

Building Local Education Agency Capacity to Improve Graduation Outcomes for Students

The ARCC will collaborate with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to improve its structural capacity to develop policies, procedures, and practices to support new graduation requirements aligned with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate. The Virginia Board of Education developed the Profile of a Virginia Graduate to establish a framework that identifies knowledge and skills that students should attain during high school, including critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship. ARCC staff will also collaborate with VDOE to determine strategies to increase the capacity of local education agencies (LEAs) to implement the Profile of a Virginia Graduate and meet the college and career readiness standards outlined in Virginia's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan. The ARCC will collaborate with VDOE to define the parameters of its strategic planning process and serve as advisor during strategic planning meetings, providing facilitation and other support. The ARCC will also assist VDOE in identifying resources such as tools, materials, and information about promising practices; developing and making available professional development to support LEA implementation; and developing a communication plan to increase LEA awareness of resources.

Building State and Local Education Agency Capacity to Improve Social-Emotional Outcomes for All Students

The VDOE requested assistance from the ARCC as the state designs, develops, and delivers a culturally responsive training series for coaches employed by the Virginia Tiered System of Support - Research and Implementation Center (VTSS-RIC) to address the challenges of disproportionality in discipline referrals across its schools. The state has found that when Virginia schools refer students with Individualized Education Programs, or belonging to a particular racial or ethnic group, for disciplinary reasons, they are significantly more likely to be suspended or expelled than other students. VDOE aims to increase its capacity to reduce disproportionate rates of discipline referrals through cultural sensitivity and awareness training for coaches and teachers. The ARCC will assist VDOE in determining ways to apply best practices employed by other state education agencies (SEAs) and school systems to build the capacity of coaches to support schools in reducing disproportionality in discipline and improving students' social-emotional outcomes. ARCC staff will assist VDOE's Office of Student Support to assess coaches' professional development needs; identify resources that coaches and teachers could employ to respond constructively to discipline incidents; and develop, monitor, and refine training for practitioners."

Supporting the Use of Formative Assessment Instructional Practices

The ARCC will continue to assist the VDOE as it builds the capacity of teachers to integrate formative instructional practices into classrooms across the state. This year, the ARCC team will help VDOE develop strategies to expand educator access to the state's formative assessment online training modules, professional learning communities, and other online resources designed to promote a balanced, coherent system of assessment in the classroom. For example, ARCC staff will assist the VDOE team to create an online orientation session for the formative assessment training modules, develop a workshop on the use of learning progressions in different forms of assessment, and create a formative assessment web page for school divisions interested in completing formative assessment training. Additionally, the ARCC will facilitate collaboration among VDOE divisions/offices to explore strategies for coordination of initiatives supporting formative, performance-based, and other forms of assessment in the classroom. ARCC staff will also consult with VDOE staff as they seek ways to embed formative assessment instructional practices into a coherent, balanced state comprehensive assessment system.