



Why is there a new teacher in my child's class?

Our special education schools are losing their teachers and teacher assistants at an alarming rate! As parents, we want the best for our children and their education. Both parents and children depend on the relationships we build with teachers. **Many teachers and teacher assistants leave to get much better pay and benefits in the public schools. The resulting high turnover causes children to lose learned skills and is detrimental to their social and emotional wellbeing.**

Why do my child's teachers earn much less than public school district teachers?

The funding that the State provides to our schools is far less than that of public school districts, which translates into lower salaries and benefits for our teachers. We are now at the point where our schools can't recruit or retain teachers or teacher assistants. **According to surveys, one out of every three of our teaching positions is vacant.** When jobs open up at the local school district, they immediately contact our teachers from their data base. Our teachers are told that they'll be hired in a job that pays between \$20,000 and \$40,000 more per year, with summers off and far better benefits but only if they'll start immediately. **Our teachers and teacher assistants have left with tears in their eyes but the pay and benefits public school districts offer them are too good to refuse!**

How can you help?

Our trade association, the InterAgency Council of Developmental Disabilities Agencies, collaborating with their statewide umbrella association, COPA, are advocating for our schools and for your children. **We need parents to be a strong voice in Albany and locally. Please let us know if you are able to join us** – there will be various opportunities from letter writing and phone calling to campaigns that are more active. Please indicate your willingness to stand up for our school by filling in the information below:

Name	Address	Phone	Email	Best way and time to contact