



ORGANIZATION VENTURE PREP
POSITION SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION (SPED) TEACHER
LOCATION DENVER, CO

***** 2012-2013 School Year *****

SPED TEACHER POSITION DESCRIPTION

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Venture Prep is a free, rigorous, public charter school that uses an innovative, college-prep curriculum to prepare its scholars to succeed in college and in life. We serve scholars in grades 6 to 12, using a project-based learning approach to teach them the academic content *and* 21st-century skills they need to become the next generation of leaders and entrepreneurs. Please visit our web site for more information: www.ventureprep.org

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A TEAM MEMBER

Our most successful team members – and therefore our most promising new-hire candidates – are extremely hard-working, collaborative, passionate people from diverse backgrounds who thrive in a scholar-centered environment of respect, trust, and achievement.

Although many of our scholars come to our school well behind grade level, we consistently set high academic standards to instill the basic skills, critical thinking, life experience, and real-world skills necessary for our scholars to be successful in college and in life.

Beyond classroom teaching, our team members are expected to focus heavily on building strong relationships with scholars and their families. This requires teachers to be available to meet with families at school during non-class time, to make numerous calls home on a weekly basis, and, occasionally, to make home visits.

Many of our teachers and staff members also lead before- and after-school clubs – including study hall, sports teams, and enrichment or intervention activities. In short, our team members dedicate much of their waking time and energy to help us achieve our mission and educational commitment to the scholars who walk through our doors every day.

To support our team members, we are committed to the following:

- **Extensive Professional Development.** We engage in frequent classroom observations by instructional coaches and organizational leaders; we spend weeks collaborating in the summer to prepare for the school year; and, during the school year, we hold weekly half-day P.D. sessions as well as regularly scheduled whole days and off-site institutes.
- **Strong Behavior and Discipline System.** We employ a strict behavior and discipline system to minimize distractions and focus our scholars and team members. We utilize Positive Behavior System (PBS)

reinforcement along with disciplinary consequences for non-compliance. We also help teachers refine their classroom management protocols, including extensive use of SLANT school-wide.

- **Small School and Class Sizes.** We are committed to maintaining a small school and related class sizes, with approximately 100 scholars per grade for 6-12.
- **Your Voice Counts.** We constantly seek ways to refine our academic and operational model. Our entrepreneurial spirit means we actively solicit ideas and the “voice” of our teachers and staff members, who inevitably share great ideas for us to improve the educational, operational, and instructional environment.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Possess a clear and effective pedagogy that embodies our project-based learning instructional model. Understand and apply effective strategies (e.g., intervention, differentiation, extension) and best practices (e.g. models, think-alouds, protocols, mini-lessons, multiple drafts, peer critique, reflection, effective group work) to ensure scholar success.
- Implement project, problem and/or inquiry-based instruction aligned with standards and outcome-based, performance assessments. This includes providing active and rigorous experiences for all scholars and integrating arts and digital-media technology in the classroom and through project instruction.
- Hold scholars accountable to upholding school wide rules and expectations, including social and academic. Be accountable and supportive of scholar performance toward identified standards. A key measure is your ability to monitor scholars' progress toward grade-level promotion and, ultimately, graduation.
- Know scholars well, including advocating for them and maintaining open and consistent communication about scholar progress, concerns, and achievement with families and within the school community.
- Mentor and support scholars' development of the academic and social skills, practices and attitudes necessary to be successful in college and the workplace, emphasizing an increasing proficiency in 21st-Century leadership skills.
- Develop a strong sense of community in the classroom, and personalize each scholar's learning experience. Plan for widely differentiated scholar needs and academic levels.
- Be a member of a supportive professional learning community that fosters respect, trust, risk-taking, an openness to learning and the sharing of ideas, and to continuously improving practices. Operate in a demanding learning environment that requires staff to be flexible problem-solvers who manage ambiguity and adversity well. Dedicate yourself to the vision and best practices of our organization, both in the classroom and as a professional learning community.

QUALIFICATIONS

Team members at Venture Prep are expected to:

- Embrace the mission, vision, and goals of the organization, including demonstrating high expectations for *all* scholars to prepare for and succeed in college
- Have experience working with underserved urban scholars, with at least 2 years full-time teaching experience preferred.
- Be a highly collaborative, results-oriented, adaptable, problem-solving self-starter
- Have experience working in an entrepreneurial, dynamic school or related demanding environment
- Desire rigorous professional development and coaching to improve your effectiveness

- Have knowledge, experience and credentials appropriate to the position, including Highly Qualified (HQ) status and/or alternate certification
- Be positive, thoughtful, passionate, articulate, motivating, and empowering with scholars and team members
- Have excellent written and verbal communications skills
- Be computer savvy, with proficiency in email, word processing, spreadsheets, Google docs, etc.

SALARY & BENEFITS

This is a full-time position with compensation commensurate with experience and qualifications. You will be eligible for performance bonuses per the Venture Prep incentive system. We also provide health, dental, disability, life/AD&D, and pension/retirement benefits.

HIRING PROCESS

Venture Prep engages in an extensive recruiting and vetting process in order to identify the optimal candidates. Our process involves initial and secondary resume screens, phone interviews, in-person interviews, simulation lessons, group interviews, CEO interview, and background and reference checks.

To initiate the process, please follow provide the following materials via email:

1) Submit all requested materials to jobs@ventureprep.org

- Include the Position Title in your subject line (exactly as it appears on the top of this listing)

2) Send your updated resume with a cover letter that addresses the following:

- Describe your ideal work environment and culture.
- Tell us what level of teaching expertise will you bring to Venture Prep

3) Please read and respond to the following case study (no more than 250 words):

Alexandra is a 9th grade scholar at Venture Prep. She struggles some academically, but is a very hard worker. As you progress through the year, you notice that Alexandra is more hesitant, missing some assignments, and starting to engage in a lot of distracting behaviors in the classroom.

You pull her aside, share your observations and ask her what is going on. Alexandra shares that for the last couple months, she has been moving houses every few days as a way of navigating through a complicated family conflict. A few days with grandma, then to her dads, then with her mom, and right now she is back to grandma's again. She is worried about her younger brother who isn't moving around, but is upset. She says with all the distraction she has been unable to find a place to study and keep up with her work.

-- How do you respond? (250 words or less)

Important Notes:

- We will accept applications until the position is filled; unfortunately, due to the large number of applications we receive, we are unable to respond directly to all applicants.
- Venture Prep is strongly committed to hiring a diverse, multicultural staff.
- For more information, please visit us at www.ventureprep.org