

For further information on low incidence professional coaching programs, contact the following statewide specialists:

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

Tami Childs | 612.638.1519
tami.childs@metroecu.org

DeafBlind (DB)

Cathy Lyle | 612.638.1526
cathy.lyle@metroecu.org

Developmental Adapted Physical Education (DAPE)

Rich Burke | 612.638.1538
richard.burke@moundviewschools.org

Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD)

Marcia Holman | 763.550.2129
mlholman@district287.org

**Physical/Health Disabilities (P/HD)
& Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**

Deb Williamson | 612.638.1532
deb.williamson@metroecu.org

For further information on professional coaching in areas administered through the MN Dept. of Education (Blind/Visually Impaired; Deaf/Hard of Hearing), contact the following state specialists:

Kristin Oien, State B/VI Specialist

kristin.oien@state.mn.us

Mary Cashman-Bakken, State D/HH Specialist

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The logo for Minnesota Low Incidence Projects features a grid of blue dots of varying sizes to the left of the text. The text is arranged vertically: "Minnesota" in blue, "Low Incidence" in orange, and "Projects" in blue.

Professional Coaching

For Special Educators New to the Areas of:

- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- DeafBlind
- Developmental Adapted Physical Education
- Developmental Cognitive Disabilities
- Physical/Health Disabilities
- Traumatic Brain Injury

Minnesota's Low Incidence Disability Professional Coaching Programs

In an effort to strengthen Minnesota's support for educators teaching in several low incidence disability areas — Autism Spectrum Disorders, DeafBlind, Developmental Adapted Physical Education, Developmental Cognitive Disabilities, Physical/Health Disabilities, and Traumatic Brain Injury — statewide professional mentoring or coaching programs for special educators new to these areas began in the 2004-2005 school year, and continue to the present day.

The loss of qualified special education teachers is a significant barrier to ensuring that the federal mandate of a free, appropriate public education is provided to all of Minnesota's students identified for special education. Teachers are particularly vulnerable to attrition early in their careers or when making major changes in their assignments.

Research suggests that participation in well-designed and well-implemented professional coaching programs can provide educators with the kinds of information, support, and connection to professional communities that may strengthen the start or continuation of their careers.

Many schools and districts throughout the state currently run successful coaching programs, providing educators with assistance of a generalized nature. Practitioners in low incidence disability areas can benefit from such opportunities. However, they also have very specific and unique needs that require the assistance of educators who are experts in their same fields.

Some unique professional needs may include: acquiring highly specialized knowledge and skills to serve their students; locating disability-specific resources and equipment; and adjusting to the isolation of working in a low incidence field, particularly in the rural areas of the state. It is for these kinds of needs that Minnesota's coaching programs for special educators new to low incidence disability areas were designed.