



January 12, 2024 Email Blast

Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education

Directors,

Before the holidays, our staff met for two days of strategic planning. Before the start of the first day, our Deputy Superintendent handed me a pen, but not just any pen. It was a pen with six different colors of ink. When I was in elementary school and maybe even high school, multi-color pens were a special treat to have. Unfortunately, most of our teachers would not allow any ink color other than black or blue. Even though we couldn't use the pretty colors for schoolwork, it was fun to write in purple, green, red, orange and aqua. You would not think a multi-color ink pen would cause happiness, but it certainly did. I tried out the colors and felt the joy. I wish it was always that easy to find happiness. I noticed my special pen is now in a protected spot on my desk. Obviously, the pen itself does not bring happiness, but the memories associated with a multi-colored pen made me feel great! In our fast-paced jobs, we are often stressed about having time to do it all. Slow down and look around for the simple joys of life such as finding a spot in the sun to feel the warmth, hearing your favorite song or taking the first sip of coffee in the morning. Happiness is all around!



Different color pens

Disproportionality data will be populated in the dashboard for LEAs to review for the next two weeks. Please contact Linda Castellanos at

icastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us if you have questions or any concerns with your data.

District Determinations will be sent this week. Please contact your district liaison with any questions.

Just a reminder about the Federal Programs Conference scheduled for February 13-14, 2023 at the Georgia International Convention Center. Registration is still open. [Conference information and registration is available.](#) Join the offices of Federal Programs, School and District Improvement, Teaching and Learning, Whole Child Supports, Financial Review, Assessment & Accountability, and Rural Education and Innovation for two days of training and information sharing.

District and school leaders will receive information to assist with plans for coordinating federal funds in FY25 and supporting newly identified CSI and TSI schools. Local Educational Agencies (LEA) participants should include representatives working with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) grants, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) grants, and selected instructional personnel. Principals at newly identified Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools, their direct supervisors, and the district point of contact for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) schools are required to attend.

This conference will be an in-person event with a modified virtual option. LEA staff not able to join in-person can register for the free live-stream of the general sessions only. All workshop recordings will be available in the GaDOE PL Events catalog after the conference. Registration will close on February 1, 2024, or when capacity is met. If space remains after February 1, we will reopen for general registration.

To ensure all LEAs have access to this conference, we are limiting registration by LEA as follows:

- Small Districts (3,999 students and below) = 5 registrants
- Medium Districts (4,000 – 19,999 students) = 8 registrants
- Large Districts (20,000 – 75,000 students) = 10 registrants
- Extra Large Districts (Above 75,000 students) = 14 registrants

Note: Principals at newly identified CSI, TSI schools and their supervisors are not included in the limits listed. To report an issue with the event link, please email the event contact, John Wight, at fpconferences@doe.k12.ga.us.



"Everyone can be great,
because everyone can serve."
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Division for Special Education Services and Supports has completed and emailed a review of data for LEA Determinations from the 2022 - 2023 school year. If you have any questions, feel free to contact your district liaison. Our Program Managers can also be contacted with questions: Felicia Peavy at fpeavy@doe.k12.ga.us or Lynn Holland at lholland@doe.k12.ga.us. Of 227 LEAs, 188 met requirements. Congratulations and keep up the great work!

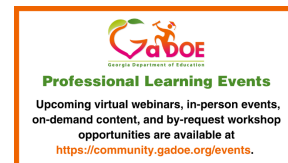
This year, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day will fall on Dr. King's birthday, January 15, 2024. The King Holiday Bill was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in 1983 to honor and commemorate the civil rights leader. This day is the only federal holiday designated as a day of service intended for people of all backgrounds to perform acts of kindness through service to others. Dr. King is quoted as saying, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

Thank you for all you do each day for student with disabilities. You are amazing leaders!

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

January 17 at 2 p.m. SSIP FY24: Integrating Accessible Educational Materials & AT Tools

January 18 at 3:30 p.m. Understanding the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) 2.0

January 18 at 1 p.m. FY24 GaDOE Legal Updates: School Psychologists

January 18 at 1:30 p.m. FY24 Special Education Student Record Basics

January 22 – 25 at 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention: SE Georgia

January 29 – February 1 at 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention: Coastal Area

January 31 at 2 p.m. SSIP FY24: Implementing PBIS in Secondary Settings

Reminders

January 17 Parent Survey Opens (SE Applications Dashboard) APR Indicator 8

January 31 Deadline for Excess Cost Calculation Submission (Consolidated Application in GaDOE Portal)

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

Practice Pointers – Individualized Education Program (IEP): Placement Decisions and Endrew F.



Arrows

QUESTION 17: HOW DOES THE ENDREW F. DECISION IMPACT PLACEMENT DECISIONS?

The United States Department of Education (USED) has stated in a Question-and-Answer (Q&A) Guidance Document, that the Endrew F. decision is important because it informs our efforts to improve academic outcomes for children with disabilities. Consistent with the decision in Endrew F., USED continues to recognize that it is essential to make individualized determinations about what constitutes appropriate instruction and services for each child with a disability and the placement in which that instruction and those services can be provided to the child. There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to educating children with disabilities. Rather, placement decisions must be individualized and made consistent with a child’s IEP. USED also notes that placement in regular classes may not be the least restrictive placement for every child with a disability. The IDEA Part B regulations specify that each public agency must ensure that a continuum of alternative placements (including instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, placement in private schools, and instruction in hospitals and institutions) is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services.

For more information, please see our [Special Education Rules Implementation Manual](#), our [IEP Resources](#) and [Specially Designed Instruction \(SDI\)](#) webpages, our [Parent Information Fact Sheets](#), and the [PROGRESS Center](#) at American Institutes for Research / [IEP Tip Sheet PLAAFPs](#).

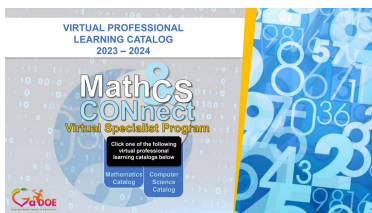
Office of Teaching and Learning: January 4, 2024 Right

Now Resources

Welcome back to the new year. May the start of 2024 bring us all a sense of excitement for what is to come. The Teaching and Learning Team has a FULL travel schedule as we start the new year, and are looking forward to serving and supporting the GREAT work in your districts. As always, we are here and welcome your questions and requests for support.

Please review the [January 4, 2024 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.



MathCONnect Mathematics Virtual Specialist Session

Please encourage all teachers of mathematics to join us for our next MathCONnect Virtual Specialist Session on February 7, 2024, as we explore strategies for effective implementation of student learning supports. Educators can join live from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m., or engage in a parallel on-demand version of the session by registering through the GaDOE Professional Learning Catalog.

Registration K-12 MathCONnect Virtual Specialist Sessions

Parent to Parent January 2024 Trainings

Webinar: Georgia Medicaid Basics and an Overview of Home and Community-Based Services

Learn about Medicaid programs and services, including how to qualify for Medicaid based on a child's disability or chronic health condition (Katie Beckett Deeming Waiver). This course will include information on EPSDT, GAPP, SOURCE, and a brief overview of CCSP, ICWP and NOW/COMP waivers.

Date: Tuesday, January 16, 2024



*Parent to Parent of Georgia
logo*

Time: 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.

Webinar: Online Workshop for Parents & Caregivers on Transitioning to Adult Healthcare

Learn about transition planning, tools and resources available to help young adults become better prepared to manage their own health care needs.

Date: Wednesday, January 17, 2024

Time: 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Webinar: Online Workshop for Parents & Caregivers on Transitioning to Adult Healthcare

Learn about transition planning, tools and resources available to help young adults become better prepared to manage their own health care needs

Date: Thursday, January 18, 2024

Time: 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Webinar: Sifting Through Your Parental Rights

Provides basic information about parental rights under IDEA, including confidentiality, notice, consent, surrogate parents, free and appropriate public education (FAPE), least restrictive environment (LRE), evaluations and dispute resolution methods such as mediation and due process.

Date: Thursday, January 18, 2024

Time: 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.

Webinar: Examinando sus derechos de paternidad

Este entrenamiento proporciona información básica sobre los derechos de los padres bajo la ley IDEA, incluyendo confidencialidad, notificación previa, consentimiento, padres sustitutos, educación pública gratuita y apropiada (FAPE), ambiente menos restrictivo (LRE), evaluaciones y resolución de disputas por mediación o audiencia del debido proceso.

Fecha: jueves, 18 de enero de 2024

Hora: 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.

FY24 Legal Updates - School Psychologists Webinar

The Division for Special Education Services and Supports is hosting a Technical Assistance online webinar for school psychologists.

Jamila Pollard, Legal Officer/Senior Program Manager, will deliver updates regarding current dispute resolution data in Georgia and discuss some common IDEA violations found in formal state complaints and due process hearings. The webinar will place an emphasis on IDEA violations that are related to the work

of School Psychologists. This webinar will occur virtually on January 18, 2024 from 1 - 2:30 p.m.

FY24 GaDOE Legal Updates: School Psychologists Registration

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

Important Budget Announcement: High-Cost Fund for Special Educations Services Grant and Grant for Residential & Reintegration Services

The High-Cost Fund for Special Education Services Grant and Grant for Residential & Reintegration Services submission period opened January 1st. The updated resources for the Georgia High-Cost Fund Grant and Residential & Reintegration Services Grant can be accessed online at the [GaDOE Competitive Grants 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 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, 2024. 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 page here. Please contact your budget liaison for further information or technical assistance.

Language and Literacy in Preschool Trainings Available

Join us for an in-person, day-long workshop designed for teachers, paraprofessionals, and related service providers of preschool students with disabilities. This session will focus on Language & Literacy that incorporates instruction on phonological awareness, concepts of print, and alphabetic

knowledge. Information presented will be based on literacy research and how literacy instruction in the early years impacts reading in elementary school and beyond. Participants will learn to identify a variety of methods for differentiating instruction for all children with a focus on intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia.

This Best Practices Training, led by staff from Georgia State University's Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education, provides professional development tools needed to keep Georgia educators at the forefront of current research and field-tested classroom methodology. Each attendee will receive two preschool books with coordinating activities for use in the classroom.

Training will be from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at each location. Seating is limited so register early. Registration information can be found in the [Georgia Department of Education Professional Learning Catalog](#).

January 19, 2024 – Warner Robins

January 25, 2024 – Albany

February 6, 2024 – Dublin

February 9, 2024 – Rome

February 22, 2024 – Black Creek

February 28, 2024 – Dearing

March 7, 2024 – Athens

March 21, 2024 – Atlanta

If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Ross at Barbara.ross@doe.k12.ga.us or Lynn Holland at lholland@doe.k12.ga.us.

GCASE Scholarships available

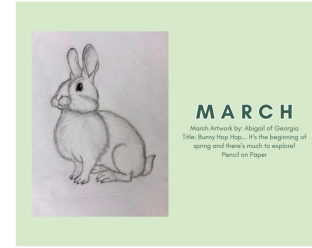
GCASE is providing Special Education teachers or Special Education paraprofessionals two scholarships of \$1000 each to continue their education. In addition to the \$1000 for higher education, paraprofessionals who are not CEC members will receive a one-year free CEC membership. To apply, complete the Google Form by February 28.

[2024 Theodore Smith Scholarship Application](#)

**Georgia Council for Exceptional
Children**

CEC 2024 Convention & Expo

CEC is offering free registration to their annual convention for building principals and paraprofessionals! This is a savings of \$600 for non-CEC members! Help principals better support your entire team by bringing them to CEC 2024. Register today and bring a principal for free. Have principals register using code 24CEC100.



CEC 2024 Calendar

A Georgia special education student's artwork is featured in CEC's 2024 calendar. Each \$10 purchase of a calendar benefits CEC's "Yes I Can" Fund, one of CEC's endowments designated to support the "Yes I Can" program, which includes recognizing the achievement of students with disabilities each year.

GET READY *For Summer Grow*

COME JOIN US FOR A 4 DAY EMPLOYMENT EXPLORATION EXPERIENCE! WHILE ENJOYING ACTIVITIES ON OUR CAMPUS AT ROOSEVELT WARM SPRINGS AND LIVING IN OUR DORMS, YOU WILL ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES THAT WILL PREPARE YOU FOR YOUR GOALS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL.

Activities Include

- Tour post-secondary programs in our community
- Visit the 7 Career Pathways offered at RWS
- Develop a Transition Toolkit
- Participate in cookouts and recreational activities
- Tour community industry virtually and in person

Dates Available

- June 3rd - 6th (18 years and older)
- June 10th - 13th (18 years and older)
- June 17th - 20th (14-17 years)
- June 24th - 27th (14 - 17 years)

Criteria

- Pre-Ets Permission form complete
- Current IEP
- Enrollment in a high school
- Independent in all activities of daily living
- Able to ambulate and navigate campus
- Able to self-monitor behavior and agree to follow campus rules

The email to submit applications and actual application will be available in February! Start thinking of great candidates today!



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