GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent

QUARTERLY SPECIAL EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

Special Education

Issue 2 February 2011

Exceptional Children's Week March 7-11, 2011

Our purpose is to share Tips, Information, and Updates from the State Department with our teachers.

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GaDOE Special Education Resources

Implementation Manual
Provides practical ideas and best practice information on the implementation of the Georgia Special Education State Rules.

Webinars
Schedules for Elluminate Trainings future and past are posted.

GaDOE Special Education Staff Contact List

In Upcoming Issues…

- **Accommodations vs Modifications**
- **Access to High School Mathematics**
- **Autism**

Intervention Highlight

Intervention Name: Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) Mathematics and Reading

Source: U.S. Dept. of Education (www.whatworks.ed.gov) and Best Evidence Encyclopedia (www.bestevidence.org)

PALS is a developed by Dr. Lynn and Dr. Doug Fuchs at Vanderbilt University. http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/pals/about/developers.html

Program Description: PALS is a proven peer mediation tutoring model intervention that can be used with high, average, and low achievers at Tiers 1, 2, 3 and 4. PALS is recognized as a validated practice with research to support its efficacy. This intervention accelerates student achievement in reading and mathematics while motivating students through successful learning activities that address the problems they are experiencing. Teachers can accommodate for academic diversity in their classrooms. The program is designed for every student to be paired with one student academically stronger than the other student. Each student, within the pair, will take turns as tutor and tutee while working on the structured activities. This interaction provides opportunities for students to have 10 to 15 instructional experiences in a given session geared toward individual needs. The teacher is able to move around the classroom to observe students and provide assistance as needed. PALS is designed to supplement, not replace, existing reading and mathematics curriculum. This makes it a low-cost intervention that only takes several 35-minute sessions per week. The teaching materials available: Scripted Reading manuals for grades K, 1, 2-6 and high school; Mathematics manuals grades K, 1, and 2-6; and Reading and Mathematics videos.

High School – The high school version of PALS relies on the same dyadic structure and activities as PALS for grades K-6. However, there are several important differences. First, the motivational system was modified for older students focusing on a "work" theme. Another change regards the reading materials. Teachers are encouraged to select reading materials that would be useful for students (e.g., informational texts about employment opportunities, life skills, social relationships, etc.). Unlike other versions of PALS that are intended to be primarily implemented in the inclusive general education setting, PALS for high school students has typically been used by special educators and remedial reading teachers for students with serious reading problems.

SPOTLIGHT ON EARLY CHILDHOOD

Keeping preschool special education on the pulse of Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP)

Behavior Bits

The Positive Environments, Network of Trainers (PENT) is part of the California Positive Behavior Initiative designed to provide information and resources for educators striving to achieve high educational outcomes through the use of proactive, positive strategies and interventions. Evidence-based positive practices and helpful information is disseminated state and nationwide through this website.

The collaborative PENT network is dedicated to increasing academic achievement and overcoming behavioral barriers to success for all students with and without disabilities. All material can be reproduced for non-commercial purpose for staff training. Samples of tools include: training PowerPoints, forms, and other resources targeted to these levels: school/district, Behavioral RTI, classroom, individual student, paraeducator, and family supports. Here are examples of the tools to help develop positive foundations and interactions between students and teachers: classroom management and organization, teaching style, legal issues, accommodations, threat assessment and cultural diversity.

An Excerpt from: *"Early Childhood Mathematics: Promoting Good Beginnings"*

A joint position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). Adopted in 2002. Updated in 2010.

(Reprinted with permission)

In high-quality mathematics education for 3- to 6-year-old children, teachers and other key professionals should perform the following tasks.

1. Enhance children's natural interest in mathematics and their disposition to use it to make sense of their physical and social worlds

2. Build on children's experience and knowledge, including their family, linguistic, cultural, and community backgrounds; their individual approaches to learning; and their informal knowledge

3. Base mathematics curriculum and teaching practices on knowledge of young children's cognitive, linguistic, physical, and social-emotional development

4. Use curriculum and teaching practices that strengthen children's problem-solving and reasoning processes as well as representing, communicating, and connecting mathematical ideas

5. Ensure that the curriculum is coherent and compatible with known relationships and sequences of important mathematical ideas

6. Provide for children's deep and sustained interaction with key mathematical ideas

7. Integrate mathematics with other activities and other activities with mathematics

8. Provide ample time, materials, and teacher support for children to engage in play, a context in which they explore and manipulate mathematical ideas with keen interest

9. Actively introduce mathematical concepts, methods, and language through a range of appropriate experiences and teaching strategies

10. Support children's learning by thoughtfully and continually assessing all children's mathematical knowledge, skills, and strategies

To support high quality mathematics education, institutions, program developers, and policy makers should do the following:

1. Create more effective early childhood teacher preparation and continuing professional development;

2. Use collaborative processes to develop well aligned systems of appropriate high-quality standards, curriculum, and assessment;

3. Design institutional structures and policies that support teachers' ongoing learning, teamwork, and planning; abd

4. Provide resources necessary to overcome the barriers to young children's mathematical proficiency at the classroom, community, institutional, and system-wide levels.

For more information contact:
Jan E. Stevenson, Young Children Education Program Specialist
Email: jstevenson@doe.k12.ga.us Phone: 404-657-9965

Assistive Technology Tip

TalkSense

TalkSense is a website that promotes augmentative and alternative communication and good practice in the use of assistive technology. Scroll down the page to find numerous resources including topics such as:

- BIGmack: Ideas and implementation
- Switch Skills
- Teaching Through (Switch Adapted) Toys
- Free Symbols to Download.

Resource Board Highlights

Easiest way to use the resource board:

"All Documents" and "Search" for key words, standard numbers, etc. to find what you are looking for.

Helping Students Who Stutter

Tips for Teachers

- Allow increased response time during class discussions and encourage everyone to contribute their ideas.
- Reading aloud can increase anxiety when waiting for his or her turn in the "down the row" style of turn-taking. To minimize consider using random styles of turn selection. During group interaction, pair the child who stutters with easy-going, partners who allow equal contribution.
- When it is time for answering questions, don't reward quick call-out answers. Use strategies such as: taking turns, modeling thinking time, and random selection.
- Classroom oral presentations may pose problems. Approach these presentations in a matter-of-fact way that supports the needs of the child who stutters. Be flexible. Provide opportunities for the child to be a successful contributor in the classroom.
- Questions from peers: The best answers can only come from the child him/herself. Ask how he or she would like to handle these situations when they arise.
- Establish an inclusive classroom culture where acceptance, respect and appreciation of diversity will be the norm.

To further assist classroom speaking, the National Stuttering Associations Classroom Presentation Guide gives sample outlines for doing a classroom presentation about stuttering.

Resources:
http://www.nsastutter.org/
http://www.stutteringhelp.org

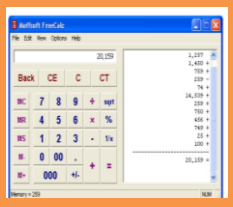
Teacher Resources

Professor Garfield

The Professor Garfield Foundation learning portal is a fun interactive online environment where children can safely explore, learn and creatively express themselves. This site is designed for students between Kindergarten – 8th grades and focuses on traditional subjects, such as reading, writing and mathematics, to career goal exploration, art and activities created expressly for kids with specific learning disabilities (SLD).
http://www.ProfessorGarfield.com

Calculation Nation
This is an online world of mathematics strategy games. Students can challenge other students from anywhere in the world. It was unveiled to mathematics teachers during the 2009 National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. The games are designed for kids of all ages.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Expanded Core Curriculum



[Moffsoft FreeCalc]

Features: Adjustable Calculator size, Tape, Color schemes, visible memory value, and more

Non-Endorsement Statement
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Expanded Core Curriculum for Students Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The concept of an Expanded Core Curriculum for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (ECC-DHH) is unique to the needs of students who are deaf or hard of hearing. It addresses educational needs that are above and beyond the general curriculum, which is known in Georgia as Georgia's Performance Standards (GPS). All students are required to be exposed to these standards, but some students need to develop specialized skills to access these standards. This requires what is known as "specialized instruction."

In 2007, the Iowa Department of Education formed a workgroup to create "The Expanded Core Curriculum for Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing". This document that defines specialized instruction for students who are deaf and hard of hearing was finalized in August 2010 and is available at: http://gadoe.org/ci_exceptional.aspx?PageReq=CIEXCDeafHH

Goal sequences that may be appropriate and necessary for students but are not part of the state standards include the following.

- Audiology
- Career Education
- Communication
- Family Education
- Functional Skills for Educational Success
- Self-Determination and Advocacy
- Social-Emotional Skills
- Technology

If you have any questions about these resources, please feel free to contact Dr. Frank Nesbit at the Georgia Department of Education at 404-844-8741 or fnesbit@doe.k12.ga.us.

Did you know about ... Exceptional Children's Week March 7-11, 2011

Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) special, Misunderstood Minds, has a great site to educate faculty, parents and students. The site provides one the opportunity to simulate a disability in the areas of - Attention, Reading, Writing, Mathematics. This site is a great teaching tool! http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/misunderstoodminds/