



**ROLE: State Director – New York**

**LOCATION: New York, NY**

**START DATE: ASAP**

**REPORTS TO: Chief of Staff and State Operations**

### **ROLE OVERVIEW**

DFER is seeking a State Director to lead its New York chapter and be responsible for advancing the DFER mission in NY. This requires:

- Developing and implementing a political strategy and policy agenda
- Designing and executing successful non-profit and political fundraising campaigns
- Building a diverse network of local allies and partners, and
- Executing a comprehensive communications plan.

### **WHO WE ARE**

**Democrats for Education Reform (DFER)** is a national political organization that supports elected Democrats and candidates for office who seek to expand policies and practices that work well for America's students and confront those that do not. We are education progressives who prioritize students and families, especially low-income students and students of color who should be better served by our country's public education system. The New York chapter launched in 2008 with the goal of supporting Democrat policymakers in the state who promote excellence and equity in public education by legislating with a student-centered approach.

DFER partner **Education Reform Now Advocacy (ERNA)** is an advocacy group that advances education reform measures through empowering community leaders to support our legislative and political advocacy work. ERNA keeps constant pressure on legislators to champion high-quality public education.

DFER partner **Education Reform Now (ERN)** is a nonpartisan think tank that promotes increased resources and innovative reforms in K-16 public education, particularly for students of color and students from low-income families.

### **WHAT WE DO**

1. **Support for Progressive Education Leaders** — In an approach that is markedly different from our peers and partners in the field, DFER engages directly with candidates and elected officials to empower them to advocate for education policies that focus foremost on serving students. Our partner organization, Education Reform Now's work involves

policy research, analysis and education that helps policy makers at all levels understand complex education issues and make informed decisions.

2. **Informing the Education Debate in New York** — Our coalition work reflects the breadth of our policy priorities. We participate in a broad array of coalitions including those focused on increased broadband and device accessibility, higher education access and affordability, high-quality public charter schools, and overall equity, fighting for higher achievement and greater opportunities for all students in New York State.
3. **Targeted Interventions and Rapid Response** — DFER's breadth and depth of reach from the most local district relationships to state and federal policymakers, enable us to respond quickly to the changing landscape and policy trends. Activities vary significantly from project to project and may include training, policy analysis, public engagement, electoral and issue advocacy, and policy guidance for elected officials and local advocates.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The State Director will have access to political, policy, communications, development, and back-office support from the organization's national office.

DFER NY aims to create a political environment across the state that prioritizes our children, families, and public schools. Specifically:

- We partner and support elected officials who share our vision to prioritize a student-centered policy agenda rooted in educational equity and excellence
- We work to recruit, train and support prospective candidates running for office that will vocally champion DFER's equity agenda
- We build a network of coalition partners who share our ambition for who we know our children are and can be, what we know our children can learn and contribute, and where we know our children can go
- We cultivate our existing donor base and build new donor champions who understand the value of politics in education policymaking
- We organize school leaders, parents, community members and stakeholders to advocate on behalf of expanded opportunities
- We track policy, legislation, and news for our base of supporters so they have consistent and synthesized access to information

## **WHO WE'RE LOOKING FOR**

The ideal candidate will possess the following qualifications and skills:

- **Leadership experience:** leadership and management experience within the non-profit education and political campaign/advocacy sectors; record of achieving ambitious results in these roles
- **Fundraising:** ability to raise funds in a non-profit and/or political context (and ideally experience in both)
- **Knowledge and Networks:** understanding the landscape and having existing relationships within New York state and local political systems and leaders

- **Strategic thinking:** able to map the local political and education landscapes and determine the key levers and timing for change and progress
- **Communication skills:** extremely compelling communicator, in writing and in person; able to persuade and influence individuals and groups that are not fully aligned to collaborate with each other
- **Goal-driven and persistent:** strong track record of setting and achieving big goals despite challenges; operates with a relentless determination to achieve goals with creativity; has enthusiasm for the work
- **Political savvy:** motivated by the opportunity to affect change in the political and advocacy sphere; interest in politics and advocacy on a national, state, and local level
- **Mission fit:** commitment to policy reforms that will improve educational opportunities for all students, particularly students of color and low-income students. A strong racial and social justice lens. A sense of humor and humility. Comfort with complexity.

### **COMPENSATION**

Competitive salary, commensurate with experience. DFER is proud to offer excellent benefits: health and dental coverage; life insurance; short- and long-term disability; 401K with a match plan; flexible spending/benefits plan; holidays and paid vacation.

### **COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

Democrats for Education Reform welcomes applications from all, and strongly encourages women, people of color, people with disabilities, immigrants, refugees & LGBTQ people to apply for this position. We are committed to maximizing the diversity of our organization and recruiting a team that reflects the diversity of New York students.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

Please apply as soon as possible, even if you are not available to start immediately. All applications are held in strict confidence. Interested applicants should send resume and cover letter in one email to: [nysearch@dfer.org](mailto:nysearch@dfer.org) and [hr@dfer.org](mailto:hr@dfer.org). References will be requested in later stages of the selection process.