



Public Schools of North Carolina

# RECRUITMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATORS

JANUARY 30, 2015

# GETTING READY TO RECRUIT



# RECRUITING IN GENERAL

- Build a living strategic plan upon foundation of district's goals—what are the professional characteristics of the teachers you want to hire
- Be sure person(s) with responsibility for recruitment has been identified and is held accountable
- Be ready to begin early in the recruiting year
- Stream line application process—ask applicants for feedback. Trace the steps yourself.



# DO YOU HAVE PLAN IN PLACE?

- Applications—communicate, communicate, communicate
  - Ensure understanding of timelines
  - Do not let anyone slip through cracks
    - began process—stopped
    - received application—never opened
    - began application—stopped
  - Communicate with the applicants throughout the process—status, timelines, next steps, etc. Make sure they understand the process.
  - Consider references as another source of teachers



- Develop talking points focused upon positives of profession and geographic area—
  - Why would I want to work for your district?
  - Is this a good area to raise a family?
  - What are the recreational opportunities?
  - What are the professional development opportunities?
  
- Who should be familiar with talking points?
  - Recruiters and those working with them
  - Your own HR staff and special education administrators
  - Those who may have any opportunity to speak with local business people/health professionals and parents
  - Those who will be working with child find
  - Those who will be working in any capacity with Special Olympics



- Develop brochures/flyers
  - Why do you work with special needs children
  - Why work for a school district -- advantages
  - Why is this a good location in which to live
- Consider the use of technology in marketing: we must communicate in the same way that potential applicants communicate



- Create partnerships—take student teachers and practicum students, provide unique opportunities
- Build relationships with universities/preparation providers—offer an event to showcase district; offer visits with a former student who teaches
- Build relationships with other regional directors via phone, email, BLOG



# PREPARING RECRUITERS AND INTERVIEWERS





- Be sure that every member of your staff understands the importance of his/her job in the success of your mission
- Ensure those who are involved in recruiting are good representatives of district and have a passion for education and the area
- Ensure those who are involved in recruiting have a strong knowledge of mission, program, area, and opportunities
- Select recruiters who are passionate for education, for special education and for living in your area of North Carolina.



# DO YOU WANT TO CREATE AN INTERVIEW PROTOCOL?

- You need to provide less training for those you ask to interview candidates and to your school administrators
- You control the flow of conversation and avoid illegal interview questions and also answers that do not give you insight into the skills, knowledge, educational philosophy, and appreciation for fact every child can learn
- You give those making hiring recommendations or decisions the same information with which to begin



# MAY WANT TO HAVE “LISTEN FORs” FOR CERTAIN QUESTIONS

- Good classroom management must be in place before good instruction is possible. Please describe your classroom management strategies.
  - Establish/model rules and consequences
  - Consistent routines/procedures
  - Efficient class organization
  - Respect/multicultural appreciation
  - Engaging/motivating lessons
  - Seating assignments
  - Progressive discipline



# BE SURE RECRUITERS UNDERSTAND WHAT LEGAL AND EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS ARE

- Interview questions should concentrate on the applicant's **ability to perform successfully the job duties fundamental** to the position being filled.



# FEDERAL LAW

- Prohibits employers from discriminating against job applicants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, physical handicap or age.
- Questions that could actually reveal information protected by federal and state law could violate the law.



# CITIZENSHIP

- **LEGAL:** Are you legally authorized to work in the United States?
- **PROHIBITED:** Are you a U.S. Citizen?



# AGE

- **LEGAL:** Are you over the age of 18?
- **PROHIBITED:** What year were you born? OR When did you graduate from high school? How long do you plan to work before you retire?



# DISABILITY

- **LEGAL:** Are you able to perform the essential duties of the job for which you are applying?
- **PROHIBITED:** Do you have a disability or a medical condition?





# FAMILY STATUS

- **LEGAL:** Do you have commitments that will prevent you from working regular hours?
- **PROHIBITED:** How many children do you have? OR How old are your children?



# PREGNANCY

- **LEGAL:** How long do you plan to stay in this job?
- **PROHIBITED:** Are you pregnant or planning to become pregnant?



# OTHER ISSUES

- Are you married?
- Do you observe Yom Kippur/Good Friday/Ramadan? Will you need personal time for religious holidays?
- Have you ever had a workplace injury?
- Have you ever been in a car accident?



- Do you have any tattoos?
- What is your native language?
- Are you in the National Guard or the Reserve?



- What arrangements have you been able to make for child care while you work?
- What does your wife do for a living?



# JUST REMEMBER

- Interview questions should concentrate on the applicant's ability to successfully perform the job duties fundamental to the position being filled.



- Why do you want to become a special education teacher?
- Do you want to work in an elementary, middle school or high school setting? Why?
- What are the qualities of an effective special education teacher?
- Do you have those qualities? What specifically leads you to believe you have those qualities?



- Was your last teaching assignment a successful one in your mind? What made it successful or not so successful? What is the criteria you used to determine whether it was successful?
- Tell me in general about your experience in working with your last difficult parent?
- Give me a specific occasion on which you followed a policy with which you did not agree?
- Describe a principal who you believe would be supportive of his/her teachers?





- Children learn in different ways. How will you plan and organize your instruction to accommodate the different learning styles and the goals and benchmarks of your students' IEPs?
- Assessment of student learning is necessary to determine if instructional goals of a unit or lesson have been met. Discuss methods you use to assess your students' progress. Give examples.



- Explain how you will provide support to special education students integrated into the general education classroom.
- What are ways the general education classroom teacher can work effectively with the special education teacher?



- What experiences have you had outside the classroom with exceptional children?
- What kinds of activities or work brings you feelings of success?



# PROVIDING FINANCIAL INCENTIVES



# DETERMINE IF THE STATE IS OFFERING INCENTIVES

- Make sure all recruiters, administrators, and HR staff are aware of the incentives.
- Make sure that applicants **are not given promises** by anyone other than authorized HR administrators about salary or incentives.



# CONSIDER CREATIVE POSSIBILITIES

- Can applicants come in at different points of the salary schedule for previous experience, military service, special training, high-needs subject areas?
- Can movement on the salary schedule be accelerated for accomplishments that enhance teaching skills?
- Can incentives include opportunities to attend certain workshops or to participate in special programs that yield financial rewards?
- Can you enlist the community's help?



# USING SOCIAL MEDIA



# TWITTER

- Use Twitter to stay in touch with university class members to whom you make presentations. Include interesting things about the district, special projects, successes. Also use it to **announce job openings, including contact information.**
- Use it to keep special groups aware of your district or region; such as special Olympic volunteers, parent advisory and advocacy groups, retired teachers, etc.





# CONNECT THROUGH EVERYDAY TOOLS ALREADY IN USE

- Bar Code additions to all possible district business cards that connect to recruiting website
- Ask all district administrators to include link to recruiting websites as part of their signature lines for letters, etc.



# LINKEDIN

- Can search by such things as job title, job skill, key words
- **Can limit searches by state, postal code, and by distance range—Can search for occupational therapists, currently not employed within 25 miles of Raleigh, New Bern, Charlotte, etc.**



- What groups would be relevant that I should consider joining or should I create my own group? **Closed groups must accept you after you indicate interest**
  - Alumni of specific universities
  - Relevant faculty organizations
  - Professional associations
  - Professional interests
  - Conference attendees
- Participate in group discussions—can have dynamic specialists take part. Can view discussion threads, add comments, share news and links
- Post jobs on group’s Jobs Discussion Board—some may not have job discussion boards



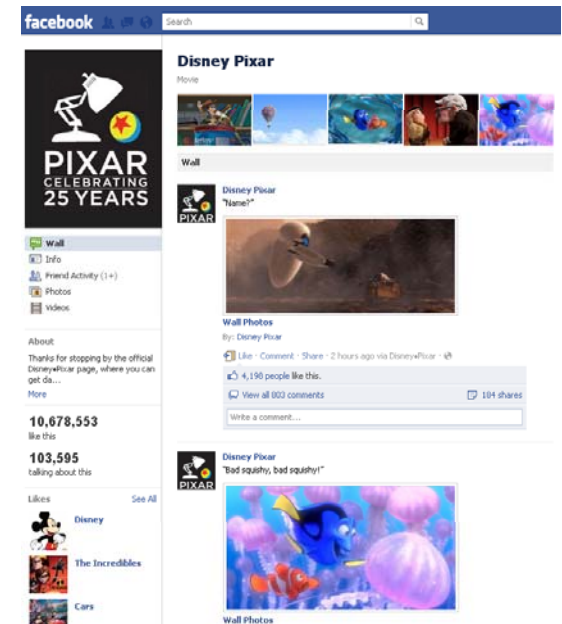
- The search results list people by name with links to profile information. You can “connect” with individuals to build relationships or engage in recruitment activities.
- To make them part of your contact network, you must send them an invitation and they must accept.



# Facebook

- Create a Facebook Page

- A Facebook “Page” can be used to represent a company, organization, club, band, etc. It’s non-personal nature creates a professional presence where friends can become “fans”. The page can be used as an information source when interacting with people in your friendship network.
- Unlike a web page, a Facebook Page works like a personal account with some limitations. Fans can receive information from the Page as a news feed, and they can also post information to the Page wall if permitted. People can “Like” your page and refer friends.



# USING LOCAL RESOURCES



- Shrink wrapped delivery trucks
- Signs in airport/ads on cabs
- Notices on the back of school monthly menus
- Ads or stories in local university newspapers
- Movie trailers and local celebs on TV ads
- Teachers already recruited
- Bus stop signs
- Hotel TV runners in rooms



- Motor Vehicles Offices
- Involve media
- Flyers in electricity or gas bills
- Poster contest; then posters in prominent places; involve media to celebrate winners, but more importantly get our recruiting story and needs to public





# CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:

- We Care
- Calls and follow-up
- Important information back to the district
- Marketing and business expertise
- Reaching out to community groups to which you do not have access
- Marketing help
- Job fairs for spouses and older children



# POSSIBLE USES OF LOCAL RESOURCES

- Poster contest in local high school — inexpensive art work
- Article in local paper about winners of art contest
- Posters re: advantages of working with special needs children and opportunities posted throughout community in markets, banks, credit unions



- Speaking opportunities
  - Groups like Lions, Shriners, which already have a commitment to children
  - Chamber of Commerce
- Empty billboards





Public Schools of North Carolina

**RECRUITING FUTURE TEACHERS  
FROM WITHIN—WHAT POOLS OF  
PEOPLE DO YOU HAVE WITHIN  
THE AREA WHO MIGHT BECOME  
TEACHERS IN CRITICAL  
SHORTAGE AREAS?**

- Current high school students
- Incentives to return to critical shortage areas
- Current support staff
- Teachers willing to add endorsements
- Long-term substitutes in self-contained classrooms
- Substitutes with degrees in fields outside education
- Parents, especially parents of exceptional children
- Recycle retirees
  - Teachers
  - Administrators



# “RETOOLING”

- Specialists who may be retiring from medical field, some of whom already contract with district
- Candidates from surplus fields
- Current educators who can be replaced from existing pool of applicants
  - New speech pathologists
  - New psychologists



# Further Looking Within

- Teaching assistants
- Teachers ready for a change
- SLP assistants, OT assistants, and PT assistants
- Work with universities to place student teachers—using technology for observations in rural or distant districts
- Consider interviewing electronically



# Still Looking Within—Staffing Hard-To-Staff Schools

- New teacher placement on the salary schedule
- Incentives to return to critical shortage subject areas
- Stipends to teach in these schools in last three years before retirement
- Urban residency programs
- Provide support within the hard-to-staff schools
  - Special and focused professional development
  - Instructional coaches
  - Best principals





# RECRUITING FROM THE COMMUNITY



- Alternative route to licensure—critical shortage areas
- People with fluency in a relevant second language
- Local church bulletins to get the word out
- Groups such as stay-at-home moms
- High school classes, community college and four-year universities
- Child care workers with 4-year degrees
- Corporate partnerships



# Recruiting Future Teachers With Help Of Outside Agencies:

- IHEs—Referrals from or Opportunities to speak with liberal arts majors or people with degrees in non-marketable subject areas
- Troops To Teachers, National Guard, and Reserves—80% male and 40% culturally diverse (Fort Bragg, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, Cherry Point Air Station, Cherry Point Naval Air Depot, Camp Lejeune, Pope Field, Simmons Army Airfield, and New River Air Station). Most have educational resources
- Retirees from other government agencies or from business



# RECRUITING FROM OUT OF STATE



- May be difficult, considering present circumstances.
- Research those states that are producing more teachers than they can employ
- Research the universities that graduate candidates in the critical shortage fields
- Gather the available resources that will guide you in your selection of out-of-state target areas; such as, the guide to college fairs, information about college production reports, reports success of graduates in field



- Select recruiters to be involved carefully
- Make sure materials look professional
- Have a checklist to take care of all logistics
  - Transportation
  - Lodging
  - Getting materials to the site
  - Reserving space at the site
- Have a plan for follow-up and then follow up



# EMERGENCY, SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS



- Identify and contact teachers who are on non-medical leaves
- Identify with help of the State Department teachers with up-to-date credentials who are not currently working
- Work with State retirement office to identify special education teachers who have recently retired and who might be interested in returning with part-time contract
- Identify and persuade teachers in general education with special education credential to transfer to special education





- Work with university to place student teacher in vacancy position and another in classroom with teacher and have teacher closely supervise both
- Work with university to identify graduates with special education minors or majors and who are not currently working in the field
- Make presentations through wives' clubs to spouses of military who might have credential and who recently moved to the area



# WHAT DO WE DO WITH THE IDEAS AND STRATEGIES YOU HAVE SELECTED?

- Develop a realistic action plan together
- Monitor progress internally and with each other
- Share successes with each other
- Share challenges with each other
- Be involved in continuous learning



**CREATE YOUR PLAN AND THEN  
PUT YOUR HEART AND SOUL  
INTO THE ACCOMPLISHMENT  
OF THAT PLAN—CHILDREN'S  
FUTURES ARE AT STAKE**

