

Moving Toward Meaningful Inclusion for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

Presented by

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2023 OSEP LEADERSHIP AND PROJECT DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE





2023 OSEP Leadership and Project Directors' Conference



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(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3 and 3474)

National Center on Inclusion Toward Rightful Presence

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Rationale for the Work

- Research supports participation in general education and access to challenging academic standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities
- Yet only 18% of students with intellectual disabilities spend 80 or more of their school day in the general education classroom
- The primary objective of this work is to improve academic inclusion, instruction, and outcomes for students with cognitive disabilities
- Support for General and Special Educator and School, District and State Leaders Committed to Inclusion Toward Rightful Presence



Conditions for the Work

- This center assumes that students with disabilities will experience ‘rightful presence’ at school when general and special educators are equal partners with others on grade level teams making instructional decisions.
- Grade-level instructional teams will organize lessons, activities, and assessments around grade-level content standards within a systems-level multi-tiered framework.



Partners in the Work

- Delaware Department of Education
- New Mexico Public Education Department
- Orange County Department of Education with support from California Department of Education
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction



Inclusion Toward Rightful Presence

Inclusion	Rightful Presence
Extension of a set of rights	Political struggle is integral to disciplinary learning: the right to reauthor rights
Located in the abstract future	Rightfulness established through presence: making visible the intersections and justice/injustice in the present while orienting towards new social futures
Burden/cost of the enterprise borne by the othered, who seeks membership	Shared burden/cost between currently powered and the othered
Culture of hospitality, involving an ethical commitment to leverage guest/host relationships towards equitable ends	Culture of disruption towards justice, where modes of power/authority are collectively called into question

Calabrese-Barton & Tan, 2020



Rightful Presence

We believe an environment conducive to learning and personal growth is established first and foremost through the cultivation of a culture of true belonging. Efforts toward that goal must begin with the presumption of the rightful presence and inherent value of the disenfranchised. Inclusion efforts alone cannot bring about substantial change because they adhere to the same guest/host power dynamic that serves to normalize the existence of a group who is “invited” and a group with the power to invite.



High Leverage Practices for Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in General Ed

- Paraeducator responsibilities designed to support grade-level classrooms
- School personnel use research-based core math curricula and instruct with fidelity
- School personnel use universal design for learning (UDL) framework
- Principal and leadership team support open, reciprocal communication and exchange of ideas among all members of school community
- Grade-level and specialized educators work in teams to monitor student progress and plan strategies across tiers
- LEA plan for linking multiple initiatives to avoid conceptual & operational silos and duplication of effort
- All students, including students with IEPs and English Learners, participate in the grade-level general education curriculum, schedule, and activities as their grade-level peers
- Principal and leadership team support and promote school-wide focus on transforming systems and practices to improve teaching and learning and incorporate family partners



Center Goals

Provide Intensive TA to Model Demonstration Sites

- Capacity Development in 4 SEAs & 8 LEAs
- Implementation in 32 Schools
- Time, Engagement, & Instructional Quality for Students with Cognitive Disability (Autism, Intellectual Disability, Deaf Blind, TBI, Multiple Disabilities)

Provide Targeted and Universal TA for SEAs and LEAs

- Knowledge Develop Site Study for continuous learning
- National Policy Scan
- Implementation Guide
- National Resource Map



Listening Sessions with Resource Providers

- Host listening session for the community of providers (e.g., OSEP-funded Literacy Projects, Dynamic Learning Maps)
- Evaluate how resource fit within MTSS structure
- Include in website knowledge base and/or professional learning
- Develop guides that show how various resources can work together for a designed experience



Systems Level Instructional Guidance for Educators

1) Belonging

Extending Inclusion Toward Rightful Presence

1) System

Multi-Framework: Equity, MTSS, UDL and Stage-based Implementation

1) Leadership

Justice-driven School Leadership and Teaming



Systems Level Instructional Guidance for Educators

4) Equity Educators (IES Funded Research Tool)

Instructionally Focused Equity-based Grade Level Team
Instructional Planning

5) Innovative Teaching and Learning

Tiers, Time, Connections, Curriculum, and Cognition

6) Measurement

Deeper ways of knowing through radical understanding of student identities and system re-authoring in service of marginalized populations



Special Educator Technology-based Training of Trainers (SETTT) for Success

Meagan Karvonen – ATLAS, University of Kansas



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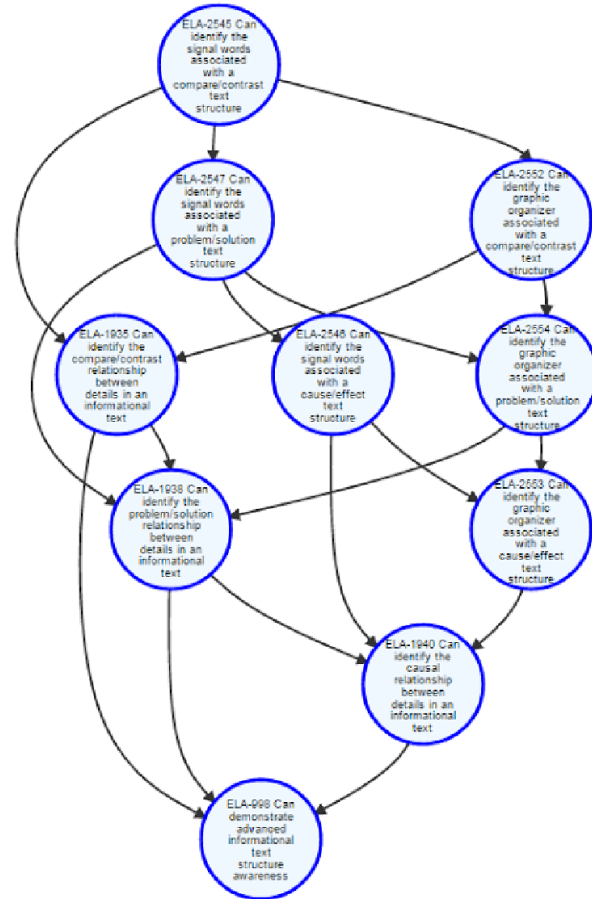


Preparing for the Future

Students with Extensive Support Needs are being held to higher academic expectations but are not yet meeting those expectations



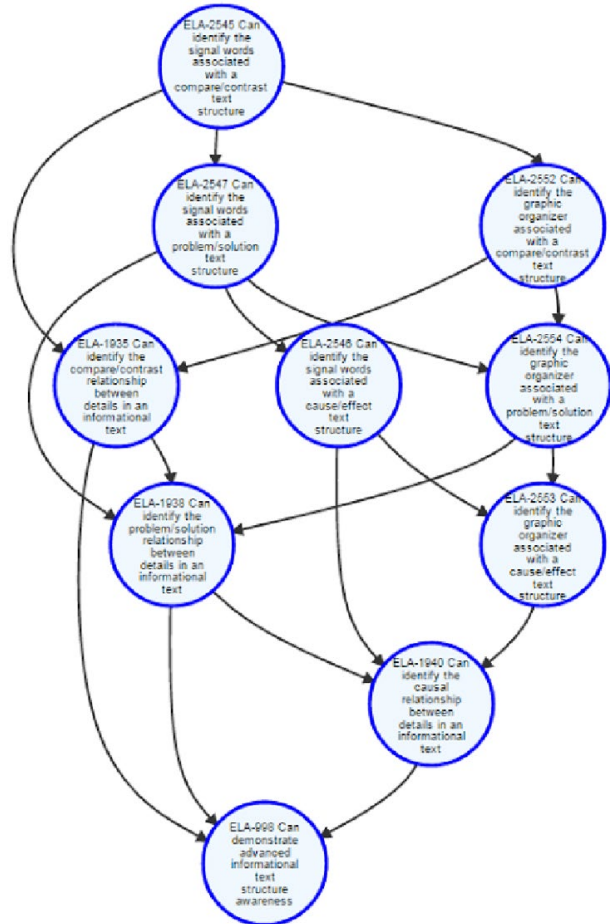
Learning Map Opportunities



- Represent the progressive nature of student learning
- Include multiple pathways by which students can demonstrate learning
- Include foundational nodes that develop prior to grade-level content



Potential Pitfalls of Learning Maps



- Focusing on a single skill
- Prerequisite model of instruction
- Fragmented academic curriculum



Project Overview

- SETTT for Success supports **teacher trainers who design professional learning experiences for teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities.**
- Helping trainers support teachers in designing and delivering **effective, comprehensive academic instruction.**



What is SETTT for Success?

SETTT is...

- A technology-driven model of designing and delivering effective teacher PD
- Designed for flexible implementation
- A project that directly targets trainers (who have various roles)

SETTT is not...

- A specific curriculum or teaching method
- A train-the-trainer model
- A project that directly targets teachers, students, or families



Key Features of the Model

- Sustained professional learning and support for trainers, delivered online
- Designed for flexibility in how trainers learn and how they use the system
- Designed for flexibility in how sites implement



Project Timeline

Years 1- 2: Development Sites

- Pawtucket and Woonsocket collaborate to co-develop dashboard, resources, and professional learning model
- Two more development sites added in Year 2

Year 5: Dissemination Sites

- Ten additional sites will adopt and use SETTT, supported by the ongoing community of practice

2023–2024

2021–2022

2025

Years 3 – 4: Pilot Sites

- Four additional sites will use SETTT resources, participate in professional learning, and design and deliver teacher training



The SETTT Trainer PD Cycle

Diagnose

- Use data to identify needs
- Set learning goals

Design

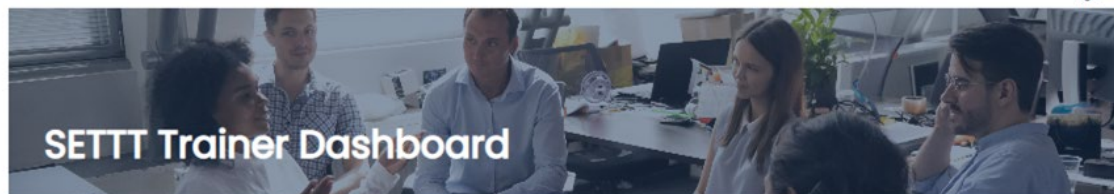
- Create PD based on needs and goals
- Deliver PD

Analyze

- Evaluate PD after delivery
- Think about what comes next



SETTT Technology and Resources



SETTT Dashboard [↗](#) Login 

RESOURCES

BOOKMARKS

SUBMIT

GUIDE

Welcome!

Students as Learners

PD Cycle

SETTT User Guides

Welcome!



SETTT for Success supports teacher trainers who provide professional development for teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities with a specific focus on comprehensive academic instruction.

To get started, download and review the [SETTT Participant Guide](#).

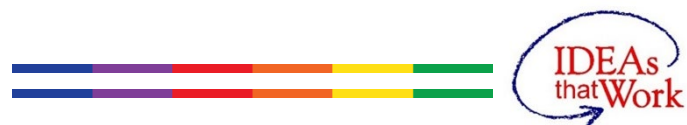
The SETTT Resource Collection

Welcome to the SETTT Resource Collection: open-access education resources for trainers of teachers who support students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.



Resources

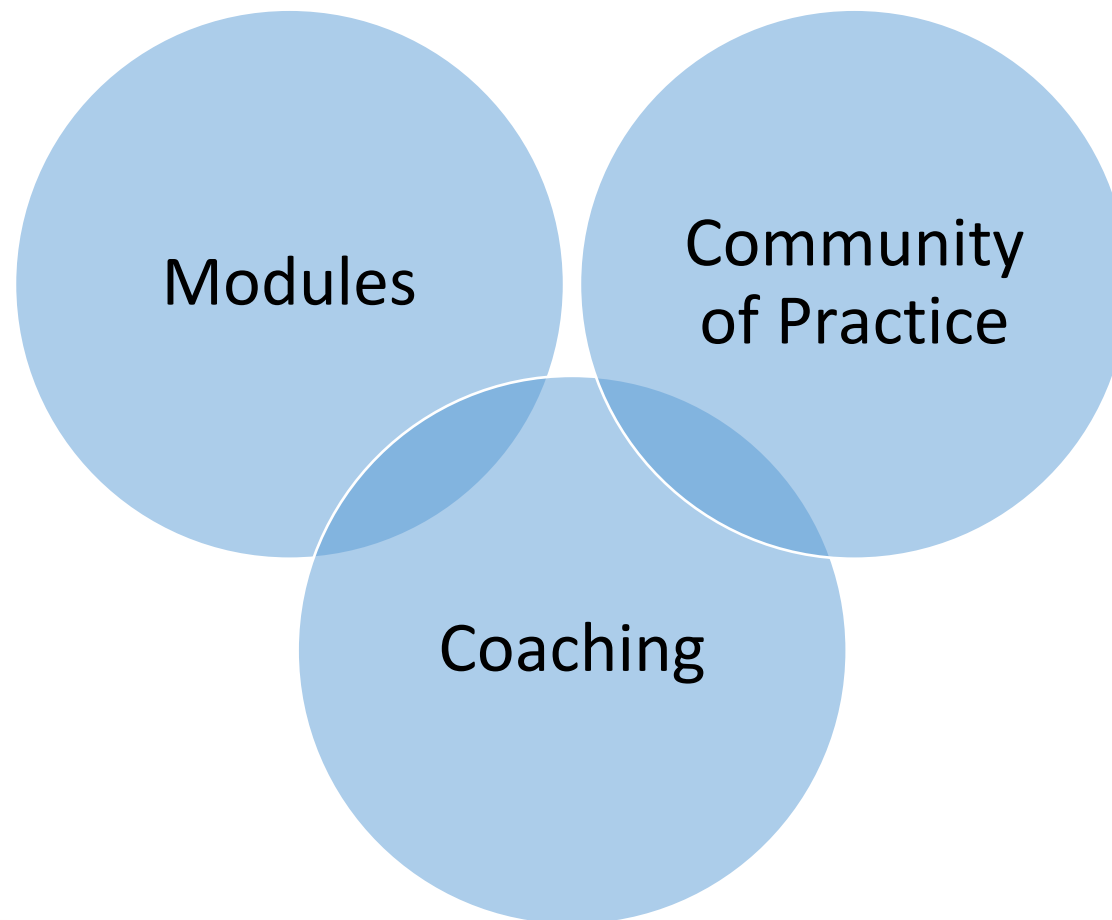
Guide



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Trainer Professional Learning Model



Why this work matters for educators

Trainers

- Wear many hats
- Have varied experience designing meaningful learning experiences for adults
- Cannot be subject matter experts in all things that teachers need to learn
- Can be isolated; benefit from support
- Need flexible support
- Need to continue developing professionally themselves

Teachers

- Juggle many, many priorities
- Need to spend their PD time on activities that are likely to benefit their work
- Need support shifting to comprehensive academic instruction



Example 1: Start From the Beginning

- Two trainers from one district collaborating
- Long-term vision: adopt a more rigorous and coherent academic curriculum
- Recognized teachers are not yet bought into the idea of higher academic expectations
- Short-term goals for teacher learning:
 - Shift teacher beliefs about what their students can accomplish academically and why that is important
 - Understand the grade-level expectations in DLM Essential Elements
- Goals for their own learning:
 - Deeper understanding of DLM assessment results
 - Learn about online polling tools they can use in workshops



Example 2: Instructional Decision-Making

- Trainer working by herself in a district, inclusive instruction model
- Teachers want to learn more about entry points for measuring student learning, progress monitoring, and supporting resources
- Short term goals for teacher learning:
 - Increase teacher data-based decision-making knowledge
 - Develop a toolkit of resources to support instructional decision-making
- Goals for their own learning:
 - Learn about new tools to deliver effective PD (e.g., zoom features, hybrid design)



Example 3: Including Students in Schoolwide Initiative

- Small group of trainers in a residential high school collaborate to deliver all the PD their teachers need with weekly built-in PD time
- Schoolwide initiative to implement project-based learning (PBL)
- Long term goal for teachers: plan and deliver quality PBL instruction for students with significant cognitive disabilities
- Mid-cycle changes in PD plan due to unexpected influx of new teachers
 - Uncover and shift teacher beliefs about student academic capabilities
 - Focus on how to keep students engaged using UDL Engagement Principle
- Goals for their own learning:
 - Model engagement expectations for students by making PD more active and teacher-centered
 - Learn about technologies (including assistive) that provide challenge and access for students during inquiry-based lessons



Example 4: Building Regional Capacity

- Regional education organization with one trainer with deep knowledge on PD for this population, on academic topics; she is overstretched and doesn't have bandwidth to mentor emerging trainers
- Using SETTT for Success to add support for emerging trainers
- Short term goals for emerging trainers:
 - Use the SETTT platform and process to provide trainers with a comprehensive, systematic method for developing teacher PD
 - Use data to make decisions about what professional development is needed
- Trainer goals:
 - Use trainer Community of Practice within the platform for additional support
 - Design teacher platform to provide easy access to specific resources



To Learn More

Visit <https://settt.atlas4learning.org/>



The Shared Writing Instructional Model (SWIM)

July, 2023

Russell Swinburne Romine, ATLAS – The University of Kansas



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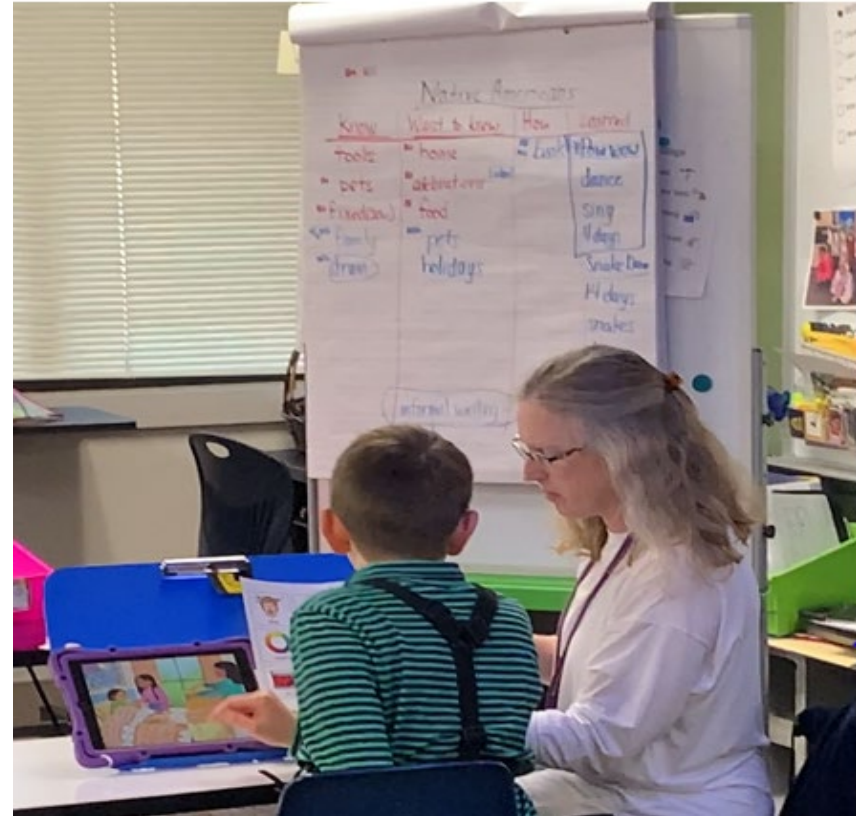
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The Importance of Learning to Write

- Instruction for students with intellectual disabilities often focuses on the mechanics and orthography of writing at the expense of the cognition and communication that underpin the writing process
- Writing is process and product



Why Learning to Write Matters for Students

- Writing can support student:
 - Self-expression
 - Self-advocacy
 - Self-regulation
- Writing can support others know they all students are members of their school community- all students are general education students
- Writing can support readiness for post-secondary opportunities
 - A process to express ideas and thoughts for problem-solving



Why Teaching Writing Matters for Teachers

- Writing activities can be used to support learning across different content areas
- Writing is an integral component of comprehensive literacy instruction
- Writing activities allow teachers to better know their students and their families



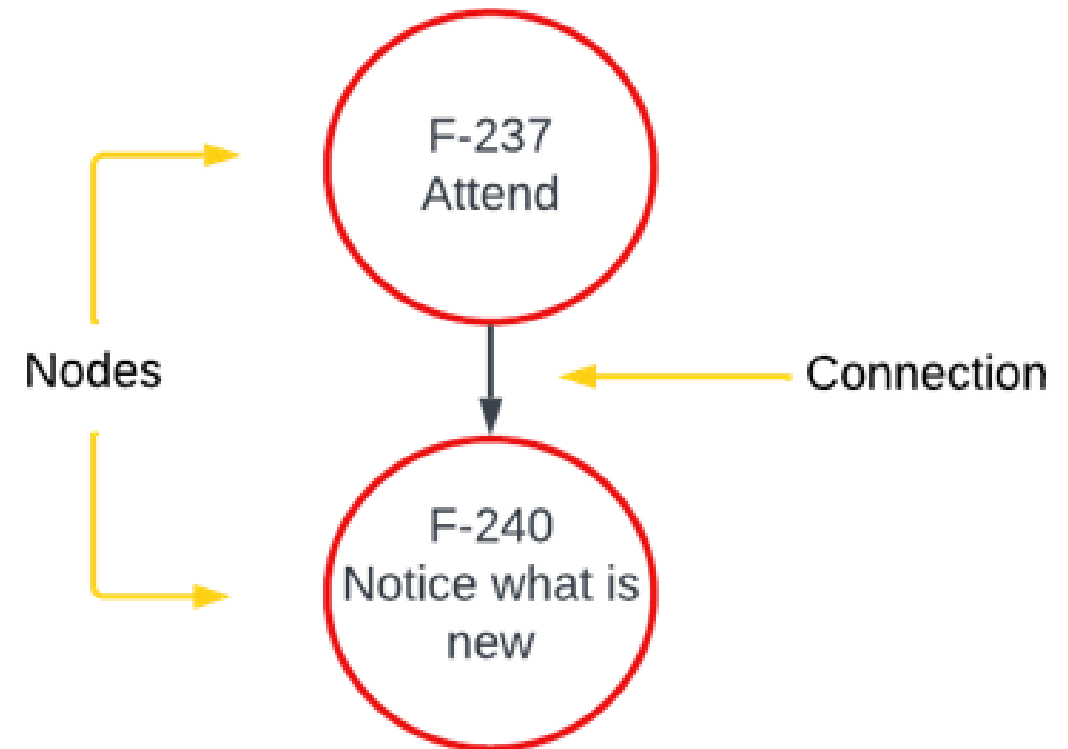
Project Overview

- SWIM is an OSEP funded Model Demonstration Project focused on supporting teachers of students with intellectual disabilities in planning and delivering **effective writing instruction** as part of **comprehensive literacy**.
- The project weaves together **research-based learning maps, evidence-based practices, and teacher tools** with professional development and coaching.



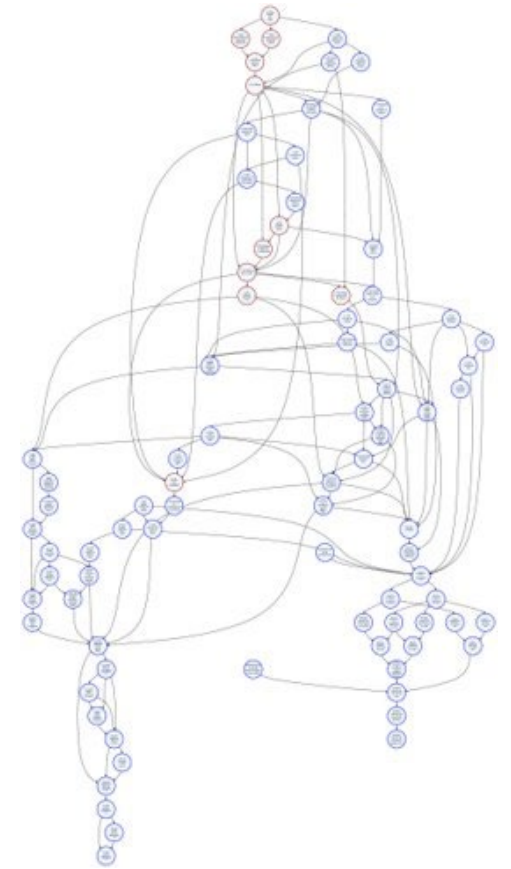
Learning Maps

- Large Scale Cognitive Learning Models
- Nodes (circles) represent knowledge, skills, or understandings (KSUs)
- Arrows show the order of acquisition and increasing complexity



Learning Maps for SWIM

- Multiple "neighborhood maps" representing conceptual development in writing.
 - Organizing Ideas and Information
 - Writing about ideas and Information
 - Opinion Writing



Evidence-Based Practices

- Evidence Based Practices are implemented in the instructional routine, and to clusters identified as instructional targets within the learning maps.
 - Self-regulated strategy development
 - Shared Reading
 - Instructional Match
 - Coaching
 - Formative Assessment



The SWIM Sequence

1

Choose a topic
and purpose for
writing

2

Communicate
about the topic
and purpose

3

Plan for writing
around the
purpose

4

Write with a
purpose

5

Review for
purpose and
revise



Instructional Match

Writing Level	Description
Pre-Emergent	Does not yet have symbolic understanding
Emergent	Emerging symbolic understanding May recognize print May understand that print has meaning
Transitional	Understands that letters comprise words Understands the purpose of writing as a communication tool
Conventional	Reads texts Can compose texts using writing tool Understands basic conventions of printed language.



Coaching (1)

- Site Plan
 - Districts selected coaching support and frequency of coaching from a menu of options based on their needs and local context
- Log
 - Coaching touchpoints for each phase of the SWIM Instructional Cycle
- Journal
 - Identify themes for coaching across all teachers



Coaching (2)

- Classroom and site contextual factors summaries
 - Capture conditions for success and challenges for SWIM implementation
- District PLC support
 - Additional learning and coaching for refinement
- Community of Practice and discussion board
 - Share, learn and support one another in the delivery of SWIM lessons



Teacher Tools

- SWIM Learning Maps
- Individual Student Plans based on map cluster assignment
- Formative assessment learning goals and student success criteria
- 5 Step Instructional Sequence Plan
 - UDL Aligned Strategies
 - Teacher "Think Alouds", Student "Look Fors", and example vignettes for each step of the sequence
- Teacher video reflection tool
 - Fidelity coaching conversations



SWIM Implementation 2022-2023

- Iowa School Districts
 - Large Urban Education Network District (new)
 - Mid-Size District (pilot district)
 - Nine Rural Districts (new)
- Teachers- 34
- Students- 77



Rural Teacher Implementation

- Challenges
 - Behaviors
 - Communication device not always present- not sent from home
 - Integrating SWIM into schedule and flow of lessons
 - Finding ways for students to elaborate during writing
 - Student absenteeism
 - Staff shortages
 - Implementing SWIM due to other district and state assessment requirements.



Rural Teacher Implementation (1)

- Successes
 - Using student's core words to describe and label items about the topic
 - Making choices for different people-more intentional choices not seen in the past
 - Using SWIM to address other student learning goals
 - Use of graphic organizers chart for engagement and understanding the writing process
 - Using a literature text as a springboard for topic selection and purpose of writing.



Rural Teacher Coaching Support

- Once a week 1:1 virtual coaching session
- Participation in small group coaching sessions twice a month
 - Address the isolation rural teachers experience as the only teacher of their kind in the district
- Community of Practice with discussion board



Rural Teacher Implementation (2)

- I am proud of how much writing my students have been able to produce this year. Both of them were able to put things in more or a sentence pattern instead of just listing or always wanting to start with "I like...I love".
- Students have grown in their ability to independently select info or details. I am still providing some of it/visuals, but they are picking things on their own.
- I look forward to incorporating the SWIM Model with all of my students during their writing time. I really just focused on my two kiddos involved this year, but after seeing the benefits this will definitely do with all kids in the future.



Pilot Site (Mid-Size District) Teacher Implementation

- Challenges
 - Knowing how to teach all the SWIM Sequence Steps
 - Feeling like I am putting words into the students' mouths because of their limited communication skills
 - Ways to incorporate formative assessment process



Pilot Site (Mid-Size District) Coaching Support

- Teacher leaders informal in-district coaches
 - SWIM project coach and teacher leaders met monthly to review SWIM project activities and coaching support to teacher leaders.
- SWIM project coach provided 1:1 coaching support, in-person for classroom observations and follow up, and via Zoom, when teacher leaders were unable to meet due to their own classroom needs.
- Twice yearly SWIM District PLCs for peer sharing of SWIM lessons.



Pilot Site (Mid-Size District) Teacher Implementation

- Successes
 - Better understanding of instructional match,
 - Change from past writing instruction which was hit & miss or just repeated the same thing over and over again
 - Coming up with identifying more vocabulary/list of words.
 - Topic instructional materials that students could look at, feel and touch
 - Student making better connections between symbols and meaning of words.



Pilot Site (Mid-Size District) Teacher Implementation

- I am proud of how much progress my students made, especially when I sit back and let them write. I am also proud that our group of teachers feel like a team and work so well together.
- I Wish to learn more about writing my IEPs to be more literacy focused than specific academic areas so that shared reading and writing do not feel to be completely separate teaching areas.



Lessons Learned

- Teacher enthusiasm and student success created buy in from administrators
- SWIM is a writing process that is flexible and meets students where they are at instructionally
- Students can be engaged for longer instructional period of time than what is traditionally provided
- The power of the learning maps to create the instructional match allows teachers know where to start with instruction
- All Students are Writers!



Panel Commentary



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Questions from Audience



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