

Interoffice Memo

The Glenbrook High Schools

TO: Mike Riggle

FROM: Jennifer Pearson

RE: Special Education Staffing - Non-Certified (FY14)

DATE: 5/1/13

I am bringing forward a recommendation for a 0.80 clerical assistant position. This request is necessary to efficiently and effectively manage and operate our special education and related programs primarily in the areas of transition, home-hospital programs, student transportation, and student records. Below is a brief summary of key points as well as the primary job functions of the person.

Transition

- Over the last 3 years, the number of students receiving transition services beyond their senior year (ages 18-22) has more than doubled from 18 students in 2009-2010 to 43 students in 2012-2013. Changes in legislation and findings from legal cases have broadened the definition of students who are entitled to transition services. We anticipate that transition services will continue to experience growth over time.
- Managerial tasks (such as scheduling meetings, arranging transportation, tracking attendance) need to be shifted from the transition teachers because it is taking away from instruction.
- Students are receiving transition services out in the community. Since instruction is not building-based, clerical support is needed at a district-level.

Home-Hospital Programs

- The number of students on homebound is greater than it has ever been due to medical (e.g. concussions), psychological/mental health, or substance abuse treatment. The majority of these students are not special education students.
- Last year, we expended \$115,671 educating 116 students who were homebound or in hospital programs. We need additional management and monitoring of expenses and do not have the manpower in our existing staffing.
- We have attempted to assign homebound clerical responsibilities to other personnel at the district office, but it is not a workable solution.
- We need a permanent administrative assistant to carefully inspect billing statements and timesheets for accuracy, and to perform reconciliations, so as not to incur any financial loss.

Transportation

- Some special education students are entitled to special transportation to get to and from school, community-training experiences, or extended school year services.
- The assistant to the director of special education currently coordinates special transportation for students in public and private day schools.
- As mentioned, transition teachers currently arrange transportation for their own students. This needs to be shifted to clerical staff.
- Transportation for special education students served at Glenbrook North and Glenbrook South has become the building special education administrative assistant's responsibility, but it has become overwhelming given their other duties. This needs to be coordinated at the district level in order to ensure transportation is set-up correctly, communication is seamless, and billing is accurate.

Student Records

- Special education student records are maintained for all currently enrolled special education students (to-date, 579 students). In addition, the district is required to manage and maintain special education records (over 1000 student files) for five years after a student exits or graduates from our district.
- The district and schools are frequently utilizing aides and temporary help for IEP data entry and filing; however it requires greater attention and oversight as well as specific training in legal mandates.
- The current organizational design is spread across too many stakeholders and needs to be centralized at the district office. Compounded by student population growth, this issue is causing gaps in the quality (accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, legal compliance) of special education documents.
- Compiling and auditing of student records for accuracy in accordance with special education and FERPA procedures is necessary. Requests need to be responded to within the legally mandated timeframe (15 days). This has been challenging given the increased number of requests (by attorneys, government agencies, alternative programs, and higher education institutions).
- New legal mandates have increased workload requirements (such as new indicators of compliance, new legal documentation requirements, and expenditure reports).

Primary Job Functions

- The functions listed below are needed to improve quality control and reduce the risk of non-compliance with state and federal requirements.
- Manage attendance, billing, and contracts for students who are placed in home/hospital settings
- Serve as support for district transition staff and the three Glenbrook schools, as well as Alternative Placement schools, NSSSED, parents, etc.
- Serve as primary custodian of student records, current and archived, and purge confidential records at state-mandated time
- Coordinate special transportation for alternatively placed students, students at the transition sites, and NSSSED programs

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve a 10-month (209 day) secretary position. The salary range is anticipated to be between \$30,000-\$34,000.

Funding

We can realize some of the costs from this position through transportation reimbursement and Medicaid revenues of approximately \$10,000.