

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, October 12, 2021.

Council Members Present:

Cindy Ball
Joseph Baxter
Katie Cravens
Tracy Dowell
Courtney Eubanks
Leslie Faulkner
Wayne Foster
Dewey Graves
Christy Lamas
Candia Nicholas
Sherry Rogers
Deb Swink
Viviana Villegas
Sonja Wright-McMurray

Special Education Staff Present:

Dr. Jeff Adams
Crystal Bethea
Dr. Jody Fields
Yvonne Greene
Josh Hart
Lisa Johnson
Danita Pitts
Rick Porter
Rhonda Saunders
Matt Sewell
Robin Stripling
Michelle Waldo

The meeting began at 10:02 a.m. with Ms. Courtney Eubanks, 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 and then seconded to approve the minutes from the July 20, 2021, meeting. The minutes were approved by the Council.

Presentation: Ms. Courtney Salas-Ford, Chief Legal Counsel for Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) – Legal Services -

Ms. Courtney Salas-Ford presented an overview of education acts passed in the most recent 93rd General Assembly, Legislative Session 2021. Updates included Acts 622, 551, 556, 89, 968, 678, 688, 264, 620, 648, 623, 689, 663, 684, 977, 964, 820, 513, 1084, 933, 657, 730, 1069, 958, 959, 1074, 633, 489, 544, 741, 322, 414, 251, 490, 611, 536, 375, 442, 606, 646, 912, 1050, 897, 1002, and 904.

Presentation: Dr. Jody Fields, Special Education Data Manager, presented information on Indicator 1: Graduation, Indicator 2: Dropout, and Indicator 3: Assessment.

Indicators 1 & 2 use the same data set and while the calculator works well at the state level it does cause concerns at the LEA level. Steps are being taken to curb the concerns when reporting the Local APRs to the public.

Indicator 3: Assessment has 24 new measures. States are reporting separate participation and performance measures and targets for Grades 4, 8 and HS on Math and Literacy. HS is comprised of grades 9 and 10.

There are four measurements per subject matter for the three grade groups.

Indicator 3A: Participation rate for children with IEPs.

Indicator 3B: Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level academic achievement standards.

Indicator 3C: Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against alternate academic achievement standards.

Indicator 3D: Gap in proficiency rates for children with IEPs and all students against grade level academic achievement standards.

This is the first time the gap is being reported.

For Indicator 3A: Participation, the decision was to keep the previous target which aligns with ESSA requirements.

Two different target setting methodologies were presented for consideration for Indicators 3B - 3D. Discussions were held with stakeholders and they had the opportunity to respond to a survey about their methodology preferences.

Mr. Jeff Adams, State Systemic Plan Coordinator for Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Special Education - Dr. Adams reviewed the SSIP Theory of Action and announced that there will be an upcoming stakeholder meeting to discuss the baseline and target setting for Indicator 17 (State Systemic Improvement Plan). Feedback from the SSIP Stakeholder meetings will be provided at the next Advisory Council Meeting.

Section Reports:

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

Next Steps and Final Remarks:

The next Council meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.