

Merit Academy is currently seeking Special Education Teacher to join our faculty, starting this 2021-2022 school year.

ABOUT MERIT ACADEMY:

Merit Academy is a new school-of-choice in the beautiful mountain community of Woodland Park, CO. This classical, Core-Knowledge® school is currently in the start-up process, with doors opening to students August, 2021. There are currently more than 200 Intent to Enrolls, with a budgeted minimum-enrollment of 155. There is great need and desire for a classical, public school option in our area.

Merit Academy is scheduled to open to grades K-8 in year one, growing to K-12 over the first five years. At maturity, Merit Academy will have two classes per grade, with purposefully smaller class sizes. There will also be a learning lab for homeschool students, and further homeschool enrichment opportunity with Merit Academy.

Merit Academy is unique in that it is situated in an area that provides many opportunities for tremendous Rocky Mountain Enhancements. Additionally, to honor our rural culture and demographics, there is a “rocky mountain version” of a uniform, unique to what you may find in an urban and traditional classical school.

Merit will incorporate a vertical and horizontal integration within academics and the House System on Fridays. This careful design not only allows team cohesion among students of all ages and abilities in community and school projects, but it also provides our valued educators with additional collaboration and planning time.

Vision: To graduate students prepared for success in a free society, promoting civic responsibility and contributing their talents in a flourishing republic by pursuing beauty, truth, and good.

Mission: Merit Academy will cultivate the minds and nurture the hearts of K-12 youth in the Ute Pass/Woodland Park region with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue, employing honored foundations of classical education and Core Knowledge®.

POSITION:

Special Education teachers are critical to the success of our exceptional students. In that, it is important that candidates are a solid fit for the school, community, and curriculum (and vice versa). Teachers will work with the Dean of Academics and Dean of School through the development and growth of Merit Academy. Our teachers will bring to our students and our school poise, joy, respect and an ability to cultivate the positive relationships needed to instill confidence and trust.

It is important that our teachers are courageous, personable, encouraging, and well-spoken. The ideal candidate will work with general education teachers to ensure individual needs of students are met within the classroom learning environment. The school culture is one of trust, respect, joy, and deep engagement in one another and in our community. In summary, our staff, parents, and volunteers will inspire students to pursue excellence and put forth their best efforts in all aspects of life.

The ideal candidates will embrace the “rocky mountain version” of traditional-classical education that makes Merit Academy unique. Merit educators are passionate for the Core Knowledge® curriculum,

liberal arts, Merit's vision and mission, and our five virtues of valor, perseverance, responsibility, goodness, and friendship. Staff also embrace and support the ideas and philosophy of America's Founding. Special education teachers will be subject matter experts in special education, classical education, IEP's, Colorado State Standards, performance assessments, and other required educational components.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Understands cognitive, behavioral, and emotional development. Incorporates that knowledge in planning and implementation of curriculum for best retention, growth, and comprehension
- Sits on the RTI/MTSS team; identifies students who may require special education interventions
- Identifies students who need an IEP. Works with the parents and team to develop educational program for students
- Collaborates with regular classroom teachers, interprets the abilities and disabilities of these students and assists teachers in defining classroom intervention strategies, as defined in the IEP
- Assists students with regular class assignments
- Communicates regularly with parents and staff regarding student's needs, growth, and performance
- Administers and interprets standardized and informal assessment instruments.
- Maintains all appropriate special education forms, Individual Education Programs (IEP's), assessments, and records mandated by regulation and school.
- Trains/coaches general education teachers on how to implement IEPs
- Maintains an appropriate and safe learning environment
- Teaches/mentors classrooms, small groups, and individual students
- Facilitates learning through sound professional teaching and classroom management skills
- Implements curriculum and instruction in a matter consistent with Merit Academy
- Cultivate the fundamental virtues of Merit Academy
- Embrace the school's vision and mission
- Additional special education duties may be prescribed

QUALITIES & CHARACTERISTICS:

- Professional and empathetic when dealing with concerns of parents, families and fellow staff
- Moral character, acts with integrity and wisdom.
- Holds a conviction and dedication to school choice and Merit's vision and mission.
- Emboldens and supports students, parents, and associated volunteers to love learning, embrace our virtues, and promote a life of responsible citizenship in a flourishing republic.
- Engenders trust and assurances in others through effective, personable communication, kindness and community involvement, behavior, and outreach.

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS:

- Ability to relate to exceptional students and an appreciation of their desire for understanding and ability-appropriate levels of fun and interaction
- Contributes to a collegial faculty throughout the school
- A commitment to Core Knowledge®, classical education, school choice, and the positive contributive culture of Merit Academy

- Use PowerSchool as parent and teacher informational tools
- Use CO's IEP software and reporting method for case reports
- Understanding of Core Knowledge® and classical education, and classical education's history and foundation within Western civilization
- Able to communicate with poise, winsomeness, kindness, and humility

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's degree or higher in Education or similar field
- Must hold a valid CO teaching license with Special Education Endorsement
- Must love working with exceptional students
- An understanding of charter schools or other schools-of-choice
- Works well with students, staff, and parents
- Conviction in Merit Academy's vision, mission and in a classical, liberal arts education
- Ability to maintain classroom decorum
- Strength of character
- Desire for professional development, growth and mentorship

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Understanding of CO standards, alignment, and performance indicators, especially as related to special education
- Experience in a charter or independent school

REPORTING STRUCTURE:

Reports to the Dean of Academics and the Dean of Schools. Works side-by-side with teachers, counselor, specialists, and additional staff.

PAY & BENEFITS:

There are 167 contact days and 8 in-service days for teachers. Upper School (grades 6-12) teachers have a 2-hour block daily for lunch, individual planning, and at least bi-weekly collaboration across grades. Fridays are ½ day teaching and ½ day collaboration for full-time teachers. Additional in-service (voluntary) or summer work may also include a stipend or comp time, TBD. Depending on exceptional student workload, paraprofessional(s) can assist the special education teacher.

- \$38,000-\$49,000, depending on experience
- School holidays and breaks
- Additional 12 days personal/sick leave
- Bonuses for grant awards
- Health insurance
- Dental insurance
- Optional vision insurance
- Retirement benefits
- Employee Assistance Program

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

- Offers of employment are conditional subject to successful background and reference check
- This is a full-time, salaried position, exempt from overtime.
- Employees are at-will employees
- As required by the IRCA, employees must be verified as legally eligible to be employed in the United States.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

Please submit the following required items to: HR@merit.academy

- Cover letter
- Resume/CV
- Minimum of three references within the past two years
- Unofficial transcripts and any applicable certifications
- Short essay answers to the following topic:
 - Describe your educational philosophy regarding the exceptional student population and how your teaching would align with Merit Academy's vision and mission.