

Susie Thomas



EDUCATION

Edd in Instructional Leadership 2019

Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama

Dissertation Title: "Teacher Perceptions of the Effects of Social and Emotional Learning Programs on Academic Achievement, School Climate, and Attendance"

Committee: Dr. Patricia Hodge (chair), Dr. Les Ennis, Dr. Peggy Connell

MA in Education – Special Education, Visual Impairments 2007

University of Alabama, Birmingham, Alabama

BA in Education – Biology and English 1996

Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville, Alabama

CERTIFICATIONS

Braille Transcriber 2007

National Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards 2010

Exceptional Needs Specialist/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood – Visual Impairments

Orientation and Mobility Specialist 2015

Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals

EXPERIENCE

The Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind Outreach 2018-present

Lead Outreach Provider

- Collaborate with public school, private school, and homeschool personnel to provide functional vision assessments, learning media assessments, and orientation and mobility assessments for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborate with public schools, private schools, and homeschool personnel to provide recommendations of accommodations, modifications, and expanded core curriculum goals for students who are visually impaired
- Instruct teachers on researched based practices for educating students with visual impairments

- Collaborate with teachers and administrators to accommodate the state curriculum for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborate with teachers and administrators to incorporate the Expanded Core Curriculum for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborate with parents to help them understand how they can help their child with a visual impairment

Trussville City Schools

2009-2018

District Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist

- Collaborated with personnel to provide functional vision assessments, learning media assessments, and orientation and mobility assessments for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborated with personnel to provide recommendations of accommodations, modifications, and expanded core curriculum goals for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborated with teachers and administrators to accommodate the state curriculum for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborated with teachers and administrators to incorporate the Expanded Core Curriculum for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborated with parents to help them understand how they can help their child with a visual impairment
- Supervised paraprofessionals who assisted students who are visually impaired in the general classroom
- Supervised and instructed paraprofessional who produced student work in braille
- Instructed students in the use of technology for the visually impaired
- Instructed students in the use of literary and Nemeth braille
- Instructed teachers on researched based practices for educating students with visual impairments
- Instructed students in proper orientation and mobility techniques for independent travel

Shelby County Schools

2009-2011

District Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist

- Collaborated with personnel to provide functional vision assessments, learning media assessments, orientation and mobility assessments for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborated with personnel to provide recommendations of accommodations, modifications, and expanded core curriculum goals for students who are visually impaired

- Collaborated with teachers and administrators to accommodate the state curriculum for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborated with teachers and administrators to incorporate the Expanded Core Curriculum for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborated with parents to help them understand how they can help their child with a visual impairment
- Supervised paraprofessionals who assisted students who are visually impaired in the general classroom
- Instructed students in the use of technology for the visually impaired
- Instructed students in the use of literary and Nemeth braille
- Instructed teachers on researched based practices for educating students with visual impairments
- Instructed students in proper orientation and mobility techniques for independent travel

The University of Alabama at Birmingham Outreach – Visual Impairments 2008-2009

Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments

- Collaborated with public school personnel to provide functional vision assessments and learning media assessments for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborated with public schools, private schools, and homeschool personnel to provide recommendations of accommodations, modifications, and expanded core curriculum goals for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborated with teachers and administrators to accommodate the state curriculum for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborated with teachers and administrators to incorporate the Expanded Core Curriculum for students who are visually impaired
- Collaborated with parents to help them understand how they can help their child with a visual impairment
- Instructed students in the use of technology for the visually impaired
- Instructed students in the use of literary and Nemeth braille
- Instructed teachers on researched based practices for educating students with visual impairments

Alabama Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

2010-present

Contract Service Provider

- Instructed consumers in the use of technology for the visually impaired
- Instructed consumers in the use of literary and Nemeth braille
- Instructed consumers in proper orientation and mobility techniques for independent travel

The Alabama School for the Blind

2005-2008

Secondary Science Teacher

- Taught Biology, Chemistry, and Environmental Science to students who are blind or visually impaired
- Supervised paraprofessionals who assisted students who are visually impaired in the general classroom

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Doctoral Researcher

2017-2019

Department of Education, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama

- Conducted primary source research at numerous archives, examining publication history through multiple sources
- Examined different social and emotional learning programs to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the programs

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“The Role of the TVI”, Alabama State Department of Education MEGA Conference, speaker, Mobile, Alabama 2017

“Let’s Share”, The Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind SOAR Conference, speaker, Talladega, Alabama 2018

“The Necessity of Pre-braille Skills”, Early Intervention Conference, speaker, Birmingham, Alabama 2018

“AIDB Outreach”, Alabama Council of Administrators of Special Education, speaker, Birmingham, Alabama, 2019

WORKSHOPS/CONFERENCES COORIDATED

- “Emerging Technology for the Visually Impaired and Blind”, coordinator, Trussville, Alabama, 2015
- “Newly Released Technology and Innovative Techniques for Working with the Visually Impaired and Blind”, coordinator, Trussville, Alabama, 2016
- “Let’s Learn Together”, coordinator, Talladega, Alabama, 2016
- “Functional Vision Assessments” and “Does Your Student Qualify for a Guide Dog?”, coordinator, Trussville, Alabama, 2017
- “State of the Art Technology for the Visually Impaired and Blind”, coordinator, Alabaster, Alabama, 2018

- “SOAR 3 Conference”, co-coordinator, The Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, Talladega, Alabama, 2018
- “Technology for the Blind and Visually Impaired, coordinator, Talladega, Alabama, 2019
- “SOAR 4 Conference”, co-coordinator, The Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, Talladega, Alabama, 2019 (upcoming)

AWARDS

- Virginia M. Sowell Student of the Year Award, Council for Exceptional Children – DVIDB, 2008

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Alabama Guidelines and Standards for Educating Students with Visual Impairments, chairperson, 2015-present

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER-COMS)
- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC –DVIDB)

REFERENCES

Dr. Jane Cobia, Assistant Professor for the Department of Educational Leadership in the School of Education

Samford University, Birmingham, AL

jcobia@samford.edu

Dr. Peggy Connell, Assistant Professor of Education and Director of Assessment for the Department of Educational Leadership in the School of Education

Samford University, Birmingham, AL

(205) 913-6605, phconnel@samford.edu

Dr. Patricia Hodge, Adjunct Professor for the Department of Educational Leadership in the School of Education

Samford University, Birmingham, AL

205-577-5562, pvhodge@samford.edu

Dr. Lisa Reburn, Assistant Professor in the School of Education (retired)

University of Alabama at Birmingham, AL

(256) 335-1080, Lisareburn7@gmail.com

Dr. Maurice Persall,