

THE CHALLENGE OF TEACHER SHORTAGES AND THE PATH FORWARD

Mary Brownell, University of Florida

Jane West, Education Policy Consultant

CASE/NASDE Conference Louisville

October 29, 2019



POLLING QUESTIONS

Options to Access Poll

Scan this code with your phone camera or QR reader and open polling website.

Go to

www.ceedar.org/case-poll and click on “launch poll”

THE SHORTAGE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

- 48 states and DC report a shortage of sped teachers
- Students in high poverty urban & rural areas hit hardest
- Students with serious emotional & behavioral disorders disproportionately affected
- Pipeline is insufficient and shrinking; sped faculty shortage likewise problematic
- Shortages exacerbated by turnover: sped teacher 2.5 times more likely to leave the profession as gen ed teachers

A PROFILE OF MICHIGAN -- TODAY

- Majority of school districts began year without enough full-time “teachers”
- 2500 “teachers” not certified
- Long-term subs can serve for a year and do not have to have a BA or any teacher training; use of long-term subs increasing
- Disproportionate impact on low-income and low-performing students
- <https://www.bridgemi.com/talent-education/majority-michigan-public-schools-started-school-year-short-teachers>

A PROFILE OF MICHIGAN -- TODAY

- Special Ed biggest shortage – 41% of reported openings
- Enrollment in teacher prep programs dropped 66% between 2009 & 2016
- Benton Harbor Public Schools – 42% of “teachers” last year were long term subs
- Michigan students rank in the bottom third nationally

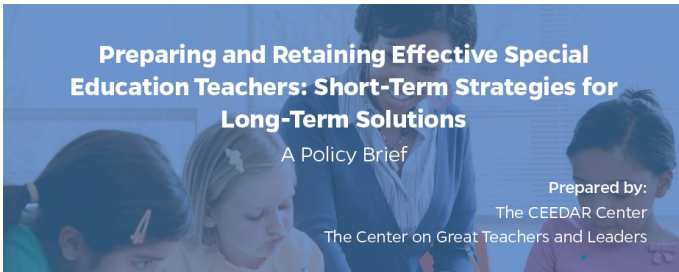
THE POLICY LANDSCAPE

- ESSA removed “highly qualified”
- State certification rules
- Shortages propelling lower state standards
- IDEA requires a minimum of a BA; ESSA does NOT
- Little national attention to the shortage crisis; limited awareness on the Hill
- Federal resources for preparation and retention matter, but insufficient
- Complex: federal, state, local roles

OSEP'S COMPREHENSIVE TALENT MANAGEMENT APPROACH



WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH TELL US?



Preparing and Retaining Effective Special Education Teachers: Short-Term Strategies for Long-Term Solutions
A Policy Brief

Prepared by:
The CEDAR Center
The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders

Many states struggle with shortages of special education teachers (SET). To address the shortage problem in the long term, policymakers, preparation providers, and state and district administrators must ensure that any short-term strategies are combined with a comprehensive plan that includes long-term systemic strategies to strengthen the supply, preparation, and retention of special education teachers.

Scope of the Special Education Teacher Shortage—Research Findings

- Forty-eight states and the District of Columbia currently report special education teacher shortages (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016).
- Certain populations of students are more disadvantaged by shortages— students in high-poverty urban schools, remote rural schools, and students with serious emotional and behavioral disorders (Albrecht, Johns, Mounsteven, & Oloranda, 2009; McClesky, Tyler, & Flippin, 2003).
- The pipeline of novice special education teachers was never sufficient and dwindled further during America's Great Recession (Sutcher et al. 2016).
- Shortages are exacerbated by high rates of attrition of special education teachers, who are 2.5 times more likely to leave the profession as teachers in general education (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

Some Short-Term Strategies May Be Counterproductive

- In response to the shortage, some states are reducing requirements for entry into teaching and are creating fast tracks into the classroom. States may often feel they have no other choice in the short term, but such strategies will not solve the shortage problem in the long term and could in fact create additional challenges associated with students not being educated by effective teachers.
- Because underprepared special education teachers are less effective and most likely to leave the field, fast tracks to the classroom create a revolving door. A more systemic approach to solving special education teacher shortages is needed to complement quick fixes.

1 Preparing and Retaining Effective Special Education Teachers: Short-Term Strategies for Long-Term Solutions

- Brief outlines the research supporting short-term and long-term strategies for reducing shortages.
- <https://www.dropbox.com/s/zffglozklnjzso5/Screenshot%202019-10-09%2023.09.08.png?dl=0>

INSIDE THE BRIEF

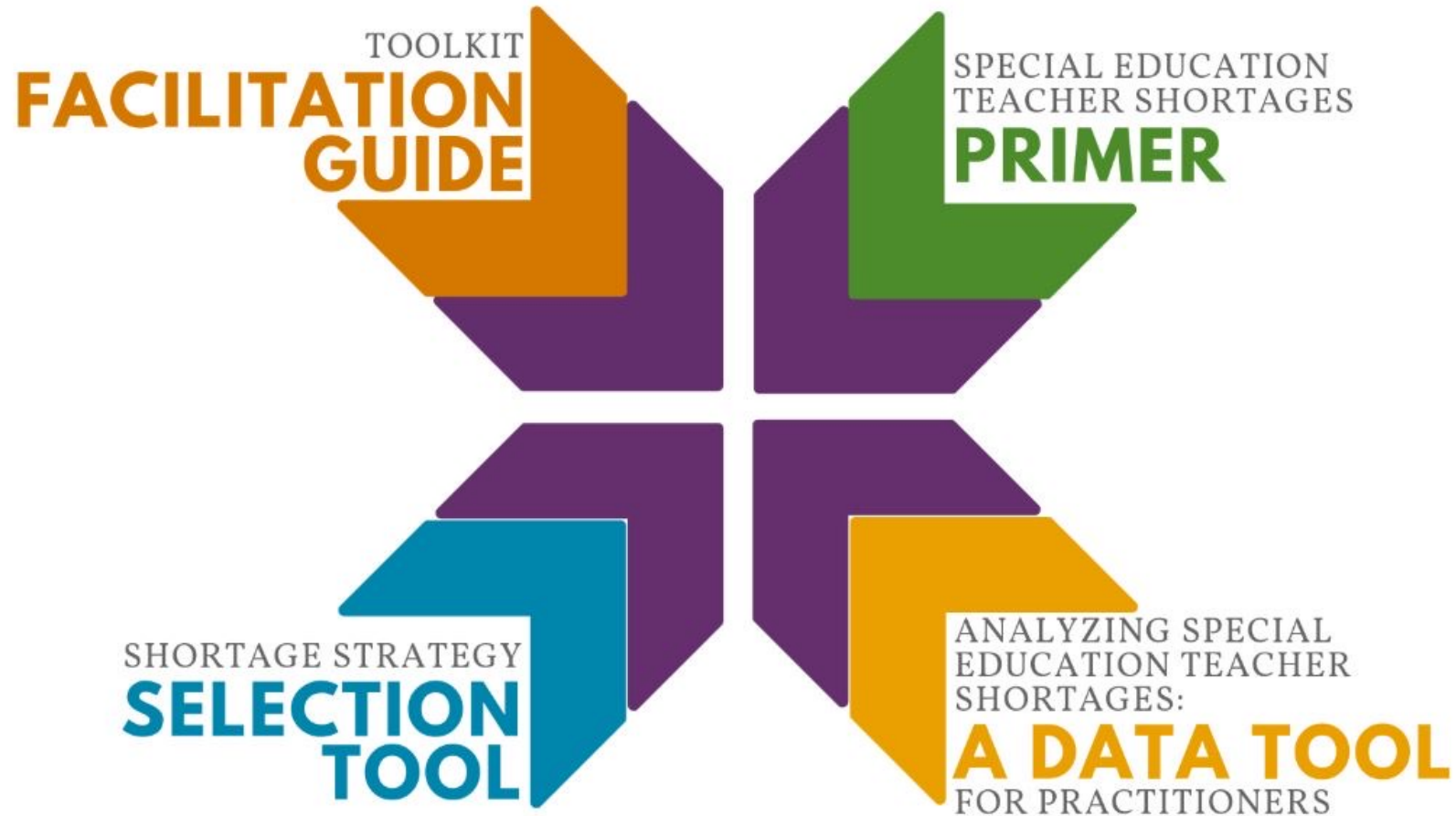
- **Attract**
 - Financial incentives matter
- **Prepare**
 - Less preparation = more turnover
 - Alternate routes with strong components can work
 - States which prepare more have fewer shortages

INSIDE THE BRIEF

- Retain
 - Positive school climate and leadership matter
 - Manageable workloads matter
 - Induction matters
 - Planning time and structured curriculum matters

SPECIAL EDUCATION SHORTAGES TOOLKIT

<https://gtlcenter.org/technical-assistance/toolkits/educator-shortages-special-education>



BEST PRACTICES: SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM

- Financial incentives
 - TEACH grants; Teacher Quality Partnership Grants; loan forgiveness, state scholarships
 - Providing housing, child care on campus
 - Raising salaries (e.g., Florida governor's initiative)
 - Stipends for teaching special education

PARTNERSHIPS TO PREPARE

- Residency programs: California Residency programs supported by the California Alliance for Inclusive Schooling (CAIS)
- Dual certification programs: Bowling Green State University, Portland State University <https://videos.aacte.org/home>
- Long Beach Promise
- Georgia P-20 collaborative developing induction and mentoring program in partnership with CEEDAR
- Advancing Inclusive Principal Leadership (AR, GA, MS, and OH)

BEST PRACTICES: SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM

- Grow your own programs: Texas, Minnesota competitive grant programs
- National Association on Alternative Certification Quality Indicators
- Initiatives for increasing diversity: University of Utah; Tennessee Minority Teaching Fellows Program

BEST PRACTICES: SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM

- Arizona Teachers Academy
 - \$15 million for 3000 students to become teachers debt-free in participating public IHEs
 - Tuition waiver scholarships for those who agree to teach in AZ public schools
- Louisiana
 - Braiding fed, state funds statewide to require full year pre-service residency for all future teachers

SPECIAL EDUCATION SHORTAGES TOOLKIT

<https://gtlcenter.org/technical-assistance/toolkits/educator-shortages-special-education>



FIVE THINGS FOR YOU TO DO: ADVOCACY IN ACTION

- DIG DEEP IN YOUR STATE/DISTRICT TO UNDERSTAND THE SHORTAGE
- ALWAYS BE AT THE TABLE WITH YOUR HOMEWORK IN HAND
- FIND ALLIES & BUILD COLLABORATIVES
- SHARE THE CEDAR BRIEF
- ALWAYS, ALWAYS BE PART OF THE SOLUTION



AND DON'T
FORGET.....

IF YOU ARE NOT
AT THE TABLE
.....YOU ARE
PROBABLY ON
THE MENU

DISCLAIMER:

The contents of this presentation were developed by the presenters. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3 and 3474)

*"That's All, Folks!"**



**Until next week, anyway..*