

Special Education Specialist (Elementary)

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Purpose of Position/Summary:

The Special Education Specialist – Elementary serves as an instructional champion for our elementary students with special needs by providing direct instructional support to assigned schools to increase student achievement of IPS students with special needs. This is a 10-month, Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) position with some compensated summertime work.

Essential Duties/Responsibilities:

The Special Education Specialist - Elementary model represents a change in the way time and expertise is used, and will result in a renewed focus on student achievement and more individualized support for special education teachers and students with disabilities. We expect that Specialists will spend the majority of their time in their assigned schools partnering with the principal to drive instructional strategy and providing instructional support to increase student achievement of our students with special needs. The remainder of the Specialist's time will be used for principal support, Learning Community and Department meetings, and ensuring assigned buildings maintain compliance with special education rules, regulations, and procedures.

In this model, the Specialist specifically:

- Spends the majority of his/her time in collaborative work with special education teachers, school leaders, and other experts to improve learning outcomes for students with disabilities. This collaboration includes but is not limited to direct instructional coaching, professional development, analysis of progress data, seeking out academic and behavioral instructional strategies, and assisting with implementation;
- Understands and engages in collaborative work with general education personnel, including building-based and Curriculum and Instruction Coaches, to improve achievement and growth for all students, while carrying out their primary responsibilities of improving learning for students with disabilities;
- Develops and empowers teachers to write strong IEPs, behavior plans and to facilitate efficient and effective case conferences/manifestation determinations as essential tools to accelerate learning and protect the rights of students with disabilities and their families;
- Chairs and facilitates weekly M-Team meetings;
- With the support of the Special Education Compliance Monitor, monitor school suspensions, expulsions, seclusion and restraints, and academic data for students with special needs in assigned buildings and develop action plans as needed;
- Consistently revisits special education program and service procedures to ensure continuity services and foresight of potential issues;
- Communicates effectively, and in a timely manner, with parents and guardians of special needs students to address complaints, issues and concerns;
- Perform duties assigned by the Special Education Learning Community Director.

Core Competencies

Critical core competencies for successful performance in this role are:

- Highly-developed communications skills (written/verbal) and interpersonal savvy
- Results/action-orientation; project management skills
- Organizational agility; developed negotiation skills
- Unquestionable personal code of ethics, integrity, diversity and trust
- Able to successfully navigate within varying degrees of ambiguity in a fast-paced environment
- Strong strategic analysis skills

Qualifications

The successful candidate will be discrete, high-energy, agile-minded, strategic, proactive, a direct communicator, highly-organized and committed to the vision and values of IPS and the IPS Special Education Department. In addition, the following standards will generally define the successful incumbent:

- Special Education certification;
- Working knowledge of federal and state special education rules, regulations, and practices (Article 7 and IDEA);
- Broad knowledge of the theories, principles, practices and methodology of special education;
- Working knowledge of Indiana and IPS special education policies, procedures and programs;
- Ability to be creative in developing alternatives to meet special education needs at each school;
- A track record of developing and maintaining strong working relationships with and among a diverse group of actors;
- Excellent communication skills and strong analytical and writing capabilities;
- Close attention to detail coupled with the ability to exercise good judgment;
- Strong organizational, oral and written communication, and interpersonal skills;
- Proactive nature; able to anticipate conflicts before they arise;
- Ability to work well independently as well as collaboratively;
- Ability to execute meetings, calls and emails with professionalism, courtesy and accuracy;
- Personal qualities of maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor, and diligence; and
- Ability to effectively allocate and prioritize time to several tasks to ensure completion of all.

Supervisory Responsibilities/Direct Reports:

The Special Education Elementary Specialist works directly with building-based staff to support special education needs in the building, provides resources and direct coaching to staff in need, and develops strong relationships with staff in each school. This position has no direct reports.

Personal Work Relationships:

The individual in this position works with a wide range of IPS staff, partners, administrators and service providers on routine and diverse problems encountered to fulfill its special education duties. The individual must possess and employ a variety of personal and interpersonal skills in the discharge of the position's responsibilities. This position requires a positive attitude when dealing with staff and IPS constituents. Good judgment, discretion and individual initiative are necessary for the effective discharge of the position's significant responsibilities.

Physical Effort:

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. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to use hands to finger, handle, or feel; talk or hear. The employee frequently is required to stand and walk. The employee is occasionally required to sit; reach with hands and arms; and stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl. The

employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 10 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and ability to adjust focus.

Working Conditions:

The work environment characteristics described in this document are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally exposed to outside weather conditions. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.