

**Field-Based Master's Program in
Special Education for New
Teachers in Chicago-F.A.C.E.**

Northeastern Illinois University

Chicago Public Schools

Federal Grant H325E010024

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Purpose

- **Address shortages in CPS special education**
- **Recruit 50 new teachers (interns) from diverse professions**
- **Obtain an MA & LBS I certification**
- **Allow NEIU to build capacity by establishing a field-based program**

Method

- **Recruit 2 cohorts of 25 interns each (Years 1 & 2)**
 - **Advertised major Chicago newspapers + *Chicago Defender* (AA), and *Exito* (LA)**
 - **900 calls for applications**
 - **35 candidates chosen for interviews**

- **Interviewed in small groups by director, two CPS representatives, two NEIU SPED faculty**
- **28 chosen year, 3 declined**
- **Year 1: Retained 21 (84%) - AA (52%), LA (15%), AngloA (33%)**
- **Year 2: Summer 2003**
- **MA Sequence**
 - **Year 1: 8 of 9 courses taught by regular tenure track faculty (89%)**
 - **Year 2: 5 of 7 courses taught by regular tenure track faculty (71%)**
- **Assigned Full – Time, CPS vacant positions**
- **Regular University Supervision (Weekly/biweekly).**
 - **Field-based assignments embedded in coursework**
 - **Field-work contributed to final grade in several courses**
 - **On-site mentors assigned**

- **On-Site Mentors Assigned**
 - **Worked 4 hours/week**
 - **Evaluated performance (as would for all new teachers)**
 - **“Reflection-in-Action”**
- **Program Evaluation – Surveys**
 - **75 Total Comments**
 - **52 Positive (70%), 21 Negative (28 %)**
- **Positives**
 - **Coursework & Cohort design**
 - **Learning technology**
 - **Collaboration: professionals & parents**
 - **Training in Assessment**
- **Negatives**
 - **More practical examples**
 - **Terms were difficult (employment issues, workload)**
 - **More support on-site**

- **Important Key Factors**
 - **Quality of Candidates**
 - ✓ **Rigorous MA sequence (45 hours)**
 - ✓ **Academic requirements**
 - ✓ **Employment requirements**
 - **On-site support**
 - ✓ **Mentor**
 - ✓ **Staff**
 - ✓ **Administration**