

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, January 16, 2024.

Council Members Present:

Joseph Baxter
Dr. Marcella Dalla Rosa
Sydney Dennis
Tracey Dowell
Courtney Eubanks
DJ Graham
Jessica Hickman
Dr. Gregory Hodges
Dr. Suzanne Kucharczyk
Lacey Monroe
Darlene Owens
Robyn Williams
Sonja Wright-McMurray

Special Education Staff Present:

Dr. Jeff Adams
Crystal Bethea
Bonnie Boaz
Dr. Jody Fields
Yvonne Greene
Josh Hart
Becky McIver
Danita Pitts
Rick Porter
Rhonda Saunders
Robin Stripling
Michelle Waldo

Guest: Kyla Bishop

The meeting began at 9:00 a.m. with Courtney Eubanks, Co-chairperson, calling the Council meeting to order. Ms. Eubanks 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 by Dr. Marcella Dalla Rosa and seconded by Dr. Suzanne Kucharczyk to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2023, meeting. The minutes were approved by the council.

Presentation: Dr. Jody Fields, Special Education Data Manager, along with other OSE staff and consultants interjecting, presented the indicator results of the FFY 2022 Special Education Annual Performance Report (APR) against the targets laid out in the State Performance Plan (SPP) last year. The presentation took the approach of *A Student's Educational Timeline Through the SPP/APR Indicators*. Beginning with Indicator 12: Preschool Transition and Indicator 11: Child Find; then moving to Indicator 6: Preschool Educational Environments, Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes and Indicator 8: Family Involvement. As the student moved into kindergarten the focus shifted to Indicator 5: School Age Educational Environment; Indicator 9: Disproportionality, Indicator 10: Disproportionality by Disability and Indicator 4: Discipline. As our student reached grade 3, Indicator 3: Assessment and Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan were introduced. Now our student is in high school and Indicator 13: Secondary Transition, Indicator 1: Graduation; Indicator 2: Dropout; Indicator and Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes. Additionally, Indicator 15: Resolution Session and Indicator 16: Mediation were presented as Indicators which may or may not fit into the child's education matriculation.

Ms. Sonja Wright-McMurray, Assistant Director of Operations for Division of Career and Technical Education, discussed that the Arkansas Division of Career and Technical has partnered with Arkansas Transition Services and Rehabilitation Services to offer a week-long CTE summer camp to rising 9th graders with disabilities. This project was piloted last summer with participation from Bryant and Benton School Districts. Students were given an opportunity to explore four different career pathways (Medical Professions, Automotive, Welding, and Construction) delivered on the campus of Saline County Career Technical Center. Along with attending career development and self-determination classes, students toured Arkansas State University – Three Rivers and learned more about pursuing those specific careers after high school. The intent of the camps is to increase student participation in and completion of a CTE pathway, as well as improve post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. The pilot will be expanded to four other locations around the state this summer.

Council Membership:

Council Member Ms. Lacey Monroe nominated Ms. Shelby Knight, Executive Director of The Center for Exceptional Families to join the Council and Mr. DJ Graham seconded that nomination. All members were in favor.

Section Highlights:

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

Next Steps and Final Remarks:

The next Council meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was adjourned at 1:27 p.m.