

Table of Contents

- [Update from the U.S. Department of Education](#)
- [What a Transformation Special Education Director Would Look Like: Characteristics of Transformational Leadership. By Angelise M. Rouse, Ph.D.](#)
- [Buzz from the Hub](#)
- [Intersection: Navigating the Road to Work](#)
- [Legislative Announcements, Calls to Participate and New Projects](#)
- [Latest Employment Opportunities Posted on NASET](#)
- [Upcoming Conferences and Events](#)
- [Funding Forecast and Award Opportunities](#)
- [Acknowledgements](#)

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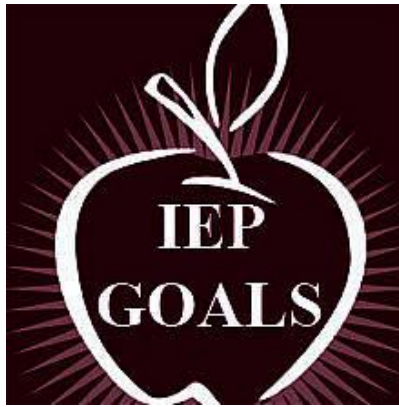
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Update from the U.S. Department of Education

U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services Release Guidance on Including Children with Disabilities in High-Quality Early Childhood Programs

The U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services today released guidance urging early learning programs to include children with disabilities.

The guidance sets a vision for action that recommends states, districts, schools and public and private early childhood programs prioritize and implement policies that support inclusion, improve their infrastructure and offer professional development to strengthen and increase the number of inclusive high-quality early childhood programs nationwide. The Departments crafted the guidance with the input of early learning professionals, families and early learning stakeholders. The policy statement also includes free resources for states, local districts, early childhood personnel and families.

“As our country continues to move forward on the critical task of expanding access to high-quality early learning programs for all children, we must do everything we can to ensure that children with disabilities are part of that,” Duncan said. “States, school districts, local organizations, communities and families must work together so that children with disabilities have access to programs that offer individualized and appropriate help in meeting high expectations.”

“Meaningful inclusion supports children with disabilities in reaching their full potential. We know that children with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities and the highest needs, can make significant developmental and learning progress in inclusive settings,” said Linda K. Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. “Children without disabilities who are in inclusive settings can also show positive gains in developmental, social and attitudinal outcomes.”

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the 40th anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the 50th anniversary of Head Start. While tremendous progress toward equality for children with disabilities has been made, children with disabilities and their families continue to face significant barriers to accessing inclusive high-quality early childhood programs, and too many preschool children with disabilities are only offered the option of receiving special education services in settings separate from their peers without disabilities. The Education Department’s new Preschool Development Grants and the Department of Health and Human Services’ new Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships support inclusive settings for tens of thousands of additional young children across the country.

Duncan made the announcement during the Education Department’s sixth annual back-to-school bus tour launch event at Woodland Early Learning Community School in Kansas City, Missouri. After the announcement, senior administration officials held a roundtable with state leaders in both Kansas and Missouri on supporting inclusion efforts. Both states committed to mobilizing existing early childhood councils or taskforces to prioritize inclusion and implement recommendations in the policy statement, leading the way for other states.

The bus tour runs through Friday and will include stops in Des Moines and Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Champaign and Williamsfield, Illinois; West Lafayette and Indianapolis, Indiana; Louisville, Kentucky; Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Duncan and other senior Department officials will hold events highlighting the progress and achievements of educators, children, families and leaders in expanding opportunity for children throughout the nation.

Senior Obama Administration Officials Release English Learner Tool Kit

The U.S. Departments of Education (ED) and Justice (DOJ) today announced the completion of the English Learner (EL) Tool Kit to support states, districts and schools in meeting their legal obligations to ELs and ensuring access to quality education.

"Our work is motivated by the belief that all students - regardless of race, gender, income, disability, and English learner status - need and deserve a world-class education," said U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan. "This toolkit - along with the guidance we released in January - can serve as a critical resource for educators in their work with English learners to help ensure that all students have a chance to succeed in school, careers and life."

The EL Tool Kit is a companion to the English Learner Guidance released jointly by ED and DOJ in January, 2015, and consists of 10 chapters, each chapter aligned to one of the 10 sections of the guidance. Each chapter contains easy-to-use tools and resources relevant to the topic of the chapter.

"The tool kit is a perfect complement to the English Learner guidance the Departments of Justice and Education issued in January. The tool kit equips educators with the resources they need to put our nation's English Learners on the path to success," said Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Vanita Gupta, head of the Civil Rights Division at DOJ. "The Civil Rights Division congratulates the Department of Education on the completion of the tool kit and encourages states and schools to use it to help English Learners realize their full potential."

Included in the tool kit are tools and resources for identifying ELs, delivering high quality EL programs, evaluating the effectiveness of EL programs, preventing unnecessary segregation, providing qualified staff, ensuring access to school programs and activities (including disability-related services), exiting ELs from EL programs at the appropriate time, monitoring students' progress, and supporting limited English proficient parents.

"We are committed to equity and access for all students, and in particular, English Learners," said Libia Gil, assistant deputy secretary and director for ED's Office of English Language Acquisition. "In our country we have a valuable yet untapped resource in our EL student population. These students come to school already speaking a variety of home languages. The heritage languages our English Learners bring to school are major assets to preserve and value."

The tool kit is free and accessible to the public and can be easily downloaded and printed here online.

Our nation's public schools serve over five million EL students—about 10 percent of all public school students. Therefore, it is crucial to the future of our nation that EL students—and all students—have equal access to a high-quality education and are provided an equal opportunity to succeed. The tool kit is just one part of the ED's work to expand equity and opportunity in education as it honors of Hispanic Heritage Month and the 25th anniversary of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics.

U.S. Department of Education Announces First-Ever Adviser to Expand Access to Open Digital Resources in Schools

The U.S. Department of Education announced today the hiring of the first ever open education adviser to lead a national effort to expand schools' access to high-quality, openly-licensed learning resources.

School technology expert Andrew Marcinek will serve in the Office of Educational Technology (OET) and focus on helping both K-12 and higher education connect with teaching, learning and research resources in the public domain that are freely available to anyone over the web. He will work with tool providers and developers, district and state leaders, and educators. Open educational resources are an important element of an infrastructure for learning and ranges from podcasts to digital libraries to textbooks and games.

"Creating a dedicated open education advisor position at the Department will greatly enhance our ability to support states and districts as they move to using openly licensed learning resources," said Richard Culatta, Director of OET. "The use of openly-licensed resources not only allows states and districts to adapt and modify materials to meet student needs, but also frees up funding to support the transition to digital learning."

Marcinek has worked on education technology and digital transitions in school districts in both Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, and he's done extensive research on how to integrate technology at scale in school districts to create a system that is sustainable and equitable for all students.

The announcements were made during a visit to Williamsfield Community School District in Illinois, where U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan stopped as part of his annual back-to-school bus tour. The Williamsfield event included the previewing of 50 videos that capture best practices of effective district leaders who use education technology in their schools. The videos can serve as professional learning for district leaders and others.

President Obama's ConnectED Initiative is a call to connect 99 percent of schools across the country to broadband Internet within five years. As part of that work, OET created a Future Ready Pledge to help school districts develop a culture where teachers harness the power of technology to personalize learning and provide quality digital content that fosters student inquiry and creativity. So far, committed Future Ready Leaders are approaching 2000 signatures.

U.S. Department of Education Approves 16 States' Plans to Provide Equal Access to Excellent Educators

As part of its Excellent Educators for All initiative—designed to ensure that all students have equal access to a high-quality education—the U.S. Department of Education today announced the approval of 16 states' plans to ensure equitable access to excellent educators: Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Maine, Missouri, Minnesota, New York, Nevada, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Wisconsin.

"All parents understand that strong teaching is fundamental to strong opportunities for their children. We as a country should treat that opportunity as a right that every family has—regardless of race, ethnicity or national origin, zip code, wealth, or first language," said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

"Few issues in education are more important than ensuring equitable access to high-quality teachers, and the Department of Education is right to focus attention on this topic. Clear action plans are a first step, but we've got to make sure that these plans are actually enacted," said Kati Haycock, President, The Education Trust.

"We know that access to great teachers makes a big difference for all students, and even more so for students facing the challenges of concentrated poverty and racial isolation. I am encouraged to see that the Department of Education is moving forward on this important equity issue," said Wade Henderson, President and CEO, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.

The 16 states receiving approval of their plans today are taking promising steps to eliminate the gaps some students face in access to excellent educators by implementing strategies and innovative solutions to challenging problems that meet local context and needs. Each of these states engaged a variety of stakeholder groups to ensure that these plans include strategies that will actually be effective.

The strategies that states are implementing to eliminate equity gaps include, for example, working to support, strengthen, or modify **teacher preparation programs**, to help ensure that all teachers are ready to provide high-quality instruction to their students, and are prepared for success in high-need schools. This work is occurring in states such as: Delaware, Nevada, Minnesota, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Missouri, Connecticut, Oklahoma, Massachusetts, Arkansas, Wisconsin, South Carolina, and Maine. More specifically,

- **Massachusetts** set higher expectations for its educator preparation programs, which include implementation of its updated Guidelines for Professional Standards for Teachers, which are aligned to the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework.
- **Kentucky** will utilize regional effectiveness coaches to work with educator preparation programs to help inform teacher education faculty regarding new standards, teacher and leader evaluation systems, and teacher leadership.

Additionally, states are investing in strategies related to **school leaders**, because great teachers will follow great principals, even into hard-to-staff schools. This work is occurring in states such as: Nevada, Delaware, Minnesota, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Connecticut, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Maine, and South Carolina. More specifically,

- **New York** is continuing work on its comprehensive Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness grant program that includes Career Ladder Pathways which provide opportunities for the state's most effective educators to advance into leadership positions.
- **Connecticut** is implementing its "LEAD CT" initiative, which purposefully focuses on school leadership and offers a suite of supports, including the 12-month "Turnaround Principals Program" that provides coaching, a summer institute and a monthly community of practice that provides a solid support system with a goal of retaining principals for at least five years in high-poverty/high-minority schools.
- **Delaware** created a Leadership Design Fellowship, under which it will identify a group of school districts with equity gaps, to share knowledge and develop principal pipelines to identify, cultivate and select school leaders based on individual school needs.

Also, states are implementing strategies that provide **financial incentives** designed to reward teachers for exceptional work and to encourage excellent educators to remain in the highest-need schools. This work is occurring in states such as: Delaware, Nevada, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Kentucky, Missouri, Wisconsin, New York, Maine, and South Carolina.

- **Rhode Island** is providing support to its districts in reviewing equity data and determining where financial incentives and differentiated compensation will attract and retain more qualified educators.
- **Minnesota** has proposed providing financial support through grants to paraprofessionals seeking full teacher licensure, providing forgivable loans to teacher candidates in high-need subject areas, offering forgivable loans for already licensed teachers who want to add licenses in high-need subject areas.
- **Nevada** passed a new state law that established a performance pay system for the recruitment and retention of teachers and administrators focusing on the lowest-performing schools.

Further, states are implementing strategies that are focused on predicting, reducing, and **eliminating critical shortages in the teaching force** so that staffing challenges do not negatively impact student learning. This work is occurring in states such as: Arkansas, Connecticut, and Missouri.

- **Missouri** continued implementation and refinement of an "Educator Shortage Predictor Model" tool that is used to inform leadership training on practices to help recruit, support, and retain excellent teachers in all schools.
- **Connecticut** awarded planning grants to eight high-poverty and high-minority districts to support their development of multiyear plans designed to increase the number of Black and Latino pre-college students who are interested in education careers, become certified to teach, and are recruited and hired.
- **Arkansas** developed a critical Educator Shortage Predictor Model, which will provide the state with the necessary data to develop and provide attractive incentives for high-need areas while recruiting teacher candidates.

In July 2014, the U.S. Department of Education announced a comprehensive Excellent Educators for All Initiative. As part of this initiative, states were asked to create new, comprehensive plans that put in place locally-developed solutions to ensure every student has equal access to effective educators. These plans are required by Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). All 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have submitted their plans for review by the Department.

The Department is currently reviewing the remaining state plans to determine whether they meet all of the requirements set in ESEA, and will make determinations regarding the plans on a rolling basis. The determinations and the plans in their entirety can be found online at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/resources.html>.

[To top](#)

What a Transformation Special Education Director Would Look Like: Characteristics of Transformational Leadership

By Angelise M. Rouse, Ph.D.

Abstract

Konnert and Augenstein (1995), state that the transformational leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower. This article will discuss the major characteristics of transformational leadership and describes what a transformation special education director would look like. Research was conducted independently by author based on years of professional experiences as a special education educator and research that is included throughout the article.

Introduction

Transformational Leadership theory was first developed in the 1970s from the research of presidential biographer James McGregor Burns on the leadership qualities of politicians. Organizations began to change during this period, as capital became global and competition for profits increased. Downsizing of staff and the building of strategic corporate units changed the face of employee relations, demanding a new approach to motivating employees. The current landscape of special education in the U.S. is in crisis. Transformational leadership in times of upheaval has been shown to lead effectively the way through change to achieve necessary goals (Bryant, 2003, p.36).

Overview of Transformation Leadership

The motivational “I have a dream” speech by Martin Luther King, and President John F. Kennedy’s public projection of putting a man on the moon for the first time, are prime examples of transformational leadership qualities. Vision, in the form of a positive future, inspiration, the setting of high standards, and a capacity for the big picture, along with an ability to motivate and be personable with followers are just some of the characteristics of a transformational leader (Hay, 2006).

This type of leadership is focused on transformation. The leader shapes and creates his environment rather than just reacting or trying to manage it. A failing company, an education system in crisis, an industry losing ground, an individual flailing in their place of work and losing motivation are all fertile ground for a transformational leader. Rarely does a transformational leader accept the status quo and apply him or her to adapt or work with it. Rather, they are focused on change and the achievement of superior goals, together with employees or followers whose trust they have gained through moral and true means. This unity results from what Burns describes as “an engagement that causes leader and follower to raise each other to higher levels of motivation and morality” (Burns, 2004, p. 20).

Charisma is one of the qualities of such leaders. Self-confidence and endless enthusiasm for the task at hand are traits that set these leaders apart from the crowd. Their confidence reaches out to those around them, colleagues, employees, service providers. They believe in people and know that motivating those people to align themselves with a common vision is the first step to successfully transforming a situation.

The promise of the transformational leader is that not only will the situation change, but also the people involved will be changed. They will undergo a personal metamorphosis for the better because they are motivated to do so by their leader who is genuinely interested in, and personally available to them throughout the duration of the transformation (Straker, 2009, ¶ 8).

Critics of this style of leadership focus on the possible narcissistic aspects of the leader, and a lack of moral fortitude that can lay at the root of some individuals with this leadership style. They also point towards a tendency of unhealthy dependency on the part of followers. Yes, there have been outstanding leaders in history that can be defined as transformational for the good of all (Mahatma Gandhi) but there have also been leaders whose revolutionary styles served evil (Charles Manson).

“Recent ethical scandals in the business world point to the growing need for developing leaders who consistently demonstrate the highest levels of ethical behavior. Authentic leadership is defined as being completely self-aware, confident, transparent, optimistic, resilient, honest, and concerned about the welfare of others before one’s own welfare. Authentic leaders will have developed a unique perspective to looking at problems that allows them to recognize moral dilemmas and address them in an open way” (May, Chan, Hodges & Avolio. 2003).

Enthusiastic leadership carries the benefits of passion and confidence in getting the job done, and at the same time, an understanding that the trust necessary for the transformation to succeed must be built on firm morals and ethics. Followers identify with the fervor and commitment of their leader, align themselves willingly to the vision that they see sense in and for this, they deserve their trust be firmly grounded in an authentic individual, not in an abuser of power.

Main Characteristics of Transformational Leadership

The second major theorist on the subject of Transformational Leadership is Bernard Bass (1985). His research developed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). The questionnaire is used to investigate leadership styles and workplace satisfaction and effectiveness. The MLQ has been implemented in over 100 research studies of leaders in organizational settings such as manufacturing, the military, education, and religious institutions as well as at various levels of authority in those organizations (Hall et al., 2002). According to the results of these studies, the main characteristics of transformational leadership have come to be generally acknowledged as: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Hall et al., 2002). An exploration of these four qualities follows.

Idealized Influence

Transformational leadership begins with a vision, a positive and exciting view of the future that grabs the imagination of colleagues and followers and motivates them to work together towards the vision’s desired outcome. Commitment can be built and action exercised for the common goal. This vision can be created in different ways. The leader alone can project it, senior management collectively formulates it, or discussions between employees and managers may bring it about. However, the vision is manifested; the transformational leader needs to be completely invested in it and able to consistently work towards it, no matter how many obstacles appear along the road. Problems will not swerve their focus and they will maintain the upper hand, motivating followers and experiencing an interaction between them of building and transforming each other along the way (Straker, 2009).

In keeping their eyes on the vision, transformational leaders must be exemplary role models for their followers. Humility rather than ego, empathy and availability rather than coldness and distance, going forward no matter what may arise and despite not always knowing the specifics of achieving the vision, maintaining passion and focus at the group level are all qualities this type of leader possesses. Influencing staff with an idealized vision allows them to identify with the leader. This identification goes a long way in building trust and respect in followers so that they easily allow decisions to be made by that leader and have a knowing that those decisions are for the good of the whole movement (Hall et al., 2002).

Inspirational Motivation

Once the vision is stated, the next job for the transformational leader is to motivate his staff or employees to apply themselves to the vision. This task requires a certain understanding of psychology, both individual and organizational.

“Transformational leaders make clear an appealing view of the future, offer followers the opportunity to see meaning in their work, and challenge them with high standards. They encourage followers to become part of the overall organizational culture and environment” (Hay, 2006 ¶ 10).

Setting expectations and guiding employees in the achievement of these expectations is a large part of the process. A leader must be an innovator and a coach, which entails being a generous listener and sharp observer, encouraging their followers’ changes and successes (Hall, Johnson, Wysocki & Kepner, 2002 ¶ 7).

In terms of a transformational leader of special education in the U.S. school system, focus would reveal how current systemic attitudes and behaviors towards students with disabilities serve to discriminate against, and devastate, the future of hundreds of thousands of these children regarding declining graduation rates. New systems to promote healthy graduation rates are currently available to schools and need to be implemented across the United States. Change must occur and old paradigms must be eliminated. The vision in this instance would be to ensure that the rights of students with disabilities to be assisted correctly in their education in order to graduate alongside their non-disabled peers are exercised (McLaughlin & Nolet, 2003).

The transformational special education leader needs to ask what would motivate special education teachers and volunteers to want to get behind this vision and help correct these existing inequalities. Decades of failure alongside degraded funding for education alongside larger classrooms and poor teacher pay have all contributed to lack of true care in the situation.

What motivated these teachers to want to work with students with disabilities in the first place? How can they now change course and see that a vision of change will allow them to make the positive impacts they originally wanted to make when they first chose their career paths? Such applications in motivating staff to get behind a vision of transformation that aims to increase graduation rates for special education students are just a few of the questions the transformational leader can ask.

According to Straker (2003 -2009), motivation can also be achieved in the following ways. Charisma with a true sense of ethics and genuine passion for the goal in sight are very important in motivating followers. Being in the forefront and staying visible throughout the implementation of strategies for achieving the vision is vital to keeping staff and employees on track with the leader and focused on the common, higher goal. Part of being upfront is moving about the organizational unit and listening, encouraging, and soothing staff throughout the process. Whenever doubt arises, obstacles appear, darkness overcomes the followers the leader must exemplify his or her commitment and be the beacon of inspiration that will carry the rest through the process. This is one of the core tasks and traits of a transformational leader. Such motivation can be instigated by ‘ceremonies, rituals and other cultural symbolism’.

Intellectual Stimulation

Transformational leaders are oftentimes revolutionary in their drive for success, unflinching belief in themselves and their teams and in their ability to question the status quo and come up with innovative solutions to long entrenched problems. Their strengths lie in encouraging followers to pinpoint existing roadblocks to the vision in mind and give them the tools to grow and change in order to solve those problems in new and more efficient ways. Controversial ideas are fostered and nurtured rather than ridiculed or punished. This environment of intellectual stimulation can produce outpourings of ideas on a constant basis, some may be relevant some may not, but the free flow of expression and the freedom to explore allows followers to gain confidence, stay focused and creative, and put into action agreed upon strategies for change (Hay, 2006, ¶ 10)

Individual Consideration

Hay (2006), further states that in addition to maintaining an overarching view of the organization and its path to success, the transformational leader must also comprehend the things that motivate followers on an individual level. Being able to create, build, and maintain trusting relationships is vital in transforming a corporate environment/situation for the better. When employees believe that their employers truly care for and are interested in them, not only in terms of what they can do for the organization via skills and experience, but as individuals wanting to attend to and experience their higher needs on a constant basis, as Maslow (1943) wrote about in his paper 'A Theory of Human Motivation'.

When managers and leaders approach their staff in this manner, they are helping both the employees and the organization at the same time. This emphasis on maintaining and knowing how to repair relationships, well as making sure firm relationships are established in the first place is one of the characteristics of Japanese corporate culture as well as a mainstay of Afro centric organizational theory (Hall, Johnson, Wysocki, & Kepner, 2002). Addressing the specific needs of followers with commitment and depth gives them the sense of true involvement, and brings the leader close to them. This togetherness helps ensure a unity of involvement in the transformational process of the company or institution (Bryant, 2003). Other successful methods of personal inclusion and encouragement include acknowledging and nourishing individual talents and skills, making a practice of giving praise and words of encouragement along the way, ensuring fair workloads, mentoring and coaching and having professional development options available to those who want and need them (Bryant, 2003).

Bryant (2003) summarized the four characteristics of transformational leadership in this way:

“The transformational leader articulates the vision in a clear and appealing manner, explains how to attain the visions, acts confidently and optimistically, expresses confidence in the followers, emphasizes values with symbolic actions, leads by example, and empowers followers to achieve the vision.”

Special Education in the context of Transformational Leadership

Since the inception of the No Child Left Behind policy of President Bush, graduation rates of special needs children have come into sharp focus. Educational standards in American schools have been declining for decades, with a great deal of media attention, federal and state investigation and policy changes, and local district attempts at trying to find affordable solutions to the problem of why children are dropping out in such large numbers.

Since the inception of the No Child Left Behind policy of President Bush, graduation rates of special needs children have come into sharp focus. Educational standards in American schools have been declining for decades, with a great deal of media attention, federal and state investigation and policy changes, and local district attempts at trying to find affordable solutions to the problem of why children are dropping out in such large numbers.

"In a global economy, the single most important issue facing our country is an educated work force," says Houston Mayor Bill White. "Somebody who lacks a high school education will have lifetime earnings that are only about 60% of those of somebody with that education. That is just the impact on personal income. There are the social costs as well" (Fields, 2008).

Such social costs include rising prison numbers, which means more cost to taxpayers to keep prisoners incarcerated, unemployment which leads to heavier loads on social programs such as social security and government medical insurance coverage. Students who do not graduate show lifetime earnings nearly 60% less than those who earned an education (Fields, 2008) do.

When it comes to high rates of dropout, special needs children fail to graduate more than their non-disabled peers do. For instance, in the 2001 – 2002 school year, only 51% of students with disabilities left school with some form of diploma (National High School Center, 2007). In terms of what constitutes a disability, students needing special educational attention and individualized help to graduate tend to display emotional and behavioral problems, learning disabilities, belong to what are considered to be 'minorities' such as Hispanics, Native Americans, non-English speaking students, physically and mentally handicapped children.

‘Of those who do not complete high school, about 61.2 % are students with emotional/behavioral disabilities and about 35 % are students with learning disabilities (National High School Center, 2007).

The No Child Left Behind law made it compulsory for schools to do whatever they had to do to raise graduation levels of their students. Funding depended on success rates and out of desperation and a need for finances, some schools have resorted to underhanded methods of pushing out special needs children who show little sign of being able to graduate in their final year. By encouraging such children to leave school early, they are able to reduce their levels of low graduation rates, making it appear that the student left of his/her own accord. Many times, the family situation encourages early drop out due to single parent and poverty combined, a parent in prison, working single parents who are unable to foster an environment of learning and encouragement for their child both at home and in relation to schoolwork (McLaughlin., & Nolet., 2003, ¶ 5).

In an era of high-stakes accountability around standardized test scores, it is particularly important to monitor the rate at which special needs students leave school in order to help ensure that they are not being encouraged to drop out by anyone intending to take shortcuts in raising a school’s overall test scores. These realities helped bring into being the IDEA (individuals with disabilities education act) law of 2004. Three core requirements of IDEA are: every child with a disability needing special education must be provided a free, appropriate public education. Their educational assistance must be designed on an individual basis in order to meet his or her unique needs and must be provided in the least restrictive environment. High dropout rates have been related to a lack of individualized attention and knowledge. Each student has his or her particular weakness/s and these have to be addressed and bolstered over time in order for the child to gain the confidence and experience needed to pass final exams. Thirdly, the rights of every disabled student and his or her family must be protected through procedural safeguards (McLaughlin., & Nolet., 2003, ¶ 5).

Overrepresentation of Minorities in Special Education

IDEA law requires all state schools to implement procedures that have been designed to protect minority children from being inappropriately placed in special education. Research has found that minority students, especially racial minorities are overrepresented in special education programs (McLaughlin., & Nolet., 2003, ¶ 12). For example:

“Research concerning the relationship between race and special education using state and district level incidence data consistently confirmed that African American students are about two and a half times more likely than white students to be identified as eligible for special education” (McLaughlin., & Nolet., 2003, ¶ 12).

These rates prove discriminatory in the face of research studies that have shown no statistically significant differences in reading problems between minority racial students and white students. From a review of the available research, McLaughlin and Nolet (2003) have concluded that this recurring overrepresentation occurs from teacher and institutional bias in initial evaluation methods that have been shown to be uninformed and superficial.

The authors go on to say that the determinants of special education eligibility were created from ‘a long history of placing certain students, notably minority, poor, and non-English speaking without parental permission or knowledge.’ It appears that more often than not, children were removed from the general curriculum on the back of a principal or teacher’s opinion of that child’s capabilities.

The Transformational Leader- Special Education Director

The following description of the characteristics of an special education director in the 21st century in the education system of the United States is based on the writings of McLaughlin and Nolet (2003) and the works of Australian educators and researchers, Nick Burnett (2005) and Alan Barnett (2003).

The first authors draw attention to how disabilities have historically been identified in schoolchildren. Haphazard, long-term awareness grows in both parents and teachers once they realize over time, that particular children show signs of learning and achievement difficulties. Failure to progress in the general curriculum seems to have been the signal that motivated parents to evaluation of their children.

It is now clear that prevention is better than cure and McLaughlin and Nolet (2003, ¶ 10) suggest that the earlier educators intervene in emotional, learning and behavioral problems the better.

Special education directors and school principals who wish to transform their special needs issues and miserable dropout rates of minority students need to exemplify leadership qualities such as those discussed earlier in this paper. Creating a vision, motivating staff, parents, children and teachers in both the general curriculum and in special needs programs, volunteer mentors and other assistants to join together to achieve the goal, stimulating intellectual approaches to the issues, and maintaining excellent relations with staff and parents, well as students of need are all vital to the success of increasing graduation rates for students with disabilities.

McLaughlin and Nolet (2003) outline a strategy for ensuring that only those students who truly do need special attention for their disabilities are placed into special programs, and given long-term assistance to ensure graduation. Special education directors who believe wholeheartedly in such a strategy will see it through to the end, agitating for funding and the cooperation of parents, families, teachers, and training programs for special education teachers.

The strategy proposes a straightforward approach to identifying who truly does need special education. Such students must only be considered after a set of increasingly intense instructional interventions are tried by general and special education teachers within the general education. An individualized approach to each child is imperative. What skills and knowledge do they have in which subjects? How can both their strengths and weaknesses be improved upon through intense, small group instruction for a concentrated period of time each day or several times a week on those skill sets. Progress should be analyzed over time and wherever progress is stalled, one-on-one assistance should be provided by tutors and adult volunteers. How these mentors implement their procedures should also be monitored. Research shows that only a few students may not respond to these more focused, individualized interventions. Those who do not develop under such tutelage are the ones that need to be referred to special education and long-term support.

For the success of such a strategy, the special education director will need to assure staff that all their efforts will be supported, all questions taken seriously, every effort made to increase teacher support in the general classroom in order to be better able to distinguish special needs earlier in the student's career. The challenge of change needs nurturing on an individual level and the principal needs to have a wide view of the problem, and be able to treat all individuals involved in a positive manner including parents who may be clueless as to what is needed, teachers who have little or no experience in recognizing true need, volunteers who want to help but have had a history of lack of support in the education system.

Burnett (2005) emphasized the importance of a transformational leader being proactive in fostering leadership within all individuals. Intense change and challenge in the institutional and organizational setting requires this type of leadership for effective special educational systems of the future. He further described three components to transformational reform: restructure, reorganize, and reculture.

The special education director will make it a priority to review learning and teaching practices as well as the policies and procedures governing schools. Authorities within schools, their size, and purpose and how they are measured will be analyzed. Beliefs, values and assumptions that shape the behavior of school members will be challenged and improved (Burnett, 2005 ¶ 18). The elimination of old ways of dealing with special needs will be at the forefront of new policy. Curriculum and philosophical changes are a couple of priorities. Morally, the special education leader will need to build trust and loyalty at every turn basing policy on humanistic principles, the abandonment of discriminatory and too easy practices of moving troublesome children out of the institution and focusing on assisting them to believe in themselves and find the capacity to meet the challenges of graduation.

Barnett (2003 p. 16) found in his study that teachers were motivated more by care and an individualized concern shown to them by their leader rather than by having their aspirations motivated and elevated by a vision. This is a controversial finding and contrary to the literature, in that proponents of transformational leadership claim that this is the way to obtain performance from their staff beyond that which would normally be expected. A transformational leader than transcend accepted qualities of this type of leadership by being able to be flexible and incorporating other styles of leadership, such as characteristics of transactional leadership and even those from more traditional leadership styles.

Conclusion

Special education directors now and of the future need to be turning, a sharp eye on the issue of high dropout rates for their special needs students. A huge task is at hand, one that requires revolutionary vision and commitment, passion and stable endurance. A love of and capacity to include and inspire people is necessary. Experience and a desire to implement change must go hand in hand with clear policies and procedures in the establishment of more equitable standards for special needs definitions. Keeping students with disabilities close to the general curriculum, informing parents and teachers of new research and plans for the future, fostering student confidence through mentoring and coaching, utilizing technology for best outcomes and keeping connections with funding requirements and federal law at the fore are all vital for success. The transformational leader is capable of this and more. He or she will rally support and unify action from all corners of the special needs world. In times of crisis and intense need for change, this leader will gain the most advances to produce lasting organizational change.

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Buzz From the Hub

To access everything below in this section from Buzz from the Hub, visit:

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/buzz-august2015/New Resources in the Hub>

What's new in the resource library? Here's a sampling that may help you and the youth and families you serve as a new academic year gets started.

Inclusive internship programs: A how-to guide for employers.

Share this guide with public and private employers of all sizes, who can reference it to learn about the benefits of facilitating inclusive internship programs as well as the components to consider when designing, implementing, and evaluating these programs.

A comprehensive approach to transition.

Members of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) have produced this paper because they want to help people to work together to support the self-determined transition of youth to adulthood and community life.

Nothing about youth with disabilities without youth with disabilities: A guide to legislative advocacy.

(Available in English and Spanish) This guide is a result of the work that the National Consortium on Leadership and Disability for Youth (NCLD/Youth) has done in preparing youth with disabilities to be effective legislative advocates and to create policy change on the local, state, and national level.

Spotlight on...Collaborating for Children and Systems Change

Collaboration was a central theme at the 2015 OSEP Leadership Conference in July. Since collaboration is such an important part of Parent Center activities, we're spotlighting collaboration resources, guides, and tools you may find helpful.

Leading by convening.

You may already be familiar with this resource from the IDEA Partnership, but the process it recommends for securing authentic engagement of multiple stakeholders is tried and true. The link above will take you to the main page about *Leading by Convening*, where you can download the guide and a host of supporting materials and worksheets.

Effective school practices: Promoting collaboration and monitoring students' academic achievement.

This module from the IRIS Center focuses on the entire school population and highlights partnerships between general education and special education faculty that result in the creation of a 'collective responsibility' and shared high expectations for all students.

Engaging "everybody."

The IDEA Partnership has found that, for most issues, people want to be involved, but not necessarily physically present. After a meeting or two, people sort themselves out by the way they want to be engaged. This tool is built on that understanding and reminds us all of the different ways in which we can involve and engage stakeholders.

Resources You Can Share with Families

This section of the *Buzz* identifies useful resources you might share with families or mention in your own news bulletins. The emphasis in this section is on parent-professional collaborations.

Family engagement and children with disabilities: A resource guide for educators and parents.

This resource guide has been compiled to help parents and special educators establish a comfortable and effective partnership in service of promoting successful outcomes for children with disabilities. Highlighted are research reports, journal articles, examples of best practices, and tools that suggest methods for developing productive collaborations so that educators and families can, together, ensure better services for children in their care.

100 ways to know more.

There are many ways to be involved. This ingenious list from the Alabama Parent Education Center gives parents 100 suggestions, organized into areas of involvement such as communicating, parenting, student learning, volunteering, partnering with the school, and collaborating with the community—because, as APEC notes, when parents get involved in their children’s education, everyone benefits.

10 rules of advocacy.

From the Parents’ Place of MD, this 2-pager give 10 powerful tips that parents can use as they advocate for their child at school.

Steps to success: Communicating with your child’s school | Available in multiple languages!!

This brochure from CADRE offers specific communication skills that may be helpful to parents as they develop and maintain partnerships with their child’s school. Available in English and also in Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Haitian Creole, Hmong, Korean, Marshallese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Wow!

Just for Parent Centers: Use of Technology for Nonprofit Management

One of the Parent Center network’s priorities is “Use of Technology for Nonprofit Management.” We’ll be talking more about this priority in our upcoming September 10th webinar. Until then... and afterwards... hope these resources help you!

Help with using technology.

Nonprofit organizations use technology in their work in a wide variety of ways, from raising money to text messages to mapping areas of needs. The variety of ways nonprofits can use technology, and the many choices there are about approaches and tools, can be more than small organizations with limited budgets can handle. This article connects you with resources that can help with this challenge, online and face-to-face.

5 ways technology is shaping the nonprofit sector.

The 5 things this article identifies as shaping our nonprofit work now (and probably for some time to come) are: mobile technology, analytics, software, the Cloud, and social media. What can any or all of these contribute to increasing your Parent Center’s impact?

Should your Parent Center consider the Cloud?

Once upon a time, all software had to be directly installed onto computers—but more and more, vendors are hosting software that users access via the Cloud. Maybe you use Google Drive or Dropbox, Office 365, or a Cloud-based database. Maybe you’re interested in what such hosted services offer but are worried about the security risks. Moving to the Cloud is not for everyone—how do you know if it’s right for your organization? This article can help!

Upcoming Webinar | Thursday, September 10th | Use of Technology!

Mark your calendars for CPIR's upcoming webinar on the *Use of Technology in Nonprofit Management and in Service Provision*. You'll hear all about the Technology Leadership Initiative, get connected with valuable tools and resources, and be asked to weigh in on what kind of information you'd like CPIR to include in the upcoming priority pages on these critical topics.

When | Thursday, September 10, 2015

Time | 3 pm Eastern

Where | Join online at: <http://tadnet.adobeconnect.com/cpir/>

Conference line: 1-877-512-6886, code 1825 1825 18

We'll be sending out a reminder closer to the date, but we hope to see you there and hear what you have to say!

NASET Sponsor - Contemporary Forums



To learn more click on the image above or - [Click here](#)

Intersection: Navigating the Road to Work

Welcome to ***Intersection: Navigating the Road to Work***, the electronic newsletter of the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth). The newsletter and the NCWD/Youth website offer information to improve programs and services for all youth and especially youth with disabilities. Below are some of the recent articles in the electronic newsletter of the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth.

Fostering Inclusive Volunteering and Service Learning

For all individuals to access and benefit from volunteering, the widespread practice of inclusion is key. An inclusive service environment actively fosters the engagement of all youth, including youth with disabilities, those involved in foster care or juvenile justice, and other disconnected youth. This guide provides information useful to youth service professionals and others interested in facilitating youth engagement in volunteer activities. It describes how youth benefit from volunteering, different types of volunteer opportunities, and ways to assist youth to prepare for, access, and learn from their experiences. It also provides relevant resources and tools that can enhance and foster successful outcomes.

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/fostering-inclusive-volunteering-and-service-learning>

Making the Right Turn: A Guide About Improving Transition Outcomes for Youth Involved in the Juvenile Corrections System

Youth with emotional disturbances comprise over 47.4 percent of students with disabilities in secure care, while within public schools they account for only about eight percent of students with disabilities. Students with Learning Disabilities are also overrepresented in the juvenile justice system and account for 38.6 percent of students with disabilities in these settings. This Guide provides professionals with well-researched and documented facts, offers evidence-based research, highlights promising practices, and provides the *Guideposts for Success for Youth Involved in the Juvenile Corrections System*, in addition to pointing out areas requiring further attention by policymakers and identifying promising practices.

This Guide adds to the overall work that can be found on NCWD/Youth's website which includes the National Association of State Directors of Special Education's publication *Tools for Promoting Educational Success and Reducing Delinquency* and the National Evaluation and Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk toolkit *Meeting the Educational Needs of Youth Exposed to the Juvenile Justice System*.

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/juvenile-justice-guide>

The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Families, Educators, Youth Service Professionals, and Adult Allies Who Care About Youth with Disabilities

When caring adults open this workbook, they take an important step toward supporting a young person to determine whether he or she should disclose his or her disability. You made a decision to learn about disability disclosure and what it can mean for a young person with a disability in your life.

Disclosure is a very personal decision, and takes thought and practice.

Because disclosure is intentionally releasing personal and often highly sensitive information about oneself to others for a specific purpose, it is important for the individual to carefully consider what information he or she needs to share with whom and for what purposes.

It is not essential that a person with a disability divulge all personal information about his or her disability. Some information is best kept private. Therefore, the individual needs to determine what information to share in order to best communicate how his or her disability affects his or her capacity in certain situations, and what he or she will need in order to access, participate in, and excel in the situation whether it be work, education, or community life. The person with a disability must decide what and how much of sensitive information is necessary to reveal in order to obtain the needed accommodations.

Adults in the lives of young people with both visible disabilities and those with disabilities that are not apparent to others can benefit from using this workbook. This workbook helps caring adults make informed decisions about teaching a young man or woman about his or her rights and responsibilities in disclosing his or her disability, a decision that will affect the young person's educational, employment, and social life. This workbook will help teach how to support a young person with a disability as he or she takes steps in becoming more independent and self-sufficient. In fact, making the personal decision to disclose a disability can make the young person more confident in himself or herself and the choices he or she makes.

This workbook is for you if:

- You want to understand the experiences of a young person with a disability;
- You want to understand how his or her disability influences the choices he or she makes;
- You want to help a young person explain his or her disability better to others;
- You are deciding how to advise a young person what and how to disclose; and
- You feel it would be beneficial for a young person to disclose his or her disability but feel unprepared or uncomfortable guiding him or her through this challenging process.

The ultimate goal of this workbook is to help caring adults help the young man or woman in their lives make informed choices about disclosing disabilities. Remember, this decision is the young person's choice to make, and may vary based on the particular person, situation or setting, and need for accommodations. Trust the young person's instincts and make sure he or she has what he or she needs to make an informed choice!

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure-for-adults>

Legislative Announcements, Calls to Participate and New Projects

States Moving Forward On ABLÉ Accounts

<http://www.disabilitycoop.com/2015/03/13/states-moving-forward-able/20131/>

The recent federal Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act provides a way for people with disabilities to save without risking their government benefits, and now most states are working to make the new accounts available. The ABLE Act, signed late in 2014 by President Barack Obama, lets people with disabilities open special accounts where they can save up to \$100,000 without jeopardizing eligibility for Social Security and other government programs. Before the accounts can become available, however, states must put regulations in place. To date, lawmakers in more than half of states have taken steps to create the new savings vehicles, advocates say.

Autism Speaks Putting New Focus on Adults

<http://www.disabilitycoop.com/2015/02/03/autism-speaks-focus-adults/20019/>

After prioritizing the needs of children for years, Autism Speaks, the nation's largest autism advocacy organization is turning its attention to expanding housing options and supports for adults. Starting as a pilot project in three states, Florida, New Jersey and Illinois, Autism Speaks is working with locally-based disability advocacy groups and policymakers to identify legislative goals and mobilize its own network to push for expanded home and community-based services.

Obama Calls for Boost to Disability Programs

<http://www.disabilitycoop.com/2015/02/03/obama-budget-disability/20023/>

President Barack Obama wants Congress to halt planned cuts under sequestration and increase funding for special education and other programs for people with disabilities. The proposals come in Obama's \$4 trillion budget plan which was released 02/16/15. The budget highlights the president's priorities for the government's 2016 fiscal year starting Oct. 1. Included in the plan is an added \$175 million in funding for special education services for school-age children with disabilities and \$115 million for programs for young kids served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Feedback to OSEP on Proposed Approach for Including Results Data in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C Determinations Process

<http://tinyurl.com/m9e8hwx>

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), in the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) sought feedback on a proposed approach for including results data in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C determinations process. At the request of OSEP, the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) developed a proposal for using results-driven data for an accountability framework to review states' performance results for children who receive early intervention services. The feedback received has been posted on OSERS' blog.

U.S. Education Department Reaches Agreement with Youngstown State University to Ensure Equal Access to its Websites for Individuals with Disabilities

<http://tinyurl.com/meg6omu>

The U.S. Department of Education announced in December that its Office for Civil Rights has entered into an agreement with Youngstown State University in Ohio to ensure that the school's websites comply with federal civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Youngstown State's websites were not readily accessible to persons with disabilities, and the university was not fully in compliance with the regulatory requirements regarding the publication of a notice of nondiscrimination in relevant documents. The agreement ends an OCR investigation and commits the 13,000-student public institution in northeast Ohio to providing equal access to educational opportunities for students with disabilities and

to ensuring that the school's websites are accessible to persons with disabilities, including students, prospective students, employees and visitors.

U.S. Department of Education Announces 2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools 337 Schools Honored—287 public and 50 private

<http://tinyurl.com/mcawtsl>

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has announced the recognition of 337 schools – 287 public and 50 private– as National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2014 for their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. These schools demonstrate that all students can achieve to high levels. The award affirms the hard work of students, educators, families and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging content. The Department invites National Blue Ribbon School nominations from the top education official in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Department of Defense Education Activity and the Bureau of Indian Education. The Council for American Private Education (CAPE) nominates private schools.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2014/07/10/congress-sheltered-eligibility/19500/>

“DisabilityScoop” reported July 10, 2014, in an article, “Congress Passes Bill Limiting Sheltered Workshop Eligibility,” that a bill that would significantly limit young people with disabilities from entering sheltered workshop programs is headed to President Barack Obama’s desk. The U.S. House of Representatives voted to approve the “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.” Included in the bill are changes to the path from school to work for those with disabilities. The measure would prohibit individuals age 24 and younger from working jobs that pay less than the federal minimum of \$7.25 per hour unless they first try vocational rehabilitation services, among other requirements. It would also require state vocational rehabilitation agencies to work with schools to provide “pre-employment transition services” to all students with disabilities and require such agencies to allocate a minimum of 15% of their federal funding to help individuals with disabilities in transition under the measure.

U.S. Department of Education’s Guidance Letter on Charter Schools’ Legal Obligations to Individuals With Disabilities

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2014/05/15/feds-warn-charters-special/19368/>

The U.S. Department of Education issued a guidance letter in May 2014 outlining charter schools’ legal obligations to individuals with disabilities, regardless of whether the schools receive federal funding. Included in the letter are reminders that students with disabilities cannot be discriminated against in admissions and disciplinary actions; and that parents with disabilities must be accommodated, e.g., with sign-language interpreters or Braille materials, when communicating with the school.

Disability.gov PSAs Challenge Assumptions about People with Disabilities

<https://www.disability.gov/newsroom/psa-download-center/>

Disability.gov recently released public service announcements (PSAs) in support of the message that people are not defined by their disabilities. Each of the eight PSAs features one of Disability.gov’s “No Boundaries” participants. Each PSAs participant chose several words to describe him or herself to paint a broader picture of who they are. The PSAs are downloadable from the Disability.gov site.

Latest Employment Opportunities Posted on NASET

Special Education Teacher (ES, MS, HS)

Multiple Locations (Brooklyn, Rochester, Troy, NY; Newark, NJ)

Job Category: Teacher

Description:

The Special Education Coordinator or Teacher is passionate about supporting the students who are at-risk for academic underperformance due to emotional and/or physical challenges so that they can succeed in the school's rigorous academic program. The Special Education Coordinator or Teacher holds primary responsibility for providing academic, emotional, and physical services for students who require additional support to thrive within the school's core academic program.

Responsibilities:

- Demonstrate a relentless drive to improve the minds, characters & lives of students both in and out of school.
- Show unwavering commitment to urban youth achieving greatness.
- Create a positive, structured learning environment to ensure that students observe the school's core values, high expectations, and strict code of conduct.
- Implement curricula and activities to meet academic standards.
- Design and implement assessments that measure progress towards academic standards.
- Use assessment data to refine curriculum and inform instructional practices.
- Participate in the collaborative curriculum development process.
- Provide consistent rewards and/or consequences for student behavior to ensure that students observe the school's core values, high expectations, and strict code of conduct.
- Be accountable for students' mastery of academic standards.
- Share responsibility for grade-level and school-wide activities.
- Exhibit resilience to persevere and turn challenges into opportunities.
- Focus constantly on student learning, thinking critically and strategically to respond to student learning needs.
- Communicate effectively with students, families, and colleagues.
- Engage families in their children's education.
- Commit to continual professional growth, participating actively in department meetings, faculty meetings, and other meetings.
- Participate in an annual three-week staff orientation and training.
- Mentor and engage another Teacher in instructional practice and professional development.

- Include a Teacher in daily classroom activities to help students meet academic standards.

Requirements:

- Drive to improve the minds and lives of students in and out of the classroom.
- Proven track-record of high achievement in the classroom.
- Mastery of and enthusiasm for academic subjects.
- Evidence of self-motivation and willingness to be a team player.
- Bachelor's degree is required; Master's degree is preferred.
- Minimum of two years teaching experience in an urban public school or charter school setting.
- Valid State Certification is helpful but not required.
- Belief in and alignment with Uncommon's core beliefs and educational philosophy is non-negotiable.

Benefits:

We offer a competitive compensation package, including a salary significantly above the district scale and comprehensive health benefits. Aside from extensive professional development, all our teachers are equipped with a laptop computer, email, high-speed internet access, library budget, and all necessary instructional supplies

Contact:

To apply, please visit our website: <http://www.uncommonschools.org/careers>

If you have any questions, please contact recruitment@uncommonschools.org with the title **SPED Teacher Position**.

Cross Categorical Resource Teacher/ESS Coordinator

Phoenix, AZ

Job Category: Special Education

Description:

Great Hearts Academies has an immediate need for a full-time Special Education Teacher/ESS Coordinator at Teleos Preparatory Academy, Veritas Preparatory Academy, and Archway Lincoln. Additional 2015-2016 special education teaching positions may open midyear.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Special Education Coordinator include:

Providing direct and consultative services to students with IEPs in the school environment, collaborating with related service providers, assisting general education staff in the implement of accommodations and modifications, writing and maintaining all IEPs, Prior Written Notices, and MET paperwork while ensuring compliance with ADE guidelines, facilitating all initial and annual IEP meetings, as well as MET 1 and MET2 meetings, and ongoing communication and collaboration with parents, staff, and administrative staff regarding student planning and progress. Additional responsibilities include coordinating 504 plans and may include conducting AZELLA testing and ELL programing to eligible English language learners.

Requirements:

Candidates will need to hold a valid Cross-Categorical or Learning Disability Special Education, K-12 Certificate with SEI endorsement, and have a current AZ fingerprint clearance card. Great Hearts teachers must also demonstrate a commitment to and love for the liberal arts.

Benefits:

- Manageable caseload
- Competitive salary
- Great benefits
- Strong administrative support
- Collaborating Exceptional Student Services Coordinators

Contact:

Candidates must apply online via our careers website at www.greatheartsamerica.org/careers. Follow the links to Arizona positions and choose the position of interest to begin the application process. The site allows applicants to submit additional materials (resume, reference letters, transcripts, etc.) for review by Great Hearts hiring staff and Academy Headmasters.

Contact: Tealai Gonella - ess@greatheartsaz.org

Recruiting - careers@greatheartsaz.org

Website: www.greatheartsamerica.org

Assistant Professor - Moderate Disabilities (SPED)

Lowell, Massachusetts, United States, 01854

Job Category: Full Time

University of Massachusetts Lowell

The Graduate School of Education seeks a collaborative and energetic colleague to assume a tenure track position in the field of special education. Currently, the GSE offers a limited number of courses at the master's level for those seeking initial license as a teacher of students with moderate disabilities; however, we are developing a Bachelor or Arts in Education degree with an option in special education. The newly appointed faculty member will play a lead role in delivering the undergraduate degree and advising students, as well as teaching master's level courses.

The University of Massachusetts Lowell (UML) is in the city of Lowell which has a population of approximately 110,000. Lowell was the first planned industrial city in the USA and is the home of the Lowell National Historical Park. Lowell is 30 minutes north of Boston. The university serves a diverse population of 17,000 students in over 120 degree programs. UML is a nationally ranked public university which, in the past 5 years, has seen tremendous growth in its undergraduate and graduate populations, the number of faculty, and the facilities available for teaching and research. The Graduate School of Education is one of six colleges at the university and serves approximately 450 graduate students and a growing body of undergraduates enrolled in two education minors.

Minimum Qualifications:

- An earned doctorate in education (candidates anticipating graduation during fall 2015 or spring 2016 are also encouraged to apply)
- The ability to work effectively with diverse groups
- At least 5 years of K-12 teaching experience or administration in special education
- A developing record of research through presentations and publications commensurate with expectations for an assistant professor position

Other Considerations:

- Teaching experience at the undergraduate or graduate level
- Online teaching experience
- The ability to work effectively with colleagues and diverse groups
- A commitment to students, research and program development

To apply, please submit the following documents:

- **Cover Letter:** Should include your teaching philosophy and future direction of your research.
- Curriculum Vitae

- **Other Document 1:** Please include/attach proof of a current or past K-12 SPED teacher or administrator license.
- **Other Document 2:** Please include a list of all undergraduate and graduate courses in special education that you have taken during your academic career.
- **Sample of Scholarly Work/Publication:** The sample of scholarly work should be a journal article or a paper presented at regional or national conference.
- Names and contact information of three references

To: <https://jobs.uml.edu/applicants/Central?quickFind=54611>

Review of applications will begin on 10/08 and will continue until the position is filled. However, the position may close when an adequate number of qualified applications is received.

The University of Massachusetts Lowell is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action, Title IX employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, sex, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age over 40, protected veteran status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, marital status, or other protected class.

Head of School

San Rafael, CA

Job Category: Head of School

Description:

Star Academy is a non-profit, non-public school, located in San Rafael, CA, serving students with learning differences in grades 1-12. Star Academy is a calm, nurturing and stigma-free school whose therapeutic model seamlessly integrates classroom and specialist instruction. The high quality teachers create a community that acknowledges and accommodates varying needs of student and individualized instruction. Community involvement is encouraged. The result – confident kids.

At Star, students face mild to moderate challenges such as: dyslexia, executive functioning deficits, dyscalculia, auditory processing, dysgraphia, ADHD and Asperger's. Elementary, middle and high school students all benefit from Star's calm, nurturing, and supportive environment, which are conducive to learning. High school students earn their high school diploma or certificate of completion and prepare to transition to college and/or other pursuits.

The Head of School, in collaboration with the Director of Education (DOE) has responsibilities related to the hiring, retention, supervision, mentorship, and evaluation of faculty. They work collaboratively to ensure that the Star's mission and vision is followed.

Quick Facts About Star:

- Star was founded in 1990
- Currently 72 Students
- Currently 20 Teachers and Assistant Teachers
- Currently 22 Specialists (Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists, Language and Math Specialists, and Wellness Specialists)
- 7 Administrative Staff
- Small Student/Faculty ratio
- The next Head of School will:
 - Embody, manifest, and advocate the mission of the school.
 - Represent the school to all of its constituents including parents, students, alumni, business community, faculty, and staff as well as state and federal agencies, and local, state, regional, and national educational organizations and accrediting agencies.
 - Manage the day-to-day operations of the school.
 - Partner with the Board of Trustees and its Committees.
 - Act as liaison with other school districts for IEPs; represent and be an advocate for parents during the IEP process.
 - It is highly desired that the next Head of School will be:
 - Experienced as an administrator; administrative and teaching credential(s) desirable.
 - An accomplished educator experienced with an understanding of the impact and challenges of children with learning differences.
 - Well-versed with multisensory classroom curriculum and approaches to learning, differentiated teaching for different learning styles and multi-grade classrooms, utilizing technology as an instructional tool, occupational therapy services, speech and language services, and Social Thinking® curriculum.
 - Have a proven track record of successfully facilitating conferences meetings addressing Individualized Program (IPs) and Individualized Educational Program (IEPs).
 - Possess leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills to help the school maintain and grow in its commitment to provide the best education for children who learn differently.
 - Strong leader who recognizes strength of team and effectively manages, collaborates, delegates and builds a community.
 - Excellent, responsive communicator and listener with consistent follow.

Contact:

Candidates interested in the position are asked to submit the following documents as a single Word document or PDF by October 15, 2015 to Judith Glickman (jglickman@educatorscollaborative.com):

1. EC Candidate Summary Form
2. Cover letter addressed to Star Academy Search Committee
3. Résumé
4. Personal statement of educational philosophy
5. List of five (5) references including name, contact information, relationship to candidate

Judith Glickman of Educators' Collaborative is eager to interview interested candidates: (415) 655-9974 or jglickman@educatorscollaborative.com.

Special Education Teacher

Tampa, FL, Columbia, MD, Chicago, IL, Philadelphia, PA, California

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

Description:

Are you a Special Education Teacher with experience in a self-contained setting? Progressus Therapy has a position for you in Tampa, FL, Columbia, MD, Chicago, IL, Philadelphia, PA, Santa Cruz, San Francisco, Sacramento, CA starting immediately. Join a team of professionals working towards positive outcomes for students. Special Education Teachers play an integral part in the lives of children so call Progressus today at 800-239-7979 to speak to a Career Service Manager.

Requirements:

- Valid professional educator license (PEL)
- Learning Behavior Specialist (LBS) endorsement
- Teaching experience, including both regular and special education
- Keen understanding of general special education testing concepts and methods
- Able to provide behavioral analysis and positive intervention skills
- Able to diagnose and provide remediation of various types of learning disabilities
- Able to provide consultation, resource information and materials regarding students with exceptional needs to parents
- Collaborative minded professional with strong oral and written communication skills
- Ability to work and build strong relationships with parents, teachers and school administrators

Benefits:

- Competitive compensation with flexible pay options
- Medical/Dental/Vision Coverage
- Flexible Spending Plan for medical and dependent coverage
- Professional Liability Coverage
- Licensure reimbursement
- Annual Professional Development stipend
- Professional membership stipend
- Unlimited CEUs through the Progressus Pathways Learning Center
- 401(k) Retirement Saving Plan with a discretionary company match

- Relocation assistance
- Unparalleled mentoring and support for CFs, new grads and clinicians new to schools
- Many More!

Contact:

Please contact Careers@ProgressusTherapy.com or simply visit our website: www.ProgressusTherapy.com to apply, or call 800.239.7979

Elementary Special Ed PALS Teacher

Cave Creek, AZ

Job Category: Elementary Special Ed PALS Teacher

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Cave Creek Schools has a \$4,000 Sign On Bonus for a Self-Contained Special Education classroom teacher.

Description:

To lead students toward the fulfillment of their potential by translating the district curriculum goals and objectives into learning experiences for each individual student in the district. Please go to our website <https://ccusd93.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx> and fill out an online application. Scan and attach three letters of recommendation, copy of certificate, fingerprint card, transcripts, proof of Highly Qualified Status (NES/AEPA tests) and resume. Cave Creek School District is an "A" district with 7 A+ Schools of Excellence.

JOB REQUIREMENTS:

- Bachelor's degree or above from an accredited four-year college or university.
- Valid Arizona teacher's certificate for the appropriate grade level and/or subject matter.
- Meet North Central Association requirements for subject area assigned.
- Possess special area endorsements as required by state and/or federal regulations or District policy and procedures.
- Ability to manage productively groups of students.
- Accountability for student growth in all areas consistent with District developed objectives.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Contact – Janet Holt, Director of SPED

Email – jholt@ccusd93.org

Preschool Special Education Teacher

Baldwinsville, NY

Job Category: Special Education teacher for pre-school 2.6-5 yrs

Description:

Now Hiring Special Education Teacher for Preschool

High energy, fun atmosphere. Flexible schedules, choice of settings

Empowering individuals to achieve their dreams

Opportunities available in Oswego, Fulton, Baldwinsville and Pulaski

Visit www.littlelukes.com and click childcare for more information about our childcare philosophy of incorporating education and fun based on our award-winning curriculum.

Please apply at the link below:

<http://Little-Lukes-Preschool.careerplug.com/j/o1hta1>

Requirements:

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEGREE PLUS NY STATE SPECIAL ED CERTIFICATION REQUIRED. B-2 SPECIAL ED CERT PREFERRED.

Contact:

Please apply at the link below:

<http://Little-Lukes-Preschool.careerplug.com/j/o1hta1>

Special Education Teacher

National Heritage Academies

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

Description:

National Heritage Academies is seeking Special Education Teachers to join our team in MI, OH, CO, GA, LA, NY, and NC.

National Heritage Academies (NHA) partners with community groups to build and operate public charter schools. Founded in 1995, today NHA partners with 80 K-8 schools in 9 states serving over 50,000 students. NHA is one of the largest charter school management organizations designed to eliminate achievement gaps and prepare our students for success in high school, college and beyond.

Requirements:

Qualifications differ in every state and can be found on our website at www.nhacareers.com.

Benefits:

- Competitive Salary
- Medical, Prescription, Dental, and Vision Benefits
- Retirement Options
- Tuition Reimbursement
- Relocation Costs

Contact:

For more information and to apply, please visit www.nhacareers.com. Qualified candidates may contact Alex by phone at 616-285-1595 or by email acookingham@nhaschools.com.

Behavior Therapist for Autism

In all cities in FL, GA, SC, NC, VA, TX, LA, AL, AZ and CA

Job Category:

Description:

Butterfly Effects, a leading provider of client-centric, in-home and in-school, ABA therapy for those experiencing life on the Autism spectrum, is actively seeking energetic, outgoing, and passionate individuals to become PART-TIME Registered Behavior Technicians!

Butterfly Effects currently serves clients in over 30 markets, employing over 500 passionate team members focused on a singular purpose - to create a collaborative environment that promotes meaningful

learning opportunities and experiences through individualized ABA therapy, for clients and their circle of support.

Availability for part time assignments. Variable hours are available, but emphasis is on after school (3:00 pm – 7:00 pm) hours.

Qualified Teachers will have:

- Bachelor's degree or a minimum of 48 college credit hours.
- A commitment to become certified as a Registered Behavior Technician by successfully completing a 40 hour course (no cost involved) in Applied Behavior Analysis.
- BLS/ CPR Certification or willingness to achieve certification.
- Reliable transportation and insurance.
- Willingness to travel to and from clients' homes within 30 minutes of your location.
- Strong computer and technology skills and reliable internet connection for data input.

Benefits:

Butterfly Effects offers great pay and benefits, including paid RBT training, mileage, flexible hours for Part-Time client home therapy, materials provided for free, and free training and supervision by a Board Certified Behavioral Analyst. Making a positive difference in a child's life.

Contact:

To Apply go to: www.butterflyeffects.com and or call **954-603-7885** for Talent Acquisition Team

Special Education Coordinator

Washington, DC

Job Category: Special Education Coordinator

Description:

AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter School seeks a motivated, passionate and experienced Special Education Coordinator to provide case management and direct services to children identified for special education and related services.

The Special Education Coordinator ensures that all children and families with special needs receive

optimal developmentally appropriate educational experiences. Under the primary direction of the Special Education Manager and secondary direction of the Principal, the Special Education Coordinator will implement students' Individual Education Plans (IEPs) in inclusion, push in and/or pull out settings, depending on the IEP Team's decision about placement and what is appropriate as the student's least restrictive environment. This position will serve to support the Special Education Manager with administrative tasks including IDEA compliance activities, chairing multidisciplinary (MDT) meetings, and comprehensive case management of all students on assigned caseload participating in the special education program to ensure their academic and developmental progress.

The Special Education Coordinator will use in-depth knowledge of early childhood special education practices to provide effective and research-based interventions to children identified for special education services. The Special Education Coordinator will also work with regular education teachers in a consultative manner to integrate these strategies into their practice within the RTI model.

The Special Education Coordinator also serves as an Inclusion Coordinator, a resource Teacher or a resource Teacher/Speech Language Pathologist in AELPCS. The inclusion Coordinator fulfills all the aspects of the Special Education Teacher in the school assigned and collaborates with a lead general education teacher to ensure high-quality instruction and coordinate services for all students in their classroom.

The Special Education Coordinator reports to the Special Education Manager, with input from the school Principal.

Requirements:

- Candidates must have, at the minimum, a bachelor's degree in elementary or early childhood special education, and one or more years of successful professional teaching experience.
- Teachers with master's degrees in early childhood special education or a certified speech language pathologist are preferred
- Two or more years of successful professional teaching of young children with special needs is preferred.
- Demonstrate leadership experience
- Strong organizational skills and communication abilities
- Ability to work collaboratively and well within a team
- Both Inclusion and resource teacher candidates must receive a passing score on the Special Education and Elementary Education Content Knowledge (PK-3) by the start of the school year.

Benefits:

Salary is commensurate with education and experience. Compensation also includes an excellent benefits package and vast professional development opportunities.

Contact:

To apply, please go to our website go.appletreeinstitute.org/vacancies. If you have questions please send to talent@appletreeinstitute.org, No Phone Calls, please

Special Education Teachers

Tucson, AZ

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

Description:

Provide students with appropriate learning activities and experiences in the core academic subject area assigned to help them fulfill their potential for intellectual, emotional, physical, and social growth. Enable students to develop competencies and skills to function successfully in society.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE:

- Familiar with Special Education Laws
- Ability to work in team environment
- Familiar with needs of Elementary School Aged Students
- Able to develop and implement IEP'S
- Good communication and organizational skills

LICENSES / CERTIFICATION:

- Valid Arizona Teaching Certificate in subject area (Special Education Certificate)
- Valid Arizona Fingerprint Clearance Card
- Structured English Immersion Endorsement (SEI)

Benefits:

9 month contracted position; 6 IEP days; Salary: \$32,096 - \$40,271; Additional \$2,000 stipend for hard to fill;

Contact:

Please apply on-line at WWW.Maranausd.org.

For more information contact Human Resources at 520-682-3243

[To top](#)

Upcoming Conferences, Workshops and Events 2015

October

Check & Connect first National Conference: 25 Years of Student Engagement 1990-2015 Conference

October 7, 2015 - October 8, 2015

St. Paul, MN

<http://checkandconnect.umn.edu/conf/default.html>

Check & Connect's first national conference will be held in Minneapolis, MN, October 7-8, 2015. It will bring together leading experts and practitioners from around the country to address the topic of student engagement among at-risk youth. Participants will include representatives from sites implementing Check & Connect's evidence-based student engagement intervention model and professionals interested in learning more about student engagement in general and Check & Connect specifically. Participants will learn from experts in the field, share lessons learned, and gain tools for implementing Check & Connect with fidelity and sustaining their sites' implementation to support at-risk students in reaching their goals and graduating high school. CEUs will be offered.

December

TASH Conference

December 2-4

Portland, OR.

Registration is open for the 2015 TASH conference. This year's theme, "Celebrating 40 Years of Progressive Leadership," acknowledges TASH's 40 years of generating change within the disability community and anticipates a brighter, more inclusive future for people with disabilities in all aspects of life. Read about the conference and register, at: http://2015tashconference.sched.org/info#.Vc5iX_IVhBd

[To top](#)

Funding Forecast and Award Opportunities

Forecast of Funding Opportunities under the Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs for Fiscal Year 2015

<http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html>

This document lists virtually all programs and competitions under which the U.S. Department of Education has invited or expects to invite applications for new awards for fiscal year 2015 and provides actual or estimated deadlines for the transmittal of applications under these programs. The lists are in the form of charts organized according to the Department's principal program offices and include programs and competitions previously announced as well as those to be announced at a later date.

FY 2015 Discretionary Grant Application Packages

<http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html>

This site, from the Department of Education, provides information on grant competitions that are currently open.

Arthur Vining Davis Foundations Seeks Proposals to Strengthen Secondary Education

<http://www.avdf.org/FoundationsPrograms/SecondaryEducation.aspx>

The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations offers \$100,000-\$200,000 grants to support a wide range of innovative professional development programs that strengthen teachers in grades 9-12 and their teaching. For example, projects might be designed to improve professional development for in-service and pre-service teachers, strengthen teaching skills, support practical research in teacher and high school education, or encourage innovative use of technology and new techniques for presentation of classroom materials in high schools. Projects should aim to develop solutions with potential for wide application or replication by others. Requests to support well-established programs should be for initiatives with the potential to improve the program significantly. Special consideration will be given to projects in their early stages that address the concerns and problems of secondary education on a national level. In considering proposals to support high school teaching, sustained partnerships between the faculties of colleges (e.g., arts and sciences and education) and school districts, or collaborative efforts involving reform organizations, colleges/universities, and high schools are encouraged. Eligible institutions include but are not limited to public and private colleges and universities, graduate schools of education, and freestanding educational institutes. Ongoing deadlines.

Discover: Pathway to Financial Success Grant

<http://www.pathwaytofinancialsuccess.org/get-a-grant>

Discover is investing up to \$10 million in financial education, and any high school can apply for a grant toward a financial education curriculum. Applying schools must have implemented or be looking to implement a financial education curriculum; have a measurement tool planned or in place to assess participation in and comprehension of the financial education curriculum; and agree to share overall results of the measurement tool's pre- and post-curriculum testing with Discover upon the program's completion to assess what worked and what didn't. Maximum award: varies. Eligibility: high schools in the United States. Deadline: none.

Dollar General: Beyond Words Library Disaster Relief

<http://www.ala.org/awardsgrants/awards/166/apply>

Dollar General, in collaboration with the American Library Association (ALA), the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the National Education Association (NEA), is sponsoring a school library disaster relief fund for public school libraries in the states served by Dollar General. The fund will provide grants to public schools whose school library program has been affected by a disaster. Grants are to replace or supplement books, media and/or library equipment in the school library setting. Maximum award: up to \$15,000 to replace or supplement books, media and/or library equipment. Eligibility: public school libraries Pre K-12 located within 20 miles of a Dollar General store, distribution center or corporate office that have lost their building or incurred substantial damage or hardship due to a natural disaster (tornado, earthquake, hurricane, flood, avalanche, mudslide), fire or an act recognized by the federal government as terrorism; or have absorbed a significant number (more than 10% enrollment) of displaced/evacuee students. Deadline: none.

Fender Music Foundation: Grants

<http://www.fendermusicfoundation.org/grants/?sec=info>

Fender Music Foundation grants of instruments and equipment are awarded to music academies, schools, local music programs and national music programs across America, particularly in-school music classes, in which the students make music; after-school music programs that are not run by the school; and music therapy programs, in which the participants make the music. Maximum award: up to 8 instruments. Eligibility: established, ongoing and sustainable music programs in the United States, which provide music instruction for people of any age who would not otherwise have the opportunity to make music. Deadline: rolling.

AASA: National Superintendent of the Year

<http://www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=3404>

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) National Superintendent of the Year Program pays tribute to the talent and vision of the men and women who lead the nation's public schools. Maximum award: recognition; a \$10,000 scholarship to a student in the high school from which the National Superintendent of the Year graduated. Eligibility: Any superintendent, chancellor, or top leader of a school system in the United States, Canada, or international school who plans to continue in the profession. Deadline: varies by state.

[To top](#)

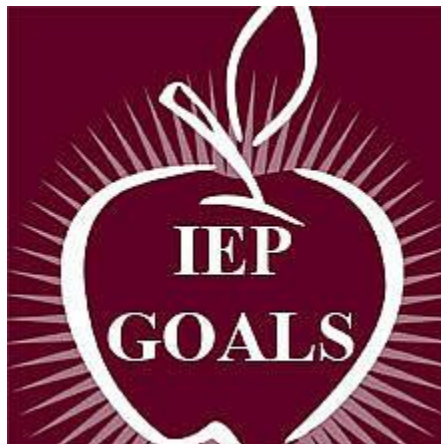
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- National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth
- National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities
- National Institute of Health
- National Organization on Disability
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- U.S. Department of Education-The Education Innovator
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NASET Application for iPad and iPhone



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