

Arkansas Special Education State Advisory Council Report

Curriculum and Assessment, October 2018

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)

Arkansas has transitioned to the DLM alternate assessment for the 2018-19 school year. DLM provided training to Arkansas teachers during the summer of 2018. DLM has created alternate achievement standards, Essential Elements, for math, English language, arts, and science. DLM also has many instructional supports available to teachers. Wendy Pascoe and Robin Stripling created a document to help teachers locate and utilize those supports. The document may be accessed at tinyurl.com/ArkansasDLM.

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Assessment Updates

The CCSSO State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) met in Boston on October 16 and 17. In conjunction with the SCASS meeting, the National Center on Education Outcomes (NCEO) hosted a convening on October 18 and 19 for states to receive federal guidance pertaining to the ESSA requirement that states assess no more than 1% of their tested populations on alternate assessments. Matt Sewell, Wendy Pascoe, and Robin Stripling, as well as other ADE staff, attended this convening.

Alternate Assessment

Arkansas is required to submit to the US Department of Education a request for an extension on its 1% Alternate Assessment Waiver. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 stated that any state that has 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 will be required to submit a waiver extension request. The information obtained in the CCSSO/NCEO convening is guiding this work.

Alternate Pathway to Graduation

Arkansas is moving forward in its efforts to put an alternate pathway to graduation in place for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The 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 Wellness 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. Wendy Pascoe and Robin Stripling have joined a Community of Practice hosted by the (NCEO) to guide this work.

English Learners with Disabilities

A task force has been formed to develop policy and guidance documents for educators pertaining to English Learners with disabilities. A task force of ADE SEU staff, ADE English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) staff, special education teachers, and ESOL educators will meet next week to begin this work.