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DIVISIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES and SUPPORTS

FEBRUARY 2009 DL UPDATE

Welcome

The Division for Special Education Services is pleased to announce the addition of a new staff member, Susan Eckhart, who will work as an education program specialist (Speech and Language Pathology) in the Elementary Curriculum/School Improvement Unit. Formerly with the Fulton County Board of Education and the Columbia County Board of Education, Susan has demonstrated outstanding leadership in speech and language services, Response to Intervention, and Special Needs Pre-Kindergarten program. She is a member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and has obtained her Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC). Please join us in welcoming Susan!

State Board of Education Recognition Awards of Excellence

The 2009 Awards of Excellence Recognition Program for Students with Disabilities will be held on June 10, 2009, at 3:30 pm at the Georgia Department of Education following the State Board of Education meeting. This year the Divisions will 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.

The Divisions for Special Education are asking Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS) centers and local school systems within each GLRS region to nominate qualifying students for these recognition awards. The Awards Recognition application will soon be available on our website at www.gadoe.org on the Special Education page. It is also attached to this update. Please complete the form for each student nominated and return by March 16, 2009, to the address below:

Frank Nesbit
Division for Special Education Services
1870 Twin Towers East
Atlanta, GA 30334
FAX: 404-657-9963
fnesbit@doe.k12.ga.us

Only applications submitted to the GaDOE by GLRS directors or special education directors will be accepted. You will receive final details of the award recipients and the June recognition activity.

Senate Bill 10 (Special Needs Voucher) Reports:

Thanks to Phillip Mellor, Henry County special education director, for the following directions for obtaining reports on your district's SB 10 students. You can access the reports either through your data/technology staff or by following the directions below to pull the report yourself.

A) Request your data/technology staff person to print for you the "FT063 SB10" reports for this year and last year.

B) For those administrators who wish to generate the report themselves...

- 1) Log on to MyGaDOE portal
- 2) On the left hand side, put your cursor over "Data Collection" - if you do not have these rights check with your technology staff to add it to your roles or get them to follow these instructions.
- 3) Select "Full Time Equivalent" from the menu beside "Data Collection"
- 4) Choose the most current FTE report to show the most current SB10 list - *NOTE: October, December and March are all within one fiscal year and the SB10 reports are all the same based on the students reported on the October FTE count. FY09 and FY08 data are available.*
- 5) Right now the most current FTE report is the December 1, 2008 (FTE 2009-2). Select this report.
- 6) Select "FTE Reports Menu"
- 7) Select "FT063 SB10 Report"
- 8) Next to the title of the report "FT063 Transmission on [date and time listed] - Signed off" there is a print button "click here to print".
- 9) Earlier or later in the year if you choose an October or March report you will need to find the pull down menu entitled "...Please Select Report Level..." and select "System Level"
- 10) To the right of this menu find another menu and using the down arrow button select "FT063 SB10 Report"

Occupational and Physical Therapy Educational Relevance Tool

The Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports have received requests from district occupational and physical therapists (OT/PT) to explore a uniform way to determine educationally relevant occupational therapy and physical therapy for students with disabilities. On Thursday, January 29, 2009 a group of school based OTs and PTs met to discuss the issues and concerns facing districts regarding the provision of OT and PT for students with disabilities. The meeting was facilitated by members of the GaDOE Professional Learning Unit. Additional meetings will be held to address issues identified in this meeting. Anyone who has questions regarding the workgroup or would like to give input on this topic may do so by contacting Elise Lynch at 404-657-0309 or via email at elynch@doe.k12.ga.us.

Parent Survey Reminder

Please refer to last month's DL Update article regarding distribution of parent surveys as well as the listing of school districts and schools to be surveyed this year. As indicated, surveys will be mailed in mid February to **special education directors** for distribution to the selected schools. Surveys are due back to the contractor by May 31, 2009. Questions? Please contact Patti Solomon at psolomon@doe.k12.ga.us

Dispute Resolution Tip: February 2009

Deleted: 9

The January/February 2009 edition of Teaching Exceptional Children (Vol. 41 No. 3) contains an article entitled, "IEP Facilitation - A Promising Approach to Resolving Conflicts between Families and Schools." In this article the advantages of using a facilitator at an IEP meeting are discussed. The components of an effective facilitated IEP meeting are reported to be: (1) a neutral facilitator, (2) an established agenda for the meeting, (3) goals for the meeting developed by participants, (4) agreed upon ground rules, (5) consideration of environmental arrangement, (6) use of communication strategies to eliminate any power imbalance and (7) use of a strategy called the "parking lot." This information in this article may be helpful to systems interested in learning more about this alternative dispute resolution process. If you are currently using a facilitated IEP meeting structure in your local system, we would like to learn more about your experience. Please contact Debbie Gay at 404- 657-7329 or dgay@doe.k12.ga.us.

Print Disability and Accessible Instructional Materials: Who is Print Disabled?

The broad definition of a print disability is a "Person having a reading disability of *sufficient severity* to prevent reading *printed* material in a *normal* manner". Many students with print disabilities have difficulty accessing standard print instructional materials and need them provided in accessible formats. There are very important distinctions within the group of students with print disabilities which affect copyright permission and access to the files used in the production of Accessible Instruction Materials (AIMs). The Library of Congress regulations (36 CFR 701.6(b)(1)) related to the Act to Provide Books for the Adult Blind (approved March 3, 1931, 2 U.S.C. 135a) provide that *blind persons or other persons with print disabilities* include:

- (i) Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses, or whose widest diameter if visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.
- (ii) Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard printed material.
- (iii) Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations.
- (iv) Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner.

In each of the above categories the person must be certified by a competent authority. The competent authority is a fairly broad list of professionals except for those with other print disabilities resulting from an organic dysfunction. This particular group must be certified by a medical doctor. Specific information is available from the NLS web-site at www.loc.gov/nls/eligible.html and for a complete discussion go to <http://www.loc.gov/nls/reference/factsheets/readingdisabilities.html> .

If a student meets the definition of blindness or other print disability, we have many sources for procuring AIMS and the authority to produce them when needed. Accessible textbooks can be obtained from sources such as the Georgia Instructional Materials Center (GIMC), Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D), and Bookshare.org, among others. Our choices, however, are very limited for students with a print disability that does not arise from one of the categories listed above. For these students who do not fall within one of the four categories listed above, school districts are limited to purchasing AIMS directly from the publisher (if available) or producing them locally. Regardless of the origin of the print disability, local schools districts must provide AIMS if they are determined to be necessary by the IEP team.

Prior to the end of February, you will receive a packet of materials from the GIMC providing information on registering students for accessible materials and on acquiring materials for these students. For further information please visit:

GIMC: www.gimc.org

Bookshare: www.bookshare.org

RFB&D: www.rfbd.org

National Library Service: www.loc.gov/nls

The Traumatic Injury Update: What Is Mild TBI?

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

When we talk about brain injuries people naturally assume that we are only talking about severe brain injuries that result in significant physical, cognitive, and behavioral changes.

But that's not all that we're talking about. We're also talking about bumps on the head, concussions, and hematomas. We're talking about the injuries that are caused by falling from a bunk bed, falling off a bike, or being hit in the head by a softball during practice.

These are all forms of mild brain injury, which is much more common than severe brain injuries. In fact, mild brain injury is especially common among children, as shown by the Central Registry data for 2006 in Georgia:

Age 0 - 4: 8,573

Age 5 - 9: 3,926

Age 10 - 14: 3,421

Age 15 - 24: 9,345

It would be easy to dismiss mild brain injuries and think nothing of them. However, mild brain injuries can result in long-term issues, many of which may not become apparent until months after the injury. This is particularly true for children, who are still going through developmental stages. It may not be clear how the head injury has affected their behavior or intellectual functioning until much later.

So what are the symptoms of a mild brain injury? They can include: personality changes; problems concentrating or remembering things; problems with speech or learning; changes in sleeping or eating; blurred vision or dizziness; persistent, unexplained headaches; or feeling tired all the time.

If you notice any of these changes in one of your students it is critical that you talk to his/her parent to see if the child sustained any type of head injury. The parent may have thought the injury was no big deal and may not realize that their child is having problems as a result. The good news is that 95% of people with mild brain injury recover if they receive appropriate treatment and education. Together, we can get help for the child and learn how to support him or her.

To learn more about mild brain injury, we recommend:

Paying Attention to Mild Head Injury, April, 2006

For Your Child's Needs: A Guide to Recovery After Traumatic Injury, July, 2008

Both of these resources can be accessed from the Commission's website: www.bsitf.state.ga.us.

Appropriate Transition Plans

Developing appropriate transition plans to meet compliance is a significant issue throughout the state. Georgia must report transition data as a part of the State Performance Plan (SPP) under Indicator 13 which states, "Percent of youth aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet the post-secondary goals." For FY06 the data was 12%, FY07-77.3% and FY08- 85.8%. The data reflects improvement. However, systems that were initially noncompliant are still not meeting compliance when reviewed again after the year for correction. In order to meet compliance these systems have been required to amend their transition plans based on GaDOE feedback to improve their results. In the last three years there have only been two school systems compliant during the initial record review and four systems during the follow-up review one year later.

There will be a webinar via Elluminate LIVE! on February 24, 2009 on how to write measurable annual transition goals. New sample transition plans will be on the web by March. Systems that have not had a record review (or had one prior to the new regulations) who would like to have their plans evaluated may send five sample plans to Lu Nations Miller for review and comment.

Please share the attached "Resources for Developing Appropriate Transition Plans" with all teachers who write transition plans. This information is a repeat from the August DL update, Implementation Manual and Elluminate sessions.

Post-Secondary Survey Reporting

The monitoring priorities and indicators of the OSEP State Performance Plan (SPP) mandate the collection of data on the postsecondary activities of individuals exiting special education. The SPP Monitoring Priority Indicator for postsecondary transition is defined as "the percent of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school". The requirement is **to time the data collection so that at least one year has passed since the students left school.** The specific reporting practices require that we "address all youth who left school, including those who graduated, dropped out and aged out".

To meet the requirements of the SPP, the Postsecondary Survey on individuals exiting school during the 2007-2008 school year will be conducted between May 18 and July 31, 2009. The report must be submitted to the Divisions for Special Education Supports and Services by July 31, 2009.

The survey will be completed via the MyGaDOE Web Portal. The application will open for reviewing student data on or around March 2, 2009 and for data entry May 18, 2009. You must be provisioned in the role of Special Education Director for your district to access the survey. If you have any additional questions about becoming provisioned, please contact the **Information Systems Customer Support Center** by emailing dticket@doe.k12.ga.us or by calling 1-800-869-1011.

The reporting catchments have been modified. Please review them carefully.

College/University - Full Time

Individuals pursuing a college degree or certification by attending a higher education institution with an enrollment for a minimum of 12 semester hours per semester for at least 1 complete term, at any time in the year since leaving high school, and are not employed. This includes public and private institutions, less-than-4-year institutions, community colleges, technical colleges, and four-year colleges and universities that meet the definition of Institution of Higher Education in the Higher Education Act (HEA).

College/University - Part Time

Individuals pursuing a college degree or certification by attending higher education institution with an enrollment for less than 12 semester hours per semester for at least 1 complete term, at any time in the year since leaving high school, and are not employed. This includes public and private institutions, less-than-4-year institutions, community colleges, technical colleges, and four-year colleges and universities that meet the definition of Institution of Higher Education in the Higher Education Act (HEA).

Vocational Training - Full Time

Individuals attending a vocational training program with enrollment for a minimum of 12 semester hours per semester, are not employed, and are pursuing a certification rather than a degree.

Vocational Training - Part Time

Individuals attending a vocational training program with enrollment for less than 12 semester hours per semester, are not employed, and are pursuing a certification rather than a degree.

Competitive Employment

Individuals who are competitively employed and working for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes the military.

Competitive employment means work- (i) In the competitive labor market that is performed in an integrated setting; and (ii) For which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled. (Rehabilitation Act Authority: Sections 7(11) and 12(c) of the Act; 29 U.S.C. 705(11) and 709(c))

Deceased

Individuals who are deceased.

Sheltered Work or Day Habilitation

Individuals who attend sheltered workshops or day habilitation facilities.

On Waiting List

Individuals who are not currently employed and are on a waiting list of a service agency for supported employment, sheltered work or day habilitation.

Unengaged

Individuals who are not enrolled in any type of postsecondary program, are not employed full or part-time, are not attending a sheltered program or are waiting for services from another agency. Individuals who are incarcerated at the time of the survey should be reported as unengaged.

Unable to Contact

Individuals who exited school and for whom no postsecondary data is available.

Returned to High School

Valid for individuals with an "Exit Status" of "Drop Out" during the 2007-2008 school year who returned to school in 2007-2008 and are enrolled in school between April 1 and the close of the 2007-2008 school year.

Or

Valid for individuals with an "Exit Status" of "Special Education Diploma" during the 2007-2008 school year who returned to school in 2007-2008 and are enrolled in school between April 1 and the close of the 2007-2008 school year.

Project SEARCH High School Transition Program Applications

Please note that the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities is again putting out an application to recruit school systems who would like to be a part of the Project SEARCH statewide initiative. They are seeking local collaboratives to participate in a statewide initiative to replicate the Project SEARCH High School Transition Program. This competitive application process is being issued to enhance the training and competitive employment opportunities required for individuals with developmental disabilities to live, work and play in their communities. The primary objective will be to implement an innovative and well grounded nationally acclaimed supported employment system, Project SEARCH, in our local communities. School systems may submit proposals as the lead agency in response to this competitive solicitation. Copies of this application are attached to this update and can also be downloaded from the GCDD website (www.gcdd.org), requested by writing GCDD at 2 Peachtree St. NW, Suite 26-246, Atlanta, GA 30303, or by calling (404) 657-2126 or toll free 1-888- 275-4233.

Please forward all requests for copies of the application to Dottie Adams at dxadams@dhr.state.ga.us .

This document contains a thorough description of Project SEARCH and the GCDD requirements for the Georgia statewide initiative. Instructions for submitting an application as a site are on page ten (10) in the document.

Contact Information for Access to the General Curriculum for Students with Significant Cognitive Impairments: Yes, We Can and Yes, They Can Do! This Is How.

It has been brought to our attention that the incorrect address for Dr. Shawnee Wakeman was provided in the January DL Update Flyer ACCESS TO THE GENERAL CURRICULUM FOR STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS: YES, WE CAN AND YES, THEY DO! THIS IS HOW. The correct e-mail for Dr. Wakeman is slwakema@uncc.edu. Please use this address when requesting access to student/teacher videos before the February 24 and 25 Elluminate sessions.

As a reminder, the dates and times of these Elluminate sessions are:

Yes, We Can and Yes, They Do! - February 24, 2009 - 3:30 - 5:00 pm

This Is How. - February 25, 2009 - 3:30 - 5:00 pm

Participants on the Elluminate session will have the opportunity to view videos through the University of North Carolina website which show students with significant cognitive disabilities accessing the curriculum while learning relevant skills. Participants may wish to view these videos before the February sessions to develop questions and discussion points, and may do so by contacting Dr. Wakeman at: slwakema@uncc.edu.

February Elluminate LIVE! Special Education Professional Learning Series Reminder

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 continue to conduct an ongoing series of on-line learning sessions through Elluminate 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 Elluminate 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 various times (see below); you may join thirty minutes before the sessions begin:

February 11, 2009	10:00-11:30	Mathematics 1 and Mathematics Support
February 12, 2009	3:30-5:00	Writing a Standards Based IEP for SWSCD-Compiling GAA Portfolios
February 12, 2009	3:30-5:00	Dr. Paul Riccomini, Analyzing Your Students' Mathematical Errors: Instructional Implications
February 24, 2009	3:30-5:00	Transition Assessment for Transition Plan Writing
February 24, 2009	3:30-5:00	Yes, We Can! Access to the GPS
February 25, 2009	3:30-5:00	This is How! Access to the GPS

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

Professional Learning Materials: Iris Center at Peabody/Vanderbilt

The Iris Center at Peabody College/Vanderbilt University in Nashville has professional learning modules covering a wide variety of education and special education topics, including RTI, progress monitoring, co-teaching and a number of other useful topics. The materials can all be downloaded and used at no cost, often with case study scenarios already written and sometimes with video. There are no copyright issues as they are meant to be used in the field as long as the IRIS Center is credited for development of the materials. If you haven't been to this site recently, it might be worth your time to take a look at <http://www.iriscenter.com/>

December 2008 IDEA Data

An Excel spreadsheet is attached which summarizes IDEA data from the December 2008 FTE Count (FTE 2009-2) for Georgia by age, gender, race-ethnicity, and primary area of disability. It also provides a comparison of the December 2007 and the December 2008 data with the changes in statewide numbers and the percentage difference for each disability area by age group. There are a few disability areas with an increase, notably SDD and Autism, while many have a decrease, especially speech/language.

Parent to Parent of Georgia: Awards and Recognition

Parent to Parent of Georgia is excited to announce a new virtual awards and recognition program designed to recognize individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in supporting families and including children and young adults with disabilities in their communities. Winners will receive a small grant to support their work as well as other gifts and prizes. Attached to the update is a document with more details and information on the nomination process. Nominations are due by March 13, 2009.

DATES TO REMEMBER

February

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| 1-3 | Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL), Renaissance Waverly Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia |
| 5 | Positive Behavior Support Form, Savannah - Whitney Avenue Complex, 2 Laura Street, Savannah, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. |
| 9 | Special Education Directors' Webinar via ElluminateLIVE! with Kim Hartsell and Nancy O'Hara, Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports, 10:00 a.m. |
| 11 | High School Mathematics: Mathematics 1 and Mathematics Support, Spaced Learning Webinar via ElluminateLIVE! 10:00 a.m. |
| 12 | Writing a Standards Based IEP for SWSCD-Compiling GAA Portfolios Webinar via ElluminateLIVE! 3:30 p.m. |
| 12 | Dr. Paul Riccomini, Analyzing Your Students' Mathematical Errors: Instructional Implications Webinar via ElluminateLIVE! 3:30 p.m. |

- 13 Positive Behavior Support Forum, Houston County Board of Education, Ragin Center, 1100 Main Street, Perry, GA 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- 16 Positive Behavior Support Forum, GaDOE Training Facility, Suite 1004, 10th floor, West Tower 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.
- 24 Transition Assessment for Transition Plan Writing Webinar via ElluminateLIVE! 3:30 p.m.
- 24 Yes, We Can! Access to the GPS webinar via ElluminateLIVE! 3:30 p.m.
- 25 This is How! Access to the GPS webinar via ElluminateLIVE! 3:30 p.m.
- 27-28 Georgia Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Athens, Georgia
- 28 Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA), Atlanta Area School for the Deaf, Clarkston
- March**
- 1 Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA), Atlanta Area School for the Deaf, Clarkston
- 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
- 18 High School Mathematics: Graphic Representations, Flexible Groups (peer assisted learning) 10:00 a. m.
- 23 New Special Education Directors Mentoring Academy, Classic Center, Athens, GLRS Pre-Conference Meeting
G-NETS Pre-Conference Meeting
- 24-25 GaDOE/G-CASE Spring Leadership Conference, Classic Center, Athens
- April**
- 24-25 Georgia Vision Educators Lit-R-C Weekend, Georgia Academy for the Blind, Macon
- 30 Directors' Discussion Forum with Kim Hartsell and Nancy O'Hara, Bibb County
- May**
- 29-30-31 Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA), Atlanta Area School for the Deaf, Clarkston
- June**
- 20-21 Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA), Valdosta State University,

Valdosta