Career Changers in Special Education: A Collaborative Direction in Teacher Preparation for School Systems and Institutions of Higher Education

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In the U.S. there continues to be a critical need for highly effective teachers for the increasing numbers of diverse learners in P-12 classrooms. In particular demand is the need for highly qualified special education teachers. This need has required school systems to look beyond the traditional four-year degree student to individuals who are entering the teaching field from other professions. We offer a discussion of the career changers in special education, what types of support and mentoring they need from local schools and teacher education programs, and considerations in teacher preparation in special education for career changers.