Arkansas Special Education State Advisory Council Report
State Systemic Improvement Plan and State Personnel Development Grant
January 18, 2018

Summary of Phase III Submission
In Phase III of the State Systemic Improvement Plan, the Arkansas Department of Education has implemented a plan for two coherent strategies to improve ADE's infrastructure and 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 that are being implemented are
> Strategy One: Create a system of support that is aligned with other ADE Units and is differentiated based on LEAs' needs as evidenced by data.
> Strategy 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 One Update - Strategy One focuses on creating a coordinated system of support to provide the necessary organizational structures for state-level staff to be able to identify, manage, and differentiate LEA services and supports.

A Cross Unit ADE Team began working with the State Support Network (a national technical assistance center) in December to develop a comprehensive needs assessment to support districts and schools. The team will use the Four Domains of Rapid School Turnaround as a framework for the needs assessment. The team has outlined goals to move the work forward through the Arkansas ESSA State Plan and Act 930 implementation. The Cross Unit ADE Team is also in the process of rebranding and goal setting.

Strategy Two Update - Strategy Two focuses on RTI. This evidence-based practice is being implemented in SSIP-targeted districts and intensively supported by the State. The Arkansas SPDG was written to directly align and support the SSIP. The State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) functions as the "boots on the ground" for the RTI implementation in targeted SSIP districts. Currently the SPDG is working closely with multiple units within the ADE to support and scale up RTI resources at the district level. This work is anticipated to be utilized in ESSA implementation. SPDG staff are creating eight RTI district modules that focus on implementation science frameworks. These modules will support districts in completing and/or creating:

- a selection process of evidence based practices
- an effective district leadership structure and process
- an initiative inventory and analysis
- a training and coaching plan
- data-based decision making