

Arkansas Special Education State Advisory Council Report

Curriculum and Assessment, April 2017

Paperwork Guidance Task Force

As of the end of March, 249 Local Education Agencies (school-age and early childhood) have chosen to pilot the new special education forms. Comments and questions are being gathered in order to make improvements to the forms before they are updated in early summer. The final forms should be available before school starts in the fall of 2017.

Using the comments and questions that have been submitted, an Arkansas Special Education Process Guide has been created. The first draft of the guide was released in February. The guide will be updated when the forms are finalized.

CCSSO Assessment Updates

The CCSSO State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) met in New Orleans on February 22 and 23, 2017. The agenda focused on the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and what its implementation will mean for students with disabilities. Several states are investigating developing a state-defined alternate diploma. Alternate diploma resources from the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) were shared with interested states. Based on the discussions at this meeting, Arkansas, West Virginia, Indiana, and Ohio had a video call in March to discuss each state's plan regarding the development of a state-defined alternate diploma.

Statewide Assessment

The statewide assessment windows are as follows:

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| • ACT Aspire (general assessment) | April 10-May 12 |
| • ACT | February 28-March 14 |
| • MSAA (ELA and math alternate assessment) | April 3-12 |
| • Alternate Science Portfolio | March 17 submission deadline |

R.I.S.E. Arkansas

R.I.S.E. is the ADE's Reading Initiative for Student Excellence. R.I.S.E. encourages a culture of reading by coordinating a statewide reading campaign with community partners, parents, and teachers to establish the importance of reading in homes, schools, and communities. Through R.I.S.E., we hope to increase the depth of knowledge for teachers in the area of phonics and phonological awareness and how that knowledge impacts fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and writing. This includes focusing on the science of reading, or how a student learns.

R.I.S.E. goals:

1. Increase the number of students in grades 3-8 who meet the ACT Aspire reading readiness benchmark by 10% within 3 years.
2. Rise above the bottom third in state comparisons within 5 years on the 4th grade NAEP reading assessment.
3. Increase the number of graduates meeting The ACT reading readiness benchmark by 10% within 5 years.

Lisa Haley and Robin Stripling recently presented IDEA and the Arkansas Dyslexia Law at the RISE Arkansas Reading Conference in Hot Springs. The presentation was given twice and both sessions were well attended.

Special Education Updates PD

A professional development opportunity will again be made available this summer to all Arkansas Educational Cooperatives and to nontraditional programs. This training will provide updates on course codes, special education licensure, the SpEd Process Guide, and statewide assessment accommodations. Effective classroom practices will also be shared.

Additional upcoming professional development presentations include *Google Apps in the Special Education Classroom* at the Northwest Arkansas Google Summit and *Classroom Accommodations and Modifications* at the DeQueen-Mena Special Education Conference.