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DIVISIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES and SUPPORTS

JANUARY 2010 DL UPDATE

New Phone System for GaDOE Staff

The Georgia Department of Education is phasing in a new telephone system in an effort to reduce operating costs. As a result of this change, staff will receive new telephone numbers over the next couple of months. As the system is implemented, we will provide the new numbers in the DL Update. Once all changes have been made, we will send you a new staff directory and will publish it on our website. A listing of staff with new phone numbers is attached to this update. Please continue to use the currently published numbers for other staff until notified.

Georgia Grant for High Cost Funds (GHCF) New in FY10

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 gives states an option to set aside funding for the creation of a "Risk Pool" designated to assist local school districts in meeting the high cost of providing special education services to children with disabilities meeting a predetermined criteria. These funds will assist local school systems in covering the direct special education instructional costs of children with disabilities who meet the criteria established in IDEA 2004 and the system plan for the Grant for High Cost Funds (GHCF). In FY10 approximately \$3,000,000 will be available for distribution to local systems through the GHCF.

- 1) A "High Need Child" is defined as a child who has been identified as eligible for special education and related services and has a current Individualized Education Program (IEP). The intensity, frequency and diversity of the special education needs of the child exceed the typical needs of a child with a disability.
- 2) IDEA 2004 requires the eligibility for reimbursement for a high needs student be at least three times the average per pupil expenditure as defined in Section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. In Georgia for FY2010 direct costs must be in excess of \$27,000.

Annually, the GaDOE will begin accepting applications for the GHCF on October 1. The ending date for submission is **April 1** of each fiscal year. The award letters for the GHCF expenditures in a school year will be issued by May 30. Additional information regarding the criteria and grant application is posted on the special education webpage at the link, "Budget and Grant Applications." http://www.gadoe.org/ci_exceptional.aspx?PageReq=CIEXCApps. Read the instructions and established criteria carefully. LEAs should complete the application and provide documentation of expenses required for processing the GHCF application.

An Elluminate session is scheduled on January 26, 2010 from 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM to provide additional instruction for systems planning to make application for the Grant for High Cost Funds. You can access the Elluminate at the following link: http://elluminate.gavirtualschool.org/doe/join_meeting.html?meetingId=1258851691967

If you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact: Debbie Gay at dgay@doe.k12.ga.us or 404 - 657-7329 or Harry Repsher at hrepsher@doe.k12.ga.us or 404- 657-9968.

Grants for Residential and Reintegration Services (GRRS) FY10

The application and instructions for the FY10 Grants for Residential and Reintegration Services (GRRS) are posted on the special education webpage at the link, "Budget and Grant Applications."

http://www.gadoe.org/ci_exceptional.aspx?PageReq=CIEXCApps. Read the instructions and established criteria carefully. LEAs should complete the application and provide documentation of expenses required for the residential services. Applications may be submitted from January 4, 2010 to March 5, 2010. Funds will be allocated to qualifying systems on or before May 1, 2010. Applications must contain all required components to be considered for grant funds. The submission of the student's eligibility report and the IEP is required. For out of state schools there must be documentation that the school has been approved by the Special Education Department of the state in which the school resides. Grants are not automatically funded. Systems must assume full responsibility for the funding at the time of placement in a residential setting. Grant applications will be reviewed by GaDOE staff and approval will be based on the order of priority identified in the state rule 160-4-7-.18 Grants for Services. Questions regarding the grant application may be directed to Debbie Gay at dgay@doe.k12.ga.us or 404 -657-7329 or Harry Repsher at hrepsher@doe.k12.ga.us or 404- 657-9968.

Dispute Resolution Tip of the Month

Parents often provide school districts with evaluative information obtained from private sources when initial eligibility determinations or reevaluations are under consideration. Formal complaints have been filed at the GaDOE with the concern that a district is not considering the information obtained from private sources in determining eligibility or in the development of a subsequent IEP.

34 CFR §300.305 (a) (1) (i) requires "(a) Review of existing evaluative data. As part of an initial evaluation (if appropriate) and as part of any reevaluation under this part, the IEP Team and other qualified professionals as appropriate, must (1) Review existing evaluation data on the child, including-(i) evaluations and information provided by the parents of the child." Some independent evaluations may be from the perspective of a clinical model versus an educational model. The recommendations may reflect treatment rather than educational access through specially designed instruction. The IEP Teams must consider the information and explain to parents how they are going to include the recommendations within an educational framework, if appropriate. This discussion is critical as the district is responsible for being proactive and developing a plan to educate the child. The school district should review private evaluations prior to the IEP meeting and include district staff that may provide assistance in interpreting evaluations from private sources if the evaluator is not a participant in the meeting.

ACE - Medicaid Billing Program

The GaDOE has received many questions about the resumption or reinstatement of Administrative Cost Claiming for Education (ACE) Medicaid program. As you know we have met with the Department of Community Health multiple times since last spring. They are well aware that local systems and our agency would like to see the ACE program up and running. Department of Community Health (DCH) is not opposed to such an event, but they must rebuild staff to operate or oversee the program and to develop the written plan to submit for approval to the federal agency. DCH is creating a position to manage the program and will move forward to get the ACE program initiated with a new plan. At this point the timeline is not yet clear, but the agency has every intention of moving forward. At the same time, DCH is instituting a new statewide management information system, which, in the long run, will also be beneficial to those who participate in the Medicaid billing programs, but, for now, is taking up a lot of time for everyone in the agency. The Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports will keep you informed as things move along. We look forward to a partnership with DCH for the ACE program.

FY10 Postsecondary Survey Activity Definitions

OSEP’s State Performance Plan (SPP) requires postsecondary outcome data to be collected on youth who had IEPs and are no longer in secondary school. Definitions of the postsecondary activities to be utilized in the FY10 Postsecondary Survey are included in the accompanying flyer entitled “**Definitions FY10 Postsecondary Survey**” provided with this DL Update. Please be sure to review these definitions carefully, as many of the definitions have changed.

FY10 Exit Data

Every November, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires each state to provide an annual count of the number of children with disabilities age 14 and above who were served in special education, but exited special education during the prior school year (July 1 to June 30). Data are provided by district, school, age, disability category, basis of exit, race/ethnicity, gender, and limited English proficiency (LEP) status. This report is identified as The Report of Children with Disabilities Exiting Special Education (Table 6). Information on this report and other Federal Data Reports (FDR) is located at IDEAdata.org. State performance rankings are also available on this site.

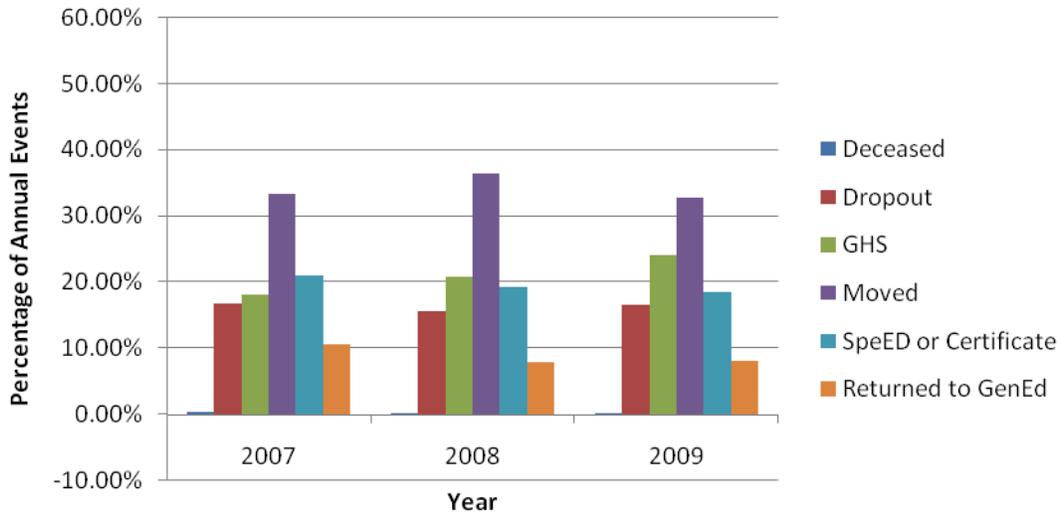
Only children who were in special education at the start of the FDR reporting period, but were not in special education at the end of the reporting period are included in Table 6 and it is based solely on an unduplicated count of exit events. The data sets used to identify the proportion of students exiting special education by exit events in this report is significantly different from the data sets used for other calculations. The table below provides a brief outline of some of these differences.

Calculation Type	Numerator	Denominator
Dropout:		
Event (FDR)	#of SWD age 14 and above dropping out between 7/1 -6/30	#of SWD age 14 and above exiting SpEd between 7/1 – 6/30
Georgia	#of SWD grade 9 and above dropping out between 7/1 -6/30	#of SWD grade 9 and above enrolled between 7/1 -6/30
Four-Year Adjusted Cohort	#of first time 9 th grade SWD –YEAR 1 (+/- move- in and move –outs over four years) dropping out during the four year enrollment window (12 th grade – YEAR 4)	#of first time 9 th grade SWD (+/- move- in and move –outs over four years) during a four year enrollment window
Graduation		
Event (FDR)	#of SWD age 14 and above graduating with a standard diploma between 7/1 -6/30	#of SWD age 14 and above exiting SpEd between 7/1 – 6/30
Georgia	#of SWD graduating with a standard diploma between 7/1 -6/30	#of SWD completers plus SWD dropouts during a four year enrollment window
Four-Year Adjusted Cohort	#of first time 9 th grade SWD (+/- move- in and move –outs over four years) graduating with a regular diploma during a four year enrollment window (12 th grade – YEAR 4)	#of first time 9 th grade SWD (+/- move- in and move –outs over four years) during a four year enrollment window

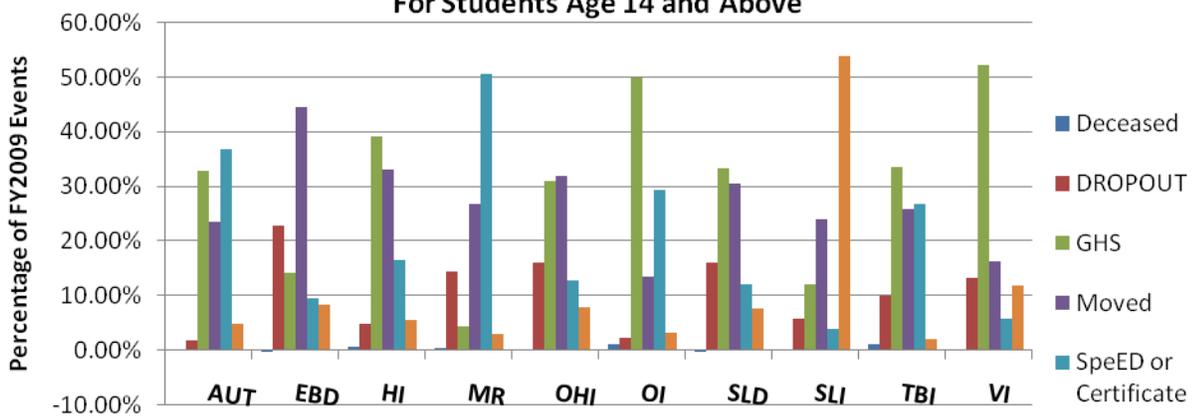
Data from the Event calculation defined above provide an additional method of data analysis. Data in the following charts are consistent with FDR Event calculation defined above. The charts reflect our current state level performance. Notable findings include:

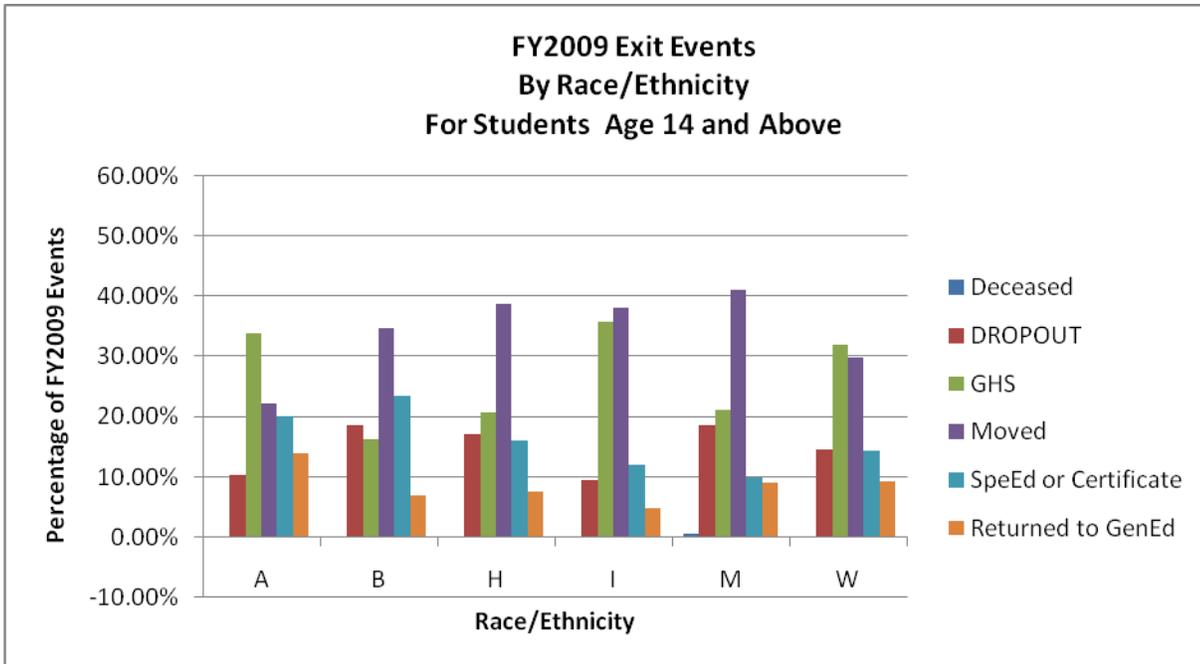
- From FY07 to FY09, the graduation rate for SWD increased 5.93%.
- In FY09, 16.32% of black students exiting special education received a general education diploma compared to 31.83% of white students.

**Exit Event Data
FY2007-FY2009
For SWD Age 14 and Above**



**FY2009 Exit Events
By Disability Type
For Students Age 14 and Above**





ExPreSS (Exam Preparation for Science and Social Studies)

The ExPreSS Program will be conducted for high school students for remediation in Science and Social Studies on June 14-25, 2010. Students will be expected to attend for the full two-weeks of the program (Monday-Friday) from 8:30-12:30. The Science and Social Studies Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHSGT) for ExPreSS students will be administered on the last day of the ExPreSS Program on June 25th.

The 2009 ExPreSS program was successful for many students with disabilities who were working toward completing the graduation requirement of achieving a meets score on the GHSGT in either Science or Social Studies. As more information comes forward about the ExPreSS 2010 Program, we will pass it along.

ExPreSS instructional plans from 2009 are available on the GaDOE website at the following link: <https://www.georgiastandards.org/Resources/Pages/Tools/ExPreSS.aspx> . For those students with disabilities currently studying for the GHSGT in Science and/or Social Studies, the ExPreSS instructional plans can provide a great basis for remediation or instruction.

As the instructional plans are updated, they will be posted with the most current date. For more information regarding instructional plans, please contact William Cranshaw for Social Studies at wcransha@doe.k12.ga.us or (404) 651-7271 and Juan-Carlos Aguilar for Science at jaguilar@doe.k12.ga.us or (404) 657-9072.

Issues in School-Based Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physical Therapy (PT)

In May 2009, an Elluminate session was conducted to discuss issues in school-based occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy (PT). Among the concerns presented was the need to have guidance and a tool to assist IEP teams in determining the amount of educationally relevant therapy needed by a student. In response to this request, staff from the Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports has developed a work group comprised of professionals from around the state to develop resources for determining educationally relevant therapy. It is expected that the workgroup will begin in January and the group will report on their progress in the DL Updates.

In addition, the GaDOE will be publishing a frequently asked questions document to address some of the questions presented in the Elluminate. It will be disseminated prior to the end of the month.

We thank you for your interest concerning school-based occupational therapy and physical therapy. Please contact Elise Lynch at elynch@doe.k12.ga.us or at (404) 844-7637 if you have any questions concerning the work group or the provision of school-based occupational and physical therapy in Georgia.

Autism Regional Team Meetings

The Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports are conducting Regional Autism Team Meetings again in January, February and March 2010 to be held at Monroe County, Pickens County, Dougherty County and Liberty County. Over 200 teachers and staff members attended the fall meetings and represented the majority of districts in Georgia.

The regional teams will be conducted as consortia meetings planned and facilitated by our division and will focus on building capacity for working with students with autism spectrum disorders.

To better meet the needs voiced by the attendees of the fall meetings, GATTAP meetings will be divided into two separate sessions. One day will be focused on staff working with low functioning students with an autism spectrum disorder and the other day will be focused on staff working with high functioning students with an autism spectrum disorder. Teachers, Speech and Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Behavior Specialists and Coordinators are invited to choose the day which correlates most closely to their areas of work.

We are suggesting at least two representatives from each school district attend the regional meetings. Ideally, the same person who attended the fall meetings should attend this meeting, but others are encouraged to attend as well. 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.

A flyer with information on meeting locations and dates, as well as registration information, entitled “**GATTAP Regional Team Meetings Announcement**” is provided with this DL Update.

Parent to Parent of Georgia is Now Accepting Nominations for 2010 Impact Awards.

The Impact Awards recognize individuals whose actions demonstrate, support, or lead to inclusion of individuals with disabilities so they can meaningfully participate in all aspects of life. Award winners exemplify respect and dignity for everyone, regardless of ability, and work to ensure that others embrace these same ideas.

Impact Award winners believe inclusion means:

- Everyone (with and without disabilities) gets the same opportunities at home, school, work and play.
- Everyone has positive social relationships and friendships.
- Everyone feels like they belong and has something to contribute to society.

These awards recognize professionals working with individuals with disabilities in schools, Babies Can't Wait, other early care and education settings, and/or post-secondary programs as well as individuals who volunteer or work in their community to enhance or develop inclusive programs and services available to families of children and youth with disabilities. Nominations are due February 12, 2010. For more information about the Impact Awards and nomination forms, visit the Parent to Parent website at www.p2pga.org.

Georgia Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

Georgia CEC has issued a call for proposals for the 2010 Georgia CEC Conference that will be held in Athens February 26-27, 2010. Detailed information can be found on the website www.gacec.org.

Exceptional Children's Week is March 1-5, 2010 and the theme is "Fueling the Road to Success".

Georgia Regional Braille Challenge

The Georgia Regional Braille Challenge is being conducted at the Georgia Academy for the Blind on January 28, 2010 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The Braille Challenge is sponsored by the Braille Institute and is the only national competition of its kind for students who read and write using Braille. Competition levels exist for students in grades 1 through 12. Parent training will occur during the competition on the topics of Orientation & Mobility and braille.

For more information and registration forms go to the Georgia Instructional Materials Center website (www.gimc.org) or contact Kathy Segers by phone at (478) 751-6208 or via email at ksegers@doe.k12.ga.us.

Autism Elluminate Series

The first in a series of 10 Elluminate sessions entitled "**Using Visuals for Scheduling and Cueing to Support Students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder**" will be held on January 14, 2010 from 1:00-2:30PM. This session will describe various uses for visuals including schedules, behavioral supports, academic supports, community based instruction, social skills training and home to school cueing.

A flyer describing each of the sessions to be offered in this series entitled **Elluminate Sessions for Autism 2010** is provided with this DL Update.

Transition Elluminate Series

The fourth Elluminate in the 2009-2010 Transition series will be held on January 21, 2010 from 3:30-5PM. This exciting session entitled "**Transition Plan Writing-Beyond Dotted I's and Crossed T's**" will feature three districts that have been successful in training teachers to write compliant Transition Plans that provide successful outcomes for students with disabilities after graduation. Plan to have your secondary teachers attend this informative session!

GPS Elluminate Session Topic Change

The topic of the January 14, 2010 Elluminate Session for Access to the GPS for students with significant cognitive disabilities has been changed. The new topic for the Elluminate session to be broadcast at 3:30 p.m. will be "**Access to the Curriculum for Students with Significant Disabilities: Pre-Requisite Skills--Choosing, Teaching, and Documenting.**"

Cancelation of March Georgia Deaf Education Achievement Forum (GDEAF)

The March 19, 2010 GDEAF meeting has been canceled due to the Department of Education's furlough date.

Dates to Remember

January 2010

- 13 SSTAGE Drive-in Conference: *Best Practices in SST/RTI* Athens Classic Center
www.sstage.org
- 14 Special Education Directors' Discussion Forum
Elluminate Session
- 16-17 Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment, Rutland Center, Athens
- 22 Georgia Deaf Education Achievement Forums (GDEAF), Educational Technology Centers
- 23 SSTAGE Drive-In Workshop: Evaluating Fidelity of Interventions, Forsyth County Board of Education, www.sstage.org
- 28 Georgia Regional Braille Challenge, Georgia Academy for the Blind
- 31 Special Education Leadership Development Academy (GCASE/GaDOE), Athens

February

- 8 Special Education Directors' Elluminate Session
Kim Hartsell and Nancy O'Hara 10:00-11:30 a.m.
- 19 Georgia Vision Impaired Consortia Meeting
Host Site: Georgia ETCs, Hosted at Valdosta State ETC
- 22 SSTAGE Drive-In Workshop: Evaluating Fidelity of Interventions, Forsyth County Board of Education, www.sstage.org
- 23 SSTAGE Drive-In Workshop: Evaluating Fidelity of Interventions, Central Georgia Site
To Be Announced

March

- 6-7 Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment, Atlanta Area School for the Deaf, Clarkston
- 19 Georgia Deaf Education Achievement Forums (GDEAF), Educational Technology Centers
- 22-24 Spring Special Education Leadership Meeting, Athens

April

- 22 Special Education Directors' Discussion Forum
Location: Bibb County, Career Center Annex at Hutchings

May

- 7 Georgia Vision Impaired Consortia Meeting, Host Site: Pioneer RESA ETC
- 10 Special Education Directors' Elluminate Session
- 15-16 Educational Interpreter Performance Assessments, Largo Tibet Elementary School, Savannah

June

- 9-11 Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment, Valdosta State University, Valdosta