

Sonoma County Office of Education – Job Description

Classified

TEACHING ASSISTANT, SPECIALIZED SERVICES

Definition:

Provides specialized assistance to students who may have specific disabilities. Facilitates access to curricula via alternative formats including but not limited to those that are specifically designed to assist students with specific disabilities, such as blindness, visual impairments, deafness, and those considered to be hard of hearing (Braille, large type, tactile representation aural media, specialized visual assistance and alternative modes of communication. Provides Braille textbook formatting. Adapts, produces, collates and binds print materials in a variety of font sizes.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This classification is distinguished from the Teaching Assistant, Special Education in that the incumbent works closely with Teacher of Students with Blindness/Visual Impairments (TVI) Teacher of Students with Deafness/Hard of Hearing (TDHH), and follows detailed instruction and/or established practices and procedures on most duties. Uses judgment and initiative in performing job duties and work with students with specific disabilities. Incumbent may be assigned to a specific classroom or multiple classrooms.

Supervision Exercised and Received:

Incumbent is supervised by a Teacher of Students with Blindness/Visual Impairments (TVI) Teacher of Students with Deafness/Hard of Hearing (TDHH) and the Administrator of Program.

Example of Duties and Responsibilities:

Duties and Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Under the direction of the classroom teacher, TVI, TDHH, may provide individual or small group instruction to students with visual impairment and/or deafness/hard of hearing to assist them in accessing curriculum and understanding instructional concepts.
- May work with students on specific Individual Education Program (IEP) goals.
- As appropriate, assists with completing in-class, homework assignments or other projects as required for students.
- May use specialized equipment and standard office machines to produce specialized formats; collates, binds and converts instructional materials, including tests, workbooks and other materials.
- Assists teaching staff in creating an optimal learning environment; consistently implements behavior management plans where needed.
- Assists grade level students in taking classroom notes with the use of special equipment when needed.
- May provide Braille translation to visually impaired students and assist with instruction of student in Braille reading, math and writing.
- May utilize and assist in use of specialized computers, software and other Braille devices to transcribe instructional materials into Braille.

- Adapts print materials in required font sizes according to individual student need; assists in the use of a variety of supplementary instructional materials and aids, including large print, tactile illustrations and auditory supports.
- Supervises and provides assistance with mobility and environmental awareness and safety for students as needed on playgrounds, at lunch time traveling the school campus, field trips and in other appropriate educational settings.
- Assists students with self care activities as needed and as directed by the classroom teacher and/or TVI/TDHH.
- May administer and score tests, gather and compile information for various reports and maintain other records as required.
- Participates in training and staff development activities as directed.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

Employment Standards:

Knowledge of:

- Regular and Special education specialized instructional/tutorial techniques.
- Behavior management techniques.
- Safe Work practices.

Preferred Knowledge:

- Basic Braille and Braille codes and rules.
- Knowledge of instructional techniques for students with deafness/hard of hearing.
- Specialized equipment for assisting students with unique needs, including but not limited to, Braille devices, computer software, assisted hearing devices and print access technology.

Ability to:

- Learn and use basic Braille, Braille codes and rules within the first six months of employment in this classification and/or learn, and use, communication systems typically used with students with hearing loss.
- Operate standard office equipment including computers and related software applications.
- Learn to operate office devices, scanners, enlarging photocopiers, embossers and other peripheral equipments and aids within the first six months of employment in this classification.
- Keyboard effectively and operate recording equipment.
- Communicate effectively in oral and written form; demonstrates correct usage of English grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary.
- Respond promptly to requests of internal and external clients; provide needed information, assistance, training, materials and resources.
- Plan, organize and prioritize own work to meet deadlines and accomplish tasks within established timelines, including maintaining accurate records and files.
- Maintain orderly work environment and perform tasks in a prescribed and safe manner.
- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with those contacted during performance of job duties.
- Maintain and improve professional skills and knowledge.
- Be flexible and receptive to change.
- Understand instructional and learning problems characteristic of visually impaired students.

- Have enthusiasm for and interest in the instructional program.
- Understand and apply principles, techniques and procedures required for effective job performance.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of education and experience that would provide the knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

Education:

Required:

- NCLB requirements for paraprofessionals working in Title I programs.
 - High school diploma or the equivalent, **and**
 - Two years of college (48 units), **or**
 - A. A. degree (or higher), **or**
 - Pass a local assessment of knowledge and skills in assisting in instruction.

Preferred:

- Unified English Braille Code knowledge.
- Completion of Library of Congress Certification in Unified English Braille (UEB).
- Additional training in Braille textbook formatting, adaptation, collating, production and binding of print materials in a variety of font sizes using specialized equipment.
- Knowledge of American Sign Language or other communication system used by the deaf community.

Experience:

Required:

- Any combination of training, experience and/or education equivalent necessary to acquire knowledge of specialized instructional techniques. (If candidate has not met the criteria prior to employment, the candidate must complete this requirement within six months of employment.)

Preferred:

- Experience working with visually impaired students or students with other special needs in a school setting.

Physical Abilities:

The physical abilities described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.

Note -Terms used in this section are defined as follows: Rarely: 1 to 10%; Occasionally: 11 to 33%; Frequently: 34 to 66%; and Continuously: 67 to 100% of the workday.

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| • Sitting: | Occasionally |
| • Standing/Walking: | Frequently |
| • Waist Bending: | Occasionally to Frequently |
| • Neck Bending: | Occasionally to Frequently |
| • Squatting: | Occasionally |
| • Climbing: | Rarely |
| • Kneeling: | Occasionally |

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| • Crawling: | Rarely |
| • Neck Twisting: | Occasionally to Frequently |
| • Waist Twisting: | Occasionally |
| • Pushing/Pulling: | Frequently – up to 60-75 lbs. at a time (such as wheelchairs) |
| • Running | Occasionally |
| • Reaching: | |
| o Above Shoulder: | Occasionally |
| o Below Shoulder: | Frequently |
| • Lifting/Carrying: | |
| o 0-10 lbs: | Frequently - weights carried 50 to 100 feet at a time |
| o 11-25 lbs: | Occasionally - weights carried up to 100 feet at a time |
| o 26-50 lbs: | Occasionally - weights carried 10 to 100 feet at a time |
| o 51-75 lbs: | Occasionally - <i>with assistance</i> - weights moved several feet at a time for toileting and transfers |
| o 76-100 lbs: | Rarely - <i>with assistance</i> - weights moved several feet at a time for toileting and transfers |
| • Hand Activities: | |
| o Repetitive Hand Use: | Frequently |
| o Simple Grasping: | Frequently |
| o Power Grasping: | Occasionally |
| o Fine Manipulation: | Rarely |
| o Hand and Arm Twisting/Turning: | Occasionally to Frequently |
| o Computer Operation/Writing: | Frequently |

- Meet sometimes, strenuous physical requirements necessary to safely and effectively perform assigned duties, including lifting 50 pounds on a regular basis and periodically lifting in excess of 50 pounds with assistance. For Preschool positions, this may include moving preschool equipment such as cots, tables, chairs; lifting infants and young children; perform twisting, bending, pushing, pulling, lifting, stooping, reaching motions during interaction with students and their children.
- May be required to accompany students on field trips, which may require maneuvering into awkward positions or in narrow bus aisles.
- Must be able to lift and physically restrain students at times; to take appropriate action in emergency situations; and follow procedures in a calm, responsible manner.
- Must be able to exchange information quickly and effectively in person, by telephone or other electronic means.
- Must be able to read, prepare and proofread documents.
- Must be able to operate a computer keyboard and other office and specialized equipment, with appropriate adaptations where needed.
- Must be able to stoop, bend, twist, and reach overhead and horizontally to retrieve and store materials and files.
- Must be able to hear computer sound prompts.
- Must be able to distinguish colors.
- Must be able to communicate and exchange information, effectively, discreetly, and accurately in a high activity environment with staff, students, parents and individuals who may have limited expressive and receptive conversational capacities.
- Must be able to detect visual and non-visual warning signs of developing physical and emotional situations that may require attention from certificated staff.
- Must be able to express self effectively, verbally and non-verbally in classroom with staff, student and parents.

- Must be able to discern visual and non-visual signs of physical and non-physical issues that may negatively affect the learning environment.
- Must be able to monitor students and staff visually and non-visually to effectively assist in the management of an orderly and safe learning environment.

Work environment:

- Walking on uneven ground when outdoors.
- Exposure to student illnesses, injuries, infections and bodily fluids.
- May be exposed to chemicals contained in cleaning products.
- May be required to maneuver into awkward positions.
- May be required to work outdoors, i.e., outdoor campus areas (playground, campus quad, sports fields, community outings), or in confined spaces.
- May be required to work indoors in other school rooms in addition to classroom, i.e., library, cafeteria, etc.

Other Requirements:

- Must be fingerprinted and satisfactory Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation records checks must be received by Sonoma County Office of Education, prior to employment.
- TB testing will be required upon employment.
- Must pass a pre-employment physical (if applicable).
- Visual acuity sufficient to read manuals, video display screens and other related material and work at a computer screen frequently and throughout the day.
- May be required to obtain first aid and CPR certificates within the first 6-12 months of employment.
- May be required to drive with or without students; some positions may require a current California driver license, proof of insurance and possible participation in the DMV Pull Notice Program once employed.

Other:

- Revised: August 16, 2016
- FLSA Status: Non-Exempt
- Bargaining Unit: SEIU
- Approved by: Personnel Commission