

SANTA CLARA COUNTY

INCLUSION COLLABORATIVE STORY



Santa Clara County Inclusive Collaborative

Blended Organizational Model

Background

The Santa Clara Inclusion Collaborative is a blended organizational model for promoting inclusive practices across Santa Clara County early care and education programs. Janice Battaglia, Program Manager provided the information through interview and program documents available on the Santa Clara County Office of Education Inclusion Collaborative website. www.inclusioncollaborative.org

For more information, please visit the SEEDS website at www.scoe.net/seeds.

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Introduction

The initiative began in 2001 when the Local Early Education Planning Council (LPC) created a committee for inclusion. In 2002, CA passed a bill for one-time funds to increase the capacity of childcare providers to serve children with disabilities. In 2003, a plan was developed for how to accomplish inclusion in child-care programs through the auspices of First 5, West Ed and the LPC. In 2004-2005, First 5 supported the LPC to begin inclusion collaborative planning. The LPC created a request for proposal to support collaborative leadership for the initiative and a joint award was given to West Ed and the SCCOE. In 2005-2006, the inclusion collaborative initiated a consultation and assessment work group. In 2006-2007 Kid Connections was born and 700 educators and parents were trained with matched funding from Charmaine Warmenhoven, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County and SCCOE. Funding was guaranteed for 3 years. Last year the work continued with the development of resource materials to support the training events. The Special Hope Foundation grant provided start up monies for an on-site coaching model through the Warm Line.

The SCCOE is a partnering agency with the Silicon Valley Education Foundation, a 501c3 organization. The nonprofit status allows the collaborative to apply for a multitude of grant opportunities that support the growth and development of the effort. The Inclusion Collaborative provides advocacy, consultation and community awareness for inclusion. A Warm Line connection offers telephone service and e-packets about inclusion and coaches to assist local implementation of the various inclusive models. The collaborative has an ongoing training program on inclusion that is recommended for every district staff or other programs considering inclusive opportunities. The full time staff consists of an inclusion program manager and a coordinator of inclusion training. Part time staff include: clerical staff, Inclusion Warm Line specialists, inclusion coach and inclusion specialist. In addition to the training events, the collaborative has created an interactive website where over 8,000 people have visited annually. This year the average hits-per-month was around 1,000. Ability Support Kits (ASK) are available for checkout and Kits for Inclusion Team Success (KITS) are available online. In addition to the Inclusion training and resource support, the collaborative sponsors a screening and assessment coordination including Kid Connections, a first Five collaborative of professionals and community agencies.

One of the many highlights of the Inclusion Collaborative is the availability of a website providing information about collaborating agencies, resources, upcoming meeting and training events, and a comprehensive list of annotated links focused on various aspects of inclusive practice. Most recently the website obtained a direct URL to increase the ease at which the website can be accessed.

Model Components- How did you do it?

Administrative support and involvement at the superintendent and assistant superintendent level

The collaborative is supported by collaborating partner agencies through a 501c3 organization, the Silicon Valley Foundation: First 5, Parents Helping Parents, Silicon Valley Education Foundation, The Warmenhoven Institute on Inclusion, Santa Clara County Office of Education, and the Special Hope Foundation. Monies for the project staff flow through to the COE without indirect costs from the 501c3. The SCCOE Superintendent is on the Silicon Valley Foundation Board creating a policy level link to supporting the mission of the collaborative. The assistant superintendent of student services has been very supportive of all inclusion activities. He participates on the Advisory Board as well as attendance at monthly collaborative meetings.

Philosophical statement (mission, vision) for inclusion

“The Inclusion Collaborative of Santa Clara County is committed to ensuring that children with disabilities and special needs have equal access to full participation in inclusive learning environments.”(mission statement) There is also a vision statement and guiding core values for inclusion.

Models of inclusion

A decision matrix offers an approach to select various inclusive model options. The process provides tips for talking with administrators about inclusion and how to create a philosophy to support your team effort. The collaborative provides handouts during training and on the website that reviews several types of inclusion models and the advantages, challenges, elements of inclusion and the resources needed to carry out the design of the model.

- ⇒ General Education and Special Education not on the same site-dual enrollment
- ⇒ General Education and Special Education on the same site-dual enrollment, social inclusion, reverse inclusion
- ⇒ Special education classroom only-reverse inclusion
- ⇒ General education classroom only-full inclusion itinerant services or full inclusion, team teaching
- ⇒ Blended model-combination of one or more of the models

Flexible staff

The staff consists of an Inclusion program manager, a coordinator of inclusion training, a part time clerical staff, a part time inclusion specialist, and a Warm Line inclusion specialist and coach. The staff also hires specialized consultants to conduct the inclusion training during the year.

Program Manager as lead to the collaborative initiative

Janice Battaglia, Project Manager takes the lead in all aspects of coordinating the activities of the collaborative.

Developing and implementing an action plan for success

The Inclusion Collaborative members create a strategic plan annually during a June retreat. The professional development is organized for the year and trainers and materials are selected. During the fall, a professional development series on Leadership on Inclusion is conducted to train coaches to support onsite inclusion opportunities in the districts and early care education programs. Teams participate in the Spring Inclusion Symposium. Teams including administrators, parents and teachers participate in six training sessions and additional support is provided to continue the effort during the next school year. Training is made available during evenings and weekends to increase participation. The grant program allow for stipends of \$300 per participant be offered when the training is completed outside of the staff's regular workday.

Fiscal support

The collaborative is a 501c3 organization with multiple funding sources. The website lists the various sponsoring agencies and grant supports.

Budget

Approximately \$450,000 annually from a variety of funding streams.

Professional development

As reflected in their 2007-2008 annual report, the collaborative has trained 2,400 people. All trainings, which are a full day or more, have either academic units or continuing education units available. Trainings provide professional development hours to support CARES participants. In addition to building on their training initiatives, the website contains resources and links on how to design LRE options. The project has created KITS and is in the process of developing Adaptation Bins for Children (ABC) to assist teachers in making adaptations in their classrooms to support the needs of their children. The Junior League of San Jose has awarded funding for this project.

Resources

The Inclusion Collaborative has benefitted from both external funding sources and internal departmental supports. The Webmaster at the SCCOE designed the website. Janice submits changes to the Webmaster on a monthly basis. The web service is part of the in kind support provided by the SCCOE. Additionally, the Silicon Valley Instructional Television Department, SCCOE, assisted Janice in designing the interactive CD that includes the inclusion materials and resources. This dept. also assists in the development of training videos and training CDs. The graphic artist for SCCOE designed the cover for the CD and assisted in the development of marketing materials for the Inclusion Collaborative. The collaborative has developed several resources for district

teams to access in their journey toward building inclusive programs. The interactive CD and adaptations kit are available for downloading as well as other visual supports and make and take communication boards.

Public awareness

The SC Collaborative incorporates creative marketing strategies to promote the work of the collaborative. Staff have used a variety of methods such as a brochure, website, logo, theme, philosophy, CD with training materials, make and take activities, among other ideas to share information about their collaborative. The communication department at the COE helped design a brochure that would encourage community members and organizations to read about the initiative. Networking occurs throughout the various community teams the project manager is involved in such as Special Education Local Planning Agencies (SELPA), the Child Care Coordinating Councils (4cs), CARES and the LPC. Trainings have been provided to the San Jose Community Parks and Recreation Department. Janice is currently working with the City of San Jose Public Library to write a grant to support adapting books and supporting the librarians to provide inclusive story times. The collaborative received the City of San Jose's 2008 George R. Howard Memorial Award for exceptional contributions to the needs of children and their families. Janice presented the Inclusion Collaborative Model at the SEECAP Conference and Special Events in the winter of 2009 to over 200 ECSE leaders.

Evaluation and continuous improvement

The annual report documents numbers of children and families served and staff trained. It provides information on new initiatives such as the Warm Line inclusion support and coaching service and other classroom support materials. The website is kept up to date with the newest links and materials available on inclusion. The program uses a formative evaluation process during the year to evaluate the effectiveness of the training and support provided. This year a survey will be used on survey monkey to assess the impact of the training from past training events. Additionally, the Inclusion Collaborative is considering the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) information at sites to measure child change after an inclusion program has been initiated. The program staff also conduct both staff and parent satisfaction surveys. The program uses a "Inclusion Models—How does your program measure up" survey to assist local district teams in evaluating their progress towards inclusion by rating the benefits, barriers, resources available, and resources needed for successful model implementation.

Other

The Inclusion Collaborative suggests specific topics to consider when formulating inclusion programs: administrative support, inclusion and collaboration, cultural sensitivity, physical environment, classroom supports, teaching strategies, documentation, transition preparation, ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement. A matrix providing the steps on how to initiate an inclusion program at your school site is available online at the Inclusion Collaborative website.

Statistics

Number of children served per year (2007-2008)

5100 children with special needs or disabilities and 11,500 children without disabilities benefitted from the teacher training.

Number and type of staff required for program functioning

The staff consists of an Inclusion program manager, a coordinator of inclusion training, a part time clerical staff, a part time inclusion specialist, and part time Warm Line inclusion specialist and coach.

Number of interagency committees to support the effort

The monthly interagency meetings include five subcommittees: funding development and leadership, relationship building and collaboration (community outreach), higher education training and development (including alignment between community colleges and universities), access, and advocacy (legislation). The committees work together and report out at each monthly meeting.

Number of MOUs and with which agencies

Over 40 agencies complete a one-page agreement to participate in the Inclusion Collaborative. The commitment to the collaborative is for one year. The agencies are listed and described in detail on the website.

Number of agency representatives involved in the initiative

Over 40

Number of meetings required for planning and implementation annually

Monthly Inclusion Collaborative meetings occur from 10 am-12 pm on the third Thursday of each month. The agenda and calendar is posted online. The agenda includes business items, a guest community speaker, and updates from the various programs and the five subcommittees. Additionally, the Inclusion Collaborative has an advisory board under the auspices of the Mrs. Warmenhoven grant that includes 20 members: Assistant Superintendent-Student Services, Mrs. Warmenhoven, FIRST 5, SpEd Directors, SELPA director, San Jose State University, DeAnza Community College, SCCOE Board Member, Kiwanis, parents, regional center staff, teachers, Head Start, 4c's, Mental Health, Parents Helping Parents, and private agency representatives. The advisory board receives updates three times a year about the strategic plan and the progress of the Inclusion Collaborative.

Types of resources needed to support staff development

The fall training and Spring Symposium include consultants who provide training in various aspects of inclusion programming. The staff is working with the community colleges and universities on developing a class on inclusive options for young children with special needs. The Inclusion Collaborative will provide the instruction and the program will be reimbursed for their time.

Total costs of inclusion supports and professional development

The inclusion training and professional development model costs approximately \$450,000 per year.