

Minutes

State Advisory Council for the
Education of Children with Disabilities

The Arkansas Advisory Council for the Education of Individuals with Disabilities met in the Conference Room at the Victory Building, Suite 445, on Thursday, January 19, 2017.

Council Members Present:

Bobby Acklin
Sarah Allen
Cindy Ball
Maryanne Caldwell – for Alan McClain
Dana Davis
Courtney Eubanks
Leslie Faulkner
Angeletta Giles
Bill Glover
Dewey Graves
Shelby Knight
Julie Mayberry
Candia Nicholas
Sherry Rogers
James (Jim) Short
Deborah Swink
Eric Treat
Barry Vuletich

Special Education Staff Present:

Linda Barnes
Bonnie Boaz
Becky Cezar
Jody Fields
Christina Foley
Jennifer Gonzales
Lisa Haley
Jared Hogue
Veronica Milton – for Jeanie Donaldson
Rhonda Saunders
Robin Stripling
Yvonne Greene

The meeting began at 10:12 a.m. with Courtney Eubanks, Chair, calling the Council meeting to order and welcoming the Advisory Council members, Arkansas Department of Education, Special Education Unit (ADE-SEU) staff and the guest of the meeting. Ms. Becky Cezar, Administrator for Monitoring and Program Effectiveness, introduced Ms. Allison Prewitt and Ms. Kiara James as new ADE-SEU staff members. Ms. Christina Foley, Administrator for Funding and Finance, introduced Ms. Kim Vogt as a new ADE-SEU staff member. Ms. Jennifer Gonzales, Coordinator of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), introduced two new staff members - Ms. Serena Davis, SPDG Administrative Assistant and Ms. Jennifer Walkup, Education Consultant for Children and Youth with Sensory Impairments, (CAYSI) project.

The council was informed that Marylene Tate will no longer be attending the Council meetings. A motion was made and seconded for Deborah Swink to fill the Co-Chair position until the next Council election in July. The October 27, 2016, minutes were reviewed and approved.

Presentation: Dr. Jody Fields, Special Education Data Manager, reviewed Arkansas' 2015-2016 Special Education Annual Performance Report (APR) submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs, U. S. Department of Education (OSEP). GRADS360 is the platform used for states to submit the APR electronically each year.

There are 17 indicators in the APR and 16 were presented.

Indicator 1: Graduation

Performance Indicator: Percent of youth with IEP's graduating from high school with a regular diploma within a four year period.. If a student remains in school more than four years, they are not counted as a graduate in the calculation. The reported rate was 81.89% for 2015-2016. The target was not met.

Indicator 2: Dropout

Performance Indicator: Percent of youth with an IEP dropping out of high school. The target for 2015-2016 was 2.54% and the reported rate is 1.94%. The target was met.

Indicator 3: Assessments - Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments.

Indicator 3A: Annual Measureable Objective.

This indicator is no longer applicable.

Indicator 3B: Assessment

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 98.70% and the reported rate for math was 98.91%. The target was met.

Indicator 3C: Assessment

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 was 32%. The reported rate for reading was 13.41%. The reported rate for math was 16%. The target was not met.

Indicator 4: Discipline

Indicator 4A: Suspension/Expulsion

Performance Indicator: Percent of districts that have 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 general education. This calculation is based on data from the 2014-2015 school year. The target is 5.11% and the actual rate is 7%; 18 districts out of 257 districts did not meet the target. 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 twenty-one districts as having a significant discrepancy. After a review of their policies, procedures, and practices via the self-assessment, the State did not determine any district's discrepancies were based on inappropriate policies, procedures, and practices in terms of compliance. The target was 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 2015 child count, the target for children inside the regular class 80% of the day or more is 57.89% and the actual rate was 52.68%. The target was not met. The target for children inside the regular class less than 40% of the day was 13.03% and the actual data was 13.55%. The target was not met. The target for children in separate schools, residential facilities or homebound/hospital placements is 2.49% and the actual rate was 2.35%. 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 including various types of therapy.

Arkansas is working with technical assistance centers specifically addressing early childhood. The State did not meet the target of 32.97% for regular early childhood program with the actual rate of 25.76%. The State did not meet the target of 30.30% for the number of students receiving services in a separate school or residential facility with the actual rate of 31.57%.

Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes

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

- A. Positive social-emotional skills,

- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors.

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 90.12% - Actual rate 84.99%
Exit: Target 67.28% - Actual rate 59.76%
- B. Knowledge and skills
Entry: Target 90.64% - Actual rate 86.39%
Exit: Target 57.19% - Actual rate 49.22%
- C. Appropriate behaviors
Entry: Target 90.21% - Actual rate 85.73%
Exit: Target 73.99% - Actual rate 69.62%

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. The State did not meet the target of 91.90% for parents of early childhood students; the actual rate was 91.18%. The State did not meet the target of 95.01% for parents of school age students; the actual rate was 93.45%.

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.

Indicator 10: Disproportionate Representation

Compliance Indicator: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification. Three districts were identified and were required to do a self-assessment which was reviewed by the ADE-SEU to determine if the identification for the students was inappropriate. None of these three districts were determined to have disproportionality in racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that was a result of inappropriate identification.

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 2015-2016 was 100%. The State rate was 99.59%. The target was not met.

Indicator 12: Preschool Transition

Compliance Indicator: Percent of children referred by Part C, birth to three years old found eligible and have an IEP developed by their third birthday and transitioning out of birth to three years old to Part B. As a compliance indicator, the target is 100%. The actual rate was 98.16% with some indication of slippage. 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 that are annually updated 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 services' needs. This is a compliance indicator, so the target is 100%. The State rate was 96.41%. The target was not met.

Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes

Performance Indicator: Percent of youth who had IEPs; are no longer in secondary school, and who have been employed, enrolled in postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school. The target for students enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year was 60.92% and the actual rate was 51.26%. The target was not met.

Indicator 15: Resolution Sessions

Performance Indicator: Percent of hearing requests that were resolved through resolution agreements. The target for resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session was 60.88% and the actual rate was 1 of 37 or 2.70%. The target was not met.

Indicator 16: Mediation

Performance Indicator: Percent of mediations that resulted in mediation agreements. In school year 2015-2016 the target of 77.52% was met.

Dr. Fields also presented on the newly revised Disproportionality Regulations:

New regulations on disproportionality were released on December 20, 2016. July 1, 2018 is the effective date for the new regulations. These regulations are tied to the coordinated early intervening services (CEIS) requirements of IDEA.

Major Shifts:

- Allow CEIS to be used for nondisabled students
- Allow CEIS for children ages 3-21
- Require a risk ratio
- Specify that discipline is calculated based on all removals, including in-school suspension

Presentation: Ms. Lisa Haley - Diploma Options

The State is considering developing an alternate diploma for Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The Student Engagement committee will discuss the diploma options.

Sub-Committee Work

The Council decided to collapse the 3 sub-committees into 2 sub-committees; Family Engagement and Student Engagement. The committees will report back to the Council on the topics they discuss.

Student Engagement: Bill Glover, Kathleen Atkins, James Short, Dewey Graves, Eric Treat, Candia Nichols, Bobby Acklin, Sarah Allen, Sherry Rogers, Carl Daughtery, Deb Swink, Lisa Haley

Family Engagement: Barry Vuletich, Angeletta Giles, Mary Broadaway, Julie Mayberry, Shelby Knight, Dana Davis, Cindy Ball, Leslie Faulkner, Courtney Eubanks, Lisa Haley

Student Engagement Committee will discuss:

- Diploma Options
- Graduation Rates
- Secondary Transition
- Least Restrictive Environment (School Age)
- Early Childhood Outcomes

Family Engagement will discuss:

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Coordination of Services
- Parent Engagement
- Early Childhood Outcomes

Distribution of Funds

Lisa Haley shared information with the Council regarding the Special Education Unit's budget. She requested input from the Council regarding needs to be considered for funding. Cindy Ball spoke to the Council about the need for individuals with deaf-blind certification or interveners.

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

Next Steps and Final Remarks:

The next meeting is April 20, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.