

**Arkansas Special Education State Advisory Council Report
State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and
State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)
October 23, 2018**

OSEP Feedback Regarding the Arkansas SSIP Plan:

On August 28, 2018, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) provided feedback on the latest submission and update of the Arkansas SSIP Plan. There were no concerns mentioned during this call, and the following strengths of the SSIP were highlighted:

- Inclusion of stakeholder engagement
- Use of tools to describe meaningful differences with stakeholder engagement
- Alignment of the SSIP with the SPDG
- Alignment of the SSIP with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Strategy One: Create a system of support that is aligned with other ADE Units and is differentiated based on LEA's needs as evidenced by data.

Update: The SSIP Coordinator and SPDG Director have continued to develop interagency collaborations with the Standards and Systems Support Team at ADE. The goal is to increase coherence among units that support literacy and behavior efforts at the state level.

Purposeful collaborations have been achieved with the SPDG unit and ADE technical assistance providers, referred to as the Arkansas Collaborative Consultants (ACC). A 2-day Arkansas Collaborative Consultants workshop was held on August 22nd and 23rd in Little Rock. The following technical assistance providers participated in this event: Arkansas Co-Teaching Project, Arkansas Transition Services, Behavior Support Specialists (BSS), Brain Injury Consultant for Arkansas, Children and Youth with Dual Sensory Impairments (CAYSI), Easterseals Outreach Program and Technology Services (ESOPTS), Educational Services for the Visually Impaired (ESVI), Educational Audiology and Speech Pathology Resources for Schools (EARS), Speech-Language Pathology Assistant/Aide Program, School-based Speech-Language Pathology Services, and the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG).

Of particular note, alignment toward a multi-tiered system of support for behavior has occurred with the work of the SPDG unit and the Behavior Support Specialists (BSS). The SPDG unit heavily focuses on an RTI model that emphasizes Tier 1 implementation of PBIS at the district level, while the Behavior Support Specialists focus more on moderate to severe behavioral issues that are typically associated with Tiers 2 and 3 of PBIS. In addition, the [Arkansas Assistive Technology Resource Guide](#) was completed by a diverse group of stakeholders from ADE, Arkansas Collaborative Consultants,

educational professionals, and family members to assist districts with making technology decisions that impact academics and behavior.

Meaningful collaborations also occurred at the LEA Academy September 13th and 14th in Hot Springs. The SPDG Director provided a presentation on the capacity tools and measures currently being used to assess capacity and implementation for RTI at the district level.

The SSIP Coordinator attended the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) meeting in Omaha, NE October 6th through the 9th. Sessions focused on:

- Using data to eliminate disparity gaps for students with disabilities
- System support and implementation of ESSA and IDEA for improved student outcomes
- Legislative updates
- Diploma pathways for all students
- Leadership strategies for effecting change

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 support for behavior and academics, with focus on literacy.

Goals for the State Personnel Development Grant

- Develop statewide RTI resources and tools in the areas of behavior and literacy
- Increase the capacity of regional and district teams to deliver high quality RTI professional development
- Improve educators' ability to implement RTI with a focus on evidence-based literacy and behavior support practices
- Improve literacy and behavior outcomes for all students, especially students with disabilities

Update: The SPDG team has worked to develop content, training modules, and facilitator's guides for both behavior and literacy, specifically reading. Many of these modules are complete including, all tier I behavior modules, tiers I, II, and III literacy modules, and modules for engaging families and communities. The team values the input of others and is currently working to gain feedback from the Behavior Support Specialists, the Dyslexia interventionists, the Student Support Services team prior to releasing these modules to leadership for final approval. The goal for completion of all modules is May 2019.

On August 14, 2018, the State Personnel Development Grant team began action assessments with the districts who are part of the project. This assessment is designed to help district leaders and staff precisely align resources with intended outcomes and effectively support the implementation of Response to Intervention in their districts.

October 1, 2018, marked the beginning of year four of this five year project. During the first quarter of this academic year the SPDG team has provided 24 trainings, 10 coaching sessions, and nine consultations. We have worked with six new districts to complete a District Capacity Assessment, gather baseline data for implementation, and action plan. This allows district leadership and teams to reflect on their current processes and practices in supporting instructional staff in their use of innovations.

The SPDG team recently participated in two national conferences-

- October 3-5, 2018, OSEP Technical Assistance Center on PBIS, 2018 PBIS Leadership Forum
 - The keynote speakers highlighted systematic improvement outcomes and building and strengthening family-school partnerships
 - The following were the breakout session themes: Applied Evaluation, Classroom, Equity, Juvenile Justice, Mental Health Integration, PBIS Foundations, and Tier II Systems & Practices
- October 9-11, 2018, SPDG National Meeting, Making Connections
 - Meeting Objectives
 - Increase knowledge and skills related to;
 - Family Engagement
 - Data-based Decision Making
 - Increase knowledge of and ability to use new tools
 - Build a stronger program network

These opportunities continue to grow the SPDG team's professional knowledge and strengthen network partners across the nation. The knowledge gained informs content development and insures the scope of work is within federal guidelines and specific to the state of Arkansas.