



DISTRICT, PARENT & FAMILY OMBUDSMAN

BASIC FUNCTION

Under administrative direction, seek to resolve concerns raised by parents and guardians of children enrolled in the Portland Public Schools by providing formal and informal assistance to District constituents, including students, staff, faculty, administrators and community stakeholders; serve as a designated neutral advocate for fairness, equity and inclusion; provide resources for information and referral; foster positive working relationships between the school community and District staff.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES

The classification specification does not describe all duties performed by all incumbents within the class. This summary provides examples of typical tasks performed in this classification.

- Serve as a resource for parents and the public to communicate education-related concerns; provide information and assistance regarding District academic and non-academic rules, regulations, and procedures; advocate for fairness, equity, inclusion, consistency, and positive working relationships between parents, teachers, students administrators and community partners. “E”
- Assist stakeholders to identify the appropriate official or office to which they should address their issues; facilitate dialogue between home and school as a means of resolving concerns. “E”
- Research and identify best practices and approaches to proactively address and prevent potential conflict situations; collaborate with district stakeholders to develop methods to deploy conflict avoidance and resolution strategies and trainings; provide one-on-one and group consultation services to effect positive relationships between District staff, parents, students and the community.
- Prepare and distribute information about complaint and inquiry processes; receive, intake and document initial concerns; conduct internal and external investigations; identify and interview stakeholders; determine validity of complaints, recommend means of resolution and identify impacts for the district; track and record issues and evaluate trends that may involve or require further intervention. “E”
- Identify recurring issues or patterns of complaints that would benefit from change in training, policy, and/or regulations and present corresponding recommendations for changes; participate in the development of district and departmental policies to ensure fair and equitable delivery of district services; advise on the strategic impacts resulting from policy implementation. “E”
- Oversee development and distribution of a variety of multilingual communication tools, brochures, and related communiqués which ensure that underserved and non-English speaking constituents are afforded equal access and understanding of their rights and procedures when navigating the District assistance and complaint processes. “E”
- Seek to resolve problems and concerns in a manner that is satisfactory to all parties involved through counseling, mediation and conflict resolution services in a prompt, fair and satisfactory manner. “E”
- Demonstrate a commitment to the Portland Public Schools Equity Initiative by developing a thorough knowledge and application of the district Racial Educational Equity Policy, Equity in Public Purchasing and Contracting and other board policies; participate in staff development, in-services and trainings related to diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace and in K – 12 education; model appropriate

behaviors; develop, recommend and implement improvements to school and business practices with awareness and understanding of their impact in a racially and culturally diverse community. “E”

- Prepare, develop and analyze reports of findings, alternatives and recommendations involving a broad range of issues; draft final resolution of complaints and inquiries; document and maintain records of all activities; prepare and deliver presentations to district management, district employees, community partners, parent groups and other stakeholders regarding activities’ status, as appropriate. “E”
- Assist parents and guardians in the process of becoming effective advocates for their own children. “E”
- Ensure confidentiality of information received and gathered in compliance with board policies, state and federal laws concerning complaint investigation and resolution. “E”
- Perform related duties as assigned.

Note: At the end of some of the duty statements there is an italicized “E”, which identifies essential duties required of the classification. This is strictly for use in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLASS

The District, Family and Parent Ombudsman provides a safe and confidential forum to surface individual, group and systemic problems, by listening to and helping clarify concerns, underlying issues and interests and exploring possible options through formal and informal channels. Employees investigate stakeholder concerns regarding a variety of issues and must be committed to fairness, inclusion, equity and respect for all viewpoints. This staff member collects a variety of data on emerging trends and patterns in the organization and makes recommendations for systemic change, while preserving the confidentiality of the individual(s) who seek their services. Employees in this classification should not be risk-averse and should understand that this position is empowered and may, on occasion, challenge even the highest levels of the administration in an effort to foster fair and just practices.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Knowledge of:

State, federal and local laws, regulations and court decisions applicable to K-12 public school operations.

Techniques and principles of high-quality customer service.

District culture, policies, procedures, organizational structure.

Ethnic, racial and cultural diversity of the PPS community.

Investigation principles, techniques and laws.

Data collection and analysis methods.

Conflict resolution applications and techniques.

Analytical, problem-solving and decision-making methodologies.

District culture, policies, procedures, organizational structure.

Definitions and philosophies that comprise the tenets of cultural competency.

Database, spreadsheet, word processing, internet and presentation software.

Public speaking techniques.

Record-keeping and report preparation techniques.

Ability to:

Promote a workforce that practices fairness, inclusion, equity and diversity.

Conduct interviews and observations for investigation purposes.

Facilitate quality decision-making and effective problem solving.

Value diversity and demonstrate the capacity for cultural self-assessment.

Be conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact.

Demonstrate institutionalized culture knowledge.

Develop adaptations to service delivery reflecting an understanding of cultural diversity within the PPS community.

Work through and manage conflict, deal with controversy and handle sensitive information and data with confidentiality.
Influence systems' change to alleviate problems and concerns.
Build trust and communicate effectively with racially and culturally diverse communities.
Ensure equal access to underserved and non-English speakers to navigate District complaint processes.
Analyze processes and problems, identify opportunities for improvement and follow through on changes.
Deliver a high-level of customer service to district stakeholders.
Work independently under minimal supervision.
Work collaboratively with a variety of people and establish effective relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
Advocate, model, learn and implement Portland Public School's Racial Equity Initiative, Equity in Public Purchasing and Contracting and other board policies.
Provide internal consultation services to district administration and staff.
Understand, interpret, apply and explain complex rules, regulations, policies, procedures, state and federal, law, and court decisions applicable to school district operations.
Demonstrate strong interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills with a variety of racial and cultural groups.
Prepare and present professional presentations to a variety of district, public and community officials and stakeholders.
Represent the district in a variety of public settings.
Adapt to and thrive in a fast-paced work environment with a demanding workload and changing/competing priorities, timelines and deadlines.
Operate a variety of technologies and related software.

Education and Training:

A Bachelor's degree in Psychology, Sociology, Conflict/Dispute Resolution, Education, Human Resources, Public Administration, or a related field is required. A Master's degree is preferred.

Experience:

Three (3) years of professional-level experience mediating work-related conflicts and/or experience as an Organizational Ombudsman, including experience preparing reports and delivering public presentations is required. Experience working in a K-12 school district or public agency is preferred.

Bilingual/bi-literate skills in a language other than English are highly desirable.

A Master's degree in Conflict Resolution will substitute for one (1) year of the required experience.

Any other combination of education, training and experience which demonstrates the candidate is likely to possess the skill, knowledge, ability and trait characteristics essential for this classification may be considered.

Special Requirements:

Positions in this classification require the use of a personal automobile and possession of a valid Class C Oregon driver's license.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The conditions herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Persons with certain disabilities may be capable of performing the essential duties of this class with or without reasonable accommodation, depending on the nature of the disability.

Work Environment: Work is performed primarily in an office environment and throughout the community with extensive student, parent and public contact and frequent interruptions.

Hazards: Frequent conversations involving conflict situations.

Physical Demands: Primary functions require sufficient physical ability and mobility to work in an office and travel throughout the community; dexterity of hands and fingers to operate a computer keyboard and other technologies and office equipment; sitting, standing and walking for extended periods of time; kneeling, bending at the waist; lifting, pushing, pulling and carrying equipment, supplies and materials weighing up to 25 pounds; repetitive hand movement and fine coordination to use a computer keyboard; emotional stability to work effectively under pressure and to keep all aspects of the job under control; hearing and speaking to exchange information in person or on the telephone; seeing to read, prepare and assure the accuracy of documents.

FLSA: Exempt
Bargaining Unit: N/A
Salary Grade: 34

Approval Date: February 12, 2014
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Portland Public Schools recognizes the diversity and worth of all individuals and groups and their roles in society. The District is committed to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in all its educational and employment activities. The District prohibits discrimination based on race; national or ethnic origin; color; sex; religion; age; sexual orientation; gender expression or identity; pregnancy; marital status; familial status; economic status or source of income; mental or physical disability or perceived disability; or military service.
Board of Education Policy 1.80.020-P