



Seeking local school districts to join unique NIU cohort that will transform paraprofessionals into teachers.

Partnering to Lead and Empower District-Grown Educators

The NIU College of Education's PLEDGE initiative combines innovative strategies, impactful programs and purposeful collaboration with district partners that will expand and diversify the educator workforce to confront the teacher shortage in our K-12 schools.

NIU is currently assessing multi-district interest to offer a customized contract cohort for paraprofessionals to obtain the Special Education PEL.

Contract Cohort Benefits:

- **Participating districts will be leading efforts to develop Special Education teachers to fill current and future vacancies.**
- **Our cohort model recognizes paraprofessionals are working adults so courses are delivered online with hybrid weekend meetings.**
- **Our customized design can specifically address district goals, and include methods and tools currently in use by the district.**
- **College of Education team members can work with districts to identify several funding options.**

Interested in Learning More?

Districts interested in joining this multi-district effort should assess the interest of their current paraprofessionals in obtaining Special Education licensure.

Please email Terry Borg (tborg@niu.edu), director of External and Global Programs, to share the number of paraprofessionals interested as well as the highest level of education obtained by each paraprofessional for input into our program design. **Please respond by April 30.**

A virtual meeting will be held in May with all interested districts to discuss next steps.



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

College of Education