

Mid-State Regional Meeting MINUTES and UPDATE

SUNY Cortland

January 14, 2011

3-4:30 pm

Attending Members

Kimberly Rombach & Susan Stratton, SUNY Cortland

Alexis Abramo, Teacher Professional Development Network of CNY, SUNY Cortland (spoke last 15 minutes)

Amanda Fenlon, SUNY Oswego (by phone)

Peter Kozik, Syracuse University

Tom Bull, Regional Field Facilitator for S³TAIR Project (by phone)

Bud Cooney, LeMoyne College

Travis Park, Cornell University

Bryan Duff, Wells College

Kim Wieczorek, Cazenovia College

Thank You's

- ◆ Bryan thanked Linda Hanrahan from Ithaca College, Jim Shuman from St. Lawrence University, and Bev Rainforth from SUNY Binghamton for reviewing the agenda and submitting suggestions via email. Bryan and Kim attempted to “represent” their suggestions and comments during the meeting.

Topic 1: Inclusion Symposium (Friday, April 8; Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES, Auburn, NY)

Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) Point People

- ◆ Bryan noted a gap in our representation of IHE's in our region; we neglected to request a point person at Syracuse University.
- ◆ Next Steps: Tom Bull volunteered to be the point person to (a) promote the Symposium to advanced preservice teachers and to (b) coordinate first-come, first-served sign-ups for Syracuse University.

Limits on IHE Student Attendance

- ◆ We noted that only 10 students from each IHE would be able to attend the symposium, due to limited space and the desire to allow for a diverse audience from different institutions and school settings to attend.

Targeting/Publicizing to Inservice Educator Audience

- ◆ We clarified that we are targeting educators from “high needs schools,” which for Taskforce purposes means schools where students with disabilities are not making adequate progress (and this is not necessarily linked to statistics around free and reduced lunch, the typical indicator of “high needs” schools).
- ◆ Because of limited number of inservice teachers we can accommodate at the Symposium, it was suggested that we focus our advertising on the “neediest” schools in the identified districts. How to identify these schools? Suggestions: State Education personnel like Matt Giugno and Gail Moon and her colleague Wendy. Brian Pulvino, Director of Special Education in the Syracuse City School District. Coordinators from RSE-TASC (Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Centers, replacing SETRC) - Scott Slater (Region 5 – Central), Janel Payette (Region 6 – Mid-State) and Rebecca DeBottis (Region 7 – Mid-South).
- ◆ Cost Discussion: We need to cover the cost of providing food and any refreshments for approximately 170 people. Preservice teachers will pay NO FEE; inservice teachers will pay an individual fee of \$25 and teams of up to six from each site will pay a fee of \$125.

- ◆ The cost of providing substitute teachers for inservice teachers to be absent was addressed; co-liaisons need to plan to pay for subs and also need to be ready for schools neglecting to ask for reimbursement for subs (past co-liaisons only paid for 4 substitute teachers).

- ◆ Next Steps: Tom volunteered to contact the RSE-TASC Coordinators, once Bryan sends out the final draft of the flier for Inservice educators, early next week.

Discussion of Breakout Sessions

- ◆ We clarified that there would be one breakout session in the morning, with 4 different strand choices, and one breakout session in the afternoon, with the same 4 strand choices (most likely with different presenters).
- ◆ Each session would be 1 hour, 15 minutes long and should be interactive and practical, planned for an audience of about 35 participants. A reminder that the breakout sessions are “book-ended” by two different speakers who offer first-person perspectives on the experience of disability and inclusion/exclusion.
- ◆ We were able to confirm the following presenters for each strand:
 - Co-teaching: Bud Cooney and colleagues from Fayetteville-Manlius Schools (Le Moyne)
 - Differentiation: Linda Stummer (Oswego City School District)
 - Behavior support: Carlo Cuccaro (Fulton City Schools) & Amanda Fenlon (SUNY Oswego)
 - Literacy: Bobbi Schnorr (SUNY Oswego)
- ◆ Amanda noted that she could discuss individualized behavior supports and Carlo Cuccaro could discuss school-wide PBIS.
- ◆ Amanda also noted that Linda Stummer has an excellent toolkit in relation to behavior supports, though we noted our lack of presenters in the Differentiation strand and therefore decided to keep Linda in Differentiation.
- ◆ In relation to the Literacy strand, will Bobbi want to present both morning and afternoon? Amanda also recommended Heidi Beverine-Curry, who is working on her PhD in Literacy at S.U. and who can offer secondary literacy content in working with students with moderate to significant disabilities. We asked Amanda to request Heidi’s participation, once we send out more detailed information about length, audience, and purpose of breakout sessions, early next week. **Note: In a post-meeting email, Amanda amended her suggestion on the grounds that Heidi is essentially teaching in a self-contained classroom. She suggested instead Donna Dennihy, of State Street Elementary School in Skaneateles, a special educator who is team teaching with 4th & 5th grade general education teachers.**
- ◆ We asked Tom if the team from Sandy Creek could confirm to present on Co-teaching as we had originally listed them. Tom noted that he would ask the team. Bud Cooney said that he and his team could also present about differentiation (at the secondary level).

- ◆ Next steps: Amanda will discuss the Literacy strand with Bobbi Schnorr and with Heidi Beverine-Curry, as well as request Linda Stummer’s participation in the Differentiation strand. Tom will confirm whether or not the Sandy Creek team can present about co-teaching and whether or not Carlo Cuccaro can present. Bryan and Kim will send out further information early the week of January 17th about presentation length and purpose.

Topic 2: Mini-grants for Preservice Teachers

- ◆ We reviewed and discussed draft of mini-grant info sheet and considered looking at the online Survey Monkey application form.
- ◆ We first reviewed the list of S³TAIR recognized schools and the counties where they are located.

- ◆ Amanda raised the question about whether or not teams (or partnerships) were going to observe, or would it be just individual preservice teachers?
- ◆ We acknowledged that partnerships could go and share the \$300 stipend, choosing 1 of the partnership to present on the panel at the conference.
- ◆ The potential of having preservice teachers present posters instead of a panel was raised, to make for a more interactive event.
- ◆ Questions about how many schools the preservice teachers would visit were raised (just one, a couple, or all 6 listed: Lanigan Elementary, Sandy Creek K-12, Chenango Forks K-5, Port Byron K-8, Roberts K-8, and Salem-Hyde Elementary)?
- ◆ Would fewer schools visited result in less diversity of discussion and poster presentation potential?
- ◆ One post-meeting note was how just 6-12 presenters could occupy all 150-170 participants during this one session. Perhaps the panel presentation might still be the best option.
- ◆ We confirmed that 10 grants could be given to 10 pairs of preservice teachers. A faculty member at the preservice teachers' IHEs could help with "look-fors" before the observation visit.
- ◆ Questions about who meets the students at the school and who structures their visit were raised. Would it be Tom Bull as the S³TAIR facilitator, Bryan and Kim, or representatives from the schools themselves?
- ◆ Tom discussed how Salem-Hyde does not have a replication school and might be the best option. We raised questions about all 10 pairs going to observe in just one school. We discussed how the award could state the "look-fors" as part of the stipulations for receiving the grant.
- ◆ Tom suggested focusing on just a couple of dates, so that all involved will not be overwhelmed with so many visits.
- ◆ Tom noted that the Symposium is not far away and we need to move on this quickly. We raised questions about using other schools like Port Byron and Roberts, and Tom noted they are not official mentor schools.
- ◆ Amanda raised the point about how the visits, if a day long, need to be well-structured. Preservice teachers could shadow one or two teachers or even a student. Amanda offered to share her assignment resource where she has preservice teachers shadow a student in a school.

◆ Next Steps: Bryan and Kim will continue to quickly draft the mini-grant application, and Tom Bull will discuss visits with Salem-Hyde personnel. Once we finalize the flier, we will send it out to IHE point people (the same as for the symposium?) and work with Tom to structure the visits to the S³TAIR validated schools.

Topic 3: Grants for Inservice Teachers

- ◆ Tom recommended we use this money for a Dr. Weeks-Salem-Hyde partnership to offer professional development support to the Dr. Weeks teachers, as they are interested in the Schools of Promise programming. **Note: In post-meeting communication, Tom clarified that Dr. Weeks is interested in becoming more inclusive but is not yet applying as a full School of Promise.**
- ◆ Tom noted that, if this project were supported, the teachers could collect data and present some qualitative and quantitative evidence in relation to inclusive practices and their professional development.
- ◆ Attending members supported the re-allocation. However, ...

◆ Next Steps: Before deciding about possible re-allocation of the inservice grant money, Bryan and Kim will send an email to the regional membership to solicit feedback. We do not want to move forward with this reallocation without strong support. The window for feedback will be relatively brief, as we need to move quickly.

Topic 4: Presentation by Alexis Abramo from the Teacher Professional Development Network

- ◆ This network is in the first year of a three-year grant and is helping to fill the gap left by the decrease and disappearance of statewise Teacher Centers. Alexis presented the website and how the Inclusive Task Force could input our information and events. She recommended we include information such as search terms related to grade level and content area. It was noted that, while there is a menu option for “special education,” there is no “inclusion” option. We would like our taskforce and its events to be coded in this way, if possible, and Alexis said that she would explore the feasibility of adding this menu choice.
- ◆ Next Steps: At Peter’s recommendation, Bryan and Kim will request that Steve Wirt connect the Task Force website to the TPDN.