

# Practical Strategies for Reducing Disproportionality in Special Education

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Georgia Department of Education

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SELDA

# Learning Targets



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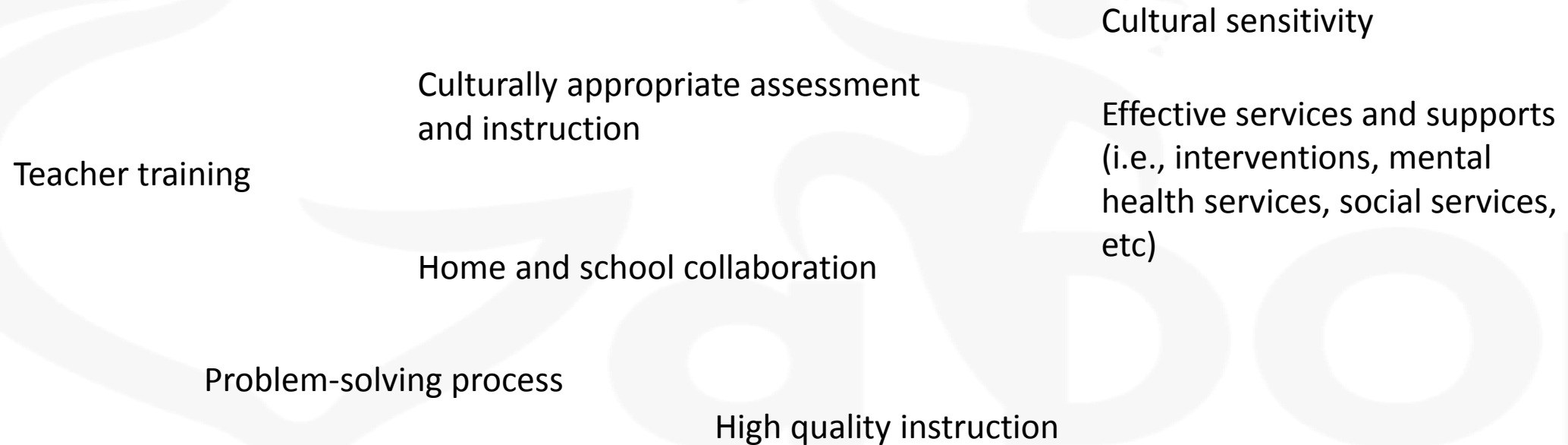
- I can identify some practical strategies to implement that will help reduce disproportionality in my district
- I can identify types of noncompliance that is frequently cited by GaDOE
- I can identify different types of data that should be examined when analyzing disproportionality

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# Reducing Disproportionality



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# General Supervision

- Reviewing policies, procedures, and practices (PPPs) to make sure they are compliant, effective, and implemented with fidelity
- Providing high quality professional learning and technical assistance
- Supervision and Monitoring of Processes and Procedures
- Data-based Decision Making



# PPPs: Compliance, Effectiveness, and Fidelity



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## Compliance

We must move from **policies** to best **practices** for implementing:

- State Board Rules
- Georgia's Special Education Rules
- IDEA

# Written Procedures

Policies provide guidance to help people make decisions. Procedures are the "how to(s)" that describe the actions or tasks that need to be done to implement the policy.

- SST/RTI/MTSS
- Special Education Rules
- Discipline
- Retention

# Policy vs Procedures

## POLICY

- Each school shall have a minimum of one SST and shall establish support team procedures.

## PROCEDURE

- Prior to the beginning of the school year, the administrative team will assign an SST chairperson and develop/revise procedures for SST implementation. All faculty and staff will be trained on procedures prior to the beginning of school by district and school staff.

# Policy vs Procedures

## POLICY

- Before a referral is made for other supplemental or support services an evaluation and/or assessment shall be conducted.

## PROCEDURE

- Include in the SST referral packet the results of recent standardized testing and/or benchmark assessments

# Policy vs Procedures vs Practices



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## POLICY

- Each LEA must conduct a full and individual initial evaluation before the initial provision of special education and related services to a child with a disability and it must be completed within 60 calendar days of receiving parental consent for evaluation

## PROCEDURE

- Upon completion of referral packet, the packet is sent to the Office of Special Education to be reviewed for compliance/completeness. If complete, the packet is assigned to school psychologist. The parent is contacted to obtain consent for evaluation. After completion of evaluation, evaluation is submitted to Office of Special Education.

## PRACTICES

- Special education coordinator reviews packets for completeness/compliance. Special education director assigns evaluation to school psychologist. School psychologist obtains parental consent and gives copy of signed consent form to Office of Special Education. Special Education Director/appointee adds case information to timeline log. 30 days after consent is signed, Office of Special education sends a 30-day notice to school psychologist, principal, and teachers. School psychologist submits completed evaluation to Office of Special Education. Special Education Director/appointee updates timelines log.

# Research and Examination of Special Education Eligibility Process



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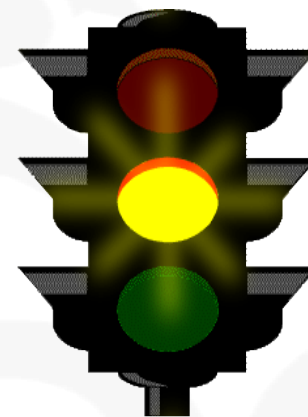
Identify key decision points in special education eligibility process to examine disproportionality

- Referral to SST
- Referral for initial assessment
- Referral for special education evaluation and eligibility
- Special education eligibility placement decisions

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# Examination of Practices

## SST and Child Find Rule



- Child Find Activities
- SST meeting participants
  - Parent/guardian invitation
- Steps of SST are clear in documentation
- Documentation of scientific, research, or evidence based interventions
- Progress monitoring data

# Examination of Practices



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## Initial Evaluations and Reevaluations

- Reevaluation or redetermination conducted every 3 years
- Comprehensive, individual assessment, and assessed in all areas related to suspected disability
- Technically sound instruments and variety of tools and strategies used for evaluation, including information provided by parents
- Initial evaluation completed within 60 day timeline of parental consent

# Examination of Practices

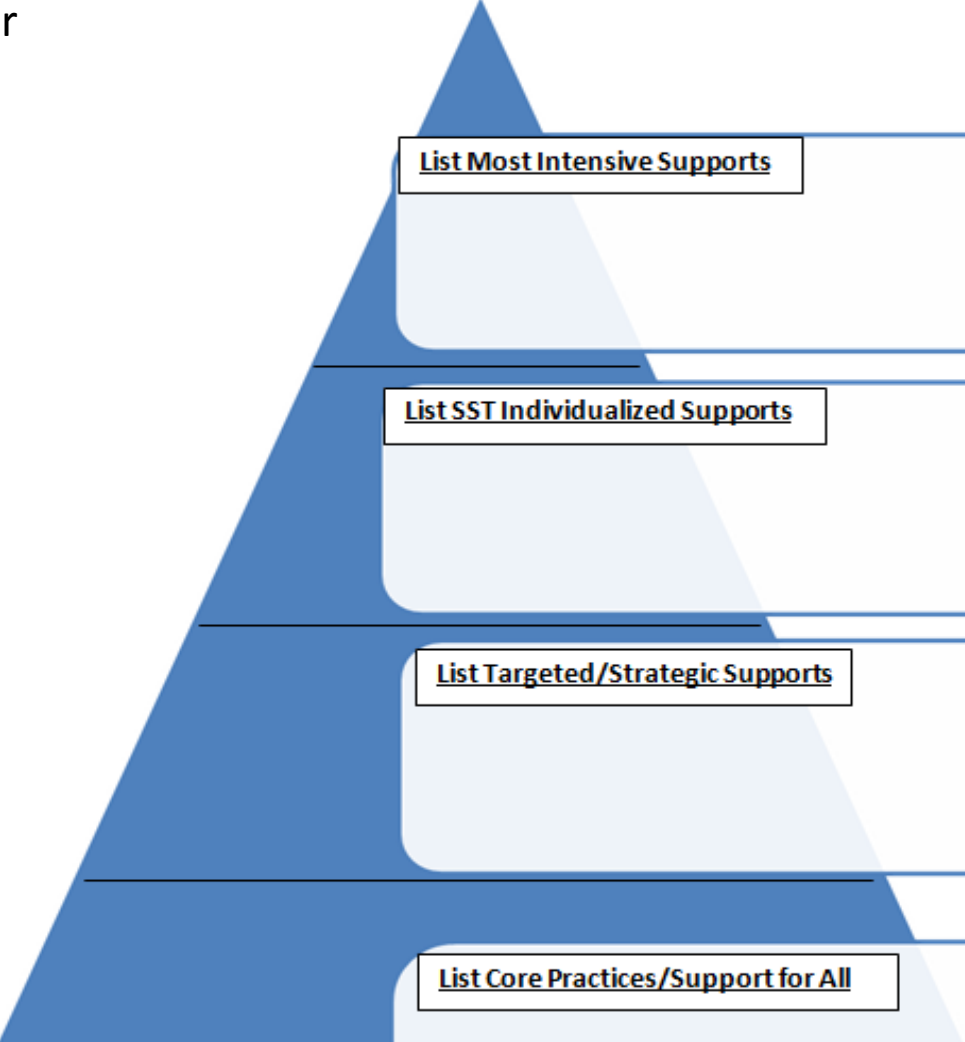


## Eligibility Determination

- A group of qualified professionals and the parents of the child (Eligibility Team) determines whether the child is a child with a disability and the educational needs of the child
- Comprehensive, individual assessment, and assessed in all areas related to suspected disability
- Draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input, and teacher recommendations, as well as information about the child's physical condition, social or cultural background and adaptive behavior;
- Initial evaluation completed within 60 day timeline of parental consent

# Pyramid Activity

Quick Audit of Practices within the Four-Tier  
Georgia Pyramid of Interventions



The diagram shows a blue pyramid divided into four horizontal tiers. Each tier is associated with a text box on the right side of the pyramid, containing a prompt for listing interventions. The tiers are ordered from most intensive at the top to core practices at the bottom.

Tier	Intervention Type
1	List Most Intensive Supports
2	List SST Individualized Supports
3	List Targeted/Strategic Supports
4	List Core Practices/Support for All

# Eligibility Determinations



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- Relevant Case History
- Interventions must be identified
- Date range for intervention, baseline dates, and progress monitoring dates
- **CONDUCT** comprehensive evaluations and evaluate in all suspected areas of need, not just suspected disability
  - **MAKE** appropriate and thorough decisions regarding the need to conduct reevaluations and presume that a reevaluation is needed rather than presuming that it is not.
- Eligibilities are considered based upon weaknesses identified in comprehensive evaluation
- Exclusionary factors must be addressed and have written rationales for Yes responses
- Final Eligibility choices must include rationale

# Data: From Compliance to Improvement



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- LRE
- Screenings
- Evaluation to Eligibility Ratios
- Alternate Assessment
- Eligibility Categories
- Timelines
- Disciplinary Removals
- Standardized Testing Data
- Reevaluations and Redeterminations
- Attendance
- Graduation Rate
- Drop Out Rate
- MDRs
- SST
- Progress Monitoring
- Post Secondary Outcomes

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# Activity



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Adapted Annotated Checklist for Addressing Racial Disproportionality  
in Special Education (2008) by Losen and Wisconsin Department of  
Public Instruction

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