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School Funding Research and Policy Fellow

The Education Law Center's mission is to ensure access to a quality public education for all children in Pennsylvania. For over 40 years, we have advocated for the most vulnerable students -- children living in poverty, children of color, those in the foster care and juvenile justice systems, children with disabilities, English Language Learners, LGBTQ students, and those experiencing homelessness. We focus on three key program areas: (1) **Fighting for Fair Funding**, which includes advocating for adequate and equitable state funding for under-resourced schools in Pennsylvania; (2) **Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline**, which includes promoting evidence-based prevention practices to improve school climate while advocating against exclusionary discipline policies that push at-risk children out of school and often into the school-to-prison pipeline; and (3) **Ensuring Equal Access**, which includes advocating for access to school and needed services on behalf of at-risk students. ELC employs a broad range of strategies to accomplish our mission, including direct legal representation, impact litigation, educating parents and students about their legal rights, supporting community-based groups, and policy advocacy on the local, state, and federal levels. **We seek a Haverford House Fellow to assist us in an important school funding advocacy project.**

Pennsylvania has the widest gap in the nation between the highest and lowest spending districts. Economic and racial inequities abound across the state and many of our students do not have access to an adequate education. Simply put, students across Pennsylvania are not receiving the services to which they are entitled because schools are

Ensuring that all of Pennsylvania's children have equal access to a quality public education.

underfunded. The state is roughly three billion dollars short of what it should spend to provide an adequate education to all children in Pennsylvania.

ELC is pursuing multiple strategies to address the school funding crisis, including the filing of a major state constitutional legal challenge to the current system of public education. ELC is also a leader of PA Schools Work, a statewide coalition of more than 20 organizations working together to ensure that all students in Pennsylvania have access to an adequate education no matter where they live. We seek a highly-motivated Haverford House Fellow to assist with this advocacy, with a focus on basic education and special education funding in Pennsylvania. Specific tasks include:

- Conducting social science research on school finance and other education issues
- Collecting and analyzing data for use in school funding litigation and other advocacy
- Writing policy analyses and policy briefs connected to legislation, school funding research, and advocacy
- Working with community members as we help them advocate for fair funding with policy makers
- Assisting communications team with media activities, including drafting press releases, background briefings, editorial board meetings, and maintaining up-to-date media lists
- Expanding our contacts with public education activists and community groups throughout the state. This will entail identifying new contacts (from existing relationships, news articles, phone calls and e-mails addressed to us, etc.), talking with them to learn their concerns and to share our perspectives, and bringing them into our networks.

Qualifications:

- Excellent interpersonal, writing, and computer skills
- Superior organization skills
- Interest in education-related issues or child advocacy
- Experience with quantitative analyses a plus
- Ability to help with graphic design (e.g. ability to create effective infographics) a plus
- Motivated individual who is able to work in a team environment
- Ability to handle multiple projects simultaneously
- Ability to work independently
- Flexibility and a sense of humor

Diverse applicants are encouraged to apply. The Research and Policy Fellow will report to ELC's Policy Director. The Fellow will have the opportunity to work with the entire ELC staff. Interested applicants should contact Reynelle Brown Staley at rstaley@elc-pa.org or 267-825-7710.