

State Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities Minutes

The Arkansas Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities met online via Zoom, on Tuesday, April 20, 2021.

Council Members Present:

Julie Callison
Katie Cravens
Marcella Dalla Rosa
Tracy Dowell
Courtney Eubanks
Patricia James
Shelby Knight
Lacey Monroe
Candia Nicholas
Bruce Smith
Deb Swink
Viviana Villegas
Robyn Williams
Sonja Wright-McMurray

Special Education Staff Present:

Jeff Adams
Crystal Bethea
Bonnie Boaz
Jody Fields
Yvonne Greene
Lisa Johnson
Danita Pitts
Rick Porter
Rhonda Saunders
Matt Sewell
Robin Stripling
Michelle Waldo
Crenisha Wright

The meeting began at 10:02 a.m. with Ms. Deb Swink, Chairperson, calling the Council meeting to order. Ms. Swink welcomed the Advisory Council members and Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Special Education (DESE-OSE) staff to the meeting.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

A motion was made and then seconded to approve the minutes from the January 19, 2021, meeting. The minutes were approved by the council.

Presentation: Dr. Jody Fields, Special Education Data Manager, presented on the new Special Education Annual Performance Report (APR) package and the changes to the performance indicators. The data source for Indicator 1: Graduation and Indicator 2: Drop Out have changed and will no longer be tied to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act requirements. Instead the data will come from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Section 618 Exiting data which districts submit to the State each June from eSchool.

One of the largest changes is Indicator 3: Assessment. Previously there were four targets, but under the new package there are 24 targets. States will be reporting on grades 4, 8, and high school assessment participation and performance for both literacy and math. Indicator 3A is participation in both the regular and alternate assessments; Indicator 3B is proficiency on the regular assessment; 3C is proficiency on the alternate assessment and 3D is the proficiency gap difference between all students who took the regular assessment and students with disabilities (SWD) who took the regular assessment.

There were no changes to Indicator 4. Indicator 5: School Age (SA) Educational Environment had no changes for Arkansas for we have already reported the data which includes 5 year old Kindergarten students with SA. Indicator 6: Early Childhood (EC) Educational Environment had no changes for Arkansas for we have already reported the early childhood data with 5 year old Kindergarten students excluded. There were no changes to Indicator 7: EC Outcomes; Indicator

8: Family Outcomes; Indicators 9-13 (which are compliance) or Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes. Arkansas already implemented the required representativeness now written into the APR Measurement Table for Indicator 8 and 14. There are no changes to Indicators 15-16 which address dispute resolution.

And while there is no change to Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) for reporting purposes, the activities and the number of schools involved will be expanded.

Mr. Jeff Adams, State Systemic Plan Coordinator for Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Special Education - Dr. Adams presented on the changes to the theory of action for Indicator 17, the State Systemic Improvement Plan. The SSIP reflects a system of supports that includes emphases on High Reliability Schools, Professional Learning Communities at Work, Response to Intervention (RTI), Inclusive Principal Leadership, High-Leverage Practices for Inclusive Classrooms and the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM). Alignment of these initiatives with ongoing work with DESE-OSE and the Arkansas Collaborative Consultants will focus on increasing the coherence of these supports to improve academic and behavioral outcomes for students. Future stakeholder meetings focused on the SSIP will be held during the Summer of 2021.

Mr. Matt Sewell, Director for Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Special Education, introduced the newest Advisory Council members. Tracy Dowell is replacing Bill Glover for Adult Corrections. Katie Cravens is replacing Shelby Knight for The Center for Exceptional Families. Viviana Villegas is our new teacher/parent.

An election was held for officers for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. Courtney Eubanks was nominated and voted in as Chairperson. Bruce Smith was nominated and voted in as Vice Chairperson.

Section Reports:

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

Future Agenda Item Suggestions:

- None

Next Steps and Final Remarks:

The next Council meeting is scheduled for July 20, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m.