

LAKE WALES CHARTER SCHOOL GENERAL COUNSEL POLICY

Qualifications of General Counsel:

- Juris Doctorate from an accredited law school; Membership in the Florida Bar.
- Minimum of five (5) years experience in the practice of law, with preference for experience in education law at the K-12 or higher education level.
- Minimum of two (2) years of administrative law preferred; practical knowledge of rulemaking and hearings under the Florida Administrative Procedures Act.
- Experience in drafting and reviewing a variety of legal documents related to the operation of a large corporation preferred.
- Experience in all facets of labor relations.
- Possess a valid Florida Driver's License.
- Ability to work harmoniously with a diverse combination of employees and members of the public in the pursuit of facilitating appropriate input and support of policy and contract content.

Purpose and Functions of General Counsel:

The purpose of the General Counsel is to protect the Board's interests as it relates to legal matters and support the Superintendent, System, and System staff in serving the educational needs of students in a legally compliant manner. The delivery of legal services provided by the General Counsel shall be coordinated through the Superintendent and the Chair. The General Counsel fulfills the following functions:

- Serves as the primary legal resource for all education, operations, labor, and employment matters.
- Delivers accurate, responsive legal advice regarding legal, compliance, and litigation matters within the System.
- Prepares and renders legal opinions and gives advice to the Board.
- Serves as Parliamentarian at Board meetings.
- Request opinions from the Attorney General as necessary.
- Keeps the Board informed of changes in statutes and relative court decisions.
- Prepares and approves as to form all contracts entered into on behalf of the Board and/or the System.
- Corresponds with the Department of Education and the Polk County School District on behalf of the Board and the System.
- Manages outside legal services provided to the System.
- Serves as a Board and System advocate to support legislative platform, Board goals, initiatives, and other matters determined by the Board.
- Acts as legal advisor to the Board at quasi-judicial hearings.
- Offers proactive, comprehensive feedback and alternatives that the Board, Superintendent, and System staff may consider to make decisions.
- Operates as a thought partner before issues arise by providing legal review of policy and practices within the ethical standards of the Florida Bar.

- Proposes risk avoidance measures through the early identification of potential legal issues and strategic planning in consultation with the Board, Superintendent, and System staff.
- Provides legal defense in dispute settlements and litigation brought against the System.
- Develops legal tools and resources for school leaders and System staff.