

Championing Special Educators: Strategies for Recruitment & Retention in Educator Preparation

Session 1 – Multiple Pathways into the Profession

**Check-In Question: What made you choose to be
involved with Special Education?**



Introductions



Weadé James, Ph.D.
Vice President, Organizational
Advancement
AACTE



Brooke Evans, M.A.
Assistant Director,
Research & Practice
AACTE



Sarah Haynes
Engagement Specialist,
AIR/CEEDAR

Championing Special Educators: Scope and Sequence

Tues, Oct. 31, 3-4 pm ET	Multiple Pathways Into the Profession
Thurs, Nov. 30, 3-4 pm ET	Making a Special Education Degree Affordable
Tues, Jan. 23, 3-4 pm ET	Clinical Practice Experiences
Thurs, Mar. 28, 3-4 pm ET	Special Education Candidate Wellness
Thurs, Apr. 25, 3-4 pm ET	Benefits of Special Education NIC
Thurs, May 2, 3-4 pm ET	Championing Special Education Through Advocacy



Meeting Structure

Welcome & Introductions	10 min
Example(s) in Action	20 min
Breakout Groups	15 min
Breakout Groups Share-out	10 min
Final Thoughts	5 min



Example/Exemplar



Elena Andrei, Ed.D.
Associate Professor
TESOL and DREAM Programs Coordinator
Cleveland State University



Claire E. Hughes, Ph.D.
Professor of Gifted,
Special and Twice-Exceptional Education
Cleveland State University

DREAM

A Dual Resident Educator Preparation Program



Levin College of Public
Affairs and Education

DREAM

DREAM is an **inclusive residential** educator preparation program at the graduate level that leads to two licensures, one endorsement, and a master's degree

- P-5 licensure
- Early Childhood Intervention Specialist (ECIS) licensure
- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) endorsement



Inclusive

- Teachers are trained to teach in inclusive settings
- Teachers will be ready to teach students in the mainstream classroom, students with disabilities, and multilingual students identified as English learners



Residential

Each semester students have rotations or internships in conjunction with courses.

Residential Model
Rotation 1 & Seminar: Setting the Context (K-5 Placement*)
Rotation 2 & Seminar: Instruction and Assessment (K-5*)
Internship I: Practice and Professionalism (Pk/K - Severe Disabilities)
Internship II: Teachers as Leaders (K-5*)

* Inclusive classrooms that serve students identified as SPED and as ELs

DREAM

- Online
- Leverage students' current classroom placements (if they are in a classroom - paras)
- Instructors (P-12 and EPP) have multiple credentials themselves (P-5 and SPED; SPED and TESOL)



CSU

Levin College of Public
Affairs and Education

Highlights

- Development and implementation has been a collaboration between EPP faculty and P-12 partners (placements, instructors, recruitment)
- DREAM unifies P-5, ECIS, and TESOL curricula
 - All courses integrate the 3 content areas
- Scholarship support
- Grant support



Time to Complete

6 semesters



Credits

22 courses totaling 66 credit hours

QUESTIONS

Elena Andrei, e.andrei@csuohio.edu

Claire Hughes, c.hugheslynch@csuohio.edu

Example/Exemplar



LeAnne Syring, Ph.D.
**Coordinator & Associate Professor of Special Education
Programming**
Southwest Minnesota State University

Paraprofessional to Special Educator

~An unconventional path to preparing strong teaching professionals

www.SMSU.edu

**DISCOVER.
ENGAGE.
LEAD.**

Background

- Began as a grant-funded program in 2015
- Completely online
- First co-hort graduate class - four students
- Currently - 33 students enrolled in the program from across the state

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Special Education: Academic Behavioral Strategist K-12



Mild to Moderate Range:

- *Autism Spectrum Disorders
- *Developmental Cognitive Disabilities
- *Emotional Behavioral Disorder
- *Learning Disabilities
- *Other Health Disorders

**Para-to-Sped
Program**

www.SMSU.edu

Para-to-Sped Criteria

- Working Paraprofessionals
- Have an Associates of Arts degree
- Continue working as a para
- Extensive field experiences in their own school district
- Year-long student teaching mentorship

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**DISCOVER.
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Student Centered

- Enroll in a co-hort of paraprofessionals
 - Begin to build their network
 - Small class sizes enhance collaboration and community building
- Online courses
 - Set their coursework time in their time
- One-on-one advising
 - A Special Education faculty mentor is assigned to each student

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Support from Student's School District

- Administrative Consent to be enrolled in the program
 - Signed and dated by two district administrators
 - Outline of the program and requirements
- Extensive field experience hours in students' own district
 - General education and special education placements K-12
 - Apply learning directly to the classroom

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Outcome

- Earned
 - Bachelor of Science: Special Education
- Complete required courses for
 - Minnesota Teaching license
 - K-12 Special Education: Academic Behavioral Strategist
- Hours of practical in classroom experience resulting in a stronger teacher

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What do graduates say about the program?

- “Entering the Para to Special Education Teacher Program was a great decision for me to make. I am able to work full-time as a para and part-time as a bus driver while taking 3 or 4 classes each semester. I'm married and have four children. The past three years have flown by. As a para, I thought I knew it all but, I've learned so much! SMSU and the school I work for have been very supportive. Everyone has been so willing to help make my dream come true!”

www.SMSU.edu





Para-to-Special Education Program
Online but Never Alone

Dr. LeAnne Syring

LeAnne.Syring1@smsu.edu or SpecialEducation@smsu.edu

www.SMSU.edu



SOUTHWEST

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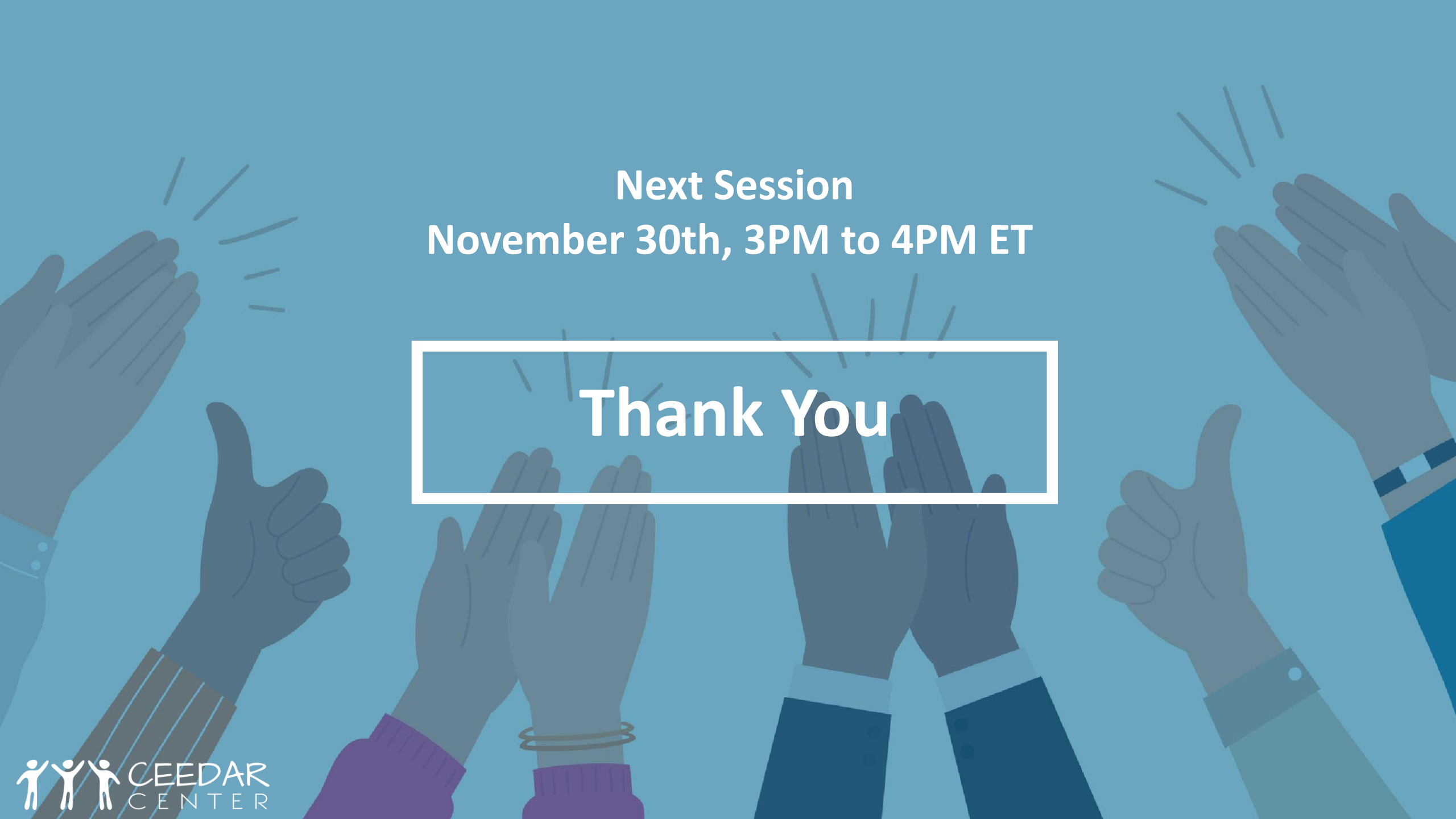
MINNESOTA STATE

Southwest Minnesota State University
A member of Minnesota State

Breakout Groups

- In what ways are you leveraging partnerships or recruitment?
- How have you altered the traditional pathway to recruit more sped candidates?
- What populations have you been successful at recruiting?

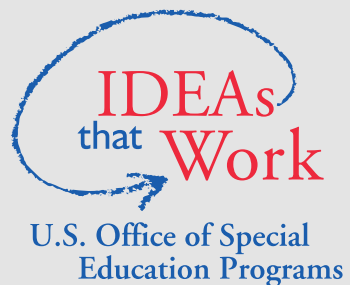


The background features a light blue gradient with several stylized illustrations of hands. Some hands are clapping, with short lines radiating from them to indicate motion. Other hands are giving thumbs up. The hands are rendered in various shades of blue and purple, suggesting diversity. In the center, a white rectangular box with a thin white border contains the text.

Next Session
November 30th, 3PM to 4PM ET

Thank You

Disclaimer



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