Prince George's County Public Schools and Johns Hopkins University
Partnership for Preparing Beginning Special Educators

The Application Process and Considerations for Applicants

January 27, 2004

1st: Applicants must read all the information in the Application Packet on the web site (including this form) to determine whether this graduate program at JHU and employment in PGCPS as a special educator is a good match for them. Note that this Partnership is a comprehensive and rigorous program, and applicants who are selected as participants will be making a commitment to (a) complete the entire graduate program with 80% tuition assistance paid from a grant* and (b) continue to teach as a special educator in PGCPS for two years after graduation. We are looking for excellent applicants who are ready to commit to the intensive graduate program and continued teaching in PGCPS. We encourage submission of applications from all people who are interested in this program and Partnership, and we especially encourage applications from people who are male, from culturally diverse backgrounds, and who have disabilities.

2nd: If you are primarily seeking tuition assistance and are not also strongly committed to a career in special education and to teaching students with a variety of disabilities—this Partnership is not a good match for you! As a special educator in Prince George's County Public Schools, you will be teaching students with mild to moderate disabilities in grades 1 to 12. Students you teach may have learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, and/or mild developmental disabilities or mild mental retardation. If you would like to observe school sites to see some special educators “in action” and to get a better idea of what special education teaching and students are about, please contact Ms. Jill Hildenbrand. We strongly encourage you—if you are not familiar with school programs or students in special education—become familiar with them prior to submitting an application so that you are better able to make a decision that’s a good match for you!

3rd: Some of you reading this may be firm that you do want to become a special educator, but you may be concerned about the pace of this rigorous and comprehensive master’s program while you are beginning to teach. Think this through as much as you can prior to submitting an application for this Partnership. For some people, this Partnership route (i.e., the rigor and pace) is not a good match for them to become a special educator. That does not mean that special education teaching is not a good match for them! Consider your personal and professional lives when making a decision to apply for this Partnership. You can still pursue the JHU graduate program in Mild to Moderate Disabilities on your own—without being part of this Partnership. You may also pursue special education teaching in PGCPS on your own—without being part of this Partnership. We want you to consider many things so that you’re better able to make a decision that’s right for you at this time in your life!

4th: When you decide this Partnership is a good match for you and your career goals, complete the Applicant's Application in a way that best highlights your excellence. Note that four attachments are required with the applicant's application; be sure all applicant information is received by the deadline of April 16, 2004. Also note that individuals who have graduated from a non-U.S. institution need to submit the evaluation completed by a credentialed agency (see Applicant Item # 19 and the JHU catalog or website for more information).

Concurrent with completing your application, print two copies of the Reference Forms, sign them, and give them to two people you would like to complete a confidential reference for you. One of these References must be your current supervisor. Confidential Reference Forms must be sent directly to Jill Hildenbrand in PGCPS by the people you ask to complete them; do NOT submit the confidential reference forms with your application packet.

TIP for References: We suggest you provide each of your References with (a) an overview of the Partnership so that the person completing the form has information on what you’re applying for and (b) a stamped envelope that is already addressed by you to Ms. Hildenbrand.
Incomplete applications will not be considered. Complete applications include all items required for the Applicant's Application and two confidential Reference Forms.

5th: A Partnership Selection Committee will convene in late April to review and rate all applications. From all applications submitted, the top scorers will be invited for an in-person interview and completion of a spontaneous writing sample on April 23. Scores will be calculated, and then the top applicants will be invited to become participants in this Partnership.

6th: Selected participants will need to complete two applications immediately: (a) application for admission to JHU graduate programs [www.spsbe.jhu.edu] and (b) application for employment in PGCPS as a special educator [www.pgcps.org]. Due to the timelines between being selected as participants and beginning the JHU graduate program and PGCPS employment, we strongly encourage you to submit applications for each of these areas in early April. Similarly, applicants who have not completed prerequisite or co-requisite courses may want to explore opportunities to complete those concurrent with submitting the Partnership Application.

7th: Selected participants will convene as a group at 4:30 on Tuesday, April 27 to overview the conditions for accepting the grant. Selected participants who desire to accept the grant will convene at 4:30 on Thursday, April 29 for an Orientation Session.

8th: JHU coursework begins June 1 2004 (note that the three summer courses are scheduled for days, evenings, and week-end times and dates, so any vacations should be completed prior to June) and PGCPS employment begins in August 2004. Anticipate that school-year courses will be completed in late afternoon/evenings, and some courses will have Saturday and Sunday sessions. Courses will be offered at the JHU Columbia Center.

* 80% tuition assistance is contingent on continued grant funding. At this time, we do anticipate the grant will continue to be funded, but we cannot guarantee it (even when it’s very likely). If funding does not continue, participants will not be required to continue at the pace outlined in this Partnership.