

**State Program Development
August 2017**

AR CO-TEACHING PROJECT ADVISORY REPORT

The Arkansas Co-Teaching Project provides a tiered system of support to schools interested in starting a co-teaching program or improving the fidelity of an existing program. Tier 1 supports are available to all schools and require no formal registration; this includes telephone and email technical assistance, informational resources, and a DVD co-teaching library. Tier 2 supports include, in addition to the previous, co-teaching overview and implementation planning professional development sessions and onsite consultation. These services are available on request. Tier 3 sessions are the most intensive services, and include year-long professional development packages with onsite coaching and other activities. The year-long professional development package is offered during the fall, and its activities occur throughout the school year.

During the summer, the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project team provided several Tier 2 activities for schools to provide more information about co-teaching and the services available from the project. Overviews of the co-teaching model were provided on request at Northeast Education Cooperative and Northwest Education Cooperative. Overview sessions were also delivered to the Benton and Magnolia School Districts. In addition, general information about co-teaching was made available during the ADE School Improvement Conference at our co-teaching booth.

Tier 3 support activities concluded at the end of the school year when final onsite coaching visits were made and implementation evaluation data was collected from the 15 schools that participated in the Boundless Learning Co-Teaching year-long professional development. Participating schools included: 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).

The co-teaching implementation evaluation data was compiled and summarized into a cohort report which was used by the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project team to revise plans for the 2017-18 Boundless Learning Co-Teaching year-long professional development package. Results from the compiled data indicated:

Grades of students in co-taught classrooms (15 schools, 41 classrooms, 273 students with disabilities and 636 students without disabilities)

- Students with disabilities: 95% made passing grades; 76% made grades of C or higher
- Students without disabilities: 97% made passing grades; 89% made grades C or higher

Administrators' perception of their adoption of recommended system supports for their co-teaching programs (measured by the completion of the Action Planning Checklist by administrators at each of the 15 schools)

- The average school addressed 68% of the actions to some extent (responded with "yes" or "somewhat in place") in the fall 2016

- The average school addressed 84% of the actions to some extent (responded with “yes” or “somewhat in place”) in the spring 2017
- The highest mean percentage of responses were in the “no” category for the fall 2016 and in the “yes” category in the spring 2017 administration

Co-teachers’ perception of their application of critical components of successful co-teaching within their co-taught classrooms (measured by the Colorado Assessment of Co-Teaching completed by 59 general and special education co-teachers fall and spring)

- 31 of the 42 items in the survey had means less than 4.0 (agree) in the fall 2016
- Only 1 of the 42 items in the survey had means less than 4.0 (agree) in the spring 2017 indicating a statistically significant difference between fall and spring perceptions.
- The one item with the mean below 4.0 (agree), “Co-teachers have schedules that permit them to plan together,” had a fall mean of 1.36. The mean for the spring survey increased to 3.25.
- There was no statistically significant difference between general education and special education responses or by subject area. Although not statistically significant, school level (e.g., elementary, middle school, high school) did impact co-teacher perceptions with the lowest scores found at the high school level.

The co-teaching implementation data was also disaggregated by school. Each school received an individual report that outlined the changes that occurred over the course of the year and further recommendations for program improvement.

The project will continue providing Tier 2 and Tier 3 activities this fall. Dr. Lisa Dieker, an internationally known co-teaching researcher and consultant, will provide her session, “Creating Effective Inclusive Schools and Classrooms” on September 28, 2017. This will provide basic information about the co-teaching model to school staff and university preservice staff. Boundless Learning Co-Teaching, the blended, year-long professional development package, is offered again this fall to provide more intensive Tier 3 supports to interested schools. Boundless Learning Co-Teaching is offered to Arkansas schools as a result of a partnership between the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project and Johns Hopkins University’s Center for Technology in Education (JHU CTE). For the 2017-18 school year, schools will be able to choose between two blended, year-long, comprehensive professional development packages. Both packages are designed to assist schools in creating sustainable, effective co-teaching programs. The initial Kick Off sessions will be offered during the week of September 18 at Arkansas Rivers, Arch Ford, and Wilbur Mills Cooperatives. The project will also continue to offer technical assistance and co-teaching overviews to schools on request.

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

- The CAYSI Project has received 4 new referrals since our last report in April, 2017. This is a total of 39 new referrals in 2017 to date. 19 students have been found eligible, 1 closed due to parent refusal, and the remaining 19 are outstanding.
- The annual Deafblind Census for 2016 was submitted with 197 total students served in 2016; 156 students of the 197 were included in December 1, 2016 Child Count being served by Part C or Part B.
- Parent groups in Siloam Springs, Little Rock, and Osceola have continued with topics of self-care and mindfulness, communication for their child and learning how parents can effectively tell their story to individuals and groups.

- SPARKLE parent training was conducted in May in Siloam Springs in partnership with Friendship Pediatric Community Developmental Services.
- Jennifer Walkup provided her first professional development in collaboration with Easter Seals Outreach as well as doing a training for Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD) Special Educators July 20th.
- Both the Education Consultant and the Family Consultant were a part of the 2017 Transition Institute for Young Adults who are deafblind in Talladega, AL and the CHARGE Conference in Orlando where 250 children with CHARGE Syndrome and their families came together with medical and educational professionals.

Personnel Development Activities

- Three of the six Special Education Training Modules that were developed by a committee of Arkansas school district and agency special education personnel in collaboration with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) have been completed by the AETN production team and are currently in the process of review by the ADE-SEU. The remaining three Modules should be finished this fall and all modules will be available through the Arkansas IDEAS Portal once reviewed and approved. A committee of statewide stakeholders has begun work to revise the Special Health Care Needs Training Module.
- The ADE-SEU is currently supporting seventeen graduate level students seeking certification as Speech Language Pathologists and Visual Specialists for Arkansas public schools through tuition reimbursement. Staff at ADE-SEU work closely with personnel at the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) to share information about the Teacher Opportunity Program (TOP) and State Teacher Education Program (STEP), teacher tuition reimbursement and loan forgiveness programs. These programs encourage new personnel to enter the field and current educators to acquire special education licensure.
- SEU Personnel Development Staff continue to actively partner with the ADE's Teacher Recruitment and Retention program by attending and supporting all "Become an Arkansas Teacher" events and working with Educator Prep and Licensure Units to attract and support persons interested becoming special education teachers.
- The ADE-SEU continues to support Educational Interpreters in Arkansas. The ADE-SEU has sponsored two EIPA assessment opportunities in 2017 for interpreters working in educational settings. These were held in Springdale in January and in Little Rock in April. Participation was very good at both and plans exist for further assessments to be scheduled.
- On June 2, 2017, the ADE-SEU held a five-contact-hour workshop for Arkansas Educational Interpreters employed by school districts or co-ops, licensed as educational interpreters or in the process of obtaining licensure.

This workshop focused on hands-on work on the topics of drawing in space, how to construct ASL with classifiers, increasing processing/lag time, and how to convey emotion/intent. The workshop was very well attended and extremely well received. Plans are to organize more workshops.