# Educator Shortages in Special Education 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.

Source: Council for Exceptional Children, 2018.

## **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 & 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!

Source: Boe, Cook, & Sunderland, 2006; Feng & Sass, 2013; Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2014.



## THE SOLUTION

- A comprehensive educator talent management framework that:
  - Encompasses the entire educator career continuum
  - √ Considers unique local contexts
  - ✓ Clarifies partner roles



## PREPARING AND RETAINING EFFECTIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

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

A Policy Brief

Prepared by:
The CEEDAR 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, & Oloraunda, 2009; McCleskx, 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).

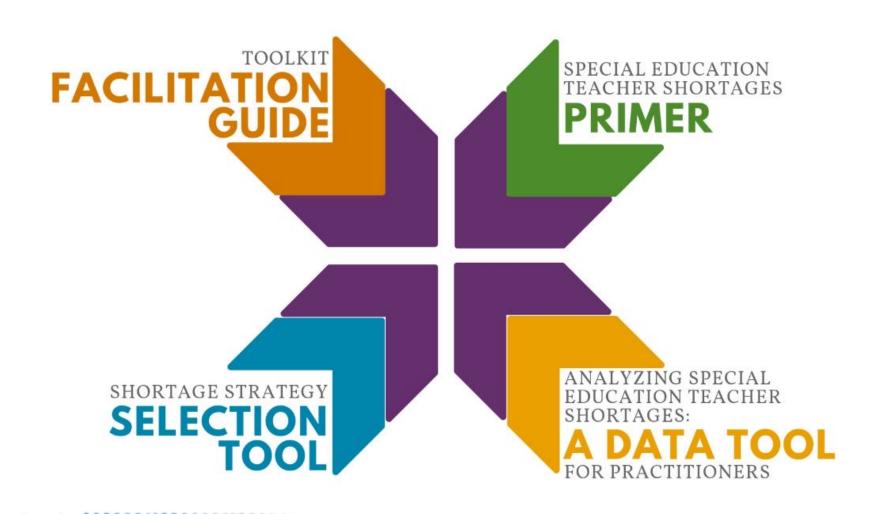
#### Some Short-Term Strategies May Be Counterproductive

- 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.

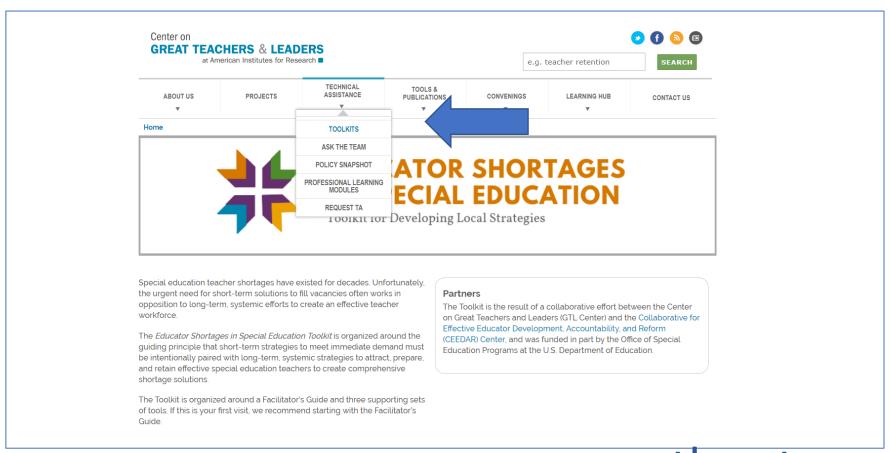
- Brief outlines the research supporting short-term and longterm strategies for reducing shortages.
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Preparing and Retaining Effective Special Education Teachers: Short-Term Strategies for Long-Term Solutions

## SPECIAL EDUCATION SHORTAGES TOOLKIT



## SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER SHORTAGES TOOLKIT



gtlcenter.org

## **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.







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



- State education agency (SEA) personnel
- Regional education agency personnel
- Local education agency (LEA) personnel
- Educator preparation program (EPP) personnel

## STAGES WITHIN THE THREE-PHASE PROCESS

#### Phase I: Assess, Plan, and Prepare

#### Short-Term Strategies

- Stage 1: Hire Candidates With the Most Potential
- Stage 2: Provide New Hires With Intensive Professional Learning

#### Long-Term Strategies

- Stage 1: Explore Context
- Stage 2: Analyze Data
- Stage 3: Identify Root Causes
- Stage 4: Select Strategies

#### Phase II: Implement, Monitor, and Improve

Phase III: Sustain and Scale Up



## Starting Point: Data, Root Cause, & Context



Where do the gaps start?



What are the root causes for gaps?



Context is crucial!

## Data Tool



- 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



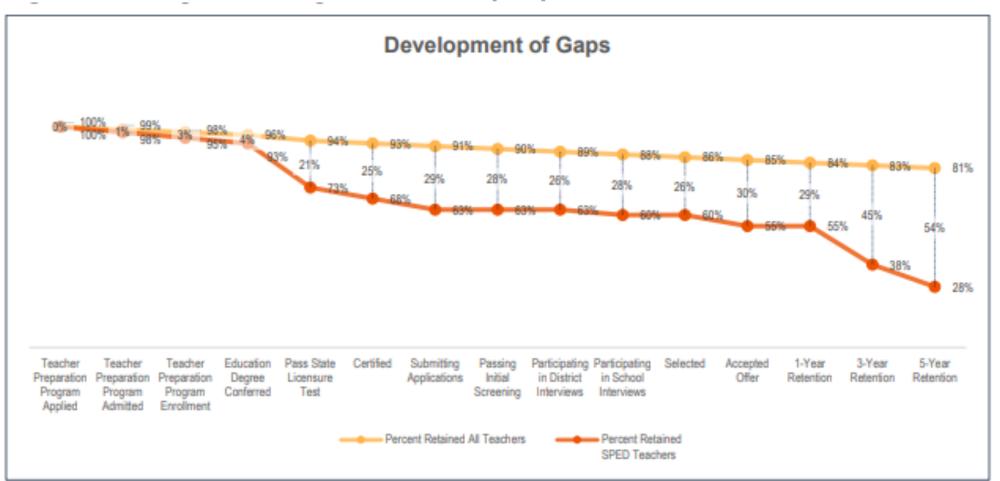


**Question:** What kinds of data sources are you currently using to examine special education teacher shortages?

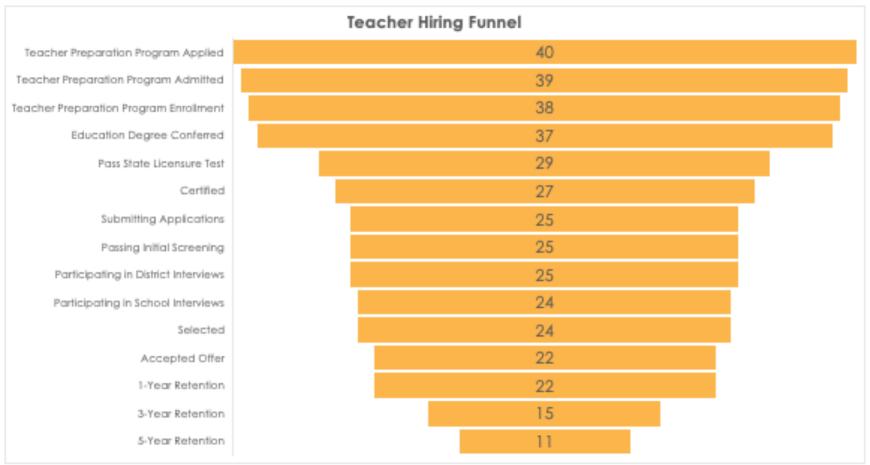
## Data Tool Lenses

- 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.

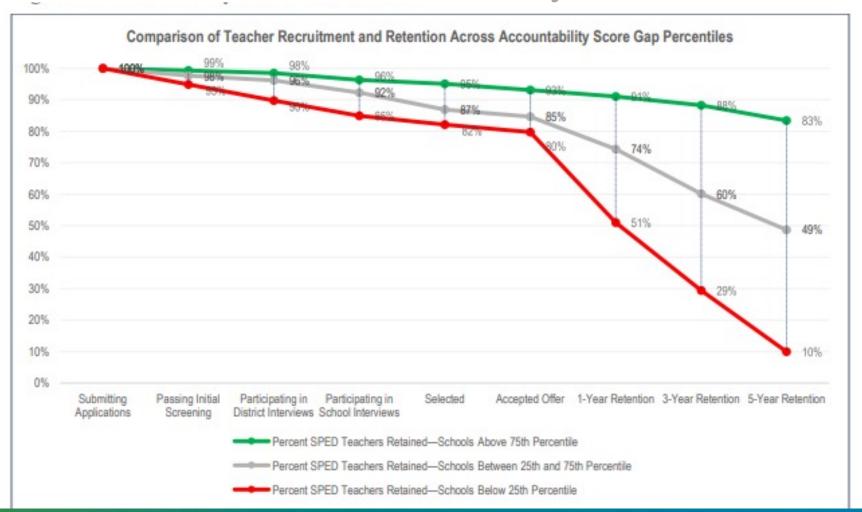
# Gaps in special educator retention compared with overall teacher population



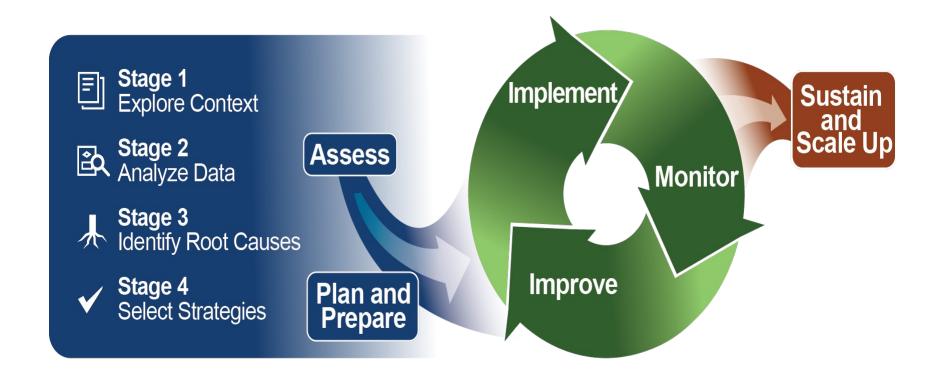
## Teaching Hiring Funnel



## Retention and ESSA Accountability



## **LONG-TERM STRATEGIES**







 To identify evidence-based short- and longterm strategies per local context.



- State education agency (SEA) personnel
- Regional education agency personnel
- Local education agency (LEA) personnel
- Educator preparation program (EPP) personnel







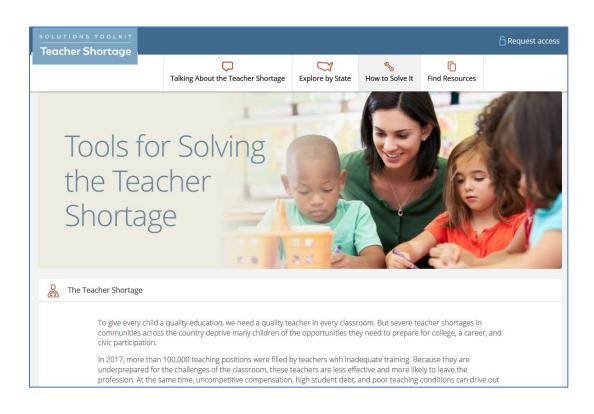


## ROLE AND FUNDING GUIDE

Recruitment/Attract Strategies Roles and Funding Document

EA Role	EPP/Community College Role	District Role	Exemplars	Funding Sources
Grow Your Own				
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	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 teachers.  Work with districts — and	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	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	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

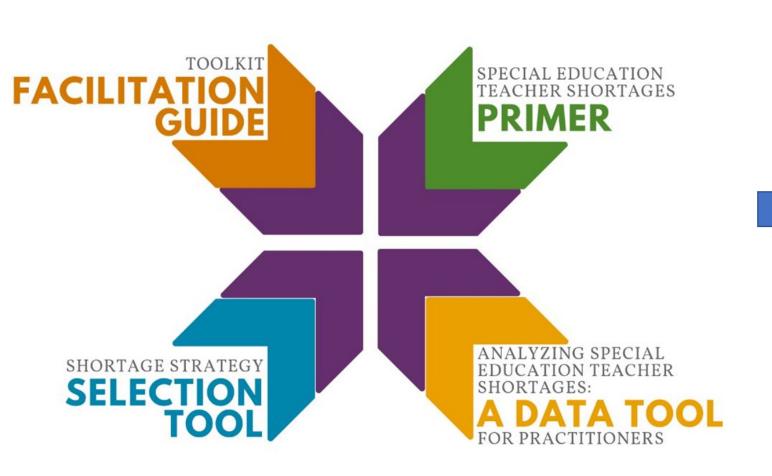
# LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE TEACHER SHORTAGE SOLUTIONS TOOLKIT











Drives what we are doing to support states in reducing shortages



## QUESTIONS?

## REFERENCES

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## **DISCLAIMER**



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