

Melissa Jade Pappas

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Professional Summary

Passionate, dedicated, and motivated teaching professional with demonstrated capabilities in addressing and meeting individual student needs and implementing developmentally appropriate practices. Committed to building rapport and fostering a positive learning environment for all students by utilizing a combined-skills approach and observing and respecting student feedback.

Education

MASTER OF EDUCATION | AUGUST 2018 | UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

- Major: Exceptional Student Education
- Inducted as a member of Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society with a 4.0 GPA
- Selected as a member of the Project ASD Federal Grant Program
- Related coursework: Autism Spectrum Disorders Graduate Certificate, completed June 2017

BACHELOR OF ARTS | MAY 2015 | UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA

- Major: Exceptional Student Education K-12/Elementary Education K-6
- Related coursework: ESOL Certification/Reading Endorsement

Awards & Recognition

- Selected as the 2020 Orange County Public Schools District Teacher of the Year
- Recipient of the 2019 Mary J. Brogan Excellence in Teaching Award
- Recognized by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis at the 2020 State of the State Address
- Selected as a State and District conference speaker and presenter
- Invited to serve on the Impact Florida Education Summit Teacher of the Year Team

Skills & Abilities

LEADERSHIP

- Responsible for coordinating a team of paraprofessionals and program assistants to best serve the needs of a diverse population of students within the classroom environment
- Takes initiative across many areas such as: learning and implementing individual education plans and behavior intervention plans; continuing education and seeking opportunities for personal and professional growth; creating, organizing, and carrying out team/schoolwide events
- Plays an active role as an ally and advocate to the ASD and special needs community both in and out of the school environment
- Serves as Team Leader, 2018-2019 School Year
- Serves as a clinical educator/mentor for new/developing professionals

COMMUNICATION

- Collaborates regularly with service providers, parents, ESE team members, and administration to maintain a positive, effective learning environment and best meet the changing needs of students
- Open to discussing and implementing new ideas and strategies
- Builds positive relationships with school team and parents of students

INNOVATION

- Finds opportunities to engage students based off their ability levels and levels of interest
- Creates original materials and lessons to teach students in creative and effective ways
- Constantly evaluates classroom procedures and lessons from various perspectives to provide a variety of learning approaches for students

RESPONSIBILITY

- Completes tasks in a thorough but timely manner, including individual education plans, communications with service providers, ESE team members, parents, or administration
- Maintains an organized environment to minimize downtime and avoid distraction that may cause behavior escalation in students
- Informs support staff of important information or changes in a timely manner to ensure consistency

Experience

TEACHER, INTENSIVE ASD K-5 | OCPS-BROOKSHIRE ELEMENTARY | 08/2015 TO CURRENT

- Responsible for: teaching up to 6 students instructed in Access Points and Florida Standards curriculum in a self-contained setting; administering the Florida Standards Assessment/Florida Standards Alternate Assessment to 3rd-5th grade students; writing and implementing Individual Education Plans; collaborating on and implementing Individual Behavior Intervention Plans; developing individualized classroom structure and schedules to meet the various needs of lower-functioning students with intensive behavioral needs; instructing students with communication needs, including use of Assistive Technology (AT) devices and Augmentative or Alternative Communication (AAC); coordinating daily with support staff, service providers, and the ESE team to create a strong, positive classroom environment to encourage student growth and learning; tending to any student medical needs and collaborating with the school nurse to ensure safety and wellbeing; provides trainings and materials to peers on various subject matter, including autism and special needs; creates schoolwide initiatives to foster community within the school setting; completes mandatory and optional trainings in accordance with district policies

PARAPROFESSIONAL, SEVERELY HANDICAPPED | OCPS-BROOKSHIRE ELEMENTARY | 8/2012 TO 6/2015

- Responsible for: working one-on-one with a student with autism in the general education setting; thoroughly understanding and implementing student's Individual Education Plan and Individual Behavior Intervention Plan; collaborating with classroom teachers, parents, and ESE staff to ensure student success; organizing and producing daily tools and supplies to be used by students; providing support to ESE classrooms

OFFICE CLERK | OCPS-BROOKSHIRE ELEMENTARY | 8/2010 TO 8/2012

- Responsible for: organization and presentation of school front office; interacting daily with parents, students, employees, and guests; assisting peers by taking on additional tasks; responsible for completing clerical tasks, covering the clinic, and supervising groups of students