

ARKANSAS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION UNIT



PART B
INDICATOR 17: STATE
SYSTEMIC IMPROVEMENT
PLAN PHASE II
FFY 2014-15

Submitted April 1, 2016

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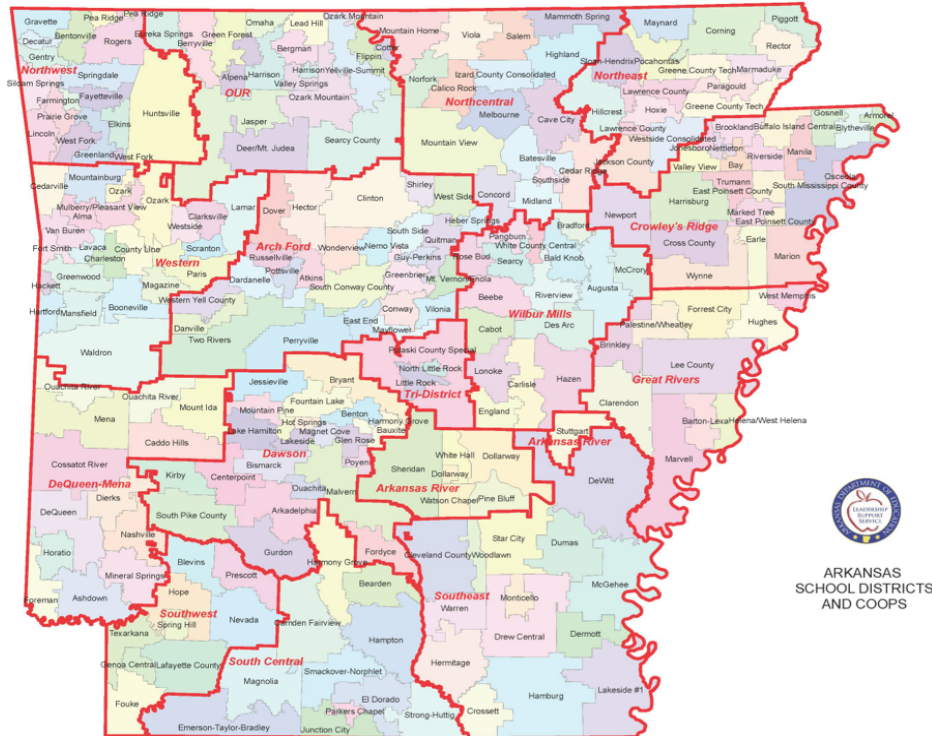
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Introduction to Arkansas's Phase II

An acronym identification chart can be found in Appendix II.

On October 1, 2015, there were 476,049 students in Arkansas public schools grades K-12 (including charter schools). According to the December 1, 2015 special education child count for grades K-12, 57,573 students were eligible for special education services (12.09% of the K-12 student population). Students in K-12 education are served by 259 local education agencies (LEAs) including charter schools. Additionally, there are 15 regionally based Education Service Cooperatives (ESCs) (see Exhibit I-17.1) that support LEAs in (1) meeting or exceeding State Standards and equalizing educational opportunities; (2) more effectively using educational resources through cooperation among school districts; and (3) promoting coordination between school districts and the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE).

Exhibit I-17.1: Arkansas School Districts and Educational Service Cooperatives



A Commissioner of Education leads the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) with support from a Deputy Commissioner. Five main divisions within the ADE structure the work: Fiscal and Administrative Services, Human Resources, Research and Technology, Public School Accountability, and Learning Services. The ADE-Special Education Unit (ADE-SEU) is under the Division of Learning Services.

The ADE State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) will focus on increasing the literacy achievement of students with disabilities (SWD) in third through fifth grade. Phase I of the SSIP focused on an extensive data and infrastructure analyses in collaboration with

multiple internal and external stakeholders in order to identify the focus on literacy. Phase II used the Phase I analyses to guide the development of implementation and evaluation plans.

In Phase II, the ADE created a plan to implement two strategies that will improve the infrastructure of the ADE and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in order to increase the State-identified Measurable Result (SIMR) - *The percent of student with disabilities in grades 3- 5 who made gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintained a proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment.*

The two comprehensive improvement strategies ADE has developed through its SSIP are (a) create a system of professional development and technical assistance that is aligned with other ADE Units and is differentiated based on LEAs needs as evidenced by data, and (b) in collaboration with other ADE Units, Restructure Arkansas' Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model using evidence based personnel development strategies to implement a multi-tiered system of supports for behavior and academics, with a focus on literacy.

The ADE understands that in order to reach the targets set forth in the SIMR, RTI and the coordinated PD and TA system must be implemented with fidelity in a sustainable manner. Successful implementation requires a systems approach and the intentional incorporation of implementation science frameworks into the state implementation plan.

Additionally, in developing Phase II of the SSIP it became evident that some components of Phase I needed to be revised. Summaries of the revisions are below and a complete revision write-up can be found in Appendix I.

- Phase I Component 3(e) had to be revised because the number of targeted schools was reduced from all 30 Little Rock School District elementary schools to six elementary schools that are being supported by the SPDG.
- Phase I Component 4(a) had to be revised since the ADE shifted from six improvement strategies to two comprehensive improvement strategies. After beginning Phase II, ADE realized four of the six strategies were actually outcomes of a well-designed implementation plan. The deleted strategies became important sub components for the two comprehensive improvement strategies.

**Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan
Component – Baseline and Targets**

Baseline Data

FFY	2013	2014
Data	45.65%	44.00%

FFY 2015 – FFY 2018 Targets

FFY	2015	2016	2017	2018
Target	45.60	47.20%	48.80%	50.40%

Justification for Baseline and Target Changes

Arkansas is resetting its baseline and targets to reflect the schools being directly served as part of the Statewide Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). The FFY 2013 baseline was set using all 30 elementary (K-5) schools in the Little Rock School District (LRS); however, the revised baseline and targets focus on six elementary schools. These six elementary schools were selected to receive direct services through the SPDG. Arkansas’s SSIP is aligned with the SPDG and the SPDG serves as the “boots on the ground” for implementing the selected evidence-based practice, Response-to-Intervention.

Targets have been reset to reflect the baseline of 44.00% for the six elementary schools; however, the annual rate of change selected previously in establishing targets was not adjusted. It remains 1.6 percentage point increase, annually.

Further, Arkansas changed its assessment in FFY 2014 (PARCC and NCSC) and has changed it again in FFY 2015 (ACT Aspire and MSAA). Due to these changes growth cannot be determined between FFY 2013 and FFY 2014 assessment data. Although Arkansas cannot measure the growth model at this time, they are keeping the growth model for the SIMR and will report a new baseline based on growth in the FFY 2016 APR.

Description of Measurement

Description of Measure

Percent of students with disabilities (SWD) in grades 3- 5, from the targeted schools, who made gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintained a proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment.

Measurement Calculation

A. Number of SWD who had valid assessment results for current and previous year	150
B. Number of SWD who made gains toward proficiency reaching a level nearer to proficient	37
C. Number of SWD who made gains toward proficiency and reached a level of proficient	11
D. Number of SWD who were proficient in the previous year and maintained their level of proficiency	18
Percent of SWD in grades 3- 5, from the targeted schools, that made gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintained a proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment = ((B+ C+D)/A)*100	44.00%

Background

In the past, Arkansas established annual improvement gains in student scale scores. The gain index per student growth was based upon changes in a student’s performance level, across two years, on tests included in the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program (ACTAAP).

For the purpose of the SSIP, Arkansas is using a modified version of the gain index. The modifications include the use of the alternate assessment and five gain index categories instead of eight. To measure gains, the proficiency levels of the regular and alternate were split into subcategories. The sub-categories allow a more discrete look at student achievement and capture gains being made even if a student has not reached a level classified as proficient. Exhibit I-17.2 illustrates the gain index categories from the ACTAAP assessment levels.

Exhibit I-17.2: Gain Index Categories Aligned to ACTAAP Assessment Levels.

Regular Assessment Levels	Alternate Assessment Levels	Gain Index Categories	
Below Basic (BB)	Not Emerging & Emerging	BB1 (1)	BB2 (2)
Basic (Bas)	Substantial Independent	Bas1 (3)	Bas2 (4)
Proficient (Prof)	Functional Independent	Prof+ (5)	
Advanced (Adv)	Independent		

Methodology

To measure changes in student achievement for the Grade 3-5, a gain index is computed using the literacy scale scores of the statewide assessment. A student's literacy score is matched to his/her literacy score from the previous year. For example, a student in the fourth grade will have his/her fourth grade literacy score matched to his/her third grade literacy score. This only applies to students who are in the participating districts for both years.

Data sources for calculating the gain index include the previous year assessment scale scores for student with disabilities in grades 3-5 and current year assessment scale scores for grades 4-6. While the focus of the SSIP is on grades 3-5, it is important to have the grade 6 scale scores to match back to the fifth grade scores. During the data analysis work, ADE found a drop in literacy scores between fifth and sixth grade. Measuring the gain index between fifth and sixth provides insight on the strategies being implemented.

Once student matching is completed, each scale score is assigned to a sub-category with a gain index of 1-5. The sub-categorizations are presented in Exhibit I-17.3: *Score Range for Student Performance Subcategories in Grades 3-8 for Regular Assessment* and Exhibit I-17.4: *Score Range for Student Performance Subcategories in Grades 3-8 for Alternate Assessment*.

Exhibit I-17.3: Score Range for Student Performance Subcategories in Grades 3-8 for Regular Assessment

Scale Score Performance Sub-Categories for Literacy Regular Assessment						
Grade	Subject	BB1 (1)	BB2 (2)	Bas1 (3)	Bas2 (4)	Prof+ (5)
3	Lit	1-262	263	330	415	>499
4	Lit	1-292	293	354	456	>558
5	Lit	1-334	335	382	493	>603
6	Lit	1-361	362	417	529	>640

Exhibit I-17.4: Score Range for Student Performance Subcategories in Grades 3-8 for Alternate Assessment

Scale Score Performance Sub-Categories Literacy for Alternate Assessment						
Grade	Subject	BB1 (1)	BB2 (2)	Bas1 (3)	Bas2 (4)	Prof+ (5)
3	Lit	0-663	664	686	698	>710
4	Lit	0-672	673	693	702	>713
5	Lit	0-664	665	693	705	>718
6	Lit	0-637	638	685	697	>710

The difference between the previous year subcategory and the current year subcategory determines which measurement category (Indicator 17: B-D) a student is counted in. Exhibit I-17.5 is a crosstab of the two years and the measurement categories for calculating the SIMR. For example, a student who had a gain index of 2 in the previous year and a gain index of 3 in the current year is counted in section B of the measurement calculation.

Exhibit I-17.5: Example of Data Categorization

		Current Year Subcategory: Gain Index				
		1	2	3	4	5
Previous Year Subcategory: Gain Index	1	-	B	B	B	C
	2	-	-	B	B	C
	3	-	-	-	B	C
	4	-	-	-	-	C
	5	-	-	-	-	D

For further clarification, Exhibit I-17.6 provides an example of matched student data and how a student’s measurement classification is determined between the two years.

Example: **Student A** had a previous year rating of 2, which is the subcategory of *below basic 2* or BB2. Based on the most recent assessment results **Student A** had a rating of 4 or *basic 2* (Bas2) showing a gain of two sub-categories. While the student did not reach proficiency they did make gains and would be counted in B of the calculation.

Exhibit I-17.6: Sample Student Data

Student	Previous Year Rating	Current Year Rating	Calculation Category
A	2	4	B
B	3	5	C
C	5	3	-
D	3	3	-
E	5	5	D
F	5	5	D
G	4	5	C
H	5	4	-
I	1	1	-
J	1	1	-
K	2	2	-
L	2	2	-

Using the sample data from Exhibit I-17.6 to calculate the actual rate of gains for students in grades 3-5 the following elements, as seen in Exhibit I-17.7, will need to be compiled from the final matched data set.

Exhibit I-17.7: Example of Calculation using Data from Exhibit 5

A. Number of SWD who had valid assessment results for current and previous year	12
B. Number of SWD who made gains toward proficiency reaching a level nearer to proficient	1
C. Number of SWD who made gains toward proficiency and reached a level of proficient	2
D. Number of SWD who was proficient in the previous year and maintained their level of proficient level	2

In the example above, 41.67% $\left(\frac{1+2+2}{12}\right) \times 100$ of student with disabilities in grades 3 - 5 made gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintained a proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment.

Targets: Description of Stakeholder Input

In establishing the targets for the SIMR, Arkansas considered various methods. Once the SIMR measurement and calculation were developed with both internal and external stakeholder input, the focus shifted to setting the targets through FFY 2018. The IDEA Data & Research staff reviewed various strategies on target setting and meaningful difference between years. After sharing the target setting options with stakeholders the group decided to use the *Guide for Describing Meaningful Differences*, which was developed by John Carr at WestEd. The purpose of the tool is to describe differences in the percentages of achievement results. Using the table presented in Exhibit I-17.8, stakeholders selected to increase the targets by eight percentage points between FFY 2013 and FFY 2018; the high end of the moderate percentage point difference for comparing 500+ students.

Exhibit I-17.8: Guide for Describing Meaningful Differences

Descriptive Difference	Total Number of Students being Compared			
	50	100	200	500+
	Percentage Point Difference			
None	0-12	0-8	0-5	0-3
Small	13-15	9-11	6-7	4-5
Moderate	16-19	12-14	8-10	6-8
Fairly Large	20-25	15-17	11-13	9-10
Large	26-29	18-24	14-19	11-15
Very Large	30+	25+	20+	16+

Although, the tool was not designed to use for setting targets, it provided guidance in selecting a percentage point increase for the next five years that would be a meaningful difference. Arkansas selected the target growth rate of eight percentage points from the FFY 2013 baseline to FFY 2018, resulting in an annual growth rate of 1.6 percentage points. While the annual growth rate may seem small, as schools throughout the central and delta region are added to the implementation, the number of students being measured will increase substantially.

The targets have been established to reflect a measurable improvement over the FFY 2014 baseline data. The initial targets are set using data for grades 3-5 from Little Rock School District’s six targeted elementary schools. As schools are added through scale-up, the targets may need to be updated to reflect the changing population; however, the baseline will remain the same.

Phase II Component #1: Infrastructure Development

1(a) Specify improvements that will be made to the State infrastructure to better support LEAs to implement and scale up EBPs to improve the SIMR for children with disabilities.

Overview of Infrastructure Improvement Strategies

In Phase II of the State Systemic Improvement Plan, the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) created a plan to implement two strategies that will improve the infrastructure of the ADE and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in order to increase the State- identified Measurable Result (SIMR). Arkansas' SIMR is focused on improving the literacy achievement of students with disabilities in third through fifth grade.

The two improvement strategies are:

- Strategy Number One: Create a system of professional development and technical assistance that is aligned with other ADE Units and is differentiated based on LEAs needs as evidenced by data.
- Strategy Number Two: In collaboration with other ADE Units, Restructure Arkansas' Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model using evidence based personnel development to implement a multi-tiered system of supports for behavior and academics, with a focus on literacy.

Strategy number one is focused on creating a coordinated professional development (PD) and technical assistance (TA) system that will provide the necessary structures for how LEA services and supports will be identified, managed, and differentiated at the state-level. Strategy number two, the restructuring of Arkansas RTI model with a focus in literacy, behavior, and least restrictive environment, is the evidence-based practice (EBP) that is being provided to LEAs. The RTI Model will provide the framework to organize and assess LEAs literacy and behavior services and supports. The purposeful selection of both a system strategy and content strategy is what differentiates the SSIP strategies from previously implemented improvement efforts and will ensure student outcomes are achieved.

Both of these strategies include activities that focus on developing the infrastructure at the ADE; however, in order to reduce duplication, the Phase II: Infrastructure Development component focuses primarily on Strategy number one. An in-depth write-up of Strategy number two is included in the Phase II: Support for LEA Implementation of Evidence-based Practices component below.

Infrastructure Weaknesses Informed by Phase I Analysis

In the Phase I infrastructure analysis, the ADE Special Education Unit (ADE-SEU), in collaboration with stakeholders, selected the improvement strategies listed above based on an extensive data and infrastructure analysis. The ADE-SEU strategically engaged the

Special Education State Advisory Council, Arkansas Education Associations, Administrators, teachers, parents, and ADE personnel in identifying infrastructure needs. After completing an analysis of stakeholder feedback, it was clear that in order to support LEAs in the implementation and scaling-up of EBPs to improve literacy, ADE first needed to address the infrastructure weaknesses that were identified in Phase I.

The ADE-SEU engaged in a systematic process to analyze the capacity of its current infrastructure to support improvement and build capacity in LEAs. The process involved meetings and surveys with multiple internal and external stakeholders. In collaboration with stakeholders, the ADE-SEU completed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis assessment in order to identify strengths of the system and to determine overall needs for improvement. The SWOT analysis guided internal stakeholders to think about the strengths and weakness of major infrastructure components: Governance, Monitoring & Accountability, Data, Professional Development, Technical Assistance, Quality Standards, and Fiscal Systems. The SWOT analysis revealed that the components of Professional Development and Governance were areas in need of improvement. Fostering collaboration and communication within ADE, as well as maintaining partnerships and collaborative communications across ADE Units were areas that presented as significant concerns,

Also as a part of the Phase I infrastructure analysis, the ADE gathered feedback from hundreds of general and special education administrators and teachers, multiple state education associations, parents, and ADE personnel. The State analyzed and categorized the resulting qualitative data into the same seven major infrastructure components listed above. Across all groups, the infrastructure components of PD and TA were most frequently identified as an area in need of systematic improvement in relationship to improving the state SIMR.

- Feedback from across educator groups (including general education teachers, special education teachers, and special education supervisors) indicated the need for PD and TA related to how to provide effective, individualized, and differentiated literacy instruction to student with disabilities.
- Similarly, when special education administrators and ADE personnel were asked ways in which the ADE can support local school systems in implementing evidence-based strategies to improve literacy for students with disabilities, both groups provided answers that most frequently aligned with the infrastructure component of Professional Development. The group responses also aligned to the component of Professional Development when asked about barriers within the current statewide system that may be contributing to the low performance of students with disabilities.
- Parent feedback indicated that instructional practices and materials are essential elements of the supports and services that they feel have helped their children individually. When asked which services or supports were most

important specifically for reading achievement, instructional practices and materials were again identified as the most important services or supports for literacy achievement.

- Cross-unit stakeholders within ADE also clearly identified PD and Governance as components for infrastructure improvement. This came across particularly strongly in the areas of fostering collaboration and communication within ADE, as well as maintaining partnerships and collaborative communications across ADE units.

After considering the needs identified in Phase I, the ADE recognized that it could best support LEAs through an infrastructure improvement strategy focused on developing an overall coordinated PD and TA system that could effectively deliver and support the implementation of EPB at the district and school level. Considering the weakness identified within the infrastructure component of Governance, the ADE also recognized, the important foundational work of building infrastructure capacity within the state to support LEAs in successful implementation of EBP with fidelity.

Accordingly, the improvement strategies focus on a combination of State-level and LEA-level capability building components. It is important to the ADE that these strategies focus on building the capacity of the State personnel while simultaneously providing targeted supports to build the capacity of LEAs to implement Response-to-Intervention. Capacity building and student outcomes are priorities across all the SSIP selected improvement strategies and therefore the infrastructure strategy is critical to improving the SIMR. Strategy number one builds the structures and systems necessary to identify and manage supports while Strategy number two focuses on the EBP being provided. The purposeful selection of both a system strategy and content strategy differentiates the SSIP strategies from previously implemented improvement efforts and will ensure student outcomes are achieved.

Infrastructure Improvements Activities to Support LEAs

Strategy number one will create a system of PD and TA that is aligned with other ADE Units and is differentiated based on LEAs needs as evidenced by data. This improvement strategy will allow the essential cross collaboration of ADE-SEU staff and consultants with other ADE personnel in the School Improvement Unit and the Curriculum and Instruction Unit (which includes the Professional Development Unit). The activities within strategy one will focus on (a) sharing LEA information, data, and outcomes, (b) collaborating on key overlapping initiatives, (c) developing a process for PD and TA coordination and dissemination, and (d) developing a system to track fidelity of implementation data. These activities will build systems that will help effectively leverage ADE resources, increase the reach and impact of ADE's work, and create a sustainable process that is not contingent on a single ADE leader or Unit to carry out.

For more in-depth information on how the improvement activities in Strategy number two will support LEAs, refer to the SSIP Phase II: Support for LEA Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices component below.

1(b) Identify the steps the State will take to further align and leverage current improvement plans and initiatives in the State, including general and special education, which impact children with disabilities.

The State has carefully considered how to further align and leverage current improvement plans and initiatives across the State and has included that alignment as an integral component of implementation planning.

Alignment of Strategy Number One – Coordinated PD and TA System

The ADE-SEU has identified multiple State-level improvement plans and/or initiatives that can be further aligned in order to support a coordinated PD and TA system. More specifically, the Arkansas accountability framework under the Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility and the Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS) are state level plans that both align with Strategy number one.

The ADE will continue to align the work associated with this strategy to the ESEA Flexibility, the newly reauthorized ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act), and TESS. The coordinated PD and TA system will be an important vehicle for implementing provisions outlined in the ESEA Flexibility, with a focus on improving literacy outcomes for students with disabilities. The Arkansas ESEA Flexibility outlines actions that the Needs Improvement Priority Schools (Priority schools) and Needs Improvement Focus Schools (Focus schools) must complete. The School Improvement Unit directly supports these schools in completing a diagnostic needs assessment and data analysis. Based on the results of the needs assessment, the School Improvement Unit works with Priority and Focus schools in the identification of appropriate resources. The coordinated PD and TA system will create a standardized process for supporting the School Improvement Unit in analyzing LEA needs and coordinating and disseminating PD and TA resources to targeted LEAs with the highest needs.

The coordinated system can also provide the necessary resources to support LEAs with evidence-based PD and TA that supports the four domains being evaluated within TESS: Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Environment, Professional Responsibilities and Instruction. It will be important that the support ADE is providing is intentionally linked to teacher Professional Growth Plans (PGP), particularly for educators that teach students with disabilities. This will ensure teachers have targeted PGP goals and PD and TA to support those goals.

Alignment of Strategy Number Two – RTI implementation

This strategy will provide the RTI framework necessary for LEAs to develop the structure, systems, and essential components that will support implementation fidelity at

the student level. The current state plans and initiatives that align to this strategy are the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), the ESEA Flexibility, TESS, RTI Arkansas, and Arkansas' Comprehensive Literacy Framework.

The ADE-SEU was fortunate to be analyzing Phase I SSIP data and infrastructure needs at the same time they were writing an application for the SPDG to be submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The ADE received funding for the SPDG on October 1, 2015. The SPDG will work directly with SSIP targeted schools to provide the systemic supports needed to achieve the intended outcomes of the SIMR and the statewide RTI Arkansas initiative. The SPDG will support the restructuring of RTI by using evidence-based personnel development to implement a multi-tiered system of supports for behavior and literacy. The focus will be on state, regional and district level implementation teams and evidence-based practices will provide sustainability over time to improve literacy outcomes for all students, especially students with disabilities in third through fifth grade. The ADE has further aligned the SPDG to the SSIP through the collaboration and coordination of multiple ADE Units and Educational Service Cooperatives (ESCs), the purposeful inclusion of implementation science scale-up components, and the development of high quality research-based RTI PD and TA.

Strategy number two will directly support goals within the Arkansas RTI initiative. All professional development and RTI implementation fidelity tools that are utilized by the SPDG will be disseminated statewide through the RTI Arkansas initiative. This initiative is supported by ADE leaderships and will continue to be highlighted at large statewide conferences and regional meetings.

The RTI support provided to SSIP targeted schools will also directly align to the ESEA Flexibility by providing direct support to Priority and Focus schools and by meeting the requirements for those schools outlined in the ESEA Flexibility Plan. Further, the RTI PD and TA provided through the SPDG will complement all four domains being evaluated within TESS (Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Environment, Professional Responsibilities and Instruction) and will be a component of PGP's for teachers. It will be important that the SPDG provide the link between the services being provided and the TESS domains when working with school administrators.

The SPDG RTI literacy PD and TA is being developed in collaboration with the ADE Professional Development Unit through the Comprehensive Literacy Framework initiative. Arkansas' Comprehensive Literacy Framework initiative provides guidance and support in building and sustaining a comprehensive literacy system at the local level. The goals for the Comprehensive Framework will be directly integrated in the SSIP targeted schools as part of the larger RTI Framework.

1(c) Identify who will be in charge of implementing the changes to infrastructure, resources needed, expected outcomes, and timelines for completing improvement efforts.

Implementation of Strategy Number One – Coordinated PD and TA System

As the ADE-SEU enters into Phase III of the SSIP, a Cross Unit Leadership Team will be developed that includes leadership staff from the Special Education Unit, the School Improvement Unit, and the Curriculum and Instruction Unit. This team will collectively be in charge of implementing changes to state infrastructure. In order to organize the associated resources, outcomes, and timelines, the State developed an action plan based on a logic model, which operationalized the theory of action developed in Phase I. It was important for the ADE to draw a connection from the theory of action to actual implementation steps. The theory of action was clearly grounded in the infrastructure needs identified in Phase I through data analysis, infrastructure analysis, and stakeholder feedback. In order to reduce duplication in the SSIP Phase II write-up, additional information about the implementation of Strategy number two is written up in-depth in the SSIP Phase II: LEA Implementation of EBP section below.

Exhibit 17-1(c).1: Improvement Strategy Number One Action Plan

Activities to Meet Outcomes	Steps to Implement Activities	Timeline (projected initiation & completion dates)	Resources Needed	Who Is Responsible
<p>Identifying LEA PD and TA needs</p>	<p>The Cross Unit Team will analyze data to identify targeted LEA needs through a special education risk assessment and outcomes of the ADE coordinated monitoring process.</p> <p>Create an online portal where LEAs can request ADE PD and TA support.</p>	<p>All resources will be finalized by February 2016.</p> <p>Initial identification of LEA needs using the Risk Assessment will occur in August 2016.</p> <p>The identification of LEA needs using the Risk Assessment, Coordinated monitoring outcomes, and data from the online portal will occur annually in August starting in 2017.</p>	<p>Special Education Risk Assessment</p> <p>Document with outcomes of coordinated monitoring process sorted by LEA</p> <p>Online portal for LEAs to request services from ADE</p>	<p>Cross Unit Leadership Team will meet monthly to implement activities.</p> <p>Staff from Special Education Unit, School Improvement Unit and Curriculum and Instruction Unit will be included when appropriate.</p>
<p>Leveraging ADE PD and TA resources between units</p>	<p>The targeted ADE Units identify key PD and TA initiatives within their Unit.</p> <p>The targeted ADE Units communicate key PD and TA initiatives to each other.</p> <p>ADE Units identify <u>key PD and TA overlapping initiatives</u> where resources can be shared.</p> <p>The ADE Cross Unit Team</p>	<p>Identifying key initiatives with targeted Units and communicating those initiative across Units will initially be completed in October 2016. Then they will be completed annually in October.</p> <p>The identification of key overlapping initiatives and the development of a common scope of work will initially happen before December 2016. After December, these activities</p>	<p>Document to complete initiative analysis between Units</p> <p>Document to outline key overlapping initiatives</p> <p>Scope of work action plan</p>	<p>Cross Unit Leadership Team will meet monthly to implement activities.</p> <p>Staff from Special Education Unit, School Improvement Unit and Curriculum and Instruction Unit will be included when appropriate</p>

	will develop a common scope of work for key overlapping initiatives.	will be ongoing and will occur regularly as key initiatives are identified.		
Coordinating and Disseminating PD and TA Resources	<p>Determine what support will be provided to LEAs</p> <p>Determine the level of support LEA needs (general, targeted, intensive)</p> <p>Develop ADE protocols for assigning PD and TA support</p> <p>Decide how support will be disseminated</p> <p>Create a common system where ADE can track LEA support and determine fidelity of implementation</p> <p>Develop internal training materials for the ADE Units on the process for coordinating and disseminating PD and TA to LEAs</p>	<p>The determination of what support will be provided, the level of support, the ADE protocols for assigning PD and TA support, and how support will be disseminated to LEAs will initially be completed in February 2017. After February, these activities will be ongoing and will occur regularly as LEAs are identified.</p> <p>The creation of a common system where ADE can track LEA support and determine fidelity of implementation will be completed by August 2017.</p> <p>The development of internal training materials for ADE Units will be completed in March 2017. The training of ADE staff will occur yearly unless more frequent training is needed for new staff.</p>	<p>A resource document that list possible ADE supports</p> <p>Protocols for assigning support to LEAs</p> <p>A system where PD and TA outcomes can be tracked</p> <p>Internal training guidebook for ADE staff on coordinating and disseminating PD and TA to LEAs</p>	<p>Cross Unit Leadership Team will meet monthly to implement activities.</p> <p>Staff from Special Education Unit, School Improvement Unit and Curriculum and Instruction Unit will be included when appropriate.</p>

1(d) Specify how the State will involve multiple offices within the SEA, as well as other State agencies and stakeholders in the improvement of its infrastructure.

Through the infrastructure analysis work completed in Phase I, the ADE began identifying opportunities for multiple offices and other stakeholders to work collaboratively on the improvement of the ADE infrastructure. The SSIP infrastructure analysis work and the ADE-SEU's priority of reaching out to multiple stakeholders laid a solid foundation for future collaborative work.

The SSIP in general, and the infrastructure improvement activities specifically, promote collaboration within the SEA and among other State agencies by bringing multiple stakeholders together around a common goal of improving literacy outcomes for students with disabilities. For example, the SSIP work in Phase II has been the catalyst for three separate units: Special Education, School Improvement, and Curriculum and Instruction to identify a common scope of work and begin collaborative work to better support LEA needs.

As the ADE continues to involve multiple offices within the State Education Agency in the infrastructure improvement processes, the State will use the following mechanisms to promote collaboration:

- ADE will develop a cross unit leadership team and hold regular meetings
- ADE Units will identify key overlapping PD and TA initiatives where resources can be shared
- ADE Units will develop a common scope of work for key overlapping PD and TA initiatives
- ADE will develop training for ADE Units on key overlapping PD and TA initiatives and how those initiatives are coordinated between units and delivered to LEAs

These mechanisms will provide a platform to allow for multiple offices to begin the process of changing their collective knowledge and skill levels. With increased knowledge and skill comes the opportunity for cultural changes in how multiple offices work with each other. Ultimately the ADE-SEU hopes to see the SSIP work as a catalyst that leads to a change in culture and provides the context for meaningful cross-unit collaborations and a shared scope of work.

External stakeholders will also be involved in the infrastructure development work. The ADE-SEU will provide regular updates to external stakeholders including the Special Education State Advisory Council, Special Education LEA Supervisors, Parent Training and Information Center, targeted SSIP districts, and Arkansas Association of Education Administrators (the largest state organization which support administrators) to keep these groups informed as well as solicit their feedback. Another important stakeholder group will be the RTI State Advisory that includes a teacher, principal, superintendent, 504 coordinator, RTI coordinator, counselor, ESC director, ESC teacher center coordinator, institution of higher education, the SPDG director and staff, ADE English Language

Learners (ELL) Unit, ADE School Based Mental Health Unit, ADE School Improvement Unit, ADE Curriculum and Instruction Unit, and the ADE Special Education Unit.

The ADE believes that for the SSIP to be successful it is vital to obtain authentic feedback from diverse stakeholders. ADE-SEU will continue to ensure that all stakeholders, including those that other ADE Units work with (e.g. priority and focus school personnel, literacy specialists at regional ESCs, ESC directors, and ESC Teacher Center Coordinators) have an opportunity to be meaningfully engaged in the infrastructure improvement work.

Phase II Component #2: Support for LEA Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

2(a) Specify how the State will support LEAs in implementing the EBPs that will result in changes in LEA, school, and provider practices to achieve the SIMR(s) for children with disabilities.

Arkansas understands that the successful implementation of sustainable Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) that will increase the State Identified Measurable Result (SIMR) requires a systems approach and the inclusion of implementation science frameworks intentionally woven into the plan. The EBP that the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) will focus on implementing is Response-to-Intervention. In Arkansas, the term Response-to-Intervention (RTI) is used instead of Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Response-to-Intervention integrates assessment and intervention within a school-wide, multilevel prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavior problems.

The Arkansas Department of Education's content improvement strategy is to restructure its Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model using evidence-based personnel development to implement a multi-tiered system of supports for behavior and academics, with a focus on literacy. This improvement strategy is based on sound research that validates the interactive nature between literacy and behavior, and the benefits of a combined approach to support and enhance student success academically and behaviorally.

Selection Evidence

The ADE Special Education Unit (ADE-SEU), in collaboration with stakeholders, selected this improvement strategy based on an extensive data and infrastructure analysis. In Phase I of the SSIP, the ADE strategically engaged the Special Education State Advisory Council, Arkansas Education Associations, Administrators, teachers, parents, and ADE personnel in identifying infrastructure needs and contributing factors of low performance of literacy achievement for student with disabilities. The data analysis completed indicated concerns with the effectiveness, individualization, and differentiation of instruction, percentages of students educated within the general education classroom, and missed instruction due to disciplinary removals. It also indicated the need for building capacity across districts to implement effective evidence-based instruction and interventions in literacy and behavior to move achievement forward for all students, particularly students with disabilities in third through fifth grade. This identification of contributing factors supported the development of a content improvement strategy focused on RTI with an emphasis on literacy, behavior, and improving the percent of students with disabilities that are educated in the general education classroom.

A synthesis of research on the development of anti-social behavior, reading difficulties and interventions, and the preventive effects of a combined approach suggests consideration of an integrated literacy and behavior multi-tiered system of supports (Ervin et al., 2006). There is a documented connection between low academic skills and problem behavior that increases over time (Fleming, Harachi, Cortes, Abbott, &

Catalano, 2004; Morrison, Anthony, Storino, & Dillon, 2001; Nelson, Benner, Lane, & Smith, 2004). Further, students facing challenges in both areas are at higher risk for poor school outcomes (McIntosh, Flannery, Sugai, Braun & Cochrane, 2008).

Implementation Drivers

Based on the Phase I SSIP analysis and the research cited above, the ADE has determined the need to create an RTI framework that builds upon current research of implementation and scaling-up of large-scale initiatives. In addition, the ADE has recognized that there is a need to build professional development protocols that adhere to standards and are implemented with fidelity. The ultimate goal of this improvement strategy is to improve both the academic and behavioral outcomes for students with disabilities in third through fifth grade.

To achieve this goal, the ADE has attended to current research and evidence-based practices to support:

- Developing a clearly articulated system of evidence-based professional development standards and practices that will support state, regional and district level implementation of selected evidence-based practices (Gulamhussein, A. (2013), Guskey, T.R. (2000). Trivette, et al. 2009);
- Developing a clearly articulated framework for implementation, from the state through regional and district levels, building upon stages and drivers for implementation (Fixsen, et al., 2005; Fixsen et al., 2008); and
- Braiding behavior and literacy evidence-based practices across and within a RTI Framework (Bohanon, H., Goodman, S., & McIntosh, 2009; McIntosh, Horner, & Sugai, 2009).

Subsequently, attention to this research and related evidence-based practices led to the following design features for the scale-up of RTI:

- An emphasis on developing state, regional and district *implementation* capacity;
- An emphasis on *attending to organizational supports* that are required at each level and making necessary adjustments at each level of the system;
- Developing *partnerships across the system*, among the state, regional, and district levels;
- A focus on *stages of implementation*, rather than rigid training sequences;
- Developing *communication feedback loops*, where participants inform and impact the delivery of professional development, supports and assistance; and
- Attention to the delivery of professional development that emphasizes *fidelity in adherence to standards and protocols*.

Scaling-Up the RTI Improvement Strategy

Arkansas was fortunate to be awarded a State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) from the Office of Special Education on October 1, 2015; the SPDG was written to

align with the SSIP. The SPDG will function as the “boots on the ground” for RTI implementation in the SSIP targeted districts.

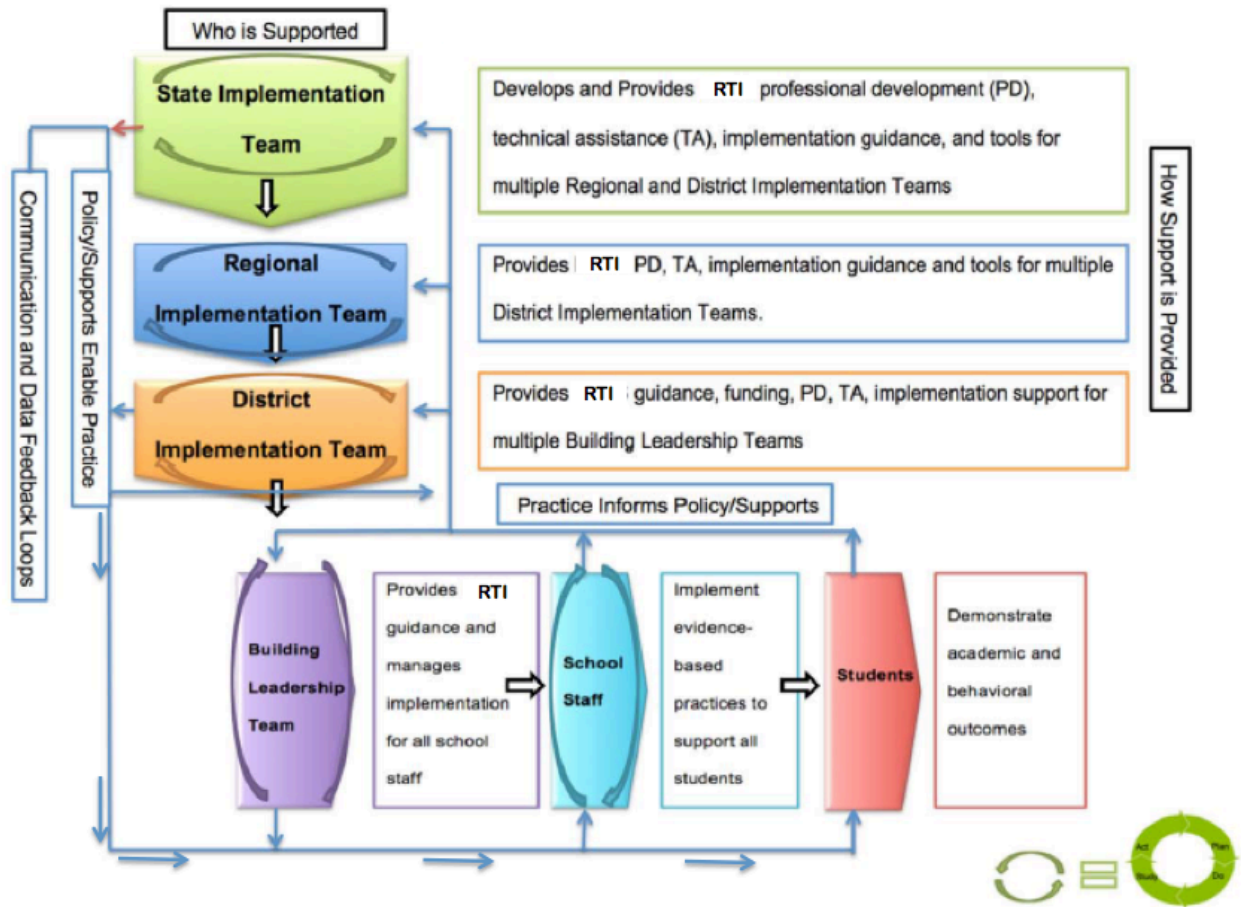
The SPDG will facilitate the design and implementation of a professional development (PD) and technical assistance (TA) system to support the implementation of RTI at the state, regional, district and school levels. Implementation of this improvement strategy requires the efficient and effective use of relevant research and resources, the engagement of committed partners and advisors, committed leadership from the State Implementation Team (SIT), and supportive ADE leadership.

Improvement strategy goals. The three primary goals for this improvement strategy are to: 1) establish a standards-based and high quality system of PD/TA that builds capacity and supports fidelity in the implementation of evidence-based practices at the regional, district, and school levels; 2) provide PD/TA at the regional and district levels that supports the implementation of research-based RTI; and 3) provide PD/TA at the regional and district levels to implement integrated RTI evidence-based practices in literacy and behavior at the school level to support improved outcomes for students with disabilities third through fifth grade.

The improvement strategy is focused on measuring the implementation capacity, increased fidelity of implementation over time, and adherence to standards and protocols for PD throughout the course of the improvement strategy. Those LEAs who effectively implement the identified supports and practices will achieve the intended outcome of sustained implementation of an integrated RTI framework that yields improvement in literacy and behavior at the school, classroom and student levels, and this success will provide motivation for continued rigorous adherence to content practices.

Levels of support across the system. Supports at each level of the system are designed to build capacity and competencies necessary to implement evidence-based practices at the school and classroom levels, in order to impact improved outcomes for students with disabilities in third through fifth grade. Exhibit 17-2(a).1 illustrates the cascading levels of support that lead to short-term, mid-term and long-term outcomes. While the graphic might suggest static or sequential supports and communication feedback across levels, the implementation is intended to be dynamic, responsive, and timely. This is at the heart of the improvement strategy design.

Exhibit 17-2(a).1: RTI Implementation Process of Support



Communication feedback and data support loops. A successful system of supports across the state through the regional and district levels, to the school and classroom levels, is contingent on a sound data decision support design, where decisions rely on a continuous flow of data among participants at all levels, the quality and specificity of the data, and the timely and appropriate response to such data. Building upon the premise of policy enabling practice and practice informing policy (PEP-PIP), the RTI implementation for this improvement strategy is constructed around not only PEP and PIP, but supports that enable practice and practice that informs supports.

This conceptual framework means that not only do discrete measures of fidelity and capacity provide feedback to levels of the support system, but also organizational dynamics, including perceptions of district and/or school culture as well as practices that create perceived or real barriers. Shared analysis of these conditions is intended to yield rich, meaningful customized technical assistance and follow-up supports from coaches and regional and district implementation teams (DITs). Beyond the regional level, if there are state level policies or support challenges, the feedback loops are designed to inform practices at this level as well.

Direct and indirect support. The SPDG provides for direct and indirect support at each level of the system, with support to:

- Implement PD/TA protocols (e.g. how PD is developed, how adult learner principles are included, how and when PD is disseminated) at the state, regional, and district levels;
- Provide PD/TA with fidelity at the state, regional, and district levels;
- Build capacity for implementation of evidence-based practices at the regional, district, and school levels; and
- Sustain implementation of evidence-based practices at the district and school levels.

Direct receivers include those who are trained and coached at the regional and district levels, creating implementation teams that, in turn, support implementers at the school and classroom levels. Indirect receivers include those supported at the school and classroom levels to implement the targeted practices through training, coaching and technical assistance from regional and/or district implementation teams.

Exhibit 17-2(a).2: Direct and Indirect Receivers of the RTI Improvement Strategy

Direct Receivers of RTI Improvement Strategy Activities	Direct Receivers	Education Service Cooperatives (ESC) Regional Teams	LEA District Teams	Parent Training and Information Center
	Activity or Process	Regional Team members receive training and coaching in evidence-based practices to support implementation of RTI integrated literacy and behavior practices	District Team members receive training and coaching on evidence-based practice to support teachers' implementation of RTI integrated literacy and behavior practices	Receive training in RTI content and parent friendly materials
	Output	ESC Regional trainers and coaches are selected and trained	District implementation team members are selected trained and coached	PTI staff have knowledge and skills to provide PD/TA to parents in SSIP targeted LEAs
Impacts/ Outcomes	Short Term Learning	ESC Regional Implementation Teams have knowledge and skills to support local Implementation Teams	Team members have knowledge and skills to provide necessary supports for school building leadership teams to implement RTI literacy and behavior practices	PTI staff have the understanding of basic RTI principles and how RTI is being implemented in schools. PTI staff learn how to make this information useful and empowering for parents
	Mid Term: Change in Practice	ESC Regional Implementation Teams: Deliver training and coaching to District Implementation Teams; Collect and analyze	District Implementation Teams: Analyze fidelity and outcome data; Develop support plans to move implementation forward with attention	PTI staff: Deliver training to parents in SSIP targeted LEAs; Collect and analyze relevance, quality, usefulness and impact of training

		capacity and fidelity data; Customized follow-up supports to local teams to move implementation forward	to provision of necessary training, coaching tools, and organizational supports; Address real and perceived barriers to move implementation forward		
	Long Term: Change in Condition	ESCs regularly measure impact of training and coaching, use data to improve supports provided to local districts and embed practices in organizational structures and supports through fiscal and human resource priorities	District Implementation Teams: Routinely engage in data-driven action planning cycles related to literacy and behavior outcomes; Adjust resources to support/sustain effective practices; Communicate results to stake holders to sustain support; Training, coaching, content expertise is embedded within the organizational structure and sustained through funding and human resource management	PTI staff work regularly with LEAs supporting parents.	
Indirect Receivers of RTI Improvement	Indirect Receivers	School Building Teams	Teachers & Teacher Teams	Student	Parents

Strategy Activities	Activity or Process	Building team members are provided training and coaching in evidence-based practices to support teachers and teacher teams in implementation of RTI literacy and behavior practices	Essential instructional time is provided with necessary resources for RTI literacy and behavior practices	Essential instructional time is provided with necessary resources for literacy and behavior practices	Parents are trained in RTI component
	Output	Building implementation team members are selected, trained, and coached	Teacher/teams are trained and coached	Students are provided effective evidence-based instruction and supports for literacy and behavior with an effective RTI process	Parents understand RTI, the implications on their child's education, and how they can be active partners in the process
Impact/Outcomes	Short Term: Learning	Building team members have the knowledge and skills to provide supports to teachers and teacher teams to implement effective evidence-based RTI literacy and behavior practices	Teachers/teams have the knowledge and skills to provide effective evidence-based literacy and behavior instruction and support practices across (relevant) grade levels	Students have skills to read at targeted levels and to meet appropriate behavioral expectations	Parents have knowledge and understanding of RTI

	Mid Term: Change in Practice	Building teams: Analyze fidelity and outcome data; develop necessary support plans to move implementation forward; coordinate or provide training and coaching based on student data/needs; align and support RTI plans with relevant building required plans, such as ESEA improvement plans	Teachers/Teams are engaged in effective RTI literacy and behavior instruction and support practices; teachers/teams regularly analyze assessment results, develop instructional planning, monitor students' progress and develop instructional strategies to meet identified needs	Students apply literacy and behavioral skills effectively and appropriately	Parents review child's grades and progress monitoring data regularly in order to identify child's needs
	Long Term: Change in Conditions	RTI integrated practices for literacy and behavior are embedded in the organizational culture of the building; Necessary supports for teachers and teacher teams are routinely	Teachers/ teams: Are successful in delivering effective instruction and supports for literacy and behavior; effectively plan and deliver differentiated instruction at each level of the multi-	Students are successful in school as measured by identified assessments	Parents support their child's learning goals at school and home

		<p>included in fiscal and human resource plans; Building teams routinely engage in data- driven action planning cycles at established intervals; RTI supports and plans are established as regular components of building improvement plans/ reports; Impacts and outcomes of RTI for literacy and behavior are regularly communicated to stakeholders</p>	<p>tiered system of supports; deliver instruction and supports with fidelity</p>		
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Core partners. The following are the core partners committed to this improvement strategy with the ADE: Little Rock School District (LRSD), the first SSIP targeted LEA; the American Institutes for Research (AIR); Arkansas State University (ASU), Center for Community Engagement; the Arkansas Disability Coalition and Parent Training and Information Center (PTI); and Public Sector Consultants (PSC).

The LRSD is the first targeted SSIP LEA. Little Rock School District has partnered with the ADE in order to implement and sustain a RTI framework, including evidence-based literacy and behavior practices, and to build capacity at the district level to support and sustain these practices over time. As a result of six schools classified in academic distress and pursuant to A.C.A. § 6-15-429 and §6-15-430, on January 28, 2015, the State Board of Education removed the current Little Rock School District Board, and the district was placed under the authority of the Arkansas Commissioner of Education. Close collaboration among the Little Rock Superintendent, the Commissioner, and others at the ADE is underway. The SPDG will fund a full time RTI specialist position at LRSD for the next five years to exclusively manage and support LRSD RTI implementation and serve as the key contact for the state and district leadership team. The RTI Specialist will be a key trainer and coach for LRSD.

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) will support training for implementation teams and the development of state, regional and district RTI trainers and coaches. This contracted partner will assist the ADE in building in-state capacity for PD/TA. The AIR has decades of experience working on federal, state, and locally funded projects designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, including both students with disabilities and their nondisabled classmates. From 2007 to 2012, AIR operated the National Center on Response to Intervention and now supports the National Center on Intensive Interventions.

The Arkansas State University, Center for Community Engagement (CCE) will support the integrated implementation of training, coaching, technical assistance, and related professional development resources for positive behavior supports and interventions (PBIS). The Director of the Center will be a member of the State Implementation Team and in this capacity will support the braiding of evidence-based practices for PBIS across all activities, at all levels of the improvement strategy. Expert staff at CCE will develop content materials, train, coach, and provide support for data collection for the school-wide information system (SWIS), related fidelity measures and web resources for PBIS practices.

The Arkansas Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) is funded by an Office of Special Education Programs through a federal grant and operated through the Center for Exceptional families. The goal of the center is to improve educational opportunities for students with disabilities, including students transitioning to adult life beyond high school. The PTI will collaborate with the State Implementation Team to develop training and information modules for on-line and onsite delivery. The modules will provide parents with an understanding of an RTI framework, its essential components, and the ways in which these components support student progress. These materials will include

guiding questions parents should consider when discussing student progress at schools and in classrooms, strengthening parent engagement in the RTI process.

Public Sector Consultants (PSC) will provide third party evaluation services. As the contracted evaluator for the current SPDG, the company’s involvement supports ongoing successful collaboration. Two evaluators will serve as consultants to the State Implementation Team.

Other partners. The ADE Assistant Commissioner, Division of Learning Services is leading the charge in the development of a statewide PD/TA system and RTI framework. The Assistant Commissioner will be on the State Implementation Team and will support the improvement strategy by routinely providing project updates to Education Service Cooperatives (ESCs), the Arkansas State Board of Education and professional education organizations, including the Arkansas Associate of Educational Administrators (AAEA), the Arkansas Education Association (AEA) and the Arkansas Association of Special Educational Administrators (AASEA). The Assistant Commissioner will be instrumental in keeping stakeholders informed about PD and TA materials and tools as they are developed and made readily available to all LEAs across the state.

Participating ESCs will commit to partnerships with the SPDG, critical to the development of Regional Implementation Teams (RITs). This is a significant design feature, supporting the integration of ADE and district improvement priorities. Below is a table that outlines the commitment.

Exhibit 17-2(a).3: Communication Priorities of Professional Organizations

Education Service Cooperative	Arkansas Administration Organization AAEA, AEA, and AASEA
Provide key stakeholder input to the State Implementation Team, to inform the gap analysis across typical PD/TA practices and evidence-based PD/TA standards	Provide support for the development of district implementation teams throughout the cohort selection and development process
<p>Support the utilization of the gap analysis to inform and help establish SPDG PD/TA protocols (e.g. training, coaching, technical assistance protocols)</p> <p>Support the development of Regional Implementation Teams for participating districts.</p>	<p>Communicate to members about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The importance of the project ● Opportunities to become involved through the application and selection process ● Training opportunities and related resources <p>Communicate to multiple audiences the practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence-based practices and positive impact on student outcomes ● The alignment of RTI implementation with ESEA (ESSA) accountability goals

Partner with the State Implementation Team in the development of trainers and coaches across existing staff (literacy specialists, behavior specialists, school improvement specialists)	
Provide communication to members (LEAs) about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The importance of the project ● Opportunities to partner and be supported support through the cohort application and selection process ● Training opportunities and related resources ● RTI materials and tools, including online resources 	

LEA Need and Readiness

The first year of the SSIP (FY 2016), six schools from the LRSD will be selected in collaboration with the District Leadership Team. The SPDG and District Leadership Team will utilize the State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center (SISEP) Hexagon Tool to assess capacity indicators of implementation when selecting the six schools. The LRSD is one of the districts not affiliated with a regional Education Service Cooperative (ESC). Therefore, members of the State Implementation Team will make up much of the team that works directly with the LRSD District Implementation Team. Training will be inclusive of pertinent LRSD staff at the district and school levels, and within the parameters of optimal training, other LRSD and ESC staff will be included in the training. This inclusion will provide essential knowledge for future cohort trainers and coaches.

An application, ADE special education risk assessment, and selection process for participants beginning in year two (Cohort 2) will add at least six more LRSD schools and six other LEAs in partnership with their ESCs. All schools that apply will have to meet the selection criteria, but preference will be given to the eligible applicants with the greatest needs. Based on SSIP data analyzed in Phase I, this includes schools within the Great Rivers, Arkansas River and Southeast ESCs, and based on ESEA accountability data, this would include priority and/or focus schools. At least three regional implementation teams (two district implementation teams within each region) will be added in the second year of the improvement strategy.

In each of the subsequent years, cohort development will continue to build capacity for implementation and scaling-up RTI for literacy and behavior across the participating regions by annually adding other LEAs in partnership with their ESCs, an additional school from each of the prior year’s participating districts, as well as additional LRSD schools. Below Exhibit 17-2(a).4 outlines the scale-up.

Exhibit 17-2(a).4: SSIP Targeted School Scale-up

YEAR	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
COHORT 1	LRSD (6 schools) →			Continued PD & TA support as needed	Continued PD & TA support as needed
COHORT 2		6 LEAs (6 schools) + 5 additional LRSD →	Add 1 school for Cohort 2 LEAs	Add 1 school for Cohort 2 LEAs	Continued PD & TA support as needed
COHORT 3			6 new LEAs (6 schools) + 5 additional LRSD →	Add 1 school for Cohort 3 LEAs	Add 1 school for Cohort 3 LEAs
COHORT 4				6 New LEAs (6 schools) + 5 additional LRSD →	Add 1 school for Cohort 4 LEAs
COHORT 5					6 New LEAs (6 schools) + 5 additional LRSD →

This configuration is designed to increase the capacity of participating regions and districts to support implementation with fidelity, increase the competencies of coaches in supporting regional implementation teams and district implementation teams, and support the development of school leadership and implementation of identified competencies in classrooms. The long-term outcome is to build capacity across the regions and districts to continue to implement and scale-up RTI for literacy and behavior beyond the five years of the SSIP. While the parameters of the plan are reflective of a reasonable scope of the improvement strategy in the first five years, the strategy is intended to expand the essential understanding and knowledge of evidence-based practices for RTI for literacy and behavior beyond the cohort implementation teams and build a base for future cohort applicants, trainers, and coaches.

2(b) Identify steps and specific activities needed to implement the coherent improvement strategies. Include communication strategies, stakeholder involvement, how identified barriers will be addressed; and who will implement activities and strategies; how the activities will be implemented with fidelity; the resources that will be used to implement them; and timelines for completion.

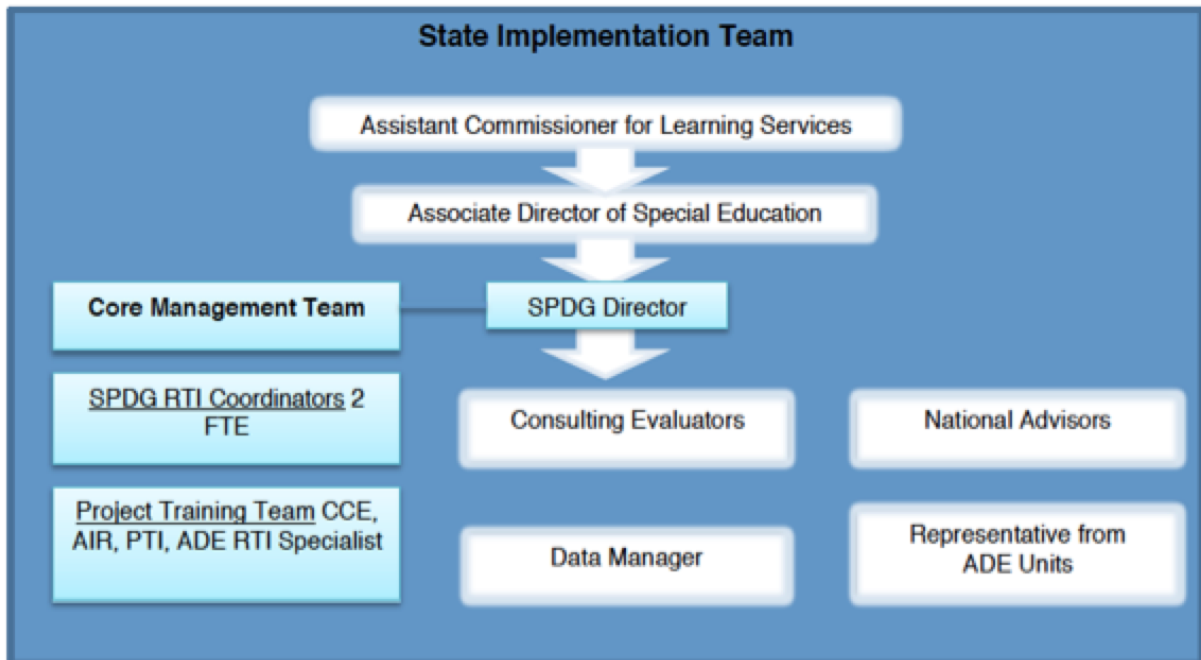
In November 2015, the ADE began implementing the management plan outline below for the RTI improvement strategy. Following an appropriate blueprint is essential for the success of any ambitious improvement strategy. The project structure, at each level, (state, regional, district, school building) reflects attention to implementation drivers (Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman & Wallace, 2005). Accountability, management of activities, support for staff, and adherence to provision of supports at each level of the system are built into the management structure. The use of continuous communication

feedback loops from one level of the structure to another, providing relevant quantitative and qualitative data for decision-making, is key to the on-going provision of supports at each level (see Exhibit 17-2(a).1: RTI Implementation Process of Support).

RTI Improvement Strategy Project Structure

State Implementation Team oversight. The State Implementation Team will consist of the ADE Assistant Commissioner, Division of Learning Services, the Associate Director of Special Education, the Core Management Team, ADE staff from multiple units (School Improvement Unit and Curriculum and Instruction Unit), the IDEA data manager, and the external evaluators. In addition, the RTI Improvement Strategy has secured five national experts to serve in advisory function to the strategy (see a list of national experts in Appendix II)

Exhibit 17-2(b).1: State Implementation Team



To ensure the ADE communication barriers that were identified in SSIP Phase I are addressed (see Phase II Component One: Infrastructure Development 1(a) for overview), the SPDG Project Director will meet at least monthly with the Associate Director for Special Education to review all aspects of program operations, including planned activities, resource allocation, other day-to-day operation issues, and any challenges. The Associate Director for Special Education reports directly to the Assistant Commissioner for Learning Services and will be able to seek timely guidance to resolve pressing issues. This immediate access to leadership in the ADE will be of great assistance in overcoming urgent challenges. The Assistant Commissioner and other key staff in the Division of Learning Services have been involved in the

development of this improvement strategy and have a vested interest in its success and impact at the district, school, classroom and student levels.

The SPDG Project Director will be responsible for reporting to the Associate Director for Special Education on a regular basis, leading the management team in the daily activities of the project design, and assuring that a Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle (The Active Implementation Hub, Improvement Cycles, 2013) is followed to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in guidance and implementation support for all cohort teams. The Director will be responsible for most reporting and communication functions of this improvement strategy; for assuring that project assessments and measures, as outlined in the evaluation plan, are completed as scheduled; and for supporting all teams to complete all activities in accordance with project timelines.

The core management team. The core management team will include the SPDG Project Director, two SPDG project coordinators, and the Project Training Team.

The AR SPDG Project Training Team will include the following:

- The Director and staff of the Center for Community Engagement (CCE) at Arkansas State University;
- A researcher with the American Institutes for Research (AIR); Dr. Jackson will also support the development of parent training materials with the PTI; these materials will be designed to support parent engagement in the RTI process;
- The Parent Training and Information Center (PTI);
- An ADE RTI specialist; and
- Public Sector Consultants (PSC), external evaluators

The Core Management Team is responsible for the development and delivery of all training and will work collaboratively to support parent training. The team works directly with regional implementation teams and district implementation teams to support the development of expert trainers and coaches at the regional and district level and provide support for regional and district teams as they develop trainers and coaches at districts. Further, this team is accountable for all training adhering to and meeting standards and protocols for professional development. In addition, the team is responsible to assure that all training venues and resources are accessible to persons with disabilities.

The Core Management Team will meet at least weekly throughout the startup of the improvement strategy, and then twice each month, or more as needed, as the work progresses. The Core Management Team will create an annual plan and use on-line tools to document, coordinate and manage project activities. The use of various tools for communication, shared work, and follow-up will support effective use of time and talent. Adhering to a Plan-Do-Study-Act continuous cycle, the Core Management Team will create detailed plans that include project design activities and will regularly

assess adherence to team protocols and adjust functions across the team as necessary to achieve improvement strategy goals.

As the improvement strategy progresses, the team will review all data, including fiscal reports, fidelity and capacity reports, and participant feedback, as well as formative and summative project data. Program changes will not be made without careful review of all available data, and the team will be attuned to ecological variables such as political, economic and regulatory or regional issues that may impact the project.

The data manager will facilitate the regular review of state and improvement strategy data, oversee data dissemination protocols and assure data are protected. The data manager will also compile other data as needed and meet with the Core Management Team as needed.

Evaluators from Public Sector Consultants are contracted through the current SPDG. They will support and facilitate the review of project evaluation data and the interpretation of qualitative project data, and will assist in developing appropriate communication strategies to report pertinent data to key stakeholders. Essential to this function is supporting communication loops across and between levels of the system in order to assure the data are timely, accurate, and easily understood by all improvement strategy stakeholders. Data will drive appropriate and timely responses to improve and support implementation of the project. The evaluators are key members of the Core Management Team.

Exhibit 17-2(b).2: Roles and Functions of Staff and Consultants

ROLE	Functions	FTE
Associate Director of Special Education	Reviews progress on project activities; has oversight for fiscal reports; addresses critical barriers and provides SPDG updates to the Assistant Commissioner at ADE	.10
SPDG Director	Has primary oversight responsibilities for improvement activities, staff and consultant deliverables; assures that improvement timelines and milestones are measured; assures the evaluation plan is implemented; works closely with RTI coordinators to assure all functions are completed successfully; works closely with Training Leads to assure that standards for PD/TA are met; participates with core management team in training events, peer network activities and regional implementation planning sessions. Reports to the Associate Director of Special Education.	.80
Consulting Data Manager	Facilitates review of data; oversees data dissemination protocols; assures data protected as necessary; provides state level district performance data as needed.	.15
Consulting Evaluators	Provides/supports evaluation protocols; manages qualitative measures; supports review of data as needed; supports data dissemination as needed; provides consultation to Director and management team as requested	400 Hours
LRSD RTI Specialist	Works directly with the SPDG Director and designated implementation lead/administrator at the district; coordinates training for the district team; facilitates implementation team processes and planning, coordinates data reviews, communicates with district leadership, reports to Core Management Team	1.0
SPDG RTI Literacy Coordinator	Works directly with SPDG Director and ADE literacy specialists for planning and delivery of all PD/TA; directs the development & delivery of specific training modules (online and on site) for literacy; directs the development and delivery of coaching for trainers and coaches in literacy content; is responsible for meeting timeline and milestones in delivery of training and coaching for literacy; adheres to PD/TA standards and management team protocols	1.0
SPDG RTI Coordinator	Works directly with SPDG Director and designated implementation leads/administrators at the regional level; supports regional teams to coordinate training; supports regional implementation team process and planning; supports data review; supports communication with regional leadership; reports to Core Management Team	1.0
CCE PBIS Training Lead	Works directly with SPDG Director for planning and delivery of all PD/TA; directs	Contract 2.80 FTE

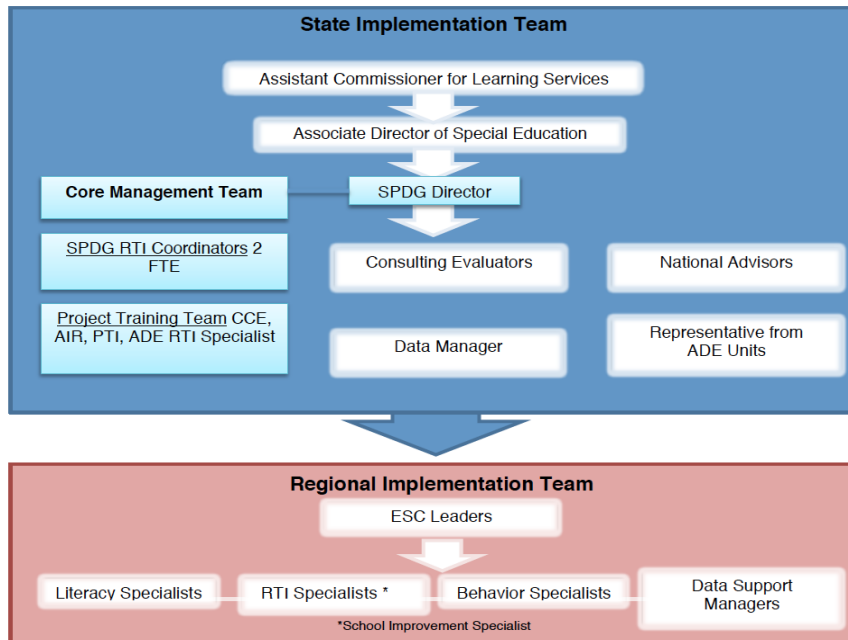
	the development & delivery of specific training modules (online and on-site) for PBIS; directs the development and delivery of coaching for trainers and coaches in PBIS content; is responsible for meeting timelines and milestones in delivery of training and coaching for PBIS; adheres to PD/TA standards and management team protocols	and 480 hours of part time staff per year
AIR RTI Training Lead	Works directly with SPDG Director for planning and delivery of all PD/TA; directs the development & delivery of specific training modules (online and on-site) for RTI; directs the development and delivery for trainers and coaches in RTI content; is responsible for meeting timelines and milestones in delivery of training and coaching for RTI; adheres to PD/TA standards and management Team protocols	1100 hours
ADE RTI specialist	Works directly with SPDG Director, SPDG RTI Literacy Coordinator and ADE PD unit to support the initial development of literacy training modules, materials and PD	.10
PTI Staff	Works directly with SPDG RTI Coordinators and AIR for planning and delivery of all PD; directs the development and delivery of specific training modules (online and on-site) for parents; is responsible for meeting timelines and milestones in delivery of training for parents; and adheres to PD/TA standards protocols	34 Days
SPDG Administrative Assistant	Supports all management team deliverables as assigned; reports to Director	1.0

Working with Regional and Local structures

This improvement strategy will focus on the development of local implementation capacity in order to implement and sustain evidence-based practices in RTI in literacy and behavior at the school and classroom levels. The project is built on implementation research and practice that is intended to sustain implementation of these practices, with fidelity, beyond the term of the SSIP. This underpinning supports the use of existing structures as much as possible. The management challenge is to support the implementation of all identified components of this improvement strategy at each level.

Regional Implementation Teams. Education Service Cooperatives, partnered with local districts, will be supported to identify and provide organizational supports for a regional implementation team that 1) is supported by the State Implementation Team, and 2) will in turn support district implementation team. This improvement strategy looked at existing ESC staff whose job descriptions could be leveraged and work priorities realigned to support this work. Each regional implementation team will include an identified RTI Specialist who, along with ESC behavior and literacy specialists and ADE School Improvement Specialist(s) assigned to the region, may become a trainer and/or coach. Education Service Cooperatives currently employ literacy and behavior specialists that support districts. The content specialist's (employed at the ESC) whose current work most aligns with RTI, will assume the RTI specialist role. The SPDG Core Management Team will train regional implementation teams. Exhibit 17-2(b).3 shows the alignment the SPDG Core Management Team will train regional implementation teams.

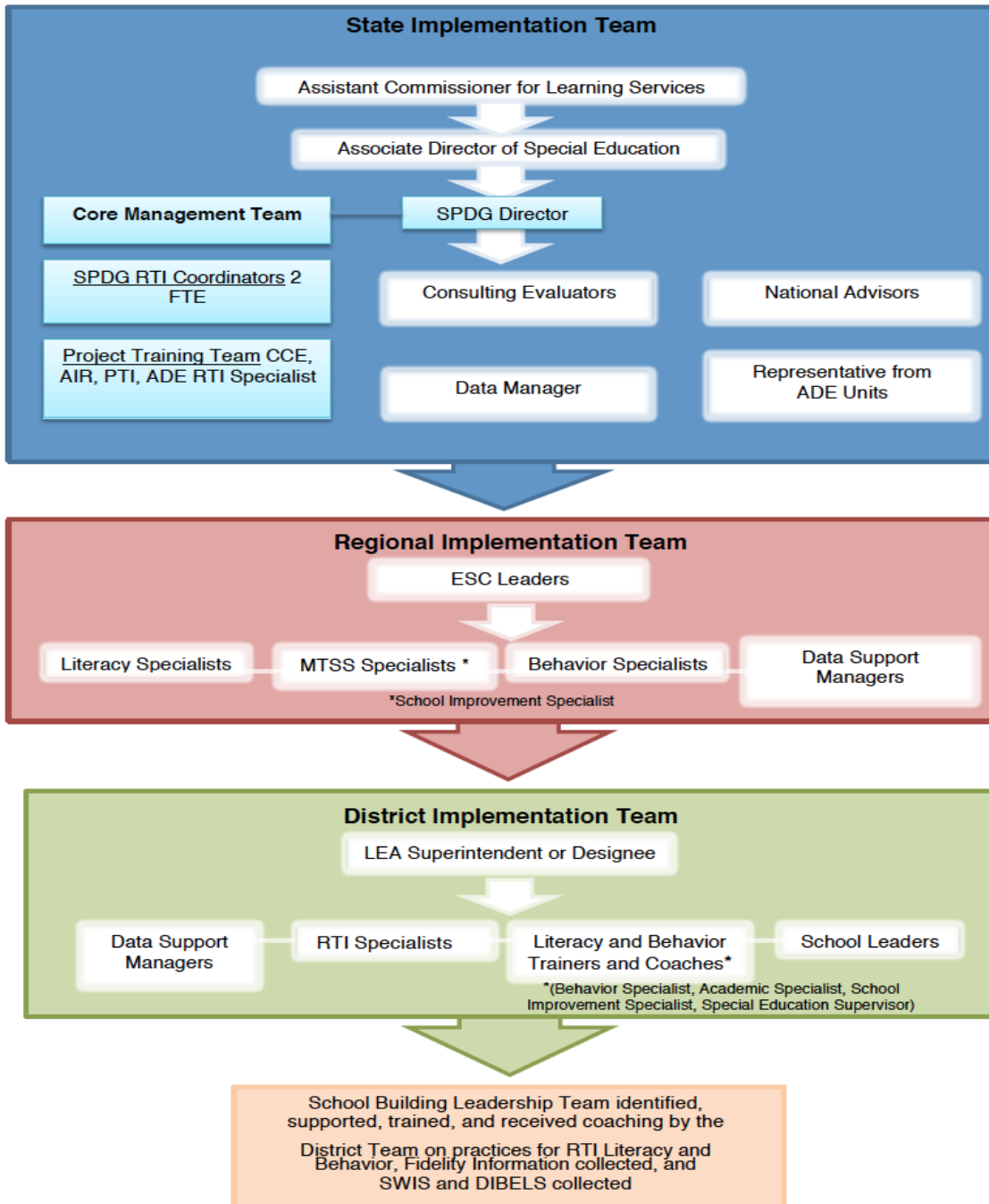
Exhibit 17-2(b).3: Alignment of the SPDG Core Management Team and Regional Implementation Team



District Implementation Teams. The development of leadership and implementation supports is built upon the alignment of current priorities in school improvement and identified needs for students with disabilities identified in Phase I of the SSIP. The alignment of ESEA accountability outcomes and special education student achievement targets provide the foundation for district and school building efforts.

District leadership teams will identify and provide organizational supports for a School Leadership Teams. The development of high functioning district leadership teams is critical to the long-term program sustainability. District teams will have knowledge, skills, organizational capacity, and defined supports that ensure effective implementation of braided evidence-based practices. Participating district teams will include the district Superintendent or designee, a designated RTI Specialist, an identified data support team member, district trainers and coaches, and key school leadership. Trainers and coaches will be selected from existing district staff. The SPDG will be looking for existing staff that have current job descriptions that can be leveraged and work realigned to meet the training and coaching expectations. District team members will be trained and coached by the regional leadership teams as seen in Exhibit 17-2(b).4.

Exhibit 17-2(b).4: Alignment of the SPDG Core Management Team, Regional Implementation Team, and District Implementation Team



The following table provides an overview of the teams role and function at each level of the system.

Exhibit 17-2(b).5: Function of Implementation Teams

Functions of Implementation Teams	
Unit	Functions
State Implementation Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advises the Core Management regarding implementation, barrier-busting, communication strategies ● Provides input to improve alignment with relevant state initiatives ● Uses (protected) data from ESCs, LEAs, and school buildings for project improvements and decision-making, as well as reporting.
Regional Implementation Teams at ESCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESC leadership provides vision and supports implementation by supporting staff participation in training, coaching, and addressing barriers to implementation. ● Implementation team is identified and supported to function within the project, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identification of RTI specialists at the ESC, ○ Provision of training, coaching, content expertise, information, materials and evaluation ● Data sharing is at multiple levels: ESC, district, and school. ● The RIT uses (protected) data for decision-making & reporting to stakeholders.
District Implementation Teams at LEAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leadership provides vision and alignment with related initiatives, and supports implementation through allocation of resources and removing barriers to implementation. ● Implementation team identified and charged with planning, monitoring, problem solving, and continuous improvement of implementation efforts ● An RTI specialist is identified. ● Data sharing is at multiple levels: ESC, district, and school. ● Data used for internal decision-making and reporting to stakeholders
School Building Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Principal supports implementation with vision and support for necessary structures and functions ● Building leadership team is established ● Team participates in training ● Practices for RTI literacy & behavior implemented ● Fidelity measures collected and used to improve implementation ● Student outcome data collected and used (SWIS & DIBELS)


Supporting Regional and District Implementation Teams

The improvement strategy will use both quantitative and qualitative data to track progress across project objectives at each level of the system, on at least quarterly intervals. Attention to the various components of implementation drivers (Fixsen et al., 2005) is an important feature of the management process. It requires attention not only to training and coaching, but identification of barriers within the organization itself that may impede implementation and sustainability. The use of defined measures will inform leadership at each level regarding progress made and issues to be addressed. Aligned with the PEP-PIP cycle of feedback to assure that policies inform practice and practices are informing policies (Fixsen and Blasé, 2009), these measures with related intervals for use are outlined in the evaluation plan.

Implementation design includes continuing support for new practices at each level. To this end, the Core Management Team will develop and participate in peer/implementers' networks for members of participating regional and district implementation teams, beginning in the third quarter of Year 2. This network will support shared problem solving, clarification of vision and expectations, and build a professional communication system.

Five-Year Improvement Strategy Overview

The following table is a blueprint for the Implementation Strategy. Timelines and milestones are included in this table that are being used to track progress toward achievement. The chart is currently being used as a working document to guide improvement strategy implementation and progress. Year One implementation started on October 1, 2015, and each year runs from October 1 – September 30. Each year indicates the quarter that the activity will take place.

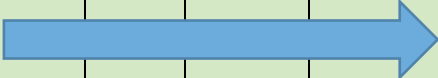
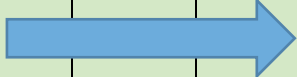
Exhibit 17-2(b).6: Five-Year Implementation Plan							
Goal 1 Establish a standards-based and high quality system of PD/TA that builds capacity and supports fidelity in the implementation of evidence-based practices at the regional, district and school levels.							
Objective 1.1 SPDG PD provided at the State level will evidence increase implementation of PD practices.							
Activities	Responsible Team	Milestones	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
1.1a Establish project management structure, team protocols, fidelity to protocols	Core Management Team	Structure in place; protocols developed; team assessing its own performance	Q1 Q2				
1.1b Establish structures and protocols for regional and district implementation teams; develop and implement measures for fidelity to protocols	Core Management Team	Established and fidelity measures in place	Q1 Q2				
1.1c Implement protocols for all levels of training, coaching, TA for RTI	Core Management Team under the direction of full SIT	Protocols utilized for training and coaching	Q4				
1.1d Fidelity to protocols	Core Management	Fidelity assessed	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q4

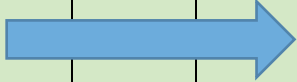

measured	Team under the direction of full SIT	through observation and participant feedback					
1.1e Supports determined and implemented to improve/sustain adherence to protocols and standards	Core Management Team under the direction of fill SIT	Assessments analyzed and adjustments made for subsequent training		Q1- Q4			
Objective 1.2 Professional development provided at the regional level will evidence increased implementation of PD practices.							
Activities	Responsible Team	Milestones	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
1.2a SPDG protocols implemented at regional level	Management Team RTI	Protocols utilized for training and coaching	Q4				
1.2b Fidelity to protocols measured	Management Team, RIT	Fidelity assessed through observation and participant feedback	Q4				
1.2c Supports determined and implemented to improve and sustain adherence to	Management Team RIT	Assessments analyzed and adjustments made for subsequent training	Q4				

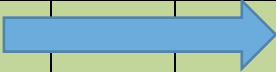
protocols and standards							
Objective 1.3 Professional development provided at the district level will evidence increased implementation of PD practices.							
Activities	Responsible Team	Milestones	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
1.3a SPDG PD protocols implemented at district levels	RIT DIT	Protocols utilized for training and coaching	Q4				
1.3b Fidelity to protocols measures	RIT DIT	Fidelity assessed through observations and participant feedback	Q4				
1.3c Supports determined and implemented to improve and sustain adherence to protocols and standards	RIT DIT	Assessments analyzed and adjustments made for subsequent training	Q4				

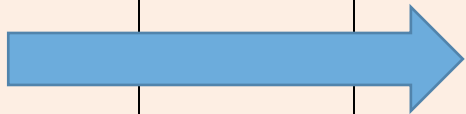
Goal 2 Provide PD/TA at the regional and district levels that supports the implementation of research-based RTI							
Objective 2.1 The State Implementation Team will demonstrate improvement of the implementation components indicated in the SISEP State Capacity Assessment by the end of a three-year action plan							
Activities	Responsible Team	Milestone	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
2.1 a Develop and annually revise the complete LEA project participant application	Core Management	Application created and	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q 3

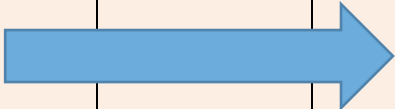
process, including the application form and selection criteria	Team under the direction of full SIT	disseminated to LEAs					
Objective 2.2 Regional implementation teams will demonstrate improvement of the implementation components indicated in the SISEP Regional Capacity Assessments by the end of a three-year action plan							
<i>Note:</i> All activities for LRSD begin in Year 1, with first cohort of schools; subsequent cohorts added each year.							
Activities	Responsible Team	Milestones	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
2.2a Implement the annual LEA project participant application cycle	Core Management Team under the direction of full SIT	LEA participants selected		Q3	Q3	Q3	Q3
2.2b Complete Regional SISEP capacity assessment	RIT	Capacity assessment completed, analyzed, shared with LEA/regional participants	Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4
2.2c Training in RTI literacy and PBIS	Core management Team	On-line modules installed; On-site modules ready for training events	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q3
2.1d Complete SISEP capacity assessment	Core Management Team under the direction of full SIT	Capacity assessment completed and analyzed	Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4
2.1e Select and install the essential elements of the RTI, literacy and PBIS training	Core Management	On-line modules	Q2- Q4	Q1- Q4			

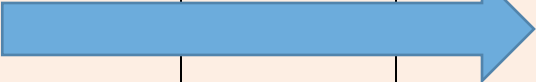
modules 2.1e.i for participants knowledge and skill development 2.1e.ii for parents 2.1e.iii for trainers and coaches	Team under the direction of full SIT	installed; On-site modules ready for training events					
2.1f Train PTI staff in RTI training modules	Core Management Team under the direction of full SIT	Training events completed; PD evaluation from participants and observers analyzed	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q4
2.2g Select trainers and coaches	RIT DIT	Trainers and Coaches identified and provided with follow-up supports	Q4				
2.2h Provide training to identified DIT participants	RIT DIT	Training events completed; PD observation and participant evaluations analyzed	Q4	Q1 Q3	Q1 Q3	Q1 Q3	Q1 Q3
2.2i Provide training to targeted trainers and coaches	RIT DIT	Training events completed; PD evaluated and analyzed for fidelity		Q1 Q4			
2.2j Measures fidelity and impact of training and coaching	Core Management Team under the direction of full	Trainer and coaches analyze impact; determine		Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4

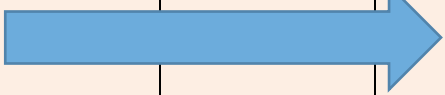

	SIT, RIT	subsequent supports					
2.2k Measure implementation of integrated RTI practices at district and schools levels	Core Management Team, RIT	Implementation Fidelity measurements completed		Q3	Q3	Q3	Q3
2.2l Provide TA and supports to sustain implementation	RIT	TA and supports delivered; impact assessed; follow-up determined; peer networks implemented		Q3 Q4			
Objective 2.3 District implementation teams will demonstrate improvement in the implementation components indicated in the SISEP District Capacity Assessment by the end of a three-year action plan.							
Note: All activities for LRSD begin in year 1. With first cohort of 6 schools; subsequent cohorts added each year.							
Activities	Responsible Team	Milestone	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
2.3a Provide training on RTI	RIT	Training events completed; PD evaluation completed	Q4	Q1 Q3	Q1 Q3	Q1 Q3	Q1 Q3
2.3b Provide coaching to district teams	RIT	Coaching, impact assessed; follow-up determined	Q4	Q1 Q4			
2.3c Follow-up supports provided	RIT	Impact assessed; coaching/TA	Q4	Q1 Q3	Q1 Q3	Q1 Q3	Q1 Q3

		evaluated and adjusted					
2.3d District capacity assessed	RIT	Capacity assessment analyzed shared with district; Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle begins	Q3	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4
Objective 2.4 School leadership teams will demonstrate improvement with RTI implementation fidelity by the end of a three-year action plan.							
Note: All activities for LRSD begin year 1, with first cohort of 6 schools; subsequent cohorts added each year							
Activities	Responsible Team	Milestones	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
2.4a School leadership team receives training, coaching support for district team	DIT	Initial program implementation	Q4	Q1 Q4			
2.4b RTI implementation fidelity rubric completed	DIT	Rubric results analyzed; action plan created; improvement plan implemented (Plan-Do-Study-Act begins)	Q4	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q3
2.4c TA and coaching needs are identified	School Leaderships Team and DIT	Customized supports are provided, including more training, coaching follow up	Q4	Q3 Q4	Q3 Q4	Q3 Q4	Q3 Q4

Goal 3. Provide PD/TA at the regional and district levels to implement integrated RTI evidence-based practices in literacy and behavior at the school level to support improved outcomes for students with disabilities third through fifth grades							
Objective 3.1 School leadership teams will demonstrate improvement over time as measured by the PBIS Fidelity Instruments.							
Note: All activities for LRSD begin in Year 1, with first cohort of 6 schools; subsequent cohorts added each year.							
Activities	Responsible Team	Milestone	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
3.1 PBIS Self-assessment survey	Core Management Team	Assessment conducted; results reviewed by school leadership teams	Q4	Q1 Q4	Q1 Q4	Q1 Q4	Q1 Q4
3.1 b Schools training	Core Management Team	Training is delivered, PD evaluated and training impact is measured	Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4	Q2 Q4
3.1 c Coaching and follow-up TA	Core Management Team and DIT	PBIS fidelity measures implemented; improvement planning completed		Q1- Q4			
Objective 3.2 Schools within districts that are maintaining fidelity or demonstrating annual improvements in fidelity will demonstrate annual reduction in office discipline referrals.							
Note: All activities for LRSD begin in Year 1, with first cohort of 6 schools; subsequent cohorts added each year.							
Activities	Responsible Team	Milestone	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
3.2a SWIS is	DIT	SWIS used as		Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1

installed and supported by district for building PBIS leadership; training in SWIS is provided		intended; data informs building PBIS team; PBIS implementation improves					
3.2b SWIS data reviewed regularly; building team achieves fidelity standard	School Leadership Team DIT	Number of office discipline referrals reduced		Q1 Q4			
							
Objective 3.3 School level participants will demonstrate improvement in implementation of literacy components over time and teams will achieve implementation fidelity.							
Note: All activities for LRSD begin in Year 1, with first cohorts of 6 schools; subsequent cohorts added each year.							
Activities	Responsible Team	Milestone	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
3.3 a Self-assessment survey for literacy	DIT	Building team reviews data for self-assessment; data informs team planning additional training; coaching needs identified	Q4	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1

3.3 b Training is provided	DIT	Implementation of evidence-based practices improves	Q4	Q1 Q4			
3.3 c Coaching and follow-up TA	DIT	Teachers achieve fidelity in use of evidence based practices		Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1
Objective 3.4 Schools within districts that are maintaining fidelity or demonstrating annual improvements in fidelity will show an annual increase on grade level benchmarks for students with disabilities in third through fifth grade.							
Note: All activities for LRSD begin Year1, with first cohort of 6 schools; subsequent cohorts added each year.							
Activities	Responsible Team	Milestone	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
3.4a Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) or an evidence based literacy screener is installed and supported by school and district leaders	DIT	DIBELS or an evidence based literacy screener implemented schoolwide as planned		Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1

3.4b Staff is trained in DIBELS or an evidence based literacy screener	DIT	DIBELS or an evidence based literacy screener data informs instructional practices for individual students		Q1- Q4	Q1- Q4	Q1- Q4	Q1- Q4
3.4c Literacy practices are implemented with coaching supports as needed	DIT	Teachers demonstrate improvement in use of evidence-based practices		Q1 Q4			
3.4d DIBELS or an evidence based literacy screener used with fidelity	School Leadership Team and DIT	Students demonstrate improved achievement		Q2- Q4			

2(c) Specify how the State will involve multiple offices within the SEA (and other State agencies) to support LEAs in scaling up and sustaining the implementation of the EBPs once they have been implemented with fidelity.

The ADE Assistant Commissioner, Division of Learning Services prioritized efforts to support schools to improve instruction through RTI. This improvement strategy was developed through collaborative planning across multiple ADE units including Special Education, Curriculum and Assessment and School Improvement. This collaborative process resulted in an implementation design supported across the ADE and a commitment to leverage resources and adhere to common professional development and implementation standards throughout the initiative. Thus, the SPDG will rely on unified efforts to braid existing programs and resources. This will improve the efficacy of integrating and aligning practices and/or initiatives that have shared components and/or parallel processes (Adelman & Taylor, 2003; McLaughlin & Mitra, 2001).

Alignment of ADE Efforts

The Assistant Commissioner was deliberate in the inclusion of staff from multiple ADE units with other leaders in education in the development of this improvement strategy.

The ADE Curriculum and Instruction Unit works with many stakeholders to provide quality professional learning opportunities for Arkansas educators. Intensive professional development is offered to support educators with the implementation of comprehensive literacy instruction aligned to State Standards.

The ADE School Improvement Unit supports districts and schools in their efforts to improve student achievement. The unit brokers resources aligned to specific district or school needs. The School Improvement Unit will work in close collaboration with the SPDG, with ADE School Improvement Specialists serving on the State Implementation Team and Regional Implementation Teams. These specialists will ensure alignment of services to schools and districts across ADE initiatives.

The SSIP has allowed the ADE-SEU to strengthen existing partnerships with internal and external groups involved in the education of students with disabilities and as well as build new partnerships. The ADE-SEU will continue its stakeholder engagement into Phase III of the SSIP as the plan outline above is implemented.

Phase II Component #3: Evaluation

3(a) Specify how the evaluation is aligned to the theory of action and other components of the SSIP and the extent to which it includes short-term and long-term objectives to measure implementation of the SSIP. Specify its impact on achieving measurable improvement in SIMR(s) for children and youth with disabilities.

The ADE has created a comprehensive evaluation plan to evaluate the two improvement strategies detailed above in the two previous components. To ensure alignment of the evaluation plan to the theory of action, the ADE developed a logic model for each strategy. The logic model was essential because it operationalized the theory of action and established short, intermediate, and long term goals and outcomes.

Evaluation overview

The evaluation of improvement strategy number one, a coordinated PD and TA system, will first involve measuring short term outcomes of how multiple offices increase their knowledge and skill level around the components of the system. The ADE believes with increased knowledge and skill, will come the opportunity for cultural change in how multiple offices interact and work with each other. Short term outcomes for this strategy will be measured internally using perceptual surveys of participating units. To assess the intermediate outcomes of cultural change between ADE Units, the ADE will use the Leading by Convening (2014) Doing the Work Together Rubric (page 34). Ultimately the long term outcomes of this strategy are measured by whether the coordinated PD and TA system provided timely and targeted, differentiated PD and TA to meet the needs of local education agencies (LEA) who have received support through the system resulting in improved literacy outcomes in grades third through fifth. Improved outcomes for student with disabilities will be measured using the statewide literacy assessment as outlined in the SIMR.

The evaluation of improvement strategy number two, implementation of Response-to-Intervention (RTI), is aligned with the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) evaluation plan. The same external evaluation team written into the SPDG, Public Sector Consultants, will evaluate the implementation of RTI. Implementation activities will include face-to-face and online training, coaching, technical assistance which includes phone, web and onsite consultations, shared problem solving, and peer learning through communities of practice. Participants will be general and special educators, administrators, and related service providers at the state, regional, district, and school levels. Evaluation will include qualitative and quantitative measures of state, regional, district, and school level implementation fidelity, capacity change, content knowledge and skills, and student growth/achievement over time.

Both improvement strategies will lead to a better system for the delivery of professional development (PD) and technical assistance (TA) to LEAs. The available supports and services will give teachers better instructional and behavioral classroom strategies that affect student learning and academic success. By improving teachers' classroom management and instructional strategies for diverse student populations, students will

have greater opportunities to succeed in the classroom resulting in improved student outcomes as seen on statewide assessments. The SIMR will use the statewide assessment to determine if the SSIP activities result in a higher percentage of students making gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintaining a proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment.

3(b) Specify how the evaluation includes stakeholders and how information from the evaluation will be disseminated to stakeholders.

Arkansas has included numerous stakeholders representing diverse groups in providing information that leads to the development of the SSIPs evaluation component. The ADE-SEU has developed meaningful partnerships that are ongoing and impactful throughout Phase I of the SSIP and these representatives are committed to supporting the implementation of Phase II of the SSIP. (See Stakeholder Participation Chart in the Phase I appendix on page 1 and the Stakeholder Representation on pages 11–14). Additional stakeholders added for Phase II include the leadership of Little Rock School District and six elementary schools being served for implementation of RTI as well as the RTI State Advisory.

The RTI State Advisory is being co-lead by the ADE Curriculum and Instruction Unit and the ADE Special Education Unit. The purpose of the RTI State Advisory is to more effectively address statewide RTI implementation including identifying strengths and barriers, guiding implementation, and supporting effective communication. The RTI State Advisory meets quarterly in Little Rock. This provides an opportunity for feedback on implementation challenges, professional development, and guidance documents as well as the development of a common language and vocabulary across members. The RTI State Advisory includes a teacher, principal, superintendent, 504 coordinator, RTI coordinator, counselor, Education Service Cooperative (ESC) director, ESC teacher center coordinator, representative from institutions of higher education, the SPDG director and staff, ADE ELL Unit, ADE School Based Mental Health Unit, ADE School Improvement Unit, ADE Curriculum and Instruction Unit, and the ADE Special Education Unit. Additionally, there is a state Core Management Team that meets weekly or more as needed.

Stakeholders for the SSIP are updated monthly through calls and/or quarterly meetings on current activities that include the development and implementation of the evaluation work. It is during these times that stakeholders have the opportunity to provide feedback on the evaluation plan and suggest changes to the collection tools. Further, each January, as part of the APR submission process, Arkansas presents the entire APR to stakeholders so they can review the State's results on all indicators and discuss future activities that could lead to improved student outcomes.

The participating six elementary schools in Little Rock School District provide some of the most critical stakeholder feedback. Through the SPDG funds provided to LRSD, there is a dedicated RTI specialist working directly with the District Leadership Team and six elementary schools building leadership teams on the implementation of RTI as well as providing professional development (PD) and technical assistance (TA). Daily interaction

in these schools allows for on-site monitoring of the implementation process, immediate technical assistance, and feedback to the multiple implementation teams (state, regional, and district) resulting in modifications to the SSIP as necessary and in a timely manner.

3(c) Specify the methods that the State will use to collect and analyze data to evaluate implementation and outcomes of the SSIP and the progress toward achieving intended improvements in the SIMR(s).

An overview of the ADE’s short, intermediate, and long term outcomes established for the two improvement strategies of the SSIP are presented in Exhibit 17-3(c). The outcomes and evaluations outlined in Strategy one and Strategy two in Exhibit 17-3(c).1 guide Arkansas’ success in reaching the long-term goals of the SSIP and the targets set forth with the SIMR. For each improvement strategy, Exhibit 17-3(c) provides the following information:

- Type of outcome
- Outcome description
- Evaluation question
- Performance indicator
- Measurement/data collection method
- Timeline of projected initiation and completion dates

The evaluation of ADE’s infrastructure changes measures the perceived and actual changes needed to effectively align initiatives identified in Phase I. A key element in measuring infrastructure change is the perception of collaboration among ADE staff. ADE staff and leadership have committed to working across units on initiatives as well as coordinating TA activities when providing more routine activities. For example, the Special Education Unit has been working jointly with the School Improvement Unit in some of Arkansas’ most struggling school districts. By aligning the work of various units, technical assistance can be more targeted in participating districts and schools providing teachers the strategies that can lead to better student outcomes.

To measure the successful implementation of RTI both capacity and fidelity tools are being used. Arkansas is partnering with the State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices (SISEP) Center and will utilize their capacity assessment tools annually to determine baseline and annual changes in the implementation capacity at all levels — State Capacity Assessment (SCA), Regional Capacity Assessment (RCA) and District Capacity Assessment (DCA).

Arkansas has also partnered with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) Center on Response-to-Intervention and will measure school level implementation fidelity using the RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric. RTI not only focuses on academics such as literacy but also has a component to address the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS). Annually, the PBIS Tiered Fidelity Assessment will be given to measure the implementation of PBIS in participating schools.

Arkansas will also use the Elementary Literacy Assessment Tool (Grades K - 2) and/or Secondary Literacy Assessment Tool (Grades 3 - 8) two to three times a year to gauge schools' implementation of a school-wide literacy process.

Arkansas will further measure the effect of RTI on student outcomes throughout the school year. First, office discipline referral data will be tracked within participating schools that include demographic elements for subpopulation analysis. The data will inform the SSIP if the percent of schools within districts that are maintaining fidelity or demonstrating annual improvements in fidelity have reduced office discipline referrals for students with disabilities in grades 3-5. Second, DIBELS or an evidence based literacy screener will be given two to three times a year to evaluate the effect of high fidelity of the literacy practices. The data will inform the SSIP as to the percent of schools within districts, that maintain literacy fidelity or demonstrate annual improvement in fidelity, that see increases in literacy screener scores of students with disabilities in grades 3-5.

Measuring the changes in discipline and student screening scores such as DIBELS is important to ensuring the strategies of the SSIP are having the targeted effect on the SIMR. The SIMR measures the percent of students with disabilities in targeted schools in grades 3- 5 who made gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintained a proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment.

Exhibit 17-3(c).1: Overview of Short and Long Term Outcomes with Evaluation Methods for the SSIP

Improvement Strategy 1: Create a system of professional development and technical assistance that is aligned with other ADE Units and is differentiated based on LEAs' needs as evidenced by data.

Type of Outcome	Outcome Description	Evaluation Questions	How Will We Know the Intended Outcome Was Achieved? (performance indicator)	Measurement/Data Collection Methods	Timeline (projected initiation and completion dates)
Short Term	Increase the knowledge of ADE collaborating Unit staff on how state-level resources for professional development (PD) and technical assistance (TA) can be coordinated	Has the knowledge of ADE collaborating Units staff increased in their understanding of how state-level resources for PD and TA can be coordinated?	The percent of ADE collaborating Unit staff who report an increased understanding of how the state-level resources for PD and TA can be coordinated	Annual Perceptual Survey of ADE Collaborating Unit Staff Measurement will be based on how the survey questions are answered. The annual results will guide adjustments to the process	Initiation Survey Summer 2016 Annually each summer through Summer 2019
Short Term	Increase the knowledge of ADE collaborating Unit staff on how to use data from across ADE for the selection of PD and TA to meet LEA needs	Has the knowledge of collaborating ADE Unit staff increased on how to use data from across ADE for the selection of PD and TA to meet LEA needs?	The percent of ADE collaborating Unit staff who report an increased knowledge in using data from across ADE for the selection of PD and TA meet LEA needs		
Short term	Increase the ability	Has the ability of	The percent of ADE	The Survey questions	

	of ADE collaborating Unit staff on how to use data from across ADE to determine dissemination strategies for PD and TA to meet LEA needs for improved RTI outcomes	ADE collaborating Unit staff increased in how to use data from across ADE to determine dissemination strategies for PD and TA to meet LEA needs for improved RTI outcomes?	collaborating Unit staff who report an improved ability to use data from across ADE to determine dissemination strategies for PD and TA to meet LEA needs for improved RTI outcomes	are to be determined Arkansas is anticipating a 90% response rate.	
Intermediate	Increase the practice of ADE collaborating Unit's staff intentionally sharing ownership in goals and outcomes for key overlapping PD and TA initiatives	Is the ADE collaborating Units staff sharing ownership of goals and outcomes for key overlapping PD and TA initiatives?	The percent of ADE collaborating Units staff that report an increase in shared ownership of key overlapping PD and TA initiatives.	Annual survey based on the Leading by Convening Doing the Work Together Rubric Measurement will be based on how the survey questions are answered and annual results will guide adjustments to the process. Arkansas is anticipating a 90% response rate.	Initiation October 2016 Completion 2019

Intermediate	Increase the practices of ADE collaborating Unit staff in how they allocate, differentiate, and disseminate PD and TA resources to meet LEA needs	Has the ADE collaborating Unit staff changed their practices in the allocation, differentiation, and dissemination of PD and TA resources to meet LEA needs?	The percent of targeted LEAs who report seeing a change in ADE's practices in how PD and TA resources are allocated, differentiated, and disseminated	<p>Annual perceptual Survey and/or Focus Groups of LEA that have received support from the coordinated PD and TA system</p> <p>Measurement will be based on how the survey questions are answered and/or focus group feedback and annual results will guide adjustments to the process.</p> <p>Survey and/or focus group questions are to be determined.</p> <p>Arkansas is anticipating a 90% response rate of survey and participation in focus groups.</p>	<p>Initiation May 2016</p> <p>Completion 2019</p>
Long Term	Implement a collaborative and responsive tiered system of supports that meets the diverse needs of LEA and ensures timely and targeted PD and TA that is	Does the ADE's collaborative and responsive tiered system of supports meet the diverse needs of LEA and ensure timely and targeted differentiated PD and TA that will	Percent of targeted LEAs that have received support from the coordinated PD and TA system, who report the system provided timely and targeted differentiated PD and TA that met their needs resulting in	<p>Annual summative evaluation survey for targeted LEA that have received support from the coordinated PD and TA system</p> <p>By the end of 2019, 60% of targeted LEAs,</p>	<p>Initiation Dec 2018</p> <p>Completion 2019</p>

	differentiated and will lead to improved student outcomes	lead to improved student outcomes?	improved student outcomes	that have received support from the coordinated PD and TA system, report the system provided timely and targeted differentiated PD and TA that met their needs resulting in improved student outcomes	
Long Term	With the support of the coordinated PD and TA system, the targeted LEAs will increase the literacy achievement of students with disabilities (SWD) in third through fifth grade on the statewide assessment.	Did the ADE increase the literacy achievement of students with disabilities in targeted schools for grades 3-5?	Percent of SWD in targeted schools in grades 3- 5 who made gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintained a proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment	Annual Statewide Assessment Data By the end of 2019, 50.40% of SWD in targeted schools in grades 3- 5 will make gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintain a proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment	Initiation 2014-15 Statewide Assessment Completion 2019
Improvement Strategy 2: In collaboration with other ADE Units, Restructure Arkansas' Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model using evidence based personnel development to implement a multi-tiered system of supports for behavior and academics, with a focus on literacy.					
Type of Outcome	Outcome Description	Evaluation Questions	How Will We Know the Intended Outcome Was Achieved? (performance indicator)	Measurement/Data Collection Methods	Timeline (projected initiation and completion dates)

Short term	Increase the State Implementation Team's capacity to support RTI for Regional and District Implementation Teams	Did the State Implementation Team's capacity to support RTI for Regional and District Implementation Teams increase?	The percent of items on the SISEP State Capacity Assessment (SCA) that are fully in place	Annual SISEP State Capacity Assessment (SCA) Goal is to reach 80% by within a three implementation plan	Initiation May 2016 Completion 2019
Short Term	Increase the Regional Implementation Team's capacity to support RTI for District Implementation Teams	Are the Regional Implementation Teams' capacities to support RTI for District Implementation Teams increasing?	The percent of items on the SISEP Regional Capacity Assessment (RCA) that are fully in place	Annual SISEP Regional Capacity Assessment (RCA) Goal is to reach 80% within a three year implementation plan	Initiation April 2016
Short Term	Increase District Implementation Team's capacity to support RTI for School Leadership Teams	Are the District Implementation Teams capacities to support RTI for School Leadership Teams increasing?	The percent of items on the SISEP District Capacity Assessment (DCA) that are fully in place.	Annual SISEP District Capacity Assessment (DCA) Goal is to reach 80% within a three implementation plan	Initiation February 2016
Short Term	School Leadership Teams increase their capacity to support an RTI Framework academically and behaviorally	Are School Leadership Teams increasing their capacity to support an RTI Framework for academics and behavior?	The percent of items on the RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric that are fully in place	Annual RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric Goal is to reach 80% within a three year implementation plan	Initiation May 2016

Short Term	Improved implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in schools within targeted districts	Did schools within targeted districts increase implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)?	The percent of items on the PBIS Tiered Fidelity Assessment that are fully in place	Annual PBIS Tiered Fidelity Assessment Goal is to reach 80% within a three year implementation plan	Initiation March 2016
Short Term	Improved implementation of essential schoolwide literacy components in schools within targeted districts	Did schools within targeted districts increase implementation of essential schoolwide literacy components?	The percent of items on the Elementary Literacy Assessment Tool (Grades K - 2) or Secondary Literacy Assessment Tool (Grades 3 - 8) that are fully in place	Annual completion of the Elementary Literacy Assessment Tool (Grades K - 2) or Secondary Literacy Assessment Tool (Grades 3 - 8) Goal is to reach 80% within a three year implementation plan	Initiation March 2016
Intermediate	The schools within districts that are maintaining PBIS fidelity or demonstrating annual improvements in fidelity will reduce office discipline referrals, especially students with disabilities in	Did the schools within the districts that are maintaining PBIS fidelity or demonstrating annual improvements in fidelity reduce office discipline referrals of SWD in grades 3-5?	The percent of schools within districts that are maintaining fidelity or demonstrating annual improvements in fidelity that have reduced office discipline referrals for SWD in grades 3-5	Annual data collection of office discipline referral data by demographics By 2019, 80% of schools within districts that are maintaining fidelity or demonstrating annual improvements in fidelity will reduce	Initiation Dec 2017

	grades 3-5.			office discipline referrals for SWD in grades 3-5.	
Intermediate	The schools within districts that are maintaining literacy fidelity or demonstrating annual improvements in fidelity will show an annual increase on literacy screener scores, especially students with disabilities in grades 3-5.	Did the schools within districts that are maintaining literacy fidelity or demonstrating annual improvements in fidelity increase on literacy screener scores for SWD in grades 3-5?	Percent of schools within districts that maintain literacy fidelity or demonstrate annual improvement in fidelity that increase literacy screener scores for students with disabilities in grades 3-5.	DIBELS or an evidence based literacy screener Administered three times a year	Initiation September 2016
Intermediate	The schools within districts that are maintaining literacy and behavior fidelity or demonstrating annual improvements in fidelity will show an increase in the percentage of students with disabilities	Are the schools within districts that are maintaining literacy and behavior fidelity or demonstrating annual improvements in fidelity showing an increase in the percentage of students with disabilities in grades 3-5 who are inside the regular classroom 80% or	Percent of SWD in grades 3-5 who are inside the regular classroom 80% or more of the school day	Annually collected via the Statewide Student Management (SMS)--- December 1 child count By 2019, participating schools will increase the percent of SWD in grade 3-5 who are inside the regular classroom 80% or more of the school day from 63.68% to 68.68% (a 5	Initiation December 2015

	educated within the general education environment for grades 3-5.	more of the school day?		percentage point increase).	
Long Term	Increasing the literacy achievement of students with disabilities in third through fifth grade	Did the ADE increase the literacy achievement of students with disabilities in targeted schools for grades 3-5?	Percent of SWD in targeted schools in grades 3- 5 who made gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintained a proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment	Annual Statewide Assessment Data By the end of 2019, 50.40% of SWD in targeted schools in grades 3- 5 will make gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintain a proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment	Initiation 2014-15 Statewide Assessment Completion 2019

3(d) Specify how the State will use the evaluation data to examine the effectiveness of the implementation, assess the progress toward achieving intended improvements, and make modifications to the SSIP as necessary.

The State will review evaluation data as it becomes available. The IDEA data manager will facilitate regular reviews of state and project data, oversee data dissemination protocols, and assure data are protected. The data manager will also compile other data as needed and meet with the SSIP team as well as the Core Management Team as needed.

The evaluations on infrastructure changes are being measured annually across targeted ADE Units. The IDEA Data & Research Office will compile the data and conduct analysis that the data manager will share with the SSIP team and stakeholders via webinars and/or face-to-face meetings. To measure the infrastructure change the ADE-SEU will collect data from participating ADE units using (a) a survey developed in conjunction with the Center for Applied Studies in Education at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, (b) the *Leading by Convening* Doing the Work Together Rubric, and (c) the SISEP State Capacity Assessment (SCA). It is important to review these data sets with a broad perspective to ascertain if the infrastructure capacity is increasing or if changes in leadership and/or staff turnover is stagnating the progress.

External evaluators from Public Sector Consultants will support the evaluation of RTI. Public Sector Consultants are contracted through the current SPDG, and have had an integral role in the development of the evaluation plan for the SSIP. They will support and facilitate the review of project evaluation data and the interpretation of qualitative project data, and will assist in developing appropriate communication strategies to report pertinent data to key stakeholders. Essential to this function is supporting communication feedback loops across and between levels of the system in order to assure the data are timely, accurate, and easily understood by all project stakeholders. Data will drive appropriate and timely responses to improve and support implementation of the project. The evaluators will consult with the SPDG Director and the special education data manager as well as the Core Management Team monthly, or more if needed, and will provide updates at most state implementation team meetings.

Data is also collected locally through assessments. The assessments will be given two to three times a year in all SSIP targeted schools. Additionally, as part of the SPDG, there is a dedicated LRSD RTI specialist (paid for by the SPDG for five years) working directly in the six elementary schools and future schools being served. This person works with the district and building leadership on the implementation of RTI as well as providing professional development and technical assistance. Daily interaction in the targeted buildings provides on-site monitoring of the implementation process, instant technical assistance, and feedback to the multiple implementation teams (state, regional, and district) allowing modifications to the SSIP as necessary and in a timely manner. In future targeted SSIP LEAs a RTI specialist will be identified to support the district in implementation and scale-up.

SSIP APPENDIX I

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Revision to Phase I: SIMR #3 Component 3(e)

3(e) The State provided baseline data and targets that are measurable and rigorous (expressed as percentages) for each of the five years from FFY 2014 through FFY 2018, with the FFY 2018 target reflecting measurable improvement over the FFY 2013 baseline data.

Targets have been established to reflect a measurable improvement over the FFY 2013 baseline data. The initial targets were set using data for grades 3-5 from Little Rock School District’s 15 elementary schools. As schools are added through scale-up, the targets may need to be updated to reflect the changing population. Targets are measurable and rigorous through FFY 2018.

FFY 2013 Baseline	FFY 2014	FFY 2015	FFY 2016	FFY 2017	FFY 2018
45.65%	44.00%	45.60	47.20%	48.80%	50.40%

A. Number of SWD who had valid assessment results for current and previous year	150
B. Number of SWD who made gains toward proficiency reaching a level nearer to proficient	37
C. Number of SWD who made gains toward proficiency and reached a level of proficient	11
D. Number of SWD who were proficient in the previous year and maintained their level of proficient level	18
Percent of SWD in grades 3- 5 that made gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintained proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment = ((B+ C+D)/A)*100	44.00%

The growth of targets from the baseline year was established using the *Guide for Describing Meaningful Differences*, which was developed by John Carr at WestEd. The purpose of the tool is to describe differences in the percentages of achievement results. Using the table presented in Exhibit I-17.3(e).1 Arkansas selected the high end of moderate growth over the next five years.

Exhibit I-17.3(e).1: Guide for Describing Meaningful Differences

Descriptive Difference	Total Number of Students being Compared			
	50	100	200	500+
	Percentage Point Difference			
None	0-12	0-8	0-5	0-3
Small	13-15	9-11	6-7	4-5

Moderate	16-19	12-14	8-10	6-8
Fairly Large	20-25	15-17	11-13	9-10
Large	26-29	18-24	14-19	11-15
Very Large	30+	25+	20+	16+

Although, the tool was not meant to set targets, it provided guidance in selecting a percentage point increase for the next five years that would be meaningful. Arkansas selected a growth rate of eight percentage points from FFY 2013 baseline to FFY 2018, resulting in an annual growth rate of 1.6 percentage points. While the annual growth rate may seem small, as schools throughout the central and Delta region are added to the implementation, the number of students being measured will increase substantially.

Revision to Phase I: Component #4 Selection of Coherent Improvement Strategies 4(a)

4(a) A description that demonstrates how the improvement strategies were selected and will lead to a measurable improvement in the State-identified result(s).

The ADE-SEU, in collaboration with stakeholders, selected improvement strategies based on an extensive data and infrastructure analysis. The ADE-SEU strategically engaged the Advisory Council, Arkansas Education Associations, Administrators, teachers, parents and ADE personnel in identifying infrastructure needs and contributing factors of low performance of literacy achievement for SWD. Based on this analysis, ambitious but achievable improvement strategies were developed that the ADE will have the capacity to support. The improvement strategies selected focus on a combination of State-level and LEA-level capability building components. It is important to the ADE that the strategies identified focus on building the capacity of the State personnel while simultaneously providing targeted supports to build the capacity of LEAs to implement evidence-based practices. Since capacity building and student outcomes are priorities across all the selected improvement strategies, it is essential that some of the strategies build the structures and systems necessary to identify and manage supports while the others focus on the PD and TA being provided. This purposeful selection between system strategies and content strategies is what differentiates the SSIP strategies from previously implemented improvement efforts and will ensure student outcomes are achieved.

The data analysis indicated concerns with the effectiveness, individualization, and differentiation of instruction, percentages of students educated within the general education classroom, and missed instruction due to disciplinary removals. This identification of contributing factors supported the development of strategies focused on RTI with an emphasis on literacy, behavior, and improving performance relative to least restrictive environment.

The infrastructure analysis identified multiple strengths and areas of need within the States infrastructure. While the restructuring of ADE-SEU's monitoring system to support a needs-based tiered system provides the resources and structure to shift from a total focus on compliance to a more balanced system that includes a focus on results, there remain several important needs. ADE-SEU's current online PD and TA system will be restructured to better support differentiated and targeted needs of LEAs. In addition, a concerted effort will be made within the ADE to build the internal capacity of personnel and align PD and TA efforts. These identified areas of need supported the development of a strategy that will focus on creating a special education system of PD and TA that is aligned with other ADE Units and is differentiated based on LEAs needs as evidenced by data.

The infrastructure analysis identified multiple strengths and areas of need within the States infrastructure. Informed by the extensive data and infrastructure analysis outlined above, the ADE-SEU, in collaboration with stakeholders, selected two infrastructure improvement strategies:

- Original Strategy # 1: Redesign a tiered state monitoring system that includes a focus on results with an emphasis on literacy and is aligned to other ADE monitoring systems.
- Original Strategy #2 Create a system of professional development and technical assistance that is aligned with other ADE Units and is differentiated based on LEAs needs as evidenced by data.

Strategy #1 focuses on the restructuring of ADE-SEU’s monitoring system to support a needs-based tiered system that provides the resources and structure to shift from a total focus on compliance to a more balanced system that includes a focus on results. Strategy #2 focuses on restructuring the current online PD and TA system to better support differentiated and targeted needs of LEAs. Strategy #2 also encompasses, a concerted effort within the ADE to build the internal capacity of personnel and align PD and TA efforts. These identified areas of need supported the development a special education system of PD and TA that is aligned with other ADE Units and is differentiated based on LEAs needs as evidenced by data.

When the state began SSIP Phase II with these two separate infrastructure improvement strategies in mind; however, when the SSIP leadership team begin the work of developing a PD and TA system, it became evident that the monitoring changes we envisioned in strategy #1 were actually outcomes of a well-designed PD and TA system. Accordingly, the state eliminated our original strategy #1, recognizing that it was not separate from strategy #2, but rather an important sub component. Moving forward we feel that our work focused on creating a coordinated monitoring system will be embedded within a PD and TA system that is aligned with other units and differentiated based on LEA needs.

The state also recognized that our original strategy #3, was also an important infrastructure improvement activity:

- Original Strategy #3: In collaboration with other ADE Units, Restructure Arkansas’ Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model using evidence based personnel development to implement a multi-tiered system of supports for behavior and academics, with a focus on literacy.

This strategy will provide the overall structure, systems, and essential components that will allow for EBPS to implemented with fidelity at the district level. This strategy provides the critical connection from state level infrastructure improvements to coherent improvement strategies at the district and student level.

Therefore, the specific strategies that will be used to improve state infrastructure to better support LEAs to implement and scale up EBPS to improve literacy proficiency for students with disabilities are:

- Revised Strategy #1 Create a system of professional development and technical assistance that is aligned with other ADE Units and is differentiated based on LEAs needs as evidenced by data.
- Revised Strategy #2: In collaboration with other ADE Units, Restructure Arkansas' Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model using evidence based personnel development to implement a multi-tiered system of supports for behavior and academics, with a focus on literacy.

In identifying our revised infrastructure strategies, the state acknowledged that to effect meaningful and sustainable change, we should start small and then scale up our infrastructure improvement work. Through work with the NCSI systems alignment collaborative the state found a focal point in which we could start this transformative work of coordinating initiatives. It was helpful for the State to think of the analogy provided by the collaborative of quilting together silos much like you would a quilt. To start the work, it is useful to focus on “quilting” together one or two silos, rather than the entire quilt. The state often returned to this analogy to help focus on work that was both ambitious and attainable. The state identified that Curriculum and Instruction unit (PD and TA for department) as well as the School Improvement Unit would be important units to collaborate with because they hold a lot of initiatives and resources related to identifying school level needs and providing PD and TA. The state felt that bring together the Special Ed Unit, Curriculum and Instruction Unit, and School Improvement Unit would be a manageable place to start the process of breaking down silos across the department of education. The state believes that success breeds success and that we are building a framework that can be extended to other units.

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Arkansas State Systemic Improvement Plan Acronym Sheet

Acronym	Acronym Meaning
AAEA	Arkansas Associate of Educational Administrators
AASEA	Arkansas Association of Special Education Administrators
ADE –SEU	Arkansas Department of Education –Special Education Unit
AIR	American Institute of Research
ASU	Arkansas State University
CCE	Center for Community Engagement
DCA	District Capacity Assessment
DIBELS	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
DIT	District Implementation Team
EBP	Evidence-Based Practice
ELL	English Language Learners
ESC	Education Service Cooperative
ESEA	Elementary Secondary Education Act
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act
LEAs	Local Education Agency’s
LRSD	Little Rock School District
PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
PD	Professional Development
PGPs	Professional Growth Plans
PSC	Public Sector Consultants
PTI	Parent Training and Information
RCA	Regional Capacity Assessment
RIT	Regional Implementation Team
RTI	Response-to-Intervention
SCA	State Capacity Assessment
SIMR	State Identified Measurable Results
SISEP	State Implementation of Scaling-up Evidence-Based Practices Center
SPDG	State Personal Development Grant
SSIP	State Systematic Improvement Plan
SWD	Student with Disabilities
SWIS	Schoolwide Information System
SWOT	Strengths Weakness Opportunities Threats
TA	Technical Assistance
TESS	Teacher Excellence and Support System

National Expects

National Advisors. Dr. Lucille Eber, National Center on Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports at the University of Oregon; Dr. Steve Goodman, the Michigan Integrated Behavior and Learning Initiative (MiBLSi); Dr. Stephanie Jackson, American Institute of Research; Ms. Barbara Sims, State Implementation and Scaling-Up of Evidence-Based Project (SISEP); and Dr. Rebecca Zumeta, American Institute of Research, have agreed to serve as national advisors to the RTI Improvement Strategy.

Lucille Eber, Ed.D., is the Director of the Midwest PBIS Network, and a collaborative partner with the U.S. Department of Education's National PBIS Center. The National PBIS Center supports state and school district initiatives for students with complex emotional and behavioral challenges. As the Illinois Director of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports for many years, Dr. Eber has facilitated PBIS implementation in over 1,800 schools. Dr. Eber is a former board member of the Illinois Federation of Families, the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health and the Association for Positive Behavior Supports. She regularly publishes articles on wraparound services, interagency systems of care and school-wide positive behavior supports.

Steve Goodman, Ph.D., is the director of Michigan's State Personnel Development Grant and for Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative, a statewide project through the Michigan Department of Education designed to improve student reading and behavior outcomes. He is on the Board of Directors for the International Association for Positive Behavior Support and is an implementation partner with the National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. He has co-authored articles on integrating behavior and academics in a MTSS.

Barbara Sims is Co-Director of the National SISEP Center in the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has 30 years experience in education as a teacher, administrator and consultant and has worked in private and public settings, including work at a State Education Agency. Barbara's current focus is the application of implementation research to the education field.

Stephanie Jackson, Ph.D., managing director at AIR, directs policy, research, and evaluation studies for federal, state, and private policymakers. Dr. Jackson has more than 30 years of experience in a variety of educational environments, including general and special education settings, magnet schools, charter schools, and institutions of higher education. She has been recognized for her educational leadership in schools and her practical and realistic perspective on the learning of all students, including students with disabilities. In 2010, Dr. Jackson became the project director for the National Center on RTI, which was funded by the OSEP. In this role, she oversaw the technical assistance efforts that helped states build capacity to support districts in implementing RTI.

Rebecca Zumeta, Ph.D., is a senior research analyst at the AIR. She has more than 10 years of experience working in general and special education and currently coordinates technical assistance and product development for A.I.R.'s National Center on Intensive Intervention. Previously, she worked for the Washington State Department of Special Education providing RTI technical assistance and helped redesign the state's alternate assessment. She has also worked on randomized controlled trials of mathematics interventions at Vanderbilt University and has co-authored several papers and articles on RTI, mathematics intervention, and curriculum-based measurement. She chairs the Professional Development Standards and Ethics Committee of the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) Division for Learning Disabilities, is a member of CEC's Division for Research.

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