

**TOMPKINS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE  
EXAMINATION  
Inclusion Through Diversity**

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Office  
125 E. Court Street  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
(607) 274-5526

**Tompkins County is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply**

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**TITLE:** Secretary to the Principal

**EXAM NO:** 86413

**SALARY:** Depends Upon Location- Groton Central School \$15.44/hr

**LOCATION:** Various School Districts Throughout Tompkins County

**TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT:** Full Time, Part-Time, Temporary

**EXAM DATE:** 03/02/24

**ISSUE DATE:** 12/15/23

**THE FINAL DATE TO FILE APPLICATIONS:** 01/26/24

**DATE THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM POSTING:** 03/03/24

**RESIDENCY:** Candidates must have been legal residents of Tompkins County or one of the six adjoining counties (Cayuga, Chemung, Cortland, Schuyler, Seneca, Tioga) for at least one month immediately preceding the date of application and maintain residency. For Examinations: The eligible list resulting from the examination will be established in accordance with the final earned numerical ratings of passing candidates regardless of residence. A municipality or district may exercise its right under section 23-4-a. of Civil Service Law to request a certification of eligible candidates who have been residents of that municipality or district for at least one month prior to appointment. After the names of residents have been exhausted, Tompkins County must then certify the names of non-residents on the list.

**THE USE OF A QUIET HAND HELD CALCULATOR IS RECOMMENDED FOR THIS EXAMINATION.**

**Location of Position:**

There are currently no vacancies in the title of Secretary to the Principal. The eligible list resulting from this open competitive examination may be used to fill any full-time, part-time, or temporary vacancies that may occur during the life of the eligible list.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: EITHER:**

- (a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York registered two-year college with an Associates Degree in Secretarial Science or computer skills; **OR**
- (b) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma **AND** two years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) clerical experience, one year of which involved substantial use of computer skills; **OR**

(c) Six years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) clerical experience, one year of which must have involved substantial use of computer skills; **OR**

(d) Any equivalent combination of training and experience as described in (a), (b), or (c) above.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

#### **DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:**

This is a clerical position with a variety of office responsibilities including word processing, maintaining files, and managing the office in the absence of the principal. A wide degree of latitude is exercised in the application of established procedures. Depending on location, the incumbent may supervise other clerical staff and is supervised directly by the principal. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

#### **TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- Uses computer, typewriter and dictating tapes to type a wide variety of documents including confidential material (speed is not typically a significant factor);
- Sets up and maintains personnel records and payroll information for all staff;
- Maintains general school files;
- Operates a calculator, copy machine, computer, printer or other office machines;
- Manages general office procedures, and clerical work supervision and assignment in the absence of the principal;
- Composes and types routine correspondence where policies and procedures are well defined at the direction of the principal;
- Answers the telephone and handles direct staff, student and parent inquiries in the absence of the receptionist.

#### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Good knowledge of office terminology, procedures and equipment;
- Good knowledge of business arithmetic and English;
- Skill in use of computer software;
- Ability to understand and carry out oral and written directions;
- May be required to supervise the work of others;
- Ability to get along well with others;
- Ability to write legibly;
- Clerical aptitude, mental alertness, good judgment, neatness, accuracy, tact, courtesy and integrity are required.
- The employee's physical condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the position.

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#### **COMPLETE SCOPE OF THE EXAMINATION AND EXPANDED SUBTEST DESCRIPTIONS:**

##### **Grammar/Usage/Punctuation**

The grammar and usage questions test for the ability to apply the basic rules of grammar and usage. The punctuation questions test for a knowledge of the correct placement of punctuation marks in sentences. You will be presented with sets of four sentences from each of which you must choose the sentence that contains a grammatical, usage, or punctuation error.

##### **Keyboarding practices**

These questions test for a knowledge of preferred practices in such areas as letter format, capitalization, hyphenation, plurals, possessives, word division, word and figure style for numbers, and common proofreading marks. In addition, there will be a passage to proofread followed by questions on how to correct the errors in the passage.

##### **Office practices**

These questions test for a knowledge of generally agreed-upon practices governing the handling of situations which typists, stenographers, secretaries, and office assistants encounter in their work, as well as a knowledge of efficient and effective methods

used to accomplish office tasks. The questions cover such topics as planning work flow; setting priorities; dealing effectively with staff, visitors, and callers; filing and retrieving information; safeguarding confidentiality; using office equipment; and making procedural decisions and recommendations which contribute to a well-managed office.

### **Spelling**

These questions test for the ability to spell words that are used in written business communications.

### **Test guide:**

The New York State Department of Civil Service has not prepared a test guide for this examination. However, candidates may find information in the publication 'General Guide to Written Tests' helpful in preparing for this test. This publication is available on line at:<https://www.cs.ny.gov/testing/testguides.cfm>.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Falsification of any part of the "Application for Employment" will result in disqualification.

Accepted candidates will be notified when and where to appear for the examination. If you do not receive your notice to appear at least three days before the date of the written examination, call Tompkins County Department of Human Resources at 274-5526. If an application is disapproved, due notice will be sent. This department does not make formal acknowledgment of the receipt of an application or take responsibility for non-delivery or postal delay.

Applicants must answer every question on the application form and make sure that the application is complete in all respects. Incomplete applications will be disapproved.

**ACTIVE MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS OR DISABLED VETERANS** desiring to claim additional credit will request the Veterans Credits application form, at any time between the date of application for examination(s) and the date of the establishment of the resulting eligible list. You must meet the requirements set by NYS for these credits and they may be used only once. **YOU MAY NOT CLAIM ADDITIONAL CREDITS AFTER THE ELIGIBLE LIST HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. IT IS THE CANDIDATE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REQUEST THE VETERANS CREDIT APPLICATION FORMS AND TO SUBMIT THESE FORMS AND ANY SUPPORTING PAPERWORK BEFORE THE ELIGIBLE LIST IS ESTABLISHED.**

Tompkins County's written examinations are prepared and rated by the New York State Department of Civil Service in accordance with Section 23-2 of Civil Service Law. The provisions of the New York State Civil Service Rules and Regulations, which deal with the rating and review of the examinations apply.

The duration of the eligible lists may be fixed for a minimum of one and a maximum of four years and may be extended beyond four years if there has been a restriction against the filling of vacancies in that title.

The candidates must complete a separate "Application for Employment" for each open-competitive and/or promotional examination that the candidate is eligible to take.

All experience required meeting the acceptable training and experience is full-time experience. (Part-time experience will be credited on a prorated basis).

Appointment from an eligible list must be made from the top three candidates willing to accept the appointment.

Tompkins County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. As part of its efforts to provide employment opportunities to the physically handicapped, Tompkins County Civil Service has adopted a rule permitting the employment of qualified physically handicapped persons without competitive examination (pursuant to Section 55 of Civil Service Law). If you meet the minimum qualifications for this position and wish to know more about this rule, please contact the Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Office.

Unless otherwise notified, candidates are permitted to use quiet, hand-held, and solar or battery powered calculators. Devices with Typewriter Keyboards, Spell Checkers, Personal Digital Assistants, Address Books, Language Translators, Dictionaries or any similar devices are prohibited. You may not bring books or other reference materials.

**CROSS-FILING - APPLYING FOR CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS IN MULTIPLE JURISDICTIONS WHEN EXAMINATIONS ARE SCHEDULED ON THE SAME DATE:** When applying for examinations across multiple jurisdictions - all of which are scheduled on the same day - you must submit a Tompkins County Cross-Filing Form. This form must be submitted no later than 4:30 PM on the final filing date of the examination. On this form, list each examination that you are taking and then tell us where you would like to sit. The purpose is to ensure that all of the test materials for the various examinations that you are taking will be available in one location. If you do not provide the cross-filing form to us by the final filing date, we cannot ensure that we can accommodate your desire to cross-file. If any of the examinations are State level examinations, you must sit at the State test center. You will still need to complete the Tompkins County cross-filing form. If sitting at the State site, the State will notify you of when and where to report for your examination(s) and you should bring all admittance letters to the State site. If you are not taking a State examination, bring all admittance letters to your chosen testing site. If you have any question please call Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Department (607) 274-5526. The Cross File form is located at <http://www.tompkins-co.org/personnel/CivilSrvForms/index.html>

**FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION AND HANDICAPPED PERSONS:** If special arrangements for testing are required, please indicate this on your application.

**ALL CANDIDATES FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR POSITIONS IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND BOCES GOVERNED BY TOMPKINS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE MAY HAVE THE FOLLOWING SPECIAL REQUIREMENT. PER CHAPTER 180 OF THE LAWS OF 2000, AND BY REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, TO BE EMPLOYED IN A POSITION DESIGNATED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR BOCES AS INVOLVING DIRECT CONTACT WITH STUDENTS, A CLEARANCE FOR EMPLOYMENT FROM THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS REQUIRED.**

In conformance with Section 85-a of the Civil Service Law, children of firefighters and police officers killed in the line of duties shall be entitled to receive an additional ten points in a competitive examination for original appointment in the same municipality in which his or her parent has served. If you are qualified to participate in this examination and are a child of firefighter or police officer killed in the line of duties in this municipality, please inform this office of this matter when you submit your application for examination. A candidate claiming such credit has a minimum of two months from the application deadline to provide the necessary documentation to verify additional credit eligibility. However, no credit may be added after the eligible list has been established.

**BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION:** Applicants may be required to undergo a State and national criminal history background investigation, which will include a fingerprint check, to determine suitability for appointment. Failure to meet the standards for the background investigation may result in disqualification.

TOMPKINS COUNTY PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT, 125 EAST COURT STREET, ITHACA, NY 14850