

Parent Group Specialist - Part-Time
START-Engaging Parents of Students with Disabilities Project
Counties of Essex (Districts), Hunterdon, Mercer, Morris, Somerset, and Warren

SPAN Parent Advocacy Network is currently looking for a self-motivated individual who has a strong commitment to the importance and significance of the involvement of empowered and educated parents/caregivers in improving academic & health outcomes for children in New Jersey through development of parent groups and participation in strong family/school partnerships.

SPAN is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to empower families and inform and involve professionals and other individuals interested in the healthy development and educational rights of children. SPAN is funded through private contributions and grants from government, foundations, corporations, and individuals.

Job Responsibilities:

1. Provide information, training, technical assistance and support to parents and professionals regarding:
 - Establishing special education parent advisory groups and other parent groups.
 - Maintaining the membership and effectiveness of existing groups at various stages of development.
2. Maintain a database of district- and community-based groups in order to connect parents with the group(s) in their communities.
3. Inform parents about their rights to be involved in educational planning for their child.
4. Provide trainings and workshops on starting and developing effective special education parent advisory groups, parent involvement in the IEP process, and additional topics as needed.
5. Increase parental awareness regarding their role in improving special education systems within their district and at the state level through parent-professional collaboration.
6. Maintain and update current knowledge related to project components, including parent groups, literacy development, inclusion of students with disabilities, and NJTSS.
7. Identify and collaborate with parent and education leaders, SEPAGs, parent and community groups, networks and/or formal organizations (FSC, CCYCs, FSO, RFSPC, PTAs/PTOs/HSAs, etc.) currently serving, supporting, or interested in supporting families with children with special education needs.
8. Outreach to identified groups/networks/organizations to determine what resources or information may be needed to sustain their development.
9. Coordinate opportunities for parents, parent group leaders and professionals to network, share resources, engage in mutual problem-solving to increase parent leadership capacity and help build family/school partnerships.
10. Collect and maintain all required data for reporting and program implementation.
11. Network with families, educators, and service providers as well as attend conferences and trainings in their counties, regions, and throughout the state regarding family-centered principles and practices.
12. Contribute content related to activities and relevant topics to the Project's and organization's publications, presentations, social media, and website.
13. Attend necessary and mandatory professional development activities.

SPAN is an equal employment opportunity employer.

Qualifications: Parent Group Specialist should be a resident of a county in the region they cover and have experience working with their local district SEPAGs as well as parent and community organizations in this region. The successful candidate, through experience, as well as training, will demonstrate the following knowledge, abilities, and skills:

1. Bi-lingual English/Spanish preferred.
2. Excellent planning, organizational, leadership, and interpersonal skills are required.
3. Excellent outreach, family engagement and empowerment, and ability to partner with NJDOE-OSE partners, district personnel, and other professionals.
4. Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
5. Proficiency working with Microsoft Word, Power Point, SmartSheet, Eventbrite, Google Suite, Internet, Social Media, Zoom, other virtual platforms, and mobile apps.
6. Experience as the parent/caregiver or advocate of a child with disabilities and experience as the leader of a special education parent advisory group, parent organization, or support group.
7. Experience in providing training to adult learners.
8. Knowledge of state, regional and local community resources.
9. Outstanding ability to work well with a wide spectrum of people.
10. Ability to work well independently as well as with a team.
11. Capacity to exercise independent judgment and sound decision-making.
12. Demonstrated commitment to the goals of the project and organization.
13. Ability to work flexible hours, including some evenings and weekends.
14. Reliable transportation.

Reports to: START-EPSSD Project Co-Director

Hours: 18.75 hours per week

How to apply:

Screening of applications begins immediately and will continue until the position is filled.

1. A letter of interest describing qualifications and accomplishments.
2. A current résumé.
3. A list of two professional references: Name, Organization, Email Address and Telephone

Please email all required documents to Albert Pelham, Human Resources Director, at apelham@spanadvocacy.org