



Wilbur D. Mills  
Education Service Cooperative

# WDMESC

Annual Report  
on Operations  
2024-2025

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Director’s Annual Memo

The Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative remains committed to providing progressive, high-quality services to the school districts we serve. In the 2024-2025 academic year, we continued to support our districts in implementing the Arkansas State Standards while ensuring access to high-quality professional development. Additionally, we have taken on the crucial task of assisting districts with the implementation of the Professional Learning Community Model.

As a liaison between the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education and our member districts, our role has expanded with the introduction of the LEARNS Act. Historically, WDMESC Specialists provided support to any school in need. However, due to funding reductions, our team of Content Area Specialists decreased from seven to three. Despite these challenges, collaborative efforts between the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, our member districts, and our cooperative resulted in all but one district being removed from ACT 1082 level of support.

Our Board members remain actively engaged in guiding the cooperative with a strong shared vision. The 2024-2025 annual report, prepared by our staff, outlines the programs and grants provided to our 17 school districts and collaborative partners. The Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative employs 78 individuals, some of whom are housed directly in schools and preschools.

The Arkansas Department of Education provides base funding of \$40ed8,618, with our total budget amounting to approximately \$6 million.

Shared Programs and Services

One of our primary objectives is to administer programs efficiently and effectively for our member schools. As a result, our 17 school districts, or portions thereof, share joint programs, including:

APSCN Field Support	Media Services
College and Career Readiness Prep Program	Medicaid Billing Services
Content Literacy	Migrant Education Program
C.T.E./Perkins Consortium Coordinator	Professional Development Programs
Digital Learning Consortium	Psychological Services
Early Childhood Special Education Program	Recruitment and Retention Services
Gifted and Talented Coordinator	School Health Nurse
LEA Special Education Supervisor	School Recruitment Employment Application Software
Licensure Assessment Support	Science Specialist
Literacy/Dyslexia Specialist	Teacher Center Services
Math Specialist	Technology Services

Arkansas education cooperatives have long served as key implementation support agents for new state initiatives. The Wilbur D. Mills Cooperative has played a crucial role in delivering the professional development and capacity-building necessary to bring these initiatives to life. Moving forward, we will continue to provide comprehensive support tailored to the evolving needs of our public schools.

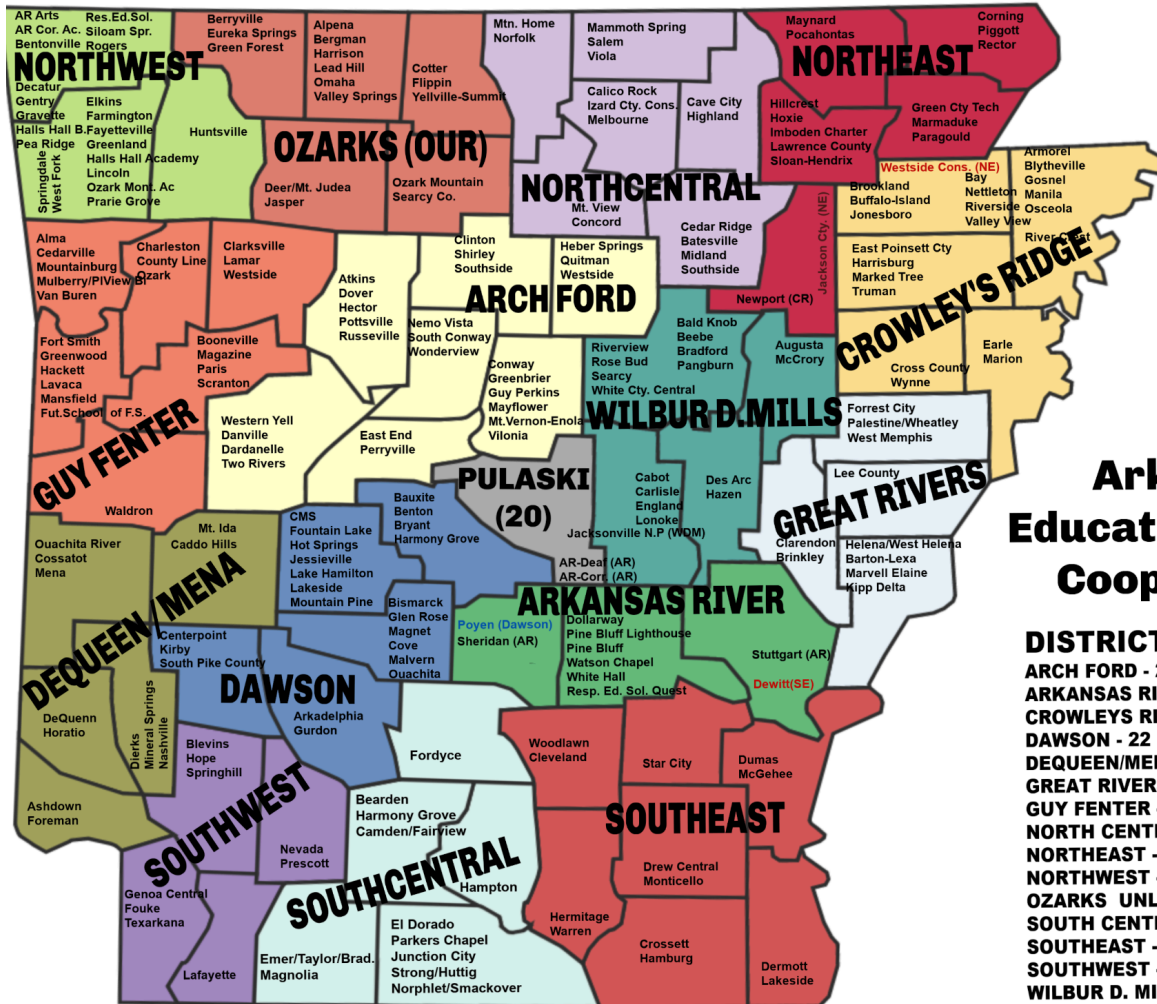
Our mission remains steadfast: to support and serve our school districts in their pursuit of providing a high-quality education for all students. We are dedicated to delivering these services in the most effective and efficient manner possible. As we prepare for the challenges and opportunities of the coming year, the staff of the Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative remains committed to excellence in service and support.

Brad Horn, Director  
Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative

# WDMESC Mission Statement

WDMESC exists to assist their member school districts in

- Meeting their local educational goals;
- Implementing educational priorities;
- Building capacity of teachers, administrators, and school board members; and
- Improving student learning, growth, and achievement.

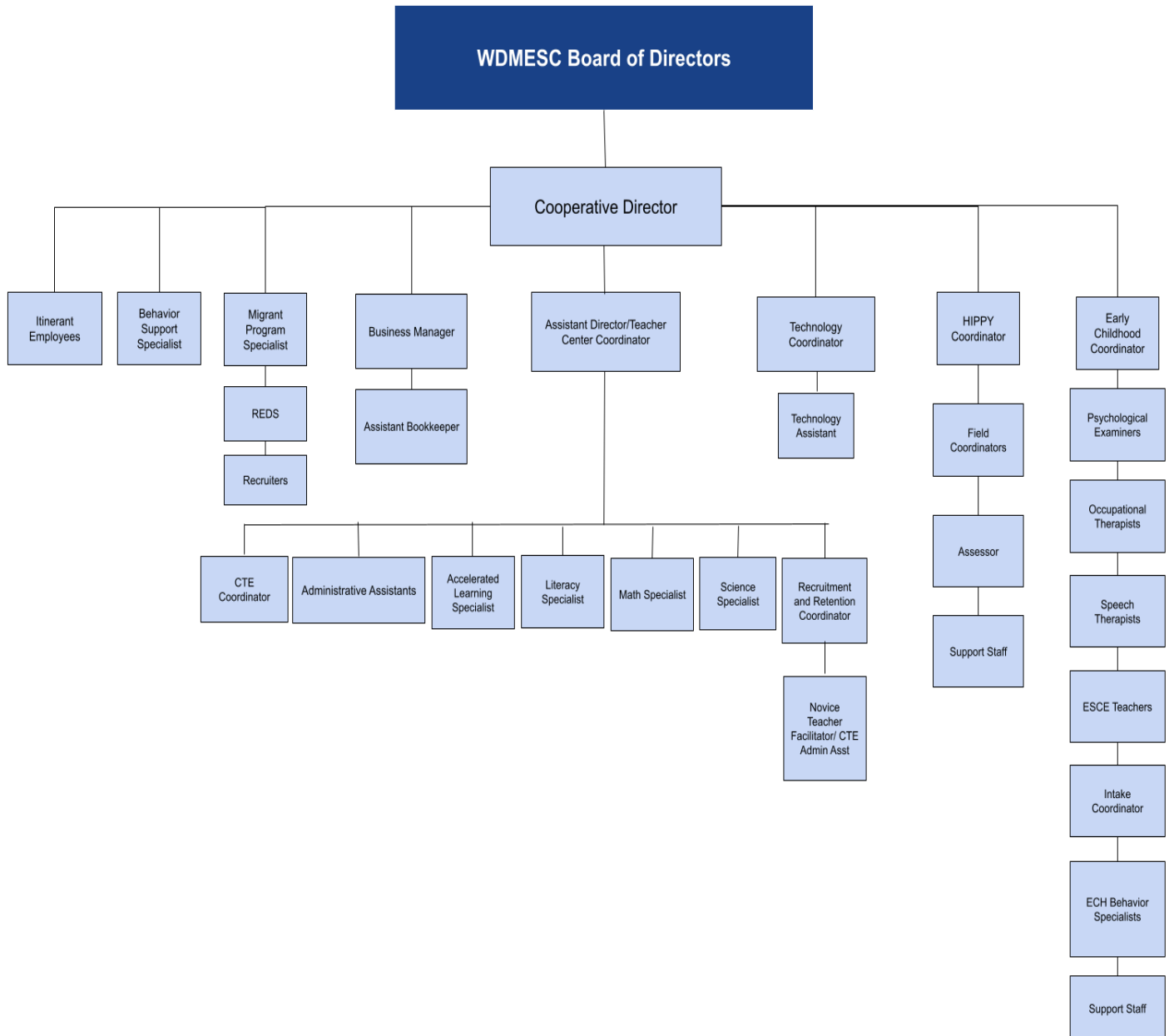


## Arkansas Education Service Cooperatives

### DISTRICTS SERVED

ARCH FORD - 26  
 ARKANSAS RIVER - 10  
 CROWLEY'S RIDGE - 22  
 DAWSON - 22  
 DEQUEEN/MENA - 12  
 GREAT RIVERS - 10  
 GUY FENTER - 22  
 NORTH CENTRAL - 16  
 NORTHEAST - 15  
 NORTHWEST - 22  
 OZARKS UNLIMITED RESOURCE - 16  
 SOUTH CENTRAL - 12  
 SOUTHEAST - 14  
 SOUTHWEST - 9  
 WILBUR D. MILLS - 17

# WDMESC Organizational Flow Chart



## School Districts served in Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Jacksonville North Pulaski, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, White County Central

### Officers of the Board of Directors for 2024-2025

Name	Position	School District
Dr. Jeremy Owoh	President	Jacksonville North Pulaski
Dr. Marc Sherrell	Vice President	Des Arc
Mr. Pharis Smith	Secretary	White County Central

### Members of the Board of Directors for 2024-2025

Name	Position	School District
Cathy Tanner	Superintendent	Augusta
Dr. Jed Davis	Superintendent	Bald Knob
Dr. Chris Nail	Superintendent	Beebe
Sarah Wickliffe	Superintendent	Bradford
Dr. Tony Thurman	Superintendent	Cabot
BJ Greene	Superintendent	Carlisle
Dr. Marc Sherrell	Superintendent	Des Arc
Barry Scott	Superintendent	England
Andy Barrett	Superintendent	Hazen
Dr. Jeremy Owoh	Superintendent	Jacksonville North Pulaski
Jeff Senn	Superintendent	Lonoke
Scott Waymire	Superintendent	McCrory
David Rolland	Superintendent	Pangburn
Stan Stratton	Superintendent	Riverview
Allen Blackwell	Superintendent	Rose Bud
Dr. Bobby Hart	Superintendent	Searcy
Pharis Smith	Superintendent	White County Central

### Teacher Center Committee Members for 2024-2025

Name	Position	School District
Becky Coyle	Administrator	Augusta
Candace Anselmi	Elementary Administrator	Bald Knob
Clint Williams	Elementary Principal	Beebe
Jeremy Robertson	Secondary Teacher	Bradford
Jill Fletcher	Administrator @ Large	Cabot
Megan Aukes	Secondary Principal	Carlisle
Billy Paschal	Mid Level Principal	Des Arc
Melissa Cason	Secondary Teacher	England
Angie Hambrick	Library Media Specialist	Hazen
Sydney Miller	Secondary Teacher	Jacksonville North Pulaski
Theresa Lawson	Mid Level Teacher	Lonoke
Glen Campbell	High School Principal	McCrory
Melissa Allen	Elementary Teacher	Pangburn
Shannon Roach	Middle School Teacher	Riverview
Amanda Frizzel	Secondary Teacher	Rose Bud
Sherri Jackson	Elementary Teacher	Searcy
Deana Smith	Mid Level Teacher	White County Central

## Education Service Cooperative Annual Report

**Date:** 01/29/2025      **LEA#:** 73-20      **ESC#:** 15  
**ESC Name:** Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative  
**Physical Address:** 114 N. Main St., P.O. Box 850, Beebe, AR 72012  
**Phone Number:** 501-882-5467  
**Director:** Brad Horn  
**Teacher Center Coordinator:** Lesa Grooms  
**Names of Counties Served:** Lonoke, Prairie, North Pulaski, White, Woodruff  
**Number of Districts:** 17      **Number of Students:** 31,092  
**Number of Teachers:** 3,281

### Governance:

How is the co-op governed? Board of Directors  
How many members are on the Board? 17  
Executive Committee? N/A  
How many times did the Board meet? 11  
When is the regular meeting? 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of month  
Date of current year's annual meeting: June 21, 2023  
Does the co-op have a Teacher Center Committee? Yes    If yes, then:  
How many are on the Teacher Center Committee? 17  
How many members are teachers? 9  
How many times did the Teacher Center Committee meet? 3  
When is the regular meeting? Fall, Winter, and Spring  
When was the most recent survey/needs assessment conducted? December 2024  
Have written policies been filed with the Arkansas Department of Education? Yes

## **Arkansas Cooperatives Finance Overview**

Arkansas Educational Cooperatives are funded from three primary sources: state, local, and federal.

State funds are awarded to Educational Service Cooperatives through targeted grants. The grant budgets and goals originate from the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Grant funds are reimbursed by DESE after program appropriate expenditures occur. The grants include targeted funds for reading specialists/coaches, math specialists, dyslexia specialists, science specialists, technology specialists, special education, curriculum training, and other grants as determined by DESE. The funds are carried over only by special permission from the Department of Education. DESE also provides \$408,000 annually to each cooperative for general operations. State funds represented 34.54% of all cooperative revenues in FY24 or \$59,312,684.

Local revenue is money that comes to a cooperative from local school districts by agreement. The services associated with these agreements include staff shared between districts, professional development services, special education testing, interest income, cooperative operations, repair services, and other special projects as determined by participating districts and the cooperative. Local funds accounted for 37.05% of cooperative revenue or \$63,636,084 in FY24.

Federal funds are governed by federal & state laws and rules for each program. They are reimbursed by DESE after program appropriate expenditures are made. Balances are regulated by federal rules. Federal Programs operated through cooperatives include the Migrant program, Arkansas Better Chance, the Perkins Program, and Special Education ages 3-5. Currently cooperatives have ARP ESSER funds that are associated with ABC, Early Childhood Special Education, and the Homeless program. For the fiscal year 2024, the cooperative Federal revenue total was \$48,136,507 or 28.03% of all FY24 revenue.

Total revenue for 23-24 was \$171,741,194. This includes the broad categories above, plus revenue of \$655,920. Additional revenue occurred in select cooperatives and included insurance claims, food service programs for students, and other revenue streams not common to the group.



## WDMESC Staffing

Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative 2024-2025

S=State, F=Federal, M=Medicaid, B=Base Funds, D=District Allocations

Name	Position	Funding Source	New Hire	Resigned
Adair, Katie	Early Childhood Teacher	S		
Allen, Pamela	Math Instructional Specialist	S		
Alvarado, Lourdes	Migrant Student Support	F		
Baker, Abby	Early Childhood Teacher	S		X
Ball, Jessica	HIPPY Field Coordinator	S		
Bass, Amber	Professional Learning Specialist-Pangburn & White County Central School Districts	D	X	
Baum, Alton	Custodial/Maintenance	B		
Bell, Kristin	Early Childhood Teacher	S		X
Berner, Robyn	Early Childhood Programmer	S		
Bettencourt, Baileann	Early Childhood Teacher	S		
Bowls, Jillian	School Psychological Examiner-Rose Bud & Pangburn School Districts	D	X	
Brewster, Amy	Early Childhood Teacher	S	X	
Brister, Timothy	Math Specialist	S		X
Bryan, Nicole	Early Childhood Teacher	S	X	
Carrigan, Benjamin	Science Specialist	S		
Carroll, Hartley	Early Childhood Speech Language Path Asst.	S	X	
Chambers, Dahnah	Early Childhood Administrative Assistant	S		
Chena, Sandra	Migrant Program Student Support Specialist	F		
Cherry, Alicia	Early Childhood Teacher	S		
Clark, Jason	HIPPY Director	S		
Clark, Wendy	Early Childhood Speech Therapist	S		

Collins, DeAnna	Early Childhood Behavior Consultant	S		
Cook, Johnnie	Early Childhood Intake Coordinator	S		
Counts, Gabby	Early Childhood Paraprofessional	S		
Crider-West, Daphne	Early Childhood Speech Therapist	S		
Cross, Kyle	Computer Technologist-Riverview School District	D		
Douell, Laruen	Early Childhood Speech Therapist	S		
Farfan, Lily	Migrant Program Field Recruiter	F		
Foster, Cheri	Early Childhood Teacher/ECH Consultant	S	X	
Frazier, Katlynn	School Psychological Examiner-Beebe & Riverview School Districts	D		
Fuller, Karen	Migrant Program Specialist	F		
Gajeski, Karen	School Psychology Specialist - Beebe School District	D		
Gerlach, Amy	Early Childhood Programmer	S		
Gibson, Christy	Behavior Support Consortium Coordinator	D		
Gibson, Jordan	Early Childhood Paraprofessional	S		
Gilbert, Stephanie	Early Childhood Occupational Therapist	S		
Gillion, Christie	General Business Manager	B		
Ginn, Lori	School Psychology Specialist	D		X
Graham, Amber	Early Childhood Program Coordinator	S		
Grooms, Lesa	Assistant Director/Teacher Center Coordinator	B		
Guyot, Kerry	Early Childhood Speech Therapist	S		X
Hall, Kimberly R	Early Childhood Teacher	S		
Harris, Heidi	Migrant Program REDS	F		
Hazelip, Jessica	Early Childhood Teacher	S	X	
Heidelberg, Stephanie	HIPPY Field Coordinator	S		

Heineman, Alexandria	Early Childhood Behavioral Support Specialists	S	X	
Henson, Sarah	Early Childhood Teacher	S		
Hines, Courtney	Novice Teacher Recruiter	S		X
Hofheinz, Monica	Early Childhood Speech Therapist	S		
Horn, Brad	Director	B		
Hurley, Kimberly	Early Childhood Occupational Therapist	S		
Jeffery, Helen	School Psychological Examiner	D		X
Jefford, Ginger	Early Childhood Programmer	S		
Jobe, Colleen	Early Childhood Local Lead Coordinator	S		
Keller, Suzanne	HIPPY Administrative Assistant	S		
Kennard, Tuer	Novice Teacher Facilitator/CTE Admin Assistant	S		
Knighton, Misty	School Psychological Examiner-Beebe School District	D		
Kuykendall, Katherine	Early Childhood Speech Therapist	S		X
Lambert, Carmen	Migrant Program Field Recruiter	F		
Leonard, Breanna	Early Childhood Teacher	S	X	
Liles, Parker	Early Childhood Intake Processor	S		
Lynn, Juanita	Early Childhood Teacher	S		X
McConnell, Chelsea	Early Childhood Teacher	S	X	
McDonnel, Samantha	HIPPY Field Coordinator	S		X
Mershon, Jade	Early Childhood Teacher	S	X	
Mikeal, Duyen	Early Childhood Speech Therapist	S	X	
Miller, Rebecca	SPED LEA Supervisor	D	X	
Mitchell, Marie	Early Childhood Teacher	S		
Moore, Greg	Literacy Specialist	S		X

Osborn, Karen	Administrative Assistant	D	X	
Park, Jennifer	Advanced Learning Specialist	D		
Parker, Misty	Early Childhood Programmer	S		
Poe, Kristy	Early Childhood Speech Therapist	S		
Quinn, Angela	PDC Administrative Assistant	S		
Ramey, Kelly	HIPPY Field Coordinator	S		
Ray, Jenny	Behavior Support Consortium Coach	D		
Reedy, Robert	CTE Coordinator	S/F		
Rodgers, Maguire	Technology Center Program Coordinator	B	X	
Roe, Sandra	Science Specialist	S		X
Rose, Tenisha	Early Childhood Teacher	S		
Sanchez, Jessica	Early Childhood Teacher	S		X
Sanders, Victoria	Early Childhood Speech Therapist	S		
Seekins, Natasha	Early Childhood Administrative Assistant	S		
Sherrill, Jackie	Business Office Assistant	B	X	
Singletary, Brook	Instructional Technology Specialist	S/B		
Smith, Lucas	Early Childhood Teacher/Examiner	S		
Smith, Melissa	Early Childhood Teacher	S		
Spann, Wendy	HIPPY Field Coordinator	S		
Stephenson, Michelle	Early Childhood Teacher	S	X	
Thompson, April	Fingerprint Technician	B		
Ussery, Lauren	Literacy/Dyslexia Specialist	S		
Vannada, Kristen	Early Childhood Teacher	S		
Verkler-Yates, Morgan	Novice Teacher Mentoring Coordinator	S	X	
Wallis, Shayne	Computer Technologist-White County Central School District	D		

Watson, Jamie	Medicaid-eSchool Assistant	S/M		
Watson, Tyler	Technology Center Program Coordinator	B		X
Weatherford, Crystal	HIPPY Field Coordinator	S		
Williams, Tammy	Early Childhood Special Education Teacher/Programmer	S		
Wolfe, Misty	Assistant Bookkeeper	S		
Woodham, Lindsey	Early Childhood Teacher	S	X	

## Teacher Center

[Needs Assessment Administrator Only](#)  
[User Satisfaction Survey](#)

Appendix A is 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. Included is a cumulative total of participants. See Professional Development Activities Report attached.

Does the co-op provide media services to schools? YES

Approximate the number of titles in media center: 250

Does the co-op provide delivery to the districts? YES

How many districts participate in the media program? 17

How many titles (including dup counts) were provided to schools during this current year? 50

Do districts contribute dollars to the media services? NO

How are media charges per district determined (formal or per ADM)? Please describe: N/A

Does the co-op operate a “make-and- take” center for teachers? YES - by appointment

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).

- Number of Teacher Participants: 18
- Number of Other Participants: 4

## **Administrative Services**

- Administrators and Local Board members professional learning
- APSCN Field Support
- Assessment data analysis
- Bookkeeping assistance
- Business Management training
- College Career Readiness Prep. administration/collaboration
- Computer Technician
- Conduct Annual Needs Assessment/planning assistance
- Cooperative purchasing
- Curriculum alignment/curriculum review
- Early Childhood Special Education services
- Early Childhood vision and hearing screening
- ESC Works support
- ESOL Support/Migrant Student Identification
- Evaluation procedures- assist/support (CTE, GT, SPED)
- Fingerprinting Services
- Gifted and Talented program assistance/professional development
- Grant writing assistance
- HIPPPY (Home Instruction for the Parents of Preschool Youngsters)
- Legislative Updates for school leaders
- Math/Science/Dyslexia Specialists
- Medicaid billing
- Mentor programs: Novice Teacher Mentor, Beginning Admin Mentor
- Migrant Education Program Coordinator
- Paraprofessional PRAXIS administration site
- Perkins Consortium/CTE Coordinator
- Personnel application software
- Praxis Support for educators and educator candidates
- Professional Development
- Psychological Services
- Ready for Learning collaborative partner
- Recruitment and Retention of educators
- School Health Nurse
- Social Emotional Support for certified, classified district staff
- Special education services/LEA Supervisors
- Technology training and support

## Direct Services to Students

Student services provided through the co-op:

- ACT Prep
- America's Battle of the Books Competition
- Behavioral Support Consortium
- Chess Tournament
- Coding Competition
- College/Career Fair
- Early Childhood Special Education 3-5 years of age: special education teachers, special education programmers, educational examiners, speech/language pathology, behavior intervention, occupational therapy, physical therapy, audiology screening services, vision screening and consulting, paraprofessional, transition to public school
- Gifted/Talented programs: 17 participating districts, Chess, Quiz Bowl Tournament, Global Domination, Community Service Day, STEM Day, Game Day, Critical Thinking Day, Youth Entrepreneur Showcase, and Stock Market Game
- HIPPY (Parents as Teachers, Transition to Kindergarten)
- Itinerant Teachers (LEA Supervisors, Educational School Psychologists)
- Migrant Support Services
- Online Digital Instruction (Pearson & Virtual Arkansas)
- Robotics Support for Programs and Competition
- Open Sci Ed Kits with training for educators
- STEM Day support
- Computer Science/Cybersecurity - Capture the Flag

## Anecdotal Reports

Please attach three or four 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.

1. Behavior Consortium - WDMESC provided a Behavior Support Coordinator and two coaches to interested districts. The program began with Administrator Training in August 2023. Administrator Training was conducted by the Coordinator and coaches. Training was then provided to teachers and counselors. The Behavior Consortium fostered a culture of understanding and intervention, ensuring that students received the support they needed for academic and social success. The Behavior Consortium continued into the 2024-2025 school year. Augusta School District, Bradford School District, Riverview School District, Bald Knob School District, and Carlisle School District participated in this Consortium.
2. HQIM/Communities of Practice Grant - Through the Communities of Practice Grant, WDMESC is providing High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) support to participating districts. England School District participated in this grant. The partnership between WDMESC and Bailey Education Group, is a collaborative effort geared towards empowering districts with tailored assistance in implementing HQIM strategies. Through this cooperative effort, districts are afforded the opportunity to engage directly with Bailey Education Group's seasoned Project Manager, facilitating personalized consultations to address the unique needs of the district. One aspect of this support system is the provision of coaching and guidance, where experienced professionals work closely with educators to navigate HQIM integration. Through planning and support, educators are empowered to integrate high-quality instructional materials into their curriculum, thereby enriching the learning experiences of students. By leveraging the collective expertise and resources available through this cooperative endeavor, districts should create learning environments that foster academic achievement and student success.



3. The DESE provided funding to school districts to support Arkansas LEARNS through professional learning communities. The goal is establish PLCs that focus on: Foundational Literacy/Science of Reading, Strengthening Instructional Quality, Strengthening Career Pathways, and Multi-tiered Systems of Support. Each district received funds based on student enrollment. WDMESC partnered with districts through consortiums. Six districts partnered with the cooperative to purchase the services of individuals who are working with the districts in this capacity.

### **WDMESC Support of Level III and Level IV School Districts (Act 1082)**

WDMESC works to support one (1) district in our region who is in Level IV Support Status. Other districts who were in need of Level III and Level IV support were able to come off the list for support early in the year. Wilbur Mills Specialists, the DESE team and school leaders formulated plans to assist the educators in assessment of learning, analysis of data, and implementation of plans for the remediation of learning loss. Additionally, Wilbur Mills Specialists aided the district with the review and selection of curriculum aligned with the Science of Reading if applicable.

Other support for Level III and IV schools included: data analysis, working in PLCs, targeted professional development such as Morphology, DOK (Depth of Knowledge) professional development and classroom support, and Science of Reading (SoR) professional development and classroom support.

Math and Science Specialists focused their work with Districts with D and F letter grades. They coached teachers concerning data, instructional strategies, and provided professional development as well as classroom support.

### **WDMESC Regional ESOL Support**

Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Regional ESOL support was developed in collaboration with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Learning Services Unit to improve the teaching and learning process for English Learners (ELs) and to assist with disseminating information regarding curricula choices and implementation. Each superintendent names an ESOL coordinator for their district. All 17 districts are invited and encouraged to participate in this work.

ESOL Coordinators meet quarterly at the co-op to collaborate and discuss current issues, policies, updates, and significant trends related to ESOL Programming and EL services. These sessions are designed as an added layer of support for districts in ensuring they are up to date regarding compliance with the Office of Civil Rights and Federal and State laws pertaining to ESOL services. Additionally and equally as important, these sessions include discussion of effective instructional models, practices and curriculum for providing English Learners with both English Language Development (ELD) and Meaningful Access to Core Content (CCP).

The meetings are facilitated by the DESE Central Arkansas Region English Learner Specialist, Carrie Acrey, who works ongoing collaboratively with district ESOL Coordinators to update the priority agenda topics and provide guidance, training, and/or helpful resources and tools to support specific needs identified. At times, ESOL Coordinators with specific knowledge or skills related to agenda topics or other experts in the field are invited to present to meet the group's needs. While the official quarterly ESOL Coordinator meetings are targeted for district ESOL Coordinators, Coordinators are often encouraged to bring members of their ESOL teams to collaborate on projects and network with other districts.

The ESOL meetings provide opportunities for districts to share and discuss with their colleagues from other districts. ESOL Coordinators who take advantage of this network support one another, share ideas, share best practices and brainstorm barriers to providing the best educational experiences for students. This community builds capacity across districts and allows them to better serve their English Learner (EL) population with the overall objective being that all WDMESC districts' are continuously striving to improve ESOL programming/instruction so that all ELs can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs and services and have access to high-quality instruction.

In addition to these quarterly meetings, district ESOL leadership, teachers, and administrators serving ELs can participate in ESOL-focused PD sessions provided by the DESE EL Specialist and other members of the state English Learner Unit. The sessions are intended to build on educators' knowledge and increase capacity in specific ESOL practices. Some examples of sessions offered are outlined below:

### **-ESOL Training Hub**

A collection of short videos on all things English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) facilitated by the DESE Office of English for Speakers of Other Languages. The goal of the videos is to build capacity in educators in their basic terminology and acronyms related to ESOL, become familiar with the process for identifying English Learners, and gain essential knowledge about compliance with federal regulations.

### **- ESOL 101: The Essentials**

ESOL 101: Training for novice ESOL coordinators and teachers.

This training is a 6-hour in-person interactive session for novice coordinators, administrators, and teachers working with English Learners. This comprehensive session will include the following topics:

- Identification and Placement of Language Minority Students/English Learners
  - HLUS (Home Language Usage Survey)
  - ELPA21/Alt ELPA21 Screener
- LPAC (Language Proficiency Assessment Committee)
- English Language Acquisition Process
- Instructional Strategies for use with English Learners
- Assessment and Evaluation for English Learners
- ESOL Program Compliance and Documentation
- LIEP (Language Instruction Education Program) Codes

### **- ESOL 2.0 - A Deep Diver into Best Practices for Working with English Learners**

ESOL 2.0 - A Deep Diver into Best Practices for Working with English Learners

For Veteran Program Administrators and Teachers:

This training is a 6-hour in-person interactive session for veteran coordinators, administrators, and teachers experienced in working with English Learners. This comprehensive session includes the following topics:

- ELP Standards
- English Language Development
- Meaningful Access to Core Content
- ELs and Dyslexia
- Gifted Education and ELs
- ELs with Potential Disabilities
- Program Evaluation
- Legal References
- Resources

### **-Virtual ESOL Coordinator Meetings**

ESOL coordinators and ESOL enthusiasts are invited to attend up to 2-hour Zoom sessions with special topics and guest speakers.

### **-Novice ESOL Coordinator Support**

This additional support is available for new (less than three years in the position) ESOL coordinators. Coordinators will be equipped with information concerning back-to-school and year-long policies and procedures for serving English Learners (ELs) and overseeing the compliance and documentation associated with the district's English for Speakers of Other Languages program.

### **-ARKTESOL & Other Offerings**

ESOL coordinators are also invited to attend bi-annual state-wide ESOL Coordinator meetings (virtually this year) facilitated by the ADE DESE ESOL Director and English Learner Unit. Additionally, all are invited and many attend the annual ARKTESOL conference for additional networking with other statewide coordinators and experts in the field.

### **WDMESC Gifted and Talented Professional Learning Community**

The WDMESC GT PLCs were developed in collaboration with the Arkansas Department of Education to improve the teaching and learning process for gifted students and to assist with the dissemination of information regarding curricula choices, advanced options, acceleration, and implementation. All 17 of our districts are invited to participate in this work. Each district has a GT coordinator to oversee their curriculum, program options, proper documentation, and compliance with the rules and regulations set forth by the ADE. An invitation is extended to each coordinator to attend quarterly virtual meetings held at the co-op throughout the year. The meetings serve as means to keep districts in compliance with the GT rules and regs, to roll out and explain new initiatives, and implementation of curriculum. Experts in the field are also invited to present at these meetings or via Zoom to meet the needs of the group. The PLC meetings provide opportunities for districts to share and discuss with their colleagues from other districts. This community builds capacity across districts and allows them to better serve their gifted population by sharing curriculum and other materials.

### **WDMESC Counseling Professional Learning Community**

The WDMESC Counseling Professional Learning Community (PLC) was created this year to bring together school counselors to collaborate, share strategies, and deepen their practice around student success and long-term planning. This dynamic PLC serves as a hub for innovation and professional growth, focusing on the unique and evolving needs of students from elementary through high school. The quarterly meetings include discussions focused on accelerated learning options for students as early as 5th grade, ensuring that all learners have access to opportunities that keep them engaged and challenged. The PLC prioritizes strategic planning through student success plans, encouraging a proactive, student-centered approach to academic and career readiness. We have also explored the high-wage, high-demand career pathways starting in elementary school, helping students connect learning to real-world opportunities from an early age. By fostering open dialogue, sharing resources, and promoting data-informed decision making, the WDMESC Counseling PLC is committed to helping counselors lead with vision, equity, and impact.

### **WDMESC Assistant Superintendent / Curriculum Directors' Collaborative Meetings**

The Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative Curriculum Directors Job Alike group was established to improve the teaching and learning process for all content areas and to assist with the dissemination of information regarding curricula choices and implementation. All 17 of our districts are invited to participate in this collaboration. Each district designates staff to attend regular meetings held throughout the year.

The meetings serve as a venue for ADE personnel and other outside consultants to share with district leaders regarding the introduction of new requirements, explain initiatives, rules, curriculum updates, and other pertinent information. The meetings provide opportunities for leaders to share and discuss with colleagues from other districts.

The meetings in the 2024-2025 school year had several areas of interest. Lance LeVar, from LeVar Consulting, presented Title IX information and training updates to the group. Dr. Morelan from Arkansas Tech spoke to the group concerning Education Leadership. With the growing need for leaders in education, Dr. Morelan shared ideas to assist districts. Amber Moss from Covey Education, presented information about self care and habits for success. Another presenter was Natalie Gosdin, who shared information about resource mapping and how to utilize employees effectively.

### **WDMESC Principals' Collaborative Meetings**

The Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative Principals' meetings focus is to assist building leaders as they enable their teachers to increase and improve learning opportunities for all students. The Principals Collaborative meetings are designed to enhance the understanding of current educational initiatives and unpack information. Our goal is to provide explanation and clarification as well as assist with implementation plans and strategies.

During the 2024-2025 school year, Andy Sullivan, from ADE/DESE, presented information about Annual Ratings and VAM scores. These are still fairly new concepts and the updated information provided insight for principals. Meagan Booe, ADE Behavior Specialist, presented information to the group concerning Behavior Management. She provided ideas and offered assistance to the schools. Amber Moss from Covey Education, presented information about self care and habits for success.

### **WDMESC Library/Media Specialists Collaborative Meetings**

Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative Library Media Specialists PLC was established during the 2020-2021 school year in response to a direct request from a library media specialist (LMS). This regularly scheduled meeting is designed to share information with the LMS group as well as bringing all LMSs together to interact, share and collaborate. In the Spring of 2023 WDMESC hosted our 1st ever America's Battle of the Books competitions. Teams from 6 districts participated in the competition. In the Spring of 2024 WDMESC hosted the 2nd Annual America's Battle of the Books competitions. 17 teams from 8 districts competed. A total of 85 students participated. In the Spring Of 2025 WDMESC hosted the 3rd Annual America's Battle of the Books competitions. 7 teams from 3 districts participated.

### **WDMESC Federal Coordinator Collaborative Meetings**

The Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative Federal Coordinators meet regularly to review upcoming deadlines, required actions, and best practices for programs related to Federal funds. All 17 of our districts are invited to participate in this work. Each district designates staff to attend regular meetings held monthly. The meetings serve as a venue for sharing the latest information, collaborating with experts from other groups, such as the AAEE and ADE. The meetings provide opportunities for leaders to share and discuss with their colleagues from other districts. In 2024-2025, Jayne Green from ADE presented information about ESSER funds, spending, the AR App and provided updates. Dr. Eric Saunders, from AAEE, presented to the group and provided information on the following: school safety, school nutrition, ESA, and the AR App. Brooke McCain, from ADE/DESE Director of Standards and Systems of Support, presented information about accreditation, the future of monitoring, licensure, and the AR App.

### **WDMESC Technology Coordinator Collaborative Meetings**

Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative district Technology Coordinators and staff meet regularly to collaborate and learn from one another regarding district technology issues. The Department of Information Systems and DESE regularly attend meetings to provide information and training on cybersecurity and other relevant topics.

## **Program: Accounting**

### **Funding Source: Base**

Competitive Grant: No

Non-Restricted

### **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Jacksonville North Pulaski, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, White County Central

### **Personnel**

Christie Gillion - Business Manager - HSD, Certified School Business Official

Misty Wolfe, Assistant Bookkeeper - HSD, Certified School Business Official

### **Goal**

To provide financial support to all programs and participating districts of the cooperative.

## **Program Summary**

### **2024-2025 State Funding Source**

General Operating \$484,494

Base Funding \$408,618

Professional Development \$237,787

Content Specialist \$270,000

Technology Coordinator \$80,000

HIPPY \$1,505,730

Early Childhood Special Education \$1,267,848

Early Childhood Special Education Extended School Year \$5,994

Career & Technical Education Coordinator \$60,000

Computer Science Initiative Innovation \$3,325

Novice Teacher \$246,825

Professional Learning \$118,737

Early Childhood Special Education Early Intervention Day Treatment \$450,313

Early Childhood Special Education Local \$543,000

Phone Free School \$18,337

### **2024-2025 Federal Funding Source**

Carl Perkins \$269,988

Carl Perkins Recruitment & Retentions \$10,000

Early Childhood Special Education \$420,978

ARMAC \$72,114

Medicaid \$235,000

ESEA Title I Migrant \$710,036

ARP ESSER Acceleration thru Communities of Practice \$43,500

CTE Certification \$5,753

Carl Perkins Professional Development \$2,000

## **Program: Administration - Director's Office**

Funding Source: Base Funds

Competitive Grant: No

Non-Restricted

### **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Jacksonville North Pulaski, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, White County Central

### **Personnel**

Brad Horn, Director - MSE + Admin. Certificate

Christie Gillion, Business Manager - HSD Certified School Business Official

Misty Wolfe, Assistant Bookkeeper - HSD - Certified School Business Official

Shawn Sherrill, Administrative Assistant - HSD

### **Program Summary**

The director has general supervisory responsibility for all cooperative programs. He is responsible to the governing board for recommendations on personnel, programs, and operations. He is specifically charged with leading the Cooperative staff to accomplish goals and to meet the program and service expectations of all funding agencies and stakeholders. He serves as a liaison for member districts to the Department for Education, the State Board of Education, the legislature, and other policy making agencies.

Both the director and business manager are bonded representatives with fiduciary responsibility for receiving and expending all funds. Because the Arkansas Public School Network (APSCN) accounting system is required of all state education agencies and because that system loosely fits such agencies as cooperatives where funding comes from many and varied sources, the bookkeeping procedures are complicated. The result is that much attention is paid to internal fiscal control. Each cooperative program coordinator is responsible for that program budget and is required to maintain a program account consistent with the APSCN coding procedures established by the central office and to work closely with the director and business manager in all fiscal decisions.

## **Program: ADE/APSCN Student Applications Field Analyst**

Funding Source: Arkansas Department of Education

**Participating Districts:** Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Heber Springs, Jacksonville, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Quitman, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, West Side, White County Central

### **Personnel**

Jessica Bowman, APSCN Student Field Analyst - B.B.A

### **Goal**

To provide end-user training and support to district staff that uses the statewide student management system, Enrollment, Cognos reports, and to provide training and guidance related to state reporting.

### **Program Summary**

The Student Applications Field Analyst 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 student management systems application provided by APSCN include: Demographics, Attendance, Scheduling, Report Cards, Discipline and Medical. Districts electronically submit data to the ADE nine times a year. The student field analyst provides districts with support and training workshops through meetings at the Cooperative, school visits, and communicating closely by email, telephone and Zoom meetings. Various trainings 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**

Facilitate eSchool trainings for new or existing users, providing guidance on eSchool (student management system) upgrades and assists with implementation of Enrollment.

## **Program: Career and Technical Education**

Funding Source: Carl D. Perkins Funding

Funding Amount: \$269,988.02

Competitive Grant: No

Restricted

### **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, and White County Central

### **Personnel**

Robert Reedy, CTE Coordinator - MSE

Tuer Kennard, CTE Administrative Assistant

### **Goal**

The mission of Career and Technical Education is to help schools strengthen the academic, technical, and employability skills of students enrolled in CTE programs and pathways. Our goal is to ensure teachers are trained in the latest technologies and equipped to bring those innovations into the classroom, preparing students for the demands of today's workforce and the careers of the future. We use Perkins performance indicators as a guide to identify areas where additional support, training, and resources are needed — ensuring both educators and students have the tools necessary for success. The following goals are the primary areas of focus at this time.

1. Support schools with the new pathway changes.
2. Help schools be more prepared to increase the number of Merit and Distinction Diplomas.
3. CTE programs will align curriculum and partner with industry stakeholders to gain students employability skills.

### **Program Summary**

The Career and Technical Education Coordinator for the Wilbur D. Mills Consortium is responsible for writing and managing the annual Perkins Grant. This includes purchasing equipment, software, supplemental curriculum, and industry certifications for member districts based on pre-approved projects outlined in the grant.

The CTE Coordinator also manages all required reporting for the Perkins program and organizes professional development opportunities to support CTE educators. Additionally, a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) is completed annually to identify and prioritize areas of need, ensuring that support is targeted and effective for member schools.

### **Highlights of the Year**

WDMESC hosted a college and career fair, bringing together students, community members, business and industry professionals, as well as faculty and staff from colleges and technical schools. Throughout the year, nineteen professional development sessions were offered across a variety of CTE pathways, providing valuable training opportunities to all schools within the WDMESC Consortium.

On January 31, 2025, WDMESC proudly hosted its first annual Girl Power Manufacturing Event, designed to engage female students in hands-on CNC and manufacturing experiences. Fourteen schools participated, with 42 girls showcasing their skills and creativity through project-based learning using advanced manufacturing equipment. The event promoted confidence, career exploration, and empowerment for young women in non-traditional career fields.

Ten of the WDMESC Perkins Consortium schools received Modernization grants, which updates the minimum equipment to align with the needs of today's business and industry needs.

**Supplemental Curriculum:** This year, many teachers at all 14 of the WDMESC consortium schools requested supplemental curriculum to help with their lesson planning and classroom instruction. Here are the requests:



- iCEV online supplemental material subscriptions for their classrooms (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025). WDMESC is requesting supplemental teaching materials. iCEV Agriculture, iCEV Business, iCEV Career Exploration, iCEV FCS, iCEV Drones, iCEV Med Pro, and others as requested. All fourteen school districts with fifty-two teachers in the consortium will benefit from these supplemental materials.
- Three Business and Marketing teachers (Bald Knob, Pangburn, Riverview) requested Gmetrix material from Certipoint. Gmetrix is used to prepare students for the Microsoft Specialist certifications.
- Twelve Business and Marketing teachers, (Augusta, Bald Knob, Bradford, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, White County Central) requested Testout supplemental curriculum that is used for business and marketing and also used to train students for the Microsoft Specialist certifications.
- AES education supplemental curriculum was purchased for Augusta Medical Professions and Criminal Justice programs of study for classroom instruction.
- CTE teachers at Beebe, Bradford, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, and White County Central requested the Glowforge Premium software to use with their Glowforge laser engraver equipment.
- One Less Thing Agriculture curriculum was purchased for Bald Knob and McCrory Agricultural departments.
- Stukent curriculum was purchased for the Riverview Business and Marketing department.
- Code HS was purchased for Riverview and McCrory Computer Science Pathways.
- John Deere- Farm Business Management Manuals purchased for McCrory Agricultural Department.
- House Wiring Code Manual purchased for McCrory Agricultural Department.
- Business U was purchased for the White County Central Business and Marketing department.
- Captain Code materials purchased for Rose Bud Computer Science pathway.
- Medical Professions textbooks purchased for Augusta Health Science pathway.
- Criminal Justice textbooks purchased for Augusta Criminal Justice pathway.
- LivestockJudging.com subscriptions purchased for Bald Knob and McCrory Agricultural pathways.
- TOSA Education Pack purchased for Hazen Computer Science pathway.
- Microsoft Office Specialist certification site license purchased for Bald Knob, Riverview, and Pangburn Business pathways

**Certifications:** With Perkins V, certifications is an indicator for funding, so it is important to achieve as many industry recognized certifications as possible. The following certifications were purchased:

- Eleven Family and Consumer Science teachers (2 Beebe, Bald Knob, Bradford, Hazen, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, White County Central) requested the ServSafe Food handler certification.
- Five Family and Consumer Science teachers (Beebe, Hazen, McCrory, Rose Bud, and White County Central) requested the Servsafe Manager certification.
- Four Family and Consumer Science teachers (2 Beebe, Rose Bud, Carlisle) requested the CPR instructor certification.
- Nine Agriculture teachers (Beebe, Bradford, England, Hazen, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, White County Central) requested OSHA-10 certification for their Agricultural Mechanics programs of study.
- Two Family and Consumer Science teachers (Beebe and White County Central) requested the Paraprofessional Praxis certification for the Pre-Educator students.
- Bradford Agriculture teacher requested the iCEV Ducks Unlimited certification for the Managing Natural Resources pathway.
- Beebe UAS pathway requested five FAA-107 exams.
- Microsoft Office Specialist certification site license purchased for Bald Knob, Riverview, and Pangburn Business pathways.
- Nine AWS Certifications purchased for Carlisle Agricultural pathways.
- All certifications are reported using the LEA Insights system.

**Perkins Funded Projects:** Here are the Perkins funded projects for the 2024-2025 school year.

- Twelve virtual reality headsets were upgraded to be used for Career Development teachers in all 14 consortium schools. They have been divided into three sets of four and are distributed among the schools. Each school will

use the headsets for two weeks and then they are moved to different schools. Augusta, Beebe, Bradford, Bald Knob, Cabot, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, White County Central schools have all used these headsets in the Career Development classes. This has been a big hit with the 7 and 8 grade students.

- Two Augmented Welding Simulators are shared among Career Development and Agriculture programs. Bald Knob, Bradford, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, White County Central have all benefited from using these welding simulations.
- One Family and Consumer Science teacher, Bradford, requested Jelly, Juice, Salsa equipment for their food labs.
- Eleven Glowforge Premium Software subscriptions were purchased for Beebe, Carlisle, Des Arc, Hazen, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, White County Central CTE departments.
- One Lumberjack tool kit was purchased for England Agriculture departments.
- Two Miller MillerMatic 215 MultiProcess welding equipment was purchased for the McCrory Agriculture department.
- A SawStop Table Saw was purchased for the McCrory Agricultural department.
- A Baileigh Roll Bender was purchased for the Rose Bud Agricultural department.
- A Edwards 20 Ton Radius Roller was purchased for the Beebe Agricultural Department.
- Evolution Miter Saws was purchased for Beebe, Bradford, McCrory, Riverview, Des Arc Agriculture departments.
- A Luna Dust Collector was purchased for the Pangburn Agriculture Department.
- A BOSS Laser Engraver was purchased for the Rose Bud Agriculture Department.
- A CPR mannequin kit was requested for Bradford and Lonoke Family and Consumer Science department to use in the human services program of study.
- CPR Teaching Materials was purchased for Bradford and Lonoke Family and Consumer Science pathway.
- Air Fryer equipment was purchased for the Riverview Family and Consumer Science pathway.
- Pregnancy Profile Simulator was purchased for Carlisle Family and Consumer Science pathway.
- Real Care Fetal Development Model Kit purchased for White County Central Family and Consumer Science pathway.
- Real Care Baby was purchased for Carlisle and Rose Bud Family and Consumer Science departments.
- Canning Equipment Bundle purchased for Bradford Family and Consumer Science pathway.
- Grain Mill was purchased for the Beebe Culinary Arts pathway.
- Dairy Food Project Equipment was purchased for the Beebe Culinary Arts pathway.
- UAS Equipment Bundle purchased for the Beebe UAS pathway.
- 3D Printer was purchased for the Beebe UAS pathway.
- Storage and Safety cases for UAS equipment were purchased for the Beebe UAS pathway.
- A tower garden was purchased for the McCrory Agricultural pathway.
- Joint Reduction Trainer- Shoulder, Elbow, Finger Simulators was purchased for the Beebe Health Science pathway.
- xTool F1 Laser Engraver was purchased for the Beebe Health Science pathway.
- Frontier Livestock Transportation Box was purchased for the Bald Knob Agricultural pathway.
- Reality Works Calf Simulator purchased for the Bald Knob Agricultural pathway.
- Laptop computers were purchased for the Business and Computer Science teachers at McCrory.
- Color Laser Jet Printer, Copy, Scan, Fax Machine was purchased for the England Business pathway.

**Grants:** The WDMESC CTE department was awarded an Innovation grant of \$52,000 for the purchase of CNC equipment for schools to participate in the Girl Power Manufacturing Event. Three BOSS Laser Engravers were purchased for Augusta, McCrory, and Rose Bud schools. And a CNC ShopSabre was purchased for Pangburn school.

The Modernization Grant initiative is aimed at enhancing established Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways across Arkansas. This grant is designed to support pathways already in place that align with high-demand and high-wage (H2) occupations, ensuring our students are well-prepared for the evolving job market. This grant allows modernizing minimum equipment to meet the latest technology demands and opportunities within the established H2 pathways. The following schools was awarded Modernization grants:

- Beebe High School, Pre-Educator- \$2,805.00

- Bradford High School, Management- \$20,485.00
- Carlisle High School, Agricultural Power, Structural, and Technical Systems- 19,635.00
- Des Arc High School, Business Finance- \$24,225.00
- England High School, Agricultural Power, Structural, and Technical Systems- \$29,580.00
- Hazen High School, Plant Systems- 86,700.00
- Lonoke High School, Agricultural Power, Structural, and Technical Systems- \$21,887.50
- Pangburn High School, Agricultural Power, Structural, and Technical Systems- 25,712.50
- Rose Bud High School, Agricultural Power, Structural, and Technical Systems- \$42,415.00
- White County Central High School, Banking- \$29,410.00

The State Start-Up grants are to implement new CTE opportunities aligned with Programs of Study that meet industry needs. Grant funds must be used to purchase the Minimum Equipment List items. The following schools was awarded Start Up Grants for the 26/26 school year:

- Augusta High School, Pre-Educator- \$39,566.41
- Bald Knob Start-Up Animal Systems \$30,307.77

The CTE Coordinator has worked with several of the teachers to offer interactive and hands-on professional developments that are relevant and meaningful to our CTE programs. Nineteen CTE professional developments were offered to meet the needs of various CTE departments.

Tuer Kennard, CTE Administrative Assistant, provided the 410,412,418 Mentorship Program for CTE teachers to earn these endorsements to their license.

The CTE department is also assisting with competitive events for FFA, FBLA DECA, Skills USA, FCCLA and TSA. All of these groups are Career and Technical Student Organizations which support and enhance student learning and opportunities through the CTE. Students are able to compete and collaborate with other students from around the state.

Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative CTE Concentrator and Completer Report

To understand the report please review the criteria for both Concentrator and Completer status.

**Concentrator**

A concentrator is a key component of Perkins V federal accountability performance measures.

The federal definition states: The term ‘CTE concentrator’ means— “(A) at the secondary school level, a student served by an eligible recipient who has completed at least 2 courses in a single career and technical education program or program of study; and “(B) at the postsecondary level, a student enrolled in an eligible recipient who has— “(i) earned at least 12 credits within a career and technical education program or program of study; or “(ii) completed such a program if the program encompasses 5 fewer than 12 credits or the equivalent in total.”

A CTE concentrator is a student who has completed two (2) courses within a career cluster.

**Completer**

A completer is not a federal Perkins accountability measure but is recognized at the state level.

A CTE program of study completer is a student who completes at least three (3) courses in a single career and technical education program of study. Although industry-recognized certifications are an expectation when completing a program or program of study, students may still be recognized as a completer if they do not attain an industry-recognized certification. This includes the courses at Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 within an approved single program of study. A CTE completer is a student who has completed three (3) courses within a career cluster.

A complete summary report can be found at the Department of Education, Division of Career and Technical Education’s website. <https://reports-dcte.ade.arkansas.gov/Summary>

The Concentrator and Completer Summary for Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative states the following information:

- State Participation is 84.77% vs. WDMESC Participation is 89.19%
- State Concentrators are 27.18% vs. WDMESC Concentrators are 32.44%
- State Completers are 10.03% vs. WDMESC Completers are 15.08%

Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative CTE Department encourages its member districts to incorporate supplements curriculum, certifications, and technology advanced equipment to support high numbers of Concentrator and Completer numbers.

## 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:**

**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:** Stacy Reynolds  
**Position:** Statewide CS Specialist  
**Degree:** MSE

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

**Name:** Tammy Glass  
**Position:** Statewide CS Specialist  
**Degree:**

### 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 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.

#### Vision

All Arkansas students actively engaging in a superior and appropriate computer science education

#### Mission

To facilitate Arkansas's transition to becoming and remaining a national leader in computer science education and technology careers

#### PD Offered:

- Computer Science Impact Meeting
- High School Computer Science Certification and Preparation
- Autonomous Vehicle Workshop @ UCA
- Python Programming for Year 1 - High School CS Professional
- Python Programming for Year 2 & 3 - High School CS Professional Development
- Business Intelligence - High School CS/Business Professional
- Cybersecurity for Year 1 - High School CS Professional Development
- Cybersecurity for Year 2 & 3 - High School CS Professional
- Robotics for Year 1 - High School CS Professional Development
- Robotics for Year 2 & 3 - High School CS Professional Development
- Mobile Application Development for Year 1 - High School CS Professional Development
- Computer Science Planning and Pacing for Middle and High School
- Middle School Intro to Coding: Learn Text-Based Code (Formerly Coding Block)
- Computer Science: Teaching K-4
- Computer Science: Teaching 5-8
- Data Science for Year 1 - High School CS Professional Development
- Data Science for Year 2 & 3 - High School CS Professional Development
- Game Development and Design for Year 1 - High School CS
- Game Development and Design for Year 2 & 3 - High School CS Professional Development
- Computer Science: Intro to Block-Based Coding
- Computer Science: Transition to Text-based Coding
- Computer Engineering for Year 1 - High School CS Professional Development
- Networking for Year 1 - High School CS Professional Development
- Precision Agriculture

- Introduction to AI
- EAST Raspberry Pi
- EAST Circuit Playground

#### Conferences Presented at:

- State TSA Conference
- Arkansas Association for Career and Technical Education
- ADE Summit
- AEA PD Conference
- HSTI
- EAST Conference

#### Events/Committees/Projects Assisted with:

- National Computer Science Education Week – Scheduled daily activities with local districts - December 2025
- Regional Capture the Flag Events
- TSA State Conference – March 2025
- Support of Robotics Competitions (VEX, FIRST) March 2025
- All-State Coding Competition April 2025
- SkillsUSA April 2025

#### Major Highlights of the Year:

- Revised pathways and standards across all CS courses
- Supported the work of the Data Science HIRED grant and the Cybersecurity HIRED grant
- Mentoring students across the state in Unity game development.
- Assisted with regional Stakeholder Meetings
- Provided training to annual ADE Counselor sessions
- Provided CS training to over 1853 education professionals and 8311 students.
- Lead Judge and Coding Challenge Creator for All-Region and All-State Coding Competition.
- Provided digital capture the flag events at schools and cooperatives around the state
- Administration statewide site visits for implementation of ACT 414
- Continued growth, development, and support of TSA
- Computer Science Completer Cords
- State of Computer Science Education Report - Code.org
- Partnered in the creation of new computer science related CTE courses

#### ONGOING SUPPORT:

- Specialists are in the process of revamping trainings for the upcoming summer
- Specialists have increased the number of professional development offerings as well as developed and will deliver several new trainings this summer..
- Specialists are currently working to visit all 260 districts to help support their implementation of ACT 414. This work will continue through the remainder of the year and summer.
- For districts who already have computer science programs in place, specialists are working to identify ways to grow and develop their program to fit their needs.

## **Program: Consolidated Purchasing Services**

Funding Source: Member Districts

Funding Amount: N/A

### **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Beebe, Bald Knob, Bradford, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Jacksonville North Pulaski, Lonoke, McCrory, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, White County Central, and Wilbur Mills Coop.

### **Personnel**

Brad Horn, Director - MSE + Admin. Certificate

Karen Osborn, Administrative Assistant - HSD

### **Goal**

The goal of Consolidated Purchasing Service is to save money for member schools, to provide convenience and a time-saver for member districts.

### **Program Summary**

The WDMESC seeks bids on instructional materials (including duplicator paper) to provide member districts with savings on the materials they would have to order from other sources.

### **Major Highlights of the Year**

12 member districts participated, along with WDMESC, in the program and placed purchase orders to the successfully bidding vendors in the amount of \$199,158.32. The bid was awarded to Contract Paper Group for the 2024-2025 school year.

17 member districts participated in the required school choice announcement as required by the Standards for Accreditation Office at the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. WDMESC provides this service at a reduced cost by combining school district announcements in the county newspaper where it is available.

13 member districts participated in the required school lunch media release program as required by the Standards for Accreditation Office at the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. WDMESC provides this service at a reduced cost by combining school district announcements in the county newspaper where it is available.



## **Program: Early Childhood Special Education Program**

Funding Source Federal & State Funding

Funding Amount \$ 2,682,139.99

Restricted Funding: Yes

Competitive Grant: No

### **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, Hazen, England, Jacksonville North Pulaski, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy and White County Central

### **PERSONNEL**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Degree</b>
Amber Graham	ECSE Coordinator	MSE
Jamie Watson	Medicaid/E-school Assistant	HSD
Dahnah Chambers	Administrative Assistant	HSD
Natasha Seekins	Administrative Assistant	HSD
Bailee Bettencourt	ECSE Teacher	BSE
DeAnna Collins	Behavior Consultant	MSE
Johnnie Cook	Intake Coordinator	BS
Parker Liles	Intake Processor	HSD
Kerry Guyot	Examiner/Speech	MS
Wendy Clark	Speech Pathologist	MS
Kristy Poe	Speech Pathologist	MS
Daphne Crider-West	Speech Pathologist	MS
Tori Sanders	Speech Pathologist	MS
Monica Hofheinz	Speech Pathologist	MS
Marie Mitchell	ECSE Teacher	MSE
Robin Hall	ECSE Teacher	MSE
Tenisha Rose	ECSE Teacher	MAT
Kristin Bell	ECSE Teacher	BSE
Ginger Jefford	ECSE Programmer	BSE
Alicia Cherry	ECSE Teacher	MS
Amy Gerlach	ECSE Programmer	BSE
Robyn Berner	ECSE Programmer	MSE
Colleen Jobe	ECSE Programmer	MSE
Misty Parker	ECSE Programmer	MSE
Sarah Henson	ECSE Programmer	BSE
Kimberly Hurley	Occupational Therapist	MS
Kristen Vannada	ECSE Teacher	BGS
Gabby Counts	Paraprofessional	HSD
Melissa Smith	ECSE Teacher	BA
Tammy Williams	ECSE Teacher	BSE
Lucas Smith	ECSE Teacher	BSE
Jordan Gibson-Kurck	ECSE Paraprofessional	HSD
Stephanie Gilbert	Occupational Therapist	MS
Katie Adair	ECSE Teacher	MSE
Khakee Kuykendall	Speech Pathologist	MS
Lauren Douell	Speech Pathologist	MS
Rebecca Miller	ECSE Teacher	MSE

Breanna Leonard	ECSE Teacher	BA
Charlene Brewster	ECSE Teacher	BA
Chelsea McConnell	ECSE Teacher	BSE
Cheri Foster	ECSE Teacher	MSE
Jade Mershon	ECSE Teacher	BSE
Jessica Hazelip	ECSE Teacher	BSE
Lindsey Woodham	ECSE Teacher	MAT
Michelle Stephenson	ECSE Teacher	BSE
Nicole Bryan	ECSE Teacher	MAT
Duyen Mikeal	Speech Therapist	MS
Alex Heineman	Behavior Consultant	MS
Hartley Carroll	SLP-A	BS

**GOAL:** The goal of the Early Childhood Special Education Program is to identify and serve children with disabilities, ages 3 through 5, by providing developmental special education services, speech therapy, and related services such as occupational and/or physical therapy.

**SMART GOALS:** By the end of the 2024–2025 school year, the Wilbur D. Mills Early Childhood Program will conduct Child Find activities in all six zones (Zones 1–6) by collaborating with local agencies, distributing outreach materials, and hosting at least one screening or informational event per zone, in order to identify children ages 3–5 who may need early intervention or special education services..

## **STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL:**

### **Partnerships & Outreach**

Collaborate with local Head Start programs, ABC programs, daycares, and other child care centers to raise awareness of Child Find. Conduct mass developmental screenings for students with parent consent at centers that opt to participate in mass screening days.

### **Marketing & Communication**

Develop flyers, social media posts, and district newsletters to promote Child Find services. Ensure materials are accessible by translating them into multiple languages spoken within the community.

### **Scheduling Events**

Schedule a minimum of one Child Find screening or informational session in each of the six zones. Offer flexible scheduling options, including evenings and weekends, to increase family participation.

### **Data Tracking**

Maintain a Child Find calendar to document outreach efforts, event dates, attendance numbers, and referrals made for further evaluation.

### **Child Find Plan & Screenings**

Implement a comprehensive Child Find plan that ensures free and confidential developmental screenings are available to all children ages 3–5 who reside within the district boundaries and may need evaluation or early intervention services.

## **PROGRAM SUMMARY:**

The Early Childhood Special Education Program is designed to support children ages 3 through 5 who may be experiencing developmental delays that could impact their ability to learn. Through this program, children are located, identified, and evaluated, and if they are found eligible, they receive individualized special education services to meet their unique needs. These services may include developmental special education instruction, speech and language therapy, and related services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, and mental health support.

In addition to these core services, the program offers Behavior Intervention Consultation to ensure that children with social or emotional developmental delays receive appropriate behavioral support. Consultants work closely with early childhood teachers in ABC, Pre-K, Head Start, and daycare programs. They help develop individualized behavior intervention plans for students who qualify for special education services and demonstrate challenges in the area of social and emotional development.

The process begins when a child is referred to the program. Each child receives a comprehensive screening in several developmental areas, including vision, hearing, fine and gross motor skills, cognitive development, self-help skills, social and emotional functioning, and communication. If the screening indicates a potential delay, a special education referral conference is scheduled to determine whether formal evaluations should be conducted.

Once evaluations are completed, an Evaluation Programming Conference is held with the family and relevant team members to review the results and determine if the child meets the Arkansas Early Childhood Special Education Eligibility Guidelines. If the child is found eligible, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed to target specific areas of need. This plan outlines the services and supports the child will receive. Each year, a conference is held to review the child's progress, update the IEP, consider Extended School Year (ESY) services, and determine the most appropriate educational placement.

The Early Childhood Special Education Program maintains strong partnerships with families and early learning providers across White, Woodruff, Prairie, and Lonoke counties, as well as the Jacksonville North Pulaski School District. The program collaborates with public school ABC programs, private ABC programs, and Head Start centers to meet the individual needs of children in the community. One key component of this outreach is the offering of mass developmental screenings at participating centers, which are free and confidential. These screenings help identify children who may benefit from further evaluation and early intervention services.

Upon eligibility for kindergarten, the Wilbur D. Mills Early Childhood Program will coordinate and conduct a transition conference with the child's district of residence. This ensures a smooth handoff of services and information, allowing the receiving district to plan effectively for the child's continued support and success in kindergarten.

Throughout all stages of service—identification, evaluation, planning, transition, and instruction—the program ensures full compliance with federal guidelines under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and state regulations set forth by the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (ADE). These standards guide the program's commitment to providing equitable, high-quality early intervention and special education services to all eligible children.

Through a coordinated, child-centered approach grounded in both state and federal law, the Early Childhood Special Education Program works to ensure that every child has the support they need to reach their full potential during the critical early years of development.

## **MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR**

### **Child Find Numbers**

722 December 1 Child Count (increase from 691 from the previous year) / Currently serving 797 students  
1490 Children Screened / 989 Children Referred (including EIDT and parent referrals)

### **Professional Development Trainings**

The Wilbur D. Mills Cooperative offers various professional development opportunities for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) staff, including but not limited to:

The Yoga for Kids – The 4-H Yoga: Move it! Curriculum, a 20-minute physical activity routine designed to introduce movement and mindfulness in classrooms.

The Literacy in the Pre-Kindergarten Classroom session, a 6-hour training focused on foundational literacy, oral language development, and phonological awareness, with an emphasis on supporting students who need additional resources.

The Core Tools for Complex Learning Environments/Easter Seals training, aimed at helping ECSE staff create supportive classroom environments for students with complex learning and communication needs.

The Student Engagement to Increase Positive Behaviors in the Classroom workshop, providing strategies to increase student motivation and enhance classroom behavior through student voice and reinforcement.

The "Do the IEP Basics Better – I 'Love' the Basics" session, which focused on improving understanding of the special education process, including IEP components, progress monitoring, and goal writing.

The VIRTUAL – PD in Your PJs training, which offered ECSE staff the flexibility to engage with instructional technology tools at their own pace and from any location.

The ECH Paperwork 101 session, which covered essential training on the processes and paperwork related to early childhood special education, including referrals, evaluations, and IEP documentation.

The Functional Goal Writing training, designed to help staff create functional, measurable goals for preschool students with IEPs, emphasizing collaboration and data collection.

The Strategies for English Learners session, which provided strategies to support language development and academic success for EL students through differentiated instruction and vocabulary support.

The EC End of Summer Rally, which included state-required training on bullying prevention, human trafficking, and seizure-safe schools, alongside discussions on curriculum and inclusive practices for the upcoming school year.

The EC Curriculum Alignment session, allowing staff to collaborate in aligning services with the Pre-K curriculum while ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations.

Additionally, the Early Childhood Special Education Program held regular Child Find meetings, involving staff from area districts, centers, Head Start, and community organizations to discuss ways to locate children in need of services and communicate those services to all stakeholders.

## Early Childhood Data for Annual Report

Preschool Achievement and Growth (APR Indicator 7)		LEA Rate	Rubric 1 .75 .5 .25 0	Score Eligible	Score Earned
A. Positive Social-Emotional Skills	Growth	95.29%	90.60...74.60...64.60	1	1
	Achievement	68.38%	67.76...51.76...41.6	1	1
B. Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills	Growth	98.05%	91.42...75.42...65.42	1	1
	Achievement	29.91%	58.17...42.17...32.17	1	0
C. Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Their Needs	Growth	96.62%	91.17...75.17...65.17	1	1
	Achievement	70.73%	75.46...59.46...49.46	1	0.75
Priority III Achievement Score Earned:				6 * 1 = 6	4.75 * 1 = 4.75
Total for Priorities I-III Results Score				6.00	4.75 79.17%

Implementation of IDEA: Compliance	LEA Rate	Rubric	Score Eligible	Score Earned
Indicator 11: Child Find - Timely Evaluation	100.00%	95.00 - 100% = 4 89.00 - 94.99% = 3 79.00 - 88.99% = 2 69.00 - 78.99% = 1 0 - 68.99% = 0	4	4
Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition - Part C to B	100.00%		4	4
Indicator 13: Secondary Transition	--		N/A	N/A
Timely and Accurate Reporting	# Data Sets Inaccurate Reporting	Rubric	Score Eligible	Score Earned
Timely and Accurate Reporting	0	Timely & Accurate = 4 One data set = 3 Two data sets = 2 Three data sets = 1 Failed to Report = 0	4	4
General Supervision	# of Years with Non-compliance	Rubric	Score Eligible	Score Earned
Long-Standing Non-compliance	0	Compliant = 4 Noncompliant yr 1 = 3 Noncompliant yr 2 = 2 Noncompliant yr 2+ = 1 Noncompliant yr 3+ = 0	4	4
Compliance Score Earned:			16.00	16.00 100.00%

**Program: Local Early Childhood Lead**

Funding Source: Arkansas Department of Education

Funding Amount: \$ 150,000

Competitive Grant: Yes

Restricted Funding

**Participating Districts**

Jacksonville North Pulaski School District, Cabot School District, Lonoke School District, England School District, Carlisle School District

**Personnel**

Colleen Jobe, Local Lead Coordinator, MSE

**Goal**

The goal of the Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative Local Early Childhood Lead organization is to support access to early childhood programs, identify gaps in services, foster local partnerships, create alignment among public and private providers and agencies within the community, and establish a comprehensive, locally supported plan for providing early childhood programs and services.

**Program Summary**

The WDMESC Local Early Childhood Lead organization created a collaboration plan outlining the process of collaborating with providers and community partners. Partners were first identified, and an outreach plan was developed. A clear purpose for the first meeting was established. Regular, ongoing communication has taken place throughout the school year. A coordinated funding request was submitted to request seats from ADE at the site and agency level. A child count was conducted along with a classroom count. A local plan for next school year was submitted to the Office of Early Childhood. Lonoke County has 45 providers and 2 HIPPY Programs and Jacksonville North Pulaski School District has 20 Providers.

**Major Highlights of the Year**

The WDMESC Local Early Childhood Lead organization was established. Because the grant was awarded part way through the school year, the organization completed all tasks on an expedited schedule.

**Program: ESC Works**

Funding Source: Arkansas Educational Service Cooperatives,  
Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Competitive Grant: No

Restricted Non-Restricted

**Participating Entities**

Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative	Northcentral Arkansas Educational Service Cooperative	Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative
Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative	Northeast Arkansas Educational Cooperative	Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Crowley's Ridge Education Service Cooperative	Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative	
Dawson Education Service Cooperative	Ozarks Unlimited Resources Education Service Cooperative	
DeQueen/Mena Education Service Cooperative	South Central Service Cooperative	
Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative	Southeast Service Cooperative	
Guy Fenter Education Service Cooperative	Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative	

**Purpose**

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

**Goal**

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 \$6,242.62 was paid by each entity for site maintenance and support FY24-25. 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 **\$99,881.93 FY 23-24**.



## **Program: Advanced/Accelerated Learning**

Funding Source: Arkansas Department of Education

Funding Amount: \$46,500

Competitive Grant: No

Restricted

### **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Jacksonville, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, and White County Central

### **Personnel**

Jennifer Park, Advanced Learning Specialist - MSE

### **Goals**

1. Provide quality educational opportunities and sessions for teachers and students while addressing the unique needs of advanced learners.
  - a. Plan and provide quarterly GT coordinator meetings
  - b. Plan and provide quarterly K-12 counselor meetings
  - c. Plan and provide professional development
  - d. Collect and analyze local data to discover trends and set goals
2. Stay current in the field of acceleration and gifted education by attending sessions and reading newly released studies.
  - a. Attend GT and Advanced Learning meetings with ADE DESE Office of Gifted & Talented and Advanced Placement
  - b. Regularly communicate with the Public School Program Coordinator for School Counseling
  - c. Attend sessions and professional development
  - d. Assist districts in revision/creation and implementation of acceleration policies
3. Assist member districts to set goals and meet the program standards for Gifted and Talented Education as laid out by the Arkansas Department of Education
  - a. Provide support for the completion of the ARApp for GT program approval
  - b. Provide support for policies around gifted services.
  - c. Provide contacts and resources to assist in supporting counselors with master scheduling
4. Facilitate opportunities for student enrichment and mentorship
5. Assist districts and/or coordinators in honors, secondary content, and Advanced Placement updates and requirements.
  - a. Forward any new and upcoming information released by College Board or from the Arkansas Department of Education Office of Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement
6. Provide quality resources and serve as a liaison as needed with the Arkansas Department of Education Office of Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement.
7. Work with parent and professional organizations including other public and private agencies.
8. Work with the district coordinators to promote accelerated options through public awareness and advocacy.
9. Support coordinators in program options and provide districts with current research, trends, and instructional strategies.
10. Work collaboratively with the other WDMESC staff/specialists to provide quality professional development and ongoing support.

### **Professional Development Program Summary**

The Advanced Learning Specialist provided onsite support to schools in strengthening their Gifted and Talented (GT) programs, guiding them through the ARApp approval process, identifying program options, and helping draft policies to

ensure compliance. In January, a counselor-focused professional learning community (PLC) was launched and has since met quarterly to explore accelerated learning pathways beginning in 5th grade, develop student success plans, and promote early exposure to high-wage, high-demand careers at the elementary level. Four onsite GT Coordinators' meetings were also held to provide targeted support and share strategies for enhancing local GT programs.

WDMESC further enriched student learning through a variety of onsite activities, including Game Day for 3rd grade, STEM Day for 4th grade, Critical Thinking Day for 5th grade, Career Exploration Day for 6th grade, Elementary Quiz Bowl, fall and spring Chess Tournaments (K–12), and the Global Domination event for grades 7–12. Additionally, a fall book study focused on *The Anxious Generation* provided meaningful professional development for all educators. Districts received information on enrichment opportunities such as the Stock Market Game and the Youth Entrepreneur Showcase competition. WDMESC also supported educators through workshops on differentiation, novice teacher mentoring, unpacking the standards, raising rigor, and effective strategies for differentiated instruction.

## **Major Highlights of the Year**

This spring marked a record-breaking moment for our elementary Chess Tournament, with 14 out of our 17 districts participating—the highest level of engagement we've ever seen. Due to its tremendous growth, we've expanded the tournament and moved it to a larger venue: the Veterans Park Community Center in Cabot. This new location allows us to accommodate even more participants, and we're proud to say the tournament is now open to all students in grades K–12.

Our commitment to providing meaningful student enrichment experiences continued strong this year, with tailored events for each grade level that encouraged collaboration, creativity, and growth beyond the classroom. A key feature of each event was the intentional grouping of students from different districts, allowing them to build important soft skills such as communication, adaptability, and teamwork in a fun, inclusive setting.

Third grade students took part in Game Day, an event designed to help them better understand their abilities, take academic and social risks, practice good sportsmanship, and become more comfortable with failure as part of the learning process.

Our STEM Day for fourth grade was hands-on and high-energy, challenging teams to build their best roller coaster using a common set of materials within 90 minutes—encouraging innovation and problem-solving under pressure.

Fifth graders tackled Critical Thinking Day, where they worked through a variety of brain-stretching activities such as lifeboat survival scenarios and complex riddles, all aimed at sharpening analytical thinking and cooperative problem solving.

This year, we introduced a brand-new event for sixth grade: Career Exploration Day. Students were introduced to a wide range of high-demand careers, learned about the skills required for each, and engaged with real-world content that sparked curiosity and ambition. The event also opened doors for future partnerships with local businesses.

In support of long-term career readiness, I collaborated with our Career and Technical Education department to create a career contact database, connecting schools with professionals across a wide range of industries. Additionally, I am actively working to form business partnerships within our districts. As a first step, we hosted an Economics Scavenger Hunt professional development session in downtown Lonoke. The event introduced educators to local economic resources and business connections, with the goal of expanding this experience to include students in the near future.

In response to district requests for deeper instructional support, I designed and facilitated a new professional development session titled *From Standards to Success*, focused on unpacking standards and raising rigor in the classroom.

## **Program: Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)**

Funding Source: Arkansas Better Chance

Funding Amount: \$ 1,505,730

Competitive Grant: Yes

Restricted

### **Participating Districts**

Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Lonoke, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, White County Central

### **Personnel**

Jason Clark, Program Director - MSE+

Katey Ball, Field Coordinator - MSE

Crystal Weatherford, Field Coordinator - MSE

Stephanie Heidelberg, Field Coordinator - MSE

Kelly Ramey, Field Coordinator - MSE

Wendy Spann, Field Coordinator - BSE

Susie Keller, Secretary/Intake - HSD

### **Goal**

The goal of the Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative HIPPY Program is to reach families in their familiar surroundings, empower parents in the educational role as their child's first teacher, assist the caregivers in better preparing their children for success in school, and serve as a liaison between the home and the public schools.

### **Program Summary**

The WDMESC HIPPY Program served approximately 775 students, ages 2, 3, 4, and 5, and 730 families within fourteen (14) school districts during the 2024-2025 program year. The coordinating staff of the WDMESC HIPPY Program and the staff of thirty-two (32) home-based educators from the school districts administered the Family Map questionnaire to each parent and held two parent-teacher conferences with the parent. The children and parents also received Ages & Stages Questionnaire and Ages & Stages Social-Emotional Questionnaire twice during the year. The Home Visiting staff role-played HIPPY curriculum each week for 30 weeks to the caregiver, and shared enrichment relating to their community and school district. The staff also assisted each family in acquiring the documentation necessary for the child to successfully transition into school. This documentation included information such as birth certificate, social security card, immunization records, and current well-child check-ups. The staff also entered each family and child into the ABC data system, COPA, which tracks family information and weekly home visits. HIPPY Monthly Group Meetings met six times at the participating school districts. Eighty-four (84) total parent/child meetings were held coop wide during the school year. Weekly staff training led by the field coordinators were held to provide home-based educators the skills to effectively instruct and support parents. WDMESC has made a long-term investment in quality learning experiences for children through the HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters) program, which has a model of shared learning through family-engagement activities that will ensure children are able to successfully transition from the home environment to the school environment and beyond. HIPPY has components that include developmentally appropriate curriculum, weekly home visits, and regular group meetings that are meant to help guide and teach the parents and families how to transition from home life to school life successfully. The HIPPY curriculum uses standardized instructional materials, storybooks, activity packets, and manipulatives, and each activity packet focuses on skills in literacy, math, motor, language and science, while also reinforcing the development of oral language, sensory skills, perceptual discrimination, as well as problem-solving skills.

### **Major Highlights of the Year**

The WDMESC HIPPY Program had a successful audit accreditation with the AR Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, Arkansas HIPPY, and HIPPY US with complimentary findings. Wilbur Mills HIPPY currently holds

the HIPPY Certificate of Accreditation from HIPPY National for all sites. This is a quality assurance standard accreditation through the HIPPY Excellence Program that takes place every five (5) years.

## **Program: Dyslexia**

Funding Source: Arkansas Department of Education

**Funding Amount: \$90,000**

Competitive Grant: No

### **PERSONNEL**

Lauren Ussery, Master of Education

#### **Program Name: Literacy/Dyslexia - Level 2 Assessor Training**

The Wilbur Mills Cooperative partnered with Stacey Mahurin to provide professional training for screening students for characteristics of Dyslexia. This workshop addresses what each screener tool assesses, how to score the screeners, and how to analyze the data. Teachers bring their level 2 screeners with them.

12 out of 17 of the Wilbur D Mills District were represented and 30 educators were trained in how to use and analyze data with the level 2 screeners.

#### **Program Name: Literacy/Dyslexia - Take Flight Training**

The Wilbur Mills Cooperative partnered with David Hanson, Access Learning Academy, to provide Cabot School District with training in Take Flight. Fifteen educators were trained to use the materials and develop a deeper understanding of Dyslexia. David then provided ongoing support to these educators through video conferencing and observing each of them teach lessons.

#### **Program Name: RiteFlight**

The Wilbur Mills Cooperative partnered with David Hanson, Access Learning Academy, to provide training in the RiteFlight program from the Scottish Rite Hospital. This training is a supplemental program to aide the Phonics First Program for Dyslexia purposes.

2 out of 17 of the Wilbur D Mills District were represented and 15 educators were trained in how to use RiteFlight.

#### **Program Name: Take Flight Recalibration**

The Wilbur Mills Cooperative partnered with Scottish Rite Hospital and the Nehlms Center to provide a recalibration for all of Arkansas's CALT and QI educators who use Take Flight in their Dyslexia therapy classrooms. This recalibration was via zoom with the author, Karen Avritt, of Take Flight. It was meant to recalibrate to ensure that Arkansas students were being taught the program with fidelity.

6 out of 17 of the Wilbur D Mills District were represented and 37 educators were trained in how to use RiteFlight.

#### **Program Name: Section 504 and Dyslexia**

The Wilbur Mills Cooperative partnered with Dr. Jeanie Johnson to provide training to teachers and administrators on what a 504 is and how it is utilized in a school. This training provided support in giving a 504 plan to a student.

14 out of 17 of the Wilbur D Mills District were represented and 67 educators were trained in how to document a 504 plan.

#### **Program Name: Dyslexia Overview**

Dyslexia Specialist, Lauren Ussery, provided Dyslexia Overview professional learning to K-12 teachers and dyslexia interventionists three times during June of 2025. All 17 school districts were invited to participate. This professional development session provides a foundational understanding of dyslexia, including its characteristics, causes, and impact on reading development. Participants will explore early signs, common

misconceptions, and evidence-based instructional strategies to support students with dyslexia in the classroom. The session will also cover accommodations, interventions, and resources to create an inclusive learning environment that fosters success for all learners.

**Program Name: Dyslexia Intervention Progress Monitoring and Data Tracking**

Dyslexia Specialist, Lauren Ussery, provided Dyslexia Intervention Progress Monitoring and Data Tracking professional learning during June of 2025. All 17 school districts were invited to participate. This professional development program in progress monitoring and data tracking is designed to provide educators with the necessary tools to effectively monitor and assess student progress. This training highlights key components embedded in existing dyslexia programs and focuses on generating parent reports, which keep families informed about their child's progress, ideally provided quarterly to strengthen parental involvement. Educators will learn best practices for conducting progress monitoring, including assessment frequency, data collection methods, and result interpretation to guide instruction. The session will also cover data tracking, using specific datasets to identify actionable next steps for individual students and assess their progress toward goals. Strategies for communicating data insights with colleagues and parents will foster a collaborative approach to enhancing student achievement. Overall, this training will empower dyslexia interventionists to use progress monitoring data to improve instructional practices and student engagement.

**Program Name: Effective Use of ORF and Encoding Measures**

Dyslexia Specialist, Lauren Ussery, provided Effective Use of ORF and Encoding Measures professional learning during June of 2025. All 17 school districts were invited to participate. This training session is designed to provide educators with a comprehensive understanding of the ORF (Oral Reading Fluency) assessment, DSA (Developmental Spelling Analysis), and Words Their Way program. Participants will learn how to effectively administer and score these tools, interpret student data to inform instructional decisions, and implement targeted strategies in the classroom to support literacy development.

**Program Name: BUILD**

Wilbur D. Mills ESC partnered with Brenda Nahlen to provide BUILD training to K-2 teachers and dyslexia interventionists. All 17 school districts were invited to participate. Build: A K-1 Early Reading Intervention is a comprehensive 100-lesson reading program that explicitly addresses all five reading pillars (phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and reading comprehension). It is suitable for small group instruction for a minimum of 45 minutes per day for kindergarten and first grade students who have been identified either as having dyslexia or being at risk for dyslexia. The curriculum is designed to be taught by a certified teacher who has completed the one-day training. Build has been designed to meet both the needs of young children identified with dyslexia and, as appropriate, to be used as a supplemental intervention (Tier II) for struggling kindergarten and first grade students, even when the diagnosis of dyslexia has not yet been established. At the end of the 100 lessons, it should be clearer which students do and do not have dyslexia.

**Major Highlights of the 2024-2025 School Year**

The Dyslexia Specialist met regularly with the Arkansas Department of Education and other education service cooperative dyslexia specialists during Unit meetings. Dyslexia Unit Meetings are scheduled for all cooperative dyslexia specialists to convene as a professional learning community. The purpose of this time together is to collaborate and brainstorm, share ideas and successes, and receive professional development that is data-driven to impact student achievement.

**The Dyslexia Department supported schools in a variety of ways, including:**

- On-site professional learning

- RtI (Response to Intervention) support
- Data Analysis (ATLAS, Testlets, Level 2 CoD screeners)
- District Leadership Team Meetings for School Improvement
- ATLAS Support
- Level II Assessment Support
- Virtual meetings and support through Zoom
- Reviewing the law around dyslexia
- Providing technical assistance around the dyslexia laws
- Providing professional learning during the summer around dyslexia curriculum and dyslexia as a whole

## **Program: Mathematics**

Funding Source: Arkansas Department of Education, K-12 Mathematics Specialist Grant

Funding Amount: \$90,000

Competitive Grant: No

Restricted

### **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Beebe, Bald Knob, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Lonoke, McCrory, Jacksonville North Pulaski, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, and White County Central

### **Personnel**

Pam Allen, Instructional Specialist - Mathematics - Masters

### **Mathematics Program Goals**

- Support and base decisions on the [goals](#) set forth by and outlined by the Arkansas Department of Education
  - Key regional supports for state initiatives include:
    - The Arkansas Initiative for Instructional Materials: This initiative aims to build pathways to high-quality instructional materials. It is essential to establish a support system for teachers and leaders through year-round professional learning, with high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) at the center.
    - ELEVATE Math Professional Learning: The ELEVATE Math professional learning sessions and training will be a key focus in the coming year. There is a focus on a balanced approach to teaching mathematics and providing coaching opportunities to further support educators in implementing this initiative will be essential.
    - Other Priorities include K-2 Math Screener and 3-8 Math Intervention Plans
- Collaborate with and/or provide technical assistance to District Leadership Teams, giving priority to districts in most need
- Collaborate with the Arkansas Department of Education during Unit Meetings, Regional Meetings, and other opportunities as they arise
- Support, empower, and build capacity with District Leaders and Instructional Facilitators
- Provide quality professional development in Mathematics to Teachers, Instructional Facilitators, and Administrators

### **Mathematics Program Summary**

Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative, in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education, administers the Mathematics Program for grades K-12, established by Act 1392 of 1999 for the improvement of mathematics' instruction throughout Arkansas. Assistance is provided to schools through professional learning programs, demonstration lessons, teacher observations, technical assistance, and teacher/administrator conferences in order to improve the teaching and learning of Mathematics through increased content understanding and improved instructional strategies across the curriculum.

### **Professional learning opportunities offered in 2024-25 included:**

- *Student-Centered Mathematics: Understanding Mathematical Thinking Year 1, 2, and 3*
- *Developing Common Formative Mathematics Assessment, Grade 6-8*
- *Developing Common Formative Mathematics Assessment, Grades 9-12*
- *Building Thinking Classrooms*



- *Planning for Building Thinking Classrooms, Grades 6-8*
- *Number Sense in the Secondary Classroom*
- *Quantitative Reasoning/Literacy Planning*
- *Elevate Math Fluency, Your quest for Mastery Begins Here!*
- *Elevate Math: Dive into K-2 Instruction*
- *Elevate Math: Dive into 3-5 Instruction*
- *Texthelp Tools: From Instruction to Diving Deeper (Numeracy)*
- *Supporting Student Achievement in Algebra 1 and Geometry*
- *Unlocking the Power of ATLAS: Crafting High-Impact Questions for Student Success*
- *Elevate Math Fluency: Addition and Subtraction*
- *Math Routines for K-5*

**The Mathematics Specialist has assisted schools in a variety of ways including:**

- Assistance with creating Mathematics Intervention Plans (MIPs)
- Assist with the K-2 Math Screeners and the Testlets from Cambium
- Assistance with adopting and/or implementing HQIM (Engage NY, Eureka Math Squared, Illustrative Mathematics, Go Math, Reveal Math, Prentice Hall/Savaas Math, I-Ready)
- Assistance and support given to administrators using the Math Key Levers Walkthrough Tool
- Coaching Cycles
- Consultant/Collaborator
- Implementation of the Arkansas Math Standards
- Implementation of the framework associated with Cognitively Guided Instruction
- Instructional Facilitator/Interventionist Support
- Team Meeting/Professional Learning Community Support
- Support for common formative assessments
- Classroom Observations
- Model or Co-teach to learn instructional practices
- Support for District Leadership Teams
- Lesson Planning Support/Demonstration Lessons
- Novice Teacher Support including Praxis Support
- Analyze and Interpret data
- RTI Support
- Support the use of the Performance Level Descriptors/Achievement Level Descriptors
- Support in screening students with the Forefront Education Screener and helping to look at the data to plan RTI Tier 2
- Provided targeted support to focus schools in most need of support.
- Manipulatives, technology (Document Cameras), and various other supplies were made available to teachers in the WDMESC region. Additional resources provided included various printed materials that would help with planning lessons and engaging students in all situations. Additionally, the Math Specialist has a [website](#) that has resources and sites highlighted to help educators find materials and/or research needed to help their students.

**The Mathematics Specialist has worked in the following additional roles:**

- Assisted with the Regional FIRST Robotics competition: The FIRST Robotics Competition Arkansas Regional was held in Searcy, AR. High school teams came together in Central Arkansas to showcase their months of hard work, creative problem solving and incredible team work. WDMESC Content Specialists played vital roles in the implementation of the event.

- Participates in a research project with DESE through the Center for Public Research and Leadership through Columbia University with a focus on implementation of Illustrative Mathematics.
- Presented information about mathematics education to and went on-site at a district with 2 sets of pre-service teachers from Harding University to use the Forefront Screener as an assessment tool to collect data on Number Sense.
- Served on State Math Committees
- Served as Co-Chair and presenter for [2024 CGI National Conference](#) in Springdale, Arkansas
- Coordinated with local districts to support the adoption and implementation of HQIM which included scheduling on-site visits between 4 different districts to observe and ask questions about HQIM.

### **Professional Development/Support Received This Year**

Math Unit meetings are organized so that K-12 Mathematics Specialists from all cooperatives convene face to face 3 times during the year to receive professional development that is current, research based, and data driven. The meetings also provide time for mathematics specialists to set goals, create and organize statewide PD, and assess impact on existing programs. Informational meetings were held virtually by DESE multiple times during the year. Several other meetings were organized by Co-op Math Specialists to meet to create PD needed across the state.

### **Additional Training Included:**

- Math Routines
- TNTP Coaching Cycles
- Suicide Prevention
- Child Maltreatment
- Mathematical Fluency
- Content Coaching
- Building Thinking Classrooms
- Cambium/ATLAS
- I-Ready
- Sweeney Consulting: Cultivating Learning Through Student-Centered Mentoring
- Cognitive Coaching

### **Statistics**

- Provided and/or received over 300 hours of Professional Development.
- Provided and/or assisted with Professional Development to almost 600 participants.
- Provided over 250 instances of direct school support (observations, facilitating PLC's, model Lessons, technology support, etc. -- either face to face or electronically) to almost 900 teachers, administrators, instructional facilitators, and over 2200 students during the 2024-25 school year.

**Program: Media**

Funding Source: NA

Funding Amount: NA

Competitive Grant: NA

Non-Restricted

**Participating Districts**

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Jacksonville North Pulaski, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, White County Central

**Personnel**

Lesa Grooms, Teacher Center Coordinator - BSE, MA, Ed.S.

**Goal**

To improve student achievement by providing appropriate instructional materials and prompt friendly service to all educators in the cooperative area.

**Program Summary**

A Variquest Visual Learning Tools Cut-out Machine and Poster Maker are provided for WDMESC educators. Educators can use the equipment or place an order to be fulfilled by the WDMESC staff.

WDMESC staff delivers to, and picks up from the schools the materials provided by the media center. Specialists provide lists of available materials and arrange for delivery and pick up, as needed. Materials include, but not limited to, Praxis study materials, professional learning books, student materials, microphones, speakers, sensory tools, etc.

The STEM Center kits from Harding University are available for check out to teachers in our cooperative districts and distributed by WDMESC staff.

A Glowforge is available for educator use. The Glowforge 3D machine serves as both a practical resource and a teaching tool. Its versatile capabilities allow staff and educators to fabricate an array of items, from intricate prototypes to educational aids, fostering creativity and hands-on learning. Beyond mere functionality, the Glowforge doubles as an educational catalyst, providing a path for others within the districts who may be unfamiliar with its operation. Through workshops and demonstrations, it not only produces tangible creations but provides enrichment.

WDMESC added a Sublimation Printer to the Teacher Center this year. This resource provides the ability to print designs that can be heat pressed onto multiple items/materials (t-shirts, tumblers, key chains, signs, etc.).

## **Program: Medicaid Services**

Funding Source: Medicaid, Arkids and ARMAC

### **Participating Districts**

White County Central, Sunshine School, & WDMESC Early Childhood

### **Personnel**

Jamie Watson, Medicaid Billing

### **Goal**

The goal of the WDMESC Medicaid Services program is to provide timely filings of Medicaid eligible claims for reimbursement on services rendered by our member school districts in speech therapy and speech, physical and occupational therapy for Early Childhood

### **Program Summary for Participating School Districts**

The Medicaid program is a state operated program to provide reimbursement for services for low income and the medically needy. In the case of school districts, the program affects children who are being serviced through the school districts for speech therapy services and who have met all requirements to be eligible for the Medicaid Program. The school districts submits required paperwork to the Co-op, which consists of the completed IEP, reports, history, and evaluations for each eligible student. After all required paperwork is received the co-op sends a prescription and required paperwork to the child's primary care physician for his/her signature. The signed prescription and required is then put in the child's folder.

The co-op then submits each claim electronically to AR Medicaid Portal for Medicaid payment to the participating School District. The Medicaid billing clerk reconciles each participating school district's RA (Remittance Advice) and sends RA to the district when received. All payments for the School District are sent directly to the School District and at the end of each school year in June each district is invoiced for a 10% administrative fee to WDMESC for the provided services. The remaining 90% is deposited into a federal account by each school district and spent within one year on Special Education Services. The School District submits documentation for Audit review on billing of Medicaid each quarter if required.

### **Program Summary for WDMESC Early Childhood**

In the case of WDMESC Early Childhood, the program affects children who are qualified for services for Speech, Physical and Occupational Therapy and who have met all requirements to be eligible for the Medicaid Program. After it is determined the child is eligible for services, the medicaid billing clerk submits the completed IEP, reports and evaluations and prescription request form to the child's Primary Care Physician for his/her signature. The signed prescription is then filed with the above documentation in the child's medical records. The medicaid billing clerk utilizes an electronic documentation system, Dstop, to submit medicaid claims to ensure accurate, timely reimbursement and compliance. Once reimbursement from medicaid has been approved, the medicaid billing clerk will reconcile all medical records for any discrepancies and verify that all records are available and accurate for review and audit.

### **Major Highlights of the Year**

The WDMESC Medicaid Program served two schools and WDMESC Early Childhood this year. The program was successful in receiving Medicaid funds for our districts and WDMESC Early Childhood.

## **Program: Novice Teacher Mentoring Program**

Funding Source: Arkansas Department of Education

Funding Amount: \$322,000

Competitive Grant: No

Restrictive: Yes

### **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Jacksonville North Pulaski, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, and White County Central

### **Personnel**

Morgan Verkler-Yates, Mentoring Program Specialist - M.Ed.

Tuer Kennard, Novice Teacher Facilitator - MSE

### **Goal**

The grant will be evaluated on recipient's actual performance as it relates to the established targets for [performance measures](#).

Each performance measure related to mentoring was developed to measure progress toward accomplishing the mentoring goals outlined in Arkansas state law:

The Teacher Excellence and Support System also shall include novice teacher mentoring for each novice teacher employed at the public school that:

1. Provides training and support to novice teachers to increase teacher retention;
2. Establishes norms of professionalism; and
3. Increase effective teacher performance, which will lead to improved student achievement; and

There is a 4th goal:

4. Provide licensure assessment support

The performance measures for licensure assessment support are related to access to the support, the progress made toward completion of the support, and support success.

### **Smart Goals**

By the end of the 24-25 school year, 90% of Novice Teachers plan to return to a teaching position as indicated in the Novice Teacher Survey, 100% of novice teachers report they were assigned a mentor or support person, and 100% of novices report they received mentoring support through WDMESC.

### **Program Summary**

**Novice Teacher Program:** District Mentoring Plans (MOUs) were developed in collaboration with each district and signed by ALL building level principals and district superintendents. Each MOU described both the district's responsibilities (maintain and share accurate NT data; select and provide a Novice Support Person or Mentor; ensure all unlicensed novices have a licensure pathway plan, provide a district POC, and complete surveys) and WDMESC's responsibilities (maintain and share accurate NT data; provide mentoring, licensure/Praxis support, observations, and PD; support districts in efforts to recruit and retain, provide TESS & PGP support through various means) as well as a detailed agreed upon description of professional development that novices could attend.

In the summer, WDMESC provided novices and mentors PD opportunities and/or their district's back to school onboarding. The mentoring program specific PDs were provided on five different days and were aligned to TESS domains, particularly domains 2 (The Classroom Environment) and domain 3 (Instruction). Mentoring Program Specialist presented at Riverview, Cabot, JNPSD, Bradford, and Searcy's new teacher onboarding. All teachers who attended bootcamp were provided with Code of Ethics training and any who did not attend were required to receive it on their own or at their district. Licensure Assessment study sessions were also held in the summer so that novices could utilize a quiet study

space, have access to study materials, receive support as needed, and apply for assessment cost reimbursement. Various PDs were offered throughout the year for novices to attend as needed (Increasing rigor/DOK, building student relationships, increasing student engagement, unpacking standards, classroom behavior management, micro-credentials, MPE/LPE designation, and more.) Jack Berckemeyer was a specific presenter that led a PD over classroom management for middle school students.

All first, second, and third year novice teachers were supported by Morgan Verkler-Yates and Tuer Kennard. Mentors and building leaders were also supported to build capacity in order to increase teacher retention. The Mentoring Program Specialist is in each district multiple times a year based on Google form surveys, how teachers are tiered, principal requests, and teacher requests: Depending on circumstances some visits are virtual.

**Licensure support:** A total of 34 Licensure Assessment Reimbursement Study Sessions and held between July 1 and March 31. These were independent study sessions through 240 tutoring or monitored by paid proctors who also provided support in both academic and test analysis. Six teachers met the requirements and received test cost reimbursement through the co-op and 3 were reimbursed through the state using geographic and academic shortage areas. Approximately 200 requests for resources were provided to support the licensure efforts of current and future educators. These resources include 240Tutoring, and Mometrix study guides. 240Tutoring supported approximately 167 students. WDMESC attended job fairs at Pangburn and Riverview School Districts, providing students with information about traditional pathways to teacher licensure and the role the co-op plays in supporting teachers.

### **Major Highlights of the Year**

- 405 Novice Teachers were supported with 95% completing the school year.
- NT Mentoring ensured all Year 1, 2, and 3 novices were provided appropriate and qualified mentors by their districts.
- ALL novices, mentors, and building leaders were provided free access to WinkED Online Learning courses. Novices were assigned a specific scope and sequence based on their years of experience with an overarching purpose to equip novices in receiving a Highly Effective rating in each dimension of the AR-TESS evaluation rubric by their summative year (4). Leadership and Mentor tasks were in their own scope and sequence for ways to support novices in their learning.
- Monthly newsletters aligning to TESS were sent out every month to novices, mentors, and building principals.
- WDMESC partnered with Riverview, Cabot, JNPSD, and Searcy's back to school new teacher onboarding programs allowing for strong relationships and lines of communication before school ever started.
- A novice teacher database dashboard was created to house all novice teacher data. From this, shared district novice teacher data sheets were created via imported data allowing district points of contact and Mentoring Program Coordinator to correspond throughout the school year. Teachers were tiered in collaboration with Mentoring Program Specialist and building principals.
- WDMESC accurately reported novice teacher data within 2% or less for all school districts except for JNPSD. NT Mentoring Specialist partnered with all districts to assist in correcting data in LEA Insights and WDMESC databases by resharing SIS instructions and Cycle 2 data discrepancies.
- WDMESC attended job fairs at Pangburn and Riverview School Districts, providing students with information about traditional pathways to teacher licensure and the role the co-op plays in supporting teachers.
- 3 cohorts for DESE approved coaching training were offered (NIET and (two) 8-Day Cognitive Coaching) allowing districts to build capacity for novice teacher mentors and LPE/MPE designations.
- NT Mentoring sent and paid for 31 educators through NIET Lead Teacher Designation Training, enabling districts to have experienced Mentor Teachers on site to mentor those pursuing alternative licensure paths.
- Mentoring Program Coordinator served as part of the Mentoring Manual Working Groups who collaborated to create a scope and sequence as well as milestones for novice mentoring.
- Mentoring Program Coordinator also served on the DESE's Mentoring Advisory Team.
- The ESC Mentoring program showed appreciation to teachers in all 17 supported districts during Teacher Appreciation Week.

- Novices were spotlighted WEEKLY on social media.
- The Mentoring webpage was updated and many additions were made to provide more resources and quick help for novices, mentors, and administrators.

### **Novice Teacher Data**

WDMESC served 402 novice teachers.

**During the 2024–2025 school year, Wilbur D. Mills ESC provided consistent and high-quality support to novice teachers across all 17 supported districts with the goal of improving retention and instructional growth.**

- 100% of novice teachers were assigned a mentor or support teacher, confirmed through required submissions in the Principal Mentoring Assurances form, district-wide MOUs, and a completed spreadsheet from each district POC and building principal identifying the assigned mentor for each novice. However, the survey results showed that 89% were actually assigned a support person.
- A strong focus was placed on mentoring program quality and impact, with over 90% of novice teachers indicating that their mentoring support helped them make meaningful progress toward their PGP goals.
- The ESC Mentoring Program Specialist (MPS) worked with building principals to identify Master and Lead designated teachers in 100% of supported schools, ensuring alignment with statewide initiatives and Executive Order 23-08.
- Teacher appreciation was prioritized across the region, with cookie trays personally delivered to every building in all 17 districts during National Teacher Appreciation Week, supporting morale and recognition.
- The Spring DESE Novice Teacher Survey achieved an 80% or higher response rate in all districts, offering valuable insight into program effectiveness.
- Notably, 80% of novice teachers reported they plan to return to the same SCHOOL building, highlighting the strength and impact of the ongoing support structures.
- 94% of novice teachers confirmed they received mentoring support, reinforcing the consistency and fidelity of mentoring across the region.

**Wilbur D. Mills ESC prioritized the development of professionalism among novice teachers by ensuring early training and meaningful mentoring support during the 2024–2025 school year.**

- 100% of novice teachers completed Code of Ethics training within their first month of teaching, reinforcing a strong foundation of professional expectations and ethical conduct from the start of the school year. This training was provided twice—once in the fall and once in the summer—to ensure coverage for all novice cohorts.
- Additionally, 90% of novice teachers reported that their mentoring support helped them establish and maintain professional norms, indicating that mentoring went beyond instructional guidance to include modeling and coaching around communication, collaboration, professionalism, and educator responsibilities.

**Throughout the 2024–2025 school year, MPS at WDMESC focused on strengthening instructional practice among novice teachers as a pathway to improving student achievement. Targeted mentoring and support were designed to build teacher capacity through aligned professional development and intentional guidance.**

- 90% of novice teachers reported that mentoring support increased their knowledge of the Framework for Teaching (FFT) and its associated Clusters, indicating stronger instructional awareness and alignment with the TESS framework.
- 90% of novices also felt more confident in their understanding of the TESS summative observation process thanks to their mentoring support, helping them better prepare for evaluations and improve classroom practice.
- Most significantly, 92% of novice teachers felt that their mentoring experience directly contributed to their progress toward becoming more effective educators—a key indicator of the program’s impact on teaching quality and student learning outcomes.

**Wilbur D. Mills ESC demonstrated a strong commitment to helping novice teachers achieve and maintain licensure by offering accessible, personalized assessment support across all 17 supported districts during the 2024–2025 school year.**

- 100% of supported schools provided novice teachers with access to licensure assessment resources, which were organized and continuously updated on the ESC mentoring website. Teachers were also encouraged to submit specific needs through a Request Resources Google Form, ensuring timely and individualized support.
- A detailed Licensure Pathway Plan was shared with district and building leaders to guide support for unlicensed educators and outline steps toward full certification.
- In addition, the ESC mentoring program offered free study resources to those needing to pass Praxis exams or expand their licensure. These included access to 240 Tutoring, Mometrix study materials, Zoom study sessions, and one-on-one tutoring opportunities, supported through a tutoring contract.
- All teachers who engaged with the ESC's licensure support services made measurable progress toward their licensure goals, reinforcing the effectiveness of the multi-tiered support approach.



**Program: The PEER Network**

**2024-2025 Funding Amount:** \$3,949,532  
**Funding Source:** Teacher and School Leader Incentive Fund, U.S. Department of Education  
**Competitive Grant:** Yes  
**Restrictive:** Yes

**Participating Districts:** Batesville, Buffalo Island Central, Carlisle, Cedar Ridge, Greene County Tech, Jonesboro, LISA Academy, Lonoke, Pangburn, Southside (Independence), Trumann

**PERSONNEL**

	Years	Degree	Job Title
Horn, Rachel	18	Ed.S.	PEER Project Director
Hardcastle, Brandi	22	MSE	PEER Lead Coach
Jones, Karla	31	MSE	PEER Coach
Williams, Brandi	23	MS	PEER Project Director
Pryor, Amy	18	MSE	PEER Coach
Gipson, Melissa	22	Ed.S.	PEER Operations and Communications Coordinator

**PROGRAM SUMMARY**

Promoting Educator Effectiveness in Rural Arkansas, the PEER Network, has supported more than 100 schools in Arkansas. The network was established to support 60 schools in the fall of 2021 through funding from a three-year federal Teacher and School Leader Incentive Fund (TSL) grant awarded to the Arkansas Public School Resource Center (APSRC) and administered through Crowley’s Ridge Educational Service Cooperative (ESC). The network expanded to support an additional 45 schools in PEER 2.0 through a second TSL award in the fall of 2023. This report outlines the successes and challenges of PEER 2.0 in Year 1 of the 2023 grant award.

The purpose of the PEER Network is to build leadership capacity in teachers and utilize distributed leadership for school improvement. PEER school leaders and teacher leaders collaboratively cultivate and support the skillful use of evidence-based instruction to maximize student learning. The PEER Network leverages lessons learned across both grant awards to increase the effective support of partner schools.

The PEER Logic Model is organized around five key strategies:

1. Establish PEER Network systems to support teachers and school leaders in the implementation of a Human Capital Management System
2. Establish systems of performance management for teacher leaders and school leaders to improve student achievement and growth
3. Expand professional learning pathways for teachers and school leaders to increase competencies and credentials
4. Establish systems of support for school leaders to recruit and retain diverse and highly qualified teachers
5. Establish a Performance-Based Compensation System to promote educator effectiveness through compensation for educator competencies and student achievement and growth

The PEER Network utilizes a Performance-Based Compensation System (PBCS) to support and promote educator effectiveness in rural Arkansas schools. The PEER Network recognizes the skills and knowledge of teachers, principals, and other school leaders as demonstrated through student academic achievement, the successful fulfillment of additional responsibilities or job functions (such as teacher leadership roles), and evidence of professional achievement and mastery of content knowledge.

## MAJOR YEAR 1 HIGHLIGHTS

- 81 school leaders and 1,369 teachers out of 1,608 (90%) earned performance-based compensation through meeting an interim assessment goal, increasing the value-added growth score, or obtaining a Master Professional Educator (MPE) or Lead Professional Educator (LPE) Designation.
  - Teachers earning an Interim Assessment Incentive:
    - Target: 50%
    - Actual: 54%
  - Teachers earning a Summative Student Growth Incentive:
    - Target: 50%
    - Actual: 64%
  - Teachers earning an MPE or LPE Designation:
    - Target: 30 by May 31, 2025
    - Actual: 36 by September 30, 2024
- Schools meet or exceed interim schoolwide interim assessment goals:
  - Target: 50%
  - Actual: 61%
- Schools increase the value-added growth score from the previous year
  - Target: 50%
  - Actual: 60%
- The PEER Network retained 90/93 (97%) of teacher leaders.
  - Of the three who were not retained, two left their schools and one was promoted to an Instructional Specialist in her school.
- Because they value the training and support provided by the PEER team, 17 of the 44 schools (39%) designated additional teacher leaders for Year 2.
  - The 3 teachers who left the program were replaced, and another 32 were added.
  - This brings the total number of teacher leaders from 93 in Year 1 to 125 in Year 2.
- Evidence-based practices from PEER training are present in **non-teacher-leader** classrooms. This metric is significant because these teachers do not have direct contact with the PEER team. Their implementation is a result of distributed leadership through PEER teacher leaders and school leaders.
  - Target: 50%
  - Actual: 79%
- The PEER Network funded the following in Year 1:
  - Summative Student Growth Incentive: \$523,900
  - Interim Assessment Incentive: \$387,000
  - Teacher Certification Incentive: \$72,000
  - Teacher Leader Stipends: \$356,520
  - School Leader Stipends: \$108,150

- Subgrant for Pursuing the Master Professional Educator (MPE) or Lead Professional Educator (LPE)  
Designation: \$129,469
- Staff Pipeline Subgrant for local recruitment and retention projects: \$126,245

## **Program: School Health Services**

Funding Source: Arkansas Master Tobacco Settlement

Competitive Grant: NA

Restricted NA

### **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Jacksonville, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, and White County Central

### **Personnel**

Shae Martin, RN, Community Health Nurse Specialist - Bachelor's Degree in Nursing

### **Goal**

Provide schools with assistance and resources that will improve student health.

### **Program Summary**

Provide technical assistance to area schools to:

Adopt tobacco-free policies and implement best practices for tobacco prevention and cessation.

Adopt policies promoting and implementing best practices for nutrition, physical activity, Coordinated School Health, and emerging public health issues.

Establish school wellness committees and fulfill state and federal mandates.

Inform communities of school health issues and current public health policy.

### **Provide education and training to:**

Certify school nurses to conduct mandated health screenings.

Provide school nurses with professional continued nursing education related to school health.

Inform schools and communities of school health resources, available trainings, and grant opportunities.

Identify needed school health related training for school personnel.

Coordinate and provide school health trainings to school personnel and community members.

### **Major Highlights of the Year**

Vision Screening/Hearing Screening/BMI/Scoliosis Screening training for 20 school nurses

Provided CPR/AED and First Aid certification training 9 times..

Provided Glucagon and Insulin Administration Training/Adrenal Insufficiency Training for School Nurses training to 9 participants.

Presented Vaping for MS/HS 26 times.

Presented Dose of Reality (opioids) 9 times.

Presented Youth Suicide Prevention 101 twice.

Presented safeTALK suicide prevention twice.

Presented QPR suicide prevention once.

Presented Oral Health 34 times.

Provided Stop the Bleed training 3 times.

Provided New Nurse training 4 times.

Provided Youth Mental Health First Aid training 4 times.

Provided Narcan training 16 times.  
Provided Distress Tolerance Training 14 times.  
Provided Addiction 101 training 29 times.  
Provided Internet Safety training 5 times.  
Provided Alcohol/Depressants training 13 times.  
Provided Cannabis training 13 times.  
Provided Hand Washing training 12 times.  
Provided Stimulants training 2 times.  
Provided Eating Disorders training 9 times.  
Provided Energy Drinks training 10 times.  
Provided Teen Dating Violence training 4 times.  
Partnered with DESE to provide Nursing Continuing Professional Development Contact Hours for the Arkansas Back to School Nurse Workshop.  
Assisted with school flu vaccination clinics.

## **Program: Science**

Funding Source: Arkansas Department of Education

Funding Amount: \$90,000

Competitive Grant: No

Restricted

## **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, JNPSD, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, White Co. Central

## **Personnel**

Ben Carrigan, Science Instructional Specialist - BSE in K-8, Masters in Teaching

## **Science Goals**

- Provide support to teachers as they implement the Arkansas K-12 Science Standards and base instructional decisions on these standards as well as the needs of students
- Collaborate with and/or provide technical assistance to District Leadership Teams
- Collaborate with the ADE Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) during Unit meetings, Regional meetings, and other opportunities as they arise
- Support, empower, and build capacity with District Leaders and Instructional Facilitators using the Science Classroom Walkthrough Tool.
- Provide professional development for teachers, academic coaches and principals; school support, regular attendance of meetings with ADE and other specialists
- Collaborative work with state science specialists to develop professional training related to the Arkansas K-12 Science Standards
- Increase awareness of classroom strategies and practices that support the implementation of the Arkansas K-12 Science Standards
- Provide support/awareness to districts as they implement curriculum that includes STEM Model Program, Project Lead the Way, Advanced Placement, and STEM Events.
- Assist all districts in the decisions of High Quality Instructional Materials.

Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative, in partnership with ADE Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), oversees the Science Program for grades K-12. Through this partnership, assistance is provided to member schools in the form of professional development opportunities, model lessons, classroom observations, technical assistance, conferences, and collaborative events. The goal is to support teachers as they endeavor to improve their content knowledge of science as well as develop a classroom environment in which learning is accessible to all students. Contact was made with every school district in the Wilbur D. Mills Cooperative area to inform them of the professional learning opportunities, teacher training, and support that can be provided by the Science Specialists.

## **Professional learning opportunities offered in 2024-2025 included:**

- DESE developed professional learning series. These sessions included:
  - Three-Dimensional Mastery: Science Instruction for Impactful Learning (28 participants)
  - Phenomenal Teaching: Unleashing Wonder in the Science Classroom (10 participants)
  - Assessment Alchemy: Using Assessment to Drive Science Instruction (15 participants)
  - Water Critters: Exploring Environmental Science (8 participants)
- Curriculum Resources/Pedagogy Training
  - Picture Perfect STEM (11 participants)
  - Greers Ferry Lake GeoFloat and Hike (14 participants)
  - The Great Quartz Dig Field Study (9 participants)
  - Middle and High School OpenSciEd Overview HQIM (14 participants)
  - Middle and High School OpenSciEd Planning HQIM (9 participants)

**The Science Department has assisted schools in a variety of ways including:**

- Implementation of the Arkansas K-12 Science Standards
- Developing/Identifying/Selecting Quality Curriculum and/or Resources
- Novice Teacher Support
- Team Meetings/Professional Learning Communities Support
- Classroom Observations
- Model Lessons
- Lesson Planning Support
- Providing Resources from WDMESC and/or Harding STEM Center
- The Science of Reading support
- Special Projects
- STEM Nights
- Coaching Support
- HQIM selection / implementation
- Classroom Walkthrough Tool

**Additional Responsibilities:**

- Member of the DESE Core Leadership Team - AR STEM Model Program
- Member of DESE AR Model Program State Advisory Committee
- Served on the Regional Planning Committee for the FIRST Robotics Competition - Arkansas Regional
- Served as the Volunteer Coordinator at the FIRST Robotics Arkansas Regional Competition
- National Picture Perfect Science Expert Trainer
- National OpenSciEd Facilitator

**Professional Development Received This Year**

The science specialist was able to attend all the face to face and virtual unit meetings provided by DESE. Unit meetings are organized so that all the state specialists from all cooperatives convene on a regular basis as a professional learning community. This year's focus at DESE has been around the TNTP Coaching Model with each specialist completing coaching cycles with volunteer teacher coachees. The science specialist also completed the 8 day cognitive coaching certification.

**Additional Training Included:**

- OpenSciEd Modules
- Mystery Science
- Picture Perfect STEM
- TNTP Coaching
- Cognitive Coaching

**Program: LEA Special Education Supervisor**

Funding Source: Assigned Districts

Funding Amount: \$20,808

Competitive Grant: No

Non-Restricted

**Participating Districts**

Bradford

**Personnel**

Rebecca Miller, LEA Supervisor; MSE

**Goal**

To supervise, plan, and keep in compliance the special education services for the district assigned.

**Program Summary**

Special Education Supervisor provides services to the cooperating district in all areas relating to special education. Services to regular education include: advisory assistance to regular classroom teachers, suggestions for modifications and/or accommodations of regular classes for students with disabilities, and professional development. Services to special education include: conducting due process/parent conferences, technical assistance in due process, testing services, instructional assistance with programs for students with disabilities including materials and methods selection and professional development. Services to district administrators include: budget preparation, amendments and reports, development of new programs, assistance with technical issues in due process, interagency resources advisement, preparation for ADE monitoring, and various types of professional development training.

**Major Highlights of the Year**

All compliance areas have been met. Budgets and other reports have been submitted in a timely fashion. The district has the necessary programs and procedures in place to ensure the special education needs of students are being met. Procedures for Child Find are also in place to ensure that compliance is met there as well. Inclusive practices are being implemented and plans are in place to increase the success of inclusion.



## **Program: Teacher Center-Professional Development; Curriculum Development Assistance; Resources**

Funding Source: Participating Districts

Funding Amount:\$237,787

Competitive Grant: No

Non-Restricted

### **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Hazen, Jacksonville North Pulaski, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, White County Central

### **Personnel**

Lesa Grooms, Teacher Center Coordinator/Assistant Director - BSE, MA, Ed. S.

Karen Osborn, Administrative Assistant

### **Goal**

- To align professional development services with district and school needs to build capacity of all adult learners in order to provide a world class education system which graduates students who are college and career ready
- To provide adult learners with content knowledge and research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards and prepare adult learners to use various types of assessment results appropriately
- To improve the learning of all students by providing resources to support adult learning and collaboration
- To provide curriculum development and selection assistance for the implementation of the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks
- To support school improvement initiatives and to enhance program integration through effective communication and technical support
- To enhance understanding of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
- To assist in understanding and implementing the LEARNS Act

### **Program Summary**

The Teacher Center Committee uses the data collected from districts to plan Professional Learning that meets the needs of educators in each of our 17 districts. The Director, Teacher Center Coordinator, Specialists and Technologist meet with constituent groups regularly. From those meetings and from the Annual Needs Assessment Survey, information is collected to assist in designing professional growth opportunities for the leaders and teachers in our region. Professional Development opportunities target the focus areas as outlined by the DESE, and PD sessions are offered to meet the requirements of law, as well.

### **Major Highlights of the Year**

The Teacher Center Coordinator and Specialists provided support and coaching in districts. Attention was given to Schools in Need or Support. The Wilbur Mills Teacher Center Coordinator met monthly with Assistant Superintendents/Curriculum Coordinators and Principals. During the regular meetings of the Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum Coordinator group and principals, guest speakers were made available and discussed a variety of topics. Some of the presenters and topics were: Lance LeVar (LeVar Consulting) presented Title IX information, Dennis Cavanaugh (National Weather Service) provided information about weather alerts and warnings, Joy Gray (AR Dept. of Health) spoke about Project Prevent and related information, Andy Sullivan (ADE) shared information about VAM scores, and Meagan Booe (ADE Behavior Specialist) provided guidance on behavior management. WDMESC Technology Coordinator, Brook Singletary, provided information on the use of AI.

## **Program: Technology**

Funding Source: State

Funding Amount: \$80,000

Competitive Grant: No

Restricted

### **Participating Districts**

Augusta, Bald Knob, Beebe, Bradford, Cabot, Carlisle, Des Arc, England, Jacksonville North Pulaski, Hazen, Lonoke, McCrory, Pangburn, Riverview, Rose Bud, Searcy, White County Central

### **Personnel**

Brook Singletary, Technology Coordinator - Masters Instructional Technology +

### **Goal**

To provide quality technology support and training for the cooperative and for the member school districts.

### **Program Summary**

The Technology Coordinator (TC) along with the Technology Assistant strive to support districts in their efforts to provide technology for teaching and learning by providing quality professional development for school staff and technology coordinators throughout the year. Along with training and technical assistance, the Co-op technology staff provides ongoing support to districts in the areas of cybersecurity, infrastructure, hardware and software.

The TC meets weekly with the statewide Arkansas Cooperative Technology Coordinators (ACTC) as well as DESE. The TC holds regular meetings with district Technology Coordinators where the information learned about DESE programs, grants and projects in the weekly meetings with DESE is promoted.

Cooperative technology staff provide ongoing support to the cooperative in the form of hardware, software, network maintenance and training. Maintenance and upkeep of on and off-site devices is also provided as well as maintaining the email and phone systems and the Co-op website.

In addition, the Cooperative Technology Staff maintains the Continuity of Operations Plan, investigates and learns new technologies that could be beneficial to districts, updates the Cooperative Annual Report and Cost Analysis and fulfills DESE mandates.

The TC also serves on Arkansas' P-12 Cyber Incidence Response Team (CIRT). Arkansas' P-12 Cyber Incidence Response Team represents a collaborative effort among Arkansas Cooperative Technology Coordinators and the Arkansas Division of Information Systems (DIS). The Cyber Incidence Response Team is a group of IT professionals who are willing and ready to provide onsite support, at no cost to the district, whenever an Arkansas school district is faced with a cyber threat. Information collected through the P-12 Cyber Incidence Response Team will only be used to inform and protect Arkansas school districts.

### **Major highlights**

- Coordinated and/or presented technology PD sessions for teachers based on Needs Assessment.
- Provided cyber security training for Co-op employees. Implemented online cyber security learning platform at WDMESC.
- Participated in statewide cyber security training following the passage of Act 504 - facilitated 6 training sessions at WDMESC for district technology coordinators and staff
  - Facilitated work days to implement the Act 504 policies
- Provided cyber security training for district technology coordinators.
- Coordinated and led meetings with district technology coordinators.

- Coordinated and led Library/Media Specialists Professional Learning Community.
- Met with DESE and Co-op Technology Coordinators on a weekly basis.
- Disseminated information to district techs from DESE.
- Served on DESE's Social Media Awareness Campaign (SMACTalk) Committee.
- Partnered with the ACTCs to provide training at the Hot Springs Technical Institute (HSTI).
- Partnered with the ACTCs to provide training at the ADE Summit.
- Partnered with the ACTCs to provide statewide PD in Your PJs training

**Program: Technology Services**

Funding Source: District

Funding Amount: \$114,228.38

Competitive Grant: No

Non-Restricted

**Program: Technology**

Funding Source: Assigned Districts

**Participating Districts**

Riverview, White County Central

**Personnel**

Kyle Cross, Technologist, Riverview - HSD

Shayne Wallis, Technologist, White Co. Central - BSE

Maguire Rodgers, Technology Assistant, WDMESC - HSD

**Goal**

To provide quality technology support for the participating school districts.

**Program Summary**

- Support districts in their efforts to provide technology for teaching and learning
- Provide support to increase access to ADE sponsored programs, features and grants
- Provide quality professional development
- Provide ongoing support to the district: hardware/software/network maintenance and training
- Add growth and provide upkeep to desktop/mobile labs and other school 1:1 initiatives
- Maintain email system and district websites
- Develop/maintain/implement District Technology Plan
- Develop/maintain Continuity of Operations Plan for member districts
- File E-Rate for member districts
- Investigate new technologies that might be beneficial for the educational process

## **Program: Behavior Support Specialists**

FUNDING SOURCE: Federal-Part B

COMPETITIVE GRANT: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X \_\_\_\_\_

RESTRICTED FUNDING: X \_\_\_\_\_

### **PERSONNEL:**

Behavior Support Specialist Coordinator: Shelia Smith, Ph.D., L.P., BCBA-D

Behavior Support Specialists:

Shana Bailey, M.S.  
Jennifer Brewer, Ed.S.  
Sandy Crawley, M.S.E  
Kelly Davis, M.Ed., BCBA  
Sonia Hartsfield M.Ed.  
Audrey Kengla, M.S., CCC-SLP  
Amanda Kirby, M.S.E.  
Kat Lancaster, M.A., CCC-SLP, BCBA  
Lindsey Lovelady, M.S., BCBA  
Allison Mears, LPC., BCBA  
Nicheyta Raino, M.Ed., BCBA  
Jenna Stapp, M.A.T.  
Connie Thomason, M.Ed., BCBA  
Mary Walter, Ed.S., SPS  
Meagan Booe, M. Ed, BCBA  
Carla Knight, M.S.E., BCBA

### **PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS: Statewide**

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.

<b>BX3 Cohort 3- Building level teams</b>	
1. Alma Intermediate 2. Bryant Elementary 3. Horatio Elementary 4. Hurricane Creek Elementary	7. Mena High School 8. Oscar Hamilton Elementary 9. Pottsville Junior High 10. University Heights Elementary

5. McRae Elementary 6. Mena Middle School	11. Asbell Elementary
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<b>BX3 Cohort 4 - Building level teams</b>	
1. Arkansas Arts Academy High School 2. Magnolia Middle School 3. Sidney Deener Elementary 4. Westside Elementary - Searcy 5. Southwest Middle School rcy- WDM 6. Janie Darr Elementary 7. Arkadelphia High School 8. Lake Hamilton New Horizons 9. Washington Elementary 10. Lincoln Middle School 11. Cedarville Elementary 12. Glen Rose Elementary 13. Flippin Elementary 14. Beebe Elementary 15. Bob Folsom Elementary 16. The Academies of West Memphis 17. Westbrook Elementary - Harmony Grove	18. Elmdale Elementary-Springdale 19. Louise Durham Elementary 20. Manila Elementary 21. K-8 Connect - Springdale 22. Indian Hills Elementary 23. Newport Elementary 24. East End Elementary 25. Lakeside Primary 26. Allbritton Elementary 27. Peak Elementary School 28. Harmony Leadership Academy 29. Rector Elementary School 30. Wonder Jr. High 31. Bayyari Elementary 32. North Heights Community School 33. Beebe Middle School 34. Benton Jr High

<b>BX3 Cohort 5 - Building level teams</b>	
1. Waldron Middle School 2. Mountainburg Elementary 3. Mountainburg Middle School 4. Mountainburg High School 5. King Elementary-Van Buren 6. Fairview Elementary- Fort Smith 7. East Side- Magnolia 8. Central Elementary-Magnolia 9. Smackover-Norphlet Elementary 10. Hillcrest Elementary 11. East End Middle- Sheridan 12. Sheridan High School	13. Eureka Springs Elementary 14. Eureka Springs Middle School 15. McCrory Elementary 16. Augusta Elementary 17. Augusta High School 18. Jerry "Pop" Williams Elementary-Farmington 19. Farmington High School 20. Arkansas Arts Academy Elementary 21. Clarendon Elementary

## **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 for each BX3 team throughout the school year. Professional learning opportunities are offered as needed based on the SMART goal(s) and action plan.

## **MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024-25:**

- Cohort 3 continued with 11 building-level teams across the state
- Cohort 4 continued with 34 building-level teams across the state
- Accepted Cohort 5 with 21 building-level teams across the state
- 99% of participants in Cohort 3, 4 and 5 agreed to strongly agreed that the coaching session on the topic covered was beneficial.
- 99% of participants in Cohort 3, 4 and 5 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 and 5 agreed to strongly agreed that the interactions with and methods used by BX3 coaches were positive and acceptable.
- 98% of participants in Cohort 3, 4 and 5 agreed to strongly agreed that they feel confident in carrying out the steps in their action plan.

## **CIRCUIT**

### **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 teams on Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) development
- Provide professional learning opportunities on evidence-based interventions

## **MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024-2025:**

- Provided on-site coaching and consultation, student observation, records review, assistance with functional behavior assessment, safety and behavior intervention planning for student teams for 155 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 2024-2025:**

- Offered 19 sessions of the 5 Essential Components of School-Wide Behavior Supports professional developments to building-level teams
- Added 10 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/>
- Offered over 140 professional learning opportunities in person or virtually to school districts in all Education Service Cooperatives with over 2655 participants

### **ADDITIONAL BSS HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024-2025:**

- Planning for the first annual Arkansas School Behavior Conference
- Partnered with DESE to support THRIVE Leadership Academy Cohorts 5, 6, and 7 and THRIVE Leadership Academy at DeQueen-Mena ESC, Dawson ESC, Southeast ESC, and Arch Ford ESC to improve the implementation of positive behavior supports in school buildings. Provided 21 professional learning opportunities to THRIVE participants
- Served on the DESE Leadership Team for Arkansas THRIVE
- Served on the Arkansas Early Childhood Behavior Support Cadre'
- Served on the BehaviorHelp Kindergarten Transition Support Planning group
- Served on committee DESE staff and AETN to develop modules on Crisis Management and MTSS-B for AR IDEAS
- 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
- Newsletter is reaching nationally and internationally (8 countries)
- Several states are accessing our online modules including California, Colorado, Nevada and North Carolina
- Presented Multi-Tiered Behavior Support Resources at SEAS Conference
- Presented Mic Drop Sessions - Review of BSS Website at AAEA Conference
- Presented Increasing Student Behavior Supports at the Tier 2 Level: Student Intervention Matching (SIM) Form at the Transition Summit
- Presented Charting the Path to Tier 2 Behavior Interventions: Intro. to the Student Intervention Matching Form at LEA Academy
- Presented Navigating Tier 1 and Tier 2 Behavior Supports in the Inclusive Classroom at LEA Academy



- Presented The BX3 Journey Awaits! Building Capacity in School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports at LEA Academy
- Presented The Behavior Side of RTI with DESE- OCSS for New Administrators
- Presented Meaningful Access ToT: Behavior with DESE-OSE
- Presented Behavior Strategies and Resources at the The Teaching & Partnerships in Juvenile Detention Centers Workshop
- Presenting Supercharging Student Success: An Overview of Multi-Tiered Behavior Support at the ArSCA & DESE School Counselor Conference
- 14 BSS attended the Association of Positive Behavior Supports International Conference in St. Louis, MO
- 1 BSS attended the 23rd Annual NWPBIS Conference in Portland, OR
- 1 BSS attended the LRP Institute Convention in Phoenix, AZ

## Program: Digital Learning – Virtual Arkansas

FUNDING SOURCE: ADE Grant – Act

COMPETITIVE GRANT: No

RESTRICTED: Yes NON-RESTRICTED: \_\_\_\_

### PARTICIPATING WILBUR D. MILLS EDUCATION SERVICE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICTS:

District	Served (Yes or No)
AUGUSTA SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
BALD KNOB SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
BEEBE SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
BRADFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
CABOT SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
CARLISLE SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
DES ARC SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
ENGLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
HAZEN SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
JACKSONVILLE NORTH PULASKI COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
LONOKE SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
MCCRORY SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
PANGBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
RIVERVIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
ROSE BUD SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
SEARCY SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes
WHITE COUNTY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	Yes

### CENTRAL OFFICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL:

John Ashworth: Virtual Arkansas Executive Director and Superintendent; EdS, MS, BS

Dr. Brandie Benton: Virtual Arkansas Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Ed.D, MSE, BSE

Mindy Looney: Virtual Arkansas Director of Operations; BS, MBA

Candice McPherson: Virtual Arkansas Director of Design and Development; MS, BS

Amy Kirkpatrick: Virtual Arkansas Director of Technology; MS, BS

Jason Bohler: Core Campus Principal; MA, BA

Samantha Carpenter: Core Campus Principal; EdS, MS, BS

Tye Bibby: Concurrent Credit Campus Principal; MS, BA

Christie Lewis: CTE Campus Director; BBA, MS

Rachael Walston: Learn Anywhere Academy (LAA) Program Principal; MS, BS

**MISSION:** Our mission is to 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 student 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	2023-2024 Results
Help Address the Arkansas Teacher Shortage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- VA made courses available in all critical academic licensure shortage areas</li><li>- VA provided access to 101 full-time Arkansas-certified teachers for local schools</li></ul>
Provide a Wide Range of Courses for Arkansas Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- VA provided access to 220 total courses; 160 courses with a VA teacher</li><li>- These courses provided opportunities to 29,121 Content + Teacher enrollments and 6,482 Content Partnership enrollments</li></ul>
Ensure Educational Options for Economically Disadvantaged Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- VA courses were made available to all high-poverty districts and were utilized by 88% of all Arkansas school districts with a 70% or higher FRL population</li><li>- VA offered preferred automatic concurrent credit registration for high-poverty districts. 100% of high-poverty schools that submitted the necessary</li></ul>

	paperwork for enrollment during the early registration period were granted seats in the classes for which they registered
Ensure Educational Options for Rural Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 60% of all Virtual Arkansas Content + Teacher Enrollments were from districts designated as rural</li> <li>- VA provided educational options and opportunities to all rural districts and was utilized by 97% of all districts designated as rural</li> <li>- 80% of all Concurrent Credit enrollments were from districts designated as rural</li> </ul>
Provide Educational Options for Students with Scheduling Conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All VA courses can be taken at any time during the day, which provides flexibility in scheduling local course options to avoid scheduling conflicts</li> <li>- This is particularly important for smaller districts, as they have many courses only available during certain periods of the day</li> </ul>
Maintain Positive Customer Support Ratings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Virtual Arkansas had a 100% positive rating in customer support/service measures on the 2023-2024 perception survey to administrators and counselors.</li> </ul>

#### **PROGRAM SUMMARY:**

Virtual Arkansas is a supplemental State Virtual School (SVS) that partners with local Arkansas schools, the Arkansas Department of Education, and the local Education Service Cooperatives to provide 7th-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](http://www.virtualarkansas.org)

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

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

#### **Major Highlights of the 2023-2024 School Year - Virtual Arkansas**

- 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.
- Partnered with the Department of Youth Services (DYS) to provide high-quality online courses and opportunities to adjudicated youth.

- After designing, developing, and launching the pre-educator Arkansas Teacher Residency Certified Teaching Assistant Concurrent Credit pathway and partnership to provide concurrent credit pre-educator options to students throughout the state, saw a 65% growth in student enrollments within the concurrent credit program.
- Spearheaded and implemented the state effort to include a new Arkansas Military Service and Security Pathway for students interested in a military future.
- Implemented a large-scale assessment improvement initiative that aligned course curriculum and assessments with the ATLAS assessment.
- Executive Director continues to serve the role of President for the Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance (VLLA), a partnership of 20 state virtual programs dedicated to advancing quality online learning.
- Multiple Virtual Arkansas directors serve as national online learning workgroup chairs, demonstrating our commitment innovation and online learning leadership at the national level.
- Partnered with Arkansas Tech University to offer summer college courses
- Designed, developed, or enhanced 44 courses
- Designed and implemented 10 new Credit Recovery courses

#### **Virtual Arkansas Data (Based on 2023-2024 School Year)**

- Have saved Arkansas school districts over \$72,500,000 in enrollment fees over the last eleven years
- Have served over 311,000 enrollments over the last 11 years
- Virtual Arkansas Students had an 92% Pass Rate
- 12,726 Unique Arkansas Students Engaged in 29,121 Content + Teacher Enrollments
- 26,730 Credits Earned
- 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 9,284 College Concurrent Credit Hours
- 80% of Concurrent Credit enrollments from rural districts
- Career and Technical Education: 5,884 enrollments over two semesters
- 1,952 Computer Science enrollments
- 2,007 Advanced Placement Enrollments
- 97% of all Arkansas Rural Districts Served by Virtual Arkansas
- 60% of all Virtual Arkansas Content + Teacher Enrollments From Districts Classified as Rural
- 94% of all Arkansas public school districts served

**Program: Migrant Education**

FUNDING SOURCE: DESE Grant – Title 1 Part C

COMPETITIVE GRANT: No

RESTRICTED

**PARTICIPATING DISTRICTS**

Academies of Math & Science	AR School for the Deaf	Augusta	Bald Knob
Barton-Lexa	Beebe	Bradford	Brinkley
Cabot	Carlisle	Clarendon	Des Arc
England	Exalt Academy of SWLR	Forrest City	Friendship Aspire-LR
Hazen	Helena/W. Helena	Jacksonville	Kipp-Delta College Prep
Lee County	Lisa Academy-ALL	Little Rock	Lonoke
Marvell	McCrary	North Little Rock	Palestine-Wheatley
Pangburn	Pine Bluff	Pulaski County	Riverview
Rosebud	Searcy	Sheridan	Stuttgart
Watson Chapel	White Co. Central		

**PERSONNEL**

Karen Fuller, Migrant Program Specialist, BBA, M.Ed-Educational Leadership

Heidi Harris, REDS, Associate Degree-Business Administration

Carmen Lambert, Recruiter, Associate Degree-Early Childhood

Sandra Garcia-Student Support Specialist-BBA-Business

Lily Farfan-Field Recruiter, Associate Degree-Social Services

Lourdes Alvarado-Recruiter/Student Support Specialist-Paraprofessional License

**GOAL**

The goal of the Migrant Education Program is to ensure that all migrant students reach challenging academic standards and graduate with a high school diploma (or complete a GED) that prepares them for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.

**Smart goals**

1. By the end of the 24-25 performance period, 70% of migratory students served in a summer migrant program that participated in an SEA-approved supplementary mathematics program, will show a gain between pre- and post-testing on a reliable mathematics assessment.
2. By the end of the 24-25 performance period, 70% of migratory students served in a summer migrant program that participated in an SEA-approved supplementary ELA program, will show a gain between pre- and post-testing on a reliable ELA assessment.

## **PROGRAM SUMMARY**

The purposes of the Migrant Education Program are to:

- Assist States in supporting high-quality and comprehensive educational programs and services during the school year, and, as applicable, during summer or intersession periods, that address the unique educational needs of migratory children.
- To identify eligible migrant students by the use of agricultural surveys in schools, businesses, and any venue that might employ or provide services for migrant families. Recruiters work to build rapport with local farmers and area businesses to ensure their assistance and cooperation with the program.
- Ensure that migratory children who move among the States are not penalized in any manner by disparities among the States in curriculum, graduation requirements, and challenging State academic standards.
- Ensure that migratory children receive full and appropriate opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards that all children are expected to meet.
- Help migratory children overcome educational disruption, cultural and language barriers, social isolation, various health-related problems, and other factors that inhibit their ability to succeed in school.
- Help migratory children benefit from State and local systemic reforms. (See section 1301 of the ESEA.)

### **Major Highlights of the Year**

- Contacted and assisted project schools with the migrant grant process including their Indistar information, suggested expenditures, agricultural surveys, and the mandatory training for tutors.
- Provided in-person training for tutors on August 21, 2024 at the Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative. A state-wide Identification and Recruitment Training was held on August 28, 2024 at Harding University.
- Provided districts with information regarding allowable expenditures and worked with migrant tutors to plan daily schedules to include in person and virtual students.
- Collected and recorded Mass Enrollments, Needs Assessments, Students' Eligible for Migrant Supplemental Services Forms, Daily Schedules, and On Track forms from each of the project tutors and the needed documentation from the non-project districts as well.
- Served approximately 900 students in the Wilbur D. Mills Educational Service Cooperative, Great Rivers Educational Service Cooperative, and Arkansas River Educational Service Cooperative areas. Of those, around 400 were non-project students and approx. 500 were project school students. These students were ages 3-21. Project schools are those who have a migrant student population great enough to receive funding and therefore can hire a migrant tutor and utilize the funds through their district. Such districts usually have at least 25 migrant eligible students enrolled, although this can vary due to the funding formula. Schools who qualify for funding have the opportunity to accept the funds or decline the funds and have the cooperative serve their student population, making them a non-project school. Other non-project schools do not have sufficient migrant student populations to qualify for funding and therefore are served by the cooperative.
- Provided migrant parents and children ages 3-5, that are not enrolled in kindergarten or other preschool programs, with needed supplies and manipulatives for at-home learning.
- Provided high-interest books, school supplies, and information on community resources (dental care, food banks, healthcare, milestones for pre-k, safety (fire, internet, and sun), banking, etc.) to migrant students and families.
- Provided free resources for those in need. Our staff is very passionate about our students and go above and beyond to help them with whatever needs the migrant students have. We have tutors and recruiters that search for outside resources to share with our migrant families. Recruiters have received sheets, towels, and blankets to distribute to families in need and provide school supplies to all students. We work in collaboration with local churches who have food to distribute it to our families in need.
- Completed needs assessments on each non-project student to determine which students were a priority for service. Students received supplies and books multiple times throughout the school year. Non-project students who are considered Priority For Service (PFS), those who have moved in the past year and are at risk of failing, are visited once to twice a month by cooperative staff to assist with instructional and or personal needs. Students in non-project schools were also provided with dental health supplies and educational information.

- Monitored high school seniors in the project and non-project schools to ensure they are working towards graduation. Provided them with information about ACT and scholarships available to migrant students.
- Assisted project tutors with setting up PAC (Parent Advisory Council) meetings in each of their districts to discuss literacy, math, and graduation requirements with parents. We held a Regional PAC meeting that focused on Financial Awareness and Resources. Presentations were done by representatives from First Security Bank, El Puente, and the Department of Labor.
- Met and established relationships with farmers and businesses.
- LEA tutors were encouraged to inquire about student progress and regularly check in with the student and/or parent to ensure they were completing their work.
- MSAC (Migrant Student Advisory Council) was held on October 30, 2024 at ASU-Beebe campus. Presenters from ASU-Beebe inform the students of what is offered there along with other campuses such as ASU-Searcy and ASU-Newport. They also discuss financial aid, the admissions process, FAFSA, and give a tour of the campus showing classrooms, dorms, student center, and the cafeteria where students enjoy lunch while there.
- Arkansas Migrant Education Student Leadership Academy (AMESLA) was held this year on October 11-13, 2024. This is a leadership development opportunity for students from all across the state and is held at the 4-H Center in Ferndale, Arkansas. Team building activities such as rock climbing and rope trails are part of the activities that are taught during this weekend. It is limited to 40 students so applications are taken as first come, first served.
- A STEM Camp for students completing 7th, 8th, or 9th grades was held at Harding University on June 10-14, 2024. Two professors from Harding University and another from a local school district taught the camp and students were engaged in numerous experiments along with some desk work and robotics. The hours for the camp were 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and Searcy School District provided transportation for the students involved from their district. Students from Searcy, Riverview, and White County Central school districts participated. Fourteen students participated and all were in attendance each day. Students were provided lunch(in the University cafeteria) and snacks by the Migrant Education Program and each student left with reading books for them and their siblings for the summer. Another STEM Camp is planned for June 2025 at Harding University for those who have completed the 7th, 8th, or 9th grades this school year. Students will be chosen based on their application and there are twelve spots available.
- Provided credit recovery opportunities through Red Comet.
- Monitored the project school districts annually as required by the Office of Migrant Education.



## Special Projects and Programs

Funding Source: Arkansas Department of Education, ARP ESSER and Local District Funds

### Program Name: AR App

WDMESC, in collaboration with all the Arkansas Education Service Cooperatives and DESE, provided training to districts on the AR App. Our collective mission is to enhance teaching, learning, and leadership in Arkansas schools by providing high quality support services targeted toward improving the achievement of all Arkansas students. A series of sessions were developed to support the gradual completion of the AR App. The purpose is to help schools differentiate the process and produce a high quality application. The timeline of this work was January through May and will continue each year moving forward. Each month a different component of the AR App was the focus. The process is designed to support the comprehensive needs assessment, data collection, team formation, creation of SMART goals, and the development of goals that align with district data and LEARNS, all of which will be implemented through each district's strategic plan.

The two main purposes of this work were to support districts in high-quality completion of the AR App and the production of the district's strategic plan and to support the Arkansas Department of Education in the approval process as a result of high-quality submissions.

Each ESC provided a series of trainings throughout the Spring semester following the below imaged timeline.



### Program Name: Mathematics

**Student-Centered Mathematics: Understanding Mathematical Thinking** is professional learning that utilizes a research-based framework designed around how elementary school children learn concepts of number, operations, and early Algebra. The goal of this multi-year training is for teachers to learn how to utilize this framework to inform their mathematics instruction. Teachers learn to analyze and write mathematically demanding story problems and equations in order to assess and further students' understanding of concepts and skills. Attention is also focused on how to recognize student responses in terms of cognitive development, facilitate discussions that will provide a window into children's

thinking, strengthen children's ability to reason about arithmetic, and build students' capacity for algebraic reasoning. This PD is based on the research found in *Children's Mathematics: Cognitively Guided Instruction*. Connections to DESE's *Elevate Math Fluency*, *ARs 5 Rs for Math Engagement*, and the *Effective Math Teaching Practices* were added to this professional learning in an effort to support state initiatives in mathematics.

The Instructional Specialist has completed the CGI Leadership Institute and is an ADE-AR Endorsed Trainer for Year 1, 2, and 3, and is currently leading and/or hosting 3 sessions.

**Program Name: Robotics - FIRST Robotics Arkansas Regional**

The FIRST Robotics Competition Arkansas Regional was held March 6-8, 2025 in Searcy, AR at Searcy Lion Arena. Thirty high school teams from 9 different states came together in Central Arkansas to showcase their months of hard work, creative problem solving and incredible team work. This year's game, REEFSCAPE, was presented by HAAS. WDMESC Program Coordinators and Content Specialists played vital roles in the implementation of the event. The science instruction specialist was a member of the planning committee and the event volunteer coordinator, who is responsible for recruiting and training over 80 volunteers each day. WDMESC was recognized as a "Friends of the Future" sponsor for their support.

**Program Name: STEM - Harding Robots and Rockets STEM Camp**

WDMESC helped plan and implement the Robots and Rockets STEM Camp at Harding University for students entering middle school grades. The goal of this camp was to provide students with hands-on STEM experiences to excite them about science and engineering and to reinforce the fundamental math and science that underlie the projects. Fifty students entering grades 5-8 participated in the camp. Faculty from the Harding Science and Engineering Departments along with the Science Specialist from WDMESC helped throughout the week. (instructed sessions, assisted with instruction, distribution of supplies, registration and supervision of students)

Topics included - Civil Engineering, EV3 Robots, Sphero Robots, 3D printing, and other STEM related topics

**Program Name: ACT Prep**

The ACT Prep Grant is designed to provide additional support to students in grades 7-12 in preparing for the ACT. Through this grant, all districts in Arkansas had the opportunity to opt-in for additional support for their students in taking the ACT. The grant included prep sessions for any student taking the ACT.

Through this grant cooperatives hosted ACT Prep sessions for students to participate in prior to their ACT test. Cantrell and Waller Preparatory (CW Prep) provided sessions across the state to almost 2,000 students. In these sessions, students spent six hours studying content from the ACT. CW Prep also shares strategies with students when taking the test. Students leave the training with a one-year log-in to all the resources that were shared so they can use them to continue studying for the ACT. WDMESC hosted three CW Prep sessions at WDMESC. October session: 76 students participated; December session: 66 students participated; March session: 79 students participated.

**Program Name: Communities of Practice (CoP)**

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 the acceleration of learning using HQIM. Bailey Education Group is the selected vendor from those approved by Rivet Education to contract with for professional services to engage in content coaching, with emphasis on HQIM. One district opted to participate in this opportunity.

**Program Name: Bus Driver Certification and Assessment**

Due to federal regulations, individuals obtaining a new CDL are required to complete a curriculum and pass an assessment. As a result of the lack of bus driving candidates, cooperatives purchased a curriculum and assessment package from Vector Solutions, LLC. Mr. Horn, Director, administers training to transportation directors of WDMESC districts and continues to support the points of contact by providing guidance and resources as they implement this process. This training allows the district point of contact to certify new bus driving candidates.

**Program Name: ESCWorks**

WDMESC purchases the online platform, escWorks for each of the 17 member districts. escWorks is the platform used by the state of Arkansas to house professional development offerings. Educators in Arkansas use their escWorks account to register for professional development and to track their professional development hours.

**Program Name: CPI Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® Training**

Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® Training provides educators with the skills to safely recognize and respond to everyday crisis situations. The training complies with all current legislation and is evidence-based and fully accredited. WDMESC staff attended CPI certification training and provided this training to our districts.

## **Appendix A**

[Professional Development Activities Reports](#)

## **Appendix B**

[Board Report](#)