

HIRING FOR THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM SERVICES

Many schools expect to see an increase in allocations to 100 percent of Fair Student Funding (FSF) for the upcoming 2021–22 school year. Schools should prioritize FSF to ensure that all students with disabilities receive their full IEP-mandated programs and services (i.e. SETSS, ICT, or Special Class) in the upcoming school year. When planning to hire for the next school year, principals should declare vacancies and hire special education teachers to cover all mandates before using budget for other positions – especially any discretionary positions.

It is essential that schools plan to meet student mandates on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), at this time of year when teams are reviewing student needs, making new recommendations, and as new students are being matched to the entering class for the next school year. Be sure to plan for and hire enough teachers to cover all anticipated needs for certified special education teachers. In planning for hiring special education teachers, review the IEPs of current students to determine the appropriate number of special education teachers and paraprofessionals needed to ensure the provision of special education programs and services as indicated in students' IEPs. As soon as they are available, review the IEPs of students expected to attend next year. Any IEP changes that are considered as a result of these reviews should be based on individual student needs, not on concerns about the ability to fund or hire special education teachers.

Throughout the school year, schools should review their Program Services (SEGIS/STARS linkage) Reports to ensure that students with IEPs are fully served. If students are not fully served, B/CO Directors of Special Education, Administrators of Special Education (ASEs), and Academic Policy and Systems Leads can support schools in determining if this is a result of the need for a special education teacher. Directors of Finance and HR, and Budget Directors can support schools in identifying candidates and the funds to hire staff.

Spring through the start of school, school leaders are encouraged to:

- **Forecast:** Work with the B/CO Administrator of Special Education (ASE) and B/CO HR Director to begin forecasting special education vacancies:
 - Utilize Program Services Reports to review need based on current students
 - Utilize SEGIS to identify incoming (list noticed) 6th and 9th grade students with IEPs
 - Utilize lists of incoming kindergarten students emailed to principals from T5CaseManagement@schools.nyc.gov
 - **NOTE:** Specific dates when schools begin receiving access to incoming K, 6th, and 9th graders in SEGIS will be announced in Principals' Digest.
- Plan for enough teachers to allow some extra instructional time, should the number of students with IEPs or the range of recommendations in your school require additional classes or sections.
- **Programming:** Ensure that each Special Education teacher is fully utilized/programmed for mandated periods FIRST; consider developing a pool of teachers for paid preps for coverages throughout the

semester, or other flexible assignments that would allow redeployment if more students with IEPs are assigned to the school.

- **Hiring Committee:** Organize a Hiring Committee which includes staff with knowledge of special education and the school's specific special education needs (e.g. a special education teacher, general education teacher, AP for special education, special education liaison) to support the Principal in hiring decisions
- **Vacancies**
 - Create and post vacancies in Galaxy. Escalate staffing needs to your BCO Human Resources and Budget point people for recruitment and associated budgetary needs. Inform your superintendent of hiring needs and the potential support needed from them regarding budget.
 - Create vacancy postings in the [New Teacher Finder](#) to be viewed by new, external teacher candidates.
 - Actively communicate with your BCO Human Resources point person to ask about teacher recruitment events, and updated candidate pools from which to interview.
 - Reach out to the Office of Teacher Recruitment and Quality through the [H.I.R.E. Connections](#) portal for information on the available candidate pools, hiring best practices, and to request lists of new teacher candidates.

Special Education Vacancies:

- Certification must match class/grade assignment;
- Special Class teachers need a specialist license (not generalist license) with content area extension or specialty for grades 7-12;
- Review licensing for entire school as compared to Master Schedule to ensure alignment.

Ensure that shifts in academic expectations for IEP program recommendations (particularly number of periods) are reflected during articulation years.

- **New Teacher Finder:**
 - Utilize the [New Teacher Finder](#) to search for traditional pathway and alternative certification pathway (e.g. NYC Teaching Fellows and NYC Teaching Collaborative partner teachers) teacher candidates.
- **Open Market Transfer:** Use Open Market Transfer (OMT) to recruit experienced teachers (open April 15, 2021 – August 9, 2021).
- **Events:** Attend virtual teacher networking events organized by the Office of Teacher Recruitment and Quality. Starting in June, please reference H.I.R.E. Connections for virtual networking events for your teacher staffing needs.
- **Alternative Certification (Alt. Cert.) Candidates:** Grades 1-6 and Grades 7-12 Bilingual Special Education and Special Education NYC Teaching Fellows are in the New Teacher Finder for the 2021-22 SY. There is a limited amount of available Alt. Cert. Candidates for the 2021-22 school year. Principals and/or hiring managers are encouraged to search the New Teacher Finder as soon as possible for potential candidates to meet their teacher staffing needs.
- There will also be a limited number of Alt. Cert. candidates for SwD/math and SwD/science available in the New Teacher Finder this summer for the 2021-22 SY.

- **Excessed Staff Selection:** After OMT closes on August 9, 2021, search for available teachers in excess (ATRs) using the Excessed Staff Selection System (ESSS) or by reaching out to the Office of Teacher Recruitment and Quality using their [online form](#) or through [H.I.R.E. Connections](#) for continued new teacher staffing support.
- **General Education and Content Area Positions:** When hiring for general education and content area positions, consider hiring teachers who hold both a common branch or content certification as well as a special education certification and/or bilingual extension.
- **General Education Teacher Appointment w/ Special Education Certification:** Consider asking teachers appointed under a general education certification who also hold a special education certification to provide some amount of special education services as part of their regular teaching program.

After start of school if there is still a staffing need, school leaders:

- Must continue to utilize ESSS and NTF to identify teachers in excess and new teachers.
- Should document outreach, interviews, outcome of interviews for all candidates.
- Must utilize Sub Central to employ special education certified substitute teachers to cover short and long-term absences and ensure that all IEP mandated programs and services are provided.
- Must continue to work with the B/CO ASE and B/CO HR Director and Office of Teacher Recruitment and Quality for continued staffing supports.
- Should consider, where applicable, the use of appropriate certified F-Status teachers and Sixth Period Shortage coverage.

If a qualified, licensed special education teacher, including ATRs and substitutes cannot be identified school leaders should:

- Ensure that all Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classes have **two** teachers assigned to them.
- Ensure that all ICT classes are within the 60/40 ratio and consistent with contractual class size.
- Ensure that all special classes have a teacher (and paraprofessional if applicable) assigned to them and that the class size does not exceed the regulatory maximum (e.g. 12, 15, etc.).
- Contact the B/CO ASE to obtain an authorization for SETSS Services (“P-4”) if a DOE SETSS teacher cannot be identified and assigned within 2 school days of the start of the school year or if two periods per day of SETSS cannot be provided by the student’s current school as an alternative until an ICT class is available. (NOTE: P-4 is non-compliant and intended to be used as a temporary provision of service until the correct service can be provided by the school. School leaders should document efforts to hire a full-time SETSS provider in their recruitment log and reach out to their B/CO for assistance when needed.)
- If ICT services are not being provided by a licensed special education teacher, ensure that students are receiving two periods per day of SETSS as an interim support until an ICT class is available. For more information about supporting students who are not receiving Integrated Co-Teaching please review the [Special Education Standard Operating Procedures \(SOPM \)](#) on page 96.

- Where a teacher with a bilingual extension is not available, ensure that all students with bilingual ICT and special class recommendations are provided with an Alternate Placement Paraprofessional. Information regarding the provision of APPs can be found in [SAM 13](#).

Note: These interventions are interim measures that do not meet the mandates of the students. Once implemented, the school must continue to take the appropriate steps to hire and program so that the students' mandates are met.