



**Orange County Department of Education
Human Resources Department
Classified Class Specification**

**Class Code: 3125
Date Adopted: 7/1/2024**

**FLSA Status: Nonexempt
Union Representation: Represented**

Senior Naturalist

GENERAL PURPOSE

Under direction, organizes, coordinates, and oversees the work of field naturalists engaged in providing science instruction to Orange County students; provides supplemental science and environmental education programs to students by leading Inside the Outdoors (ITO) field trip programs or Traveling Scientist classroom programs in schools across Orange County; and performs related duties as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Senior Naturalists are responsible for the delivery of supplementary science education programs either at assigned outdoor sites or through the Traveling Scientist program. Incumbents organize, coordinate, and oversee the work of part-time field naturalists providing natural sciences education in such areas as biology, ecology, geology, and history. Incumbents participate in developing instructional activities and materials in conformance with state curriculum standards and provide instruction and conduct activities for visiting students and classroom teachers. When assigned to the Traveling Scientist program, an incumbent teaches science programs at elementary schools throughout Southern California, incorporating the use of animals, including birds, reptiles, mammals, insects, and amphibians, in ITO's collection.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This position description is intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by an employee assigned to this position. This description is not an exhaustive list of all duties, responsibilities, knowledge, skills, abilities, and working conditions associated with this position. All requirements are subject to possible modification to reasonably accommodate individuals with a disability.

1. Organize, coordinate, and oversee the work of field naturalists providing environmental science instruction to visiting students and teachers at assigned outdoor locations; provide training; observe and provide feedback on teaching techniques, group management skills, and instructional content; prepare evaluations of field teaching and general job performance; and ensure program rules, policies, and procedures are followed.
2. Provide orientations and coordinates with classroom teachers, bus drivers, and adult volunteers for visiting school groups; explain activities, rules, and procedures for arrival/departure and while on site; and prepare daily summary reports, billing reports, student counts, and safety/accident reports as needed.
3. Supervise, instruct, and lead hands-on activities for students, teachers, and volunteers in natural sciences applicable to the ecosystems of assigned sites, including biology, ecology, geology, and

history; and assist in the creation of program curriculum and instructional materials and ensure content is consistent with state curriculum and program guidelines and standards.

4. Adjust program activities in response to weather conditions, scheduling, group size problems, adult-student ratios, incomplete visiting school preparation, and other unplanned events; arrange for the needs of students or others with limited mobility; work with teachers and volunteers to resolve student behavior problems; and take appropriate action in the event of a medical emergency or injury.
5. Continuously monitor and review on-site safety protocols for students to ensure their safety, utilizing group management techniques; coordinate activities and use of facilities with park rangers; and interact with the public to resolve any potential conflicts in site and facilities use.
6. When assigned to the Traveling Scientist program, drive to and from elementary schools throughout Southern California; coordinate daily and monthly schedules with ITO staff and school representatives, when required; communicate the school's responsibilities in preparing for the Traveling Scientist program; and develop lesson plans and teach supplementary science education curricula consistent with program standards and guidelines and state standards.
7. Develop and maintain a variety of instructional materials and aids; cage and transport animals, birds of prey, and other species for use in classroom instruction; develop methods to explain or demonstrate information to students; demonstrate techniques, processes, and methods for students; and return animals to ITO facilities, providing any care required and medical attention when necessary to ensure an animal's health and well-being.
8. Set up and arrange materials, supplies, and equipment for instructional activities; and maintain, repair, or replace program equipment and instructional aids as needed.

OTHER DUTIES

1. Drive OCDE vehicles to field locations; and perform driver-level safety checks and maintenance of vehicles.
2. Attend a variety of meetings, training sessions, conferences, and workshops.
3. Administer CPR and first aid as required.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

1. Assigned specialized science subject matter areas, including applicable state and OCDE standards and regulations.
2. Methods, practices, and techniques of improving student science knowledge through specialized lesson plans, inquiry-based methods, teaching techniques, instructional materials, and hands-on activities.
3. Methods and practices of child instruction and tutoring.
4. Correct English usage, including spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
5. Administrative practices and procedures, including record-keeping and filing practices and procedures.
6. CPR and first aid.

Ability and Skill to:

1. Perform specialized tasks applicable to instructional subject areas.
2. Operate a computer using word processing, spreadsheet, and database software, and other standard office equipment, and specialized equipment and materials.
3. Organize, set priorities, and exercise sound judgment within areas of responsibility.
4. Monitor and control student behavior in both indoor and outdoor settings.
5. Organize and maintain confidential student records and files.
6. Communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing; and understand and follow written and oral instructions.
7. Prepare and maintain a variety of records, reports, and files.
8. Deal with sensitive and difficult situations.
9. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with OCDE management, administrators, faculty, and volunteers from visiting schools, staff, students, and others encountered in the course of work.
10. Must demonstrate attendance sufficient to complete the duties of the position as required.

Education, Training, and Experience:

A typical way of obtaining the knowledge, skills, and abilities outlined above is a bachelor's degree in a natural science-related field and one (1) year of experience working with school-age children; or a combination of training and experience.

Licenses; Certificates; Special Requirements:

A valid California driver's license and the ability to maintain insurability under OCDE's vehicle insurance policy.

Obtain valid CPR and first aid certifications.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEMANDS

The physical and mental demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this class.

Physical Demands

Employees must be able to perform the essential functions of the position with or without accommodation. Employees in this classification often lift, carry, push, and pull heavy objects. They read written and electronic materials; communicate clearly with those contacted through the course of work (typically in person, on the phone, and via email); and access and operate all required equipment for job duties. This position may include the need to traverse uneven surfaces. May move items weighing up to 50 pounds and lift up to 100 pounds with assistance.

Must pass a pre-employment physical examination related to job duties and assignments and in accordance with relevant codes and regulations.

Mental Demands

While performing the duties of this class, the incumbent is regularly required to use written and oral communication skills; read and interpret information; analyze and solve problems; make observations and interpret people and situations; use mathematical reasoning; learn and apply new information or skills; perform detailed work on multiple, concurrent tasks with frequent interruptions; work under intensive deadlines and meet productivity requirements; and interact successfully with various groups of people encountered in the course of work.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions. Employees typically work in an outdoor environment, and the noise level can be loud. Employees are exposed to outdoor weather conditions, extreme heat and cold, walk and climb on uneven terrain, and may be exposed to wild animals.