



Sustained Shared Expectations While Preparing and Mentoring Teachers of Students Who are Visually Impaired and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists Across State Lines

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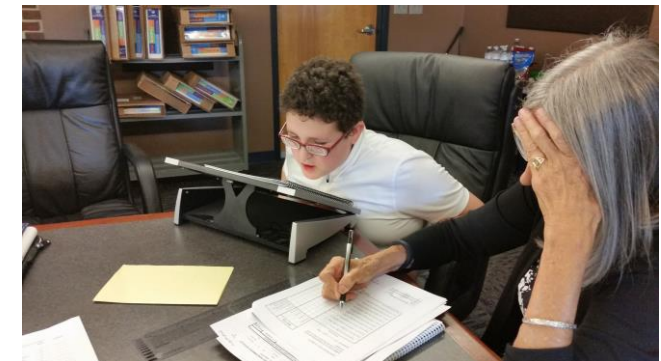
Building Local Capacity to Serve Kansas Learners Who are Blind or Visually Impaired



Kansas learners who are blind or visually impaired have increased access to quality instruction as a result of their **teachers high rates of program completion and increased retention.**

Kansas relies on **interstate partnerships** to sustain quality Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists across rural and “suburban” classrooms.

Kansas TASN coordinators will describe key practices used with multiple audiences during **recruitment, preparation and mentoring, which establishes shared expectations.**



Interstate Partnerships

To Sustain Quality Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs) and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMS) Across Rural and “Suburban” Classrooms

No in-state training program. Interstate Partnership with Graduate Programs . . .

University of Nebraska (UNL) – Lincoln. Dr. Mackenzie Savaiano

- TVIs – need standard initial teaching license in area of general or special education
 - Teaching Endorsement in Visual Impairment. 36 credit hours training program
 - Does not pay for Master’s Degree – additional 6 credit hours

Texas Tech University (TTU) – Lubbock. Drs. Rona Pogrund and Nora Griffin Shirley

- COMS – need Bachelor’s Degree – considered a Related Service
 - 27 credit hours training program plus internship
 - Successful completion of the National Orientation and Mobility Certification Examination by The Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP)
- Dual trained (TVI/COMS)
 - 15 credit hours training program plus internship for TVIs earning certification in orientation and mobility
 - 12 credit hours training program plus student teaching for COMS also earning TVI Teaching Endorsement



Key Practices: Recruitment

Recruitment and Shared Expectations

- Systems Level: State and regional
- Target Audience: Project coordinators, project partners, administrators
- Selection Criteria: Areas with no service, areas that are underserved and known vision caseloads with retiring TVI/COMS.
- Commitment of school district, educational service center, special education co-op or inter-local to support student in training and to commit to their employment. “Grow Your Own!”

Recruitment Partners

- KSDE: Division of Learning Services staff
- Outreach Team from KSSB
- State Advisory Council for Special Education
- TASN Providers
- State Teacher and Administrator Associations
- Special Education TVI and COMS



Key Practices: Preparation

Preparation and Shared Expectations

Follow-up with each referral through email, conversations, face-to-face meetings

Students are connected with university programs for admission and enrollment

Accepting applications to keep all candidates up-to-date

District plan for selected applicant

Signature of commitment to items outlined on Educational Reimbursement Agreement

- Pay for approved expenses in advance (tuition, fees, books and some travel) – earn a “B” or better – in order to be reimbursed at end of semester
- Work in Kansas as a TVI/COMS for 2 years. Most districts get a waiver when the student is accepted into the program of study



Key Practices: Mentoring

Mentoring and Shared Expectations – link to teacher effectiveness and student achievement

Pre-service classes

- Quality Programs (QP) for Students with Visual Impairments (VI)
 - QP Functional Vision Assessment (FVA) and Master List (ML)
 - QP Learning Media Assessment (LMA) for General Educational Student and a Developmentally Appropriate LMA
- Master List Analysis – QP Facilitator and Vision Program Supervisor Co-Leads Meetings
 - Development of an accurate list of students with VI and to gather specific data about each student
 - Use their vision program data to inform instructional decisions and program improvement
 - Development of a self-study analysis report and plan of action

Key Practices: Mentoring

e-Mentoring for Student Success (eMSS)

Partnership with TASN Recruitment and Retention Project, KS SPDG, and New Teacher Center.

The mentors for this program are highly qualified TVIs and COMS who provide feedback aimed at helping the new teachers improve their practice

Program director designed a content-specific exploration

Online community for Kansas TVIs and COMS, which new teachers can participate in for up to 3 years



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