

**ARKANSAS CO-TEACHING PROJECT ADVISORY REPORT
JANUARY 2018**

The Arkansas Co-Teaching Project continues to provide a tiered system of support to the staff at schools interested in starting a co-teaching program or improving the fidelity of an existing program. A number of special education supervisors, principals, and co-teachers have taken advantage of the Tier 1 supports this fall. These supports include telephone and email technical assistance, informational resources, and access to the DVD co-teaching library. Tier 2 supports include co-teaching overviews, implementation planning professional development sessions, and onsite consultation. The most noticeable Tier 2 support offered was the statewide basic co-teaching session for 164 participants provided by Dr. Lisa Dieker, national co-teaching consultant and researcher. In addition, staff from three schools representing one district participated in a one-day overview of co-teaching.

Sixteen schools from nine districts continue to participate in the more intensive Tier 3 supports. These supports are provided in the form of Boundless Learning Co-Teaching (BLC), a blended yearlong co-teaching professional development package available as a result of a partnership between the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project and Johns Hopkins University's Center for Technology in Education (JHU CTE). Participating schools include: Cooper Elementary, (Bentonville District), Crossett High, Crossett Middle (Crossett District), Jacksonville North Pulaski County Middle (Jacksonville North Pulaski County), Hall High (Little Rock School District), Magnolia High, Magnolia Junior High, and East Side Elementary (Magnolia District), Mountain Home Junior High, Mountain Home High and Pinkston Middle (Mountain Home District), Sonora Middle and Springdale High (Springdale District), Trumann Middle and Trumann High (Trumann District), and Vilonia Freshman Academy (Vilonia District).

The Boundless Learning Co-Teaching (BLC) activities began with onsite or online orientation presentations in July, August, and September, followed by one-day traditional professional development kick off sessions provided at three local cooperatives. Participants included co-teaching general and special education partnerships, designated BLC building administrators and in the case of three schools, instructional facilitators. Participants were provided basic information on BLC and the roles and responsibilities of co-teachers, building administrators, and facilitators. They were also provided with an orientation to the online components of BLC and were able to begin working on the first of the six online modules during the sessions with the support of the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project's team and the team from JHU CTE.

At this point in time, the majority of the co-teaching teams have completed three of the 6 online modules. Each module or online learning event (OLE) requires co-teaching partnerships to meet together to continue their learning about effective co-teaching practices and demonstrate their learning by completing an online product. Co-teachers also individually participate in a facilitated online community and are assessed on their learning. After submitting their team products, partnerships receive online feedback from members of the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project's team.

Two webinars have been offered to administrators and designated BLC facilitators to provide them with additional information about the content co-teachers were learning in the OLEs, strategies for supporting co-teachers, and ideas to address common implementation issues. The majority of administrators were able to attend the webinars and a recording was posted for those unable to participate because of scheduling conflicts.

Beginning in January with the second phase of BLC, co-teachers will complete the final three online modules and receive onsite coaching. Each school will receive a minimum of two coaching visits. Additional visits will be scheduled as needed. In addition, administrators and designated instructional facilitators will also participate in two more webinars as well as participate in the onsite coaching visits. As part of their BLC training, administrators and instructional facilitators will practice observing and providing feedback to co-teachers to support their implementation of BLC practices in the classroom.

During the September Kick-Off sessions, implementation evaluation data was collected from the administrators and co-teachers using the Needs Assessment/Action Planning Checklist and Colorado Assessment of Co-Teaching (CO-ACT) surveys. The pre-assessment data collected in September was compiled and the data summarized into cohort and individual school reports. The individual school report summaries, along with recommendations for improvement, were disseminated to participating schools in December. The surveys will be administered again at the end of the school year, and the pre/post data comparisons will enable the co-teaching teams and school administrators to measure changes in the co-taught classrooms and building/district level support for the co-teaching programs. Final grades of students with and without disabilities will also be collected as a means of demonstrating the impact of co-teaching.

In addition to BLC activities, the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project will increase its focus on increasing the awareness of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 supports. Additional information will be added to the website and the activities provided by the project will be promoted for access during the summer and throughout the 2018-19 school year.

**Federal Deafblind Grant
CAYSI (Children and Youth with Sensory Impairment and other disabilities)
January, 2018 Advisory Report**

- The CAYSI Project has received *11 new referrals* since our last report in August, 2017. This is a total of 66 new referrals in FY18 to date. 29 students have been found eligible; 3 referrals were closed due to parent refusal; 5 students were found not eligible; and the remaining 39 referrals are outstanding.
- 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.
- CAYSI is in collaboration with Easter Seals Outreach to provide 4 professional development trainings in central, northeast, and southern parts of the state for children with dual sensory impairment and other disabilities. Training begins January 30, 2018 and ends March 3rd. Feedback from these trainings will determine if continued training will occur during the summer.
- CAYSI is continuing a pilot program of intensive technical assistance in northwest Arkansas with the second professional development on literacy and active learning on January 23, 2018. Teams from each school district with

- CAYSI students will have face to face trainings along with individual support and on-line distance learning.
- Preparation for the Deafblind Summit meeting and Deafblind International conference is beginning.
 - There will be a SPARKLE Parent Training on Saturday, March 3rd in Little Rock to help parents better understand their child's world with deafblindness.
 - CAYSI has amped up Early Identification and Referral efforts by:
 - Collaboration with the Department of Health Infant Hearing Program
 - Collaboration with Part C by providing a CAYSI webinar to Early Intervention providers in February or
 - CAYSI in-service training for Arkansas Children's Hospital (ACH) relative to discharge planning
 - Collaboration with other state deafblind projects in work groups with the National Center on Deaf-Blindness
 - CAYSI is working with the southeast regional state deafblind programs to provide a Family Planning Conference for children who are deafblind and have multiple disabilities transitioning to adulthood - March 23-25 in Georgia.

Advisory Council for the Education of Individuals with Disabilities January 2018 Report

Personnel Development Activities

Paraprofessional Supports and Training

Six new special education training modules are now available through ArkansasIDEAS. These six one-hour Modules were developed by a committee of Arkansas school district and agency special education personnel in collaboration with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and the Arkansas Department of Education, Special Education Unit, (ADE-SEU). Three of the Modules focus on the foundations of special education and the other three focus on student behavior. All modules are available to Arkansas licensed teachers and administrators, and paraprofessionals working in schools. A committee of statewide stakeholders continues the process of updating and revising the Special Health Care Needs Training Module.

Recruitment and Retention

The ADE-SEU continues to support fourteen graduate level students seeking certification as Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) through the previous tuition reimbursement program. Six participants have completed their university programs, achieved licensure as SLPs, and are fulfilling the terms of their commitment as employees of Arkansas public schools or education service cooperatives. Two program participants completed the terms of their commitment in 2017 and continue their employment with Arkansas Education Service Cooperatives (ESCs). The ADE-SEU is now working with education service cooperatives to provide supports for LEAs

to increase recruitment and retention of special education personnel, which can include Speech Language Pathologists.

The ADE-SEU will continue to supporting teachers seeking vision and hearing specialist certifications 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 "Become an Arkansas Teacher" events and working with ADE Educator Preparation and Licensure units to attract and support persons interested in becoming special education teachers.

Educational Interpreters

The ADE-SEU sponsored three Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) opportunities in 2017 for interpreters working in educational settings. Future assessment opportunities will be scheduled. Additionally, the ADE-SEU held a five-hour workshop (free of charge) for educational Interpreters. More workshops are planned for the coming year. The ADE-SEU collaborates with the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Arkansas Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (ARID) to support educational Interpreters and schools in Arkansas.