

AR CO-TEACHING PROJECT ADVISORY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2016

The Arkansas Co-Teaching Project provides 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 are available to all schools and include services such as telephone and email technical assistance, informational resources, and a DVD co-teaching library. Tier 2 supports include co-teaching overviews and implementation planning professional development sessions and onsite consultation. These services are available on request. Tier 3 sessions are the most intensive services provided 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 the activities occur throughout the school year.

During the summer, the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project team provided multiple opportunities for schools to gain information about co-teaching and the services available from the project. Presentations were made at the Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development conference (AASCD), the Arkansas Council for Exceptional Children (AR CEC Conference), and the Arkansas Department of Education's (ADE) School Improvement Conference. Overviews of the co-teaching model were provided on request at Wilbur Mills Cooperative, Arch Ford Cooperative, Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD), and Barton-Lexa School District.

On September 22, 2016, the Project invited educators from around the state to attend a co-teaching professional development event in Little Rock presented by Dr. Lisa Dieker, an internationally known co-teaching consultant and researcher. Invitations to this event were also offered to teacher pre-service university staff, ADE and cooperative curriculum specialists, and ADE special education and school improvement specialists. The session was attended by 118 people.

Promotion of the year-long Boundless Learning Co-Teaching (BLC) professional development package occurred over the summer and at the beginning of the school year. This professional development opportunity 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 2016-17 school year, schools were 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.

- Basic Boundless Learning Co-Teaching (BLC) - The Basic BLC blended package is designed to create co-teacher partnerships that work together to build a 21st century co-teaching team in which each member is clear about the team's mission, goals, and roles. It includes a formal Kick-Off session, facilitated, online, competency-based modules for co-teachers; electronic learning communities for co-teachers and administrators, on-site co-teaching coaching visits, virtual administrators' support meetings, and a comprehensive

implementation evaluation process. The target audience for the Basic BLC package includes general and special education co-teaching partners and their principal or designated assistant principal.

- Combined Boundless Learning Co-Teaching (BLC). The Combined BLC package includes all the components of the Basic package as well as a new School-Based Facilitator's BLC package. With the Combined BLC package, literacy and math facilitators are taught how to provide ongoing support to BLC co-teachers while strengthening their skills in coaching adults and working effectively with administrators. The target audience for the Combined BLC package includes general and special education co-teachers, their principal or designated assistant principal, and literacy and/or math facilitators.

The one day traditional face-to-face Kick Off sessions were provided September 27-30, 2016. Co-teachers and administrators from 15 schools in 9 school districts participated. These 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).

For schools enrolled in the Basic Boundless Learning (BLC) package, the next step for co-teachers will be to complete the 6 online modules and participate in the electronic learning community. The co-teaching partners will work together to complete the online modules and create electronic products. Afterwards, the co-teaching partners will individually assess their mastery of the content, respond to challenge questions in the electronic learning community, and use a process to rate themselves and their partnerships. Their administrators will participate in 4 webinars with the teams from the AR Co-Teaching Project and JHU CTE to discuss implementation issues and improve their ability to give co-teachers non-evaluative performance feedback. They will also network with the project teams and other administrators in this year's cohort group through an administrators' electronic learning community. In addition, all participants will engage in the same co-teaching implementation evaluation process that has been used in the past to measure changes in the co-taught classrooms, building/district level support for the co-teaching programs, and impact on students with and without disabilities.

Co-teachers and administrators who are enrolled in the Combined Boundless Learning Co-Teaching (BLC) package will complete the same activities listed above, with the additional benefit of including their literacy and/or math instructional facilitators in the process. These facilitators will complete online modules specific to their role in order to provide co-teachers with onsite support in the form of check-in meetings, classroom walk-throughs, and fidelity checks.

Over the course of this year, the Arkansas Co-Teaching Project and their partners at JHU CTE will continue to provide support by facilitating the BLC online work, hosting administration webinars, coaching staff onsite at their school, and providing ongoing technical assistance.

In addition to the year-long professional development package activities, the AR Co-Teaching Project team will continue to provide email and telephone technical assistance to any interested co-teachers and administrators as well as offer onsite consulting and co-teaching overview sessions on request. The Project team will also continue to work closely with staff from the ADE Special Education and School Improvement Units to provide support as needed to schools identified as high need.

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

- The CAYSI Project has received 29 referrals since January 2016. 12 students have been found eligible, 4 were found ineligible and 13 are still being processed.
- Parent groups in Siloam Springs, Little Rock, and Osceola have continued with meeting topics around communication needs for their children and learning how they as parents can effectively tell their story to individuals and groups.
- SPARKLE parent training was held in Little Rock, October 7th with 9 families registered.
- CAYSI and the Special Education Unit sponsored 2 families and their young adult with deafblindness to attend the Transition Institute at the University of Georgia. Both the student and parent wrote action plans were the student that included goals of the student around self-determination and advocating for oneself.
- CAYSI and the Special Education Unit sponsored 2 parent leaders from Mountain View and Wynne for the 2016 Family Symposium for DeafBlind in Austin, TX. The parents reported highlights and action plans were developed to form an affiliate to the National Family Association of Deafblindness (NFADB).
- CAYSI staff attended the National Center for Deafblindness Summit and OSEP's Project Director's meeting in August.
- The Southeast Regional Cohort is offering national on-line training modules to professionals and families. 12 teachers from Arkansas have registered and 2 parents have registered for the parent modules.
- CAYSI is currently recruiting for an Education Consultant.

Professional Development Activities

- Six **Special Education Training Modules** developed by a committee of Arkansas school district and agency special education personnel and produced by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) are scheduled for filming in December 2016 at AETN. It is anticipated that these Modules will be available in the Spring of 2017 to provide high quality professional development for paraprofessionals and all educational personnel with access to the Arkansas IDEAS Portal system.
- Currently, the 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 allow certified Arkansas teachers to work toward licensure as Visual Specialists and Hearing Specialists.
- SEU Professional Development continues to actively participate with the ADE's Teacher **Recruitment and Retention** program and the ADE Licensure Unit to attract and support persons interested in becoming special education teachers. The next "Become an Arkansas Teacher" event was held on Monday, October 10 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Little Rock. Later this month a series of four additional targeted regional Recruitment/Retention events will be held at Educational Cooperatives. The ADE-SEU will participate at each of these events.
- The ADE-SEU continues to support **Educational Interpreters** in Arkansas with plans for additional assessment opportunities for interpreters working in educational settings. The ADE-SEU team will seek to expand its support for Educational Interpreters and Arkansas schools to meet the new standards.