

ATTRACT	
PREPARE	
RETAIN	

# OPTIMISE

OPENING THE PIPELINE OF TALENT  
INTO MICHIGAN'S SPECIAL EDUCATION

ENERGY INTO ACTION

Attract • Prepare • Retain

# WELCOME TO OPTIMISE

The First-of-its-Kind Program to Attract, Prepare and Retain Special Educators and Professions in Michigan.

**Thank you for your continued support!**



OPTIMISE.Education



**Laurie VanderPloeg**  
Consultant



**Kathy Fortino**  
Project Manager

# 94d OPTIMISE



Initiated by the Michigan State Legislature in 2021 - Section 94d of the State School Aid Act of 1979, (OPTIMISE <https://optimise.education/>) was created to develop a comprehensive multi-year plan to attract, prepare, and retain a diverse and qualified special education personnel to serve individuals with disabilities.

# OPTIMISE TASK FORCE

The task force shall provide all of the following:



An identification of the barriers to attracting and training qualified personnel to work with children with disabilities.



An analysis of current educator preparation processes, including the degree to which they meet the needs of special education students and whether the preparation process could be streamlined to increase the number of qualified personnel entering the field of special education.



An analysis of attrition rates for qualified personnel leaving the field of special education and recommendations for ways that this state or districts could better retain talent.



An analysis of this state's licensing requirements and whether they could be streamlined to increase the number of qualified personnel entering the field of special education.



Policy changes that should be enacted into law to address the barriers identified in this subsection, with specific changes to applicable state laws or applicable state rules.

# OPTIMISE TASK FORCE

## Mission:

- The OPTIMISE Task Force will build, support, and sustain a NEW education system that can enthusiastically attract, prepare, and retain an effective and diverse special education workforce to serve individuals across Michigan.
- Collaborate with a coalition of partners focused on energy to action to address the urgent shortage of educators servicing the needs of individuals with disabilities across Michigan.



# OPTIMISE Partners



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
OFFICE of the GOVERNOR



MICHIGAN



# OPTIMISE Action Team Recommendations

Barriers & Influence Mapping

Identified action teams listed below

Special Education Administration Credentials

Implementation: Special Education Administration Credential Program with MAASE and MASA

Teacher Credentialing & Standards

Implementation: Special Education Teacher Standards and Credentialing Guidelines

Building Leader – Inclusive Leadership

Implementation: MAASE with Coaching from MASSP and MEMSPA

Paperwork Reduction

Implementation: IEP Systems with SEILN and MAISA | SE Compliance training resource hub with SEILN and MAISA

Workload/Caseload

Implementation: Workload Calculators with SEILN and MAISA

School Psychologists

Implementation: MASP and Department of Labor

Behavior Support

Currently Working on Appropriation Request with Other Partners

Speech-Language Pathologists

Addressed Through Social Media and Website

Paraeducators

Implementation: Paraeducator Training with MAASE

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Including Interpreters

Implementation: Social Media and Recruitment into IHEs

Compensation

Implementation: Shared with MSBO



**We Attract New Talent  
to Michigan Special Education**

# Digital Marketing Results – May 29, 2025



Platform	Impressions	Engagement	Clicks to Website	Click Through Rate	Video Views
Facebook	2,528,857	174,130	27,995	3.55%	39,280
LinkedIn	45,250	143	89	.41%	27,241
Instagram	29,924	1,021	1	-	5,657
TikTok	170,266	20	1,891	1.16%	167,636
SnapChat (13 to 17 yrs)	786,084	N/A	16,773	2.22%	26,045
Twitter	636	29	3	-	101
Google/Display Ads	305,756	N/A	8,083	6.89%	N/A
2025 to Date	3,872,457	175,343	55,663	4.54%	265,859
2024	9,916,477	189,357	105,575	3.60% <small>(Industry Ave.: 1.77%)</small>	1,074,901
2023	5,844,648	430,722	51,301	2.08%	571,110
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>19,633,582</b>	<b>795,422</b>	<b>212,539</b>	<b>3.31%</b>	<b>1,911,870</b>



# OPTIMISE.Education is a One-Stop-Shop Site to Start or Retain a Career in Special Education

## Explore by Profession

Steps to Get the Degree

Michigan Colleges that Offer the Degree

Scholarships & Grants

Free College Opportunities

Volunteer Opportunities

Job Shadowing

Support from Special Education Associations

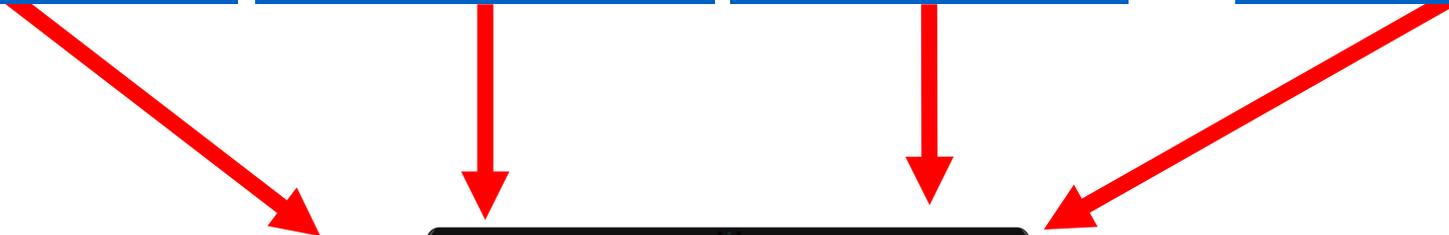


Currently Employed within 12 Professions

Attracting New Talent to 12 Professions

Attracting New Talent College

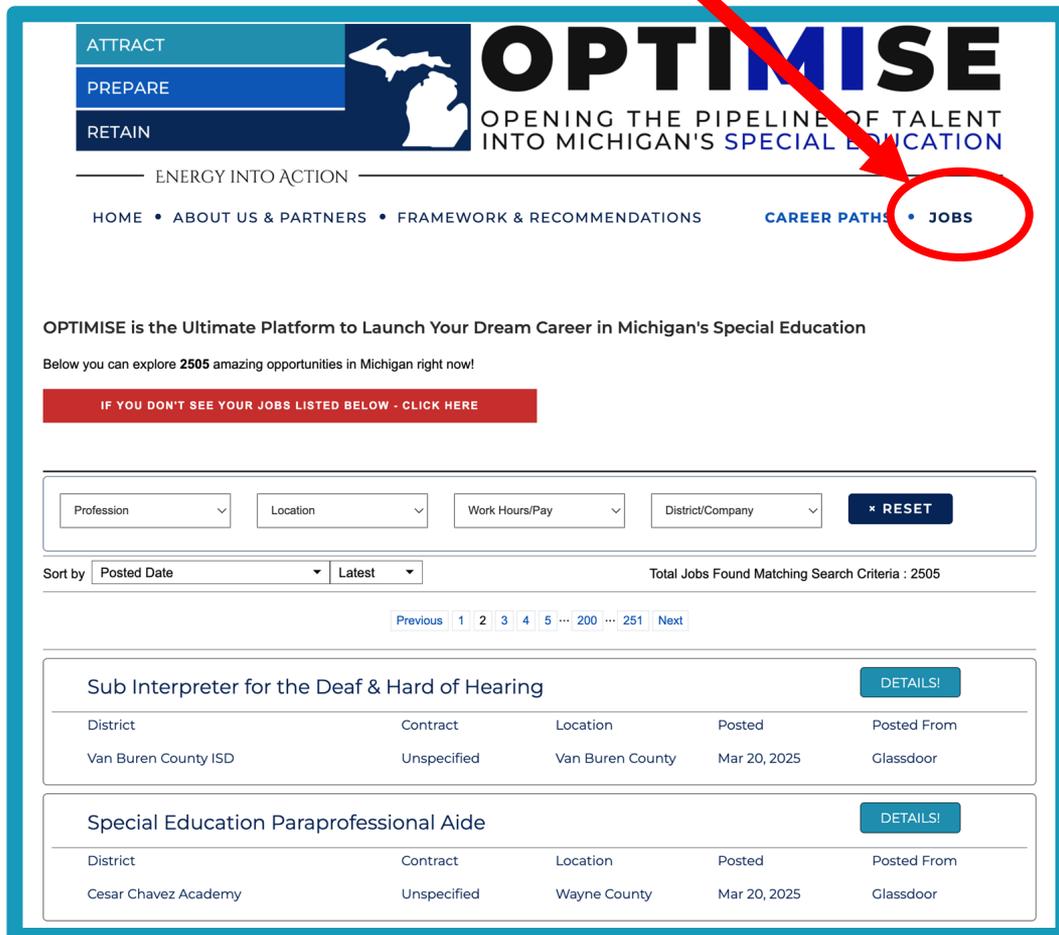
Attracting New Talent High School



## Job Portal

Searchable by:

- Professions – 18
- County
- Work Hrs./Pay
- District/Company



ATTRACT  
PREPARE  
RETAIN

**OPTIMISE**  
OPENING THE PIPELINE OF TALENT  
INTO MICHIGAN'S SPECIAL EDUCATION

ENERGY INTO ACTION

HOME • ABOUT US & PARTNERS • FRAMEWORK & RECOMMENDATIONS • CAREER PATHS • **JOBS**

OPTIMISE is the Ultimate Platform to Launch Your Dream Career in Michigan's Special Education

Below you can explore **2505** amazing opportunities in Michigan right now!

**IF YOU DON'T SEE YOUR JOBS LISTED BELOW - CLICK HERE**

Profession Location Work Hours/Pay District/Company **× RESET**

Sort by Posted Date Latest Total Jobs Found Matching Search Criteria : 2505

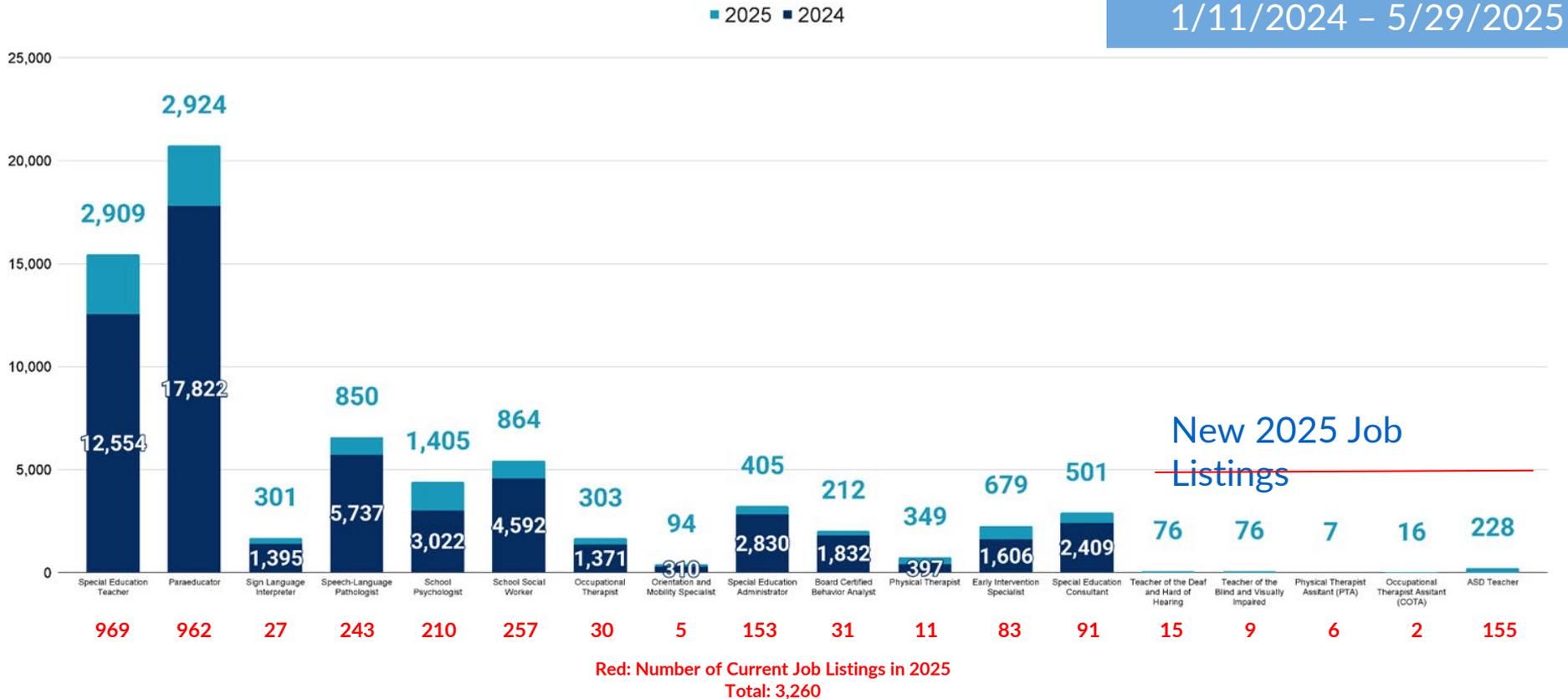
Previous 1 2 3 4 5 ... 200 ... 251 Next

Sub Interpreter for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing <b>DETAILS!</b>				
District	Contract	Location	Posted	Posted From
Van Buren County ISD	Unspecified	Van Buren County	Mar 20, 2025	Glassdoor

Special Education Paraprofessional Aide <b>DETAILS!</b>				
District	Contract	Location	Posted	Posted From
Cesar Chavez Academy	Unspecified	Wayne County	Mar 20, 2025	Glassdoor

# Users Clicking Job Listings by Profession – 68,603

(12,348 in 2025)



# Special Education Workforce Data-EPIC/MSU



An analysis of attrition rates for qualified personnel leaving the field of special education and recommendations for ways that this state or districts could better retain talent.

*From 94d Legislation*

- Education Policy Innovation Collaborative wants to partner with OPTIMIZE to support their mission through data-informed insights and actionable recommendations regarding the special educator workforce.
- Proposed Scope of Work
  1. Data Assessment
  2. Special Educator Attrition
  3. Composition of the Special Educator Workforce
- EPIC is an independent, non-partisan research center housed in MSU's College of Education and the strategic education research partner to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), and local school districts and agencies throughout Michigan.

# Behavior Training and Coaching Appropriations Request

- a) Develop and provide statewide professional development in behavior science for all educators
- b) Develop a coaching system, so every school in Michigan has sufficient behavioral coaching to support the implementation
- c) Create a statewide system that demonstrates consistent application of best practices for the reduction of the use of emergency seclusion and emergency physical restraint

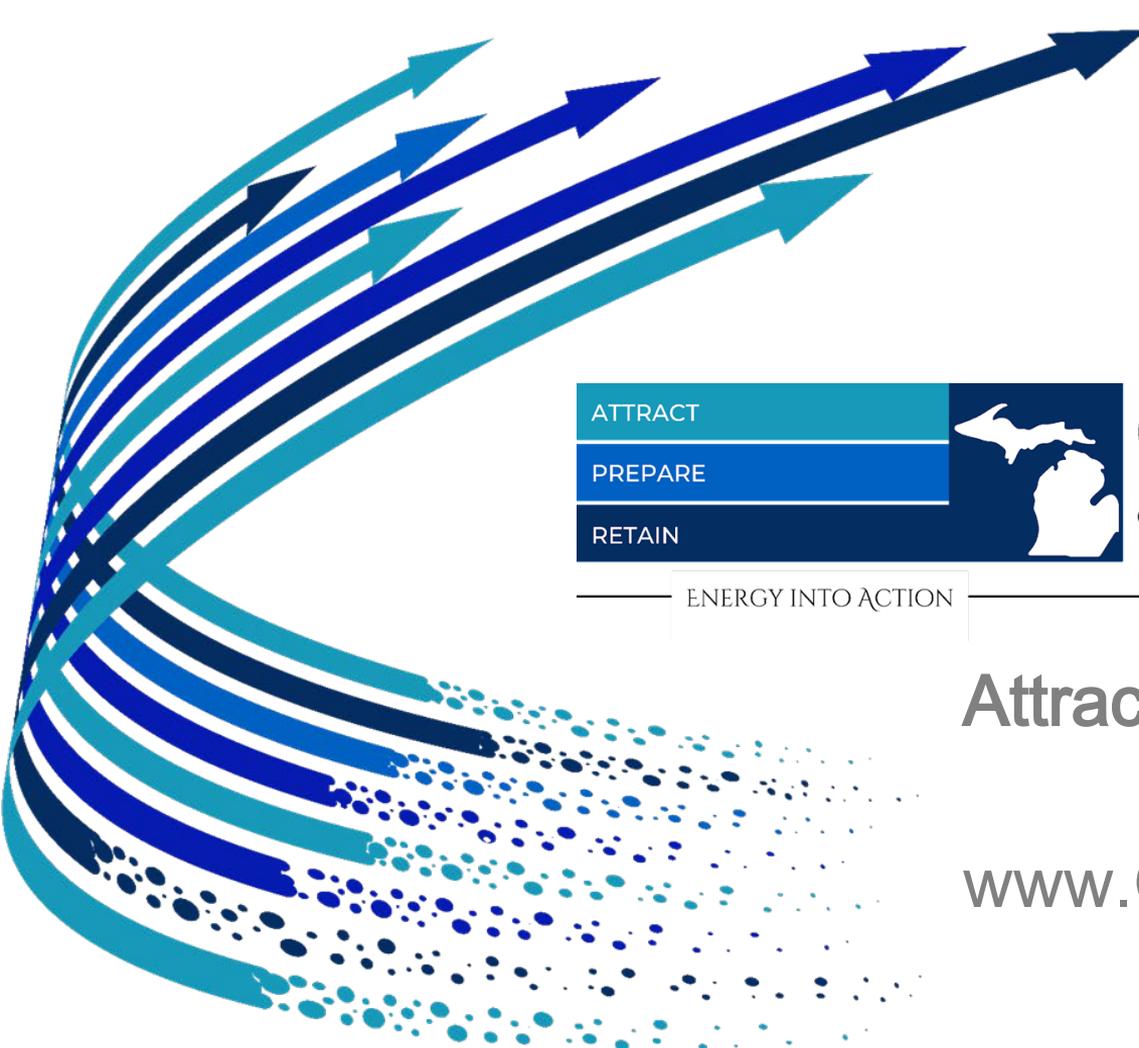
# Collaboration and Celebration





**Thank You for Your  
Continued Support!**





ATTRACT	
PREPARE	
RETAIN	

# OPTIMISE

OPENING THE PIPELINE OF TALENT  
INTO MICHIGAN'S SPECIAL EDUCATION

ENERGY INTO ACTION

Attract • Prepare • Retain

[www.OPTIMISE.education](http://www.OPTIMISE.education)