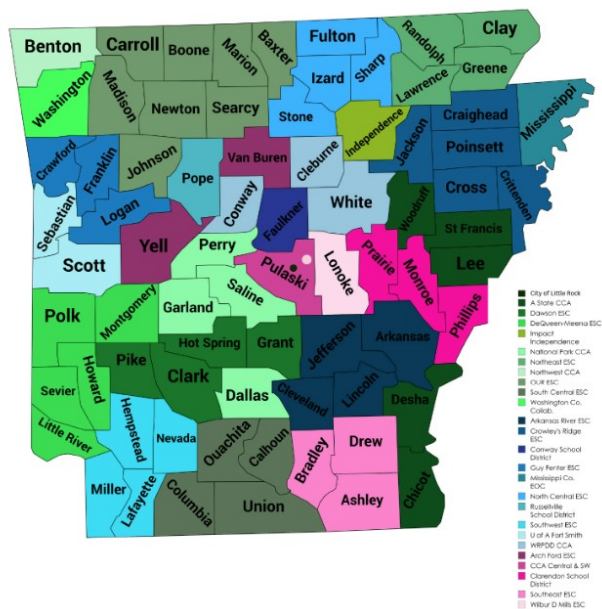


Learns Local Leads EDI
OUTREACH TOOLKIT
2026-2027 Early Development
Instrument (EDI)



The ADE Office of Early Childhood to offer the EDI as no cost to districts this Spring. The EDI is a nationally recognized tool that assesses early childhood well-being across five key domains.

Contents

How to Use This Toolkit..... 2

Contact Us..... 3

EDI Talking Points..... 4

Email Template for Superintendents..... 5

Online Resources..... 7

Registration form (2026-2027)..... 7

EDI One Pager..... 7

Video explainer of EDI in Arkansas..... 7

Current EDI data dashboards..... 7

EDI Peer Videos..... 8

EDI Infographic..... 9

Your District Contact Information..... 10

How to Use This Toolkit

This outreach toolkit is designed to provide Learns Local Leads (LLLs) with the resources and guidance needed to effectively encourage school districts in their area to participate in the Early Development Instrument (EDI) data collection for Spring 2027. We know district participation increases significantly if local partners like yourself get involved. A few emails and phone calls can make the difference between excellent, impactful data and an empty map.

Step one: Review the districts in your area that are eligible but have not registered yet (see District Contact Information page)

Step two: Reach out to districts by calling or sending an email (see Talking Points and Email Template) and ask them to consider registering for the EDI this year. Make sure they know they can register by downloading and filling out [this form](#).

Step three: Keep in touch! We are here to support and answer any questions that may come up.

We recommend that LLLs review the entire toolkit and then select the materials that will be most impactful for their district outreach efforts. Feel free to customize any of the content to better suit your local context. Thank you!

Contact Us

We are always here to help and are happy to answer any questions. The EDI in Arkansas website also has a wide range of information including an FAQ section, videos, handouts and reports. <https://arc.arkansas.gov/arcweb/edi.html>



Ellie Wheeler Hill, MA
EDI Project Director
University of Central Arkansas
Arkansas Research Center
(512)-415-2262
ellie.hill@arkansas.gov



Emily Smith, MPS
Community Engagement Specialist
University of Central Arkansas
Arkansas Research Center
(501)-574-1259
emily.l.smith@arkansas.gov

EDI Talking Points

What is the EDI?

- The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a nationally recognized, population-based measure of early childhood well-being that assesses school readiness.
- The EDI project in Arkansas aims to assess and improve school readiness for kindergarteners. This initiative is supported by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Office of Early Childhood.

Regional Impact and District Benefits

- EDI data helps districts better understand the developmental needs of their kindergarten students across multiple domains.
- Districts use EDI data for grant applications, school improvement plans, and community initiatives to enhance early childhood services.
- Participating districts contribute to their LEARNS Local Lead catchment area's efforts to build systems that improve early childhood development and opportunities.

Active Participation is Essential

- Active participation from school districts is essential for robust and reliable EDI data and maps.
- More participation means districts get a full-picture view of early childhood development in their counties and a baseline for comparison in future EDI years.

Teacher-Friendly Process

- The EDI questionnaire takes only about 10 minutes per student, with flexible timing in the spring.
- There is zero student testing or technology setup required from teachers.
- Participating kindergarten teachers receive a \$100 incentive gift card.

Unique Purpose

- The EDI provides community-level insights rather than just academic assessment data.
- EDI data informs early childhood resource planning and community partnerships.
- Districts can leverage unique EDI data to strengthen grant applications.

Minimal Resource Impact

- Participation in the EDI is provided at no cost to school districts.
- The process is completed by teachers, not students, requiring minimal oversight.
- Districts only need to participate every 3 years, not annually.

Email Template for Superintendents

Subject: Registration Now Open - Early Development Instrument (EDI)

Dear Superintendent [LastName],

As your regional LEARNS Local Lead, I'm excited to share an opportunity for your district to participate in the Spring 2027 Early Development Instrument (EDI). The EDI is a nationally recognized tool that assesses early childhood well-being across five key domains. The Arkansas Department of Education Office of Early Childhood is offering this valuable EDI tool at no cost to school districts. This data-driven approach supports more effective policies, resource allocation, and community initiatives to enhance early childhood development in our region.

Registration is now open: [Download EDI registration form](#)

Hear from your colleagues

I encourage you to hear directly from colleagues who have embraced the EDI in their districts:



Kindergarten Teacher Perspective

Ms. Jones shares how the EDI transformed her understanding of her students' needs.



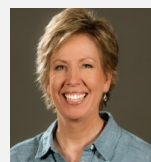
Principal Perspective

Principal Summers discusses how EDI data informs interactions with parents.



Assistant Superintendent Perspective

Ms. Douglas explains how EDI data guided district-wide early childhood programming.



LEARNS Local Lead Captain Perspective

Ms. Cowie demonstrates how EDI data is integral to community planning.

Why Participate in the EDI?

By joining the Spring 2027 EDI implementation, your district will gain access to valuable data that can drive positive change in early childhood education. The Arkansas Research Center, the group implementing the EDI, has been coordinating with me as your LEARNS Local Lead to ensure seamless integration and support across our region. Here are some key benefits of participating:

- **Access Meaningful Data:** Utilize EDI data in grant applications, school improvement plans, and community-driven initiatives to enhance early childhood services.
- **Support Regional Efforts:** Contribute to our LEARNS Local Lead catchment area's efforts to build systems that improve early childhood development and opportunities.
- **Teacher Incentives:** Each spring, kindergarten teachers complete a brief, 10-minute questionnaire for each of their students. As a token of appreciation, the EDI Project Team will provide \$100 gift cards to all kindergarten teachers who complete the questionnaires for their students.

By participating, you'll be part of a statewide initiative that helps shape a brighter future for Arkansas's youngest learners.

Get Involved

To register your district for the Spring 2027 EDI implementation or learn more, please complete [this form](#) and return it to Ellie.Hill@Arkansas.gov.

Together, we can build stronger systems that support early childhood development in our region and ensure every child enters kindergarten ready to succeed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

LEARNS Local Lead

Online Resources

Registration form (2026-2027)

This link takes you to the registration for this year's EDI project. Interested districts should download this form, fill it out, and send it to Ellie.Hill@Arkansas.gov



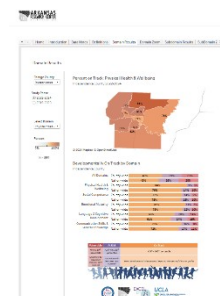
EDI One Pager

This one-page handout is helpful for bringing along to meetings or attaching to emails. It explains the basics of how the EDI works and what the information is used for.



Video explainer of EDI in Arkansas

This is a short 4-minute video that describes the history and process of the EDI in Arkansas specifically.



Current EDI data dashboards

These data dashboards are the result of EDI participation across Arkansas. Visitors are welcome to view EDI data from all participating counties here.

EDI Peer Videos



Kindergarten Teacher Perspective

Ms. Jones shares how the EDI transformed her understanding of her students' needs.

https://youtu.be/_LipLDJdGfQ



Principal Perspective

Principal Summers discusses how EDI data informs interactions with parents.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqZHvXBl9o>



Assistant Superintendent Perspective

Ms. Douglas explains how EDI data guided district-wide early childhood programming.

<https://youtu.be/c3KKCgbvtWY>



LEARNS Local Lead Captain Perspective

Ms. Cowie demonstrates how EDI data is integral to community planning.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uDKWneEx6ug&feature=youtu.be>



EDI Systems

Hear from Arkansas stakeholders including principals, teachers, assistant superintendents, and LEARNS Local Leads.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7e_TjtULqM&ab_channel=ARC2024

EDI Infographic



Powering Early Learning Success in Arkansas

