

**State Advisory Panel (SAP) for Special Education  
November 1-2, 2018**



Felecia Peavy from GaDOE on Compliance Indicators

Indicator 4b: Significant Discrepancy by race or ethnicity of rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days for children with IEP. Looks at the percentage of LEAs that have significant discrepancies in this area and whether those LEAs have policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the problem.

7 LEAs have significant discrepancy; 2 LEAs had policies, practices and procedures that led to significant discrepancy.

Indicator 9: Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services

1 LEA was reported to have had disproportionate representation and was determined to be noncompliant after GaDOE reviewed policies, practices and procedures.

Indicator 10: Disproportionate representation in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification

36 LEAs had disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories. Only 5 LEAs determined to be noncompliant by GaDOE. GaDOE is working with LEAs to provide targeted TA in those districts; schools need to look at how they support all students, prior to referral to evaluation process.

Indicator 11: Child Find, percent of children evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for completion of initial evaluation report. Eligibility meeting should be held within 10 days of timeline completion.

98% of children referred met the 60-day timeline. Statewide, 685 meetings were considered late; just over half of those meetings were late due to teacher/evaluator delays followed by parent delays.

Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transitions, percentage of children referred by Part C prior to age 3 found eligible for Part B, have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.

99% of children referred by Babies Can't Wait had IEPs in place by their third birthday.

Indicator 13: Postsecondary Goals for Transition, percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and over with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals, with services and course of study to meet those goals.

Students must be invited to IEP team meetings, and a representative of any participating agency may be invited to the IEP meeting.

94% of LEAs were in compliance when GaDOE reviewed 574 plans statewide of a random sample of youth IEPs. 541 of those reviewed were found to be compliant.

\*\*Recommendation from SAP: Teachers and administrators of middle school students should plan for postsecondary goals. By the time students with IEPs get to high school, it's too late to begin the process to inform students and families.

FY19 District Determinations: GaDOE has a scoring rubric on compliance indicators. It evaluates state's efforts to implement IDEA. If LEAs don't score well, GaDOE offers TA to meet goals. Each indicator has a range of points for meeting goals for each indicator. For example, for indicator 11 on completing initial evaluations, an LEA will get more points for 95% or higher completing evaluations within the 60 days, fewer points for 75-95%, and 0 points for under 75%.

For FY19, 14 out of 209 LEAs needed technical assistance to improve compliance.

\*\*SAP asks: Is there a better way to disseminate this info to families?

#### Jamila Pollard from GaDOE on Dispute Resolution Data

##### Formal Written Complaints:

When LEAs are found to be in noncompliance on an issue, it must be resolved ASAP but no later than 1 year. GaDOE requires corrective action status updates on the LEA plan. LEAs must review their policies, procedures and practices.

##### Due process:

Complaints filed by families will go before an Administrative Law Judge. It is possible to file a formal complaint and due process at the same time. If any of the issues are the same, due process will take precedent.

\*\*Communication among stakeholders presents a big concern.

\*\*LEAs that have Facilitated IEPs have fewer formal complaints. Next school year, FIEPs will be available to all families. This is part of dispute prevention.

### Zelphine Smith-Dixon: 2020 Vision

As a leader she is:

- Student-centered leader “whole child,” student success”
- Supportive leader “teacher/leader success”
- Stretch leader “push and pat”

What is your vision (what we hope to accomplish) for this work?

What does success look like in five years?

Mission – why you exist. The mission is “Educating Georgia’s Future.” Offering a holistic education each child in the state.

Who else cares about the vision? The “else” becomes your partners.

Does vision align with the mission?

How do we use data to establish the vision?

How will we use measurable outcomes to keep us accountable?

--Students must have viable postsecondary options.

--We must have equity among districts for all students.

--Continuous improvement is the only way!

--We must work for all of Georgia including students!

What are the core values?

People at the table may not share the same core values.

Be inclusive (families need to be present; families may not be able to read or understand parent rights) and transparent.

Every student can learn and achieve success.

Covey: First Things First

How are we using our funding to support where we want to be in 5 years?

Good leaders are good followers first – Are you leading the group, or are they chasing you?

2020 Vision Casting for GaDOE special education: Provide the necessary infrastructure and supports for leaders, teachers, and families to meet the “whole child” needs of each student and improve student outcomes and school climate resulting in increased “quality of life” and a “workforce ready” future.

Where is IDEA in this vision?

### Zelphine Smith-Dixon: Students with Disabilities Dropout Statistics

--1021 female students and 2437 male students

--More than 50% are African American

--By primary disability category, vast majority are SLD followed by OHI and EBD

What the research says:

Effective instruction plus engaging school climate = increased school completion

Teachers and administrators need to help each child unpack his or her backpack – this might include all the child’s needs.

In 2015, 36.5% of SWD graduated with regular high school diploma, compared to 72% of all students. Now over 60% of SWD graduate with the adjusted cohort.

## Public Comment

1. Karen, Valdosta: Supports for SWD are adequate. Can be improved by milder to moderate classes, not inclusion classes. "True" LD or autism students work well in cotaught classes. SWD should take same assessments as other students. There are amazing sped teachers in our district.
2. Carmen Allen, Forsyth County: Volunteer advocate – not an adversary. She feels led by God to do her work. She is inspired by students who have succeeded due to people who support them and work thoughtfully to create truly individualized plans for students to be successful.

## Zel's announcements

Advancing Inclusive Principal Leadership training so that principals can support all teachers (especially sped teachers).

Sped teachers need access to curriculum resources to help SWD.

GaDOE is working to ensure that students, teachers and administrators are successful.

## Committee Meeting report-outs:

### SAP Best Practices Committee:

1. Language counts: the jargon and official terms serve as a gatekeeper to accessing what families need. SAP needs to use language that includes everyone.
2. Each time you use the jargon, you need to define it. Every presentation on indicators should define all the terms. And ideally, we do not use jargon because it excludes people, or keeps people from fully engaging with others.
3. Zephine, please let us know what you want from us up front. The Panel members may need to do homework.

### Family Engagement Committee:

Can we create hyperlinks to key words in the vision that link to other information?

Can we move the parent link to the top of the home page?

Can we have school districts provide a link to the parent page of the DOE website on their district websites?

Create a partnership with superintendents to pass down the information about the different panels and their public comment sections.

Have a panel convention where all members of panels come together for 2-3 days at the end of the year so that we are all on the same page working towards the same goal.

How can we manage family engagement events within teacher schedules?

Begin adding information that is limited and controlled by moderators on social media.

### Formal Complaint Committee:

#### Strengths

- New vision
- Facilitated IEP
- Complaints spread out across state
- Process to file complaints

Leverage Strengths - Find out what districts without complaints are doing to support implementation. Market vision Facilitated IEPs to parents, leaders, and teachers.

## Needs

- Implementation of the IEP
- Lack of SPED staff to perform services required
- Gen Ed teacher not aware of IEP and accommodations
- Procedural errors
- Communication

## Building Support

- Provide state mentors for new SPED teachers
- ALL teachers trained on IEP implementation in everyday language
- ALL leaders trained on SPED law and IEP implementation
- ALL parents trained on SPED law and IEP implementation in multiple ways in everyday language

## Building Infrastructure

- Figure out how to best reach ALL parents, not just webinars, provide food, binders, etc. on how to best support child
- Provide resources to implement IEP, help teachers to become highly qualified
- Develop a standardized system to account for IEP implementation

### Public Comment Committee:

- Analyze past public comment to make sure themes are accurately captured to help us discuss next steps.
- Reminders will be sent to all SAP members two weeks prior to every meeting in a sharing friendly format. This email will request all SAP members remind/inform the individuals they represent about this opportunity.
- Explore reviewing the proposed 2020 vision against current survey questions to ensure feedback solicited from stakeholders align with this vision.

### Post committee meeting discussion and feedback:

Membership: Membership committee will abbreviate the membership application. New application will be posted in late January or early February.

Public comments are meant to inform SAP about special ed across the state. Maybe include role of person submitting feedback (parent, teacher/admin, self-advocate, etc.).

Special Education leadership academy – train heads of special ed. They need to be supported to help students with disabilities be successful. Schools have a lot of autonomy; they can be flexible and accountability. Principals need to support teachers on high-quality instruction. Mental health is also an issue that needs to be acknowledged for students and staff.

SAP members need to give concrete advice!  
We must engage district-level leaders in our work.