

MNDEC Newsletter <http://www.mndec.org/>

Minnesota Division of Early Childhood

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President's message

Andrea Robbins, MNDEC President, Waseca Public Schools



Ready or not?! Here comes winter! It doesn't seem possible that yet another holiday season has arrived. It seems as if we were just wrapped up in the excitement and bustle of beginning a new school year.

Fall brings not only the start of a school year, but a busy time for our Minnesota DEC. Each fall, MNDEC collaborates with the Minnesota Department of Education to provide the ECSE Fall Leadership Conference. Though the location is the same each year there is still a lot of coordination, collaboration, and planning that go into putting together this conference. A simple "thank you" to all that participated in the planning or by leading breakout sessions is hardly enough, but THANK YOU all!

I personally would like to thank the experienced DEC board members for your encouragement and patience as I navigate this whole "President" thing. That said, I'd like to introduce myself very briefly. I started my ECSE journey as a paraprofessional in a self-contained classroom with the Mankato Public Schools. I am currently in my second year as an Early Intervention Teacher with Waseca Public Schools. The three years prior, I was an ECSE preschool teacher in another district. Simple math will tell you that I have been a licensed teacher for just under five years. This is my fifth year (maybe sixth) as a MNDEC Board member and I am the current president. I started on the board as a student member. I share this information with you not only as an introduction but also as an invitation. I am newer to our profession and I am actively involved with MNDEC. I worry that sometimes there is a misperception that membership in our professional organization is more for leaders or administrators. I am neither by job title. DEC is a national organization that supports research, professional development, and the services we provide to families and children. As a member, you receive some great publications, webinars that are available at a discount, and discounted DEC conference registrations. These are things we all benefit from regardless of our job title. I invite each of you receiving this newsletter to do two things. First, reach out to someone who is not currently a member and share what you love about DEC membership and encourage them to become a member. Second, reach out to me at roba@waseca.k12.mn.us and share ideas for increasing membership in our MNDEC.

HAPPY WINTER!

Andrea

State Updates

The 2019 Spring ECSE Leadership Forum is Thursday, March 5th, 2020 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Save the date for the Spring Practitioners conference: Thursday night March 5, 2020 and Friday, March 6, 2020 in Bloomington, MN.



Higher Education

Aaron Deris, MN DEC secretary, Minnesota State University, Mankato

Save the date: Summer Institute will be June 16 to June 17, 2020 at St. John's University in St. Joseph, Minnesota.

Aaron



National DEC

We are pleased to announce the National DEC Conference will be in Minneapolis in October, 2020. The Division for Early Childhood brings together a passionate group of dedicated individuals who work with or on behalf of young children (0-8) with disabilities and other special needs and their families. This is a wonderful opportunity offered closer to home!

News, Events and Announcements

Professional of the Year

Shannon Peterson from Minneapolis was the Professional of the Year! Congratulations, Shannon!

2019 Mini Grant Awards Recipients

This year the mini grant awards have become competitive as practitioners realize that the application is quite simple and straight forward. We are really pleased that a team from Robbinsdale and one from Owatonna were awarded grants.

Both applications used assessment data from TS Gold to identify areas of student need. Robbinsdale's TS Gold data showed that students' literacy skills in retelling stories was lower than expected in both three and four year old classrooms. They proposed to enhance instruction by using the grant to purchase additional story props to focus on teaching the skill. Owatonna found that in the VPK classes students' social emotional skills needed improvement. To address this, they proposed purchasing Second Step, a social emotional curriculum to implement in 4 year old classrooms.

Mini grants are an excellent way for practitioners to receive additional funds to address an area of student need identified by classroom/student data. Thanks to all the teams who have submitted applications and congratulation to the teams awarded grants.

The application for 2020 mini-grants is included on page 6 of this newsletter. Deadline is February 14, 2020.

Technology

Elizabeth Barry, PACER's TIKES Project Coordinator

PACER Center Seeks Early Childhood Professionals for TIKES Assistive Technology Project

Research shows that assistive technology (AT) can make a big difference in a short amount of time for children with disabilities ages birth to five. Research also shows that AT is underutilized in early childhood. PACER Center's Technology to Improve Kids' Educational Success (TIKES) Project works directly with parents and professionals to help them learn about and experience the benefits of AT first-hand. This free project is currently seeking new participants for the 2020 – 2021 school year.

PACER's TIKES Project began in 2013 as a five-year model demonstration project funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The goal of the project was to improve outcomes for young children with disabilities ages birth to five through the use of AT. The project partnered with three Minnesota school districts to help parents and professionals understand and use AT in early childhood through hands-on training and coaching. The TIKES Project developed handouts, videos, and training materials to provide guidance on the use of AT in early childhood. (<https://www.pacer.org/stc/tikes/>).

PACER is providing the TIKES Project in a modified format for additional Minnesota school districts. PACER partners with two Minnesota school districts each year to build their knowledge in early childhood AT. PACER staff provides support through trainings, observations, and coaching to help participants consider, select, and implement AT at home and in the classroom.

Districts chosen to participate receive assistive technology to add to their district early childhood AT libraries. Participants receive a stipend as well as a free one-year membership to PACER's Simon Technology Center Lending Library.

For more information contact PACER's TIKES Project Coordinator Elizabeth Barry via email at elizabeth.barry@pacer.org or by phone at (952) 838-9000.

Elizabeth

Article Summary

Liz Barnett, MA, CCC-SLP, MN DEC newsletter editor, website manager

Members of DEC receive the ***Journal of Early Intervention*** and the magazine ***Young Exceptional Children***. They also have access to professional development opportunities in webinars, conferences, and learning decks, as well as timely recommendations to articles and resources specifically relevant to young children and their families.

I recently retired and have had time for reflection. Professionally, I have been energized and inspired by interactions with colleagues, often informal, focused on reflecting on our practice and continual improvement. Even though we were from a variety of fields and jobs, we shared the common purpose of working with young children and their families. Just starting a conversation by sharing something I read, often rewarded me with the insight of my colleagues. I was professionally rejuvenated and refreshed on a frequent basis. No matter where you are in your years of service, there is opportunity to renew your excitement and energy by engaging in conversations with your colleagues about topics you find relevant.

Continued on page 4

“Parent-Implemented Communication Strategies During Storybook Reading” authored by Yusof Akamoglu (The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa) and Hedda Meadan (University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign) can be found in this month’s Journal of Early Intervention, vol. 41, 4, December 2019, : pp. 300-320. This article describes coaching the shared storybook reading skills of two mothers of young children with developmental disabilities experiencing delays in communication. Both mothers showed improvement in their fidelity of using strategies to enhance the experience of reading with their children. Of interest to me was the coaching they received especially in terms of ‘time delay’. Time delay is an effective strategy but it is often challenging for many to implement and maintain, professionals and non-professionals alike. With coaching, the mothers were able to improve it’s use. While the study focused on parental outcomes rather than child outcomes, there was observation of some improvement of language production with their mothers during shared-book reading. Suggestions for future research included expanding the diversity of study participants.

As often happens when I read an article, I was drawn to another great resource that the study authors adapted for their use in this study. That resource is Connect Module 6: Dialogic Reading Practices available via our national DEC website at <https://www.connectmodules.dec-sped.org/connect-modules/learners/module-6/> .

Share something you are interested in with a colleague and reap the benefits of shared interest. I could not state this member benefit better than DEC: DEC provides “opportunities to interact, collaborate, and communicate with a multidisciplinary group who understands the work you do”.

<https://www.dec-sped.org/become-a-member>

Liz

Do you have an ECSE question?

The Minnesota Department of Education Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) leadership team has a general mail address that can be used to submit any ECSE question, birth to five. The emails will be answered in a timely manner by members of this team. Email questions to: mde.ecse@state.mn.us

About the MN DEC

The Minnesota Division for Early Childhood (MN DEC) is a statewide membership organization for those who work with or on behalf of young children with disabilities and other special needs.

Become a DEC member

To become a member of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) you first need to become a member of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and choose DEC as one of CEC’s Special Interest Divisions.

Application link: <http://www.cec.sped.org/Membership/Membership-Applications>

Professional Organizations

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) <http://www.dec-sped.org>

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) <http://www.cec.sped.org>

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) <http://www.naeyc.org>

Resources

Looking for a job in ECSE? <http://www.mndec.org/jobs.html>

Prospective Employer? Complete the document to post on MN DEC's website:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1XPHA15yLJWaLeTMKe5TZmLkgerQFLTr1Asx-s3wSipM/viewform>

Center on Developing Child: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/contact/>

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)

<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/>

Division for Early Childhood Recommended Practices:

<https://www.dec-spced.org/dec-recommended-practices>

Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Products to support the use of the DEC Recommended Practices

<http://ectacenter.org/decrp/>

Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Resources to support the Inclusion of Young Children with Disabilities

<http://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/default.asp>

Faculty Finds: <http://eepurl.com/ggHi3j>

Head Start Center for Inclusion <http://depts.washington.edu/hscenter/>

Help Me Grow <http://www.helpmegrowmn.org/> An interagency initiative of the State of Minnesota (Department of Education, Department of Health and Department of Human Services) partnering with all local service agencies.

Minnesota Centers of Excellence Minnesota Centers of Excellence for Young Children with Disabilities is the statewide professional development system for early childhood special education (ECSE). Professional Development Facilitators (PDF) in each of the state's eight economic development regions work to connect, support and empower local leaders to build capacity. Through these joint efforts, young children and their families are accessing and benefiting from high-quality programs and services throughout the state.

<https://www.mncoe.org/>

Minnesota ECSE Licensure Programs <https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/mn-ecse-programs/>

National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) <http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/> Go to their website and you will find a resource titled Implementation Drivers: Assessing Best Practices .

PACER's Early Childhood website <http://www.pacer.org/ec/>

Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI)

<http://www.challengingbehavior.org/>

Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Effective School-wide Interventions and Supports <http://www.pbis.org/>

ZERO TO THREE Journal For professionals who work with or have an interest in very young children and their families.

- Stay current on best practices and the latest knowledge about early childhood development.
- Access practical advice and professional development tools.
- Available in print or digital versions.

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/zero-to-three-journal>

Please do not forget to follow us:

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Minnesota-DEC/132315643458975?v=wall>

Twitter https://twitter.com/mndec_info

MNDEC is Minnesota's Chapter of The Division For Early Childhood





MNDEC Mini-Grant

The Minnesota Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (MN DEC) uses its fundraiser revenue to annually fund two grants (up to \$750) for practitioners to engage in innovative practices. Applicants may be individuals or teams of practitioners working in a program that serves young children with disabilities and their families. **Each application must include at least one applicant who is a current member of DEC.** On completing the process, recipients share the results in a short article (describing the process and results) for the MNDEC newsletter.

Typical components of Action Research:

1. Identifying the problem to be solved
2. Diagnosing the causes of the problem
3. Formulating an action hypothesis
4. Designing and implementing an action plan
5. Simple procedures for analysis of the resulting data or evidence

Please complete all sections of this application and return by Feb. 14, 2020 to MN DEC at: info@mndec.org

Applicant Name(s):

DEC Member Number(s):

1. What is the problem or issue (25 words or less):
2. What are the possible causes of the problem or roots of the issue?
3. Describe your hypothesis. What are the actions to be taken that may solve the problem?
4. Describe your action plan. What are the steps to be taken? Who will be responsible? By when will the steps be taken?
5. What data/evidence will you collect that will help you know whether your hypothesis was accurate? How will the data be analyzed?
6. Budget. Clearly describe how the grant funds will be used to answer your identified questions including cost of supplies/equipment, added compensation for time of researchers outside existing contractual hours, cost associated with visiting another program to conduct an observation, etc.

Signature of DEC Member:

Signature of Immediate Supervisor: