

Labor Market Analysis: 0809.00 – Special Education

Special Education (AS degree & Certificate)

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, September 2022

Summary

Program Endorsement:	Endorsed: All Criteria Met <input type="checkbox"/>	Endorsed: Some Criteria Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not Endorsed <input type="checkbox"/>
Program Endorsement Criteria			
Supply Gap:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Living Wage: (Entry-Level, 25th)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Education:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Emerging Occupation(s)			
	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

The Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (LA COE) prepared this report to provide regional labor market supply and demand data related to two middle-skill occupations:

- **Special Education Teachers, Preschool (25-2051)** Teach academic, social, and life skills to preschool-aged students with learning, emotional, or physical disabilities. Includes teachers who specialize and work with students who are blind or have visual impairments; students who are deaf or have hearing impairments; and students with intellectual disabilities.¹
- **Teaching Assistants (25-9045)** This occupation includes the 2018 SOC occupations (25-9042) *Teaching Assistants, Preschool, Elementary, Middle, and Secondary School, Except Special Education*; (25-9043) *Teaching Assistants, Special Education*; and (25-9049) *Teaching Assistants, All Other*²;
 - **Teaching Assistants, Special Education (25-9043)** Assist a preschool, elementary, middle, or secondary school teacher to provide academic, social, or life skills to students who have learning, emotional, or physical disabilities. Serve in a position for which a teacher has primary responsibility for the design and implementation of educational programs and services.³ Data collection is currently underway for this occupation; currently, the labor market data is included under *Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary (25-9045)*.

¹ [Special Education Teachers, Preschool \(bls.gov\)](#)

² [Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary \(bls.gov\)](#)

³ [2018 Standard Occupational Classification System \(bls.gov\)](#)

Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree.⁴ This report is intended to help determine whether there is demand in the local labor market that is not being met by the supply from community college programs that align with the relevant occupations.

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap for these middle-skill special education occupations in the region. While the majority of annual openings in Los Angeles County have entry-level wages that are lower than the self-sufficiency standard wage, the majority of annual openings for the occupations in this report typically require some college, but no degree. **Therefore, due to some of the criteria being met, the LA COE endorses this proposed program.** Detailed reasons include:

Demand:

- **Supply Gap Criteria** – Over the next five years, **4,443 jobs are projected to be available annually** in the region due to new job growth and replacements, **which is more than the three-year average of 278 awards conferred** by educational institutions in the region.
- **Living Wage Criteria** – Within Los Angeles County, the majority (99%) of annual job openings for these middle-skill special education occupations have entry-level wages **below** the self-sufficiency standard hourly wage (\$18.10/hour).⁵
- **Educational Criteria** – Within the greater LA/OC region, **99% of the annual job openings** for middle-skill occupations related to special education **typically require some college, but no degree.**
 - While the national-level educational attainment data indicates between 9% and 39% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree, the occupation with the majority of the annual openings (**teaching assistants, except postsecondary**) **has 39% of workers in in the field who have completed some college or an associate degree.**

Supply:

- There are **17 community colleges** in the greater LA/OC region that issue awards related to special education, conferring an average of **275 awards annually** between 2018 and 2021.
- Between 2017 and 2020, there was an average of **3 awards conferred annually** in related training programs by non-community college institutions throughout the greater LA/OC region.

⁴ The COE classifies middle-skill jobs as the following:

- All occupations that require an educational requirement of some college, associate degree or apprenticeship;
- All occupations that require a bachelor's degree, but also have more than one-third of their existing labor force with an educational attainment of some college or associate degree; or
- All occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent or no formal education, but also require short- to long-term on-the-job training where multiple community colleges have existing programs.

⁵ Self-Sufficiency Standard wage data was pulled from The Self-Sufficiency Standard Tool for California on 8/29/2022. For more information, visit: <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/california>.

Occupational Demand

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for these middle-skill special education occupations. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to decrease by 1% through 2026. However, there will be more than 4,400 job openings per year through 2026 due to retirements and workers leaving the field.

Exhibit 1: Occupational demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties⁶

Geography	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	2021-2026 Change	2021-2026 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	36,284	36,156	(128)	(0%)	3,373
Orange	10,636	11,080	443	4%	1,070
Total	46,920	47,235	315	1%	4,443

Wages

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for these middle-skill special education occupations in Los Angeles County as they relate to the county's self-sufficiency standard wage. Orange County wages are included below in order to provide a complete analysis of the greater LA/OC region. Detailed wage information, by county, is included in Appendix A.

Los Angeles County—The majority (99%) of annual openings for these middle-skill special education occupations have entry-level wages **below** the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$18.10 in Los Angeles County). While *special education teachers, preschool* typically earn entry-level hourly wages above the county's self-sufficiency standard wage (\$23.40), *teaching assistants, except postsecondary* earn entry-level hourly wages below the self-sufficiency standard (\$17.72). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$22.71 and \$47.41, which are higher than the self-sufficiency standard.

Exhibit 2: Hourly Earnings for Occupations in LA County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)
Special Education Teachers, Preschool (25-2051)	\$23.40	\$38.14	\$47.41
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary (25-9045)	\$17.72	\$18.34	\$22.71

Orange County—The majority (99%) of annual openings for these middle-skill special education occupations have entry-level wages **below** the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$20.63 in Orange County). While *special education teachers, preschool* typically earn entry-level hourly wages above the county's self-sufficiency standard wage (\$21.35), *teaching assistants,*

⁶ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

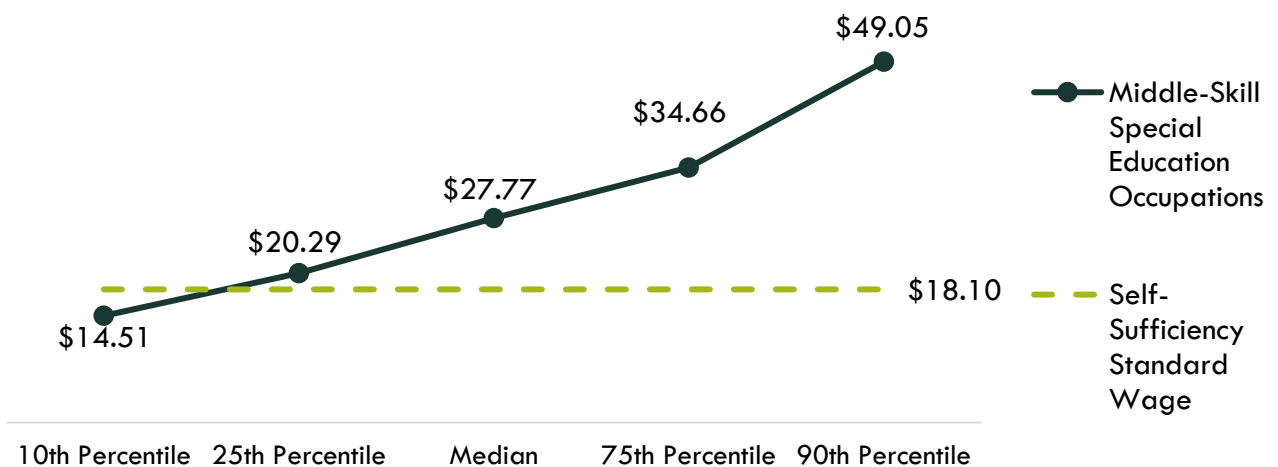
except postsecondary earn entry-level hourly wages below the self-sufficiency standard (\$17.43). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$22.50 and \$42.73, which are higher than the self-sufficiency standard.

Exhibit 3: Hourly Earnings for Occupations in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)
Special Education Teachers, Preschool (25-2051)	\$21.35	\$34.60	\$42.73
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary (25-9045)	\$17.43	\$18.07	\$22.50

On average, the entry-level earnings for the occupations in this report are \$20.29; this is above the living wage for one single adult in Los Angeles County (\$18.10). Exhibit 4 shows the average wage for the occupations in this report, from entry-level to experienced workers.

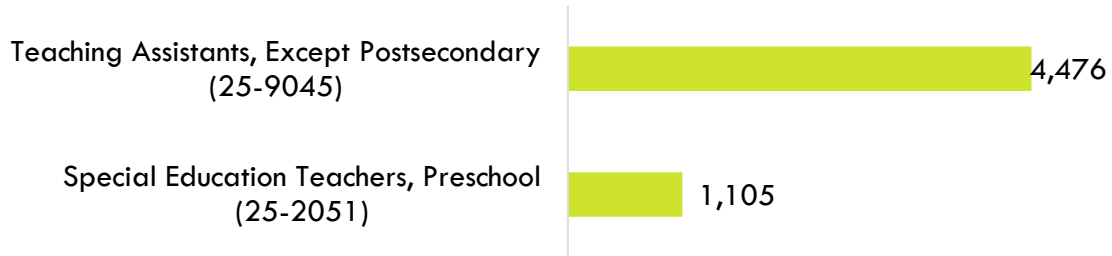
Exhibit 4: Average Hourly Earnings for Middle-Skill Special Education Occupations in LA/OC



Job Postings

There were 5,581 online job postings related to middle-skill special education occupations advertised in the past 12 months. Exhibit 5 displays the number of job postings by occupation. The majority of job postings (80%) were for *teaching assistants, except postsecondary*, followed by *special education teachers, preschool* (20%). The highest number of job postings were for behavior interventionists, paraprofessionals, teacher assistants, assistant teachers, instructional assistants, and instructional aides. The top skills were teaching, autism diagnosis/treatment/care, child care, applied behavior analysis (ABA), child development, and special education. The top three employers, by number of job postings, in the region were Center for Autism and Related Disorders, Intercare Therapy, and Stepping Stones.

Exhibit 5: Job postings by occupation (last 12 months)



Educational Attainment

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists the following typical entry-level education levels for the occupations in this report:

- **Bachelor’s degree:** *Special Education Teachers, Preschool*
- **Some college, no degree:** *Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary*

In the greater LA/OC region, the majority of annual job openings (99%) typically require some college, but no degree. While the national-level educational attainment data indicates between 9% and 39% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree, the occupation with the majority of the annual openings (*teaching assistants, except postsecondary*) has 39% of workers in the field who have completed some college or an associate degree.

Educational Supply

Community College Supply—Exhibit 6 shows the three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in programs that have historically trained for the occupations of interest. The colleges with the most completions in the region are East LA, Santa Ana, and LA Valley.

Exhibit 6: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2018-2021

TOP	Program	College	2018-19 Awards	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	3-Year Average
0802.00	Educational Aide (Teacher Assistant)	Mt San Antonio	23	21	21	22
		LA Subtotal	23	21	21	22
		Coastline	3	2	6	4
		Fullerton	7	-	-	2
		Santa Ana	30	11	80	40
		Santiago Canyon	6	7	20	11
		OC Subtotal	46	20	106	57
Supply Subtotal/Average			69	41	127	79

TOP	Program	College	2018-19 Awards	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	3-Year Average
0802.10	Educational Aide (Teacher Assistant), Bilingual	LA Mission	-	1	-	0
		LA Subtotal	-	1	-	0
		Santa Ana	-	-	3	1
		Santiago Canyon	-	1	4	2
		OC Subtotal	-	1	7	3
Supply Subtotal/Average			-	2	7	3
0809.00	Special Education	Compton	-	-	2	1
		Long Beach	2	1	1	1
		LA Subtotal	2	1	3	2
		Santa Ana	27	16	31	25
		Santiago Canyon	-	2	6	3
		OC Subtotal	27	18	37	27
Supply Subtotal/Average			29	19	40	29
1305.20	Children with Special Needs	Cerritos	-	1	1	1
		Citrus	1	1	-	1
		Compton	-	-	1	0
		East LA	109	51	38	66
		LA City	12	6	16	11
		LA Valley	51	55	52	53
		Long Beach	6	2	3	4
		Mt San Antonio	-	2	3	2
		Pasadena	-	-	2	1
		Rio Hondo	-	15	15	10
		Santa Monica	11	8	15	11
		LA Subtotal	190	141	146	159
		Orange Coast	-	-	13	4
		Santiago Canyon	-	-	2	1
		OC Subtotal	-	-	15	5
Supply Subtotal/Average			190	141	161	164
Supply Total/Average			288	203	335	275

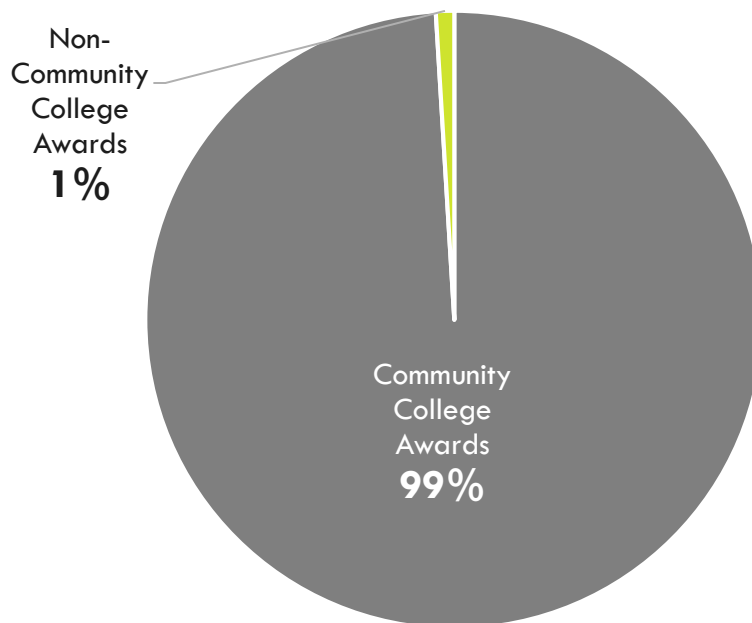
Non-Community College Supply—For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that may provide training programs for the occupations of interest. Exhibit 7 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred in relevant programs. Due to different data collection periods, the most recent three-year period of available data is from 2017 to 2020. Between 2017 and 2020, one non-community college institution in the region conferred an average of 3 awards.

Exhibit 7: Regional non-community college awards, 2017-2020

CIP	Program	Institution	2017-18 Awards	2018-19 Awards	2019-20 Awards	3-Year Average
13.1001	Special Education and Teaching, General	M. Saint Mary's University	-	6	2	3
Supply Total/Average			-	6	2	3

Exhibit 8 shows the relationship between the number of community college awards conferred in LA/OC versus the number of non-community college awards for the programs in this report. Nearly all awards conferred in middle-skill special education and/or assistant teaching is awarded by community colleges in the LA/OC region.

Exhibit 8: Community College Awards Compared to Non-Community College Awards in LA/OC Region, 3-Year Average



Appendix A: Occupational demand and wage data by county

Exhibit 9. Los Angeles County

Occupation (SOC)	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)
Special Education Teachers, Preschool (25-2051)	377	437	60	16%	41	\$23.40	\$38.14	\$47.41
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary (25-9045)	35,907	35,719	(188)	(1%)	3,332	\$17.72	\$18.34	\$22.71
Total	36,284	36,156	(128)	(0%)	3,373	-	-	-

Exhibit 10. Orange County

Occupation (SOC)	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)
Special Education Teachers, Preschool (25-2051)	86	99	13	15%	9	\$21.35	\$34.60	\$42.73
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary (25-9045)	10,550	10,980	430	4%	1,061	\$17.43	\$18.07	\$22.50
Total	10,636	11,080	443	4%	1,070	-	-	-

Exhibit 11. Los Angeles and Orange Counties

Occupation (SOC)	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Typical Entry-Level Education
Special Education Teachers, Preschool (25-2051)	463	536	73	16%	50	Bachelor's degree
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary (25-9045)	46,457	46,700	242	1%	4,393	Some college, no degree
Total	46,920	47,235	315	1%	4,443	-

Appendix B: Sources

- O*NET Online
- Labor Insight (Burning Glass Technologies)
- Lightcast (formerly Emsi)
- Economic Modeling Specialists, International (Emsi)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Self-Sufficiency Standard at the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington
- Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

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