

IS A CAREER AS A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER RIGHT FOR YOU?



WHAT IS A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER?

A special education teacher is a certified teacher who is highly trained to work with students with disabilities. Special education teachers use information in a student's individualized education program (IEP) to plan and deliver instruction.

WHERE DO SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS WORK?

A special education teacher may work in public schools, private schools, cyber charter schools, or charter schools. They could also work in hospitals, a student's home, or the community. Regardless of the location, special education teachers often partner with families and other professionals, such as school psychologists and physical therapists, to provide support to students with disabilities.

WHAT MIGHT YOU DO AS A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER?

Special education teachers can expect to have a range of duties and responsibilities to ensure students with disabilities receive the supports outlined within their IEP. They may:

- Serve as a member of IEP teams
- Monitor student progress by collecting data
- Co-plan or co-teach with other teachers
- Meet with family members
- Direct the work of paraeducators

WHAT TYPES OF SUPPORT DO SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS PROVIDE?



Communication, social skills, or behaviors designed for individuals with autism. (Autistic support)



Academic, functional, or vocational skills necessary for independent living. (Life skills support)



Social or emotional skills development or functional behavior. (Emotional support)



Academic, functional, or vocational skills necessary for independent living for individuals with more than one disability the result of which significantly impacts their lives. (Multiple disabilities support)

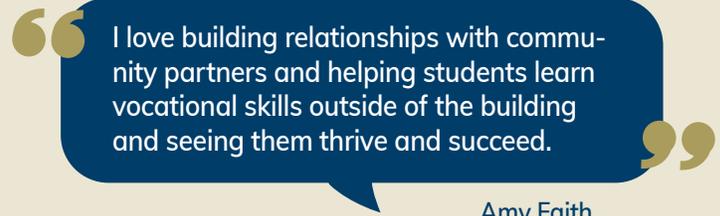


Mathematics, reading, writing, speaking or listening skills related to academic performance. (Learning support)

YOU MIGHT ENJOY A CAREER AS A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER IF YOU:

- Like to inspire and motivate others
- Are flexible and creative
- Like to work on a team
- Are empathetic and connect easily with others
- Are patient and understanding
- Can remain calm in stressful situations
- Understand and want to learn about special education law
- Like to use data to solve problems
- Have effective communication skills
- Are well organized and self-driven

VOICES FROM THE FIELD: MEET SOME SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS



Amy Faith
Special Education Teacher
Hampton Township SD

Scan the QR codes to watch the interviews.

Ann Lipko
Learning Support
Teacher



Chad Shetler
Life Skills Teacher



Amy Faith
Special Education
Teacher Supporting
Secondary Transition



HOW TO BECOME A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER:

There are multiple pathways to becoming a special education teacher in Pennsylvania. All pathways require you to earn a bachelor's degree, successfully student teach, achieve a passing score on the required content area tests, and obtain a special education teaching certificate.

There are over seventy approved special education teacher programs in Pennsylvania from which to choose. To learn more about these career pathways, use the link to visit the Pennsylvania Department of Education website and discover which path is best for you.

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Educators/Certification/BecomeAnEducator/CertificationPathways/Pages/default.aspx>

