School/University Preparation Program
Partnerships that Address Local Personnel Needs

Presented in partnership with:
National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals and Related Service Providers

April 14, 2011
Presenters

Lisa Churchill
Personnel Improvement Center

Marilyn Likins
National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals

Peggy Milligan
Utah State Office of Education

Robert Morgan
Utah State University

Jerry Purles
Granite (UT) School District

Bruce Schroeder
Utah State Office of Education
Participant Outcomes

Participants will gain an understanding of best practices for developing personnel preparation program partnerships, including:

- developing partnership plans;
- implementing data collection procedures and support strategies and
- analyzing preliminary results.
Utah State Office of Education

Peggy Milligan
Assistant Director of Special Education Services
Bruce Schroeder
Director – UT Personnel Development Center /SPDG
State Leadership Team Members
A State Perspective: Overview of the Utah State Performance Plan (SPP)

With the reauthorization of IDEA 2004, states were required to:

- develop a six-year State Performance Plan (SPP);
- submit the plan to the Secretary of Education and
- report progress on each of the key indicators to OSEP in an Annual Performance Report (APR).
Analysis of UT’s APR Indicators

Unsatisfactory or Significant Issues with:

• Student achievement levels
• Student behavior & school discipline
• Graduation rates
UT’s State Professional Development Grant (SPDG) designed to address:

- achievement gap between students with/without disabilities;
- shortage of qualified special education teachers
- preparation of unlicensed special educators;
- support and utilization of research-based instructional practices;
- recruitment of new special educators;
- retention of highly qualified special education teachers and
- knowledge and skills of school personnel to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
Multiple Levels of Collaboration

**National**
- Personnel Improvement Center (PIC)
- National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals (NRCP)

**State**
- UT Department of Education/State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)
- UT Professional Development Center

**Local**
- LEAs - Districts and charters
- IHEs – 2 and 4 year colleges and universities
Lisa Churchill
Personnel Improvement Center
State Service Provider
PIC Goal in UTAH

- Increase state’s capacity to create opportunities for LEAs/local programs to partner with community colleges and four year institutions of higher education (IHEs)

- Focus on paraeducator-to-teacher programs to increase accessibility to four year institutions for community members in high need areas of the state
PIC Technical Assistance in UTAH

- UT selected for intensive PPP Services.
- UT State Leadership Team created.
- UT examined data & identified districts with high needs and partnering IHEs.
- Three UT statewide on-site meetings were co-planned and facilitated.
- LEA/IHE Personnel Partnership Plans written.
- Continuous follow-up and monitoring of plan implementation via emails, teleconferences, Project Pier and webinars.
UT Partnerships Plans

- Developed targeted strategies for increasing accessibility to IHE coursework for paraeducators in partnering districts.
- Consolidated resources at all levels to provide support, funding and TA.
- Increased awareness of need and opportunities.
- Designed to meet the needs of state, districts, IHEs and paraeducators.
Partnership Plan Activities

- Paraeducator survey
- Paraeducator appreciation/celebration event
- IHE information event
- Paraeducator website
- "Pathways to Becoming a Special Educator” brochure for each IHE program
- Financial aid resource chart
- Smooth segue into IHE application and admission
- Collaborative supports from both district and LEAs for paraeducators in programs
Marilyn Likins
NRCP Director
State Leadership Team Member
NRCP’s Mission

To address policy questions and other needs of the field, including:

- Providing technical assistance and sharing information about policy questions, management practices, regulatory procedures, and training models that will enable administrators and staff-developers to improve the recruitment, deployment, supervision, and career development of paraprofessionals.

- Serving paraeducators; teachers; policymakers and administrators; other education professionals; occupational, physical and speech-language therapists; early childhood specialists; personnel developers in 2 & 4 year colleges and universities; and other stakeholders.

www.nrcpara.org
NRCP Role in Partnership Work

Provide resources to the partnership, including:

- building state website to support work;
- posting a link to the Paraeducator Survey on that website and
- providing information about needed paraeducator supports to both IHEs and LEAs.
District/IHE Partnerships

**DISTRICTS**
- Granite
- Davis
- Weber
- Ogden

**IHE**
- Utah State University
- University of Utah
- Weber State University
- Utah State University
Jerry L. Purles
Elementary Special Education Paraeducator Coach
Handy Facts

Granite School District (GSD) is located in Salt Lake City, Utah, operating:

- 61 elementary schools
- 6 junior high schools
- 8 high schools
- Other special schools

Additional GSD Information:

- Largest school district in Utah
- Boundary includes 257 sq. miles
- 7,500 full & part-time employees
- 68,310 students (2009)
Special Education Services:

2010 – 2011 School Year

- Resource classrooms: 4,394 students
- Self-contained classrooms: 1,368 students
- Number of paraeducators: 944
- Number of new teachers: 35
Paraeducator to Teacher Certification

Fact finding:
Surveyed the paraeducator population to determine:

- Interest level in becoming a special education teacher
- Current level of education
Paraeducator Survey

CONDUCTED TWO SURVEYS:

- **April 2009** (700 paraeducators surveyed, 370 responded):
  - to determine those who were interested in a teacher certification; **166 expressed interest**.

- **March/April 2010** (166 paraeducators, 52 responded):
  - to determine the current status, level of interest, and needs of this focused population segment.
Paraeducator Survey Results

Are you currently enrolled in any college courses?
• Yes 19.2%
• No 80.8%

What is your level of education?
• Some college classes 65.4%
• Associate degree 13.5%
• Bachelor’s degree 21.2%
• Master’s degree 0.0%
Paraeducator Survey Results

Plans for applying to a Teacher Certification program:

- Not applying 36.5%
- Salt Lake Community College 36.5%
- University of Utah 21.2%
- Utah State University 32.7%

When do you plan on applying?

- 2010-2011 school year 28.8%
- 2011-2012 school year 26.9%
- No plans 44.2%
Paraeducator Survey Results

What additional support and/or information do you need in the application process?

- Computer literacy/application process 5.8%
- Financial aid 36.5%
- Entrance test requirements 19.2%
- Meet w/counselor to evaluate transcripts 15.4%
- All of the above 38.5%
- None of the above 21.2%
Paraeducator Survey Results

- In which area of Special Education are you interested in pursuing certification?
  - Mild/moderate: 55.8%
  - Severe: 21.2%
  - Undecided: 34.6%
Paraeducator Appreciation & Career Opportunity Night

- January 21, 2010, 5:00-8:00pm
- Created special invitation for each paraeducator, hand-delivered.
- Celebration with food, prizes, personal recognition, with a program presentation.
- University of Utah and Utah State University presented information on their special education programs.
- 135 paraeducators attended.
District Paraeducator Support

- Two district specialists provided individual support to paraeducators regarding the teacher certification process.
- Encouraged the universities to design and implement a simplified process for delivering program application and financial resource information to these prospective students.
University Counseling Event

Bring any College Transcripts you have!

April 30th, 2010
1:00 P.M.-4:00 P.M.
Granite Education Center

There are no set times for the sessions. You may move among the rooms as needed.

You may choose one or more of the information sessions that apply to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>U of U</th>
<th>USU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer Literacy</td>
<td>D-206</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcript Evaluation/Counseling</td>
<td>D-202</td>
<td>L &amp; M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>D-202</td>
<td>L &amp; M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing Requirements</td>
<td>D-202</td>
<td>5th Floor L &amp; M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19 Granite paraeducators were admitted to 2 universities for the 2011 school year for the special education teacher certification program!
Granite Partnership Outcomes

- Built district website for paraeducator
  - www.
- Ensured that all paraeducators have a working email
- Established an annual paraeducator appreciation night event
What’s Next? New Goals

- Continue to target interested & talented paraeducators for teacher certification
- Re-survey paraeducators
- Provide more support
- Goal: 2012 3% of Paraeducators going into teacher certification programs
Utah State University

Bob Morgan
Department of Special Education & Rehabilitation
Role of the University in a Paraeducator-to-Special Education Teacher Program

- Assess the extent to which current special education majors have backgrounds as paraeducators.
- Collaborate with school districts to define and support pathways for paraeducators into teacher education.
  - Offer distance education and on-site classes
- Schedule meetings (such as the Granite Event) – not on campus but at the local schools – to engage paraeducators.
  - Provide advisement on-site during the event.
- Respond to needs expressed by paraeducators (such as simplified enrollment process and financial aid information).
Role of the University in a Paraeducator-to-Special Education Teacher Program

What doesn’t work
- Stay in the office.
- Expect them to come to you.
- Assume they’ll figure out enrollment, registration, financial aid, etc.

What works
- Actively engage school districts by going to them to establish recruitment plans for paraeducators.
- Actively engage paraeducators by describing teacher education.
- “Demystify” enrollment processes to paraeducators (e.g., 6 steps....)
Paraeducator Appreciation Events

- An evening event to recognize paraeducators and provide advisement leading to teacher education programs.
- Organized collaboratively between IHEs and school district.

Event schedule
- School district offers recognition, awards, etc.
- IHEs describe teacher education programs
- IHEs offer on-site advisors to create plans of study for paraeducators (or schedule meetings for later)
Paraeducator Applicants to On-Campus Program

- **2010-11**
  - Number of appreciation events
  - Number of paraeducator applicants

- **2009-10**
  - Number of appreciation events
  - Number of paraeducator applicants

- **2008-09**
  - Number of appreciation events
  - Number of paraeducator applicants

(O Events)
Paraeducator Applicants to Distance Program

- **2010-2011**
  - Number of paraeducator applicants: 40
  - Number of appreciation events: 5

- **2008-2009**
  - Number of paraeducator applicants: 30
  - (O Events)
Ongoing State Partnership Needs

- Increase capacity of IHE programs to accept more qualified applicants.
- Continue to increase accessibility of coursework through additional online and on-site course offerings.
- Funding to provide tuition assistance.
Contact Information

- **Lisa Churchill**
  Personnel Improvement Center, lchurchill@csuchico.edu

- **Marilyn Likins**
  National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals, marilyn@nrcreleng.org

- **Peggy Milligan**
  Utah State Office of Education, peggy.milligan@schools.utah.gov

- **Robert Morgan**
  Utah State University, bob.morgan@usu.edu

- **Jerry Purles**
  Granite School District, jlpurles@graniteschools.org

- **Bruce Schroeder**
  Utah State Office of Education, bruce.schroeder@schools.utah.gov
RELATED WEBSITES

- www.utahparas.org
- www.personnelcenter.org
- www.nrcpara.org
- www.schools.utah.gov/sars/Paraeducators.aspx
- www.personnelcenter.org/personnelprep.cfm
Poll Results
Questions