

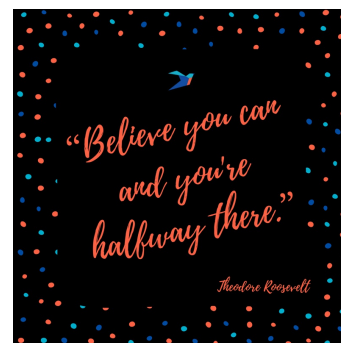


August 4, 2023 Email Blast

Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education

Directors,

By now, most teachers and staff have returned from summer break. It's a new beginning, and we should make the most of the opportunity. I am sure you have engaged in strategic planning this summer by analyzing your data to see what worked and if changes are needed. We have also been working diligently to focus our work for FY24. Our goals for the 2023-2024 school year are undoubtedly familiar. Still, we have an opportunity to impact lives, so let's focus and work together to see improved outcomes for students with disabilities.



*Believe you can and you're
halfway there. - Theodore
Roosevelt*

Goals for 2023-2024

- Reduce the number of students assessed on GAA 2.0 to 1% or less.
- Provide instructional support, professional learning, resources, and coaching for Specially Designed Instruction to address academics and behavior.
- Enhance General Supervision Practices to include the new guidance from OSEP.
- Reduce the dropout rate for students with disabilities.
- Increase graduation rates for students with disabilities.

I will discuss the goals and priorities in more detail during our first Director's

Webinar of the new school year on **August 8, 2023**. Your support will be critical as your outcomes are our outcomes. With focus and determination, I know we will have an awesome school year!

Reference to the new General Supervision Guidance is a topic of great interest. We just received this information last week at the OSEP Leadership Conference. I am including a link for your review. There are some interesting implications. Because of the depth and importance of the guidance, we will schedule a separate webinar for later this month. Please see the announcement below from OSEP.

On July 24, 2023, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) released a Dear Colleague Letter and Guidance on State General Supervision Responsibilities under Parts B and C of the IDEA. This guidance is a component of OSEP's Results Driven Accountability system, emphasizing improved outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. OSEP is committed to supporting States in improving educational results and functional outcomes for all children with disabilities and enhancing the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities.

Another Dear Colleague Letter was released last week on July 25, 2023, about children served in foster care. Please take time to read the letter. Did you know students in foster care may be up to three times as likely to receive special education services as their peers who are not in foster care? Please ensure proper support is in place for the children.

Foster Care Dear Colleague Letter



The best is yet to come.

your work.

Paula Gumpman will be discussing uPAR during our August Director's Webinar. uPAR will be available this year at no cost to our LEAs. uPAR identifies reading accommodations that are right for each student. More than 50% of students reading below grade level can access curriculum when provided a reading accommodation. uPAR identifies the right accommodation through an online process. Learn more about uPAR and how this resource may support

President Theodore Roosevelt said, "Believe you can, and you're halfway there." When you believe in yourself, great things can happen. Knowing someone believes in you is one of the best motivators to accomplish goals. Our students need to know we believe in them. So many times, we hear people say

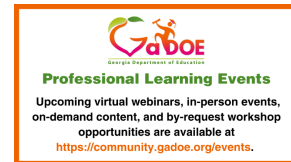
a teacher believed in them and changed their life. We are so fortunate to have an opportunity to support students with disabilities. I believe in each of you! Together we can make a difference.

Thank you for all you do each day. Believe in yourself and believe in your students!

Keeping students first,
Wina

Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review the information below and the Due Dates Calendar for deadlines and key dates.



*Professional Learning
Events*

Coming Up

August 9 at 10 a.m. Special Education and School Administrator Academy

August 28 at 9 a.m. Back to Basic Behavior Edition: West Central GLRS

August 29 at 9 a.m. Back to Basic Behavior Edition: Northeast GLRS

August 29 at 8:30 a.m. Special Education Budget & Data Tools for the Job: South Central GLRS

August 30 at 2 p.m. SSIP FY24: Utilizing Explicit Instructional Strategies for SWDs

Reminders

August 31 Continuation of Services Data Deadline for Submission (FY22 Data) located in SE Applications Dashboard.

Visit GaDOE Community for a complete listing of GaDOE Professional Learning Events.



District Highlight: We Want to Feature You!

We want to feature the amazing work you are doing in your districts!

You can email Wina Low at wlow@doe.k12.ga.us or Kris Rhee at kristen.rhee@doe.k12.ga.us, and we will be happy to feature your district's and students' successes.

Practice Pointers – Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): Incarcerated Students



Arrows

When developing or modifying an individualized education program (IEP) for a student in a correctional facility, IEP Teams should consider whether there has been an interruption in the provision of special education and related services during the student's transfer to the correctional facility and how the break in services has affected the type or amount of special education and related services needed to provide free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the student. In addition, the special factors that the IEP Team must consider in developing, reviewing, and revising the IEP of each student with a disability are particularly relevant to students with disabilities in correctional facilities. Among these special factors is the requirement for the IEP Team to consider using positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies to address behavior in the case of a student whose behavior impedes their learning or the learning of others. 34 C.F.R. § 300.324(b)(2). Appropriate implementation of these positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies to address behavior should ensure that the student can benefit from their educational program in the correctional facility and hasten the student's transition from the facility and reentry into the community.

For more information, please see our [Guidance for Serving Youth who are Detained or Incarcerated](#), and the [Dear Colleague Letter on the IDEA for Students with Disabilities in Correctional Facilities](#).



Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership logo

Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership

The Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership is revving up for the new year! If you have a new parent mentor, please let Tracy Barber at

Tracy.BarberJones@doe.k12.ga.us and Anne Ladd at aladd@doe.k12.ga.us know by filling out the New Parent Mentor Information Form.

FY24 Special Education Budget and Data: Filling your Toolbox with the Right Tools

Special Education Directors are faced yearly with numerous requirements in Budget and Data. The Budget and Data teams are here to support you! Please join budget and data specialists from the GaDOE Division for Special Education Services and Supports for interactive sessions to support your work for students with disabilities. The team will provide the information and tools you need to get the job done effectively and efficiently in all the key areas impacting budget and data submission. Some topics will include Maintenance of Effort (MOE), Equitable Services, Allowability, FTE, Student Class, and Student Record.

A schedule of the sessions is available here, [Special Education Budget & Data Tools for the Job Registration and Schedule](#). Each day of the two-day sessions is 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. All sessions are open for registration in the [Professional Learning Catalog](#).

Survey: After registering for your session, please complete the [FY24 GaDOE IDEA Budget and Data Technical Assistance Survey](#) to enable the Budget and Data teams to provide information based on your input.

Please contact Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us or Malissa Roberts at mroberts@doe.k12.ga.us with any questions.

SAVE THE DATE!

The Center for Leadership in Disability (CLD), which is the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) at Georgia State University (GSU), will offer a 4-day, in-person training on the functional behavior assessment/behavior intervention plan (FBA/BIP) process. Participants will learn the FBA/BIP process from start to finish and will receive free, modifiable FBA/BIP materials for their district's use. Training participants will also have access to follow-up coaching/technical assistance calls. There will be a maximum of 50 participants per training session.

FBA/BIP Professional Learning Schedule

Training Dates	Region
August 28 -31, 2023	Metro East Region
August 28 -31, 2023	Regions 8 & 13
September 11-14, 2023	Region 6
September 25-28, 2023	Regions 1 & 2
October 2- 5, 2023	Regions 3
October 23-26, 2023	Region 5
October 23-26, 2023	Metro West Region
November 6-9, 2023	Regions 7
November 13-16, 2023	Region 10
December 4- 7, 2023	Region 9
December 11-14, 2023	Region 16
December 11-14, 2023	Region 18
January 22 -25, 2024	Region 14
January 29 -Feb 1, 2024	Region 15
February 2 – Feb 8, 2024	Regions 11 & 12
February 26 – February 29, 2024	Region 17

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August 11, 2023 Email Blast

Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education

Directors,

District and school leaders are busy people. No doubt, the beginning of the school year is one of the busiest times. The goal is to be productive rather than just busy. There are several thoughts on how to be more productive, but the most common suggestion is to determine what is important and necessary. Organization can optimize your potential while minimizing your distractions is also essential. Knowing when to say “yes” is another key factor. Great leaders build good systems to manage the workload. Until systems are in place, you will always just be busy. Move beyond busy to productive by surrounding yourself with trusted, productive people.

Our district highlight this week is from Burke County Public Schools about their participation in the GVRA/High School High Tech “GROW” (Getting Ready for Opportunities in Work) summer program. Read how the program inspired and engaged students in meaningful opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills in preparation for life beyond high school.

If you missed the first Director’s Webinar, a recording and PowerPoint will be posted by early next week. A huge thanks to everyone for participating.



Leaders: if you're too busy to build good systems, you'll always be too busy.

Save the date for the General Supervision Webinar scheduled for August 29, 2023 beginning at 1 p.m. GaDOE staff will share the highlights of the new OSEP General Supervision Guidance.

As a new year begins, please make careful decisions about students participating in extended content standards. More information and guidance will be shared soon.



Productivity meter with the arrow pointed to high.

Lucille Ball said, “If you want something done, ask a busy person.” If you have strong systems in place, the work can be shared so everyone can be productive.

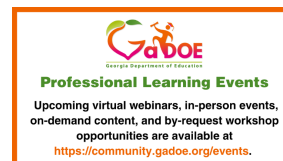
Hope the first week of school has been fabulous! Many thanks to each of you as your lives are busy and also productive.

Thank you for all you do for students with disabilities.
You are making a difference!

Keeping students first,
Wina

Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review the information below and the Due Dates Calendar for deadlines and key dates.



Professional Learning Events

Coming Up

August 28 at 9 a.m. Back to Basic Behavior Edition:
West Central GLRS

August 28-31 from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Functional Behavior
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Visit [GaDOE Community](#) for a complete listing of GaDOE Professional Learning Events.



Burke County Public Schools logo

District Highlight: Burke County Public Schools

Experiencing GROW, A HSHT Summer Program

This past summer, 15 Burke County High School students participated in GVRA/High School High Tech “GROW” (Getting Ready for Opportunities in Work) summer program. The program inspired and engaged students in many relevant and meaningful opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills in preparation for life beyond high school, for work or college. The students listened to brief lectures/presentations from experts in the field and participated in three field trips, which involved touring two local businesses and a post-secondary campus (East Georgia College (EGC)). The job-related tours involved a tour of the business facilities and information about scholarship awards and employment opportunities. At EGC, the students toured the campus, experienced the dorms, and received information about college services available for students with disabilities (e.g., how to request accommodations).

Guest speakers came and provided hands-on experiences and/or shared their experiences and knowledge relevant to the following topics: self-advocacy, money management, resume writing, preparing for an interview, meeting employer expectations, teamwork, developing leadership skills, “smart” use of social media, FAFSA, IDEA and ADA, and assistive technology.

Furthermore, all students left the program with positive thoughts, a resume, and a certificate of completion. The GROW Experience offered something for each grade level, especially our juniors and seniors.

To read more about this program, check out the [BCHS GROW newsletter](#).

Practice Pointers – Transition Planning: Overview

As a student approaches the time to leave high school, it is important that preparations for adult life are well underway. For early transition planning and active participation in decision making to occur for students with disabilities, members of the planning team need to be well-informed about the student's abilities, needs, and available services. Local educational agencies (LEAs) and State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies participate in planning meetings to assist students and family members to make critical decisions about this stage of the student's life and his or her future post-school goals. During the planning process, schools and VR agencies work together to identify the transition needs of students with disabilities, such as the need for assistive or rehabilitation technology, orientation and mobility services or travel training, and career exploration through vocational assessments or work experience opportunities. The individualized education program (IEP), developed under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), for each student with a disability must address transition services requirements beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and must be updated annually thereafter.



Arrows

For more information, please see our [Transition webpage](#) and the [Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services \(OSER\): Transition Guide](#).



Student in front of a blackboard

Science Updates

Please check out our latest [GaDOE Science Resource Update](#). In this resource you will find links to our new resources which include:

- Teacher Notes for grades K-8, Physics, Biology, and Physical Science
- New instructional resources for Human Anatomy &

Physiology and Forensics

-Science in Action for Elementary Educators video series from GPB and GaDOE

-And so much more!

This update also includes information about GaDOE Inspire, a centralized hub for all instructional and course resources. Teachers can access a wide array of resources including instructional segments, lessons, teacher notes, assessments, and more! By housing all these valuable resources in one accessible location, GaDOE Inspire plays a pivotal role in supporting educators

and fostering a culture of continuous improvement in Georgia. Teachers can access it by logging into SLDS and selecting the “Preview GaDOE Connects” button.

Office of School and District Improvement (SDI) Bulletin



GaDOE logo

Please review this bulletin from the Office of School and District Improvement for important information including updates on State Board policies and practices, references and resources, grants, trainings and more to share with your district and staff.

Office of School and District Improvement (SDI) August 7 Bulletin

School Psychologists Technical Assistance Webinar

The Division for Special Education Services and Supports is hosting a Technical Assistance Webinar for School Psychologists titled, Dyslexia: FY24 School Psychologist Update.

Dr. Jennifer Lindstrom, Statewide Dyslexia Coordinator, will provide legislative updates related to the forthcoming implementation of S.B. 48 and H.B. 538, including teacher training and professional development opportunities. Findings from the three-year Dyslexia Pilot Program Implementation will also be discussed. The remainder of the session will focus on guidance for screening for dyslexia as part of the MTSS process, and effective reading instruction across all tiers. There will be time allotted for Q & A at the end of the session. This webinar will occur virtually. Please sign up using the registration link below:

Dyslexia FY24: School Psychologist Update - Registration Link

Date: September 14, 2023

Time: 1 - 2:30 pm

Intended Audience: School Psychologists, District Leaders, Special Student Services Staff

Please forward this information to School Psychologists and/or appropriate personnel in your Local Educational Agency (LEA).

For more information, please contact Alicia Mercer by email at amercer@doe.k12.ga.us.

Office of Teaching and Learning: August 3, 2023 Right Now Resources

As many of you are in your first days of school or are anticipating students returning in the coming days, our Teaching and Learning Division sends you positive thoughts and well wishes for a successful start of the year. Please review the [August 3, 2023 Right Now Resources](#) newsletter for Teaching and Learning Updates, or subscribe on the [Curriculum and Instruction](#) webpage to have them delivered straight to your inbox.

Remember that we stand ready to support the work you are leading. Please reach out as needed.

Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Training Series

The Center for Leadership in Disability (CLD), which is the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) at Georgia State University (GSU), will offer a 4-day, in-person training on the functional behavior assessment/behavior intervention plan (FBA/BIP) process. Participants will learn the FBA/BIP process from start to finish and will receive free, modifiable FBA/BIP materials for their district's use. Training participants will also have access to follow-up coaching/technical assistance calls. There will be a maximum of 50 participants per training session. Each LEA can only register a maximum of three participants per training. All trainings will be from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. GaDOE's plan is to continue to offer additional trainings at a later date to meet demand.

The following trainings are available for registration:

- August 28-31 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: East Central
- August 28-31 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: Metro East
- September 11-14 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: West Central
- September 25-28 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: NW/North Central
- October 2-5 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: North Georgia
- October 23-26 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: Metro

West

Additional dates, locations and registration will be available in the coming weeks.

Back to Basics Behavior Edition

Join us for a one-day professional learning opportunity that will assist both general education and special education teachers in addressing challenging behaviors within the classroom. Participants will explore the science of behavior, discussing developmental norms, static and alterable variables, the function of behavior, and avoiding a power struggle. Presenters will share research on the power of relationship-building and empowerment and dive into Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) and High Leverage Practices (HLP) for Behavior. There will be 5 locations around the state.

The locations, dates, and registration are listed below:

- August 28 at West Central GLRS, 99 Brown School Dr., Grantville, GA 30220
- August 29 at Northeast GLRS, 375 Winter Street, Winterville, GA 30683
- September 13 at North Georgia GLRS, 1342 Hwy 254, Cleveland, GA 30528
- September 25 at Old West Laurens High School, 338 West Laurens School Road, Dublin, GA 31021 (*Updated location*)
- September 27- Middle Georgia GLRS, 80 Cohen Walker Dr., Warner Robbins, GA 31088

FY24 Special Education Budget and Data: Filling your Toolbox with the Right Tools

Special Education Directors are faced yearly with numerous requirements in Budget and Data. The Budget and Data teams are here to support you! Please join budget and data specialists from the GaDOE Division for Special Education Services and Supports for interactive sessions to support your work for students with disabilities. The team will provide the information and tools you need to get the job done effectively and efficiently in all the key areas impacting budget and data submission. Some topics will include Maintenance of Effort (MOE), Equitable Services, Allowability, FTE, Student Class, and Student Record.

A schedule of the sessions is available here, [Special Education Budget & Data Tools for the Job Registration and Schedule](#). Each day of the two-day sessions is 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. All sessions are open for registration in the Professional Learning Catalog.

Survey: After registering for your session, please complete the [FY24 GaDOE IDEA Budget and Data Technical Assistance Survey](#) to enable the Budget and Data teams to provide information based on your input.

Please contact Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us or Malissa Roberts at mroberts@doe.k12.ga.us with any questions.

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August 18, 2023 Email Blast

Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education

Directors,

I love a happy ending! I am sure you do too. Earlier this week, we received a note from a parent just to say thank you. Often messages sent to us are due to concerns, but this message was different. The parent and district had some ups and downs last year even resulting in a formal complaint. By working together, this school year is going well, and the concerns have been resolved. I am sure the Special Education Director and other personnel included in the email were smiling today. I can say it made my day! Just because there was a conflict does not mean it has to stay that way. Collaboration is key in working for the best for the student. Parent Mentors can often play an important role to better understanding the needs of the district and the parent. I would love to see a Parent Mentor in each school district. After 20 years of Parent Mentors in Georgia, we are still hovering at about 50% of the districts in Georgia utilizing the program. Facilitated IEP is also a great option when needing extra support to find common ground yet only about one-fourth of our districts take advantage of this option. My greatest hope for each of you is to provide great services and supports for students without any concerns but just in case, please keep in mind the resources available to support your district at no cost. I would also be remiss if I didn't mention our Outreach Unit and IDEA Ombudsman, Dr. LaTanya Barkley Washington. Feel free to reach out to Dr.



Pink speech bubble with a white heart inside

Washington if she or the team can help. Being proactive is always better than reactive.

ESSA and IDEA Federal Programs Cross Functional Monitoring Cycle Is Moving to a 5-Year Cycle

Federal regulations and administrative procedures require that the state educational agency (SEA) monitor the implementation of program requirements and the expenditure of federal funds. Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year (FY24), the Cross Functional Monitoring (CFM) cycle is being updated. The current 4-year cycle has been changed to a 5-year cycle. Some local education agencies (LEA) will not see a change in monitoring year. Other LEAs will be moved one year forward on the cycle. The new Cross Functional Monitoring cycle can be [accessed here](#). As a reminder, all LEAs will continue to be included in the annual Risk Assessment process and review completed by GaDOE each year. LEAs included in the FY24 cross-functional monitoring cycle will receive planning details before the end of August 2023. If you have any questions contact Dr. Kathleen Yarbrough at kathleen.yarbrough@doe.k12.ga.us; Wina Low at wlow@doe.k12.ga.us or Amy Alderman at aalderman@doe.k12.ga.us.

Our district highlight this week is from Bleckley County Schools. Read all about their opportunity to participate in a unique autism and behavioral training.



Be a rainbow in someone else's cloud. -Maya Angelou

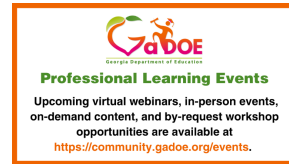
I am always looking for happily ever after. The truth is you must work to find happy solutions for everyone. I found as a special education director that each decision should be considered as if you were deciding for your own child. Parent calls were always a priority for me and returned the same day. I never wanted a parent to be worried or upset about a situation with their child if I could prevent a miscommunication or work to rectify a concern. I was not afraid during my years as a local director to apologize or promise to make it right if there was a different course we should have taken. Communication goes a long way for everyone in creating happy endings.

Thank you for the going the extra mile to support students with disabilities and their families. Be a part of the magic and spread happiness today!

Keeping students first,
Wina

Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review the information below and the Due Dates Calendar for deadlines and key dates.



*Professional Learning
Events*

Coming Up

August 28 at 9 a.m. Back to Basic Behavior Edition:
West Central GLRS

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Visit GaDOE Community for a complete listing of GaDOE Professional Learning
Events.



Bleckley County Schools logo

District Highlight: Bleckley County Schools

Recently, a few student support services staff members at the Bleckley County School District had the opportunity to participate in a unique autism and behavioral training. This year Bleckley is excited to pilot Robokind's SEL curriculum utilizing the physical robot, Milo, along with programmed avatars. The program is designed to meet the needs of educators as they guide students toward social skills mastery. Their multidisciplinary behavioral approach encompasses speech-language pathology, occupational therapy and ABA principles as students are exposed to a core set of social skills. Target behaviors are reinforced as students master these social skills. Big thank you to GaDOE for offering districts the opportunity to apply for a capacity building grant which is making programs such as this possible to support our students!



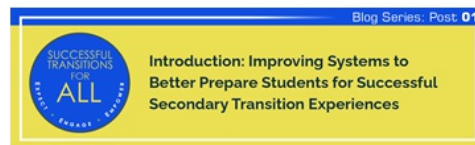
Arrows

Practice Pointers – Transition Services and Requirements

Transition services are integral to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A primary purpose of the IDEA is to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a FAPE that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living. The IDEA contains transition services requirements for students with disabilities, which must be addressed in the first individualized education program (IEP) to be in effect when the student turns 16, or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP Team and updated annually thereafter. These requirements are in place for students and youth with disabilities to seamlessly access services and supports to achieve their career goals. The IEP must include: 1) appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills; and 2) the transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the student with a disability in reaching those goals. The [Rehabilitation Act](#) authorizes a continuum of services, such as pre-employment transition services for students with

disabilities, and transition services, job placement services, other Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, and supported employment services for students and youth with disabilities, as appropriate, to secure meaningful careers. Both the school system and VR program provide opportunities designed to prepare students and youth with disabilities for postsecondary education and careers in the workforce.

For more information, please see our Transition webpage, [Transition From School To Work | Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency](#), and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSER): [Transition Guide](#).



New OSERS Blog Series Emphasizes the Need for More Cohesive Secondary Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities

OSERS released a new blog series as part of a continued effort to emphasize the need for more cohesive secondary transition planning for students with disabilities.

“We are dedicated to working alongside families, students, educators, advocacy groups and policymakers to rethink transition services,” wrote Office of Special Education Programs Director Valerie C. Williams and Rehabilitation Services Administration Deputy Commissioner Carol Dobak in the blog.

Additionally, OSERS kicked off its [Expect, Engage, Empower: Successful Transitions for All!](#) initiative earlier this year. This initiative focuses on effective transition planning to help young adults moving from school to postsecondary education, community living or competitive integrated employment. To learn more about OSERS secondary transition efforts, visit the OSERS’ [Successful Transitions for All](#) blog series.

Important Budget Reminder: IDEA 611 ARP and IDEA 619 ARP

The IDEA 611 ARP and 619 ARP grants will expire September 30, 2023. If your LEA did not fully expend these funds in FY22, funds have been carried over to

FY23. Please ensure that a budget has been added and completed in the FY23 Consolidated Application. Funds must be obligated by September 30, 2023 or the funds will expire, and your LEA will no longer have access to the funds. Please take immediate action to ensure funds are expended on allowable expenditures for students with disabilities.

IEP Team Meeting Facilitation

IEP Team Meeting Facilitation is an optional process, not required by the IDEA that state educational agencies (SEA) or school districts may provide to parents and schools. A facilitated IEP Team meeting is the same as any other IEP Team meeting, except that a facilitator joins the meeting. Read the [Facilitated IEP flyer](#) and check out the [IEP Team Meeting Facilitation webpage](#) for more information.

School Psychologists Technical Assistance Webinar

The Division for Special Education Services and Supports is hosting a Technical Assistance Webinar for School Psychologists titled, Dyslexia: FY24 School Psychologist Update.

Dr. Jennifer Lindstrom, Statewide Dyslexia Coordinator, will provide legislative updates related to the forthcoming implementation of S.B. 48 and H.B. 538, including teacher training and professional development opportunities. Findings from the three-year Dyslexia Pilot Program Implementation will also be discussed. The remainder of the session will focus on guidance for screening for dyslexia as part of the MTSS process, and effective reading instruction across all tiers. There will be time allotted for Q & A at the end of the session. This webinar will occur virtually. Please sign up using the registration link below:

[Dyslexia FY24: School Psychologist Update - Registration Link](#)

Date: September 14, 2023

Time: 1 - 2:30 pm

Intended Audience: School Psychologists, District Leaders, Special Student Services Staff

Please forward this information to School Psychologists and/or appropriate personnel in your Local Educational Agency (LEA).

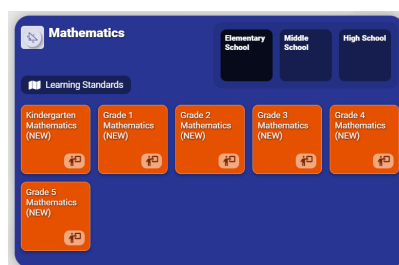
For more information, please contact Alicia Mercer by email at amercer@doe.k12.ga.us.

Office of Teaching and Learning: August 9, 2023 Right Now Resources

The Office of Teaching and Learning had a great RESA/GaDOE HEADS TOGETHER and those who joined us learned about great new resources and updates from ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies Program Managers. Curriculum leaders - mark your calendar now for August 22nd at 9 a.m. to join our next session. I do want to encourage your district to consider applying to be a part of the GaLEADS pilot and the good news is you still have time as the deadline has been extended to August 18.

Please review the [August 9, 2023 Right Now Resources](#) newsletter for Teaching and Learning Updates, or subscribe on the [Curriculum and Instruction](#) webpage to have them delivered straight to your inbox.

You are in a place to purposefully impact teaching and learning in your districts, schools and classrooms. Thank you for your commitment and dedication; we stand ready to support your needs.



Right Now Resources for Mathematics

With the 2023-2024 school year underway, Georgia's K-12 Mathematics Standards are being implemented in all mathematics classrooms across Georgia. Here are some resources to support the effective implementation of Georgia's K-12 Mathematics Standards.

Mathematics Instructional Materials

Within [Georgia Inspire](#), educators can access all instructional learning plans for every grade level and high school mathematics course. The instructional learning plans include a 4-part instructional design, Engage, Explore, Apply, and Reflect. The GaDOE Mathematics Team and Office of School and District Improvement have collaborated to revise the instructional framework for mathematics that is provided by the Office of School and District Improvement.

Instructional Resources for Assessment

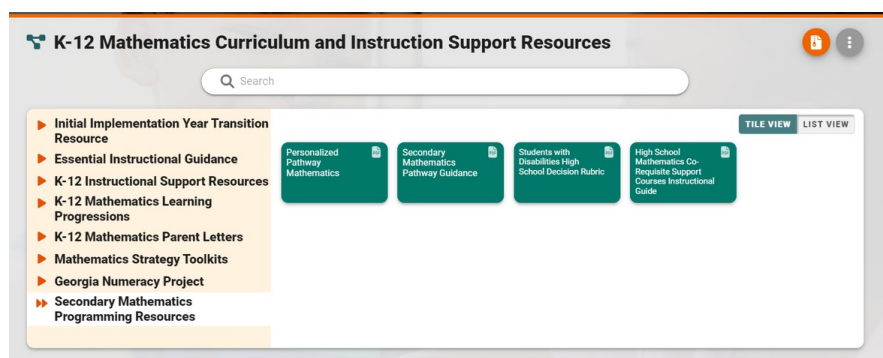
Within each instructional learning plan, diagnostic assessments are provided to help in uncovering students' understandings and misunderstandings about the standards and learning objectives associated with the learning plans. In addition, each instructional learning plan has a section titled Evidence of Student Success. This section provides opportunities for formative assessments of student learning.

Student Learning Supports

Coupled with the instructional learning plans, student learning supports are provided to ensure each student's needs are met before, during, and after the learning experiences. The supports provided are specific to the concepts and skills addressed within each mathematics unit of study and additional specific learning supports are provided within each learning plan.

Additional Curriculum and Instruction Support Resources

Additional resources are available within the K-12 Curriculum and Instruction Support Resources Repository within Georgia Inspire.



Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Training Series

The Center for Leadership in Disability (CLD), which is the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) at Georgia State University (GSU), will offer a 4-day, in-person training on the functional behavior assessment/behavior intervention plan (FBA/BIP) process. Participants will learn the FBA/BIP process from start to finish and will receive free, modifiable FBA/BIP materials for their district's use. Training participants will also have access to follow-up coaching/technical assistance calls. There will be a maximum of 50 participants per training session. Each LEA can only register a maximum of three participants per training. All trainings will be from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. GaDOE's plan is to continue to offer additional trainings at a later date to meet demand.

The following trainings are available for registration:

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- October 2-5 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: North Georgia
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- October 23-26 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: Northeast GA
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- November 13-16 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: East Georgia
- December 4- 7 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: Oconee
- December 11-14 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: SW Georgia
- December 11-14 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: South Central
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- January 29-February 1 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: Coastal Area
- February 5-8 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: West Georgia
- February 26-29 Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention: South Georgia

Sign Up for Free Structured Literacy Professional Learning

Facilitated by the Rollins Center in partnership with the Georgia Department of Education, join us for Knowledge Building for Leaders: Setting the Foundation for Structured Literacy Transformation, a fast-paced and comprehensive professional learning journey. The courses are available to educational leaders

and leadership teams in Georgia at the state, regional, and district level. Join an information session on August 28 at 10 a.m. or 3 p.m. to learn more!

[Additional Information & Registration Links](#)

Georgia RISE Award Nomination Window Now Open

The 2023 Georgia Recognizing Inspirational School Employees (RISE) Award nomination window is open August 15 - September 30. District superintendents or their designee may nominate a full- or part-time classified school employee who provides exemplary service to students in pre-kindergarten through high school.

Full- or part-time classified employees in the following job categories are eligible for consideration:

- Clerical and Administrative Services
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- Food and Nutrition Services
- Health and Student Services
- Paraprofessional
- Security Services
- Skilled Trades
- Technical Services
- Transportation Services

Deadline: September 30 at 5 p.m.

[Additional Information: 2023 Georgia RISE Nomination Form | Nomination Guidance | Georgia RISE Award website](#)

Back to Basics Behavior Edition

Join us for a one-day professional learning opportunity that will assist both general education and special education teachers in addressing challenging behaviors within the classroom. Participants will explore the science of behavior, discussing developmental norms, static and alterable variables, the function of behavior, and avoiding a power struggle. Presenters will share research on the power of relationship-building and empowerment and dive into Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) and High Leverage Practices (HLP) for Behavior. There will be 5 locations around the state.

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- September 25 at Old West Laurens High School, 338 West Laurens School Road, Dublin, GA 31021 (**Updated location**)
- September 27 at Middle Georgia GLRS, 80 Cohen Walker Dr., Warner Robbins, GA 31088

FY24 Special Education Budget and Data: Filling your Toolbox with the Right Tools

Special Education Directors are faced yearly with numerous requirements in Budget and Data. The Budget and Data teams are here to support you! Please join budget and data specialists from the GaDOE Division for Special Education Services and Supports for interactive sessions to support your work for students with disabilities. The team will provide the information and tools you need to get the job done effectively and efficiently in all the key areas impacting budget and data submission. Some topics will include Maintenance of Effort (MOE), Equitable Services, Allowability, FTE, Student Class, and Student Record.

A schedule of the sessions is available here, [Special Education Budget & Data Tools for the Job Registration and Schedule](#). Each day of the two-day sessions is 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. All sessions are open for registration in the Professional Learning Catalog.

Survey: After registering for your session, please complete the [FY24 GaDOE IDEA Budget and Data Technical Assistance Survey](#) to enable the Budget and Data teams to provide information based on your input.

Please contact Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us or Malissa Roberts at mroberts@doe.k12.ga.us with any questions.

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August 25, 2023 Email Blast

Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education

Directors,



Calling all superheroes!

If you could be any superhero, who would you be?

What superpower would you wish for? This question has become popular in job interviews. It sounds a little silly, but it truly causes an individual to think on their feet and share a strength to showcase. It should cause the applicant to consider their best qualities and the impact to the organization. Most of you know, I am a huge fan of Batman. Catwoman was my favorite character. Unfortunately, Catwoman was not on the side of justice -- but she was very charismatic. (I also liked the idea of pouncing around and using my claws as we pretended on the playground.) Batman doesn't really have "superpowers". He uses all his best qualities to stay a step ahead, to stand for what is right, to be organized and very discreet when being Bruce Wayne. You must admit that the Batmobile was super cool. It had a few gadgets with the car. Batman could swing into action with his cape but truly he was just an extraordinary man fighting for what is right. I believe you are all superheroes. You answer the call to service with all you've got!. You are strong advocates for students with disabilities and their families. Just stand back if a Special Education Director feels that justice is not being served. He or she will take on the battle to ensure the students' rights are protected. Special Education Directors are relentless and do not give up easily. All these wonderful superpowers were cultivated while serving as a Special Education Teacher. Our teachers are undoubtedly to be admired. Just reflect

for a moment on all the superpowers you used today. Whoever your favorite superhero happens to be, find your inner superpowers to support students with disabilities.

The Center for Leadership in Disability (CLD), University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) at Georgia State University (GSU), will offer a 4-day, in-person training on the functional behavior assessment/behavior intervention plan (FBA/BIP) process. Participants will learn the FBA/BIP process from start to finish and will receive free, modifiable FBA/BIP materials for their district's use. Training participants will have access to follow-up coaching/technical assistance calls, as well. There will be a maximum of 50 participants per training session.

Please register for the [FBA/BIP training](#) beginning next week and extending through February. We still have open seats for Dublin and Metro East for Monday, August 28. Registration is open without restrictions. Please take advantage of this opportunity.

-August 28-31, 2023: FBA/BIP Training: Region # 8 & 13 (East Central & Middle Georgia) (Dublin, GA)

-August 28-31, 2023: FBA/BIP Training: Region #4 (Metro East) (Clarkston, GA)

Our district highlight was shared by Dr. Trevor Metzger from Jefferson City Schools. Learn more about the professional learning the district hosted this summer and how the capacity building grant supported their work. Way to go, Jefferson City Schools!

As you are aware, as a state we are required to keep the participation rate on the alternate assessment at 1% or less. We have struggled with this mandate for almost 20 years. For the last few months in conjunction with the Division for Assessment and Accountability, we have been researching, talking with other states and striving to create an improved rubric to align decision making. Remember, you don't choose the assessment, the standards being followed for the student determines the assessment. Through this process, we have asked for feedback from a variety of stakeholders. We still have feedback sessions scheduled until mid-September. The guidance for GAA is not changing - only the rubric will change. Professional learning will begin the last week of September with a Special Education Director's Webinar scheduled from 9 a.m.- 12 p.m. on September 26, 2023. In-person professional learning will be offered in Macon on October 4 or 5. (Attend only one day.) Until we have reached all stakeholder groups, resources and professional learning will not be published as we have approval steps and vetting that are also necessary. I want to

reassure each of you that there are no steps to take currently, and the information has not skipped your input. Your session is coming in conjunction with Assessment Directors in September. Change can be a challenge, but I support this work 100%. Only the rubric is changing. The changes are good and necessary to support decision making for participation in the GAA. The decision to place a student on an extended curriculum carries serious consequences as access to the general curriculum is limited. The alternate assessment should only impact 1% or less students at the state level. The rollout will be as IEPs are developed or revised rather than a requirement to examine each IEP immediately. Working together we can accomplish so much! More to come very soon. We are allowing plenty of time for professional learning and guidance. Securing feedback from the rest of our stakeholders is a top priority. For more information, feel free to contact me or Annie Myers at anne.myers@doe.k12.ga.us or Lynn Holland at lholland@doe.k12.ga.us.

The Smokey Powell Center has openings for the upcoming low vision clinics, September 11-12, 2023, in Ellijay (Gilmer County). Please contact Heather Francis at [hfrancis@doe.k12.ga.us] ([mailto: hfrancis@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:hfrancis@doe.k12.ga.us)) for an appointment as soon as possible.



Pow! Kabam!

Not all superheroes wear capes. You don't need to be able to leap tall buildings. Stand up for what is right. Be there for those in need. Be relentless in ensuring access to a great education for all students. Continue to use your superpowers for good as you are all superheroes to me! If you need me, just send up the Bat Signal and I will be there!

Keeping students first,
Wina

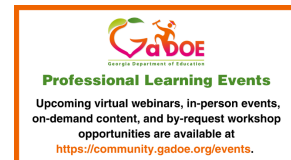
Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review the information below and the Due Dates Calendar for deadlines and key dates.

Coming Up

August 28 at 9 a.m. Back to Basic Behavior Edition:
West Central GLRS

August 28-31 from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Functional Behavior



*Professional Learning
Events*

Assessment/Behavior Intervention: East Central

August 28-31 from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Functional Behavior

Assessment/Behavior Intervention: Metro East

August 29 at 9 a.m. Back to Basic Behavior Edition: Northeast GLRS

August 29 at 8:30 a.m. Special Education Budget & Data Tools for the Job:
South Central GLRS

August 30 at 2 p.m. SSIP FY24: Utilizing Explicit Instructional Strategies for
SWDs

September 5-6 at 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Special Education Budget & Data Tools for
the Job: Northeast GLRS

September 6 at 10 a.m. Specially Designed Instruction Kick Off: What is SDI, &
why we need it

September 6 at 2 p.m. SSIP FY24: Integrating Mathematics Content for SWDs

September 7-8 at 2 p.m. Special Education Budget & Data Tools for the Job:
Northwest GLRS

Reminders

August 31 Continuation of Services Data Deadline for Submission (FY22 Data)
located in SE Applications Dashboard.

Visit [GaDOE Community](#) for a complete listing of GaDOE Professional Learning
Events.



Jefferson City Schools logo

District Highlight: Jefferson City Schools

This summer, Jefferson City Schools was able to train all of their co-teaching teams on the basics of co-teaching and collaboration. They were able to use the Capacity Building Grant to pay stipends for teachers to attend this training. This training laid the foundation for one of their special education district initiatives this school year, improving co-teaching teams and experience.



Chasity McCrary, Special Education Director, Miles Ahead Charter

New Director Spotlight: Chasity McCrary - Miles Ahead Charter

The Georgia Department of Education's Special Education Services and Supports Division is excited to feature Chasity McCrary for our New Director Spotlight this week.

Chasity McCrary is the Special Education Director for Miles Ahead Charter and has been in the field of education for 10 years. Ms. McCrary began her educational journey as a Special Education Paraprofessional with Atlanta Public Schools, while pursuing her master's degree in special education at Clark

Atlanta University. After earning her degree, Ms. McCrary worked as a full-time Special Education teacher with DeKalb County Schools, teaching dual exceptional students. Shortly after her experience with DeKalb County Schools, Ms. McCrary returned to Atlanta Public Schools, serving as a Special Education teacher at Coretta Scott King Young Women's Leadership Academy. Throughout her professional career, Ms. McCrary has been awarded opportunities to obtain her gifted certification, ESOL certification, establishing an all-girl school's STEM certification, serving as a science ambassador for the exceptional children's department, serving as an assistant testing coordinator, and starting Mentors Matters for adolescent girls within her community. Ms. McCrary believes that her unique journey has equipped and prepared her for the exciting new role as the Director of Exceptional Children Services at Miles Ahead Charter. In this role, Ms. McCrary is responsible for Special Education, ESOL, Gifted, MTSS, and is an Assessment Coordinator.



When asked why she chose this profession, Ms. McCrary shares that her answer is simple, “My students are the driving forces behind my love for education and learning. I have had the pleasure of working in several capacities where I have encountered a variety of experiences that taught me great lessons both professionally and personally. It has been an honor to wake up every single morning and do what I love, making an impact on the lives of my students and their communities.”

During her free time Ms. McCrary enjoys spending time with her highly active Goldendoodle, Georgia Rose. Ms. McCrary also enjoys volunteering with several different organizations within her local community, winemaking, and spending time with family and friends.



Arrows

Practice Pointers – Transition Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): The Team

Each student with a disability served under the IDEA, must have an individualized education program (IEP) that is developed, reviewed, or revised at a meeting of the IEP Team that includes: 1) The parents of a child with a disability; 2) Not fewer than one general education teacher of such child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the general education environment); 3) Not fewer than one special education teacher or, where appropriate, not fewer than one special education provider of such child; 4) A representative of the local educational agency (LEA); 5) An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the team described above; 6) At the discretion of the parent or the agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate; and 7) Whenever appropriate, the child with a disability. Parents are an essential source of information in the IEP development and play an important role in the IEP Team to establish the student's IEP goals and transition processes. Representatives of other agencies, such as the Vocational Rehabilitation agency, can be invited to participate at IEP Team meetings in which transition services and postsecondary goals are discussed, if that agency is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services to be included in the student's IEP. However, IDEA requires the consent of the parents or the student who has reached the age of majority under State law to invite other agency representatives to participate in the meeting.

For more information, please see our Transition webpage, [Transition From School To Work | Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency](#), and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSER): [Transition Guide](#).

GA STABLE/P2C Matching Scholarship

Georgia has partnered with STABLE Account, a national ABLE plan, to make STABLE accounts available to residents of Georgia.

GA STABLE/P2C Matching Scholarship

GET UP TO
\$2,500

for eligible existing
Georgia STABLE account owners

Applications can be submitted by entering the scholarship promo code "**MATCH2023**" when logging in to your Georgia STABLE account at <https://georgiastable.com/gateway>.



For more information about the Georgia STABLE Program, call 1-800-439-1653.

Who's Eligible?

STABLE qualified Georgia residents ages 18 and under who have net contributions made to their new or existing Georgia STABLE accounts between July 1 and December 31, 2023.

2023 Scholarship Cycle
July 1st – December 31st



Person holding various technology

Assistive Technology (AT) Partnership

Be on the lookout for a "Welcome Back" email from Tools for Life. If you are registered in the AT Partnership Portal, you will receive information about the AT Partnership, AT Portal, uPar, and EdTrade.

What is EdTrade? EdTrade is a platform for districts to "post" assistive technology items that are no longer needed. Accessing EdTrade provides districts an opportunity to borrow and/or possibly purchase AT devices, etc. This platform could also be used as an assistive technology inventory platform. Districts must register to access EdTrade. If interested, click here: [Register for EdTrade - Special Education Director \(office.com\)](#)

Tools for Life will host a webinar on September 7, 2023 from 3:30 p.m. – 4 p.m. to share the process of building Accessible Educational Materials (AEM). The webinar will guide the participant from the request process to the finished product. Click here to register: [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

We are looking forward to sharing more information about Georgia's "Take a Minute" initiative specific to assistive technology and accessible educational materials consideration process.

If you have any questions, please reach out to
Paula.Gumpman@doe.k12.ga.us or Katherine.Johnson@doe.k12.ga.us.

School Psychologists Technical Assistance Webinar

The Division for Special Education Services and Supports is hosting a Technical Assistance Webinar for School Psychologists titled, Dyslexia: FY24 School Psychologist Update.

Dr. Jennifer Lindstrom, Statewide Dyslexia Coordinator, will provide legislative updates related to the forthcoming implementation of S.B. 48 and H.B. 538, including teacher training and professional development opportunities. Findings from the three-year Dyslexia Pilot Program Implementation will also be discussed. The remainder of the session will focus on guidance for screening for dyslexia as part of the MTSS process, and effective reading instruction across all tiers. There will be time allotted for Q & A at the end of the session. This webinar will occur virtually. Please sign up using the registration link below:

[Dyslexia FY24: School Psychologist Update - Registration Link](#)

Date: September 14, 2023

Time: 1 - 2:30 pm

Intended Audience: School Psychologists, District Leaders, Special Student Services Staff

Please forward this information to School Psychologists and/or appropriate personnel in your Local Educational Agency (LEA).

For more information, please contact Alicia Mercer by email at amercer@doe.k12.ga.us.

Office of Teaching and Learning: August 16, 2023 Right Now Resources

I hope that your week has been productive and exciting. By now, most hallways and classrooms are full of learning and growing. Our team has been on the road and out in the field where we have had a chance to work with great educators across the state.

Please review the [August 16, 2023 Right Now Resources](#) newsletter for Teaching and Learning Updates, or subscribe on the [Curriculum and Instruction](#) webpage

to have them delivered straight to your inbox.

Thank you for your commitment and dedication; we stand ready to support your needs.

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Georgia

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