DIRECTOR, SPECIAL EDUCATION

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the direction of the Student Services Director, the position is responsible for the leadership, administration, and supervision of the school division’s special education program and services and the daily operational functions of the Office of Programs for Exceptional Children (OPEC).

ESSENTIAL TASKS
(These are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work performed. The omission of specific duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.)

- Establish and communicate a division-wide philosophy of least restrictive environment for serving special needs students.
- Guide the development and implementation of long-range and short-range plans for achieving special education goals and objectives in alignment with the school division’s strategic plan.
- Direct special education services for all students with disabilities and ensure that students have access to the school division’s core curriculum.
- Monitor the development and implementation of all aspects of the special education program process.
- Collaborate with the Director of Student Services to coordinate services provided through the Office of Student Services.
- Oversee the Extended School Year (ESY) program.
- Assume responsibility for Child Find activities including the coordination of all schools’ referral activities and preschool screenings.
- Collaborate with school-based administrators and central office administrators regarding the discipline of students with disabilities.
- Interview and hire staff members for OPEC; supervise and evaluate all daily activities of staff members relative to assigned tasks; reassign operational responsibilities of staff members as necessary to provide opportunities for cross-training and growth.
- Facilitate and/or participate in all matters of dispute resolution with the Virginia Department of Education and the Office for Civil Rights pertaining to students with disabilities; manage mediation and due process procedures.
- Provide accurate and timely data to the Virginia Department of Education’s State Performance Plan for evaluating outcomes for students with disabilities.
- Develop, monitor, supervise and manage all aspects of the annual budgets for special education and audiology services; coordinate budget requests with individual schools relative to instructional programs.
- Coordinate the implementation of federal and state grant applications and manage appropriate IDEA grants.
- Oversee and direct the allocation of special education staff to schools in accordance with state and local standards and student needs.
- Review federal and state legislation/regulations related to special education; identify and share the impact of changes on the school division.
- Monitor compliance with School Board Policies and Regulations and work with the School Board attorneys to develop required policy changes.
- Maintain open lines of communication regarding special education with all interested parties; respond to concerns of parents, teachers, building and central office administrators, and community members.
- Monitor Standards of Learning (SOL) testing in collaboration with the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment, as applicable to students with disabilities.
- Maintain accurate database and files of former and current students served in special education.
- Maintain a permanent inventory of equipment available to students with disabilities from OPEC and all equipment and materials purchased by the school division for special education.
• Prepare reports and information for the school board including the Special Education Annual Plan and the application for federal funds.
• Conduct ongoing needs assessments, collect and analyze data, use pertinent data to refine and improve OPEC operational functions and services; evaluate special education program initiatives.
• Facilitate research regarding trends and best practices to support appropriate recommendations for student success through rigorous, innovative, and technological programming.
• Advise on the design, furnishings, and equipment for special education classrooms and facilities.
• Plan, implement and facilitate professional development/in-services for school staff assigned the responsibility of delivering and overseeing the special education services/process in their buildings.
• Engage all new staff members in effective induction procedures and facilitate continued professional development through ongoing training opportunities within OPEC and the division.
• Plan and implement professional development for OPEC staff; involve staff in continuous improvement through self-evaluation and goal setting.
• Serve as the school division’s liaison in all matters concerning special education.
• Maintain communication network with other special education directors within the state.
• Work collaboratively with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) to refine and enhance programs and services for students with disabilities.
• Assist Department of Human Resources with screening special education applicants as needed.
• Perform related work as required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

Ability to work collaboratively with principals to implement and monitor special education programs; ability to work in a supportive, collaborative role with staff in all departments and offices; ability to interface with other departments to coordinate reciprocal services for achieving special education goals; ability to interpret and remain current on all federal, state, and local mandates for special education and Section 504 services and to ensure that the school division is in compliance; handle confidential information discretely and professionally; use discretion and exercise sound judgment; exceptional public relations/interpersonal skills to respond to parents and advocacy groups and to serve as the school division’s lead representative/contact person of programs for special needs students; effective management, supervisory, team-building, and problem solving skills.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Master’s Degree required, CAS/EdS/EdD/PhD preferred. Valid Virginia Postgraduate Professional license required with endorsements in administration, supervision, and special education. Significant experience as a teacher and administrator working with students with disabilities (ages 2 to 21 years inclusive) to include a minimum of 5 years direct development of IEPs and implementation through service delivery and 5 years administrative/supervisory experience involving exceptional learner processes and instructional programming.
(Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential tasks.)

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

None

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Possession of a valid driver’s license