Supporting Interagency Partnerships through Implementation of the CIRCLES Model of Interagency Collaboration

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NTACT:C Webinar

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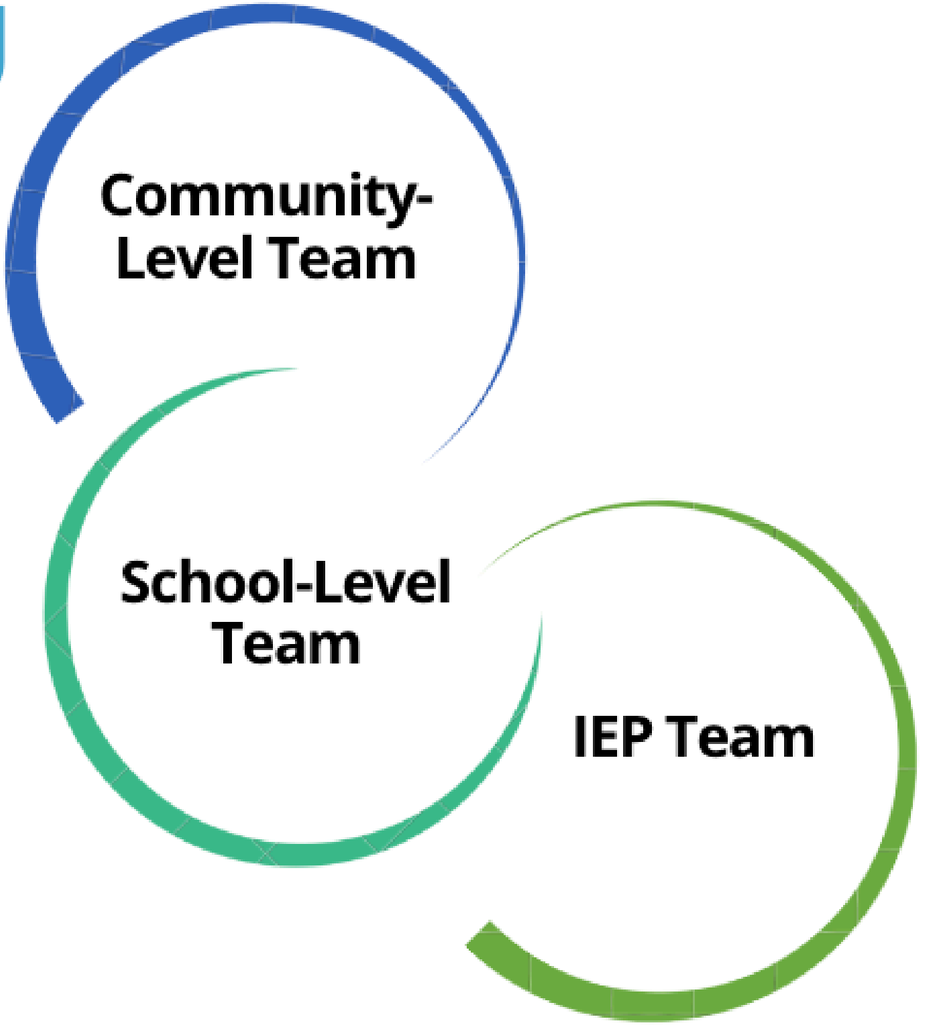
Today's Agenda

- Basic Overview and Purpose of CIRCLES
- Teams and Responsibilities
- Perspectives from CIRCLES Schools & Parents
- CIRCLES Data Reports
- Lessons Learned from Year 1 of Implementation
- Questions?

Three-Team Model of Interagency Collaboration to Support Transition Planning

Enhancing Postschool Outcomes for Students with Disabilities



CIRCLES

BUILDS COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS!!!

Interagency collaboration is a predictor of positive post-school outcomes

(Test et al., 2009; Mazzotti et al., 2016, 2021)

The only research-based model to facilitate interagency collaboration

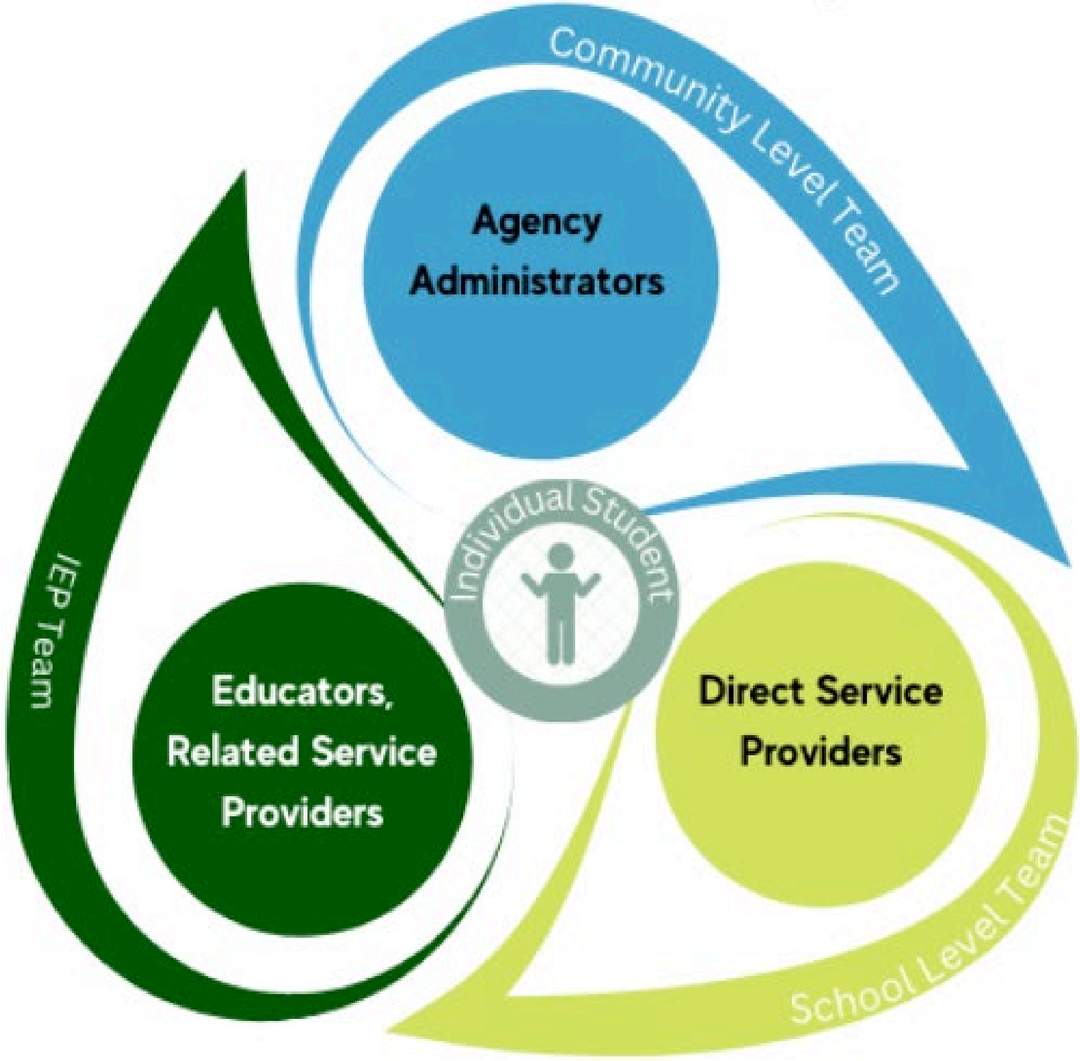
(Rowe et al., 2021)

Supports transition services under IDEA & Pre-ETS under WIOA

(IDEA, 2004; WIOA, 2014)

CIRCLES

Building Collaborative Partnerships



Community Level Team

- Appoint agency representatives for SLT
- Deals with issues at policy level
- Does not meet directly with students

School Level Team

- Listens to individual students about transition goals
- Participates in discussion to identify supports and opportunities
- Pre-plans transition service actives

IEP Team

- Writes transition plan and IEP goals using resources and information from CLT & SLT

CIRCLES HISTORY

BEGAN

In North Carolina

- 1990
- 1 SLT
- 2011-2016
- 28 High Schools

CONTINUED

In Arkansas

- Attempted 2014
- Restructured 2016
- 4 Pilot Schools
- 3 Schools Continuing

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

- Increased levels of IEP participation
- Increased self-determination
- Felt better prepared for job and college

FAMILY, COMMUNITY, & SCHOOL

- Increased levels of collaboration
- Greater family engagement with school
- Businesses learning about students earlier

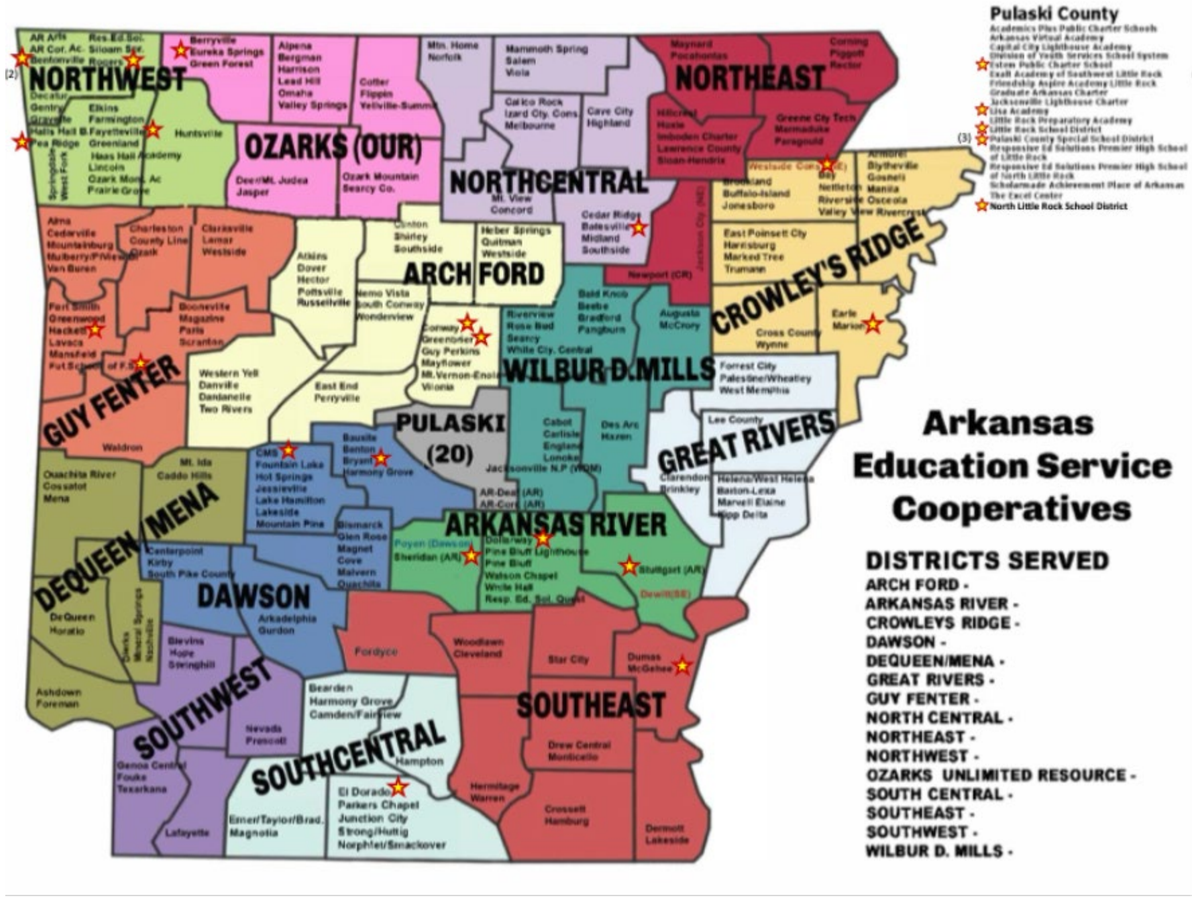
CURRENT PROJECT

- 55 High Schools
- AR
- TN
- MI
- KS

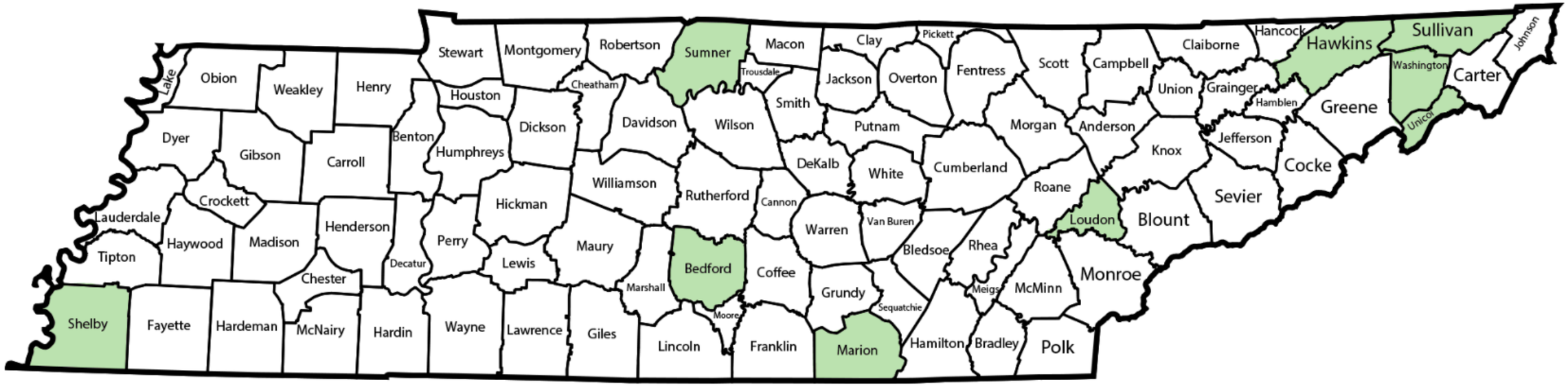
CIRCLES in Arkansas

- **Four teams originally trained and implemented with fidelity.**
- **Representatives from three of those teams now present with us to help scale up CIRCLES in Arkansas**
  - **Harrisburg**
  - **Rogers**
  - **Magnolia**
  - **White Hall**

- **34 schools across AR participating in the CIRCLES Project**
  - **18 CIRCLES Implementation Schools**
  - **16 CIRCLES Assessment Schools**



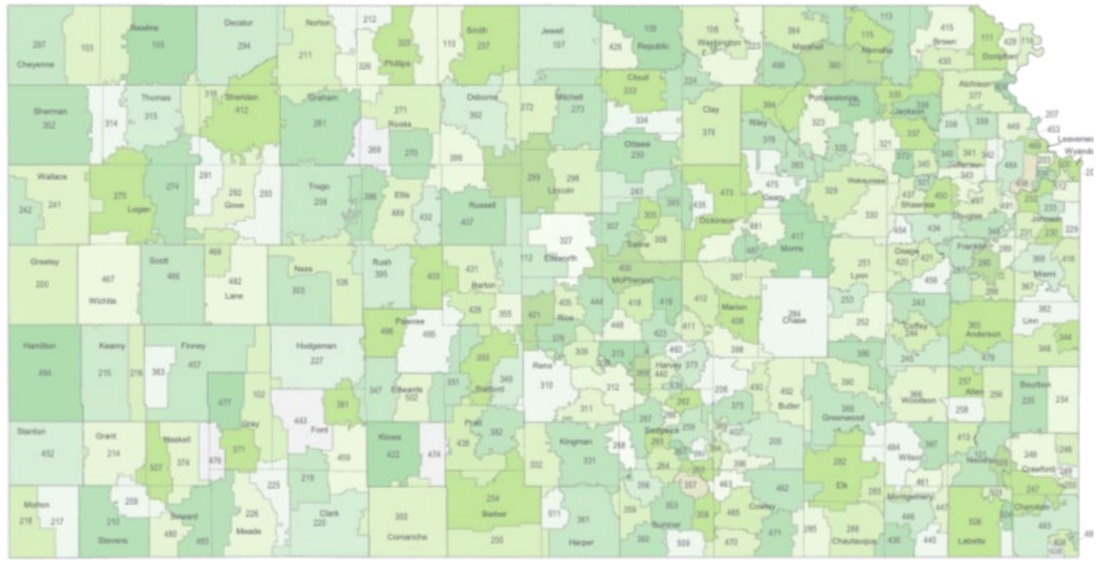
CIRCLES in Tennessee



- **17 schools across TN participating in the CIRCLES Project**
  - **7 CIRCLES Implementation Schools**
  - **10 CIRCLES Assessment Schools**

Kansas & Michigan

Kansas Unified School Districts



Oakland County School Districts

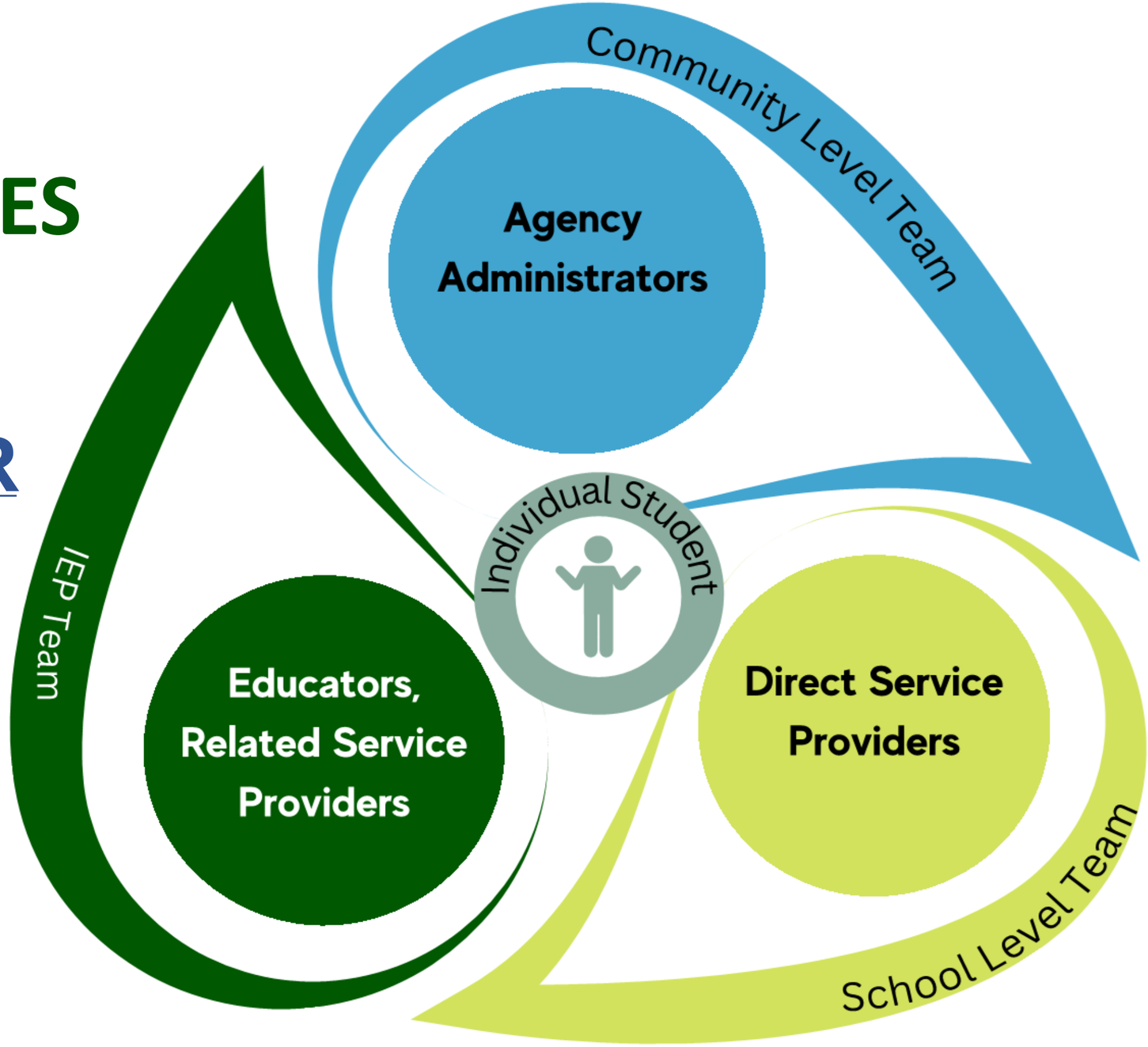
- **1 school in KS & 3 schools in MI participating in the CIRCLES Project**
  - **2 CIRCLES Implementation Schools**
  - **2 CIRCLES Assessment Schools**

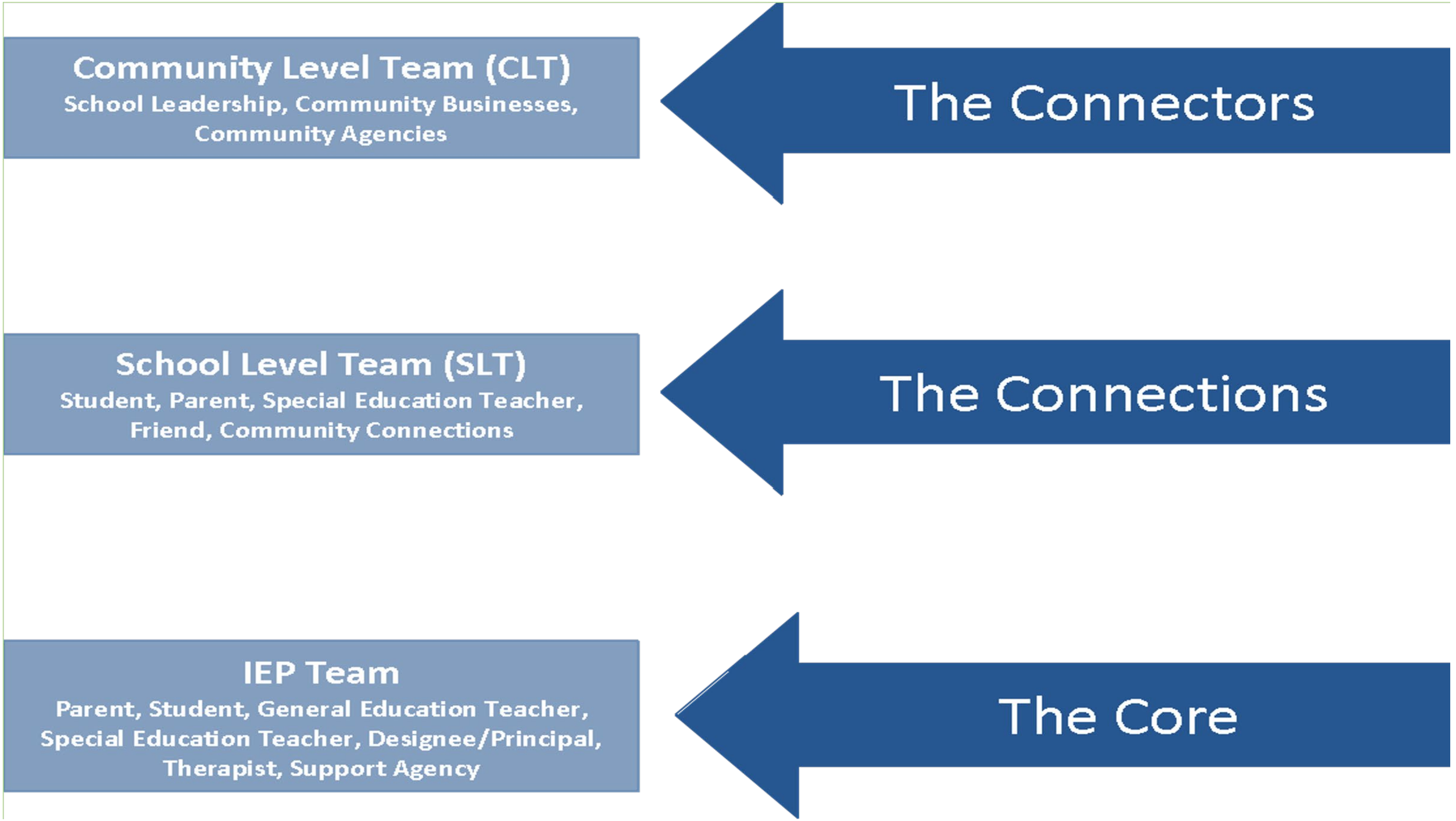
CIRCLES

An Overview of CIRCLES

CIRCLES in Rogers, AR

CIRCLES




Community Level Team (CLT)
School Leadership, Community Businesses, Community Agencies
The Connectors
School Level Team (SLT)
Student, Parent, Special Education Teacher, Friend, Community Connections
The Connections
IEP Team
Parent, Student, General Education Teacher, Special Education Teacher, Designee/Principal, Therapist, Support Agency
The Core

Target Population Students for CIRCLES

Students needing multiple support from multiple agencies

Students at high risk for drop-out

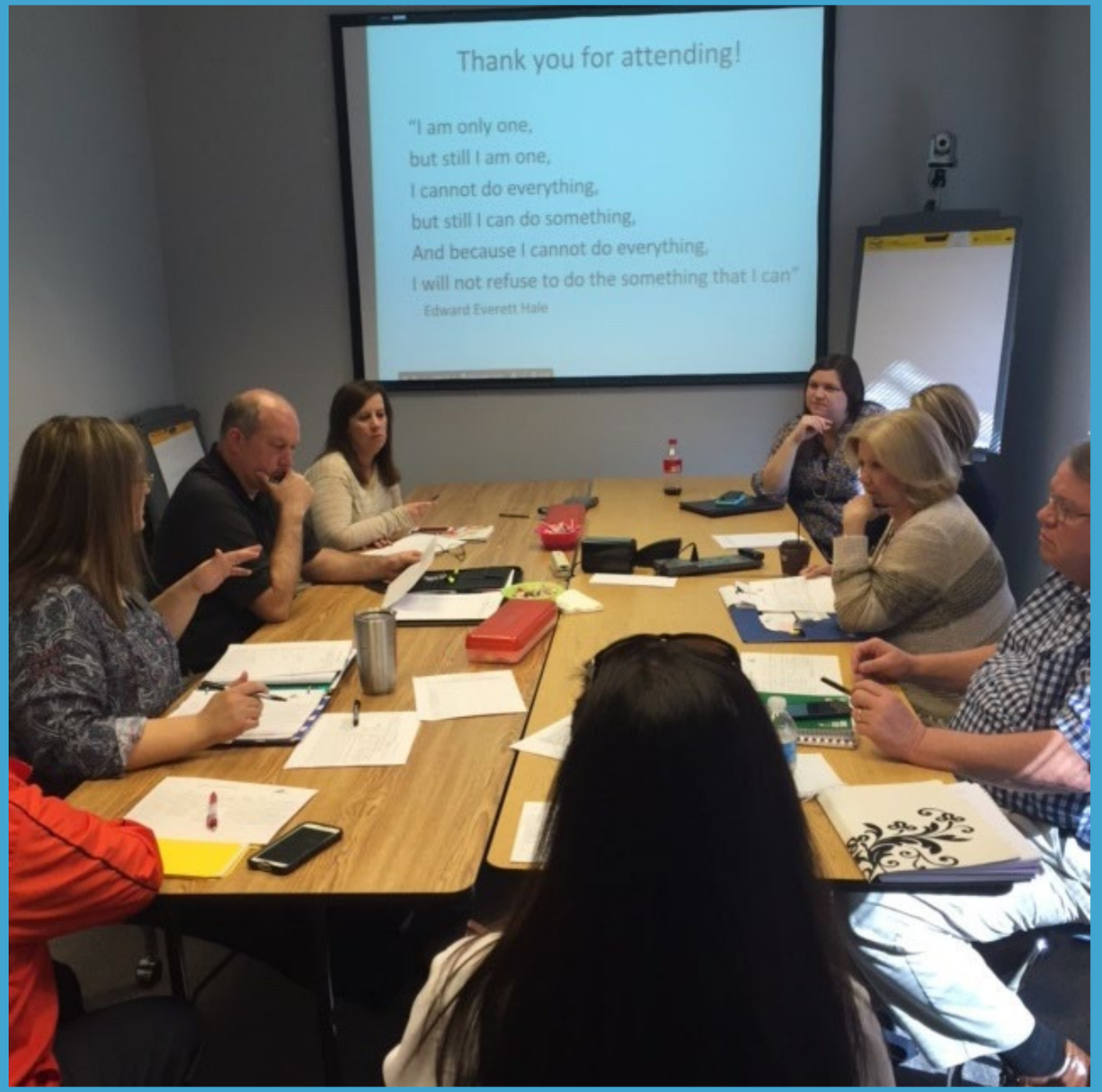
If it is unclear which agency can best meet the student's need(s)

Students who exhibit a specific need which should be addressed by more than one agency

Students who will keep you up at night…

Or maybe all students could benefit, if you are a small district

Community-Level Team



District level leadership from schools and adult service providers

Might include adult agency representatives:

Vocational Rehabilitation

Developmental Disabilities Services

Mental Health

Services for the Blind and Other

Other Community Partners:

Employers

Community Leaders

Chamber of Commerce

Community Colleges

Organized and convened by the CIRCLES Implementation Team

Pre-Planning = Community Mapping

Think about what already exists

Discover what's missing

Identify necessary stakeholders

Invite necessary stakeholders

CIRCLES

Aspects of Life

- Health
- Family
- Work
- Living
- Friendship
- Spirituality
- Recreation
- Personal Growth
- Community
- Finance

Partnerships

- Hospitals, Mental Health
- Support Groups
- Agencies, Businesses, Chamber of Commerce
- Housing, Care Providers
- Social Groups
- Religious Organizations
- Recreation Department, YMCA
- Educational and Leisure Programs, Social Groups
- Transportation, Adult Service Providers
- Banking, Financial Planning

CIRCLES

Community Mapping

Questions to consider when conducting community mapping to identify community partners for your CLT (NTACT, 2005):

1. Who are the potential/critical partners?
2. What does the partner bring to the conversation?
3. What is their self-interest?
4. What steps need to be taken to elicit involvement?
5. What is the stakeholder's role in involvement?

School-Level Team

School-Level Team (2)

Purpose:

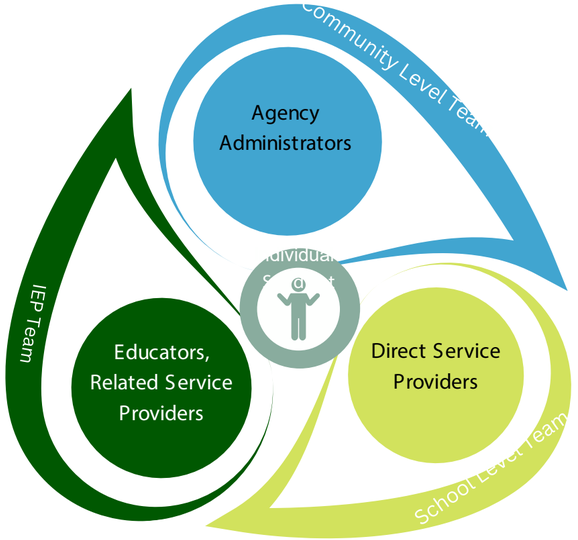
- To develop transition activities and services for youth with disabilities
- Brings adult service providers to meet directly with students and families

Comprised of:

- School personnel (e.g., transition coordinator, special education teacher)
- Direct service providers (e.g., case managers, counselors, care coordinators) from each agency represented on the CLT
- Customized members according to student's interests/needs

Attend one full-day meeting a month (during the school year), in which multiple students are seen and post-school goals are addressed

IEP Team



IEP Team(2)

- Writes transition plan and IEP goals
- Reports successes, needs, & challenges to CLT
- Meets 1x on typical school schedule

HOW CIRCLES IMPACTS STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

School Level Team Meeting		IEP Meetings After CIRCLES
• Student is prepared to present at SLT	→	• Student knows what is going on
• User friendly wording	→	• User friendly wording
• Participation in SLT	→	• Increased attendance
• Student presents strengths, needs, and goals.	→	• Increased student participation
• Strengths and needs identified through the SLT	→	• Focus on student strengths and necessary supports

Let’s Hear Perspectives from Bonnie Boaz, Arkansas Transition Services

Bonnie Boaz,
AR State Transition Coordinator

CIRCLES

arkansas Transition services

Perspectives on CIRCLES from Our School Partners

“We've seen skills and positive outcomes carry over into the school setting for our students after participating in CIRCLES and Film Camp that we hadn't been able to get to before.”

“None of this would have happened if it was not because of the CIRCLES SLT because when everyone starting seeing her potential that’s when all the possibilities started happening. It made her realize that she could go after what her heart desired.”

“Minds started to open because of CIRCLES. We had a student who was interested in graphic design and because she was connected with Pulaski Tech during the SLT, she is now taking courses to work towards a degree in graphic design.”

“Through CIRCLES and our Wolfe program…she began to focus on her love of food service…another connection made because of her connection with CIRCLES”

CIRCLES

An Important Quote:

“I think we were all just blown away. Having high school students with learning differences speak to a group of strangers about their lives – their dreams – it was an honor to be at the table…That room was full of love, understanding, and a willingness to help one another ”

Testimonial from Rogers, AR

Data Reports for CIRCLES

Cohort 1

COLLABORATION SURVEY

Rate current levels and perceptions of collaboration with community partners

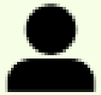
Overview:

Method	Time to complete	When to complete	Who completes	Used to Measure	Other
Computer	15 minutes	Fall	Transition Planning Personnel	Collaboration	Based on 5 stages of collaboration (Frey et al., 2006)

STUDENT TRANSITION QUESTIONNAIRE

Measure of student perspectives and knowledge of transition planning

Overview:

Method	Time to complete	When to complete	 Who completes	Used to Measure	Other
Computer	15 minutes	2x pre (Fall) post (Spring)	Students	Transition Planning Knowledge	40 items Likert scale

SDI:SR

STUDENT REPORT

MEASURE OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ABILITY TO ENGAGE IN SELF-DETERMINED ACTIONS

Overview:

Method	Time to complete	When to complete	Who completes	What is measured	Other
Computer	15 minutes	2x pre (Fall) post (Spring)	Students	Perceptions of SD ability	Reliable and Valid

Collaboration Data Reports

2023 – 2024 Collaboration Survey (Example)

19 professionals completed the collaboration Survey for GREAT High School

Below is a summary of the responses reported for each item.

No Interactions at all	Networking	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration
☆☆☆☆☆	★☆☆☆☆	★★☆☆☆	★★★☆☆	★★★★☆	★★★★★
unaware of organization, no communication, no collaboration	aware of organization, loosely defined roles, little communication, all decisions made independently	provide information to each other, somewhat defined roles, formal communication, all decisions made independently	share information and resources, defined roles, frequent communication, some shared decision making	share ideas, share resources, frequent and prioritized communication, all members have a vote in decision making	members belong to one system, frequent communication characterized by mutual trust, consensus reached on all decisions

Using the scale above, professionals indicated the extent to which they currently interact with each partner.

	☆	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★
	Percent (%) Endorsed					
Family						
Family Members	11	11	11	11	17	39
Parent Training Center	44	6	17	17	0	17
School Personnel						
Special Education Teacher	12	6	0	24	29	29
General Education	0	12	6	12	41	29
School Counselors	12	6	0	12	18	53
Career Technical Education	5	18	18	24	24	12
Local Education Agency (LEA)	20	13	7	20	0	40
District/School Transition Coordinator	19	6	6	19	13	38
Project Search	31	25	0	19	0	25
Adult Services						
Vocational Rehabilitation	24	24	0	24	0	29
Developmental Disability Services	19	19	13	19	6	25
Local Independent Living Center	47	12	6	6	24	6
Related Services						
Occupational Therapist	47	6	0	12	18	18
Physical Therapist	53	12	0	12	18	6
Speech Language Pathologist	41	18	0	12	12	18
Division of Services for the Blind	47	18	0	12	18	6
Division of Service for the Deaf	47	29	0	12	6	6
Other Community Partners						
Regional Transition Consultant	31	19	6	19	13	13
Local Employer	31	0	8	8	0	54

	☆	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★
	Percent (%) Endorsed					
Chamber of Commerce	24	29	18	12	6	12
Local Community Colleges/Universities	18	6	12	35	12	18
Juvenile Justice	35	12	12	12	6	24
Mental Health Services	18	6	12	6	24	35
Medical Professional	41	12	6	24	12	6

This question focuses on your overall collaboration with the partners you indicated above. Please consider the overall partnership and rate how well your partnership uses the following resources.

	Percent (%) Endorsed					
	Don't know	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent
The partnership makes use of partners' financial resources.	28	0	17	22	22	11
The partnership makes use of partners' in-kind resources.	22	0	11	33	22	11
The partnership makes use of partners' time.	17	6	6	33	28	11

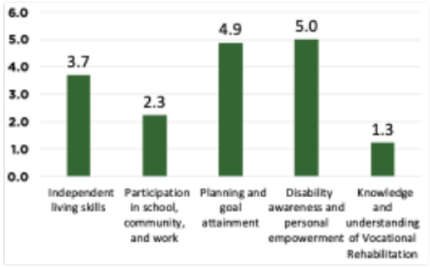
This question focuses on your overall collaboration with the partners you indicated above. Please consider all the people who provide either formal or informal leadership in this partnership. Please rate your overall partnership's leadership in each of the following areas.

	Percent (%) Endorsed					
	Don't know	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent
Taking responsibility for the partnership	16	0	16	26	16	26
Inspiring or motivating people involved in the partnership	16	5	11	16	32	21
Empowering people involved in the partnership	16	0	11	21	26	26
Communicating the vision of the partnership	16	5	5	37	11	26
Working to develop a common language within the partnership	21	0	11	37	11	21
Fostering respect, trust, inclusiveness, and openness in the partnership	16	0	5	26	21	32
Creating an environment where differences of opinion can be voiced.	16	0	11	32	16	26
Resolving conflict among partners	28	6	11	28	6	22
Combining the perspectives, resources, and skills of partners	16	0	11	21	21	32
Helping the partnership be creative and look at things differently	16	0	16	26	21	21
Recruiting diverse people and organizations into the partnership	21	0	11	26	16	26

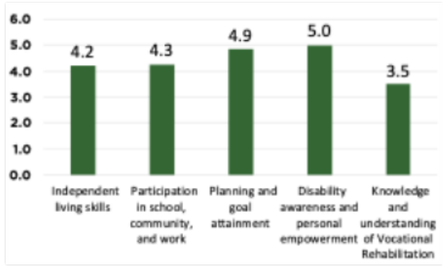
Plain/Clear Language Student Data Reports

Student Transition Questionnaire (STQ)

CIRCLES



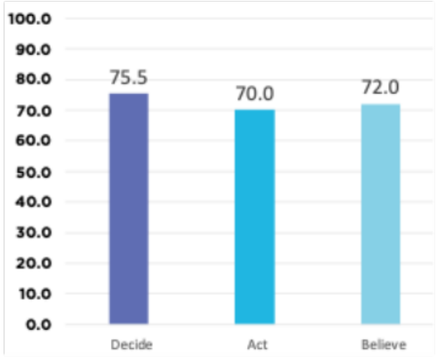
STQ Pre-Test Results



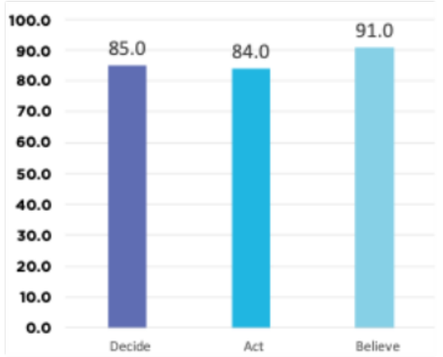
STQ Post-Test Results

The STQ was assessed on a 7-point scale from 0 = disagree to 6 = strongly agree.

Self-Determination Inventory: Student Report (SDI:SR)



SDI:SR Pre-Test Results



SDI:SR Post-Test Results

The SDI:SR was assessed on a 100- point scale from 0-100, assessing the student's self-determination.

For more information on CIRCLES, please visit https://circles.ku.edu/.

SDI:SR STUDENT REPORT

CIRCLES Data Report Information

CIRCLES

- This report includes aggregate data from the Student Transition Questionnaire (STQ) and the Self-Determination Inventory: Student Report (SDI:SR). Data in this report are aggregate – meaning these reports reflect the responses of your students as a group.
- Data can be used to support student-centered transition planning.
- Responses are **NOT a measure of student knowledge, ability, or skill.** They ARE a measure of **students' thoughts about their knowledge, abilities, and skills related to transition planning and self-determination.** This report asks students if they agree or disagree to each question and is a self-report of their perceptions.

Student Transition Questionnaire (STQ)

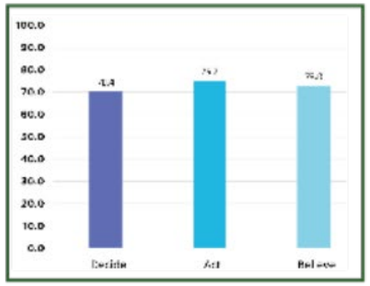
The STQ provides a view of your students' thoughts about their knowledge, awareness, and skills related to transition planning. In answering the survey, students rate on **a scale of 0 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).**

Students rate themselves across 5 categories: **(1) Independent Living Skills; (2) Participation; (3) Goal Attainment; (4) Disability Awareness and Personal Empowerment; and (5) Vocational Rehabilitation.**

- **Independent living skills:** A range of skills from maintaining health, transportation, money management, and skills for independence.
- **Participation:** Accessing community resources, community participation, advocating for accommodations in school and the community, and employment preparation.
- **Goal Attainment:** Planning for goal setting and attainment.
- **Disability Awareness and Personal Empowerment:** Understanding disability and disability rights
- **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)**: Knowledge of VR and how VR can support students.

Self-Determination Inventory: Student Report (SDI:SR)

The SDIST provides a view of your students' self-determination, and **measures their thoughts of their ability** to **DECIDE** their goal, **ACT** on their goal, and **BELIEVE** they can achieve their goals. SDI:SR Scores are measured on a scale from **1 to 100.**



Students with a high "DECIDE" score are more likely to set goals for themselves and make a plan of action on their goals.

Students with a high "ACT" score are more likely to take action on their goals and take action on their plan.

Students with a high "BELIEVE" score are more likely to take action on their goals and take action on their plan.

Lessons Learned from Year 1 Implementation

- Implementation across various community contexts is **HARD**!
- IRB consent process adds **ANOTHER** layer of challenge!
- **READINESS** of schools to participate must be considered!
- Administrator support is **CRITICAL**!
- Personnel turn-over **IMPACTS** implementation
- **Organization** of materials & monitoring school progress & consents

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Questions?

CIRCLES

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