



Post-COVID Special Education Workforce Opportunities: Student Teachers and Career Changers




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Center on
**GREAT TEACHERS
& LEADERS**
at the American Institutes for Research® ■

By Lois Kimmel, *American Institutes for Research*, Paul Sindelar, *University of Florida*, Michael Rosenberg, *SUNY-New Paltz*, and
Loretta Mason-Williams, *Binghamton University*

Selecting Career Changers with Real Potential for Teaching and Designing a Program to Meet Their Needs

Available in the resources or online at
the CEEDAR Center:
<https://ceedar.education.ufl.edu/>



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Addressing Shortages of Educators in an Uncertain COVID-19 Landscape: Viewing Teacher Candidates as Assets

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Join us to discuss!

Saturday, March 13 @ 3:45

Zoom Meeting ID: 961 2944 8911

Objectives for today:

1. Understand the impact that COVID-19 may have on the special education teacher labor market.
2. Recognize key elements of candidate selection and program design for alternative route certificate programs that enhance teacher retention.
3. Discover potential opportunities for teacher candidates to assist during remote and in-person instruction throughout three main phases of teacher candidate clinical field experiences (foundational skills, intermediate practice, and advanced preparation).
4. Consider a range of practical solutions to Special Education teachers workforce challenges.

Talent Development Framework



Implications of COVID-19 in the Teacher Workforce



https://gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Examining_Impact_COVID19_Workforce.pdf

EDUCATION

Coronavirus school closures push out student teachers. Will US teacher shortage get worse?

Olivia Krauth and Sommer Brugal Louisville Co
Published 5:00 a.m. ET Apr. 6, 2020 | Updated 3:56 p.m. ET Apr.



EDUCATION

'We are going to run out of teachers' | APH officials warn coronavirus positivity rates in schools are 4 times higher than fall semester

An AISD middle school teacher says he's not surprised the numbers are spiking in the education systems.

E The Economist

Disrupted schooling will deepen inequality for American students

Some charities, like the Tennessee Tutoring Corps, have tried to spread access to tutors to less wealthy children, but efforts at scale (a federally ...
3 weeks ago



ED Education Week

What Happens to Student Teachers When Schools and ...

Will they be able to finish their student-teaching assignments? ... The student-teacher will continue to video chat with students a couple ... At West Virginia University's college of education, for example
Mar 13, 2020



Americorps, SNHU partner on program to help train teachers

By Paul Feely New Hampshire Union Leader Jan 12, 2021 Updated Jan 12, 2021

Policy Solutions

1

Selecting Career Changers
+ Designing a Program to
Meet Their Needs

2

Viewing Teacher
Candidates as Assets

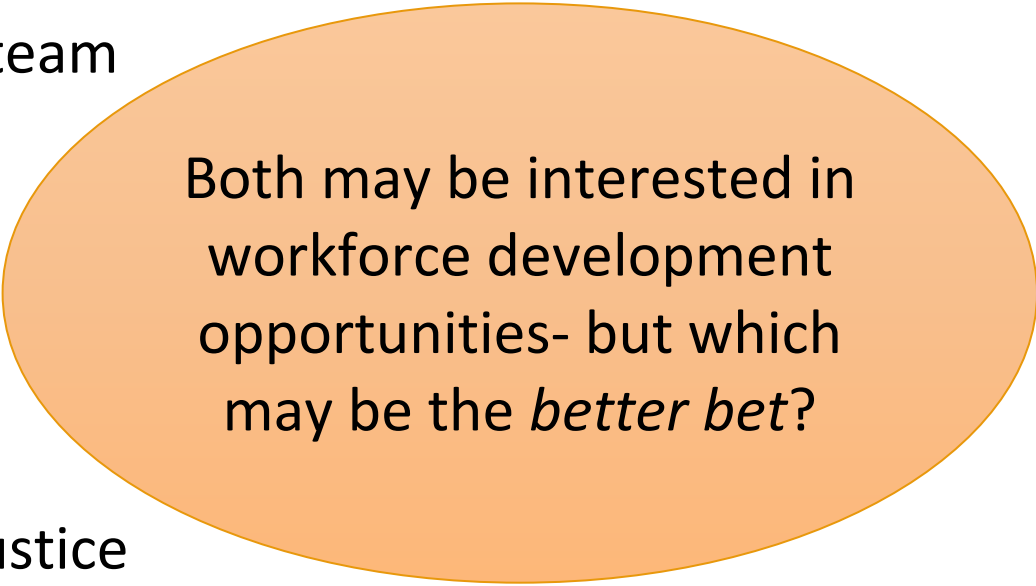
COVID-19 Created Abrupt Changes to Workforce Opportunities

- **Mark**

- Former bartender at popular restaurant until September 2020
- Completed bachelor's degree in English
- Assists with coaching the local youth football team

- **Tammy**

- Worked as an office assistant until July 2020
- Has experience in retail
- Completed an associate's degree in criminal justice



Both may be interested in workforce development opportunities- but which may be the *better bet*?

COVID-19 Led to Abrupt Changes in Teacher Preparation

Teacher candidates faced a number of barricades due to COVID- what can we learn from our response to the crisis?

- **Emily**

- Former star basketball player and coach, turned special educator
- Student teaching in class for students with severe disabilities
 - » Mentor teacher struggled with remote instruction, relied exclusively on worksheets
 - » District policies kept Emily side-lined and unable to assist with material development

- **Vanessa**

- Student teacher providing co-teaching and collaborative services
- Assisted mentor teacher and grade level team with developing materials and posting to Schoology
- Allowed to provide remote instruction to targeted groups
- Assisted with overseeing breakout rooms, encouraging engagement

With these situations in mind, we set out to create useful, research-informed briefs to inform administrators, policymakers, and teacher educators.



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Selecting Career Changers with Real Potential for Teaching and Designing a Program to Meet Their Needs



Alternative Routes for Career Changers

“Our concern with novice teachers’ impact on student achievement may be allayed by **careful selection of participants, adequate pre-teaching preparation, and induction and mentoring**” (Dai et al., 2007).

Guidelines for Candidate Selection

Learn about
previously held
positions

Look for candidates
with experience with
children or who live
in the community

For these reasons,
paraprofessionals
are a particularly
good bet.

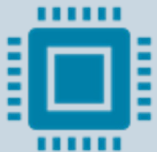
Guidelines for Program Design



Emphasize classroom survival and provide opportunities for practical products & coaching



Focus on partner districts' procedures, curriculum, and assessments- seek out opportunities for shared supervision & mentorship



Optimize technology in all elements of program design- enhance frequent exchanges between the instructor and other students.



Ensure coursework quality and rigor is not sacrificed. However, a program that's too long may discourage able participants.

Guidelines may also be useful:

- In districts relying heavily on long-term and short-term substitute teachers due to quarantines or other challenges;
- In building cooperative, grow-your-own programs; and
- Assisting general educators with obtaining certification in special education to fill pressing needs.



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Foundational Research

University-District Partnerships

Practice-Based Opportunities for Candidates

Benefits of Candidates on Students and Mentors

The Stages in Teacher Preparation Development



Getting Started: Foundational Skills

Teacher Candidates Have Opportunities in Schools to...

- Develop content-focused videos.
- Assist with locating and vetting online materials.
- Create support materials (scaffolded notes, graphic organizers).
- Monitor small groups (in person and online).
- Post materials to learning management systems.



EPPs Have the Opportunity to...

- Require modules on accessibility features.
- Share ways to evaluate materials.
- Evaluate candidate technology expertise.
- Teach about online security, confidentiality, and privacy.
- Require mandated reporting requirements earlier.



Gaining Experience: Intermediate Practice

Teacher Candidates Have Opportunities in Schools to...

- Teach small groups.
 - Targeted?
 - Assess gaps?
 - Reteach/remedial?
- Create review and extension activities.
- Provide feedback and oversee online activities.
- Conduct screening/benchmarking.



<https://www.tracksmag.com.au/news/the-tracks-small-wave-awards-550821>

EPPs Have the Opportunity to...

- Allow “hours” to be met online OR in person.
- Assign candidates to a building/team.
- Collaborate with districts to meet pressing needs.
- Do supervision remotely.



<https://www.tracksmag.com.au/news/the-tracks-small-wave-awards-550821>

Transitioning From Teacher Candidate to Novice Teacher: Advanced Preparation

Teacher Candidates Have Opportunities in Schools to...

- Allow candidates to take full responsibility—in person AND online.
- Assign strong student teachers to cooperating teachers with health concerns.
- Encourage team and co-teaching.
- Pair strategically to balance strengths (and needs).



<https://www.dailybreeze.com/2019/03/11/beachlife-festival-will-bring-surfings-big-wave-awards-to-redondo-beach/>

EPPs Have the Opportunity to...

- Identify and address implicit bias and how it may impact interactions with students and families;
- Promote virtual platforms as an option for supervision and mentoring;
- Revise evaluation systems to offer feedback on remote instruction; and
- Allow student teachers to demonstrate skills in unconventional ways.



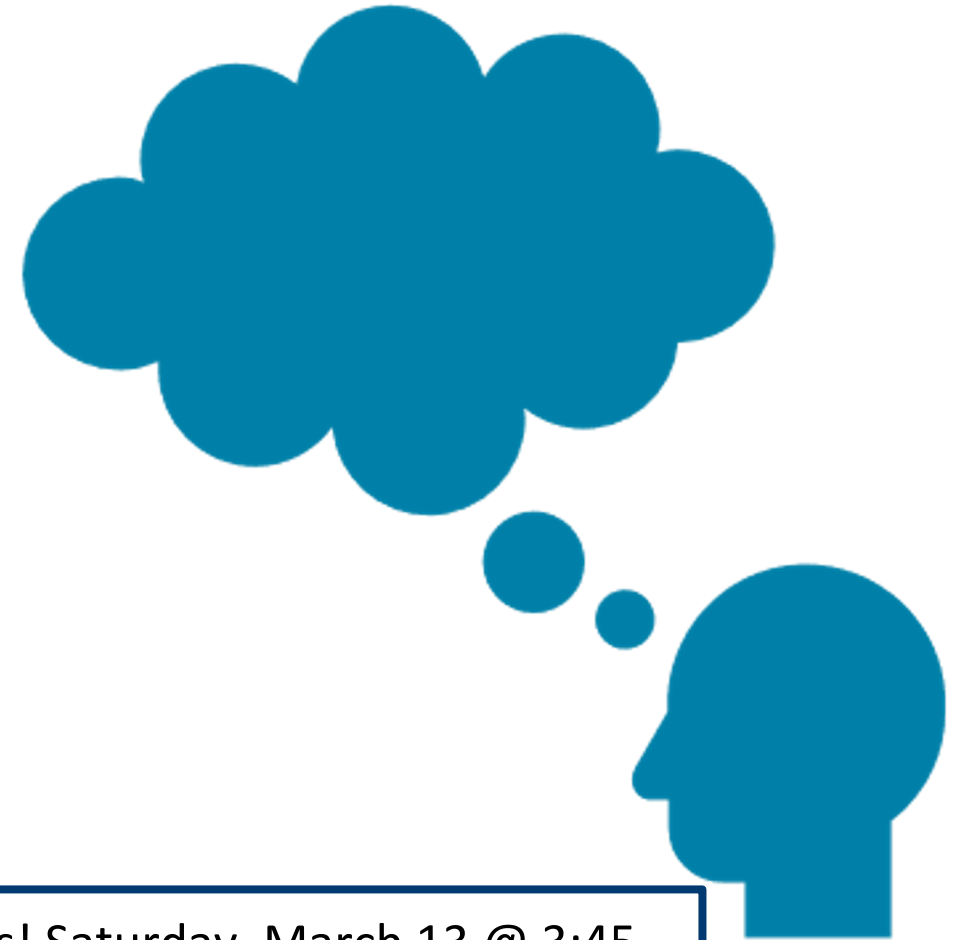
<https://www.dailybreeze.com/2019/03/11/beachlife-festival-will-bring-surfings-big-wave-awards-to-redondo-beach/>

Further Discussion

Join us either in the CEC chat or on Zoom!

Questions for Live Discussion & Self-Reflection

- What have you tried that has worked well? What successes have you had?
- What opportunities do you see?
- In your local context, how have established partnerships (or lack of) affected your ability to respond to special education teacher supply challenges that may be exacerbated by COVID?
- Are new programs/policies/initiatives underway within your local context/state to meet SET supply challenges?



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