

Minutes

State Advisory Council for the Education of Children with Disabilities

The Arkansas Advisory Council for the Education of Individuals with Disabilities met in the Conference Room at the Victory Building, Suite 445, on Thursday, January 21, 2016.

Council Members Present:

Cindy Ball
Dana Davis
Courtney Eubanks
Leslie Faulkner
Angeletta Giles
Julie Mayberry
Sherry Rogers
Eric Treat
Maryanne Caldwell, Designee for
Alan McClain, Commissioner, ARS
Stephanie Harvey, Designee for
Marylene Tate, ACEI

Special Education Staff Present:

Linda Barnes
Becky Cezar
Jody Fields
Jennifer Gonzales
Christina Foley
Lisa Haley
Beverly Leonard
Robin Stripling

Guest Present: Teresa Tate

The meeting began at 9:20 a.m. with Courtney Eubanks, Co-Chairperson, calling the Council meeting to order with the welcoming and introductions of the Advisory Council members, Arkansas Department of Education, Special Education Unit (ADE-SEU) staff, and the guest in attendance. Ms. Haley informed the council that Ms. Deborah Swink has stepped down as an Advisory Council member and as the chair. Ms. Eubanks stated that the council did not have a quorum present; therefore, the minutes from the July and October 2015 meetings could not be approved at this time.

Lisa Haley, Associate Director, ADE-SEU, welcomed new council members, Ms. Cindy Ball, Ms. Leslie Faulkner, Ms. Angeletta Giles, and Mr. Eric Treat.

Ms. Haley also introduced Ms. Hana Hunter, who joined the ADE-SEU as the Administrative Specialist and receptionist for the unit.

Ms. Becky Cezar, Administrator of Monitoring/Program Effectiveness, ADE-SEU, introduced Ms. Dara Delony as a new program advisor in the Monitoring/Program Effectiveness Section.

Jennifer Gonzales, Coordinator of SSIP and SPDG, introduced Ms. Lorena Harper, the Administrative Assistant for the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG). Ms. Harper is originally from Arkansas and has spent the last two years teaching in Honduras. Ms. Gonzales also introduced Ms. Yvonne Furniss, the SPDG Response to Intervention (RTI) literacy coordinator for K-12.

Presentation:

Dr. Jody Fields, Special Education Data Manager, reviewed Arkansas' 2014-2015 Special Education Annual Performance Report (APR) submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs, U. S. Department of Education (OSEP). GRADS360 is the platform used for states to submit the APR electronically each year.

Indicator 1: Graduation

Performance Indicator: Percent of youth with IEP's graduating from high school with a regular diploma within a four year period. Graduation is a calculation based on Title I and the target is a performance indicator of 85%. If a student stays over four years, it counts against the calculation. The reported rate is 83.14% for 2014-2015.

Indicator 2: Dropout

Performance Indicator: Percent of youth with an IEP dropping out of high school. The target for 2014-2015 is 2.62 % and the reported rate is 2.03%. The target was met.

Indicator 3: Assessments

Performance Indicator: Participation and performance of children with IEP's on statewide assessments.

Indicator 3A: Annual Measureable Objective.

The Annual Measurable Objectives are no longer applicable due to the passage of ESSA. The state is not required to report for the next two years.

Indicator 3B: Assessment

Performance Indicator: Participation rates for children with IEPs on the statewide assessment. The state must meet the target of 95% for reading and math. The reported rate for reading is 98.54% and the reported rate for math is 98.79%.

Indicator 3C: Assessment

Performance Indicator: Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level and alternate academic achievement standards. The Arkansas targets for Indicator 3C assessment were based on analysis of trend data.

Indicator 4: Suspension/Expulsion**Indicator 4A: Discipline**

Performance Indicator: Percent of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs. For the 2014-2015 school year, 12 districts out of 257 districts did not meet the target. The target is 5.43% and the actual rate is 4.67%.

Indicator 4B: Discipline

Compliance Indicator: Percent of districts that have significant discrepancy by race or ethnicity in the rate of suspensions and expulsions.

The federal target is zero percent. The State identified ten districts as having a significant discrepancy. After a review of their policies, procedures, and practices via the self-assessment, the State did not determine any district's discrepancies were based on inappropriate policies, procedures, and practices. Therefore, the target of zero percent was met.

Indicator 5: Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Performance Indicator: Percent of children ages six through twenty-one removed from regular class, served in public/private separate school, residential facility, homebound or hospital placement:

- A. Inside the regular class 80% or more of the day,
- B. Inside the regular class less than 40% of the day, or
- C. In separate schools, residential facilities or homebound/hospital placements.

The target for children inside the regular class 80% of the day or more is 55.93% and the actual rate is 52.51%. The target for children inside the regular class less than 40% of the day is 13.62% and the actual data is 13.56%. The target for children in separate schools, residential facilities or homebound/hospital placements is 2.53% and the actual rate is 2.32%.

Indicator 6: Preschool Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Performance Indicator: Percent of preschool children ages three through five with IEPs attending:

- A. Regular early childhood program, receiving the majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program;
- B. Separate special education class, separate school or residential facility including various types of therapy.

Arkansas is working with TA Centers using Powerful Data for 619, which is a section of the law specifically addressing early childhood. The State did meet the target for the number of students receiving services in a separate school or residential facility. The State did not meet the target for regular early childhood.

Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes

Performance Indicator: Percent of preschool children aged three through five with improved

- A. Positive social-emotional skills,
- B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and
- C. Use of appropriate behaviors.

Each outcome has two targets measuring the increased rate of growth when entering the program and then functioning within age expectations, when the child exits the program.

- A. Positive social-emotional skills
Entry: Target 89.64% - Actual rate 85.58%
Exit: Target 66.80% - Actual rate 59.06%
- B. Knowledge and skills
Entry: Target 90.46% - Actual rate 87.46%
Exit: Target 56.21% - Actual rate 49.15%
- C. Appropriate behaviors
Entry: Target 89.73% - Actual rate 87.82%
Exit: Target 74.97% - Actual rate 69.20%

The State did not meet the targets in these three categories and shows slippage from the previous year.

Indicator 8: Parent Involvement

Performance Indicator: Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. The State did meet the target for parents of early childhood students with 90.92 % and the actual rate is 92.93 %. The State met the target for parents of school age students with 94.53% and the actual rate is 95.63%.

Indicator 9: Disproportionate Representation

Compliance Indicator: Percent of districts with disproportionality due to inappropriate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification.

No districts were identified as having disproportionate representation that was a result of inappropriate identification.

Indicator 10: Disproportionate Representation - Disability Category

Compliance Indicator: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Three districts were identified and were required to do a self-assessment which was reviewed by the ADE-SEU to determine if the identification for the students was inappropriate. None of these three districts were determined to have disproportionality in racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that were a result of inappropriate identification.

Indicator 11: Child Find - Evaluation Timelines

Compliance Indicator: Percent of children who were evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation or, if the State establishes a timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted, within that timeframe. The target percentage for 2014-2015 is 100%. The State rate is 99.57%.

Indicator 12: Preschool Transition

Compliance Indicator: Percent of children referred by Part C, birth to three years old found eligible and have an IEP developed by their third birthday and transitioning out of birth to three years old to Part B. As a compliance indicator the target is 100%. The actual rate is 98.7% with some indication of slippage.

Indicator 13: Secondary Transition

Compliance Indicator: Percent of youth aged sixteen and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition service's needs. This is based upon data from monitoring. This is a compliance indicator so the target is 100%. The State data is 99.87%.

Indicator 14: Post-School Outcomes

Performance Indicator: Percentage of youth who are no longer in secondary school and IEPs were in effect at the time they left secondary school, and are competitively employed, enrolled in higher education, or both within one year of leaving high school. The target for students enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year is 60.04% and the actual data is 63.03%.

Indicator 15: Resolution Sessions

Performance Indicator: Percent of hearing requests which were resolved through resolution agreements. One complaint reached a resolution agreement. Once a due process hearing is filed, a resolution meeting must be held within seven calendar days, which is a federal requirement. The majority of the complaints do reach a settlement. If a settlement is reached the case is dismissed.

Indicator 16: Mediation

Performance Indicator: Percent of mediations that resulted in mediation agreements. There is no requirement that a complaint goes to mediation. Both parties must agree to mediation. Mediations are handled by UALR Bowen School of Law. In school year 2014-2015 there were five mediations. The target of 75.56% was met.

Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

SSIP is a comprehensive, multiyear plan that focuses on improving results for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. Phase II work has begun. This part of the APR is not due until April 2016.

Special Education update

Ms. Haley gave an update on the Part B Application and asked for feedback regarding the annual budget.

Ms. Haley informed the Council that ADE has formed a paperwork reduction task force representing multiple stakeholder groups to convene around the issue of special education paperwork reduction. The amount of time special education teachers are required to spend on special education paperwork is an ongoing concern in Arkansas. This is an opportunity to positively impact policies and procedures in this state.

Section Reports: No reports were presented.

Future agenda items:

Ms. Eubanks asked the Council to consider who they would like to nominate to replace Ms. Deborah Swink as the Chair person. She advised the Council that the future agenda items will be decided by the Council. There was discussion on what the members would like to have more information about. Some of the suggestions for upcoming agenda topics were:

- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which is taking the place of No Child Left Behind
- SSIP with Jennifer Gonzales reporting on what to expect in the future
- Professional development regarding what districts are required to do
- Technology and resources assistance
- Transition process with Bonnie Boaz
- Changes in McKinney-Vento regarding homeless youth

The next meeting is April 21, 2016. The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.

