

Director, Special Education, Secondary Schools

ABOUT US

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) is one of the leading school systems in Maryland and the nation. To learn more about us and our [2024 -2029 Strategic Plan](#), please visit our [website](#) and our [careers page](#). Join our award-winning workforce and make a difference in the lives of our students!

DESCRIPTION

Under the direction of the Executive Director of Special Education, the Director, Special Education, Secondary Schools provides strategic leadership and oversight for special education programs and services across middle and high schools, ensuring that students with disabilities have equitable access to high-quality instruction, supports, and opportunities for success.

This position partners with school administrators, educators, families, and community stakeholders to promote inclusive practices, improve student outcomes, and ensure compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Code of Maryland Annotated Regulations (COMAR) requirements. The Director leads the implementation of district initiatives, supports continuous improvement efforts, and uses data to drive decision-making and resource allocation, including the management and oversight of budgets. Through collaboration, problem-solving, and system-level leadership, the Director ensures that schools effectively meet the diverse academic, behavioral, social-emotional, and transition needs of students with disabilities.

This role directly supports the HCPSS mission and vision and the HCPSS Strategic Plan by fostering learning environments where every student can access meaningful educational opportunities, achieve their full potential, and be prepared for college, career, and community success.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants must meet all qualifications below to be considered for the vacancy.

Education:

- Master's degree from an accredited college or university in Education, Special Education, Curriculum and Instruction or a related field.

Certification/Licensure:

- Hold a current Maryland State Department of Education professional certificate or license in Generic Special Education (secondary/adult, grades 6-Adult OR elementary/middle, grades 1-8) and any of the additional endorsements below:
 - Administrator I or Administrator II
 - Supervisors of Instruction, Assistant Principals, and Principals

Applicants who do not already possess the required licensure above may be considered if you are eligible through one of the pathways below:

- Hold a current MSDE professional certificate or license and complete all MSDE requirements for the Supervisors of Instruction, Assistant Principals, and Principals endorsement by the position effective date.

- Have completed a Maryland Approved Program which leads to licensure as a supervisor of instruction, assistant principal or principal by the position effective date.
- Have completed an approved out-of-State program which leads to licensure as a supervisor of instruction, assistant principal, or principal and includes a supervised clinical practicum and earn passing score on the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (Praxis 6990) by the position effective date.
- Hold a valid professional state license in administration from another state or country and have verification of five years of effective performance as an administrator in a PreK-12 school setting.

Out-of-state applicants are strongly encouraged to begin the [application process](#) for educator licensure with the Maryland State Department of Education in addition to uploading all required materials to your HCPSS employment application.

Experience:

- Five years of experience in instructional leadership roles supervising special education teaching and learning at the secondary level.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate for this role will also possess a combination of the additional qualifications below. If you don't meet every one of the preferred qualifications, we still encourage you to apply, as we welcome applications from candidates with diverse backgrounds and experiences.

- Doctoral degree from an accredited college or university in Education, Special Education, Curriculum and Instruction or a related field.
- Experience utilizing strategic master scheduling, coteaching, and other instructional models to meet student needs at the secondary level.
- Experience supporting transition services for students ages 14 –21.
- Experience managing operating and/or grant budgets within a complex organization, such as a public-school system, or comparably structured organization.
- Experience achieving measurable organizational change that includes:
 - o Leading and managing cross-departmental projects or initiatives that advance special education programs and departmental priorities.
 - o Engaging and collaborating with a variety of stakeholders including community groups and Board of Education members to support implementation efforts and communicate program outcomes.

ESSENTIAL POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The below list is a summary of the functions of the job, not an exhaustive or comprehensive list of all possible job responsibilities, tasks, and duties.

- Provides leadership, supervision, and oversight in the administration and evaluation of special education services in all secondary schools for children and students in grades 6-12.
- Oversees compliance with federal, state, and local law, regulations, policy and procedures regarding the

provision of special education services for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

- Partners and collaborates with school-based administrators, central office leaders, related service providers, and general and special education teaching staff to address special education related school and student needs.
- Represents the Department of Special Education on district committees and workgroups, and performs other duties as assigned by the Executive Director of Special Education and the Chief Academic Officer.
- Serves as a liaison between schools, families, and community agencies such as the Special Education Students Advisory Committee (SECAC), and state educational agencies.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

The below list is a summary of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for success in this position, not an exhaustive or comprehensive list.

Knowledge

- Deep understanding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and relevant state and local regulations governing IEP development, compliance, and dispute resolution.
- Strong familiarity with evidence-based instructional strategies, specialized curricula, accommodations, and modification models tailored for students in grades 6-12.
- Thorough knowledge of post-secondary transition requirements, including vocational training, higher education preparation, independent living skills, and collaboration with community agencies.
- Understanding of secondary school structures, master scheduling, resource allocation, and program evaluation methodologies to optimize special education delivery.
- Familiarity with the roles of community advisory groups (e.g., SECAC), state educational agencies, and district-level operational procedures.

Skills

- Build consensus and partner effectively with diverse stakeholders, including school principals, central office leaders, related service providers, and general/special education teachers.
- Audit IEPs, monitor compliance metrics, analyze service delivery data, and implement corrective action plans across multiple secondary schools.
- Act as a diplomatic intermediary between schools, families, and advocacy groups, defusing tense situations and finding student-centered solutions.
- Excellent written, verbal, and presentation skills required to represent the Department of Special Education on district committees and present information clearly to varied audiences.
- Assess the effectiveness of special education programs using student performance, behavior, and graduation data to drive continuous improvement.

Abilities

- Ability to balance directives from the Executive Director, Special Education and Chief Academic Officer while supporting the operational realities of school-based administrators.
- Ability to advocate passionately for equity, inclusion, and high expectations for all students with disabilities across grades 6-12.

- Ability to oversee special education services across multiple secondary schools simultaneously, prioritizing urgent compliance or student needs effectively.
- Ability to engage with parents and community agencies empathetically, ensuring family voices are respected and integrated into district initiatives.
- Ability to assume new responsibilities, serve on varied district workgroups, and respond to changing educational policies or crisis situations with agility.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Working Hours

This position will require occasional evening and weekend hours.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Complete applications must be submitted, and once your application has been submitted, you will not be able to add documentation or make any changes. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Resumes will not be accepted in lieu of a completed application.

Supplemental Application Questions

This position requires applicants to provide responses to the below supplemental application questions to determine whether you meet the minimum and preferred qualifications. **Please upload your responses in a separate file to the supplemental application questions section of the application.**

- 1) Please summarize in table format your experience in instructional leadership roles supervising special education teaching and learning at the secondary level. For each position held, please identify your title, employer, start and end date of employment, student levels served, and supervisory reports and responsibilities.
- 2) Please describe any experience you possess utilizing strategic master scheduling, coteaching, and other instructional models to meet student needs at the secondary level. In your response, include the position(s) in which you gained this experience and key outcomes achieved by your efforts.
- 3) Please describe one to two examples of any experience you possess supporting transition services for students ages 14 –21. In your response, include the position(s) in which you gained this experience.
- 4) Please describe any experience you possess managing school-based, operating and/or grant budgets. In your response, include the type(s) of budgets and total funds managed and position(s) in which you gained each experience.
- 5) Please describe one to two examples that highlight your experience achieving measurable organizational change including:
 - Leading and managing cross-departmental projects or initiatives that advance special education programs and departmental priorities.
 - Engaging and collaborating with a variety of stakeholders including community groups and Board of Education members to support implementation efforts and communicate program outcomes.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants who meet the minimum qualifications will be included in further evaluation. Interviews will be limited to those applicants who, in addition to meeting the basic requirements, have experience and education which most closely match the position qualifications and the needs of the school system.

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Compensation

This is a 12-month per year position in the Howard County Association of Supervisors and Administrators (HCASA) employee unit. The [current salary range](#) for this position is in the Grade IV lane on the Central Office Administrators salary scale. Actual placement will be in accordance with the salary procedures of the Howard County Public School System and the HCASA Master Agreement which considers relevant prior experience. Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, this position is **exempt** from overtime.

Retirement

Membership in the Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA) pension plan is a mandatory condition of employment for all employees who meet the eligibility and membership criteria defined in the State Personnel and Pensions Article and the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR). A qualifying employee cannot reject membership, nor can an ineligible employee elect membership. The annual contribution to the pension plan will be 7% of an employee's annual salary.

Benefits

HCPSS offers a [comprehensive benefits package](#) for eligible employees. Information about additional benefits such as paid time off can be found in the [negotiated agreement](#) for employees in this bargaining unit.

Pre-Employment Requirements

Professional references will be contacted prior to any offer of employment. Recommended candidates will be required to provide references from current and recent supervisors.

All employees, regular and temporary, must be fingerprinted, have a criminal background investigation completed, and successfully complete the Maryland Employment History Review, pursuant to Section 6-113.2 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland. In addition, some positions will require completion of a physical examination and/or drug testing.

Anyone offered employment is required to provide proper identification and documentation of eligibility for employment in the United States. HCPSS participates in E-Verify and does not offer employee sponsorship.

For questions regarding this posting, please contact Sandy Saval at sandy_saval@hcpss.org.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

To request an accommodation during the application or interview process due to a documented disability, please email humanresources@hcpss.org.

HCPSS celebrates diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees and applicants and prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation of any kind. HCPSS is committed to the principle of equal employment opportunity for all employees in providing them with a work environment free of discrimination and harassment. All employment decisions at HCPSS are based on organizational needs, job requirements and individual qualifications, without regard to race, color, religion or belief, national, social or ethnic origin, sex (including pregnancy), age, physical, mental or sensory disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, marital, civil union or domestic partnership status, veteran status or present military service, family medical history or genetic information, family or parental status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.

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