

Hanging by a Thread to Holding the Line

Leadership strategies to
reduce burnout and strengthen
special education teams

9 TIPS

FOR SCHOOL +
DEPARTMENT
LEADERS





Ensuring that special education teachers feel valued and supported is key to retention. Use this checklist to implement strategies that create a more positive and sustainable work environment.

By implementing these strategies, you can create a school environment where special education teachers feel supported, valued, and motivated to continue their critical work.



Need more support?

eLuma provides tailored solutions to help schools expand and retain their special education teams. **Reach out at eLuma.com** to learn how we can support your educators!

Highlight and Celebrate the Value of Special Education Careers

- ☐ Regularly recognize and celebrate special educators' contributions.
- ☐ Share success stories within your school and community.
- ☐ Promote special education as an honorable and rewarding profession.

Provide Targeted Professional Development Aligned with Educator Needs

- ☐ Offer professional development that addresses real classroom challenges.
- ☐ Focus on practical skills, such as trauma-informed care and inclusive teaching.
- ☐ Partner with trusted organizations to provide expert-led training.

Foster Strong Collaboration Between Special Ed and Building Leaders

- ☐ Encourage a culture where special education is integrated, not separate.
- ☐ Facilitate regular meetings between special education staff and building leaders.
- ☐ Align goals across departments to ensure consistent support for all students.

Ensure Equitable Distribution of Workloads and Caseloads

- ☐ Conduct regular workload assessments to prevent burnout.
- ☐ Adjust caseloads based on the intensity of student needs.
- ☐ Consider teletherapy solutions to supplement staff capacity.

Develop Comprehensive Induction and Mentoring Programs for New Educators

- ☐ Implement a structured onboarding program for new special educators.
- ☐ Assign experienced mentors to guide new teachers.
- ☐ Provide ongoing coaching and professional learning opportunities.

Clarify Roles and Responsibilities to Eliminate Job Ambiguity

- ☐ Clearly define job expectations for all special education staff.
- ☐ Reduce confusion and frustration by providing role-specific training.
- ☐ Regularly communicate any changes in responsibilities.

Prioritize Adequate Planning Time for Educators

- ☐ Protect and allocate sufficient planning time for special educators.
- ☐ Include special education teachers in grade-level and subject-area meetings.
- ☐ Ensure they have the resources needed for effective instructional planning.

Encourage Collaboration Among Educators

- ☐ Integrate special educators into professional learning communities (PLCs).
- ☐ Foster opportunities for team teaching and co-planning.
- ☐ Promote inclusive professional development sessions.
- ☐ Build in time for related service providers to collaborate with all staff.

Offer Curriculums Relevant to Areas of Need

- ☐ Invest in research-based curriculums relevant to the needs of the diverse special ed populations.
- ☐ Ensure that educators are provided adequate training and refreshers in curriculums.

Continuously Assess and Improve Your Retention Strategies

- ☐ Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of retention initiatives.
- ☐ Collect feedback from special educators on what's working and what's not.
- ☐ Make data-driven adjustments to support staff well-being and satisfaction.



Want to reduce burnout and boost retention?

Scan the QR code to book a free consultation and get expert strategies tailored to your special education team.