68th Conference on Exceptional Children – November 15 – 16, 2018

General Exceptional Children Conference:

The Exceptional Children Division of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, through its strategic plan, is committed to increasing the performance of students with disabilities, thereby enhancing their ability to graduate and achieve productive post-secondary outcomes. It is critical that all who have a stake in impacting the lives of our students – parents/families, special education teachers, related service personnel, psychologists, regular education teachers, administrators – collaborate to help them thrive each day and into the future.

The Exceptional Children Division is pleased to invite colleagues from across the state to join us for the 68th Annual Conference on Exceptional Children. This annual synergistic event is an opportunity to share and learn about innovations and exciting practices to help exceptional children achieve. Numerous enriching activities include:

- An uplifting Plenary Session with inspiring keynote presentation;
- 90+ informative Instructional Sessions covering the broad spectrum of exceptional children education:
- Educators of Excellence reception honoring outstanding North Carolina special educators;
- Poster Display of innovative programs and practices;
- School-Based Enterprise Bazaar showcasing products created and marketed by North Carolina Public School students with disabilities;
- Exhibitor/Vendor area that offers interactions with organizations and companies specializing in serving exceptional children.

Come be an integral part of this annual gathering in Greensboro of more than 3,000 professionals and parents, all working together to improve educational outcomes for all students!

More details on the General EC Conference sessions can be found under Registration at https://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/conferences-profdev/annual-conference.

Pre-Conference Institutes

Institute #1

Title: Coaching Basics: How to Avoid the Implement and Abandon Cycle through Quality Coaching **Speaker(s):** Carol Moffit, MEd & Laura Marsden, MEd **Session description:**

Coaching is a vital element of the implementation drivers within implementation science. In this institute, we will examine the coaching basics for administrators, coaches, teachers, and service providers. Topics will include research that supports the effectiveness of coaching and the types of coaching as described by Joellen Killion's five models of coaching. Additionally, participants will have an opportunity to learn the basics of the coaching continuum including individual coaching, group coaching, and peer coaching with models of each. The fundamentals and importance of goal setting will also be addressed with teachers and student development in mind. Another key element will be feedback including types of feedback, the feedback loop and use of in-ear-technology as a means for

in-the-moment content and high impact strategy coaching. Participants will learn and practice giving and receiving feedback and will be able to view models of in-ear-technology used in coaching teachers.



Institute #2

Title: All Leaders Understand, Support & Collaborate to Provide Evidence-Based Instruction

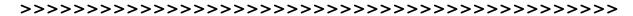
Speaker(s): Bridget Bilbro, MSA & Rick Powers, MSA

Session description:

All Leaders Understand... is a professional learning opportunity for district and building leaders to dig deeper into components of Implementation Science. NC State Improvement Project sites will use activities to explore their NC SIP Implementation plans. Leaders are guided through these activities as a team during a face-to-face day with DPI Consultants to understand the compelling why of authentic engagement in school improvement. Teams will collaboratively use tools provided by the National Implementation Research Network to focus on building readiness, implementation stages, implementation teams, and implementation drivers. Course participants will gain the skills to develop, implement, and evaluate district and school plans that support the improvement of core content instruction and achievement of students with disabilities.

Institute Objectives:

- 1. Engage in a professional learning opportunity that will be teachable, learnable, doable, and readily assessed in practice.
- 2. Expand knowledge of implementation science for planning evidence-based practices
- 3. Utilize tools to improve implementation of current or new practices
- 4. Develop an action plan



Institute #3

Title: EC Program Administrators' and Coordinators' Institute

Speaker(s): Beth Rice, MA, CAS, Susan Robinson, MEd, Matt C. Hoskins, EdD, SHAPE Pilot LEA representatives, Lauren Holahan, MS, OT/L, FAOTA, & Carolyn Murchison (formerly Waller), Tharrington Smith, LLP

Session description:

The Exceptional Children Program Administrators' and Coordinators' Institute will focus on pertinent topics related to providing appropriate services to students with disabilities. The morning session will focus on implementation of a full continuum of school mental health supports and services. Strategies to be addressed will include leveraging data systems, creative and permissible use of funds, implementing social-emotional learning standards, evidence-based practices delivered within a framework of tiered supports, and intentional collaboration with community partners. The session will include presentation of research and models of best practice presented by state agency, LEA, and community partners.

The afternoon sessions will focus on critical legal issues and address hot topics related to growing concerns of administrators across the state. NC Attorney, Carolyn Murchison (formerly Waller), will

share presentations entitled An Overview of Case Law: The Interception of IDEA and Managing students with Mental Health Needs, and LRE: Placement Decisions and Inclusion.

Ms. Murchison is a partner with the law firm of Tharrington Smith, where she has represented local boards of education since 2000. Her practice focuses on children with disabilities, and through the years, includes the representation of dozens of LEAs across the state of NC in the area of special education and 504.

Instructional sessions will be followed by a special reception (4:15pm) which will be held for all EC Directors and Coordinators registered for the Administrators' Institute.



Institute #4

Title: Deaf Plus: Optimizing Access for D/HH Children with Developmental & Behavioral Challenges **Speaker(s):** Robert C. Nutt, MD, MPH, Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrician **Session description:**

Coordination of educational services for children with special needs is crucial to educational and developmental progress. Children who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH) require educational accommodations to fully access the educational curriculum, as well as maintain healthy social interactions with their peers. Augmenting the auditory and visual classroom environment have greatly enhanced the ability of D/HH children to succeed in general education classroom settings. When a D/HH child has additional medical conditions (i.e. "Deaf-Plus"), the importance of individualized strategies of accommodation become even more pronounced. Although quite challenging, every effort must be made to best characterize the child's abilities and limitations. Maintaining partnerships between educational providers, medical providers, service coordinators, and the family ensures the child's needs are met both in the school setting, at home, and when out in the community.

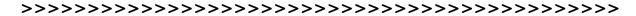
This Institute will address the challenges of accommodating a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, and the additional considerations that are crucial to providing educational access when a D/HH student has additional medical conditions that present further challenges in the school setting.

Additional sub-topics to be addressed during this Institute:

- o Determining language levels
- o How to prioritize skills/goals
- o Determining appropriate service delivery time (per area/service provider)
- o Communication & assistive technology that is appropriate and intentional

Participants will be able to:

- Develop partnerships: clinical/medical professionals and school personnel.
- Provide clinical recommendations "bridge" into the educational component/setting.
- Evaluate students who are deaf/hard of hearing
- List examples of appropriate evaluation tools/measures, especially for a student with a low IQ.
- List specific strategies to use with these students: communication, functional, social, and academic.



Institute #5

Title: Supporting Social Communication in Students with Neurodevelopmental Differences

Speaker(s): Laura Hiruma, PhD

Session description:

This institute will provide comprehensive, evidence-based information to help educators increase their understanding of the social and communication challenges that students with neurodevelopmental differences may experience as well as strategies for supporting the social functioning of these students. Information will be taught through lecture, use of vignettes, group discussion, and guided participant activities.

The morning will begin with a focus on increasing participants' abilities to identify social communication difficulties and understand how this may impact the functioning of students at school. Typical social communication development and factors that may contribute to various social challenges will be reviewed. The audience will then participate in an in-depth discussion regarding the manifestations of social communication challenges among students with neurodevelopmental disorders who may be higher functioning in other regards. Further information will be provided to help educators understand how challenges may go beyond "textbook" deficits associated with certain neurodevelopmental diagnoses and how social challenges may present differently based on sex differences. Additionally, considerations for referring students for further evaluation, intervention, or support when there are social communication concerns will be discussed.

In the afternoon, we will build on this foundation with a focus on addressing social communication concerns when these have been identified for a student. Participants will discuss important social skills targets that are relevant across different developmental stages, review a variety of evidence-based strategies for teaching social communication skills, and learn about practical strategies for supporting students' social functioning at school. An emphasis will be placed on broader evidence-based strategies that can be tailored to individual students, though a sampling of specific treatments and social skills intervention resources will also be reviewed. Additionally, strategies for monitoring and assessing social functioning and intervention outcomes will also be covered.

Institute participants will:

- 1. Increase their knowledge of how social communication challenges may present in students with neurodevelopmental disabilities
- 2. Increase their capacity to identify when social communication challenges may warrant monitoring, evaluation, support, and/or intervention
- 3. Learn about evidence-based methods for teaching social communication skills
- 4. Identify practical strategies for supporting the social communication functioning of students

Institute #6

Title: Participation Focus for Students with Complex Disability

Speakers: Cindy Dodds, PT, PhD, PCS & Susan Zapf, PhD, OTR/L, BCP, ATP

Description: To improve participation across home, school, and community environments for students with complex disability, learners involved in this course will: 1) understand applications of the

Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM),1 Participation and Environment Measure for Children and Youth (PEM-CY),2 and Matching Assistive Technology to Student-Augmentative Communication Evaluation Simplified (MATCH-ACES)3,4 assessments, 2) participate in a live demonstration using the COPM, PEM-CY, and MATCH-ACES with a student with complex disability and family, and 3) develop participatory goals and strategies related to IEP development and implementation.

Children and youth with disabilities have decreased participatory rates as compared to children who develop typically. In order to effect lifelong participation for students with complex disability, it is essential that we identify participatory desires and goals, apply environmental facilitators, and provide appropriate assistive technology. Using a student and family centered model, interprofessional/IEP teams are ideal to identifying these factors and create individualized strategies to improve participation. An interprofessional team, including a pediatric physical therapist and occupational therapist with expertise in assistive technology assessment (the speakers) along with a local IEP team; will share knowledge and experiences with the COPM, PEM-CY, and MATCH-ACES as well as provide a demonstration with audience interaction. The Institute will include small group work and discussion with the prioritizing of data to document Present Level of Academic and Functional Performance as well as consider potential student IEP goals and progress monitoring. Time will be afforded for questions, answers and large group discussion.

Learners involved with this instructional course will:

- 1. Describe participation in students with disability, categories of assistive technology, and the roles of interprofessional, assistive technology teams.
- 2. Delineate the purposes and processes of the COPM, PEM-CY, and MATCH-ACES in promoting participation for students with disabilities across home, school, and community settings.
- 3. Employ the COPM, PEM-CY, and MATCH-ACES to improve participatory desires and goals across settings with a focus on school.
- 4. Observe and interact with an interprofessional team carrying out a live demonstration using the COPM, PEM-CY, and MATCH-ACES with a student having complex disability and family.
- 5. Recommend environmental modifications and assistive technology as part of an interprofessional team.
- 6. Apply observed demonstration into IEP development, specifically: prioritize student data, identify potential IEP goal/areas, plan for progress monitoring.

Institute #7

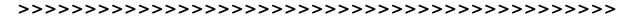
Title: Collaborative Strategies for Serving Students with Ocular Motor Difficulties

Speaker(s): Kate Hartnett, OTD, OTR/L

Session description:

School age students with ocular motor difficulties have traditionally received therapy services from Occupational Therapists. While Teachers of the Visually Impaired receive training in ocular motor issues associated with visual impairments from university teacher preparation programs, historically they have not provided educational services to these students. Given federal guidance from the Office of Special Education Programs in 2017 followed by a recent technical change of state visual impairment eligibility criteria, students with ocular motor difficulties may now be found eligible to receive special education services in the visual impairment disability category. The result is that now Occupational Therapists and Teachers of the Visually Impaired have a unique opportunity to collaborate by bridging

together rehabilitation services with instruction of accessing educational materials. This institute is specifically designed for district teams of occupational therapists, teachers of the visually impaired, psychologists and special education teachers to provide training and support in the evaluation and intervention of ocular motor deficits that are impacting learning. Attend this institute and develop a comprehensive understanding of how vision impacts learning. Participants will gain understanding of the three-component model of vision, screening tools to test for common vision problems and interventions strategies that include both compensatory and rehabilitative techniques.



Institute #8

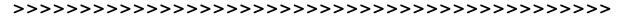
Title: Trauma-Sensitive Schools: Improving the Wellbeing of Children Impacted by Trauma **Speaker(s):** Katie Rosanbalm, PhD & Elizabeth Dekonty, MSW

Session description:

There is growing awareness of the high prevalence of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), along with the trauma reactions that can result. This session will delve into the research behind ACEs: the short- and long-term effects for children, the impact on brain development, and how this shows up in school settings. Then we will shift gears to thinking about what we can DO to promote positive development and long-term well-being, even in the face of trauma. We will consider approaches at the school and classroom levels to create safe spaces, foster positive climate, strengthen relationships, build self-regulation skills, and support families. Interactive discussion will encourage brainstorming and action planning to begin this work in your classroom, school, and community.

Participants will:

- 1. Understand the prevalence of childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and the impact of trauma on child brain development.
- 2. Understand the connection between trauma and student behavior, ability to learn, and ability to form positive relationships in the school setting.
- 3. Describe what it means to be a trauma-sensitive school and how to create safe and supportive learning environments that support the needs of the whole child.
- 4. Describe the recommended process needed to design a whole-school approach for addressing the impact of trauma on students.
- 5. List and identify evidence-based methods and school-based strategies to improve school outcomes by reducing the impact of ACEs and promoting resilience, healing, and learning.



Institute #9

Title: Threat Assessment: One Component of Comprehensive School Mental Health Services

Speaker(s): Stephanie Lowe Ellis, EdS, NCSP

Session description:

Public schools are responsible for the academic growth and success of all students. Within this responsibility exists also addressing social, emotional, and behavioral health factors that interfere with students' academic performance. When a system prioritizes keeping "healthy" students healthy and efficiently matching intervention to students at-risk, adequate resources can then be dedicated to supporting students with intensive social-emotional/behavioral health needs. Identifying students who pose risk for violence is the responsibility of teachers and other school personnel, as well as the student

body. Threats from students often have deep roots in mental health. Although many variables have been linked to adolescent violent behavior, the empirical literature points to several variables as especially important (Cornell and Sheras, 2006).

During this institute, Rockingham County Schools (RCS) will share their process of assessing and revising their threat assessment procedures within the context of comprehensive school mental health planning. RCS will provide detail of their process in conducting a formal review of existing risk assessment forms using a newly designed rubric to analyze historical threat assessment data within the district. The qualitative study informed RCS of areas to improve in their existing threat assessment process that could apply to any district. Using a documents analysis approach, the presenter will describe how findings from the study were utilized to inform a model policy that describes an updated and improved threat assessment process. In addressing this practice area and identifying model procedures, the intent is to provide school teams with resources to design their own model of a comprehensive threat assessment process. Participants will leave this institute with resources that can be readily adapted and applied within any local system.

Through interactive engagement and collaborative planning, school teams will:

- 1. Review the evidence-based framework required for implementation of coordinated and effective comprehensive school mental health supports and services
- 2. Learn of a data-based evaluation process used and outcomes gleaned to enhance threat assessment procedures at the local level
- 3. Utilize scenarios in the application of necessary steps to conducting threat-assessments
- 4. Utilize scenarios in the application of a rubric intended for monitoring of threat assessment practices at the local level
- 5. Consider and apply the procedures and plan for implementation of evidence-based threat assessment processes at the local level



Institute #10

Title: Adapted Physical Education (APE) without Tears, Fears or Dread

Speakers: Kaky McPeak, MA, PhD, CAPE & Amy Clark, BS

Description: This session includes participant discussion and collaboration, resources and break-out sessions to engage all levels of interest and expertise as it pertains to APE, referral to exit, students with disabilities, developing the PLAAFP for the IEP, Data collection, utilizing paraprofessionals, lesson planning, differentiated teaching, accommodations and modifications, and when to create a 504 plan.

This session is designed to build stronger relationships between Physical Education, Adapted Physical Education and Special Education; to provide problem-solving, and decision-making skills for the APE process (referral to exit); provide strategies for progress monitoring for general ed PE teachers, administrators, special educators, TAs, and other related service personnel to negotiate the APE special education maze. And, it is designed to remove that "are you serious?" anxiety feeling that frequently accompanies the unknown, misrepresented, and misunderstood details of APE.

During the general morning session, time will be provided to discuss actual scenarios submitted by the participants, myths and misconceptions that need to be disregarded and suggested solutions to these scenarios will be encouraged. We welcome input from the audience regarding what has been successful in similar situations. (We honestly mean it!).

Participants will become familiar with evidence-based strategies that will help organize and streamline their thoughts and materials. Procedures for using STEP method for creating modifications and designing accommodations for students with disabilities for safe and successful participation in PE will be covered. Strategies for managing and organizing the overabundance of paperwork that frequently accompanies a student will be discussed and reviewed. Participants will have opportunities for handson best practices in progress monitoring to create data collection sheets for their own students on their caseloads; managing limited fiscal resources, learn how to identify appropriate tests, equipment to buy, which equipment to make; and, which measures should be utilized for determining APE service; best practices for writing evaluation reports (using sample/example categories) based on PE/APE components and/or grade level to present results; and how to use common problem solving models (BSER Framework, Planning for Inclusion in PE, Observable Characteristics of Skill Proficiency) when making decisions about least restrictive environment for physical education. Time for an interactive roundtable discussion and Q & A for participants to present real life APE problems to the group for suggestions will be provided.

Session objectives:

- Build strategies for quality adaptation of physical education: stronger relationships, provide problem-solving and consistent decision-making skills for the APE process (referral to exit), by collaborating with the general ed PE teachers, LEA administrators, special ed, related service personnel, school nurses and parents. (LEA self-assessment.
- Provide customized support to LEA personnel by responding to specific situations and questions to promote best practices.
- Provide progress monitoring strategies to ensure compliance with federal and state policies regarding students with disabilities in physical education.
- Employ adult learning principles, to share current scenarios from their classes that need solutions through cooperative discussion.

Institute #11

Title: Laying the Foundation for Communication-Learners with Functional Needs, Including Students Who Are Deaf-Blind

Speaker(s): Susan M. Bashinski, EdD

Session description:

This institute will present a rationale for the argument that ALL learners DO communicate—NOT that all learners CAN LEARN TO communicate, but the fact that they already do! Support for this belief will be provided through a brief discussion of the NJC's (National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities) Communication Bill of Rights.

It is the responsibility of all the learner's potential communication partners to (1) adopt the belief the learner is communicating; (2) build an attuned relationship with the learner, as an individual; and (3) organize a systematic way to begin to understand what the learner is "saying." Communication, every single infant's communication, begins with behavior—and a communication partner's interpretation of that behavior.

The institute will bust the myth, which often paralyzes families / educational teams, that "they're not doing what they're supposed to be doing," by discussing the criticality of "meeting the learner where

s/he is" and consistently responding to her behavior in a predictable way. Essential points for understanding a learner's growth in the direction of conventional communication (i.e., from the starting point of nonsymbolic, non-intentional communication) will be presented and discussed.

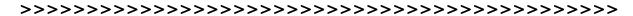
The presenter will provide potential communication partners with specific strategies they might implement to facilitate a learner's growth in the direction of conventional, intentional communication.

Particularly when working with learners who experience multiple, complex disabilities (including deafblindness), it is critical educational team members remember that the way in which a learner receives information might be different from the way she expresses information. Specific steps for the development of receptive and expressive nonsymbolic communication dictionaries will be explained. Possibilities for the incorporation of movement and the tactile aspects of life experiences will be discussed, along with the appropriate use of object cues and touch cues.

Participants will be encouraged to consistently implement well-planned, organized routines with learners, which incorporate object cues and touch cues, to assist the learner's development of understanding that the world is a safe, predictable place—one in which she can predict what is "going to happen to her" next. A final strategy, for incorporating meaningful and diverse choice-making opportunities to facilitate the learner's communicative rate, will also be discussed.

The inseparable relationship between communication and literacy will be examined from the perspective that communication is the foundation for literacy skills. The construct of "personalized literacy" (Bruce, Janssen, and Bashinski, 2016) will be explained, along with practical possibilities educators might use for adapting / individualizing books for learners who experience multiple disabilities, including deaf-blindness.

Finally, participants will discuss strategies to incorporate these practices in program-based capacity-building initiatives with particular focus on the exploration (i.e., assess student needs, identify practices and programs to meet student needs) and installation (i.e., establishing team practices).



Institute #12

Title: We've Tried Everything...Now What? Using Data to Individualize and Intensify Intervention

Speaker(s): Tessie Bailey, PhD, Teri Marx, PhD & Amy Peterson, MA (National Center on Intensive Intervention)

Session description:

How do you support students who persistently struggle with reading, math, or behavior even after you provide high quality evidence-based intervention? Are you struggling to use data to guide instructional decisions or define your special education instruction or Tier 3 intensive intervention? Despite growing use of multi-tiered systems of support (Berkeley, Bender, Peaster, & Saunders, 2009), national data paint a stark picture of poor academic and behavior outcomes for students with severe and persistent learning and behavioral needs (e.g., USED, 2015; Wagner et al., 2005). Research estimates about 3-5 percent of the general school population need intensive academic or behavioral interventions (National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII), 2013). NCII's approach to intensive intervention is data-based individualization (DBI). DBI is a multi-step research-based process that relies on the systematic and frequent collection and analysis of student-level data, modification of intervention components when data indicate inadequate response, and use of teachers' clinical experience and judgment to individualize intervention (NCII, 2013). Further DBI, encourages teams to

consider the complex needs of students with intensive needs including co-occurring academic and behavioral needs that are often inextricably linked (Kuchle, et al., 2015). Schools working with NCII have illustrated improved implementation of DBI and case examples have showed individual student level gains (Arden, Danielson, Pentimonti & Kuchle, 2017). This session will introduce attendees to DBI, identify assessments, interventions, and data tools that can be used to support implementation, and review how data can be used to determine intensification strategies. Handouts, activities and case examples will provide opportunities to apply new knowledge and help users make connections to their school context.

Learner outcomes:

- Participants will understand the rationale and key features of intensive intervention to support students with significant academic and behavioral needs using the data-based individualization process
- Participants will learn the ways in which data can be used to intensify interventions and will apply this new knowledge to case examples of students struggling with complex academic and or/behavioral needs.
- Participants will access a variety of tools and resources that can assist with addressing the needs of students with severe and persistent learning and/or behavioral needs.

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Institute #13

Title: Managing EC Data

Speaker(s): NC DPI EC Delivery

Session description:

Data Managers designated as the Contact/Trainer for their LEA, Charter School or State Operated Program will receive training on the EC data system. They will learn how to access, add/update records, and effectively use standard reports. Participants will have opportunities to network and exchange ideas with EC Delivery Team and users from other LEAs/Charters/SOPs.