SLP-Assistants are a good option to consider

Recently state regulations regarding Speech Language Pathology Assistants (SLP-As) were revised making the option of using an SLP-A in the schools something every school district should consider. An SLP-A's role and function is the same as that of a Speech Implementer. There are several advantages for schools in using an SLP-A instead of a Speech Implementer.

	SLP Assistant Rules	**Implementer Current Provisions**
Credential	MO Board of Healing Arts issued SLP-Assistant Registration	DESE issued Educator Certificate
Scope/Use	Permanent service delivery option available for use as appropriate in any setting.	Temporary, exception-based special education service delivery option. Must be DESE approved **ANNUALLY** based on inability to recruit/employ certified SLP.
Degree Required	Bachelors Degree in Speech Pathology or equivalent defined as 21 hours in five speech/language areas, 25 hours of observation and 25 hours of clinical assisting or practicum.	Bachelors Degree in Speech Pathology plus Temporary Authorization to Teach (TAC) ***OR*** Bachelors Degree in any area of Education with Teaching Certificate.
Supervisor Credential	Board of Healing Arts SLP License*; may designate temporary alternate.	Board of Healing Arts SLP License **OR** DESE SLP Student Services Certificate
Supervision Ratio	SLP can supervise 3.0 Assistants at one time.	No limit on the number of Implementers an SLP can supervise.
Level of Supervision Required	Direct supervision (real-time observing and viewing of assistant & student) for initial student contact. Thereafter 1 hour per week for each assistant or 1 of every 3 student session.	At least one direct contact by supervising SLP for each student. Supervising SLP conducts periodic direct therapy.
Allowed Activities	Screening; implementing treatment plans; documenting progress.	Screening; implementing IEP.
Prohibited Activities	Conduct evaluations; do diagnosis and case selection; interpret data; refer patients; write, develop or modify treatment plans.	Evaluation and eligibility determination; IEP development.
Individuals Served	Any individuals served by supervising SLP can be served by SLP-A. No restrictions based on functional deficits or client type.	Implementer credential/role limited to IDEA eligible students. As a certified general education teacher, can provide services to nondisabled students.
Medicaid Billing	Can bill if Missouri Medicaid expands to allow per federal regulations.	Unable to bill Medicaid even if Missouri Medicaid expands to allow assistants.
Retirement System	Position would not require a teaching certificate - participate in PEERS retirement system.	Implementers are required to have a teaching certificate or TAC -- participate in PSRS retirement system.

If you think a SLP Assistant is a good fit for your school, please contact the SLP training program near you for support in locating one of their Bachelor's degree graduates. A list of those programs and contact numbers can be found on the MO-CASE (http://www.mo-case.org/) and MSHA (http://www.showmemsha.org/) websites. While few SLP-As are currently registered, there are significant numbers of individuals with a Bachelor's degree in SLP in Missouri who might be interested in this career option.

** Statute change is needed to allow SLPs with DESE certificate equivalent to licensure to supervise SLP-A's and to require specific number/type of CEUs for SLP-A registration renewal. Plans are in place to amend the statute during the 2013 legislative session.*