State Level Strategies for Recruiting and Retaining Special Education and Related Service Personnel

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- Arizona – Carol Crawford, Joe Stubblefield
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- Kansas – Julie Wilson, Kerry Haag
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- North Carolina – Paula Crawford
- North Dakota – Mary McCarvel–O’Connor
- South Carolina – Ann Marie Taylor, Barbara Turner, Joe Sutton
- Utah – Bruce Schroeder
Agenda

- Methodology of the study
- State–level Infrastructures
- State Supported Strategies for R&R
- Challenges
- Recommendations
Methodology

- Survey of states on strategies for recruiting and retaining special education personnel
- Selection of 10 strategies based on PIC–identified “best practices” and report from all states.
- Selection of 8 states for in–depth interview on selected strategies for each: AZ, CA, KS, LA, NC, ND, SC, UT
STATE–LEVEL INFRASTRUCTURES

THAT SUPPORT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED SPECIAL EDUCATION PERSONNEL
State-level Infrastructures

- Advisory Boards – Utah
- Strategic Action Plans – California
- Dedicated Personnel – Kansas
Utah – Advisory Board

**Critical Personnel Issues in Special Education Advisory Group**

- Meet 3–4 times per year (including annual or bi-annual symposium)
  - 7 IHEs that prepare special educators
- Voluntary membership of IHEs and LEA SE directors (12–15)
- Began in 2000
- Addresses issues related to personnel shortages
Utah (cont.)

Major Accomplishments:

- Recruitment to classroom– Utah Education Employment Board, designed by special education with SPDG funds, moved to Teachers–Teachers.com

- Highly Qualified Teachers
  - Through professional development

- Adopting Common Core Standards
  - SE teacher role

- New teacher induction
  - Retention data from last five years
  - focused on LEA–level

- ARC graduates have same rate of retention

- Connecting teacher quality to student performance
State “Leadership Team” for Strategic Plan on Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Special Education Personnel

- 10 years and running
- Voluntary membership (22–25) varies based on focus for the year
- Meet two times per year
- Contracted facilitation and research
- State dedicated staff – partial FTE
Results of Leadership Team Work

- Special Education Credential’s required induction piece for Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) – $3,600 – $4,000 state money
  - Teacher Recruitment (to field) – TEACH CA, driven by special education unit, funding from Title II also
  - Revision of special education credential (credentialing in separate agency)
  - Improving school climate – survey: promoting completion, marketing, user-friendly data display
Kansas –Dedicated Personnel

**State staffing ~6.0 FTE**
- Includes external and internal staff
  - Program consultant – PD (IDEA–B)
  - SPDG coordinator & PBIS coordinator
  - KS elearning/ementoring (.75 FTE)
  - KEEB Website programmers (2 part time)
  - R&R coordinator and assistant

**Results**
- Support of LEAs and working conditions:
  - KSDE TA System Network (TASN)
    - multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS)
    - Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
STATE-LEVEL STRATEGIES
THAT SUPPORT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED SPECIAL EDUCATION PERSONNEL
State-Level Strategies

Recruitment to the Field
- Preparation Program Partnerships (NC)
- “Grow Your Own” Programs (SC)

Recruitment to Specific Jobs
- Financial Incentives (SC)
- New Technologies (AZ)

Retention
- Mentoring (ND)
- Administrative Support (KS, LA)
- Improved Working Conditions (CA)
RECRUITMENT TO THE FIELD
North Carolina

**Preparation Program Partnerships**

- Cooperative Planning Consortium
  - IHE representatives and state staff
  - Meet two times a year
  - Issues addressed—increasing HQT req’s for secondary SE teachers
- IHE involvement with Math & Reading State Improvement Project—increase SE teacher knowledge and skills
  - Application process for IHEs
  - Research–based practices
  - Student teacher placement
- IHE recruitment plans
  - Letter to undeclared majors
  - Campaign plan and activity log
RECRUITMENT TO THE FIELD
South Carolina

“Grow Your Own” Programs (legislative initiative)

- Teacher Cadet Program
  - Encourage high academic/leadership students
  - 2,660 cadets – 85 of these want to teach SE
- Teaching Fellows Scholarship
  - Support high achieving HS students – annual cohorts at each personnel prep program (909 teaching fellows from 11 IHEs)
- Project CREATE
  - Began funding in ‘03–’04 from IDEA funds
  - 11 IHEs – tuition/textbooks for add-on or initial SE certification
  - 2,124 enrolled through Year 7 (2009–2010)
  - 65% success rate
  - 80 out of 85 LEAs have sent paraprofessionals, etc. into the project
Financial Incentives

- The South Carolina Teacher Loan Program
  - Critical subject or geographic area
  - 20% or $3,000 of loan forgiven if they meet one criteria; 33% or $5,000 if they meet both criteria
  - Out of 1140 who applied for 2009-2010/14% wanted to teach in SE

- South Carolina Teacher Advancement Program (TAP)
  - Pay for performance—as much as $10,000
  - Move to master teacher status
  - Salaries and bonuses based on student performance results
  - Out of 1470 teachers participating/14% teach SE

- Project CREATE
  - Award tuition and textbook reimbursement, course-by-course; funded by IDEA
  - Student teaching paid for in-total; districts allow one semester leave-of-absence
  - Praxis II exam fee reimbursement through district IDEA discretionary funds
  - Financial awards go to all participants
  - 3-year return commitment to teach in SC in respective SE fields

- Project SLP-RRS
  - Scholarships for Masters degree at selected IHEs
  - Funded by IDEA
RECRUITMENT TO SPECIFIC JOBS

Arizona

**New Technologies – Part of the SPDG**

- Arizona Education Employment Board (AEEB) – free and online
  - Online application to specific jobs at multiple LEAs – all at once
  - Candidates register and receive weekly updates on job postings
  - 438 AZ LEAs post jobs and communicate w/candidates online
  - 237 new job special education postings on the AEEB (Oct 2010–Jan 2011)
  - 95 special education teacher hires (Oct 2010–Jan 2011)
  - 186,500 visitors (Oct 2010–Jan 2011)

- Teach in Arizona – website
  - Promotes the Great AZ Teach-in; an in-person Job Fair
  - Allows LEAs to register online
  - Info specific to SE positions available – 12,400 visitors (Oct 2010–Jan 2011)

- Arizona Promising Practices
  - Resource for pre service, in-service and parents –retention and support system – 13,100 visitors (Oct 2010–Dec 2010)

- Facebook and Twitter
  - Updates on job postings– linked to other AZ websites and events
Mentoring – Special Education Mentoring Toolkit

- Adapted from state manual for mentoring for all teachers
- Used SPDG advisory board and funds to create taskforce to address retention.
- Created *State Guidelines for Special Education Mentoring Programs:*
  - Chapter 1 – Quality Induction
  - Chapter 2 – Mentoring Plan
  - Chapter 3 – Components of Mentor Training
  - Chapter 4 – Components of Special Educator Training
  - Chapter 5 – Communication
  - Chapter 6 – Regulations and Policies
- No requirement for Local Education Agencies to implement
RETENTION
Kansas

- **Administrative Support**
  - Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators (KASEA)
    - 8 regions, each meet monthly
    - All 8 meet together 4X per year
    - Address recruitment and retention needs at local level
  - KS Education and Employment Board (KEEB) – recruitment
    - Free to all LEAs with specific SE recruitment
    - Prescriptive feeds for candidates to specific regions/content
    - LEAs expressed need and state followed up
  - KS Early Educator portal (KEEP) – retention
    - Top 3 issues for early career SE and how they want content delivered
    - Top 3 issues for SE directors and superintendents and how they want content delivered
    - Attrition study, including related services personnel
The Louisiana Statewide Staffing Initiative in partnership with the New Teacher Project will help low-performing schools in four districts build strong instructional teams and open the school year fully staffed, as ~50% of non-certified teachers are in SE.

- Reforming Central Office Human Capital practice
  - Remove policy barriers to efficient practices
- Training principals on effective hiring/staffing practices
  - Marketing schools using websites
  - Job fairs
  - Competency-based selection/Effective interviewing
  - Induction programs
RETENTION
California

- Improved Working Conditions
  - Special Education Supports Module (SESM)
  - Workbook on Improving School Climate – Special Education Section
  - California Comprehensive Center LEA–level Demonstration Site
Challenges

- Difficulty in hiring and retaining SEA staff who are well-versed in best practices and specific regional needs. (KS)
- A lack of teaming and cross-training at the local level to ensure continuity of initiatives over time. (LA)
- An inability to provide state-level support and/or guidance in local-control states. (LA)
Challenges

- A lack of up-to-date workforce data enabling IHEs to conduct targeted recruitment for personnel preparation programs. (UT)
- Ensuring that online job sites include proper information about necessary certification and/or other qualifications. (AZ)
- A lack of adequate funding due to current economic recession and resulting budget shortfalls prevent many initiatives from being fully realized. (SC)
Recommendations

- Work closely with LEAs in order to be responsive to the needs of the field.
- Communicate with IHEs to be sure they are preparing teachers to meet state personnel needs.
- Nurture relationships between LEAs and IHEs.
- Develop local business partnerships to improve community infrastructure and support for teachers.
Recommendations

- Make data-driven decisions.
- Be knowledgeable of, and promoting, best practices.
- Provide a foundation for recruitment and retention based on well-crafted laws and effective regulations.
- Gain local programs’ buy-in and trust as states move from a compliance model to a support model.
Questions? or Comments
Contact Us

- Project Forum
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- Personnel Improvement Center
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  - www.personnelcenter.org
Resources

Arizona:

- Arizona Education Employment Board (AEEB) [www.arizonaeducationjobs.com/]
- Teach in Arizona [www.teachinaz.com/]

California:

- Special Education Supports Information System (SESIS) [http://cscs.wested.org/survey_content/SESIS]

Kansas:

- KSDE Technical Assistance Network [www.ksdetasn.org/cms]
- KEEP [www.kansasteacherretention.com/]
- KEEB [www.kansasteachingjobs.com]
Resources (cont.)

Louisiana:
- Administrative support
  www.teachlouisiana.net
  Andrew.vaughan@LA.gov

North Dakota:
- Mentoring—Special Education Mentoring Toolkit
  www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/general/chpt1.pdf
  Chapter 1
  www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/general/chpt2.pdf
  Chapter 2
  www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/general/chpt3.pdf
  Chapter 3
  www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/general/chpt4.pdf
  Chapter 4
  www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/general/chpt5.pdf
  Chapter 5
  www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/general/chpt6.pdf
  Chapter 6
Resources (cont.)

South Carolina (cont.):

- The Teacher Cadet Program [www.teachercadets.com/](http://www.teachercadets.com/)
- The Teaching Fellows Scholarship [http://cerra.org/teachingFellows](http://cerra.org/teachingFellows)
- Project CREATE [www.sccreate.org/](http://www.sccreate.org/)
- The South Carolina Teacher Loan Program [www.scstudentloan.org/students/loanprograms/scteachersloanprograms.aspx](http://www.scstudentloan.org/students/loanprograms/scteachersloanprograms.aspx)
- South Carolina Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) [www.scteachers.org/tadvance/advance.cfm](http://www.scteachers.org/tadvance/advance.cfm)
Resources, con’t

Utah

- IHE Symposium 2011
  - [www.updc.org/personnel-prep/](http://www.updc.org/personnel-prep/)