

Career Profile



VIDEO COVERAGE
Sarah Rybak speaks at
<http://www.chroniclet.com/Nie>

A weekly series devoted to providing information on career exploration

Do You Like

- Teaching others how to do something?
- Being reliable, responsible, and dependable, and fulfilling obligations?
- Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate?
- Selecting and using training/instructional methods and procedures appropriate for the situation when learning or teaching new things?
- Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making?

Then This Could Be The Career For You!

The Type of Work

- Instruct students in academic subjects, using a variety of techniques such as phonetics, multisensory learning, and repetition, in order to reinforce learning and to meet students' varying needs and interests.
- Employ special educational strategies and techniques during instruction to improve the development of sensory- and perceptual-motor skills, language, cognition, and memory.
- Teach socially acceptable behavior, employing techniques such as behavior modification and positive reinforcement.
- Meet with parents and guardians to discuss their children's progress, and to determine their priorities for their children and their resource needs.
- Plan and conduct activities for a balanced program of instruction, demonstration, and work time that provides students with opportunities to observe, question, and investigate.
- Establish clear objectives for all lessons, units, and projects, and communicate those objectives to students.

Pathways to Success

All States require special education teachers to be licensed, which typically requires at least a bachelor's degree and completion of an approved training program in special education teaching. Many States require a master's degree. Most States have alternative methods for entry for bachelor's degree holders who do not have training in education. Many colleges and universities across the United States offer programs in special education at the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degree levels. Special education teachers usually undergo longer periods of training than do general education teachers. Most bachelor's degree programs last years and include general and specialized courses in special education. However, an increasing number of institutions require a 5th year or other graduate-level preparation. Some programs require specialization, while others offer generalized special education degrees or a course of study in several specialized areas. The last year of the program usually is spent student teaching in a classroom supervised by a certified teacher.

What Employers Look For

- Individuals who possess knowledge of:**
- The structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
 - Principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.
 - Human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.
 - Arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications.
 - Principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.

Job Outlook

The number of special education teachers is expected to increase by 15 percent from 2006 to 2016, faster than the average for all occupations. Although student enrollments in general are expected to grow slowly, continued increases in the number of special education students needing services will generate a greater need for special education teachers. In 2006, there were nearly 219,000 special education teachers in the United States, with over 6,000 in the State of Ohio.

Earnings Potential

Location	Year	Pay Period	Low	Median	High
United States	2006	Yearly	\$31,300	\$46,400	\$73,600
Ohio	2006	Yearly	\$31,000	\$48,000	\$70,000
Cleveland Elyria-Mentor, OH MSA	2006	Yearly	\$36,000	\$57,800	\$80,400

Source: Occupational Information Network, O*Net Online, <http://online.onetcenter.org>

Local Education Websites

Lorain County JVS
Teacher Education Exploration
www.lcjvs.com

Lorain County Community College
www.lorainccc.edu

University Partnership through Ashland University at Lorain County Community College
www.lorainccc.edu/up



Special Education Teachers:

Preschool, Kindergarten, and Elementary School

DEFINITION: Teach elementary and preschool school subjects to educationally and physically handicapped students. Includes teachers who specialize and work with audibly and visually handicapped students and those who teach basic academic and life processes skills to the mentally impaired.

NAME: Sarah Rybak
COMPANY: Elyria City Schools

Q. When you were a young child, what did you want to be when you grew up?
A. I wanted to be a teacher. Both of my parents were teachers at the time and I was very influenced by them.

Q. How did you become interested in your particular field?
A. After living in California, I decided to move back to Ohio to pursue a career. I wanted to make sure that education was right for me before I spent the money on the college degree. I got a job working as a paraprofessional in a school system on the west side. When they offered me the position, they asked if I was willing to do Special Education. I said yes and fell in love with the profession. That is when I decided to get my degree as an Intervention Specialist.

Q. Who or what influenced your decision the most and why?
A. My parents were large influences in my life. They both were teachers and continued their careers in administration. My father went on to be a principal. My mother got her PhD and is an administrator in Lorain. Also, my grandmother felt very strongly that I get a college education. I wanted to make her proud as well.

Q. What is your educational background?
A. I have a Bachelor's of Science Degree from Notre Dame College in South Euclid, with a certification in Mild/Moderate Invention Specialist.

Q. What was the most critical class or training you took and why?
A. The most meaningful experience came from a job that I held over a few summers at Beech Brook, a residential facility for abused and at-risk children. It was a very difficult job, but very rewarding. It reinforced the importance of looking at the individual need of every student.

Q. How did you get to where you are today? What path did your employment journey take?
A. I didn't take a conventional approach to college. When I graduated from high school, I didn't feel ready for college. I joined a foreign exchange student program and studied abroad in Denmark for a year. I lived with a family and learned the language. Upon my return home, I had a few odd jobs and traveled. I moved to California for a year, and when I returned, I pursued my degree. I was 25 when I finally started my education. I really enjoyed my life experiences. They helped me to be a better teacher today!

Q. What skills or certifications do you think are needed to be successful in this field?
A. To have a career as an Intervention Specialist, you must have a bachelor's degree in education.

Q. Do you have any words of advice for someone considering a career in your field?
A. Keep everything you do kid-centered. Students with special needs are still just kids. They have the same feelings and thoughts as other students – they just learn in a different way. It becomes your job to figure that out and help them reach their goals. Allow them to dream big and they will!

Sources: Occupational Information Network, O*Net Online, <http://online.onetcenter.org>.** U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, <http://stats.bls.gov/oco>