

Abstract

Western Michigan University Special Education's **Intensive Recruitment, Preparation and Retention (IRPR)** program is designed to **fully** credential special educators currently working on emergency or temporary certificates and practicing general educators pursuing endorsements in special education. This project will **significantly increase** the number of fully certified special education teachers in Michigan and will result in a support structure that promotes recruitment and retention of teachers from underrepresented populations and persons with disabilities. To address an increasingly diverse population and the lack of trained special education teachers, this program will prepare teachers with **dual endorsements** in learning disabilities and emotional disturbance and they will also be **certificated** in Collaboration and Teaming, Transition, and/or Special Education Technology.

This project is an intensive competency and field-based preparation program designed to prepare and support **2** cohorts of **25** professionals for a total of **50** professionals within the duration of the proposed project. Each cohort will **complete** the program within **eighteen months** and receive intensive follow-up support from project personnel upon completion of the program.

The purpose of the project is to: (a) **decrease** the number of teachers currently working under emergency or temporary certification, (b) **prepare** special educators in exemplary coursework relevant to their practice, (b) **utilize** a cohort model for the purpose of building teamwork, collaboration, peer coaching, and on-going support, (d) **provide** excellent advising and mentoring, and (e) **enhance** relationships with school districts in Michigan by developing inclusive learning communities that emphasize the importance of partnerships between higher education and K-12 institutions.

