Regional Initiative Summaries

Executive Connections

The ARCC has established the Executive Connections project to offer a virtual professional learning community for state board of education members and state education agency (SEA) executives. The ARCC staff will moderate the virtual learning community to enable peer-to-peer learning about different approaches for managing and resolving issues faced by these states. The ARCC will schedule, facilitate, and keep records of quarterly virtual meetings, with topics selected by state board members and SEA executives. By focusing on peer-to-peer networking, identifying common challenges, and exploring best practices, the ARCC will help SEA executives and state board members enhance their professional efficacy in support of coherent policies and procedures, providing technical assistance as requested, on such topics as strategic planning, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) implementation, succession planning, and sustainability. Contingent on state board or SEA executive interest, the ARCC will facilitate training or work sessions to assist SEA staff and state board leaders in the application of tools.

Beyond College: Enhancing Career Readiness

The ARCC created the Enhancing Career Readiness project to connect SEA staff across the region in peer-to-peer discussion about their career pathways initiatives. SEA staff will learn about tools and strategies for communicating the benefits of career and technical education (CTE) programs, and engage with other SEA staff responsible for CTE to discuss shared successes and issues concerning pathways. The ARCC team will coordinate and facilitate visits for SEA staff to other states to study their pathways initiatives and CTE programs in general. The ARCC will also facilitate monthly calls about topics of interest, such as middle school CTE alignment and career pathways, district/regional advisory councils, postsecondary incentives, and validated industry credentials. SEA staff may benefit from expanding their network of peers with CTE expertise, exploring new strategies to reform career readiness in their states, and communicating more effectively to students, parents, and businesses. The ARCC team will also coordinate with the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) to identify and develop strategies and tools to better communicate the benefits of its Simulated Workplace to students, parents, and businesses, conduct interviews with businesses to obtain their perceptions, and partner with WVDE to determine how to use the findings to improve Simulated Workplace, conduct and analyze a second survey of CTE Completers, and develop an information resource guide to help other CTE programs communicate and market CTE to students.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Support

The ARCC will develop peer learning opportunities and tools to address emergent regional needs related to ESSA implementation through a peer-to-peer webinar series concerning issues associated with ESSA implementation by SEAs and local education agencies (LEAs), and a workgroup of regional stakeholders that will compile a meta-data repository of education databases that could inform monitoring of ESSA implementation and progress. This effort is expected to enhance SEA knowledge and skills and access to materials and other assets that support ESSA implementation. The ARCC team will also respond to ad hoc requests for technical assistance related to ESSA implementation and collaborate with ARCC state coordinators to identify emerging topics.

Building SEA Capacity to Support Students with Literacy-Related Disabilities

SEAs in the region report a need for technical assistance to build their capacity to put into action best practices in literacy screening, identification, instruction, and intervention for students with literacy-related disabilities, including dyslexia. They report the need to empower schools to build local capacity to support students with literacy-related disabilities, create a multi-tiered system of support framework, and improve understanding among school staff of data and interventions, including access to professional development and resources. The ARCC will collaborate with SEAs to build their knowledge and capacity as well as the capacity of schools and districts to implement effective screening, identification, and instructional support for dyslexia and other reading disabilities. To provide SEAs with a firm foundation on critical issues the ARCC team will host regional professional development events on three topics: 1) screening for and understanding dyslexia and other literacy-related disabilities; 2) improving reading achievement for students with dyslexia and other literacy-related disabilities in K-3 general education; and 3) identifying dyslexia and other literacy-related disabilities and intensifying interventions to maximize reading success. The ARCC staff will further provide guidance to SEAs on designing and facilitating continuous improvement data summits that support LEA use of formative and summative data to inform model implementation of evidence-based literacy practices and tools and measures that can feasibly and accurately capture implementation status. Lastly, the ARCC will facilitate, through online peer-to-peer exchanges, sharing feedback on National Council on Independent Living tools, resources, and systems to support students with literacy-related disabilities.