



January 7, 2022 Email Blast

## Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education

Directors,

Keeping Students First,  
Wina



*Happy New Year!*



*Latest news*

## Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review for upcoming events and the **Due Dates Calendar** for deadlines and key dates.

### Coming Up

**January 10** at 9:00 AM – MTSS Coaching Clinic

**January 11** at 1:00 PM – Special Education Directors' Webinar

**January 11** at 3:00 PM – Assistive Technology Webinar Series

**January 12** at 10:00 AM – School Based Administrator Academy

**January 12** at 3:00 PM – Transition: Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

**January 13** at 11:00 AM – Content Integration Live Session Q & A

## Reminders

**January 15** – Parent Survey opens in the Special Education Applications Dashboard for LEAs to review results, with hourly updates. The Parent Survey Link for parent responses will be posted on the **Special Education Services and Supports webpage**. Please share the link in your LEA and encourage participation.

**January 31** – Timelines Prong 1 data submission is due in the Special Education Applications Dashboard for LEAs that were not 100% in the September 30, 2021 submission.

**January 31** – Excess Cost Calculations Submission is due in the Consolidated Application Portal.

**January 31** – Disproportionality Compliance Reviews begin ONLY for applicable LEAs in the Special Education Applications Dashboard.

## District Highlight: Coffee County Schools

### Project Search at Coffee County Schools



*Coffee County Schools logo*

Welcome to the world of the innovative classroom with Project Search. I bet you are wondering what Project Search is all about. Well, it is a classroom with a special calling. It's a classroom that is filled with transformation into life and adulthood. We are not your traditional classroom, our interns experience life first hand. Whenever there is a need, we are there. We are a part of the community. The goal for our interns is to serve, explore, and gain skills that will help them become productive members of the community.

This year has been an amazing year! Our interns have served Coffee Regional Medical Center, Coffee County Food Bank, FireSide and Pearls Bakery. These businesses have provided our interns with the strength and confidence to go out and obtain a job on their own. They have instilled knowledge and life lessons that will take them to future employment.

By increasing the amount of individuals with disabilities in the workforce, others will see the value in having them as employees. This is not just program for students with disabilities, but an opportunity for individuals to gain valuable work skills that will allow them to become productive members of their community.



*Karen Suddeth, Program Manager,  
GaDOE Division for Special  
Education and Student Supports*

## GaDOE Spotlight: Karen Suddeth

Karen Suddeth has worked in the field of education for 35.5 years. She currently serves at the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) as a program manager for Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students (Georgia's MTSS). She previously worked in School and District Effectiveness, serving as a program specialist for the federal School Improvement Grants (1003g). Prior to joining GaDOE, she served in Carroll County Schools as a high school and middle school teacher, director of secondary curriculum and instruction, and high school principal.

In her current role, Karen along with the Georgia Department of Education recognize the positive effects of MTSS for educators and ALL students, and have placed emphasis on implementing with fidelity a national MTSS model that is widely accepted and practiced. The MTSS team is dedicated to supporting district and school personnel with implementation of MTSS. The resources developed include implementation guidance, MTSS essential components professional learning, online learning modules, webinars, and fidelity rubrics along with worksheets.

Karen's family includes her husband, Mike, of 40 years; two daughters, Samantha and Lindsey; one son, Mike; and six grandchildren, 4 boys and 2 girls. Additionally, her family includes her son-in-law, Kyle, and her daughter-in-law, Meri. She also has two poodles, Louie and Cooper, who are very much considered family members. She and her husband will celebrate two weddings this year as their oldest daughter, Samantha, is engaged, and their oldest grandson, Scout, is engaged.

## Important: Graduation - Annual Event Rate

As indicated in presentations beginning August 18, 2021 (see *Graduation Rate Presentation*), the graduation rate required in the Annual Performance Report (APR) for Students with Disabilities by the State and all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) is the Annual Event Rate. The Office for Special Education Programs (OSEP) will no longer allow the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate from the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to be



*Exclamation mark*

used in the APR. The ESSA rate will continue to be used by the State and all LEAs for the CCRPI and accountability measures.

Both the Annual Event Rate and Adjusted Cohort Rate calculations include students graduating with a regular high school diploma as graduates. Students with significant cognitive disabilities entering high school in the 2020-2021 school year or later will be working towards an alternate diploma rather than a regular diploma. Georgia received an *ESSA Waiver* in 2020 to enable students participating in the Georgia Alternate Assessment who entered high school prior to 2020-2021 to continue receiving a regular diploma during the transition.

The waiver is not applicable to the Annual Event rate used by OSEP. OSEP defines regular graduates as receiving a high school diploma identical to that for which students without disabilities are eligible. The diploma must be fully aligned to State standards and cannot be aligned to alternate academic achievement standards. Students who exited high school with a high school diploma that did not meet the same standards as students without disabilities are classified as receiving a certificate (see p. 7-8, *Children with Disabilities Exiting Sp. Education- FS009*).

Beginning with the 2021 graduating class, students with disabilities who did not meet the same graduation requirements as students without disabilities will not be included as regular graduates in the Annual Event calculation. This change will impact State and LEA Annual Event Graduation Rates for Annual Performance Reports for Students with Disabilities. LEAs with many students who were regular diploma graduates participating in the Georgia Alternate Assessment will have a lower graduation rate on the Annual Performance Report for Students with Disabilities. Annual Event Graduation Rates will be made available to LEAs soon.

The calculation change will not impact individual students in any manner.

These students will continue to be included as graduated with a regular diploma in the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates for Students with Disabilities used in the CCRPI.

If you have any questions, please contact Dawn Kemp at [dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us) or Linda Castellanos at [lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us).

**Important Budget Announcement:  
Georgia High-Cost Fund Grant and**



*Person reviewing data and graphs*

## Georgia Residential & Reintegration Services Grant

The Georgia High-Cost Fund Grant and Georgia Residential & Reintegration Services Grant submission period opens January 1st. The updated resources for the Georgia High-Cost Fund Grant and Residential & Reintegration Services Grant can be accessed online on the **Budget, Grants and Consolidated Application webpage**. The deadline for the submission of these grants is February 15th. Don't hesitate to contact your budget liaison if you have any additional questions.

## Important Budget Information: IDEA 619 Adjustment Allocations

The Georgia Department of Education made an adjustment to the FY21 IDEA 619 Ages 3-5 preschool allocations for new and expanding LEA charters. This will include a minor reduction of carryover for several LEAs. Please see the *FY21 IDEA 619 Adjustment Allocations document* which details the new FY21 IDEA 619 allocations. We will be updating the allocations on our website as well. Additionally, the FY21 IDEA 619 carryover amounts will be loaded into our grants accounting system and available to budget next week. Please contact your Budget Liaison if you have any questions.



*Person using a calculator and graphs to look at data*



*Person typing on their laptop*

## Instructional Supports and Teacher Training to Address Readiness in Literacy Grant

Georgia Department of Education is excited to share the Instructional Supports and Teacher Training to Address Readiness in Literacy Grant opportunity.

The purpose of this grant is to provide financial resources for multi-sensory reading training and resources to support early reading assistance programs for struggling readers and those students with risk factors for dyslexia. GaDOE will award competitive, non-renewable grants to LEAs to ensure the necessary



infrastructure and supports are available for teachers to meet the needs and improve outcomes in literacy for every student.

We strongly encourage each district to read the *Instructional Support and Teacher Training to Address Literacy Grant Application package* and apply for the grant to provide training and resources to teachers as they help support students with readiness in literacy.

Applications must be received no later than 5:00 PM on January 19. Please contact Leigh Ann Cross, Program Manager, at [LeighAnn.cross@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:LeighAnn.cross@doe.k12.ga.us) with any questions.

## Opportunity for Full Waiver of Tuition and Stipend to Earn a Master's Degree



*Graduates tossing their hats in the air*

Interested in earning your master's degree at Georgia State University? Want to gain expertise in early behavioral intervention? Consider applying for Project BEES! Project BEES provides a specialized, fully-funded, master's-level training experience in applied behavior analysis (ABA) and early childhood special education (ECSE). Project BEES scholars will learn to address the academic, behavioral and communication needs of young children with high-intensity needs, such as those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and will receive mentoring and professional development opportunities. For more information, please review the *Project Bees Recruitment flyer*.

Contact Sarah Hansen at [projectbees@gsu.ed](mailto:projectbees@gsu.ed) with any questions.



*A gavel and law book*

## Update on Head Start Vaccine and Mask Mandate

On December 21, 2021, 24 States, including Georgia filed a lawsuit against the Office of Head Start, Administration of Children and Families, and the Department of Health and Human Services arguing against the Head Start Vaccine and Mask Mandate, which requires all Head Start staff, volunteers, and contractors to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 by January 31, 2022, and immediate masking of all Head Start individuals two years of age and older. Two exemptions to the vaccine requirement are medical

necessity and legally entitled accommodations, and those granted the accommodations are required to undergo weekly COVID-19 testing. On January 1, 2022, the Court granted the States' motion for Preliminary Injunction which prevents the implementation of the Head State Mandate pending the final resolution of the case. The Court found that the States are likely to succeed on the merits of the claims that the Agencies do not have the power to impose the Head Start Mandate, that the mandate violates the notice-and-comment requirements, and that the mandate violates the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. For more information, please read the copy of the *Court's order*.

## Important Budget Reminder: Excess Cost Calculation Submission

The Excess Cost Calculation Portal is now open for submissions. The Special Education Excess Cost Calculation, which is part of the local district determination's Timely and Accurate Data Submission Report, is due by January 31, 2022. This submission must be entered into the Consolidated Application and has a two part sign-off for the results and base calculations. Please plan accordingly as both parts must be submitted by the due date. Resources for the calculation can be found on our **Budget, Grants and Consolidated Application webpage**. Please contact your budget liaison for further information or technical assistance.



*News paper front page on a tablet*



*Person typing with their laptop in their lap*

## Cross Functional Monitoring Office Hours

To support districts in preparation for upcoming Cross-functional Monitoring(CFM), the Budget Unit and the Results-Driven Accountability Unit will be offering open office hours to answer questions and provide clarification to LEAs. These sessions are completely optional and designed to meet needs and address any questions surrounding the IDEA component of the CFM process.

The scheduled dates and times are:  
Tuesday, January 18, 2022  
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Meeting Link

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Meeting Link

Friday, February 18, 2022

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Meeting Link

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Meeting Link

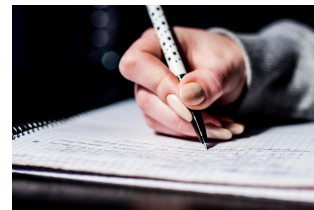
Links to the January 2022 and February 2022 sessions will be available in the Friday blast several weeks prior to each listed date.

Support documents are available on the **Federal Programs Monitoring webpage**.

Additionally, your District Liaison and Budget Liaison are always available to provide any necessary assistance. We look forward to supporting you in this process.

## APH Annual Census

The annual APH census will began on 1/4/2022 and will remain open till 2/28/2022. Please forward this to your teachers of the visually impaired and/or Vision Coordinators.



*Person filling out a paper application*

There are only three criteria for students to qualify for APH quota funding:

1. Blind or Functioning at the Definition of Blind.
2. Enrolled in a school on the first Monday in January.
3. Consent to release PII on file with the GIMC.

**Eye Reports have been waived for this year's Annual Census, so if you think a student meets the criteria, please register them!**

It is important that all eligible students are counted because districts rely on the consolidated funds to help support the education of the blind.

Instructions for authorizing district representatives, updating and adding student records is available at the [GIMC webpage](#).

If you have any questions or need help registering a student, please contact Justin Harris by email [justin.harris@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:justin.harris@doe.k12.ga.us) or by phone at either 478-751-6083 ext. 1145 or 478-283-5116.





*Parent 2 Parent of GA*

## Parent to Parent Trainings

### Webinar: I Can Do That! A Brief Overview of Assistive Technology for Parents and Families

This webinar will introduce parents of school-age children to assistive technology devices and services; help them determine what assistive technology (AT) their child might need to overcome barriers and achieve their goals, and locate sources for AT.

Tuesday January 25th at 9:00 AM ET

[I Can Do That! Registration Link](#)

[I Can Do That! Facebook Page](#)

### Webinar: Parents & Caregivers on Transitioning to Adult Healthcare

Join us as Debbie Dobbs explains exactly what you need to do to apply for the Katie Beckett Deeming Waiver. She will walk you through the application, step by step. Attending this webinar will empower you with knowledge that will help you fill out the application accurately with all the required components.

Tuesday January 25th at 6:00 PM

[Transitioning to Adult Healthcare Registration Link](#)

[Transitioning to Adult Healthcare Facebook Link](#)

### MTSS Snapshot: GO MTSS/SST Platform

Georgia's MTSS team continually works to provide resources that are practical and accessible for all districts and schools. One resource that is used by several schools in the state is the GO MTSS/SST platform. The application was designed to support the implementation of MTSS in Georgia. The purpose of Georgia's Online MTSS/SST (GO MTSS/SST) Application is to help districts and schools to create, monitor, update and maintain a record of a student's response to interventions.



*A desktop computer*

This tool is available to all Georgia schools, and it helpful for tracking student performance on interventions provided at tier II and tier III. The application also aligns with the SST rule and maintains meeting notes, parent communications, and recommendations for next steps.

### Tier II Features:

- Assists teams with creating a record of students identified as at-risk for poor learning and behavioral outcomes.
- Allows users to select from their list of evidenced-based interventions.
- Permits users to assign identified students to Tier II intervention and supports groups.
- Allows users to enter progress monitoring data for each student.
- Supports users in making decisions based on students' responsiveness to Tier II intervention and supports.

### Tier III features:

- Ensures Student Support Teams (SST) adhere to the SST State Board rule.
- Allows users to record members of the SST.
- Permits users to schedule SST meetings.
- Allows users to enter student data, intervention details and progress monitoring data.
- Records team decisions and next steps.
- Assists LEAs in developing an educational plan designed to meet the unique needs of students.

A recent development is the integration of GO MTSS/SST and GO IEP. This addition allows users of GO IEP to transfer the information from GO MTSS/SST without having to re-enter all of the details. For a demonstration of GO MTSS/SST, please contact Rondalyn Pinckney at [rpinckney@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:rpinckney@doe.k12.ga.us).

For more information contact Karen Suddeth, Program Manager Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students at [ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us)

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## Federal Programs



January 14, 2022 Email Blast

### Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education

Directors,

**How 'bout them DAWGS!** I know you will join me in celebrating the outstanding accomplishment of our Georgia Bulldogs. The game was very close until the final quarter. A great lesson in staying the course to finish strong as National Champions! Many of you know the district where I served as Director for many years had a big football program. One of our long-serving head coaches always said that he would rather lose a game during the season than have the loss during playoffs or finals. I couldn't help but think of his words of wisdom when the SEC Championship did not go the way the Bulldogs had hoped, yet I thought maybe this was "their loss" since there was still another opportunity to be National Champions. Odds are in football and in life that you win some and lose some. We know that losses are often our best teacher. We need to all take this lesson to remember a stumble along the way doesn't mean that you can't be the champion. Stay the course and always finish strong!

Please join me in learning more about Brooks County High School's High School High Tech partnership with Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. So proud of their efforts to ensure effective transition for all students!

I know you will enjoy learning more about our Deputy Superintendent for



*UGA National Champions 2022*

Federal Programs, Shaun Owen. Shaun is a fierce advocate for students with disabilities. We are very fortunate to have her strong leadership to keep a focus on flexibility, valuing input from all stakeholders, and providing supports for administrators, teachers, families and students.

It is time to apply to be a part of the Parent Mentor Partnership. Please consider applying.

Our Parent Survey will open on January 18, 2022. Be sure to learn more about the new items added.

Please share the updates and notices from the eblast with your staff. Of particular interest, a new professional learning series for School Psychologists will begin later this month. We are hopeful you will encourage your personnel to participate.

In honor of Dr. King and the upcoming holiday, I wanted share a few of his quotes: "Love is the greatest force in the universe." "If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward." "Ultimately a genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus." Wise words to consider.

Hope you have a great weekend! I am wishing for snow on Sunday as forecast, but we will see.

As always, thank you for all you do! You are making a difference each day! We may have some losses along the way but finish strong!

Keeping Students First,  
Wina



*Latest news*

## Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review for upcoming events and the **Due Dates Calendar** for deadlines and key dates.

### Coming Up

**January 17** Martin Luther King, Jr., State Holiday, Georgia DOE closed

**January 19** 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM – Special Education Leadership Development Academy (SELDA)

**January 20** at 1:30 PM – FY22 Special Education Student Record Basics

Webinar

**January 24** at 3:00 PM – Self-Determination Community of Practice

**January 25** at 3:00 PM – Transition Webinar Series #4

## Reminders

**January 4** – American Printing House (APH) Census opened for entry

**Registration and Census** and closes February 28, 2022.

**January 15** – Parent Survey opens in the Special Education Applications Dashboard for LEAs to review results, with hourly updates. The Parent Survey Link for parent responses will be posted at **Special Education Services and Supports webpage**. Please share the link in your LEA and encourage participation.

**January 31** – Timelines Prong 1 data submission is due in the Special Education Applications Dashboard for LEAs that were not 100% in the September 30, 2021 submission.

**January 31** – Excess Cost Calculations Submission is due in the Consolidated Application Portal.

**January 31** – Disproportionality Compliance Reviews begin ONLY for applicable LEAs in the Special Education Applications Dashboard.

**February 3** – Student Record Data Collection opens in the GaDOE Portal.

## District Highlight: Brooks County Schools

### Delta Innovative School

At Delta Innovative School, we are excited to collaborate with GVRA and Georgia High School High Tech (GHSHT) programs. GHSHT is an in-school transition program for students with disabilities. The main focus at Delta Innovative School is to ensure that our students are aware of post-secondary education and employment opportunities. Being a non-traditional school, we put an emphasis on providing opportunities to help students understand the importance of post-secondary opportunities and gaining a high school diploma, because their diploma opens the doors to continue their education and employment journey even after high school.



*Brooks County Schools logo*

In partnership with GHSHT, we are able to provide transition activities in the following categories:

- Counseling on Post Secondary Education
- Job Exploration Counseling

- Work Based Learning Experiences
- Work Based Readiness Training
- Instruction to Build Self Advocacy Skills

We have also partnered with the Goodwill Pre-ETS Program. We have planned activities for this academic school year as well as over the summer to provide students with an understanding of workplace, home, and community. Goodwill team members will provide instructional activities designed to help students find jobs at a higher rate than individuals without formal instruction. We are in the process of getting qualified for the workforce training facilitation. Finally, the Delta Innovative School and Goodwill Pre-ETS program will provide quality workforce training to demonstrate characteristics of being an effective and productive employee.

Some of the topics we will cover this school year are:

- Effective Communication Skills
- Interpersonal Skills and Teamwork
- Time Management
- Work Ethics and Initiative
- Professionalism in the Workplace
- Dress for Success
- Engaging Others and Networking
- Interview Skills and Mock Interviewing
- Job Retention

Following are the sessions/activities we already completed with our students:

1. Setting short term and long term goals (SMART Goals)
2. Self-confidence (Two sessions)
3. Financial Literacy (One session)
4. College Tour



## **GaDOE Spotlight: Shaun Owen**

Shaun Owen has worked in the field of education for 27 years. She became the Deputy Superintendent of Federal Programs in February of 2020. Prior to becoming Deputy Superintendent, she was the Deputy Chief of Staff, Director of Consolidated Federal Initiatives and State Ombudsman at the Georgia Department of Education.



Shaun Owen, Deputy  
Superintendent, GaDOE Federal  
Programs

Shaun led the Consolidation of Funds Initiative, which grew from 4 LEAs to over 30 LEAs, and gained national recognition culminating in a presentation with the U.S. Department of Education at the National ESEA Conference. Shaun created the Collaborative of State Ombudsmen, a national collaborative of Ombudsmen across the U.S., in the Spring of 2017, which gained national recognition resulting in presentations at the Office of Nonpublic Education. She has worked at the GaDOE since 2008 where she led several statewide initiatives including the Governor's Directive for Resource Development and previously was a decorated classroom teacher and business owner. She also served as the president of the National Council of State Social Studies Specialists when she was over Social Studies for the state of Georgia.

Shaun loves traveling, spending time with her family, and is an avid animal lover.

## **Important: Georgia Children's Intervention Services (CISS) Expansion of Free Nursing Services**



*Exclamation mark*

Information about the expansion of nursing services by CISS was shared in a previous email blast. To ensure that all LEAs have the knowledge they need to decide about participation, we would like to offer an informational session during an upcoming Directors webinar with representatives of Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) and Public Consulting Group (PCG).

DCH contracts with PCG to conduct the following functions: conduct validation review audits of LEAs who billed for school-based Medicaid services rendered in their school district, conduct the Random Moment Time Studies, work in conjunction with internal Reimbursement Department to produce the annual cost settlement and quarterly reimbursement for administrative costs related to rendering direct medical services to Medicaid eligible students within the LEAs who participate in school based Medicaid, provide consultation services as it pertains to developing program policy documents, and conduct trainings to LEAs who participate in school-based programs. LEAs cannot contract other vendors to do the aforementioned tasks. LEAs have the liberty to contract vendors to be their Medicaid billing agent. PCG does not provide Medicaid billing agent services to LEAs who participate in this school-based Medicaid program.

Please take a moment to complete this one question **Interest Survey**.

Thank you in advance for helping us plan effectively to meet your needs by completing this survey by January 21, 2022.



*Pages of a book*

## **Accessibility: Braille Literacy Month**

January is braille literacy month in honor of the creator of the English braille code, Louis Braille's birth month. Mr. Braille used a system of 2 columns and 3 rows of dots to represent all the characters of the alphabet. He used a special

braille number sign in front of the first 10 alphabet symbols to represent numbers 0-9. GENIUS!

## **GaPMP Application for Participation**

*"Parents' voices are critical to the success of our education system. They are our children's first, and most influential teachers," said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona.*



*Person typing on their laptop*

Welcoming families, establishing two-way communication, and giving families a voice in decision making are all components of an effective family engagement program. When the child is a student with disabilities, there are additional skills and information that families need to impact positive student outcomes and successful transition. For the past 20 years, the GaDOE has demonstrated our commitment to family engagement in special education by funding the Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership (GaPMP). The Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership is parents and professionals working together to improve outcomes for students with disabilities by enhancing communication and collaborate between families, educators, and the community. Parent mentors build relationships and train parents and are an invaluable resource for teachers and district personnel.

The GAPMP theme for the current year is Building Capacity Today for a Better Tomorrow. That spirit is at the heart of the initiative. We believe that schools, families, and communities all play a role in creating positive futures. By working together, we build our capacity to impact change. Once again, we invite you to join the GaPMP in FY23. All districts whether returning or coming on for the first

time must sign and submit the application by March 1, 2022.

Scan the signed *FY23 GaPMP Application* and reference your district name in the file name. A **JotForm Application** has been provided for uploading application for submission. Application submissions are not accepted by email.



*Person filling out a paper application*

## IDEA Parent Survey

The IDEA Parent Survey opens on January 18, 2022. The survey data collected is used to measure Indicator 8: Percent of parents with a student receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving results for children with disabilities. Studies

show schools, where parents are involved in their child's education and in the decision-making process, experience higher levels of student achievement and greater public support.

-Georgia's online parent survey is available to all families of students with disabilities.

-Survey link will be open January 18, 2022 – May 31, 2022.

-Access your district's real-time data on the dashboard.

-This direct link to the parent survey will be posted on the **GaDOE Special Education Services and Supports webpage**.

New this year:

Two optional questions will be included as a way of collecting data to support work GaDOE is doing to improve the consideration of these factors in the IEP Team meeting. They will not be included in the survey calculation.

I. We discussed whether my child needs assistive technology at the IEP meeting.

II. We discussed whether my child needs accessible formats like braille, large print, auditory and electronic text at the IEP meeting.

## Closing Gaps and Opening Spaces Vlog #4

We are excited to present Vlog #4 of our series, Closing Gaps and Opening Spaces, by Derrick Butler, principal at Islands High School, Savannah Chatham School District as he shares the importance of intentional and impactful leader shifts to impact



student success. In this vlog, he discusses building capacity and tiered professional development. The vlog series can be found on our Co-Teaching Resources page or the School Based Administrator Podcast webpage.

*Derrick Butler, Principal  
Savannah Chatham School  
District*

## Lead EmBRACE Video Episode 4



*Students standing together*

## Community of Practice to Support Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities

Please share the **Significant Cognitive Disabilities Community of Practice survey** with all of the staff that support students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. We are working on our community of practice calendar/activities and would like input from all of the individuals that support these students. The survey has 6 questions and it should only take a few minutes to complete. (name, email, grade level, best meeting day, what would you like to learn and what would you like to share).

## NEW Professional Learning Series for School Psychologists

The Division for Special Education Services and Supports announces a NEW Professional Learning Series for School Psychologists. This virtual training series will focus on topics specific to the scope of work in School Psychology. All School Psychologists, diagnosticians, and other pertinent personnel are encouraged to attend. Each training will occur virtually on corresponding dates listed below from 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm. Please sign up for each training using the registration links below:



*People sitting in a training and watching the presenter*

January 26, 2022

### **Specific Learning Disability Registration**

February 23, 2022

### **Prior Written Notice Registration**

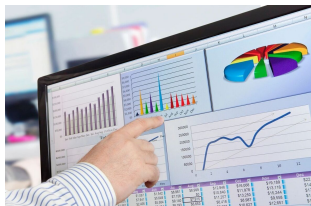
March 16, 2022

## Vision and Hearing Registration

May 12, 2022

### Disproportionality Registration

For more information, please contact Alicia Mercer by email at [amercer@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:amercer@doe.k12.ga.us).



*Person reviewing charts and graphs on a screen*

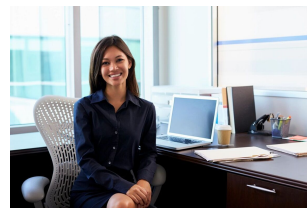
## Annual Event & Cohort Graduation Rate Chart

The **Annual Event and Cohort Graduation Rate Chart for FY21** can now be accessed. Numbers below 15 are redacted in the chart per confidentiality requirements. The Annual Event rate does not include students who participated in the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) as regular graduates per the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Specific details of the Annual Event rate calculation were provided in the **January 7 Email Blast**.

If you have any questions, please contact Dawn Kemp [dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us) or Linda Castellanos [lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us).

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*Woman sitting in front of a computer*

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10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Meeting Link

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Meeting Link

Support documents are available on the Federal Programs Monitoring webpage.

Additionally, your District Liaison and Budget Liaison are always available to provide any necessary assistance. We look forward to supporting you in this process.

Dimensions*	Description
<b>Strength</b>	How well the program works to address each identified student need, measured in terms of effect size. Effect sizes of about .25 indicate an intervention has value in improving outcomes. Effect sizes of .50 to .80 are moderate, effect sizes of .80 or larger are strong (Cohen, 1988).
<b>Dosage</b>	The number of opportunities a student has to receive and receive corrective feedback. It refers to the size of the instructional group, the number of minutes each session lasts, and the number of sessions provided per week.
<b>Alignment</b>	How well the program addresses the target student's (a) set of academic skill deficits, (b) does not address with the target student has already mastered (practice skills for that student), and (c) incorporates a meaningful focus on grade-appropriate academic standards.
<b>Attention to transfer</b>	The extent to which an intervention is designed to help students (a) transfer the skills they learn to other formats and contexts and (b) make connections between unrelated or distant skills.
<b>Comprehensiveness</b>	The number of explicit instruction practices the intervention incorporates (e.g., providing explanations in simple, direct language; modeling effective strategies instead of expecting students to discover strategies on their own; providing practice to students; and the strategies to generate more correct responses and incorporating systematic correction).
<b>Behavioral support</b>	The extent to which the program incorporates (a) self-regulation and executive function components and (b) behavioral practices to increase appropriate behavior.
<b>Individualization</b>	A tailored, data-based process for individualizing intervention, in which the educator systematically adjusts the intervention over time, in response to ongoing progress monitoring data, to address the student's complex learning needs.

*Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity: Academics*

## MTSS Snapshot: Taxonomy of Intervention: What is it, and how do I use It?

The National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) provides an online website with a wealth of resources for MTSS. One NCII resource frequently used by Georgia's MTSS team is the Taxonomy of Intervention. This tool is made up

of seven dimensions that can help educators make informed, systematic decisions to support students as interventions are individualized and intensified. Educators may use the Taxonomy of Intervention to evaluate current interventions; select a new intervention; and/or intensify an intervention.

Seven Dimensions of the Taxonomy of Intervention:

- **STRENGTH** – Does evidence suggest the intervention is expected to lead to improved outcomes?
- **DOSAGE** – Will the group size, duration, structure, and frequency provide sufficient opportunities to respond?
- **ALIGNMENT** – Does the intervention match the student's identified needs?
- **ATTENTION TO TRANSFER** – Does it assist the student in utilizing the learned skills to general education or other tasks?
- **COMPREHENSIVENESS** – Does the intervention include elements of explicit instruction?
- **BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT** – Does the student have opportunities to develop the behavior skills necessary to be successful?
- **ACADEMIC SUPPORT** – Can the intervention be easily integrated into academic instruction?
- **INDIVIDUALIZATION** – Can the intervention be individualized with a data-based process to meet student needs?

The Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity\* was adapted from Fuchs, L. S., Fuchs, D., & Malone, A. S. (2017). The Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity. TEACHING



Exceptional Children, 50(1), 35-43. The National Center on Intensive Intervention in coordination with a technical working group of experts has refined and expanded the Taxonomy to incorporate considerations for both academics and behavior and lessons learned from implementation in the field.

For more information contact Karen Suddeth, Program Manager Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students at [ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us)

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## Federal Programs

January 21, 2022 Email Blast

### Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education

Directors,

Wishes do come true! You may recall that I was wishing for snow last weekend. I got my wish! The picture to the right is from my dining room window. Unfortunately, we also had icy roads until late on Tuesday afternoon.



*Snow and trees*

We often wish for certain things that may also have unintended consequences. I love the snow, but I don't like being trapped at home. Overall, I am still happy to think about the snow and can't help but wish for more -and then I will be ready for spring!

Please join me this week in celebrating Valdosta City Schools. They are making great progress in collaborating with their local Sheriff to serve students. Keep up the great work! A big shout out to Dougherty County Schools for your leadership and support to other LEAs.

Our staff spotlight this week, as Miss Piggy would say, is "moi". I would much rather feature others but not myself. Hope you enjoy learning about my journey as an educator as well as a little about my family. Be sure to find out about Lucy. She is a cuddle bug!

The eblast is packed with announcements, professional learning opportunities and reminders. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our staff for more information.

I know January can be a tough month. LEAs usually start talking budgets and planning for the next school year, yet we have plenty left of the current year. Please know my thoughts are with each you with the continuing challenge of keeping schools staffed.

Thank you for all you do each day for students with disabilities. You are appreciated!

Keeping Students First,  
Wina



*Latest news*

## Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review for upcoming events and the **Due Dates Calendar** for deadlines and key dates.

### Coming Up

**January 24** at 3:00 PM – Self-Determination Community of Practice

**January 25** at 3:00 PM – Transition Webinar Series #4

**January 26** at 1:00 PM – Professional Learning Series for School Psychologists (Specific Learning Disability)

### Reminders

**January 31** – Timelines Prong 1 data submission is due in the Special Education Applications Dashboard for LEAs that were not 100% in the September 30, 2021 submission.

**January 31** – Excess Cost Calculations Submission is due in the Consolidated Application Portal.

**January 31** – Disproportionality Compliance Reviews begin ONLY for applicable LEAs in the Special Education Applications Dashboard.

**February 3** – Student Record Data Collection opens in the GaDOE Portal.

**February 15** – Post School Outcomes opens for viewing in the Special Education Applications Dashboard (2020-2021 exiters).

**February 15** – Grants for Residential and Reintegration Services and High Cost are due.

**February 28** – Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) is due for all LEAs.

**February 28** – American Printing House (APH) Census is open for entry **Registration and Census** and closes February 28, 2022.

**Open through May 31, 2022** – Parent Survey is open in the Special Education Applications Dashboard for LEAs to review results, with hourly updates. Please share the **FY 22 Parent Survey link** in your LEA and encourage participation.

## District Highlight: Valdosta City Schools



*Valdosta City Schools logo*

Valdosta City Schools Program for Exceptional Children Department is happy to announce that after collaboration with the Sheriff of Lowndes County Jail, they are closer to providing special education services to recently booked inmates. VCS is still working out the procedure for receiving the names on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. However, it has been a long time coming and the Valdosta City Program for Exceptional Children Department is excited and ready to provide the necessary services to inmates with Individualized Educational Plans who are incarcerated in the Lowndes County Jail. Special shoutout to Dr. Gayla Bentley, Assistant Director of Exceptional Students Program of Dougherty County Schools for her guidance throughout the process.



*Wina Low, Interim State Director, GaDOE Special Education and Student Supports*

## GaDOE Spotlight: Wina Low

Wina Low has worked in the field of education for 39 years. She currently serves as the Interim State Director for Special Education at the Georgia Department of Education. She has also been an Evaluation Specialist, Program Specialist, Program Manager and Senior Program Manager since joining GaDOE in November 2013. Prior to GaDOE, she was a local Director of Student Services for 17 years. She has also served as an Educational

Diagnostician and classroom teacher.

She is proud of the work being done to address Teacher Retention. Retaining teachers and leaders is one of our greatest challenges. It has always been an honor to support new directors through the Special Education Leadership Development Academy (SELDA). The Executive Coach for SELDA has also been a great addition to support new directors.

Wina and her husband, Michael, will celebrate 44 years of marriage on March 11th. They have a son and daughter, Christopher and Alexandra (Ali). Christopher and his wife, Cari, live in Ames, Iowa. They have their only grandchildren, Annabelle (10) and Josie (7). Ali is married to Chris Smythe and they live in Downingtown, Pennsylvania. Wina and Michael added Lucy, their English Bulldog, to their family last March. Lucy is now a year old and brings great joy to their lives. They moved back home to Big Canoe in the north Georgia mountains last December. Wina loves to shop and travel. Michael likes the travel, but the shopping not as much.



*Logo, Keeping Students First*

## **Support Personnel Professional Development: MTSS & Child Find: Keeping Students First**

The next professional development session for support personnel will cover Multi-tiered Systems of Supports and Child Find. This session will be held on Thursday, February 10th from 1:00pm-3:00pm. Use the link below to join the session.

### **Join the session: MTSS & Child Find: Keeping Students First**

If you have questions, contact the Program Specialist for your area below.

- Evelyn Dixon, Program Specialist, Speech-Language Pathologists at [edixon@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:edixon@doe.k12.ga.us)
- Elise James, Program Specialist, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy at [ejames@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ejames@doe.k12.ga.us)
- Alicia Mercer, Program Specialist, School Psychologists at [amercer@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:amercer@doe.k12.ga.us)

## **Charting the LifeCourse Principles**



## Professional Learning Series

The Parent Mentor Partnership in collaboration with the GaDOE Transition for Students with Disabilities is inviting transition specialists/personnel, Parent Mentors, and lead teachers who work in the area of transition to participate in an overview of the Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC) framework. You will have the opportunity to interact with three of these many principles which help “individuals and families of all abilities envision for a good life, think about what they need to know and do, identify how to find or develop supports, and discover what it takes to live the lives they want to live.” The sessions with the links to join are listed below. No registration is required. For more information, contact Elise James at [ejames@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ejames@doe.k12.ga.us).



*People sitting in a group watching a presenter*

Part 1: Wednesday, January 26th from 9:00 AM -10:00 AM **Meeting Link: Overview of Charting the LifeCourse Principles and Understanding your Student in the Context of Family and Community**

Part 2: Wednesday, February 9th from 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM **Meeting Link: Trajectory to a Good Life**

Part 3: Wednesday, February 23rd from 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM **Meeting Link: Integrated Star for Problem-Solving and Planning**



*Graduates smiling*

## Youth Focus Group For Youth and Young Adults: Transitioning to Adult Health Care

The Department of Public Health is conducting youth/young adult focus groups on Health Care Transition. ALL youth and young adults between the ages of 14 and 22 (with and without disabilities) are invited to attend. Each session will be held virtually lasting no longer than 90 minutes. Participants who attend and complete the full focus group will receive a \$25 gift card. The links below contain the information flyers which include the registration link and the consent form to participate. The electronic consent form needs to be completed electronically or printed, completed, scanned and mailed to Quondalynn Rainey at [Quondalynn.Rainey@dph.ga.gov](mailto:Quondalynn.Rainey@dph.ga.gov).



For more information contact Quondalyn Rainey at [Quondalynn.Rainey@dph.ga.gov](mailto:Quondalynn.Rainey@dph.ga.gov).

Dates and information links:

January 26, 2022 at 5:00 PM

**Transitioning to Adult Health Care January 26 Flyer**

February 2, 2022 at 5:00 PM

**Transitioning to Adult Health Care February 2 Flyer**

February 21, 2022 at 1:00 PM

**Transitioning to Adult Health Care February 21 Flyer**

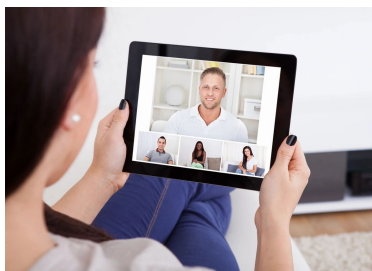
## **Statewide Transition Consortia: Time Change for State Content**

The next Statewide Transition Consortia will meet on Wednesday, February 2nd. There will be a change in the time for the state content delivered during this meeting. Districts will begin their district/regional meetings at 11:00 AM and use the link to join the meeting for the state content at 12:00 PM. Use the link below to join the meeting. No registration is required. The discussion for this session will cover the Transition Postsecondary Survey.



*A clock*

### **Join the Statewide Transition Consortia**



*Person watching a presenter on a tablet*

## **The next Transition Talks with the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA)**

The next session for Transition Talks with GVRA will take place on the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency will take place on Thursday, January 27 from 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM.

This session will focus on the revamping of the Virtual Job Shadow initiative. All are invited, but designated personnel assigned by their districts to take the lead are required to attend. These designated leads

will receive an official notification of the meeting. Use the link below to join the meeting. No registration is required. For more information, contact Elise James at [ejames@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ejames@doe.k12.ga.us).

### **Transition Talk with GVRA Zoom Meeting Link**

Meeting ID: 813 3209 1542

Passcode: y7ftp7

## **Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy (OT/PT) Community of Practice (COP)**

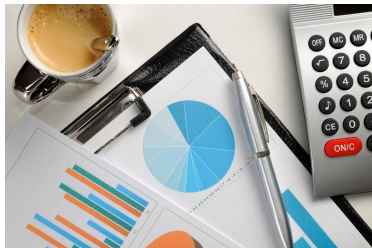
The next OT/PT Community of Practice will take place on Monday January 24, 2022 at 3:00pm.

The focus of the COP will be to discuss professional development needs for the next school year. Use the link below to join the session. This information is also on the **OT/PT website**. For more information, contact Elise James at [ejames@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ejames@doe.k12.ga.us).



*People sitting at a table together*

### **Join the OT/PT Community of Practice**



*Graphs, data charts, and a calculator*

## **Preparing for Your IDEA 2023 Budgets**

Join the Budget Unit for a webinar to receive training and updates on FY2023 IDEA budget requirements. Participants will understand how to complete and submit various budget information such as Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) and proportionate share documentation.

Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022

Time: 1 – 2 pm

### **Preparing for Your IDEA 2023 Budgets Registration Link**

*The webinar will be recorded.*

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Croom at [ncroom@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ncroom@doe.k12.ga.us).

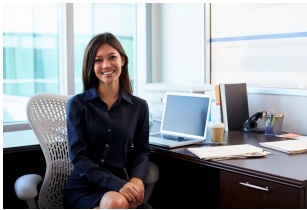
## Classroom Conversations Podcast: Bit By Bit

The Division for Curriculum, Instruction and School Climate has just released the second podcast encouraging educators to engage students in Computer Science at the elementary level. Please share with administrators and teachers as appropriate.



*Classroom Conversations logo*

### Bit by Bit Podcast Link



*Woman sitting in front of a computer*

## Cross Functional Monitoring Office Hours

To support districts in preparation for upcoming Cross-functional Monitoring(CFM), the Budget Unit and the Results-Driven Accountability Unit will be offering open office hours to answer questions and provide clarification to LEAs. These sessions are completely optional and designed to meet needs and address any questions surrounding the IDEA component of the CFM process.

The scheduled dates and times are:

Friday, February 18, 2022

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Meeting Link

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Meeting Link

Support documents are available on the **Federal Programs Monitoring webpage**.

Additionally, your District Liaison and Budget Liaison are always available to provide any necessary assistance. We look forward to supporting you in this process.

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## Federal Programs

January 28, 2022 Email Blast

### Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education

Directors,

Next Wednesday, February 2nd, we will observe Groundhog's Day. As the Pennsylvania Dutch tradition goes, if the groundhog sees his shadow due to clear weather, there will be six more weeks of winter. If he doesn't see his shadow, we can expect an early spring. I am not so sure

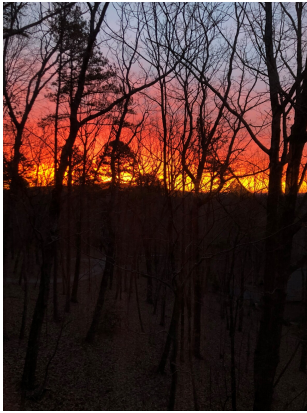
about the reliability of the groundhog prediction, but it is lots of fun to "hope" there will be an early spring. Hope is an optimistic state of mind with the expectation of positive outcomes. Hope can also be an expectation with confidence or cherished anticipation. We all need hope. It is motivational. As leaders of special education services, our families often look to us for hope. Someone may be depending on you to be their hope. Treasure the opportunity.

I am delighted to feature Brantley County Schools this week. I love the idea of communication boards for the playground. Would love to be invited for a visit!

Our staff spotlight for the week is Ann Cross. Ann is an outstanding leader! She is not only leading the support for our GLRS network, but also leads our instructional and systemic improvement unit. Ann has a clear focus – better outcomes for students. We are fortunate to have her leadership.



*A groundhog*



*Sunrise through some trees*

With each sunrise, we have hope for a new day. Although I grew up in the mountains of North Georgia, I guess I took the beautiful scenery for granted. Returning to the mountains after being away for many years, has really opened my eyes. The picture to the left is of a recent sunrise at my house. Hard to not see the beauty of the richly painted sky as the sun rises to start a new day. A beautiful sunrise is a promise of hope. Always make the most of it!

Thank you for all you do and being the hope for many children and their families. Your leadership and advocacy are making a difference! I am so proud of each of you.

Keeping Students First,  
Wina

## Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review for upcoming events and the **Due Dates Calendar** for deadlines and key dates.



*Latest news*

### Coming Up

**February 8 at 1:00 PM – Special Education Directors Webinar Link**

**February 8 at 3:00 PM – Assistive Technology Webinar Registration Link: Supports for math with Text Help’s Equatio software**

**February 9 at 10:00 AM – Lead emBRACE: Logic of Logistics and Targeted Times to Talk Lead emBRACE Registration Link** (FY22 School-Based Administrators PL Series)

**February 9 at 2:00 PM – Improving Graduation Rates for Students with Disabilities through CTAE Registration Link** (FY22 SSIP Spring PL Series)

**February 10 at 1:30 PM – FY22 Special Education Student Record Registration Link** (Recovering Rejected Events)

### Reminders

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**Open through May 31, 2022** – Parent Survey is open in the Special Education Applications Dashboard for LEAs to review results, with hourly updates. Please share the **FY 22 Parent Survey link** in your LEA and encourage participation.



*Brantley County Schools logo*

## **District Highlight: Brantley County Schools**

### **Nahunta Primary School**

Three playground communication boards have been installed at Nahunta Primary School in Brantley County. The communication boards were developed to address the need for a more inclusive playground experience for all students. With access to the communication boards, students with communication impairments, whether they are nonverbal or have other types of communication delays, are able to interact with peers and express their wants, needs, thoughts, and feelings. Play is such an integral and vital part of child development and being able to communicate allows students the ability to make friends and feel like they are included with their peers.

The communication boards, which were fully funded by the Brantley County Special Education Department, were designed by the school's Speech-Language Pathologist, Michelle Mitchell, using SymbolStix symbols. The school system partnered with a local sign company to have them printed and placed on weather-proof metal signs. The symbols on the boards were specifically chosen to give students access to playground vocabulary, such as "swing," "slide," and "ball." Student's may also express when they need water or are hurt. The accessibility the new signs provide allow students to use communication skills they have practiced in the resource and classroom settings in a natural setting, providing meaningful interactions and carryover.

## **GaDOE Spotlight: Ann Cross**

Ann Cross has worked in the field of education for 37 years. She has been a teacher, school leader and district leader. She now works as a program manager for instruction and systemic improvement. She oversees the GLRS network and SSIP work as well as supporting the work of the teacher and leader retention program, specially designed instruction, literacy grants, and other projects.



*Ann Cross, Program Manager,  
GaDOE Special Education and  
Student Supports*

GaDOE has just begun our Special Education and the School-Based Administrator Academy to support the critical role school leaders have in the success of special education students and outcomes. There are 142 participants who are eager to learn and improve outcomes for students. We are excited to also give them an opportunity to participate in the mixed reality simulations for leaders in collaboration with the University of West Georgia.

Ann loves to travel, go on spontaneous road trips, hike a trail, explore different cultures, conduct Bible studies, try new recipes, yell "Go DAWGS", and entertain friends and family. She has visited 45 states and 5 continents.



*National Alliance for Medicaid in  
Education logo*

## **Professional Development from National Alliance for Medicaid in Education**

### **Save the Date!**

The National Alliance for Medicaid in Education is pleased to announce the 2022 Spring Virtual Learning Series.

- February 9th, 2022 at 2:00 PM ET "COVID-19, ESSER and School Nurses UPDATE", presented by Eva Stone
- March 9th, 2022 at 2:00 PM ET "OIG Audit Review," presented by Sarah Broome, Kevin Bauer, Michigan Department of Community Health, and Alex Mays, in collaboration with Healthy Schools Campaign
- April 13th, 2022 at 2:00 PM ET "Telehealth: Innovative Funding and Overcoming Obstacles."
- May 11th, 2022 at 2:00 PM ET "Ongoing Impact of COVID on School-Based Services."

## Medicaid in Education Announcement Page

### Dyslexia Informational Handbook Update

The *GaDOE Dyslexia Informational Handbook* has been updated and is available here and on the **Dyslexia Webpage**. Notable updates include:



*Pages of a book*

#### Section IV

- Revised to align with the current MTSS guidance

#### Section V

- Link to the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) screener selection tool has been added
- Updated screening components by age/grade

#### Section VII

- A link to the NCII interventions selection tool has been added

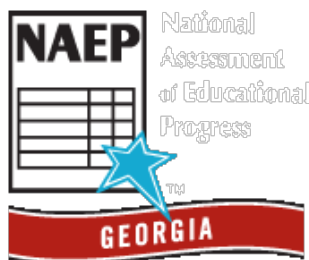
#### Section IX

- Updated the Professional Learning Section to include information about the Dyslexia Endorsement and Professional Learning Organizations

#### Appendices

- Example screener and intervention appendices have been removed and added to Sections V and VII via the NCII selection tools

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Franeka Colley at [franeka.colley@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:franeka.colley@doe.k12.ga.us) or Jennifer Lindstrom at [jennifer.lindstrom@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:jennifer.lindstrom@doe.k12.ga.us).

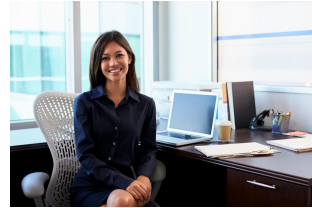


*National Assessment of Educational Progress logo*

### NAEP Testing Window

The testing window for 2022 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) testing is January 24 to March 18. Selected schools should make a special effort to include students with disabilities who are selected for testing. Students may participate with NAEP approved accommodations. Neither student nor school scores are calculated, but researchers rely on NAEP state results to understand what the student sub-group knows and can do on the test items.

## MTSS Snapshot: Considerations for Effective Use of Interventions with Fidelity



*Woman sitting in front of a computer*

Fidelity is critical with any framework you are implementing across your district or within your school. According to the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII), the need for fidelity rests in the concern that if we don't implement critical components of an intervention with consistency, we are then unable to connect student outcomes to the instruction and interventions provided. Through fidelity of implementation, educators are able to determine the effectiveness of the instruction and identify if the intervention needs to be adjusted to meet the needs of the student. Georgia's MTSS team continually works to ensure educators have the professional learning and resources necessary to implement MTSS with fidelity.

NCII includes elements of fidelity to ensure students are provided interventions that will yield the gains needed to meet the year end goal(s). As you provide interventions to students, consider the following elements:

### **Student Engagement**

- How attentive and involved are the students in this intervention or activity?

### **Adherence**

- How well do we stick to the plan, curriculum, or assessment?
- Are the intervention and assessment delivered consistently across different settings and by different teachers?

### **Exposure/Duration**

- Does the schedule allow the intervention to be delivered for the recommended dosage (duration and frequency)?
- How often does a student receive an intervention? How much time is provided?
- Is the student regularly attending school?
- Is the teacher regularly available to support the student and the instruction?
- Did any factors prevent the student from receiving the intervention as intended?

### **Program Specificity**

- How well is the intervention defined?
- How different is the intervention from others?
- Does the intervention provide for transfer of learning?

### **Quality of Delivery**

- Does the interventionist have the necessary training, knowledge, and skills to deliver the intervention correctly?

- How well is the intervention, assessment, or instruction delivered?
- Are quality teaching practices used consistently and with appropriate intensity across all sessions or interventions?

As you work to provide interventions for students, focus on the fidelity of the implementation by using the elements identified. NCII also offers Tools Charts on the **National Center on Intensive Intervention website** that will assist in choosing interventions and assessments. Elements of fidelity such as dosage and frequency are included on the Tools Charts. For additional information, feel free to reach out to the MTSS regional coaches to learn more.

Resource: National Center for Intensive Intervention at American Institutes for Research. Contributing authors include Dane and Schneider (1998); Gresham, Gansle, and Noell (1993); and O'Donnell (2008).

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