Policy Associate Job Description

Title: Policy Associate

Full-Time

Organization Overview
Advance Illinois is a not-for-profit policy and advocacy organization that works toward a healthy public education system that prepares students to achieve success in college, career and civic life. We are committed to an aligned education system that strives for equity, stresses college and career readiness and completion, and supports the whole child from the earliest years through adulthood. We believe every child should have access to a high-quality education regardless of geography, income or race.

Spanning the early childhood through higher education continuum, the Advance Illinois Policy team analyzes qualitative and quantitative data; reviews research and local and national practices; and stays abreast of federal requirements to inform the development and continuous improvement of state education policies and actions. We then work collaboratively with the full Advance Illinois team to advance them. We are seeking a passionate individual who is committed to public education, looking to grow in the not-for-profit sector, and able to thrive in a fast-paced and high-energy workplace.

Position Summary
Advance Illinois seeks an outstanding Policy Associate to work on issues related to state and regional education policy. The ideal candidate will have strong analytical, research, writing and communication skills, and the demonstrated ability to go above and beyond to support multiple projects.

The Policy Associate will report to the Director of Policy and will support the policy needs of the organization. We are looking for a self-starter who is comfortable working in a small team environment and partnering not only with staff members, but with diverse outside partners.

Competencies (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSA))

- Demonstrated commitment to valuing diversity and contributing to an inclusive working and learning environment
- Excellent research and analytic skills, including the ability to quickly synthesize large amounts of information
- Excellent communication skills – writing, speaking, listening, advising – and political savvy
- Demonstrated ability creating visualizations or graphics to communicate complex ideas and information
- Knowledge of government policy, programs, and cross-system strategies at the state and national levels that support children and youth
- Ability to extract, clean, analyze, and interpret trends from complex data sets
- Demonstrated ability to take independent action and assume responsibility
- Ability to identify and track key issues of concern to leaders and develop promising initiatives to address these concerns
- Interpersonal skills necessary to work effectively with a variety of colleagues and stakeholders
- Demonstrated ability to coordinate project activities
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- Proficiency in using software such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and Power Point. Experience with statistical analysis and data visualization software (R, Stata, Tableau) and design programs (Adobe Creative Suite) a plus.

Essential Functions:

- Writes issue briefs, articles and memoranda on policy issues and best practices for Advance Illinois staff.
- Manages the collection, analysis and dissemination of information and data necessary for successful project completion and provides technical assistance to partners, the state, and districts. This includes analyzing financial and budget data.
- Creates presentations and externally facing reports and documents
- Provides information and technical assistance to staff and other external policymakers. Occasionally provides policy analysis to committees, task forces, work groups that Advance Illinois participates in.
- Organizes, participates in, and conducts workshops, conferences, and seminars. Develops materials and talking points, support state strategy sessions, and other meetings.

- Contributes to project strategy to deliver relevant and timely expertise to Advance Illinois staff.
- Updates and maintains relevant websites and electronic portals related to issue areas.

Education and Experience
Bachelor’s degree plus relevant quantitative analytic, design and writing skills required.

Working Environment
Due to the current COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak, this position is temporarily remote. This arrangement is expected to be short term, and Advance Illinois will continue to monitor guidance from health officials and the need for remote work arrangements.

Compensation
Competitive salary commensurate with experience along with excellent benefits such as: health/dental insurance; short-term/long-term disability plans; 401K with a company match plan; flexible spending account; holidays and vacation accrual.

To Apply
Submit a resume and cover letter to: policy@advanceillinois.org. All submissions will be acknowledged. Applicants selected for an interview will be contacted. Please do not call Advance Illinois.

Equal Employment Opportunity Statement
Advance Illinois is an equal opportunity employer with a commitment to engaging the skills and leadership of people of color, low-income persons, LGBT persons, differently abled people, and other people from diverse backgrounds. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, political affiliation, mental or physical disability, age, marital status, family status, or veteran status. People from these and other historically marginalized backgrounds and communities are strongly encouraged to apply.