

**Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Office of Special Education
Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities
Curriculum and Assessment, October 2021**

RISE and Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

The Office of Special Education has partnered with Sandy Shepard and others from DESE Reading Initiative for Student Excellence (RISE) team to investigate methods for using the Science of Reading with students who have significant disabilities. This group of students includes students with deafblindness, multiple disabilities, and some students with intellectual disabilities. The collaborative team will develop informational and instructional resources for teachers

Novice Special Education Teachers

The Curriculum and Assessment team recently provided a training at the Northwest Arkansas Educational Service Cooperative for novice special education teachers. The training included IDEA regulations, special education service delivery, inclusive practices, and exploring DESE resources.

Inclusive Practices

Inclusive Practices professional learning opportunities have been provided at eighteen in-person locations, plus multiple virtual sessions. Well over a thousand individuals have attended. Additional training days will be provided later this fall and winter. School administrators, including superintendents and principals, have been invited so that a common understanding can be developed within schools. It is anticipated that a new iteration of the training will be available in Spring 2022.

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

Robin Stripling provided two presentations for the Arkansas River Educational Cooperative in September. One presentation was for building and district administrators, and the other was for dyslexia interventionists. The presentations focused on the ways IDEA and the Arkansas Dyslexia Law should work together.

Alternate English Language Proficiency Exam Development

Arkansas continues to work with a collaborative of states working 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.