CEEDAR Special Education Teacher Shortage Toolkit

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WHY SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED?

• 48 states and the District of Columbia report shortages of special education teachers.
• 42 states report a shortage of early intervention providers.
• Special education teachers leave the profession at nearly twice the rate of general education teachers.
• Enrollment in teacher preparation programs is down 35% over the last 5 years.

EQUITY ISSUES

• 90% of high-poverty school districts report difficulty attracting qualified special education teachers.
• There are severe and persistent shortages of special educators from diverse backgrounds.
• Students with serious emotional and behavioral disorders are disproportionately affected.

Source: Council for Exceptional Children, 2018; Fall & Billingsley, 2011.
THE CHALLENGE

• Districts are left with few choices and often rely on “fast-track” and emergency-certified teachers with little preparation and no classroom experience to fill positions.

• Short-term solutions exacerbate quantity and quality issues and create a revolving door.

• Long-term solutions like policy change take time!

THE SOLUTION

• A comprehensive educator talent management framework that:
  ✓ Encompasses the entire educator career continuum
  ✓ Considers unique local contexts
  ✓ Clarifies partner roles
EDUCATOR SHORTAGES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION: TOOLKIT FOR DEVELOPING LOCAL STRATEGIES
**Purpose**

• A one-stop shop for the latest research and talking points on special education shortages.

**Audience**

• State education agency (SEA) personnel
• Local education agency (LEA) personnel
• Educator preparation program (EPP) personnel
• Policymakers
PREPARING AND RETAINING EFFECTIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

• Brief outlines the research supporting short-term and long-term strategies for reducing shortages.
LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

TEACHER SHORTAGE SOLUTIONS TOOLKIT

Tools for Solving the Teacher Shortage

The Teacher Shortage

To give every child a quality education, we need a quality teacher in every classroom. But severe teacher shortages in communities across the country deprive many children of the opportunities they need to prepare for college, a career, and civic participation.

In 2017, more than 100,000 teaching positions were filled by teachers with inadequate training. Because they are unprepared for the challenges of the classroom, these teachers are less effective and more likely to leave the profession. At the same time, uncompetitive compensation, high student debt, and poor teaching conditions can drive out experienced teachers and attract fewer to the profession.

Special Education

Teacher shortages are not felt uniformly across all communities and classrooms, but instead affect some states, subject areas, and student populations more than others. Shortages are most prevalent in certain subject areas, such as secondary mathematics and science, special education, English as a second language (ESL), and foreign languages. In 2016, for example, 48 states and the District of Columbia reported a special education teacher shortage, and 32 states and the District of Columbia reported an ESL teacher shortage (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Likewise, certain populations of students already considered to be underserved are further disadvantaged by shortages, especially students in rural and diverse, high-poverty communities.
Purpose

• To help teams identify and implement a combination of short- and long-term educator talent management strategies.

Audience

• State education agency (SEA) personnel
• Regional education agency personnel
• Local education agency (LEA) personnel
• Educator preparation program (EPP) personnel
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1) Shortages are a local issue.
2) Shortages are an equity issue.
3) Shortages can impact any stage of the career continuum.
4) Shortages require collaboration across partners at all stages of the career continuum.

Short-Term Strategies
Hire and support candidates to fill immediate vacancies

Long-Term Strategies
Attract, prepare, and retain an effective teacher workforce

Comprehensive Solutions for Special Education Teacher Shortages
LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

Stage 1
Explore Context

Stage 2
Analyze Data

Stage 3
Identify Root Causes

Stage 4
Select Strategies

Implement
Assess
Monitor
Plan and Prepare
Improve
Sustain and Scale Up
Purpose: Tool for identifying and visualizing special education teacher shortages across the career continuum.

Audience: State teams consisting of state, regional, local, and educator preparation program stakeholders.
Starting Point: Data, Root Causes, and Context

Where do the gaps start?

What are the root causes for gaps?

Context is crucial!
Data Tool Lenses

- **Development of Gaps**: Compares the attrition of special education teachers with the attrition of the overall teacher population throughout the career continuum.

- **Teacher Hiring Funnel**: Focuses on the educator career continuum specifically for special education teachers, identifying the most significant moments of attrition.

- **Accountability Score Results**: Identifies how special education teacher attrition varies across districts and schools based on outcomes for SWDs as measured by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability scores.
Development of Gaps in the Retention of the Special Education Teacher Population vs. Overall Population
Teaching Hiring Funnel
Special Education Teacher Retention and ESSA Accountability
Purpose

• To identify evidence-based short- and long-term strategies per local context.

Audience

• State education agency (SEA) personnel
• Regional education agency personnel
• Local education agency (LEA) personnel
• Educator preparation program (EPP) personnel
## Recruitment/Attract Strategies Roles and Funding Document

### SEA Role
- Offer competitive grants to districts to establish GYO programs
- Secure private funding to establish statewide GYO programs
- Offer guidance/resource document to districts to advance GYO programs
- Convene stakeholders (EPPs, LEAs, and others, i.e. rural associations, etc.) to discuss local challenges, share priorities with each other and the SEA, and create partnerships
- Ensure grants prioritize local needs or gaps by a) identifying those needs, and b) providing how they are filling gaps

### EPP/Community College Role
- Provide on-site, in-district courses to paraprofessionals working toward certification.
- Partner with districts to establish a GYO program: for current EPP students, paraprofessionals, and future educators (HS students).
- Offer dual credit for Education and Training courses — and potentially other core courses — in partnership with districts to expand recruitment, matriculation, and future teacher.  
- Work with the districts — and the SEA, as needed — to count classroom

### District Role
- Work with the SEA, local business, CTE, and preparation programs to develop GYO curriculum.
- Work with EPPs — and the SEA, as needed — to allow classroom experience as a paraprofessional to count as field experience in the preparation program.
- Work with the EPP and Community Colleges to offer or expand dual credit opportunities for Education and Training courses — and potentially other core courses, to elevate the perception of the classes and training.

### Exemplars
- MN Department of Education’s COMPETITIVE — STATE — GROW YOUR OWN (GYO) GRANT OPPORTUNITY FOR FY19
- State of Washington’s Professional Educator Professional Standards Board Grow Your Own Pilot Program
- Tennessee Department of Education’s Awards Grants in Every Grand Division to Support Further Growing Educator Diversity
- New Mexico Higher Education Department’s Grow Your Own Program

### Funding Sources
- ESSA Title II Funding
- Private Foundation Funding: Gates, New Schools Venture Fund
- Teacher Quality Partnership Grant Program (ED)
- State Funded/Allocated funding from budget
- Perkins V funding (for HS program)
- IDEA Discretionary Funds
NEXT STEPS

Drives what we are doing to support states in reducing special education teacher shortages.
QUESTIONS?
REFERENCES


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