Unifying General and Special Education
MO-CASE Reinvent Initiative

Working toward a unified system of education that benefits all students.
Civil Rights & Special Education
Decades of Change

1950’s to 1970’s
- Separate but not equal
- Disproportionate minority students in special education

1970's & 1980’s:
- Legislation–EHA (PL94-142) Missouri HB 474
- Pull-Out Programs
- Mainstreaming to Integration
- Medical Diagnosis/Treatment Model

1990’s & 2000’s:
- Legislation–IDEA and NCLB
- IDEA Reauthorizations and Amendments
- Access to the general education curriculum-standards apply to all
- Special Education is a service, not a place
- Presumption: General education classroom with supplemental supports is starting point
- Mandated Early Childhood Services
Key Principles: Must be Maintained

- **Zero Reject** ~ regardless of severity, all students in need of special education are identified, located, and evaluated (private and public schools)

- **Non-Discriminatory Evaluation**

- **IEP/FAPE/LRE**

- **Due Process**

- **Parent Participation**
Significant progress has occurred since P. L. 94-142 (IDEA) mandated a FAPE in the LRE for all students with disabilities:

- Students with disabilities have full access to schools & many spend most of their day in regular classrooms; many students with autism and significant medical or cognitive impairments are attending neighborhood schools;
- NCLB created accountability for the progress of all students, including those with disabilities;
- Instructional and assistive technologies have substantially increased accessibility to the general curriculum for many students with disabilities;
- A large body of research now specifies instructional and intervention procedures that are more likely to be effective in addressing various academic and behavioral problems;
- In many states response to intervention has replaced “wait to fail” eligibility models (SLD, ED, LI and OHI). Students demonstrating need receive early intervention and are less likely to require special education.
However...
- General education and special education teachers report being inadequately prepared to meet the diverse needs of students.

- More time and focus is spent on regulatory compliance activities than instruction.

- Parallel systems create barriers to innovative practices, inefficient use of resources and impede a shared sense of responsibility for all learners.

- The needs of students with disabilities are often not considered in school initiatives.

- Instructional practices based on theory rather than research-based evidence of effectiveness are prevalent.
Result:

70% of students with IEPs are not proficient in communication arts or math when they graduate (MO MAP and EOC data)—

Students with IEPs, consistently lag behind non-disabled peers on post secondary outcomes

Not Good Enough
National Discussion-Reinventing Special Education within the context of a unified system of education:

6 Big Components

- Shift in focus from regulatory compliance to results driven accountability
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports
- Individual Growth Plans for students below the 35th percentile on screening assessments
- Certification and licensure based on demonstrated skills
- Flexibility in the use of local/state/Federal funds
- IDEA eligibility only for students whose disability has significant, adverse impact on learning and development
“Our most urgent leadership priority is to ensure that special education is relevant, responsive, and effective in working with our colleagues in meeting the multitude of challenges Missouri schools face today. Achieving this priority requires a new vision for who we are as a profession and how we do our work as special educators.”
MO-CASE’s Emerging VISION

Transformation of our current dual systems of general and special education into:

- a single, unified, and coordinated educational system
- with the capacity and competency to appropriately educate all students, including those with disabilities and other special needs
- within a community of professional support in which...
Special educators participate on **collaborative teams** of professional **educators and specialists** that use data and problem solving to plan for and monitor progress of all learners;

- **A Multi-tiered System of Support** (MTSS) is the operational **framework** used to identify and provide **proactive, early intervention** for students who need **intensified academic or social-emotional-behavioral instruction**;

- **Evidence-based practices** are the **universal standard** for both core and intervention instruction;

- **Disability eligibility** under IDEA is based on **significant educational impact** of an identified condition, including lack of sufficient response to targeted intervention.

- **Proficiency on state learning standards and post-graduation success** are the explicit **targets** of PK-12 education for all learners.
How are we pursuing this vision?
Completed Stakeholder Interviews & Surveys about Special Education

- Over 100 Individual and small group
  - State/District leaders
  - Principals
  - National leaders in special education policy/research
  - Classroom & special education teachers (on-going)
  - Parents and students with disabilities (on-going)
- Over 220 MO-CASE Survey respondents
- Analyzed the data for recurring ideas
Established working partnerships with professional organizations and leaders

- Administrators: MASA, MAESP, MCSA, MASSP
- DESE and Special Education Advisory Panel
- Parent Groups: MPACT and Advisory Councils
- Teacher organizations: MSTA, MNEA, AFT
- Related Service organizations: MSHA, MASP
- School Boards: MSBA
CEDAR Project

Grant funded partnership with the Missouri DESE and Institutions of Higher Education to:

- Reform Educator Pre-service programs
- Remove barriers to innovative school practices
- Provide high quality and effective technical assistance to schools/districts
MTSS Focus

- MO-CASE has identified the establishment of a viable, Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) as the necessary and essential condition for fulfilling the vision of our reinvent initiative.
MTSS Vision

- Enhance the capacity of school districts to successfully implement and sustain a MTSS with fidelity in every school.

- Accelerate and maximize academic and social-emotional outcomes through the application of data-based problem solving utilized by effective leadership at all levels of the educational system.

- Inform the development, implementation, and ongoing evaluation of an integrated, aligned, and sustainable system of service delivery that prepares all students for post-secondary education, and/or successful employment within our global society.

Batsch
What Does it Look Like?

- All instructional and support services are delivered through a multi-tiered system.
- Decisions regarding instruction/support are made using a data-based, problem-solving process.
- All problem-solving considers academic and behavior (student engagement) together.
- A district-based team is responsible for monitoring performance of schools to determine the overall “health” of the district.
MTSS Survey

- MO-CASE is completing a survey which gathers detailed information about implementation of MTSS in Missouri school districts. This information will be used to target professional development opportunities, and to identify school districts who may serve as models for others.

- The survey is still open! Please complete it if you have not done so already.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MTSS_Survey
What’s next?

- Analyze MTSS survey data, share findings with districts, and follow up as planned.
- Provide regional training sessions on essential skills and structures needed for effective implementation of MTSS, in addition to our Fall Conference and Winter Institute.
- Continue to share online resources with MO-CASE membership.
- Collaborate with DESE/Special Education in developing Missouri’s plan for Results Driven Accountability (RDA).
- Continue and expand collaboration with other educational leadership organizations.
Down the road…

- Plans in progress for a Spring 2017 joint conference with other educational organizations focused on effective instruction, intervention and student support.

- This conference will replace our Winter Institute.

- More to come…
We Make the Road by Walking

Myles Horton/Paulo Freire
What is your relationship with general education administrators?

Do you collaborate with them on instruction?  Do they see special education as a support to general education? Do you see it that way?

Where do you spend most of your time in your role: compliance or improving instruction?

In your opinion, what divides special education from general education?

Is the system in place now in your district getting positive results for students who are behind their peers in academic & social development? How do you know?