

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON THE BEST PRACTICES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Use various methodologies of communication to ensure that all services are coordinated. If the Department of Education approves the development of Rural Centers and if funded; the centers should address all disabilities not just autism spectrum disorder. The centers should also provide its services to anyone who needs them to include doctors, and other service providers in the continuum of care. (Dr. Peggy Whitby, Dr. Smith and Lisa Haley to come back to the Task Force to address a continuum of care and education for all involved providers after Dr. Whitby's February 29, 2016 presentation of plans for the \$2.5 million that was in the U of A budget but was unfunded. Bailey Perkins to research the cost of rural centers in Michigan, Florida and Virginia.)
2. Encourage adoption of peer mediated support strategies in a way that will work in each of the school districts in Arkansas. Provide information and monitor the voluntary implementation of these strategies. School principals will have to be involved in this process to make it work. This could also be a recruitment tool for getting students involved and interested in majoring in special education.
3. Develop a manual of identified best practice for special education. State in relevant policy that all schools are encouraged to implement identified practices. (Superintendent's Association and School Board to adopt this initiative as a policy for all schools Dr. Murry and Dr. Butcher)
4. Examine the federal mandate to ensure that it promotes early diagnoses and does not limit diagnoses. (Need presentation from the sponsors of the Arkansas Dyslexia Law to discuss the rationale behind the legislation)
5. "Milestone Moments", a publication of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention should be distributed with the issuance of all birth certificates in the state. (Sen. Johnson to check with the Governor's Office about making this a mandate of the Department of Health through special language during the Fiscal Session beginning in April 13, 2016. Dr. Whitby to check with CDC to see if the brochures are available for this undertaking and to see if other states are distributing the brochure. Lisa Haley to see if ADE can post this brochure on line.)
6. An entity should be created to continue the dialogue and communication for best practices in special education.