



We will lead the nation in improving student achievement.

DIVISIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES and SUPPORTS

NOVEMBER 2008 DL UPDATE

Budget Update

There has been a reduction of 2% in the QBE funds and other state grants. Thus, the State Preschool Grant and GNETS state budgets have been reduced. Please check the Consolidated Application portal or GAORS for this reduction and submit an amendment.

Your carryover amounts for the federal grants (IDEA and federal Preschool) are posted on the Consolidated Application portal and GAORS after your initial budget has been approved. If you know that your carryover amount is more than 25% of your FY 08 initial allocation, you may submit an e-mail to Harry Repsher requesting to get 100% of the carryover. This waiver can occur once every three years. Once the waiver is reviewed and approved, the full carryover amount is posted on the Consolidated Application portal and on GAORS. Please wait a week after the request, then check the portal and then complete an amendment.

Georgia Interagency Transition Website: Introductory Webinar

Please remember on Wednesday, November 12th from 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm there will be a Webinar introducing the Georgia Interagency Transition website. We will discuss the many resources available on this website to Georgia's ITC's and answer your questions. Included in this website are many Transition Assessment resources. Please visit www.gatransition.org for more information and how to access the Webinar and see the attached flyer.

Touch the Future Tools for Life/Transition SERID Conference

A Special "Thank You" to all that attended and/or supported Touch the Future Tools for Life/Transition SERID this year. We had over 800 attendees. It was truly a wonderful learning experience for all. Make plans now to attend the International DCDT Transition Conference in Savannah next October 28-30, 2009!

Dispute Resolution Tip: Parental Requests for Evaluation

One of the most common formal complaints received at the Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports result from the local school system's delay or refusal to provide upon parental request a comprehensive evaluation to determine a student's eligibility for special education services. As systems are working to implement the Georgia Student Achievement Pyramid of Interventions, some parental requests are being delayed until data is collected. Under all circumstances it is important for systems to implement Tier II and Tier III interventions for struggling students. These interventions and data collection should continue during the 60 day period allowed for the comprehensive evaluation. The data collected in the Response to Intervention (RTI) process is designed to play a critical role in making a final determination regarding a student's eligibility for an area of disability. Under IDEA, a system must conduct an initial evaluation when it suspects that a student has a disability and needs special education and related services.

Therefore, it is advisable for systems to investigate thoroughly the possible existence of a disability before refusing to evaluate, particularly when the request comes from the parent of a student who is not progressing well in school. If a local system determines that it will refuse a parental request for evaluation, the IDEA requires several actions on the part of the system. The notification provisions of IDEA 34 CFR § 300.503 require that if a system refuses to initiate an evaluation, it must furnish parents prior written notice that describes the refused action, states why the system has decided not to evaluate the student; advises parents of available procedural safeguards, provides sources for parents to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the law and describes other options considered, if any, and explains relevant factors in its decision.

Working with Families of Students with Disabilities

"Relationships & Results" are a set of evidence-based modules emphasizing the behaviors and activities of school-based personnel as they work with families of students with disabilities. There are seven modules designed for use as faculty development and targeted at school personnel with little or no experience in working with families of students with disabilities. The materials are not copyrighted or restricted in any way. The information can be downloaded on www.accountabilitydata.org or <http://www.bulletinboards.com/cftree.cfm?comcode=NCSEAM&ViewType=C&UseNoFrame=yes&xx=x>.

This new set of materials is available from the National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM). They should be useful in addressing the need for evidence-based improvement activities related to the improvement of school facilitation of parent involvement. Parent engagement is a goal *that we are all working towards*.

Illuminate Special Education Professional Learning Series for 2008-2009

To support local school systems in providing training to teachers and administrators on various topics regarding special education, the Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports are conducting an ongoing series of on-line learning sessions through Illuminate Live. The sessions are intended to provide current information on the issues that affect students with disabilities and their families. Many systems have developed PLU courses around these sessions. The Illuminate sessions are also being used by systems in order to train new faculty and staff on various topics. The training is divided into sections (e.g., transition, co-teaching, Positive Behavior Supports, Compliance, IEPs, Access to GAA, Academic Performance, Family Engagement, Assistive Technology, etc.), therefore training and/or PLU courses can be designed around many different topics according to faculty and staff needs. Please remember to share this information with all of your schools. This month the following sessions will be live starting at 3:30; you can join thirty minutes before the sessions begin:

November 5, 2008	Improving Academic Performance of SWDs for Elementary Reading/Language Arts
November 10, 2008	Top 10 FY 08 Most Cited Due Process Issues
November 12, 2008	Improving Academic Performance of SWDs for Secondary Mathematics
November 13, 2008	Presentation by Core Access Teachers-Examples of multiple activities relating to standard and a single element
November 13, 2008	PBS on the Bus (3:00-4:30)
November 17, 2008	Improving Academic Performance of SWDs for Secondary Reading/Language Arts

In order to access these sessions please go to gadoe.org>georgiastandards.org>training>illuminate live>session login under standards, instruction and accountability OR <http://illuminate.gavirtualschool.org/dae/index.html>. Passwords are no longer required.

Georgia Vision Educators Lit-R-C Weekends

Weekends are scheduled for: January 30-31-2009, March 6-7, 2009, April 24-25, 2009 at the Georgia Academy for the Blind in Macon, GA. Lodging is available at no cost in the cottages at GAB. The cost for the weekend is \$10 to cover food costs.

Registration: Registration forms can be downloaded from www.gimc.org and sent to Kathy Segers at GAB. We will be working on the alignment of the Georgia Performance Standards in Math to the Expanded Core Curriculum for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

PLU's- 1 PLU is available for each week-end attended based on 10 contact hours. You must have a prior approval form on file with Kathy Segers in order to receive PLU. This is also available at www.gimc.org.

Georgia Regional Braille Challenge 2009

The 2009 Georgia Regional Braille Challenge, sponsored by Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Academy for the Blind, and The Atlanta Braille Volunteers will be held on February 12, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Georgia Academy for the Blind in Macon, Georgia.

This is a literacy competition for students who read and write using Braille as their learning medium. This is the third year that Georgia has participated in this program and we were thrilled to have had two Georgia students invited to participate in the National Braille Challenge at The Braille Institute in Los Angeles, CA this past summer. Parent training sessions will be provided during the student competition.

The Traumatic Injury Update: A Primer on Brain Injury in Children and Youth

brought to you by the Children & Youth Subcommittee of the Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission

What is a brain injury?

There are two types of brain injury:

A **traumatic brain injury (TBI)** is caused by a jolt, blow or penetrating injury to the brain.

Whereas with TBI only specific areas of the brain can be affected (depending upon which parts of the brain were injured), **acquired brain injury (ABI)** is an injury that takes place at the cellular level, meaning that the injury can effect cells throughout the entire brain.

What are the causes of brain injury?

Falls are the leading cause of traumatic brain injury for children ages 0 to 4 years. This age group has the highest rate of TBI-related emergency department visits, followed by older adolescents ages 15-19 years. Other causes of TBI for children and youth include bicycles, skate boards, other sporting injuries, motor vehicle accidents, and child abuse.

ABI is caused by near-drowning, choking, electrical shock, infectious disease, strokes, brain tumors, and exposure to toxic gases.

How many children have a brain injury?

Traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of death and disability for children and adolescents in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) there are 1.5 million new TBI's every year in the United States.

This is confirmed by the Georgia Hospital Association Central Registry, which identified 27,208 children and youth age 0 - 24 who were either treated in an emergency department or admitted to the hospital for a TBI in 2006. So 54% of all TBI's in Georgia in 2006 were sustained by someone under age 24!

To learn more about brain injury in children, we recommend the following resources:

- Teaching Strategies for Children with Brain Injury: <http://www.biausa.org/word.files.to.pdf/good.pdfs/teaching.strategies.for.students.with.brain.injuries.pdf>
- Brain Injury Association of America: http://www.biausa.org/Pages/for_kids.html
- Center for Neuro Skills: <http://www.neuroskills.com/children.shtml>
- *For Your Child's Needs: A Guide to Recovery After Traumatic Injury*, July, 2008: www.bsitf.state.ga.us

Dates to Remember

November

4-5	State Advisory Panel, Savannah area
5	New Special Education Directors' Academy, Savannah Riverfront Marriott
5	Elluminate: Improving Academic Performance of SWDs for Elementary Reading/Language Arts
6-7	G-CASE Fall Conference, Savannah Riverfront Marriott Hotel
8-9	Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA), Largo Tibet Elementary School, Savannah, Georgia
10	Elluminate: Top 10 FY 08 Most Cited Due Process Issues
12	Elluminate: Improving Academic Performance of SWDs for Secondary Mathematics
13	Elluminate: Presentation by Core Access Teachers-Examples of multiple activities relating to standard and a single element
13	PBS on the Bus
16-18	National Dropout Prevention Center Conference, Ravinia Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia
17	Elluminate: Improving Academic Performance of SWDs for Secondary Reading/Language Arts

December

8 Special Education Directors' Elluminate, Kim Hartsell and Nancy O'Hara,
Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports

January

30-31 Georgia Vision Educators Lit-R-C Weekend, Georgia Academy for the Blind, Macon

31 Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA), Macon State College
Macon, Georgia

February

1 Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA), Macon State College
Macon, Georgia

1 New Special Education Directors' Academy, Renaissance Waverly Hotel,
Atlanta, Georgia

1-3 Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL), Renaissance Waverly Hotel,
Atlanta, Georgia

27-28 Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Athens, Georgia

March

3-6 Exceptional Children's Week with the theme "Raising the Bar"

6-7 Georgia Vision Educators Lit-R-C Weekend, Georgia Academy for the Blind, Macon

April

24-25 Georgia Vision Educators Lit-R-C Weekend, Georgia Academy for the Blind, Macon