



DIVISION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES and SUPPORTS

FEBRUARY 2011 District Liaison (DL) UPDATE

Welcome

Dr. Paula Freer joins the Division for Special Education as the new Education Program Specialist for Emotional Behavior Disorders. Paula earned a Ph.D. in School Psychology from Mississippi State University, a Masters of Social Work from the University of Georgia, and a Bachelor of Science from University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Paula worked at Metro West GLRS as a Program Specialist and in Troup County Schools as a school psychologist. Join us in welcoming Paula to the team!

Directors Elluminate February 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.

Save the Date – 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 information will be available on the G-CASE website by the week of February 8, 2011.

Timelines

Many school districts in the northern part of the state recently had to cancel school due to inclement weather. Here is a reminder about how this will affect districts' evaluation timeline for initial evaluations.

State Rule 160-4-7-.04 Evaluations and Reevaluations: "Holiday periods and other circumstances when children are not in attendance for 5 consecutive school days shall not be counted toward the 60 day timeline, including the weekend days before and after such holiday periods, if contiguous to the holidays..."

Districts that were out of school for five consecutive school days will stop counting the days toward the sixty day timeline on the last day of school attendance for students. Districts will begin counting the days as part of their sixty day timeline, beginning the first day students return. Please note that the rule addresses only five consecutive school days. Districts that have a four day school calendar will count the days students would normally be scheduled to attend school. Students must miss five consecutive school days in order for this exception to apply.

For example, if the district's last date of attendance was Friday, January 7th and students did not return until Tuesday, January 18th (following the MLK holiday), districts will count Friday, January 7th and will then continue counting toward their timeline beginning with Tuesday, January 18th.

Please share this information with all staff responsible for evaluation timelines. If there are additional questions, please contact either Kathy Giddens at 404-463-5280 kgiddens@doe.k12.ga.us or Julie Moilanen at (404) 657-9952 jmoilanen@doe.k12.ga.us.

Updated Special Education Rules Implementation Manual

An updated and more user-friendly version of the Special Education Rules Implementation Manual is scheduled to be posted on the Special Education page of the GaDOE website on or about February 1st.

The intended audience of this manual includes all the parties involved in the delivery and receipt of special education. This includes administrators, principals, regular education teachers, special education teachers, related services providers, parents, and students with disabilities.

Part I of the manual, which will be posted in February, relates to the processes, procedures, and best practices for implementing the Georgia Rules for Special Education; Part II, which is in development, will focus on the different eligibility categories. Each part has its own Table of Contents. The chapters and topics listed in the Table of Contents are hyperlinked to the specific pages in the manual. To move directly from the Table of Contents to a specific chapter or topic, press the control key (Ctrl), place the cursor over the desired chapter or topic listing, and click. In the revised manual sample forms are hyperlinked throughout the manual instead of in an appendix at the end.

This manual is meant to serve as a practical guide for implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) and its regulations. It is not intended to state new law or supplant any federal or state laws, regulations, or requirements. Nothing in this manual should be seen as having the force of law. This manual should not be cited as law or as imposing any additional requirements or obligations outside the requirements of existing law. Districts, schools, and parents are not required to adhere to this manual, but only to the requirements of the IDEA as codified in 20 U.S.C. § 1400 *et seq.*, its regulations promulgated in 34 C.F.R. Parts 300 and 301, and the rules of the State of Georgia promulgated by the State Board of Education.

Please consider downloading the updated Implementation Manual to your desktop to use as a ready reference.

Communities of Practice in Transition Institute II

In conjunction with the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC), the Georgia Department of Education will present the second Communities of Practice in Transition Institute on March 8, 2011 at the Central Georgia Convention Center in Forsyth, Georgia. The focus will be on increasing participants' knowledge of appropriate transition assessment instruments and translating assessment results to postsecondary goals. Case studies will be presented utilizing assessment reports for individual students. Breakout sessions will cover strategies for implementing best practices in transition; the role of assistive technology in transition; family engagement as it relates to transition; as well as transition services and transition planning. A pre-meeting poster session will highlight projects and partners that impact transition. Each district may send two participants who can re-deliver the information to others in the district. GaDOE will reimburse mileage for one vehicle per district according to state guidelines for travel. The pre-meeting poster session and registration will be from 7:30-8:30. The meeting begins at 8:30. The registration link will be emailed to directors on, or about, February 1. Please contact Lynn Holland lholland@doe.k12.ga.us or Patti Solomon psolomon@doe.k12.ga.us for questions.

On-line Transition Training (iTran)

The GaDOE is collaborating with the University of Kansas (KU) to provide online training opportunities that will prepare secondary educational personnel to provide special education and transition services to students with disabilities. The KU project, iTran, will provide a 15-hour graduate endorsement program in transition. Online coursework will be offered in order to reach pre-service and practicing secondary educators from across Georgia and six other states. KU iTran, in conjunction with a grant from the United States Department of Education, will provide scholarships that support teachers in acquiring a transition endorsement from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). Information regarding the application process is attached to the DL Update, and may be found at <http://transitioncoalition.org/transition/section.php?pageld=180>

Differentiating Curriculum and Instruction in PreKindergarten (PreK) and Kindergarten (K) Programs

A webinar presented by the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) a division of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) will be held on Tuesday, February 8, 2011 from 4:00-5:30 p.m. Go to www.cec.sped.org for more registration information.

The webinar will focus on curriculum differentiation that results in high quality Tier One instruction for preschoolers and kindergarteners. Differentiation is conceptualized as creating multiple and varied learning opportunities within the same activity or routine. Information will be presented that will assist service providers in understanding appropriate expectation levels for children as well as how to allow children to participate in a variety of activities with varied materials. Overall, a curriculum framework approach with multiple tiers is highlighted representing the underlying foundation of all practices from which supports and services are differentiated to meet the differing needs of children.

The webinar will provide a range of content and is geared toward professionals in several areas: those who provide direct services to young children (e.g., teachers, specialists, paraprofessionals); administrators of PreK and K programs; as well as teacher educators and pre-service teachers interested in working with young children with diverse abilities.

Expanded Core Curriculum for Students Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ECC-DHH)

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 or skills that go beyond those found in the *Georgia Performance Standards*. All students are required to master these standards, but some students need to develop specialized skills in order to access them, i.e. “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*. Finalized in August, 2010, this document defines specialized instruction for students who are deaf and hard or hearing and includes the following topics:

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

The curriculum is available at http://gadoe.org/ci_exceptional.aspx?PageReq=CIEXCDeafHH. If you have any questions about these resources, please feel free to contact Frank Nesbit at the Georgia Department of Education at 404-844-8741 or fnesbit@doe.k12.ga.us.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

A state-wide task force has been created to support the needs of professionals providing intervention and/or education for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The task force has created a survey to gather information from individuals providing services to children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Data from the survey will be used to make informed decisions and establish priorities regarding the professional development needs of individuals serving these children as well as other types of support needed in this area.

Please review the survey and forward it to any personnel serving children who are deaf or hard of hearing in your district. Thank you for your support. <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/L9H2GPQ>

Date and Location Change for Occupational Therapist (OT)/Physical Therapist (PT) Contact Meeting

The first face-to-face OT/PT Contact Meeting date has been changed to **Tuesday, February 15, 2011**. The meeting will be held at the **Griffin RESA**. Information was sent to all designated district contacts on Friday, January 21st. Please check with your district contact to ensure that the individual received notification. If you have not designated a contact person, please contact Elise Lynch at elynch@doe.k12.ga.us. Be sure to submit only one name with an email address and phone number.

Georgia Exceptional Children’s Week is March 7-11, 2011 Theme: “Celebrating Diversity”

What is Exceptional Children’s Week? CEC initiated Exceptional Children’s Week (ECW) as a way to educate the public about children with disabilities and garner support for them. Since its inception, many CEC units have taken advantage of ECW to highlight the needs and capabilities of exceptional children as well as the community and state programs that support these children. ECW provides far-reaching benefits to students with exceptionalities.

In addition to increased public awareness, ECW gives community members an opportunity to become directly involved in the advancement of individuals with disabilities. Professionals, parents, students, legislators, and the general public find themselves working together to enhance understanding and acceptance of individuals with exceptionalities.

Georgia CEC can help you celebrate Exceptional Children's Week by providing pencils, buttons, and t-shirts. The order form can be downloaded and printed from the Georgia CEC website at gacec.org . If you have questions, please contact Irene Fries at friesi@org or call her at 706-302-9677.

Response to Intervention (RTI) for English Language Learners (ELLs) in Georgia: Research to Practice

The English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program Unit will host a professional learning webinar series. The series is designed to support Georgia educators as they increase their knowledge of research-based practices in implementing the RTI process for children who are English Language Learners (ELLs). It brings participants and nationally-recognized researchers together to address issues related RTI and ELL education. In addition, resources will be shared from the United States Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (IES) and the Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs). All those with responsibility for, and/or interest in, the RTI process as it relates to English Language Learners are invited to attend, i.e. school practitioners and administrators; district level staff; Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS) personnel; Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) staff, as well as faculty at institutions of higher education.

The seven webinar series runs from February 16, 2001 to May 11, 2011 from 3:00 p.m.- 4:30 p.m. Specific dates and details can be found under "Updates" at: http://www.gadoe.org/ci_jap_esol.aspx . Please contact LaShaun Odom at lodom@doe.k12.ga.us or 404-463-0505 for more information.

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

The NASDSE Professional Development Series has received a complete renovation this year. States will be provided with a new, fully accessible, state-of-the-art web delivery system. This system includes a searchable data base of information; listing of conference chapters for easy navigation; and accurate transcription of all conference content. **The previous one-time satellite downlink portion for the series has been discontinued.**

March 16, 2011 [Common Core Standards: What They Mean for States and Schools](#)
May 4, 2011 [Virtual Special Education: Issues and Answers](#)

The conference will be accessible using a new web-delivery system. All conferences in 2010-2011 will be accessible to each state only using the following directions:

- 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.

For additional information contact Julia Causey at 404-675-9954 or jcausey@doe.k12.ga.us

2001 Calendar of Events

February

2	Elluminate: Special Education Directors
17	Special Education Directors Forum: Macon
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): Athens

28 Initial Transmission for Special Education: Student Record

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