

**Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Office of Special Education  
Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities  
Curriculum and Assessment, January 2022**

**Office of Special Education (OSE) Updates for Special Education Directors**

Robin Stripling has recently shared information at the Arkansas Association of Special Education Administrators (AASEA) Board meeting and at two AASEA Area meetings regarding IDEA requirements for the Continuum of Alternative Placements:

*Section 300.115*

*300.115 Continuum of alternative placements.*

*(a) Each public agency must ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services.*

*(b) The continuum required in paragraph (a) of this section must—*

*(1) Include the alternative placements listed in the definition of special education under §300.39 (instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions); and*

*(2) Make provision for supplementary services (such as resource room or itinerant instruction) to be provided in conjunction with regular class placement.*

Additionally, information was shared pertaining to the Every Student Succeeds Act's graduation requirements and that changes will be made in the future regarding the awarding of credit for special education courses.

**Arkansas School Counselor Call**

Robin Stripling recently shared information with the state's school counselors regarding upcoming changes. The following statement was included in the December 2021 School Counselor Newsletter:

*In order to be fully compliant with ESSA, the state will, in the future, cease allowing core courses required for graduation to be taught by persons who are not licensed in the content area. The date for this change has yet to be determined. Districts should plan for this by providing core instruction to the majority of students with IEPs, especially their youngest students with IEPs, in the general education setting with special education provided as a supplementary service in conjunction with regular class placement as outlined in IDEA Section 300.115.*

**Alternate English Language Proficiency Exam Development**

Arkansas continues to work with a collaborative of states to develop an alternate English language proficiency assessment for students who are English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Dr. Laura Sullivan and Robin Stripling from the DESE-OSE and Dr. Alan Lytle from the DESE Office of Assessment are the state members on this team that meets weekly. A Community of Practice (CoP) has also been formed to move Arkansas ahead as this new assessment is implemented. The CoP includes Arkansas educators and members of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. The assessment will be piloted with a small group of Arkansas students in Spring 2022. The assessment will be operational for the 2022-23 school year.