PRINCIPAL, SPECIAL EDUCATION

Definition:

Plan, organize and direct services and activities of special education within the Special Education Department of the County Office; provide educational and administrative leadership to the staff and students at designated sites; plan, coordinate, schedule and supervise and evaluate work performed by certificated and classified staff; plan, organize and direct all aspects of school operations; develop and administer program budgets; serve as liaison between the County Office and local districts, other schools, outside agencies and the general public; manage and coordinate facilities use; provide responsible and professional staff assistance in the management of the education program; and perform related duties as assigned.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

- Working under general direction, incumbent assists in the development and implementation of goals and objectives within the Special Education Department.
- Budgetary responsibilities include assistance in developing, administering and monitoring program budgets and approving expenditures within approved budgets.
- Supervisory responsibilities include day-to-day supervision of certificated and classified staff, conducting staff evaluations, and initiating and writing contracts for work performed by consultants and non-public agents.
- Plans program objectives, makes major decision in program operations and infrequently refers specific cases to supervisor.
- Contact with others includes district superintendents, administrators, board and other agencies as a representative of the County Office; contacts may require influencing others to obtain desired results.

Supervision Received and Exercised:

General direction is provided by the Director of Special Education. Responsibilities include direct and indirect supervision of certificated and classified staff.

Examples of Duties and Responsibilities:

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

- Plan, manage, assign and supervise special education programs conducted within one or more school sites.
- Attend Individual Educational Program (IEP) meetings, determine class placement and monitor delivery systems for student special education services.
- Direct and monitor school support activities to ensure facilities maintenance, clerical assistance, appropriate record keeping and adherence to department procedures.
- Direct and assist staff through conferences, meetings, emails, memos, in-service workshops, classroom demonstrations and site visits.
- Confer and assist in resolving a variety of education-related issues and problems with students, teachers, case workers, parents, school officials and other agency personnel.

- Establish, implement and maintain effective systems for school records and office support services.
- Prepare and present a variety of reports, records and statistical data regarding activities, attendance, physical maintenance, instructional needs and services.
- Assist in developing, maintaining, monitoring and administering program budget(s); monitor and approve expenditures; respond to requests from staff for budget expenditures.
- Assist in the planning, development and implementation of program evaluation systems.
- Plan, develop and implement staff development and in-service training programs.
- Work closely with parents, keeping them appraised of educational activities and soliciting their input for program change and improvement.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of County Office contracts, collective bargaining agreements, policies and procedures.
- Monitor compliance with all applicable federal and state laws in regard to annual reviews, re-evaluations, etc.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of courses of study, common core state standards, state testing requirements and curriculum.
- Direct and monitor implementation of educational programming appropriate to assignment.
- Serve as liaison and coordinate educational programs with a variety of outside agencies, community groups, local school districts and other entities; implement and coordinate parent and advisory group activities, as applicable.
- Establish and maintain clear communications and cooperative working relationships with clients, staff, other agencies, regional and state administrators through announcements, letters, telephone communications, attendance at meetings and site visits.
- Participate in the acquisition of grants and other sources of funding for the County Office programs and projects; coordinate and participate in writing proposals and agreements; ensure that grants and agreements are properly administered.
- Develop personal goals and objectives which support and are consistent with the goals of the Superintendent and the County Office.
- Maintain professional competencies in areas of responsibility; maintain contact with and participate in professional job related organizations; serve as a liaison to professional groups.
- Assist teachers and staff with student conflicts and problems.
- Select, train, supervise and evaluate staff.
- Perform related duties as assigned.

Employment Standards:

Knowledge of:

- Knowledge of principles, practices, methods and techniques used in curriculum development and classroom instruction for special education.
- Methods and approaches to planning individualized instructional programs and services, according to identified needs and requirements.

- Principles and practices of modern management including personnel administration, organizational development, collective bargaining, staff development, purchasing and information processing.
- Funding sources for special education programs and the variety of related regulations, controls and reporting procedures.
- Federal, state and local laws, codes, ordinances, regulations and other requirements which are applicable to the education field in general and to special education specifically.
- Evaluation and assessment techniques used in determining effective teaching and instructional methods.
- Budget development and administration.

Ability to:

- Ability to respond promptly to requests of internal and external clients, provide needed direction, assistance, training, materials and resources.
- Express ideas and concepts clearly and concisely in both oral and written form; use language and medium appropriate to audience.
- Establish and maintain cooperative and professional working relationships with individuals, groups, public and private agency personnel.
- Motivate, challenge and guide others in the improvement of educational programs and County Office services.
- Analyze data and situations and render judgment, make decisions and solve problems efficiently and effectively.
- Conceptualize new ideas and approaches, integrate them into a coherent program.
- Develop and administer budget(s) related to areas of responsibility.
- Plan organize and conduct training, in-service and staff development activities; coordinate curriculum and instruction projects, conferences, events and activities.
- Assume primary responsibility for the maintenance and operation of site(s); providing a safe and healthful environment for staff, students, clients and the public.
- Oversee a wide range of educational programs and relate effectively to the personnel associated with those programs; set high expectations and assist others in meeting those expectations.
- Select, train, supervise and evaluate staff performance relative to program objectives; observe and document performance; design data-based improvement processes.
- Maintain and improve professional skills and knowledge.
- Be flexible and receptive to change.
- Interpret and administer applicable laws, codes, ordinances and regulations.

Education and Experience:

Education:

- Master's Degree from an accredited college or university with an emphasis in special education or a closely related field.

Experience:

- Five (5) or more year's comprehensive and directly related, progressive experience beyond experience required to obtain an appropriate CA Teaching Credential and

Administrative Services Credential. Supervisory responsibility is required and experience with Transition and E.D. Programs is desirable.

Credentials:

- A valid appropriate California Teaching Credential and Administrative Services Credential.

Physical Abilities:

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

- Positions in this classification work indoors and sit for long periods of time.
- The position requires daily oral communication in person and on the telephone, and frequent written communication.
- Requires speaking and hearing ability sufficient to hear over phone and carry on routine conversations.
- The work involves operating a computer, calculator, copier, and other equipment, and involves repetitive arm and hand movement.
- Requires hand-eye-arm and finger dexterity to use a personal computer keyboard, ten-key, and other common office equipment.
- Entering data by touch requires the ability to hear computer alarms for errors.
- Forms and copies are color coded, requiring the ability to distinguish among colors.
- Requires visual acuity sufficient to recognize people, words, and numbers.
- Reaching and lifting up to forty (40) pounds, with assistance.
- Must have normal vision (20/20), corrected or uncorrected.
- Visual acuity sufficient to read manuals, video display screens, and other related material and work at a computer screen frequently and throughout the day.

Work Environment:

The following conditions may be present:

- 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.

Other Requirements:

- Must be fingerprinted and a satisfactory Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation records check 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).
- 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.
- A mandatory employment disclose by all former employers for the AB2534 must be completed prior to employment.

Other:

- Revised: August 2026
- FLSA Status: Exempt
- Bargaining Unit: Unrepresented
- Approved by: Human Resource Services