Slide 1: Supporting the Literacy Needs of Elementary Students Through Professional Development for Their General Education Teachers

Tina S. Herzberg
University of South Carolina
therzberg@uscupstate.edu

L. Penny Rosenblum
University of Arizona
rosenblu@email.Arizona.edu

Slides 2-8: We have cartoons on these pages and they will be described at the session.

Slide 9: A Word of Thanks

University of South Carolina - ASPIRE: Advanced Support for Innovative Research Excellence

Paths to Literacy

Slide 10: What We've Developed

- 11 on-demand short (8-12 minute) videos
- A list of resources
- A quiz to assess your knowledge prior to and after watching the videos

Slide 11: The First Three Modules

1. How Do You Use Your Vision?
2. Understanding the Numbers Behind a Student's Visual Impairment and the Use of Functional Vision
3. Functional Vision Assessment 101

Slide 12: Minnie Helps Viewers Understand the FVA Process
Video will be shown

Slide 13: Four More Topics

4. Who's on My Student's Educational Team?
5. How Do I Support the Print Reader in My Classroom
6. What is Braille and How Do Students Read It?
7. How do Students Write Using Braille?

Slide 14, 15 & 16

Videos of the three modules. The group will see one.

Slide 17: The Last Four Topics

8. You and Your Student's Paraprofessional Working Together
9. How Does the Student Use Technology in My Classroom?
10. What is My Role in Adapting Materials?*
11. Orientation and Mobility 101

Slides 18 & 19

Videos of two modules. The group will see one.

Slide 20: The Logistics of Our Pilot Testing

- We advertised in all the usual places (e.g., listservs, conferences, social media).
- We had 2 groups pilot the professional development.
- We set up a Blackboard site.
- Movement within the site was controlled so only one video was available until it was opened and then the next would become available.

Slide 21: The Reward

- 5 hour certificate
  - Completed pre-test
  - Completed 11 videos
  - Completed post-test
- 8 hour certificate
  - All of the above **+**
  - 2 assignments

Slide 22: The Participants were More Than Just General Ed. Teachers

- 101 individuals from 27 states and 3 countries
  - TX (n=11), AZ (n=10), KS (n=10)
- Professional Role
  - General education teacher (n=22)
  - Special education teacher (n= 21)
  - Paraprofessional (n=11)
  - Therapist (n=9)
  - Vision professional (n=23)
  - Other roles including administrator, parent, ASL interpreter, university student (n=15)

Slide 23: Number of Years in Professional Role (n=98)

- First year (n=6)
- 2-5 years (n=23)
- 6-8 years (n=15)
- 9-12 years (n=16)
- 13-16 years (n=10)
- 17+ years (n=29

Slide 24: Why Professionals Signed Up (n=82)

Role	First Time VI Student	Work with VI Students	Prepare for Future	Evaluate to Share
General Ed	11	5	4	0
Special Ed	0	11	3	0
Parapro.	3	6	2	0
Therapist	1	8	0	0
VI Profess.	0	10	0	12

Slide 25: Reasons General Ed Teachers Signed Up

- I want to learn] strategies to help this child be successful in my classroom.
- I would like to learn how to assist my student to reach their full potential.
- I would like to learn about the "ins" and "outs" of Braille and would like to learn about instructional strategies that I can use with my student who will is completely blind so that he can be successful in the 2019-2020 school year.

Slide 26: Reasons Special Ed Teachers Signed Up

- I want to have the most current, relevant information to assist my students.
- How to continue to meet the needs of my students with low vision and vision needs.
- I want to learn information to help me be better prepared for my student who is starting in the fall as well as to help me learn and grow in my profession.

Slide 27: Reasons Paraprofessionals Signed Up

- Additional ways I can assist my student in the classroom while also helping her to build independence.
- …I will be working with a blind student who also has physical limitations. So I want to learn the best ways to help her.
- I want to learn all I possibly can about assisting visually impaired students. I have always found visual impairments interesting, so learning how to relate, assist and teach them the best is something I want so deeply.

Slide 28: Reasons Therapists Signed Up

- Any information that will help with not only students with visual impairments, but strategies to help all students.
- I often work with students with visual impairments and would like some more information to make sure that I am using best practices.
- Strategies and resources to use to better support my students

Slide 29: Reasons Vision Professionals Signed Up

- Any information that will help me to become more informed on how to support general education teachers that have students with visual impairments in their classrooms.
- I want to take this course to see if it is appropriate to have my upcoming classroom teachers for 2019-2020 learn about how to teach students who are visually impaired or blind.
- I want to gain information (in general terms) that I can use in helping general education teachers as they work with students with visual impairments for the first time and lessen their fears.

Slide 30: Assignments: Applying What You Learned

- 12 options to select from:
    - *Environmental Changes*
    - *Use a Pinterest Idea or Make a Pinterest Board*
    - *Critique a book or movie with a VI character*
    - *Interview a VI professional or person with VI*
    - *Accompany student on an O&M lesson*
    - *Watch a Perkins eLearning video or read 2 articles and explain how you'll use the information*
    - *Try out technology using simulators*
    - *Decode uncontracted braille*

Slide 31: Decode Grade 1 Braille Passage

Photo of a page of braille interlined by a participant.

Slide 32: Design a Pintrest Board

- Early childhood special education teacher with more than 17 years of experience.
- 2018-2019 was her first year having a blind student.
- She designed a board with activities including:
    - *Make Your Own Memory Game*
    - *Adapting Story Books for Our Younger Learners*
    - *Finger Isolation Activities for Young Learners*
    - *Helping Your Blind Child Develop Social Skills*

Slide 33: At the End of Her Paper She Shared

"I feel that by targeting these four areas, I can better focus on meeting core needs instead of always feeling as if I am struggling to touch a little bit on fifteen different needs. I hope that this is a great starting point to help our team focus on needs while creating and imbedding new activities and strategies into his preschool classroom."

Slide 34: Watch a Video

Picture of the screen for "Adapting Environments for Individuals with Vision Loss" (Perkins eLearning)

- A kindergarten teacher with 13-16 years of experience
- Student with low vision in her classroom
- Watched *Adapting Environments for Individuals with Vision Loss* (on Perkins eLearning)

Slide 35: Changes She Made

- We have tape running down the hallways as a guide and red tape at stopping points, which he uses.
- …contrast on charts, I have started using darker colors of marker…and letting go of some of the cute graphics.
- There was glare from windows that bothered him at his carpet seat. I moved the easel to the other side of the carpet so that the window is always behind him.
- We go to another Kindergarten room…and I realized last week that I need to take him there when it is empty so that he can look around. He kept interrupting the lesson to ask questions about the classroom instead of focusing on the lesson.

Slide 36: Accompany Your Student on an O&M Lesson

- Second grade teacher with more than 17 years of experience
- Student has very low vision.
- To review his routes at the beginning of the school year he took his teacher on a tour.
- Terms: sweeping, blended curb, drop-offs, square off, sighted guide, landmarks
- Student became distracted by a lawn mower and it was valuable observing how the O&M instructor responded.

Slide 37: Teacher Concludes

"I thoroughly enjoyed attending the Orientation and Mobility lesson. I learned a lot about my student's ability and knowledge level in the greater community outside of the school. I hope to attend another lesson in the late spring to see what he learns over the next few months."

Slide 38: Technology Trial

- Second grade teacher with more than 17 years of experience
- Victor Reader Classic+
- "I found this activity very enlightening on the challenges this student faces in this and many other activities of his daily life. I had the benefit of a quiet environment to listen to this story, and realize the student is often trying to hear in a noisy active classroom while wearing headphones. I will be more cognizant of this in the future."

Slide 39: A Few Weeks Ago a Teacher Sent a Slide Showing What She is Doing

Using a large white board with paraprofessional copying what teacher is putting on board.

Slide 40: She Also Shared She is…

- Using her cell phone to take photos of things on the board and sharing with the student.
- Providing the student his own set of cards that match the ones she is showing in the front of the class.
- Having him bring his Visiobook to view pictures in stories.
- Asking him where he wants to sit to see best.

Slide 41: We Also Asked Participants What Else to Include

- It would be helpful to know more about my role regarding the IEP. I would also like to know if Schools for the Blind still exist and if they are better/not as good for a student with a visual impairment.
- Another topic that may be beneficial to include in the future could be showing some more examples of how general educators will need to modify assignments/group activities for students with visual impairments (like art projects, collaborative learning activities, etc.).

Slide 42: We Also Asked Participants What Else to Include (cont.)

- I think some ideas relating to non-academic settings would be beneficial. Field trips, PE, recess, etc.
- What to do if you suspect that vision may be impacting their learning but the student does not already have a vision teacher on their team.
- Perhaps provide a variety of simple modification materials/supplies general education teachers can use.

Slide 43: Participant Share Take-Aways

"This coming school year, I will be teaching a student who is legally blind. This course has taught me valuable information about the roles different specialists will play in assisting my student. he course has also taught me how these individuals will support me as the teacher in making sure that my instruction meets the needs of my student. The course also helped me gain a better understanding of the technology that is available to students with visual impairments as well as other tools that could be useful for my student this year."

Slide 44: Some Ideas of What to Ask

"I wrote down a list of how to adapt visuals. I also wrote down questions I must ask about student's abilities, impairments, tools, environment and team. It is very helpful to know what to ask about!"

Slide 45: Practical Ideas

"The areas I found most beneficial were ideas and examples of what to do in my classroom to help the child with the vision impairment. Things such as background contrasting colors, getting time on their own to get to know the layout of the room etc."

Slide 46: Practical Ideas

"The areas I found most beneficial were ideas and examples of what to do in my classroom to help the child with the vision impairment. Things such as background contrasting colors, getting time on their own to get to know the layout of the room etc."

Slide 47: A Recruitment Tool

"I took this PD course over the summer when I was considering whether or not to accept a position with my school district working with students in the VI program. This coursework gave me the basic information I needed, as well as the courage to make the leap into the world of educational programming for students with VI. I'm now also in the graduation program at University of North Dakota for BVI!"

Slide 48: Confidence Booster

"I am a paraprofessional working with a visually impaired student for the first time this year. This class was helpful for me to consider how that student would be. I am so thankful to have had this class before meeting my student. It gave me the confidence to dive in."

Slide 49: Sharing with Colleagues

"I participated in this to share with professional colleagues at the school for the blind I work at because many are core subject teachers who do not have a good understanding of or practice how to work VI students."

Slide 50: We Hope You Too Will Share

"I hope that this professional development becomes available for continued use. There is a definite need for this sort of inservice for inexperienced teachers who will be teaching a student with a visual impairment as well as for those already experienced in the field. Please let us know!"

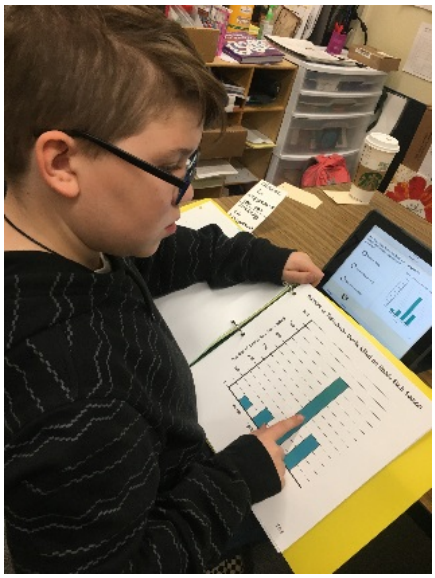
Slide 51: And We Are Letting You Know…

Flyer that appears on next page

Tools to Support You in Having a Student with a Visual Impairment in Your K-6 General Education Classroom

http://bit.ly/2VmO0Lf

We are pleased to announce the availability of 11 short on-demand videos. These videos are designed for those working with academic students with visual impairments in K-6 classrooms. Topics include:



- How Do You Use Your Vision?
- Understanding the Numbers Behind a Student's Visual Impairment and the Use of Functional Vision
- What is Braille and How Do Students Read It?
- Who's on My Student's Educational Team?
- What is my Role in Adapting Materials?
- How Does the Student Use Technology in My Classroom?
- Orientation and Mobility 101
- How Can I Support the Student Who Is Using Technology?

Videos are designed to support:

- Classroom teachers
- Paraprofessionals / teacher assistants
- Therapists
- Families
- Administrators

A self-check quiz is included for monitoring progress.

The videos were developed by Dr. Tina Herzberg, University of South Carolina Upstate and Dr. L. Penny Rosenblum, University of Arizona.

http://bit.ly/2VmO0Lf

PATHS TO LITERACY