

Arkansas Special Education State Advisory Council Report
State Systemic Improvement Plan
July 27, 2016

The ADE State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) will focus on increasing the literacy achievement of students with disabilities (SWD). 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 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) - 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 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. This strategy is focused on creating a coordinated professional development and technical assistance system that will provide the necessary structures for how LEA services and supports will be identified, managed, and differentiated at the state-level.

Update:

A cross unit ADE team analyzed data to identify targeted LEA needs through a special education risk assessment. Targeted LEAs were identified to receive coordinated support from the Special Education Unit and the School Improvement Unit. The next step is to identify key professional development and technical assistance initiatives where resources can be shared. Then an ADE Cross Unit Team will develop a common scope of work for key overlapping initiatives.

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.

Update:

Arkansas was awarded a State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) from the Office of Special Education on October 1, 2015. The SPDG is working with Little Rock School District for the entirety of the grant and will also scale up to additional districts in year two of the grant. The protocols and resources utilized and developed by the SPDG are aligned and support the implementation plans outlined in the ESEA Flexibility Plan for schools in school improvement. The SPDG is currently developing many statewide RTI professional development modules that will be available online for educators for free. The SPDG will utilize these online modules, resources, and tools to build the capacity of cooperatives and districts within the state to support RTI.