


RECLAIMING ARKANSAS EDUCATION

Powered by  LEARNS

Arkansas' Consolidated State Plan
The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as
amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act

Released for Public Comment
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Contact Information and Signatures	
SEA Contact (Name and Position):	Telephone:
Mailing Address:	Email Address:
<p>By signing this document, I assure that: To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information and data included in this plan are true and correct. The SEA will submit a comprehensive set of assurances at a date and time established by the Secretary, including the assurances in ESEA section 8304. Consistent with ESEA section 8302(b)(3), the SEA will meet the requirements of ESEA sections 1117 and 8501 regarding the participation of private school children and teachers.</p>	
Authorized SEA Representative (Printed Name)	Telephone:
Signature of Authorized SEA Representative	Date:
Governor (Printed Name)	Date SEA provided plan to the Governor under ESEA section 8540:
Signature of Governor	Date:

Programs Included in the Consolidated State Plan

Instructions: Indicate below by checking the appropriate box(es) which programs the SEA included in its consolidated State plan. If an SEA elected not to include one or more of the programs below in its consolidated State plan but is eligible and wishes to receive funds under the program(s), it must submit individual program plans for those programs that meet all statutory and regulatory requirements with its consolidated State plan in a single submission.

Check this box if the SEA has included all the following programs in its consolidated State plan.

Arkansas is submitting a redlined version of the following sections of the state plan originally approved in 2018 for approval :

Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies

Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children

Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk

Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction

Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement

Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Title V, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income School Program

Title VII, Subpart B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act: Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program (McKinney-Vento Act).

Introduction

Each SEA must provide descriptions and other information that address each requirement listed below for the programs included in its consolidated State plan. Consistent with ESEA section 8302, the Secretary has determined that the following requirements are absolutely necessary for consideration of a consolidated State plan. An SEA may add descriptions or other information, but may not omit any of the required descriptions or information for each included program.

Every Arkansas child should have access to a quality education, a good-paying job, and a better life. With this belief, in 2023 Arkansas set out to transform its entire education system through the passage of the LEARNS Act, signed by Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders. LEARNS (literacy, empowerment, accountability, readiness, networking, and school safety) provides the statutory framework for a fully aligned education system.

The LEARNS Act established Arkansas' vision that all students will have access to a best-in-class education experience that prepares them for enlistment, enrollment or employment. The vision of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) is that, as the result of LEARNS:

- Every child enters kindergarten ready to learn because of high-quality early care and education.
- Every student accesses grade-level instruction, with every teacher supported to deliver it effectively.
- Every student has a clear post-high school plan and pathway to get there.
- Every school is safe, supporting students' academic, mental, and behavioral health needs.
- Every classroom is staffed by a highly qualified, licensed teacher.

All of ADE's work is aligned to delivering on this vision for students. To pursue it, Arkansas has built a Unified Accountability and Support Plan that:

- Ensures high expectations for every student;
- Aligns funding through a unified planning system;
- Strengthen accountability for student outcomes; and
- Provides direct coaching support to struggling schools and student subgroups.

To sustain this momentum, ADE is requesting an ESEA waiver in addition to this revised ESSA plan that will remove barriers and allow Arkansas to reclaim education by continuing to advance its unified strategy to prepare every student to graduate ready for enlistment, enrollment, or employment.

Arkansas LEARNS: Three Years of Progress

In just three years, Arkansas has achieved notable progress toward making each aspect of the LEARNS vision a reality: Student achievement in English Language Arts, math, and science has increased since 2024, as measured by statewide assessments. Furthermore, Arkansas has driven progress through all aspects of its coherent system, as described below.

Ensures High Expectations for Students

Arkansas has reorganized and carefully examined early childhood education to ensure the state's youngest learners are well prepared for success when they enter kindergarten. The state has taken concrete steps to strengthen local program coordination by designating local leads, which has improved the organization and delivery of early childhood services at the community level. 43,000 children from low-income families are able to benefit from early learning opportunities. In addition, the state is in the process of modifying its quality rating system for early childhood programs. Rather than focusing solely on environmental factors, the new approach emphasizes the quality of student-teacher interactions. This shift

is intended to ensure more consistent and high-quality early learning experiences, supporting kindergarten readiness across Arkansas.

Additionally, Arkansas has intensified its longstanding commitment to literacy by doubling down on evidence-based instruction grounded in the science of reading, which involves implementing new ELA standards statewide aligned to the science of reading; embedding K–3 reading and dyslexia screening into the assessment system; investing in high-quality instructional materials (HQIM); and providing classroom coaching for teachers. Families can now access literacy tutoring grants, and schools must develop individualized reading plans for students who need extra support. As of the 2025–2026 school year, Arkansas has provided high-impact tutoring during the school day to more than 47,500 students and Literacy Tutoring Grants to more than 18,244 families.

Arkansas continues to prioritize student safety and well-being as essential preconditions for learning. Arkansas dedicated funds for schools to secure campuses; required threat assessments and district safety audits; established school safety specialists; improved monitoring; and passed a law restricting students' use of cell phones and personal devices during school hours.

The Arkansas Department of Education's (ADE) vision is that all students graduate ready for enlistment, enrollment, or employment. High schools must offer at least three career and technical education pathways, including one in a high-wage, high-demand field. Students who earn at least 12 hours of college credit, earn a seal of biliteracy, enlist in the military, or earn an industry recognized credential may earn either a Diploma of Merit or Distinction. Indicators for these outcomes are included in the state's accountability formula and aligned with state scholarships, highlighting Arkansas' commitment to student readiness after graduation and making the state's vision a reality.

Finally, Arkansas has worked to improve all educational options through competition and innovation, while also empowering families to expand their choices. LEARNS expanded statewide school choice through open enrollment, strengthened charter school accountability, and introduced Educational Freedom Accounts, state-funded accounts families can use for private or homeschool education. A new public-facing dashboard makes performance data transparent and accessible to all.

Aligns Funding through a Unified Planning System

ADE consolidated the planning process for 17 state and federal requirements in 2024 into the AR App, a unified planning framework and application submitted on a single timeline. Each year, districts in Arkansas work with their local education service cooperatives to plan how to improve student learning in the coming year. This process involves reviewing student achievement and student progress data, establishing priorities, and building a budget aligned to these priorities using all available funding sources. As a result of AR App, districts in Arkansas can align funding to a single plan and streamline their resources while still ensuring compliance with federal and state requirements.

Creates Accountability for Student Outcomes

Arkansas built a first of its kind cohesive assessment system, ATLAS (Arkansas Teaching, Learning and Assessment System), which now serves as a unified measure of student learning across the state. ATLAS covers grades K–8 in English language arts (ELA) plus English I and English II end of course; grades K–8 in math plus end of course Algebra I and Geometry; and grades 3–8 in science plus end of course Biology. It includes K–3 universal screeners that meet dyslexia-screening requirements, as well as the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Arkansas continues to administer the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) for English learners and requires all high school students to take a college and career readiness

assessment. Starting in eighth grade, every school must create a personalized student success plan to guide intentional course selection that matches each student's post-secondary aspirations.

The state shifted away from Common Core State Standards and provided the much-needed clarification while maintaining rigor to its academic standards, emphasizing foundational skills grounded in cognitive science and the science of reading research. ATLAS cut scores were informed by NAEP levels to maintain high expectations, and a NAEP alignment study is underway to confirm rigor.

Furthermore, Arkansas redesigned its A–F accountability system to place emphasis on achievement, growth, and postsecondary readiness. The state overhauled the previous formula, removing indicators that distracted school leaders from school improvement. The simplified formula focuses on the percentage of students meeting grade level expectations, and achieving individual growth, with particular emphasis on the progress of the lowest-performing students and on postsecondary outcome measures for high school students. The new dashboard and formula increased transparency and clarity around school improvement for all stakeholders. In 2025, ADE issued letter-grade ratings to school districts for the first time to provide a statewide measure of overall district performance that supports local leaders and communities to identify academic strengths and areas for growth.

Provide Field-Facing Support to Struggling Schools and Student Subgroups

Arkansas' A-F letter grades now determine the level of state support and monitoring initiatives. District letter grades determine the flexibility and support that districts receive:

- A/B districts receive maximum flexibility with light state level monitoring.
- C districts receive collaborative support from Education Service Cooperatives (ESC).
- D districts receive ESC support and additional state-level monitoring.
- F districts receive direct state support and present their district's strategic plan for improvement to the Arkansas State Board of Education. Consecutive years of low performance may be subject to additional state level oversight.

School letter grades drive school-level support. Schools with a D or F rating, for example, receive state-provided literacy coaching, prioritized High-Impact Tutoring grants, and leadership development. School improvement plans will be monitored for implementation and progress. Schools that remain D or F for three years without sufficient progress will be subject to additional sanctions to ensure students and families have better services and choices. All students who score below mastery in any school must have an Individualized Reading Plan and Math Improvement Plan.

Education Service Cooperatives (ESCs) across the state offer targeted assistance to designated districts and schools, growing the state's ability to support district and school leaders and educators around the state. Arkansas has also invested in educators to support high-quality teachers in all schools: raising the minimum teacher salary to \$50,000, providing 12 weeks of maternity leave, expanding educator scholarships, and launching the Teacher Merit Incentive Fund. In the 2024–25 school year, over 4,000 excellent teachers earned merit pay bonuses of up to \$10,000 - a 45% increase from the prior year.

Notably, Arkansas has included over 3,000 stakeholders, working groups and survey participants with educators and parents, technical advisors, item bank reviewers, standard setting panels, and academic standards revision committees in the establishment of this unified accountability and support system. These processes and outcomes demonstrate the state's commitment to clarity, fairness, evidence-based practice, and transparency in service of student success.

Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)

Challenging State Academic Standards and Assessments (ESEA section 1111(b)(1) and (2) and 34 CFR §§ 200.1–200.8.)¹:

Arkansas statutes Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-2905 (2023) and §6-15-2906 (2017) describe the responsibilities of the Arkansas State Board of Education regarding approval and implementation of challenging academic standards to prepare students for college, career, and community engagement. Current legislation and rules direct the ADE to appoint committees to write and revise academic courses based on the Arkansas Academic Standards.

In 2023, Arkansas developed a new assessment and coordinated the revision of the academic standards for math and English language arts in tandem. The ADE gathered educators, local and national content experts, and solicited public feedback regarding the standards and assessment changes. The academic standards and assessment committees were comprised of educators, administrators, parents, representatives from higher education and early childhood, as well as community members.

Revision committee members consulted a variety of documents to inform the revision process, such as international learning expectations, international assessments, national assessments including the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), other states’ standards, expert reviews, and community feedback surveys. The revision committee members focus on writing the standards that prepare students for success after high school for enlistment, enrollment, or employment. Arkansas is following a similar process for academic standards for social studies and science.

Table 1: Assessments Available for Use by Arkansas to Measure Achievement and/or Growth

Grade Bands	Assessment	State Use
3-8	ATLAS	Achievement and Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● English Language Arts (Reading, Writing) ● Mathematics ● Science
9-12	ATLAS	Achievement and Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● English Language Arts I and II End-of-Course (Reading, Writing) ● Algebra I and Geometry End-of-Course ● Biology End-of-Course
Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities	Dynamic Learning Maps and Alternate ELPA	Dynamic Learning Maps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● English Language Arts, grades 3–10 ● Math, grades 3–10 ● Science, grades 3– 8 and 10 ● Alt ELPA Achievement and Growth

¹ The Secretary anticipates collecting relevant information consistent with the assessment peer review process in 34 CFR § 200.2(d). An SEA need not submit any information regarding challenging State academic standards and assessments at this time.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Percent on track to English language proficiency, grades K-12 ● ELP Value- Added Growth
K-12	English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21)	Achievement and Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Percent on track to English language proficiency ● ELP Value- Added Growth

Arkansas has a state developed assessment, ATLAS (Arkansas Teaching and Learning Assessment System). ATLAS provides a variety of assessments that can be used within the accountability system, as noted in Table 1. Following the LEARNS Act of 2023 and the ACCESS Act of 2025 the state continued to streamline standards, curriculum, assessments, and accountability. The ADE will use the italicized assessments for the math and the English language arts required assessments for the academic achievement indicator in the accountability and support system (Table 1).

Eighth Grade Math Exception (ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C) and 34 CFR § 200.5(b)(4)):

Does the State administer an end-of-course mathematics assessment to meet the requirements under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA?

Yes

No

If a State responds “yes” to question 2(i), does the State wish to exempt an eighth-grade student who takes the high school mathematics course associated with the end-of-course assessment from the mathematics assessment typically administered in eighth grade under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(aa) of the ESEA and ensure that:

The student instead takes the end-of-course mathematics assessment the State administers to high school students under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA;

The student’s performance on the high school assessment is used in the year in which the student takes the assessment for purposes of measuring academic achievement under section 1111(c)(4)(B)(i) of the ESEA and participation in assessments under section 1111(c)(4)(E) of the ESEA;

In high school:

The student takes a State-administered end-of-course assessment or nationally recognized high school academic assessment as defined in 34 CFR § 200.3(d) in mathematics that is more advanced than the assessment the State administers under section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA;

The State provides for appropriate accommodations consistent with 34 CFR § 200.6(b) and (f); and

The student’s performance on the more advanced mathematics assessment is used for purposes of measuring academic achievement under section 1111(c)(4)(B)(i) of the ESEA and participation in assessments under section 1111(c)(4)(E) of the ESEA.

Yes

□ No

If a State responds “yes” to question 2(ii), consistent with 34 CFR § 200.5(b)(4), describe, with regard to this exception, its strategies to provide all students in the State the opportunity to be prepared for and to take advanced mathematics coursework in middle school.

ADE has ensured that students may enroll in Algebra 1 beginning in 7th grade and Geometry in 8th grade without requiring any course approval process from the State. By removing approval barriers, ADE guarantees that districts can offer these courses freely and that any student who is ready for advanced mathematics has an accessible pathway to participate. To prepare students for success in middle school advanced mathematics, ADE developed a sequence of honors courses beginning in 5th grade. These courses were designed intentionally as an acceleration strategy, ensuring that students receive rigorous instruction early.

Native Language Assessments (ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(F) and 34 CFR § 200.6(f)(2)(ii)) and (f)(4):

Provide its definition for “languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population,” and identify the specific languages that meet that definition.

Arkansas closely monitors the numbers of students who come from homes where a language other than English is used. For the purposes of ESSA, Arkansas defines a language other than English to be present to a significant extent when the number of students speaking that language exceeds 15%, or the most populous language within the state, of the total student population. In 2024-2025, the total student population in Arkansas was 465,421. The following table provides the top 5 languages other than English spoken by Arkansas students.

Table 2: Languages Other than English Spoken by Arkansas Students

Language	# of Students	% of Students
Spanish	33,810	7.3%
Marshallese	3,258	0.7%
Vietnamese	398	0.1%
Arabic	422	0.1%
Chinese	169	<0.1%

In addition, stakeholders in the English Learner Advisory Group stated that the primary group of students for whom native language assessment may be appropriate would be those English Learners who are scoring at the “Emerging” level on the summative ELPA21 or Alt. ELPA21. For the Spring 2025 ELPA21, -18% of English Learners scored at the “Emerging” level. Of the total percentage of English Learners,-33,810 were coded as Hispanic. That represents only 7.3% of the total student population that would most potentially benefit from offering a native language assessment. In addition, Arkansas implements a 3-year integration of achievement and growth scores from EL students into the accountability formula. This process allows for native language speakers to have 3 years of EL services

and support prior to achievement scores being used for accountability purposes and 2 years for growth scores.

Identify any existing assessments in languages other than English, and specify for which grades and content areas those assessments are available.

No assessments were identified.

Indicate the languages identified in question 3(i) for which yearly student academic assessments are not available and are needed.

No assessments were identified.

Describe how it will make every effort to develop assessments, at a minimum, in languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population including by providing the:

- I. State's plan and timeline for developing such assessments, including a description of how it met the requirements of 34 CFR § 200.6(f)(4);*
- II. A description of the process the State used to gather meaningful input on the need for assessments in languages other than English, collect and respond to public comment, and consult with educators; parents and families of English learners; students, as appropriate; and other stakeholders; and*
- III. As applicable, an explanation of the reasons the State has not been able to complete the development of such assessments despite making every effort.*

English has been established as the official instructional language of Arkansas, and instruction in the public schools must be conducted in English unless the nature of the course would otherwise require. Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-104 (2017) states that “the basic language of instruction in the public school branches in all the schools of the state, public and private, shall be the English language only”, and Ark. Code Ann. § 1-4-117 (2017) states, “The English language shall be the official language of the state of Arkansas.” Further, “It shall not be a violation of this section for an: (A) An educator to communicate with a student in the student's native language in order to facilitate the student's ability to become proficient and learn in the English language; or (B) A public school district or an open-enrollment public charter school to adopt a bilingual program or a dual-immersion program approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.” Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-104 (2021).

Arkansas does recognize the value of providing native language supports on assessments to English Learners as they are in the process of acquiring English. Arkansas currently offers the opportunity for students to utilize the following native language supports: Word-to-Word dictionaries utilizing the vendor approved list or ADE can approve dictionaries not on the list if the district certifies that the student uses the dictionary on a regular basis in the instructional environment; Spanish language general directions; and, other language general directions - districts can translate general directions into other languages following an ADE process.

Statewide Accountability System and School Support and Improvement Activities (ESEA section 1111(c) and (d)):

Overview of the Unified Accountability and Support Plan

Arkansas’ K-12 accountability formula for Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) aligns all educators, families, community stakeholders, and policymakers around a shared definition of excellence for children in Arkansas schools. The accountability formula sets a new baseline for Arkansas schools focused on rigorous academic outcomes, annual student growth, and post-secondary readiness. This new formula aligns with priorities established in Arkansas’ LEARNS Act (2023).

Through a two-year feedback and design process for the accountability formula, stakeholders reinforced that the accountability system should:

- Reflect high expectations for all students to ensure all students graduate prepared for enlistment, enrollment, or employment.
- Incentivize evidence-based practices that support student well-being and long-term success, beyond achievement on state assessments.
- Be consistently rigorous, reliable, and fair across grade configuration, size, geography, and student demographics.
- Be easily understood by educators, families, and community leaders, and provide transparent, disaggregated data for all stakeholders.

The Arkansas formula focuses on measures that are simple, reliable, and reflect high expectations. The new accountability formula elevates Arkansas’ focus on **Achievement**, **Growth**, and **Readiness** to ensure every student is prepared for enlistment, enrollment, or employment.

Accountability Formula

The accountability formula includes nine measures across four indicators: Achievement, Growth of All, Growth of Lowest Quarter, and Success Ready Graduate. One third of the new formula will focus on achievement, with the remainder of schools’ scores focused on growth and readiness (at high schools). Each school will receive a school index score by combining indicator scores equally. Table 3 outlines the measures in each indicator.

Table 3: Indicators and Measures

Indicator	Elementary & Middle School (K-8)	High School (9-12)
	Measure Description (9 total)	Measure Description (9 total)
Achievement Are students achieving level 3 & 4 on state assessments?	% Proficient ELA	% Proficient ELA
	% Proficient Math	% Proficient Math
	% Proficient Science	% Proficient Science
Growth of All Students Are students achieving their individualized growth targets?	% Met Growth Target ELA & ELP	% Met Growth Target ELA & ELP
	% Met Growth Target Math	% Met Growth Target Math
	% Met Growth Target Science	% Met Growth Target Science
Growth of Lowest Quarter Are the students who are farthest behind their peers growing?	% Met Growth Target ELA	% Met Growth Target – Average of ELA, Math, and Science
	% Met Growth Target Math	
	% Met Growth Target Science	
Success Ready Graduate Are students graduating in four years?	Not included in K-8 formula	% Graduating in four-year cohort

Are students demonstrating postsecondary readiness for enlistment, enrollment, or employment?	Not included in K-8 formula	% Graduates with merit or distinction <i>A transitional readiness measure will be used until Success Ready Pathways are fully implemented.</i>
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It is the responsibility of the state to provide the framework necessary to ensure that all students in Arkansas public schools have an opportunity to achieve and demonstrate academic achievement, individual student growth, and demonstrate competency through the application of knowledge and skills consistent with state academic standards.

The ADE has led a data-informed design process that engaged and continues to engage stakeholders in a well-documented, public process for meaningful consultation. Further, the ADE continues to support and empower LEAs as primary agents to improve their schools to make significant progress toward closing longstanding achievement gaps for all students.

Purpose and Goal of Unified Accountability and Support Plan

The primary goal of the accountability and support plan is to ensure academic outcomes for all students and close long-standing achievement gaps. To do this, the system is built around three key objectives:

- Identify and Notify: Pinpoint underperforming schools and districts and student subgroups and notify stakeholders when and where targeted support is most needed.
- Empower and Support: Provide districts and Education Service Cooperatives with tools and resources to identify the needs of their schools and implement proven, evidence-based strategies for improvement.
- Inform and Improve: Share clear, transparent information with educators, families, and the public about school quality, student success, and the progress of improvement efforts.

Subgroups (ESEA section 1111(c)(2)):

List each major racial and ethnic group the State includes as a subgroup of students, consistent with ESEA section 1111(c)(2)(B).

Arkansas will include and report on the following major racial and ethnic student subgroups and educationally at-risk student groups for annual meaningful differentiation of schools: Black/African American, Hispanic, White, Economically Disadvantaged, English Learners, and Students with Disabilities.

If applicable, describe any additional subgroups of students other than the statutorily required subgroups (i.e., economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, children with disabilities, and English learners) used in the Statewide accountability system.

The ADE updated analysis of Arkansas’ K-12 student population and school-level density of major racial and ethnic student groups to determine whether additional student groups were of sufficient numbers and density within schools to include in the system for annual meaningful differentiation as discrete student groups. The statewide population and school-level concentration of the remaining major race groups continue to remain too low to include for the purpose of meaningful differentiation of schools. ADE will continue using its current student groups for annual school differentiation. To enhance transparency, ADE now also reports outcomes for students in Gifted and Talented programs and separately tracks current English Learners and former English Learners (within the past four years) based on stakeholder input.

Does the State intend to include in the English learner subgroup the results of students previously identified as English learners on the State assessments required under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I) for purposes of State accountability (ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(B))? Note that a student's results may be included in the English learner subgroup for not more than four years after the student ceases to be identified as an English learner.

Yes

No

Arkansas will include students previously identified as English Learners in its Unified Accountability and Support Plan for annual differentiation and reporting on interim progress toward long-term goals. Based on stakeholder input, the ADE will further break down the English Learner group for reporting as follows:

- English Learners only
- Recently Arrived English Learners
- English Learners with Disabilities
- Former English Learners (up to four years)

If applicable, choose one of the following options for recently arrived English learners in the State:

Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(i); or

Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(ii); or

Applying the exception under ESEA section 1111(b)(3)(A)(i) or under ESEA section

1111(b)(3)(A)(ii). If this option is selected, describe how the State will choose which exception applies to a recently arrived English learner.

Minimum N-Size (ESEA section 1111(c)(3)(A)): *Provide the minimum number of students that the State determines are necessary to be included to carry out the requirements of any provisions under Title I, Part A of the ESEA that require disaggregation of information by each subgroup of students for accountability purposes.*

Arkansas will use the N-size of 15 for disaggregation of information by each student group for informing support and for annual meaningful differentiation purposes. The system of annual meaningful differentiation will include all full academic year students for the purposes of establishing the school index. The minimum N-size of 15 will be used for disaggregation of the school index for student groups within each school to determine, at the subgroup-level and on multiple indicators, whether student groups are low performing or consistently underperforming (ESEA 1965 section 1111(c)(4)(C)(iii)).

To clarify, Arkansas will use an index comprised of multiple indicators, the school index, for annual meaningful differentiation (ESEA 1965 section 1111(c)(4)(C)). The school index will be coupled with enhanced reporting to increase transparency for educators and stakeholders. Arkansas will report on schools' interim progress toward long-term goals on the indicators for which long-term goals and measurements of interim progress are required (ESEA 1965 section 1111(c)(4)(A)). The minimum N-size of 15 will be used to determine whether a student group within the school is eligible for notification and identification leading to school supports and improvement required under ESEA (1965) section 1111(d)(2)(A) and section 1111(d)(2)(D).

Describe how the minimum number of students is statistically sound.

ADE has established a minimum N-size of 15 to balance maximum student participation with statistical reliability. This threshold was determined through consultation with the Arkansas Technical Advisory Committee and is justified by stakeholder feedback and reliability via multiple indicators. To ensure high reliability, the ADE employs two specific safeguards:

- Multi-year Averaging: For schools that do not meet the N-size of 15 in a single year, the ADE aggregates up to three years of data (weighted average) to reach the threshold.
- Visual Reporting: ADE uses graphical representations and color-coding in reporting to provide context and reduce the risk of misinterpreting scores that may be more volatile due to smaller group sizes.

The ADE will continuously monitor the N-size of 15 to ensure year-to-year consistency and the protection of student privacy.

Describe how the minimum number of students was determined by the State, including how the State collaborated with teachers, principals, other school leaders, parents, and other stakeholders when determining such minimum number.

The ADE determined the minimum N-size through a collaborative process involving stakeholders. Initial discussions began with the Vision for Excellence in Education and Arkansas Accountability System Steering Committee, followed by analyses and advisory team consultations. The ESSA Accountability Advisory Team provided input through web meetings and surveys, emphasizing the need for a minimum N-size that represents schools of all sizes and includes at least 90 percent of students in each group. The Arkansas State Board of Education reviewed and commented on the findings in a dedicated work session, ensuring stakeholder perspectives informed the final decision.

Additional in-person and web-based stakeholder meetings with educators around the state from 2023 to 2025 did not raise concerns around continuing to use the minimum N-size.

Describe how the State ensures that the minimum number is sufficient to not reveal any personally identifiable information.²

The ADE employs a cell-size limit of 10 regarding redacted values for public reporting to protect personally identifiable information and to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (1974) (FERPA). Additionally, various methods are employed to protect student data, which include, but are not limited to, complementary suppression, limited access, and data encryption. Depending upon cell size, population size, performance characteristics, student demographics, and other criteria including the topic being reported, various suppression/limited access methods are used.

Secure access to student-level data by teachers and leaders for educational use requires appropriate hierarchical permissions and confidentiality agreements (Memorandum of Understanding) to avoid disclosure of personally identifiable information and to ensure appropriate use of data.

² Consistent with ESEA section 1111(i), information collected or disseminated under ESEA section 1111 shall be collected and disseminated in a manner that protects the privacy of individuals consistent with section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g, commonly known as the “Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974”). When selecting a minimum n-size for reporting, States should consult the Institute for Education Sciences report “[Best Practices for Determining Subgroup Size in Accountability Systems While Protecting Personally Identifiable Student Information](#)” to identify appropriate statistical disclosure limitation strategies for protecting student privacy.

If the State’s minimum number of students for purposes of reporting is lower than the minimum number of students for accountability purposes, provide the State’s minimum number of students for purposes of reporting.

Arkansas uses a minimum N-size of 10 for public reporting purposes.

Establishment of Long-Term Goals (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)):

Arkansas’ K-12 accountability formula aligns educators, families, and policymakers around a shared definition of excellence. This framework is anchored in the LEARNS Act (2023) and aligned with the 2023 Arkansas Academic Standards, focusing on rigorous academic outcomes, annual student progress, and post-secondary readiness. The system utilizes long-term goals as targets and Checkpoints for Progress (measurements of interim progress) to ensure schools are on track to close achievement gaps.

The 2023-2024 school year marked the inaugural administration of the ATLAS 3 through high school exam.

- Baselines: Following the shift from ACT Aspire to ATLAS, the ADE 2023-2024 data to establish new baselines for academic achievement in ELA and mathematics (Grades 3-8) and End-of-Course exams (ELA I, ELA II, Algebra I, Geometry).
- Rigor: These goals reflect the increased rigor of the 2023 standards, particularly in Mathematics, ensuring students are prepared for postsecondary success as defined by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education.

Checkpoints for Progress are based on increments to reach the long-term goals. These checkpoints allow the ADE to provide enhanced reporting that situates annual scores relative to expected progress within a long-term trajectory.

Consistent with ESEA section 1111(i) and FERPA, all data used to track progress toward these goals is collected and disseminated to protect student privacy. Arkansas employs statistical disclosure limitation strategies to ensure that reporting remains transparent without compromising personally identifiable information.

Academic Achievement (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(i)(I)(aa)):

Describe the long-term goals for improved academic achievement, as measured by proficiency on the annual statewide reading/language arts and mathematics assessments, for all students and for each subgroup of students, including: (i) baseline data; (ii) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi-year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the State; and (iii) how the long-term goals are ambitious.

Arkansas establishes long-term goals for improved academic achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics as measured by proficiency on the statewide annual assessments. Long-term goals apply to all students and to each federally required subgroup of students. Arkansas will set a long-term goal of the percent proficient equal to the percent proficient at the 75th percentile of all schools by grade span using ATLAS 2024 as baseline scores.

The timeline for meeting long-term goals will be 7 years from the 2024 baseline for all students, and all federally required subgroups statewide.

Appendix A includes baseline data and projected index trajectories supporting the long-term goal calculations.

Describe how the long-term goals and measurements of interim progress toward the long-term goals for academic achievement take into account the improvement necessary to make significant progress in closing statewide proficiency gaps.

Student subgroups will be expected to make progress to meet or exceed the long-term goals. Subgroups of students who start lower relative to their baseline in 2024 will need to make more progress to achieve the long-term goals. The information provided in Appendix A illustrates the average increase that will be required to meet the established goals.

Enhanced annual reporting of schools’ student groups’ progress compared to checkpoints will be coupled with reporting of the annual school index.

Graduation Rate (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(i)(I)(bb)): *Describe the long-term goals for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for all students and for each subgroup of students, including: (i) baseline data; (ii) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi-year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the State; and (iii) how the long-term goals are ambitious.*

Arkansas proposes to set its long-term goal for the 4-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate at 94 percent based on prior Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate improvement trends. Arkansas recognizes that long-term goals must be aspirational and reflect the reality that individual indicators include some statistical variation that can be minimized but not completely eliminated.

The 4-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate baseline data indicate gaps among student groups, which will continue to be a focus of improvement within LEAs as these systems seek to ensure all students are achieving the goals of the vision. See Table 4 for baselines.

Table 4: 2024 Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate Baselines for All Students

Groups of Students	Number of 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Expected Graduates	Baseline 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate
All Students	36,010	88.39
African American	6,814	87.28
Hispanic/Latino	5,496	89.27
White	21,232	87.83
Economically Disadvantaged	25,435	87.09
English Learners	3,011	88.48
Students with Disabilities	4992	86.49

If applicable, describe the long-term goals for each extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, including (i) baseline data; (ii) the timeline for meeting the long-term goals, for which the term must be the same multi-year length of time for all students and for each subgroup of students in the State; (iii) how the long-term goals are ambitious; and (iv) how the long-term goals are more rigorous than the long-term goal set for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate.

Provide the measurements of interim progress toward the long-term goals for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and any extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate in Appendix A.

Describe how the long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and any extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate take into account the improvement necessary to make significant progress in closing statewide graduation rate gaps.

Details provided in Appendix A show how student groups starting at lower points in the baseline year will need to improve at greater rates to achieve long-term goals within a 7-year cycle. Enhanced annual reporting of schools’ student groups’ progress compared to Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate checkpoints will be coupled with reporting of the annual school index, which gives a more robust indication of how schools and student groups within schools are progressing over time relative to gaps within schools and with the long-term goals. The enhanced reporting will include a breakdown of schools’ and their student groups’ achievement on the set of indicators included in the school index.

English Language Proficiency (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(ii)):

Describe the long-term goals for English learners for increases in the percentage of such students making progress in achieving English language proficiency, as measured by the statewide English language proficiency assessment including: (i) baseline data; (ii) the State-determined timeline for such students to achieve English language proficiency; and (iii) how the long-term goals are ambitious.

Time to English Language Proficiency (Reclassification)

Arkansas will report an expected timeline to proficiency that considers initial English Language Proficiency levels differentiated by initial grade level spans. Tables 5a, 5b, and 5c provide Arkansas’ data and research-based timelines to English Language Proficiency.

Table 5a: Arkansas K-2 Timeline to English Language Proficiency

Initial	Years Identified as an English Learner			
Domain Level (Year 1)	2	3	4	5
Level 1	Level 2	Level 2	Level 3	Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)
Level 2	Level 3	Level 3	Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)	
Level 3	Level 3	Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)		
Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)				

Table 5b: Arkansas Grade 3-5 Timeline to English Language Proficiency

Initial	Years Identified as an English Learner			
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Domain Level (Year 1)	2	3	4	5
Level 1	Level 2	Level 2	Level 3	Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)
Level 2	Level 3	Level 3	Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)	
Level 3	Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)			
Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)				

Table 5c: Arkansas Grade 6-12 Timeline to English Language Proficiency

Initial	Years Identified as an English Learner				
Domain Level (Year 1)	2	3	4	5	6
Level 1	Level 2	Level 2	Level 3	Level 3	Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)
Level 2	Level 3	Level 3	Level 3	Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)	
Level 3	Level 3	Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)			
Proficient (Level 4/Level 5)					

An English Learner is “On Track to English Language Proficiency” if any one of the following conditions is met:

1. Exit English Learner status;
2. Meet time expectations on 3 or more ELPA21 domains;
3. Meet time expectations on all nonexempt ELPA21 domains (if the English Learner has at least 1 domain exemption).

English Learners are on track to English Language Proficiency if they meet or exceed the timeline expectation within at least three of the four ELPA21 domains given their initial English Language Proficiency level and years identified as an English Learner as indicated in Tables 5a-5c. For instance, suppose an English Learner who began in kindergarten had an initial English Language Proficiency level of 1 on reading and has been identified as an English Learner for four years. This student would need a level 4 or 5 in the reading domain to be on track to English Language Proficiency in reading in year 5. Arkansas intends to calculate the percent of students on track to English Language Proficiency for each student group, domain, and a combination across all domains. See Table 6 for 2024 baselines.

Arkansas proposes to update long-term goals for the percentage of students on track to English Language Proficiency based on results and recommendations from Arkansas’ participation in *Competitive Grants for State Assessments Program (CGSA CFDA 84.3368A) Evaluating English Language Progress Models: The Sensitivity of Claims about Progress across State Models*. Recommendations included adjusting the time to proficiency in Tables 5a-5c to shorten the time to proficiency in later years while maintaining some time for Emerging and Progressing students in initial years and to adjust based on the trends learned across numerous states actual English Language Acquisition by grade spans.

The school's percentage of students on track to English Language Proficiency at the 75th percentile rank of the 2024 school distribution was used to establish the long-term goal for schools to reach in 7 years. This value is 47 percent of students on track to English Language Proficiency.

Table 6: 2024 Arkansas percent on track by student group, domain, and combined

Student Groups	On Track to English Language Proficiency by Domain				On Track to ELP Combined Domains or Exited
	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking	
All English Learners	28%	37%	66%	46%	33%
ELs With Disabilities	12%	15%	46%	27%	14%
Long-Term ELs**	18%	26%	57%	43%	20%

*** Long-term ELs are students classified as English Learner for more than five years. It should be noted that if an English Learner does not attain English Language Proficiency within the appropriate timeline, that student must still be afforded English Learner services until proficiency is met.*

Provide the measurements of interim progress toward the long-term goal for increases in the percentage of English learners making progress in achieving English language proficiency in Appendix A.

Indicators (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(B)):

The indicators described in this section will be aggregated to produce an annual school index, an index-based system. Each indicator will equally contribute 100 points each to the overall index. The ADE developed the indicators for the school index in collaboration with stakeholders through meaningful consultation. In 2023 and 2024 ADE engaged in further collaborative consultation with members of the Accountability Workgroup convened to help ensure alignment with the new priorities under the LEARNS Act (2023). Documentation of this process is found on the [LEARNS website](#).

Academic Achievement Indicator: *Describe the Academic Achievement indicator, including a description of how the indicator (i) is based on the long-term goals; (ii) is measured by proficiency on the annual Statewide reading/language arts and mathematics assessments; (iii) annually measures academic achievement for all students and separately for each subgroup of students; and (iv) at the State’s discretion, for each public high school in the State, includes a measure of student growth, as measured by the annual Statewide reading/language arts and mathematics assessments.*

Arkansas will calculate the percentage of full academic year students who achieve a score at the Proficient or Advanced (Level 3 or 4) in English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics and science. Points earned on the achievement indicator are equal to the percentage of students earning a proficient or higher (criteria ii). English Learner achievement scores will be included in the student’s 3rd year enrolled and beyond. Arkansas will aggregate those points at the school-level for all students and for each student group (criteria iii). Table 7 provides the baseline percentages for Arkansas from 2024.

Table 7: Arkansas’ Percent Proficient or Advanced ELA, Math, & Science at Baseline in 2024

Grade Span	Sub-Group	N ELA	% ELA	N Math	% Math
Elementary	All Students	98,837	36.73	98,897	38.59
	Black/African American	19,281	19.51	19,306	18.33
	Hispanic	13,602	29.68	13,607	31.18
	White	57,862	43.66	57,888	46.55
	Economically Disadvantaged	68,523	28.92	68,570	30.05
	English Learners	8,175	8.23	8,179	13.25
	Students with Disabilities	16,044	11.14	16,063	12.06
Middle School	All Students	88,514	34.73	88,484	38.6
	Black/African American	17,293	16.16	17,275	14.35
	Hispanic	13,856	26.37	13,857	29.87
	White	50,197	42.75	50,192	48.61
	Economically Disadvantaged	56,974	25.15	56,933	27.78
	English Learners	6,928	3.59	6,934	7.54
	Students with Disabilities	12,462	6.55	12,470	7.96
High School	All Students	86,991	32.85	80,548	21.83
	Black/African American	15,061	15.52	14,621	6.33
	Hispanic	13,687	25.74	13,044	17.95
	White	51,943	39.19	47,332	27.33
	Economically Disadvantaged	54,721	24.44	52,785	15.81
	English Learners	6,140	3.78	6,117	4.59
	Students with Disabilities	11,221	4.54	11,505	4.18

Indicator for Public Elementary and Secondary Schools that are Not High Schools (Other Academic Indicator): *Describe the Other Academic indicator, including how it annually measures the performance for all students and separately for each subgroup of students. If the Other Academic indicator is not a measure of student growth, the description must include a demonstration that the indicator is a valid and reliable statewide academic indicator that allows for meaningful differentiation in school performance.*

Arkansas stakeholders communicated a high value for including a student academic growth indicator in the school index for all grade levels for which growth can be calculated, including elementary and secondary schools that are not high schools. Arkansas stakeholders expressed a desire for growth to play a more significant role in overall school ratings. Stakeholders additionally expressed a desire to maintain the current value-added growth model as the means of measuring growth, but to make the way in which growth data are calculated for accountability easier for educators, parents, and stakeholders to understand (such as with a simple percentage out of 100).

A value-added growth model was piloted and selected in 2015 based on policy considerations such as which question about student growth is meaningful to students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders, as well as the technical considerations given Arkansas' test transitions. Over four years of development and advisory meetings conducted by the ADE, stakeholders concluded their preference for the use of a value-added model (VAM) over other options, such as Student Growth Percentiles (SGP).

In 2023, the LEARNS' Accountability Workgroup reconvened to discuss possibilities for adapting or changing the state's VAM to more accurately reflect the impact that the educators in the school have on student learning as well as to provide stakeholders with a measure that provides different information than the achievement indicator.

The student longitudinal growth model is a VAM that conditions students' expected growth based on students' score histories. Appendix B includes the model equation for Arkansas' student growth model. The VAM assesses student growth relative to the student's individual score history and the student's expectation of growth (predicted score). The score reflects the difference between the observed performance and the performance expected (predicted) for each student in a group of students. The computation of the students' value-added scores (VAS) which is the difference score (residual) is carried out in two steps.

In the first step, a longitudinal individual growth model is run to produce a predicted score for each student. The individual growth model uses up to four years of prior scores for each student to maximize the precision of the prediction (best estimate) and accounts for students having different starting points (random intercepts). In the value-added model, each student's prior score history acts as the control/conditioning factor for the expectation of growth for the individual student.

In the second step, the student's predicted score is subtracted from his or her actual score to generate the student's value-added score (actual – predicted = residual = value-added score). The magnitude of value-added scores indicate the degree to which students did not meet, met, or exceed expected growth in performance.

- If the student has a value-added score with a positive value, the student's performance exceeded growth expectations for the year. The student had higher than expected growth. The greater the value above zero, the more the student exceeded expectations.
- If the student has a value-added score value of zero, the student's performance met expected performance. The student grew at least as much as expected.
- If the student has a value-added score with a negative value, the student did not meet expectations for growth in performance for the year. The student did not grow as much as expected in achievement. The lower the value, the larger the degree to which the student did not grow as much as expected.
- The percentage of non-mobile students who meet or exceed their expected growth becomes the number of points earned for that subject (English Language Arts with ELP, science and mathematics).
- English Learners are included in the Growth indicator for all students by proportionally including their English Language Proficiency (ELP) growth with their English Language Arts growth scores.

Points are awarded in the school index based on the percentage of full academic year students meeting or exceeding their expected growth in ELA, math, and science. English Learner growth scores will be included in the student’s 2nd year enrolled and beyond.

Individual growth scores will also be used to calculate the Growth of the Lowest Quartile indicator. Growth for the lowest quartile within a school reflects the growth of the nonmobile students in the lowest quartile of the school based on prior year achievement. Points are earned for English Language Arts, mathematics and science equal the percentage of full academic year students in the lowest quartile meeting or exceeding their expected growth in each subject. English Learner growth scores will be included in the student’s 2nd year enrolled and beyond. Growth for the lowest quartile increases the significance of growth in the overall accountability index, aligned with stakeholders’ feedback, and focuses educators on ensuring students in the lowest quartile receive the necessary support to demonstrate growth.

School-level value-added scores will be calculated as well as a value-added score for each student group within schools that meet the minimum N-size.

Table 8: 2024 Mean School Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expected Growth

Grade Span	Sub-Group	N ELA	% ELA	N Math	% Math
Elementary	All Students	2,677	37.25	2,677	37.47
	Black/African American	1,482	45.92	1,482	47.15
	Hispanic	2,401	38.49	2,401	39.07
	White	2,127	46.55	2,127	46.65
	Economically Disadvantaged	2,621	37.36	2,621	37.38
	English Learners	2,188	35.82	2,188	37.05
	Students with Disabilities	2,344	38.57	2,344	36.62
Middle School	All Students	907	51.43	907	52.09
	Black/African American	739	51.06	739	53.32
	Hispanic	844	54.99	844	54.90
	White	879	51.82	879	52.55
	Economically Disadvantaged	895	50.90	895	52.30
	English Learners	743	59.28	743	55.50
	Students with Disabilities	872	52.93	872	45.71
High School	All Students	1,593	36.06	1,593	49.56
	Black/African American	916	39.18	916	51.47
	Hispanic	1,284	39.10	1,284	47.95
	White	1,449	39.83	1,449	50.72
	Economically Disadvantaged	1,562	36.70	1,562	49.42
	English Learners	1,016	37.99	1,016	46.35

	Students with Disabilities	1,373	43.01	1,373	49.96
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Graduation Rate: *Describe the Graduation Rate indicator, including a description of (i) how the indicator is based on the long-term goals; (ii) how the indicator annually measures graduation rate for all students and separately for each subgroup of students; (iii) how the indicator is based on the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate; (iv) if the State, at its discretion, also includes one or more extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rates, how the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is combined with that rate or rates within the indicator; and (v) if applicable, how the State includes in its four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and any extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rates students with the most significant cognitive disabilities assessed using an alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(D) and awarded a State-defined alternate diploma under ESEA section 8101(23) and (25).*

Arkansas will use the four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate in the school index. Arkansas includes in the four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities assessed using an alternate assessment who complete the alternate pathway to graduation within the time period available for a free appropriate public education. Those on the alternate pathway who do not complete are counted as non-graduates.

Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency (ELP) Indicator: *Describe the Progress in Achieving ELP indicator, including the State’s definition of ELP, as measured by the State ELP assessment.*

Arkansas will continue to use a value-added growth model for the English Language Proficiency Indicator as part of its plan. The value-added growth model for English Language Proficiency is a simple two-level model that nests students’ English language assessment scores for each year. The general form of the equation is provided in Appendix B. The English Language Proficiency value-added model uses students’ prior score history on state English Language Proficiency assessments to determine an expected growth trajectory. The residuals between current year ELPA21 scores and students’ expected scores are used as a proxy measure of whether the students met, exceeded, or failed to meet expected growth in English Language Proficiency. Student-level residuals are aggregated to the school level to provide a school-level metric for English Learner progress in English Language Proficiency.

Arkansas will report the English Language Proficiency as the percent of students meeting or exceeding their growth target. Arkansas has established the following definition of English Language Proficiency as measured by the ELPA21 assessment:

Students’ results on the ELPA21 are the criterion used to measure a student’s proficiency in English. English Learners are tested annually on ELPA21. The ELPA21 is based on the Arkansas English Language Proficiency standards and addresses the language demands needed to reach college and career readiness. ELPA21 assesses the language domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The assessment is scored by the state’s testing vendor and districts are notified of students’ results. Within each of the four domains (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) there are five performance levels (1– 5). These performance levels offer additional details as to student performance within each domain.

Based on these performance levels, ELPA21 has established three categories of proficiency status: Emerging (the beginning level of English language acquisition), Progressing, and Proficient.

Proficiency Status Rules:

- Emerging = students with all domain levels ≤ 2
- Progressing = students with domain level combinations that fall in between the criteria for Proficient and Emerging
- Proficient = students with all domain levels ≥ 4

Student Proficiency Status represents the following:

1. Emerging (qualifies for English Learner services at the beginning level of English language acquisition)
2. Progressing (qualifies for English Learner services)
3. Proficient (qualifies to be considered for exiting English Learner services)

Students with an Emerging or Progressing determination will continue to receive English Learner services, while students with a Proficient determination will be considered for exiting English Learner status and services (see section on statewide exit criteria).

School Quality or Student Success Indicator(s): Describe each School Quality or Student Success Indicator, including, for each such indicator: (i) how it allows for meaningful differentiation in school performance; (ii) that it is valid, reliable, comparable, and statewide (for the grade span(s) to which it applies); and (iii) of how each such indicator annually measures performance for all students and separately for each subgroup of students. For any School Quality or Student Success indicator that does not apply to all grade spans, the description must include the grade spans to which it does apply.

Based on consultation with the Accountability Workgroup, Arkansas has refined the SQSS indicators to focus on high-impact metrics that drive student success and post-secondary readiness. The Success-Ready Graduate indicator reflects Arkansas' commitment to ensuring that students graduate prepared for meaningful postsecondary pathways. While academic proficiency in ELA and mathematics remains foundational, Arkansas recognizes that readiness for, enlistment, enrollment, or employment requires more than minimum graduation requirements. The Success-Ready Graduate measure captures whether students leave high school equipped with the credentials, skills, and experiences necessary to transition successfully beyond K–12 education as outlined in the [Success-Ready Pathway Guide](#). Arkansas has established the Diploma of Merit and Diploma of Distinction to signal that a student has met the Success-Ready Graduate indicators and qualifies for aligned state supported scholarships. Criteria for Success-Ready Graduate includes completing a series of designated coursework and demonstrating proficiency in content or skills aligned with that coursework. Demonstrations are met by earning postsecondary credit, receiving an industry recognized credential, or passing an associated assessment (AP, AICE, IB, ASVAB, etc.).

This indicator is a core component of the state's A–F accountability system and complements measures of Achievement, Growth, Growth of the Lowest Quarter, and Graduation Rate. Together, these indicators provide a comprehensive picture of a school's effectiveness from mastery of core academic standards to sustained growth, academic outcomes for underserved students, successful completion of high school, and demonstrated postsecondary readiness.

The presence of the Success-Ready Graduate measure elevates expectations for high schools beyond on-time completion. Schools are accountable not only for graduating students, but for ensuring that graduates demonstrate readiness through recognized credentials, advanced coursework, career pathways, military readiness benchmarks, or other approved measures aligned to state priorities.

By embedding this measure into the overall accountability index, Arkansas reinforces that postsecondary preparedness is not an optional outcome, but an essential responsibility of the K–12 system. The indicator

incentivizes schools to align instruction, advising, and pathway opportunities to ensure students graduate with both a diploma and a viable plan for their future.

Arkansas is currently in a transitional phase for measuring postsecondary readiness as the full criteria for Success-Ready Pathways commenced with the freshman class of 2024.

- Transitional Measure (Through Class of 2028): Points are awarded for on-time graduates who demonstrate readiness by meeting one of the following:
 - Completion of 3+ Concurrent Credit (CC) courses.
 - Completion of 3+ Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) or Cambridge ACE courses.
 - Completion of Seal of Biliteracy.
 - Status as a Completer in a High-Demand, High-Wage (H2) Career Pathway.
 - Military Enlistment

- Full Implementation (Class of 2029 and Beyond): The measure will shift to Merit and Distinction benchmarks. Points will be calculated based on the percentage of students graduating on time while meeting the specific requirements outlined in the [Success-Ready Pathway Guide](#).

Annual Meaningful Differentiation (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(C)):

Describe the State’s system of annual meaningful differentiation of all public schools in the State, consistent with the requirements of section 1111(c)(4)(C) of the ESEA, including a description of (i) how the system is based on all indicators in the State’s accountability system, (ii) for all students and for each subgroup of students. Note that each state must comply with the requirements in 1111(c)(5) of the ESEA with respect to accountability for charter schools.

Currently, Arkansas must maintain dual identification systems: the federal ESSA categories and the state’s A–F system. This dual system is burdensome, duplicative, and confusing for schools, educators, and families. Beginning in Fall 2026, Arkansas will use its state-established accountability system as the official process for identifying schools for support and improvement under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), Section 1111(c)–(d) and meeting the federal requirements for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), and Additional Targeted Support (ATSI).

Arkansas will use the Unified Accountability and Support Plan as the single, aligned system for identifying and supporting schools. The Arkansas accountability system exceeds the minimum expectation set by ESSA.

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) remains committed to earning public trust through transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of state and federal resources. As part of its continued approach, ADE focuses on empowering local education agencies (LEAs) to lead improvement efforts in their communities. This strategy builds on the belief that sustainable change is most effective when driven locally, with the state offering support based on each district’s specific needs.

LEAs continue to lead the way through regular, data-informed cycles of reflection and action, supported by the statewide system. The role of ADE is to provide guidance, tools, and oversight that enable LEAs to deliver better outcomes for students.

Table 9: Title I School vs. D/F Rated Schools

Category	Count	Percentage
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Total Schools	1,108	
Title I Schools	893	80.6%
Federal ESSA Identified (CSI, TSI, ATSI, MRI-CSI, CSI-ATSI)	185	16.7% of all / 20.7% of Title I
Arkansas A–F (D/F Schools)	230 (26 not Title I)	20.7% of all / 22.8% of Title I

Identifying and Supporting Struggling Schools

The data in Table 9 that Arkansas is identifying more than four times the federal minimum of 5% of Title I schools by using the state’s school rating system. Unlike the federal system, which flags only from Title I schools, Arkansas’ model provides clearer differentiation through its A–F letter grade structure for all schools in the state. By identifying more schools and creating sharper distinctions across performance levels, Arkansas is able to direct resources and supports to a broader set of schools, ensuring that assistance is both targeted to the areas of greatest need and distributed across the state.

To simplify the identification of struggling schools and ensure they receive the right support and resources, Arkansas will:

- Use school index scores and A–F letter grades to identify schools for improvement.
- Classify D and F schools as the highest-priority schools (equivalent to CSI), with intensive, state-directed supports.
- Any D/F rated school will be required to develop a school-level improvement plan that directly addresses identified deficiencies and outlines how allocated Title I, Section 1003 school improvement funds will be utilized to address the areas of concern as identified through the school index.
- Identify and support all schools with underperforming subgroups.
- Apply the 95% participation requirement and subgroup rules as required under federal law.
- For any school who under state law does not receive a school letter grade, Arkansas will calculate a school index score that will be used to determine the appropriate level of support and improvement needed.

If the number of D/F schools ever drops below 5%, Arkansas will identify at least 5% of schools based on the lowest overall index scores to maintain compliance with ESSA. Arkansas has also added an automatic escalator clause in state rules to prevent over inflation of letter grades. The state will review and reset standards as needed.

In addition, any school that remains a D or F for three consecutive years will cascade into a higher level of support and oversight from ADE, equivalent to MRI-CSI and CSI-ATSI designations. Schools will exit status once the letter grade increases above a D. Exit and identification will occur annually. Once a school is identified, it will work with ADE to complete a comprehensive needs assessment to review all subgroup data across each indicator in order to target needed supports and areas of improvement.

Through this approach, Arkansas ensures not only compliance with ESSA, but also a stronger, more transparent, and more effective system of school identification and support.

Lowest Quartile Indicator focuses schools on closing achievement gaps: Arkansas’ accountability system includes a strong focus on the performance and growth of students in the lowest 25% of achievement. This indicator ensures that schools cannot rely solely on the performance of their highest-

achieving students to compensate for stagnant or declining growth among their lowest-performing peers.

By emphasizing the lowest quartile, Arkansas:

- Directly targets achievement gaps by requiring schools to demonstrate growth for students most at risk of being left behind.
- Provides a mechanism to identify ATSI schools among D and F campuses.
- Holds schools accountable to design supports and interventions that support lowest-performing students, ensuring all students improve.
- Ensures all students are learning.

This design reflects Arkansas’ commitment to ensuring that achievement gaps are closed and that every student benefits from the state’s accountability and support system.

Grade spans: Identification will occur within Elementary, Middle, and High school grade spans to ensure comparability across schools of similar configuration.

N-size: Arkansas will continue to apply an N-size of 15 for accountability decisions (with multi-year aggregation to meet N) and N-size of 10 for public reporting where feasible. This ensures statistical reliability while maximizing all student groups.

Guardrails: Funding, interventions, and exit will follow the federal guidelines even when Arkansas communicates through A–F ratings. Parent-facing dashboards and reports will clearly display both the state designation (A–F grade) and the data for subpopulation performance by indicator. This maintains compliance with ESSA Section 1111(d) while streamlining communication with families and educators.

Providing additional flexibility during a temporary transition period: Arkansas requests a waiver of the federal requirement to identify schools for support and improvement in the fall of 2025. Under 20 U.S.C. § 6311(c)(4)(D)(i)–(ii), states are required to annually identify schools for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), and under 20 U.S.C. § 6311(d)(3)(A) states must escalate supports (“cascade”) to schools that fail to exit identification status within the established timeline.

Arkansas is currently transitioning to a revised accountability system based on a new A–F School Letter Grade and Index formula, aligned to updated standards and assessments. To ensure fairness, accuracy, and stability during this transition, Arkansas proposes to:

- Carry forward 2022 identifications for one additional year (2025–26). Schools currently designated as CSI, ATSI, or TSI will maintain that status and continue to receive supports and interventions. Schools approaching the escalation timeline (e.g., moving from ATSI to CSI, or CSI to MRI) will not be advanced into higher levels of intervention until fall 2026, when the new accountability system is fully implemented.

This temporary waiver ensures that schools do not face double disruptions—new identifications plus escalations—during a system transition year. It provides consistency of support while preserving fairness and credibility in the accountability system.

Arkansas commits to resuming full identification, exit, and cascade processes beginning with the fall 2026 cycle, as outlined in this waiver request.

Table 10: Overview of Timeline for Identification:

2025-2026 School Year	2026-2027 School Year
<p>Schools currently identified for CSI, ATSI, TSI under the old accountability system maintain status regardless of letter grade.</p> <p>Schools that are not currently identified for identification who meet the established criteria under the new accountability system (i.e., earn a D or F letter grade) are provided direct support.</p>	<p>Schools who meet the established criteria under the new accountability system (i.e., earn a D or F letter grade) are identified for CSI or TSI.</p>

Describe the weighting of each indicator in the State’s system of annual meaningful differentiation, including how the Academic Achievement, Other Academic, Graduation Rate, and Progress in ELP indicators each receive substantial weight individually and, in the aggregate, much greater weight than the School Quality or Student Success indicator(s), in the aggregate.

See section above.

If the States uses a different methodology or methodologies for annual meaningful differentiation than the one described in 4.v.a. above for schools for which an accountability determination cannot be made (e.g., P-2 schools), describe the different methodology or methodologies, indicating the type(s) of schools to which it applies.

Arkansas will continue to use its prior strategy for including schools for which an accountability determination cannot be made. Specifically, schools that feed into a paired school for which a determination can be made will receive the same determination as the school with which it is paired. Stakeholders expressed a desire to transition toward including a K-2 indicator for schools that serve these grade levels. This would allow a feeder school rating to include data from grade levels within the school. The ADE currently has a K-2 reading and math readiness indicator and will evaluate its potential use in the school index in future years.

Identification of Schools (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)):

Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools: *Describe the State’s methodology for identifying not less than the lowest-performing five percent of all schools receiving Title I, Part A funds in the State for comprehensive support and improvement, including the year in which the State will first identify such schools.*

Beginning in 2026, Arkansas will identify any building receiving a D or F rating as in need of Comprehensive Support and Improvement. See Table 9 above for the number of schools that will be identified. By using the state grading system, Arkansas will identify more than the bottom 5% of required schools and thus provide support to a broader range of schools. Should the percent of D and F rated schools fall below 5% of the Title I schools, ADE will identify the bottom 5% of all schools for Comprehensive Support and Improvement.

Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools: *Describe the State’s methodology for identifying all public high schools in the State failing to graduate one third or more of their students for comprehensive support and improvement, including the year in which the State will first identify such schools.*

Arkansas will identify schools with a four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate below 66.667 percent for all students as in need of comprehensive support and improvement in 2025-2026 and every year thereafter as included in the school rating. The rate is computed annually for all students and separately for each subgroup of students. The four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate is calculated on lagging data and applies to all students and subgroups meeting the minimum N-size of 15. In the case of a high school that does not meet the minimum N-size of 15 in the cohort a weighted three-year average (most recent three years) of the four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate will be used to determine if the school meets this threshold for the All-Students group.

Pursuant to ESEA section 1111 (d) (1) (C) (i) (II) Arkansas will differentiate support for high schools that are identified under subsection (c) (4) (D) (i) (II) that are predominantly serving students:

- Returning to education after having exited secondary school without a standard high school diploma; or
- Who, based on their grade or age, are significantly off track to accumulate sufficient academic credits to meet high school graduation requirements as established by the State. If such a high school has a total enrollment of less than 100 students, the LEA may forgo implementation of improvement activities required under this paragraph.

Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools: *Describe the methodology by which the State identifies public schools in the State receiving Title I, Part A funds that have received additional targeted support under ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C) (based on identification as a school in which any subgroup of students, on its own, would lead to identification under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(I) using the State’s methodology under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)) and that have not satisfied the statewide exit criteria for such schools within a State-determined number of years, including the year in which the State will first identify such schools.*

See section above.

Frequency of Identification: *Provide, for each type of school identified for comprehensive support and improvement, the frequency with which the State will, thereafter, identify such schools. Note that these schools must be identified at least once every three years.*

Arkansas will identify schools annually based on their school rating and/or graduation rate.

Targeted Support and Improvement: *Describe the State’s methodology for annually identifying any school with one or more “consistently underperforming” subgroups of students, based on all indicators in the statewide system of annual meaningful differentiation, including the definition used by the State to determine consistent underperformance. (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(C)(iii))*

See section above.

Additional Targeted Support: *Describe the State’s methodology, for identifying schools in which any subgroup of students, on its own, would lead to identification under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(I) using the State’s methodology under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D), including the year in which the State will first identify such schools and the frequency with which the State will, thereafter, identify such schools. (ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C)-(D))*

See section above.

Additional Statewide Categories of Schools: *If the State chooses, at its discretion, to include additional statewide categories of schools, describe those categories.*

See section above.

Annual Measurement of Achievement (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(E)(iii)): *Describe how the State factors the requirement for 95 percent student participation in statewide mathematics and reading/language arts assessments into the statewide accountability system.*

Under Arkansas' Unified Accountability and Support plan, if a school does not meet the 95 percent participation requirement for all students, 95 percent will be used for the denominator for purposes of measuring, calculating, and reporting. Additionally, if a school does not meet the 95 percent participation requirement for any subgroup of students, 95 percent will be used as the denominator for each subgroup for the purposes of measuring, calculating and reporting. All calculations will be conducted both for all student groups and for each student group meeting minimum group size requirements (N=15).

For schools that do not meet the 95 percent participation requirement for two consecutive years, the ADE will require each school to submit a plan that includes strategies for meeting participation requirements. For schools that do not meet the participation requirement for multiple years or that do not show sustained improvement in meeting the 95 percent participation rate, the ADE will implement additional actions and interventions as appropriate.

Continued Support for School and LEA Improvement (ESEA section 1111(d)(3)(A)):

Clear, achievable, time-limited exit criteria

Arkansas will apply annual exit and identification cycles aligned to the state A–F school rating system. Exit criteria are designed to be clear, achievable, and time-limited, consistent with the requirements of ESSA section 1111(d).

- Schools rated D or F will be identified annually for support. Any school rated D or F for three consecutive years will cascade into a higher level of state-directed support and oversight, equivalent to MRI-CSI and CSI-ATSI.
- Schools will exit once their overall letter grade improves above a D for one full accountability cycle.
- Subgroup-specific supports will remain in place until the subgroup shows sustained improvement above the state-defined thresholds for two consecutive years.
- Once identified, schools will collaborate with ADE to complete a comprehensive needs assessment reviewing subgroup data across all indicators to target supports and areas of improvement.
- Schools failing to exit within the three-year timeline will be subject to enhanced ADE oversight, including resource allocation reviews, leadership audits, and additional intervention authority.

Schools identified as D or F that do not achieve, at minimum, the next highest letter grade within three years will enter an intensified improvement phase.

At the conclusion of the three-year period, the ADE, in partnership with the LEA, will conduct a structured performance and capacity review shared with the Arkansas State Board of Education. This review will examine:

- Movement on the specific accountability indicators driving the school's letter grade (Achievement, Growth, Growth of the Lowest Quarter, Graduation Rate, and Success-Ready Graduate);

- Fidelity and quality of implementation of selected evidence-based practices;
- Alignment of resources, staffing, and scheduling to identified student needs;
- Leadership effectiveness and organizational conditions supporting improvement; and
- The adequacy and timeliness of LEA-level support provided to the school.

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the lack of progress resulted from implementation gaps, insufficient district capacity, misaligned strategies, leadership barriers, ineffective use of funds, or other structural factors not addressed in the original improvement plan.

ADE will also evaluate whether the LEA’s support systems, oversight, and resource deployment were sufficient to enable the school to meet the required performance target.

Intensified Intervention Phase

If the review indicates insufficient progress or capacity, ADE will implement more directive and rigorous actions. These actions will be tailored to the school’s specific barriers and may include, but are not limited to:

- Required reallocation or directed use of state and federal funds;
- Mandatory adoption of specified evidence-based intervention models;
- Reduction or elimination of low-impact or duplicative initiatives;
- Required leadership coaching or replacement of ineffective personnel;
- Reassignment or restructuring of staff to ensure access to effective educators;
- Increased monitoring, reporting requirements, and on-site support;
- Required participation in organizational systems improvement processes;
- Expanded access to higher-performing schools, where permitted;
- Transformation contract options authorized under Arkansas law;
- State Board of Education directed action as permitted by statute, up to and including governance intervention.

Arkansas will not rely on a single prescribed intervention model. Instead, ADE will use a structured, evidence-driven review process to determine the most appropriate and rigorous next steps to ensure meaningful academic improvement.

The expectation remains clear: sustained failure to demonstrate measurable progress toward improved student outcomes will result in progressively stronger state action to ensure that students have access to effective instruction and high-performing schools.

Exit Criteria for Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools: *Describe the statewide exit criteria, established by the State, for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement, including the number of years (not to exceed four) over which schools are expected to meet such criteria.*

See section above.

Exit Criteria for Schools Receiving Additional Targeted Support: *Describe the statewide exit criteria, established by the State, for schools receiving additional targeted support under ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C), including the number of years over which schools are expected to meet such criteria.*

See section above.

More Rigorous Interventions: *Describe the more rigorous interventions required for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement that fail to meet the State’s exit criteria within a State-determined number of years consistent with section 1111(d)(3)(A)(i)(I) of the ESEA.*

See section above.

Resource Allocation Review: *Describe how the State will periodically review resource allocation to support school improvement in each LEA in the State serving a significant number or percentage of schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement.*

District Identification, Support, and Monitoring

As part of AR ACCESS of 2025, Arkansas assigns letter grades to each district LEA to facilitate the identification of needs, provision of support, and ongoing monitoring. The calculation of a district’s letter grade utilizes the high school letter grade formula, which is applied to all students within the district.

Districts that earn a letter grade of D or F are subject to increased support and enhanced monitoring by the state. This includes closer oversight of the implementation of each district’s strategic plan and additional assistance directed toward their schools. Districts identified as D or F are considered more likely to have a significant number of schools also rated D or F, and therefore are required to adhere to specified processes for support and monitoring.

Consolidated Strategic Planning and School Improvement Processes

Arkansas has streamlined its approach to strategic planning by consolidating 17 state and federal applications into the AR App, which now functions as the district’s strategic plan. Districts with an F letter rating are required to present their district strategic plan, along with their local board members, to the State Board of Education for thorough review. Furthermore, all schools situated within D or F rated districts will undergo onsite monitoring to assess the implementation of school improvement efforts. Allocation resources will be prioritized to school and district letter grades, as well as the length of time low performance has been sustained.

The state has also consolidated the required School Improvement Plan and introduced additional requirements based on individual school letter grades. Each year, the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), in collaboration with Education Service Cooperatives (ESC), will review school improvement plans under section 1003 for schools rated D or F. This plan must detail how funds will be utilized to ensure the school achieves, at minimum, the next highest letter grade within three years. The improvement plan must clearly link proposed expenditures to identified needs, evidence-based strategies, and specific accountability indicators that influence the school’s letter grade. School Improvement Plans should inform the district strategic plan.

In addition to standard formula-based allocations, and when funding is available, ADE may provide limited competitive supplemental grants to help address unexpected barriers or to expand successful practices. All supplemental grant requests must include documentation of the need, the intended outcomes, and a measurable return on investment.

Technical Assistance: *Describe the technical assistance the State will provide to each LEA in the State serving a significant number or percentage of schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement.*

See section above.

Additional Optional Action: If applicable, describe the action the State will take to initiate additional improvement in any LEA with a significant number or percentage of schools that are consistently identified by the State for comprehensive support and improvement and are not meeting exit criteria established by the State or in any LEA with a significant number or percentage of schools implementing targeted support and improvement plans.

Arkansas will utilize the state A–F school and district letter grade system as the primary method for identifying schools and districts in need of support and improvement. Schools identified as D or F will be required to implement a school improvement plan designed to achieve, at minimum, the next highest letter grade (e.g., F to D; D to C) within three years.

LEAs with a significant number or percentage of schools earning D or F ratings, and that have not met exit criteria within the three-year timeframe, will engage in a structured partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). ADE will conduct a comprehensive review of district systems, including instructional programs, leadership effectiveness, resource allocation, financial practices, and implementation fidelity of prior interventions.

If sufficient progress has not occurred, ADE will recommend more rigorous improvement requirements to the State Board of Education for the district. These actions may include, but are not limited to:

- Reallocation or directed use of funds
- Reassignment or replacement of personnel
- Implementation of specific evidence-based interventions
- Required changes to governance or operational structures

ADE in partnership with Education Service Cooperatives will provide coordinated technical assistance and monitoring to ensure coherence across accountability, assessment, accreditation, and school improvement supports. ADE will also facilitate collaborative networks to strengthen district capacity and accelerate improvement. If a LEA demonstrates insufficient capacity to support sustained improvement, state statute authorizes additional state action, including directing the use of funds or classification of the district as in need of intensive support by the State Board of Education.

Disproportionate Rates of Access to Educators (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(B)): Describe how low-income and minority children enrolled in schools assisted under Title I, Part A are not served at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers, and the measures the SEA will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the SEA with respect to such description.³

Arkansas is focused on ensuring that every student has access to a team of effective teachers and effective leaders. The ADE shall determine the rate at which low-income and minority students enrolled in Arkansas' Title I, Part A schools are disproportionately taught by educators who are ineffective, inexperienced, or teaching a subject for which they are not currently licensed. If there is disproportionality, the state will evaluate and publicly report the progress in addressing the disproportionality.

The ADE assists and supports schools under Title I, Part A whose children are served at disproportionate rates by teachers that are ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced using their local cycle of inquiry to develop human capital audits to identify root causes of access gaps and to make recommendations to address disproportionalities.

³ Consistent with ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(B), this description should not be construed as requiring a State to develop or implement a teacher, principal or other school leader evaluation system.

The ADE will identify schools receiving Title I, Part A funds that have children who are being served at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers by using the following methods:

- School Report Card
- High Poverty/High Minority Report
- Workforce Stability Index

School Report Card

Arkansas has a statutory, comprehensive Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS) that governs all aspects of teacher and school leader support, development and effectiveness. Using a statewide system for observation, support and ratings for K-12 educators, professional practice performance ratings are reported to the ADE for the purpose of identifying and evaluating educator effectiveness. Each LEA reports a teacher's professional performance rating from the teacher's summative evaluation that is conducted at least once every four (4) years.

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, per state legislation, the ADE shall include in the school performance reports:

- The total number of teachers who are employed in the public school; and
- Of that total, the number who meet each of the following criteria:
 - Identified as effective or highly effective under the Teacher Excellence and Support System for the school;

The reported information will be used as part of the information needed to determine the rate at which low-income and minority students are disproportionately taught by educators who are ineffective. If there is disproportionality, the state will evaluate and publicly report the progress in addressing the disproportionality.

High Poverty/High Minority (HP/HM) Report

The ADE identified gaps through data analysis within the state's schools with the greatest percentages of poverty and minority students. The ADE will annually provide an update on educator gaps through a High Poverty/High Minority Report for Title I Schools.

The HP/HM report is available to all stakeholders on the [Educator Effectiveness webpage](#).

The report provides information on all Title I schools designated as high poverty and/or high minority and their Workforce Stability Index (WSI) rating. High poverty schools are defined as schools that are in the highest 25% of all schools ranked by Free/Reduced Lunch percentages. High Minority schools are defined as schools that are in the highest 25% of all schools ranked by the percentage of non-white students. The HP/HM Report will be used in Human Capital Audits to help determine whether these students are being disproportionately served by teachers who are ineffective, inexperienced teachers, or teaching a subject for which they are not currently licensed.

Workforce Stability Index (WSI)

To provide districts with a more systematic comprehension of their local workforce, ADE has developed the WSI as an informational tool. The ADE, schools, districts, and the general public may access WSI information on the ADE's "[My School Info](#)" website, and on [LEA Insights](#). Based on an analysis of existing data the WSI identifies variables across domains that are commonly used measures of workforce quality. ADE uses the WSI to identify districts and schools with potential gaps in access to effective

teachers and target interventions and resources intended to close those gaps. The ADE relies on the WSI as a diagnostic tool to identify districts that perform poorly across all WSI domains.

After identifying districts and schools in need of assistance, the ADE can target support, such as human capital audits or other human capital management interventions, to improve the quality of their respective educator workforces.

Human Capital Audits

Arkansas is focused on ensuring that every student has access to a team of effective teachers and effective leaders. The ADE has developed a network of Human Capital Audits that will:

1. Increase awareness among school districts of the educational access issues in our state.
2. Increase district use of local data to identify access gaps and root causes.
3. Increase district WSI percentile.

To achieve these outcomes, the Human Capital Audits will explore issues and data concerning access both at a personal level and at the school and district level with local educational stakeholders. Educational stakeholders will include teachers, leaders, local school board members, parents, representatives from the business community, nearby educator preparation programs, regional Education Service Cooperatives, and state leaders about how to serve as a community of practice that will continue to focus on educational-access issues.

School Conditions (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(C)): Describe how the SEA agency will support LEAs receiving assistance under Title I, Part A to improve school conditions for student learning, including through reducing: (i) incidences of bullying and harassment; (ii) the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom; and (iii) the use of aversive behavioral interventions that compromise student health and safety.

A comprehensive education requires addressing all learning conditions. The ADE helps LEAs use evidence-based strategies to reduce bullying, limit excessive discipline that hinders learning, and avoid unsafe behavioral interventions. State law mandates anti-bullying policies for LEAs and requires ADE to assess how school discipline affects student achievement, reporting results to the State Board of Education and LEAs. The University of Arkansas Office for Educational Policy annually analyzes and presents the student discipline report to the State Board of Education.

The ADE has established a School Safety Unit responsible for overseeing the Safe School Initiative within the state. This unit delivers professional development, conducts safety audits, coordinates with districts statewide, and provides support when necessary. Additionally, the state has formed the Safe Schools Committee, which issues school safety recommendations in collaboration with the Arkansas Criminal Justice Institute at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Annual anti-bullying training is offered to school resource officers, counselors, principals, and stakeholders through the institute, as well as other safety agencies and organizations working alongside the ADE.

ADE has expanded Mental Health Awareness training for educators across the state, enhancing their ability to support students facing trauma and adverse experiences. The program now includes regional trainers dedicated to helping educators improve early identification, intervention, and classroom behavior management, ultimately building a more resilient educational environment. This infrastructure aims to equip educators with practical tools and techniques to address mental health concerns effectively, promoting overall student well-being.

Implementation of School Health Index, School Wellness Committees, and Health and Wellness School Improvement Priority

The passing of Arkansas Act 1220 of 2003 launched a state level structure of support, a funding source, and school improvement requirements for Arkansas schools in order to promote healthy schools. This legislation, over the past decade has been modified to encompass the full Coordinated School Health Model and thus, created a platform for the ADE to establish a foundation of supports for school personnel seeking resources to address social, health, and personal needs for students. ADE and the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) collaborate and share education and public health staff for the purpose of providing resources and professional development opportunities for LEAs. This statute created a funding source to support a Health Coordinator position at both the agencies, as well as created regional Community Health Nurse (CHNS) and Community Health Promotion Specialist (CHPS) positions to be housed in each Education Services Cooperative for the purpose of building a network of support for district personnel to improve the learning environment for students. The state statute implemented the requirement for every Arkansas public school to:

1. Convene a local wellness committee which is comprised of at least one representative from the following stakeholder groups: local school board administrator, food services, teacher organization, parents, students, school health professionals, and community members;
2. Conduct an annual assessment using the School Health Index (SHI) Assessment, a research-based instrument developed by the U.S. Center of Disease and Control and Prevention to assess and inform health and safety policies and programs on school campuses. and
3. Include in the comprehensive school-level improvement plan, goals and objectives which address health and wellness to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment which promotes student learning.

ADE provides a suite of in-person and online professional development free to Arkansas teachers. As well as behavior specialists throughout the state who support regional areas and the THRIVE initiative. THRIVE is a multi-day training geared toward administrators regarding school climate, behavior expectations, and leadership skills to lead a building aimed at all aspects of student success. The state recently provided a state contract for CareSolace to assist schools in coordination of mental health services, as well as in the process for a statewide contract to support mental health via online at no cost to the family.

School Transitions (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(D)): Describe how the State will support LEAs receiving assistance under Title I, Part A in meeting the needs of students at all levels of schooling (particularly students in the middle grades and high school), including how the State will work with such LEAs to provide effective transitions of students to middle grades and high school to decrease the risk of students dropping out.

Education Service Cooperatives (ESC) are regional educational supports for districts. They are a direct extension of the department providing support for LEAs. The LEA should be the first line of support for its schools in partnership with ESCs. This is an intentional shift of responsibility of schools in need of support. LEAs are empowered and encouraged to assess school factors that may be contributing to their schools' struggles. This will include assessing how transitions and feeder patterns may be contributing to risk factors for LEAs' schools in need of support and improvement. ESCs are positioned to assist LEAs in evaluating data, participating in walk-throughs and providing direct support as needed.

The expectation that all students engage in grade level work and have opportunities for acceleration each year as they transition from one grade to the next. ADE's vision is supported by a set of coherent academic standards, supportive academic course offerings, content-specific statewide initiatives, and state law. Academic courses have been developed by Arkansas educators to provide access and to meet

the needs of students, including those receiving Title I services who need additional time and support to successfully complete grade-level work. The state has provided support to districts to identify High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) and High-Quality Professional Learning (HQPL). Supporting the skillful use of HQIM in the classroom will create a better academic classroom experience and student outcomes. Arkansas, through the LEARNS Act (2023), has provided additional resources to support high-impact tutoring by offering competitive grants to districts. Priority has been placed on math and literacy and the middle grades. Literacy tutoring grants have been offered to parents of students in K-3 who have been identified as a struggling reader.

Course design is a key piece in supporting students in middle and high schools. Strategic Reading is a course that schools can provide for students in grades 6-8 who score below grade level in reading. This is in addition to the traditional English courses. At the high school level, Arkansas has developed two credit-bearing courses, Critical Reading I and II, to support continued reading instruction and intervention in high school. A new math course, Qualitative Reasoning, offers students a fourth-year math course that engages students through relevant, practical application of rigorous mathematical concepts. However, Arkansas is also committed to providing more access to accelerated courses and has revamped math, literacy, and science academic standards to provide an accelerated pathway for students who are ready to take high school credit bearing courses in middle school. These pathways open the door for students to pursue engaging STEM coursework or college credit while in high school.

The LEARNS Act (2023) moved all early childhood programs to the Arkansas Department of Education to set up a unified state early childhood to ensure kindergarten readiness and create a seamless transition. This included the CCDF programs, Early Childhood Part C, as well as licensing responsibilities and determining quality. Since then, ADE has established local leads throughout the state and transitioned to a different quality rating tool focused on the interactions of the child and educator. Arkansas has a strong history of funding Pre- kindergarten through the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success program and will continue to look for opportunities to expand and offer high quality programs.

The ADE supports improved transition and post school outcomes for students with disabilities through Arkansas Transition Services (ATS) which serves all 75 counties in Arkansas. As part of intensive technical assistance work with the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT), Arkansas Transition Services is partnering with multiple agencies including Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, the Arkansas Department of Career and Technical Education, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, and the Arkansas Division of Services for the Blind to support school districts in the implementation of evidence-based practices to improve employment training opportunities for students with disabilities that positively impact post-school outcomes.

Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children

Supporting Needs of Migratory Children (ESEA section 1304(b)(1)): *Describe how, in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and projects assisted under Title I, Part C, the State and its local operating agencies will ensure that the unique educational needs of migratory children, including preschool migratory children and migratory children who have dropped out of school, are identified and addressed through:*

- I. The full range of services that are available for migratory children from appropriate local, State, and Federal educational programs;*
- II. Joint planning among local, State, and Federal educational programs serving migratory children, including language instruction educational programs under Title III, Part A;*
- III. The integration of services available under Title I, Part C with services provided by those other programs; and*
- IV. Measurable program objectives and outcomes.*

The primary purpose of the Arkansas Migrant Education Program (MEP) is to ensure students are set up for success to be ready for enlistment, enrollment or employment upon graduation. The department will work with districts to identify and support migrant students who have challenges. Furthermore, the Arkansas MEP must give priority for services (PFS) to migratory children and youth who (1) have made a qualifying move within the previous 1-year period and who (2) are failing, or most at risk of failing, to meet the challenging state academic standards; or have dropped out of school. The term 'migratory child' means a child or youth ages birth to age 21 who made a qualifying move in the preceding 36 months (A) as a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher; or (B) with, or to join, a parent or spouse who is a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher. [Section 1309(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015].

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) administers the Arkansas MEP grant using a sub-granting process. The MEP currently funds six (6) Education Services Cooperatives - Local Operational Agency (LOAs) and 41 School Districts (LEAs). Each Education Service Cooperative (LOAs) provides a comprehensive program and ensures that there is no redundancy in services. The six LOAs serve the entire State with full-time statewide recruiters collaborating with full-time community liaisons and grantee district liaisons. ADE will review, monitor, and evaluate LOAs and LEAs MEP plans, program applications, program implementation, and fiscal expenditures.

The Arkansas MEP offers high quality services in the areas of supplemental instructional and support services; parent engagement; staff professional development (PD); and ID&R, inter/intrastate coordination, and migratory student enrollment. To meet Arkansas migrant students' needs, the program must comprehensively identify, recruit, and enroll migrant students and assess the needs of migrant students and their families. Migrant children who have dropped out of school should be recruited back into the school and provided the appropriate help to recover lost credits.

The Arkansas MEP follows the Continuous Improvement Cycle as recommended by the Office of Migrant Education (OME) in its Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) and Service Delivery Plan (SDP) Toolkits (2018). In this cycle, each step in developing a program, assessing needs, identifying strategies, implementing strategies, and evaluating results, builds on the previous activity and informs the subsequent activity. The Continuous Improvement Cycle includes the following components:

- CNA: A 5-step process involving stakeholders identifying major concerns, gathering data to define needs, and selecting priority solutions.

- SDP: A multi-step process involving stakeholders selecting evidence-based strategies (based on the CNA findings) to meet the needs of migratory children and youth, developing a plan to implement the strategies, and establishing measurable goals and targets for accountability.
- Implementation of SDP: Information dissemination and training to align project services and goals with the statewide plan, roll-out of strategies, and data collection for accountability.
- Evaluation: Measures the extent to which strategies were implemented with fidelity and the impact of those strategies on migratory student achievement.

The Arkansas CNA was designed to develop an understanding of the unique educational and educationally related needs of Arkansas' migratory children and their families. Not only does this analysis of needs provide a foundation for the future direction of the Arkansas MEP through the SDP, but also it supports the program's overall continuous improvement and quality assurance processes. The needs analysis was adapted to the resources and structures available in the State of Arkansas.

The Migrant CNA primary purpose is to guide the overall design of the Arkansas Migrant Education Program on a statewide basis and weave its findings into the comprehensive state plan for service delivery. The Service Delivery Plan guides the development and articulation of a clear vision that includes the:

1. Arkansas migrant children's needs
2. Arkansas Migrant Education Program's Services
3. Arkansas Migrant Education Program's measurable performance objectives (MPOs) and performance targets
4. Program evaluation to determine the effectiveness

The Arkansas MEP Service Delivery Plan (SDP) resulted from a systematic process that involved a broad-based representation of stakeholders whose experience lent authenticity and whose expertise directed the development of the strategies and MPOs that are presented in this report. The SDP Committee was composed of LOAs Migrant Specialists, LOAs Recruitment and Eligibility Data Specialists (REDS), and Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) MEP staff. All of these individuals have expertise in language arts, mathematics, graduation/dropout prevention, family literacy, professional development, and/or early childhood. All members of the SDP Committee also served on the Needs Assessment Committee (NAC) to provide and ensure that systems were aligned to meet migratory students' unique educational needs.

The service delivery strategies identified by the SDP Committee took into consideration the needs and solution strategies identified during the CNA process. There are three strategies for Language Arts and Mathematics, five strategies for School Readiness, and five strategies for Graduation/Services to OSY. The strategies serve as the foundation for the implementation of the Arkansas MEP at the local level. The SDP Committee created MPOs to reflect the State performance targets and needs and solutions identified during the CNA process. MPOs are the desired outcomes of the strategies that quantify the difference that the MEP will make for migratory students, parents, and/or staff. MPOs provide the foundation for the SDP and can be clearly communicated, implemented with fidelity, and evaluated.

The Arkansas MEP periodically reviews and revises the Comprehensive Need Assessment and Service Delivery Plan. In addition, The MEP completes a placement profile on each individual student within 10 business days of student being identified as migrant in order to address students' unique needs. Services provided to the migrant students and families include but not limited to:

Academic Services

- Supplemental tutoring in ELA, and Math, and other instruction
 - In school
 - Before and after school
 - In home
- Credit recovery program
- Life skills lessons for Out-of School Youth
- Distance learning
- Summer migrant school
- In-home instruction for preschoolers
- Providing educational materials for the home

Support Services

- Identification of migrant children who need preschool support
- Provide appropriate support for preschool aged migrant children
- Enrollment of migrant children who need preschool support
- Child nutrition programs
- Health, dental, and vision support services and referrals
- Mental health referrals
- School counseling
- Providing school supplies
- Translation and interpretation
- Parent and family
- Transportation
- Dropout-prevention intervention strategies for migrant students at risk
- Graduation requirements, career orientation and postsecondary education opportunities
- Finding preschool programs and other school resources for preschoolers
- Leadership Programs

The state also completes an annual evaluation of the Arkansas MEP with the assistance of an external evaluator knowledgeable about migrant education, evaluation design, federal reporting requirements, Office of Migrant Education guidelines, and the Arkansas Migrant Education Program. The evaluation systematically collects information to inform the program and help the state make decisions about program improvement and success.

Implementation of all strategies identified in the Arkansas Migrant Education Program Service Delivery Plan is measured using a Fidelity of Strategy Implementation (FSI) tool anchored to specific implementation-based best practices in designing and implementing effective programs, especially for migrant children and youth. Fidelity of Strategy Implementation data is gathered by cooperatives and/or local Migrant Education Programs and presented as evidence during on-site monitoring visits, classroom observations, and structured interviews with Arkansas Migrant Education Program staff. The Fidelity of Strategy Implementation uses a five-point rubric that measures the degree of implementation from non-evident to highly effective.

The Arkansas MEP collects data on migrant students and services from each of its local projects. Data sources include: migrant staff, migrant parents, migrant secondary students, out-of-school youth (OSY), recruiters/advocates, and migrant program administrators. Data will be collected using surveys, focus groups, structured interviews, and records reviews, including assessment results reported through the state system.

The statewide MEP evaluation measures the effectiveness of the Arkansas MEP, examining the fidelity between the implementation of the State's service delivery strategies as stated in this SDP,

and determining migratory student progress toward the State’s MEP MPOs, State performance targets (Performance Goals 1 and 5), and MEP GPRA measures. Following are the key components of the Arkansas MEP evaluation.

1. Collect, analyze, summarize, and prepare reports that contain MEP progress toward State performance targets related to Performance Goals 1 and 5 (the percentage of students attaining proficiency in reading/language arts and mathematics for each grade, and the percentage of students who graduate from high school), disaggregated for PFS, non-PFS, and non-migratory students. [34 CFR Sections 200.83 and 200.84]
2. Collect, analyze, summarize, and prepare reports that contain performance results data on the MEP MPOs established in this SDP, disaggregated for PFS and non-PFS migratory students. [34 CFR Section 200.83]
3. Collect, analyze, summarize, and prepare reports that contain performance results data on the GPRA measures. [34 CFR Section 80.40]
4. Collect, analyze, summarize, and prepare reports that provide specific implementation results that demonstrate the level of fidelity in the implementation of MEP activities and service delivery strategies contained in this SDP. [34 CFR Section 200.84]
5. Based on data comparing implementation and performance results to performance targets, prepare and report implications and recommendations to inform SEA decision making for the improvement of MEP services (e.g., data needed for an update to the CNA; updated performance targets in the SDP based on overachievement of MPOs). [34 CFR Section 200.85]

States are required to evaluate the effectiveness of the MEP and provide guidance to LEAs on how to conduct local evaluations. The Arkansas State MEP evaluation allows the State and its LEAs:

1. Determine whether the MEP is effective and document its impact on migratory children;
2. improve program planning by comparing the effectiveness of different types of interventions;
3. Determine the degree to which projects are implemented as planned and identify problems that are encountered in program implementation; and
4. Identify areas in which children and youth may need different MEP services.

To accomplish this end, the Arkansas MEP evaluation examines both program implementation and program results (or outcomes) as required by OME. In evaluating program implementation, the evaluation of the Arkansas MEP will address the following questions.

- What types of supplementary ELA/mathematics instruction were provided to migratory students?
- What types of PD were provided to staff and how many attended?
- What types of services were provided to parents to support their children’s ELA/ mathematics achievement?
- What types of instructional services were provided to migratory children ages 3-5?
- How many migratory children ages 3-5 received MEP-funded services?
- What PD was provided to migrant instructional staff addressing school readiness and how many staff attended?
- What types of services were provided to parents to support their child’s school readiness and how many parents attended?
- What health and/or advocacy services/resources were provided to migratory children?
- What types of coursework did students receive and how many students were enrolled?

- What types of PD were provided to staff about graduation and postsecondary opportunities?
- What services were provided to secondary migratory students about college and career opportunities?
- What information was shared with migratory parents about the achievement and high school graduation of their children?
- What types of MEP instructional and support services were provided to migratory OSY?

Local implementation of the service delivery strategies identified in the Arkansas SDP is measured using the Fidelity of Strategy Implementation (FSI) Tool that is anchored to the service delivery strategies identified in this SDP. Ratings on the FSI are self-assigned by local MEP staff (or by Co-op and/or DESE staff during onsite visits) after reviewing ways in which each strategy was implemented and coming to consensus on their ratings. The FSI's ratings are based on a five-point rubric that measures the degree of implementation from "not evident" to "exceeding".

As part of the performance results evaluation, progress is measured and reported toward the State's performance targets, the GPRA measures, and the MEP MPOs to evaluate the impact of MEP services for migratory students. Data are collected and submitted using surveys, student assessment results, records reviews, and other sources identified in this Evaluation Plan. Evaluation questions that will be answered by the following outcome data.

- What percentage of migratory students (PFS and non-PFS) showed a gain of 3% or more on local ELA or mathematics assessments?
- What percentage of migratory staff that participated in MEP PD reported increased knowledge/skills for supporting the ELA/mathematics needs of migratory students?
- What percentage of migratory parents reported receiving useful strategies to promote their children's ELA or mathematics achievement?
- What percentage of migratory children ages 3-5 gained by 3% or more on school readiness assessments?
- What percentage of migrant staff reported the MEP PD they received increased their knowledge and skills for supporting the needs of migratory preschool children?
- What percentage of migratory parents reported receiving useful strategies and resources to help their child be ready for kindergarten?
- What percentage of migratory children ages 3-5 received health and/or advocacy services/resources?
- What percentage of secondary migratory students (PFS and non-PFS) completed MEP-funded courses for high school credit?
- What percentage of secondary-aged migratory students attending MSAC meeting(s) reported increased knowledge of college and career opportunities?
- What percentage of migratory OSY (PFS and non-PFS) received MEP instructional and support services?

For all migrant programs and services, progress monitoring calls for the collection of data on identification and recruitment of students, student participation, coordination activities (including interstate coordination and home/school partnerships), staff and parent perceptions about program effectiveness, professional development, and program strengths and areas needing improvement. Determining progress and adjusting the Migrant Education Program is focused on increasing migrant student achievement.

The Arkansas MEP supports local Migrant Education Programs in their efforts to use evaluation results for making mid-course corrections and improving program services through:

- Implementation of a statewide plan to identify preschool programs in all migrant regions and geographical locations and direct migrant families to programs with open slots;
- Distributing materials to support professional development activities among Arkansas Migrant Education Program staff during regional meetings and statewide workshops that address;
 - School readiness among migrant children entering Kindergarten, and
 - Identification of and intervention strategies for migrant students who are potential high school dropouts, and
 - Identification of migrant children who have dropped out of school and strategies for reenrollment.
- Providing opportunities for local Migrant Education Programs to share ideas and discuss the use of evaluation results for improvement during statewide meetings;
- Reviewing program monitoring results and actions for the use of evaluation results for improvement;
- Sharing information and providing consultation on increasing the reliability of data collection and reporting, interpreting data, and student progress monitoring for improving instruction;
- Including language in the local Migrant Education Program application asking sites to discuss how evaluation results will be used for program improvement purposes;
- Coordinating with the outside evaluator to review processes, procedures, and supports provided to local Migrant Education Programs;
- Offering training sessions to local Migrant Education Programs to improve identification and recruitment among migrant families with young children;
- Sharing information among local Migrant Education Programs from ADE and national reading, math, early childhood, and Identification and Recruitment (ID&R) meetings, conferences, and forums that focus on the use of data for improvement;
- Offering training sessions for Migrant Education Program coordinators to support their efforts in assisting local Migrant Education Programs to use evaluation results to make mid-course corrections and improve Migrant Education Programs and services.

Services for Preschool

Arkansas Migrant Education Program identifies and addresses specific needs of preschool students by using the School Readiness Checklist. This tool includes evaluations on language, writing, and reading skills, as well as mathematical thinking and expression. Other skills evaluated by this tool include social and emotional readiness, physical development, and health and safety awareness. The School Readiness Checklist is administered two times per year. Preschool tutors use this information to guide in-home lessons provided to preschool students. In-home instruction is mostly provided to preschool students who are not enrolled in center-based programs. Arkansas Migrant Education Program also works in close collaboration with local preschool centers such as Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) and Head Start to facilitate enrollment of migratory children in preschool programs. The state will collaborate with other migrant programs across the nation to find more effective ways to serve migratory preschool students.

Services for Drop-out and Out of School Youth

Arkansas Migrant Educational Program uses the Migrant Student Placement Profile to identify the unique needs of migratory high school students and Out of School Youth (OSY). In an effort to help migrant

students stay on track to graduate and reduce the number of high school dropouts, the Arkansas Migrant Education program has designed the *On Track to Success* guide. Tutors in the Arkansas Migrant Education Program use the *On Track to Success* guide to determine if high school students are meeting all state requirements to graduate, as well as identify effective strategies to decrease the likelihood of students dropping out of school. The program also offers strategies to students who are at risk by providing credit recovery through the utilization of Portable Assistance Study Sequence (PASS) courses. Students also can attend the *Moving Up Arkansas* – a Migrant Residential Summer School Program. Arkansas Migrant Educational Program collaborates with local High School Equivalency Programs and provides referrals and facilitates enrollment for high school dropouts and Out of School Youth.

Service Delivery Plan Long-Term Goals

ELA and Mathematics MPOs
MPO 1A.1) By the end of the 2021-2022 performance period, 80% of migratory students served in a summer migrant program that participated in an SEA-approved supplementary ELA program will show a gain of 3% between pre- and post-testing on a reliable ELA assessment.
MPO 1A.2) By the end of the 2021-2022 performance period, 80% of migratory students served in a summer migrant program that participated in an SEA-approved supplementary mathematics program will show a gain of 3% between pre- and post-testing on a reliable mathematics assessment.
MPO 1B) By the end of the 2021-2022 performance period, 80% of migrant instructional staff surveyed receiving MEP professional development will report increased knowledge and skills for supporting needs of migratory students.
MPO 1C.1) By the end of the 2021-2022 performance period, 80% of migratory parents who completed a survey will report receiving useful strategies to promote their child(ren)'s ELA achievement.
MPO 1C.2) By the end of the 2021-2022 performance period, 80% of migratory parents who completed a survey will report receiving useful strategies to promote their child(ren)'s mathematics achievement.

School Readiness MPOs
MPO 2A) By the end of the 2021-22 performance period, 80% of migratory children ages 3-5 participating in migrant funded pre-k instructional services will show a gain of 3% between pre- and post-assessments.
MPO 2B) By the end of the 2021-2022 performance period, 80% of migrant instructional staff surveyed receiving MEP professional development will report increased knowledge and skills for supporting the needs of migratory preschool children.
MPO 2C) By the end of the 2021-2022 performance period, 80% of parents of preschool children completing a survey will report receiving useful strategies and resources to help their child be ready for kindergarten.
MPO 2D) By the end of the 2021-2022 performance period, 65% of eligible migratory children ages 3-5 who are not in kindergarten will receive health and/or advocacy services/ resources.

HS Graduation/Services to OSY MPOs
MPO 3A) By the end of the 2021-22 performance period, 80% of secondary migratory students who participate in a MEP sponsored credit recovery program will earn credit.

MPO 3B) By the end of the 2021-22 performance period, 80% of secondary-aged migratory students who attend an MSAC meeting will report increased knowledge of college and career opportunities.
MPO 3C) By the end of the 2021-22 performance period, 70% of migratory OSY will receive MEP funded instructional or support services.

*Goals will be revised in 2027-2028 Service Delivery Plan

Promote Coordination of Services (ESEA section 1304(b)(3)): Describe how the State will use Title I, Part C funds received under this part to promote interstate and intrastate coordination of services for migratory children, including how the State will provide for educational continuity through the timely transfer of pertinent school records, including information on health, when children move from one school to another, whether or not such move occurs during the regular school year.

The Arkansas MEP collaborates with other states for the identification and recruitment of migratory children. For example, Arkansas recruiters collaborate with Louisiana recruiters due to movement between the two states. Staff participate in workshop sessions that help enhance the outreach efforts for identification and recruitment of migrant families; maximize compliance to the MEP non-regulatory guidance and Service Delivery Plan; and renew the energy and commitment to engaging and supporting migrant families.

Coordination for recruitment is done throughout the state. Also, at local level, recruiters search for and identify migrant students in a variety of ways from school employment surveys and employer referrals to posting flyers at community businesses. Recruitment can occur in a variety of places (rural, urban or suburban) and each present its own challenges. Collaboration with members of the community, farmers, and local industry is essential in identifying and recruiting migrant children/youth. At the state level, we coordinate with state and federal agencies to obtain information that will help the LOAs and LEAs identify and recruit migratory children. We work with the Arkansas Department of Agriculture to obtain seasonal labor camps lists and licensing information, the U.S. Agricultural Census Bureau for trends on crops, and the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration for H2A Lists.

Arkansas State Migrant Education Program Student Records Exchange

Arkansas uses MIS2000 for the information needs of states serving migrant children. MIS2000 is fully customized to meet each state’s needs. The system provides for the storage, retrieval, and reporting of student information. Records are electronically transferred without a dependency on a national database. The installation process establishes a state database, which is served by multiple sub-state installation sites with region, county, or district levels. Each sub-state site communicates directly with the state system. States using MIS2000 can easily transfer student information from state to state and within the state of Arkansas. MIS2000 allows states to store data from Certificates of Eligibility (COEs), education records, health information, as well as any additional information collected by programs. MIS2000’s reporting tools allow states to run preinstalled reports, create personalized reports, print copies of Certificates of Eligibility, run eligible student counts, and federal performance reports.

The Migrant Student Records Exchange (MSIX)

In Section 1308 (b) of the ESEA (1965), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), the U.S. Department of Education was mandated by Congress to assist states in developing effective methods for the electronic transfer of student records and in determining the number of migratory children in each state. These methods must ensure the linkage of migrant student record systems across the country. In accordance with this mandate, the ADE has implemented the Migrant Student Information Exchange ([MSIX](#)) initiative to ensure the appropriate enrollment, placement, and accrual of credits for migrant children.

Arkansas is operational in Migrant Student Information Exchange and the Arkansas Migrant System/MIS2000 interfaces with it successfully to allow the state to complete reports on interstate and intrastate student records. Arkansas is able to provide student data, as required, for the Comprehensive State Performance Report (CSPR) and meet other federal/state data requirements. Systems are in place to ensure protection of student information based on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (1974) (FERPA).

Ongoing training is provided to Arkansas Migrant Education Program staff on all of these systems. Arkansas Migrant Education Program staff also regularly respond to individual requests made from other SEAs and LEAs to help facilitate a timely transition.

Coordination activities include collaboration with the Texas Migrant Interstate Program (TMIP) to exchange critical student demographic information and student progress to ensure appropriate placement and identification of credit accrual needs. Arkansas is an active member of the Interstate Migrant Education Council (IMEC), and the National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME). In addition, the Arkansas MEP utilizes the Texas-based Project SMART curriculum and content-embedded assessments that align with the recommendations included in the SDP.

Use of Funds (ESEA section 1304(b)(4)): Describe the State's priorities for the use of Title I, Part C funds, and how such priorities relate to the State's assessment of needs for services in the State.

The Arkansas MEP is funded through a federal formula-driven allocation for the state and each regional project area based on child count, academic indicators, and mobility factors. The Arkansas MEP serves children from birth through age 21, as well as their families, who face a number of potential obstacles to educational success – such as poverty, high mobility, language barriers, cultural adjustment, and limited access to health care. As mentioned earlier, every migratory child, identified as such in Arkansas, has an individual Placement Profile. The initial placement profile is completed within 10 business days of the student being identified as migratory child. All placement profiles are updated as often as changes happen and a new one created by September 30 of each school year. Priority for Service (PFS) determinations are made using the criteria that follows: Based on ESSA, PFS is an indication for students who have made a qualifying move within the previous 1-year period from when the placement profile was completed AND are failing OR most at risk of failing to meet state's challenging academic standards – OR have dropped out of school. In addition, Office of Migrant Education (OME) guidance indicates that states may also align PFS criteria with their Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) and Service Delivery Plan measures and indicators.

To address these challenges, the Arkansas MEP provides a wide range of services, including:

- Supplemental enrichment learning opportunities before and after school;
- In-home support services;
- Language and cultural support;
- In-home preschool services;
- Student leadership programs;
- Postsecondary enrollment support;
- Student advocacy; and
- Efforts to increase parent/family involvement.

To comply with federal guidelines, Arkansas performs an annual evaluation of the Migrant Education Program with the assistance of an external evaluator knowledgeable about migrant education, evaluation design, federal reporting requirements and Office of Migrant Education guidelines, and the Arkansas

Migrant Education Program. The evaluation systematically collects information to inform the program and to help the state make decisions about program improvement and success.

Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk

Transitions Between Correctional Facilities and Local Programs (ESEA section 1414(a)(1)(B)):
Provide a plan for assisting in the transition of children and youth between correctional facilities and locally operated programs.

Arkansas delinquent students receive transitional services in juvenile and adult facilities. These students are required to have a transition plan, and the state of Arkansas further requires that each institution provide a description of the processes and protocols to facilitate the transition of these youth to locally operated programs.

Each facility is required annually to describe the program to be instituted, grades and ages of participants, characteristics of youth in the program, and the circumstances that caused them to be housed at the facility.

Facilities must include a facility description, geographic location information, a description of services provided, and at least two goals. Facilities must also list two major objectives or activities that will be used to accomplish each goal as well as an explanation of how the facility or agency ensures priority is given to youth who will soon be released or who will complete incarceration within two years.

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) requires that facilities coordinate with other federal, state, and local programs, such as those under the Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA), AmeriCorps, Homeless, Workforce, Job Corps, and vocational education programs serving this at-risk population of youth to provide an education that is comparable to one in the local school. Funding as well as additional programs operated under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (1974) and other comparable programs must be used.

Through a collaboration with the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Youth Services (DYS), the ADE and the Arkansas Education Service Cooperatives are able to provide quality online coursework to youth in the criminal justice system using Virtual Arkansas. Virtual Arkansas is a project of ADE and the education services cooperatives that offers online coursework to public school students provided by licensed Arkansas teachers. This enables teachers to connect with students via a secure online system allowing for back-and-forth communication. Virtual Arkansas provides consistent, high-quality education that is standard across all participating correctional facilities.

In March 2017, the ADE formed a task force representative of multiple stakeholder groups to convene around the topic of supporting youth with disabilities involved in the criminal justice system. As a result of this work, guidance documents and other resources have been developed for schools, correctional facilities, as well as youth with disabilities and their families to support the implementation of effective special education services for youth involved in the corrections system. Additionally, a comprehensive training module that targets transition services for youth with disabilities in correctional facilities will be developed and implemented through a partnership between the ADE and Vocational Rehabilitation.

This module will include the development and implementation of Individualized Education Program transition plans with goals and activities for successful reentry to school and or the community, including career readiness and work experience components.

The ADE works with facilities to ensure the facility is working with youth and is aware of the child's existing Individualized Education Program, actively encouraging parents and/or extended family involvement. The goal is to try to help parents improve the educational achievement of their child, assist in dropout prevention activities, prevent the involvement of their child in delinquent activities, and to share academic progress. Each LEA and the ADE must consult with probation officers, parole officers, and other experts to provide training and ensure staff meet the needs of youth departing from the facility.

A Transitional Services Liaison for each facility is required. This person is responsible for the provision of transitional services to the youth in the facility and the transitional plan for students. This plan will include a list of the transitional services that will be provided by or made available by the LEA/state agency for students and will include services in the following areas:

- Dropout prevention
- Military
- Higher education
- Career development
- Employment or self-employment
- Community contacts
- Referrals to community resources and outreach programs.

A transition plan must be on file to represent the steps the agency will take to improve the likelihood that youth will complete secondary school, attain a secondary diploma, enter the military, or find employment.

Program Objectives and Outcomes (ESEA section 1414(a)(2)(A)): Describe the program objectives and outcomes established by the State that will be used to assess the effectiveness of the Title I, Part D program in improving the academic, career, and technical skills of children in the program.

ADE requires that facilities evaluate each program using multiple measures of student progress and annually disaggregate data by sex, race, ethnicity, and age. These data are submitted to the ADE for the purposes of evaluating data related to the same academic content standards and state assessment required of all students and additionally for technical and career skills. ADE requires that each facility and LEA carry out high-quality education programs to prepare youth for secondary school completion, training, employment, or further education. ADE also requires that each facility and LEA provide activities to facilitate the transition of such youth from the correctional program to further education or employment and operate dropout prevention programs for youth that are at risk.

It is also ADE's goal and responsibility to ensure that each LEA and facility:

- Assist in locating alternative programs through which students can continue their education if the students are not returning to school after leaving the correctional facility or institution for neglected or delinquent children and youth;
- Work with parents to secure parents' assistance in improving the educational achievement of their children and youth, and preventing their children from becoming further involved in delinquent activities;
- Work with children and youth with disabilities to meet an existing Individualized Education Program and an assurance that the agency will notify the youth's local school if the child or youth is identified as in need of special education services while the child or youth is in the correctional facility or institution for neglected or delinquent children and youth; and intends to return to the local school;
- Work with children and youth who dropped out of school before entering the correctional facility or institution for neglected or delinquent children and youth to encourage them to reenter school

once the term of the incarceration is completed, or provide them with the skills necessary to gain employment, continue their education, or achieve a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent if they do not intend to return to school;

- Train teachers and other qualified staff to work with children and youth with disabilities and other students with special needs taking into consideration the unique needs of such students; and
- Coordinate the program under this subpart with any programs operated under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (1974) or other comparable programs, if applicable.

Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction

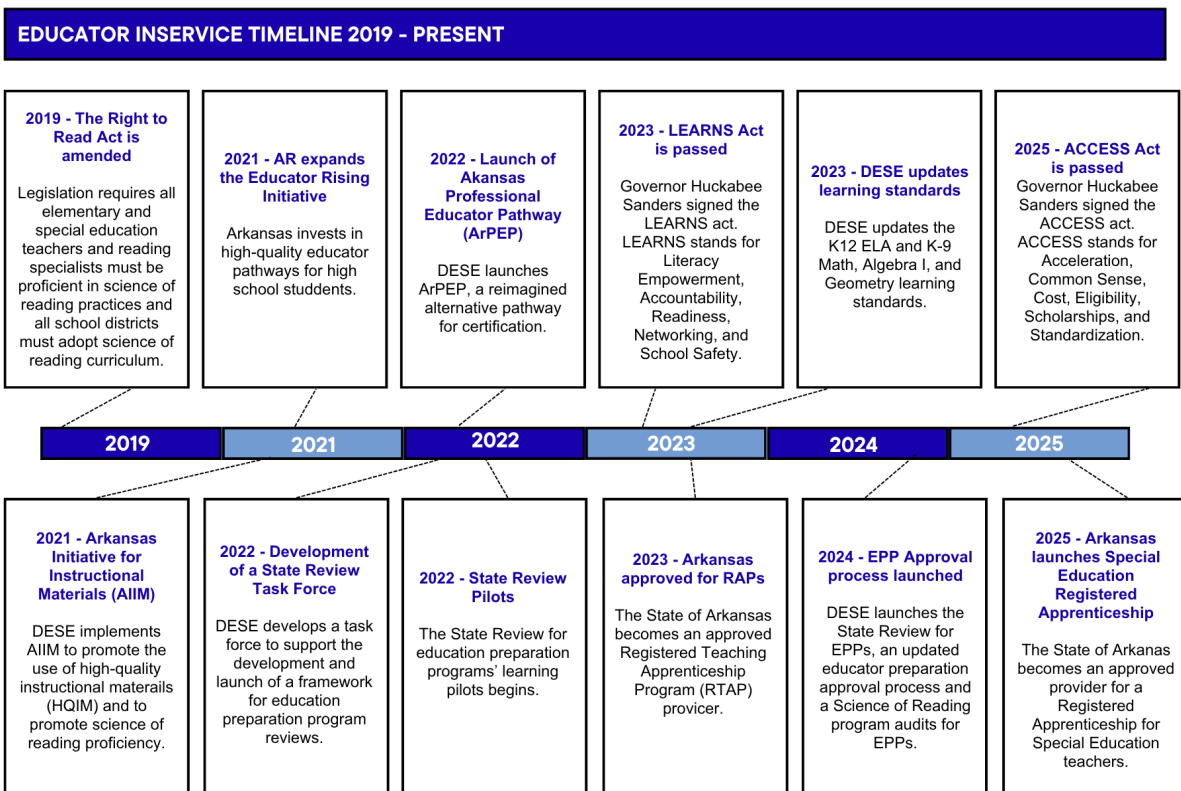
Use of Funds (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(A) and (D)): Describe how the State educational agency will use Title II, Part A funds received under Title II, Part A for State-level activities described in section 2101(c), including how the activities are expected to improve student achievement.

The ADE is leading efforts to provide all students across Arkansas access to excellent teachers and leaders ready to meet the needs of Arkansas students on day one. Over the past few years, ADE has pursued an agenda to attract, prepare, develop, support and retain an exceptional educator workforce to support schools and districts to positively impact outcomes for each and every student in the state regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status or zip code. ADE has been working to ensure teachers and leaders across the state are ready to support each student to:

- Meet or exceed milestones along pathways to graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement
- Meet or exceed his/her individual growth annually
- Develop and apply personal competencies that promote learning and success in life
- Be actively engaged in college, career preparation, military service and/or competitive employment one year after graduation

ADE has made key investments to transform the educational experience for Arkansas students by laying the groundwork to ensure pre-service and in-service educators have the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to meet students' needs (see timeline below).

Figure 1. Educator Inservice Timeline



ADE intends to continue to build upon these key investments to further develop an exceptional educator workforce. Notably, ADE offices will continue to collaborate with offices across the state agencies to ensure educators have a seamless experience from pre-service to in-service by delivering on key commitments in the LEARNS Act (2023).

To achieve Arkansas' literacy goals, ADE offices are collaborating to ensure coherence in preparation, support and development for pre-service and in-service teachers as it relates to curriculum implementation and instructional practices. All pre-service and in-service teachers are being trained in the science of reading to ensure that every student is taught by a teacher who consistently applies evidence-based knowledge of how students learn to read and implements scientifically based reading instruction to strengthen literacy skills.

ADE will further increase opportunities to build upon the state's literacy initiative by using Title II A funds to support affordable, quality high school-to-teaching pathways that provide training and development in instructional practices that are grounded in the science of reading as well as job-embedded experiences that center on providing reading support for younger students (e.g., building tutoring and reading interventionist roles). These opportunities will catalyze Arkansas' efforts to provide a faster and more affordable, quality pathway to a bachelor's degree and bring more young adults back to our communities as effective teachers. Through this work, ADE aims to do its part in changing the reality that only 35% of third graders in Arkansas can read at grade level by significantly altering the training teachers receive on literacy to ensure all students can be taught by teachers who are well-prepared to support every student to be proficient readers.

ADE is using Title II A funds to increase alignment between teacher preparation programs and research-based instructional practices in the K-12 classrooms today by operating a State Review of Educator Preparation Providers. The AR State Review for EPPs sets a shared vision and bar for high quality educator preparation in our state while supporting a process of continuous improvement to ensure all new teacher candidates prepared through those programs are ready to meet the needs of Arkansas students on day one.

To align pre-service and in-service teachers' experiences, ADE is requiring educator preparation providers to launch year-long teacher residencies to significantly increase the number of hours pre-service teachers will spend in their clinical experience in K-12 classrooms under the mentorship of an exceptional or skilled teacher leader. These year-long residencies will reduce the experience gap that new teachers too often experience in their first few years of teaching. Funding is also used to implement the Educator Preparation Collaborative, which provides support to educator preparation programs on developing these innovative residencies and aligning EPPs to the State Review Framework.

ADE will make certification and licensure routes more efficient and transparent by providing resources such as licensure advisors to support aspiring teachers through the licensure experience. To encourage more Arkansans to consider teaching as a profession, the ADE launched the Teach Arkansas campaign in 2018. The campaign uses Title II A funds for recruiting teachers into the teaching profession, supporting existing teachers and encouraging those who have left the profession to return. Examples include Educator Signing Day & Week, Love Teaching Week, Teacher Appreciation Week, back to school events, and test fee reimbursements for teachers in geographic or subject shortage areas.

The Arkansas Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS) provides a statewide system for observation and support of K-12 classroom and specialty teachers. The Leader Excellence and Development System (LEADS) provides a statewide system for observation and support for principals, assistant principals, and district administrators. Title II, A funds are used to support TESS and LEADS best practices regarding professional growth plans, evidence collection, and coaching/feedback.

Funds are also used to operate the Office of Coordinated Support and Service, which provides direct coaching and opportunities for principal collaboration around best practices.

All these efforts align and build upon one another to promote a coherent experience for pre-service to in-service teachers and, in turn, their students. These key investments will help Arkansas attract, develop and retain talented, committed teachers and leaders who will positively impact students’ learning experiences for years to come. ADE will prioritize efforts that will promote a well-trained, exceptional educator workforce grounded in the following theory of action:

Table 11. ADE Educator Preparation Theory of Action

	If we...	Then...
Attract	make the teaching profession more attractive through increased pay <u>and</u> provide multiple accessible and high-quality pathways to educator licensure that are responsive to LEAs’ needs,	districts across the state will have the access they need to a larger pool of well-prepared educators to meet students’ needs.
	If we...	Then...
Prepare Teachers	establish a state vision for high-quality teacher preparation experiences and hold programs accountable to meet those expectations,	the supply of teachers coming to AR classrooms will better address state workforce needs and be prepared to lead instruction on day one.
Support, Develop and Retain Teachers	incentivize LEAs to embed quality teacher leadership roles across schools, and the training for those roles is grounded in HQIM and effective coaching practices,	teacher candidates and current teachers will receive coaching to develop and improve their practice over time, while teacher leaders experience meaningful career growth opportunities while in the classroom.
	And we...	Then...
Prepare Leaders	establish a state vision for high-quality leadership preparation experiences through clear and supportive leadership pathways and role-specific professional development,	the supply of leaders coming to AR schools and districts will better address state workforce needs and leaders will be prepared to be instructional leaders on day one.
Support, Develop and Retain Leaders	provide professional development that supports leaders across roles to effectively develop teachers using practices grounded in the use of high-quality instructional materials and scientifically based reading instruction,	leaders will provide teachers with high-quality, actionable feedback, coaching and professional learning aligned to evidence-based practices that will positively impact student learning.
	And we...	Then...
Develop Clear Communication Systems	communicate to educator preparation providers and K12 systems a clear vision for standards-aligned, grade-appropriate instruction across the educator workforce continuum,	the educators in AR will experience a coherent system designed to support the development of teachers and leaders at all stages of their careers centered around a clear vision for student success.

	And we...	Then...
Align Internal Efforts to Increase Coherence and Capacity	align efforts within the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to coordinate all efforts relating to educator recruitment, preparation, development and retention,	we will build a stronger teacher pipeline and retain an exceptional teacher workforce to meet the needs of the K12 system.
Then...		
Arkansas will develop an exceptional educator workforce, and every student will have access to effective educators who are ready to support students to be actively literate, critical thinkers and engaged in the community on day one.		

LEAs will report data on ineffective teachers and leaders per requirements of state law. The data will be disseminated through the School Report Card and also used in the Workforce Stability Index to help districts identify targeted ways to address the workforce.

Use of Funds to Improve Equitable Access to Teachers in Title I, Part A Schools (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(E)): *If an SEA plans to use Title II, Part A funds to improve equitable access to effective teachers, consistent with ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(B), describe how such funds will be used for this purpose.*

To evaluate access to effective educators, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) developed the Workforce Stability Index (WSI) for use across the state, specifically in high-poverty and high-minority Title I schools.

DESE uses the WSI High Poverty/High Minority Report to publicly report progress toward ensuring that low-income and minority children in Title I schools are not served at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, and inexperienced teachers. The report assists school districts in identifying staffing issues and ensuring that all students have access to effective teachers.

The Workforce Stability Index (WSI) is a measure of workforce quality defined in Arkansas’ state plan as required under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ADE uses the WSI to identify districts and schools with potential gaps in access to effective teachers and target interventions and resources intended to close those gaps.

The WSI includes 8 variables across the 5 domains (Table 12) that are commonly used measures of workforce quality. The experience domain includes teacher average years of experience and the percent of teachers with 3 or more years of experience in a school; the attainment domain includes the percent of teachers with a master’s degree and the percent of teachers who have a Lead or Master Professional Educator Designation; the effectiveness domain includes the percentage of teachers who received a rating of progressing or higher and effective or higher on the Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS), which is Arkansas’ evaluation system; the licensure domain includes the percent courses with a teacher licensed to teach that course; and, the retention domain includes the percent of teachers who were retained in a given school year. All variables in each domain are positively related to workforce quality, meaning that as a district or school improves on a variable, one would expect to also see improvements in their WSI scores.

Table 12. Variables included in the current WSI by domain

Experience	Attainment	Licensure	Retention
Teacher average years of experience	Percentage with a Master's degree	Percentage without AWL exception	Percent retention
Percentage of teachers with more than 1 year of experience	Percentage Lead or Master Professional Educator designated	Percentage with no exceptions	

ADE relies on the WSI as a diagnostic tool to identify districts that perform poorly across all 5 WSI domains. After identifying high poverty/high minority Title I schools in need of assistance, ADE uses Title II, A funds to target support, such as human capital audits or other human capital management interventions, to improve the quality of their respective educator workforces.

System of Certification and Licensure (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(B)): Describe the State's system of certification and licensing of teachers, principals, or other school leaders.

Providing Master and Lead licensure designations that encourage teachers to lead from the classroom will result in retaining teachers in critical shortage areas. Arkansas legislation has opened the opportunity for the ADE to promote the educator profession through a career continuum. Through the adoption of new rules and regulations, Arkansas' system of licensing teachers and administrators will recognize educator professional growth and contributions to the profession with advanced licensure opportunities and encourage school districts to structure teacher salary schedules to align with the educator career continuum.

As part of developing a career continuum for Arkansas educators, licensure designations were implemented, beginning in the 2018–2019 school year. Arkansas' Access to Excellent Educators Plan (Supplement 2016) identifies a tiered licensure system as a strategy to address the need to retain effective teachers, particularly in high-poverty and high-minority schools.

To align with our Teacher Excellence and Support System, Arkansas added an Early- Career Educator level to the tiered licensure system. The Early-Career Educator level will enable school districts to provide greater support for the first three years of licensure to allow the early career teacher to grow as a professional educator.

A career continuum will be developed to support the development of educational leaders. The ADE adopted the 2016 Professional Standards for Educational Leadership (PSEL) and is currently working to re-design state-approved leader preparation programs with the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership standards. The standards will guide leadership efforts in school leader preparation, school leader development, and in promoting professional standards. The standards will be used for all areas of leadership, including support for new principals, those in low-performing schools, and turnaround leaders. As with new teachers, beginning administrators will receive support for the first three years of licensure, again with the goal of allowing them to grow in their new role as school leaders.

During the 2017 Legislative Session, in an effort by the Arkansas Legislature to complement the ADE's goal to place highly effective teachers in high-poverty schools and high-poverty districts, they passed a law to significantly increase the amount of the yearly bonus to National Board Certified Teachers who teach in a high-poverty school in a high-poverty district. Merit pay incentives were legislated in 2023 and included selection criteria based on geographic shortage areas.

Improving Skills of Educators (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(J)): Describe how the SEA will improve the skills of teachers, principals, or other school leaders in order to enable them to identify students with specific learning needs, particularly children with disabilities, English learners, students who are gifted and talented, and students with low literacy levels, and provide instruction based on the needs of such students.

Arkansas supports educator development through a multi-tiered system anchored in the Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS) and the Leader Excellence and Development System (LEADS). These systems establish statewide standards for teaching and leadership and provide differentiated supports across an educator's career continuum, including opportunities for mentorship, leadership roles, and advanced designations such as lead and master teacher.

Educator preparation programs align coursework with national and program-specific competencies to ensure readiness for practice. Education Renewal Zones are established partnerships with Institutions of Higher Education that support aspiring educators through targeted recruitment and preparation interventions, and the Arkansas Department of Education has developed job-specific effectiveness and mentoring rubrics to personalize professional learning and support.

Arkansas is expanding its novice teacher mentoring system to provide consistent, comprehensive support. The state's mentoring manual has been updated to reflect current rules and executive orders and now includes a three-year TESS aligned scope and sequence. Tools and templates support unlicensed teachers in planning individualized pathways to licensure. Micro-credentials, facilitated by experienced educators, provide competency-based professional learning, with digital badges awarded to recognize skill attainment.

Education Service Cooperatives lead regional mentoring efforts, tailoring support to local needs. With support from ADE and state teacher organizations, ESCs provide mentoring through in-person and virtual options, including micro-credentialing. ESCs also lead supplemental mentoring for novice special education teachers to support recruitment and retention.

To support beginning administrators, Arkansas implements an induction and mentoring program that connects new leaders to essential resources and support structures in their first year and emphasizes reflection and goal setting in subsequent years. Supports include trained advisors, blended professional development, and individualized growth plans.

Arkansas is advancing a competency-based professional learning system that recognizes educator proficiency rather than seat time. Professional learning aligned to individual growth plans may be earned through micro-credentials. Title II, Part A funds support the development, implementation, and evaluation of this system, including platform costs, resource vetting, and statewide coordination. These funds also build the professional capacity of ADE staff to support curriculum, instruction, assessment, accountability, and educator effectiveness.

In addition to general professional learning, ADE provides targeted professional development for educators serving specialized populations, including gifted and talented students, school counselors, English learners, special education, STEM, and other content areas. Content specialists in literacy, mathematics, and science support educators using evidence-based practices aligned to state academic standards. ADE also provides statewide instructional support in areas such as fine arts, world languages, library media, health, and social studies, as well as programmatic support for technology, alternative learning environments, special education, gifted education, and English learners.

Professional learning for Gifted and Talented (GT) educators supports identification and instructional

practices aligned to state program approval standards. Districts are required to provide ongoing, data-informed GT professional development, and educators serving gifted students must meet state licensure and training requirements. ADE provides statewide and regional professional learning and targeted support for new GT coordinators.

Under the School Counseling Improvement Act of 2019, each LEA implements a Comprehensive School Counseling Plan that is preventative, developmental, and data-driven. Professional learning for school counselors supports the design and implementation of comprehensive programs aligned to district goals, using a multi-tiered system of support to address academic, career, and social-emotional needs. Counselors use data to identify gaps, implement targeted interventions, and evaluate program effectiveness. ADE also supports counselor leadership development, including training counselors to deliver required professional learning to other educators.

The state has enhanced professional learning for ESOL educators through statewide partnerships with ESCs and expanded support for Dual Immersion and Bilingual programs.

To strengthen early literacy instruction, candidates seeking licensure in elementary education (K–6) and special education (K–12) must demonstrate knowledge of the science of reading through a stand-alone assessment. Educator preparation program competencies in these areas have been revised accordingly, and currently licensed teachers in these fields must also demonstrate proficiency in the essential components of beginning reading instruction.

The ADE also supports the improvement of teacher knowledge and differentiated instructional practices in content areas. The ADE provides grants for literacy, mathematics, and science specialists throughout the state to work with educators and school leaders. These content specialists are located regionally at the fifteen education service cooperatives. The work of the specialists is grounded in evidence-based practices and high-quality academic standards. The ADE also continues to provide instructional content and program support to all educators in various fields such as library media, fine arts, world language, health, and social studies. In addition to these content specialists at the ADE and the Education Service Cooperatives, the ADE also provides support for schools with technology, Alternative Learning Environments, Special Education, Gifted and Talented, and English Learners through specific program specialists located throughout the state.

Special Education Professional Development Outreach

The State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), a comprehensive, multi-year plan that focuses on improving results for children with disabilities, guides the professional development and technical assistance efforts of the ADE Office of Special Education.

Phase I of the State Systemic Improvement Plan consisted of an extensive data and infrastructure analysis involving multiple internal and external stakeholders to identify the central focus of literacy.

In Phase II, the ADE created a plan to implement two strategies to improve the infrastructure of the ADE and LEAs to increase the State-identified Measurable Result (SIMR), the percent of students with disabilities in grades 3–5 who made gains towards reaching a proficient score or maintained a proficient score on the statewide literacy assessment.

In Phase III, the ADE expanded the plan to implement two coherent improvement strategies to increase the State-Identified Measurable Result by scaling initiatives aimed at increasing meaningful access and participation to quality core instruction for students with disabilities.

Strategy 1: Expand a system that is aligned with other DESE Units and is differentiated based on LEAs' needs as evidenced by data. This strategy is focused on expanding 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.

Strategy 2: In collaboration with other ADE Units, restructure RTI Arkansas' model using evidence-based personnel development to implement a multi-tiered system of supports for behavior and academics, with a focus on literacy.

The ADE Special Education Unit's professional development and technical assistance outreach is grounded in the State Systemic Improvement Plan designed to build the capacity of local special education personnel and, to the extent appropriate, that of general education professionals.

Special Education professional development efforts include the following:

- The Arkansas State Personnel Development Grant: The Arkansas State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) is the "boots on the ground" component of the Arkansas State Systemic Improvement Plan. The SPDG maintains a collaborative relationship with the broader ADE and is centrally involved in numerous ADE initiatives including implementation of the State's Response to Intervention model. SPDG staff work with the ADE Curriculum Support Services Unit to support schools in the implementation of evidence-based literacy and math interventions and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports for all students, with an intentional focus on the needs of students with disabilities. Additionally, the State Personnel Development Grant partners with the ADE School Improvement Unit, Assessment Unit, and Office of Educator Effectiveness to assist underperforming schools.
- Arkansas Transition Services: Arkansas Transition Services (ATS) serves all 75 counties in Arkansas in an effort to improve transition outcomes for students with disabilities. Their mission is to effectively assist students with disabilities, educators, parents, agency personnel, and community members in preparing students to transition from school to adult life and reach positive post-school outcomes. ATS staff provide technical assistance, training, and consultation to special education teachers and other relevant staff, as well as to various agency personnel.
- Arkansas Behavior Support Services: The behavior support consultants provide individual student assistance, including assistance with behavior plan development and programming. Building capacity at the classroom, building, and district level to meet the social/behavioral needs of students with disabilities is the central focus of this group.
- Co-Teaching Project: The Arkansas Co-Teaching Project provides support to schools interested in implementing a new co-teaching program or improving an existing one. Support is provided through blended online and face-to-face comprehensive training, technical assistance, and informational resources.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Data and Research Office: The IDEA Data & Research Office provides quality data management, analysis, technical assistance, and research for the enhancement of the ADE's general supervision of LEAs' special education programs by ensuring accurate, valid, and timely data to meet all state and federal reporting.
- Interagency Collaborations: The ADE-Special Education Unit continues to be involved in interagency collaborations to enhance the provision of special education services for children with disabilities.

- Curriculum and Assessment: The ADE-Special Education Unit works closely with the Student Assessment Unit and the ADE Curriculum Support Services Unit to ensure all students have access to and progress in the general education curriculum with meaningful participation in statewide assessments.
- Education Services for the Visually Impaired: Education Services for the Visually Impaired (ESVI) consultants provide recommendations for adaptations and modifications to enhance the student's opportunities for learning; assessment, instruction, and consultation in the use of recommended low-vision devices, adaptive mobility devices and canes; provide recommendations for large print or Braille books; recommendations for assistive equipment and materials; and assistance as needed with required Functional Vision Assessments and Learning Media Assessments.
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Services: TBI Services include consulting with school districts on intervention strategies that assist schools in managing student behavior; enhancing academic achievement of low performing students; assessment and identification of students potentially in need of special education services; and providing staff development to school faculty and administrators regarding traumatic brain injury.
- Speech-Language Pathology Services: Speech-Language services include consultation and technical assistance to individuals and districts on a variety of communication, regulatory, and service delivery issues; professional education information in the form of training, self-study materials, and announcements; and a resource and equipment loan program which includes professional texts, assessment tools, self-study materials, and auditory trainers.
- Medicaid in the Schools: Medicaid in the Schools (MITS) services include training, technical assistance, support for electronic billing, program management, policy and program development, initiation/development of new revenue streams, and collection/management/and analysis of data.
- Children and Youth with Sensory Impairments: Children and Youth with Sensory Impairments (CAYSI) is a federally funded program serving individuals from birth to age 21 who are deaf/blind or who are at risk for deaf/blind. CAYSI consultants provide training, technical assistance, and information to families, educators, and others who work with these individuals. This program supports the philosophy of access of the individual with deaf/blindness in educational, vocational, recreational and community environments.
- Easter Seals Outreach: Easter Seals Outreach (ESO) consultants provide assessments and recommend services for children with disabilities, ages 3–21. Services include: evaluations for Autism Spectrum Disorder identification and augmentative/alternative communication; psycho-educational assessments; student-centered planning and addressing specific needs of individual students or an entire classroom.
- Educational Audiology Resources for Schools: Educational Audiology Resources for Schools (EARS) services include managing hearing screening programs to assist with amplification and other classroom technical assistance; and recommendations for accommodations/modifications for students with auditory processing disorders, cochlear implants, etc. A full range of evaluation services are available including audiological assessments, guidance for parents and hearing conservation education. Speech pathology services include specialized assessments (with a written report), classroom observations, assistance with writing appropriate goals, as well as modeling therapy with individual students.
- Dispute Resolution Section: The Dispute Resolution Section (DRS) encourages the use of mediation and other collaborative strategies to resolve disagreements between parents and educators around the provision of special education services. This section provides ongoing

technical assistance to LEAs on due process rules and regulations, mediations, complaints and hearings.

- University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Law Mediation Project: Trained professional mediators assist parties in finding effective solutions to the problems affecting educational services for children with disabilities. Mediators can facilitate Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings to guide the process of the meeting and assist members of the Individualized Education Program team in communicating effectively to develop an acceptable Individualized Education Program.
- Speech/Language Pathology Aides/Assistants: LEAs may seek approval for a program to use Speech-Language Pathology Support Personnel (assistants and aides) who can perform tasks as prescribed, directed and supervised by master's level speech-language pathologist. The LEAs submit written proposals developed collaboratively by the supervising speech-language pathologist and the administrator(s) who will be most directly involved with the program. The LEAs may design a service delivery model which best meets the needs of students and professionals involved.
- Arkansas PROMISE Grant: Arkansas PROMISE is a research project open to youth, ages 14–16 who currently receive Social Security Insurance benefits. For 1,000 youth, PROMISE provides additional services to youth and their families to support their education and career goals. Services include intensive case management, two paid competitive work experiences, education and employment training and support for youth and families, benefits counseling, health and wellness training, and money to address emergency financial needs.
- Monitoring and Program Effectiveness (MPE): The ADE Special Education Unit continues to work toward full implementation of a risk-based tiered system of monitoring and technical assistance, which focuses on results for students with disabilities. This system is designed to: a) ensure LEAs comply with IDEA requirements, b) identify compliance barriers that may negatively impact student results, and c) identify technical assistance needs. Monitoring and Program Effectiveness section personnel work collaboratively with other sections within the ADE Special Education Unit, as well as across divisions within the ADE, to support LEAs in their efforts to improve educational results for students with disabilities and ensure that all LEAs meet the IDEA program requirements.
- State Program Development: State program development staff assist public agencies such as schools, institutions of higher education, state and private agencies in the development of programs and trainings to improve services for students with disabilities. This section provides information and assists in the coordination for recruitment and retention of special education personnel and paraprofessional training efforts.

Data and Consultation (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(K): Describe how the State will use data and ongoing consultation as described in ESEA section 2101(d)(3) to continually update and improve the activities supported under Title II, Part A.

To promote communication and collaboration to ensure that all students have access to effective teachers and leaders, the ADE will work within its 15 Education Service Cooperatives and Pulaski County to support structures as well as the Office of Coordinated Support and Service, to establish human capital audits for districts, based on areas of need identified in the Workforce Stability Index.

Human capital audits will provide a structure for regional meetings to support implementation planning and provide opportunities for stakeholders to:

- Discuss approaches to ensuring access to effective educators;

- Develop communities of practice to explore common implementation challenges and share best practices on data use and analysis, rural access issues, stakeholder engagement, policies, and programs;
- Identify tools and resources to support implementation planning, ongoing stakeholder engagement and communication, supporting LEAs in implementing local strategies, and monitoring and reporting progress; and
- Share state specific support available to address gaps.

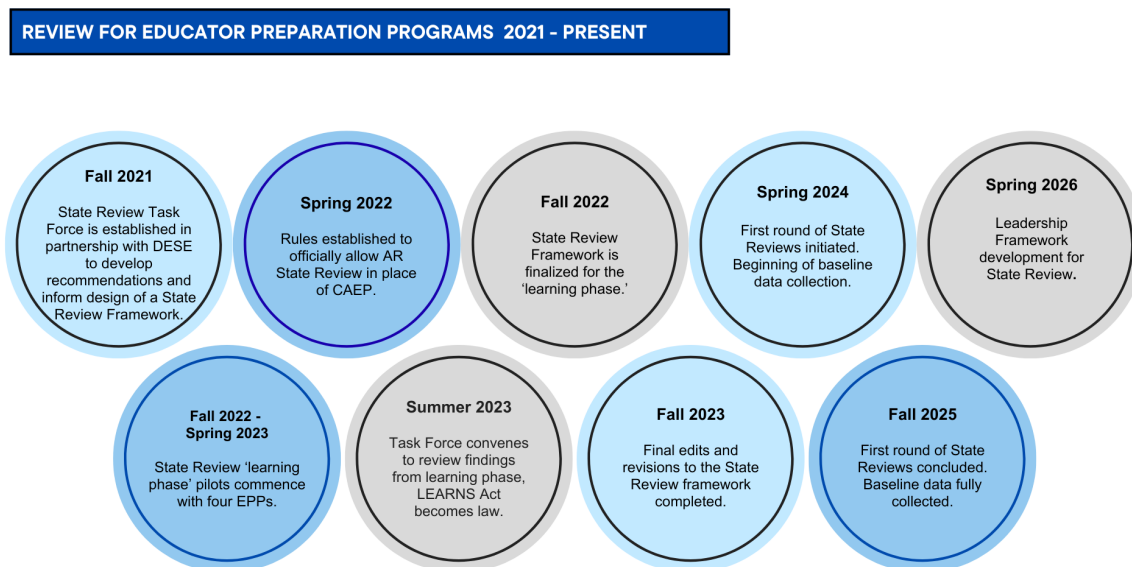
Title II Part A funds may be used to pay for allowable costs associated with the ongoing meetings audits.

In 2021, The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Office of Educator Effectiveness and the Office of Education Policy (OEP) coordinated and facilitated virtual feedback sessions with 176 stakeholders and 48 survey respondents, from across the state of Arkansas to gather feedback about teachers' experiences in preparation programs. This study also offered a vision of what stakeholders would like to see in the preparation, support, and partnerships from EPP programs. Common themes included:

- Provide continuous support for early career robust mentoring;
- Expand and strengthen partnerships between Educator Preparation Programs and LEAs;
- Use technology to model and expand access to programs;
- Ensure teachers have diverse and authentic field experiences, and;
- Align Educator Preparation Program experiences with state initiatives and district needs.

To address these priorities, the DESE, Office of Educator Effectiveness established a group of stakeholders and national partners to support facilitation and development of a new Arkansas State Review for Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs). The timeline and sequence of activities as outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Review for Educator Preparation Programs



The State Review of Arkansas EPPs provides a rich data source on the effectiveness of educator preparation programs across the state. The AR State Review for EPPs was designed to elevate the key pieces of data and the program experiences that align with our vision for high-quality preparation of teachers that are ready to meet the needs of Arkansas students on day one. The organization and focus of

the overarching framework include three core standards with aligned indicators and criteria. The AR State Review Standards are:

1. Candidate Recruitment & Completion
2. Preparing Candidates Effectively
3. Supporting Workforce Needs

Figure 3. Arkansas State Review Standards

Standard 1: Candidate Recruitment & Completion		Standard 2: Preparing Candidates Effectively		Standard 3: Supporting Workforce Needs	
Indicator	Indicator	Indicator	Indicator	Indicator	Indicator
1.1 Plans	1.2 Recruitment	2.1 Coursework	2.2 Clinical Experiences	3.1 Licensure	3.2 Employment
Criteria	Criteria	Criteria	Criteria	Criteria	Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Programs have formal plans to meet the targets described in the state review framework (i.e., Standards 1-3) and show evidence of acting on their plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Programs meet annual recruitment targets that align with their program size and Arkansas's workforce needs. b. Programs recruit candidates for Arkansas certification shortage areas in proportion to the need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Candidates receive high-quality program coursework that is evidence-based. b. Candidates' coursework supports their development as a teacher. c. Candidates are provided with knowledgeable and effective course instructors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Candidates are provided clinical experiences that support their development as a teacher. b. Candidates across the program are provided with an effective clinical internship. c. Strong partnerships exist between the EPP and K12 schools and districts that facilitate the development of strong candidates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A high proportion of program candidates obtain a standard license. b. A high proportion of alternative route enrollees are provisionally licensed. c. A high proportion of traditional program candidates pass the content exam in their area on the first try. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A high proportion of completers are employed in Arkansas public schools. b. A high proportion of completers work in high-priority Arkansas public school districts and subjects. c. Program completers remain in the classroom for multiple years.
Indicator	Indicator	Indicator	Indicator	Indicator	Indicator
1.3 Completion		2.3 Development		3.3 Effectiveness	
Criteria		Criteria		Criteria	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Candidates have high rates of persistence from enrollment to completion. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Candidates are successful with their program coursework. b. Candidates are successful in their clinical internship. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. School leaders rate program completers that they hire as effective classroom teachers. b. Completers feel that their program prepared them well to be a teacher. c. A high proportion of program completers have above average value-added scores. 	

State Review Performance Rating

The overall performance rating for each EPP will be determined by using a formula that considers the individual ratings for each standard. The approach and methodology for determining the overall rating is provided in Table 13.

Each of the criteria and indicators will be assigned points based on the extent to which the EPP achieved the set target. The criteria scores are then averaged to serve as the score for each indicator. The indicator scores are then averaged across standards and will determine the overall performance level. The targets within each criteria for Standard 1 and Standard 3 are determined by averages from historical data. The targets within Standard 2 are set based on guidelines outlined for the EPP on-site review process. Scoring is on a 0-3 point scale that will assign points based on the performance level brackets (table below).

EPPs will receive an overall performance level (Exceeds, Meets, Approaching and Below) and score (0-3), which will be an average of the indicator scores and measures how close an EPP is to the target.

Table 13: EPP Rating Table

Performance Level	Average Score Equivalent	Score Cut-Off
Exceeds (3 points)	Exceeds on two of three Standards or Indicators	Average Score ≥ 2.67
Meets (2 points)	Meets on all three standards or indicators	$2.67 < \text{Average Score} < 1.67$
Approaching (1 point)	Approaching on one Standard or Indicator and Meets on the other two	$1.67 \leq \text{Average Score} < 0.67$
Below (0 points)	Below on one Standard or Indicator and Approaching on the other two	Average Score ≤ 0.67

Rating Each Standard

A performance level and score will be assigned for each standard in the framework and will be determined based on the average of scores for each indicator. During the State Review process, evidence will be collected to align with the named criteria for each indicator.

State compiled educator workforce and effectiveness data will be assessed as evidence for Standard 1 and 3. The data for Standard 2 will be gathered through on-site review. DESE staff and peer review teams will utilize the on-site review approach and rubric to facilitate the review process with each EPP. Reviewers will receive training and have access to an Onsite Review Handbook as well as an evidence guide that will outline the steps of the review process.

There are three types of evidence that reviewers look at: a set of documents submitted by the EPP, focus group responses, and coursework and clinical internship observations. EPPs submit their documentation evidence before the review. This includes files, handbooks, templates, and artifacts. Focus groups and observations are convened by the EPP and are conducted by the review team. The evidence table in the following section includes a high-level description of evidence by Standard.

To monitor the effectiveness of high school to teacher pathways, the ADE will track the following:

- Enrollment in the pre-educator program of study offered in Arkansas high schools
- Number of Certified Teaching Assistant (CTA) credentials awarded
- Enrollment in work-based licensure pathways (i.e., apprenticeship)
- Educator preparation enrollment, particularly candidates from hard to staff regions of the state
- Teacher vacancy data
- Teacher retention

To monitor the effectiveness of one-year residencies, the ADE will track the following:

- EPP completer rates

- EPP completer and EPP completer supervisor perception surveys
- EPP completer retention
- EPP completer student growth data

In January 2024, State Reviews and Science of Reading Audits were launched. By December 31st, all Arkansas Educator Preparation programs were reviewed, and baseline data had been collected.

Teacher Preparation (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(M): Describe the actions the State may take to improve preparation programs and strengthen support for teachers, principals, or other school leaders based on the needs of the State, as identified by the SEA.

As the ADE has examined its educator workforce needs, stakeholders are realizing the importance of “Grow Your Own” initiatives to cultivate local talent and create pathways to the educator profession with early career experience and extending support through college into the workforce.

In support of new Title II regulations, the ADE in collaboration with higher education preparation programs will annually measure and report the performance of educator preparation programs, using multiple outcome measures to evaluate student growth (of program completers’ students), employment outcomes, surveys, and program approval and accreditation. Program completers will be followed for the first 3 years after completing a preparation program. Through this work, the state will hold traditional and alternative educator preparation programs accountable for their completers’ and graduates’ impact on student learning.

Paraprofessional to Educator Programs

The ADE will be working to scale up Paraprofessional-to-Educator programs that are currently being piloted by the University of Arkansas at Monticello, the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, and Harding University. The ADE will share data and lessons learned with other institutions of higher education interested in following the models.

Title III, Part A, Subpart 1: English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement

Entrance and Exit Procedures (ESEA section 3113(b)(2)): Describe how the SEA will establish and implement, with timely and meaningful consultation with LEAs representing the geographic diversity of the State, standardized, statewide entrance and exit procedures, including an assurance that all students who may be English learners are assessed for such status within 30 days of enrollment in a school in the State.

Identifying which students in Arkansas are English Learners is critical to the success of these students. To facilitate consistent identification of English Learners, reclassification to Former English Learners, and monitoring of Former English Learners, Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) has standardized statewide entrance and exit procedures effective in the 2017-18 school year. These standardized entrance and exit procedures were developed after consulting with 51 English for Speakers of Other Languages Coordinators throughout Arkansas and gathering feedback from English for Speakers of Other Languages Coordinator groups at several Education Service Cooperatives, as well as in collaboration with the representing districts of various sizes throughout the state.

Entrance Procedures

Timeline: All Arkansas students who may be English Learners will be assessed, placed and parents notified of such placement within the first 30 days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of enrollment thereafter.

Home Language Usage Survey (HLUS): A common HLUS will be administered to all Arkansas students initially enrolling in each LEA. For those students whose HLUS responses indicate a language other than English, LEAs will:

1. Code the students as a “Language Minority Student;”
2. Record the language other than English as the “Student Language” in the State Information System (currently eSchool); and,
3. Screen the student for English proficiency.

Home Language Usage Survey Verification (HLUS-V) form: If a student or his/her family demonstrates usage of a language other than English, even though their responses on the Home Language Usage Survey were all English, LEAs will document such usage on a statewide common HLUS-V form and LEAs will:

1. Code the students as a “Language Minority Student”;
2. Record the language other than English as the “Student Language” in the State Information System (currently eSchool); and
3. Screen the student for English Language Proficiency.

Statewide initial English proficiency screener: Arkansas adopted the usage of ELPA21’s Language Proficiency Screener as the statewide English Language Proficiency screener with full implementation since 2019.

Table 14: Criteria for Initial Placement of Screened Students

	English Learner	Former English Learner, Year 1	Former English Learner, Year 2 and beyond
Evidence of Other Language	Home Language Survey/English Language Referral Indicates a language other than English		
English Language Proficiency Assessment Results	ELPA21 Screener = Not Proficient	ELPA21 Screener = Proficient	LEA obtains copies of prior placement/exit documentation from another LEA.
Other Factors	Recent prior placement as an English Learner in a school that uses the ELPA21 Screener as long as LEA obtains copies of prior placement decision made by a Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee (LPAC).	Completed “Professional Judgment Rubric” indicates student is “Proficient” (see exit criteria for more information).	Year of monitoring (up to 4 years) will be based on time elapsed since Exit Date on prior LEA documentation and student maintaining exit status as per monitoring.

Documenting Initial Placement Decisions

Placement decisions are made by a site-based Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee consisting of at least three educators, one from each category:

1. Building administrator (principal, assistant principal)
2. English for Speakers of Other Languages Teacher (English as a Second Language-endorsed and/or trained to work with English Learners)
3. Certified educator familiar with the student’s data and performance in the classroom. (If the student is also receiving special education services, a member of that student’s IEP team should also be present.)

Notification of Parents/Guardians

1. Parents/guardians must be notified of their child’s identification as an English Learner or Former English Learner within the first 30 days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of enrollment thereafter.
2. Notification must include the following elements and be provided in a language and manner the parents/guardians can understand:
 - a. The reasons for the identification of their child as limited English proficient and in need of placement in a language instruction educational program;
 - b. The child's level of English proficiency, how such level was assessed, and the status of the child's academic achievement;

- c. The methods of instruction used in the program in which their child is, or will be participating, and the methods of instruction used in other available programs, including how such programs differ in content, instructional goals, and the use of English and a native language in instruction;
- d. How the program in which their child is, or will be participating, will meet the educational strengths and needs of their child;
- e. How such program will specifically help their child learn English, and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;
- f. The specific exit requirements for the program, including the expected rate of transition from such program into classrooms that are not tailored for limited English proficient children, and the expected rate of graduation from secondary school for such program if funds under this part are used for children in secondary schools;
- g. In the case of a child with a disability, how such program meets the objectives of the Individualized Education Program of the child;
- h. Information pertaining to parental rights that includes written guidance
 - a. Detailing the right that parents have to have their child immediately removed from such program upon their request; and
 - b. the options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such program or to choose another program or method of instruction, if available; and
- i. Assisting parents in selecting among various programs and methods of instruction, if more than one program or method is offered by the eligible entity.

Exit Procedures

Timeline: LEAs will annually review every identified English Learner’s progress in acquiring English.

1. This review will be conducted by a site-based Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee.
2. Annual reviews will include a committee analysis of ELPA21 summative assessment scores and other available student performance data.

Monitoring Former English Learner Procedures

1. Language Proficiency and Assessment Committees will at least annually review Former English Learner performance and progress for four years. To continue as a Former English Learner, students must demonstrate academic performance comparable to English-only peers as indicated on the “Professional Judgment Rubric” being developed by the ADE in consultation with experts in the field as well as with stakeholders.
2. Schools will monitor Former English Learner performance as they do all other non-English Learner students and respond appropriately should the student begin to struggle academically or otherwise.
3. If the Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee determines that a Former English Learner would benefit from returning to English Learner services, the student may be reclassified as an English Learner. Parent is to be notified of a student’s reclassification and placement as an English Learner.

SEA Support for English Learner Progress (ESEA section 3113(b)(6)): Describe how the SEA will assist eligible entities in meeting:

- I. The State-designed long-term goals established under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(ii), including measurements of interim progress towards meeting such goals, based on the State’s English language proficiency assessments under ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(G); and*
- II. The challenging State academic standards.*

The ADE is working to develop a statewide long-term educational plan for English Learners who are in our K–12 education system. The Arkansas English Learner Strategic Plan (AELSP) addresses gaps and unequal outcomes by examining relevant data and applying appropriate best practices. Arkansas’ Title III program currently serves 54 districts which are identified as collaborating with ADE to improve outcomes for their English Learners.

Some of the supports provided to all LEAs include: state funding, coaching in best practices for working with English Learners, specialized professional development, LEA identified needs assessments, and direct coaching opportunities.

ADE is working to align Arkansas’ English Learner Strategic Plan with the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability System to leverage support for all LEAs in meeting the state’s long-term goals and measures of interim progress based on Arkansas’ English Language Proficiency standards and Arkansas’ academic standards in English language arts and math.

ADE will use Title III funds to enhance Arkansas’ English Learner state initiatives by providing additional technical assistance and professional development to Title III eligible entities. Some activities supported by Arkansas’ English Learner Strategic Plan include:

- Professional development on implementation of Arkansas’ English Language Proficiency Standards
- Professional development on effective English Language Development models
- Professional development on effective models for providing English Learners with access to content area curriculum
- Professional development on sheltered instructional strategies
- Guidance on engaging parents and community members in their child’s education
- Translation/interpretation guidance to support parent/community members

Title III funds will be used to enhance the Arkansas English Learner Strategic Plan activities by including:

- Support for data-informed decisions to improve English Learner outcomes and determine professional development needs
- Translation/interpreting Title III-required activities
- Additional Title III parent/community engagement guidance and resources
- Evaluation of Title III English Learner program outcomes in order to improve Title III programs
- Collaboration with various ADE units to support Arkansas’ English Learner statewide initiatives
- Collaboration with national experts, providing ADE the opportunity to meet directly with researchers on improving outcomes for English Learners
- High-Quality Professional Learning for English Learners and Educators
- Collaboration with Arkansas’ English Learner groups and community-based organizations to better support teachers, administrators, parents and students.

The activities are examples of available long-term supports. Additional technical support may be provided as appropriate.

Monitoring and Technical Assistance (ESEA section 3113(b)(8)): Describe:

- I. How the SEA will monitor the progress of each eligible entity receiving a Title III, Part A subgrant in helping English learners achieve English proficiency; and*
- II. The steps the SEA will take to further assist eligible entities if the strategies funded under Title III, Part A are not effective, such as providing technical assistance and modifying such strategies.*

Monitoring and Technical Assistance of Title III eligible entities is ongoing and systematic. Each eligible entity is reviewed based on its own unique English Learner needs and outcomes. Regular monitoring includes, but is not limited to:

Annual Review

- Review of English Learner data (counts, progress learning English, proficiency in English, effective teachers)
- Review of English Learner identification and exiting procedure implementation
- Review of Title III expenditures
 - Measurement of effectiveness of district provided professional development for teachers/administrators of English Learners
 - Measurement of effectiveness for district provided instructional materials

Biennial Review

- Review of district local plans including district evaluation of English Learner program
- Compare data trends on English Learner progress – prioritize Title III eligible entities whose English Learner outcomes are not met for additional technical support from ADE (for LEAs with two years not meeting English Learner outcomes)
 - Determine specific areas of need for each LEA and create a joint SEA/LEA technical assistance plan to address district-specific needs

Every Three Years

- Review English Learner data trends on English Learner progress – prioritize Title III eligible entities whose English Learner outcomes continue to not meet outcomes for program monitoring (for districts with three or more consecutive years of not meeting English Learner outcomes)
 - Review and update technical assistance plan with LEA

Based on all of the above criteria, a Title III-eligible entity may be selected for Title III compliance monitoring. Monitoring could be either a desk monitoring, targeted on-site monitoring based on a specific concern, or on-site comprehensive monitoring.

To assist eligible Title III districts with low English Learner outcomes, ADE proposes to use a system of support that is similar to the one currently in place to support districts which are identified for state support with ADE’s proposed accountability provisions under ESSA (2015) and the state’s accountability and support system. The system of support for districts will similarly be aligned. Currently, ADE provides the following support to LEA identified with opportunity for growth along multiple measures.

- LEAs were identified based on needs and achievement outcomes. Multiple indicators are used to establish English Learner language acquisition and academic progress. Additionally, the identification process looks at the needs the LEAs have for professional development, including instructional materials, increasing parent engagement and LEA communication with parents, student academic support, and potentially coaches provided to LEAs.
- Individualized support is available to LEAs based on LEA root cause analysis and needs evaluation.
- Evidenced-based best practice and promising practice is required and expected. Exemplar LEAs are engaged to offer best and promising practice supports for other LEAs of like size, outcomes, and needs.

Title III support will complement other ADE assistance providing additional opportunities to improve outcomes for English Learners. ADE school improvement staff and Title III staff will collaborate on LEA needs and provide a collaborative, cohesive support structure.

ADE implements a statewide education plan for English Learners in kindergarten through grade 12. The plan addresses disparities experienced by English Learners in every indicator of academic success, from the historical practices leading to disproportionate outcomes for the students to the educational needs of the students from kindergarten through grade 12.

ADE reviews English Learner Outcome potential data and indicators to be used to identify LEAs for technical assistance and progressive interventions. The indicators used to identify districts are:

- Progress in attaining English Language Proficiency, as measured by the state's English Language Proficiency Assessment;
- Growth in English language arts and mathematics proficiency, as measured by state assessments;
- Graduation rate; and
- Postsecondary enrollment of English Learners.

Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

Use of Funds (*ESEA section 4103(c)(2)(A)*): *Describe how the SEA will use funds received under Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1 for State-level activities.*

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) has shifted from a remediation first mindset to one of access and opportunity. ADE utilizes the streamlined consolidated application to encourage districts to align support and opportunities to address student support and academic enrichment opportunities. ADE currently supports several efforts and opportunities.

- Acceleration Course Work: Advanced Placement (AP) courses, Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education, International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, and concurrent courses. State legislation requires Acceleration courses in all secondary schools.
- Dual Enrollment: Initiative for high school student's enrollment in postsecondary coursework for college credit.
- Industry Recognized Credentials: Provides workforce ready training and credentialing.
- Arkansas School for Mathematics, Science and the Arts: A public, residential high school for academically advanced juniors and seniors.
- Arkansas Network of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Centers: Services enrich the knowledge and teaching practices of teachers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics by linking institutions of higher education to K-12 public schools and businesses. The centers also provide services, current information, and resources for teachers, administrators, and students as it relates to trends in STEM education.
- Comprehensive School Counseling: Provides counseling focused on career, academic, and social/emotional development for all students provided within the structure of a multi-tiered system of support. State supported care coordination service and online mental health supports.
- High-Impact Tutoring Grants: Competitive district grants for high-impact tutoring during the day.
- Literacy Tutoring Grants: State provided literacy grants to families of struggling readers to select from a list of approved tutors for grades kindergarten through third.
- Computer Science Specialists: In the interest of providing Arkansas educators with access to quality computer science professional development, the ADE Office of Computer Science has provided grants for Computer Science Specialists.
- Governor's School: A six-week summer program available to rising high school seniors that seeks to engage students in exploring cutting-edge theories in the arts, civics, math and sciences, and to develop a greater understanding of how art, culture, and knowledge change with time.
- Expanded School Choice: Opportunities for charter conversions and innovation.
- College Entrance Assessments: Arkansas offers a suite of assessment options for all high school students in 10-12th grades (ACT, SAT, CLT, ASVAB, etc.) for free.
- Arkansas Better Chance: State grants for funding pre-schools in low-socioeconomic communities and neighborhoods.
- Career and Technical Student Organizations: Robust CTE Student organizations, competitions, conferences, and national representation.

Based on a needs assessment funds may be utilized in a number of ways. Some examples of activities to fund under the law are:

- **Safe and Healthy Activities:** mental health awareness training, school-based counseling, student safety and violence prevention, professional development for specialized instructional support personnel, physical education, bullying and harassment prevention, and integrated systems of student and family supports.
- **Well-Rounded Activities:** college and career guidance programs, using music and the arts to promote student engagement, STEM and computer science programs, increasing access to accelerated coursework, community service, social studies, foreign languages, enhanced library media services, environmental education, and almost anything else that supports a well-rounded educational experience.
- **Technology Activities:** educator professional development in the use of technology, building technology infrastructure, using blended learning projects, and providing students in rural communities with resources for digital learning experiences.

Awarding Subgrants (ESEA section 4103(c)(2)(B)): Describe how the SEA will ensure that awards made to LEAs under Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1 are in amounts that are consistent with ESEA section 4105(a)(2).

The ADE will award subgrants to eligible LEAs by formula in the same proportion as to the LEAs' prior year's Title I, Part A allocations. The ADE will provide a minimum grant award of \$10,000 to all eligible LEAs through an application process according to requirements outlined in ESSA (2015). If any LEA does not generate sufficient funds to equal the minimum of \$10,000, the ADE will reduce all LEA allocations. These dollars will allow LEAs to determine and prioritize needs of students in the allowable areas. State activity funds will provide for technical assistance to LEAs as they research safe and healthy environments (inclusive of mental health services), effective use of technology, or to enhance well-rounded educational opportunities. Additionally, through a single application, LEAs may form a consortium with other LEAs and combine their allocations to jointly carry out the local activities identified in the plan.

Any LEA that receives a formula allocation of \$30,000 or above must conduct a needs assessment and then expend 20 percent of its grant on safe and healthy school activities and 20 percent to provide a well-rounded education. The remaining 60 percent of the money can be spent on all three priorities, including technology. If the LEA receives an allocation below \$30,000, it must spend the money on activities in at least one of the three categories. Regardless of the allocation, there is a 15 percent technology infrastructure spending cap.

Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Use of Funds (ESEA section 4203(a)(2)): Describe how the SEA will use funds received under the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, including funds reserved for State-level activities.

The Arkansas Department of Education will award competitive grants at a minimum of \$50,000 per applicant year. Grants are awarded on a three to five-year cycle. Continuation of grants from year to year is awarded subject to availability of funds from the United States Department of Education and satisfactory performance of the grantee during the grant period. Satisfactory performance is determined based on the following:

- Progress toward program goals;
- Attendance of required personnel to mandatory training and professional development, timely and accurate entry of required program data;
- Demonstration of appropriate grant fund management which is consistent with the requirements of the statute and the operational requirements set forth in the Educational Department Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), Office of Management and Budget Circulars, US Non-Regulatory Guidance and ADE 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Guidance;
- Submittal of all final evaluation reports and data as required;
- Submittal of all requests for reimbursements according to federal grant regulations and ADE 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Guidance;
- Submittal of end of year budget and continuation reports;
- Maintenance of an acceptable program quality score as determined by the program quality assessment tool;
- Participation in required planning with data training and submittal of program improvement plans; and
- Program operation is in alignment with the awarded grant application serving the target population.

Grants are awarded with the purpose to provide opportunities for communities to establish or expand activities in community learning centers that provide opportunities for academic enrichment, including providing tutorial services to help students, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, to meet the challenging state academic standards; offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, such as youth development activities, service learning, nutrition and health education, drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs, arts, music, physical fitness and wellness programs, technology education programs, financial literacy programs, environmental literacy programs, mathematics, science, career and technical programs, internship or apprenticeship programs, and other ties to an in-demand industry sector or occupation for high school students that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students; and offer families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children's education, including opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

Agencies and organizations eligible to receive the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program funds include, but are not limited to:

- Local Educational Agencies (LEA);
- Indian Tribe or tribal organization;

- Educational consortia;
- Non-profit agencies;
- City or county government agencies;
- Community based organizations (CBO) and faith-based organizations (FBO);
- Institutions of higher education;
- For-profit corporations.

In addition to issuing competitive awards to Out of School Time programs, up to two percent of funds will be used for:

- Administrative costs of carrying out its responsibilities under Title IV, Part B to administer the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant program;
- Establishing and implementing the rigorous peer review process for subgrant applications described in detail in the following pages of this section; and
- Awarding of funds to eligible entities.

Additionally, up to five percent of 21st Century Community Learning Centers funding will be used for:

- Monitoring 21st Century Community Learning Centers programs and activities;
- Evaluation of 21st Century Community Learning Centers programs utilizing a continuous improvement model;
- Providing capacity building, training, and technical assistance to 21st Century Community Learning Centers;
- Conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of 21st Century Community Learning Centers programs and activities;
- Providing state-wide training, grant writing support and technical assistance to eligible entities that are applicants for or recipients of 21st Century Community Learning Centers funding;
- Ensuring that any eligible entity that receives an award under 21st Century Community Learning Centers from the state aligns the activities provided by the program with the challenging state academic standards;
- Ensuring that any eligible entity that receives an award under 21st Century Community Learning Centers from the state identifies and partners with external organizations, if available, in the community;
- Working with teachers, principals, parents, the local workforce, the local community, and other stakeholders to review and improve state policies and practices support the implementation of high- quality programs; and
- Providing a list of prescreened external organizations, that could provide assistance in carrying out the activities under 21st Century Community Learning Centers and develop and make available to eligible entities a list of external organizations that successfully completed the prescreening process.

Awarding Subgrants (ESEA section 4203(a)(4)): Describe the procedures and criteria the SEA will use for reviewing applications and awarding 21st Century Community Learning Centers funds to eligible entities on a competitive basis, which shall include procedures and criteria that take into

consideration the likelihood that a proposed community learning center will help participating students meet the challenging State academic standards and any local academic standards.

Eligible applicants will: Serve students who attend a school site that is eligible for designation as a Title I school-wide program. To be eligible for this designation at least 40 percent of the students must qualify to receive free or reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program. Applicants will have submitted an application jointly between at least one LEA that is eligible to receive funds as a Title I school-wide program, and at least one public or private community organization. Each eligible organization receiving an award will use the funds to carry out a broad array of before- and after-school, summer, weekend, and/or holiday activities that advance overall student achievement, and support student success.

Absolute Priority: The ADE awards sub-grants only to applicants primarily serving students who attend schools with a high concentration of low-income students and families. For the purpose of this application, a high concentration of low-income students and families is defined as poverty percentage (i.e., the percentage of eligible students for free or reduced price meals) of at least 40% qualify to receive free or reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program.

Competitive Priority: The ADE may award the following competitive priority points including but not limited to the following dependent upon changing state needs and data in the state evaluation report.

- Competitive Priority I: Application is for a program that has never received 21st CCLC funding.
- Competitive Priority II: Application is for a program located in a county with no 21st CCLC programs.
- Competitive Priority III: Application is for a program that has no other 21st CCLC program within a 30-mile radius.
- Competitive Priority IV: Application is a Joint Application between an LEA and Community Based Organization.
- Competitive Priority V: Application describes how evidence-based practices will be used to increase student attendance and intellectual engagement.
- Competitive Priority VI: Application provides programming for summer (minimum of 64 hours).

The ADE State Request For Application (RFA) Peer Review Process: The review process will begin approximately two weeks after the deadline for grant submission and will be led by the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program team. The team will review each application. Applicants may request funds ranging annually based on need and proposed services to the target population.

Title V, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income School Program

Outcomes and Objectives (ESEA section 5223(b)(1)): *Provide information on program objectives and outcomes for activities under Title V, Part B, Subpart 2, including how the SEA will use funds to help all students meet the challenging State academic standards.*

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), will fund Rural and Low-Income School Program (RLIS) grants to eligible Local Education Agencies (LEAs). Rural and Low-Income School Program eligible LEAs are those in which 20 percent or more of children ages 5–17 are from families with income below the poverty line and are designated with an eligible locale code as determined by U.S. Department of Education.

Upon completion of a comprehensive needs assessment, the ADE expects LEAs to meet RLIS standards by utilizing the flexible funds provided by the program to improve teaching and learning in the classroom. It is also an expectation that the LEAs will improve access to high quality instruction in the classroom for students, especially for subgroups that are typically disadvantaged in education, such as poverty, minority students, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities. Each LEA will identify the amount of RLIS funding dedicated to meeting the program objectives in the application process. The specific measurable program objectives and outcomes for each participating LEA related to the RLIS program will be driven by the needs and key planning decisions identified in each LEAs plan for educating its students.

RLIS funds are designed to carry out the following allowable activities that are used to improve teaching and learning as well as improving quality access to all students in the classroom:

- Teacher recruitment and retention including the use of signing bonuses and other financial incentives;
- Teacher professional development including programs that train teachers to use technology to improve teaching and that train teachers of students with special needs, and other Title II-A activities that support effective instruction and meet that program's outcomes and objectives;
- Title I-A activities focused on outcomes and objectives of improving basic programs operated by local education agencies, which would include parental involvement activities;
- Title III allowable activities to increase services for English learners and immigrant students and;
- Title IV-A activities (Student Support and Academic Enrichment) activities to support safe and healthy students such as drug and violence prevention programs, school-based mental health programs, and programs on nutrition and healthful living; activities to support the effective use of technology in the classroom; activities to support a well-rounded education such as providing greater access to STEM programming or programs that include art and/or music as tools to support student success; and parental engagement activities to promote school/family collaboration and student success.

The ADE Federal Programs Unit will approve the Rural and Low-Income LEA grants and monitor recipients to ensure that 100 percent of the grant implements activities allowed under the applicable title program regulations.

Technical Assistance (ESEA section 5223(b)(3)): *Describe how the SEA will provide technical assistance to eligible LEAs to help such agencies implement the activities described in ESEA section 5222.*

The ADE will provide technical assistance training to eligible LEAs on how to: conduct needs assessments, use the funds to address the identified needs, identify priorities and goals, conduct an annual program evaluation, identify allowable expenditures, provide notification to eligible LEAs of expiring funds, and offer assistance through e-mail communication, via telephone, and any other available means to support eligible LEAs.

Education for Homeless Children and Youth program, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title VII, Subtitle B

Student Identification (722(g)(1)(B) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Describe the procedures the SEA will use to identify homeless children and youth in the State and to assess their needs.

Identification of children and youth experiencing homelessness will primarily be the responsibility of local educational agencies (LEA), with support materials provided by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Office of Homeless Education. LEAs are trained on the identification of students according to the McKinney-Vento definition.

The McKinney-Vento Act Homeless Assistance Act (1987), in section 725, defines “homeless children and youth” (school-age and younger) as children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters; or
- Abandoned in hospitals.

LEA liaisons are trained in the identification procedures. The liaisons place posters in all buildings and around the community with contact information for the LEA liaison as well as the State Coordinator. Liaisons collaborate with homeless shelters and other partners to ensure all children experiencing homelessness are identified.

The ADE Office of Homeless Education has a State Residency Form for all LEAs to use in the identification process. All students will receive the Residency Form at the beginning of each school year. The LEA liaison will determine eligibility after speaking with parents/students about their living situation. Parents of all identified homeless students will receive a copy of the educational rights and services. Upon identification and enrollment, LEAs will assess the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness through a collaborative effort of assessments administered by various departments. Those participating in the assessments include the Special Education Supervisor, Speech Pathologist, English for Speakers of Other Languages Coordinator, and School Nurse.

Dispute Resolution (722(g)(1)(C) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Describe procedures for the prompt resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youth.

The ADE Office of Homeless Education has established a dispute resolution procedure with the purpose of providing an opportunity for the parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth to dispute a LEA decision on eligibility, school selection, and enrollment or transportation to the school of origin. All disputes will be handled in a timely manner and the student will be enrolled and attend school until the dispute is settled.

The dispute resolution process involves key steps aimed at ensuring that disputes are resolved promptly while safeguarding the rights of all parties. Every student must be immediately enrolled regardless of any dispute that arises. In the case of a dispute, the matter is first referred to the LEA’s homeless liaison, with a written explanation from the disputing school. The liaison then makes a determination regarding school selection, eligibility, or enrollment. If unresolved or appealed, the matter is referred to the ADE Office of

Homeless Education's dispute team, where the school selection, eligibility, or enrollment decision will be reviewed within thirty working days of receipt of dispute materials.

LEA liaisons have been provided a sample of a dispute resolution form for parents and a sample response form informing the parents of the following:

- Resolution by the Homeless Liaison will be made within seven business days of receipt of Dispute Resolution Form.
- If the matter is not resolved at that level, the Superintendent shall issue the District's decision within ten business days of the second dispute by parent/guardian.
- If the matter is not resolved at that level, the parent/guardian may appeal this decision by contacting the Arkansas Department of Education Homeless Education Coordinator.
- The student listed above has the right to enroll immediately in the requested school, including full participation in all school activities pending resolution of the dispute.
- Families may contact the state coordinator if further help is needed.

Support for School Personnel (722(g)(1)(D) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Describe programs for school personnel (including the LEA liaisons for homeless children and youth, principals and other school leaders, attendance officers, teachers, enrollment personnel, and specialized instructional support personnel) to heighten the awareness of such school personnel of the specific needs of homeless children and youth, including runaway and homeless children and youth.

The ADE Office of Homeless Education will provide ongoing training to all school personnel (liaisons, school counselors, social workers, principals, and superintendents) on the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program, to heighten the awareness of children and youth experiencing homelessness and runaway homeless children and youth. These training opportunities include in-person meetings, webinars, state conferences, and trainings conducted at the education service cooperatives throughout the state of Arkansas. School counselors, social workers, principals, superintendents and shelter administrators are also invited to attend these trainings.

Access to Services (722(g)(1)(F) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Describe procedures that ensure that:

- I. Homeless children have access to public preschool programs, administered by the SEA or LEA, as provided to other children in the State;***
 - II. Homeless youth and youth separated from public schools are identified and accorded equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services, including by identifying and removing barriers that prevent youth described in this clause from receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school, in accordance with State, local, and school policies; and***
 - III. Homeless children and youth who meet the relevant eligibility criteria do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs, if such programs are available at the State and local levels.***
-
- I. The State Coordinator for Homeless Education collaborates and coordinates with the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education to ensure access to public preschool programs. LEA Liaisons identify homeless families with preschool-age children during initial school enrollments and are responsible for ensuring that the homeless children have equal access to preschools available in their community. The district liaison will make referrals to all early childhood

programs within their community. The State Coordinator for Homeless Education includes facts on accessing public preschool programs in training materials for LEAs. When a child is enrolled in school and becomes homeless, the McKinney-Vento Act requires LEAs to, according to the child's best interest, continue the child in the school of origin unless this is against the wishes of the child's parent or guardian (See 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)).

- II. To ensure that homeless youth who are separated from public schools are identified and accorded equal access, without barriers to full or partial credit, outreach by LEA Homeless Education Liaisons is a critical element in trainings at the local, regional and state levels. Outreach procedures are included in the monitoring of LEA McKinney-Vento programs.

Access to online courses, summer school and tutoring through Title I-A will be developed and enhanced for credit recovery for students experiencing homelessness through collaboration and coordination with district program administrators and McKinney-Vento Liaisons.

A goal for McKinney-Vento is to develop formal guidance and procedures at state levels for granting partial and/or full credit for schoolwork satisfactorily completed in a previous school/district by youth experiencing homelessness. This guidance would then be approved by the Arkansas State Board of Education. Training on this new guidance will also be provided to McKinney-Vento Liaisons, as well as high school counselors, principals and administrators.

- III. The State Coordinator for Homeless Education provides training and technical assistance to McKinney-Vento LEA Liaisons and staff on all provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Every Student Succeeds Act and the U.S. Department of Education McKinney-Vento Guidance, including those specifying that students experiencing homelessness must not face barriers to accessing any academic or extracurricular activities including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs for which they are eligible.

To prevent any enrollment delays, McKinney-Vento LEA Liaisons receive training and are provided with state sample forms to assist homeless parents or youth in obtaining any necessary enrollment documents.

The State Coordinator has coordinated and collaborated with the Arkansas Athletic Association to ensure a process for homeless students to continue eligibility to participate in sports when changing districts.

Strategies to Address Other Problems (722(g)(1)(H) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Provide strategies to address other problems with respect to the education of homeless children and youth, including problems resulting from enrollment delays that are caused by—

- I. requirements of immunization and other required health records;***
- II. residency requirements;***
- III. lack of birth certificates, school records, or other documentation;***
- IV. guardianship issues; or***
- V. uniform or dress code requirements.***

Training and technical assistance is provided to all LEA Liaisons and school staff, regarding the removal of any enrollment or participation barriers for children and youth experiencing homelessness who lack required health records, birth certificates or documentation of guardianship or residency. The LEA Liaison is responsible for obtaining documentation for children and youth experiencing homelessness in a timely manner. LEA Liaisons are trained to retrieve school records as quickly as possible by contacting

the sending district and requesting information by phone or fax, while official school records are being processed and sent, allowing for expedited placement of homeless students in appropriate schools and classes. The State Coordinator provides training and technical assistance to LEA Liaisons on all provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act, ESSA (2015) and the U.S. Department of Education McKinney-Vento Guidance, including dress code and uniform requirements. McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Grant funds and Title I-A Homeless Reservation funds are also used to provide necessary clothing for school dress codes or school activities.

Policies to Remove Barriers (722(g)(1)(I) of the McKinney-Vento Act): Demonstrate that the SEA and LEAs in the State have developed, and shall review and revise, policies to remove barriers to the identification of homeless children and youth, and the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth in schools in the State, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences.

The State Coordinator for Homeless Education provides training and technical assistance to McKinney-Vento LEA Liaisons and other staff members on all provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, ESSA (2015), and the U.S. Department of Education McKinney-Vento Guidance, including those related to fees, fines, and absences. These trainings include a yearly state McKinney-Vento Conference and yearly trainings at the education service cooperatives throughout the state. Individual LEA training is scheduled when requested. All trainings emphasize the importance of students remaining in the school of origin the remainder of the school year, regardless of attendance status, unless an official withdrawal or record transfer request is submitted.

ADE will ensure that barriers related to outstanding fees, fines, or absences are specifically addressed. ADE will address these barriers at all trainings and will specifically have conversations pertaining to fees, fines and absences during monitoring visits.

The LEA monitoring protocol for the McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act programs includes requirements that LEAs have school board policies and procedures for making exceptions for homeless youth in any policy area that poses barriers to their enrollment, retention, and success. The State Coordinator collaborates with the Arkansas School Board Association's Policy Services Director annually to review and update as necessary the SEA McKinney-Vento policies and policies for school districts which include those related to the identification enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees, fines and absences. Assistance will be provided to any LEAs to update policies and procedures if needed.

Assistance from Counselors (722(g)(1)(K): A description of how youths described in section 725(2) will receive assistance from counselors to advise such youths, and prepare and improve the readiness of such youths for college.

The Arkansas State Coordinator for Homeless Education provides professional development and technical assistance for school counselors at the Arkansas counselors' annual conference. Counselors are trained on the identification of unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) and the rights granted to the population under the McKinney-Vento Act. ADE encourages LEA liaisons to help promote and encourage college readiness programs to motivate students eligible to pursue postsecondary education.

Counselors are provided information on the following topics:

- Educational challenges for youth experiencing homelessness
- Barriers to college access and success
- Waiver eligibility requirements for ACT and SAT

- College application process and fee waiver
- Factors to consider when choosing a college

District Liaisons and school counselors have been trained to complete a verification form (provided by ADE) for any graduating UHY, documenting their homeless status for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and college financial aid staff to help with barriers.

Appendix A: Measurements of Interim Progress

Instructions: Each SEA must include the measurements of interim progress toward meeting the long-term goals for academic achievement, graduation rates, and English language proficiency, set forth in the State's response to Title I, Part A question 4.iii, for all students and separately for each subgroup of students, including those listed in response to question 4.i.a. of this document. For academic achievement and graduation rates, the State's measurements of interim progress must take into account the improvement necessary on such measures to make significant progress in closing statewide proficiency and graduation rate gaps.

The Arkansas Technical Advisory Committee for Assessment and Accountability recommended the ADE use prior improvement trends to provide insight for setting Checkpoints for Progress. The annual checkpoints provide measurements to help schools gauge their progress toward the long-term goal for all student groups.

Tables A-1 and A-2 indicate the baselines for ELA and math by grade span and the annual progress toward the goal of meeting the percentage proficient or advanced at the value associated with the 75th percentile rank of schools' percent proficient/advanced. Arkansas' ATLAS performance levels were set to approximate the NAEP lower proficiency level/upper Basic level for Arkansas' Proficient cut. This provides a rigorous standard for all schools to set long-term goals.

Table A-1: Checkpoints to Gauge Interim Progress of Schools toward Long-Term Goals for English Language Arts

Grade Span K-5 ELA	Number of Students	Baseline Value	7 Year Gap with 75th PR	Average Annual Rate of Change Needed to Reach 75th PR in 7 Years	2025 Chkpt	2026 Chkpt	2027 Chkpt	2028 Chkpt	2029 Chkpt	2030 Chkpt	2031 Long-Term Goal
All	97,456	36.18	9.27	1.32	37.51	38.83	40.16	41.48	42.80	44.13	≥ 45.45
African American	19,056	26.32	19.13	2.73	29.06	31.79	34.52	37.26	39.99	42.72	≥ 45.45
Hispanic/Latino	12,911	33.11	12.35	1.76	34.87	36.63	38.40	40.16	41.93	43.69	≥ 45.45
White	57,659	41.47	3.98	0.57	42.04	42.61	43.18	43.75	44.32	44.89	≥ 45.45
Economically Disadvantaged	67,278	30.74	14.72	2.10	32.84	34.94	37.04	39.15	41.25	43.35	≥ 45.45
English Learners	7,248	11.31	34.15	4.88	16.19	21.06	25.94	30.82	35.70	40.58	≥ 45.45
Students with Disabilities	15,882	11.56	33.89	4.84	16.40	21.24	26.09	30.93	35.77	40.61	≥ 45.45

Note: Chkpt = checkpoint

Grade Span 6-8 ELA	Number of Students	Baseline Value	7 Year Gap with 75th PR	Average Annual Rate of Change Needed to Reach 75th PR in 7 Years	2025 Chkpt	2026 Chkpt	2027 Chkpt	2028 Chkpt	2029 Chkpt	2030 Chkpt	2031 Long-Term Goal
All	87,260	33.26	7.64	1.09	34.35	35.44	36.53	37.62	38.71	39.81	≥ 40.90
African American	17,128	24.04	16.86	2.41	26.44	28.85	31.26	33.67	36.08	38.49	≥ 40.90
Hispanic/Latino	13,146	28.73	12.17	1.74	30.46	32.20	33.94	35.68	37.42	39.16	≥ 40.90
White	49,997	39.80	1.09	0.16	39.96	40.12	40.27	40.43	40.58	40.74	≥ 40.90
Economically Disadvantaged	55,894	26.34	14.55	2.08	28.42	30.50	32.58	34.66	36.74	38.82	≥ 40.90
English Learners	6,023	4.79	36.10	5.16	9.95	15.11	20.27	25.42	30.58	35.74	≥ 40.90
Students with Disabilities	12,338	6.31	34.59	4.94	11.25	16.19	21.13	26.07	31.01	35.96	≥ 40.90

Note: Chkpt = checkpoint

Grade Span 9-12 ELA	Number of Students	Baseline Value	7 Year Gap with 75th PR	Average Annual Rate of Change Needed to Reach 75th PR in 7 Years	2025 Chkpt	2026 Chkpt	2027 Chkpt	2028 Chkpt	2029 Chkpt	2030 Chkpt	2031 Long-Term Goal
All	85,734	30.89	6.50	0.93	31.82	32.75	33.68	34.60	35.53	36.46	≥ 37.39
African American	14,953	15.88	21.51	3.07	18.95	22.02	25.10	28.17	31.24	34.32	≥ 37.39
Hispanic/Latino	13,016	27.94	9.45	1.35	29.29	30.64	31.99	33.34	34.69	36.04	≥ 37.39
White	51,669	35.56	1.83	0.26	35.82	36.09	36.35	36.61	36.87	37.13	≥ 37.39
Economically Disadvantaged	53,744	25.40	11.99	1.71	27.11	28.83	30.54	32.25	33.97	35.68	≥ 37.39
English Learners	5,265	7.98	29.42	4.20	12.18	16.38	20.58	24.78	28.99	33.19	≥ 37.39
Students with Disabilities	11,136	4.95	32.45	4.64	9.58	14.22	18.85	23.49	28.12	32.76	≥ 37.39

Note: Chkpt = checkpoint

Table A-2. Checkpoints to Gauge Interim Progress toward Long-Term Goals for Math

Grade Span K-5 Math	Number of Students	Baseline Value	7 Year Gap with 75th PR	Average Annual Rate of Change Needed to Reach 75th PR in 7 Years	2025 Chkpt	2026 Chkpt	2027 Chkpt	2028 Chkpt	2029 Chkpt	2030 Chkpt	2031 Long-Term Goal
All	97,513	37.45	12.29	1.76	39.21	40.97	42.72	44.48	46.23	47.99	≥ 49.74
African American	19,079	24.04	25.71	3.67	27.71	31.39	35.06	38.73	42.40	46.08	≥ 49.74
Hispanic/Latino	12,915	34.09	15.66	2.24	36.32	38.56	40.80	43.04	45.27	47.51	≥ 49.74
White	57,685	42.92	6.83	0.98	43.90	44.87	45.85	46.82	47.80	48.77	≥ 49.74
Economically Disadvantaged	67,322	31.29	18.46	2.64	33.93	36.56	39.20	41.84	44.47	47.11	≥ 49.74
English Learners	7,251	17.35	32.39	4.63	21.98	26.61	31.24	35.86	40.49	45.12	≥ 49.74
Students with Disabilities	15,900	12.38	37.37	5.34	17.72	23.06	28.40	33.73	39.07	44.41	≥ 49.74

Note: Chkpt = checkpoint

Grade Span 6-8 Math	Number of Students	Baseline Value	7 Year Gap with 75th PR	Average Annual Rate of Change Needed to Reach 75th PR in 7 Years	2025 Chkpt	2026 Chkpt	2027 Chkpt	2028 Chkpt	2029 Chkpt	2030 Chkpt	2031 Long-Term Goal
All	87,226	36.25	10.32	1.47	37.73	39.20	40.68	42.15	43.63	45.10	≥ 46.58
African American	17,109	21.32	25.26	3.61	24.93	28.54	32.14	35.75	39.36	42.97	≥ 46.58
Hispanic/Latino	13,146	31.00	15.58	2.23	33.22	35.45	37.67	39.90	42.13	44.35	≥ 46.58
White	49,992	43.15	3.43	0.49	43.64	44.13	44.62	45.11	45.60	46.09	≥ 46.58
Economically Disadvantaged	55,849	29.39	17.19	2.46	31.84	34.30	36.75	39.21	41.66	44.12	≥ 46.58
English Learners	6,027	9.34	37.23	5.32	14.66	19.98	25.30	30.62	35.94	41.26	≥ 46.58
Students with Disabilities	12,346	7.68	38.90	5.56	13.24	18.79	24.35	29.91	35.46	41.02	≥ 46.58

Note: Chkpt = checkpoint

Grade Span 9-12 Math	Number of Students	Baseline Value	7 Year Gap with 75th PR	Average Annual Rate of Change Needed to Reach 75th PR in 7 Years	2025 Chkpt	2026 Chkpt	2027 Chkpt	2028 Chkpt	2029 Chkpt	2030 Chkpt	2031 Long-Term Goal
All	79,308	19.16	7.89	1.13	20.29	21.42	22.54	23.67	24.80	25.93	≥ 27.05
African American	14,525	8.88	18.18	2.60	11.47	14.07	16.67	19.26	21.86	24.46	≥ 27.05
Hispanic/Latino	2,353	16.41	10.65	1.52	17.93	19.45	20.97	22.49	24.01	25.53	≥ 27.05
White	47,070	22.17	4.88	0.70	22.87	23.57	24.26	24.96	25.66	26.36	≥ 27.05
Economically Disadvantaged	51,805	16.46	10.60	1.51	17.97	19.48	21.00	22.51	24.03	25.54	≥ 27.05
English Learners	5,239	5.86	21.20	3.03	8.89	11.92	14.94	17.97	21.00	24.03	≥ 27.05
Students with Disabilities	11,421	3.95	23.11	3.30	7.25	10.55	13.85	17.15	20.45	23.75	≥ 27.05

Note: Chkpt = checkpoint

Table A-3. Checkpoints to Gauge Interim Progress toward Long-Term Goals for 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

4-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate	Number of Students	Baseline Value	Average Annual Rate of Change Needed to Reach 75th PR in 7 Years	2025 Chkpt	2026 Chkpt	2027 Chkpt	2028 Chkpt	2029 Chkpt	2030 Chkpt	2031 Long-Term Goal
All	36,010	88.39	0.80	89.19	89.99	90.80	91.60	92.40	93.20	≥ 94.00
African American	6,814	87.28	0.96	88.24	89.20	90.16	91.12	92.08	93.04	≥ 94.00
Hispanic/Latino	5,496	89.27	0.68	89.95	90.62	91.30	91.97	92.65	93.32	≥ 94.00
White	21,232	87.83	0.88	88.71	89.59	90.47	91.36	92.24	93.12	≥ 94.00
Economically Disadvantaged	25,435	87.09	0.99	88.08	89.06	90.05	91.04	92.03	93.01	≥ 94.00
English Learners	3,011	88.48	0.79	89.27	90.06	90.85	91.63	92.42	93.21	≥ 94.00
Students with Disabilities	4,992	86.49	1.07	87.57	88.64	89.71	90.78	91.86	92.93	≥ 94.00

Note: Chkpt = checkpoint

Subgroup	Baseline (Data and Year)	Long-Term Goal (Data and Year)
English Learners	33% of students on track to English Language Proficiency based on ELPA21 2025 results	47% of students on track to English Language Proficiency by 2030

Table A-4. Checkpoints to Gauge Interim Progress toward Long-Term Goals to English Language Proficiency

On Track to English Language Proficiency	2025 Baseline Value	Average Annual Rate of Change Needed to Reach 75th PR in 7 Years	2026 Chkpt	2027 Chkpt	2028 Chkpt	2029 Chkpt	2030 Chkpt	2031 Long-Term Goal
25th Percentile Schools	33	2.33	35.33	37.66	39.99	42.32	44.65	47

Note: Chkpt = checkpoint

Appendix B: Student Growth Formula

The mixed model used for growth allows for scores nested within students over time (successive grade levels), random intercepts and slopes to allow for inter-individual differences in growth trajectories, and heteroscedastic error variances at each time period.

English Learners' English Language Proficiency level in the current year is added as a time-invariant covariate to level 2 (student level) in the model.

For the ELA, math, and science calculations the following applies:

- i represents testing occasions nested within student j
- $zscsc_{ij}$ = Standardized Achievement Score $_{ij}$
- ELP_j = English Language Proficiency Level of student in current year
- $Time_{ij}$ = individual j 's grade level for score i . Grade level is centered on Grade 3.

Level 1 Equation

$$\text{Standardized Achievement Score}_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}Time_{ij} + r_{ij} \quad \text{where } r_{ij} \sim N(0, \sigma_i^2)$$

Level 2 Equation

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}ELP_j + u_{0j} \quad \text{where } (u_{0j} \ u_{1j}) \sim N[(0 \ 0), (\tau_{00} \ \tau_{10} \ \tau_{11})]$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}ELP_j + u_{1j}$$

Reduced Form

$$zscsc_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{10}Time_{ij} + \gamma_{01}ELP_j + \gamma_{11}Time_{ij}ELP_j + u_{0j} + u_{1j}Time_{ij} + r_{ij}$$

- $zscsc_{ij}$ is student j 's observed standardized achievement score on occasion i . Students' achievement scores are standardized by grade and K-2 test for each subject for Grades 1 and 2 scores. Students' achievement scores are standardized by grade for each subject for Grades 3 through 10.
- $Time_{ij}$ is student j 's grade level for score i . Grade level is centered on Grade 3.
- r_{ij} is random error associated with student j 's $zscsc$ at occasion i .
- $\gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}ELP_j$ is the average intercept over all students within the grade and subject (ELA, Math, Science) conditioned on English Proficiency Level (allows individual intercepts to account for ELP level).
- $\gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}ELP_j$ is the average slope (rate of change) over all students within the grade and subject (ELA, Math, Science) conditioned on English Proficiency Level (allows rate of growth for a student to account for ELP level).
- $\gamma_{11}Time_{ij}ELP_j$ is the interaction term between time and ELP level that indicates the extent to which the slope might vary by ELP level and time.

- u_{0j} is the random individual variance associated with the intercept or initial score for students in a particular grade and subject (ELA, Math, Science)
- $u_{1j}Time_{ij}$ is the random individual variation associated with the slope or rate of change over time for students in a particular grade and subject (ELA, Math, Science)

For ELP growth the model is the same except the history and outcomes are ELPA21 composite scores and the covariate is initial language levels upon entry to program.