



TEACHER EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

Presenters:

Julie Blair

Beth Hoffman

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INTRODUCTIONS

*Julie Blair, Assistant Director of
Academic Programs/Assistant Professor
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*Beth Hoffman, Special Education
Instructional Coordinator/Assistant Professor
College of Education, Rio Salado College*

*Jay Johnson, Director of Itinerant Services
Arizona School for the Deaf and the Blind*

*Kimberly Rice, Recruitment and
Retention Specialist
Exceptional Student Services, Arizona Department
of Education*

OUTCOMES

Participants will learn about...

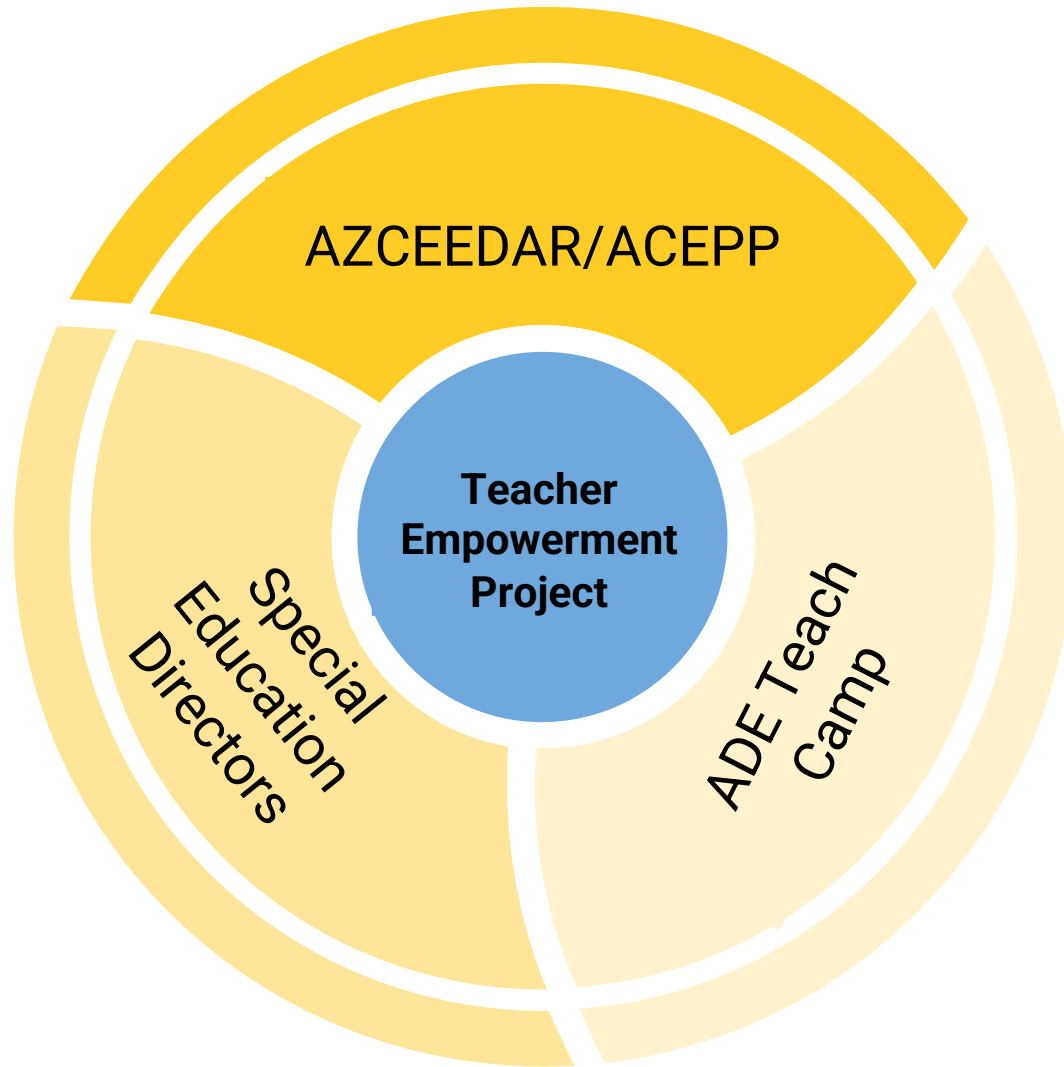
- ▶ The evolution of a pilot project to retain teachers.
- ▶ The timeline of the project from exploration to implementation.
- ▶ The power of relationships and partnerships for sustained capacity.



THINK BACK...

The Teacher Empowerment Project was created to familiarize and connect special education teachers and special education directors with the resources and supports available to *sustain* and *retain* novice special education teachers.

PURPOSE



SYNERGY

Trust & Relationships

TEP Partnerships



Florence Unified
School District #1
A District By Design, Not By Chance



*Inspiring students to
learn today & lead tomorrow.*

TUCSON UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Rio Salado
College



SAHUARITA UNIFIED SCHOOLS

OUR Story

July

Teach Camp Induction for New Special Education Teachers

August

Outreach to Special Education Directors begins

SUMMER
2019:
*In the
Beginning*



September

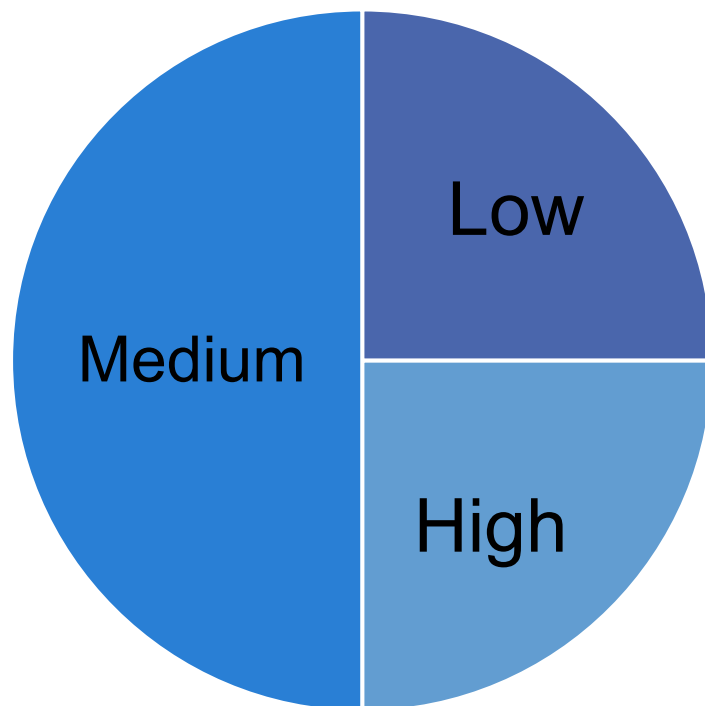
- Idea of the Teacher Empowerment Project came to fruition and the conversation began with ACEPP around teacher shortages and the high leverage practices

October

- Surveyed teachers from the three Districts (initially a part of Teach Camp)

FALL
2019:
*Revving
Up*

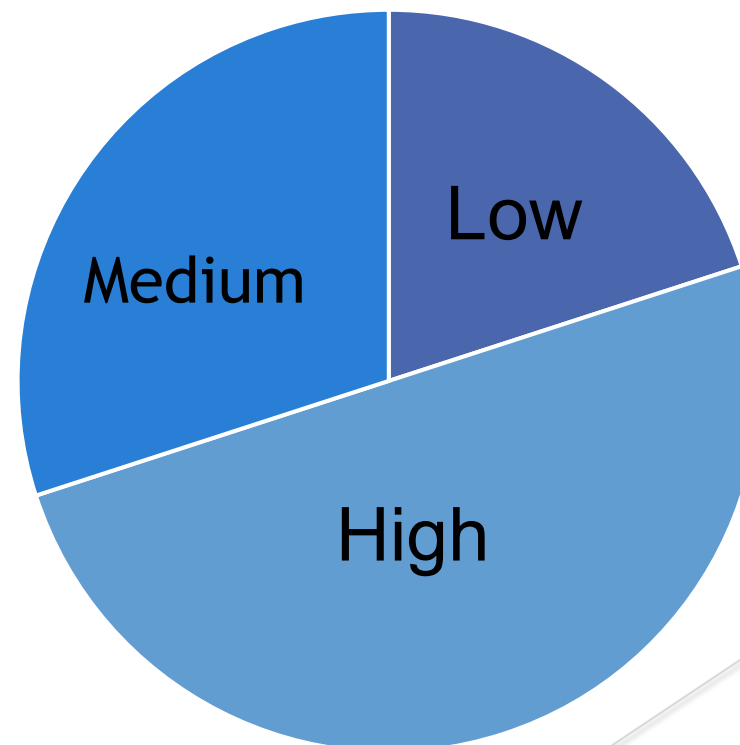
Instructional Help



■ Low ■ High ■ Medium ■

Teacher Survey

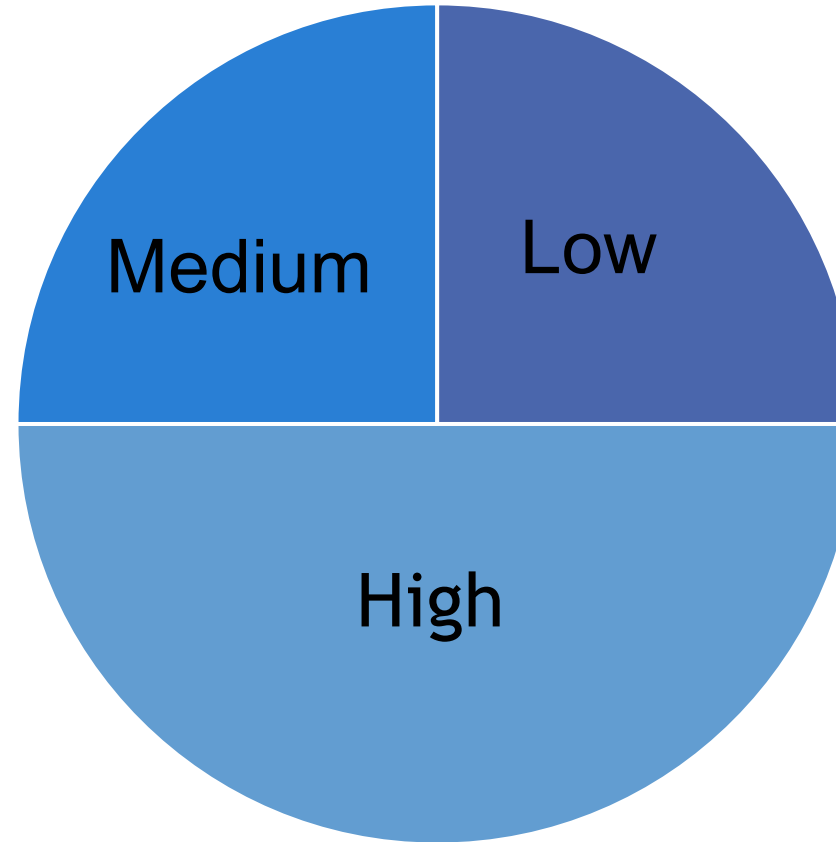
Teacher to Leader Talk



■ Low ■ High ■ Medium ■

Teacher Survey

Access to Resources for
Best Practices in Special
Education (*High
Leverage Practices -
Explicit Instruction*)



■ Low ■ High ■ Medium ■

November

- Conversation around narrowing the focus of project to high leverage practices with Special Education Teacher
- Synthesizing data from our partner districts
- Teacher Empowerment Project begins
- First webinar with special education teachers

December

- Explicit Instruction Webinar for Special Education Teachers, their mentors, and their special education directors

FALL
2019:
The Plan

January

- Second Explicit Instruction webinar
- Turning point for TEP direction

February

- AZCEC/CASE Conference lunch: networking and preparation for the fall CEEDAR Convening with Special Education Directors

March

- TEP Meeting with Special Education Directors

May

- CEEDAR Shortages TAG Meeting
- TEP Meeting with Directors (Next steps)

June

- Gathered feedback from larger CEEDAR group (SSC)
- Reviewed survey results from SSC
- AZCEEDAR strategic planning meeting to sustain TEP

SPRING 2020: *A Turning Point*

August

- Left future meetings open in response to COVID needs CEEDAR Shortages TAG Meeting

September

- AZ Shortages TAG Planning Meeting
- Schools trying to figure out their response to COVID-19

October- November

- TEP meeting with SPED Directors
- Connected directors to local and state resources
- CEEDAR conversation around shortages
- AZ CEEDAR SSC Meeting
- OSEP Summit: Attracting Effective Personnel.

November

- AZ Shortages TAG planning meeting

December

- TEP meeting with SPED Directors: Began to develop survey and sent to SPED directors for feedback

FALL 2020: *Doing the Work*

January

- TEP team meeting to solidify survey

March

- Will disperse survey to teachers in all four participating districts

April

- Will continue to disperse survey to teachers in all four participating districts
- Analyze survey results

TBD

- TEP team meets with AZCASE to develop professional learning opportunities in the area based on the data

Spring 2021: Where We Are Now

Where We Are Headed

- **Continue to support** teacher and director empowerment
- **Broaden district participation** to include charter schools and AZ rural schools
- **Partner with AZ CASE** to support directors and **AZCEC** to support teachers with professional learning.
- **Seek out additional partnerships** to sustain the work

- Novice teachers in an alternative path program may need DIFFERENT support than the novice teacher coming from a traditional program.
- Pre-service teachers need more practice learning opportunities for writing IEPs to address the specific needs of different disability categories.
- Special education directors need a space to share the challenges with the hiring process and mentorships.

AH-HA Moments

- Applicants are unfamiliar with district jargon and acronyms when applying for positions.
- Special education directors need and want to be more involved in the district and school level hiring process and fit applicants to site level positions.
- Connecting sped directors to local hiring resources- Pima County One Stop and Maricopa ARIZONA@Work

AH-HA Moments, continued

- Empowered directors to become more involved in supporting teachers in their day-to-day activities.
- Webinars and support need to be scheduled on “teacher-time” for more involvement.
- Self Care and Connection with Others a common theme of need.
- Forced us to think outside the box (technology, equity, platforms, training, connections with others).

Additional AH-HA Moments

Celebrations

- ★ We did this all during a pandemic!
- ★ Moving education forward
- ★ Relationship Connections

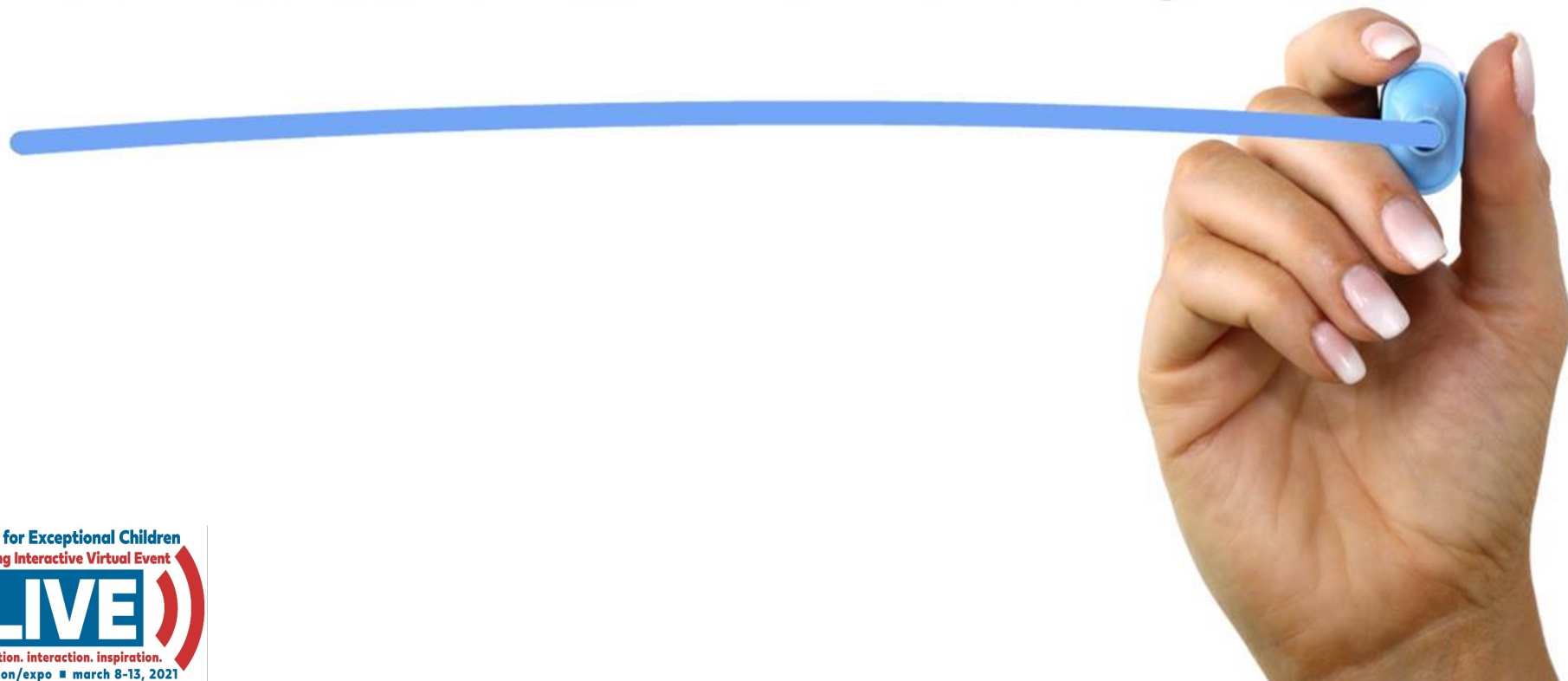


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OUR PURPOSE



QUESTIONS



Contact Us!

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