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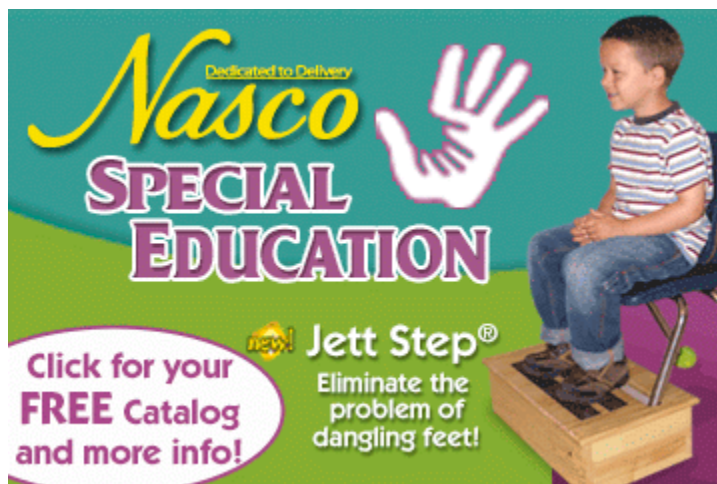
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# Update from the U.S. Department of Education

## Obama Administration Takes Action to Ensure Fewer and Better Tests for Students

Building on President Obama's Testing Action Plan, the U.S. Department of Education released a series of case studies with examples of work states and districts are doing to ensure fewer, better and fairer tests for students. The examples are part of the Department's continued efforts to lift up promising practices and provide information to states and districts about thoughtful ways to reduce and improve testing.

As part of that work, the Department also today outlined proposed priorities for applicants of the Enhanced Assessment Grant, a competitive grant program for states and consortia of states to improve state academic assessments. Through a notice published in the Federal Register, the Department is proposing three additional priorities for applicants: developing innovative assessment item types and design approaches, improving assessment scoring and score reporting, and conducting an inventory of state and local assessment systems to eliminate unnecessary, redundant or low-quality tests.

"Done well, assessments are tools for learning and promoting equity. Done poorly, in excess or without clear purpose, they take valuable time away from teaching and learning, draining creative approaches from our classrooms," said U.S. Education Secretary John B. King Jr. "Across the country, educators are leading the way on innovative ideas to strike the right balance on testing. We're committed to supporting that work."

These steps build on an October 2015 announcement by President Obama of a set of principles promoting a smarter approach to student assessment, aimed at reducing the amount of time spent on standardized testing and providing support for states and school districts to develop and use better, less burdensome assessments. The Obama Administration's Testing Action Plan outlines that assessments must be worth taking and of high quality; enhance teaching and learning; and give a well-rounded picture of how students and schools are doing.

Earlier this year, the Department released guidance on how states and districts can use federal dollars to eliminate unnecessary, redundant or unhelpful tests. The guidance also includes ideas on how to revise assessments that are already given to ensure they are as high quality as possible. In the summer, the Department will release proposed regulations to provide clarity to states on exercising the new authority in the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) for states to pilot innovative assessments. The President signed ESSA into law last December.

The grants – amounting to \$9 million – will be awarded to states later this year.

Today's report, *Testing Action Plan: State and District Profiles*, was released by King during a visit to Tulsa, Oklahoma, where he joined Tulsa Superintendent Deborah A. Gist in a roundtable discussion with members of a local committee that looked at testing in the district, and efforts aligned with the President's Testing Action Plan to eliminate unnecessary testing;

## King Calls for Return to Well-Rounded Education

U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King Jr. called for a renewed focus on well-rounded education for all students, as states work to implement the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

In a speech at the Las Vegas Academy of the Arts in Nevada, King said the new law, signed by President Obama in December to replace the outdated No Child Left Behind act, gives schools, districts and states a chance to reset after years of focusing heavily on math and reading while other important classes—like science, social studies, the arts and world languages—took a back seat.

“Strong literacy and math skills are surely necessary for success in college, careers and life – but they just as surely are not sufficient. Being a well-educated person and passionate about learning isn't just about reading and computing well,” said King, a former social studies teacher. “It’s about being skilled and knowledgeable about a wide range of subjects, expert and passionate about a few, and confident in the quest for more knowledge.”

Research shows that students—particularly historically underserved students—engage more deeply in learning when they are exposed to a variety of topics and can better connect what they are learning in the classroom with the world outside the school house. For example, there’s evidence that students improve at math when they’ve taken classes that connect science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) with the arts. And research from the University of Virginia’s Daniel Willingham shows that students with broad knowledge are stronger readers.

That’s why the U.S. Department of Education is taking action to support states and districts in ensuring schools provide a rich range of offerings—from arts and social studies to computer science and world language. The Department released guidance Wednesday on how to leverage federal funds to expand STEM offerings in schools.

Proposals in the President’s 2017 budget would provide significant support for a well-rounded education. For example, the budget requests \$500 million for the new Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants, nearly double the funding available for the programs focused on STEM, school counseling, physical education and rigorous coursework—which are such important parts of promoting students’ success. In addition, the budget includes the \$4 billion Computer Science for All initiative; a \$125 million Teacher and Principal Pathways program; \$10 million for a new STEM Master Teacher Corps; and \$1.8 million for the American History and Civics Academies Program, which supports workshops and programs for teachers and students to develop a deeper understanding of American history and civics. And the new Skills for Success grants are helping middle school students develop social and emotional skills they will need to achieve and complete a higher education.

“The good news here is that the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act makes the work to provide a well-rounded education to all students easier,” King said. “Under the new law, states now have the opportunity to broaden their definition of educational excellence, to include providing students strong learning experiences in science, social studies, world languages, and the arts, as well as AP and International Baccalaureate classes – and even supporting students’ socioemotional development. That’s a huge and welcome change.”

King will also visit Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Springdale, Arkansas, as part of a series of school visits this week on well-rounded education. Excerpts of his speech are attached.

## **U.S. Department of Education Issues Guidance for Schools on Leveraging Federal Funding to Support STEM Education**

The U.S. Department of Education today issued a Dear Colleague Letter to states, school districts, schools and education partners on how to maximize federal funds to support and enhance innovative science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education for all students.

The letter serves as a resource for decreasing the equity and opportunity gaps for historically underserved students in STEM and gives examples of how federal funds—through formula grant programs in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act—can support efforts to improve instruction and student outcomes in STEM fields.

“Too often many of our students, especially those who are most vulnerable, do not have equitable access to high-quality STEM and computer science opportunities, which are part of a well-rounded education and can change the course of a child’s life,” said U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King Jr.

"We are committed to ensuring that all students have the same opportunities to access a rigorous and challenging education. This letter will help states and their school districts use their federal funds to close opportunity gaps and improve educational outcomes for all students."

Outlined in the letter are examples of allowable uses of federal funds that can support the development, implementation, and expansion of STEM experiences to help improve student achievement in the 2016-17 school year. The examples include recommendations for both improving access for students and supporting educators in STEM disciplines, including computer science. Specifically, the letter addresses ways to use federal funds to:

- Increase students' equitable access to STEM courses and experiences, including out-of-school programs, STEM-themed schools and career pathways.
- Support educators' knowledge and expertise in STEM disciplines through recruitment, preparation, support and retention strategies.
- Increase student access to materials and equipment needed to support inquiry-based pedagogy and active learning.

Ensuring that all students have equitable access to STEM education continues to be a priority of the Obama Administration. To help promote that priority, the Education Department created a STEM team to help coordinate STEM programs throughout the Department and across other federal agencies. Also, STEM is now a funding priority in numerous Department grant competitions—including the Arts—to raise awareness of the need for and interest in strengthening STEM education for all students, both in and out of school.

## **U.S. Department of Education Acts to Protect Social Security Benefits for Borrowers with Disabilities**

The U.S. Department of Education announced today a new process to proactively identify and assist federal student loan borrowers with disabilities who may be eligible for Total and Permanent Disability (TPD) loan discharge. This effort was called for by President Obama in his Student Aid Bill of Rights, which details measures to make paying for higher education an easier and fairer experience for millions of Americans. The Higher Education Act allows for loan forgiveness for borrowers who are totally and permanently disabled. By proactively identifying and engaging borrowers who may be eligible for TPD loan discharge, the Department is fulfilling its commitment to ensure that borrowers who are totally and permanently disabled have the information needed to take full advantage of the debt relief to which they are entitled.

"In 2012, the Administration took steps to streamline the process to allow for Americans who are totally and permanently disabled to use their Social Security designation to apply to have their loans discharged. But too many eligible borrowers were falling through the cracks, unaware they were eligible for relief. Borrowers like one such woman whose side effects from her breast cancer treatment left her totally and permanently disabled. After repeated attempts, she finally received a disability discharge—seven years after her first application," said U.S. Education Under Secretary Ted Mitchell. "Under the new process, we will notify potentially eligible borrowers about the benefit and guide them through steps needed to discharge their loans, helping thousands of borrowers. Americans with disabilities have a right to student loan relief. And we need to make it easier, not harder, for them to receive the benefits they are due."

### **Background**

Through the Treasury Offset Program (TOP), borrowers' defaulted debts owed to federal and state governments, including student loan debt, are paid down by offsetting other federal benefits that the debtor would receive, including Social Security Disability payments. The Department of Education has been working closely with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to complete a data match to identify federal student loan borrowers who also receive disability payments and have the specific designation of "Medical Improvement Not Expected" (MINE) which, because of a change in Department regulations in 2013, qualifies them for loan forgiveness under the TPD discharge program. This streamlined and more accurate process ensures that eligible borrowers receive loan discharges.



Approximately 387,000 borrowers were positively identified in the first set of matches which were conducted in December 2015 and March 2016. In total, these borrowers have a combined loan balance of over \$7.7 billion, and roughly 179,000 are currently in default. As required by federal law, over 100,000 of those borrowers with defaulted loans have been certified for the TOP, and are therefore at risk of losing federal tax refunds, and of having their Social Security benefits offset. Today's announcement will ease the process of obtaining forgiveness for these struggling borrowers and ensure they receive this entitlement under the law.

Beginning on April 18, 2016, borrowers who were positively identified in the match will receive a customized letter explaining that the borrower is eligible for loan forgiveness and the simple steps needed to receive a discharge. Unlike other borrowers, those identified through the data match will not be required to submit documentation of their eligibility. Instead, they are eligible for a streamlined process by which they simply sign and return the completed application. Initial notification letters will be sent over a sixteen-week period and will be followed up with a second letter that will be sent 120 days after the initial letter if a signed application is not received. Notification will also include information to ensure borrowers understand the potential tax implications for this benefit and can make an informed decision about electing a discharge. Please refer here for more information about the TPD program and the loan forgiveness process for practitioners. We ask that this be shared with appropriate networks to reach the borrowers that this process aims to serve.

While the President's 2017 Budget proposal seeks to exclude TPD discharges and other Department of Education loan forgiveness programs from taxable income, unless Congress acts, loans discharged under the TPD program may be subject to taxation, depending on the specific circumstances of the borrower.

Going forward, this match will be conducted quarterly to ensure that newly eligible borrowers are aware of their options.

### ***Increased safeguards to protect student borrowers***

The Department has implemented a number of other measures outlined in President Obama's Student Aid Bill of Rights to help student borrowers struggling to repay their loans.

Last year, the Department, in consultation with the Department of the Treasury and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), developed a report on how all responsible parties could increase borrower protections in the federal student loan program and strengthen student loan servicing, among other efforts. Key statutory recommendations include:

- **Update Debt Collection and Offset:** Index to inflation the amount of Social Security benefits exempt from offset, consistent with the proposal in the President's 2017 Budget applicable to student loans and other debt owed to the federal government
- **Enhance Federal Data-Sharing to Improve the Federal Student Loan Borrower Experience:** Streamline the process for those who are eligible to have their loans discharged because of a disability
- **Increase borrower protections in the federal student loan program:** Eliminate the tax liability for student loan discharges, including those related to Income Based Repayment and Income Contingent Repayment

Borrowers are encouraged to visit <https://disabilitydischarge.com> for more information.

### **Department of Education Releases Resources on Improving School Climate**

The U.S. Department of Education today released new school climate surveys and a quick guide on making school climate improvements to help foster and sustain safe and supportive environments that are conducive to learning for all students.

The *ED School Climate Surveys (surveys)* and the Quick Guide on Making School Climate Improvements will enable states, local school districts, and individual schools to collect and act on reliable, nationally-validated school climate data in real-time. These new free and adaptable resources will enable educators, administrators, and school system leaders to understand and create environments where every child can be successful.

“All students deserve schools that work to ensure safe and supportive school climates in which they can reach their full potential,” said James Cole Jr., General Counsel, Delegated the Duties of Deputy Secretary of Education. “These new surveys and quick guide will support any school that seeks to make significant improvements in all students’ safety and sense of respect and connectedness at school. We owe it to our children to ensure that school is not only safe and engaging, but that we are also working to continuously improve school climate by using resources like these.”

Research shows that students learn best when they are in environments in which they feel safe, supported, challenged, and accepted. Positive school climates foster trust, respect, communication and cooperation among students, school staff, parents and the community at-large. By improving school climate, schools lay the foundation for improving daily school attendance and high achievement by all students.

These new resources build on two Administration initiatives: President Obama’s Now is the Time Plan, and his My Brother’s Keeper Taskforce, which recommended that the Department work on the issue of school climates. As part of *Now is the Time*, the Department announced efforts to place a high priority on helping schools create safer and more nurturing school climates. One result was that the Department funded its National Center for Education Statistics to develop the surveys to create a school climate measurement platform in coordination with the Office of Safe and Healthy Students.

The new school climate surveys, which are on a web-based platform, are designed for middle and high school students, instructional staff, non-instructional staff, and parents and guardians. Moreover, the platform can process real-time data and provide user-friendly reports. Education agencies and schools administering the survey can store school climate survey data on their state, local, or school-based data systems. The federal government is planning to conduct a sample-based study using the surveys for benchmarking but will *not* collect or store data generated by the schools using the surveys for any other purposes.

In addition to the Quick Guide, a series of tools will be released later this spring and summer as part of the School Climate Improvement Resource Package, a web-based suite of action-oriented, research and evidence-based resources to help create and support positive school climates.



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# NCWD: Intersection: Navigating the Road to Work

All information and more details of the information below can be found at:

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/>

## NCWD/Youth & Getting Hired Hold Disability Disclosure Webinar

On March 24, 2016, NCWD/Youth presented a webinar on disability disclosure in partnership with GettingHired based on NCWD/Youth's *The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities*. The webinar described the advantages and disadvantages of disclosure in the workplace, the rights of youth with disabilities, and how youth can confidently discuss their disabilities and needed accommodations.

## NCWD/Youth Hosts Webinar with CAST on Improving Postsecondary Outcomes with Universal Design for Learning

On February 17, 2016, NCWD/Youth and CAST hosted a webinar for postsecondary institutions on how to use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to improve retention and graduation rates. The webinar provided an orientation to UDL and explained how postsecondary education professionals use evidence-based UDL practices to facilitate engaged learning for all students. This webinar is part of a series for postsecondary education faculty and staff hosted by NCWD/Youth. The full recording and transcript are available online.

## Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities to Meet April 27-28

The Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (the Committee) will hold a meeting on April 27-28, 2016 at the Access Board. The location for this meeting is 1331 F Street NW, Suite 800 in Washington, DC. The meeting will be open to the public on Wednesday, April 27, 2016 from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. On Thursday, April 28, 2016, the meeting will be open to the public from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. During the meeting, the Committee's four subcommittees will report out on their work since the last Committee meeting. In addition, the full Committee will discuss recommendations regarding the AbilityOne® program and consider recommendations regarding the certificate program under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The Committee will also discuss next steps and timelines for the final report. The public comment period of the meeting will take place on April 27 from 2:45 PM to 3:45 PM. Instructions for submitting comments can be found in the Federal Register Notice. The deadline for submitting comments is April 15.

## U.S. Department of Education Releases Report on College Access for Low-Income Students

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Education released the report titled

*Fulfilling the Promise, Serving the Need: Advancing College Opportunity for Low-Income Students*. *Fulfilling the Promise, Serving the Need* describes college pathways for low-income students. It also shares how colleges and universities can work to improve student outcomes achieved by low-income students in the U.S.

## Achieve Releases Report on College and Career Readiness

In March, Achieve released a report titled *College and Career Readiness for U.S. High School Students*. This report identifies gaps in publicly available data for college and career readiness (CCR) of K-12 students. It notes that only seven states make available CCR data on whether students are on track to graduate. Additionally, only 22 states make available CCR data on students earning college credit, and only 15 states share data on CCR course of study completion.

## **LEAD Center Issues Resources to Use in Reviewing State WIOA Unified or Combined State Plans from a Disability Perspective**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the governor of each state to submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the Secretary of the Department of Labor (DOL) by April 1, 2016. The plan must outline the state's four-year strategy regarding how the workforce development system will provide services and supports to help all job-seekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with skilled workers. States must have approved state plans in place to receive funding for six core programs under WIOA. In order to ensure that these Unified or Combined State Plans address the needs of individuals with disabilities, as required by WIOA, the LEAD Center has created two guides that can be used by local and state Workforce Development Boards, disability-related stakeholders, and workforce partners as a tool to assist them in reviewing their state's plan from a disability perspective. The LEAD Center's WIOA website also includes The LEAD Center's Review of 10 Unified and Combined WIOA State Plans and a link to the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) on Operating Guidance for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, published by DOL's Employment and Training Administration.

## **Labor Deputy Secretary Chris Lu Addresses Youth Employment Opportunities Roundtable in Chicago**

On March 7, 2016, U.S. Deputy Labor Secretary Chris Lu addressed a roundtable on youth employment opportunities hosted by Malcom X College in Chicago, Illinois. Deputy Secretary Lu discussed this event in his blog post *Pathways to Success for Young People*. He shared the career ambitions of fellow speakers Charmaine Ricketts, a community advocate, and Amairani Ambriz, a young adult interested in becoming a nurse.

## **ESSA Negotiated Rulemaking Committee Holds First Series of Meetings**

On March 21-23, 2016, the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) held its first series of meetings at the U.S. Department of Education. The committee is discussing potential regulations to implement the law passed by Congress in 2015. These regulations involve use of statewide assessments, alternative assessments for some students with disabilities, and other key issues.

## **William Rainey Harper College and Zurich Insurance Group Launch First Insurance Apprenticeship Program**

In February, William Rainey Harper College in Palatine, Illinois and Zurich Insurance Group launched the first ever apprenticeship program in the U.S. focused on the insurance industry. The inaugural class for this apprenticeship program includes 24 students developing vocational and professional skills at Zurich Insurance's headquarters in Schaumburg, Illinois. The students earn a salary from Zurich Insurance, while attending tuition-free classes at Harper College to complete an associate's degree in business.

## **HSC Foundation and NCIL Seek Applicants for 2016 Youth Transitions Fellowship (YTF)**

The HSC Foundation, in partnership with the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), is now accepting applications for a paid fellowship position on youth transition and collaboration work. This fellowship is ideal for a person with a disability who has an interest in youth career transitions and employment solutions. The 15-month fellowship starts in June 2016. Under the supervision of NCIL's Executive Director, the Youth Transitions Fellow (YTF) will gain exposure to youth programs serving people with disabilities. The fellow will also have the opportunity to facilitate collaboration among internship, fellowship, and apprenticeship programs based in the Greater Washington, DC area. More information, including how to apply, is available online. Applications must be received by 5:00 PM EDT on or before Tuesday, April 26, 2016 via email to [tim@ncil.org](mailto:tim@ncil.org).

### **ABLE Account Clearinghouse Website Helps Individuals Navigate State Programs**

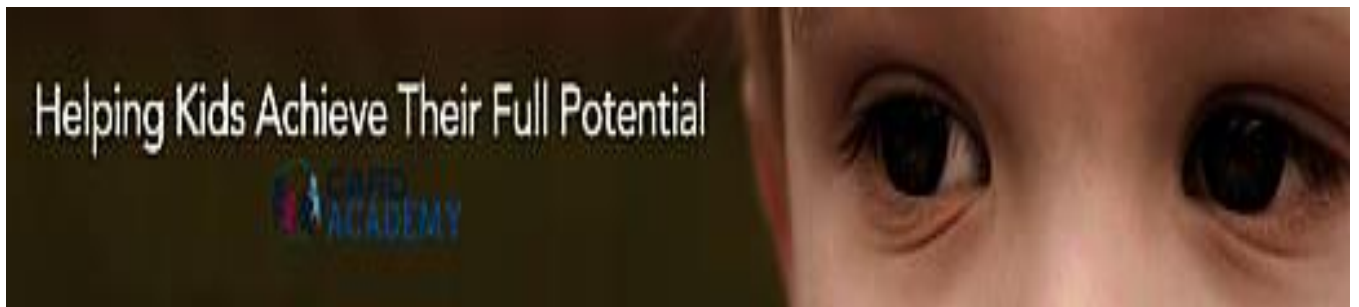
The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act of 2014 allows many people with disabilities to save up to \$100,000 in special accounts without losing Social Security and other government benefits. ABLE accounts can help pay for education, health care, transportation, housing, and other expenses. Each state must pass legislation and regulations to administer ABLE accounts. The ABLE National Resource Center (ANRC), managed by the National Disability Institute, now offers a website that outlines the state programs and allows individuals to compare them side-by-side.

### **AYPF Hosts Webinar Series on Supporting First-Generation College Students**

The American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF) is hosting two webinars on policies and strategies to support first generation college students. The first webinar on April 5, 2016 at 2:00 pm EDT will focus on comprehensive advising strategies for supporting first-generation college students from low-income homes and the role of policy in scaling these efforts. The second webinar on April 13, 2016 at 2:00 pm EDT will highlight how technology can be leveraged to complement in-person college advising for this population of students.

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# **A Review of Barriers to School Involvement for Parents of Students with Disabilities**

**By Celina Chocron**

**Florida International University**

## **Introduction**

When a student is diagnosed with a learning disability, schools follow a procedure mandated by the IDEA that requires them to send the parents procedural safeguard documents. “These documents represent the primary way in which schools provide written notice to parents of their rights and their children’s rights in the special education system” (Mandic, Rudd, Hehir & Garcia, 2010. P.196).

It is important for the parents to be able to clearly understand those documents and their rights for how they can advocate for their child. The school is required to offer a translator if the parents are non-native speakers; however, it is very unlikely that parents will take the help. Immigrants often face culture and linguistic barriers. Even though there has recently been a change in legislation to help motivate parents to advocate for their children, parents still perceive several barriers. Evidence has shown that the majority of parents do not have the ability and the knowledge to advocate for their children, and there is mismatch between the efforts to involve parents followed by the laws and the results of several researchers.

Moreover, it is well-known that family participation makes a positive impact in their children’s outcome. As stated in an article on Web-Based Training in Family Advocacy (2013) related to children with cerebral palsy : “Effective family advocacy leads to better outcomes for both survivors and their families, diminishes caregiver burden, and reduces the overall need for services” ( McLaughlin et al , p.341).

In the article Down the Rabbit ( 2011), we can find the following reflection, “if we ask mothers about their stories, we can learn the consequences of our practices within their lives”( Valle, p.188). This shows that we can learn from the parents, and the importance of enhancing parents’ involvement in the education of their children.

In this paper, we aim to review several studies to understand the impediments that parents of children with disabilities face with regards to their involvement in their children’s academic and social education in school.

## **Literature Review**

In the article In Parents’ Voices: The Education of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (2010), the authors state that many parents are dissatisfied with school programs. Parents are typically concerned about school staff’s ability to manage behavioral challenges, to understand their children disability, and to keep open lines of communication with parents. Additionally, parents manifest that teachers do not have enough knowledge around Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). According to Parson and Lewis (2010), many parents prefer home schooling options because they feel that schools’ offerings do not meet their needs. In this study, the authors examine the factors that contribute to the parents’ satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the school, as well as their expectations. They found that the “quality of collaboration and communication differentially affected the parents’ perceptions of their children’s education experience” (Starr& Foy, 2012, p.213).



Moreover, a survey developed by a parent from an advocacy group demonstrates that parents' dissatisfaction may influence the outcomes of research-based programs implemented at schools. This finding proved the importance of involving parents in their children's education and the relevance of open communication between the school staff and the parents.

Others research, such as, *Down the Rabbit Hole* (2011) confirms a similar conclusion. The authors analyzed a compilation of stories, observation, and surveys of 15 mothers with children that have learning disabilities. These mothers represented a variety of cultures and races. They corroborated that parents are excluded from their children's education by the use of teacher's understandable language, their passive position at parent-teacher meetings, and the devaluation of parents' knowledge. Others researchers discovered that parents tend to feel left out due to the technical language used in school meetings that they may not fully grasp. This creates a barrier for the parents to be able to collaborate with their children's academic and social goals. Others factors consider are the family's culture, race, and ethnicity. The researchers demonstrated that decisions on behalf of the students' education have been made without taking the factors into consideration.

Valle analyzed historical changes in the laws of education. In 1970, evidence was found related to parents' lack of knowledge regarding their rights under the IDEA laws, and that parents do not understand the procedure of placement in the special education classroom. In 1990, survey results indicated that parents were confused with the psychological test results, diagnosis and recommendations. Then in 2008, researchers affirmed that a new educational law aimed to achieve greater collaboration between parents and teachers by requiring the use of simple language and creation of an Individual Educational Plan(IEP) in collaboration with the parents. Schools have intended to follow these laws, but it depends on "the attitudes and beliefs of those who implement the law" (Vall & Connor, 2010). This finding corroborates the authors' conclusion that the parents' satisfaction is based on the particular style of communication from the school staff and on how they are included in their children's education process.

Another study found that the way families perceive their children impacts the feelings of unmet needs (*Beyond Autism Autism Diagnosis*, 2011). This research shows that it is not the severity of the diagnosis that affects the parents' and the child's perceptions, but rather it is the way that families deal with the child that has the most impact on their satisfaction with the school. Moreover, the National Research Council (2001) and the Committee on Social Affairs, Science, and Technology (2008) reported that Parents for Children with Autism manifested their dissatisfaction and difficulty in understanding the educational system related to special education in schools. This shows the parents' frustration in their inability to provide inputs into their children's education.

Readability of Special Education Procedural Safeguards further communicates the barrier that impedes parents' involvement in the school. This study measured the readability scores in the procedural safeguard documents that are given to parents of children with disabilities in US public schools. "The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Fitzgerald and Watkins (2006) and others, which indicate that procedural safeguard documents provided by state departments of education are written at an excessively high level" (Mandic et al, 2012,p.199). The authors of this research stated that "more than half of state procedural safeguard documents scored in the college reading level range for readability, and almost 40% scored in the range considered graduate or professional" (Mandic et al., 2012, p.200). Even though the IDEA specifically demands that the written language be understandable to the parents, this research shows this is not reflected in practice.

Mandic and colleagues (2012) reviewed the importance of parents' involvement based on the results of various studies. They noted that "parental involvement has been shown to be an important protective factor against adverse educational, social, and employment outcomes in young adulthood" (Wagner, Blackorby, Cameto, & Newman, 1993). Nevertheless, evidence from national longitudinal studies of students with disabilities affirm that parents of students with disabilities have difficulties in getting involved due to their poor literacy skills and social cultural factors. This evidence confirms that another factor that impede parents advocacy is that they do not have the skills to understand important documents regarding their rights and the school's processes for their children's education.

At last, a program implemented by Wade and colleagues (2013) analyzed the efficacy of Web-based interventions for training families of children with brain injuries to be effective advocates. This program taught parents listening skills, how to be effective in finding resources and programs for their children, and how to pursue their children's goals. They used text, interactive video examples, and video-based skills.

The results showed that “participants who used the program demonstrated greater increases in intention-to-use advocacy skills” (Wade et. al, 2013, p.346). There is a believe that this type of interventions “could result in improved family functioning and better outcomes for survivors of brain injury.” They affirm that there is enough evidence stating that the impact of parents working together with teachers leads to a positive effects on the child’s performance. This example of parent involvement for children with brain injuries shows promise and could potentially be translated to getting parents of children with learning disabilities to work more collaboratively with school staff.

## Recommendations

Overall, six studies revealed that when parents collaborate with teachers to set up goals and work together in the process of education, their involvement produces better outcomes for children with learning disabilities. Therefore, one effective way to improve the education of students with disabilities is by enhancing parent advocacy. In order to enable parents to become more active in their children's education, the studies mention several barriers that need to be considered. The complicated language used in school documents, the cultural and language barriers, the attitude and communication from school personnel, the way parents perceive their children and teachers, and the lack of communication have an important role in parents involvement with their children's education.

Based on these findings, one recommendation is to enhance parents’ participation and personally walk the parents through documents that are sent to them. Furthermore, the documents should be written in plain language and they should be explained in the parent’s native language to assure that they understand their rights. To overcome the cultural barriers, schools could offer workshops to parents related to the US education, the school's philosophy, standardized tests, and methods of communication. The research results call to question whether there should be a designated bilingual teacher responsible for communication with parents, including workshop generation, one-on-one meetings, and/or office hours for parent questions. To change teachers’ attitudes, it may be beneficial for the district to provide workshops for administrators and teachers to develop a deeper understanding of the importance of communication with parents. Finally, wider implementation of Web-based training for parents on the skills needed to advocate for their children could be beneficial for families of children with learning disabilities.

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## About the Author

**Celina Chocron** earned her Master's degree in Exceptional Student Education with Autism Endorsement from Florida International University and her Bachelor's in Exceptional Student from Broward College. She has 25 years of experience in education as a Special Education Teacher, Title I Teacher in Math/Reading, Curriculum Coordinator, and School Principal. Celina is passionate about inclusion of ESE students inclusion support programs in general classroom and the positive impact in academic, as well as, socio-emotional settings.

## Buzz from the Hub

All information and more details of the information below can be found at:

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/buzz-april2016/>

## New Resources in the Hub

CPIR's resource library is ever-growing, so it's helpful to know what's been recently added. Here are several you may find useful in the coming days and months.

### **Developmental Foundations of School Readiness for Infants and Toddlers.**

This *Research to Practice* report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services summarizes the research on development during the first 3 years of life; highlights areas that are foundational for school readiness and later school success; and describes how providers can support the development of school readiness in infants and toddlers.

### **Effective Literacy Interventions | Webinar.**

Has your state selected "literacy" as an important target for improving outcomes for students with disabilities? If so, this webinar of the REL Mid-Atlantic is for you! Learn what the research says about the effectiveness of literacy interventions and how teachers can offer literacy instruction that meets a range of student needs. The webinar also discusses how school leaders can support effective literacy programs.

### **Technology in Education: An Overview.**

Keep up to date with how technology is being used in education and get answers to questions such as: What is personalized learning? 1-to 1 computing? Blended learning? How is online testing evolving? How are digital materials used in classrooms? And much more...

## Spotlight on...ESSA Resources

The recent passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act—ESSA—ensures that loads of decisions must be made at the state level as to how to implement the law. So being well informed about ESSA is an ongoing priority for Parent Centers. Here are several new resources on the law to go with CPIR's resource page on ESSA.

### **Education Week's Overview of the ESSA.**

One of the best overviews you'll read, nicely broken down and explained.

### **PTA Resources for Families on ESSA.**

Check out the many briefs offered on Parent Teacher Association's website that summarize the titles of ESSA and stress family engagement.

### **ESSA and Students with Disabilities: Analysis & Comments.**

The Advocacy Institute and the Center for Law and Education examine several key provisions of ESSA along with comments of how the provisions may impact students with disabilities.

### **The New Education Law: 6 Things to Know.**

From NCLD's Public Policy & Advocacy Team, this succinct article focuses on the 6 important things for parents to know about the new law, with emphasis on how it affects students with disabilities and the need for parental involvement and advocacy.

## **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.

### **Summer Fun Camp Directory.**

From the Federation for Children with Special Needs, this directory includes links to over 200 camp websites serving children with disabilities.

### **Physical Education for Students with Disabilities.**

Just updated page from Wrightslaw! If your child has a disability and an IEP, the school must provide physical education as part of your child's special education program. This includes providing accommodations and modifications (as needed), or it may mean providing adapted physical education.

### **Checklist: What to Ask the School Before Choosing a Tool or Device.**

This checklist includes multiple questions that parents might ask the school about assistive technology (AT) options for their child with a disability. The questions are organized into three sections: (1) AT and Your Child's Needs; (2) Assessment of Assistive Technology; and (3) Assistive Technology Settings and Situations.

### **Options and Planning for College: For Families.**

Do you serve families who want to learn more about the possibilities for their sons or daughters with intellectual disabilities to attend college? This self-paced module from Think College! describes college options, identifies how college is different from high school, discusses the changing role of families once students are in college, and offers strategies for families and students on how they may navigate those differences.

## **Resources Just for Parent Centers: More Facts at Your Fingertips**

### **Significant Turnover in State Education Leadership in 2015.**

This new report details the changes that took place across the country in 2015 and early 2016 in 4 key state leadership roles: Governor, State Boards of Education, Chief (leader of the K-12 system), and State Higher Education Executive Officer (leader of the postsecondary system). This makes it critical that education stakeholders such as parents, community leaders, and business leaders be a consistent voice for keeping expectations high and improving student performance in their communities.

### **How to Look at Your Data to Address Disproportionality | Webinar.**

Disproportionality in discipline rates can be a barrier to student engagement and school completion. This webinar from the REL Mid-Atlantic and the Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality can help Parent Centers and others become more familiar with using data to

identify disproportionality; identifying root causes of disproportionality in discipline rates; and analyzing existing policies and practices to address disproportionality.

### **Best Practices for Engaging Youth with Disabilities.**

This 7-page brief comes from the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council with extensive input from the ID Action Youth Advisory Board. It begins with an overview of youth engagement best practices, discusses essential components of youth-serving programs, and concludes with considerations for working with youth with disabilities.

## **Miss the April 7th Webinar?**

No problem! **NTACT's Resources on Transition and Opportunities for Parent Center Partnership** is archived for your listening and viewing convenience. At your leisure, you can learn more about:

- the resources of National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT);
- how NTACT encourages the engagement of Parent Centers as partners at each level of planning and implementation;
- what Parent Centers can bring to the various decision-making tables going on in their states right now; and
- strategies that some Parent Centers have used—successfully!—to become part of state-level decision-making and capacity-building teams.

Just visit the archive page of the April 7th webinar on **NTACT's Resources on Transition and Opportunities for Parent Center Partnership**, at:

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/webinar13/>



## **From the Journal of American Academy of Special Education Professionals (JAASEP)**

### ***Fostering Special Education Certification through Professional Development, Learning Communities and Mentorship***

***Mitzi P. Trahan, Ph.D., LPC***

***University of Louisiana at Lafayette***

***Dianne F. Olivier, Ph.D.***

***University of Louisiana at Lafayette***

***Donna E. Wadsworth, Ph.D.***

***University of Louisiana at Lafayette***

#### **Abstract**

The purpose of this article is to present mixed methodology evaluation data regarding a professional development initiative designed to offer non-certified special education teachers specialized classroom and teacher certification support. The project was grounded in evidence-based strategies that resulted in direct implications for teacher preparation, retention, and certification. To maximize benefits of participation in this project, access to instructional resources was provided. Participants benefitted from face-to-face communities of practice and a virtual learning environment designed to establish a shared culture of improvement and collaboration. Teacher participants generally felt factors such as “*encouragement, motivation, and support they received from their colleagues contributed to their decision to pursue a special education teaching career.*” The evaluation findings informed a professional development model incorporating the essential components of professional development, learning communities, and mentorship. The findings further indicated that teacher professional development should specifically address instructional strategies, understanding of special educational issues, and skill attainment.

### ***Fostering Special Education Certification through Professional Development, Learning Communities and Mentorship***

The purpose of this article is to present mixed methodology evaluation data regarding participants' satisfaction of the effectiveness and overall project success of a Department of Education (DOE) professional development initiative. This initiative was designed to offer specialized classroom and teacher certification support to teachers of students with disabilities who are teaching without the appropriate certification, and in some cases without any teacher certification. Teacher participants either had no special education certifications, held temporary teaching certificates, or only general education certificates. As a result, many students with disabilities were often being taught by teachers without the appropriate certification and in some cases without any teacher certification.

The project was based on evidence-based strategies resulting in direct implications for practice. Evaluation questions were designed to elicit teacher perceptions of impact on teacher preparation and retention, special education certification resources, benefits of participating in a community of practice, and confidence in special education instructional strategies.

Educational research consistently shows multifaceted relationships between professional development, teacher growth, and student achievement (Yoon et. al, 2007). Annual evaluation results showed that new special education teachers often felt alone during their first days as a new teacher. To maximize benefits of participation in this project, it was deemed important to provide access to resources and instill a culture of improvement and collaboration. In identifying factors that best impact student achievement, project developers also considered the need to nurture teacher learning and instill a sense of belonging. The teacher/advisor professional learning community intentionally provided a collaborative culture of ongoing professional learning with desired outcomes for both teacher and student growth.

The successes of this initiative can be replicated through a professional development model focusing on quality programming and encouraging collaboration that captures a sense of strength in numbers. As part of the evaluation, recommendations were offered for initiation, implementation, and sustainability of a learning community that reinforces program goals as well as offers a structure to address critical issues shaping teacher education. A major goal of this initiative was to create supportive cohorts for special education teachers having limited professional development opportunities concentrating on specific needs of special education students. The notion of community is aligned to NCLB 2001 school reform initiatives and it was anticipated that collaborative and targeted assistance would increase the number of newly certified special education teachers meeting highly qualified educational standards. While this evaluation was extensive to numerous project components, findings relating to the initiation and processes within the advisor/teacher and virtual advisor learning communities will be highlighted.

## **Overview of the Professional Development Project**

The impetus for the project was to provide specific professional development and certification support for non-certified special education teachers. In the developmental stages, advisors were selected based on their expertise in the field of special education to mentor the teacher participants. The initial project expanded from 4 districts to 15 school districts over a period of three years.

Project coordinators identified factors impacting student achievement through thoughtful consideration of staff development design and conceptually focused on: (1) awareness of special education issues, (2) understanding of educational pedagogy, (3) skill attainment, and (4) coaching and team elements. Project developers also recognized the importance of aligning essential aspects and objectives to both education policy and standards for highly qualified special education teachers as defined by the Louisiana Department of Education (2009).

Since students with disabilities are expected to meet the same standards as other students, teachers who deliver instruction to special needs students are required to meet the same standards for content knowledge. Students with disabilities receive instruction in core academic subjects from a teacher who is highly qualified to teach the core academic subjects. In addition, teachers of students with disabilities must meet the state's special education certification requirements for the grade level that they are teaching in order to be identified as highly qualified (§ 2).

## **Project Need**

The daily challenges for teachers of students with exceptional learning needs are overwhelming especially when the general education system offers little opportunities for services or professional development opportunities. Special education teachers often have limited opportunities to attend professional development programs that clearly concentrate on the specific needs of special education teachers and their students; more often educational workshops focus on mainstream pedagogy. This persistent lack of resources and specialized special education professional development support combines to create obstacles to successful growth of these professionals. Above all, it is essential that new special education teachers receive targeted support and guidance in effective teaching strategies which positively influence

the academic development of their special need students. Without quality teaching that addresses the unique needs of special education students, student achievement will almost certainly be negatively impacted.

## Project Goals and Objectives

Increasing the pool of highly qualified special education teachers directly impacts the special education classroom and students with disabilities. Specific project goals were:

1. To offer mentorship, resources, and support to new un-certified special education teachers seeking special education certification.
2. To enhance preparation of new un-certified special education teachers through comprehensive educational practices and instructional strategies for special needs students.
3. To build district-level capacity by creating supportive cohorts of special education teachers, thereby, increasing the number of newly certified special education teachers, as well as establishing ongoing relationships at the state, district, and individual school level.

## Project Components and Characteristics

The overall objective of this project was to provide specific resources for new non-certified special education teachers on their path toward certification. The project was designed based on three main components. The first component was *mentorship* in which the state project coordinators assisted the advisors who served the teacher participants. These district advisors, along with the program coordinators, conducted face-to-face meetings, managed online professional discussion forums, and communicated special education and certification information directly to the teacher participants.

The second component was the creation of two *virtual communities*: one connecting new uncertified teachers of special education with advisors and the other establishing a link among all advisors through a *Virtual Advisor Learning Community*. Online resources were posted to a Learning Management System (LMS) and provided ongoing 24/7 teacher/advisor collaborative sharing across the geographic regions. Online discussion forums were intended to facilitate communication among state facilitators, advisors, and teachers while serving as an avenue for networking and collaboration. The *Virtual Advisor Learning Community* was implemented to foster the development of a professional learning community of advisors across the state as a way to involve teachers in web-based professional development (Knapczyk, Frey, & Wall-Marencik, 2005).

The third component was the *professional development support sessions*. Participating non-certified teachers were exposed to skill building activities and resources uniquely designed to assist them in their certification process and overall development as special education teachers. This project created an effective avenue for open discussion as an integral part of any professional development initiative. Moving beyond the basics, many participants expressed hope that this opportunity would surpass their expectations of certification and provide the necessary tools to address future concerns and issues faced by special educators.

NCLB (2001) encourages the development of site based professional learning communities as a way to promote teacher capacity and improve student outcomes. Over the life of the project, teacher and advisor participants have consistently reported that collaboration has decreased their sense of isolation. This finding matches prior research on the benefits of collaborative professional development (Dettmer, Thurston, Knackendoffel, & Dyck, 2009; Friend & Cook, 2010; Hord, 1997, 2004). Fullan, Rolhesier, Mascall, and Edge (2001) further conceptualize that implementation and sustainability of ongoing professional development is rooted in collaboration. Fullan, et al. (2001), endorse capacity building as everyone's responsibility from all levels, individual teacher, school, district, to the larger. Essentially, this vision for increasing teacher capacity, and thus improved student achievement, is anchored in creating a systemic sense of purpose followed by strategic direction. As a result of offering supportive leadership and targeted assistance, a corresponding increase can be anticipated in the number of newly certified special education teachers.

## Research Questions

The following research questions provided direction for evaluating the project's professional development goals and objectives:

1. How does project participation impact teacher retention by enhancing a sense of self-efficacy through the learning community infrastructure?
2. What are teachers' perceptions of the impact of training and certification on students with disabilities' academic performance and personal growth?
3. Do project participants feel more confident with instructional strategies as a result of the professional development project?

## Research Methodology

Data from advisor and teacher participants were collected and analyzed to assess project compliance and success. Formative and summative evaluation reports provided stakeholders with critical findings, as well as offered additional recommendations to enhance project goals.

## Participants

A critical shortage of certified special education teachers in this southern state inspired the creation of this initiative. Priority certification support issues identified in the pilot project included: (1) help with passing the Praxis exam, (2) networking opportunities that could eventually lead to certification, and (3) benefiting from the experiences of certified peer mentors. Annual results from needs assessments consistently indicated that additional need for support included: (1) help in securing instructional materials, (2) preparation of individual education plan (IEP) and other special education documentation, and (3) understanding legal issues and responsibilities surrounding teachers of students with disabilities. In accordance with the goals and objectives of the grant, the project provided an opportunity for the target population of new uncertified special education teachers to learn new information on instructional strategies, development of individual education plans, and in-depth guidance on special education certification pathways.

**Advisor/Mentor Participants.** To launch the program, project advisors from each school district participated in a *Train the Trainers* session designed to introduce project goals, objectives, and initiate shared vision. Although advisors maintained flexibility in support session topics to meet individual district needs, a topical listing of cogent special education issues (detailed in the professional development support sessions) was recommended to ensure consistency in *evidence-based practice* offerings. Advisors are critical to the success of the project and were chosen based on their experiences and educational qualifications. Selection criteria for these mentors included extensive knowledge of state initiatives relating to classroom instruction including grade level expectations, content standards, and the state comprehensive curriculum and assessment materials. Advisors were chosen based on having high levels of skills and abilities as behavior interventionists, special education supervisors, staff development specialists, and instructional coaches. The number of years' experience in special education related positions ranged from a minimum of seven years to 26 years. This diversity in positions greatly enriched the sharing of experiences and knowledge of their relationships between the advisors/mentors and teacher/mentees.

**Non-certified Teacher Participants.** Students with disabilities are often taught by teachers not meeting the NCLB guidelines for highly qualified teachers. Instead, a large percentage of special education teachers hold several types of temporary, non-standard teaching certificates including: (1) Temporary Authority to Teach (TAT), (2) Out-of-Field Authority to Teach (OFAT), and (3) Temporary Employment Permit (TEP). In total, the evaluation revealed participant teachers holding TAT, OFAT, and TEP temporary certifications ranged from approximately 45% to 72% across the districts. On the other hand, 20% of teachers who identified themselves as holding multiple teaching certificates, including PK-K, elementary, middle school, or secondary school teachers. These statistics clearly illustrated the great need for professional development activities that promote special education certification.

Since this trend has not yet been totally reversed, outreach efforts, such as this initiative, could stimulate further support to those teachers serving children with disabilities and exceptionalities. Approximately 800 teachers joined this initiative to address critical issues shaping the future of special education teacher training. The evaluation captured the following grade, experience levels, and special education teaching positions demographics.

**Grade level and experience diversity.** Outreach efforts of the project were successful in recruiting a full range of teachers from different grade levels including: PK-K, 9.87%; Elementary, 35.40%, Middle, 25.83%, Secondary, 18.20%; and other participants, 10.7%. Teachers generally reported education experience levels of one year or less ranging from 64% to 74% confirming the great need for increasing the pool of certified teachers.

**Special education teaching positions.** Teachers of students with Mild/Moderate disabilities (62%) represented the largest category participating in this professional development followed by teaching positions in self-contained classrooms (19%). Other teacher participants (19%) included representatives from Early Intervention and Severe/Profound.

## Data Collection and Analysis Methods

A mixed methodology research design using a variety of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods was developed to assess each of the primary goals of the project. Paper and pencil surveys were initially used to collect data. The questionnaire items were primarily Likert scales; however, open-ended structured interview questions were also included to provide qualitative data. As the program grew across the state, data collection shifted to the online professional learning community LMS created to capture advisors' perceptions of the program.

*Survey Monkey* was also used to collect data over the expanded geographical regions.

## Study Results

The primary goal of this project was to provide learning and sharing opportunities for the participants focusing on resources and skills needed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. According to the goal set forth, survey questions were designed to elicit participant opinions regarding the project's impact on teacher retention (Research Question 1); special education certification efforts (Research Question 2); and confidence in instructional strategies and documentation procedures (Research Question 3). The findings were analyzed according to the major components of the initiative and focused on enhanced professional development and support for new uncertified special education teachers, collaborative practices supported by mentorship, and enhancement of ongoing learning through virtual learning communities. The project coordinators hoped to make a difference in helping new teachers to meet the standards of highly qualified and certified special education teachers by embedding research based practices into the professional development instruction. Ultimately, it is believed that as new uncertified special education teachers become more proficient, a corresponding increase in student achievement outcomes will be evident. The study analyses resulted in identification of three major findings.

### Major Finding 1: Enhanced Professional Development and Support Addressing the Needs of New Uncertified Special Education Teachers

Interactive support sessions were facilitated during the project year and addressed special education key issues including classroom management and behavior modification (behavior intervention plans, maintaining student discipline and motivation); inclusive practices (differentiation of instruction, curriculum accommodations and modifications); exceptionalities (individualizing the educational program to meet individual needs); intervention and assessment (reading, mathematics, and writing strategies, individual and group assessment/measurement); and technology integration (within curriculum and instruction, software application, assistive technology supports).



Participants were provided activities and resources expressly designed to assist in their certification process and overall development as special education teachers. Participants also engaged in skill building exercises and encouraged to reach beyond their normal daily activities.

In total, each school district dedicated four support sessions throughout the program. In addition to the central topics above, other areas needing attention were determined by a Needs Assessment Questionnaire designed to understand what teachers needed most. This instrument allowed districts to individualize participants' needs and target professional development and specific levels of assistance in selected areas such as instructional needs, organization and classroom management, and communication with families and colleagues. Three primary themes surfaced in relation to enhancing professional development and support: motivation, support sessions, and special education documentation.

**Motivation.** A review of the average scores, open-ended responses, indicated teachers consistently reported needing motivation strategies. Teachers also expressed concern they were lacking in resources and information on accommodations and/or modifications to prepare their students for standardized tests even though they were generally satisfied with their school districts level of support in the provision of study and test taking workbook tools. Several teachers approached motivation from a behavioral perspective asking for information about rules and consequences. Teachers asked for samples of effective and detailed age-appropriate behavior management plans; some were looking for more positive ways to establish consequences and *"how to handle different behaviors from different students."* The greatest area of need was Motivating the Unmotivated Learner. Respondents were concerned they did not have *"workable and novel approaches to try!"* Overall, teachers recognized the challenge of motivation and showed a willingness to understand the critical dynamics of teacher and student interaction. In addition, a need for more training, classroom strategies, and instructional materials was expressed for reading, writing and math strategies. Conflict resolution and time management strategies were other types of interventions most requested.

**Support sessions.** As part of the summative evaluation, participants responded to questionnaire items regarding professional development. Although most comments were favorable, the support session topics and networking opportunities had the highest average mean ( $m = 4.30$  to  $4.45$  on a 5 point scale). Teachers generally felt the topics presented at the support sessions were exceptionally informative and a successful aspect of professional development. Participants appreciated certification resources and IEP information, *"from start to finish, it gave and provided helpful information and the need for more in-depth information on IEPs and certification."* Participants felt the presenters were responsive to questions and comments. Respondents enjoyed and valued the experience and the information presented throughout the life of the project. Similarly, teacher participants gave numerous examples of how their advisors helped them to better understand the specific needs of their students. They believed their advisors offered important suggestions and clarification of special education topics.

**Special education documentation.** A recurring theme directly related to the project's objective of providing assistance was guidance in completing special education documentation. Teacher comments demonstrated the importance of this aspect, *"She has been extremely helpful in helping to keep me organized and on track with IEPs and I feel more knowledgeable as well as somewhat comfortable with completing the IEP plans and identifying students' needs."* Another teacher commented, *"I have gained a better understanding of the needs of SPED children and the importance of the IEPs that we write."* A majority of new uncertified teachers surveyed consistently felt strongly that their advisors offered important suggestions and clarification regarding a variety of special education topics. However, these new uncertified teachers of exceptional children especially gave high praise to their advisors in explaining specialized curriculum strategies, understanding special education students' needs, classroom management strategies, ways to motivate and challenge their students, and in the preparation of special education documentation.

## Major Finding 2: Mentorship Enhanced Collaborative Practices

The establishment of a sustainable learning community is critical to continued success and consistency of any professional development project (Aber, Kelly, & Mallory, 2009). Comments such as these describe the significance of a professional learning community, *"I think some of the most important values that must be incorporated into a professional learning community are teamwork and working toward a common goal. Collaboration between members of a group ensures that all participants have input into the groups' shared vision."*



*Participants feel valued in a program if their ideas and concerns are heard and addressed. All members of the program are valued and the program facilitates the exchange of ideas in a nonthreatening environment."*

The majority of new uncertified special education teachers enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to learn from experienced mentors in the field of special education. Learning from each other and the opportunity to establish working relationships with their peers was probably the most cited source of satisfaction for both teachers and advisors with over 86% of all participants during all time frames, rating the aspect, *Networking Opportunities*, as *Good to Excellent*. While the data generated from the Needs Assessment focused on professional development topics, it became evident that over the life of the project teachers had a desire for a greater sense of independence and efficacy. An integral aspect of mentorship is collaborative practices (Ali, 2008); as such, teachers and advisors were asked to respond to questionnaire items regarding the collaborative relationships established as part of the project. The advisor/teacher collaborative experience helped to remind the advisors of the difficulties new special education teachers faced.

**Advisor perceptions.** One advisor stated that the greatest benefit of being an advisor was becoming aware of *"the level of support and encouragement new teachers needed to remain motivated."* An understanding of teacher needs was reflected in the comment, *"I have gained a deeper understanding of the thought processes of those new teachers and why they make the certain decisions that significantly impact the educational outcomes of students. The teachers have helped me to understand that you can't assume that they come in knowing something about teaching students with special needs."* The advisors generally realized the teachers simply, *"have questions but are not sure how and what to ask."* These insights were enlightening and helped advisors to more effectively meet their teacher's needs. One recommendation for choosing future session offerings was to involve all advisors in collective planning in the virtual learning community. Research consistently shows when schools address instructional needs and concerns of their faculty through collaborative learning experiences, and in an effort to build professional efficacy among faculty members, they also are effective in increasing student achievement (Bray-Clark, 2005; Goddard, LoGerfp, & Hoy, 2004).

**Teacher perceptions.** Teachers gave numerous examples of how their advisors helped them to better understand the specific needs of their students, *"I have learned so much about special children [not person first] I could have never imagined loving this type of work. The teachers are amazing."* A short list of benefits cited by the teachers included understanding of students with exceptional learning needs, helpful classroom materials, knowledge of how to better reach their students, perspectives of collaborative teaching, behavior management strategies, documentation instruction, student and parent motivation, and information on certification requirements. As a result of the mentorship relationships, lower levels of stress were reported at year end and seemed to be linked to greater efficiency in the classroom. Another theme that evolved from the feedback was a feeling of support, encouragement, validation, and understanding. Learning from each other and the opportunity to establish working relationships with their peers was a major source of satisfaction. Participants reflected positively on their networking experiences which allowed for sharing of ideas and classroom techniques, face-to-face time with each other, and even friendship building. The teachers felt comfortable asking questions and appreciated the opportunity to see they were not alone.

In summary, the mentorship project component provided special education teachers and advisors a feeling of connectiveness and increased confidence in their teaching abilities. It seemed clear these new uncertified teachers in special education were genuinely grateful for these collaborative opportunities and that the community component successfully strengthened certification efforts.

### Major Finding 3: Enhanced Learning through Virtual Learning Communities (VLC)

The special education community can only benefit from a common understanding of standards, student needs, best practices, and individual commitment. As the project grew statewide, it naturally became more difficult to coordinate face-to-face meetings and collaboration efforts. Research continues to provide evidence that online is comparable to face-to-face interaction in a number of ways (Kuo, Song, Smith, & Franklin, 2007). Web conferencing and other synchronous and asynchronous distance platforms deserve consideration for both communication and support (Bonk, Ehman, Hixon, & Yamagata-Lynch, 2002; Rodes, Knapczyk, Chapman, & Chung, 2000).

Advisors strengthened their roles as mentors by modeling shared and collective learning strategies. Using the VLC online platform and online discussion questions, advisors collegially discussed multiple program issues and were able to enhance their sense of community via cyberspace.

**Teacher/Advisor Learning Community.** An online learning management system offered an infrastructure in which high levels of collaboration could occur through sharing of resources and collective learning. Evaluation data indicated that levels of capacity building were enhanced through the online resources provided. Further, an indirect result of the interaction within the online community was increased self and collective efficacy of both the teachers and advisors which should ultimately benefit education at the individual, school, district, and state levels.

**Virtual Advisor Learning Community.** A Virtual Advisor Learning Community (VALC) was initiated to promote collaborative relationships for sharing of best practices and innovations grounded in applied research and practice. This ongoing 24/7 asynchronous community served to stimulate critical discussion through guiding questions relating specifically to professional learning community theory and practice. The groundwork for community naturally includes collective learning and shared planning, leadership, support, and structure. In this approach, it is important to solicit ownership by encouraging members to readily share common topics and issues.

## Conclusion and Implications

At the end-of-the project surveys, participants were asked to consider how selected student performance measures have been impacted. New uncertified special education teachers responded to a variety of perceptual questionnaire items addressing how test performance, motivation and interest in learning, and increased parental involvement were impacted as a result of their participation. Teachers were able to identify the link between professional development, increased teaching skills, and the impact on student achievement. Approximately 83% to 98% of the teachers overwhelmingly agreed that student outcomes would be improved in direct relationship to professional development. Participants also reported an increase in confidence about their abilities to better assess their students' needs and to understand the unique challenges of this population. They began to appreciate how working as a team with general education teachers was critical to achieving a holistic approach to student success.

Linking professional development to teacher growth and student achievement has long been recognized as educational best practice. The highest level of impact can be achieved by specifying the knowledge, skills, and/or behavioral outcomes to be addressed. The results from this project demonstrate an effective structure initiated through identification of desired student results. This initial identification resulted in designing elements for staff development linked to learning within a culture of improvement, provision of adequate access to resources, and promotion of shared and collegial communication. The project offered an effective learning environment for mentorship, capacity building, and certification support. These findings inform all responsible stakeholders educating children with special needs about critical issues of "*leadership, competence, caring, and commitment*". Participants recognized that teachers, who have a deep commitment to their profession and clarity relating to the purpose of their roles, tend to study, reflect, and dialogue at higher levels.

This professional development initiative was implemented in response to a critical need for better trained, more informed, more qualified, and more knowledgeable special education teachers who will increase the chances of success for children with special needs. The project offered participants access to an extensive and comprehensive source of professional development instruction throughout the course of the pilot and subsequent years. Not only did each participant benefit from the training and growth, it is also anticipated student achievement will be directly impacted as a result. The initiative also established a learning environment designed to expose new uncertified special education teachers to classroom activities and a variety of educational resources. Ultimately, the goal was to positively impact students as a result of enhanced teacher professional development. Professional development is often fueled by accountability. The absence of a clearly defined and organized professional development initiative that is not based on effective best practices can hamper the development of a common vision of improvement for all involved. According to Buysse, Winton, and Rous (2009), "the role of learners in professional development is to actively engage in learning experiences that lead to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and dispositions and the application of this knowledge in practice" (p. 238).

Investment in teacher education and professional development generally yields the greatest increase in student achievement. The learning community as well as the professional development support sessions allowed for increased learning opportunities and sharing of ideas with other special education peers. The topics offered in the support sessions provided information on teacher education, recent changes and requirements in special education, and up-to-date research in the field of special education. Support sessions should be designed to integrate best practices in special education and instructional design with practical knowledge and skills to assist teachers in becoming more effective in promoting student learning.

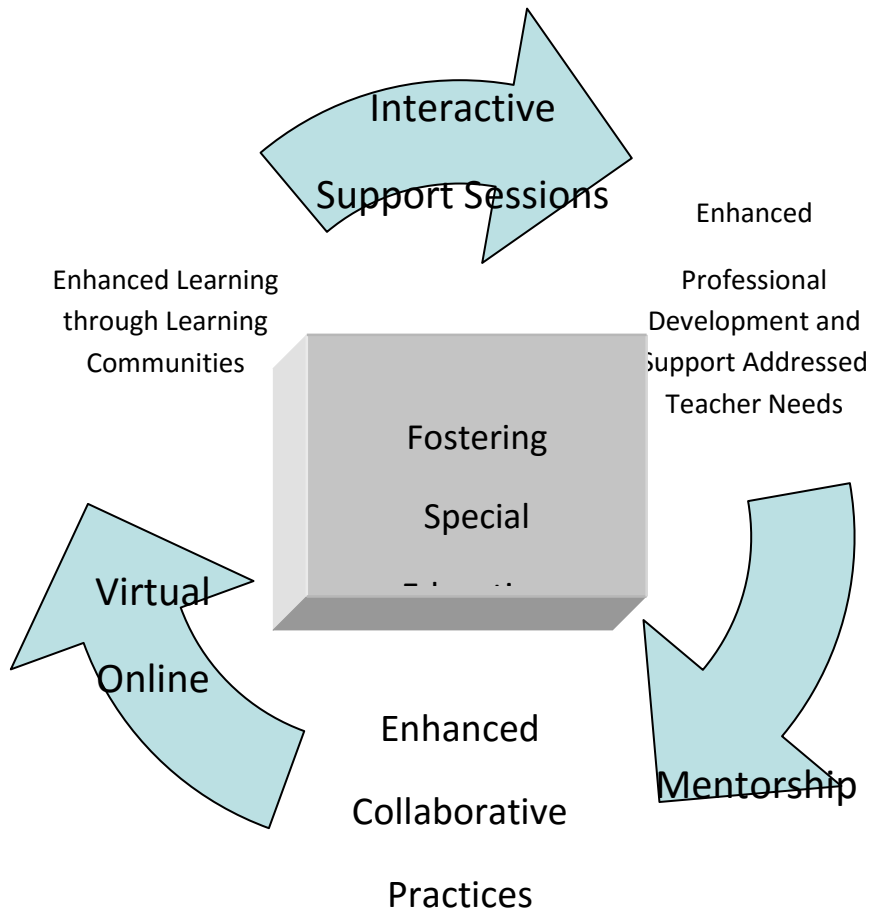
The overriding intent of this project was to integrate best practices in special education and instructional design with practical knowledge and skills to assist uncertified teachers to become highly effective certified teachers. It was also intended that educators would consider the research evidence from this initiative in planning future professional development. This initiative can be used to inform the creation of a professional development model focused on knowledge, skills, mentorship, and community to promote teacher capacity and personal growth.

In this project, new uncertified special education teachers were offered specialized support to promote certification efforts. The evaluation findings have informed a professional development model incorporating the essential components of mentorship, learning communities, and ongoing support through professional development. The findings further indicated that professional development should address instructional strategies, awareness of special education issues, understanding of educational pedagogy and skill attainment.

Given the focus on increasing special education certification, teachers were asked to comment on how their participation affected their efforts toward this overall goal. Awareness of necessary certification prerequisites was a major theme that resounded in the comments. Teacher participants generally felt factors such as *“encouragement, motivation, and support they received from their colleagues contributed to their decision to pursue a special education teaching career.”* Working with others was believed to help *“ease some of the frustrations, fears, and stress in their beginning years as new SPED teachers.”*

Teachers reported they were able to link increased teaching skills directly to student instructional needs and perceived student achievement would eventually be positively impacted. They began to appreciate how working as a collaborating team with general education teachers is critical to achieving a holistic approach to student success. As an additional benefit, the participants gained confidence in their abilities to better assess the exceptional learning needs of their students, as well as understanding their unique challenges. The results of this evaluation study reaffirmed how professional development, mentorship, learning communities, and collaboration have the potential to positively impact student achievement. The authors recommend extending this study to further examine correlations between related study variables and constructs to specific student achievement scores; these statistical analyses would enhance the validity of the perceptual from this study.

Finally, the authors propose the Professional Development Model presented as Figure 1 to illustrate the relationships between critical aspects of the program found to support special education teachers' efforts toward certification. The theoretical model is conceptualized from the major findings of this study and illustrates the 3 major components of the program (interactive support sessions, mentorship, and virtual online communities) on the arrows followed by each of the major findings (enhanced professional development and support addressed teacher needs, enhanced collaborative practices, and enhanced learning through learning communities) resulting from the implementation of the component. Thus, the model illustrates major findings as successful outcomes of the program components in overall efforts to foster special education certification.



Development Model of Mentorship, Learning Communities, and Support Sessions

Figure 1. Professional

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<http://64.78.6.92/library/schoolbasedlitreview.pdf>

## About the Authors

**Mitzi P. Trahan, Ph.D., LPC** is employed as an Associate Professor in the Educational Foundation and Leadership department at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (UL) for the approximately 8 years. She received her doctorate in Educational Leadership and Research from Louisiana State University. Prior to coming to higher education as a professor, Mitzi had 2 distinct careers. First, she has 15 years of experience in the business and finance sector as a CPA and bank comptroller. She also worked as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in mental health arenas and higher education student services. Mitzi has several publications focusing on educational technology, research and evaluation, and a variety of educational topics such as leadership, teacher evaluation, and accountability. Her teaching experience primarily centers on research methodology, statistics, evaluation, and classroom assessment. Additionally, Mitzi has taught courses in a variety of the social sciences, counseling and psychology.

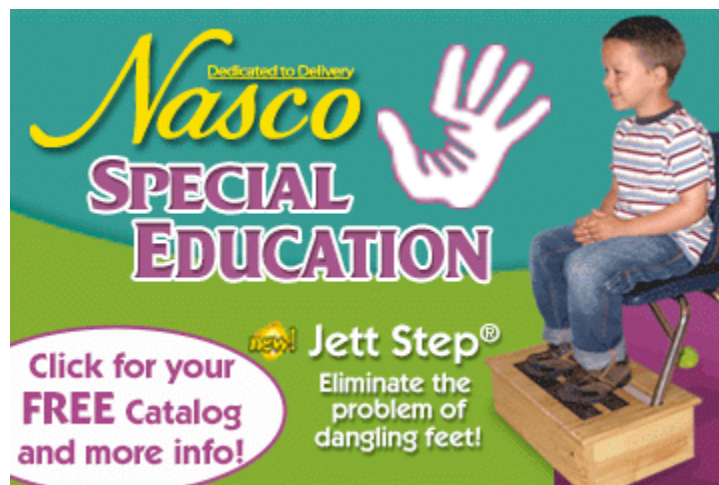
**Dianne F. Olivier, Ph. D.,** is an Associate Professor in Educational Foundations and Leadership at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She teaches doctoral educational leadership and research courses, serves as the Facilitator for the Ed. D. program. She currently holds the Joan D. and Alexander S. Haig/BORSF Endowed Professorship in Education. Prior to the university level, Dianne served thirty-four years in public education with twenty-six of those years as a district administrator. Dianne uses her former K-12 administrative experiences to work throughout the U. S. with principals, central office personnel, and teacher leaders in her role as an educational consultant with the Learning-Centered Leadership Program for the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). Dianne's research focuses on professional learning communities, educational leadership, change process, school culture, and teacher self- and collective efficacy. She has developed several assessment measures relating to these research interests which are used on both a national and international level. Dianne has authored and coauthored several chapters and articles on professional learning communities and school leadership. Her work in the area of professional learning communities has transitioned from the domestic or national level to participation as a member of a Global PLC Network researching the PLC process from a global perspective.

**Donna E. Wadsworth, Ph.D.,** is a professor and Special Education Coordinator at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Donna teaches graduate courses in both the special education mild/moderate and early intervention programs. She holds the Kathy Authement Prouet/BORSF Endowed Professorship in Special Education. Her primary areas of research are inclusion and collaborative teacher training and professional development practices. These areas of research have been supported by grants for development of special education professional development sites, new inclusive teacher training programs, and state transition projects. Donna has authored and co-authored several book chapters, books, and articles focusing on special education teacher training and inclusive practices for students with disabilities. She was also higher education's representative to the Louisiana's Special Education Advisory Council for over 15 years. Donna has also served in numerous leadership positions for the Louisiana Council for Exceptional Children Executive Board and national Council for Exceptional Children committees.



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# Latest Employment Opportunities Posted on NASET

## Special Education Teacher

**Washington, D.C.**

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

### **Mission:**

The Chavez Schools' mission is to prepare scholars to succeed in competitive colleges and to empower them to use public policy to create a more just, free, and equal world. We accomplish our mission by challenging our students with a rigorous college prep and public policy curriculum – focusing on real-world public policy experiences – that foster critical and disciplinary thinking, deep knowledge of our country's founding principles, and strong advocacy skills.

The Chavez Organization seeks to employ educators and leaders who are talented and passionate about student achievement and are looking for an opportunity to ensure our schools deliver remarkable results for students.

### **Primary Accountabilities:**

#### **Instruction Planning.**

- Develops instructional plans that provide cognitively engaging learning opportunities that ensure all students construct knowledge to achieve mastery of the stated learning objectives at a high level Motivating.
- Provides activities and content that are consistently organized to be personally meaningful and relevant
- Rigor.
- Creates learning experiences and assignments that demand students think in multiple ways about complex problems that requires them to apply knowledge and skills
- Opportunities to Revise Work. Develops systems that require students to revise work to meet high standards of excellence
- Use of Assessment Data.
- Consistently uses assessment data to make timely instructional decisions to inform instruction and assign activities

#### **Classroom Management**

- Expectations.
- Establishes high academic and behavior expectations for every student
- Respectful Culture.
- Fosters interactions and relationships of interdependence and respect
- Routines.
- Ensures all available time is maximized thru established classroom norms

## School Community

- Reflective Practice.
- Collaborates and engages in reflective inquiry with peers and administrators for the purpose of improving instructional practice and student and teacher learning
- Collaboration with Parents.
- Ensures frequent and timely communication with parents and guardians about goals of instruction and student progress
- Upholds School & Organization Norms.
- Assumes a leadership role in modeling school and organizational policies and timelines and encourages others to support them

## Candidates must:

- Believe that all students can achieve at the highest levels with no excuses
- Have achieved the Highly Qualified designation as defined by NCLB (No Child Left Behind)
- Have substantive knowledge of the applicable content area
- Have experience facilitating a student-centered classroom (cooperative learning, inquiry or project-based learning)
- Experience using a varied repertoire of instructional strategies
- Have demonstrated success using various formative assessments to monitor student understanding
- Have demonstrated success using data to drive practice
- Exercise excellent judgment in decision-making
- Think strategically and proactively problem-solve
- Work with only the highest ethical standards

**TO APPLY, PLEASE GO TO** [www.chavezschools.org](http://www.chavezschools.org)

## Benefits:

- Competitive Compensation Package
- Excellent Benefits Package

## Contact:

Apply at [www.chavezschools.org](http://www.chavezschools.org)

Pamela Merkersen - (202)-730-5220

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# Special Education Services Director

Scarsdale, NY

Job Category: Director of Special Education

## Description:

- Oversee the day to day operations of the entire Special Needs Services department, specifically supervision of the preschool state funded year round programs, private class, and Developmental Disabilities Enrichment Services.
- Develop and implement all guidelines and policies with the purpose of ensuring compliance with all government regulations, as well as maintaining alignment with the JCC of Mid-Westchester's Nursery School mission.
- Innovate, develop and implement curriculum and remain current on special education and early childhood education best practices.
- Create program protocols; formulate policies and procedures for special services programs such as related services, evaluations, placement, and education of participants.
- Interact with Committee for Preschool Special Education and Committee for Special Education (school age) chairpersons to form a collaborative relationship. Attend, when needed, student's CPSE or CSE meetings at the parent's, staff or district's request. Be an active member of the Early Childhood Direction Center preschool meetings and the Hudson Alliance for Children with Special Needs.
- Evaluate the special education programs to ensure that objectives for students' education are met according to their IEPs. Maintain and provide update protocols for progress on student participants. Oversee quarterly, annual and other annual reviews/reporting required under student IEPs.
- Identify and implement computerized reporting such as but not limited to IEP Direct, to streamline and utilize more efficient and accurate reporting mechanisms.
- Manage, hire, recruit, train, develop & evaluate procedures for all special services staff including but not limited to related services staff, therapists, educators and administrative staff. Provide annual reviews of all staff members.
- Create protocols, manage, and oversee all staff records and currency of licenses. Oversee and ensure adherence to staff hiring procedures including required background checks and paperwork administration.
- Inform and interpret state and federal laws, rules, and regulations to staff and parents. Remain current in knowledge of New York State Reimbursable Costs Manual and fiscal reporting policies.
- Oversight and review of student records such as daily notes, progress reports and annual review reports. Oversight and review of therapists reports regarding related services.
- Prepare and maintain budgets for programs to minimize expenses and maximize revenue. Oversight, management and reviews of all filing & billing claims to county, school districts, and federal agencies.
- Work with finance staff to provide fiscal data for annual Consolidated Fiscal Report. Finance staff to complete the Consolidated Fiscal Report.
- Complete or assist in preparing reports for federal, state, and local regulatory agencies.
- Work with JCC of Mid-Westchester's Executive Director and other program directors to develop grant and fundraising opportunities for special needs programming.
- Collaborate with Marketing Director to promote community awareness and full enrollment of all of the department's programs.
- Establish medical policies and procedures for special education programs, distribute and manage individual classes' adherence to protocols. Create a medical plan/protocol for all classes and work with medical staff hired (or subcontracted) to ensure adherence to protocols are met to ensure the safety of our children participants.
- Create protocols, manage and oversee all data base management of participant information.
- Develop, oversee and work with the marketing department on all social media, digital and traditional marketing for non-state funded classes/programs.

## Requirements:

- Current New York State certification in one of the following: School Administrator & Supervisor (SAS), School Building Leader (SBL) or School District Leader (SDL)
- Master Degree in Special Education and/or Early Childhood Education highly preferred
- Extensive knowledge & experience in: Early Childhood Education, Special education and 4410 preschool program management & supervision.
- Extensive knowledge of New York State Reimbursable Costs Manual and experience with reporting and billing for a 4410 preschool program.
- Experience in counseling of families pertaining to IEP's and education requirements for children with special needs.
- Extensive staff management and development experience. Experience creating protocols for hiring, records management and staff supervision & development.
- Computer Skills Required, including knowledge of: MS Word, MS Excel, MS Access & Facebook.
- Flexible and able to alter protocols as needed to adhere to future updated state, federal and agency policies.

## Benefits:

All benefits outlined for full-time staff in the current JCC of Mid-Westchester employee manual effective as of April 2016.

### Start Date: On or around September 1, 2016

JCC of Mid-Westchester Nursery School provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetics.

## Contact:

Mara Roberge

[robergem@jccmw.org](mailto:robergem@jccmw.org) [www.jccmw.org](http://www.jccmw.org)

999 Wilmot Road

Scarsdale, NY 10853

\*\*\*\*\*

## Special Education Teacher - \$125,000 Salary

New York, NY

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

## Description:

Earn a \$125,000 salary and join a team of master teachers at The Equity Project (TEP) Charter School, featured in the New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and on 60 minutes for its revolutionary teacher salaries and its outstanding results.

## Middle School Special Education Positions:

These positions are designed as collaborative team-teaching (Integrated Co-Teaching) positions, whereby the Special Education team teach with general education ELA and Math teachers in general education classrooms (which have both General Ed and Special Ed students). The Special Education teacher also teaches small group literacy and math support classes for students who are significantly behind grade level in these subjects. This position requires a minimum of 3 years of lead teaching experience, at least 2 of which must have been in 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th or 9th grade classrooms.

## Kindergarten Special Education Position:

This teacher will support all kindergarten students with IEPs (Individualized Education Plans) – approximately 20% of TEP's Kindergarten cohort. The Kindergarten Special Education teacher will work as a co-teacher in an integrated classroom, team teaching with the general education teacher. The integrated classroom will have a mix of both General Ed and Special Ed students. The Special Education teacher will also teach small literacy and math groups for students in all of the kindergarten classes. This position requires a minimum of 3 years of lead teaching experience, at least 2 of which must have been with kindergarten students.

## Contact:

Apply today here: <http://www.tepcharter.org/submit.php>

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# Special Education Coordinator / Resource Teacher

Irving and San Antonio, TX

Job Category: Special Education Coordinator/Teacher

## Description:

Duties and Responsibilities of the Special Education Coordinator include: Providing direct and consultative services to students with IEP's in the school environment; Collaborating with related service providers, assisting general education staff in the implement of accommodations and modifications; Writing and maintaining all IEP's, Prior Written Notices, and MET paperwork while ensuring compliance with state and federal guidelines; Planning and facilitating meetings throughout the ARD committee process and ongoing communication and collaboration with parents, staff, and administrative staff regarding student planning and progress; Coordinating 504 plans and conducting testing and ELL programming for eligible English language learners; Managing the transition of new enrollees eligible for special education and related services for the 2016 - 2017 school year (Conducting initial records request for new incoming students, creating individual student files/folders for incoming SPED and 504 students, reviewing IEPs, evaluation reports and 504 Plans received on incoming students, scheduling and/or attending meetings with SPED or 504 student families, conducting follow up phone calls to school staff members currently working with some incoming students and responding to emails and calls from parents of potential future students with special needs, etc.)

## Requirements:

Candidates will need to hold a valid Texas teaching certificate with Special Education endorsements for K - 12; ESL Certification is preferred.



## Benefits:

- Great Hearts offers a very competitive benefits package and overall compensation will be commensurate with talent, experience and education; Strong administrative support; Collaborating Exceptional Student Services Coordinators and Great Hearts Lead Office support

## Contact:

For specific questions, please contact Mr. Tom Doeblor, Director of Exceptional Student Services: [tdoeblor@greatheartsaz.org](mailto:tdoeblor@greatheartsaz.org).

Candidates interested in applying can do so

at: <http://chp.tbe.taleo.net/chp04/ats/careers/requisition.jsp?org=GREATHEARTS&cws=39&rid=552>

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## K-12 Special Education Teacher (Multiple Locations)

Brooklyn, NY

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

**An Invitation to Apply for the Position of K-12 Special Education Teacher Coney Island Preparatory Public Charter School Brooklyn, New York**

### About Coney Island Prep

Coney Island Prep is a college preparatory public charter school in Brooklyn, New York. Merging growth, performance and commitment, the Coney Island Prep community takes its responsibility to prepare students for the college and career of their choice very seriously. Professionals balance their sense of ownership and responsibility with humility and levity and are supported every step of the way.

We were thrilled to launch Coney Island Prep's elementary school in August 2014. Over the next two years Coney Island Prep will continue its growth to serve approximately 1,000 scholars in grades K-12. The mission of Coney Island Prep is to prepare every student to succeed in the college and career of their choice. We achieve success through a rigorous academic program in a supportive and structured school community.

### Commitment

There is no more urgent task than to educate students from low-income backgrounds. So we hire professionals who are committed to the core. It's high-energy, fast-paced, tiring and sometimes all-consuming. But we wouldn't have it any other way. And neither would you.

### What We Have to Offer

There are plenty of ways you can make an impact. And our team is all in. You have the opportunity to work with students, and there's always someone who's got your back from coaching you through a bad day to helping you grow professionally. And while the environment can be hectic and ever-changing, you'll have all of the technology and caffeine you need to get the job done.

## What We Ask In Return

You have to be all in too. You own your work and when you reach your goals, you reach higher. Our professionals work incredibly hard, and are inspired by the urgency of what we do. We need professionals who aren't afraid to ask for help, feedback, and support. They're driven by personal responsibility, data, and results, and they're not above doing whatever's asked. They make friends at work, smile through hectic days, and add a little levity in along the way.

## Responsibilities:

- Assume a high level of personal responsibility for the progress of all students
- Create academically rigorous lesson plans, materials, and assessments, and differentiate as needed
- Teach engaging, rigorous, and relevant lessons daily
- Communicate effectively with all stakeholders, including scholars, families, and staff
- Commit to a school culture of consistency by implementing school-wide systems, structures, and procedures
- Reflect on various data sources to improve your practice
- Take on a proactive role in creating a positive, structured, results-oriented and fun school culture

**START DATE AUGUST 2016**

## Contact Information

Interested applicants should go to <https://coneyisland.schoolrecruiter.net/Index.aspx> to apply for available jobs.

Coney Island Preparatory Public Charter School is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital or familial status, national origin, citizenship or disability.

## Mindsets and Experience

- Passion for education and a dedication to Coney Island Prep's mission
- Steadfast belief that all students can achieve at the highest academic levels and deserve an opportunity to succeed in the college of their choice
- Bachelors degree required; Masters degree and NY state certification preferred
- Professional demeanor and excellent organizational skills
- Self-reflective and open to regular feedback
- An entrepreneurial spirit, embracing the opportunity for creativity and hard work inherent in a start-up
- A positive, solution-oriented attitude and drive for excellence
- Willingness to be a team player

## Benefits and Compensation

- Teachers at Coney Island Prep are provided with an extremely generous salary and are eligible for a school-wide performance-based bonus.
- As a regular full time employee of Coney Island Prep School, you will be eligible for benefits that include medical, dental and vision, as well as a generous retirement benefit package.
- Teachers are provided with laptops and access to all the necessary technology and resources needed to succeed in the classroom.

## Contact:

Victoria Curry  
294 Avenue T  
Brooklyn, NY 11223  
(929)275-5881  
[vcurry@coneyislandprep.org](mailto:vcurry@coneyislandprep.org)

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## Elementary School Principal

Taunton, MA 02780

Job Category: Education

### Description:

We are seeking an enthusiastic, dedicated, visionary principal and Catholic educator who will continue the growth and development of the school. We are accepting applications from individuals who will value joining a well established and growing community. Our school provides a variety of special education resources and support for its students.

### Requirements:

- The Candidate must possess a degree in Education or a related field and able to be certified by the State of Massachusetts as a principal.
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, are essential. Candidate must have a strong understanding of effective marketing and recruitment strategies.
- An innovative vision of education that includes technology and current teaching methodologies as well as knowledge of budgeting is crucial.
- Candidate must be a strong instructional leader and have the ability to relate well with children, parents, teachers, and the community at large and work collaboratively with the pastor and school board to lead the school in its mission.

### Benefits:

Salary is negotiable based on experience, education, and credentials. Benefits include a 12 month contract with 1 month vacation time, employee health insurance, 403K retirement plan, sick leave, short-term disability. Principal will begin work on July 1, 2016

### Contact:

To apply, send your completed forms to the Diocese of Fall River Education Office. Include, current resume, cover letter, and a Diocese of Fall River application. Complete information and packets for employment with the Diocese of Fall River can be downloaded at [www.dfrcs.org](http://www.dfrcs.org) . Please indicate on your cover letter "Our Lady Of Lourdes School Principal Committee".

Also, please email one copy of your cover letter and resume to Our Lady of Lourdes School. Attn: Principal Search Committee at [OLOLSchoolTaunton@gmail.com](mailto:OLOLSchoolTaunton@gmail.com).

To learn more about our school please visit our website at [www.ololtaunton.com](http://www.ololtaunton.com) and on Facebook at [ololtaunton](http://ololtaunton) . Our Lady of Lourdes School answers Jesus' call to love and serve others and is committed to achieving academic excellence, enriched with Catholic values.

### About the Employer

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School is an accredited parish school, serving students in grades Pre-K - 5, located in Taunton, MA.

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# Elementary School ICT Special Education Teacher

New York, NY

Job Category: Teacher

## Overview:

Our Special Education Teachers for integrated co-teaching classrooms (ICT) are results-driven and passionate about integrated learning for students with special needs. We are looking for special educators who want to re-imagine public education and education for students with disabilities in particular. Approximately 12-20% of our students have IEPs and struggle with a variety of learning challenges. Nonetheless, our students with disabilities have outperformed district general education students. We seek ICT teachers who believe in their students and have sky-high expectations when working with students with disabilities. This will be a compelling intellectual and educational adventure that will transform you as a person and while doing so you will impact hundreds of students' lives.

## About Success Academy

At Success Academy, we are redefining what's possible in public education. Since opening our first school in Harlem in 2006, we have swiftly grown to 34 high-performing schools, from Bed-Stuy to the Bronx, serving approximately 11,000 kids. We are scaling to 100 great schools serving 50,000 children across New York City, bringing transformational change here and across the country. We believe all children, regardless of zip code or family income, deserve the life-changing opportunities that a world-class education brings.

In all grades, pre-K through 12, our exploration-driven curriculum focuses on the whole child and includes chess, art, and other specialized subjects that bring excitement to the school day and foster a lifelong love of learning. To achieve exceptional results for children, we hire the best, the brightest, and the most highly motivated adults we can find. We value excellence, celebrate diversity, and are relentlessly committed to improving ourselves and our work to enhance the lives of our scholars.

## As an Elementary School ICT Special Education Teacher, you will:

- Build a classroom culture in which students love learning
- Co-teach a rigorous, inquiry-based curriculum
- Implement appropriate academic and behavioral modifications for students
- Develop strong relationships with parents and students, creating investment in school culture and academics
- Hold all students to extraordinarily high expectations, with the fundamental belief that special education students are capable of incredible growth and achievement
- Drive academic outcomes by analyzing data, studying student work, and implementing high leverage instructional moves to ensure dramatic gains for all students
- Train with colleagues and school leaders and receive targeted, in-the-moment feedback on instruction, as well as unparalleled support and professional development
- To be considered as an Elementary School ICT Special Education Teacher, you must:
  - Have lead teaching experience with a proven record of propelling student growth
  - Hold a Bachelor's degree with an outstanding record of academic achievement and leadership
  - Be a person of high moral character
  - Be passionate about learning

**To join our team**, please upload a cover letter and resume. Make a compelling argument in your cover letter about your candidacy and qualifications.

Success Academy Charter Schools is an equal opportunity employer and actively encourages applications from people of all backgrounds. Compensation is competitive and commensurate with experience. Success Academy offers a full benefits program and opportunities for professional growth.

**Apply here:** <http://jobs.successacademies.org/job/6074195/elementary-school-ict-special-education-teacher-new-york-ny/>

**Contact:**

Brandon Piper  
Manager of Outreach  
95 Pine Street Fl 6  
New York, NY 10005

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## **Special Education Teacher**

**Grand Rapids, MI**

Job Category: Education

### **EXCELLENCE IS CHOICE**

Our real masterpiece is the unleashing of human potential. While our main focus is on creating the conditions of success for children to achieve their dreams, we also focus on developing one another through meaningful relationships, challenging work, constructive feedback, sound professional training, and a true commitment to nurturing the career path of each team member.

OPEN POSITION

**Special Education Teacher**  
(Full-time, Benefits)

Mentor and support will be provided.

Greater Detroit, MI Area

### **SCHOOLS WE SERVE:**

- Dove Academy of Detroit - [www.dovedetroit.com](http://www.dovedetroit.com)
- Bradford Academy - [www.bradfordacademy.com](http://www.bradfordacademy.com)
- Creative Montessori Academy - [www.creative-montessori.com](http://www.creative-montessori.com)

### **JOB GOAL**

To provide students with a first class learning experience, contributing to their development as responsible citizens and leaders in their communities.

TO JOIN OUR DYNAMIC TEAM

To apply, please visit: <http://www.applitrack.com/choice/onlineapp>.  
Applications will be accepted until position has been filled.

MIChoice & Choice Schools Associates LLC are an Education Service Provider for charter schools in Michigan and is the employer. EEOC

## QUALIFICATIONS INCLUDE

- Valid Michigan Elementary/Secondary Teacher Certificate with an endorsement any of the following:
- Cognitive impairment
- Learning disabled
- Emotional impairment
- Demonstrated competence as a teacher.
- Montessori certification desired.
- Excellent verbal and written expression.
- Strong interpersonal skills.
- Works well in a collaborative environment.

## CONTACT:

Courtney Kingma - Human Resources Generalist  
[courtneykingma@choiceschools.com](mailto:courtneykingma@choiceschools.com)  
616.785.8440

TO JOIN OUR DYNAMIC TEAM

To apply, please visit: <http://www.applitrack.com/choice/onlineapp>.  
Applications will be accepted until position has been filled.

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## Special Education Specialist

Olympic Valley, CA

Job Category: Director

### Description:

Squaw Valley Academy is looking for an experienced boarding school Special Education certified teacher to join our team and assist in the daily instruction of our students.

The ideal candidate will hold a Master's degree in Special Education, be currently certified and have 2+ years high school experience teaching in Special Education. Boarding school experience a plus.

Assist students in subjects of concern in two Resource classes (address study and organizational skills) and provide support to students in core classes. Assist in IEP/504 reviews, educating/informing faculty of best modalities for student success.

Evaluate and assist students class work, performance, and assignments. Prepare supplemental course materials such as syllabi, homework assignments and handouts. Individualize curriculum content to address various learning needs Collaborate with colleagues to address teaching and research issues. Prepare and submit required reports related to instruction (Individualized Educational Plan goals, progress reports so on) Participate in all faculty campus and community events. Act as academic advisor to group of students (address study and organizational skills)

Run and coordinate 5 day a week, three hour daily Afternoon Learning Center. Assist with the daily boarding school coverage of afternoon activities, evening study hall and weekend duty.

Room and board included. Salary range is above average plus medical and dental Ins.



## Requirements:

The ideal candidate will hold a Master's degree in Special Education, be currently certified and have 2+ years high school experience teaching in Special Education. Boarding school experience a plus.

## Benefits:

Room and board with above average salary with medical and dental Ins.

## Contact:

No phone calls please.

**email:** [wgrant@sva.org](mailto:wgrant@sva.org)

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## Special Education Teacher

**Culver City, CA**

Job Category: (K-12) Special Education Teacher

## Description:

Provide an educational program for students who are developmentally disabled or have special needs. Ensure progress on all IEP goals and district and state requirements. Continually assess student needs, and design and deliver lessons based on those needs and state standards. Work closely with parents/care providers, classroom team, school staff and administrators to ensure students' needs and goals are met.

## Requirements:

**Education:** Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and a valid Special Education Internship, or Preliminary Level 1, Clear Level II, or equivalent California State Special Education Credential. Master's Degree preferred.

**Experience:** Two years teaching experience in special education classroom.

**Knowledge/Abilities/Skills:** Knowledge of Welligent and MS Office helpful. Behavior Management and Confidentiality Training required.

## Benefits:

- Paid time off during Spring and Winter breaks.
- Vacation and sick time accrual.
- Medical, Dental, and Vision benefits.
- Professional Development Plan for Teachers.
- Sign-on bonus.

## Contact:

Please submit resume and cover letter to:

[hr@ecf.net](mailto:hr@ecf.net) or fax to (310) 391-1059

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## **Special Education Teacher (Arizona)**

### **Phoenix, Arizona**

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

**EBS** is seeking passionate, motivated Special Education Teachers who want to make a difference in the lives of exceptional children! **EBS** Special Education Teachers develop and implement all aspects of student IEPs and classroom instruction in order to maximize academic, communicative, behavioral, self-help, social and emotional success.

### **Responsibilities include:**

- Organizing and implementing an instructional program that meets the developmental level and unique learning style needs of diverse learners
- Creates a positive educational environment for all students using a multi-tiered system of supports
- Utilizes Universal Designs for Learning and multiple modalities of instruction for engagement
- Incorporates a system for data collection and analysis that drives academic decision making
- Collaborates with other educators, related service providers and parents to maximize student outcomes
- Uses professional quality communication skills to convey information to the student's team
- Meets all district, state and federal requirements for the program to which they are assigned including, MET/IEP and Progress Report Deadlines
- Utilize visual supports and structured teaching methodologies as appropriate to population served
- Demonstrates an understanding of appropriate curriculum, differentiation and developmental instruction
- Demonstrates an understanding of behavioral functions and implements a system of positive behavior interventions and supports

**EBS** offers customized salary packages for each individual employee. An **EBS** special educator's salary varies based on experience, education, employment setting, and location.

### **Qualifications:**

- Bachelor's and/or Master's Degree in Special Education
- Appropriate State Certification/Licensure in Special Education
- Current Fingerprint Clearance Card
- SEI Endorsement (For AZ Candidates)

### **To Apply:**

Please send updated resume to [hr@ebshealthcare.com](mailto:hr@ebshealthcare.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Special Educator Teacher - (Hawaii)**

### **Honolulu, Hawaii**

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

**EBS** is seeking passionate, motivated Special Education Teachers who want to make a difference in the lives of exceptional children! **EBS** Special Education Teachers develop and implement all aspects of student IEPs and classroom instruction in order to maximize academic, communicative, behavioral, self-help, social and emotional success.

## Responsibilities include:

- Creating an optimal learning environment that is responsive to the needs of students with significant emotional and behavioral challenges
- Organizing and implementing an instructional program that meets the developmental level and unique learning style needs of diverse learners
- Creates a positive educational environment for all students using a multi-tiered system of supports
- Utilizes Universal Designs for Learning and multiple modalities of instruction for engagement
- Incorporates a system for data collection and analysis that drives academic decision making
- Collaborates with other educators, related service providers and parents to maximize student outcomes
- Uses professional quality communication skills to convey information to the student's team
- Meets all district, state and federal requirements for the program to which they are assigned including, MET/IEP and Progress Report Deadlines
- Utilize visual supports and structured teaching methodologies as appropriate to population served
- Demonstrates an understanding of appropriate curriculum, differentiation and developmental instruction
- Demonstrates an understanding of behavioral functions and implements a system of positive behavior interventions and supports

**EBS** offers customized salary packages for each individual employee. An **EBS** special educator's salary varies based on experience, education, employment setting, and location.

## Qualifications:

- Bachelor's and/or Master's Degree in Special Education
- Appropriate State Certification/Licensure in Special Education
- Experience working with children with emotional disabilities and challenging behaviors/self-contained teaching experience preferred
- Current Fingerprint Clearance Card (if required for your state)

## To Apply:

Please send a copy of your updated resume to [hr@ebshealthcare.com](mailto:hr@ebshealthcare.com)

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## Special Education Teacher - (California)

### California

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

**EBS** is seeking passionate, motivated Special Education Teachers who want to make a difference in the lives of exceptional children! **EBS** Special Education Teachers develop and implement all aspects of student IEPs and classroom instruction in order to maximize academic, communicative, behavioral, self-help, social and emotional success.

## Responsibilities include:

- Organizing and implementing an instructional program that meets the developmental level and unique learning style needs of diverse learners
- Creates a positive educational environment for all students using a multi-tiered system of supports
- Utilizes Universal Designs for Learning and multiple modalities of instruction for engagement
- Incorporates a system for data collection and analysis that drives academic decision making

- Collaborates with other educators, related service providers and parents to maximize student outcomes
- Uses professional quality communication skills to convey information to the student's team
- Meets all district, state and federal requirements for the program to which they are assigned including, MET/IEP and Progress Report Deadlines
- Utilize visual supports and structured teaching methodologies as appropriate to population served
- Demonstrates an understanding of appropriate curriculum, differentiation and developmental instruction
- Demonstrates an understanding of behavioral functions and implements a system of positive behavior interventions and supports

**EBS** offers customized salary packages for each individual employee. An EBS special educator's salary varies based on experience, education, employment setting, and location.

## Qualifications:

- Bachelor's and/or Master's Degree in Special Education
- Appropriate State Certification/Licensure in Special Education
- Current Fingerprint Clearance Card

## To Apply:

Please send updated resume to [hr@ebshealthcare.com](mailto:hr@ebshealthcare.com)

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## Teacher

**Washington, DC**

Job Category: Teaching

**Position: Teacher**

**Opening Date: School Year 2016-2017**

**Number of openings: Varies by content area**

Our students need your expertise, passion and leadership.

We are looking for highly motivated and skilled talent to join our team at the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). We seek individuals who are passionate about transforming and improving educational outcomes for our students.

In DCPS, 4,500 teachers serve the needs of 49,000 students across 113 schools. As part of a comprehensive reform effort to become the best urban school system in America, DCPS intends to have the highest-performing, best paid, most satisfied, and most honored educator force in the nation whose work drives significant achievement gains for DCPS students.

## Responsibilities:

- Develop and implement curricula to meet academic standards
- Thoughtfully plan daily lessons and implement specific strategies to meet the needs of all students, providing extra support, enrichment, or variation of work when necessary
- Be accountable for students' academic growth and increase each individual student's achievement
- Design and implement assessments that measure progress towards academic standards and diagnose areas of student misunderstanding
- Use assessment data to refine curriculum and inform instructional practices
- Create a positive, achievement-oriented learning environment

- Reflect on successes and areas of growth as a teacher, seek to improve performance, and respond to feedback
- Participate in collaborative curriculum development, grade-level activities, and school-wide functions
- Invest parents and families in their children's academic success through regular communication
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

## Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree
- Possesses or is eligible for a valid District of Columbia Teaching License (for more information on DC Teacher Licensure, please visit the website of the Office of the State Superintendent of Education at <http://osse.dc.gov/service/teacher-licensure>)
- Successful completion of Praxis I and II exams (unless holding a standard teaching license)
- Strong instructional skills and classroom management
- Ability to self-reflect on teaching practices and be responsive to feedback
- Personal Qualities of Top Candidates
- **Commitment to Equity:** Passionate about closing the achievement gap and ensuring that every child, regardless of background or circumstance, receives an excellent education.
- **Leadership:** Coaches, mentors, and challenges others to excel despite obstacles and challenging situations.
- **Focus on Data-Driven Results:** Relentlessly pursues the mastery of instruction based on student performance, and is driven by a desire to produce quantifiable student achievement gains.
- **Innovative Problem-Solving:** Approaches work with a sense of possibility and sees challenges as opportunities for creative problem solving; takes initiative to explore issues and find potential Innovative solutions.
- **Adaptability:** Excels in constantly changing environments and adapts flexibly in shifting projects or priorities to meet the needs of a dynamic transformation effort; comfortable with ambiguity and non-routine situations.
- **Teamwork:** Increases the effectiveness of surrounding teams through collaboration, constant learning and supporting others; sensitive to diversity in all its forms; respects and is committed to learning from others

## How to apply:

To apply, visit our website at [www.joindcpublicschools.com/teachers](http://www.joindcpublicschools.com/teachers), and complete our online application.

## QUESTIONS:

If you have any questions, please email us at [teach.dcps@dc.gov](mailto:teach.dcps@dc.gov).

## STAY INFORMED!

Follow us on Twitter at [@dcpsjobs](https://twitter.com/dcpsjobs), or become a fan of [DCPS Jobs](https://www.facebook.com/DCPSJobs) on Facebook.

## Criminal Background Check

In accordance with the Criminal Background Checks for the Protection of Children Act of 2004, this position has been designated and identified as one which requires a criminal background check and/or traffic record check. If you are tentatively selected for the position, a criminal background check will be conducted. A final offer of employment is contingent upon the receipt of a satisfactory criminal background check.

## Notice of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, District of Columbia Official Code Section 2-1401.01 et seq. (Act), the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) does not

discriminate (including employment therein and admission thereto) on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an interfamily offense, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination, which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above-protected categories is prohibited. Discrimination in violation of the aforementioned laws will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action. Inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies of DCPS will be handled as follows:

Employees with inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies related to employment and employees should contact:

Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist  
Office of Labor Management & Employee Relations  
District of Columbia Public Schools  
1200 First St, NE, 10th Floor, Washington, DC 20002  
(202) 442-5424

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## **Special Education Teacher**

**Vestal, NY**

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

### **Special Education Teacher - Institute for Child Development About The Research Foundation for SUNY at Binghamton:**

The Research Foundation, founded in 1951, exists to serve SUNY and to capitalize on the scope, scale and diversity of SUNY as an engine of New York state's innovation economy.

The RF supports nearly \$1 billion in SUNY research activity annually, providing sponsored programs administration and commercialization support services to SUNY faculty performing research in numerous disciplines.

The Research Foundation of SUNY is a private not-for-profit corporation that administers externally funded sponsored projects for and on behalf of SUNY. The Research Foundation is a separate employer from SUNY and the State of New York and offers separate compensation and benefit plans.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Formulate, write, and implement Individual Education Plans.
- Develop, construct, write and implement habilitative programs for children.
- Objectively evaluate child behavior and performance.
- Monitor and objectively evaluate child behavior and performance and modify programs as required.
- Conduct and Consult on program analyses to determine effectiveness.
- Prepare written reports as needed.
- Maintain frequent contact with parents or guardians of children, in oral and written forms, regarding child progress on IEP goals.
- Participate orally and by providing written material in multiple weekly staff meetings.
- Provide support, in vivo supervision and performance feedback to paraprofessional staff as directed.
- Provide support, in vivo supervision and performance feedback to undergraduate practicum students as directed.



## EXPECTATIONS:

- Provide direct child instruction and care for 5-days a week as determined by the Unit calendar. Meetings, preparation, parent contact, etc. will occur outside direct child attendance times
- Be available for ad hoc meetings and consultation during work hours as specified by Director of Educational Services, which may vary.
- Participate in all habilitative, self-help and emotional development programs as requested.
- Maintain appropriate cleanliness, organization and decoration of classroom.
- Assist children to and from bus stop and monitor lunch period.
- Demonstrated proficiency in analytical methods and written English expression.

## LEVEL OF SUPERVISION:

Special Education Teachers will be supervised by and work closely with the Director of Educational Services. In vivo supervision of instructional effectiveness will be provided. In addition, consultation on program development, data evaluation and related responsibilities will be held bi-weekly.

## REQUIRED QUALIFICATION:

- Bachelor's or Master's degree in Special Education
- New York State teaching certification or eligibility
- Must be fluent and easily understood in English with very good articulation to accommodate the communication and comprehension needs of the children served.

Please see the Research Foundation website for more information on qualifications and organizational policies.

<https://rfbu.interviewexchange.com/jobofferdetails.jsp?JOBID=63321>

## ANNUAL SALARY:

\$33,000 dependent upon qualifications and experience.

Full time position includes full benefits package through the Research Foundation of the State University of NY.

### **Research Foundation Commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Research Foundation for The State University of New York (RF) is committed to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action.

The Research Foundation for SUNY is a private, not for profit corporation.

## To apply please submit:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Three letters of recommendation are required prior to employment
- You may add additional files/documents after uploading your resume.
- After filling out the contact information, you will be directed to the upload page.

**Returning Applicants:** - Login to your The Research Foundation for SUNY at Binghamton Careers Account to check your completed application.

Please contact us if you need assistance applying through this website.

<https://rfbu.interviewexchange.com/jobofferdetails.jsp?JOBID=63321>

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## Special Education Teacher

**Phoenix, AZ and Tucson, AZ**

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

### **Description:**

\$48,000/school year (180 days). Summers off with year round pay. Special Education Teachers needed in Arizona (Phoenix and surrounding cities). Needs are in the self-contained and resource settings serving students with emotional disabilities (ED), Autism (A), Severe/Profound (S/P), and Intellectual Disabilities (ID). **STARS** is the largest school contract agency in AZ. **STARS** is owned and operated by Occupational Therapists. You will be an employee and receive full benefits (see below). With a proven track record, **STARS** is able to offer you an unbeatable support system and resources. **STARS** is hiring for the 2015-2016 school year. **STARS** places Special Education Teachers throughout the Phoenix, Tucson and the surrounding area public schools.

### **Requirements:**

- Certification through the AZDOE, in Special Education
- Arizona Fingerprint Card through AZDPS
- We will help you get the credentials needed and reimburse you for the cost.

### **Salary:**

**\$48,000/SCHOOL YEAR, BASED ON 180 DAYS**

**STARS** also offers a fantastic benefit package including:

- 16 weeks off
- 100% Company paid Health, Dental, and Life Insurance
- \$1,000/year Continuing Ed Money
- Paid DOE Certification Fees
- Paid NASET Dues
- Spanish Immersion trip
- Hawaii Trip for two
- 401K
- 125 Plan
- Direct Deposit
- Evaluation tools and treatment supplies
- Two company sponsored parties with professional entertainment
- Company newsletter
- **STARS** sponsored dinner meetings with national/local speakers
- Yearly raises
- Referral bonuses
- Moving \$
- Birthday gifts and other appreciation throughout the year
- **Genuine Appreciation**

YOU WILL FEEL LIKE A STAR!!!

### **Contact:**

Brian Paulsen, COO #480.221.2573; Please email your resume to [Jobs@StudentTherapy.com](mailto:Jobs@StudentTherapy.com); Apply Online at [StudentTherapy.com](http://StudentTherapy.com), we would love to hear from you!

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## Acknowledgements

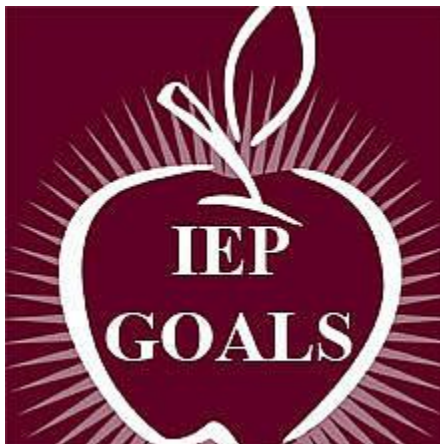
Portions of this month's *NASET's Special Educator e-Journal* were excerpted from:

- Committee on Education and the Workforce
- FirstGov.gov-The Official U.S. Government Web Portal
- National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, an electronic newsletter of the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET), available online at <http://www.ncset.org/enews>. NCSET is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.
- National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth
- National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities
- National Institute of Health
- National Organization on Disability
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Education-The Achiever
- U.S. Department of Education-The Education Innovator
- U.S. Department of Labor
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration
- U.S. Office of Special Education
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The **National Association of Special Education Teachers** (NASET) thanks all of the above for the information provided for this edition of the Special Educator e-Journal

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