

## **Arkansas Department of Education - Special Education Unit Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities Curriculum and Assessment, April 2019**

### **Alternate Assessment**

In November 2018 Arkansas submitted a request for an extension on its 1% Alternate Assessment Waiver to the US Department of Education. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 stated that any state having more than 1% of its tested population participating in an alternate assessment must request a waiver from the US Department of Education. In 2017, 1.37% of Arkansas students participated in the alternate assessment for literacy and 1.39% participated in the alternate assessment for math. In 2018, 1.21% of Arkansas students participated in the alternate assessment for literacy and 1.20% participated in the alternate assessment for math. While the percentage of Arkansas students participating in alternate assessment declined, we are still required to submit a waiver extension request. That waiver extension request was submitted to the US Department of Education on December 7, 2018. The waiver extension approval was received on March 4, 2019. The ADE-SEU will continue providing technical assistance to districts as they work to ensure that assessment decisions are appropriately made.

### **Alternate Pathway to Graduation**

At its February 2019 meeting, the State Board of Education approved the Arkansas Alternate Pathway to Graduation for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternate achievement standards are in place for literacy, math, and science. Arkansas created alternate achievement standards for Civics, Economics, US History, World History, Art, and Health and Safety which are currently being piloted. The ADE-SEU is working collaboratively with Virtual Arkansas to develop an online Fine Arts course for this group of students. Tabitha Riendeau and Robin Stripling have joined a Community of Practice hosted by the National Center on Educational Outcomes to guide this work. Training is being planned for Summer 2019 to inform Arkansas educators of this new pathway. Information pertaining to the pathway may be found at [tinyurl.com/ArAltPathway](http://tinyurl.com/ArAltPathway).

### **English Learners with Disabilities**

The ADE and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) have developed a collaborative project designed to provide supports for teachers of English learners with disabilities. A guidance document is being developed and training is being planned for Summer 2019.

### **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Arkansas Dyslexia Law**

Robin Stripling provided training at multiple educational cooperatives in January and March to help general education teachers and special educators understand how the Arkansas Dyslexia Law and IDEA work together for students with disabilities.