

CAYSI (Children and Youth with Sensory Impairments)
Quarterly Report to the Special Education Advisory Council
October 8, 2018

- The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) under the Technical Assistance and Dissemination section approved CAYSI's grant application for 2018 – 2023. Under this new grant, Angyln Young, Educational Services for the Visually Impaired (ESVI) Coordinator, will also take on the role of Project Director. In deeper collaboration with ESVI and Easter Seals Outreach, the project intends to build capacity in reaching students with deafblindness and improving outcomes.
- CAYSI's Education Consultant and Easter Seals Outreach will provide four professional development opportunities throughout the state for the next school year. Trainings are October 16th in North Central Education Cooperative, February 5th at Great Rivers Cooperative, and November 1st and March 5th in Little Rock at Easter Seals Outreach.
- CAYSI, in collaboration with the Southeast Deafblind Projects, is sponsoring a Haptics Training in Asheville, NC. The Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) will teach Support Service Providers (SSPs), Interpreters, Vision Specialists, other professionals, and families a type of communication that provides access to more information through touch. CAYSI's Education Consultant, Family Consultant, an ESVI Vision Consultant, an Arkansas School for the Deaf transition teacher, and an interpreter for persons with deafblindness from the University of Arkansas Little Rock will bring back new concepts in communication for Arkansas' deafblind population.
- Technical assistance has been provided over the last reporting period in Batesville, Greenwood, Magnolia, DeWitt, Hot Springs, Van Buren, Northwest Arkansas, Bryant, and Pulaski County.
- The Supporting Parent Access to Resources, Knowledge, Linkages, and Education (SPARKLE) parent training was conducted in Siloam Springs in September at Friendship Community Care. Professionals joined CAYSI families, along with a Spanish interpreter for 2 of our families.
- CAYSI is working with Arkansas Rehabilitative Services (ARS), Division Services for the Blind (DSB), Arkansas Transition Services (ATS), and HKNC in transitioning students into adulthood. A Family Futures Planning Day will be held in March for parents whose child is deafblind and has other disabilities as well. Parents and caregivers will explore services and options available for a rich and purposeful life for their child after graduation.

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Personnel Development Activities

Paraprofessional Supports and Training

Districts and agencies are now to employ the six Special Education Training Modules available through ArkansasIDEAS for training paraprofessionals. The 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 ADE-SEU. The Modules focus on the Foundations of Special Education and Student Behavior. They are available to all Arkansas licensed teachers and administrators, and school age paraprofessionals.

The Special Health Care Needs Training Module has been updated and should be ready for review by the ADE soon.

Recruitment and Retention

The ADE-SEU completed all direct funding support (tuition reimbursement) to graduate level students seeking certification as Speech Language Pathologists at the end of Summer 2018. The ADE-SEU now collaborates with educational service cooperatives to provide opportunities for recruitment and retention of educational personnel, which can include Speech Language Pathologists, at the local level.

The ADE-SEU continues to support the last cohort of six graduate level students seeking certification as Vision Specialists under the previous tuition reimbursement program. The ADE-SEU will now work with two out of state Institute of Higher Education (IHE) to recruit and support licensed Arkansas teachers seeking to add Visual or Hearing Specialist certifications by means of stipends available after certification and time spent teaching in a qualified position.

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 in becoming special education teachers. ADE-SEU staff participated in the ADE's September 2018 "Become a Teacher" event. 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 offered another Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) assessment opportunity in September 2018 for interpreters working in educational settings and sponsored a 2-day workshop in June 2018 to help Educational Interpreters increase their skills and assist them in obtaining their license and credentials required for working in public schools. Both events were free. 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.