

The Director of Exceptional Student Services is responsible for collaboratively working with principals and other school district administrators to implement and monitor the district's special education programs. The Director has the following strengths and abilities: works in a supportive, collaborative role with staff in all departments; interfaces with other departments to coordinate reciprocal services for achieving special education goals; interprets and remains current on all federal, state, and local mandates for special education services and ensures that schools are in compliance; handles confidential information discretely and professionally; uses discretion and exercises sound judgment; has exceptional public relations and interpersonal skills to respond to parents and advocacy groups and serves as the school district's lead representative and contact person of programs for special needs students; and possesses effective management, supervisory, team-building, and problem solving skills.

Chain of Command

The Director of Exceptional Student Services reports to the Executive Director of Student Inclusive Services.

Competencies of the Director of Exceptional Student Services

The Director shall possess deep knowledge of special education requirements, compliance, relevant law and best practices. Additionally, listed below are the leadership competencies required for this position:

- **Accountability:** Holds self and others accountable for measurable high-quality, timely, and cost effective results. Determines objectives, sets priorities, and delegates work. Accepts responsibility for mistakes.
- **Communication:** Effectively communicates to audiences in diverse situations through strong written and verbal communication skills.
- **Conceptual Thinking-** Sees patterns and links among seemingly unrelated things.
- **Developing Others:** Develops the ability of others to perform and contribute to the organization by providing ongoing feedback and by providing opportunities to learn through formal and informal methods.
- **Innovation:** Develops new insights into situations; questions conventional approaches; encourages new ideas and innovations; designs and implements new or cutting edge programs/processes.
- **Problem Solving:** Identifies and analyzes problems; weighs relevance and accuracy of information; generates and evaluates alternative solutions; makes recommendations.
- **Resilience:** Deals effectively with pressure; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks.
- **Results Oriented:** Drives towards achievement of challenging goals, through a disciplined approach to work, using risk analysis, aligning strategy and mission, and regularly reviewing key measures of results.
- **Transformational Leadership:** Assumes leadership of a group to rapidly address the need for change within an organization.
- **Vision:** Takes a long-term view and builds a shared vision with others; acts as a catalyst for organization change. Influences others to translate vision into action.

Essential Duties

The Director shall be responsible for the following duties:

- Establish and communicate a district-wide philosophy of least restrictive environment for serving students with special needs.
- Guide the development and implementation of short and long-range plans for achieving special education goals and objectives in alignment with the district's strategic plan.
- Direct special education services for all students with disabilities and ensure that students have access to the core curriculum.
- Monitor the development and implementation of all aspects of the special education program process.
- 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 district administrators regarding the discipline of students with disabilities.
- Interview and hire staff members for the Department; 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 Arizona Department of Education and the Office for Civil Rights pertaining to students with disabilities; manage mediation and due process procedures.
- Develop, monitor, supervise and manage all aspects of the annual budgets for special education; 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; support school hiring processes.
- Review federal and state legislation/regulations related to special education; identify and share the impact of changes on the school district.
- Monitor compliance with Governing Board Policies and Regulations, recommend Board policies related to the areas of responsibility, 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.
- 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 and all equipment and materials purchased by the school district for special education.
- Conduct ongoing needs assessments, collect and analyze data, use pertinent data to refine and improve 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.
- Engage all new staff members in effective induction procedures and facilitate continued professional development through ongoing training opportunities.
- Plan and implement professional development for staff; involve staff in continuous improvement through self-evaluation and goal setting.
- Serve as the school district's liaison in all matters concerning special education.
- Maintain communication network with other special education directors within the state.
- Assist Talent Management and school principals with screening special education applicants as needed.
- Attend Board meetings and other special meetings upon request of the Superintendent and serve as a contributing member of the teaching and learning team and on assigned committees.
- Perform related work as required.
- Serve as the district 504 Coordinator.

Training and Experience

Masters/Doctoral level degree in special education or related discipline and teaching experience required; or, an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job such as those listed above.

Licensing/Certification Requirements

Current Arizona Principal certification or other administrative certification, or eligibility for Arizona certification, required

AZ Fingerprint Clearance Card required

Experience and demonstrated success as a district leader preferred

Experience and demonstrated success as a school principal or assistant principal preferred

Revised Date

4.1.2021