



DIVISIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES and SUPPORTS

AUGUST 2010 DL UPDATE

Special Education Directors' Forums

Once again this year, special education directors representing each GLRS region will have an opportunity to participate in the Special Education Directors' Forums. Please select a representative from your region to attend the forums. Donna Poole, Special Education Director in Bibb County, has volunteered to provide a space to meet. The forums are scheduled from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM on the following dates:

September 30, 2010
December 2, 2010
February 17, 2011
April 21, 2011

Based on feedback from previous participants, the time has been adjusted to accommodate representatives traveling long distances to participate in the forums. We will have our discussion during these lunch meetings.

Please inform the GaDOE of the district representative from your region and details for the forums will follow to that individual. The name of your representative should be sent to sburse@doe.k12.ga.us. If your district alternates representatives at the forums, please specify the individuals attending each meeting.

Special Needs Scholarship Notification Requirement

Several districts have contacted the GaDOE to ask if the notification requirement for the Special Needs Scholarship (SB10) has changed for this year. HB 907 that would have changed the requirement was vetoed by the Governor.

The notification requirements for the Special Needs Scholarship are found in Rule SB10: **160-5-1-.34 GEORGIA SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM** which was passed by the State Board of Education in January 2010. The relevant section is copied here for your convenience.

(2) Public School District Requirements.

(a) The resident school district must annually notify the parent of a student with a disability, as defined by IDEA, by letter, electronic means, or other reasonable means of the options available to the parent under the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program. Notification for the upcoming school year must take place no later than ten business days prior to the last day of the current school year.

Preschool Exit Data Reports

District exit reports are now available for view in the GaDOE portal. The report can be viewed in three data reporting views:

District data in comparison to the state data for three reporting years.

'08-'09 district data in comparison to the state data *along* with the summary statements.

Pictorial graphs of district data in comparison to the state data.

To view your report-

Log into the GaDOE portal

Look under your *Exceptional Students* sidebar menu

Click on *Preschool Exit* (should be at the bottom of your menu list)

To print out your report AND/OR save it to your computer

(Click on the Excel Spreadsheet icon located in the top right-hand corner of the report)

OSEP required states to report the baseline data in the form of two summary statements for **each outcome**, a total of six summary statements.

Summary Statement 1: Of those preschool children who entered the preschool program below age expectations in each Outcome, the percent who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. **(Reflects measurement #'s 1-2)**

Summary Statement 2: The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in each Outcome by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program. **(Reflects measurement #3)**

The remaining two measurement categories **do not** measure growth or progress, however they still must be reported:

Percent of preschool children who did not improve functioning

Percent of preschool children who maintained functioning at a level comparable to same-aged peers

NOTE: To view our baseline data and targets, please refer to the Preschool Flowchart attachment.



Children with Disabilities Ages 3 through 5 by Special Education Environments

On May 3, 2010 the Federal Office of Budget and Management approved new environment categories for children with disabilities age 3 – 5 effective during the 2010-11 school year. This approval had been pending for approximately two years and provides a very a short window of implementation for our **October FTE Count**. Listed below are the new definitions as they will appear in the GaDOE guidance for the FY11 FTE data collections.

While the reporting environments are new, the data required to determine these environments is consistent with data needed for the previous environments. A new Environment Calculator for Children Age 3 – 5 ATTENDING A REGULAR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM has been developed to assist you with your FY11 reporting. Since it was previously necessary to collect information on the amount and location of special education services there were little or no additional data collection required when completing the calculator. Districts are strongly encouraged to use this tool. The changes only impact children attending a regular early childhood program. The definitions for all other environments have not changed.

The calculator was emailed to all special education directors on 6/8/10. If you didn't receive it, please email **Jan Stevenson** at jstevenson@doe.k12.ga.us. A brief tutorial on use of the calculator may be accessed at: <http://screencast.com/t/OWFiNDcz>

NOTE: The calculator is a tool to use when determining the environmental educational settings for young children with disabilities. **PLEASE do not send us your calculated information.** All environmental reportings should be reported via the October FTE count.

Proposed Language for FY11 FTE Documentation:

Children with Disabilities Ages 3 through 5 by Special Education Environments

Use the following decision rules to determine which environment code to use when reporting each child aged 3 through 5. Please note that the order of the categories for children with disabilities ages 3 through 5 does not reflect a continuum from least to most restrictive.

Children with disabilities ages 3 through 5 will fall into one of the following three categories:

- Children Attending a General Education Early Childhood Program
- Children NOT Attending a General Education Early Childhood Program and are Attending a Special Education Program
- Children NOT Attending a General Education Early Childhood Program or Special Education Program and are receiving services in their Home or a Service Provider Location

Code	Special Education Environment Description
<i>Children Attending a General Education Early Childhood Program</i>	
1	Children who attend a Regular Early Childhood Program at least 10 hours per week and receive the majority of their special education and related services in the Regular Early Childhood Program.
2	Children who attend a Regular Early Childhood Program at least 10 hours per week and receive the majority of special education and related services in some other location.
3	3A. Children who attend a Regular Early Childhood Program less than 10 hours per week and receive the majority of their special education and related services in the Regular Early Childhood Program. 3B. Children who attend a Regular Early Childhood Program less than 10 hours per week and receive the majority of special education and related services in some other location.
<i>Children Attending a Special Education Program</i>	
4	Special Education Setting – students who receive all of their special education and related services in educational programs designed primarily for children <i>with</i> disabilities housed in regular school buildings or other community-based settings.
5	Separate School – students who receive all of their special education and related services in public or private day schools specifically for children with disabilities.
6	Residential Facility – students who receive all of their special education and related services in publicly or privately operated residential schools or residential medical facilities on an inpatient basis.
<i>Children NOT Attending a General Education Early Childhood Program or Special Education Program</i>	
7	Home – students who receive all of their special education and related services in the principal residence of the child's family or caregivers.

8	Service Provider Location – Students who receive all of their special education and related services from a service provider, and who did not attend an early childhood program or special education program provided in a separate class, separate school, or residential facility.
0*	Parentally Placed in Private School – Special education and related services in regular parochial or other private schools where student was enrolled by the parent or guardian.

* Children ages 3 through 5 are considered to be parentally placed private school children when they are enrolled by their parents in a private school that meets the definition of elementary school including offering a kindergarten program. (See Georgia Board Rule 160-4-7-.13 PRIVATE SCHOOLS.) Give an **unduplicated** total of children who were enrolled by their parents or guardians in regular parochial or other private schools **and** whose basic education is paid through private resources **and** who receive special education and related services at public expense from a local education agency under a service plan. Do not include children who are placed in private schools by the local education agency (school system).

The Considerations for Educationally Relevant Therapy (CERT) Tool and the Educationally Relevant Guidance Document

Staff from the Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports and various stakeholder groups worked to make available guidance that assists IEP teams in determining the need for educationally relevant occupational and physical therapy. This guidance consists of two separate documents:

The document titled *“Characteristics of Educationally Relevant Therapy and Medical/Clinical Therapy”* outlines the difference between therapy provided by school districts and therapy provided outside of school districts. We encourage districts to use this document with teachers, administrators, parents and medical providers when clarifying the purposes and provisions of school based therapy.

The *“Considerations for Educationally Relevant Therapy (CERT)”* tool was developed by the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, and has been adapted with permission for use by GaDOE. While the use of the tool is not mandated by the state, districts use the may use the tool in the IEP process to assist in providing consistency in the manner in which we determine appropriate school-based therapy across the state. If the tool is used, it is not to be altered and the district must adhere to the instructions provided. The tool is not an assessment and should not be used as such. It is a guidance tool that assists the therapist(s) and IEP team in determining the appropriate amount of time a student may need for occupational and physical therapy based upon his or her educational needs. The documents are included in the attachments to this update. Information concerning training on the completion of the tool will be made available to districts in early August. For additional information about these resources, please contact Elise Lynch at 404-657-0309 or by e-mail at elynch@doe.k12.ga.us.

SPDG Cohort 3 Schools Applications Available!

Georgia’s State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) is entering its 4th year and is now accepting applications from interested middle and high schools to participate in Graduate First Cohort 3 training for the 2010-2011 school year. Attached are a brochure and an application. Please share them with any schools in your district that may be participating in the project. If you have questions, please contact your GLRS director or Susan Brozovic at sbrozovic@doe.k12.ga.us. Applications are due August 15, 2010.

Budgets and Grants

The FY2010 ARRA IDEA and Preschool budgets for special education are a two (2) year budget and will not require a completion report or a new budget for FY2011. When you go into the Consolidated Application, it automatically defaults to 2011 programs and budgets. Please do your 2010 ARRA amendments as needed by accessing the dropdown box in the upper right hand corner and click on 2010. In addition, any drawdown of ARRA funds must be completed in FY2010 budget. Please pass on the latter information to your bookkeeper or business office. Furthermore, special education does not require a waiver for carryover funds for the regular IDEA and Preschool grants.

Please check to ensure that you carryover CEIS and Proportional Share funds, if applicable to you, for your regular IDEA and Preschool grants. There will be a subgrant closing report to show these latter amounts, if applicable. Obviously, your ARRA CEIS and Proportional Share funds will cover the two year span of 2010 and 2011, thus, no closing reports for ARRA until next year when all ARRA funds should have been expended.

Testing Update (AUGUST, 2010)

Several districts have had questions regarding the administration of the GAA in grades 1 and 2 since the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) will not be administered statewide for grades 1 and 2 during the 2010-2011 school year. Since federal regulations do not require a state to provide an alternate assessment for grades in which there is not a general assessment for all students, the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) will not be administered statewide for those students with significant cognitive impairments in grades 1 and 2 whose IEP teams have determined participation in the GAA.

However, those federal regulations **do** require local districts to provide an alternate assessment for each assessment which is provided to all students within a grade level. This would include benchmark testing. In the past, the grades 1 and 2 GAA could serve as the alternate assessment for any benchmark testing, since the CRCT was also given. As the GAA will not be administered through the state in these grades, districts that are planning to provide benchmark assessments in grades 1 and 2, must also identify an alternate assessment in which students with significant cognitive impairments can participate. Most districts, who are implementing benchmark testing, provide this to ensure that students in grades 1 and 2 continue to have instruction in the GPS and that movement toward meeting standards is shown. When identifying an alternate assessment for those grades, the same purpose can and should apply. Any alternate assessment implemented should have as its outcome the assurance that the student is not only receiving instruction aligned to the GPS, but that the student is working on and becoming more proficient at skills that will move them closer to meeting alternate academic standards.

Autism Regional Team Meetings:

As a continuation of professional learning opportunities offered to enhance teacher expertise and build state capacity to serve students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), the Regional Autism Team Meetings will be conducted during the 2010-2011 school year. The regional meetings will be held in Bibb County, Pickens County, Dougherty County and Liberty County

There will be two meetings in each region. During these meetings, members will have the opportunity to share concerns and effective strategies with each other as well as staff from the Divisions of Special Education Services and Supports. The local system is responsible for funding and providing a substitute teacher as needed for each of the two, one-day meetings.

It is recommended that two or more representatives from each school district attend these meetings, such as a teacher and SLP to provide training for school district staff. Although the teams may or may

not be the same staff who attended the autism academy, the regional meetings will build on those skills developed during the academy.

The dates and locations for the fall meetings will be announced at a later date. All team meetings will be from 8:30 – 4:30. Thank you for your collaboration in developing our teams across the state. For questions or additional information please contact Dr. Alice Murphy at 404-657-9957 or mmurphy2doe.k12.ga.us.

Make and Take Workshops

The Georgia DOE is sponsoring two Make and Take Workshops at the Middle Georgia GLRS in Macon targeted to meet the needs of teachers new to teaching students with significant cognitive disabilities. Teachers will have the opportunity to create a “starter-kit” of GPS-aligned instructional activities that will give access to the GPS for students with significant cognitive disabilities. These integrated units will include a core English Language Arts Unit, and related activities in math, social studies, and science. There is no cost to attend the workshops. Unit materials (including featured book for each grade band) will be provided by GaDOE. Georgia DOE staff will lead the sessions. Please see the attached flyer for additional information.

Each teacher may register for one (and only one) grade band. The schedule and selected book for these hands-on sessions is:

Day One: Grades K-2- The Great Kapok Tree and Grades 3-5- Alice in Wonderland.

Day Two: Middle School 6-8- Bridge to Terabithia and High School- The Red Badge of Courage

There is a limit of 12 persons per grade band for each workshop. Registration will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. The workshops will be held at Macon State College in the Learning Support Building September 21 and 22 from 9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.

Additional information is available in the attached flyer.

To register: Contact Michele Wilson at mwilson@mgresa.us, at Middle Georgia GLRS, phone 478-475-8628.

For additional information: Contact Kayse Harshaw at 404.463-5281 or sharshaw@doe.k12.ga.us

Georgia Vision Educators Consortia and National Agenda Meetings for FY11

The Georgia Department of Education will be coordinating the Georgia Vision Educators Consortia during FY11. These meetings provide information on a range of topics related to the provision of special education and related services to students who are blind or visually impaired. The dates are as follows:

- September 10, 2010 VI Consortia 9am-12pm Host Site Macon State ETC
- February 17, 2011 VI Consortia 9am-12pm and National Agenda Meeting 1pm-4pm Host Site Dalton State ETC
- May 5, 2011 VI Consortia-9am-12pm and National Agenda Meeting 1pm-4pm Host Site- Kennesaw State ETC

Additional dates of interest for teachers of the visually impaired are:

- October 6-8, 2010 Georgia Vision Educator's Statewide Training (GVEST) Georgia Academy for the Blind. National Agenda Committee will meet during GVEST on October 8th from 1pm-4pm.
- January 27, 2011 9am-3pm- Georgia Regional Braille Challenge-Georgia Academy for the Blind

For more information about the above activities go to www.gimc.org or contact Kathy Segers at ksegers@doe.k12.ga.us or 404-693-3727 or 478-751-6208.

Georgia Medicaid Administrative Claiming for Education (ACE) Program

The State of Georgia (Department of Community Health) is re-establishing the Medicaid Administrative Claiming for Education (ACE) program with administrative support from Public Consulting Group, Inc. (PCG). LEA Contacts for the ACE program need to be established as soon as possible by completing the Information Sheet sent to all Superintendents via email communication. Completed Information Sheets should be emailed to gaace@pcgus.com by Friday, July 30. PCG will conduct ACE regional training sessions the first week of August. Details about the trainings will be provided via email to the established LEA Contacts. Please be aware that LEAs must participate in the Medicaid Fee-For-Service (FFS) program as a condition to participate in the ACE program.

Special Education Leadership Development Academy

The Georgia Council of Administrators of Special Education (GCASE) and the GaDOE annually sponsor a series of trainings for new special education directors and other special education leadership staff to provide critical information on topics related to special education. The first training on September 9-10, 2010 will be held in Macon and will focus on training for budget development, FTE reporting, Dispute Resolution Processes and other informational topics. The presentations will be conducted by GaDOE staff and GCASE members. Registration will be available for interested parties on the www.gael.org website in the near future. An announcement will be sent to all special education directors when the registration goes live. Save the following dates:

- November 10, 2010 in Savannah
- January 30, 2011 in Athens
- March 21, 2011 in Athens

Dates to Remember:

August

31 Parent Mentor Council Retreat

31 Transition Elluminate

September

1 Parent Mentor Council Retreat

8-9 Focused Monitoring Training

9-10 Special Education Leadership Development Academy (SELDA)

10 VI Consortia

23-24 State Advisory Panel

30 Special Education Directors Forum

November

10-12 Georgia Council of Administrators of Special Education Fall Conference, Savannah, GA

10 Special Education Leadership Development Academy (SELDA)