



DIVISION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES and SUPPORTS

MARCH 2011 District Liaison (DL) UPDATE

Staff Change

Effective February 16, Kayse Harshaw became the Education Program Specialist for Assessment. Kayse has been the Education Program Specialist for Intellectual Disabilities in the Division for Special Education Services and Supports for the past three years, coming to the GADOE from Gwinnett County Schools. Kayse has been instrumental in developing instructional activities aligned with the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA). In addition, she has also expanded the Resource Board. We look forward to working with Kayse in her new role!

Directors Elluminate March 2, 2011

Please mark your calendars for the Special Education Directors' Monthly Elluminate session that is held the first Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. We will be trying something new this month with a "live feed" to give the webinar a more real time, interactive element. Included in the webinar, will be important information regarding the Spring Leadership Meeting Agenda, budget reminders, and information on topics submitted by Special Education Directors.

GaDOE and GCASE Spring Leadership Meeting 2011: HIGH SPeED CONNECTIONS for Student Achievement

Please plan to attend the annual Special Education Spring Leadership Meeting March 21-23, 2011 in Athens at the Classic Center. Registration is available on the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) website.

http://www.gael.org/gcase/2011_spring_meeting

Consider inviting a representative from your local Instructional Technology (IT) Department to attend the conference with you. There is a special one day registration of \$85 available on Tuesday, March 22nd for IT personnel only.

Spring Leadership Meeting Poster Session

The Division for Special Education invites all school districts, agency partners, non-profit organizations, and partners in education to submit proposals for the 2011 Spring Leadership Poster Session in Athens, Georgia. The session will take place on Monday, March 21, 2010 from 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at the Classic Center. GCASE will host a reception at the same time. The theme for the meeting is "HIGH SPeED CONNECTIONS for Student Achievement". All posters should highlight programs, instructional strategies, interventions, etc. that demonstrate the use of technology in the instruction of students with disabilities. Vendors will not participate in this session. Interested parties should submit the attached application no later than Thursday, March 10, 2011 to Elise Lynch, Program Specialist, at elynch@doe.k12.ga.us. Please contact Elise at 404-657-0309 with any questions.

2011 NASDSE Professional Development Series

March 16, 2011 Common Core Standards: What They Mean for States and Schools

The webinar is available for viewing anytime after 1:00 pm on March 16th. Open your web browser to <http://pd.nasdse.org/>. Click on the conference you want to view. Georgia's access code is: 1011GA5

Timeline Summary Report for FY 11

The **Timeline Summary Report for FY 11** and the Directions for completing the report are available in the *View Documents* section of the portal. Please note that this report should include all evaluations completed between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011. The report is due to the GaDOE by July 31, 2011. Please email Kathy Giddens at kgiddens@doe.k12.ga.us if you have any questions.

Awards of Excellence

This year the Division for Special Education Services and Supports is seeking to recognize High School Seniors with Disabilities who have had academic and/or extracurricular accomplishments, as shown by:

1. Earning a scholarship to a four-year, two-year, or vocational technical school;
2. Earning a Regular Education Diploma with outstanding extracurricular involvement in school/community;
3. Earning a Special Education Diploma with transition to career education and/or employment.

Our office would like Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS) centers and local school systems within your area to nominate qualifying students for this year's recognition award. The Awards Recognition application will soon be available on our website at www.gadoe.org on the Special Education home page, and is also attached to this update. Please complete the form for each student nominated, and return by March 31, 2011, to the address below:

Frank Nesbit
Division for Special Education Services and Supports
1870 Twin Towers East
Atlanta, GA 30334
PHONE: 404-844-8741
FAX: 404-651-6457
fnesbit@doe.k12.ga.us

Only applications submitted by GLRS directors or Special Education Directors to the DOE will be accepted.

Special Education Newsletter

Your help is needed to help promote the GaDOE Special Education Newsletter. This is a newsletter specifically designed for teachers and other interested staff. Please send a reminder telling teachers and staff that they can sign up by sending a blank email to join-specialeducation@list.doe.k12.ga.us. Thank you for your assistance in disseminating this information.

Additional IDEA Funds for Carryover

At the February State Board Meeting, reallocated additional IDEA funds to LEAs were approved. These funds must be used by the end of the current school year. Approximately \$24 per child was allocated, so please submit a budget amendment as soon as possible to access the additional funds. If the LEA was in the process of making an IDEA amendment, the funds will appear after the current amendment has been approved.

NOTE: When making an IDEA amendment, there will be an error message for CEIS. Go back into the grant, click on Program Information; then click on Exceptional Students, next click on CEIS. Put in the original status: NA, optional or required and then save. For some systems this item is not copying over to the amendment process.

ARRA Funds

Only 58% of the IDEA ARRA funds and 54% of the ARRA Preschool funds have been drawn down as of February 15th. Please review expected expenditures to ensure that all funds are obligated by June 30th and spent by September 30th. Remember to access ARRA grants by resetting the FY status bar in the upper right hand corner to FY10.

The Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Consortia and the Georgia National Agenda Taskforce

The Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Consortia and the Georgia National Agenda Taskforce will have their final meeting for the 2010-2011 school year May 5, 2011- 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.. The National Agenda Taskforce is aligned with the Georgia Strategic Goals and Special Education Indicators. This meeting will focus on developing a statewide action plan based on the state current data collection to improve performance on the 10 National Agenda Goals. Teachers of the Visually Impaired will receive information regarding upcoming trainings and events and will be instructed on providing specialized instruction to students with visual impairments using the Expanded Core Curriculum for the Blind and Visually Impaired through assessment and incorporation into the IEP. Kennesaw State ETC is the host site for the meeting and it will be broadcasted to ETC sites at the following locations:

Albany State College
Armstrong Atlantic State University
Dalton State University
Macon State University
National Science Center
Pioneer RESA
UGA Gwinnett
West Georgia RESA
Valdosta State College

Georgia Alliance of School Occupational and Physical Therapists Will be sponsoring a conference on Friday, March 18, 2011 from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm at the Coweta County Schools Werz Building: 167 Werz Industrial Blvd, Newnan, GA 30263. The conference will award participants 6.0 Contact Hours.

Topic: Relating SI, Praxis and the Vestibular System to the School Setting: Interpretation and Implementation. See attached flyer for additional information.

Accessible Books and Periodicals for Readers with Print Disabilities - Taken from Bookshare.org

- **Bookshare® is free for all U.S. students with qualifying disabilities**, thanks to an award from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).
- **Bookshare dramatically increases the accessibility of books.** People with disabilities deserve the same ease of access to books and periodicals that people without disabilities enjoy.
- **A searchable online library.** Bookshare offers approximately 90,000 digital books, textbooks, teacher-recommended reading, periodicals and assistive technology tools.
- **Readers of all ages.** Bookshare offers affordable membership, unlimited library privileges and a [community](#) of Members, Volunteers, parents, publishers and authors.

Communicate this information to teachers and parents of students who meet eligibility requirements. Go to bookshare.org to find a qualification guideline table, membership information, and answers to common questions.

Workshop: Making Stuttering Intervention Simpler

Dr. John Tetnowski will present a workshop, *Making Stuttering Intervention Simpler: Clinical Tips and Recent Research*, in Atlanta, Georgia on Wednesday March 23rd from 4-7pm. This workshop is approved for .3 ASHA CEUs. See attached flyer for more information and http://cci.fsu.edu/alumni_friends/Atlanta_2011/.

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

The first face to face OT/PT Contact Meeting was held February 15, 2011 at Griffin RESA in Griffin, Georgia. Approximately 80 therapists designated by their districts as the state contact, attended the meeting. The focus of the discussion was the new Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document and additional content that will be added to the Related Services section of the Special Education on-line Implementation Manual. Therapists were able to share information concerning a variety of topics that impact educationally relevant therapy in the school systems. The next meeting will be in May and each contact person will be sent the registration information.

As a reminder the OT/PT contact meeting is only for the district designated contact. We are encouraging Special Education Directors who have not submitted the information for their designee to do so as soon as possible. While Special Education Directors are welcome to attend the meetings we only need one therapist per district.. Once every district has designated a representative, there could be more than 187 people attending. It is the Division's desire to have every district represented. The designated representative is responsible for sharing the information from the meetings and redelivering any training provided.

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.**

The Dispute Resolution Continuum: Mediation

A quick reminder about the five stages of the dispute resolution continuum from Feinberg et al. (2002):

<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

This month the focus is upon mediation as a conflict resolution strategy. Beginning in 1997, Congress strongly emphasized mediation as a primary (although not exclusive) way to attempt to formally resolve conflicts in special education. Mediation is designed to:

- Afford the participants a structured opportunity to meet and discuss their concerns and to work collaboratively to create a mutually satisfactory agreement
- Empowers the participants to explore issues, make decisions, and design solutions
- Offers a voluntary process for mutual problem solving without assigning blame or determining fault
- Provides a confidential process to all participants
- Emphasizes communication and creative problem solving by providing a mediator to assist the participants in defining their problems, exploring their interests, and resolving their conflicts together
- Focuses on the future by describing what future interactions, plans, agreements, or behavior changes will occur.

State Rule 160-4-7-.12 DISPUTE RESOLUTION specifies the requirements for formal complaints, mediation, and due process hearings in Georgia. The mediation process is available upon request of either party to resolve disputes at any time. The rule provides that mediation shall be available and offered upon each receipt of a complaint or a due process hearing request. Further, the procedures shall ensure that the mediation process is:

- Voluntary on the part of the parties;
- Is not used to deny or delay a parent's right to a hearing on the parent's due process complaint, or to deny any other rights afforded under Part B of IDEA; and
- Is conducted by a qualified and impartial mediator who is trained in effective mediation techniques.

The GaDOE maintains a list of individuals who are qualified mediators and knowledgeable in laws and regulations relating to the provision of special education and related services. Mediators are selected on a rotational basis. You can access the procedures and form to request mediation using the following link:

http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/ci_exceptional.aspx?PageReq=CIEXCMediationRequests

You are encouraged to provide input and feedback regarding Georgia's dispute resolution process .Consider joining Drs. Frank Nesbit and Mike Blake during the GCASE Spring Leadership Meeting in Athens for a review and more in-depth discussion about the dispute resolution continuum with a focus upon strengthening preventative strategies in Georgia.

In the area of dispute resolution, an ounce of prevention is truly worth a pound of cure. As always, if you have tips to share or questions to ask please email 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).

2001 Calendar of Events

March

- 3** Final Date to Submit Grants for Residential and Reintegration Services (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
- 16** NASDSE Professional Development Series - Common Core Standards: What They Mean for States and Schools
- 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

May

- 5** Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Consortia/Georgia National Agenda Taskforce Educational Technology Centers: Kennesaw State-Host Site 9:00am-4:00pm
- 31** Parent Surveys Completed

June

- 1** All Special Education Budget Amendments Due
- 15** Final Student Record Submission – Including Special Education Record and GNETS Program Record
- 30** Disproportionality Documentation Form/CEIS Student Data for the Portal

July

- 31** Preschool Exit Data (FY11 Data)
Postsecondary Survey (FY09-10 Exiters)
Timelines (FY11 Data)
*July 31st is a Sunday; therefore all reports must be submitted by August 1, 2011.