Columbia Public Schools

Excellence in Education for *All* Students

Job Description

POSITION PROPERTIES

Position Title: Executive Director of Special Services
Schedule / Grade: Salaried Support/ 9
Job Code: 01EXDIR209
FLSA: Exempt
Calendar: ADSUP-S
Benefits: Eligible (Retirees not Eligible)
Contract Type: Administrative
Bargaining Unit: None
Revised Date: 09/11/2026

PURPOSE

Columbia Public School District is dedicated to providing an excellent education for all students. This position is responsible for providing district-wide programmatic and administrative leadership for PreK-12 special services including special education, 504 services and gifted education. The broad range of special services provide support for students and their families to ensure integration of education and services within each building depending on the needs of the students.

This essential position is an opportunity for a visionary and strategic leader who is passionate about ensuring instructional practices are well balanced and integrated with individualized student needs, while meeting complex regulatory compliance requirements.

ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

Lead, develop and inspire a shared vision for instructional improvement in special education and special services throughout the district.

- Develop, implement, and evaluate assessment programs for individual needs of students with special learning circumstances. Ensure appropriate child-find, screening, assessing and programming for students with disabilities, medical needs or students who may be in crisis situations.

- Provide effective educational leadership in the development, dissemination and monitoring of curriculum for students with special needs including homebound instruction.
- Assess data and establish strategic improvements for student progress, attendance, and discipline for students in special services programs.
- Establish processes for maintaining student records and assuring confidentiality of records.
- Oversee and deliver staff development opportunities for educators and administrators throughout the district to ensure staff are well trained in research-based curriculum, programs, processes and procedures.
- Communicate regularly with district-wide program coordinators and school administrators to ensure all special and related services effectively support district and school goals, objectives and priorities.

Ensure understanding and compliance with state and federal regulations including staying apprised of emerging issues.

- Develop policies and procedures in compliance with state and federal legislation regulation including IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Respond in a timely manner to the Department of Education and Secondary Education regarding paperwork for grants, assurances and funding.
- Work collaboratively with district and school administrators to ensure understanding of and compliance with policies and procedures related to all special services.

Promote, facilitate and ensure effective communication and partnerships to elevate the understanding and support of mental health issues, emerging special education needs, and other educational needs of students with educational, mental and physical needs.

- Collaborate and partner with community agencies and organizations, ensuring effective wrap-around care for current and emerging needs.
- Provide assistance and information to families of students with special needs.
- Participate in local boards and advisory groups.
- Keep district administration abreast of emerging local, regional and national issues and trends.

Effectively manage special services financial and operational resources to support students and staff throughout the district.

- Manage special services budget consisting of over $38.5 million in state, federal and grant funding, personnel salary and benefits, and operating costs.
- Develop grant proposals and complete necessary amendments, forms and reports.
- Monitor budget expenditures. Arrange for collection of monies related to the operation of programs.

- Supervise the billing for out-of-district students who attend Columbia Public Schools, and the reimbursement to districts where Columbia Public School students are placed by mental health, social services, juvenile office or the courts.
- Determine technology, space and material needs for special services programs.
- Ensure appropriate transportation for students with special needs.

Recruit, attract, develop and retain highly qualified staff to carry out the district's mission, goals and objectives.

- Ensure a positive, collaborative and educationally centered environment dedicated to students' success, inclusivity and growth.
- Provide programmatic leadership for over 550 employees including directors, coordinators, learning specialists, paraprofessionals, educational diagnosticians, occupational and physical therapists, psychologists, speech language pathologists and social workers.
- Interview, recommend hiring and evaluate personnel in collaboration with district and school administrators.
- Assess and manage staffing plans to meet the needs of students with special learning circumstances.

Perform additional responsibilities to ensure instructional practices are well balanced with compliance regulations and clinical needs.

- Prepare or direct the preparation of the District's responses to IDEA, child complaints, OCR complaints and due processes.
- Keep well informed on current trends and issues related to the education of students with special needs, medical concerns or students who are in crisis situations.
- Consult as appropriate with legal counsel regarding school policies and legal actions.

Perform other duties as necessary to support the mission and vision of Columbia Public School District.

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS

All employees of the District are expected to adhere to the policies and regulations of the Board of Education, maintain appropriate certification and competencies necessary for the position, and demonstrate the values of the district at all times. For information on polices, regulations and values, visit http://www.cpsk12.org

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

Reports To: Chief Academic Officer

Supervises: Supervise special education, Section 504 and gifted education personnel. Support building administrators in the supervision of special services teachers, professional staff and paraprofessionals throughout the district.

QUALIFICATIONS

Minimum: Master's degree in special education or related field, and 5+ years' experience in supervising or leading one or more areas of special education or specialized programs. Missouri Special Education Administration certification.

Preferred: Doctorate degree.
An ideal candidate will have successful experiences which demonstrate effective interpersonal skills and ability to lead conflict resolution in critical situations. Additionally, must have a solid understanding of special education systems, child development and other laws, regulations and guidelines pertaining to the special needs population, local school organization and community resources.

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills and abilities required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions.

ADA REQUIREMENTS

Language: Present information to teachers, staff, other administrators, and boards. Respond to common questions and concerns. Interview students, staff, and teachers. Read, analyze, and interpret professional journals, memoranda, policies, administrative procedures, and statutes. Write business correspondence, including staff memoranda and newsletter articles. Demonstrate strong interpersonal and non-verbal communication skills. Keep information confidential when required by law, policy, or the nature of a particular situation. These are essential functions of the job.

Computation: Work with mathematical concepts, such as probability and statistical inference, and analyze data for instruction. Apply concepts such as fractions, percentages, ratios and proportions to practical situations. Perform computer word processing (including spreadsheets) and internet research. Access and create reports using the Districts student information software and databases. These are essential functions of the job.

Reasoning: Define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions. Solve a variety of problems in many different situations. Interpret instructions presented in written, oral, diagram or schedule form. Demonstrate executive functions such as planning, organizing, remembering, and regulating information and behavior as they pertain to student performance and achievement. These are essential functions of the job.

Technology: Present information using a variety of media/technology sources. Access and create reports using the District's student information software and databases. Readily utilize smart boards, projectors and other instructional technology provided by the district. Adhere to all District policies and procedures regarding technology use. These are essential functions of the job.

Physical: Requires sedentary work involving standing or walking for brief periods, exerting up to 10 pounds of force on a regular basis, and considerable dexterity in operating office equipment. Consistent and regular attendance is an essential function of this position including attend Board meetings, student activities and events. Weekends or evening hours is common. These are essential functions of the job.

Environmental conditions: The work environment is consistent with a typical office environment; however, they will occasionally be outside in temperatures below freezing and above 100 degrees. The individual who holds this position is frequently required to work irregular or extended hours. These are essential functions of the job.

Prospective and current employees with disabilities are encouraged to contact human resources to discuss reasonable accommodations to perform the essential job functions.

Equal Opportunity Employer