



Shawnee State University
School of Education

Building an Educator Preparation Ecosystem

Multiple Pathways. One Destination.

Ohio Intervention Specialist Licensure

Leigh Anne Prugh, Ph.D. | Gay Lynn Shipley, Ph.D. | Lindsay Monihen, Ph.D.
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Why an Ecosystem?

The challenge is not simply recruiting more candidates. It is building sustainable routes into the profession.

ACCESS

Geography, work, family responsibilities, cost, and prior experience shape who can enter educator preparation.

QUALITY

Every pathway must preserve rigorous coursework, evidence-based practice, assessment, and meaningful clinical preparation.

WORKFORCE

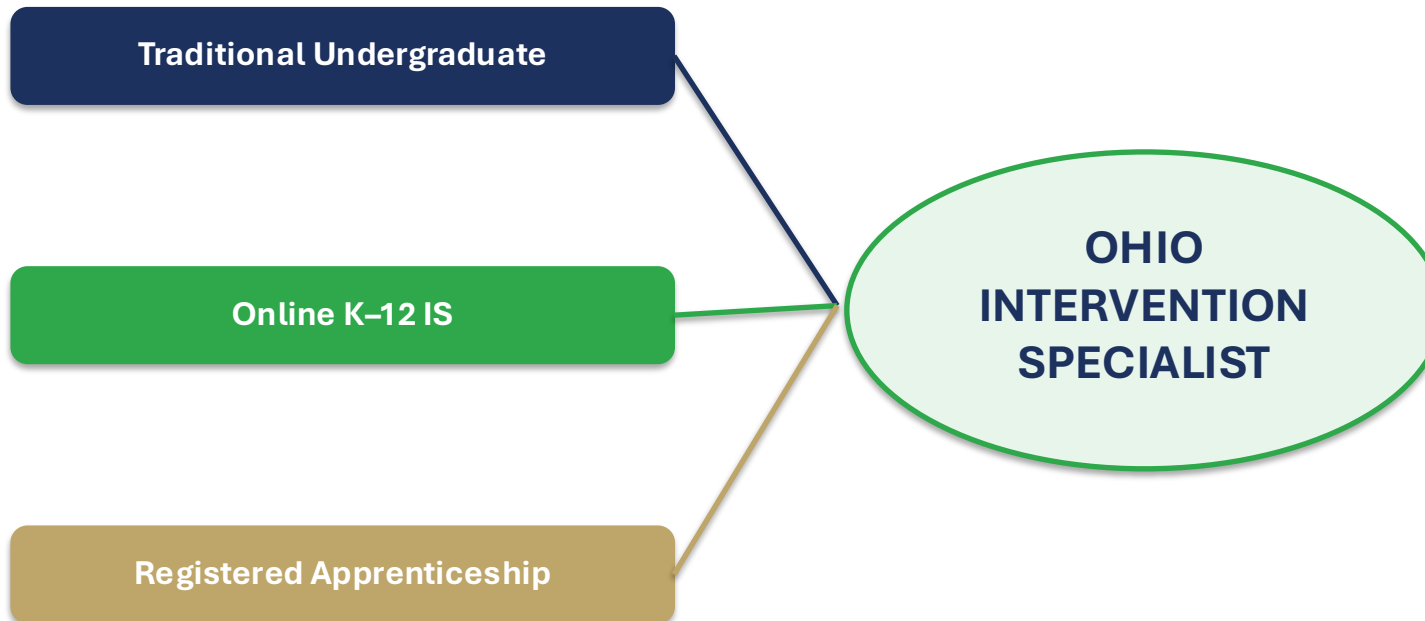
Districts need licensed intervention specialists who are prepared to serve students and remain connected to their communities.

How do we widen access without creating separate standards of preparation?



One Destination: Ohio Intervention Specialist Licensure

Pathways differ in delivery and candidate context, not in the professional expectations we hold.



- Evidence-based instruction
- High-Leverage Practices
- Strong Reading Core: Science of Reading
- Data-based decision making
- Inclusive practice
- Strong clinical preparation

Pathway 1 | Traditional Undergraduate

The campus-based pathway remains an essential anchor of the ecosystem.

- Early and repeated field experiences connect coursework to practice.
- Candidates develop professional identity alongside a cohort of peers and faculty.
- Clinical preparation builds toward increasingly complex responsibilities and student teaching.
- Partnership schools provide authentic settings for collaboration, specially designed instruction, IEP work, and progress monitoring.

STRENGTH

Immersive preparation with sustained faculty and peer interaction.

DESIGN PRIORITY

Keeping clinical experiences at the center, not at the end, of preparation.



Pathway 2 | Online K–12 Intervention Specialist

Flexibility expands the geographic reach of preparation while candidates remain rooted in their communities.

- Designed for candidates who need a fully online route to K–12 Intervention Specialist preparation.
- Coursework is intentionally redesigned for online delivery rather than simply transferred from face-to-face instruction.
- Candidates complete authentic field and clinical experiences in local schools.
- Hands-on learning, explicit instruction, HLPs, literacy, mathematics, behavior, assessment, and collaboration remain central.

**ONLINE
COURSEWORK**

+

**LOCAL CLINICAL
PRACTICE**

Pathway 3 | Registered Apprenticeship

The apprenticeship is not a shortcut. It is a supported route for experienced school employees to become licensed teachers.

17 NEW PARAPROFESSIONAL CANDIDATES

Enrolled in the online Intervention Specialist program as a registered apprenticeship offering

1

EMPLOYMENT

Remain employed in schools.

2

COURSEWORK

Online preparation for working adults.

3

CLINICAL

Practice connects to program outcomes.

4

SUPPORT

Partners share responsibility.

Partners: Area 20 Workforce Development • Pickaway County ESC • participating school districts • Shawnee State University



The Ecosystem Around the Pathways



A pathway succeeds when the supports around it are intentionally connected.

Shared Core Across All Three Pathways

Multiple pathways only work when candidates encounter a coherent preparation model.

HLPs

High-Leverage Practices
embedded across coursework and
fieldwork.

LITERACY

Science of Reading and structured
literacy.

MATHEMATICS

Evidence-based mathematics
instruction and Ohio K–12
alignment.

BEHAVIOR

Prevention, explicit expectations,
data, and intensive intervention.

COLLABORATION

Families, general educators,
related services,
paraprofessionals, and teams.

ASSESSMENT

Progress monitoring and data-
based instructional decision
making.



Clinical Preparation Is the Common Language

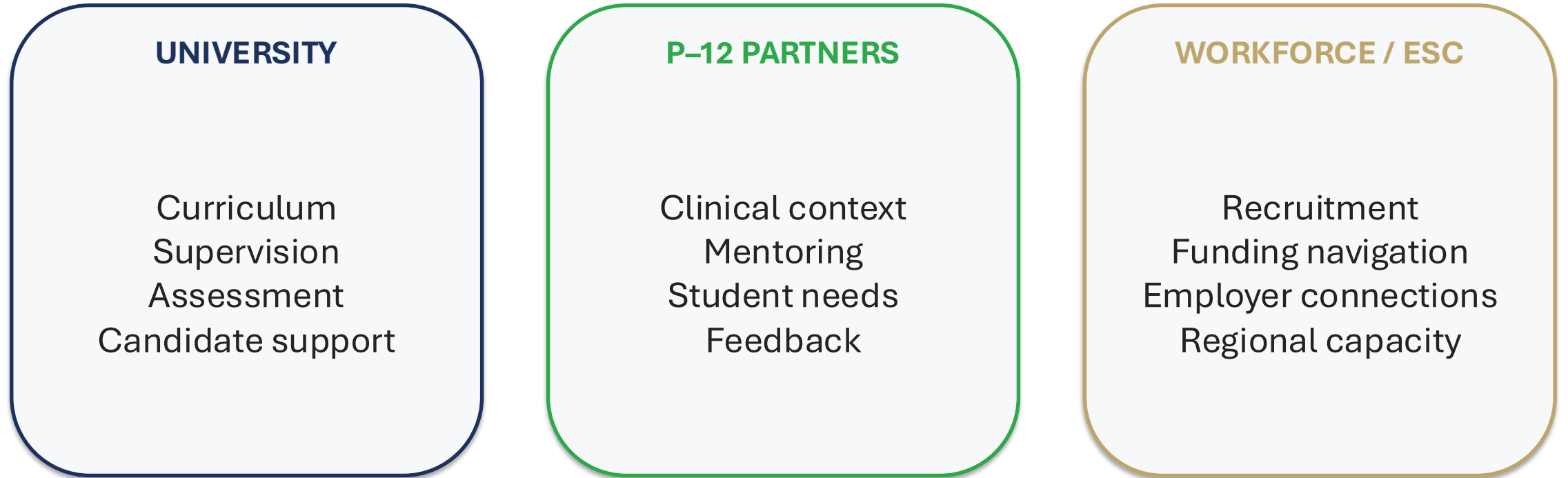
Clinical experiences create coherence across candidate populations and delivery formats.



- Candidates move from observation to supported practice to increasing instructional responsibility.
- Cooperating teachers and supervisors connect university expectations to real P–12 needs.
- Embedded experiences include specially designed instruction, IEP goals, progress monitoring, collaboration, and professional communication.
- The goal is practice-ready graduates, regardless of how they entered the program.

Partnerships Change the Work

We moved from placement sites to shared preparation partners.



Shared ownership turns separate initiatives into an educator preparation ecosystem.

What We Learned From the First Online Cohort

Designing for working paraprofessionals requires more than putting courses online.

- Relationship-building and frequent check-ins matter early as candidates balance employment, coursework, field requirements, and family responsibilities.
- Clear communication among the university, employer, partner stakeholders, and candidate prevents small logistical issues from becoming barriers.
- Clinical expectations must distinguish the paraprofessional role from the developing teacher role.
- Flexibility is important, but professional standards, licensure requirements, and candidate accountability remain consistent.
- Cohort identity and structured supports help working adults see themselves as future intervention specialists.

Quality Assurance: Different Routes, Same Expectations

Access and rigor are not competing goals.

ALIGN

Common program outcomes, standards, assessments, and licensure expectations.

MONITOR

Candidate progress, field performance, dispositions, assessment data, and partner feedback.

RESPOND

Tutoring, advising, coaching, course redesign, and targeted candidate supports.

IMPROVE

Use data and stakeholder input for continuous program improvement.

The pathway can flex. The outcomes cannot.



Early Evidence of Capacity Building

The ecosystem is already producing tangible changes in preparation and partnership.

17

new paraprofessional
candidates in the registered
apprenticeship

5+

regional school district and
community partnerships
targeted for sustained
collaboration

700+

field and student-teaching
hours in SSU's clinically
grounded preparation
model

1

shared destination:
a practice-ready, licensed
intervention specialist

What Makes the Model Replicable?

The transferable lesson is the architecture, not the exact pathway.

- Start with the destination: define the nonnegotiable knowledge, skills, clinical experiences, and professional expectations.
- Map barriers for distinct candidate populations before choosing a delivery model.
- Build partnerships around candidate and district needs, with explicit roles for each partner.
- Design clinical experiences as the bridge connecting every pathway.
- Create common checkpoints for quality assurance and candidate support.
- Treat new pathways as part of the preparation system, not as side programs.



Discussion | Build Your Own Ecosystem

Consider one pathway your institution is trying to create, expand, or strengthen.

1

WHO is not currently able to access your program?

2

WHAT must remain nonnegotiable across pathways?

3

WHICH partners are needed to remove barriers?

4

HOW will clinical preparation create coherence?

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Thank You

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