



Task Force Brief

February 2016

Meeting Objectives

Create three to five recommendations for SWIFT partner sites for supporting students with extensive needs in SWIFT partner schools. We will:

- Minimize the need for separate educational environments
- Effectively address the academic needs of students with extensive support needs
- Elevate conversations in each of our SWIFT partner states regarding the logistics of bringing students together

Big Ideas

- Teacher and Administrator Preparation: Address the coursework and credentialing of educators through Institutes of Higher Education and State Accrediting/Licensing Agencies
- Include in the reauthorization of IDEA a focus matching resources and supports to student needs as an alternative to labels and continuum of placements; an equity-based rather than placement-based definition of inclusion
- State Departments of Education: Develop or promote guidance and incentives to reduce out-of-district placements, accessing federal dollars for special education services, and collaborate with mental health agencies (consider funding, MTSS approach, etc.)
- Develop teacher capacity within SWIFT partner States to provide examples of “highly effective” teachers who can collaborate to teach ALL students; merged preservice general and special education personnel preparatory programs

Task Force Members

DeBello, Joanne
Diamond, Tina
Duncan-Holley, Marisa
Dunn, Winnie
East, Bill
Farr, Sally
Halvorsen, Ann
Hemingway, Beth
James, Matthew
Kozleski, Elizabeth
Kurth, Jennifer
Longino, Jamilliah
Meisenheimer, Jessica
Meza DeLaVega, Maria

Miles, Robin
Miller, Amanda
Ouellet-Piper, Jackie
Quirk, Carol
Ryder, Ruth
Ryndak, Diane
Sailor, Wayne
Schuh, Mary
Williams, Chandra
Woods, Joyce
Woods, Kari s
Yudin, Michael
Zamora Durán, Grace

Recommendations

1. Develop or share job descriptions, interview questions, etc. templates that partner sites can use when hiring staff who are prepared to collaborate and teach all students—including general and special education teachers, teaching assistants, related service providers, administrators, etc.
2. Connect partner sites with CEEDAR; and develop SWIFT/CEEDAR information sharing via blogs, newsletter, etc.
3. SWIFT partner sites begin to convene people for specific purposes and include community mental health and other groups in the meetings, using both a SWIFT Resource Leveraging Map and NASDSE's community engagement tools
4. Develop strategies schools can use with parents of students who are in transition to new settings (e.g., returning to neighborhood school after an out-of-district placement)
5. Investigate states that use non-categorical support systems for more ideas

Recommendation Updates - April 2017

1. Sample job descriptions for inclusive educational environments are posted on [SWIFT Guide](#).
2. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform Center (CEEDAR Center) collaboratively developed the *PSEL 2015 and Promoting Principal Leadership for the Success of Students with Disabilities*. This resource provides chief state school officers and their state education agency staff guidance on key leadership practices for school principals. It can be accessed on [SWIFT Guide](#).
3. NASDSE's IDEA Partnership developed *Leading by Convening: A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement*. It provides tools to help improve communication and collaboration and is available for download on [SWIFT Guide](#).
4. Members of the SWIFT Family and Community Engagement Team are searching and developing strategies schools can use with parents of students who are in transition to new settings (e.g., returning to neighborhood school after an out-of-district placement). This resource will be available soon.
5. Iowa was identified as a state that uses non-categorical support systems. An excerpt from Standard 6 of the Iowa Department of Education's special education eligibility standards are downloadable from [SWIFT Guide](#).



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