



## **Shortage of Special Education Staff Report**

### **Part 1 - National Coalition Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services (NCPSSERS)**

**and**

### **Part 2 - Ohio's Related Service Workgroup on Personnel Shortages**

**Prepared for OAPSA December 4, 2020 Business Meeting**

Part 1 - I participated in a meeting of the National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services (NCPSSERS) on November 12, 2020. The focus in those National Coalition meetings since last March has been on teletherapy. We actually started that discussion just before the pandemic started and since we know so much more about teletherapy now (as opposed to beginning of March) we've been exploring whether or not we should develop a policy as a group on teletherapy. While OAPSA doesn't currently have a policy on teletherapy, some of the other organizations that are part of the Coalition do have a policy. Those policies have now been analyzed to see what our various organizations already agree upon.

We determined that the National Coalition would not do a policy at this point but instead, make some slight changes to our current website design and add in the points that we agree upon regarding teletherapy in the appropriate sections on our website. We recently received a draft of those ideas for our review.

We had a brief discussion about OSEP's Attract, Recruit and Retain series from October 2020 and that evolved into a discussion about the new administration. The National Alliance of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (NASISP) is in the process of preparing a letter of request for the new administration. The shortage of teachers and related services for Special Education will be on the list of requests. NASISP is a coalition representing more than one million Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP). SISP professionals include school counselors, school nurses, psychologists, school psychologists, social workers and school social workers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, art, dance/movement, music therapists, and speech-language pathologists and audiologists. In addition, the major national organizations representing

general and special education teachers and administrators are part of the coalition. For example, our affiliate, NAPSA, has representation in NASISP. We explored if our Coalition should also write a letter on our own or if we should join in with signing the letter from NASISP. We agreed that we will reach out to the coleaders of NASISP to get together in the next few weeks to discuss requests for the new administration to address the shortage of Special Education and related service staff and see if it is possible for us to either make those requests with them or if we should develop our own.

OAPSA'S website has a section dedicated to the shortage of special education staff and that includes a link to the National Coalition's website and I encourage you to visit that site to learn more information about the nationwide shortage.

Part 2 - On a different but related topic, I'm pleased to report that I was part of a panel discussion that presented at OCALICON about Ohio's Related Service Workgroup and the recommendations of their 2019 report for solutions to the shortage of staff problems. If you attended OCALICON, you may still view that session under recorded items. That 2019 report is also available on our OAPSA website in that same area on the shortage. The link on OAPSA's website takes you directly to ODE's website's page about Related Services Workgroup. You will find there the full report, as well as one-page flyers on each related service group and a variety of video clips that you could use in combination with 1-page flyers on each related service area in your district. I encourage you to check out that section of our website for those resources that I mentioned plus even more resources that will be helpful to you in case of shortages problems.

Respectfully Submitted,

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OAPSA Executive Director