HANGING ON TO THE GOOD ONES:

SUPPORTING AND RETAINING HIGH QUALITY SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF

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COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

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Olathe School District

- Suburb of Kansas City
- Fourth largest city in the state
- Since 1950, Olathe’s population has quadrupled
33 Elementary
8 Junior Highs
4 Senior Highs
2 Early Childhood Learning Centers
Alternative Programs
LET’S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT OUR STUDENTS....
ETHNIC ENROLLMENT DISTRIBUTION

- Caucasian: 76.60%
- American Indian: 5.80%
- Asian: 9.40%
- Hispanic: 4.40%
- African American: 3.60%
- Multi-racial: 4.40%
FREE/REDUCED STATUS
SEPT. 20TH STATE COUNT

Students/Families Living in Poverty

- **District Average** = 20.36% (08-09)
  - 2007-08: 17.09%
  - 2006-07: 16.79%
  - 2005-06: 15.92%
- **Range** = 1% - 81.59%
- **Title 1**: 10 Schools
English Language Learners (ELL)

# of students

1800
1600
1400
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0


50 97 120 369 1501 1687

49 Different Languages in ELL in 08-09
SPECIAL EDUCATION ~
APPROXIMATE DISABILITIES 12%
APPROXIMATE GIFTED 3%

Gen. Ed.
SPED
MOST IMPORTANT KEY TO SUCCESS

Leadership

Parents & Families

Faculty & Staff

Community
QUALITY STAFF..

- Number of Certified Staff = 2479
  - Number of Certified staff with Masters Degrees & Beyond - 1695

- Number of Classified Staff = 1999
WHAT DOES THE LITERATURE TELL US?

- One-third of all new teachers leave after three years
- 46% leave after five years
- Nationally, this costs $7 billion per year

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future
The professional literature indicates that there is a severe, chronic shortage of special education teachers in the United States (Boe, Bobbitt, Cook, Barkanic, 2001; Katsiyannis, Zhang & Conroy, 2003; Carlson et al., 2002; Carlson et al., 2001)

Current Headlines: Special Educators in Demand Despite Recession: Even as some Southern California districts lay off hundreds of teachers, they are hiring special-education, math, science and foreign-language teachers. At a job fair, one district was offering a $9,000 bonus for special-educators. San Jose Mercury News (Calif.) (03/21)
Are we ready for the shortages of qualified SPED staff?
THE SHORTAGES

- 98% of US school districts report shortages of SPED personnel
- 47,000 SPED vacancies filled by uncertified personnel in 2000-01
- In 2008, estimated need for 135,000 more SPED teachers than in 1998.

Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education, February 2004
RELATED SERVICE SHORTAGES

• **Physical Therapists** – Overall vacancy rate of 2% for 3 to 5 year olds; 7% for 6 to 21 year olds

• **Occupational Therapists** – By 2009, the demand for OTs will increase as much as 35%

• **Speech-Language Pathologists** – By 2010, 34,000 additional SLPs needed bringing total vacancies to 57,000

• **Audiologists** – 1 audiologist per every 71,555 students. ASHA guideline → 1 per every 10,000-12,000 students
Why Shortages in SPED?

Beginning teachers report:

- Struggling with the demands of teaching
- Experiencing isolation from colleagues
- Being affected by poor school climate and unclear expectations
- Receiving inadequate resources
- Lacking opportunities for professional growth

Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education, February 2005
HOW DOES THE OLATHE SCHOOL DISTRICT RETAIN QUALITY SPED STAFF?

Comprehensive New Educator Induction Program

A Collaborative Model developed by the Olathe District Schools and the Olathe National Education Association
Purpose:

- To improve the capacity of the Olathe District to attract, induct and retain high performing educators.
- To guarantee New Olathe Educators know district expectations, the district curriculum, and can implement key instructional strategies.
- To ensure success - for both our new educators and, ultimately, our students!
“GREAT BEGINNINGS”

NEW EDUCATOR INDUCTION PROGRAM

- Induction is Part of our Appraisal Process
  - For your professional growth

- Jointly developed
  - Olathe NEA
  - Olathe Administration
Professional growth and development is an ongoing collaborative process based on open communication and rooted in standards of excellence...

...its purpose is to improve educator’s skills and student learning
APPRAISAL PROCESS
FIVE EDUCATOR STANDARDS:

Educators Teaching for Learning
Standard 1:  Educators committed to students and their learning
Standard 2:  Educators know their subject matter and how to teach it
Standard 3:  Educators create a climate for learning

Educators as Members of Learning Communities
Standard 4:  Educators as life long learners
Standard 5:  Educators work with various stakeholders
“Great Beginnings”
New Educator Induction Program

IRT
- Consultation
  - Model Lessons
  - Co-Teaching
  - Problem Solving
- Observation/Reflection
- Feedback

DISTRICT
- Prof. Growth Sessions
  - During Day
  - After School
  - On-Site Masters ESU
- District Staff
  - Coordinators
  - Directors
  - Others

SCHOOL
- School Administrators
- Dept. Chairs
- Olathe NEA Bldg. Reps.
- BLT Members
- Collegial Mentor or Orientation Partner
Supports for New SPEDucators

All special education staff new to the district

Instructional Resource Teachers (IRTs)
Master special education teachers on full release to support new SPEDucators

Building/District Level Mentors
Special Education staff who are paid a stipend to support new educators

SPED Coordinators and Program Facilitators
Staff paid to support all Special Education staff and facilitate professional growth opportunities
NEW SPECIAL EDUCATOR INDUCTION:
WHAT ARE THE SUCCESSFUL INGREDIENTS?

- IRT Support
- Building/District Level Mentor
- Building SPED Coordinator and Department Facilitator
- On-going Professional Development designed for New Educators
- Standards-Based Evaluation
- Adequate and Stable Funding
Who is the Special Services Instructional Resource Teacher?
INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCE TEACHER: IRTS are...

- Full-time *mentors* for the new SPEDucators in their first year
- Involved in designing, planning and providing *professional development* to new educators
- Highly *trained and skilled* professionals
- Engage staff in *structured contacts* involving observations and feedback
IRT Contact Time

- Specializing instruction for SPED students
- Collaborating with general education staff
- Developing IEPs and conducting IEP meetings
- Accessing necessary resources
- Providing emotional support
- Training paraeducators
- Answering procedural questions
ON-GOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **New Educator Preservice Event** – 3 full days prior to other faculty returning.

- **Advanced Teaching and Learning Series** – After-school professional development series on topics to support management and effective instruction.

- **School Improvement Training** – Professional development pertaining to specific grade level/content area school improvement.

- **Content Area/Grade Level Professional Development**

- **Building Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)**
**Preservice Activities**

Day 1 - Morning
- Human Resources Breakfast
- Teaching and Learning Overview
- Team Building with SPED IRTs
- Classroom Climate and Management
- IRT Handbook
- Knowing Your Building SPED Team
- Roles and Responsibilities
- ONEA Luncheon

Day 1 - Afternoon
- Team Building Activity
- Jigsaw Activity
  - Working with Parents
  - Rules/Procedures/Routines
  - Special Services Case Manager Responsibilities
  - Working with Other Educators
  - Supervising Para Educators
- IEP Content
- Q & A with SPED Administrative Team
Preservice Activities

Day 2 - Morning
- Accessing SPED Website and Virtual File Cabinet
- Acronyms in Olathe District Schools
- New Educator Needs Assessment
- District Training
  - Blood-borne Pathogens
  - Benefits

Day 2 - Afternoon
- Olathe National Education Association Luncheon
- Principal Directed Activities in Home School
Preservice Activities

Day 3 - Morning
- Introduction to the netIEP
- Meet with Department Facilitators for job-specific information

Day 3 – Afternoon
- Principal Directed Activities in Home School
SPECIAL SERVICES: ADVANCED TEACHING & LEARNING SERIES

netIEP Training
Training and Supervising ParaEducators
Parent-Teacher Conferences/Progress Monitoring
IEP the “Write” Way
Classroom Management
The Gen Ed/SPED Connection
Teaching with the Brain in Mind
Differentiated Instruction
Multiple Intelligences
End of the Year Challenges
Other Professional Growth Opportunities

- Introduction to the District Curriculum
- School Improvement Process Training
  - Guided Growth Training
  - Departmental Trainings
COMPREHENSIVE NEW EDUCATOR INDUCTION PROGRAM

Building Level Mentors
Building Level Mentors

Mentoring helps create a culture for learning by sharing clearly articulated, commonly held beliefs on student learning and professional growth.

Helps reinforce our shared beliefs in
- Instructional practices
- Curriculum
- Management
- Policies & Procedures
- Professional Development
BUILDING LEVEL MENTORS

Who receives mentoring support?
Any certified new hire (with or without prior experience), including: Classroom Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Special Services Staff (school psychologists, SLPs, social workers, OTs, PTs), School Counselors, School Nurses. Early Childhood Educators

How do we select mentors?
Assigned by building administrator or special education facilitator
Assign mentor based on:
• Master Educator of their field
• Preferably similar assignment
• Preferably same location
• Building/District leader
• Utmost professional
• No more than 2 mentees per mentor
BUILDING LEVEL MENTORS

Collegial Mentor (CM)

Working with a teacher who is brand new to the profession – never held a contract in another district (two year program)

Orientation Partner (OP)

Working with a teacher who comes to Olathe with at least one year of experience in another district
CONTACT REQUIREMENTS

Collegial Mentor
(New to Profession)

Meet an average of 30 minutes per week throughout the first year
Meet an average of 30 minutes every other week throughout the second year

Orientation Partner
(Veteran Educator)

Meet an average of 30 minutes every other week throughout the first year
TOPICS FOR CONTACT TIME

First semester: Survival
• Orienting to the District and Building
• Scheduling, procedures, IEPs, etc.
• Day-to-Day assistance

Second semester: Reflection
• Strengths/Needs
• Considerations for Change
MENTOR REQUIREMENTS

Collegial Mentor
(New to Profession)

Three Training Sessions
- Orientation Session
- Two others from a Menu of Options regarding mentoring and/or instructional topics

Contact Log

Orientation Partner
(Veteran Educator)

One Training Session
- Orientation Session

Contact Log
MENTOR TRAINING

Mentor Strand:
• Mentor 101: The Nuts & Bolts (relationship building, coaching, etc.)
• Classroom Management for Mentors: Helping Improve the Effectiveness of Your New Educator’s Management Skills
• Working Relationships: Helping Your Mentee Work with You and Other Staff
• Advanced Mentoring: Helping New Educators Reflect & Grow

AT&L Sessions Available for Training – Recommend attending with New Educator
COMPENSATION

Collegial Mentor  
(New to Profession)

Mentor currently receives $1140 annually (state reimburses $1000)

New Educator receives 2 professional development points per month for movement on the salary scale

Orientation Partner  
(Veteran Educator)

Orientation Partner currently receives $570 annually

New Educator receives 1 professional development point per month for movement on the salary scale
COMPREHENSIVE NEW EDUCATOR INDUCTION PROGRAM

Olathe District Schools and Emporia State University Onsite Masters Degree Curriculum and Instruction
ONSITE MASTERS PROGRAM

- State Board of Regents’ Outcomes
- University Syllabi
- Olathe District Schools New Educator Standards

Began in 2000-2001
ONSITE MASTERS PROGRAM

- **New Educator Induction Series**
  - Meets twice a month
  - 2 hours

- **Master’s Degree Seminar**
  - Meet twice a month
  - 3 hours
  - Grounded in research
  - Open to all new educators
  - Required for Master’s Degree seeking students
ONSITE MASTERS PROGRAM

School Improvement Training

- SIP/Effective Schools Overview
- Research-based Before, During, and After Reading Strategies
- Research-based Problem Solving Strategies
ONSITE MASTERS PROGRAM

- Olathe Summer Conference
  - Effective Instructional Strategies
  - Reading, Writing, Math
  - Technology
  - Climate
  - Long Range Planning
  - Assessment

- Instructional Resource Teachers
  - Model Lessons
  - Consultations
  - Co-Planning
  - Co-Teaching
  - Observations
Why has Our Comprehensive New Educator Induction Program Been Successful?

Winner of the 2007 NEA-SaturnUAW Partnership Award
STANDARDS-BASED EVALUATION

- New Educators are supported for the first four years with a Standards-Based Evaluation system
- IRT and Building Principals base all feedback and appraisal on the District Educator Standards, Indicators and Rubrics
- Professional Development is always connected with the District Educator Standards

See Handouts of Examples of Standards, Rubrics, Observation Forms
Adequate and Stable Funding

- District Negotiated Agreement
  - IRTs
  - Supplemental Contracts
- State Mentoring Funds
RETURN ON OUR INVESTMENT

- High Retention Rate
  - District Overall 2001-2008 (90-93%)
  - 2006-2007 SPED Data: 92%
  - 2007-2008 SPED Data: 96%
  - 2008-2009 SPED Data: 96%

- High Achieving Schools
- Standard & Poor’s
- NTC/Kauffman Foundation Study
- Saturn/NEA/UAW Partnership Award
THE OLATHE WAY

Olathe School District

Our Goals For Students...
- Apply academic skills
- Communicate effectively
- Think critically and creatively to solve problems
- Use and apply technology
- Maintain and enhance physical and emotional health
- Respect and work cooperatively with others
- Demonstrate self-management and practical life skills
- Contribute as responsible and productive citizens

Our Vision...
Students prepared for their future

Our Purpose...
Student learning

Our Beliefs...
- All children can learn
- Together we achieve more

Our Core Values...
- Continuous improvement
- Life-long learning

How We Do Business...

Staff/Board Guiding Principles
Staff/Board will demonstrate in actions and words:
- Children first
- Respect for all
- Teamwork
- Excellence and quality
- Commitment to individual needs

2007-2010 Strategic Plan Directions and Goals
- Student Learning
  Continuously improve learning and achievement
- Quality People
  Recruit, develop and retain a highly qualified staff
- Innovation
  Encourage and promote a climate of innovation
- Community Involvement and Organizational Climate
  Sustain current relationships to enhance involvement and climate
- Resource Acquisition and Allocation
  Maximize resources to support strategic directions

Student Guiding Principles
Students will demonstrate in actions and words:
- Honesty
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Trustworthiness

Parent/Patron Guiding Principles
Parents/Patrons will demonstrate in actions and words:
- Positive Role Models
- Effective Communicators
- Respect for all
- Advocates for education
- Actively involved
New Educators... 

New educators’ success means student success!