

Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Special Education Unit Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities Children And Youth with Sensory Impairments (CAYSI), July 2020

- The 2019 Deafblind Census and the Year 2 Annual Performance Report was submitted in May 2020, to the Office of Special Education Programs.
- CAYSI and Easterseals Outreach cancelled the last of five proposed trainings for the school year on *Serving Students with Multiple Disabilities and Dual Sensory Impairments* due to social distancing concerns and regulations. This totals four professional development opportunities for educators of students with dual sensory impairments and multiple disabilities. CAYSI and Easterseals Outreach will be meeting to discuss the upcoming plans for the next school year.
- CAYSI currently has 241 students on its registry. In this quarter, three new referrals were received. Seven students were found eligible for services during this quarter. Thirty-nine referrals are outstanding.
- CAYSI provided support to the Brain Injury consultant during the webinar *Building Connections: A Team Approach to Education After Brain Injury*.
- An MOU was developed with Educational Services for the Visually Impaired (ESVI), CASYI, and Brain Injury (BI) to leverage expertise, time, effort, and resources to address the complex needs of students who are deaf/blind, blind and visually impaired, and diagnosed with brain damage, brain dysfunction or brain injury.
- CAYSI provided families, educators, vocational rehabilitation, Division of Services for the Blind, and state consultants, an opportunity gain deafblind knowledge through free webinars offered through Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI) and through the Southeast Deafblind Projects and the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC).

CAYSI grant initiative work in changing systems and building capacity in serving students and their families birth to twenty-two years:

Transitioning Students with Deafblindness out of High School

1. Re-planning for Family Futures Planning Days virtually is being considered in the fall, in collaboration with Arkansas Transition Services, Arkansas Rehabilitative Services, Division Services of the Blind, and individuals from the PASSE system under DHS.
2. CAYSI staff has developed a plan with NCDB in receiving intensive technical assistance. A work group has been identified to partner in making systems change for our deafblind population. A meeting will be held June 30th with our Deafblind Interagency Team. CAYSI, the Helen Keller Nation Center, Arkansas Transition Services, Arkansas Rehabilitative Services, Division Services of the Blind, DHS, DDS, and Goodwill Industries will be working on a systems change in the area of building a seamless process of transitioning and providing the necessary supports and longer-term services for integrative employment of our young adults.

Family Engagement

1. The Family Consultant became certified as an Ambassador with Charting the Life Course Nexus Program along with seven other individuals from state deafblind programs. Work is beginning in creating a systems change in family engagement for Arkansas, increasing capacity for families to plan for the future for themselves and their children.
2. CAYSI has provided support to families via Zoom and phone calls in the area of parent anxiety, communication issues, transition, behavior, and information to newly eligible parents.
3. CAYSI is developing an individual plan on cultural competence to increase efforts in providing equity among race and other ethnicities in these vulnerable populations of students with deafblindness. Work in further collaboration with the Community Parent Resource Center in northwest Arkansas, The Center for Exceptional Families, and Arkansas Hands and Voices is a part of the the plan for CAYSI. A Cultural Ambassador is being considered as part of this work.
4. The Family to Family Communities program (F2FC) has offered family drop-in calls twice monthly since COVID-19 stay at home has been implemented. Seven parents from Arkansas

have participated. The F2FC has closed their 5th year of parent monthly calls that occur during the school year. Recruitment of new parent facilitators is currently happening with recruiting parents starting in August.

5. The Family Consultant presented to the Family Engagement Coordinators for the state deafblind programs on Mindful Self-Compassion June 9 via Adobe Connect.

Educational Technical Assistance

1. Through the encouragement of our OSEP Officer, Susan Weigart, CAYSI is participating in the National Community of Practice for Project Core. CAYSI is learning more about how certain children with deafblindness—specifically those with significant cognitive impairment who are not proficient communicators—will respond to instruction in the use of Universal Core Vocabulary. We have identified three teachers of a deafblind child who might benefit from Core Vocabulary instruction. We have also included education consultants from ESVI and Easterseals Outreach in this CoP. During the monthly CoP call, our goal is to review and try out the implementation of Project Core's universal core vocabulary (<http://www.project-core.com/>) and to provide feedback about participating student progress, successes, and challenges.
2. CAYSI provided school consultations to DeWitt, Arkansas School for the Deaf, and a Little Rock Early Childhood Center via phone conference and Zoom.