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**ARKANSAS
MEANINGFUL ACCESS PROJECT**

(formerly known as the Inclusive Practices Project)

Vision

The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in **student-focused education**.

Mission

The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) provides leadership, support, and service to schools, districts, and communities so every student graduates prepared for college, career, and community engagement.



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Arkansas Meaningful Access Project

- Create a culture within the school in which general educators, special educators, and related service professionals work collaboratively and operate as one system in order to promote continuous improvement
- Increase student achievement and growth for academics and behavior by fostering collaboration and collective efficacy, maintaining a relentless focus on learning, and remaining results oriented for all students, with an intentional focus on outcomes for students with disabilities
- Expand access to core instruction and increase the number of students with disabilities being educated in general education content classrooms (least restrictive environment)
- Advance the understanding of Innovative Service Delivery Models, including Universal Design for Learning and High-Leverage Practices



Arkansas Meaningful Access Project

2020-2021 Pilot

Angie Grant Elementary, Benton School District
Grace Hill Elementary, Rogers School District
Prescott Elementary, Prescott School District
Raymond Orr Elementary, Fort Smith School District

2021-2022 Project Schools

Caldwell Elementary, Benton School District
Carroll Smith Elementary, Osceola School District
East Hills Middle, Greenwood School District
Lakeside Jr. High, Lakeside School District
McNair Middle, Fayetteville School District
Rivercrest Elementary, Rivercrest School District
Waldron Elementary, Waldron School District



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Arkansas Meaningful Access Project

2022-2023 Project Schools

Cutter Morning Star Elementary School, Cutter Morning Star School District
East Pointe Elementary School, Greenwood School District
Magnet Cove Elementary School, Magnet Cove School District
Main Street Visual and Performing Arts Magnet School, Hot Springs School District
Northside Elementary School, Rogers School District
Ridge Road Elementary School, North Little Rock School District
Warren Middle School, Warren School District
West Side Elementary School, West Side School District

2023-2024 Project Schools

Bayyari Elementary School, Springdale School District
Bearden Elementary, Bearden School District
East End Middle, Sheridan School District
J.F. Wahl Elementary, Helena/West Helena School District
Jacksonville Middle, Jacksonville N Pulaski School District
Osage Creek Elementary, Bentonville School District
Palestine-Wheatley High, Palestine-Wheatley School District
Sidney Deener Elementary, Searcy School District



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Section 1: Purpose of the Project

- Build a collaborative culture through the implementation of sustainable systems, structures, and effective practices
- Create school sites that serve as working laboratories for the Project, conducting action research and sharing best practices with other schools throughout Arkansas
- Promote an intentional focus on effective practices to ensure that students who are IEP eligible, as well as other groups of struggling learners, have meaningful access to core instruction and established systems of intervention



Overview of the Project

- Selected schools, in partnership with an education service cooperative (ESC), will
 - select a project plan that best meets the school's needs
 - be matched with a Collaborative Support Coach to provide onsite and virtual support
- From a needs assessment, each school will collaboratively develop a tailored action plan that aligns to the assessment outcomes
- Educational accessibility for all students will serve as a foundation for the project, so that every child receives the time and support necessary for high levels of learning



Intended Outcomes

- School leadership teams will increase their understanding of innovative service delivery models, cultivate a culture conducive to embracing distributive leadership, and demonstrate expertise in driving systemic change
- Staff will initiate cycles of inquiry and engage in a collective effort to establish sustainable, student-centered systems, including intervention frameworks for academics and behavioral support, with built-in structures for monitoring student learning
- Staff will increase their capacity to implement effective practices, including Universal Design for Learning and High-Leverage Practices, to support the needs of all students, especially students with disabilities
- Students with disabilities will experience greater access to grade-level core instruction and engage with educators who implement evidence-based instructional practices



Intended Outcomes following Full Implementation

- A schoolwide culture in which general educators, special educators, and related service professionals work collaboratively and operate as one system in order to promote continuous improvement will be evident
- Students with disabilities will demonstrate improved achievement and growth, as measured by district and state assessments, as they gain increased, meaningful access to general education environments, leading to an increase in the percentage of students with disabilities educated in their least restrictive environment



Key Components of the Project

- Professional development and coaching provided through a mix of onsite and virtual training, observation, and support based on the school's project plan
- Print and video resources tailored to the needs of the school in support of the learning
- Attendance for specific training events may be included



What Can Schools Expect?

- Project days will be a combination of onsite and virtual training, observation, coaching, and other job-embedded staff development
 - There will be times when accommodations will need to be made for teachers who are out of the classroom for training
- Training will occur with the building principal, and other building leaders as well as the school's leadership team, collaborative teams, and individual teachers
 - Education Service Cooperative specialists shall be included in the training
- The schools will work to create an intentional emphasis on meaningful access to quality core instruction in least restrictive environments with a focus on students with disabilities



Section 2: Eligibility and Selection

- Any K-12 Public School and Open Enrollment Charter School within Arkansas
- Priority will be given to schools with an Additional Targeted Support designation due to performance of students with disabilities as identified by the Arkansas Department of Education.
- Schools will be selected through a rigorous application and evaluation process determined by a committee comprised of education professionals knowledgeable of the project components.
- Efforts will be made to ensure geographic distribution across the state.



Selection Process

The selection process involves the following:

1. Request for application
2. Applications Received by DESE
3. Selection Committee Review
4. Finalist Interviews
5. Schools Selected and Announced



Section 3: Contents of the Application

- Cover Page
- Letter from Education Service Cooperative
- Introduction
- School Demographic Data
 - Special Education Demographic Data
 - Student/Teacher Ratios
 - Teacher numbers
 - Average tenure of staff
- Applicant Needs
- School Structures
- Initiative Implementation
- Project Commitment
- Stakeholder Involvement and Support
- Sustainability



Section 4: Commitments of the Project

- Engage in ongoing, targeted professional development to deepen collaborative practices
- Support teams, including special education and related service professionals, and the structures necessary for a schoolwide collaborative culture
- Increase the implementation of effective practices, including Universal Design for Learning and High-Leverage Practices, within the school
- Develop plans for continued teacher training and coaching after the Project has ended
- Establish and practice a belief system that all students are capable of learning at high levels and teachers accept responsibility for making this outcome a reality
- Serve as a learning lab for other schools to visit in order to build statewide capacity



Process for Selecting Schools

- Schools will be selected through a rigorous application and evaluation process, determined by a committee of education professionals knowledgeable of the project components
- Evaluation criteria will be included in the application
- Selected schools will serve as learning sites for other schools
- Efforts will be made to ensure geographic access and distribution across the state
- Once finalists are chosen, interviews will be conducted
- Only applications that have addressed sections 3 and 4 in their entirety will be reviewed



Submission of Application

- Applications must be received no later than 5 pm CST on May 3, 2024
- Documents should be double spaced with a minimum of 12-point font
- Applicant responses must be clear and concise on each component
- Applications may be mailed or sent electronically
 - If sent electronically, documents should be submitted as a Microsoft Word or Adobe.pdf file
 - The document should be emailed to:
michelle.waldo@ade.arkansas.gov
 - If mailed, include one hard copy. Hard copy applications should be addressed and sent to:

Michelle Waldo, Policy Development Coordinator
Arkansas Department of Education
1401 W. Capitol Ave, Suite 450
Little Rock, AR 72201



Projected Timeline

Informational Recording	April 24, 2024
Request for Application	April 24 – April 30, 2024
Applications Emailed to Point of Contact	April 24 – April 30, 2024
Applications Due	May 3, 2024
Evaluation Period	May 6 – May 10, 2024
Finalist Interviews	May 13 – May 17, 2024
Notification of Award	May 21, 2024
Tentative Project Start	August 2024



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Project Contacts

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