

RETENTION STRATEGIES

Comprehensive retention strategies must be implemented to address existing shortages of special education teachers and specialized instructional support personnel (SISP). Policy makers can support retention by alerting constituents and others of the importance of retention strategies and introducing legislation and regulatory efforts addressing funding initiatives.

Strategies for States and School Districts

- Encourage and develop mentorship/induction programs that value interprofessional education
- Promote national models of practice
- Provide secretarial support for compliance related work activities
- Provide professional development opportunities
- Provide financial incentives
- Create and sustain systems that prioritize interprofessional practice
- Provide recognition when appropriate
- Provide advancement opportunities
- Allow for flexible and part-time experiences
- Provide Employee Assistance Programs
- Conduct annual workplace condition assessments
- Encourage policies that support flexible hiring processes
- Support the use of appropriate, secure and reliable telehealth that is fully accessible to persons with disabilities (see Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and Section 255 of the Communications Act)
- Provide telehealth opportunities for parents to engage in consultation and collaboration with teachers and other specialized instructional support personnel and to attend meetings virtually



Strategies for Policymakers

- Encourage states to adopt mentorship and induction programs
- Provide financial incentives accessible to districts for the hiring and retention
- Provide grant funding for professional learning
- Promote interagency and intergovernmental collaboration
- Promote consistent specific caseload, workload and/or ratio targets
- Advocate for loan forgiveness for service in specific professions
- Encourage policies and support flexible hiring practices
- Authorize use of and provide maximum funding for technology capacity and appropriate use of teleconferencing and telehealth to:
 - Allow equitable access for all
 - Reduce travel time for efficient service delivery
 - Improve access to needed professionals

Benefits of Implementing Comprehensive Retention Efforts

Implementation of comprehensive retention strategies allows schools to:

- Retain highly qualified personnel
- Limit employee attrition, remedy personnel shortages, and increase job satisfaction
- Help employees build stronger working relationships and improved professional skills
- Demonstrate to staff that they are a valued member of the school community

