

**Division of Elementary and Secondary Education – Office of Special Education  
Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities  
Early Childhood, October 2023**

**Current Activities for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)/619 Coordinator:**

- **State Leadership Team for Early Childhood Inclusion:** The State Leadership Team (SLT) for Early Childhood Inclusion is working to accomplish action items related to the previous indicator analysis work. The SLT chose to prioritize three Indicators of Quality Inclusion the team felt were crucial to address immediately. Sub-committees meet monthly to address Indicator Three increasing Family Engagement, Indicator Nine to increasing access to inclusion Professional Learning opportunities, and Indicator Twelve increasing Public Awareness around inclusion.
- **Early Childhood L.E.A.R.N.S. Transition Activities:** The Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator meets at least weekly to help align activities to support the transition of early childhood special education as outlined in L.E.A.R.N.S.
- **National Association of State Directors of Special Education Part B/619 Affinity Group:** The Arkansas Part B/619 Coordinator serves as co-chair for the affinity group until October 2023. In October, the Arkansas 619 Coordinator will ascend to chair of Part B, Section 619 Affinity Group.
- **First Connections/Part C Transition to the Office of Special Education:** The Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator is collaborating with Department of Education and Department of Human Services staff to facilitate the transition of First Connections/Part C to the Office of Special Education. Completion target for the full transfer is July 1, 2024.

**Current Early Childhood Special Education Technical Assistance and Professional Development:**

- **Building Arkansas Strong through Inclusive Classrooms (BASIC) Training and Coaching Project for Early Childhood:** The early childhood special education program has partnered with the University of Denver's Positive Early Learning Experiences (PELE) Center to provide intense professional learning and coaching to create model classrooms for early childhood inclusion in the state. We are working this year to create a landing site for the inclusive training modules. Site visits and monthly planning sessions each month for each program.
- **National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) Intensive Technical Assistance Project:** The Early Childhood Special Education program was chosen by the OSEP funded NCPMI to provide three years of intensive support to create a Preschool Pyramid Model Support Network in Arkansas. The system is to provide a consistent platform of evidence-based strategies, resources, and support for state staff to aid children with peer interactions and behavior support for birth to five. The Leadership Team has been established, Programs and Program Implementation Coaches have been chosen and training has begun.

## Current Statewide Collaboration Projects:

- **ABICE** (Arkansas Bilingual Interpreter Credential in Education) Provides professional credential training and support in Arkansas for bilingual adults acting as interpreters in educational settings from birth through twelfth grade.
- **AECCIG** (Arkansas Early Childhood Collaborative Impact Group: formerly Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (AECCS) Medical Home Workgroup) Work on drafting recommendations and providing feedback for the plan and standards for Better Beginnings.
- **Arkansas None for Nine Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder Taskforce** Brings state-wide attention to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).
- **BehaviorHelp** A workgroup created to support a single point-of-entry support system for teachers struggling to manage challenging behaviors in childcare center classrooms.
- **Excel by Eight (E8)** Formerly known as the Pritzker Grant, this is a planning grant and initiative to allow a team to develop a well-informed plan for infant and toddler support within the broader realm of developing successful children overall.
- **Head Start School Readiness Team** The early childhood special education programs attend meetings to help analyze results and plan for quality transitions for Head Start students who will be attending kindergarten. The team assists the state Head Start office in planning and holding the annual Kindergarten Readiness Summit, a collaborative team of cross-agency personnel who work together to hold transition meetings for Head Start children.
- **Learn the Signs, Act Early Network!** A grant designed to bolster early identification of developmental delays and disabilities, including through use of the Learn the Signs. Act Early (LTSAE) parent developmental monitoring tool, and to advance the promotion of existing resources that enhance resiliency among families with young children during COVID-19 response efforts.
- **TECI (Teaming for Early Childhood Inclusion) Project** Partners for Inclusive Communities facilitates this project with the goal building capacity within the early childhood education network for successful inclusion of children with disabilities.