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# Teacher of the Deaf-Blind/Teachers Who Work with Deaf-Blind

# Creating and Sustaining a Community of Practice

## Facilitators: Chris Montgomery, TX SDBP, Sam Morgan, NCDB

## 7.23.15

**Attendees**

Michelle Clyne - IL  
Teresa Coonts - NE

Sherri Nelson - ND

Amy Parker - NCDB

Elizabeth Bell - NCDB

Person from Illinois

Chris Russell – NY

Tracy Luiselli - NE

Mark Campano - DE

Sam Morgon - NCDB

Linda McDowell – NCDB

Eva Scott – NJ

Gretel Sampson – Utah

Rose Moehring – ND

Amy Richard - IL

**Introduction**

Chris (TX) - gave short history of how the NCDB online group has functioned in the past. A core workgroup has been meeting for the last year and a half, by phone conference, to discuss common issues among state DB projects. We shared information ~~and~~ regarding TA efforts and how our state department of education (SDOE) systems were set-up with regards to licensure for the TDB position.

Chris (TX) - asked that the first question for the group to answer is: how do we more clearly define what our role will be moving forward – how do we fit in and compliment CEC and Coalition efforts that are currently underway?

**The Role of the TDB and Licensure**

Many people in the meeting feel that we need to more clearly define the role of the TDB. TX, IL, UT have the role defined in various ways already.

Amy (NCDB) - There are existing CEC competencies for TDB, and members of DVIDB are looking at them to see if they need re-working. They may move to re-write or edit the TDB competencies. All university coursework is based on CEC competencies.

Michelle (IL) - Illinois has definition, and licensure, but currently has no teachers or college program to train new TDB’s.

Chris (TX) - TX has pilot program that works (as a TA model) to train existing TVI’s and TDHH’s as TDB’s. TX also has a document that outlines the role of the TDB. There is no state licensure for TDB in TX and our SDOE does not seem eager to create new licensure at this point. We are making the assumption that to get licensure (when there is one offered) the person would need existing TVI or TDHH licensure and they would have to get additional course work in DB-ness. We are working to partner with Texas Tech. One of our big questions is: How does TA fit with and support personnel prep.

Amy (NCDB) – TX Tech U does have an advanced certificate in deafblindness. A person getting certified in Visual Impairment or Auditory Impairment would have the ability to take 5 extra classes to get advanced DB-certificate.

UTAH has the DB attached to TVI or DHH license but we have it so that it can get attached to any credential – *meaning it doesn’t necessarily need to be attached to a credential in sensory impairment*.

Sam (NCDB) - Is that a similar model for other states?

Michelle (IL) – Illinois would like to do that but it would be an advanced certification in DB-ness.

Tracy (NE) – We tried to do that but the states would not do a separate licensure for DB. The compromise was that some of the competencies were embedded into VI or DHH licensing. Goes into affect August of this year.

**Roles of the Group**

Mark (DE) - What is goal of this work group?

Chris (TX) – I am hoping we get ideas and current issues from our group today and that that would help us realize some of our goals.

Sam (NCDB) – One thing may be, finding existing teachers (TDB’s) and see what are they willing to share with us, and then see how that could help other state’s efforts. Another question is - how do we mentor teachers in general. Can we use the model of Community of Practice to help mentor teachers (TDB’s) who are in the group?

Chris R (NY) – What if there was a way for NCDB to host a national DB endorsement, that said that if you met a criteria you could pursue the DB endorsement? The certification could be to submit in an e-portfolio. (*NCDB, as a TA project, would not be the best “home” for endorsing people.)*

Amy Richards (IL) - CEEDAR organization is working on something related to this.

**National Training Models**

Tracy (NE) – There has to be a qualified person (recognized, with state licensure) to work on the IEP team. If not, districts will then say, where is the certification. They would not support a certification done by an outside agency.

Eva (NJ) - We would have the same issue in New Jersey. The university supports only the TVI and DHH, and those have low enrollment and are shrinking.

Chris (TX) – What are we talking about exactly; a standardized, or a certified position? Could national standards be adopted by states to allow for a common core of training? Isn’t this what we have with the CEC competencies?

Sam (NCDB) – Could there be national training program that allows you to get both knowledge and skills leading to a certification? Not a licensure program. Some states could get approval for a national program as something that is recognized. Shooting for teacher licensure seems difficult if there are already shrinking populations of TVI’s and DHH. Is there something that we can get recognized on a national level that will drive recognition and the need for a TDB?

Amy (NCDB) – Consider various models of professional development. Have experts teach national classes. OHOA modules could be used for professional development or used to galvanize already existing professional networks.

Rose (ND) – Where does a project start to find someone qualified to work in their state? If you get a new teacher where do you direct them to start? (OHOA modules?)

Chris (TX) - We are building out a resource toolbox for TDB on the TSBVI website.

**Mentoring of Existing Teachers**

Linda (NCDB) – This is something that existing TA projects can do. Chris has TX model of a Community of Practice for existing teachers and so the question is “how do we share that with others?” What are the mentoring and supports that people have done in states and why is that not happening on a national level? Is there interest in using a Community of Practice model? This is a common problem that you hear from projects….”how do I support teachers?” Also, from Chris, how do we raise awareness about this?

Eva (NJ) – Looking at the concept of Community of Practice, as a TA provider, I will have to be the force that keeps that Community of Practice going because teachers will always be moving on. Can Community of Practice be set-up to provide for a co-op model where a teacher can be shared amongst districts? Another consideration is “what is the role of that person and relationship between TVI and DHH?”

Linda (NCDB) - What are the tools that we have in place? The Literacy site, Communication Matrix Community of Practice group, OHOA modules…..?

Amy (NCDB) - How about creating a couple of modules for teachers to form a cohort group?

This group could then share and collaborate on TDB resources? Is there a possibility of paying to have someone host the modules (NCDB) if states can collect the teachers?

Teresa (SD) – Had the idea of paying retired TVI’s in her state to host the modules and the state could pay.

Tracy (NE) - We talk about TDB each grant cycle. It is important to our field that we give it as much attention as we do Interveners. WE NEED QUALIFIED PERSONNEL.