

Ramin J. Taheri

(b)(6)

EXPERIENCE

Democrats for Education Reform, Washington, DC

Position: Executive Director, District of Columbia Chapter, March 2020 - Present

Salary: (b)(6) /year (includes monthly telecom allowance of (b)(6))

Duties:

- **Executive-level leadership:** Lead all aspects of the District of Columbia chapter (both the 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) arms) of a nonprofit education advocacy and political organization working to improve public education for students in Washington, DC.
- **Budget development and financial management:** Oversee an annual budget exceeding \$2 million, including forecasting revenue and expenses, the management of vendor contracts and invoices, and the determination of staff salaries.
- **Communications:** Create and manage all aspects of external relations and strategic communications; led campaign to develop and publish the organization's new vision, mission, and statement of core values; design and approve digital and print advocacy content, including through social media, mail, radio, and video; manage contract employees in the development and execution of communications strategies and content creation.
- **Leading people:** Supervise a team including a deputy director, field manager, program manager, several organizers, and a host of consultants; lead diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts designed to foster an inclusive workplace; design and manage formal and informal personnel development strategies, including annual performance reviews, interim check-ins, and goal-setting frameworks.
- **Coalition building:** Lead a diverse coalition of advocacy organizations, often navigating complicated internal political dynamics to move the group toward a common goal; work closely with executive-level leaders in other nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and academic/research focused entities; design and direct advocacy campaigns for the coalition (example: led the design and execution of an advocacy campaign for priorities in the fiscal year 2021 budget for Washington, DC, including digital advertising strategy and content; earned media (e.g., op-eds); written and oral testimony before the DC Council; and direct advocacy with elected and appointed officials).
- **Fundraising:** Responsible for all fundraising efforts; plan and execute major giving campaigns and efforts to identify and cultivate small-dollar donors, work closely with senior program officers in large philanthropic organizations to determine grant

requirements, metrics, reporting deadlines, and the projected scope and impact of deliverables.

- **Interfacing with senior-level leaders:** As executive director of the DC chapter, represent the organization in meetings, hearings, panels, and in the media; work directly with senior-level elected and appointed officials (e.g., members of the DC Council, the Deputy Mayor for Education, members of the DC State Board of Education).

Chiefs for Change, Washington, DC

Position: General Counsel and Director of Advocacy, Jan. 2020 - March 2020

Salary: (b)(6) year (includes monthly telecom allowance of (b)(6))

Duties:

- **Executive-level leadership:** Served as a member of the organization's senior leadership team, which includes the CEO, COO, and chief external affairs officer.
- **Legal and strategic guidance:** In addition to all the duties as director of advocacy and policy (listed below), as general counsel, advised the CEO and senior leadership team on all legal matters, ranging from the drafting and review of vendor contracts to the resolution of personnel matters.

Position: Director of Advocacy and Policy, Dec. 2018 - Jan. 2020

Salary: (b)(6) year (includes monthly telecom allowance of (b)(6))

Duties:

- **Policy and strategy:** Led all aspects of advocacy and policy for a national advocacy organization made up of district- and state-level education leaders (i.e., superintendents and agency heads); developed annual policy priorities in consultation with the CEO, board members, and key staff; translated strategy into tactical implementation plans and tracked their progress and impact; identified and developed innovative policy solutions and best practices using local, state, and national resources and contacts.
- **Results-driven operational management:** Coordinated the development of time-sensitive, complex grant deliverables, often juggling competing deadlines and substantial workloads to execute under budget (example: managed the in-house development of grant deliverable that previous leaders had intended to outsource at costs estimated up to \$400,000, saving the organization hundreds of thousands and using the project to develop the policy expertise of junior-level staff).
- **Public speaking and engagement:** Participated in numerous panels and conferences, including leading a "fireside chat" with the superintendent of a large school district in front of an audience of 200, leading a panel discussion with a professor of education and two school-district superintendents at a conference attended by roughly 100, and participating in a panel discussion aired live on NBC (local Houston affiliate) at the University of Houston.
- **Budget and financial management:** Managed budget of just under \$1 million, including determining forecasted revenue, expenses, and staffing needs.
- **Leading people:** Supervised a team that included full-time staff, fellows, and several contractors; designed and managed formal and informal personnel development strategies, including annual performance reviews, interim check-ins, and goal-setting frameworks.
- **Coalition building:** Represented Chiefs for Change externally and engaged key stakeholders and partners to build advocacy coalitions and advance the organization's priorities.
- **Interfacing with senior-level leaders:** Maintained strong relationships with key leaders in states and districts as well as with partner organizations, funders and prospective

funders, and other stakeholders, including school-district superintendents, state education agency heads, researchers, and staff in key offices of the Senate and House of Representatives.

Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser

Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education, Washington, DC

Position: Director of Policy & Partnerships, Feb. 2017 - Dec. 2018

➤ **Civil service title:** Special Assistant (ES-301-9)

Salary: (b)(6)/year

Duties:

- **Policy and strategy:** Led highly visible and complex initiatives, such as the Mayor's Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force (co-chaired by the former mayor, Anthony Williams, and then Deputy Mayor for Education Jennie Niles), designed to further systems improvement in public education in DC; served as senior advisor on all education policy and strategy issues.
- **Public speaking and engagement:** In addition to facilitating monthly task force meetings, designed and facilitated large community "town hall" meetings with upwards of 100 participants and smaller focus groups; participated on various panels focused primarily on school diversity and integration, including co-hosting a session at the 2018 National Coalition on School Diversity's national conference.
- **Operational management:** Directed all aspects of strategy and operations on core citywide education policy projects; managed outside counsel; cultivated and maintained relationships with funders, policy experts, and other key stakeholders.
- **Interfacing with senior-level leaders:** Routinely advised the deputy mayor on complex and politically sensitive issues; worked closely with the executive director of DC's Public Charter School Board, the state superintendent of education in DC, and the chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools system, and executive directors of various charter local education agencies.

U.S. Department of Education

Office of Planning, Evaluation & Policy Development, Washington, DC

Position: Senior Policy Advisor, Sep. 2014 - Feb. 2017

➤ **Civil service title:** Education Program Specialist (GS-1720-15) [Note: began on detail from Office for Civil Rights as General Attorney (GS-0905-14)]

Salary: \$132,352/year

Duties:

- **Managing policy development:** Managed rulemaking processes and the development of significant guidance materials (example: led the internal and interagency development of the final rule on "significant disproportionality" issued by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in 2016); led initiatives to evaluate and improve Departmental programs; coordinated policy development across a range of Obama Administration priorities related to civil rights, special education, school choice and charter schools, and school diversity and integration.
- **Managing federal budget development:** Developed budget materials, including congressional justifications, after consultation with program staff, senior leadership, White House and congressional staff, and external stakeholders (example: led the drafting and development of the Stronger Together budget proposal focused on school diversity and integration); managed the development of spending plans by individual program offices in the Department.

- **Managed policy decisions and competitive grant programs:** Brought forward significant policy issues to the “policy committee,” including, for some issues, directly briefing the Secretary; worked closely with program offices in developing the notices inviting applications (NIAs) and other grant documents; managed the clearance process for various NIAs.
- **Legislative development:** Represented the Department in meetings with congressional staff, the White House, and advocacy groups (example: worked closely with these groups in developing language for the *Every Student Succeeds Act*).

U.S. Department of Education

Office for Civil Rights, Washington, DC

Position: Senior Attorney, Sep. 2010 - Sep. 2014

- **Civil service title:** General Attorney (GS-0905-14)

Salary: \$116,887/year

Duties:

- **Legal and policy guidance:** Counseled senior leadership (e.g., assistant secretary, principal deputy) and enforcement staff on civil rights issues in various contexts, including amicus participation; agency rulemaking; intra and interagency requests for review of pending legislative, regulatory, and policy developments.
- **Legal and other writing:** Drafted regulatory and policy guidance and related press materials; reviewed, edited, and drafted technical assistance materials; researched and drafted legal memoranda and internal guidance; drafted speeches, talking points, and press releases.
- **Public speaking and engagement:** Represented OCR in congressional and other public correspondence; served on panels and delivered technical-assistance presentations.
- **Operations:** Managed FOIA response process for the disability rights team in the Program Legal Group.

EDUCATION

- **Georgetown University, McCourt School of Public Policy**, Washington, DC
Certificate in Education Finance, 2020
- **Boston University School of Law**, Boston, MA
Juris Doctor, 2005
- **Columbia University, Teachers College**, New York, NY
Master of Arts (Developmental Psychology), 2001
- **University of Maryland**, College Park, MD
Bachelor of Arts (Psychology), 1998

LICENSES AND FELLOWSHIPS

- Licensed to practice law in Massachusetts (2005) and New York (2006)
- Fellow, Excellence in Government, Partnership for Public Service (2013-14)

RECENT VOLUNTEER AND LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

- Thrive by Five Coordinating Council, Member (mayoral appointment) (2019-Present)
- Capitol Hill Little League, Board Member and co-director of fundraising (2019-Present)
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission, Committee on Alcoholic Beverage Licensing Member (2018-19)
- University of Maryland Alumni Network of Washington, DC, Board Member (2018-Present)
- DCPS Local School Advisory Team, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Co-Chair (2017-18)