

**“Reaching All Students in An Inclusive Classroom:  
*Implementing Differentiation and Specially Designed Instruction*”**

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***Key words:* special education, differentiation, specially designed instruction, inclusion, general education**

**Funding Sources:**

This conference is funded through grants from the Virginia Department of Education’s Office of Special Education and Office of School Improvement.

**Project Cost and Budget Narrative:**

In total, the estimated cost for the event is \$41,330.85, based on 150 participants.

Conference Budget Estimate for Approval (4.25.18)  
**Reaching ALL Students in an Inclusive Classroom:**  
*Implementing Differentiation & Specially Designed Instruction*  
 September 25-26, 2018

Conference Budget Planning	
Needs/Requests	Estimate
<p><b>Participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include this statement on every notice or message about the conference as well as registration: <i>“A \$40.00 daily fee will be charged to registered participants who do not show up for the event.”</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>150 (max 200)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subs will be allowed to fill-in for a registered participant and will void a no show</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include this statement: “Carpooling is encouraged.”</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$1, 500</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(\$5.00 per night)</li> <li>Factors in daily fee and potential carpooling</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hotel Madison (HM) Rooms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disclaimer to include: <i>“Overnight hotel bookings must be secured with a personal credit card. If you need to cancel, you must contact the hotel no later than <b>September 18</b> or you will be charged for the room(s). Your September 25, 2018 hotel stay will be paid by the event sponsor with conference attendance.”</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>\$7, 940.00</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>93.00 x 30 singles = \$2,790</li> <li>103.00 x 50 doubles = \$5,105</li> </ul>
<p><b>Food</b></p>	<p><b>\$13, 117.50</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breakfast: 11.00 x 2 days x 150 = \$3,300.00</li> <li>Lunch: 12.00 x 2 days x 150 = \$3,600.00</li> <li>Snack: 10.00 x 2 days x 150 = \$3, 000.00</li> <li>+12% food tax + 20% service fee</li> <li>Total Food: 9, 900.00</li> <li>Tax: 1, 237.00</li> <li>Service Fee: 1, 980.00</li> </ul>
<p><b>Venue Space</b></p>	<p><b>\$1,250.00</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$625 x 2 days</li> </ul>
<p><b>AV / Sound Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are still unclear about services listed. We need to meet with HM people to discuss our needs vs the prices/packages listed on the menu. Jesse has offered to assist with this planning if he is available.</li> <li>Wi-fi included</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$4, 530.00</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic AV for 6 rooms 400.00 x 2 = \$2,400.00</li> <li>Sound Add-ons \$1,000.00 – 1,500.00</li> <li>AV person 45.00 hourly x 7 x 2 days = \$630.00</li> </ul>

<b>Keynote Speaker</b> Rick Wormeli	<b>\$6,393.35</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$3,000.00 x 2 days</li> <li>• \$186 (\$93 x 2 hotel nights)</li> <li>• \$130.85 mileage 240 (round trip)</li> <li>• \$69.00 \$23 x 3 dinners</li> </ul>
<b>Book for Participants</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase <u>Fair Isn't Always Equal Assessing &amp; Grading in the Differentiated Classroom</u> by Rick Wormeli</li> <li>• Use JMU Bookstore to offer 5-6 other titles of books for sale</li> </ul>	<b>\$ 5,700</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 38.00 x 150 participants</li> </ul>
<b>Printing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will plan to utilize padlet as much as possible</li> </ul>	<b>\$ 400</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda-in color</li> <li>• Presenter's specific needs</li> </ul>
<b>MISC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bags</li> <li>• Highlighters</li> <li>• Notepads</li> <li>• Pamphlets for Harrisonburg area (get from Chamber of Commerce)</li> </ul>	<b>\$ 500</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$41,330.85</u></b>

**Project Description:**

This two-day conference will be held at James Madison University at the Madison Hotel and Shenandoah Valley Conference Center on September 25 & 26, 2018.

The overall mission of the conference is to provide clarity, experience, and understanding for the successful integration of differentiated and specially designed instruction (SDI) in inclusive classrooms. Attending schools are required to bring a minimum of one administrator, one special educator, and one general educator. Therefore, the scope of the conference is two-fold, one (general/special education teachers): to provide foundational information and strategies with reference to differentiation and specially designed instruction and two (administrators): to lay a foundation of understanding in the differences between differentiation and SDI and to instruct administrators in the appropriate use and evaluation of each when doing classroom observations.

Breakout sessions on day one are tailored toward the participants' role within the school. Administrators will attend breakout sessions focused specifically on their roles in supporting differentiation and SDI in their schools and the appropriate use of each within classrooms that they observe. They will also be exposed to several options for classroom evaluation tools specific to general education classrooms containing students with disabilities, special education classrooms, and co-taught classrooms. They will learn what specific differences should be evident in each setting and in what context and for which students each scaffolded approach is appropriate.

Simultaneously, teachers will be attending breakout sessions that will provide specific strategies for providing differentiated instruction in their classrooms. Teachers will be divided by elementary (PreK-5) and secondary (6-12).

Breakout sessions on day two will be open to all participants and they will be able to choose two sessions. These sessions will be focused on SDI and meeting the needs of students with disabilities based on areas of identification. Four areas will be covered: communication, processing, social emotional, and adapted curriculum.

### **Staffing Pattern:**

The conference was developed by a steering committee of three Coordinators from Region 5 Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC). We worked to develop the scope of the conference and to determine keynote speakers, budget, breakout sessions, and various other details of conference planning. In total, eleven TTAC Coordinators will present breakout sessions and one keynote will speak (Rick Wormeli). Three administrative assistants are helping with registration and hotel, facility, and meal coordination.

### **Population Served:**

This conference is open to all divisions (20) and schools (over 200) in Virginia Superintendent's Region 5. In order to register, schools must send a team that includes at least one administrator, one special education teacher, and one general education teacher. Directors of Special Education for each division were also invited to attend. The conference welcomes teachers PreK-12. The scope of the conference is specific support of students with disabilities; therefore, teachers attending should work in a classroom that is inclusive of identified students. Conference registration is first-come, first-served with a maximum attendance of 200 and a minimum attendance of 150 participants.

### **Project Origination:**

This conference has been developed based on requests from teachers and administrators in Virginia Superintendent's Region 5. Students with disabilities are a subgroup with which schools struggle. These students are often not meeting grade-level proficiency, and therefore, not reaching graduation on-time or at all. As schools work to become more inclusive, a drop in the success of this population has been noted through state-mandated, standardized testing and graduation indexes. Through surveys, interviews, and requests, my office has noted that general education teachers do not feel prepared to support these students and special education teachers feel anxiety at the loss of individual and small group time with their students. In an effort to maintain or increase inclusion, administrators have requested training for teachers, and themselves, with a focus on building teacher capacity to support and increase the success of students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

With this in mind, we have provided several administrator focused conferences to provide them with a basic understanding of special education law, an introduction to disability awareness, and effective scheduling of students with disabilities in an inclusive setting. This conference is a natural next step in supporting these administrators and their teachers in the success of their work toward full inclusion.

### **Issues Addressed**

This conference will address the lack of understanding by both teachers and administrators on the definition and use of differentiation and SDI. After attending the event, participants will be able to identify strategies and choose appropriate interventions that support the needs of students with disabilities. Teams will have identified goals for their schools to increase the use of differentiation and SDI within inclusive classrooms and will be prepared to present conference findings and learning to school staff upon return. Finally, teams will understand the importance of their role in the successful graduation of students with disabilities. Through knowledge gained at the conference, teams will be able to more effectively address the needs of students with disabilities, and in-turn increase the success of these students in inclusive classrooms.

### **Desired Outcomes and Measurable Objectives:**

As a result of this conference, teams will create an action plan for expanding or improving the use of differentiation and SDI in inclusive classrooms in their schools. Additionally, individual team members will have the opportunity to join communities of practice facilitated by the Region 5 Training and Technical

Assistance Center to continue expanding their knowledge in these two areas. Administrators will be offered a specific community of practice geared toward their specific needs in school structure and teacher evaluation.

Through the communities of practice Region 5 TTAC hopes to see an increase in the number of co-taught and inclusive classrooms within the attending schools and, in turn, a rise in test scores for students with disabilities in these classrooms.

### **Strategies:**

Planning for the conference began in March 2018. The steering committee met at least weekly to determine and secure the venue, keynote, food, accommodations, and breakout sessions. Once the Coordinators that would be presenting breakout sessions were identified, a full meeting was held in May 2018 to discuss the expectations for the presentations and the role of the steering committee moving forward.

Once roles and responsibilities were assigned sub groups were permitted to meet according to their collective calendars and needs. The steering committee continues to work with the keynote to ensure key points are addressed and to develop work for the teams to complete while attending the conference.

Below is the session planner that was given to presenters that establishes expectations for breakout sessions and an example of the planning tool that the steering team used to remain on track and organize roles and responsibilities. The planning tool was updated, typically monthly, to reflect work completed and immediate next steps. This step-by-step approach to planning helps hold team members accountable and maintains a fresh look at the work that needs to be completed. Additionally, by seeing what work has already been completed, this dynamic planner helps maintain positive morale and a sense of forward movement for the project.

The WHY	
To provide clarity, experience, and understanding for the successful integration of differentiated and specially designed instruction in inclusive classrooms.	
The WHO	
Mandatory Team Participation (minimum of three): Building Administrator(s), Special Education Teacher(s), General Education Teacher(s)	
The HOW	SESSION CONSISTENCY
<p>Provide two full days of learning opportunities for participants and teams to work together identifying, discussing, and reflecting on differentiation and SDI strategies that successfully impact all students' learning experiences and outcomes.</p> <p>Conference Structure: <b>DAY 1</b> <b>Content Focus: *Differentiation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keynote: Rick Wormeli</li> <li>• Three strands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Administrators, Elementary Teachers, (PreK-5), Secondary Teachers (6-12)</li> <li>○ We will provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 75 Minute Sessions</li> <li>▪ Book: Fair Isn't Always Equal (one-two per team?)</li> <li>▪ Conference notetaker</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Team Action Planner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Build-in a report out section for end of the day</li> <li>▪ Provide Community of Practice (CoP) information and interest sign-up opportunities for the next day</li> <li>▪</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Rick Wormeli: Closing</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p><i>*Exception: Administrators' Sessions will cover Differentiation and SDI on Day 1</i></p> <p><b>DAY 2</b> <b>Content Focus: Specially Designed Instruction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keynote: Rick Wormeli</li> <li>• Offer <i>two</i> different session choices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Presenters will repeat session one time</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Provide organized and structured team time activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Team Action Planner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Build in a report out section for end of the conference</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Rick Wormeli: Upbeat closing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Presenters will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align session content and activities to the "WHY" of the conference</li> <li>• Provide engaging, active, hands-on, learning activities</li> <li>• Ensure that activities and material is representative of strategies practical for inclusive classrooms: Gen. Ed., co-taught, and resource</li> <li>✓ Use same intro slide (being developed and will be sent to presenters ASAP)</li> <li>✓ Reiterate the importance of data-driven decision making to match instructional strategies</li> <li>✓ Provide and facilitate a 5 to 7-minute notetaker writing time at the end of each session. [Scaffolded, culminating activity depends on this work]</li> <li>✓ Incorporate information from the book, Fair Isn't Always Equal, into the session</li> <li>✓ Make (necessary only) copies for your session</li> <li>✓ Send explicit statement defining session content and intended audience for DAY 2 SDI to Cherish <i>by Wed., Sept. 12<sup>th</sup></i></li> <li>✓ Send Padlet resources to Jen <i>by 12:00 Sept. 24<sup>th</sup></i></li> <li>✓ E-mail/See Lisa, Jacki, or Cherish with any questions</li> </ul> <p><b>TTAC planning team will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update presenters on pertinent conference information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Make-up of teams/divisions</li> <li>○ Participants registered (continue updates throughout open enrollment)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Meet and/or e-mail presenting teams during planning stages before the conference to answer questions</li> <li>• Cherish will send book information, Fair Isn't Always Equal, that pertains to each session topic for reference during session work</li> <li>• Touch base during the conference to make sure all needs are met</li> <li>• Jacki will meet with teams to get overview of presentations in order to support administrative strand alignment</li> </ul>

SEPI Conference Session/Presenters

<p><b>Conference Sessions Schedule</b></p>	<p><b>Ideas/thoughts for who's doing what</b> <i>(We are in a crunch with Amber, Kandy, and Cherish being out of town for VTSS work those days)</i></p>
<p><b>Day 1:</b> We will start by clarifying assumptions: Defining Differentiation and Specially Designed Instruction</p> <p>9:00 – 9:15 Welcome 9:15 – 10:15 Keynote 10:15 – 10:30 Break 10:30 – 11:45 Breakout session 1 11:45 – 12:30 Lunch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Show Padlet &amp; Explain Team Time]</li> </ul> <p>12:45 – 2:00 Breakout session 2 2:05 – 2:45 Structured team time (includes snack) 3:00 - 4:00 Keynote Closes</p>	<p><b>*Differentiation Day 1:</b> Breakout sessions 1 &amp; 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elementary strand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Kendal &amp; Cathy (session 1)</li> <li>○ Lisa &amp; Cheryl (session 2)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Secondary strand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gina &amp; Jen (session 1)</li> <li>○ Jesse &amp; Jillian (session 2)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Administrative strand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Jacki, Amanda &amp; John (1 &amp; 2)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Day 2:</b></p> <p>8:00 – 8:15 Intro 8:15 – 9:15 Keynote 9:30 – 10:45 Breakout session 3 11:00 – 12:15 Breakout session 4 12:15 – 1:00 Lunch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Explain TTAC Request Process]</li> </ul> <p>1:15 – 2:30 Spectacular team time ☺ ➤ (needs a new name) 2:30– 3:00 Keynote Closes</p>	<p><b>Specially Designed Instruction Day 2:</b> Breakout sessions 3 &amp; 4 (these sessions are repeated once) Participants will pick 2 different session to attend.</p> <p>Please title your sessions: <b>Supporting students with <i>__(insert topic here)__</i> challenges through SDI</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication – Amanda &amp; Kendal</li> <li>• Processing – Lisa &amp; Jillian</li> <li>• Adapted Curriculum– Jesse &amp; Cheryl <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ (remove the word “challenges” in your title)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Social/Emotional – Gina &amp; John</li> <li>• *Structure Team Time: Jen, Cathy, Jacki, Cherish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Activity/hands-on observation time/reviewing and critiquing classroom clips</li> <li>○ Create and plan activity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

NOTES:

**Checklist for Conference/Presentation Work**  
**6/1/18 (revised)**

Title of Conference or Presentation: <b><i>Reaching ALL Students in an Inclusive Classroom: Implementing Differentiation &amp; Specially Designed Instruction</i></b>	Date: <b>September 25-26, 2018</b> Times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9/25/18: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.</li> <li>9/26/18: 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.</li> </ul>	Location: <b>Hotel Madison &amp; Shenandoah Conference Center, Harrisonburg, VA</b>
TTAC Planning Team: <b>Lisa Norris, Cherish Skinker, Jacki Nickel</b>	Participants: <i>Team Required: Admin., Spec. Ed., Gen. Ed</i> Total: 150 (+ if requested)	Event Contact #s

Assignment	Person responsible	Date completed	Comments
Secure venue, parking, and /or hotels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yvonne with help of team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ May</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waiting on contract (hold on opening registration until firm contract –goal is to send registration on June 4<sup>th</sup>)</li> <li>Be sure Lisa, Jacki, and Cherish are always cc'd on information to streamline work/questions</li> </ul>
Secure keynote speaker(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lisa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Rick has agreed to speak via e-mail contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rick Wormeli (2 Days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need contract sent</li> <li>Request videos he may have or suggest for us to use on day two “team activity time”</li> <li>Plan book signing time</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Create and send estimated budget work to co-directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jacki</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Sent “final” budget to Cheryl and John on 4.25.18</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changed original budget work from participants from 200 to 150 and adjusted all #'s</li> <li>Costs for Audio/visual still unclear</li> </ul>
Create and address registration and e-mails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yvonne and Cherish</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>IMPORTANT:</b> SPED Directors <i>may</i> attend but may NOT replace any of the mandatory team members per registration requirements</li> <li>Cherish: Remember to request that the Team Lead be responsible for bringing school data (VDOE Quality Indicator Info: SPED and one other targeted for focus subgroup )</li> </ul>
Event check- ins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yvonne</li> <li>Karen</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HM- Arrive and prepare area ?7:15a.m. 9.25-26.18</li> </ul>
Plan food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Team and Yvonne</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waiting on menus</li> </ul>



Plan AV/sound support needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jesse</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jesse has offered to assist with this work</li> <li>Need to find time in Jesse's schedule to visit HM with planning team</li> </ul>
Create "Save the Date Constant Contact" and send it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cherish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Save the date sent on 5.7.18</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work on crafting important disclaimers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$40.00 no show fee charged daily if registered participant is no show</li> <li>Hotel Registration put on personal credit card and be responsible for cancelation on own by deadline we provide</li> <li>VDOE attendance to conference info statement</li> </ul> </li> <li>Send by May 8<sup>th</sup></li> </ul>
Create Conference Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jacki</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send to Cherish for printing by September 17</li> </ul>
Create Conference Notetaker, Team Action Planner and Structured Team Time activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cherish and Jacki</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create easy to use, scaffolded approach Notetaker</li> <li>Create Team Action Planner including "Action Steps" 1. How will team members share what they learned at the conference 2. What needs to be done to support continued learning after leaving conference?</li> </ul>
Evaluation Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cherish</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create form that allows for individual sessions to be evaluated</li> </ul>
Name Tags	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yvonne and Karen</li> </ul>		
Poster Boards for Community of Practice (CoP) interest sign-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cherish/Jacki</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan sign-up if interested</li> <li>Discuss CoP groups/how to generate interest</li> </ul>
RESOURCES (our team) to add to Padlet or Print	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cherish/Jacki/Lisa</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cherish/Jacki Notetaker, Team Action Planner</li> <li>Lisa 1 Page Visual: Differentiation, Accommodations, SDI</li> </ul>
Padlet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jen</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presenters need to provide all Padlet resources to Jen by Sept. 20<sup>th</sup></li> <li>Put disclaimer on Padlet about accessibility cut-off</li> </ul>
Printing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cherish</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notetaker</li> <li>Conference Program</li> <li>Team SMART Action Planner</li> <li>Team Activity Observation Form</li> </ul>

Welcomes, Keynote Introductions, Lunch (Conf/TTAC info sharing) and Closing Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cheryl, John, Lisa, Jacki</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Day 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cheryl brief welcome to all</li> <li>Lisa “clarify assumptions: Definitions of Differentiation and SDI, and intro Rick</li> <li>Jacki/Lisa Lunch (share conf. info)</li> <li>John Closing remarks???</li> </ul> </li> <li>Day 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jacki Starts Day???</li> <li>Lunch-Lisa (How to request svc TTAC)</li> <li>Closing?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Intake paperwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jacki</li> </ul>		
Order Rick’s latest book for participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lisa w/Yvonne</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 5.16.18 staff received book</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depending on cost, determine if every participant receives a book or if limited 1-2 per team</li> </ul>
Contact JMU Bookstore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lisa w/Yvonne</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning team to determine 5-6 book titles</li> </ul>
Set up debrief and share evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jacki</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review evals with planning team</li> <li>Prepare and share feedback reflection form with all TTAC presenters and support staff to use during mtg</li> <li>Set meeting date to share “glows and grows” (preferably within 1 week of conference)</li> <li>Set date for ?Oct. 4-5, 2018</li> </ul>
Set meeting with TTAC Directors /Coordinators to discuss conference needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lisa, Cherish and Jacki</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ready for meeting on 15<sup>th</sup></li> <li>5.15.18 mtg took place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NEED finished by May 14 Create presenter’s handout explaining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why (purpose of conf.)</li> <li>What (sessions to be offered)</li> <li>How (consistent expectations for every session, i.e. “hands-on activity, intentional alignment to purpose, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Set Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> all TTAC meeting dates to review work/update info</li> </ul>
Communities of Practice (CoP) Follow-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directive from Co-Directors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Admin: Jacki/(Jillian Shifflett?)</li> <li>Teacher: ?</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider two strands: Admin and Teachers</li> <li>Design the follow-up platform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hybrid face-to-face/online</li> <li>Provide 2-3 regional PLC’s so drives are not long</li> <li>Allow online to be all Region 5?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Determine when to complete a topics interest survey</li> </ul>
Meet with every session team to align questions/content with Admin sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jacki</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send e-mail out June 12</li> </ul>

### **Results (Outcomes and Achievements):**

Through keynote presentations and breakout sessions, participants will receive a variety of classroom strategies for both differentiation and disability specific SDI. Differentiation strategies will be grade-span specific (PreK 5/6-12) and SDI strategies will be targeted to address specific student areas of weakness (communication, processing, social emotional, and adapted curriculum).

Additionally, administrators will learn evaluation/observation methods for use in classrooms and will receive information on appropriate scheduling for students with disabilities. The entire team will work to create a school-wide goal to implement/increase the use of differentiation and SDI in classrooms.

The outcome of this project for Region 5 TTAC will be the development of communities of practice that will continue the work started at the conference. For schools attending, the outcome will be their completed statement of action. Each team will work, throughout the two days, to create a goal that can be incorporated into their school's strategic plan addressing enhancing and/or including differentiation and SDI in their school. This action plan will identify current strengths and weaknesses within their academic programming and help target areas for additional professional development from Region 5 TTAC's communities of practice or individual school trainings.

### **Project Timeline:**

March-September, 2018

### **Outcomes Related to School Completion, Dropout Prevention, and/or Graduation Rates:**

This conference is open to schools PreK-12. Our hope is for preschools and elementary schools to begin working strategically to increase the success rate of students with disabilities early so that fewer students find themselves in academic peril in high school. For secondary schools attending, our intention is to provide them with specific strategies and methods that can be immediately implemented to help support students with disabilities who are struggling and on a path towards not graduation. Prevention is our message; however, we know that triage must be done; therefore, we are specifically addressing both.

### **Current Status of Project:**

Currently, registration for the conference is open and is rapidly filling. We expect to fill all slots for the conference by the end of June 2018.

### **Special Conditions, Expertise, or Skills Required to Carry Out the Project:**

Expertise in special education and disability specific strategies is necessary for the breakout sessions. Each person leading a breakout has worked, researched, and studied in the area to which they have been assigned to present. This expertise is most critical on day two when participants will be attending disability specific sessions. During day one, teacher participants will attend sessions addressing differentiation strategies for their grade-level. The presenters for these sessions are experienced teachers, both special education and general education, and have worked in and with schools to increase the use of differentiated strategies in inclusive classrooms.

Lastly, administrative experience and expertise is needed for the specific strand for administrators. Knowledge of school and special education law, scheduling, budgeting, and personnel management is crucial to reach this population of attendees.

### **Role in Project as a NDPS Certification Program Participant:**

As a NDPS certification program participant, I was a member of the steering committee. I am working to ensure that graduation for students with disabilities is the focus of the conference and the message of starting early is disseminated. Often times, preschool and elementary teachers do not immediately connect their role in the classroom to graduation (we have seen this mentality reflected in numerous surveys and evaluation forms over the course of the last five years). I am working to make graduation a priority for all teachers and to incorporate this message throughout the conference. All teachers must understand that they are a step in a student's path to

graduation. Students with disabilities statistically show lower graduation rates and teachers must work from the very early grades to provide appropriate support and interventions for these students. Too often we see a rush in high school to make-up for lost time, my goal is to change preschool and elementary teachers' perceptions of their role in a student's success.

**Lessons Learned:**

Though the conference has not officially happened yet, we have already learned that starting early and having a clear mission are key. It has been invaluable to have an anchor statement to which we could refer during our work to maintain alignment with core values as we planned breakout sessions and team action planning. While all of the breakout sessions are being conducted by "in-house" colleagues, beginning this process early and meeting frequently has ensured that day-to-day tasks do not push this important work to the background. We have held conferences in the past that were planned in a more rapid fashion, and while they were successful, the depth of strategic planning was missing and in the end the participants did not leave with a clear, targeted message.

**Advice for Dropout Prevention Practitioners about the Project:**

I would advise starting early on planning an event of this nature. I would also encourage practitioners to use their human resources strategically. As teachers, we know a little about a lot, but presenters should have a depth of knowledge that allows them to present their sessions incorporating both research and practical classroom application.