

Arkansas Department of Education - Special Education Unit Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities Children and Youth with Sensory Impairments (CAYSI), April 2019

- CAYSI and Easter Seals Outreach provided a targeted technical assistance training to two agencies during this reporting period. The training session, *Serving Students with Multiple Disabilities and Dual Sensory Impairment*, was presented at Great Rivers Educational Cooperative agency in Helena and Easter Seals in Little Rock.
- The Local Education Agencies have had an opportunity to review their census for children with deafblindness. CAYSI staff is cleaning the data to submit the Arkansas deafblind census for the December 1, 2018 child count by May 10, 2019.
- CAYSI currently has 226 students on its registry and has received ten new referrals during this quarter. Eight of those students have been found to be eligible for services.
- CAYSI has provided initial home visits to families in Lonoke, Magnolia, Mountain Home, Crossett, and Brinkley and two parent groups have met in Siloam Springs and Osceola. Family meetings have taken place in Little Rock regarding identifying families affected by CHARGE syndrome, building family leadership in the newly developed family group (Arkansas Empowering Families with Deafblindness) and mentoring parent facilitators for the national “Family 2 Family Communities” monthly teleconference groups.
- CAYSI has also provided initial school visits in Warren, Marion, Little Rock, Beebe, Amity, Mountain View, Sherwood, Maumelle, and Arkadelphia. Work in CAYSI’s second year follow-up technical assistance has been ongoing in Bentonville and Siloam Springs.
- CAYSI provides bi-weekly coaching to the first paraprofessional in Arkansas to become a credentialed intervener.
- CAYSI has met with the newly developed Deafblind Interagency Transition Team. This team consists of agencies within the educational system and those programs charged with developing skills students need to successfully transition out of high school and beyond. Plans are being made for the team to attend the Helen Keller National Center in Sandpoint, NY. Training will be on deafblindness and identification of eligible young adults who need HKNC’s services - preparing them for an independent and quality life after high school.
- CAYSI has worked with the Deafblind Interagency Transition Team on the Family Futures Planning Days, scheduled for March 30th and April 13th. Ten families whose children have dual sensory impairments and other disabilities have registered for the event. The goal is for the families and providers to come together and learn more about providing a meaningful, purposeful, and joyful life after high school.

- The Deafblind Summit Meeting and Symposium was held February 21st-25th. While there, CAYSI met with other stakeholders in state deafblind projects to listen to the new project officer and work being done at the national center to support the state projects. There were discussions about the new requirements of reporting quality, relevant, and useful services, as well as information in the annual performance reports. Educational Services for the Visually Impaired joined CAYSI during the Symposium days to learn more about working with children and youth with deafblindness.
- CAYSI was selected to report on a new “Technical Assistance & Dissemination (TA&D) Deaf-Blind New Service Description”. The new service, selected by Office of Special Education Program (OSEP), was the Follow-up of year 2 Intensive TA Project (*Moving Mountains*) using Coaching and Open Hands Open Access (OHOA) Modules. The report was completed and turned in on March 23, 2019.

Arkansas Department of Education - Special Education Unit Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities Personnel Development, April 2019 Report

Personnel Development Activities

Paraprofessional Supports and Training

Six Special Education Training Modules are required for paraprofessionals working with students with special needs. Each of these one-hour Modules are available through ArkansasIDEAS for paraprofessionals as well as all licensed Arkansas educators and administrators. The Modules address the “Foundations of Special Education” and “Introduction to Behavior.” Other quality courses are available for paraprofessional training through ArkansasIDEAS’ non-licensed section. The “Special Health Care Needs” training module is being finalized, and the updated PowerPoint will be placed on the ADE-SEU Paraprofessional webpage upon ADE approval.

Recruitment and Retention

The ADE-SEU supports the recruitment and retention of educational personnel at the local level through collaboration with educational service cooperatives.

The ADE-SEU now has agreements with two out of state Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) that offer programs for Visual or Hearing Specialists. The ADE-SEU supports the recruitment and training of licensed Arkansas teachers seeking to add Visual or Hearing Specialist

certifications by offering stipends once certification has been obtained and service guidelines have been met.

SEU Personnel Development Staff actively partners with the ADE's Teacher Recruitment and Retention program by attending and supporting all "Become an Arkansas Teacher" events and works with Educator Prep and Licensure Units to attract and support persons interested becoming special education teachers. SEU staff also directly assist teachers and others interested in entering the field of Special Education by providing information via phone and email.

Staff at ADE-SEU work with personnel at the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) to share information about the Teacher Opportunity Program (TOP), State Teacher Education Program (STEP), and loan forgiveness programs. These programs encourage new personnel to enter the field and current educators to acquire special education licensure.

Educational Interpreters

The ADE-SEU will continue to offer free Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) assessment opportunities for interpreters working in educational settings and sponsor free workshops. Scheduled for the Fall of 2019, the workshops help Educational Interpreters increase their skills and assist them in obtaining their license and credentials required for working in public schools. The ADE-SEU collaborates with the Arkansas School for the Deaf, Arkansas Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (ARID) and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Interpreter Education Program Stakeholder group to support Educational Interpreters and schools in Arkansas.