



EDUCATION SERVICES and SUPPORTS

DIVISIONS FOR SPECIAL

JUNE 2010 DL UPDATE

State Board of Education Recognition Awards of Excellence

The State Board of Education recognizes groups of outstanding students in various subject areas of achievement. The 2010 Awards of Excellence Recognition Program for Exceptional Students will be held in Atlanta on June 10, 2010, at the Department of Education's State Board of Education meeting.

This year the Georgia Department of Education will honor Georgia 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

The 2010 Honorees are:

Bobby Evans	Brunswick High School	Glynn County
Donyetta McCraw	Thomas County Central High School	Thomas County
Christopher Pellerin	Upton-Lee High School	Thomaston-Upton
Shaynedonovan Elliot	Atlanta Area School for the Deaf	Fulton County
Kadarius Venson	South Atlanta High School	Atlanta City Schools
James Hollander	Cherokee High School	Cherokee County
Davis Duffey	Winder-Barrow High School	Barrow County
Ethan Bloodworth	Jones County High School	Jones County
Alesha Pinson	Murray County High School	Murray County
Tyler Byrd	Banks County High School	Banks County
James Kilpatrick	Gordon Central High School	Gordon County
Antonio Banks	Toombs County High School	Toombs County
Lararius Dunbar	Langston Hughes High School	Fulton County

Thanks to all you who completed and submitted applications for this award. We had many outstanding nominees, each of whom will receive a certificate of recognition. A special thanks to all of the special education directors, parents, and teachers who will be attending this celebration with their students. Watch for the 2011 Awards of Excellence Application that will be available after January 2011.

State Board of Education Approves Exemptions to Class Size Maximums

The State Board of Education approved an exemption of all class size maximums for the 2010-2011 school year **only**. This applies to special education as well as general education class size maximums. In order to implement this new flexibility, local boards of education must submit a locally approved resolution to the Georgia Department of Education before implementing the maximums. The action taken by the SBOE did not waive accountability, health and safety requirements.

For special education, it is also important to remember that the requirement for the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is maintained. Establishing large classes for special education students may impact a district's ability to provide FAPE to certain students with disabilities. It also important to remember that other regulatory requirements in the Georgia Rules for Special Education remain in effect. Attached are two documents providing additional information on this flexibility. The first attachment, State Board of 2010-2011 Education Local Class Size Flexibility Considerations, contains general information about class size flexibility. The second document, Special Education Class Size Considerations for 2010-2011, contains information specific to special education.

Revision to Rule 160-4-70.04 - Evaluations and Reevaluations

One of the new revisions to the State Rules for Special Education included a revision under Rule 160-4-7-.04 Evaluations and Reevaluations. Under Initial Evaluations, a change was made that now states that "Any summer vacation period in which the majority of an LEA's teachers are not under contract shall not be counted toward the 60 calendar day timeline for evaluation." However, there are two exceptions to this rule amendment:

- (1) "Consent received 30 days or more prior to the end of the school year must be completed within the 60 calendar day evaluation timeframe." Here are a couple of examples to demonstrate the new timeline rule.
 - a. If consent is received April 27 and the last day of school is May 28, the process must be completed within 60 calendar days of the receipt of consent because there are 31 days before the end of the school year. The system has a choice of expediting the process to complete the eligibility meeting before the end of the school year or completing the eligibility by the 60 day timeline during the summer. In this situation, the system must develop the IEP within 30 days of the eligibility determination.
 - b. If the consent for evaluation is received April 30 and the end of school is May 28, the evaluation process for the 60 days will extend into the next school year and days during the summer will not count. The timeline will stop on the last day of school, May 28 (that is 28 days into your timeline). The system will begin the 60-day timeline again once again on the first day that teachers are under contract the next fall (beginning the timeline with day 29).
- (2) "Students who turn three during the summer period or other holiday periods must have an eligibility decision and IEP (if appropriate) in place by the third birthday." A team must be gathered and meet during the summer to decide eligibility and write an IEP (if the child is eligible) if the child turns three during the summer when school is not in session.

Please keep in mind, you will only count referrals for timeline reports submitted July 31st of each year for students who have gone through the complete process from referral (consent) to eligibility decision by June 30th of each year. For referrals that are stopped during the summer months due to receipt of consent less than 30 days prior to the last day of school, systems will include them on the next year's timeline report.

If you have any questions, you may contact Kathy Giddens at 404-844-8759.

FY 2011 Data Collection Conference

The Georgia Department of Education will offer a 3-day Data Collection conference in Athens from September 1-3, 2010. This conference is designed to help school systems better understand state and federal reporting requirements, while providing an understanding of the importance of internal data collections and reporting procedures. The conference represents the culmination of effort among several offices within the Georgia Department of Education. Various program areas, including special education will share program-specific information that impact funding, accountability, federal reporting, and program evaluation.

Conference Dates:

Wednesday, September 1, 2010: 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM
Thursday, September 2, 2010: 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM
Friday, September 3, 2010: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Registration for the conference is now open and can be accessed using the following link:

<http://admin.doe.k12.ga.us/gadoe/trngadmin2.nsf/frnCourseSchedule?OpenForm&CourseName=2011+Data+Collec+ions+Conference&parentunid=7C69E379AE46629C852577270042D1D8>

Disproportionate Representation: Overrepresentation & Underrepresentation

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires states to identify districts with disproportionate representation (DR) and determine if the disproportionate representation is the result of inappropriate identification. DR occurs when students from a racial/ethnic group are identified for special education/related services or for a specific disability category either at a greater rate (overrepresentation) or at a lesser rate (underrepresentation) than other students. Underrepresentation may represent inappropriate exclusion from special education.

Districts should review their FY10 weighted risk ratios in the Special Education Annual Reports located on the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Website - Select the Data Reporting link - Select your District and Open the Representation by Disability Type tab. Districts are encouraged to use this data to identify subgroups that are trending toward overrepresentation (4.0) or underrepresentation (.25).

- For FY10, the GaDOE defined disproportionate representation for overrepresentation as a weighted risk ratio ≥ 4.0 with a risk of 1.0 reflecting neither over or under representation.
- For FY10, the GaDOE defined disproportionate representation for underrepresentation as a weighted risk ratio $\leq .25$ with a risk of 1.0 reflecting neither over nor under representation.
- Two preconditions were applied prior to the calculation for overrepresentation and underrepresentation: (1) Total District Race Count ≥ 40 and (2) District Race Composition $\leq .75$.

Based on FY10 data, the State identified districts with DR and notified superintendents, in writing of the determination. Districts with DR must submit the Self-Assessment Monitoring Protocol to the State by June 30, 2010. On May 19, 2010, the GaDOE provided technical assistance via an Illuminate Session to address underrepresentation. The session was recorded and can be accessed through the GaDOE Archived Illuminates.

Please contact Dr. Donna Drakeford at 404-656-2427 or via email at ddrakeford@doe.k12.ga.us for additional information about disproportionate representation.

Disproportionality Forums for Discipline

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) will provide three Disproportionality Forums for systems identified as being significantly disproportionate (SD) or "at serious risk" of being significantly disproportionate in the area of discipline for children with disabilities. If identified, your district is required to send a team to one of the forums.

The purpose of the forums is to provide technical assistance to school system teams to:

- 1) Discuss criteria for SD determinations and at serious risk status,

- 2) Guide your planning process for Next Steps in addressing critical elements that support appropriate discipline practices, and
- 3) Provide information on the local, state, and national supports available to districts to improve suspension/expulsion data.

Date	Location
June 8, 2010 10:00 am – 4:00 pm	Twin Towers West, Training Room D Atlanta, GA (Please note the remaining forums begin at 8:30)
July 21, 2010 8:30am – 3:00 pm	Classic Center 300 N. Thomas St. Athens, GA 30601
July 28, 2010 8:30am – 3:00 pm	Coastal Plains RESA 245 North Robinson Street Lennox, GA 31637

The registration link is listed below. Your district team should register for one location. Registration will close **June 4, 2010**. Participants will be registered on a first come, first served basis.

<http://admin.doe.k12.ga.us/gadoe/trngadmin2.nsf/frmCourseSchedule?OpenForm&CourseName=Disproportionality+Forum&parentunid=0CFDE4A12735F2568525772700473258>

Please contact Dr. Donna Drakeford at 404-656-2427 or via email at ddrakeford@doe.k12.ga.us for additional information about disproportionate representation.

Grants and Budgets

Harry Repsher has provided the following update information regarding grants and budgets:

1. The amendments deadline has been extended to June 30, 2010.
2. There will be a reallocation of the State Preschool Grant and state grant for GNETS. GaDOE withheld 10% of state funds for FY10 in anticipation of budget cuts. Figures for the budget cuts were finalized and the difference is available for reallocation. This budget item will go to the State Board on June 10, 2010. You will need to do a budget amendment to add these funds. You can move expenditures from your federal preschool grant to zero out the state funds, thus, giving you that amount for carryover in FY11. These funds will be lost on June 30, 2010 if this is not completed.
3. The High Cost Funds grant was approved by the State Board on May 13, 2010. If your system applied for a grant, you will need to add this program in the Consolidated Application. The Consolidated Application Administrator for the system will need to do this from the configuration drop down box. Once added, you will need to budget these funds in order for the system to draw down the funds. These funds are available to June 30, 2010 only.
4. Estimated budget allocations will be posted the first week of June in the special education portal. After the June State Board meeting, the allocations will be posted on the special education website under Budgets and Grants. Click on the + sign before the title to access the FY11 allocation and guidance information.

High School Access Courses for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

We have had continuing questions regarding which high school students in your district might be appropriately placed in Access courses. These courses were designed to provide access to the general education curriculum at an entry or pre-requisite skill level for those students who have traditionally been in an adaptive curriculum with a focus on relevant life skills.

Only students who are assessed by the Georgia Alternate Assessment should participate in Access Courses. In order to be assessed using in the GAA, students should meet the criteria for participation in the GAA. These criteria can be found using the following link:

<http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/DMGetDocument.aspx/Participation%20Criteria.doc?p=6CC6799F8C1371F660E63AAE DA8FED3D5467A6B678B5C1263C1D36A3C558295F&Type=D>

FY11 GNETS Grant Applications

Actual GNETS budget submissions with the final FY11 Grant Application as an attachment are due from your fiscal agent no later than June 15, 2010 via the portal. Please send draft FY11 Grant Applications and copy draft FY11 budgets to Mike Blake at mblake@doe.k12.ga.us as soon as possible. Annual GNETS Accountability Reports are due no later than June 30, 2010 and can be emailed to mblake@doe.k12.ga.us.

Draft Guidance for Determining Considerations for Educationally Relevant Therapy for Occupational and Physical Therapists

The OT/PT workgroup has completed draft guidance to assist IEP teams in determining the need for educationally relevant occupational and physical therapy. This guidance was presented for initial feedback at the Special Education Spring Leadership Meeting in March of this year. There are two separate guidance documents. The "Educationally Relevant Therapy VS Medical Model of Therapy" guidance attempts to outline the difference between therapy provided by school systems and therapy provided outside of school systems. The "Considerations for Educationally Relevant Therapy (CERT)" tool was developed by the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, and has been adapted for use by GaDOE with permission. The CERT is not an assessment. The Division of Special Education Services and Supports is requesting the input of special education directors as well as school-based therapists and contract therapists that provide services to students with disabilities in Georgia schools. Special education directors and OT/PT coordinators are asked to disseminate the copies of the attached documents to their providers for feedback. Comments are to be submitted in writing to Elise Lynch at the Division for Special Education Services and Supports, Georgia Department of Education, 1870 Twin Towers East, 205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive, S.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30334 or via e-mail to elynch@doe.k12.ga.us by Monday, July 5, 2010.

Interagency Council Information

All Interagency Councils are asked to be sure to post their "vital statistics" (council name, members, meeting location and time, key activities, and other essential data) at www.gatransition.org. There has been some confusion regarding who should post information at this site. This request is to ALL interagency transition councils in Georgia to share information, not just those who are part of the SPDG grant. If you have any questions, please e-mail bnations@doe.k12.ga.us.

Down Syndrome Education Conference

The Down Syndrome Association of Atlanta is sponsoring the internationally renowned DownsED training in Atlanta on September 9 - 11, 2010. This is an exciting opportunity for speech pathologists, educators, and parents to learn about highly successful strategies for working with students with Down syndrome.

A brochure for the conference entitled "Atlanta DownsED Conference" is attached to this update. Registration is set up on the Down Syndrome Association of Atlanta website, www.AtlantaDSAA.org. Please note the Early Bird registration costs, which that are good until July 1, 2010. For questions, please contact The Down Syndrome Association of Atlanta at 404.320.3233.

Make and Take Workshop for Teachers of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

The Georgia DOE is sponsoring Make and Take Workshops at four locations for teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities. As we still have room for additional teachers to register, we are opening

registration statewide. There is a limit of 40 persons for each workshop and registration will be accepted at the GLRS on a first come first serve basis.

Teachers will have the opportunity to create integrated units of instruction that will give access to the GPS for teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities. GaDOE will provide the materials. There is no cost to attend this workshop. Core Access Teachers and Georgia DOE staff will present the sessions. Please see the attached flyer entitled "Make n Take Registration Flyer" for additional information.

Teachers should contact the GLRS as noted below for registration. Travel expenses will be the responsibility of the school system or the teacher.

The locations, dates, and registration contacts for the make and take workshops are:

June 15, 2010 9:00-4:00

South Georgia GLRS

Lenox, Georgia 31637
Phone 414 North Robinson Street
(229) 546-4367

Please register via email to:

hbailey@cpresa.org

June 17, 2010 9:00-4:00

East Georgia GLRS

Richmond County Board of Education
East Central Georgia Learning Resources System
Central office
864 Broad Street
Augusta, Georgia 30901

Please register by phone:

Phone: (706) 826-1128 or 706-826-1010

June 21, 2010 9:00-4:00

Northwest Georgia GLRS

3167 Cedartown Hwy SE
Rome, Georgia 30161
Phone: (706) 295-6189 x17

Please register via GLRS Website:

<http://team.glr.org/nwglrs/default.aspx>

June 23, 2010 9:00-4:00

West Georgia GLRS

1120 Bradley Drive
Columbus, Georgia 31906
Phone: (706)748-2140

Please Register by email to:

Marguerite Hay, mohay@mcsdga.net

Dates to Remember

June

- 9-10-11** Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment
Location: Valdosta State University, Valdosta
- 10** State Board of Education Recognition Awards of Excellence,
Location: Department of Education, Atlanta
- 21-24** Autism Academy
Location: The Rutland Center, 1250 Oglethorpe Avenue, Athens, Ga.

July

- 15** Final Submission for CPI Cycle 3
- 31** Preschool Exiting Survey due
- 31** Post-secondary Survey due
- 31** Timeline Data Due

August

- 31** Parent Mentor Council Retreat

September

- 1** Parent Mentor Council Retreat