



Director of Policy and Government Affairs

POSITION DESCRIPTION

ABOUT GREEN SCHOOLYARDS AMERICA

Green Schoolyards America partners with school districts and public agencies across the U.S. to establish large-scale living schoolyard programs that transform school grounds into ecologically-rich, park-like green spaces. Our goal is to improve children's health, learning, and happiness while contributing to communities' ecological and climate resilience. We are working to change the norm for school ground design, use, and management so that all children will have access to the natural world in the places they already visit on a daily basis. We center equity in our work and collaborate with communities that have the greatest need for educational, environmental, health, and open space improvements. Our team develops and implements programs that shape and support the living school ground movement. We build relationships that help the movement succeed, and work to embed green schoolyard perspectives in our existing institutions and policy frameworks.

Green Schoolyards America's work is highly interdisciplinary and sits at the intersection of the environmental, health, education, city planning, and public policy fields. The problems we are trying to solve are larger than any single organization can address alone, so we convene and lead large-scale, collective impact initiatives that align many organizations and institutions to work toward robust, enduring systems change solutions. We value the power of the written word and share our ideas through professional presentations and written materials including books, articles, webpages, newsletters, policy guidance, and more.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Director of Policy and Government Affairs will lead GSA's national, state, and local policy advocacy activities primarily through direct lobbying and advising to national and state legislatures, government agencies, as well as participation in coalition work and policy creation. The Director of Policy and Government Affairs will advance GSA's policy agenda in environment, education, and health through strategic relationship building with key officials, advocacy coalitions and partner organizations. The Director of Policy and Government Affairs will increase GSA's visibility, position the organization as an influential resource and leader in California and beyond, and leverage the organization's experience, knowledge, and national scope and brand.

The Director of Policy and Government Affairs will collaborate and coordinate across the organization to ensure policy and advocacy priorities align with GSA's strategic priorities, organizational core values, and the needs of partners and communities served by GSA. This position will also support state-level programming as it relates to GSA's broader policy goals and programmatic expansion. The position will collaborate with GSA's staff and will report to a member of the senior leadership team. The Director

will be a crucial new member of the GSA team consisting of staff in California and Colorado with projects nationwide.

COMPETENCIES

The Director of Policy and Government Affairs will possess strong political savvy and be exceptional at relationship building. The Director will be creative, energetic, results-oriented, and a strong and proactive communicator. The Director will be highly collaborative, working closely with members of different teams across the organization.

RESPONSIBILITIES

As Green Schoolyards America's Director of Policy and Government Affairs you will:

Policy Advocacy and Government Affairs

- Collaborate with GSA leadership to design and implement a strategic legislative and policy strategy at the national and state level to advance GSA's environmental, health, education, and city planning priorities
- Execute GSA's legislative agenda utilizing appropriate strategies and tactics, including lobbying members of state and national legislatures, their staff, and governors offices
- Track interactions between GSA and elected officials, government staff, and coalition members; measure the effectiveness of policy work/initiatives and define and lead change to meet objectives
- Remain informed and responsive in strategy and communication to policy developments that impact the sector and present opportunities for GSA to take a leadership position
- Analyze and track legislation, draft legislation and amendments, and prepare and deliver written and oral testimony
- Build trusted relationships with elected and appointed officials and their staffs, agency decision-makers, governors offices, lobbyists and community stakeholders by providing clear, fact-based analysis and resources

Communications

- Prepare written materials in collaboration with GSA communications staff, including action alerts, talking points, issue briefs, policy reports, op eds, support letters, and website content
- Represent GSA in various community and stakeholder policy groups, build and lead coalitions with diverse stakeholders to advance shared policy goals, and work in partnership with other organizations
- Speak to the media or the public as needed

Program

- Coordinate relevant state-level initiatives that pertain to GSA's broader policy and expansion goals
- Communicate with state-level partners and ensure alignment with GSA's national legislative priorities

Development

- Identify potential sources and advocate for public funding for green schoolyards
- Assist GSA in preparing applications seeking organizational funding, and support the stewardship of relationships with donors who support GSA's policy work

Other Duties

- Coordinate with GSA admin to complete relevant reports
- Perform other related duties as assigned

QUALIFICATIONS

- 10+ years of professional experience in state and/or national legislative, political or policy advocacy work
- In depth understanding of the legislative and budget process, and political strategic planning
- Strong commitment to Green Schoolyards America's mission and passion for, and a well-articulated knowledge of environmental, education, and health-related policy areas
- Bachelor's degree in public policy, political science, or equivalent relevant professional experience
- Exceptional analytical, research, writing and oral advocacy skills, as well as the ability to articulate complex issues and to communicate them effectively to a variety of audiences
- Skilled relationship manager and demonstrated ability to build and sustain respectful relationships across the political spectrum with diverse coalitions, including navigating internal political dynamics among partner groups, and a personal approach that values and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability and socioeconomic circumstances
- Strong, proactive project management skills and ability to work simultaneously on multiple projects at various stages of completion while maintaining a keen attention to detail
- Self-aware and authentic leader with the ability to listen, guide and support people to achieve common goals

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience as a legislative staff member with experience navigating the ever-changing political landscape in Washington D.C.

LOCATION

This position involves occasional travel. GSA's policy work is primarily in California and in Washington D.C, and we expect the Director to attend hearings and in person meetings with legislators and policy makers in those areas as well as other states at key times. When not in the field, this position is fully remote and much of the work will be conducted from the employee's home office. The employee will need access to a strong internet connection, and must have the ability to travel when needed.

Most of our team is based in California, so it is important to us that all employees overlap on our core hours of 10 am - 3 pm Pacific Time, to allow collaboration between team members.

COMPENSATION

Classification: This is a regular, full-time (100%), salaried, exempt position.

Salary: Salary is commensurate with experience and takes into account the cost of living where the employee is located. The Bay Area salary range for this position is \$90K-\$120K.

Benefits: Health, dental, vision, and life insurance; 403b retirement plan available (optional)

Paid time off: Holidays, vacation, sick leave

Green Schoolyards America is a fiscally sponsored project of Earth Island Institute. As such the Director of Policy and Government Affairs will be an employee of Earth Island Institute.

Earth Island does not unlawfully discriminate against employees or applicants because of race, color, religion, religious creed, sex (including pregnancy, breastfeeding, childbirth, or related medical conditions), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, military and veteran status, or any other basis protected by state or federal laws, local law, or ordinance.

TO APPLY

If you are interested in being considered for this position, please email your cover letter, resume, and a writing sample to careers@greenschoolyards.org with "Director of Policy and Government Affairs" in the subject line.

This position is open until filled.