

# Opportunity for Members and Partners of the Council of Chief State School Officers to Collaborate with the Newly Funded OSEP Project...

## The Access Center: Improving Outcomes for All Students K-8

The 1997 reauthorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* and the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)* both place heightened emphasis on the need to use scientifically based practices to help students with disabilities access the general education curriculum. Unfortunately, educators often lack the time, training, and support needed to identify proven practices and determine which practices are most appropriate for their circumstances.

To address these challenges, the American Institutes for Research established *The Access Center: Improving Outcomes for All Students K-8*. The Center's mission is to create a national infrastructure of information and support that states and local school districts can rely on to learn about and use scientifically based practices with their elementary and middle school students with disabilities. At a minimum, we believe we must accomplish three objectives. First, we will identify scientifically based practices relating to delivering technical assistance and helping states and local districts implement proven practices that will increase curriculum access for students with disabilities. Second, we will establish communication mechanisms that will connect scientifically based practices among producers and users of this information. Finally, we will promote moving research into practice into measurable progress for students with disabilities in elementary and middle schools across the country.

### **This partnership will provide CCSSO members and partners with:**

- Connections to a knowledge bank of research-based resources and tools.
- Proven methods for data driven decision-making that will better enable students with disabilities to access the general education curriculum.
- Resources to assist educators to meet the heightened accountability requirements inherent in legislation and policy.

### **The Access Center staff are proposing to work with CCSSO members and partners to improve access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities. Partnership activities will:**

- Identify states and/or districts to participate in the Center's service areas, with particular emphasis on those sites that have the greatest need regarding school improvement.
- Convene a state team comprised of key constituents from SEA / LEA / State TA systems that may include special and general educators, administrators, and families.
- Serve as a platform for mentoring and consultative services.
- Reinforce the work of The Access Center related to data collection and evaluation by communicating with CCSSO constituents the value of data driven decision-making.
- Use outreach and marketing forums through which CCSSO members, partners, and Access Center staff can disseminate information.
- Supplement the expertise of partners in scaling up scientifically based practices nationally.

Through its OSEP funded projects, AIR has enjoyed a strong working relationship with CCSSO and its network. We hope to continue this relationship through The Access Center. Ms. Elaine Bonner-Tompkins of the Council of Chief State School Officers will be involved in coordinating these services. Please contact Elaine at (202)-336-7035 or E-mail [elainebt@ccsso.org](mailto:elainebt@ccsso.org) if you are interested in additional information about The Access Center.

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