

OPTIMISE NEWSLETTER

We're Excited to Advance Special Education in 2025

With the hard work of the Task Force, Core Team, Action Teams, and hundreds of special education professionals, OPTIMISE helped advance Special Education in 2024. Below are a number of accomplishments.

- Conducted dozens of listening sessions with organizations, IHEs, ISD SE Directors, and others and identified barriers to becoming special educators.
- Worked closely with House and Senate education committee members, subcommittees, and appropriations to help advance SE work.
- Helped move SE Action Teams' professional recommendations to the OPTIMISE Core Team and Task Force, where they were then delivered to the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Educator Excellence, and Office of Special Education.

OPTIMISE Action Team Outcomes

Teacher Credential & Standards Action Team:

- The 20-member team developed recommendations for B-5 and K-12. OPTIMISE presented the recommendations to MDE, OEE, OSE, and IHE, and legislators.
- OEE finalized the standards.
- The standards went to the SBE.

School Psychologist Action Team:

- The action team released four recommendations that OPTIMISE presented to the Task Force and several key legislators. Two of four were approved: \$15M for mental health services through the SMART budget and \$1M to increase IHE school psychology programs, including online options.

[Details - School Psychologists Shortage](#)

Paraeducator Action Team:

- OPTIMISE worked to help coordinate Paraeducator Action Team recommendations with the

Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education and Michigan CEC.

- The MAASE workgroup created a Paraeducator Toolkit pilot that was completed in three locations in the state. The program officially launched in January 2025.
- Recommendations include:
 - > Create statewide training access to high-quality professional learning for paraeducators.
 - > Education Program Providers (EPPs) address paraeducator training in teacher ed. programs.
 - > Campaign for retired certified teachers to work as paraeducators.
 - > Create a statewide scope and sequence for H.S. CTE programs to become a paraeducator.
 - > Tie paraeducator compensation to knowledge and skill, not just seniority.
 - > Continue legislative support for paraeducator-to-teacher pathways.

Details - Paraeducator Action Team Recommendations



Building Leader Support Action Team:

- The members of the OPTIMISE Task Force approved this Action Team's recommendations.
- MAASE is working with MASSP and MEMSPA to begin this training and coaching in 2025.

Details - Building Leader Support Recommendations

Behavior Support Action Team:

- Nearly 60 people met to develop recommendations and completed a "white paper."
- Recommendations are specific to a large-scale professional learning & coaching system, cross-agency connections, and funding barriers.
- OPTIMISE will help move these recommendations through legislative and education channels.

Details - Behavior Support Recommendations



Deaf and Hard of Hearing Action Team:

- The team completed their recommendations:
 - > Establish a 4-year DHH Educator and Interpreter program to be paired with Michigan's universities.
 - > Provide paid practicum experiences for DHH teacher candidates not currently employed as DHH teachers.
 - > Have a plan to raise awareness of the needs of learners across the DHH spectrum and career opportunities.
 - > Have state or federal funds for Michigan universities to establish and sustain DHH Ed programs.

Details - Deaf & Hard of Hearing & Interpreter Recommendations



Speech-Language Pathologists Action Team:

- The Action Team crafted recommendations with their association board, the Michigan Speech Language Hearing Association.
- Recommendations address workload/caseload and inconsistency within school-based SLPs to support the "60, adjusted" for workload rule, along with salary improvements and a quicker licensing process for Michigan SLPs.
- OPTIMISE helped funnel SLP recommendations to the members of the OPTIMISE Task Force.

Details - SLP Recommendations

SE Administration Credentialing Action Team:

- This team completed recommendations founded on the Standards for the Preparation and Practice of Special Education Administrators through the Michigan State Board of Education:
 - > Revise and combine MARSE (R 240,1771 and 340.1772) into one special education administrator credential.
 - > Revise requirements within the Michigan Revised School Code 380.1246 to remove the Gen. Ed. requirement associated with SE admin. credential.
 - > Overall streamline credentialing pathway.
 - > Have a formal mentoring program from field-based colleagues.
 - > Adopt micro-credentialing for non-credentialed building or district leaders.
 - > Have state-funded fellowships for SE admin. credentialing.
- The Alternative Route program is expected to launch in early 2025.

Details - Special Education Administration Credentialing

Paperwork Reduction Action Team:

- This team completed two sets of recommendations for a statewide electronic special education documentation system and for universal training system.

[Details - Electronic SE Documentation Recommendations](#)

[Details - Universal Training](#)

Future Recommendations from Action Teams in 2025

- Compensation
- High Leverage Practices
- Workload / Caseload



OPTIMISE is Helping to Bring More People into Special Education
The Job Board Helps Supplement District Hiring Efforts

[Visit OPTIMISE Job Board](#)

Thank You for Sharing Michigan's Special Education Story
Like, Share, and Link Your Website to OPTIMISE.education



[OPTIMISE Videos](#)

[OPTIMISE.Education](#)

Year to Date:

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

15.7 MILLION

CLICKS TO OPTIMISE.EDUCATION

156,876

Video Views

1.6 MILLION

Tag OPTIMISE: [@OPTIMISEEdu](#)

Use Our Hashtags:

[#optimiseedu](#), [#specialeducation](#), [#specialeducationteacher](#),
[#earlyinterventionspecialist](#), [#speechlanguagepathologist](#), [#schoolpsychologist](#),
[#occupationaltherapist](#), [#paraeducator](#), [#orientationmobilityspecialist](#),
[#deafeducation](#), [#signlanguageinterpreter](#), [#schoolsocialworker](#), [#physicaltherapist](#)

*You received this email newsletter as you are a friend and associate
within Michigan's teaching profession.*

OPTIMISE | 490 S. Paw Paw St. | Lawrence, MI 49064 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!