

Minutes

State Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities

The Arkansas Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities met in the Conference Room at the Victory Building, Suite 445, on Tuesday, January 14, 2020.

Council Members Present:

Cindy Ball
Marcella Dalla Rosa
Dana Davis
Courtney Eubanks
Leslie Faulkner
Bill Glover
Dewey Graves
Patricia James
Shelby Knight
Christy Lamas - for Alan McClain
Lacey Monroe
Candia Nicholas
Sherry Rogers
Bruce Smith
Deb Swink
Robyn Williams
Sonja Wright-McMurray – for Dr. Angela Kremers

Special Education Staff Present:

Jeff Adams
Bonnie Boaz
Jerri Clark
Jody Fields
Tiah Frazier
Yvonne Greene
Lisa Johnson
Laura McCammon
Wendy Pascoe
Rick Porter
Tanya Powell
Tabitha Riendeau
Rhonda Saunders
Matt Sewell
Robin Stripling
Michelle Waldo

Guests Present: None

The meeting began at 9:22 a.m. with Ms. Deb Swink, Chairperson, calling the Council meeting to order. Ms. Swink welcomed the Advisory Council members; Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Special Education Unit (DESE-SEU) staff to the meeting. A motion was made and seconded for Ms. Shelby Knight to be nominated as co-chair and all voted in favor.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motions were made and seconded to approve the minutes from the July 16, 2019, and October 15, 2019, meetings. The minutes were approved by the council.

Presentation: Dr. Jody Fields, Special Education Data Manager, reviewed Arkansas' FFY 17 (2017-2018) Special Education Annual Performance Report (APR) submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs, U. S. Department of Education (OSEP).

Indicator 1: Graduation

Performance Indicator: Percent of youth with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular diploma within a four year period. If a student remains in school more than four years, that student is not counted as a graduate in the calculation. The target was 85.91%. The reported rate was 84.61% for 2017-2018. The target was not met.

Indicator 2: Dropout

Performance Indicator: Percent of youth with an IEP dropping out of high school. The target for 2017-2018 was 1.98% and the reported rate is 1.62%. The target was met.

Indicator 3: Assessment

Performance Indicator: Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments.

Indicator 3B: Assessment Participation

Performance Indicator: Participation rates for children with IEPs on the statewide assessment. The state must meet the target of 95% for reading and math. The reported rate for reading was 99.11% and the reported rate for math was 99.20%. The target was met.

Indicator 3C: Assessment Proficiency

Performance Indicator: Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level and alternate academic achievement standards. The Arkansas targets for Indicator 3C were based on analysis of trend data. The target for reading was 38.15%. The reported rate for reading was 10.50%. The target was 43.07% for math and the reported rate for math was 12.95%. The targets were not met.

Percent Proficient for Math and RLA

SFY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Math	10.42%	16.00%	17.01%	15.88%	13.13%
RLA	10.45%	13.41%	14.38%	11.15%	10.80%

The standard deviation for math is 2.69. Increasing one SD annually through 2027 established a target proficiency rate of 34.66% in 2027

The standard deviation for RLA is 1.75. Increasing one SD annually through 2027 established a target proficiency rate of 23.03% in 2027

Indicator 4: Discipline

Indicator 4A: Suspension/Expulsion

Performance Indicator: Percent of districts with a significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs

compared to children in general education. This calculation is based on data from the 2017-2018 school year. The target is 29.50% and the actual rate is 30.15%; 18 out of 59 districts had a significant discrepancy. The target was not met.

Indicator 4B: Suspension/Expulsion

Compliance Indicator: Percent of districts that have significant discrepancy by race or ethnicity in the rate of suspensions and expulsions.

The federal target is zero percent. The State identified four districts as having a significant discrepancy. After a review of their policies, procedures, and practices via the self-assessment, the State determined one district with discrepancies resulting from inappropriate policies, procedures, and practices. The target was not met.

Indicator 5: Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Performance Indicator: Percent of children ages six through twenty-one removed from regular class, served in public/private separate school, residential facility, homebound, or hospital placement not including corrections or private schools:

- A. Inside the regular class 80% or more of the day,
- B. Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day, or
- C. In separate schools, residential facilities or homebound/hospital placements.

Based on the December 2018 child count, the target for children inside the regular class 80% of the day or more is 63.77% and the actual rate was 54.32%. The target was not met. The target for children inside the regular class less than 40% of the day was 12.00% and the actual rate was 12.72%. The target was not met. The target for children in separate schools, residential facilities or homebound/hospital placements is 2.40% and the actual rate was 2.05 %. The target was met.

Indicator 6: Preschool Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Performance Indicator: Percent of preschool children ages three through five with IEPs attending:

- A. Regular early childhood program, receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program,
- B. Separate special education class, separate school, or residential facility.

The State did not meet the target of 35.94% for regular early childhood program with an actual rate of 29.04%. The State did meet the target of 26.65% for the percent of students receiving services in a separate school or residential facility with an actual rate of 23.74%.

Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes

Performance Indicator: Percent of preschool children aged three through five with IEPs who demonstrate improved:

- A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships),

- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy), and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Each outcome has two targets measuring the increased rate of growth when entering the program and then functioning within age expectations, when the child exits the program.

- A. Positive social-emotional skills
Entry: Target 91.56% - Actual rate 87.89%
Exit: Target 68.72% - Actual rate 57.92%
- B. Knowledge and skills
Entry: Target 92.38% - Actual rate 89.49%
Exit: Target 61.11% - Actual rate 45.15%
- C. Appropriate behaviors
Entry: Target 92.13% - Actual rate 90.63%
Exit: Target 78.00% - Actual rate 65.22%

The State did not meet the targets in these three categories.

Indicator 8: Parent Involvement

Performance Indicator: Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. These are based upon parent surveys which the district has given to the parents, with a response rate of 33.26%. The State did not meet the target of 94.84% for parents of preschool students; the actual rate was 93.83%. The State did not meet the target of 96.45% for parents of school age students; the actual rate was 95.82%.

Indicator 9: Disproportionate Representation

Compliance Indicator: Percent of districts with disproportionality due to inappropriate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification.

No districts were identified as having disproportionate representation that was a result of inappropriate identification.

The State did meet the target in this category.

Indicator 10: Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories

Compliance Indicator: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.

No districts were determined to have disproportionality in racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that was a result of inappropriate identification.

The State did meet the target in this category.

Indicator 11: Child Find - Evaluation Timelines

Compliance Indicator: Percent of children who were evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation or, if the State establishes a timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted, within that timeframe. The target percentage for 2018-2019 was 100%. The State rate was 99.75%. The target was not met.

Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition

Compliance Indicator: Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age three, who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthday. As a compliance indicator, the target is 100%. The actual rate was 95.24%. The target was not met.

Indicator 13: Secondary Transition

Compliance Indicator: Percent of youth aged sixteen and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals updated annually and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition service needs. This is a compliance indicator, so the target is 100%. The State rate was 80.15%. The target was not met.

Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes

Performance Indicator: Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:

- A. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school,
- B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school,
- C. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.

A. Percent of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school, and enrolled in postsecondary school within one year of leaving high school. The target for students enrolled in higher education within one year is 15.80% and the actual rate was 11.78%. The target was not met.

B. Percent of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school, and who have been enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school. The target for students enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year was 51.49% and the actual rate was 25.93%. The target was not met.

C. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school. The target for students enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed or in some other employment was 63.26% and the actual rate was 51.35%. The target was not met.

Indicator 15: Resolution Sessions

Performance Indicator: Percent of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements. The target for resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session agreements was 66.76% and the actual rate 78.26%. The target was met.

Indicator 16: Mediation

Performance Indicator: Percent of mediations that resulted in mediation agreements. The target of 83.40% was met with an actual rate of 100%. The target was met.

Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan – State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR): Dr. Jeff Adams

Performance Indicator: Percent of students with disabilities (SWD) in grades 3- 5, from the targeted schools, whose value-added score (VAS) in reading is categorized as moderate or high for the same subject and grade level in the state. The target of 62.53% was not met with an actual rate of 59.45%.

Dr. Adams presented a brief review of the two broad strategies for the Arkansas State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Strategy one of the SSIP focuses on creating a system of support that is aligned with other Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Units and is differentiated based on LEA's needs as evidenced by data. Dr. Adams discussed ongoing cross-unit efforts to leverage agency resources to support schools identified for Additional Targeted Support (ATS) due to chronic underperformance for the subpopulation of students with disabilities. Purposeful alignment activities have occurred through monthly DESE Strategic Performance Management (SPM) meetings, DESE Division of Learning Services meetings, and with eleven grant groups comprising the Arkansas Collaborative Consultants (ACC).

Presentation: Shelby Knight, Executive Director of The Center for Exceptional Families, shared with the Advisory Council an informative overview of all The Center for Exceptional Families. The state's parent center provides training and guidance to parents and professionals throughout the state of Arkansas. Informing parents of their rights and giving them the tools they need to learn to advocate on their own.

Initially, The Center for Exceptional Families was funded in 1975 through the IDEA law. Every state and territory has a Parent Training and Information Center (PTI). The role of a PTI is to inform and train parents of children with disabilities to be effective advocates for their children.

Their mission is to improve educational opportunities for students with disabilities, including students transitioning to adult life beyond high school. Their Vision Statement is to work in collaboration with families and their local school districts to promote an innovative approach to special education services for individuals with disabilities.

Presentation: Robin Stripling, Curriculum & Assessment Coordinator for the DESE-SEU. With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states are required to administer the alternate assessment to no more than 1% of their students. Arkansas has been over this percentage for the past three years. In an effort to meet ESSA requirements, the SEU proposed adding more specific criteria to the current Arkansas Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines. Robin Stripling and Tabitha Riendeau shared information gathered from other states as well as data obtained during the spring's onsite monitoring visits. The advisory council's input was requested. The advisory council suggested that the state move forward in the review and revision of the guidelines.

Section Reports:

Section Reports are available to view on the Special Education website.

Future Agenda Item Suggestions:

- Sherry Rogers- Promoting educational stability for students in foster care
- Dewey Graves- Roy Johnson/motivational speaker and author of "Put Some Gratitude in Your Attitude!"
- Dana Davis- McKinney-Vento education for homeless children and youth
- Matt Sewell- Annual budget application

Next Steps and Final Remarks:

The next Council meeting is scheduled for July 14, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was adjourned at 2:29 p.m.