office of Educator Licensure and Preparation (OELP) within the Tennessee Department of Education to improve inter-agency communication and problem-solving.
- Working with the license discipline team to refine and improve processes for management of educator misconduct cases to ensure timely resolution of all cases.
- Defending the Board in declaratory order actions, as appropriate.
- Conducting legal research and writing on a variety of topics relevant to license discipline and the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act.
- Assisting drafting rules and policies relating to licensure discipline.
- Providing legal advice to the Board and Board staff regarding licensure discipline, administrative procedure, and other legal matters as requested.
- Working with other Staff Attorneys to prepare and present to school districts and other interested stakeholder organizations regarding the State Board's process for handling license discipline cases.
- Responding to inquiries regarding the Board's licensure discipline work from a variety of stakeholders including school district representatives, teachers and their counsel, witnesses, and others.
- Working with the General Counsel to timely respond to media inquiries and public records requests regarding licensure cases as prescribed under the law.
- Delegating appropriate work to paralegal(s).
- Delegating appropriate work to intern(s).
- Tracking expenses for assigned cases to determine costs for the purpose of advocating for additional funding as needed.
- Managing other special projects as assigned.

Qualifications

We are seeking candidates who have:

- Strong legal research and writing skills, as well as excellent oral and written advocacy skills.
- Litigation/case management experience, and other demonstrated project-management experience. Experience litigating administrative cases under the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act is a plus.
- A desire to grow as a leader.
- Ability to multi-task and effectively and efficiently manage a high-volume caseload.
- A demonstrated commitment to meeting and exceeding expectations, and a history of getting things done.
- Strong personal presence and communication skills necessary to interact and develop positive relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
- A commitment to teamwork, collaboration, transparency, and public service.

A Juris Doctorate and at least three (3) to five (5) years of experience as a licensed attorney is required. Candidates must possess a current Tennessee law license. Knowledge of education law and policy, administrative procedure, experience advising government agencies, or prior experience with Board relations are preferred but not required.

Salary for this position is competitive and depends on prior experience. In addition, a comprehensive [benefits package](#) is included.

How to Apply

Please send a cover letter, resume, and writing sample to Angela Sanders, General Counsel at Angela.C.Sanders@tn.gov by **May 12, 2021**.

Cover letters should include an expected salary range.

Pursuant to the State of TN's policy of non-discrimination, the State Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, disability, or military services in its policies, or in the admission of, access to, treatment, or employment in its programs, services, or activities.