

# Collaborative Project: Final Report

The \_\_\_\_\_ Collaborative Project was funded in the summer of 2018 by the \_\_\_\_ Education Agency's (\_\_\_\_) "Services to Students \_\_\_\_\_" grant. The purpose of this grant is to implement a comprehensive model of services designed to improve cognitive, language, behavioral, social and academic skills of students with autism between the ages of three and nine years.

## Needs Assessment and Goals

A needs assessment (see Appendix B) was completed by each participating district upon acceptance of the grant. From the identified needs, the following goals of the project were identified:

- 1 Improved outcomes for students with autism in all developmental areas to ensure meaningful inclusion in the school community:**
  - Use of research-validated instructional strategies
  - Curriculum and supports include assessment, data collection, and ongoing progress monitoring
- 2 Comprehensive professional development focusing on fidelity of instructional practices:**
  - Practical, high quality supports for teachers, resulting in improved implementation
  - Increase in retention of teaching staff through success of model and supports to teachers
- 3 Expansion of the model through training sites and coaches:**
  - Building local training sites to model evidence-based practices and provide a venue for training district staff
  - Developing in-district supports and coaches to expand and sustain practices
- 4 Training and support for parents:**
  - Transferring student skills across environments by providing parent training, resources, and supports
  - Encouraging and improving school-parent communication
- 5 Building campus administrator capacity to support the model:**
  - Training and modeling for administrators to support teachers working with all students on the autism spectrum
  - Resources for administrators to evaluate and offer feedback to teachers on implementation of effective practices for students on the spectrum

# Project Evaluation Results

**Goal 1:** Improved outcomes for students with autism in all developmental areas to ensure meaningful inclusion in the school community.

## Components

The \_\_\_\_\_ Project uses practices proven to work with children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other developmental disabilities. Through the use of curricula based on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) techniques such as Discrete Trial Training (DT), Pivotal Response Training (PRT), and task analysis, students' individual needs are identified and targeted for instructional support. Special education laws emphasize the importance of using proven methods of teaching in special education and targeting instructional strategies that are based on peer reviewed research in order to ensure the best child outcomes possible (IDEA, 2004). Specific components include: curriculum-based assessment with corresponding lesson plans (The \_\_\_\_\_ Program), inclusion supports, online access to instructional materials supporting academic learning standards, resource library of visual and environmental supports, and extensive data collection tools for instructional decision-making.

## Activities and Deliverables

**111** Pre-K/Elementary classrooms

**171** curriculum-based assessment baseline samples collected

**119** students were included in the outcome sample

**945** students benefitted from instruction

## Anticipated Student Outcomes

While all students learn at their own pace, we anticipated that the trajectory of students' skill acquisition would improve as a result of participation in the project. The blue line in the graph depicts what we might expect from a student who does not receive intervention. The orange lines demonstrate how initiating instruction can set students on an accelerated paths of skill acquisition. For most students, we expected participation in the project would result in an improved developmental trajectory over time.

