

IHE COMPREHENSIVE FINAL REPORT

June 30, 2002

I. INTRODUCTION

The California Department of Education, Special Education Division (CDE/SED) received a five year, \$9,230,000 State Improvement Grant (SIG) from the U.S. Department of Special Education Programs for “Improving Special Education Outcomes and Services in the State of California.” The California Partnership Committee for Special Education (PCSE) with input from parents, educators, and interested community members from around the state developed the vision, goals, and activities for this grant. As a direct response to the PCSE March 2001 recommendations, several State Improvement Grant activities were simultaneously implemented. These activities included research on California’s foundational recruitment efforts, follow-up telephone interviews with PCSE members of the teacher training and preparation workgroups as well as individuals involved with the identified California foundational recruitment efforts, assemblage of the Special Education Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) Recruitment Task Force, and the development of a Draft California Strategic Plan for the Recruitment, Preparation, and Retention of Special Education Teachers. This report summarizes key findings from the research on foundational recruitment efforts, the activities and recommendations of the Special Education IHE Task Force within the scope of the State Improvement Grant, and the research-based development and production of the Draft California Strategic Plan for the Recruitment, Preparation, and Retention of Special Education Teachers. The report concludes with educational implications and recommendations for next steps of action.

II. SUMMARY OF FOUNDATIONAL TEACHER RECRUITMENT EFFORTS IN CALIFORNIA

California State University (CSU)

The CSU is California’s largest public university and the primary source of California teachers. To fulfill this responsibility, “The CSU has committed to serve every individual who wants to be a teacher, wishes to be prepared by CSU, and meets CSU admission standards,” according to the online document prepared by Dr. Beverly Young (October 2001). To enhance access and to ensure its teacher preparation is sound and of high quality, the CSU has identified the following four major goals: 1) Access, to build capacity and efficiency of California’s largest public university; 2) Curriculum, to develop opportunities for early and better articulated teacher preparation; 3) High Standards, to establish the CSU benchmark for a well-prepared California teacher; and 4) Collaboration with schools, to broaden University/K–12 shared role in teacher preparation. These goals are based on recommendations of the CSU Presidents’ Commission on Teacher Education Report (1997), the Senate Bill 1422 Advisory Panel Report (CCTC, 1997), and the Teachers Who Teach Our Teachers (CSU, Institute for Education Reform, 1996). Under the auspices of the CSU is the CSU, Institute for Education Reform and CalTeach. Both of these educational organizations play a major role in the foundational teacher recruitment efforts in California.

California State University, Institute for Education Reform

The California State University (CSU) Institute for Education Reform founded in 1995 by then Chancellor Barry Munitz and Gary K. Hart, former state Senator and veteran chairperson of the

Senate Education Committee, is a university-based policy center, focusing on elementary and secondary school issues. The Institute, located on the CSU, Sacramento campus, works with all 23 campuses of the CSU system and is supported by the Chancellor's Office. Its goals are to link the university and state policy makers with important developments and concerns within the K–12 education community and to provide assistance to K–12 schools which are undertaking or contemplating major reform activities.

The CSU, Institute of Education Reform produces documents and organizes seminars and forums to discuss pertinent policy issues. For example, in September 1996, the Institute produced, *A State of Emergency in a State of Emergency Teachers*, to stimulate a long overdue debate and action on this pressing problem facing California's public education. Relevant to the focus of this report is the Institute's document, *Pipeline to the Future: A Statewide Teacher Recruitment Plan for California* (April 1997). The document provides a context for the development of a California Statewide Task Force on Teacher Recruitment and the creation of the Statewide Teacher Recruitment Action Plan, a strategic approach to teacher recruitment in the state.

The story of the history and development of this Task Force and the Statewide Strategic Plan can directly inform the State's present recruitment efforts for special education teachers. Therefore, it will be discussed in greater detail as part of this summary report. It is interesting to note that in January, 1996, recognizing the challenges related to the unprecedented demands on California's ability to keep pace with its need for new teachers, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) in collaboration with the State Department of Education, and CSU, Institute for Education Reform, and with support from the Stuart Foundation, awarded a competitively-bid contract to Recruiting New Teacher, Inc. (RNT) to assist the Commission in developing a coherent, comprehensive action plan for increasing and improving teacher recruitment, induction, and retention. The sponsors and RNT convened a task force made up of 23 representatives of various California education and teaching organizations and groups, to explore key issues through interviews with educational stakeholders and researchers on major policy issues and to examine teacher recruitment efforts occurring nationwide. In California, RNT interview results identified "a patchwork of very effective highly innovative projects operating for the most part in isolation from one another, a piecemeal landscape of innovation and effectiveness without much connection or cohesion," as stated in the Institute's 1997 Pipeline report. As a result, the Statewide Teacher Recruitment Action Plan was developed as a "flexible framework that highlighted a range of programs that currently existed and suggested ways to connect them conceptually and operationally in a manner that can be expanded and modified as needed. The Plan incorporated as much as possible of the work that was already going on, so as not to reinvent the wheel," according to the Institute's report.

The Task Force identified 33 recommendations for improving teacher recruitment, induction, and retention in California, Eleven of these were regarded as priority recommendations because they could be implemented quickly and showed the most promise for short-term results in building and expanding the pipeline into teaching. Briefly stated, the eleven priority recommendations were: 1) Develop a California Public Service Announcement (PSA); 2) Generate news coverage of teacher need and opportunity in CA; 3) Create "What it Takes to Teach in CA" brochure; 4) Develop a "CA Career in Teaching Handbook;" 5) Establish a CA Center/Clearinghouse on Teaching Careers; 6) Develop a Prospective Teacher Helpline and Referral Database; 7) Create a Respondent Database; 8) Expand Paraprofessional Teacher Training Program; 9) Provide internships; 10) Expand Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program; and 11) Link the Mentor Teaching Program to New Teacher Support. The recommendations were also sorted into three categories with associated activities. The first category, Expand Pool, included the activities: PSA, Media Campaign, Informa-

tion Clearinghouse, Teacher Induction, and Stakeholder Meetings at District Level. The second category, Strengthen Pipeline, highlighted the pre-collegiate and community college levels, providing traditional and nontraditional programs, expanding induction and career continuum through future education clubs, teaching magnet programs and fellowships, better articulation between high schools, community colleges, and state universities, and a pipeline for paraprofessionals. The third category, Remove Unnecessary Barriers, addressed CBEST accessibility and test preparation, candidate screening and selection, the use of technology, and the concentration of state recruiting efforts within California's boundaries.

The total 33 recommendations of the Task Force were referred to in Appendix A of the Institute's report, but not provided online. Under Appendix A online is the statement, "Coming soon to the web site." Further investigation into the Appendix of this report is needed. Although the shortage of special education teachers is referred to as "chronic," and the number of emergency permits in 1997 for special education was reported at 3,628, specific strategies to target special education teachers are not addressed in the eleven priority recommendations, nor in the text of the Institute's report.

CalTeach

CalTeach, the California Center for Teaching Careers, was created in 1997 through the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 824 to address California's projected need for approximately 300,000 new teachers over the next ten years. CalTeach is a one-stop information, recruitment and referral service for individuals considering or pursuing a teaching career. The Institute for Education Reform, under the auspices of California State University, administers CalTeach. CalTeach coordinates efforts with the California Teacher Recruitment Incentive Program (Cal-Trip). The "CalTeach: California Teaching Incentives Matrix" is a comprehensive, user-friendly publication that identifies and describes 20 California Teaching Incentives for future teachers, teachers, and districts, county offices and postsecondary institutions.

To better inform the public about the teaching shortage, CalTeach initiated a statewide media campaign in January 1999. Media and public relations campaigns that include printed informational materials distributed at community events and school presentations are major CalTeach services. In addition, CalTeach provides resources, information, web access, links to other websites, and advisors to talk with using their toll-free Advisor Helpline. CalTeach media and printed materials target all age groups by explaining "pathways to teaching" for High School Students, Community College Students, College Students, Career Changers, as well as Foreign Degree holders.

CalTeach makes available information on teacher preparation programs, gives information on alternative certification programs, provides information on programs for paraprofessionals, identifies teacher awareness and preparation programs at the high school community college, and four-year college levels including recruitment activities schedules. Furthermore, CalTeach networks applicants to teaching jobs across the state using the online Education Job Opportunities Information Network (EDJoin), and guides prospective teachers to the Teacher Recruitment Centers located throughout the state.

All accredited teacher credentialing programs within California are accessible from the CalTeach website or by phone. Information regarding alternative credentialing opportunities (district and college intern programs and online credentialing) is also listed for those individuals looking for an accelerated or nontraditional credentialing program.

As outlined in the CalTeach brochure, "Who is CalTeach?" the focus of Calteach's recruitment efforts is on high school students, college students, and paraprofessionals from diverse cultural backgrounds, as well as professionals seeking a career change. CalTeach is committed to recruiting

and promoting a teacher corps that reflects the diversity of California’s population.”

CalTeach works with all groups and individuals concerned with future generations of educators. CalTeach collaborates with educational organizations, businesses, and community groups because the organization believes that full community support is needed to successfully identify and recruit potential teachers.

Teacher Recruitment Centers (TRCs)

With a predicted shortage of 300,000 new teachers needed in the next ten years to fill vacancies caused by teacher attrition and pupil growth, the Governor approved Senate Bill No. 1666 (Alarcon) on July 5, 2000. In addition to the creation of multiple teacher incentive opportunities, this bill established the “Teacher Recruitment Incentive Program” that awarded six grants to operate regional recruitment centers that focus on recruiting teachers to low-performing schools, especially those with teaching staff that have more than 20% emergency permit holders.

“Regional teacher recruitment center” is defined in Senate Bill (SB) No. 1666, as an entity operated by a consortium of school districts that may also include county offices of education, colleges, universities, or other community-based organizations. To date, six regional teacher recruitment centers have been established in California. The Teacher Recruitment Center and the counties that they serve are listed below:

1. ***Project Pipeline Northern California Teacher Recruitment Center*** serves Alameda, Alpine, Butte, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Mateo, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Yolo, and Yuba Counties.
2. ***Central California Teacher Recruitment Center*** serves: Amador, Calaveras, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Monterey, San Benito, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Ventura Counties.
3. ***Los Angeles Unified School District Teacher Recruitment Center*** serves Los Angeles Unified School District
4. ***Los Angeles County Teacher Recruitment Center*** serves all other Los Angeles County Districts.
5. ***San Diego, Orange, Imperial Teacher Recruitment Center*** serves Imperial, Orange, and San Diego Counties.
6. ***Riverside, Inyo, Mono, San Bernardino (RIMS) Teacher Recruitment Center*** serves Inyo, Mono, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties.

Teacher Recruitment Centers provide assistance and partner with districts to ensure that teachers are placed in classrooms through a seamless and efficient hiring process. The centers are designed to directly link “veteran teachers seeking a new position, beginning teachers looking for a supportive environment, or aspiring teachers seeking the right internship program and prospective employers.” Specific services that the centers provide are: teacher preparation assessment, job opportunity exploration, attendance at recruitment fairs and events, application assistance, and financial opportunity information (including sample incentives such as teacher tax credits, increased entry-level salaries, certification bonuses, district incentives, and home purchase discounts).

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC)

“Through the 1990s, alternative certification programs have played an increasingly

significant role in recruiting individuals into the teaching profession,” according to Edsource Report, Update on California’s Teacher Workforce Issues, March 2001 (p.4). Since 1994 the number of districts participating in intern programs have tripled. The number of participants has steadily increased with more than 11,000 having graduated between 1994 and 2000. The legislature in 2000 showed some support for alternative certification programs and raised the reimbursement amount to districts and county offices operating such programs to \$2500 per intern (Senate Bill No. 1666). Presently, the Commission projects a grand total of 8,202 interns for the 2002–2003 fiscal year.

More recently a CCTC pre-intern program has been passed by the state legislator to encourage individuals who are interested in teaching to enter the certification pipeline and focus on obtaining subject matter competency verification so that they may be eligible for an internship credential and an alternative route to teacher preparation.

Center for Future of Teaching and Learning

The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning is a public nonprofit institution dedicated to the improvement of teacher professional development policy and practice. The Center was founded in 1995 and is comprised of educational professionals, school and public policy experts. The Center’s objectives are to strengthen professionalism in teaching, accelerate the development and dissemination of effective professional development strategies, and contribute to and improve the quality of public policy on professional development. Its primary focus is strengthening California’s teacher workforce.

In its December 2001 report, the Center concluded, “ Many states face shortages of skilled teachers, but none at the scale of California.” The Center reports that the shortage of qualified teachers does not affect schools uniformly. However, teacher shortages in specialized areas remain. In California, the problem of vacancies and of “undertrained” personnel for special education is an alarming statewide issue. In the school year 2000–2001, 9,468 of the 26,109 individuals employed as California special education “teachers” were neither certified, nor even in supervised internship programs.

Joint Committee for the Master Plan

The Joint Committee to Develop a Master Plan for Education under the leadership of Senator Dede Alpert, chair, has developed a new master plan that builds on California’s existing Master Plan for Higher Education, expanding that framework to include K–12 and postsecondary education. The Joint Committee has developed a Master Plan for Education that addresses a broad range of issues including enrollment, funding, and governance across California’s schools, colleges, and universities.

Gary K. Hart chaired the Master Plan Committee on Professional Personnel Development. After 18 months of “hard labor” the Final Report on Professional Personnel Development (1/31/02) of the Master Plan is now at the stage of seeking public input. According to John Gilroy, Master Plan Consultant, “The Professional Personnel Development Subgroup Report highlighted the following areas: accountability, inadequate regional coordination of professional development, improvement in communication networks, shortage of the professorate (need to increase capacity), reduction of emergency permits, need for increased teacher training capacity, state standards for working conditions, low performing schools, need for more staff development, establishment of Teaching Academies in high school and community colleges, need for increased articulation with four year institutions, target recruitment efforts to reduce emergency permits, need for increased awareness of support for beginning teachers, and the development of teacher cadres. The Master plan does not target Special Education teachers or specifically reference Special Education, but refers to all teachers.

III. SUMMARY OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION (IHE) TASK FORCE

Background

The California Department of Education, Special Education Division (CDE/SED) received a five year, \$9,230,000 State Improvement Grant (SIG) from the U.S. Department of Special Education Programs for “Improving Special Education Outcomes and Services in the State of California.” The California Partnership Committee for Special Education (PCSE) with input from parents, educators, and interested community members from around the state developed the vision, goals, and activities for this grant.

Year 1 State Improvement Grant (SIG) Activity

In Year 1 SIG Activity, “to reduce the rate of special education teachers who are less than fully credentialed (emergency permits and credential waivers),” the Partnership (PCSE) proposed that a state incentive program for Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) be developed through a request for proposals (RFP) process. The purpose of the IHE Incentive Program was to provide incentives for additional, easily accessible, special education credential-required courses including training in the use of collaborative strategies. Guidelines for the development of this SIG activity were recommended by the Partnership and implemented through the RFP process. The first year of the RFP process, two grants for the amount of \$20,000 each were awarded to CSU, Fresno and CSU, Fullerton. The second year of the RFP process, three grants for the amount of \$20,000 each were awarded to San Francisco State University, CSU, Chico, and CSU, Stanislaus.

IHE Task Force Meeting on September 25, 2000

The IHE Task Force developed as a workgroup under the State Improvement Grant to review and critically examine the RFP Grant process and the SIG Activities that related to teacher preparation and training. The first meeting of the IHE Task Force took place on September 25, 2000. The Task Force developed recommendations and next steps for the Partnership Committee on Special Education (PCSE) consideration. Specifically, the Task Force provided recommendations for how the IHE RFP process could be revised and how the SIG “Teacher Activities” could be enhanced to address teacher recruitment, retention, and program development and expansion that would lead to sustainable, systemic change. A summary of the IHE Task Force issues identified and recommendations taken to the PCSE on March 14–15, 2001 follows.

Summary of IHE Task Force Recommendations

IHE Program Development

Issue 1: Several IHEs do not have Commission approved programs. Technical Assistance (TA) to support IHEs in writing program approval documents would be helpful.

Recommendations:

- A.** TA in form of individuals identified (a pool) of individuals who would act as mentors to help with program development and the writing of documents and also receive stipends.
- B.** Request for Proposals (RFP) process would not be allocated at \$1200 or less. Specific criteria and guidelines for the Technical Assistance need to be drafted.

Teacher Recruitment

Issue 2: Get more people into the pipeline (minority, traditionally underrepresented groups, i.e.: individuals with low-incidence disabilities, moderate/severe disabilities)

Recommendations:

- A. RFP to all IHEs
- B. Focus on Undergraduate Recruitment
- C. Link with Community Colleges for Teacher Recruitment
- D. Develop an IHE handbook on recruitment strategies for SPED that focuses on minorities and traditionally underrepresented groups, new-to-the-field students, nontraditional certification paths, such as interns.
- E. As recruitment centers develop, ensure that a SPED component is included from the beginning.

Teacher Retention

Issue 3: A plan is needed for integrating Education Specialist Level II standards and Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) requirements:

- Support provider training
- California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST) modification
- Design activities that satisfy both BTSA/CFASST and Level II requirements eliminating double work for beginning special education teachers.

Recommendations:

- A. Create a state level focus group with specific timelines to develop guidelines to implement BTSA/Level II interface
- B. Pilot a statewide CFASST training for Special Education Support Providers
- C. RFP for IHE/BTSA collaborative grant

Issue 4: Working conditions connected to the Special Education “Job”—Expectations for “role” and “job” may not match.

Recommendation:

- A. RFP for IHE/LEA Partnership to study local “Working Conditions” for the Special Educator.

Issue 5: Support for getting people through the special education teacher preparation program

Recommendations:

- A. Advising support
- B. MSAT/CBEST/RICA
- C. Coaches of Coaches
- D. Flexible Programming—“Client Orientation,” such as alternative access and child care options

Teacher Program Expansion

Issue 6: There is a need for centralized data collection for teacher “pipeline” numbers.

Recommendation:

- A. Produce a data publication distributed to IHE Special Education Programs annually, in June.

Issue 7: There is a need to support program expansion such as new ways to offer courses, i.e. distributed learning options in Special Education.

Recommendations:

- A. RFP for Program Expansion
- B. Provide state technical assistance workshop/conference focused on existing online courses available. “Brown Bag” on technology.

Several of the IHE Task Force recommendations, such as the ones listed under Teacher Retention (BTSA/Level II Interface) were implemented immediately under the coordination of the California Department of Education /Special Education Division, the California Department of Education/Professional Development Division, and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The result of this collaboration and coordination produced two state level workgroups that addressed BTSA for Special Educators and culminated in a statewide one-day workshop (supported by the State Improvement Grant). Special Education Faculty from Institutions of Higher Education across the entire state participated. For the very first time, every California Special Education Teacher Preparation Program, with the exception of two programs, was represented in the same room at the same time. Feedback from this event continues to be most positive.

Year 2 State Improvement Grant (SIG) Activity

The Year 2 SIG Activities included revisions from the March 2001 PCSE meeting. The first revision was the alignment of the SIG Objective to the Special Education Division’s Key Performance Indicator (KPI). The “Teacher Outcome” under the KPI now guiding the work of the PCSE and the IHE Task Force became “All students with disabilities will be served or taught by fully qualified personnel.”

To increase the percentage of special education staff who are fully certified and to decrease the percentage of special education teachers operating under emergency permits or credential waivers, the Partnership in March 2001 proposed five SIG recommendations that will lead to sustainable, systemic change.

SIG 2001 Recommendations:

(five recommendations that will lead to sustainable, systemic change)

1. Develop a Task Force to include general education, LEAs, nonpublic schools, private and public IHEs, parents, HR, state-funded programs, CCTC, CDE, CDE/SED, and a representative from legislative analyst office.
 - Task Force needs to be data driven and link to Joint Master Plan and Governor’s Plan (Senate Bill No. 1666).
2. Develop a California strategic action plan that identifies short and long-term activities for recruitment/retention of special education teachers.
3. Gather information and continually inform field and “solution” folks on what works.
4. Increase resources to support IHE/RFP process
 - Produce data generated reports on:
 - Undergraduate Recruitment
 - Links with Community Colleges for Teacher Recruitment

- IHE Handbook on Recruitment Strategies for Special Education Teachers that focuses on minorities and traditionally underrepresented groups, new to the field students, and nontraditional certification paths, such as internships
- As recruitment centers develop, ensure a SPED component is included from the beginning.

5. Provide a plan for collaboratively capturing federal dollars.

For further details see State Improvement Grant (SIG) Website: www.calstat.org

Year 3 State Improvement Grant (SIG) Activity

As a direct response to the PCSE March 2001 recommendations, several SIG activities were simultaneously implemented. These activities included research on California's foundational recruitment efforts, follow-up telephone interviews with PCSE members of the teacher training and preparation workgroups as well as individuals involved with the identified California foundational recruitment efforts, and assemblage of the IHE Recruitment Task Force with expanded representation as recommended by the PCSE.

Research on California's foundational recruitment efforts is summarized in Section I of this report. Results of the follow-up telephone interviews provide useful information regarding the "next steps" needed to address the KPI, "All students with disabilities will be served or taught by fully qualified personnel."

Follow-up Telephone Interviews

Fifty-three (53) individuals were contacted and twenty (20) in-depth "open-ended" telephone interviews were actually conducted. The individuals interviewed represented various local, regional, state, and national organizations and constituencies as well as various geographical regions of California. The "open-ended" telephone interview questionnaire asked respondents to describe recruitment activities and processes that their organization implemented or that they knew about on a personal level. The questionnaire also asked respondents to describe recruitment activities and processes that specifically targeted special education teachers.

Findings from Interviews and Research

A content analysis of the interview notes indicates that multiple recruitment activities for teachers are occurring across the state and that state resources provide much of the needed funding and support for these activities. Additionally, it is important to note that the findings from the open-ended telephone interviews and a review of the foundational recruitment efforts in California indicate that although the need for fully certified special education teachers is recognized as a critical state concern, recruitment activities and processes that specifically target special education teachers have not been identified or included in statewide recruitment efforts. As multiple respondents indicated, "We didn't focus on special education. There is no specific reference to special education teacher recruitment."

However, the findings also reveal a very strong interest by some respondents to engage in recruitment activities that would specifically target special education teachers. All respondents indicated that they did not know of the existence of any statewide strategic plan for the recruitment of special education teachers. As the interview responses were analyzed, it became clear that the issues surrounding special education teacher recruitment were directly linked to issues of special education teacher preparation and retention. Therefore, when the IHE Task Force met in April, 2002, the scope of the group's work to create a Draft California Strategic Plan for Recruitment broadened to encompass strategic planning for special education teacher preparation and retention.

IHE Recruitment Task Force Meeting—April 25, 2002

The IHE Task Force met again on April 25, 2002 with the purpose of sharing information about California foundational recruitment efforts and developing recommendations for a California strategic action plan for the recruitment, preparation, and retention of special education teachers. The IHE Task Force outcomes were to recognize current recruitment activities, identify future recruitment, preparation, and retention activities, and list recommendations in a California strategic action plan that includes long and short term activities and improves the communication and coordination of local, regional, and statewide efforts for the recruitment, preparation, and retention of special education teachers. The Task Force members included representatives from the University of California, the California State University, Private Universities, Local Education Agencies/ Public School Administration, Institute for Education Reform—CalTeach, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC), the Project Pipeline Northern California Teacher Recruitment Center, the California Department of Education/ Special Education Division (CDE/SED), and the National Clearinghouse on the Professions in Special Education (NCPSE). Unfortunately, a representative from the State Education Department representing Early Childhood programs and a parent who was planning to participate, were unable to attend at the last minute.

During the Task Force Meeting, Dr. Phoebe Gillespie from the National Clearinghouse on the Professions in Special Education shared information on resources and services from the National Clearinghouse, a conceptual model of Collaborative Practices to Support Development of Diverse, Well Qualified Special Educators, and examples of other states' efforts (including Hawaii, North Carolina, and Texas) to develop a strategic plan for the recruitment, preparation, and retention of special educators.

The minutes and work of the IHE Task Force were summarized in the form of “Draft Recommendations for California Strategic Plan for Recruitment, Preparation, and Retention of Special Education Teachers: Long and Short Term Activities Grid.” The development of the Draft California Strategic Plan and the recommendations from the PCSE on May 22, 2002 are discussed in the next section of this report.

IV. DRAFT OF STATEWIDE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION, AND RETENTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Research Background

The construction of the Draft California Strategic Plan incorporated the notes from the April 25, 2002 IHE Task Force Meeting with references such as websites and “hotlinks,” so that the document serves as an information resource in addition to being a strategic plan. The framework for the Draft California Strategic Plan was modeled on best practices outlined in the “Collaborative Practices to Support Development of Diverse, Well Qualified Special Educators” developed by the National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education (NCPSE). A copy of this conceptual model can be found in Appendix A of this report.

The practices outlined in this model provide research-based specific strategies that have proven successful in the areas of special education teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention. Research findings from The Survey of Personnel Needs in Special Education (SPeNSE) and the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) have been addressed in the “Collaborative Practices to Support Development of Diverse, Well Qualified Special Educators” best practices conceptual model.

SPeNSE was a national study conducted in spring 2000 under the direction of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to address concerns about nationwide shortages in the number of personnel serving students with disabilities and the need for improvements in the qualifications of those employed. The survey included approximately 8,358 interviews with special education preschool teachers, general and special education teachers K–12, speech-language pathologists, para-professionals, and local administrators (approximately 358 administrators). Results of the study support that collaborative partnerships are needed to 1) recruit young people, career changers, and nontraditional learners into the profession; 2) use technology and data to recruit special education professionals for school vacancies, and 3) establish professional development programs to retain service providers in the profession.

The conceptual model of collaborative practices provides practical steps to the *Strategies for Building and Sustaining a Diverse and Highly Qualified Special Education Workforce* as outlined by Dr. Lynn Boyer in the Council of Administrators of Special Education Newsletter, In CASE- November–December, 2001. Dr. Boyer (2001, p.2) states that, “Building a diverse, high quality special education workforce requires ongoing work within an integrated and collaborative recruitment and retention plan. The plan should address recruiting persons into the field, preparing them to meet the challenge of the classrooms they will enter, recruiting into districts, and supporting new hires to become accomplished teachers who are the core of the program.” She further identifies collaborative partners as university faculty, state department of education staff, individuals responsible for recruitment and hiring in districts, and district level staff responsible for professional development. The author describes strategies for the recruitment of special educators into the field and specific district recruiting strategies. These strategies are researched-based and include findings from the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) that highlight the most effective recruitment strategies identified by 3,506 superintendents in seven Midwestern states. These specific strategies are also included in the conceptual model on best practices outlined in the “Collaborative Practices to Support Development of Diverse, Well Qualified Special Educators” developed by the National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education (NCPSE).

Analysis of Research and Practice

“Best Practices” for Support, Recruitment, and Conditions of the Environment, and Curriculum and Processes Support outlined in the NCPSE conceptual model were matched with the California foundational recruitment efforts and the recommendations of the IHE Task Force. The result of the match revealed that many recruitment, preparation, and retention activities are currently available in California. The areas in need of leadership, attention, and resources focus upon the need to improve communication and coordination of local, regional, and statewide efforts for the recruitment, preparation, and retention of special educators. The “Draft Recommendations for: CA Strategic Plan for Recruitment, Preparation, and Retention of Special Education Teachers: Long Term and Short Term Activities Grid” attempts to address the need for improved communication and coordination of these efforts. The document is attached in Appendix B of this report. It is also available at the State Improvement Grant (SIG) website: www.calstat.org/pcsesig/html

Year 4 State Improvement Grant (SIG) Activities Recommendations:

Emphasis on Key Performance Indicator

Recommendations from the May 22, 2002 PCSE Teacher Recruitment, Preparation, and Retention Workgroup addressed the Key Performance Indicator: “Increase percentage of fully certified staff.”

The overall PCSE workgroup recommendation was to continue to develop a California strategic action plan that includes long and short term activities and improves the communication and coordination of local, regional, and statewide efforts for the recruitment, preparation, and retention of special education teachers. The overall recommendation aligns with the State Improvement Grant's "Guiding Principles for Implementation." The workgroup's recommendation is based upon research-based practices to improve student, teacher, and system outcomes. The recommendation leverages and builds upon existing resources and also models and encourages partnerships.

Furthermore, the recommendation highlights outcomes and data informed decision-making. The SIG Objectives: California's State-Level Outcomes Summary suggests that since 1997–1998 (83.9%) through 2000–2001 (75.9%) there has been a steady decline in the percentage of fully certified special education teachers. The percentage of special education teachers on emergency permits or credential waivers has also increased since 1997–1998 (16.7%) to 2000–2001 (21.6%). It is interesting to note that a decrease in the percentage has been demonstrated from 1999–2000 (23.4%) when compared to 2000–2001 (21.6%). The percentage decrease may be indicative of a current trend downward, but this cannot be determined until the next year's data collection and analysis are completed.

The key performance indicator data suggest that action is critically needed in order to reach the goal of increasing the percentage of special education staff who are fully certified and decreasing the percentage of special education teachers operating under emergency permits or credential waivers. A research-based statewide strategic action plan that improves communication and coordination of efforts for the recruitment, preparation, and retention of special educators addresses this call to action.

Feedback from PCSE workgroup members indicated that a great deal of work was accomplished within the last year regarding this SIG activity and that more work was needed. In general, workgroup members felt that more time and input are needed to review and revise the "Draft Recommendations for: CA Strategic Plan for Recruitment, Preparation, and Retention of Special Education Teachers: Long Term and Short Term Activities Grid" (Document available at State Improvement Grant (SIG) website: <http://www.calstat.org/pcsesig/html> and in Appendix B of this report.)

PCSE Workgroup on Teacher Recruitment and Retention—May 22, 2002

(The following are the typed notes from the chart papers from Workgroups A and B)

RECOMMENDATIONS/ WORKGROUP A

- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 9: Working Conditions Study recommended.
- Pre-Intern Program Points #1 and #2 recommended.
- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 8: Add persons with disabilities.
- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 6: Add high school seniors.
- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 16: IHE statewide meeting recommended.

TARGETS WORKGROUP B

- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 17:
Continued development of CA Strategic Plan— (Method to provide input needed)
Continue IHE Task Force
Use services from National Clearinghouse
Creation of workgroups to implement plan
- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 3:
Approach Edjoin to target special education.

CONSIDERATIONS

1. 0–5 consideration within the IHE strategic plan
2. Childcare staff consideration in the IHE strategic plan
3. Need for clarification of personnel i.e. “teachers”
4. Check Master Plan for preschool readiness related to personnel
5. Check other studies i.e. Utah
6. Expand representation on the IHE Task Force Group
7. Post in timely manner for input
8. Teacher voice represented

DRAFT CA STRATEGIC PLAN: SPECIFIC CHANGES RECOMMENDED

(These changes were indicated on the overhead of the plan as the workgroups discussed the plan.)

- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 2:
Add “as appropriate” to the outcome, so it reads, “ Ensure that Special Education is included in teacher education legislation as appropriate.”
- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 7:
Add “mid-career changers to long-term and short -term ACTIVITIES box.
- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 8:
Add communication and interactions with parents to long-term and short -term ACTIVITIES box.
- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 10:
Add SECOS curriculum available under the BTSA Special Education Pilot website.
- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 10:
Add <http://www.carsplus.org> and add “ CARS+ Handbook of Goals and Objectives available under the CARS+ website.
- Draft California Strategic Plan Recruitment, Preparation, Retention Effort # 11:
Add “Computer Software Programs and technical assistance to long-term and short-term ACTIVITIES box. Note: See research on California Speech and Language Association (CSLA) for benefits to justify technological efforts for special education teacher retention.

In sum, concluding recommendations from both of the PCSE Workgroups included:

- Use services from the National Clearinghouse on the Professions in Special Education (NCPSE) to continue the development of a California Strategic Plan for the Recruitment, Preparation, and Retention of Special Education Teachers.
- Continue the IHE Task Force and expand its representation.
- Include teachers and parents in the strategic action planning process.
- Consider the early childhood (birth to five) population, including childcare staff, within the strategic plan.
- Address IHE capacity issues in regards to teacher recruitment and preparation in the development of the California Strategic Plan.
- Coordinate a positive Statewide PR/media (PSA) campaign targeting individuals from traditionally underrepresented groups, including individuals with disabilities.
- Provide financial support for an Advisory Group for purposes of a Special Education Working Conditions Study.
- In collaboration with CalTeach and Northern California Teacher Recruitment Center, coordinate a press conference and an IHE Statewide Meeting in Sacramento in fall, 2002. (Suggested agenda items include: Sharing resources and networking with Teacher Recruitment Centers, CalTeach, and National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education (NCPSE) on special education teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention; IHE BTSA/Level II Follow-up; Leadership personnel shortage; Development of an IHE Political Agenda and process for Policy Issues Updates, i.e.: Address Social Security Disincentive)
- Facilitate a means to ensure that every special education teacher has a laptop computer, software, and technical training needed to address “paperwork issues” and increase special education teacher retention.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

California’s foundational recruitment efforts are varied and numerous. When originally conceived, these recruitment efforts did not specifically target special educators. However, there is momentum at the present time to focus on the issue of special education teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention, due to the critical nature of the special education teacher shortage and the need for qualified special educators to impact positive student outcomes.

Such interest has been expressed by Project Pipeline Northern California Teacher Recruitment Center that has formed its own Special Education Task Force and proposes to fund a major study (along with Riverside, Inyo, Mono, San Bernardino Teacher Recruitment Center) on the working conditions of Special Educators.

CalTeach has also expressed interest and support for targeting special education teacher recruitment and collaborating with the California Department of Education /Special Education Division to strengthen the communication and information between the California Center on Teaching Careers (CalTeach) and Special Education Faculty from Institutions of Higher Education.

Furthermore, in preparation for the Partnership meeting on May 22, 2002, a telephone interview was conducted with Mr. Rick Cornish from EdJoin, the online Education Job Opportunities Information Network. Mr. Cornish stated that he had, “Never been approached by anyone to do creative thinking about targeting EdJoin for Special Education Teachers.” Mr. Cornish continued to state, “EdJoin is a public education system paid for by public education for public education. We can do almost anything with our system.” He also expressed that he was very willing to entertain ideas to target special education. This example is provided to illustrate the need for statewide-improved communication and coordination regarding the recruitment, preparation, and retention of special education teachers.

Suggested Next Steps

The California strategic planning process provides a purpose and a means to establish these connections and improve relationships at multiple levels across the state. The work involved is process-oriented as well as product-driven. Based on the PCSE recommendations, next steps include:

1. Convene the IHE Task Force or a subgroup of the IHE Task Force as the planning group for an IHE (two day) Statewide meeting in fall 2002 in Sacramento.
2. Plan to share information as outlined on the Draft California Strategic Plan and ask participants to review the Draft CA Strategic Plan and be prepared to engage in discussion and feedback regarding the plan’s contents.
3. Some time after the two day IHE meeting, the next activity would be the continuation of the development of the CA Strategic Plan for the Recruitment, Retention, and Retention of Special Education Teachers. Research into the CA Strategic Plan referenced in the CSU, Institute of Education Reform report is needed and an assessment of the “lessons learned” from that Task Force would be beneficial. Specifically, further research into the reasons why, five years later, the same “patchwork of highly effective and innovative programs are not connected or functioning in a cohesive manner would be important to identify. Is it possible to establish these functioning networks and sustain them over time? If so, what cost-effective and efficient ways can improvements in coordination and communication be implemented throughout the state to ensure that Special Education is included from the beginning regarding policy and program implementation in respect to teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention activities?”

APPENDIX A:

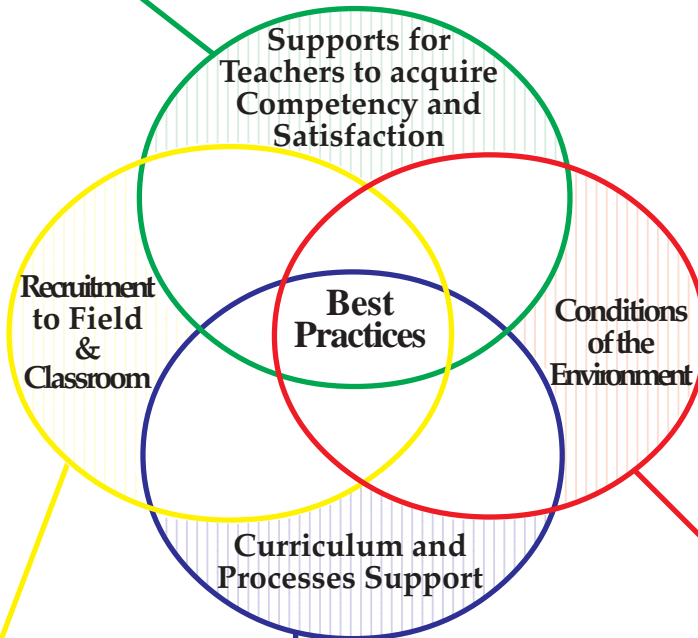
Collaborative Practices to Support Development of Diverse, Well Qualified Special Educators developed by the National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education (NCPSE)

Please go to next page.

Collaborative Practices to Support Development of Diverse, Well Qualified Special Educators

- Induction/mentorship programs
www.ces.sped.org
- Personnel preparation programs with LEAs that include an internship year
- Professional Development Schools www.nctz.org
- State coordinated distance education programs
- Early/increased field experiences in urban and rural settings
- Building/need specific professional development, including coaching and peer support www.glef.org

- To the Field**
- OSEP grants
 - State websites
 - Special education recruiters
 - Incentives (\$ and course work) for critical need areas
 - Non-traditional teacher prep programs
 - State supported print/media campaign
 - Teacher Cadet Program
 - Paras to teachers program
 - www.scctr.org/recruitment.asp
- To the Classroom**
- Online job application and interview processes
 - Salary support programs
 - National and State Web recruiting services
 - Automatic emails to applicants
 - Local print/media campaign
 - Incentives for in-house teacher recruitment
www.rnt.org



- Curriculum content training
- IEP training
- Litigation support
www.special-ed-careers.org

- Administrator training and support
- Teacher participation in building level decision making
- Improved assignment practices for new teachers
- Equal and adequate resources
- Improved communication with district/ building level staff
- Paraprofessional role clarified to increase impact on student achievement (Bright Futures)

This chart was developed by the National Clearinghouse on Careers and Professions Related to Early Intervention and Education for Children with Disabilities (descriptive title: National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education) Cooperative Agreement H326P980002 between the U.S. Department of Education and The Council for Exceptional Children 1999
U.S. Department of Education Project Officer Martha B. Bokee

APPENDIX B:

Draft Recommendations for: CA Strategic Plan for Recruitment, Preparation, and Retention of
Special Education Teachers:

Long Term and Short Term Activiites Grid
(Revised Draft 8/28/02—includes recommendations from PCSE 5/22/02 meeting)

Click on [Draft: CA Strategic Plan](#) for the pdf document or go to
www.calstat.org/CA_strat_plan_sep02.pdf