



DIVISION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES and SUPPORTS

JANUARY 2011 DL UPDATE

Welcome

Leah Tillery, a native of Michigan, joins the Division for Special Education as the new Education Program Specialist for Speech Language Pathology (SLP). Leah received both a Bachelor Degree in Audiology and Speech Sciences and a Masters Degree in Speech Language Pathology from Michigan State University. She obtained her Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), as well. Leah worked in DeKalb County and Atlanta City Public Schools. Join us in welcoming Leah to the team!

Directors Elluminate January 5, 2011

Please mark your calendars for the Special Education Directors' Monthly Elluminate session that is held the first Wednesday of each month at 10:00am.

Budget Reminder

Your semi-annual certifications for federal employees should be completed this month for work from July 1 - December 31, 2010 and filed away for the auditors. The form can be signed by the employee or a supervisor. The latter provides the opportunity to complete the form for a group of employees. Forms are posted on the Special Education website under Budgets, Grants, Data Collection and Reporting then Budget and Grants Applications. They are in the FY2011 Consolidated Application Attachments.

Special Education Fiscal Monitoring Elluminate Scheduled January 19th

Harry Repsher will host an Elluminate session on Wednesday January 19th at 10:00 a.m. to review and answer questions related to the new special education fiscal monitoring requirements for FY 11. The three parts of the fiscal monitoring process will be addressed:

- LEA Application Review and Monitoring
- Base and Six Year Cycle Fiscal Monitoring
Self Assessment During Records Review
- Annual High Risk Assessment

A reminder with the link will be sent to Directors closer to the date of the session.

Occupational Therapist (OT)/Physical Therapist (PT) Contact Meeting

The first face to face OT/PT Contact Meeting will be held February 3, 2011 in Macon, Georgia. The meeting begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 2:00 p.m. All OT/PT Contacts will receive an email with information regarding registration and location. If you have not made your OT/PT Contact submission, you can do so by emailing Elise Lynch at elynch@doe.k12.ga.us. **Be sure to submit only one name with an email address and phone number.**

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) 2010-2011 Professional Development Series

On January 12, 2011, the second part of the four part NASDSE Professional Development Series will be broadcasted. This session is titled: Special Education Teacher Evaluation: Issues and Answers. Lynn Holdheide, National Center for Teacher Quality, Vanderbilt University and Tony Bagshaw, Managing Director of Human Capital, Battelle for Kids will host the session.

As a reminder, the conference will be available online anytime after 1:00 p.m. on January 12th. The navigation path to access this session is below:

- Open your web browser to <http://pd.nasdse.org/>
- Click on the conference you want to view
- You will be taken to a screen that asks for an access code
- Georgia's access code is: 1011GA5

The Dispute Resolution Continuum: Stage II Strategies

Dispute resolution is an important component of IDEA 2004. Having a clear understanding of how the dispute resolution process is designed and how each component operates is essential for improving the chances of successful early resolution of disputes. Below is a reminder of the model developed by Feinberg et al. (2002). This is a five stage model that is based on a *continuum* of conflict resolution options:

<u>Stage</u>	<u>Example of Options</u>
I. Prevention	Active stakeholder collaboration, training
II. Disagreement	Local director, parent to parent assistance
III. Conflict	Mediation
IV. Procedural Safeguards	Formal Complaint Due Process Hearing Request
V. Legal Review	Formal Hearing

After Stage I prevention strategies (such as active stakeholder collaboration and training) are implemented, disagreements may still arise that warrant the employment of Stage II strategies. Disagreements that emerge over areas such as eligibility determination or IEP design may or may not involve a breakdown of trust and communication since this is an early stage and conflict is only emerging. Prior to the emerging stages of conflict, there may be more openness and flexibility so that special education directors who provide early assistance and intervention can improve the chances of parents and school district personnel working collaboratively.

Parent to parent assistance is another valuable Stage II strategy. Feinberg et al. (2002) writes about the importance of parents as "a valuable source of assistance as liaisons to other parents" and emphasizes the importance of activities that focus on building relationships between parents and school staff. In Georgia, the Parent Mentor Partnership <http://www.parentmentors.org/> was established in 2001 as a pilot program. This partnership now includes almost 90 parents of students with disabilities who work directly for local school systems across Georgia. Their mission is to build effective family, school, and community partnerships. Another source of parent assistance is Parent to Parent of Georgia <http://www.p2pga.org/>. This organization provides information, training, and assistance for parents of students with disabilities and is another potential resource for early conflict resolution.

While working to develop and enhance active stakeholder involvement and training activities, special education administrators may still face conflict between parents and school district staff regarding issues of special education design, delivery, and/or relationships. Direct involvement by special education directors as well as parent-to-parent assistance offers two options that address emerging disputes before the issues rise to more formal interventions such as mediation, a formal complaint, and/or a request for a due process hearing and legal review. In the area of dispute resolution, an ounce of prevention is truly worth a pound of cure. If you have tips to share or questions to ask please email Mike Blake mblake@doe.k12.ga.us.

Feinberg, E, Beyer, J.D. & Moses, P. (2002). Beyond Mediation: Strategies for

Appropriate Early Dispute Resolution in Special Education. A briefing paper from The Consortium for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE).

Georgia PINES

Georgia Parent Infant Network for Educational Services (Georgia PINES) is a statewide early intervention agency under the Department of Education that has been serving families with sensory impaired children since 1980. Currently Georgia PINES serves over 500 families and has over 200 contractors who serve as Parent Advisors. Georgia PINES conducts a family workshop for parents and early intervention professionals every year. This year, in conjunction with Georgia Sensory Assistance Project (GSAP), Georgia PINES is pleased to present its 25th annual family workshop on January 29, 2011 at the Atlanta School for the Deaf in Atlanta and on March 5, 2011 at the Georgia Academy for the Blind in Macon. Workshop sessions include presentations on behavioral issues, personal future planning for children with special needs, the Katie Beckett Deeming Waiver Program, and promoting communication by using sign language as a bridge for all children with sensory impairments. Siblings of children with special needs will have their own Sibshop activities. Parents will meet based on the disability of their child/children in Mom to Mom and Dad to Dad sessions. There will also be a Spanish Strand on January 29, 2011 at the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf for Spanish speaking parents. The session for Professionals will focus on working with families from culturally diverse backgrounds. The 2011 Georgia PINES-GSAP Family Workshop will truly have something for everyone who is involved in early intervention!

Questions About Section 504?

Information regarding Section 504 is available from the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) through the office of General Counsel. Gregg Stevens is the contact person for Section 504. His contact information is below:

Gregg Stevens, Assistant General Counsel, Legal Services, Office of the Georgia Department of Education
gstevens@doe.k12.ga.us 404-463-1725.

The GaDOE Student Support Team (SST) Resource Manual also contains information about Section 504 and is available on the website at:

<http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/DMGetDocument.aspx/SST%20MANUAL%20updated%202-2808.pdf?p=6CC6799F8C1371F6DCAB6C4FADADC43296A7D1D5AD3381AB5F6DAD4365E6FB7A&Type=D>

Announcing New Autism Assessment Project

I. Assessing the Needs of Children with Autism (ANCA)

In response to requests from local districts, Marcus Autism Center and Georgia Department of Education are collaborating to offer training for selected staff to better meet the needs of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in your school. This initiative will help locally nominated educators administer and use data from the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills- Revised (ABLLS-R) Assessments to guide the development of developmentally appropriate goals based on the individual needs of the learner.

Lead teachers, facilitators, and coordinators from eight educational regions will work directly with our consultants. The course material will be delivered via face-to-face instruction, telemedicine (video chat using a secure server) or webinars. Participants will be trained to:

Administer and use the ABLLS-R to determine developmental needs and to plan appropriate instruction

Assist others in utilizing the ABLLS-R assessment

Determine appropriateness of other assessment tools

After the first session, each participant will identify a student to work with for the remainder of the sessions. Participants will conduct assessments with this child and develop goals and objectives based on the assessment. Materials and competency measures for this child will be used throughout the training series, and the competency measures must be met by all participants. Attendance at all training sessions is necessary, as each training session builds on lessons from the previous session.

II. Selection and Registration of ANCA Participants

It is recommended that two representatives who teach **mild, moderate and low functioning students with autism** from each school district with a foundational knowledge of Autism Spectrum Disorders attend these meetings. They should also be capable of assisting with training for school systems. Special education directors are encouraged to select project participants who can assist in building local program capacity.

Dates and locations are attached and registration will be announced soon. Following notice, you may register participants via GaDOE Special Education website at www.gadoe.org (see What's New Box). Prior to attending a February training session, each participant will be required to view a prerecorded elluminate which will be posted on the GaDOE Special Education website. Notification will be sent to directors and participants when the ANCA Introductory elluminate has been posted.

III. ANCA Eight Regional Training Locations

Floyd County - Rome	Richmond County - Augusta
Spalding County - Griffin	Laurens County - Dublin
Heard County - Grantville	Evans County - Claxton
Muscogee County - Columbus	Cook County - Lenox

Together We're Better: Georgia's Collaborative Approach to Early Childhood Professional Development

How do teachers of young children with and without disabilities get new information and ideas to help them support each and every young child? In most parts of Georgia, multiple and diverse entities plan and deliver professional development. The staff of Babies Can't Wait, the Georgia Department of Education, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and Bright from the Start all play significant roles in preparing and supporting the early childhood workforce, but each agency does that independently. Too often, the content provided is not up to date and the methods of delivery are not reflective of best practices. Even more often, these efforts are not integrated; sometimes they even convey conflicting views and messages.

To address these issues, Georgia is trying a new approach to early childhood professional development. Working with representatives from the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion (NPDCI), Georgia has organized a state level leadership team that is committed to increasing and improving inclusive early care and learning opportunities for children with disabilities. A regional system of professional development has been created for early childhood personnel. This system includes high quality, cross-agency, and accessible professional learning opportunities. The team, known as the Georgia Quest for Quality Inclusion, is made up of representatives from Bright from the Start, the Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Head Start, higher education faculty (technical colleges and universities), family members, and others.

With the goal of fostering high quality, collaborative supports for sustainable professional development, cross-sector teams have been organized in each of the six Child Care Resource and Referral regions across Georgia. Each team is made up of representatives from Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Babies Can't Wait, Preschool Special Education, Head Start, the Georgia Learning Resource System as well as individual families, child care providers, and higher education faculty. Together, these teams have conducted a community needs assessment to identify professional development needs and priorities with specific emphasis on the inclusion of young children with disabilities. Using the information from these assessments, the teams have developed action plans targeting both early care and education leaders as well as classroom teachers. Activities have been designed to provide current, evidence-based content knowledge in order to support improved classroom practices. Effective professional development approaches such as mentoring, coaching, and consultation will be implemented.

Each team is lead by a Child Care Resource and Referral Agency Inclusion Coordinator with support from Bright from the Start state staff as well as members of the state team. All decisions and efforts reflect cross-sector input and support; an approach that may help to avoid unnecessary gaps or overlaps. Advocates for this collaborative approach believe that it will ensure more responsive and effective professional development in addition to the savings that come from the elimination of duplicative offerings. NPDCI will be facilitating an evaluation of the effectiveness of this approach as well as when and how to grow future regional teams. For more information about the regional team approach, contact Jennie Couture at jennie.couture@decal.ga.gov .

2001 Calendar of Events

January

- 4 Grant for Residential and Reintegration Services (GRRS) Applications Accepted
- 5 Elluminate: Special Education Directors
- 11 Communities of Practice in Transition Institute: Grayson Technical School
- 12 Communities of Practice in Transition Institute: Central Macon Technical College Building I
- 13 Elluminate: Access to ELA: Writing Skills--Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities 3:30-5:00
- 19 Elluminate: Fiscal Compliance and Accountability Monitoring
- 25 Communities of Practice in Transition Institute: South Georgia GLRS
- 27 Georgia Regional Braille Challenge: Georgia Academy for the Blind
- 27-28 Core Access Teachers for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities will meet at Monroe County Board of Education training facility to continue development of curriculum for students who participate in GAA

February

- 2 Elluminate: Special Education Directors
- 17 Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Consortia/Georgia National Agenda Taskforce
Educational Technology Centers: Dalton State-Host Site
- 25-26 Georgia Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- 28 Initial Transmission for Special Education: Student Record

March

- 3 Final Date to Submit GRRS Applications
- FTE Cycle 3 Count Day
- Transmission for FTE Cycle 3 Begins
- Transmission for CPI Cycle 2 Begins
- 8 Last Date for Initial Transmission of FTE Cycle 3 Data
- 21-23 Special Education Spring Leadership Meeting: Athens
- 25 Final Transmission for CPI Cycle 2: Deadline for Superintendent's Sign-off
- Final Transmission Date for FTE Cycle 3 Data: Deadline for Superintendent's Sign-off

April

- 1 Final Date to Submit Georgia High Cost Fund (GHCF)
- 8 Special Education Student Record: Duplicate Resolutions