

From: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Poudre School District

Date: December 20, 2022

On Thursday December 15, 2022, the PSD Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) was joined by Deborah Meyer, Director of Talent Acquisition and Retention to hear about the efforts for recruiting and retaining staff in PSD. We would like to offer ideas and actionable next steps when considering the hiring and retention opportunities of Integrated Services staff.

The following reflects the thoughts and considerations for recruiting and retaining IS staff from SEAC parents, staff, and community members that may be useful to the HR and IS Department:

#### Recruitment:

- 1) Increase recruiting efforts at HBCU's like Langston U in Oklahoma and other Higher Education communities with large Latin X populations.
- 2) Target additional cities in the US for recruitment that have comparable demographics and cost of living to Fort Collins and Northern Colorado.
- 3) Consider using the J2 model to obtain employees from HBCU's and Latin X Universities, not just abroad.
- 4) Include information during the retirement process to recruit for long term subs and Para II's to keep seasoned teachers in the district.
- 5) Develop pathways to "grow-our-own" staff for greater opportunity for advancement and to reduce burn out. Recruiting high school students for para positions, classroom helpers, and to fill custodial and food service vacancies, training substitutes for IS support, paying paras to become teachers and other positions that are hard to fill, and encourage student teachers to enter master's programs.
- 6) Consider advertising paraprofessional job's to specific audiences. Ex. CNA's

#### Retention:

- 7) Explore differentiated rates of pay for classified, certified, and substitute IS staff that is significant and increases at a larger rate for special education assignments.
- 8) Offer loan forgiveness and other incentives to increase staff retainment in hard to fill positions.
- 9) Extend classified pay over a 12-month period, similar to teacher pay.

#### Professional Development:

- 10) Create mentoring programs for Paraprofessionals to be connected to veteran teachers and staff.
- 11) Require behavioral support training for general education teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals to create better safety in school for students and staff. i.e. CPI training.

- 12) Add days/hours to para positions for more training: White bus training, CPI, attending IEP meetings, collaboration time, onboarding, and shadowing of others.

Other Considerations/Additional Supports:

- 13) Add special education administrators to schools to learn more about IS programs, IEP process, de-escalate and support behaviors; one admin per HS and MS and 1 shared person between 2 elementaries for further support with the IS workload.
- 14) Consider having four days a week of direct instruction for teachers and the fifth day for administrative duties and IEP meetings. This allows time to collaborate, train and complete tasks outside of direct support.
- 15) Clearly define roles of support within teams, buildings and at the district level allowing teachers and para's to be a support team rather than a hierarchy, plus allow for ongoing anonymous feedback opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this very important topic of recruitment and retention of staff. Without staff we cannot serve Every Student Every Day.

Sincerely, PSD SEAC

CC:

Dennis Rasttater, Interim Director of Integrated Services

PSD SEAC Members