

**Pathway Program for Severe Disabilities Licensure and Professional Practice**

**Fall/Winter SY 2015-2016 – SEV 3B Cohort**

**The fall/winter Severe Disabilities Pathway is a continuation of the summer program and will begin with the 5 additional seminars of the 13 seminar requirements needed by summer participants for the Severe Disabilities license.**

**New prospective applicants are welcome to apply. If there are a sufficient number of new applicants, the program will offer all 13 seminar requirements for the Severe Disabilities license.**

**1. Program Director**

Nick Balasalle, Office of Human Resources  
[nbalasalle@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:nbalasalle@bostonpublicschools.org)

Please note: All program communications are conducted by email.

**2. Program Background and Goals**

The Severe Disabilities Pathway Program was created to build the district's capacity for meeting the unique needs of students with severe disabilities, more particularly students with autism and those with multiple handicaps. The program consists of professional development seminars that meet the requirements for severe disabilities licensure while imparting the knowledge, instructional skills and practices and dispositions needed for effective teaching of students with severe disabilities.

The BPS Office of Human Capital piloted the Severe Disabilities Pathway Program during SY 2013-2014 with very positive results. A second cohort followed in SY 2014-2015. The July/Fall 2015 program will enroll the third cohort of participants...

**3. Severe Disabilities License**

MA DESE offers three types of the Severe Disabilities license -- preliminary, initial and professional. The Pathway is designed primarily for individuals who seek to add the initial or professional type of the severe disabilities license to an existing initial or professional license in Moderate Disabilities. Participants who do not hold the Moderate Disabilities will need to take 3-5 additional seminars, which will be offered in the Moderate Disabilities Pathway Program scheduled for the fall. (The exact number of additional seminars is determined by the type of other licenses held.)

### **Severe Disabilities License (cont'd.)**

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the program director to discuss their individual license situation and to ascertain what will be required of them to acquire the Severe Disabilities license.

#### **4. MTEL Requirements for Licensure**

Severe Disabilities licensure requires passing scores on the Communication and Literacy Skills and General Curriculum or Core Content Area MTELs. Both MTELs are computer-based tests and are scheduled year-round by appointment.

The preference is for Pathway applicants to have passed the Communications and Literacy Skills MTEL at a minimum...

#### **5. Pathway Program Seminars In Fulfillment of MA DESE Licensure Requirements**

The Pathway Program offers 13 ten-hour professional development seminars for a total of 130 hours. Eight of the seminars were offered during July. The remaining five seminars will be completed in this fall. If there is sufficient new applicants, the fall/winter program will be extended and offer the remaining 8 seminars needed for Severe Disabilities license.

The seminars fulfill the following, additional coverage requirements for Severe Disabilities licensure for individuals who already hold the Moderate Disabilities license:

1. Definitions, etiologies, and characteristics of severely disabling conditions
2. Theories, concepts, and methods of assessing physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development in children and adolescents
3. Theories of first and second language acquisition and development
4. Theories of language development and the effects of disabilities on learning
5. Development of a listening, speaking, and reading vocabulary
6. Theories on the relationships between beginning writing and reading
7. Reading theory, research, and practice; Knowledge of the significant theories, practices, and programs for developing reading skills and reading comprehension; Phonemic awareness and phonics, principles, knowledge and instructional practices; Diagnosis and assessment of reading skills using standardized, criterion-referenced, and informal assessment instruments
8. How to design or modify curriculum, instructional materials, and classroom environments for students with severe disabilities
9. Techniques for developing skills designed to facilitate placement in least restrictive environments

**Pathway Program Seminars In Fulfillment of MA DESE Licensure Requirements (cont'd)**

10. Ways to prepare and maintain students with severe disabilities for general education classrooms; for example, use of behavioral management principles
11. Appropriate use of augmentative communication and other assistive technologies
12. Source and operation of orthotic devices, medical technologies, and computer-moderated prosthetic devices
13. Knowledge of appropriate vocational or alternative school programs, or work-study and community-based opportunities and alternative high school programs and how to refer students to them

Individuals who hold initial and professional licenses in fields other than Moderate Disabilities will also need to take the following seminars offered in the Moderate Disabilities Pathway Program:

14. Federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to special education
15. Knowledge of services provided by other agencies
16. Preparation, implementation, and evaluation of Individualized Education Programs

In addition to the three seminars above, individuals who hold no license or who do have preliminary licenses in fields other than Moderate Disabilities will also need to take the following seminars offered in the Moderate Disabilities Pathway Program:

17. Teaching of Reading
18. Teaching of Mathematics
19. Teaching of English

**7. Internship**

An internship is required for participants adding the Severe Disabilities license to an existing initial or professional license in another field. The internship consists of 150 hours of supervised practice in the role of “Teacher of Students with Severe Disabilities in an appropriate classroom”. In most cases, the internship can be completed in the participant’s current teaching position. The Office of Human Capital coordinates internships with school principals and headmasters.

**8. Portfolio**

Participants complete an assignment for each seminar and compile a portfolio consisting of these products and other materials that document the skills and knowledge gained in the program. The portfolio is a capstone requirement for the completion of the program.

**9. In-service Credits**

Pathway Program completers are awarded 8 in-service credits upon obtaining the Severe Disabilities license. In-service credits can be used for salary purposes.

**10. Eligibility for Admission**

While all BPS staff members are eligible to apply for admission, priority for admission will be accorded applicants who will be teaching in inclusive practices classrooms in SY 2014-2015 and in self-contained classes for students with severe disabilities. Admission decisions are based both on the qualifications of the applicants and on the staffing needs and priorities of the district and schools. Each application is given full, respectful and individual consideration.

**11. Program Fee**

The fee for the fall program of 5 seminars is \$500. If the program continues beyond the 5 seminars, the fee for the full program of 13 seminars is \$1,300. Alternative payment arrangements are available by request and spread installments over the time of the program.

## **12. Draft Program Schedule and Location**

The program will be conducted on the Madison Park Campus. The seminars are conducted on a blended model combining in-person sessions and online presentations and study. The Friday schedule of 4:15-7:15 pm and the Saturday schedule of 8 am – 3:30 pm for each seminar will be reduced by the time given by the seminar to online presentations and study.

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| <b>Seminar Dates</b>                     |
| <b>Seminar #1<br/>November 20 and 21</b> |
| <b>Seminar #2<br/>December 4 and 5</b>   |
| <b>Seminar #3<br/>December 18 and 19</b> |
| <b>Seminar #4<br/>January 8 and 9</b>    |
| <b>Seminar #5<br/>January 22 and 23</b>  |
| <b>Seminar #6<br/>February 6 and 7</b>   |
| <b>Seminar #7<br/>February 26 and 27</b> |
| <b>Seminar #8<br/>March 4 and 5</b>      |
| <b>Seminar #9<br/>March 11 and 12</b>    |
| <b>Seminar #10<br/>April 1 and 2</b>     |
| <b>Seminar #11<br/>April 29 and 30</b>   |
| <b>Seminar #12<br/>May 13 and 14</b>     |
| <b>Seminar #13<br/>May 20 and 21</b>     |

## **12. Application Process**

**The deadline for submission of applications is Wednesday, October 28, 2015.**

Interested staff should register for the application process on My Learning Plan. Upon registration, prospective participants will receive an application form and additional program information. Applications, including the resume and personal statement, need to be submitted by email to [bpspathways@gmail.com](mailto:bpspathways@gmail.com) on or before the October 28 deadline.

A complete application must be submitted to be considered and needs to include:

1. Application form
2. Resume detailing educational background and relevant professional work experience.
3. A 2-3 page, carefully crafted personal statement of your reasons for seeking admission to the Severe Pathway Program and your perspectives on or experiences with students with severe special needs.

Principals/headmasters will be contacted directly for a reference relative to the individual's application for the Pathway Program. Applicants have the option of submitting letters of reference from other individuals who can attest to their qualifications and potential for special education teaching or teaching in inclusive schools and classrooms.