



October Newsletter

Career Pathways Program

Office of Human Resources and Development

PREPARE. PLAN. DETERMINE. DISCOVER.

ONLINE PRAXIS CORE PREP CLASS-IT'S FREE!

The Maryland State Department of Education requires that individuals earn a bachelor's or master's degree and certification in the content area they will teach and pass the necessary Praxis exams. Some universities require that applicants pass the Praxis Core before being accepted into graduate programs.

We have some good news from Khan Academy! They have launched Official *Praxis*® Core Prep—a free, online test prep resource that helps aspiring teachers prepare for the *Praxis*® Core exams!

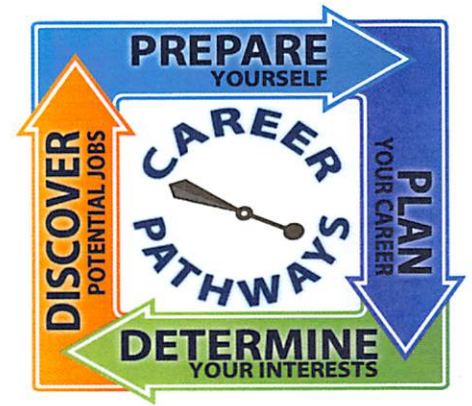
Khan Academy developed this free test prep resource in collaboration with ETS, the makers of the *Praxis*® exams. With the help of this test prep, aspiring teachers can gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed on test day and in their future classrooms—for free! Free prep for the Praxis Core tests will assess each teacher candidate's strengths and weaknesses. Each user will then receive a personalized study plan beginning at the user's starting point and progressing right up to test day. This online prep resource will prepare you in math, reading, and writing!

SUPPORTING SERVICES EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Start planning now to nominate a supporting services employee who extends beyond the basic required duties and contributes to students and the school community by enhancing student learning, creating positive relationships, and making the worksite or school a better place. Each nominee must be an active support professional with a minimum of 3 years of service with MCPS.

See the last page of this newsletter for more information on last year's winner and how to nominate a coworker!

For more information, contact Nathalie Bourdereau, Career Pathways Program Specialist, at 301-217-5115 or Nathalie_C_Bourdereau@mcpsmd.org



Upcoming Events

Supporting Services Workshop: Becoming a Special Education Teacher with MCPS

Look on PDO today for a training which will provide information on how support professionals can participate in Higher Education Partnerships to become certified special education teachers with MCPS. **Couse #88480**



Did You Know?

All current permanent MCPS employees have **free** access to all Montgomery County recreation facilities, including swimming pools and gymnasiums. Both passes are valid for one year; you may reapply each year to continue your access to the facilities.

Interested? Learn more and visit the MC Recreation website for general information.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) Career Development Grants provide funding to women who hold a bachelor's degree and are preparing to advance or change careers or reenter the workforce. Primary consideration is given to women of color and women pursuing their first advanced degree or credentials in nontraditional fields.

Applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents whose last degree was received before June 30, 2015. Funds are available for tuition, fees, books, supplies, local transportation, and dependent care.

Applications for AAUW Career Development Grants are open until November 15, 2019.

<https://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/educational-funding-and-awards/career-development-grants/cdg-application/>

UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Clear and Concise Communications

Upcounty Regional Services Center

October 24, 2019, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

This course will help you develop skills to improve your communication with colleagues. Learn the importance of good listening skills and clarifying questions in gaining understanding. Discover how your body language can be made consistent with your verbal message. Learn why "less is more" when communicating via e-mail to avoid being ignored. *Course #86390*

Giving and Receiving Feedback

Upcounty Regional Services Center

October 30, 2019, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Learning to give and receive feedback at work is an essential skill for individuals looking to grow professionally, build successful relationships with coworkers, and accomplish their goals. Learn strategies for handling difficult situations in both giving and receiving information. *Course # 53756*



REMINDER!

New Paraeducator Orientation*

October 26, 2019
Richard Montgomery HS
*Please register on PDO
Lunch is provided.*

This is a highly recommended day of training!

You will be **paid for seven hours at \$20 per hour.**

Training Provided:

- What is Special Education in MCPS?
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Strategies that Support Instruction
- Behavior Management

*Open to new paras and paras hired in the last two years who have not attended before.

Look For!

Is this your evaluation year? Administrators and supervisors received a list of employees who should be evaluated this school year. Find out if you will be evaluated and start keeping your own documentation of a job well done! Check out Developing a Professional Portfolio, course #87533, for more information about the seven core competencies and artifacts that demonstrate professional growth and accomplishment!



CAREER ADVANCEMENT PATHWAY SPOTLIGHT: LESLIE ATKIN

Leslie Atkin, English composition assistant at Wheaton High School and 2019 Supporting Services Employee of the Year, has been employed as an English composition assistant for the last 10 years.

Tell us about yourself. I graduated from Tulane University in 1981, with a bachelor's degree in English and Political Science. Then, I worked in private industry for 18 years as a professional writer and editor before joining MCPS in 2008 as an English composition assistant (ECA). I have worked as an ECA at Walt Whitman and Kennedy high schools and now Wheaton High School. I have held several volunteer positions in the school system while our children made their way to graduation from Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. Both adult children have now graduated from college and are working in their areas of passion in the work world.



Why did you choose MCPS as an employer? I already was volunteering at my kids' high school and heard about an opening at Walt Whitman High School from another volunteer parent. We both had backgrounds as writers and editors. She already worked at Whitman High School and told me how great the job was—meeting with students, working with teachers, and staying young (in spirit) in the high school environment. I gave it a chance and haven't looked back since!

Who should apply to be an English Composition Assistant? Great English composition assistants meet each student at his or her level, encourage those individuals about what they are doing right, and then try to raise the bar to improve his or her writing skills. In order to do this, ECAs need to quickly assess each student's abilities, get a feel for how to communicate effectively with that individual, and offer effective and simple methods that the students can use on their own. Great ECAs should stay positive and focus on student accomplishments while addressing a student's challenges. A sense of humor also is important!

How do you encourage employees to build their careers in MCPS? I participate in the MCPS Support Services Training Corps (SSTC), which offers professional development opportunities for support professionals. In particular, I act as a co-trainer with another MCPS employee. Together, we run a PDO course on improving punctuation and writing style for support professionals who are interested in becoming more effective writers. This would be a great class for employees to take to prepare for an English composition assistant. The SSTC is a great way to build your skills for future positions in MCPS.

Want to nominate someone for Supporting Services Employee of the Year?

Use this quick checklist when submitting your nomination packet!

1. Complete Nomination Form (online at www.seiu500.org).
2. Minimum of **two**, maximum of four letters of support, one of which must be from an administrator or supervisor.
3. Nomination form must be complete and submitted together with letters of support at the same time to the awards committee. No faxes will be accepted.



Deadline for submissions is 4:00 p.m. on December 20, 2019.