



NORTHWEST ARKANSAS Education Service Cooperative

Annual Report 2025-2026



NORTHWEST ARKANSAS
Education Service Cooperative

4 North Double Springs Road

Farmington, Arkansas 72730



NORTHWEST ARKANSAS
Education Service Cooperative

Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

(479) 267-7450

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Mr. Jody Wiggins
Director

Dr. Missy Hixson
Assistant Director/TC Coordinator



Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

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To: Arkansas Educators
From: Jody Wiggins, Director
Subject: 2025–2026 Annual Evaluation Report

The Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative (NWAESC) continues to evolve to meet the needs of our rapidly growing region. While the number of students, teachers, administrators, and support staff in our 16 public school districts and 6 public charter schools continues to rise—now serving nearly 100,000 students—our cooperative has operated with a leaner team due to state funding constraints. Even with this reduction in staffing, we remain focused on delivering high-impact services that help our schools thrive.

This past year has provided valuable opportunities for reflection and strategic growth. We’ve taken a close look at our programs to assess their effectiveness and identify ways to strengthen our support for districts across Northwest Arkansas.

In response to concerns expressed by our superintendents regarding student behavior, NWAESC partnered with the Arkansas Department of Education to contract with ChanceLight Behavioral Health to provide therapeutic day treatment services. This regional program, hosted on a Bentonville campus, currently serves eight of our sixteen districts and represents a significant step toward providing consistent, high-quality behavioral support across participating systems.

Additionally, at the request of the Department of Education, we have intensified our focus on supporting D- and F-rated campuses within our service area. Through targeted site visits conducted by our leadership team and specialists, we are working alongside district staff to identify needs, implement effective strategies, and improve student outcomes.

NWAESC also continues to play a critical role in early childhood special education, providing services that support students in 14 of our 16 districts. This work ensures that our youngest learners receive the specialized instruction and care they need during their most formative years.

In addition to these initiatives, NWAESC has continued to deliver a wide range of professional development and training opportunities for teachers, administrators, and district staff. We have also worked closely with districts to refine strategic plans and strengthen applications for state and federal funding.

The 2025–2026 Annual Evaluation Report reflects the collective efforts of our dedicated staff and the shared vision of Assistant Director and Teacher Center Coordinator Dr. Missy Hixson and myself. Our team of approximately 65 employees—based in Farmington, Springdale, Rogers, and Bentonville—leverages a base funding allocation of \$408,000 from the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to manage a total cooperative budget of approximately \$8.1 million.

Below is a snapshot of the programs we proudly provide in partnership with our member districts:



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- APSCN Field Support
- Medicaid Billing Services
- Computer Science Education
- School Health Nurse Services
- Early Childhood Special Education
- Technology Support Services
- Education Services for Visually Impaired (ESVI)
- Science/STEM Support
- English Language Services
- Teacher Center Services
- Behavior Intervention Support
- Migrant Education Services
- Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Math Support Services
- Dyslexia Services
- Professional Development
- Novice Teacher Training

Our mission at NWAESC is simple yet powerful: to *make a difference*. We are committed to advancing teaching and learning by equipping educators with the tools, training, and support they need to succeed. As lifelong learners ourselves, we are always seeking new, research-based practices that help elevate outcomes for students.

Arkansas's education service cooperatives have long played a vital role in implementing state initiatives, providing the training and infrastructure needed to drive student achievement. While we remain steadfast in our support of the Arkansas State Standards and the LEARNS Act, we are equally committed to developing local programs that respond directly to the unique needs of our districts.

As we look ahead to a new year of challenges and opportunities, we remain excited, focused, and optimistic. Thank you for your continued partnership and dedication to improving education for every student in Northwest Arkansas.

Sincerely,

Jody Wiggins

Director of the Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative

“Serving the Schools, Serving the Children”

Northwest Arkansas Education Services Cooperative



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ARKANSAS EDUCATION SERVICE COOPERATIVES



Mission Statement: The mission of the Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative is to promote high expectations for positive leadership in order to effect desired change for educators and students in this region. We further seek to foster public and private sector educational partnerships as we seek to continuously enhance and expand the quality of programs and services for the schools we serve.

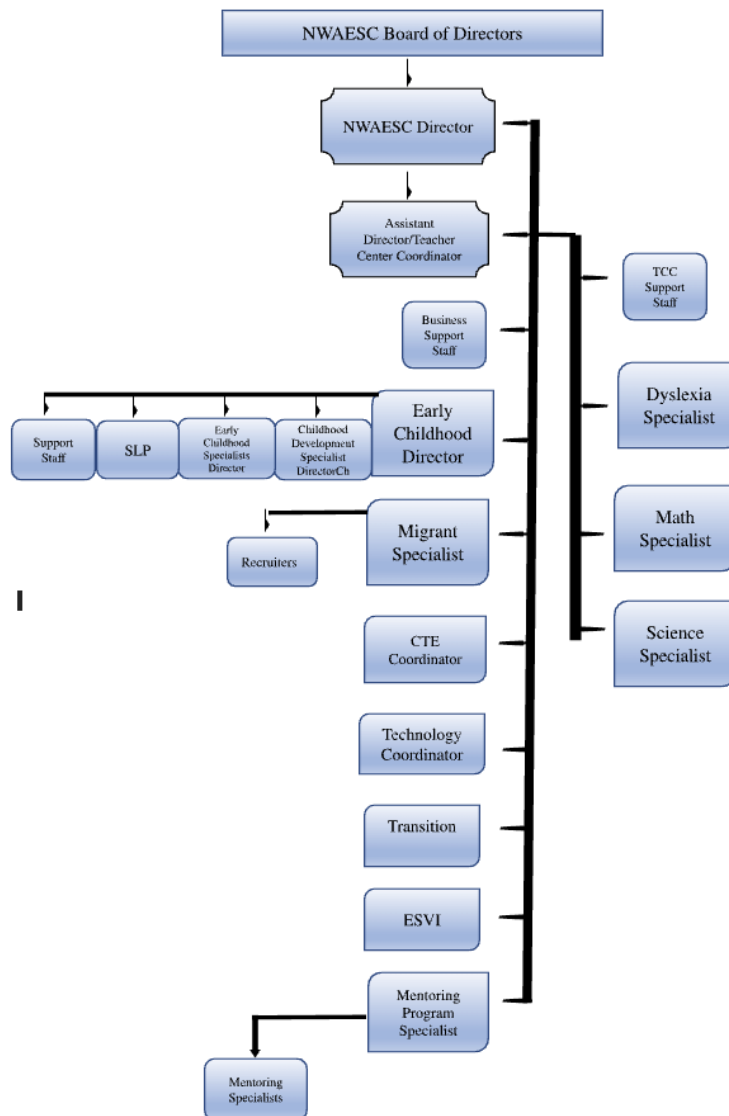
Northwest Arkansas Education Cooperative proudly serves Benton, Washington, and Madison Counties.

Organizational Chart



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Additional Affiliates

Regional Speech-Language Pathology Specialist
Multicultural Liaisons/Interpreters
Computer Science Specialist
Arkansas Teacher Retirement Representative
Special Education Inclusion Specialist

Additional Affiliates

Community Health Nurse Specialist
Community Health Specialist
User Support Coordinator
Behavior Support Specialists



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Public School Districts served in Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative:

Bentonville, Decatur, Elkins, Farmington, Fayetteville, Gentry, Gravette, Greenland, Huntsville, Lincoln, Pea Ridge, Prairie Grove, Rogers, Siloam Springs, Springdale, and West Fork

Charter Schools served in Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative:

Arkansas Arts Academy, Arkansas Connections Academy, Haas Hall, Founders Classical Academy, Hope Academy, Responsive Ed Solutions Premier High School,

Officers of the Board 2025-26

Name	Position	School District
Dr. Jared Cleveland	President	Springdale
Mr. Keith Martin	Vice-President	Pea Ridge
Dr. Debbie Jones	Secretary	Bentonville
Mr. Jody Wiggins	Director/Ex-officio	NWAESC

Members of the Board 2025-26

Name	Position	School District
Dr. Debbie Jones	Board Member	Bentonville
Dr. Steve Watkins	Board Member	Decatur
Mr. Jeremy Mangrum	Board Member	Elkins
Mr. Jon Laffoon	Board Member	Farmington
Dr. John Mulford	Board Member	Fayetteville
Dr. Tyler Broyles	Board Member	Gentry
Mr. Jeff Gravette	Board Member	Gravette
Dr. Andrea Martin	Board Member	Greenland
Mr. Jay Chalk	Board Member	Huntsville
Dr. Mary Ann Spears	Board Member	Lincoln
Mr. Keith Martin	Board Member	Pea Ridge



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Mr. Luke Humphries	Board Member	Prairie Grove
Dr. Jeff Perry	Board Member	Rogers
Mr. Shane Patrick	Board Member	Siloam Springs
Dr. Jared Cleveland	Board Member	Springdale
Mr. John Unger	Board Member	West Fork

Northwest Arkansas Education Cooperative 2025-2026 Teacher Center Committee



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Committee Member	District	Position	Expires
Ms. Alyson Lyles	Bentonville	Elementary Teacher	2027
Mr. Matt Boevig	Decatur	High School Administrator	2028
Ms. Monique Lambert	Elkins	Elementary Teacher	2026
Ms. Brittany Reano	Farmington	Middle School Teacher	2027
Ms. Brooke Edwards	Fayetteville	Elementary Teacher	2026
Mr. Cliff Smith	Gentry	Middle School Teacher	2028
Dr. Mandy Barrett	Gravette	Elementary Administrator	2027
Mr. Robert Fithian	Greenland	Middle School Teacher	2027
Ms. Sherry Baldwin	Huntsville	Middle School Teacher	2027
Ms. Olivia Barenberg	Lincoln	Elementary Teacher	2027
Mr. Evan Athanasiou	Pea Ridge	Middle School Teacher	2027
Dr. Evan Hubbard	Prairie Grove	High School Teacher	2027
Ms. Kristy Brown	Rogers	Curriculum Administrator	2027
Ms. Kim Morgan	Siloam Springs	Middle School Teacher	2028
Mr. Aaron Tinnin	Springdale	MS/JH Administrator	2026
Mr. Caleb Bowlin	West Fork	High School Teacher	2028

Superintendent 1 Year Term

Dr. Andrea Martin	Greenland	Superintendent	2026
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Phone Number: 479-267-7450

Fax: 479-267-7456

Director: Mr. Jody Wiggins

Teacher Center Coordinator: Dr. Missy Hixson



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Counties Served: Benton, Madison, and Washington

Number of Districts: 16

Number of Charters: 7

Total Number of Students: 98,230

District	Total Number of Students	Percentage of Free/Reduced Lunches	Certified Staff	Certified Classroom Teachers	Classified Staff
Bentonville	19944	14	591	1400	1003
Decatur	549	64	19	75	42
Elkins	1377	28	31	107	58
Farmington	3015	21	68	212	112
Fayetteville	10171	30	334	691	749
Gentry	1783	53	49	148	83
Gravette	1974	32	40	156	138
Greenland	667	59	19	82	39
Huntsville	2140	55	39	189	158
Lincoln	1062	55	27	87	71
Pea Ridge	2665	22	51	188	185
Prairie Grove	2087	32	42	162	108
Rogers	14943	43	1177	1155	761
Siloam Springs	4281	56	127	326	275
Springdale	21097	60	425	1469	1238
West Fork	702	37	16	86	52
Charter Schools					
AR Arts Academy	927	33	24	68	32



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AR Connections Academy	5780	42	200	61	10
Founders Classical Academies-NWA	1536	6	-	-	-
Garfield Scholars' Academy	94	54	4	7	4
Haas Hall Academy	1301	1	18	92	16
Premier HS of AR-Springda	-	-	11	-	21
School for Advanced Studies	135	13	10	21	11
Totals	98,230	-	3322	6782	5166

I. Governance:

- A. How is the co-op governed? **Board of Directors**
How many members are on the Board? **16**
How many times did the Board meet? **9**
When is the regular meeting? **First Thursday of each month**

Date of the current year's annual meeting: **Thursday June 11, 2026**
- B. Does the co-op have a Teacher Center Committee? **YES**
How many are on the Teacher Center Committee? **17**
How many members are teachers? **12**
How many times did the Teacher Center Committee meet? **3**
When is the regular meeting? **As scheduled (three times per year)**
When was the most recent survey/needs assessment conducted?
November 2025
- C. Have written policies been filed with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education? **Yes**

II. Staff



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Please list (or attach a list of) all staff members of the co-op (including those housed at the co-op and paid through other sources), their titles and the salary funding sources for the positions. Place an asterisk (*) beside those who are housed at the co-op only and whose salary does not flow through the co-op's budget.

S=State, F=Federal, H=Head Start, M=Medicaid, P=Private Funding, B=Base Funds, D=District Allocations

2025-2026 Employees

Employee Name	Position	Funding Source	New Hire	Resigned
Adkins, Leah	EC Paraprofessional	S	Y	5/29/2026
Allgood McGee, Zoe	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Augustosky, Meggi	Community Health Promotion Specialist	*		
Bailey, Kaili	EC Paraprofessional	F	Y	
Barker, LeighAnn	Accounts Payable Clerk	B		
Butcher, Kelli	Community Health Nurse Specialist	*		
Byler, Alyssa	EC Secretary	F	Y	
Caldwell, Maryanne	Transition Consultant	F	Y	
Canion, Chelsea	APSCN User Support Coordinator	*		
Casas, Sylvia	Migrant Recruiter	F	Y	
Clements, Leslie	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Davidson, Megan	Speech/Language Pathologist	S	Y	



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Davis, Martha	Adm. Asst/Fingerprinting	S		
Deertz, Betsy	Early Childhood Secretary	S		
DeVore, Colleen	Early Childhood Coordinator	S		
Dowdle, Rachel	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Estes, Shem	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Faizy, Aqela	Afghan Refugee Liaison	F		
Florick, Wendy	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Gallardo, Angela	Migrant Parent Engagement Liaison	F		8/22/2025
Galucki, Natalie	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Gammill, Jennifer	Science Specialist	S		
Garnett, Joni	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Gooch, Michelle	Regional Mentoring Specialist	S		
Graf, Darlene	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Guzman, Nataleen	EC Paraprofessional	S	Y	9/29/2025
Hardy, Regan	Adm. Asst/Medicaid Clerk	S		
Hein, Bridget	EC SPED Teacher	S	Y	
Henschell, Tamara	Speech/Language Pathologist	S	Y	



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Heck, Amy	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Hernandez, Ana	EC Paraprofessional	S	Y	
Hixson, Dr, Missy	Assistant Director/TC Coordinator	B		
Holder, Marsha	ESVI Specialist	F		
Holland, Annette	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Holtz, Rebecca	Child Development Specialist	S		
Hull, Anne-Ashley	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Hunt, Angela	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Johnson, Kara	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Kline, Cynthia	Migrant Tutor/Recruiter	F	Y	
Lancaster, Kat	Behavior Support Specialist	*		
Ledbetter, Elizabeth	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Lomax, Morgan	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Lovelady, Lindsey	Behavior Support Specialist	*		
McLaren, Lisa	Child Development Specialist	S		
Moore, Anna	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Mushiranzigo, Aliza	Refugee Student Liaison	F	Y	



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Nava, Lourdes	MEP Student Support Specialist	F	Y	
Neal, Cayce	Regional Mentoring Coordinator	S		
Neal, Parrish	Migrant Tutor	F	Y	
Nelson, Marlo	Child Development Specialist	S		
Noll, Lydia	Math Specialist	S		
Orange, Lynn	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Pratt, Maritza	Spanish Interpreter	S		
Ramer, Michael Ann	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Rhodes, Rachele	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Ritchie, Laura	EC SPED Teacher	S	Y	5/27/2026
Schlinder, Jeremy	Technology Coordinator	S		
Schmitt, Karle	Regional Mentoring Specialist	S	Y	
Smith, Robbye	Migrant Recruiter	F		
Smith, Robyn	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Starr, Gia	EC Paraprofessional	F	Y	
Stewart, Danyell	Front Desk Admin. Asst.	S		
Storm, Tina	TCC Admin. Assistant	S		
Stripling, Robin	SPED Consultant	P		
Thompson, Brandy	EC SPED Teacher	S		



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Trolinger, Stephanie	CTE Coordinator	F		
Vanhook, Jakki	Business Manager	F		
Vinson, Jennifer	Migrant Specialist	F		
Waldrop, Crystal	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Walker, Jessica	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Warford, Shelby	Migrant Tutor	F		6/30/2026
White, Cynthia	ESVI Specialist	F		
Wiggins, Jody	Director	F		
Williams, Natalie	Dyslexia Specialist	S	Y	
Williams, Rebecca	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Willis, Jeremy	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		
Wohlford, Patti	Business Assistant	B		
Yates, Mitzi	EC SPED Teacher	S		
Zimmerebner, Claire	Speech/Language Pathologist	S		

III. Teacher Center

Please attach a list of all in-service training/staff development workshops offered through the co-op, including month offered, topic, number of districts participating, number of participants and location of workshops. Place an asterisk (*) beside those which provided curriculum assistance. Include a cumulative total of participants. See attached form.



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Does the co-op provide media services to schools? **YES (check out basis)**

Approximate the number of titles in media center: **45**

Does the co-op provide delivery to the districts? **NO**

How many districts participate in the media program? **N/A**

How many titles (including duplicate counts) were provided to schools during this current year?
N/A

Do districts contribute dollars to the media services? **NO**

How are media / technology charges per district determined (formal or per ADM)? **N/A**

Does the co-op operate a “make-and-take” center for teachers? **YES (as needed)**

How many teacher visits have been made to the center? (Count all teachers who have visited the center, using duplicate counts for teachers who have visited the center more than once.) **70**

IV. Administrative Services

Please check administrative services offered through the co-op:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| ☒ | Administrators and Local Board Member trainings |
| ☒ | Assessment data analysis and support |
| ☒ | Behavior Support services |
| ☒ | Bookkeeping assistance |
| ☒ | Business Management training |
| ☒ | Carl Perkins/CTE assistance |
| ☒ | Computer Science support |
| ☒ | Cooperative purchasing |
| ☒ | Curriculum support |
| ☒ | Dyslexia support |
| ☒ | E-Rate applications |
| ☒ | English Language support |
| ☒ | eSchool and eFinance support |



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- ☒ Evaluation procedures
- ☒ Fingerprinting
- ☒ Gifted and Talented support
- ☒ Grant writing assistance
- ☒ Health and Nurse services
- ☒ Instructional facilitator training
- ☒ Math/Science/STEM/Literacy support
- ☒ Media services
- ☒ Migrant student identification
- ☒ Novice Teacher Mentoring
- ☒ Numerous professional development opportunities for teachers
- ☒ Special Education services
- ☒ Technology support and training
- ☐ Other (please specify)

V. Direct Services to Students

Please check the student services provided through the co-op:

- ☐ Academic Competition in Education (ACE)
- ☐ Amazing Shake (grades 4-5)
- ☒ Behavior Support services
- ☐ Chess Tournament



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- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ | Computer Science competitions |
| ☐ | Gifted/talented programs |
| ☒ | Early Childhood Special Education ages 3-5 years old |
| ☒ | Low incidence handicapped |
| ☒ | Migrant Education services |
| ☐ | National History Day (NHD) |
| ☒ | Nursing services |
| ☒ | Occupational Therapy |
| ☐ | Odyssey of the Mind |
| ☒ | Physical Therapy |
| ☒ | Quiz Bowl |
| ☒ | Speech therapist |
| ☐ | Science Olympiad |
| ☐ | STEAM Day (grades 3-4) |
| ☐ | Other (Please specify): |

VI. Anecdotal Reports:

Please attach descriptions of activities which demonstrate partnerships, agreements or creative ways that the co-op has assisted local districts. The co-op personnel may write the reports, or the descriptions may be written by local schools served by the co-op. These reports may also include letters sent to the co-op or evaluations of a co-op activity.

The Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative (NWAESC) continued the work to support regional schools in a plethora of ways, including working with educators with teaching and learning initiatives, assisting with accountability and compliance information, alignment of K-12 schools with higher education and/or business and industry needs, and partnering with our



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local educator prep programs to assist in teacher recruitment, etc. sessions were held both at the Co-op onsite in the districts where possible. Additionally, some other highlights are listed below:

NWAESC and SpEd Strategies Grant-The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) launched the Inclusive Practice Project in 2020 to "Promote an intentional focus on inclusive practices to ensure that students who are IEP-eligible, as well as other groups of struggling learners, have meaningful access to core instruction." The project's timeline has been ambitious with the expectation of having as many K-7th students as possible included in general education during the 2024-25 school year with plans to add grades through high school by 2030. Through this Walton Family Foundations grant, NWAESC is working in partnership with SPED Strategies and ADE to support the quality implementation of the Inclusive Practices Project in NWA. During this time, SPED Strategies will be running an intensive cohort program with six (6) schools per year. NWAESC's local special education consultant will support that effort through school visits and training support, and she will provide training, instructional coaching, and technical assistance for educators and schools not in the SPED Strategies' intensive cohorts.

The **Special Education Consultant** has provided fourteen training sessions in NWA on topics including Universal Design for Learning, specially designed instruction, collaborative teaching, flexible scheduling, and the use of artificial intelligence to meet individual student needs. She has provided eighty-two varied forms of technical assistance, and coaching for two NWA districts.

Strategic Support Plan for Educators of ELs in Arkansas Grant-

Vision

Transform every classroom to foster a learning community where language and content learning are harnessed to create a vibrant space where ELs' linguistic and academic assets are celebrated and leveraged to guarantee student learning. This plan envisions educators becoming reflective practitioners and leaders who empower every student by skillfully and intentionally using on-grade-level HQIM to instruct and make data-informed instructional practices.

Action Steps

1. **Engagement:** Landscape Analysis Consult with personnel at the educational cooperatives to validate regional data-based needs and define localized priorities for districts based on EL population density. Priorities include the extent of student needs for English Language Development (ELD) and meaningful access to core content instruction.
2. **Vendor Selection:** Use the AR Professional Learning Partner Guide and previous relationships/knowledge of EL-centered PL vendors to select partners that demonstrate both successful past performance in working with educators of ELs in urban and rural settings.



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3. **Monitor and Evolve:** Analyze existing monitoring systems (i.e. ATLAS and ELPA21 performance data) to determine EL-specific indicators for monitoring EL outcomes and professional learning impacts to fuel improvement cycles for short- and long-term educational cooperative support plan development.

Strategic Goals

1. **Responsive Vendor-Led Through-Year Professional Learning:** Tailor professional learning pathways based on educational cooperative EL population density. For instance, districts with high EL enrollments (e.g., Northwest at 51%) require scalable, intensive interventions for district and school-level leaders, whereas districts with lower concentrations (e.g., Southeast at 5%) benefit from focused, integrative communities of practice and teacher-level support.
2. **Selective, Impactful Partnerships:** Engage vendors and professional learning partners who demonstrate expertise in EL pedagogies for sustainable practice through direct teacher support in the classroom or, for high-density districts, building system and instructional support at the district, school, and classroom level.
 - Past partners such as E.L. Achieve and ED Northwest serve as models for these critical collaborations.
 - Review existing CBPL partnerships (AR Professional Learning Partner Guide) to determine where PL can be extended to an ELD-specific focus using existing school HQIM as the core content.
3. **Data-Informed Resource Allocation:** Use language proficiency (ELPA21), academic performance data (ATLAS or other), and EL population density information to drive strategic decisions for vendor support. This includes conducting targeted landscape analyses and setting up feedback loops that allow educational cooperatives to monitor progress against measurable outcomes.

Funding

Leverage existing categorical funds to provide grants to Education Service Cooperatives (ESCs) in each region. These ESCs will collaborate with DESE-approved vendors to deliver direct support to districts and schools. Funding distribution will be based on student density, academic performance (ATLAS), and language development data (ELPA21) [see data/demographics information below]. Categorical funding for professional learning will be allocated at a rate of \$45.00 per pupil.

ESC Works- Since 2004, the escWorks platform has been used across the state to house professional development hours required by Arkansas law to renew and retain teaching licenses and certifications. escWorks is an event management software that can schedule and track professional development offerings online. It then produces reports to quickly and clearly communicate services provided or taken over time. The software is made up of multiple online modules designed to schedule events, manage data, and most importantly, keep track of



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educators professional development hours. Before escWorks was purchased, there was not a consistent and logistical platform to track educator professional development in Arkansas.

By using escWorks, Arkansas school districts and administrators can access professional development history from any educator at any location across the state. This platform allows for school districts to easily verify employment history and trainings when they are interviewing and selecting high-quality educators for open positions.

Whether an educator has taught one year or twenty, they can use the platform to see their history of professional development and courses taken over their career. They can print transcripts and reports to keep in their personnel files or personal folders. Participants also have the ability to print a certificate of completion after a training.

Additionally, after each training session, a professional development evaluation survey is sent to all participants. The surveys are identical in the platform and allow participants to share feedback about trainings that our staff or guest presenters instruct. Our cooperative staff and specialists use the data from these surveys to improve instruction and grow in methodology. We measure the level of implementation of knowledge and skills participants had before and after attending the training. The comment section at the end of the survey is another tool we use to gain personal feedback from the teachers we support. It also allows us to closely inspect our practices and delivery methods.

Each Educational Cooperative assists their local school districts with escWorks in the following ways:

- Hosting trainings for new and veteran teachers on how to use the platform.
- Input trainings, meetings, and other events that participants can select to attend for yearly professional development.
- Check attendance records with district administration to make sure professional development requirements were met.
- Mark attendance in escWorks after a training is completed.
- Answer Help Desk questions that come from users of escWorks.
- Assist current and retired educators with obtaining records and reports.

Each of the fifteen Educational Service Cooperatives and the Arkansas Department of Education split the cost of this service each year. Approximately \$7,118.89 was paid by each entity for site maintenance and support FY25-26. Southeast Service Cooperative handles the renewal and purchase of this program each year. The total amount paid to escWorks to cover Region 4 (Arkansas) was \$113,902.24 FY 25-26.

Arkansas Teacher Retirement Counselor-NWAESC hosts an Arkansas Teacher Retirement Counselor who meets with members to help them better understand the retirement system and



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how it works. The ATR Counselor assists members with retirement and T-drop applications. From May 2024-April 2025 there have been 535 meetings both virtual and in person.

Project Name: Beginning Superintendent and Principal Mentoring

Competitive Grant: No

Goals and Description: Education Service Cooperatives began mentoring beginning superintendents and principals in the 2025-2026 school year. NWAESC supported one (1) beginning superintendent and eight (8) beginning principals in the Beginning Administrator Mentoring program.

The Beginning Superintendent/Principal Mentoring Program is a two-year initiative designed to support first-year and second-year superintendents/building principals across Arkansas. Administered regionally through the state's Education Service Cooperatives (ESCs), this program provides structured leadership training aligned with the Arkansas LEADS framework. It emphasizes building a positive school climate and strengthening instructional leadership. This Beginning Superintendent/Principal Mentoring Program is designed to equip Arkansas' newest educational leaders with the essential tools, habits, and mindsets they need to foster strong climates, improve instruction, and ultimately improve student outcomes. Its flexible design ensures statewide consistency while allowing for regional customization based on local needs.

Year 1: Foundational Leadership Development

Focus:

- Climate, Communication, Coaching, Commitment
- LEADS, especially Domain 2 (School climate)

Key Components: Summer statewide kickoff training, on-site school visits, quarterly climate-focused focus walks, regional meetings, 6 annual hybrid training modules, and a foundational coaching course.

Training Topics: TESS, Ethics, Professional Growth Plans, Relationship Building, Interpreting Test Data, School Safety, Discipline, Special Education, 504, Dyslexia, Mentoring Basics, Standards for Accreditation, Communication, Conducting Hard Conversations, Building Visibility, Using Interim Data, Student Voice, Telling Your School's Story, Conducting Needs Assessments, Classroom Walkthrough Practices, Introduction to Coaching, EES Overview, Hiring Basics, Professional Development Planning, Roster Verification, and Preparing for Annual Teacher Ratings.



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Year 2: Advanced Instructional Leadership

Focus:

- Instructional Leadership
- High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM)

Key Components: Summer statewide 2-day training, on-site school visits, regional meetings, focus walks (focused on instruction and HQIM)

Training Topics: Building an Instructional Model, Classroom Walkthroughs, Profile of a Highly Effective Principal and Teacher, Data Collection, HQIM

Program Summaries

Program:	Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN)
Funding Source:	Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Funding:	\$3,600
Competitive Grant:	No
Restricted:	No

Participating Districts:

Arkansas Arts Academy	Arkansas Connections Academy	
Bentonville	Decatur	Elkins
Farmington	Fayetteville	Gentry
Gravette	Greenland	Haas Hall
Huntsville	Lincoln	Pea Ridge
Prairie Grove	Rogers	Siloam Springs
Springdale	West Fork	Pinecrest Academy
Garfield Scholars Academy	Advanced Studies of NWA	

Personnel:

Name: Chelsea Canion

Position: User Support Coordinator- DESE



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

Goal:

Our goal is to provide end-user support to district student users of the SMS statewide student management system, Cognos reports, and meeting statewide guidelines.

Program Summary:

The User Support Coordinator provides services to districts within Arkansas that utilize the SMS statewide student management system software. The software is used to store district, school, and student data. Student Management Systems Applications is computer software used primarily to process and maintain student records. The SunGuard Pentamation student management systems applications provided by APSCN include: Demographics, Attendance, Scheduling, Report Cards, Discipline and Medical. With the use of nine cycles yearly, districts electronically submit data to DESE. The user support coordinator provides districts with consulting and training workshops through meetings at the Cooperative and communicating closely by e-mail, telephone, and virtually. Various training offered throughout the year include, but are not limited to, SMS Required Fields for State Reporting, New Personnel, Cognos Report Writing, Next Year Scheduling and Year End Rollover.

Major Highlights of the Year:

- Provided 27 trainings for all districts for the 2025-2026 school year along with multiple one-on-one training and support.
- Have added SMS Cycle Trainings for each SIS Cycle.



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

Program: Arkansas Transition Services
Funding Source: Federal Grant
Funding: \$102,870.44
Competitive Grant: No
Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts:

NWAESC Districts:

AR Arts Academy	AR Connections Academy	Bentonville
Decatur	Elkins	Farmington
Fayetteville	Gentry	Gravette
Greenland	Haas Hall Academy	Huntsville
Lincoln	Pea Ridge	Prairie Grove
Rogers	Siloam Springs	Springdale
Premier High School	West Fork	

O.U.R. Districts:

Alpena	Bergman	Berryville
Cotter	Deer/Mt. Judea	Eureka Springs
Flippin	Green Forest	Harrison
Jasper	Lead Hill	Omaha
Ozark Mountain	Valley Springs	
Yellville/Summit		



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Guy Fenter ESC Districts:

Alma	Booneville	Cedarville
Charleston	County Line	Fort Smith
Future School of Fort Smith		Greenwood
Hackett	Lavaca	Magazine
Mansfield	Mountainburg	Mulberry
Ozark	Paris	Premier High School-Fort Smith
Van Buren	Waldron	

Personnel:

Name: Maryanne Caldwell

Position: Transition Consultant

Degree: MM-UA Fayetteville, BSE-Missouri State, AAS-UA Fort Smith

Goal:

To provide district, regional, and state-wide training throughout the year to prepare teachers to help Special Education students reach their post school goals as stated on their Transition Plans per their IEP. To provide consults with participating districts to assist students, parents, and teachers in assisting students to reach their post school goals. To develop and facilitate local Transition Teams for school districts. To assist LEAs in folder reviews to ensure Transition Plans on the IEP are accurate and help students to reach their post school goals.

Program Summary:

Arkansas Transition Services is a consultant group in affiliation with the Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Secondary and Elementary Education, Office of Special Education, that provides training and technical assistance related to secondary transition to special education teachers, other relevant school staff, and relevant agency personnel in Arkansas. Our services are not only related to ensuring secondary transition requirements in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) are in place, but also include building capacity of local transition teams, and information and assistance on research and evidence-based practices that improve transition programs and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. We are available to assist at no cost to public schools in Arkansas.



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Major Highlights of the Year:

Arkansas Transition Services (ATS) has been spending this year out in schools consulting and providing on-site statewide and regional professional learning opportunities. ATS also has a YouTube channel and a website (www.arkansastransition.com) as a resource to get our information out across the state.

State Level

- ATS continues to produce videos that are housed on both our YouTube channel and website that focus on specific areas of Transition. These are resources that can be accessed at any time. These provide educators and families the opportunity to access professional development and information on a variety of secondary transition topics.
- Arkansas Transition Services, Career and Technical Education, and Inclusion Films continue to partner to provide The Inclusion Films Film Camp for students with disabilities. Students write scripts, pitch proposals, cast characters, film, and produce a 7-10 minute short video. These experiences give students the opportunity to not only explore a variety of options in the film industry, but to experience team work, responsibility, accountability, and other pre-employment skills. The skills they learn and practice at camp are all transferable work skills.
- Arkansas Transition Services is continuing its work to encourage schools to implement The Predictors Implementation Self-Assessment (PISA) tool. This tool allows schools and/or districts to take a closer look at their transition programs and identify predictors of positive post-school outcomes supported by evidence-based practices. The tool then allows for action planning to include those predictors and evidence-based practices for program growth or improvement. ATS has been using the PISA to help districts focus on Inclusion in General Education as well as other areas for which the school determines a need..
- Arkansas Transition Services in partnership with the University of Kansas, are participating in a study to see the effects of interagency collaboration for students with disabilities. The CIRCLES (Communicating Interagency Relationships and Collaborative Linkages for Exceptional Students) model involves three levels of interagency collaboration: Community Level Team, School Level Team, and IEP Team. The approach includes youth with disabilities who may need support from multiple adult service agencies to experience successful post-school outcomes. Follow up trainings were held this year.
- Arkansas Transition Services and DESE Office of Special Education, Monitoring & Program Effectiveness team are continuing to collaborate in an effort to educate each



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group on specific requirements and procedures and to improve monitoring outcomes in transition related indicators through reviewing state and federal requirements.

- ATS held its statewide Transition Summit for teams from across the state in Hot Springs. The Summit is a chance for Transition Teams from across the state to work on plans to improve transition at their respective districts and attend breakout sessions on Transition.
- ATS also works with adult service providers around the state to share concerns and possible strategies to better connect with schools and their students. We continue to work collaboratively among districts, agencies and ATS, and help with both on-site and virtual Transition Fairs to increase the knowledge of agency services around the state. Agencies are also invited to participate in IEP meetings and on local transition teams.

○ State Level Organizations Served:

- Arkansas Council on Exceptional Children (AR-CEC) sub-division
Division of Career Development and Transition (DCDT) - State
President

Co-op Level

- Transition Fairs – ATS promotes and provides technical assistance for districts and regions that want to have a Transition Fair. The fairs are opportunities for students, parents, and teachers to connect with state and local agencies that can provide assistance.
- Technical Assistance was provided on a variety of Transition related subjects to teachers/staff in districts across the 3 co-op areas.
- Meetings regularly attended
 - AASEA Area I and Area II (Special Education Supervisors)
 - AR-CEC Board Meetings
 - Project Search
- Trainings/Conferences Attended



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

Program: Behavior Support Specialist
Funding Source: Federal-Part B
Competitive Grant: No
Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts: Statewide

Bentonville	Decatur	Elkins	Farmington
Fayetteville	Gentry	Gravette	Greenland
Huntsville	Lincoln	Pea Ridge	Prairie Grove
Rogers	Siloam Springs	Springdale	West Fork

Personnel:

Name: Dr. Shelia Smith, Ph.D., L.P., BCBA-D
Position: BSS Director

Name: Shanna Bailey, M.S., BCBA
Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Jennifer Brewer, Ed.S.
Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Sandy Crawley, M.S.E
Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Kelly Davis, M.Ed., BCBA
Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Sonaia Harsfield, M.Ed.
Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Audrey Kengla, M.S., CCC-SLP,
BCBA
Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Kat Lancaster, M.A., CCC-SLP,
BCBA*
Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Lindsey Lovelady, M.S., BCBA*

Name: Allison Mears, LPC., BCBA



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Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Nicheyta Raino, M.Ed., BCBA

Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Connie Thomason, M.Ed., BCBA

Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Amanda Kirby, M.S.E.

Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Carla Knight, M.S.E., BCBA

Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Jenna Stapp, M.A.T.

Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Mary Walter, Ed.S., SPS, BCBA

Position: Behavior Support Specialist

Name: Meagan Booe, M.Ed., BCBA

Position: Behavior Support Specialist

***(NWAESC Regional Representatives)**

GOAL: In an effort to support the DESE vision, mission, and goals, the Arkansas Behavior Support Specialists build local district capacity by providing educators with support and services needed to implement evidenced-based behavioral practices that meet the needs of all students.

BX3 PROJECT

GOAL:

- BX3 is a capacity-building project that provides coaching to school behavior teams working to develop tiered systems of positive behavior supports for all students.

BX3 Cohort 3- Building level teams	
1. Bryant Elementary- Dawson 2. Hurricane Creek Elementary-Bryant-Dawson 3. McRae Elementary-Searcy- WDM 4. Mena Middle School- DQM 5. Mena High School- DQM 6. Oscar Hamilton Elementary-Foreman-DQM 7. Pottsville Junior High- AF 8. Asbell Elementary Fayetteville	



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BX3 Cohort 4 - Building level teams

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Magnolia Middle School | 14. Westbrook Elementary - Harmony Grove |
| 2. Westside Elementary - Searcy | 15. Bayyari Elementary - Springdale |
| 3. Southwest Middle School - Searcy | 16. North Heights Community School - Texarkana |
| 4. Janie Darr Elementary - Rogers | 17. Beebe Middle School |
| 5. Arkadelphia High School | 18. Louise Durham Elementary- Mena |
| 6. Lake Hamilton New Horizons - | 19. Manila Elementary |
| 7. Washington Elementary - Fayetteville | 20. Indian Hills Elementary - North Little Rock |
| 8. Lincoln Middle School | 21. East End Elementary |
| 9. Cedarville Elementary | 22. Lakeside Primary |
| 10. Glen Rose Elementary | 23. Peake Elementary - Arkadelphia |
| 11. Flippin Elementary | 24. Harmony Leadership Academy- Texarkana |
| 12. Beebe Elementary | 25. Rector Elementary School |
| 13. Bob Folsom Elementary - Farmington | |

BX3 Cohort 5 - Building level teams

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Waldron Middle School | 11. Sheridan High School |
| 2. Mountainburg Elementary | 12. Eureka Springs Elementary |
| 3. Mountainburg Middle School | 13. Eureka Springs Middle School |
| 4. Mountainburg High School | 14. McCrory Elementary |
| 5. King Elementary-Van Buren | 15. Jerry "Pop" Williams Elementary- Farmington |
| 6. Fairview Elementary- Fort Smith | 16. Farmington High School |
| 7. East Side- Magnolia | 17. Arkansas Arts Academy Elementary |
| 8. Central Elementary-Magnolia | 18. Clarendon Elementary |
| 9. Hillcrest Elementary | |
| 10. East End Middle- Sheridan | |

BX3 Cohort 6 - Building level teams

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Arkansas High School | 11. Sheridan Alternative Learning |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|



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2. Arkansas Middle School 3. Kilpatrick Academy of Public Service 4. Beryl Henry Elementary 5. Beebe Early Childhood (K-1) 6. Cabot Eastside Elementary 7. Dierks High School 8. eStem Downtown Elementary 9. Sheridan Middle School 10. Sheridan Intermediate School	- Academy 12. Sylvan Hills Elementary 13. Davis Elementary (Bryant) 14. Angie Grant Elementary 15. Park Elementary (Corning) 16. Trumann Elementary 17. Trumann Middle School 18. John L Colbert Middle School 19. Lavaca Elementary
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PROGRAM SUMMARY:

The Arkansas Behavior Support Specialists (BSS) affiliated with the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary education (DESE) - Office of Special Education lead the state-wide initiative, the BX3 (Behavior eXtreme 3 - Training, Coaching, Empowering) Project. This BX3 project is designed to build capacity by providing coaching to building-level behavior teams that are working to develop tiered systems of positive behavior supports for all students. BX3 assists building level teams in developing and monitoring at least one SMART goal based on their assessment on the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI). Additionally, the BX3 teams create and update an action plan focused on meeting their individualized SMART goal(s). The BSS offer 4-6 coaching sessions (one per month) for each BX3 team. Professional learning opportunities are offered as needed based on the SMART goal(s) and action plan.

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025-26:

- Cohort 3 continued with 8 building-level teams across the state
- Cohort 4 continued with 25 building-level teams across the state
- Cohort 5 continued with 18 building-level teams across the state
- Accepted Cohort 6 with 19 building-level teams across the state
- 98% of participants in Cohort 3, 4, 5 and 6 agreed to strongly agreed that the coaching session on the topic covered was beneficial.
- 98% of participants in Cohort 3, 4, 5 and 6 agreed to strongly agreed that the BX3 Coaches helped their team plan action steps toward meeting their SMART goal(s).
- 99% of participants in Cohort 3, 4, 5 and 6 agreed to strongly agreed that the interactions with and methods used by BX3 coaches were positive and acceptable.
- 97% of participants in Cohort 3, 4, 5 and 6 agreed to strongly agreed that they feel confident in carrying out the steps in their action plan.

CIRCUIT



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GOAL:

- To provide technical assistance and support to local school district administrators and school personnel in the development and implementation of evidence-based behavior supports for students receiving special education services
- To provide professional development to local school district administrators and personnel on evidence-based behavior supports

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

The Behavior Support Specialists (BSS) provide technical assistance in the area of behavior to all school districts within the state. The BSS receive requests for technical assistance through the CIRCUIT on-line referral system. Once a request for services is received, the BSS works in conjunction with the Special Education Supervisor of the referring school district to identify and provide needed support for students with disabilities. Services include:

- On-site coaching and consultation, student observation, record review and written recommendations with follow up and training as needed
- Coaching student team on Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) development
- Provide professional learning opportunities on evidence-based interventions

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025-2026:

- Provided coaching and consultation, student observation, records review, coaching with functional behavior assessment, or safety and behavior intervention planning for student teams for 150 CIRCUIT referrals across all Education Service Cooperatives

Professional Learning Opportunities

GOAL:

- To provide professional development to local school district administrators and personnel on evidence-based behavior supports

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

The Behavior Support Specialist (BSS) position provides professional learning opportunities on evidence-based behavior practices via in-person, virtual, and online learning modules available to all school districts in all Education Service Cooperatives.

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025-2026:

- Offered 6 sessions of the 5 Essential Components of School-Wide Behavior Supports professional developments to building-level teams
- Added 6 Behavior Breaks which are short instructional videos to equip educators and parents with strategies that can be implemented quickly to improve student engagement and success. <https://arbss.org/behavior-breaks/>



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- Offered over 143 professional learning opportunities in person to school districts in all Education Service Cooperatives with over 2392 participants

ADDITIONAL BSS HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025-2026:

- Held the first annual Arkansas School Behavior Conference on July 23 with over 450 attendees from across the state
- Partnered with DESE to support THRIVE Leadership Academy at Northeast Arkansas, Wilbur D. Mills ESC, OUR ESC, Crowley's Ridge ESC, Guy Fenter ESC, Arkansas River, and Southwest ESC to improve the implementation of positive behavior supports in school buildings.
- Served on the DESE Leadership Team for Arkansas THRIVE
- Served on the Arkansas Early Childhood Behavior Support Cadre'
- Served on the DDS Autism Work Group
- Served on the Autism Legislative Task Force
- Facilitated BCBAs working in the school through ArPSBAN meetings (meet once a month either in person or virtual), connecting BCBAs across the state through a community of practice
- Reached national and international audiences with newsletter
- Provided online modules for Special Education Apprenticeship Program for 2 Cohorts thus far
- Reached educators and University Educator Programs in Arkansas as well as nationally and internationally audiences with online modules
- Presented Level Up at East End Middle: Implementing Tier1/2 Strategiesat AAEA Conference
- Presented the Student Intervention Matching Form at the APRSC Virtual Conference
- Presented Building Capacity in School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports: The Journey from THRIVE to BX3 and Behavior Boost: Practical Tools to Empower Every Educator at the ADE Summit
- Presented Break Away from Behavior at the ASEP Conference
- Presented Quick Tips for Positive Behavior at the ArSCA Southwest Fall Meeting
- Presented ACC: Supporting Schools, Supporting Students as part of the ACC panel at Arkansas Children's Hospital
- Presented at Arkansas Association of Alternative Educators Conference
- Presented What to Do When Students Behave and Misbehave! and Approaches for Managing Student Behaviors at the Fall ARMEA Conference
- Presented The Behavior Side of RTI with DESE- OCSS for New Administrators
- Presented Myth-Busting Behavior: What School Teams Often Get Wrong (and How to Get It Right) and Effective Approaches for Managing Student Behavior: Tier 1 and Tier 2 at the 2026 Forum on School Behavior and Mental Health
- Attended the Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders (1 BSS)
- Attend Southeastern School Behavioral Health Conference in April (2 BSS)
- Attended Verbal Behavior Conference in March (1 BSS)



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- Attend Association for Behavior Analysis International Conference in May (3 BSS)

Program: Career & Technical Education (CTE)
Funding Source: Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Career & Technical Education and Carl Perkins Grant
Funding: \$204,866.69
Competitive Grant: No
Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts:

Gravette	Huntsville	Decatur	Farmington
Prairie Grove	Lincoln	Elkins	West Fork
Greenland	Gentry		

Personnel:

Name: Stephanie Trolinger
Position: CTE Coordinator
Degree: BSE Education

Goal:

The goals of Career and Technical Education align The Division of Career and Technical Education (DCTE). Our goal ensures students graduate prepared for enlistment, enrollment, or employment by aligning pathways with workforce demands through tools like LMI, SOC, and CIP. Guided by the LEARNS Act, we focus on equipping students with durable and technical skills that meet industry standards and lead to sustainable, high-wage, high-demand careers



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Program Summary:

In Arkansas, the role of a CTE Coordinator at a cooperative is to provide leadership, support, and resources to member school districts to enhance their CTE Programs. In terms of administering Carl D. Perkins Vocational funding, the coordinator creates and manages the budget for ten consortia schools, providing accountability as required by the Division of Career and Technical Education. The coordinator acts as a liaison between the districts and the Department of Career and Technical Education (DCTE), helping to develop, implement, and improve programs aligned with state goals and objectives.

The coordinator collaborates with administrators and CTE staff to:

- Identify and develop new/innovative programs
- Initiate and facilitate grant applications
- Provide training for new CTE staff
- Implement mentor training programs for licensure
- Provide guidance in programming decisions
- Provide Perkins and new equipment audit assistance
- Promote CTSO participation and CTE program success
- Develop and deliver professional development for administrators and teachers

The coordinator works closely with districts in the collection of data, program evaluation and expansion, and technical assistance & expertise; collaborates widely with industry and community partners to identify workplace trends and needs to inform CTE program improvement. Works regionally with post secondary educators and other stakeholders to identify opportunities for concurrent credit and work-based learning experiences.

Major Highlights of the Year:

- ACTE Fellows Member 2025-2026
- 55 people 410/412/418 Work-based Learning, Career Development and Internship Instructors Endorsements
- Build My Future Showcase
- Girl Power Spread the Magic Manufacturing Event
 - Farmington High School
 - Lincoln High School
 - Greenland High School
 - Huntsville High School
 - Decatur High School
 - Gravette High School



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- Perkins V Administrator Training
- Perkins Administration & Start-up Grants Workshop
- Industry Partnerships: Medical Teacher Roundtable
- Industry Partnerships: FACS Teacher Roundtable
- Career Coach Roundtable
- Adoption of Perkins Purchasing Policies and Guidelines
- Counseling and Career Coach Training
- BOSS Laser Training
- NEW CTE Teacher Training
- I49 Workforce Summit
- CTE PD Opportunities
- Mentor Novice CTE Teachers & Train new Mentors
- University of Arkansas - Guest Speaker to Graduate Students
- Participate in Podcast
- Hosted Medical Roundtable Meeting
- Hosted FACS Roundtable Meeting
- Farmington - Approved NCCER Testing Site
- Rural College & Success Summit
- FACS Roundtable
- MEDS Roundtable
- GIRL Power CTE Showcase
- ACTE Fellows

Funding Highlights		
Build My Future	Decatur School District	\$1,000.00
Build My Future	Farmington School District	\$2,000.00
Build My Future	Gentry School District	\$2,315.00
Build My Future	Gravette School District	\$10,000.00
Build My Future	Greenland School District	\$7,695.29
Build My Future	Huntsville School District	\$11,812.00



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Build My Future	West Fork School District	\$6,420.00
Girl Power	Gentry School District (Equipment)	\$12,803.99
Girl Power	Gravette School District (Equipment)	\$8,493.01
Girl Power	Huntsville (Equipment)	\$8,621.98
Computer Science Innovation Grant	Elkins	\$4,180.25
Innovation Grant	Gentry	\$36,450.00
Start-Up Grant	Gravette School District	\$116,233.00
Modernization Grant	Greenland School District	\$32,949.90
Start-Up	Huntsville School District	\$21,590.00
Start-Up	Elkins School District	\$49,104.00
TOTAL GRANTS		\$331,668.42



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Program: Computer Science
Funding Source: Arkansas Department of Education Grant – Act 220 of 2017
Competitive Grant: Yes
Restricted: Yes

Statewide

Personnel:

Name: Brian Lawhon
Position: Statewide CS Specialist
Degree: MSE

Name: Alex Moeller
Position: Statewide CS Specialist
Degree:

Name: Ashley Kincannon
Position: Statewide CS Specialist
Degree: Ed.S.

Name: Joshua Rodgers
Position: Statewide CS Specialist
Degree:

Name: John Hart
Position: Statewide CS Specialist
Degree: MLIS

Name: Tammy Glass
Position: Statewide CS Specialist
Degree:

Name: Zachary Spink
Position: Statewide CS Lead Specialist
Degree: MSE



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Goals:

The ADE DCTE Office of Computer Science's established goals and associated tasks for computer science education implementation in Arkansas are divided into five categories:

1. Standards, Curriculum, and Pathways - Successful implementation of computer science education in Arkansas requires the development and periodic revision of a comprehensive and vertically articulated set of K-12 computer science curriculum standards and courses, the local creation of well-developed curriculum that supports student learning, proper alignment of the K-12 expectations and opportunities to industry needs, and appropriate K-20 pathway development for students seeking formal computer science education beyond high-school.

2. Educator Development and Training - Successful implementation of computer science education in Arkansas requires the ADE and its partner organizations to anticipate and address the needs of the Arkansas educational system with regards to knowledgeable and informed computer science teachers. ADE in collaboration with the Arkansas Educational Cooperatives and other partners must support quality computer science educator development and training opportunities for all Arkansas Educators and Administrators.

3. Licensure - Successful implementation of computer science education in Arkansas requires the ADE and its partner organizations to anticipate and address the needs of the Arkansas educational system with regards to licensed and endorsed computer science teachers. ADE will continue and further research and implement, when appropriate, flexible licensure pathways and practices, based on legislation and regulation.

4. Outreach and Promotion - Successful implementation of computer science education in Arkansas requires the active use of a broad range of mediums, digital tools, and human networks to properly communicate about the Arkansas Computer Science Education Initiative and respond to the needs and concerns of Arkansas students, educators, community members, and industry leaders.

5. Program Growth and Student Success - Successful implementation of computer science education in Arkansas requires encouraging broad school implementation, supporting lighthouse schools to expand their programs, increasing statewide teacher capacity, growing student interest, and increasing stakeholder interest and support using innovative programs and outreach initiatives.

Program Summary:

Education Service Cooperatives, in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education, administers the Computer Science Support Program for grades K-12 (Support for Integrating the



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Embedded K-8 Standards; Middle School Introduction to Coding: Grades 5-8; and High School CS). In the interest of providing Arkansas educators with access to quality computer science (CS) professional development (PD), the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Office of Computer Science provided grants for ten Computer Science Specialists beginning in 2017. The computer science specialists each serve the CS PD needs state-wide for all ESCs, and Public School Districts. Assistance is provided to local school district educators through PD services including sessions (ADE developed & customized based on needs assessments) at the Cooperative as well as support on-site in living the mission and striving for the vision of Computer Science Instruction in Arkansas.

PD Offered:

- Computer Science Impact Meeting
- AI for ARPEP Teachers
- Applied Cryptography
- Bit by Bit
- Build a Game Pygame
- Business Intelligence
- Circuit Playground Training
- Code to Cultivation
- Coding with Circuit Playground
- Coding with Raspberry Pi
- Cryptography
- CS Planning with the New Standards
- Cybersecurity and Networking with Raspberry Pi
- Data Analysis and Visualization
- Data Science: Collect, Clean, Analyze
- Data Science: SQL, Spreadsheets, Python
- Fundamentals of Cyber
- Hardware Interactions
- High School Computer Science Certification and Preparation
- Networking: Packet Tracing
- K6 Robot Roundup
- Mobile App Development
- Organizational Security
- Precision AG
- Project Based Sewing Lab
- Sensor Exploration
- Soldering
- Visual Applications
- Web Application Development with Python

Conferences Presented at:



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- State TSA Conference
- Arkansas Association for Career and Technical Education (ArACTE)
- ADE Summit
- AEA PD Conference
- ISTE - Raspberry Pi Escape room
- HSTI - K8 Computer Science
- Cyber.org - National Conference
- NICE K-12 Preconference Session

Events/Committees/Projects Assisted with:

- National Computer Science Education Week – Scheduled daily activities with local districts - December 2025
 - Regional Capture the Flag Events - throughout the 2025-2026 school year
 - DECA Conference - February 2026
 - TSA State Conference – March 2026
 - Support of Robotics Competitions (VEX, FIRST) March 2026
 - Regional and State Girl Power - February 2026
 - All-State Coding Competition March 2026
 - Girls of Promise - March 2026
 - SkillsUSA April 2026
-

Major Highlights of the Year

- Standards Development: Developed and launched five new courses (four middle school and one high school).
- Standards Modernization: Updated the Introduction to Computer Science standards to integrate a stronger emphasis on Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Statewide Training Impact: Delivered targeted CS training to 2,287 education professionals and 5,118 students.
- State Coding Competition: Designed and delivered the first open invitation Arkansas State Coding Competition.
- Interactive Cybersecurity: Hosted digital Capture the Flag (CTF) events at schools and educational cooperatives statewide.
- Student Mentorship: Mentored students across the state in Unity game development.
- CTSO Support: Continued the growth, development, and support of Career and Technical Student Organizations.
- Student Recognition: Distributed Computer Science Completer Cords to schools to honor students finishing their CS Pathways.
- National Advocacy & Representation: Represented Arkansas on the national stage with the Expanding Computing Education Pathways (ECEP) alliance and collaborated on the Code.org State of Computer Science Education report.



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Ongoing Support & Initiatives

- Summer Training Prep: Creating and revamping professional development sessions for the upcoming summer.
- CS Summit: Coordinating the first Computer Science Summit at the ACTE Summer Conference.
- Classroom AI Integration: Developing training and resources for guided AI implementation in K-12 classrooms.

Program: Digital Learning – Virtual Arkansas (2025-2026 Academic Year)

Funding Source: ADE Grant – Act

Competitive Grant: No

Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts:

Arkansas Arts Academy	Bentonville	Decatur	Elkins
Farmington	Gentry	Gravette	Greenland
Huntsville	Lincoln	Prairie Grove	Rogers
Siloam Springs	Springdale	West Fork	

Central Office Personnel:

Name: John Ashworth
Position: Executive Director

Name: Mindy Looney
Position: Director of Operations

Name: Candice McPherson
Position: Director of Development & Design

Name: Jason Bohler
Position: Core Campus Principal

Name: Christie Lewis
Position: CTE Campus Director

Name: Samantha Carpenter
Position: Core Campus Principal

Name: Rachel Walston
Position: Learn Anywhere Academy Principal



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MISSION: Equip, engage, and empower Arkansas schools, students, and teachers by providing equitable access to superior online education.

VISION: Leveraging local, national, and global partnerships to advance students and educator success through innovative technologies and services.

CORE VALUES: Teamwork, Relationships, Integrity, Quality, Innovation

GOALS:

Virtual Arkansas exists to provide affordable and equitable educational access and opportunities for Arkansas students, teachers, and schools. According to *Act 2325 of 2005*, distance learning opportunities were employed:

- To help alleviate the teacher shortage
- To provide additional course-scheduling opportunities for students
- To provide an opportunity to access an enriched curriculum
- To develop and make available online professional development

Virtual Arkansas has specific goals that drive its operations. These goals are outlined in the chart below, along with the most recent results:

Goals	2024-2025 Results
Help Address the Arkansas Teacher Shortage	- VA made courses available in all critical academic licensure shortage areas - VA provided access to 97 full-time Arkansas certified teachers for local schools
Provide a Wide Range of Courses for Arkansas Students	- VA provided access to 214 total courses; 151 courses with a VA teacher - These courses provided opportunities to 29,170 Content + Teacher enrollments and 16,500 Content Partnership enrollments
Ensure Educational Options for Economically Disadvantaged Students	- VA courses were made available to all high-poverty districts and were utilized by 90% of all Arkansas school districts with a 70% or higher FRL population - VA offered preferred automatic concurrent credit registration for high-poverty districts. 100% of high-poverty



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	schools that submitted the necessary paperwork for enrollment during the early registration period were granted seats in the classes for which they registered
Ensure Educational Options for Rural Students	- 59% of all Virtual Arkansas Content + Teacher Enrollments were from districts designated as rural - VA provided educational options and opportunities to all rural districts and was utilized by 97% of all districts designated as rural - 79% of all Concurrent Credit enrollments were from districts designated as rural
Provide Educational Options for Students with Scheduling Conflicts	- All VA courses can be taken at any time during the day, which provides flexibility in scheduling local course options to avoid scheduling conflicts - This is particularly important for smaller districts, as they have many courses only available during certain periods of the day
Maintain Positive Customer Support Ratings	- Virtual Arkansas had a 100% positive rating in customer support/service measures on the 2023-2024 perception survey to administrators and counselors.

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

Virtual Arkansas is a supplemental state virtual program that partners with local Arkansas schools, the Arkansas Department of Education, and the local Education Service Cooperatives to provide 6th-12th grade online courses, resources, and services to Arkansas schools, teachers, and students who might not otherwise have access to these resources and opportunities. This initiative is guided by Act 2325 of 2005: An Act to Provide Distance Learning.

www.virtualarkansas.org

We are not an online high school or a diploma-granting institution, but a resource for supplementing education for students through their local school.

Virtual Arkansas is comprised of five campuses:

- Core Campus High School: Arch Ford Educational Service Cooperative
- Core Campus Middle School: Arch Ford Educational Service Cooperative
- CTE Campus: Dawson Educational Service Cooperative



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- Concurrent Credit Campus: Southeast Educational Service Cooperative
 - DYS Campus: Arch Ford Educational Service Cooperative
-

Major Highlights of the 2025-2026 School Year - Virtual Arkansas

- Provided 100% virtual student options for local schools through the Learn Anywhere Academy (LAA).
 - Provided parent orientation webinars and informational webinars throughout the school year.
 - Recognized as a national leader, including the second highest number of Quality Matters externally reviewed and quality assurance certified courses in the nation for state virtual programs.
 - Partnered with the Department of Youth Services (DYS) to provide high-quality online courses and opportunities to adjudicated youth.
 - Spearheaded the state effort to include a new Arkansas Military Service and Security Pathway for students interested in a military future. Had over 170% enrollment growth between year 1 and year 2.
 - Executive Director completed his role as Board President for the Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance (VLLA), a partnership of 20 state virtual programs dedicated to advancing quality online learning, after 6 years of service.
 - Designed and developed the America 250 teaching and learning resources utilized by schools, families, and students throughout the state.
 - Partnered with the Arkansas Department of Education to design and develop facilitator materials for the ArPEP program.
 - Supported DESE in the launch of the Course Choice program.
 - Virtual Arkansas offers 5 full H2 pathways and an additional 6 H2 pathways with at least 2 levels of courses
-

Virtual Arkansas Data (Based on 2024-2025 School Year)

- Helped Arkansas school districts and programs save over \$78,000,000 since 2014
- Saved Arkansas school districts over \$5.2 million during the 2024-2025 school year in its Content + Teacher and Content Partnership services
- Have served over 360,000 Content + Teacher enrollments since 2013
- Virtual Arkansas Students had a 93% Pass Rate
- 12,485 Unique Arkansas Students served by Virtual Arkansas
- 78% of Virtual Arkansas teachers have a Master's degree or above
- 165 Content+Teacher courses available to students throughout Arkansas
- Concurrent Credit students earned 8,283 College Concurrent Credit Hours



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- 80% of Concurrent Credit enrollments from rural districts
- Career and Technical Education: 6,460 enrollments
- 2,510 Computer Science enrollments
- 2,589 Advanced Placement Enrollments
- 97% of all Arkansas Rural Districts Served by Virtual Arkansas
- 59% of all Virtual Arkansas Content + Teacher Enrollments From Districts Classified as Rural
- 94% of all Arkansas public school districts served

Program: Dyslexia
Funding Source: Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Funding: \$90,000
Competitive Grant: No
Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts:

Arkansas Arts Academy	Bentonville	Decatur
Elkins	Farmington	Fayetteville
Founders Classical	Gentry	Gravette
Greenland	Haas Hall Academy	Huntsville
Lincoln	Pea Ridge	Prairie Grove
Rogers	Premier HS	Siloam Springs
Springdale	West Fork	

Personnel:

Name: Natalie Williams

Position: Dyslexia Specialist

Degree: M.Ed in Education, M.Ed in Educational Leadership. Ed.S Reading and AOGPE Associate (Orton Gillingham training and certification for Dyslexia)

Goal:



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The goal of the dyslexia program is to provide guidance and support to NWAESC school districts in accordance with Arkansas law (Ark. Code Ann. § 6-41-602). The focal points this school year were (1) delivering dyslexia intervention with fidelity (2) implementation of screening process for grades 3-12 with consistent interpretation of data, and (3) progress monitoring and quarterly reporting for students receiving intervention using a state approved dyslexia curriculum .

Program Summary:

The NWA Regional Dyslexia group consists of district leaders, facilitators, and interventionists involved in the selection and implementation of approved dyslexia intervention programs and identification of students with characteristics of dyslexia. The purpose of group meetings is to promote networking among districts and provide an opportunity for conversation around topics of interest. Office hours for 2025-2026 were hosted via zoom. The focus of office hours included DESE updates, 3rd grade retention, participant questions, as well as an opportunity for the region to collaborate. The table below contains collaboration opportunities along with special session dates and attendance.

Collaboration Opportunities and Professional Development July 1, 2025- May 31, 2026:

Date	Session	Number of Participants
7/25/25	Dyslexia Law, Rules, and Legislative Update	47
7/28/2025	School Based Identification of Dyslexia grades 4-12; effective use of ORF and Encoding	28
8/19/2025	School Based Identification of Dyslexia grades 4-12; effective use of ORF and Encoding	17
8/22/2025	School Based Identification of Dyslexia K-3	31
9/26/2025 1/16/2026 4/10/2026	Dyslexia Round Table sessions	70 total
9/29 and 9/30/2025	Level 2 Screener Session with Stacey Mahurin	47
9/30/25	Analyzing data from Level 2 Screeners	48
October 2025- May 2026	Dyslexia Coordinator Meetings	85 total



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Jan 2026	Literacy Coach Collaborative	21
3/31/26	Multisyllabic Word Decoding and Encoding PD session for interventionists, Gen Ed and SPED teachers	22

Major Highlights of the Year:

- 100% of districts participated in dyslexia observations/coaching sessions with over 120 lessons observed collaboratively by the NWAESC Dyslexia Specialist, Administrators, Instructional Facilitators and Coaches, as well as district Dyslexia Coordinators.
- Held monthly Dyslexia Coordinator meetings at NWAESC to provide support on Technical Assistance Plans, review updates from State Dyslexia and Literacy Meetings, and create a culture of collaboration and support among district leaders.
- Scheduled and offered a Dyslexia Level II assessment training Sept 2025 (Mahurin).
- Attended monthly State Dyslexia Unit meetings and Literacy meetings (via zoom).
- Provided monthly in person updates to the Curriculum Coordinators on dyslexia and 3rd grade promotion.
- Met with districts one on one at the start of the year to educate them on dyslexia law and rules as well as establish procedures for screening, data analysis, parental notification and website reporting (all part of the technical assistance plan).
- Met with districts one on one at the end of the year to analyze program fidelity, review their technical assistance plan, and set goals for next school year.
- Offered quarterly dyslexia round table sessions for interventionists, coaches, coordinators, and other interested staff to provide State updates, analyze data and determine progress, discuss recent research articles related to dyslexia, and model/practice effective instructional strategies for students with dyslexia.
- Sent monthly newsletter to over 100 participants in all districts with information on upcoming professional development opportunities, articles and videos on effective instruction for students with dyslexia, as well as State Updates on Dyslexia.
- Worked with schools on identifying needs based on updated rules and provided support based on technical assistance plans.
- Consistent office hours included specific topics for discussions, collaboration opportunities, and a platform for questions.
- Created and updated regional dyslexia dashboard filled with resources to support districts in implementation of the dyslexia law, rules, and screening protocol, as well as tracking data, progress monitoring, level 2 assessment



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information, and virtual professional development opportunities as well as articles and other online resources pertaining to dyslexia

- Regularly posted updates to NWAESC social media on district dyslexia visits as well as daily postings during Dyslexia Awareness Month (October 2025).
- Participated in Washington County Expo to represent NWAESC
- Attended national ALTA and IDA conferences on dyslexia
- Provided dyslexia or literacy information at the migrant workshops in the fall of 2025 and spring of 2026
- Guest on the NWAESC Mentoring Podcast “Inspiration After the Bell”

Individual District Support:

Specific district support was provided for on-site or virtual technical assistance.

Support for districts included but was not limited to the following:

- Data analysis
- Determination of characteristics of dyslexia
- Appropriate placement criteria
- Exit criteria
- 504 accommodations
- Other individual student concerns
- Observation of lessons
- Coaching dyslexia interventionists
- Modeling lessons for interventionists
- Level II testing and data analysis support
- 3rd grade promotion questions
- Met with district leaders to discuss ATLAS testing concerns to take forward to state level for guidance and clarification
- Tracking of intervention data for students receiving dyslexia curriculum
- Selection of progress monitoring assessments as well as interpretation of data
- Scheduling progress monitoring throughout the year and determining format for distribution
- Presentation of the law, rules, screening process, and progress monitoring for staff and administrators
- Interpretation of level 2 screener results as compared to psychological evaluations for students with COD; joint session with Rogers and Stacey Mahurin
- Targeted, frequent visits and support for D/F schools
- Connected and participated in 3 school districts for on site observation of high school intervention program for students with dyslexia
- Spoke about Dyslexia to Future Educators Class at HS over 2 days in fall 2025



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- Co-Hosted IRP writing session with Dyslexia Coordinator in one district

Program: Early Childhood Special Education
Funding Source: Local through MOU (Federal/State)
Funding: \$2,648,067
Competitive Grant: No
Restricted Funding: Yes

Participating Districts:

Bentonville	Decatur	Gentry	Gravette
Pea Ridge	Siloam Springs	Elkins	Lincoln
Farmington	Fayetteville	Greenland	Huntsville
Prairie Grove	West Fork		

Personnel:

Name: Anna Moore
Position: Speech Language Pathologist
Degree: M.S.

Name: Laura Ritchie
Position: Special Education Teacher
Degree: B.S.

Name: Robyn Smith
Position: Special Education Teacher
Degree: M.Ed.

Name: Becky Holtz
Position: Administrative Liaison
Degree: M.Ed.

Name: Betsy Deertz
Position: Administrative Assistant
Degree: N/A

Name: Kaili Bailey
Position: Paraprofessional
Degree: N/A

Name: Claire Kitzmiller
Position: Speech Language Pathologist
Degree: M.S.

Name: Gia Starr
Position: Paraprofessional
Degree: N/A



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Name: Colleen DeVore
Position: SPED Coordinator
Degree: M.Ed.

Name: Alyssa Byler
Position: Administrative Assistant
Degree: None

Name: Crystal Waldrop
Position: Special Education Teacher
Degree: B.S.

Name: Morgan Lomax
Position: Speech Language Pathologist
Degree: M.S.

Name: Darlene Graf
Position: Special Education Teacher
Degree: M.Ed.

Name: Amy Heck
Position: Speech Language Pathologist
Degree: M.S.

Name: Rachel Dowdle
Position: Speech Language Pathologist
Degree: M.S.

Name: Lynn Orange
Position: Speech Language Pathologist
Degree: M.S.

Name: Joni Garnett
Position: Special Education
Degree: B.S.

Name: Jeremy Willis
Position: Speech Language Pathologist
Degree: M.S.

Name: Kara Johnson
Position: Speech Language Pathologist
Degree: M.S.

Name: Anne-Ashley Hull
Position: Speech Language Pathologist
Degree: M.S.

Name: Regan Hardy
Position: Admin. Asst./Medicaid Billing
Degree: N/A

Name: Elizabeth Ledbetter
Position: Speech Language Pathologist
Degree: M.S.

Name: Tamara Henschell
Position: Speech Language Pathologist
Degree: M.S.

Name: Jessica Walker
Position: Special Education Teacher
Degree: B.S.

Name: Leslie Clements
Position: Special Education Teacher
Degree: B.S.

Name: Lisa McLaren
Position: Special Education Teacher
Degree: B.S.

Name: Angela Hunt
Position: Special Education Teacher
Degree: M.Ed.

Name: Maritza Pratt
Position: Interpreter
Degree: N/A

Name: Marlo Nelson
Position: Special Education Teacher

Name: Brandy Thompson
Position: Special Education Teacher



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Degree: B.S.

Name: Michael Ann Ramer

Position: SLP Evaluator

Degree: M.S.

Name: Rachele Rhodes

Position: Special Education Teacher

Degree: M.Ed.

Name: Shem Estes

Position: Sped. Teacher/Evaluator

Degree: B.S.

Name: Wendy Florick

Position: Speech Language Pathologist

Degree: M.S.

Degree: M.Ed.

Name: Leah Adkins

Position: Paraprofessional

Degree: N/A

Name: Rebecca Smith

Position: Speech Language Pathologist

Degree: M.S.

Name: Natalie Gulecki

Position: Sped. Teacher/Evaluator

Degree: M.Ed.

Name: Zoe Algood

Position: Speech Language Pathologist

Degree: M.S.

Goal:

The NWAESC Early Childhood Program seeks to identify and serve children ages three through five that are eligible for special services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Program Summary:

The Early Childhood Special Education Program provides developmentally appropriate services through an Individual Education Program for children with disabilities ages three to five. These services are mandated under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 1997 (IDEA) and provided by the Early Childhood Program on behalf of the 14 school districts in the Co-op area. The Early Childhood Program has grown from a child count of 115 children in 1988 to serving 697 children on December 1, 2025. Most of our screening requests or referrals come from private and public preschool and day care programs. Services provided include screening, evaluation, preschool instruction, speech/language therapy, physical/occupational therapy, counseling, and other services as needed at no cost to the family. Services are provided in a variety of settings, including preschool and Head Start classrooms, a self-contained classroom, private homes, and central locations such as churches, libraries, youth centers, community buildings, and school facilities. The staff works on an itinerant basis traveling to all Co-op area school districts to provide service to preschool children in the most appropriate environment. A



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child may be eligible for special services if he/she is experiencing difficulties which may interfere with normal development in speech/language, vision, hearing, motor skills, behavioral/social skills, self-help skills, or cognition/readiness skills. The majority of children have speech and language disorders, any of which can be remedied much more efficiently at these early ages and provide the child with the ability to enter kindergarten with no deficit. Research shows that this is beneficial to social development as well as development of reading skills. Children with more severe disabilities are also treated. These disabilities include autism, hearing impairment, cerebral palsy, cleft palate, general developmental delays, traumatic brain injury, personal/social/behavioral disorders, and attention deficit disorder. Children with these disorders are much better prepared for entering kindergarten after receiving Early Childhood services. Their parents are initiated into the special education services gradually and caringly. State and national research shows that dollars spent on early intervention are saved in later public education costs.

Major Highlights:

- The Early Childhood Program has grown from a child count of 115 children in 1988 to serving 1125 children on December 1, 2024.
- Received over 1,000 inquiries for screenings and/or services.
- More than 95% of our students are served in their community settings or in the setting the parent has chosen to enroll their child.
- Held over 400 programming conferences to develop Individualized Education Plans (IEP's) for students eligible for special education services.
- Coordinated and held over 400 transition conferences with individual school districts to ensure students have a successful experience entering kindergarten.
- Held more than 50 early intervention transition conferences from Part C to Part B to ensure a smooth transition process in determining eligibility.
- Served on NWA Head Start Health Services Advisory Committee to ensure students have access to health services needed so they are ready to learn.



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

Program: Educational Services for the Visually Impaired
(ESVI)

Funding Source: Division of Elementary and Secondary
Education Special Education Unit

Funding: \$228,453.38

Competitive Grant: No

Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts:

Fayetteville	Farmington	West Fork	Greenland
Prairie Grove	Lincoln	Springdale	Gravette
Gentry	Bentonville	Siloam Springs	Huntsville
Rogers	Pea Ridge		
Elkins			

Personnel:

Name: Melanie Birthright
Position: State Int Director TVI/COMS

Name: Ashley Lee
Position: Administrative Analyst

Name: Evan Beavers
Position: Access Technology Specialist

Name: Marsha Holder (NWAESC)
Position: TVI/COMS

Name: Cynthia White (NWAESC)
Position: TVI/COMS

Name: Paige Dillinger
Position: TVI/COMS

Name: Stephanie Smith
Position: TVI/AT Specialist



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Goal:

Educational Services for the Visually Impaired collaborates with school districts, parents, and communities to provide support that empowers them to remove educational and environmental barriers and to create solutions that foster independence for all students with visual impairments.

Program Summary:

Educational Services for the Visually Impaired consultants provide recommendations for accommodations to enhance the student's opportunities for learning; develop district support teams with implementation plans to meet the needs of students who are blind or visually impaired ages 3 through 21 in educational programs; conduct Learning Media and Functional Vision Assessments, Orientation and Mobility assessments, and Assistive Technology assessments; make recommendations for an individual student's access to educational curriculum; provide large print or Braille textbooks through the Instructional Resource Materials Center; demonstrate, loan and provide instruction and consultation in the use of assistive technology and low vision devices; and provide direct instruction in Orientation and Mobility in the school and in local communities. In addition, professional development opportunities are offered to parents, teachers and related staff.

Regional vision consultants are funded through the following Education Service Cooperatives:

- Guy Fenter Education Service Cooperative
- Crowley's Ridge Education Service Cooperative
- Southwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative
- Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative

ESVI's Central Office is located at:

1401 West Capitol Avenue
Victory Building, Suite 425
Little Rock, AR 72201

Major Highlights of the Year:

- ESVI staff presented on a variety of topics for Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists for students with visual impairments to the state AER members.
- ESVI hosted 2 professional development meetings/training sessions for Teachers of the Visually Impaired.



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- Public school students with visual impairments and blindness participated in the Arkansas Braille Challenge and Cane Quest.
- ESVI staff provided special education information during workshops to several coops throughout the state and at the LEA Academy in Hot Springs.
- ESVI provided information, embossers and support to districts that have students with Visual Impairment for the ATLAS testing. ESVI also provided technical assistance for many school districts across the state to help administer the tests. Paper, embossers and Windows computers were provided to assist school administrators in the testing process.
- ESVI and NanoPac coordinated a group technology training for staff of the blind and visually impaired students in Little Rock.
- ESVI participated and presented in the AER conference in Little Rock at World Services for the blind.
- Collaborative meetings with building district capacity regarding safety procedures for students with visual impairments was also addressed.
- Collaboration with ESRSS in supporting districts.



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Program: Mathematics
Funding Source: Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Funding: \$90,000
Competitive Grant: No
Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts:

Arkansas Arts Academy	Bentonville	Decatur
Elkins	Farmington	Fayetteville
Gentry	Gravette	Greenland
Huntsville	Lincoln	Pea Ridge
Prairie Grove	Rogers	Siloam Springs
Springdale	West Fork	

Personnel:

Name: Lydia Noll
Position: Mathematics Specialist
Degree: BSE

Name: Danyell Stewart
Position: Administrative Assistant
Degree: N/A

Goal:

The primary goal of the Mathematics Specialist is to provide professional development and site-based support that inspires positive relationships with and success in mathematics for both educators and students of Northwest Arkansas.

Program Summary:



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The mathematics program at the Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative is based on the identified teacher needs of the Northwest Arkansas school districts. These include increasing teachers' content knowledge, sharing best practices, disseminating research, locating and developing supplemental teaching resources, assisting with data-driven decision making, and increasing parental awareness of the importance of quality mathematics experiences. Though we differentiate our work for districts/schools/educators, the mathematics program is always working to inspire positive relationships with success in mathematics. The major focus this year was to strengthen relationships with districts, facilitate districts/schools as they worked toward creating a vision of mathematics, and supporting individual schools/teachers as they implemented a High Quality Instructional Material (HQIM).

Major Highlights of the Year:

Site Based Support

- Site specific professional development was provided based on school/district/teacher needs such as supporting happy/healthy teachers, mathematics language development, understanding the design and structure of Illustrative Mathematics curriculum, supporting productive struggle, unpacking standards, backwards design planning, numeracy foundations, facilitating meaningful mathematics discussions, numeracy screening and interventions, and implementing tasks that promote reasoning and problem solving.
- Facilitated job-embedded opportunities for individual teachers and teams of teachers to implement a student-centered curriculum from Illustrative Mathematics. These opportunities included planning lessons, observing lessons, and reflecting upon students' engagement and mathematical thinking.
- Facilitated job-embedded opportunities for teams to evolve into true professional learning communities and collaborative teams.

School Improvement Support

Math specialists are available to assist in the school improvement process which includes meeting with educators in a variety of configurations to provide customized learning opportunities.

- Provided support to districts identified in need of support. Specialists assisted schools through guidance in curriculum selection and implementation, interpretation of assessment data, intervention, instructional strategies, and classroom walk-throughs. Total hours of support in these districts, Grades K-12 (over 450).

Face-to-Face Professional Development

- **Illustrative Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction**, 6-12 Mathematics - 34 educators participated in this session to learn more about this student-centered curriculum and how to purposefully plan for student-centered mathematics



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classrooms. 6 educators participated in a year 2 follow up session to continue their professional learning.

- **Illustrative Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction, K-5 Mathematics** - 47 educators participated in this session to learn more about the student-centered curriculum and how to purposefully plan for student-centered mathematics classrooms. 66 educators participated in a year 2 follow up session to continue their professional learning.
- **Understanding Illustrative Mathematics Centers, K-5 Mathematics** - 14 educators participated in this session to learn more about how the IM curriculum uses centers to address procedural fluency, an aspect of mathematical rigor, and experience specific centers to prepare for a successful launch of centers in the classroom.
- **Elevate Math Fluency: Your QUEST for Mastery Begins Here! K-12 Mathematics** - 53 educators participated in this session to uncover the importance of math fluency and dispel common fluency fallacies. They gained insight into related truths and acquired practical strategies, tasks, games, and routines for improving math fluency skills in their classrooms while learning how to support Arkansas fluency standards.
- **Elevate Math Fluency: Addition/Subtraction of Whole Numbers** - 25 educators participated in this session designed to empower educators with innovative strategies for building fluency in addition and subtraction of whole numbers, as well as to engage in activities, actionable tools and proven techniques aligned with Arkansas Math Standards to enhance student mastery and confidence.
- **Elevate Math Fluency: Multiplication/Division of Whole Numbers** - 45 educators participated in this session designed to empower educators with innovative strategies for building fluency in multiplication and division of whole numbers.
- **Deep Dive Into the AR Math Standards K-5** - 14 participants examined and unpacked the new 2023 Arkansas Math Content Standards for Kindergarten through 5th grade.
- **Deep Dive Into the AR Math Standards: 6-Geometry** - 8 participants examine and unpacked the new 2023 Arkansas Math Content Standards for 6th grade through Geometry.
- **Building Ambitious Thinking Mathematics Classrooms: K-12** - 48 participants learned through discussions and model lesson experiences how to implement thinking tasks to increase student engagement, understanding, and application of mathematical concepts.

Online Professional Development

- **NWA Math Forum** - 64 educators including math teachers, math leaders, curriculum leaders, and district leaders participated in three sessions that included unpacking standards, understanding learning progressions, exploring the use of the Grade 3 Diagnostic supplied by DESE, understanding the Acceleration/Honors courses



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approved by the state, writing and implementation of Math Intervention Plans, using the ATLAS Classroom Tool, and forming a committee to research, plan, and implement a NWA Math Conference for summer, 2027.

Program: Migrant Education
Funding Source: Title I, Part C—Education of Migratory Children
Funding: \$771,647
Competitive Grant: No
Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts:

Alpena	Arkansas Arts Academy	Bentonville	Bergman
Berryville	Bruno-Pyatt	Cotter	Decatur
Deer/Mt. Judea	Elkins	Eureka Springs	Farmington
Fayetteville	Flippin	Gentry	Gravette
Green Forest	Greenland	Haas Hall	Harrison
Huntsville	Jasper	Kingston	Lead Hill
Lincoln	Marshall	Omaha	Ozark
Mountain			
Pea Ridge	Prairie Grove	Rogers	Searcy County
Siloam Springs	Springdale	St. Joe	St. Paul
Valley Springs	West Fork	Western Grove	Yellville-Summit

Personnel:

Name: Jennifer Vinson, Ed.S.
Position: Migrant Specialist
Degree: BSE, MAT, Ed.S

Name: Sylvia Casas
Position: Recruiter
Degree: BSE in Education

Name: Robbye Smith
Position: Recruiter
Degree: HS + 2 years college credits

Name: Lourdes Nava
Position: Tutor / Recruiter
Degree: HS + 1 year college credit

Name: Shelby Warford
Position: Student Support Specialist
Degree: HS + 3 years college credits

Name: Parrish Neal
Position: Student Support Specialist
Degree: BA (Social Work), MA Psychology



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Name: Cynthia Kline

Position: Tutor / Recruiter

Degree: Bachelors in Science/Microbiology

Goal:

The Title I Part C - Education for Migratory Students is a federally funded program that provides services to the children of families who move seeking temporary or seasonal work in Arkansas's agricultural and fishing industries. The program is designed to help children ages three (3) through twenty (21), who are uniquely affected by the combined effects of poverty, language, cultural barriers, and difficulties pertaining to the migratory lifestyle. The primary goal of the Migrant Program is to help our students meet the same challenging academic content and student academic achievement standards that are expected of all children. Our measurable program goals address reading and math achievement, high school graduation and services for out of school youth, and school readiness for preschool children.

Program Summary:

Support for districts which accept federal grant funding includes the following:

- Professional development for Title I Part C staff in areas such as literacy, math, Pre-K, family engagement, and graduation support.
- Grant assistance.
- Ongoing program monitoring and feedback.
- Support in providing summer learning opportunities for migratory students

Students and families in districts that are supported directly by NWAESC receive all applicable migrant services from the team housed at NWAESC. Services in non-project schools are provided by Migrant Education Program (MEP) cooperative staff and include the following:

- All members of the NWAESC Migrant team receive professional development to support all facets of their roles in service of Migrant students and families.
- In home PreK Lessons for all three, four & five year old MEP students not already enrolled in an approved Pre K program.
- Information and support for parents of Pre K children as they prepare to enter Kindergarten.
- Students with an identified need are eligible to receive free in-school and/or after-school tutoring.
- Students with an identified need are eligible to receive free summer school support.
- Students receive supplemental, high-interest books multiple times each year. These books are self-selected by the students as often as possible.



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- Students may receive health and/or hygiene education and/or services as needed.
- Secondary students are monitored at least quarterly to ensure students remain on-track for high school graduation. Intervention is provided if necessary.
- Secondary students may complete credit recovery courses through the Title 1 Part C program at no cost.
- Secondary students have the opportunity to develop leadership skills through state programs, such as AMESLA & Summer Tech Camp.

Major Highlights of the Year:

- Provided students with school supplies, hygiene products, books and other items to help them be successful more than 6 times this year.
- Purchased STEM Kits to give all students K-12 before extended breaks, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas & Spring Break to encourage continued learning.
- PreK Students ages 3-5 get monthly Scholastic Newsletter encouraging letter recognition, counting, coloring, and guiding family members on how to help the academic growth of the preschool child.
- Partnered with IMPACT and have piloted a literacy program with families in our program, providing them with literacy resources and skills to help promote stronger literacy in the family.
- Continued collaborating with AR United, a local non-profit organization that works with families new to the State of Arkansas.
- Parent Meetings held in Siloam Springs.
- Provided services and resources to all identified MEP students in the region.
- Built relationships with appropriate businesses and organizations within the region.
- Provided training in the areas of literacy, math, trauma informed care, Pre K assessment and the effects of poverty to all Project Schools in both Region 1 and Region 3 due to staffing irregularities. The NWAESC staff provided over three hundred (300) students of the Migrant Education Program (Non-Project Schools) with a Christmas gift through a partnership with the Washington County Historical Society, Caring and Sharing of Benton County, the MEP Region 1 Staff and NWAESC staff volunteers.
- Collaborated with school districts to ensure that MEP students were safe, secure, and had all basic needs met.
- Provided summer school opportunities to all appropriate MEP students.



Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

Program: Medicaid in the Schools (MITS)
Funding Source: School Health Services Division of the Arkansas Department of Education
Competitive Grant: No
Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts and Cooperatives:

Covering a 19-county region, working with approximately 80 public and charter schools, and four educational service cooperatives: Northwest, Ozark Unlimited Resources, Guy Fenter, and DeQueen/Mena. **Training:** Over the past year, provided training for 305 individuals

Personnel:

Name: Erbey Gomez

Position: NWA Regional Advisor Medicaid In The Schools (MITS)

Degree: N/A

Program Description: The Medicaid in the Schools (MITS) program serves as a liaison for Local Education Agencies (LEA) to support the administration of school-based Medicaid reimbursement. MITS assists districts to maximize health resources and revenue to promote the Whole Child Model including special education services.

The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Medicaid in the Schools program provides guidance, leadership, and technical assistance to support schools in operating effective Medicaid programs. Medicaid is a critical source of health care coverage for children, providing access to comprehensive and preventative child health programs. The provision of Medicaid revenue provides for school districts to offer sustainable, medically necessary support for students to have every opportunity to be academically successful. Schools deliver a broad range of Medicaid reimbursable school-based services to students at school. These services include:

- Therapy Services: Occupational, Physical, and Speech
- Early and Periodic, Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) - the vision and hearing portion
- Audiology Services
- Personal Care



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

- School-Based Mental Health Services
- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapy

Medicaid in the Schools provides Medicaid billing training, and personal care training to personal care aides and school nurses as part of the certification process for the aides.

Program:	Mentoring
Funding Source:	Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Funding:	\$548,000
Competitive Grant:	No
Restricted:	Yes

Participating Districts:

Bentonville	Decatur	Elkins	Farmington
Fayetteville	Gentry	Gravette	Greenland
Huntsville	Lincoln	Pea Ridge	Prairie Grove
Rogers	Siloam Springs	Springdale	West Fork
Arkansas Arts Academy			

Personnel:

Name: Cayce Neal
Position: Regional Mentoring Coordinator
Degree: M.S. TESOL and Ed Leadership

Name: Michelle Gooch
Position: Mentoring Specialist
Degree: M.S Ed Leadership

Name: Karle Schmitt
Position: Mentoring Specialist
Degree: MAT

Goals:

Arkansas state law requires that each novice teacher employed at a public or open-enrollment public charter school participate in mentoring that: (1) Provides training and support to novice teachers to increase teacher retention, (2) Establishes norms of professionalism, and (3) Leads to improved student achievement by increasing effective teacher performance.

There are two primary components of novice teacher mentoring in Arkansas. One is training and preparation for an effective summative evaluation rating under the Teacher Excellence and



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

Support System (TESS). The other is individualized support provided by the hiring school. Mentoring programs and school districts are expected to support novice teachers through their formative years through professional development training, coaching, and guided practice. Mentoring plans for each district that ensures all novice teachers receive training and support shall be readily available upon Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) request. If participating in a grant funded Education Service Cooperative (ESC) mentoring program, the ESC Mentoring Program Specialist (MPS) will be responsible for writing the mentoring plan and coordinating support.

Program Summary:

In 2025-26 the mentoring program supported 955 first, second, and third-year teachers in our cooperative districts. The cost of all services is covered by the Mentoring grant.

Professional Development sessions were as follows:

- Instructional planning/HQIM training: 5 sessions
- TESS training: 2 sessions
- Professionalism training: 3 sessions
- Mentor Huddles: 3 sessions
- NIET Lead Teacher Pathway training: 74 teachers completed
- NIET Master Teacher Pathway training: 59 teachers completed
- Experienced Mentor Teacher training: 8 sessions

Further support was provided in the following areas:

- ArPEP: In our fourth year of this program, we supported 42 candidates in their first year of provisional licensure and 25 candidates in their second year of provisional licensure, including ten days of summer professional development, 8 monthly follow-up sessions, and a minimum of two classroom observations with coaching that focused on Domains 2 and 3 of TESS.

Major Highlights of the Year:

- Mentor of the Month and Novice Teacher of the Month initiative: The principal/mentor and novice teachers monthly newsletters had nomination links for teachers to nominate teachers and celebrate their accomplishments. One novice teacher and one mentor of the month received an award and prizes donated by local business donation. All received recognition via social media.



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- Principal Meetings: We met with every principal in Northwest Arkansas to ensure they know the requirements and support available for novice teacher mentoring.
- Online presence: We created a website to house all novice teacher resources, making them easily accessible to all. We also created Instagram and Facebook accounts to share resources and events (@novicenavigators_nwaesc) in a novice-friendly format.
- Monthly newsletters: In addition to a monthly newsletter to novices, we also started a monthly newsletter for principals and mentors to share resources, provide support, and remind of upcoming events/deadlines.
- Monthly check-ins: We created a monthly check-in form that was shared via newsletter and Google classroom for novices to privately communicate their needs. We followed up with them on-site or via Zoom to provide assistance and coaching to resolve these needs.
- Podcast: We produced and published a podcast with weekly episodes that showcase NWAESC resources for novices as well as classroom management, behavior, instructional, and resiliency information. These 10 minute episodes allow novice teachers and mentors to receive support from NWAESC while on the go. A special Teacher Appreciation episode featured shout-outs from NWA superintendents, principals, mentors, and college program leaders.
- Mentoring Minutes: We created a mentoring curriculum that follows the TESS rubric and published it monthly for mentors to structure their novice teacher meetings.
- 240 Tutoring accounts were provided free of charge to novice teachers who indicated on our survey that they needed licensure support (26 of 955 novices) and 13 took advantage of the support.
- Coaching cycles: We partnered with Farmington School District and Siloam Springs School district for novice teacher coaching cycles that focused on both behavior/classroom management and data for small group instruction/instructional planning.
- Career fairs: We partnered with Elkins and West Fork School districts to promote the education profession at their annual career fairs.
- On-site Mentoring Meetings: We met with Decatur Middle/High School and Gentry Primary for on-site mentoring support with their novices and mentors.



Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

Program: Science/STEM
Funding Source: Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Funding: \$90,000
Competitive Grant: No
Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts:

Arkansas Arts Academy	Bentonville	Decatur	Elkins
Fayetteville	Gentry	Gravette	Greenland
Huntsville	Lincoln	Pea Ridge	Prairie Grove
Rogers	Siloam Springs	Springdale	West Fork

Personnel:

Name: Jenny Gammill	Name: Danyeill Stewart
Position: Science/STEM Specialist	Position: Administrative Assistant
Degree: M.Ed.	Degree: N/A

Goal:

The Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative, in partnership with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, will work with Arkansas Public School personnel to meet the following goals related to Science/STEM education:

- Provide district and building leadership with assistance in choosing high quality instructional materials (HQIM) and assist districts in implementation
- Educate building leadership and instructional coaches on the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education's science walkthrough tool and assist leadership with walkthroughs, data collection and data disaggregation
- Partner with local community and business organizations to provide Science/STEM training and resources to educators
- Assist schools' professional learning communities in using student assessment data to make informed decisions with intervention and extensions
- Mentor and coach teachers in the classroom on high quality science content, high quality instructional practices, student ownership, and culture of learning



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

- Provide professional development and implementation of training related to science and the STEM disciplines
- Assist elementary schools in understanding the science standards and implementing high quality science lessons in order to prepare students for ATLAS testing in grades 3-8 and Biology
- Create awareness of DESE's Outdoor Education Program and School of Conservation Leadership

Program Summary:

The science/STEM program at the Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative is based on the identified needs of teachers in the Northwest Arkansas school districts. These include increasing teachers' science and STEM content knowledge, sharing best practices, disseminating research, implementation of HQIM, locating and developing supplemental teaching resources, assisting with data-driven decision making, and increasing parental involvement. Each opportunity supports the state and national goal of STEM literacy for all students. The specialist is continuing to build relationships with other specialists, administrators, teachers, university officials and community and business organizations in order to best support science and STEM education throughout the region.

Major Highlights of the Year:

- Trained district leaders, building principals, and instructional coaches on the science walkthrough tool.
- Assisted building leadership in conducting walkthroughs using the science walkthrough tool and helping them make instructional decisions based on data collected during walkthrough.
- Provided coaching to teachers in Bonnie Grimes Elementary (Rogers), Greenland Middle School, Lincoln Middle School, LISA Academy (Fayetteville), Parson Hills Elementary (Springdale), and Walker Elementary (Springdale).
- Supported different school districts in choosing appropriate HQIM science curriculum including Bentonville, Decatur, Fayetteville, and Rogers.
- Worked intensively with districts implementing OpenSciEd and Amplify Science.
- Participated in a coaching lab with TNTP and DESE at Prairie Grove Middle School and have continued to provide support to the school in their implementation of Amplify Science.
- Worked intensively with building leadership and teachers at Parson Hills Elementary School in Springdale through coaching, modeling lessons, co-teaching, small group instruction and data disaggregation.
- Provided year long support to districts across the region for ATLAS interim and summative assessments.



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- Partnered with Bentonville's elementary science specialist to pilot three different HQIMs in the spring semester in order to best select the HQIM for the 2026-27 school year.
- Partnered with the Amazeum to provide professional learning through two semester long science integration cohorts. In total, more than 70 teachers and six districts participated.
- Assisted Tucker Elementary (Rogers) in developing lessons for their STEAM lab through grade level meetings and two days of professional development.
- Provided resources for family STEAM nights across the region.
- Supported a number of schools across the region with books, equipment and kits so students could engage in high quality, hands-on science and STEM lessons.
- Partnered with the Amazeum to implement a Moonshot Grant through Remake Learning, and served as an advisory board member of the Northwest Arkansas Learning Ecosystem.
- Trained all elementary teachers in Rogers Public Schools on three dimensional instruction and then supported district leadership and building coaches throughout the year.
- Provided extensive support to Walker Elementary in their application for designation as a STEM Model School and worked with Vaughn Elementary in their application for redesignation as a STEM Model School.



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

Program: School Health and Wellness - Tobacco Prevention, Nutrition, Physical Activity
Funding Source: Arkansas Department of Health
Funding: \$11,000
Competitive Grant: No
Restricted: No

Participating Districts:

Arkansas Arts Academy	Bentonville	Elkins	Decatur
Farmington	Fayetteville	Gentry	Gravette
Greenland	Haas Hall	Huntsville	Lincoln
NWA Classical Academy	Pea Ridge	Prairie Grove	Rogers
Siloam Springs	Springdale	West Fork	Shiloh Christian
The New School	St. Joseph	St. Vincent de Paul	

Personnel:

Name: Kelli Butcher, RN	Name: Meggi Augustosky, MPH, RRT
Position: Community Health Nurse Specialist	Position: Community Health Promotion Specialist
Degree: Registered Nurse, BS Chemistry	Degree: Master's of Public Health, Respiratory Therapist

Goal:

This program provides:

- Assistance with grant writing for school grants and community coalition grants
- Linkage for school-based tobacco prevention and other health efforts
- Linkage of resources for schools to community coalitions and others in the community to promote healthy communities
- Provides technical assistance on public health practices to schools
- Provides technical assistance and collaborates with school nurses to identify appropriate resources and continuing education offerings that will help meet the requirements for nursing licensure
- Works with State School Nurse Consultant to disseminate information as needed
- Technical assistance with school districts on all School Health issues
- Provides Technical Assistance in policy development for tobacco and school-based enforcement of tobacco related policies



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- Provides Technical assistance with evidenced based curricula for tobacco, nutrition, teen dating, suicide prevention, teen pregnancy, and physical activity
- Provides training to school nurses and others
- Provides technical assistance to school districts with communicable disease outbreaks
- Provides training and technical assistance on School Health Index
- Provides technical assistance to Coordinated School Health grantees
- Provides technical assistance and guidance to schools for wellness initiatives
- Provides technical assistance to schools for implementation of best practices for nutrition and physical activity, Coordinated School Health and other public health issues
- Provides technical assistance to school wellness committees regarding state and federal mandates
- Provides technical assistance on nutrition and physical activity via evidenced based curricula
- Maintains current knowledge of research, resources, and best practices related to school health issues
- Informs schools of available trainings and grant opportunities
- Addresses training needs related to school health issues and organizes and conducts trainings based on those needs
- Coordinates and provides trainings to school personnel
- Informs schools of available trainings and grant opportunities
- Serves as an advocate for school health needs
- Compiles and distributes necessary reports and other information
- Participates in data collection and school health interventions
- Serves on committees and work groups and works on special projects
- Attends, participates in, and distributes updates from regional and state meetings to schools
- Attends CHAC meetings and reports outcomes Wellness Committees

Major Highlights of the Year:

- Annual Back to School Nurse Workshop held in person, 109 participants. Cheria McDonald, BSN, RN, State School Nurse Consultant, presented on new laws and rules and regulations for school nurses. R.I.S.K. (Recognition of Impairment from Substances in K12) Training, Anxiety in Elementary Students, Measles Updates, and Acute Management of Sprains and Strains: From RICE to PEACE & LOVE
- Vision Certification Training for all new school nurses



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

- Hearing Certification Training for all new school nurses
- Scoliosis Certification Training for all new school nurses
- BMI Certification Training for all new school nurses

Other Highlights of the Year:

- Tobacco prevention education and Love Notes presented on request
- Presented Youth Mental Health First Aid, instruction for parents, teachers, and other school staff in correct ways to address a youth that is experiencing a mental health or addiction challenge or crisis.
- Presented CPR for staff and nurses as needed.
- Presented Stop the Bleed to nurses to educate on correct presentation of the information for their staff and students
- Facilitated Medicaid in the Schools workshop on training and billing for personal care done in the school setting.
- Hosted What's Poverty got to do With It: Students and Families in Crisis in partnership with Arkansas Children's Hospital and DESE
- Assisted districts with Wellness Committee planning and requirements

Community Links

NWA Drug and Tobacco Free Coalition
NWA Hometown Health Improvement
NWA Trauma Regional Advisory Council
Washington County Hometown Health
Arkansas Children's Hospital

Benton County Community Coalition
Madison County Health Coalition
Region 1 Prevention Providers
NWA Suicide Coalition



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

Program: Teacher Center/Professional Development
Funding Source: Base
Funding: \$292,000
Competitive Grant: No
Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts: (INSIDE THE NORTHWEST CO-OP AREA)

Bentonville	Decatur	Elkins	Farmington
Fayetteville	Gentry	Gravette	Greenland
Huntsville	Lincoln	Pea Ridge	Prairie Grove
Rogers	Siloam Springs	Springdale	West Fork

Charter Schools:

Arkansas Arts Academy	Haas Hall Academy
Garfield Academy	Lisa Academy
Founders Classical Academy	Responsive Ed

Participating Districts: (OUTSIDE THE NORTHWEST CO-OP AREA)

Alma	Dumas	Lafayette
Alpena	Deer/Mt. Judea	Lamar
Ashdown	El Dorado	Lavaca
Bald Knob	Eureka Springs	Little Rock
Beebe	Foreman	Marion
Benton	Fort Smith	Mountain Home
Bergman	Green Forest	Mountainburg
Berryville	Greenwood	Mulberry/Pleasant View
Boonville	Hackett	Nashville
Cedarville	Harmony Grove	Omaha
Charleston	Harrison	Ozark
Clarksville	Jasper	Ozark Mountain
Cossatot River	Jonesboro	Russellville
Star City	Valley Springs	Van Buren
Waldron	Westside	

Participating Universities:

Harding University	John Brown University	NWA Technical Institute
U of A	Henderson University	Arkansas State University

Participating Co-ops:

Arch Ford	DeQueen-Mena	Boston Mountain
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Dawson
Northeast
Wilbur Mills

Guy Fenter
OUR

Northcentral
Southeast

Others Participating:

DESE

St. Joseph Catholic

Shiloh Christian

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic

The New School

Personnel:

Name: Missy Hixson

Position: Assistant Director/Teacher Center Coordinator

Degree: Ed.D.

Name: Tina Storm

Position: Administrative Assistant

Degree: A.A.

Goal:

To provide teachers, administrators, and support staff with professional growth opportunities in order to expand knowledge, enhance skills, and develop new strategies and techniques is the major focus. Professional Development and the Teacher Learning Center are the primary responsibilities of this program.

Program Summary:

This office has the responsibility of surveying, organizing, and providing K-12 professional development that supports school improvement for our sixteen member districts. During the 2025-2026 school year, Northwest ESC offered professional development opportunities that aligned with district needs and state initiatives. A comprehensive list of professional development workshops is provided at the end of this report.

The Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative and the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education continue to work together to support districts in the state initiatives and mandates, particularly those related to the Arkansas State Standards implementation process, the ATLAS assessment and other assessment systems, Beginning Principal/Superintendent Mentoring, Teacher Excellence Support System (TESS) and Leader Excellence And Development System (LEADS 2.0). These initiatives continue to be the driving forces for



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

increasing student achievement. All NWAESC districts have been involved in various professional development opportunities provided at the state and local levels. With the support of the Arkansas legislature, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, other education cooperatives, and the local districts, K-12 educators now have the resources to align their curriculum to the Arkansas content standards and to increase student achievement to meet these standards.

Major Highlights of the Year:

These opportunities included, but not limited to, trainings such as

- **Math-** Elevating Math Fluency, Illustrative Mathematics (IM), Building & Refining Ambitious Thinking Math Classrooms, Deep Dive into the 2023 Math Standards, and, on-site visits to schools to provide coaching, targeted assistance and support with mathematical practices, curriculum design and curriculum alignment. Principals were provided with training on the use of the Math Walkthrough Tool. Math forums were held for collaboration and discussion with school/district leaders and teachers to provide direction in mathematics for Northwest Arkansas.
- **Dyslexia-** Technical support and assistance with site visits, monthly coordinator meetings at the COOP, and weekly office hours via zoom for each NWA district was conducted. Workshops were held at the Co-op and in the districts upon request. Participants analyzed data at the district, school, and classroom levels and left with action steps for improving identification of risk and instruction for students with characteristics of dyslexia.
- **Science/STEM-** Science and STEM professional learning sessions for K-5 and content teachers focused on utilizing HQIM, three dimensional assessments, science ATLAS data, and sensemaking with phenomena. The sessions included both cooperative and district-hosted sessions led by Science/STEM Specialist. The Science/STEM Specialist also worked both on-site and virtually with schools through coaching, grade level PLCs, modeling/co-teaching and providing resources for science learning.
- **Collaborative Meetings/Forums-** NWAESC continued to host K-12 Administrators, Beginning Principals, Curriculum Leaders and Federal Programs Coordinators. Curriculum and Federal Programs leaders met regularly for DESE updates and NWAESC served as a liaison between DESE and districts. Topics for these groups were on an “as needed basis” due to the ongoing topics.



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- **Art, Music, Drama** – Since 1991, NWAESC has partnered with the Walton Arts Center (WAC) and the Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts to provide quality arts integrated education in this area. The Arkansas 1991 partnership provides professional development in the visual and performing arts to arts specialists, teaching artists and classroom teachers.
- **Specific Forums/Groups**-The Dyslexia Coordinators Group, Instructional Facilitator Group, and the Math Leadership Forum all meet regularly to bring district leaders together to discuss common professional development needs, share concerns and suggestions and to collaborate in a way that benefits all districts in the NWA region in these areas. These groups were led and supported by specialists in their specific areas, held both on-site and virtually. Specialists worked with Computer Science, Special Education Services, Social Studies/Arkansas History, Career and Technical Education, Health and Wellness etc. Additionally Curriculum and Federal Program Leaders meeting monthly for collaborative discussions and information updates, as well as listening to guest speakers of interest. These sessions were led by the Teacher Center Coordinator. Area Federal Programs Coordinator/Director, ESOL Director and GT Coordinators assisted with leading each of these “job alike” groups.

Program:	Technology
Funding Source:	Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Funding:	\$80,000



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

Competitive Grant: No
Restricted: Yes

Participating Districts:

Bentonville	Decatur	Elkins	Farmington
Fayetteville	Gentry	Gravette	Greenland
Huntsville	Lincoln	Pea Ridge	Prairie Grove
Rogers	Siloam Springs	Springdale	West Fork

Personnel:

Name: Jeremy Schlinker
Position: Technology Coordinator
Degree: N/A

Goal:

The goal of the Technology Program is to provide reliable technology resources, information, and support throughout our member district area. The Technology Coordinator is responsible for administering and maintaining the computer network, managing a computer training lab, supporting device carts, and overseeing more than 150 PCs, along with servers, printers, and other equipment across NWAESC and its two Early Childhood offsite locations. In addition to infrastructure support, the Technology Department is committed to delivering ongoing training and assistance to both member district staff and internal NWAESC personnel.

In recent years, the role of the Technology Director has evolved beyond traditional infrastructure management into a position with a strong emphasis on cybersecurity awareness and training, reflecting the growing importance of protecting district systems and data.

Program Summary:

The Technology Coordinator is a resource for districts to utilize as needed. The Technology Coordinator supplies pertinent information on new technologies, statewide initiatives, new cyber threats, cyber laws and training opportunities. Support for the NWAESC LAN, including server



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administration, device support and staff development training for Co-op staff is provided. In addition to the LAN the Technology Coordinator oversees phone systems, Wifi, Security Camera, computer user and email accounts, Audio and video systems, iPad management and cellular data service. Duties also include supporting the Co-op website. Another primary role of the Technology Coordinator is to support the hundreds of workshops held at the cooperative during the year. This includes supporting workshop presenters, loading specific software required for workshops, providing necessary hardware and network access for participants, and resolving technical issues as they arise. The Technology coordinator also assists with Cyber and computer use policy creation and management as well teaching Cyber awareness to all NWAESC employees.

Major Highlights of the Year:

- Supported NWAESC staff with on site meetings and PD offerings.
- Hosted a Cybersecurity ransomware readiness assessment and table to exercise.
- Taught a Cybersecurity PD for Lincoln School District staff
- Served as a contributing member of the Cyber Incident Response Team (CIRT), assisting in recovery efforts during a major cybersecurity incident affecting an Arkansas school district.
- Hosted eight (8) in person meetings/training for NWA Techs.
- Attended CIRT training to further knowledge of Cyber threats.
- Authored a month of the DESE Security Awareness Insider .
- Served on Act 504 state ACTC work group to help develop school standards for the second phase of Act 504 requirements.
- Co taught two sessions of PD in Pj's Virtual/Hybrid technology software training for Teachers.

Special Projects or Programs

AR Application (ArAPP)
Trained: 16+ districts



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

Description:

To better serve our member districts, Education Service Cooperatives, in collaboration with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, recognized the need for targeted support in the development and submission of the AR Application (AR App). In response, a structured support initiative was launched to assist districts and improve the overall quality of AR App submissions and create a district strategic plan.

Beginning in January and concluding each May, a series of monthly meetings has been established to guide districts through each component of the AR App. These sessions are designed to provide differentiated support tailored to the specific needs of schools, ensuring a more effective and high-quality application process.

Each month, participating schools receive training and guidance on a different element of the AR App. These components include:

- Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment
- Collecting and analyzing relevant data
- Forming an effective planning team
- Developing SMART goals
- Writing goals that align with both district-level data and the priorities outlined in LEARNS
- Aligning resource allocation with the goals identified in the district's strategic plan.

To ensure consistency and ease of implementation across all cooperatives, training modules and introductory communication materials were developed for shared use. This collaborative approach not only strengthens district capacity but also promotes alignment and accountability across the state.

This initiative reflects the education cooperative's continued commitment to supporting schools in achieving meaningful improvement through strategic planning and data-driven goal setting. Lastly, in regard to recent legislation, education service cooperatives provided feedback on each district prior to the district's submission to DESE.

Multilingual Liaison/Interpreter - Year 3

Description: In collaboration with a consortium of Northwest Arkansas school districts and Canopy NWA, the Multilingual Liaison/Interpreter program supports refugee families and students by strengthening communication between schools, multilingual parents, students, and community members. The program promotes student achievement and growth by helping families access information about school programs, services, activities, procedures, and community resources.



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This program focuses on supporting Afghan students and families who speak languages and dialects from Afghanistan, and on supporting students and families from Africa who speak Swahili or Kinyarwanda. The Multilingual Parent-Community Liaison/Interpreter also helps refer families to appropriate agencies and fosters an ongoing partnership between home and school.

Communities of Practice (CoP)-Year 3

Description:

Building Communities of Practice (CoP) is focused around Identifying Learning Loss and Accelerating Learning using High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM). DESE, in partnership with a national partner, will bring together groups of Arkansas system leaders (district and school teams). The Community of Practice will explore the leadership practices necessary to implement math and/or literacy instruction and learning supports that meet the moment, while staying focused on long-term recovery and acceleration goals.

The CoP includes a series of sessions that includes research and evidence-based strategies to address and plan for acceleration of learning using HQIM.

Grantee will select vendors from those approved by Rivet Education to contract with for professional services to engage in content coaching, with emphasis on HQIM. NWAESC collaborated with the vendor The Bailey Group as a partner in this grant for 2024-2026.

Arkansas Professional Educator Pathway (ArPEP)

Trained: 42 participants in Cohort 4

Trained: 31 participants in Cohort 3

Trained: 23 participants in Cohort 2

Trained: 18 participants in Cohort 1

Description:

The Arkansas Professional Educator Pathway (ArPEP) is an affordable two-year, work-based training, alternative education route to obtaining an Arkansas standard teaching license for college graduates or career changers holding at least a bachelor's degree. ArPEP's goal is to prepare learner-ready teachers to meet the growing demand of the teacher pipeline in Arkansas. The primary objective of ArPEP is to train future educators on how to build classroom communities, design effective lesson plans, implement evidence-based instructional strategies, and use assessments to facilitate student learning.

The ArPEP facilitator will prepare educators who understand what accomplished beginning



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Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Annual Report

teaching looks like in a classroom, and more importantly, demonstrate how effective teachers design lessons, provide instruction, build classroom communities, and utilize assessments to facilitate student learning.

Inclusion Specialist Grant from Walton Family Foundation

- **14 Professional Development Sessions provided for 425 participants**
- **82 instances of technical assistance and support provided**

Description:

The Special Education Consultant has provided fourteen training sessions in NWA. She has provided eighty-two instances of technical assistance, and coaching for two NWA districts. The purpose of this work is to equip educators with methods for ensuring meaningful access and participation for students with disabilities. Educators are encouraged to maintain firm learning goals while offering flexible means for participation.

Professional Development Sessions:

- Collaborative Teaching
 - Specially Designed Instruction
 - Universal Design for Learning
 - Special Education for Novice Educators
 - Inclusive Practices
-

Electronic fingerprinting

Number fingerprinted: 1,564 (5/26/26)

Description:

Arkansas State, FBI, and Child Maltreatment Central registry background checks are required for student teaching internship, first-time licensure and all licensure renewals, first employment or change of employment in public schools, charter schools or education service cooperatives. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education deemed that the Arkansas Education Cooperatives would perform all fingerprints needed.

- Currently, we have three employees trained to conduct fingerprints. These employees must work fingerprinting into their already full-time positions.
-

ChanceLight Behavior School



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Description: The ChanceLight Behavior School is a regional behavior support program developed in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education, ChanceLight, and participating Northwest Arkansas school districts. The program was created in response to concerns expressed by area superintendents regarding increasing student behavioral needs and the need for a more intensive, structured level of support for students whose needs may extend beyond what can be provided in the traditional school setting.

Hosted on a Bentonville campus site, the program serves students from eight participating NWAESC districts. ChanceLight provides specialized staffing, therapeutic support, and behavior-focused programming designed to help students build the skills necessary for success in school. The model allows districts to access a regional service while maintaining a focus on individualized student needs, family engagement, and collaboration with the student's home district.

Through this pilot, NWAESC and its partners are working to provide a consistent, high-quality option for students requiring more intensive behavioral support. The goal of the program is to help students stabilize, develop appropriate social-emotional and behavioral skills, continue academic progress, and transition successfully back to their home school setting when appropriate.

NWAESC Impact on Student Performance 2025-2026

In accordance with Act 802 (2023), the following data have been collected from NWAESC Districts regarding impact of the cooperative on student growth

Program	Impact
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CTE	The CTE Specialist provided professional development and technical assistance to districts across the region focused on high-quality Career and Technical Education programs, pathway alignment, industry-recognized credentials, and workforce readiness initiatives. Support was provided to multiple districts through coaching, technical assistance visits, program implementation support, and collaborative PLC meetings focused on strengthening CTE instruction and student outcomes. NWAESC had a cohort of 45 teachers that were endorsed for career orientation, career awareness, and work-based learning.
Early Childhood/Special Education	NWAESC Early Childhood/Special Education Program served 115 children in 1988 and has increased to 697 on December 1 2025. We will have provided special education services to over 868 students. Ninety-five percent of our services are in community settings in the NWA region. The Early Childhood/Special Education has a satellite office in Benton County to serve families and schools throughout the NWA region with the home office in Farmington.
Math	The math specialist supported four (4) focus schools, as well as other schools in the region in the implementation of HQIM, providing coaching cycles with seven teachers throughout the year. The Math Walkthrough Tool was presented to 76 principals throughout the region. Currently 88% of the NWA schools have adopted math HQIM. The remaining two districts have committees designated to choose a HQIM for the 25-26 school year. The math specialist has provided resources and training in the importance of adopting an HQIM to both districts.
Mentoring/Novice	In 2025-26, 955 teachers were identified as year 1, 2, or 3 novice teachers. In 2024-2025, 940 teachers were identified as novice teachers. This was an increase of 15 novice teachers over one year, who were supported by Mentoring Specialists. NWAESC retention rate of novice teachers was 91% (7% were undecided at the time of feedback, and 2% left the profession). Additionally, we supported 59 teachers through their Master Professional Educator training and 74 teachers through their Lead Professional Educator training with NIET. 69 teachers were trained as Experienced Mentor Teachers, with up to 205 more Experienced Mentor Teachers possible through summer training opportunities.
ArPEP	In 2025-26, NWAESC had a cohort of 67 ArPEP teachers: 42 first-year and 25 second-year. All received at least 2 classroom observations with



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	coaching in Domains 2 and 3 of TESS. 24 second-year teachers met their licensure requirements on time and received a standard license, graduating from the program.
Dyslexia	The total number of Students Receiving Dyslexia Intervention Services in grades K-12 during the 2025-2026 school year was approximately 4,250. The COOP Specialist observed 126 dyslexia lessons in cooperation with all 16 district coordinators. 100% of districts participated in the dyslexia day walks and dyslexia PD impacted 437 participants between July 2025 and April of 2026.
Science	The science specialist provided training for all districts on the HQIM currently available for science and supported five districts in the implementation of an HQIM through coaching and PLC meetings. Currently, 63% of districts in the Co-op region have implemented HQIM in at least one grade band.. Throughout the school year, the science specialist provided training on the state's science classroom walkthrough tool for principals and instructional facilitators from every district and conducted multiple walkthroughs with leadership in seven districts.



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NWAESC Preliminary Performance
Data
ATLAS Spring 2026



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Professional Development Summary Report

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