

Theory of Action

A logical model is most effective when an explicit theory of action is developed. The theory of action provides a logical, organized set of ideas to guide the intended work of the educational system to achieve the desired results. The Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability System is a coherent system guided by clearly defined goals and indicators of success that are congruent with the theory of action.

The purpose of the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability System is to ensure all children have access to opportunities for a high quality education and to make progress in closing long-standing achievement gaps. The system is intended to achieve the following expectations.

1. To identify underperforming schools and subgroups of students within schools and notify local educational agency (LEA) leaders when schools within their systems are most in need of the LEA's support to achieve immediate and sustained improvement.
2. To provide support that will empower LEAs to uncover the needs of their underperforming schools and/or student subgroups and enable LEAs to implement evidence-based strategies to address those needs.
3. To inform educators and stakeholders about school quality and student success as well as the progress and outcomes of schools' and districts' continuous improvement efforts.

A theory of action connects the intended courses of action with the desired outcomes. It serves to clarify important inputs in the system, the resources, and supports that may be needed to carry out the actions theorized to achieve the goals of the system. The theory of action for the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability System shifts the focus of Arkansas Department of Education efforts from directly intervening in schools in need of support to empowering and enabling LEAs. LEAs are then empowered to harness local, state, and federal resources for those schools in need of support and those schools historically underserved to enhance outcomes for all students. To achieve this end, LEAs will need to play the central role in leading their local system through continuous cycles of inquiry for improvement, supported in varied degrees by the statewide system of support based on data-informed needs. A central concept in this theory of action is an intentional shift in the expected state inputs and the expected LEA inputs and outputs.

Theory of Action for Student Success



IF...

the Arkansas Department of Education implements a comprehensive support and accountability system that measures many facets of student success and school quality that inform and sustain student learning ...



THEN...

the ADE and LEA will engage in continuous cycles of inquiry and improvement by combining state and local information to identify and address the needs within their respective systems...



AND this will...

spark student learning; increase students' readiness for college, career, and community engagement; and close achievement gaps within and across schools.