



# Louisiana Special School District

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## Special School District Superintendent Job Description

The Superintendent of the Special School District (SSD) will have a unique opportunity to improve education opportunities, choices, and quality of instruction for thousands of K-12 children within one District in Louisiana. Success will require this leader to champion the vision for SSD and its unique student population; identify metrics and communicate a higher set of expectations for the district; and drive related transformation efforts to build a broad base of support through engagement with the community, civic leaders, and policy leaders at the state level, as well as grassroots leaders in homes and schools throughout the state. To accomplish this bold and critical work, the SSD Board of Directors seeks a seasoned, tested, high-caliber leader to assume the following **responsibilities**:

## Educational Leadership, Curriculum, and Instruction

The Superintendent will continuously work toward/to:

- Increase the academic achievement level of all SSD students by working collaboratively with the Chief Academic Officer, the Assistant Superintendent for Special School Programs, the Director of the Louisiana School for the Deaf, and the Principal for the Louisiana School for the Visually Impaired to support the academic growth of students.
- Facilitate a collaborative effort to review and refine the SSD's vision, mission, and beliefs to focus on developing a statewide model of excellence in serving students who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, or identified as having other low-incidence disabilities.
- Develop an annual academic strategy for SSD schools and programs anchored in high expectations and measurable growth in student performance and college and/or career attainment for all students, while understanding and celebrating what's unique about each school's student population and tailoring school strategies with these distinctions in mind.
- Ensure an academic setting that provides students with opportunities and the support to build their independence and self-advocacy skills on the path to adulthood. This element is essential not only at school, but in dormitories and off-campus venues where students learn to interact with the community at-large and gain invaluable work experiences.

## Roles and Expectations

- Maintain a visible presence in the schools, programs and in the community.
- Communicate with the public through available opportunities such as the district website, newsletters, social media, media releases, and public speaking engagements.
- Provide the SSD Board of Directors — as well as student families, staff, and the general public — with clear, frequent, and easily accessible information about the schools, their missions, curriculums, and academic performances.

- Ensure administrators and teachers communicate student progress and academic resources.
- Develop strong and sustainable partnerships with LEAs, other relevant state agencies, and with the wider field of national experts.
- Develop and implement a hiring and retention plan that complies with applicable state and federal laws targeting the most qualified and competent teachers, administrators, and shared specialty service personnel.
- Foster an environment that encourages continuous learning and improvement on the part of all SSD faculty and staff.
- Administer an educator evaluation program aligned to state requirements that supports teachers and school leaders in defining expectations for student learning, and monitoring progress of those goals throughout the year.
- Develop a strategic plan as required by the Office of Planning and Budget to achieve agreed-upon strategic goals.
- Maintain or increase an appropriate budget to operate the SSD by working collaboratively with the Division of Administration and the legislature.
- Ensure that instructional staff is fairly compensated and schools and programs are receiving fair and equitable services through shared specialty services.
- Develop systems of collaboration between SSD and other state agencies, as well as the wider field of experts both within and outside of Louisiana, in service to the plan of becoming a highly functioning and valued statewide resource.
- Administer the development, implementation, and annual assessment of educational programs consistent with state and federal requirements.
- Ensure that policies, procedures, and school rules promote a safe, respectful, and healthy school.
- Make administrative decisions necessary for the effective and efficient operations of the SSD facilities and property.

## Skills

- Proven ability to recruit, manage, and retain high-functioning talent and teams.
- Deep and excellent capacity for relationship-building across teams, organizations, geographies, and interests.
- Seasoned and innate instincts for authentic, effective professional communication with a wide range of stakeholders and personalities.
- Tested experience in managing systemic systems-change processes, including articulating a new, clear, and thoughtful vision with evidence of driving a team effectively through that change.
- A track record for holding schools or organizations accountable for high academic or industry standards.
- Experience navigating and leading effectively within a public advocacy context; and
- Demonstrable experience in developing a team or organizational strategy and being accountable for its results.

## Minimal Qualifications

The SSD Superintendent must believe deeply in, and be motivated by, the SSD's mission to provide compassionate, collaborative, and innovative educational opportunities for students with low-incidence disabilities, meeting each student's unique needs. Additionally, the SSD seeks a leader with the following skills, experience, and attributes:

- Master's Degree earned at a regionally accredited college or university.
- Five years of successful experience in leadership, management, or school governance (state, parish, or city) as a superintendent, assistant superintendent, supervisor of instruction, principal, or assistant principal in a State-approved system, or experience certified as equivalent to any of these by the Board.

## Compensation

- The salary range for the Superintendent is \$135,000-\$175,000. Salary will be based on qualifications and experience.
- Participation in state retirement package, deferred comp, life insurance, dental insurance, health insurance, supplemental benefits, flexible spending accounts, annual, sick, military, civil, and funeral leave, state holiday leave, workers compensation, START Saving Program (LA Student Tuition Assistance and Revenue Trust Program), LA HIPP (If you or a member of your family received Medicaid and are determined eligible, LAHIPP will reimburse the premium paid for the policyholder and Medicaid and Medicaid eligible dependents)

## Location

The SSD operates from a central campus in Baton Rouge, but services sites all over the state. The Superintendent must live in Louisiana and be able to travel to all SSD sites. The SSD Superintendent must physically report to work and be visible and available to staff and the SSD Board of Directors.

## Governance

The Superintendent is an employee of the SSD and is subject to an annual evaluation by the SSD Board of Directors. The 12-member SSD Board of Directors comprises individuals across the state of Louisiana from diverse backgrounds who represent the agencies and organizations that serve the youth under the umbrella of the SSD.

The SSD Superintendent reports directly to the SSD Board of Directors. The SSD Superintendent has two direct reports: one oversees operations/facilities/grounds/risk management/finance, and the other oversees academics for the Louisiana Special Schools and Programs.

## To Apply

The Executive Search team at SSA Consultants is honored to be supporting the Louisiana Special School District Board of Directors in filling this crucial role. Inquiries or applications (including a resume and cover letter) should be directed to Sarah Bowden, Consultant, at [sbowden@consultssa.com](mailto:sbowden@consultssa.com) or 225-769-2676.