

State Program Development April 2017

AR CO-TEACHING PROJECT ADVISORY REPORT

The Arkansas Co-Teaching Project continues to provide a tiered system of support to staff at schools interested in starting a co-teaching program or improving the fidelity of an existing program. Tier 1 supports include telephone and email technical assistance and access to informational resources about the co-teaching model. Interested administrators, teachers, and co-teachers regularly contact the project team to obtain basic information about the co-teaching model, roles and responsibilities of co-teachers, best practices for implementation, scheduling, sources of co-teaching professional development, etc. The project team also works with the ADE Special Education, Learning Services, and School Improvement Units to respond to informational requests about co-teaching and the types of services provided by the project.

In addition to sharing information and discussing concerns, the project team directs interested individuals to information posted on the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project's website. Recently, the website was updated to include video clips of Arkansas elementary co-teachers demonstrating the six co-teaching instructional formats in which both partners are engaged in the instruction at the same time. The project team is planning to video tape secondary co-teachers demonstrating these formats in late spring with plans to post the videos to the website in the summer.

Tier 2 services include more extensive technical assistance that is provided remotely with telephone or Internet conference calls or onsite. Since January, six schools have requested these services to assist them in implementation planning for 2017-18. Five of the six schools have decided to include Tier 3 services in the form of the yearlong, blended co-teaching professional development package as part of their implementation plans for 2017-18. Tier 2 services also include onsite or regional overviews of the co-teaching model. At this point, full day co-teaching overview professional development sessions are scheduled at Southeast Education Cooperative, Northeast Education Cooperative, OUR Education Cooperative, and Northwest Arkansas Education Cooperative during the summer months. Additional sessions may be added at a later date. In addition, the project has contracted with a national co-teaching expert and researcher, Dr. Lisa Dieker, to provide a one day co-teaching session in September. This session will be open to all interested educators as well as ADE staff and university preservice instructors.

Tier 3 services are provided in the form of a yearlong, blended professional development package, Boundless Learning Co-Teaching (BLC). This package is provided in partnership with Johns Hopkins University's Center for Technology in Education (JHU CTE) and includes a traditional face-to-face Kick Off session, online modules, webinars, onsite coaching, and implementation evaluation for administrators, co-teachers, and instructional facilitators who agreed to serve as BLC facilitators. Currently fifteen schools in nine school districts are participating. These include Cooper Elementary, Bentonville High School, Bentonville West High School (Bentonville

District), Hill Farm Elementary (Bryant), Crossett High School, Crossett Middle School (Crossett District), Marvel-Elaine High School (Marvel-Elaine District), Mountain Home Junior High (Mountain Home District), Jimmy Brown Elementary, Star City Middle School, Star City High School (Star City District), Park Avenue Elementary (Stuttgart District), Truman Intermediate, Trumann High School (Trumann District), and Vilonia Freshman Academy (Vilonia District).

At this point, the majority of the Boundless Learning Co-Teaching (BLC) package activities have been completed. All of the participants attended the Kick Off session and evaluated their current co-teaching implementation practices in the fall. Administrators and BLC facilitators have attended or reviewed recordings of four webinars designed to assist them in supporting their co-teachers, and the majority of co-teachers have completed their six online modules. All but two schools have received two onsite coaching visits. The remaining schools will receive their second onsite coaching visit by the end of April. Two members of the JHU CTE team were in Arkansas in February to provide additional coaching training to the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project team. Six of the fifteen BLC schools served as training sites, and the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project team along with administrators and instructional facilitators were able to observe and participate in collaborative observation/feedback coaching sessions with co-teachers and the JHU CTE team.

Between now and the end of the school year, the following activities will be completed: BLC facilitators will complete their six online modules in which they document their active support of their BLC co-teachers; administrators and their co-teaching planning teams will engage in implementation planning for 2017-18 with a member of the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project team; and all participants will engage in an implementation evaluation process designed to measure changes that have occurred as a result of their participation in Boundless Learning Co-Teaching. The Arkansas Co-Teaching Project team is also planning a one day formal follow-up session in May designed to deepen the understanding and classroom application of the content presented in the online modules and to celebrate the achievements of co-teachers, administrators, and facilitators. This session was not part of the original package, so attendance will be optional.

The Arkansas Co-Teaching Project will continue to offer the yearlong, blended Boundless Learning Co-Teaching (BLC) professional development session in 2017-18 for schools interested in the more intensive Tier 3 supports. The Arkansas Co-Teaching Project is in the process of contracting for these services with JHU CTE and revising promotional material to share with districts. Information about registering for this package will be available by the end of April.

Federal Deafblind Grant - CAYSI (Children and Youth with Sensory Impairment and other disabilities)

- The CAYSI Project has received 35 new referrals since our last report in January 2017. Two students have been found eligible, and the remaining 33 are outstanding.

- The annual Deafblind Census for 2016 is ready for submission with an estimated student count of 160, taking out those students who have died, moved out of state, or aged out of the program.
- Parent groups in Siloam Springs, Little Rock, and Osceola have continued with topics of communication for their children and learning how parents can effectively tell their stories to individuals and groups.
- SPARKLE parent training was conducted in Mountain View in partnership with The Center for Exceptional Families and Arkansas' new Deafblind Family Leadership group and is being planned in northwest Arkansas for May 20, Siloam Springs.
- Jennifer Walkup started as our new Education Consultant and has provided Technical assistance to teachers who have children with dual sensory impairments. She attended the 2017 Symposium for Deafblindness and the 2017 Deafblind Summit in Austin, Texas, and is planning professional development in collaboration with Easter Seals Outreach as well as doing a training for Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD) Special Educators in the summer.

Professional Development Activities

- Six Special Education Training Modules targeted for teachers and paraprofessionals have been developed by a committee of Arkansas school districts, agency special education personnel, and staff from the American Institutes for Research (AIR). It is anticipated that these Modules will be available through the Arkansas IDEAS Portal system in the Fall of 2017. A committee of statewide stakeholders will begin work this spring to revise the Special Health Care Needs Training Module for paraprofessionals.
- The Arkansas Department of Education, Special Education Unit (ADE-SEU) supports students seeking certification as Speech Language Pathologists and Visual Specialists for Arkansas public schools through its Tuition Reimbursement programs. The ADE's Memorandums of Understanding with out-of-state programs also allow certified Arkansas teachers to work toward licensure as Visual Specialists and Hearing Specialists. Staff at ADE-SEU work closely with personnel at the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) to share information on teacher tuition programs that encourage new personnel to enter the field and current educators to acquire special education licensure.
- The SEU Personnel Development section continues to actively participate with the ADE's Teacher Recruitment and Retention program, Educator Preparation and Licensure Units to attract and support persons interested becoming special education teachers. The next "Become an Arkansas Teacher" event is set to be

held at the Wyndham Hotel, Little Rock from 10:00 to 2:00 on April 22, 2017. The ADE-SEU will be represented at this event.

- The ADE-SEU continues to support Educational Interpreters in Arkansas. The ADE-SEU organized an Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) opportunity for interpreters working in educational settings on January 21 and 22, 2017 in Springdale and a second testing session is scheduled for April 29 and 30, 2017 in Little Rock. Participation was excellent at the Springdale session and is anticipated to be very good in Little Rock. The ADE-SEU team continues to work to expand its support for Educational Interpreters and Arkansas schools to meet the new interpreter standards.