



Office of Federal Programs Division for Special Education

Educating Georgia's Future

September 2, 2022

Welcome

Greetings from the State Director

Directors,

Created during the labor movement in the late 19th century, Labor Day is an established tradition paying tribute to the contributions of the American workers. The first Labor Day was celebrated on September 5, 1882 in New York City to bring attention to working conditions and long hours for American workers. A parade was held on that day -but it was more of a protest to affect change. Protests and unrest continued for several years with often unsafe working conditions before changes were made. By June 1894, Congress passed an act making Labor Day a legal holiday with President Grover Cleveland signing it into law. (As a side note, my daughter was a fierce competitor as an Academic Bowl team player from 3rd -12th grades. She also had the opportunity to make several appearances on WSB High-Q. There is a standing tradition among competitors that if you really don't know the answer, use President Grover Cleveland as the default. Clearly, learning that Labor Day was signed into law by President Cleveland made me smile.) Hope you take this weekend to recharge and enjoy some of the final days of summer. You have labored and it is time for a brief rest. Enjoy the long weekend!



This week's district spotlight is on Crisp County Schools. The highlight was submitted from our Math Unit in Teaching and Learning at GaDOE. Learn more about Number Talks and the impact on Ms. Hubbard's third grade inclusion class. Way to go - Crisp County!

Our staff spotlight is shining brightly on Trace Vaughn. Trace is a Program Specialist in our Instruction and Systemic improvement Unit. He leads several initiatives related to systemic improvement as well as the Special Education School Administrator's Academy. Trace often narrates videos and podcasts as he sounds like a professional broadcaster. We are very fortunate to have Trace on our team. He provides strong leadership to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

Our new director spotlight is Amy Wadley from Barrow County Schools. Learn more about her journey to the director's role as well as how her first principal influenced her educational career. Congratulations, Amy, on your new role!

Please join us on September 15, 2022 for Session 1 of our Specially Designed Instruction Professional Learning Series. This series is a multi-year initiative to support improved outcomes for students with disabilities. The series is appropriate for all teachers, leaders, coordinators and other support personnel. General education teachers supporting inclusive models of instruction are highly recommended to participate with their co-teaching partner. Please see the



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details in the full eblast for registration links. Join the fun as we learn and grow together. Our GLRS Regional Centers as well as GaDOE staff are here to support, redeliver and coach this work. We would love to partner with your region or district.

This week's MTSS Snapshot is particularly relevant for students with disabilities. Please take time to read and share the message.

In honor of Labor Day, I will leave you with a few quotes:

- "Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." Confucius
- "The miracle is not that we do this work, but that we are happy to do it." M. Teresa
- "Nothing will work unless you do." M. Angelou
- "The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary." V. Lombardi
- "If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair." S Chisholm



We may be sitting in folding chairs at times but never underestimate your power to influence support and services for students with disabilities.

You are appreciated and loved! Thank you for all you do each day!

Keeping Students First,

Wina

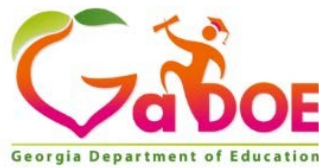
Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review our [Georgia DOE SPED Calendar](#) for upcoming events and the [Due Dates Calendar](#) for deadlines and key dates.

Coming Up

- **September 7** at 10:00 AM – Areas of Eligibility, Assessment and GAA (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: Areas of Eligibility and Assessment & GAA - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 7** at 2:00 PM – Integrating Social Studies Content for Secondary Students with Disabilities (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Integrating Social Studies for SWDs - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 14** at 10:00 AM – Being the Instructional Leader for Special Education (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: Being the Instructional Leader for SPED - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 14** at 2:00 PM – Integrating Science Content for Secondary Students with Disabilities (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Integrating Science Content for SWDs - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 2022** – Regional Budget & Data Sessions are scheduled. Information about the sessions including registration information is available on the [GaDOE Community Professional Learning Events](#) website. A listing of the sessions with specific locations and registration links is in this Email Blast. The format of these sessions will be application based. They will not be a repeat of the Data Collections conference presentations. Please contact Dr. Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us, if you have any questions.





Professional Learning Events

Upcoming virtual webinars, in-person events, on-demand content, and by-request workshop opportunities are available at <https://community.gadoe.org/events>.

Reminders

- **September 23** – Timelines (Prong 1) is due in the SE Applications Dashboard. Note: ONLY for LEAs that were not at 100% on Timelines on July 31, 2022. If you have questions about this process, please contact Laurie Ponsell at lponsell@doe.k12.ga.us, Linda Castellanos at lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us, or Dr. Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us.



New Director Spotlight: Amy Wadley

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

Amy Vandenberg Wadley is the Special Education Director for Barrow County and has been in the field of Education for 22 years. Ms. Wadley began her professional career as a social worker, then decided to change paths and go into the field of special education. Ms. Wadley's first teaching position was in a self-contained behavior support classroom, where she then moved to resource, co-teaching, and became a department chair. Ms. Wadley became a special education coordinator in 2015, Assistant Director in 2019, and is now the Special Education Director.

When speaking of her educational career, Ms. Wadley refers to Mr. Rob Johnson, who was her first principal when she was hired as a special education teacher at Winder-Barrow High School. "He took a chance on me even though I didn't have teaching experience- I was a social worker! He was so very supportive of me in all my years at WBHS and he was a shining example of someone who poured himself into what he did. This was no job for him- it was a passion! No one ever doubted how much Mr. Johnson cared for his students and staff. Mr. Johnson's example taught me all I needed to know about hard work, consistency, firmness, grace, and care. He frequently challenged us to reconnect to the joys of teaching and to remember why we do what we do- it's all for our students!"

When not serving and supporting students and families, Ms. Wadley enjoys traveling, Georgia football, really good food, her pets, running or hiking in the great outdoors, and precious time with her three children.





GaDOE Staff Highlight: Trace Vaughn

Trace has served as a systemic improvement program specialist in the Instruction and Systemic Improvement Unit for 1.5 years. Prior to coming to GaDOE, he worked in Gordon County for 20 years, serving as a special education teacher for eight years and as a graduation coach for 12 years. Before moving to education, he worked in non-profits, primarily with adults with disabilities and as executive director of a United Way.

Trace has been instrumental in establishing and facilitating the Special Education and School Administrator Academy. SESAA served 154 administrators in the initial cohort in the spring, and we currently have over 300 in the second cohort. SESAA was created as a response to stakeholder input that we have many administrators who have little to no experience in the realm of special education in Georgia. The goals of SESAA are to build capacity around special education, support new and/or induction level school-based leaders, and

strengthen collaborative relationships between school-based administrators, special education directors, and families. Trace also started a podcast for GaDOE's Special Education Division called "What's Special in Georgia."

Trace played basketball and volleyball at Mercer University, where he graduated with a B.A. in Psychology, and he later obtained his Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of South Florida. He recently married Rondie Raines, after both lost their long-time spouses to cancer in 2019. Together, they have five daughters, five sons-in-law, and they will soon have five grandchildren ages two and younger. They also have a three-year-old cocker spaniel named Graham. Trace enjoys rooting for Mercer, the Atlanta Braves, and UGA, writing, reading, singing in his church choir, and boating. He and Rondie currently live on Lake Chatuge in Young Harris, but they plan to find a place more centralized to all their kids and grandkids soon.

District Highlight: Crisp County

This week we want to highlight Crisp County's Crissy Hubbard from Crisp County Primary School!

In mathematics, the emphasis is on reasoning and thinking about the quantities within mathematical contexts. Algorithms, tape diagrams (bar models), and number line representations are a few examples of ways that students communicate their strategic thinking in a written form. Students may solve problems in different ways and have the flexibility to choose a mathematical strategy that allows them to make sense of and strategically solve problems using efficient methods that are most comfortable for and makes sense to them. Crissy Hubbard uses Number Talks in her 3rd grade Inclusion class at Crisp County Primary School to build strategic thinkers. A Number Talk is a 10 to 15-minute whole group mental math activity where students find the answer to a math problem in their heads, then share aloud the strategies they used to find that answer. This strategy helps to develop quality student discourse in a whole class setting as students are encouraged to explain their thinking, justify their reasoning, and make sense of each other's strategies. For more information about Number Talks visit the [Effective Instructional Practices Guide](#). Teacher actions for providing language supports during Number Talks are provided within the [Georgia Mathematics Strategies Toolkit to Address Learner Variability](#).



Practice Pointers – General Fiscal Management

Local educational agencies (LEAs) accepting federal funds must implement procedures to ensure appropriate fiscal management of funds. The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) processes and procedures are based on the fiscal regulations and guidance provided by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) through the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (known as the Uniform Grants Guidance or UGG) and EDGAR.



When planning for budgeting for all federal programs, the LEA must: 1) Adhere to the LEA's approved Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP); 2) Coordinate funds to meet the goals and needs of the LEA; 3) Include all supporting program documents (job descriptions, class size reduction worksheets, class size reduction documentation, private school documents, etc.); and 4) Account for the expense of all funds in the year in which they are allocated. LEAs accepting federal funds must also implement procedures to ensure appropriate fiscal management of funds. The GaDOE indirect cost calculation, chart of accounts, and Grants Accounting Online Reporting System (GAORS) used to draw down funds and report when all funds have been expended (completion report) are resources to assist LEAs with fiscal management.

For more information please visit our website at [Budget, Grants and Consolidated Application](#) and see our [Federal Programs Handbook](#).

FY23 Data, Privacy, and Cybersecurity Conference - Presentations

It was a pleasure to see so many special education leaders at the conference this week. Thank you for all you do for students with disabilities in the state. If you were unable to attend the conference, the presentations are linked below.

- [Navigating the Disproportionality Maze](#)
- [Equitable Services and Proportionate Share for IDEA](#)
- [FTE Update for Special Education](#)
- [FTE Back to Basics](#)
- [State Performance Plan—Annual Performance Report: Why does it matter for LEAs?](#)
- [Student Class—Special Education Delivery Models](#)
- [Student Record and Special Education—A Critical Reporting Relationship](#)
- [Student Class Update for Special Education](#)



Please contact Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us or Linda Castellanos at lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us with any questions.

Reactivation of GTIDs

The following message went out on Friday, 8/26, to all school superintendents regarding the reactivation of GTIDs for students who were marked as graduated during Student Record data collection, but did not receive a general education diploma. More than 95% of those students are students with disabilities instructed using alternate content standards. The new approval process to reactivate the GTID of these incorrectly graduated students must be followed before the GTID can be reactivated and the student can be sent as active in FTE and earn FTE funding. Please see the announcement [here](#).

FY23 Special Education Budget and Data: Filling your Toolbox with the Right Tools

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



The format of these sessions will be application based. They will not be a repeat of the Data Collections conference presentations. If you have an opportunity to attend one of these sessions, please consider attending. **None of these sessions are closed.** There was a glitch last week and a couple of the sessions were accidentally closed. These have been reopened.

Registration: A schedule of the sessions is listed below. Each day of the two-day sessions is from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. All sessions are open for registration in the [Professional Learning Catalog](#). Registration for specific sessions is also available [here](#).



Important Budget Update: Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 IDEA Consolidated Application Tabs

The proportionate share and Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) subgrant tabs are in production for the FY23 budgets and available for your use. Local educational agencies (LEAs) will no longer need to complete and upload the Excel worksheets for these subgrants. Directors will resume calculating each subgrant set-aside amount in the Program Information tab of the Consolidated Application. The proportionate share amount for equitable services for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) grant will now be calculated in separate tabs of the 611 Flowthrough and 619 Preschool grants. The CCEIS expenditures will continue to be calculated in the CCEIS tab of the 611 Flowthrough grant. If you have any questions, please contact your [Budget Liaison](#).

Important Budget Update: Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Completion Reports for Subgrant Expenditures

Local educational agencies (LEAs) will submit the completion report for **subgrant expenditures** (i.e., proportionate share and Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) or Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) expenditures) differently for FY 2022. The reporting change is due to LEAs having to calculate the set aside amounts for proportionate share and CCEIS/CEIS using Excel worksheets because of the IDEA 611 ARP and IDEA 619 ARP allocations. In prior years, LEAs completed the Proportionate Share and CEIS Budget Worksheet tabs in the Consolidated Application instead of worksheets. The completed Proportionate Share and CEIS Budget Worksheet tabs populated the completion report. Therefore, LEAs will report actual subgrant expenditures using Microsoft forms for this reporting period by **October 30, 2022**. All LEAs must complete and submit the [proportionate share form](#) except for Charter LEAs. Additionally, only required and optional LEAs must complete the [CCEIS/CEIS form](#).

LEAs will still prepare and submit the completion reports for **grant expenditures** through the MyGaDOE portal application. Please share this update with the appropriate personnel. Should you have questions, please contact your [Budget Liaison](#).



Preparing for Your IDEA 2023 Budgets

The Special Education Budget Unit will host Open Office Hour for help with IDEA fiscal requirements. This informal, open-forum session will provide an opportunity for districts to ask questions and receive the technical support needed to successfully complete FY 2023 budgets and meet the maintenance of effort (MOE) eligibility standard. The session will begin with the Special Education Budget Unit sharing important requirements and reminders and then opening the floor for questions.

Date: Wednesday, September 7, 2022

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

[Special Education Office Hours Registration Link](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. For more information, please contact your [Budget Liaison](#).

Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership (GaPMP) 2022 Kickoff

We are happy to share the registration link for the 2022 GaPMP Kickoff, Sharing the Journey! This year our Kickoff dates are September 7-8, 2022. We will again be meeting virtually. On September 7-8, there are in-person locations that will broadcast

the virtual meeting allowing groups to participate virtually together. You can choose to come together or watch from your own computer. We encourage you to join a conference hub for camaraderie and to meet our new parent mentors. There is no cost for the Kickoff. Any travel expenses must be reimbursed by your local school district.

Date: September 7 from 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Date: September 8 from 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

[Sharing the Journey Registration Link](#)

An agenda will soon be made available. Additional information can be found on the [GaPMP webpage](#). If you are still in the process of filling your parent mentor position, please contact Anne Ladd at aladd@doe.k12.ga.us and complete the [New Parent Mentor Form](#).



Georgia
Parent Mentor
Partnership

Trauma Informed and Mental Health Symposium

Join Georgia Southern University for a unique conference bringing together professionals, community members, and activists to learn, discuss, and enhance mental wellness for all. The symposium will take place on September 10, 2022 from 9 a.m.—1 p.m. at Georgia Southern University's Armstrong Campus. There will be food trucks, keynote speakers, breakouts for discussion as well as opening remarks by the SCCPSS Deputy Superintendent, Ms. Bernadette Ball-Oliver.

You can register to attend this conference [here](#). For more information, please see the [flier](#) as well as the [program of events](#).

Georgia's Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) Professional Learning Series for Elementary Educators and Secondary Educators

Session 1: Why and What is Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)?

This is the first of four sessions to build knowledge and skills around Specially Designed Instruction. This professional learning series will focus on supporting teachers and leaders in implementing specially designed instruction to increase the academic achievement of students with disabilities.



Date: September 15, 2022

Elementary Session: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

[Georgia's SDI for Elementary Educators, Session 1 Registration](#)

Secondary Session: 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

[Georgia's SDI for Secondary Educators, Session 1 Registration](#)

Audience: Elementary and Secondary Teachers, Instructional Coaches/Coordinators, MTSS Team, Paraprofessionals, School Leaders, Teacher Leaders

Upcoming sessions:

- October 12, 2022
- January 25, 2023
- February 22, 2023

For more information about upcoming sessions, please see the flier [here](#). If you have any questions contact: Yyanisha Bass at Yyanisha.Bass@doe.k12.ga.us.



Social Studies Opportunity

Are you looking for support with Personal Finance and Economics? The Teacher Notes for Fundamentals, Microeconomics, and International are available NOW. The [Teacher Notes](#) are also available for access. Need more help with the Personal Finance domain? The [Personal Financial Literacy Elective course teacher notes](#) will be helpful. Need help with a different grade/course? GaDOE Social Studies has Teacher Notes for each grade and course on the [Georgia Standards of Excellence webpage](#). Teacher Notes are NOT intended for students but are a great resource for teachers.

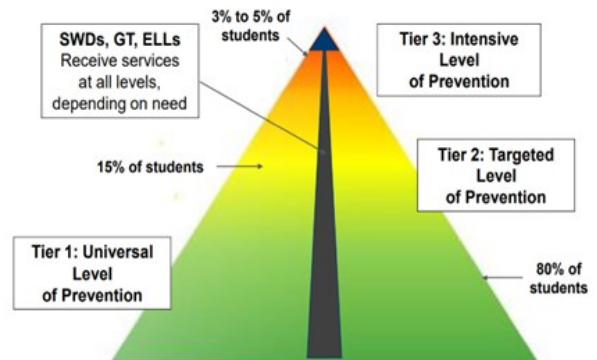
Come see the GaDOE Social Studies team at the GCSS Conference in Athens. Our sessions include:

- Bulletin Bored? Learn to Create Inquiry-Based Displays in a Social Studies Classroom
- Social Studies Takes on Careers! The Public Management and Administration/Social Studies Embedded Pathway
- Wiggling, Wondering, and Working: Welcoming Social Studies Inquiry into Your K-2 Classroom
- Inquiring EL Minds Want to Know (and Participate) in Social Studies
- Compass Over Maps: Calibrating Your Social Studies Compass in Times of Change.

Visit the [Georgia Council for the Social Studies website](#) to register for the conference.

MTSS Snapshot: What should be considered for students with disabilities when implementing a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS)?

As we implement a multi-tiered system of supports, the needs of students with disabilities must be considered at each of the three tiers. As we reflect on the multi-level prevention system, gifted students, English Learners, and students with disabilities should receive services at all levels, depending on their diverse needs.



At Tier I, it is essential that students with disabilities receive access to effective standards-based instruction that is supplemented by specially-designed instruction (SDI). As teachers and/or co-teachers are planning standards-based lessons, it is critical that the content, methodology and/or delivery of instruction is designed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities, Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) (gadoe.org). While implementing SDI, it is also critical that co-teachers have co-planning time to discuss the intent of the standards and how to integrate SDI into their lessons.

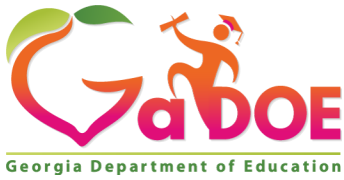
Co-teachers and/or small group teachers should consistently have access to planning time and professional learning with their grade-level teachers and/or instructional support staff. This provides an opportunity for all teachers to have the same access to professional learning that supports effective Tier I instruction. This professional learning helps to ensure that all teachers have an opportunity to the following actions that support effective Tier I instruction:

- discussing the intent of the standards
- discussing effective best practices
- analyzing data

As we consider supports at Tiers II and/or III, students with disabilities also should have access to effective evidence-based interventions that address their identified gaps. This additional support should complement Tier I instruction. Students should not miss Tier I instructional time to receive support at Tiers II and/or III. If this happens, it will continue to impact their access to their grade-level standards.

When universal screeners are administered, this data should be analyzed for all students along with at least two other data sources. Based on this data analysis, students with disabilities should not be excluded from accessing evidence-based interventions that address their unique needs. Special education is a service, not an intervention, so ensuring that students with disabilities have access to these interventions is crucial to help support closing gaps. Once a student with a disability receives an eligibility, there still may be unique needs that need to be met at Tiers II and/or III. As these interventions are implemented, progress monitoring should continue as the interventions are implemented with fidelity. As we continue to reflect on the needs of students with disabilities, it is important to remember that their needs must be considered at all three tiers of the multi-level prevention system.

For additional information, feel free to reach out to the MTSS regional coaches or Karen Suddeth at ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us to learn more.



Office of Federal Programs Division for Special Education

Educating Georgia's Future

September 9, 2022

Welcome

Greetings from the State Director

Directors,

Anne Ladd received the Visionary Award during the Georgia's Parent Mentor Partnership Kickoff on Thursday, September 8, 2022. The Visionary Award, given in partnership with G-CASE, provides well deserved recognition for Anne. Anne is typically the one ensuring that others are recognized for their dedication and commitment to students with disabilities. She is gracious with her time and talents and more comfortable recognizing others than receiving the recognition. Anne is only the second state leader of the Parent Mentor Partnership. Having served in this role for 10 years, her impact will leave a lasting legacy. I am grateful for Anne's leadership and vision. Congratulations, Anne! The Parent Mentor Partnership is celebrating 20 years of service in Georgia.



The Phil Pickens award winners for this year are Alecia Segursky from Gordon County Schools receiving the Director award and Jane Grillo from White County Schools receiving the Parent Mentor award. Both leaders are legendary in their service and support to students with disabilities. This recognition is the highest honor for a local Special Education Director and Parent Mentor to receive from the Parent Mentor Partnership. The Phil Pickens awards are named after the State Director, Phil Pickens, responsible for establishing the partnership.

Our September Director's webinar is scheduled for Tuesday, September 13, 2022 beginning at 1:00 pm. Look forward to seeing you next week! [Director's Webinar Link](#)

Our district highlight is from Fulton County Schools. Learn more about the Milton High School athlete competing in the United Kingdom as a Powerlifting athlete. Dave Githutu qualified for the Amateur World Powerlifting Congress championship in England. He will compete in his weight class against non-disabled lifters. This competition, although not affiliated with Special Olympics, is an incredible opportunity for Dave to further his accomplishments on top of his achievements through Special Olympics. So proud of Dave and the support provided by Milton High School and Fulton County Schools.

Our staff spotlight this week is shining brightly on April Calloway. April is a Budget Support Analyst for the Dispute Resolution unit. Her duties include processing invoices for mediation and investigations. We are grateful for April's dedication and service and the critical role she plays to support students and their families.

Our new Special Education Director for the week is Ashley Condon from Buford City Schools. Ashley brings extensive experience to the role of director. Please join me in welcoming Ashley!



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Georgia
Parent Mentor
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Having the opportunity to spend time with our Parent Mentors this week provides the perfect reminder of the critical need for increased communication with families. One of our strategic goals this year is to increase communication with all stakeholders. Parent Mentors are a great way to reach parents. If you do not have a Parent Mentor in your system, please let us know if we can provide additional information. Perhaps you prefer to have a Family Engagement Specialist,

either way, we want to support your work. Family engagement is so important. It would be wonderful to have a Parent Mentor or Family Engagement Specialist in every district. Please join me in working toward this goal.

In closing this week, please allow me to share a big announcement from Fannin County Schools. Shannon Miller, Director of Student Services, has been named the next Superintendent! I am so proud of Shannon and her accomplishments. I was privileged to work with Shannon for many years in Carrollton City Schools while she served in various roles as a teacher, Media Specialist and Assistant Principal. Shannon has a big heart for all children but especially students with disabilities. She would tell me that she wanted to work in Special Education Administration. Clearly, Shannon accomplished her goal in serving as the Director of Student Services in Fannin, but now she will have the opportunity for even more impact as the Superintendent. To my friend of more than 20 years, let me thank you for your dedication and commitment to all children. We will all look forward to following your success through your new role.



Thank you for all you do! You are valued and appreciated.

Keeping Students First,

Wina

Special Education Events & Due Dates

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Coming Up

- **September 13** at 1:00 PM – Special Education Directors' Webinar see [registration link](#) to register in advance.
- **September 14** at 10:00 AM – Being the Instructional Leader for Special Education (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: Being the Instructional Leader for SPED - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 14** at 2:00 PM – Integrating Science Content for Secondary Students with Disabilities (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Integrating Science Content for SWDs - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 21** at 10:00 AM – Special Education Discipline and Positive, Proactive Approaches (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBA: Special Education Discipline - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 27** at 10:00 AM – UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support: Special Ed. Law (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: Avatar Labs for Leadership-Sp. Ed. Law - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 27** at 4:00 PM - UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support: Coteaching Mediation

(FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: UWGLive Avatar Labs- Coteaching Mediation - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.

- **September 28** at 2:00 PM – HLP # 7 & 16 Establishing a Supportive Learning Environment Utilizing Explicit Instructional Strategies (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Utilizing Explicit Instruction - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 30** at 10:00 AM - UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: Avatar Labs-Sp. Ed. Support - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 30** at 2:00 PM - UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBA UWGLive Avatar Labs: Supporting Sp. Ed. - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.



- **September 2022** – Regional Budget & Data Sessions are scheduled. Information about the sessions including registration information is available on the [GaDOE Community Professional Learning Events](#) website. A listing of the sessions with specific locations and registration links is in this Email Blast. The format of these sessions will be application based. They will not be a repeat of the Data Collections conference presentations. Please contact Dr. Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us, if you have any questions.

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New Director Spotlight: Ashley Condon

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

Ashley Condon is the Special Education Director for Buford City Schools and has been in the field of Education for 15 years. Throughout her professional career in education, Ms. Condon worked in Lamar County for six years, Valdosta City Schools for two years, and has currently supported Buford City Schools for seven years. Ms. Condon's hands on educational experiences were in general education for three years working with 3rd grade students, general education for two years working with 5th grade students, and nine years in special education: EBD/ interrelated for 1st - 5th grade students.

When speaking of her educational career, Ms. Condon shares that principal, Kaleen Pulley saw qualities in her that she did not see in herself. "Ms. Pulley pushed me outside of my comfort zone and challenged me to become a better leader every day through the responsibilities she gave me as the Special Ed Department Chair. She was my advocate and always pushed me to strive for the next level. For this, I will forever be grateful for her leadership, courage, and willingness to support me throughout my career".

Ms. Condon is married to Gus Condon, who is also a Special Education teacher and football coach. The Condon's have four children- Lanier (14), Madelyn (8), Mary Kinsell (3) Briggs (2) and their family enjoys Friday Night Lights, cheering on the Buford Wolves, as well as their family loves vacationing at the beach. When Ms. Condon is not serving and supporting students and families, her spare time involves watching their oldest two girls play softball and enjoying time with her family.



GaDOE Staff Highlight: April Calloway

April Calloway has been working in the field of education for 12 years. She is a Business Support Analyst supporting the Budget unit and the Dispute resolution unit. Her duties include processing and updating the GANs reports and letters in the GaDOE portal and handling the purchase orders and invoicing for the dispute resolution unit.

She previously worked for the Georgia Instructional Materials Center (GIMC) where she was responsible for processing the materials for the Special Education students in the districts. Currently, she works for the Dispute Resolution unit where she processes the invoices for the mediation and investigations in student cases. This work is very important to GaDOE and she takes pride in it!

April is a middle child and has a brother and sister. She and her husband, Walter, have been married for 25 years and have three kids, Brian, Kailyn, and Wesley and two grandkids, Jaden and Harper. She has a Bachelors degree in Business Management and has been working for the State of Georgia for nearly 25 years! Her hobbies include bowling and she travels a few times each year to different states to bowl in USBC tournaments. She loves Disney World and it is one of her favorite vacation spots. She also loves traveling across the United States to watch my son, Wesley, play baseball. Her family is her everything. April plans to eventually start a non profit that will support others in their times of need. She attends Mt. Olive Baptist Church and serves as a Youth Coordinator and Culinary servant.

District Highlight: Fulton County Schools

The district highlight this week is an athlete, Dave Githutu, from Milton High School, Fulton County Schools. Last April, Dave qualified for the Amateur World Powerlifting Congress championship in the United Kingdom. He will compete in his weight class against non-disabled lifters. This competition, although not affiliated with Special Olympics, is an incredible opportunity for Dave to further his accomplishments on top of his achievements through Special Olympics.



The UK competition is an important opportunity for Dave and has garnered much support from local businesses who are excited to see this young athlete compete on a world stage. Dave has competed in multiple sports with Special Olympics Georgia and won gold, silver and bronze medals, but weightlifting is his everything.

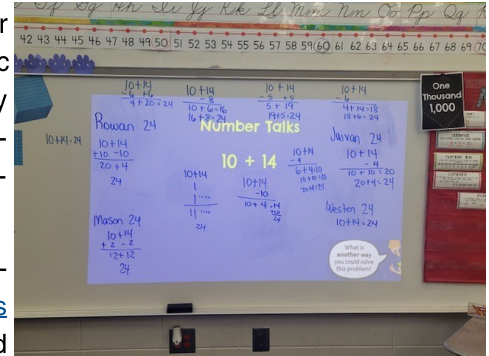
Visit [The Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) to read more about Dave's incredible journey as he prepares for the UK competition. We are excited to follow his road to gold!

Crisp County: Encouraging Mathematical Discourse

Facilitating meaningful mathematical discussions builds a shared understanding of mathematical concepts for the whole class and greatly impacts student achievement. According to John Hattie's research, classroom discussion has an effective size of 0.82. Mathematical discourse can take on multiple forms within the classroom. One form is

through the use of Number Talks. Crissy Hubbard uses Number Talks in her 3rd-grade Inclusion class at Crisp County Primary School to build strategic thinkers. Students exercise voice and the teacher provides ownership by highlighting specific students and their strategies. This intentional incorporation of mathematical discourse can eventually lead to students seeing themselves as mathematics leaders.

The Georgia Department of Education offers resources to support the implementation of mathematical discourse. [The Effective Instructional Practices Guide](#) provides practical steps for implementing Number Talks. Featured within the [Mathematics Virtual Specialist Series](#) are applicable examples of mathematical discourse. Teacher actions for providing language supports while encouraging in mathematical discourse are provided within the [Georgia Mathematics Strategies Toolkit to Address Learner Variability](#).



Practice Pointers – General Supervision Sixth Component: Incentives, Improvement and Correction, and Sanctions

Incentives – Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) are recognized annually for their performance on state performance goals and indicators. Recognition occurs when the LEA achieves one of the following goals: (1) meets the state target; (2) exhibits the highest performance on the goal in their enrollment size group; and (3) demonstrates the most improvement for a specific indicator.



Improvement and Correction – Based on the data in each LEA profile, information obtained through monitoring visits, and any other public information, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) will determine if each LEA: 1) Meets Requirements; 2) Needs Assistance; 3) Needs Intervention; or 4) Needs Substantial Intervention. Determinations are made annually, and superintendents are notified. Determinations should enable LEAs to develop improvement activities and to incorporate those improvement activities into the LEA Improvement Plan. Also, if the State issues a finding of noncompliance, then the LEA must correct the noncompliance, as soon as possible, but no later than one year from the written notification. The LEA must identify the root cause of the area(s) of noncompliance and develop a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

Sanctions – After four consecutive years of not meeting requirements or at any time the State determines that a LEA Needs Substantial Intervention in implementing the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the LEA will be designated as needing substantial intervention. If the State determines that a LEA Needs Substantial Intervention, in addition to all previous activities, IDEA and State funds may be withheld in whole or in part. Additionally, when LEAs fail to correct their noncompliance within one year, one or more sanctions may be implemented, and the GaDOE may direct the LEA to spend funds on specific activities designed to bring the LEA into compliance.

For more information please see the Portal Special Education (SE) Applications Dashboard User Manual accessible to Special Education Directors, and our website at [Special Education Annual Reports and Data Analytics](#).

FY23 Data, Privacy, and Cybersecurity Conference - Presentations

It was a pleasure to see so many special education leaders at the conference. Thank you for all you do for students with disabilities in the state. If you were unable to attend the conference, the presentations are linked below.

- [Navigating the Disproportionality Maze](#)
- [Equitable Services and Proportionate Share for IDEA](#)
- [FTE Update for Special Education](#)
- [FTE Back to Basics](#)
- [State Performance Plan—Annual Performance Report: Why does it matter for LEAs?](#)
- [Student Class—Special Education Delivery Models](#)
- [Student Record and Special Education—A Critical Reporting Relationship](#)
- [Student Class Update for Special Education](#)

Please contact Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us or Linda Castellanos at lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us with any questions.

FY23 Special Education Budget and Data: Filling your Toolbox with the Right Tools

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



The format of these sessions will be application based. They will not be a repeat of the Data Collections conference presentations. If you have an opportunity to attend one of these sessions, please consider attending. **None of these sessions are closed.** There was a glitch last week and a couple of the sessions were accidentally closed. These have been reopened.

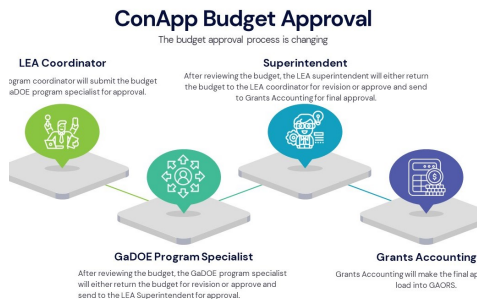
Registration: A schedule of the sessions is listed below. Each day of the two-day sessions is from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. All sessions are open for registration in the [Professional Learning Catalog](#). Registration for specific sessions is also available [here](#).

Important Budget Update: Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Completion Reports for Subgrant Expenditures

Local educational agencies (LEAs) will submit the completion report for **subgrant expenditures** (i.e., proportionate share and Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) or Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) expenditures) differently for FY 2022. The reporting change is due to LEAs having to calculate the set aside amounts for proportionate share and CCEIS/CEIS using Excel worksheets because of the IDEA 611 ARP and IDEA 619 ARP allocations. In prior years, LEAs completed the Proportionate Share and CEIS Budget Worksheet tabs in the Consolidated Application instead of worksheets. The completed Proportionate Share and CEIS Budget Worksheet tabs populated the completion report. Therefore, LEAs will report actual subgrant expenditures using Microsoft forms for this reporting period by **October 30, 2022**. All LEAs must complete and submit the [proportionate share form](#) except for Charter LEAs. Additionally, only required and optional LEAs must complete the [CCEIS/CEIS form](#).

LEAs will still prepare and submit the completion reports for **grant expenditures** through the MyGaDOE portal application. Please share this update with the appropriate personnel. Should you have questions, please contact your [Budget Liaison](#).

FY23 Consolidated Application Budget Approval



This is a reminder of the new budget approval process. The process has the LEA Coordinator sign off on the budget, which then sends the GaDOE Program Specialist the budget to review and either approve or request a revision. If adjustments are required, the LEA Coordinator makes the adjustments and approves the budget, which sends the budget back to the GaDOE Specialist. Once the GaDOE Specialist approves the budget, it is sent to the LEA Superintendent for approval and sign-off. The LEA Superintendent still has the option to sign-off or reject and send the budget back to the LEA Coordinator. After the Superintendent signs-off, the budget goes straight to Grants Accounting

so that the budget can get loaded into GAORS. This new process improves the workflow and speeds up the process.

Georgia’s Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) Professional Learning Series for Elementary Educators and Secondary Educators

Session 1: Why and What is Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)?

This is the first of four sessions to build knowledge and skills around Specially Designed Instruction. This professional learning series will focus on supporting teachers and leaders in implementing specially designed instruction to increase the academic achievement of students with disabilities.



Date: September 15, 2022

Elementary Session: 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

[Georgia's SDI for Elementary Educators, Session 1 Registration](#)

Secondary Session: 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

[Georgia's SDI for Secondary Educators, Session 1 Registration](#)

Audience: Elementary and Secondary Teachers, Instructional Coaches/Coordinators, MTSS Team, Paraprofessionals, School Leaders, Teacher Leaders

Upcoming sessions:

- October 12, 2022
- January 25, 2023
- February 22, 2023

For more information about upcoming sessions, please see the flier [here](#). If you have any questions contact: Yyanisha Bass at Yyanisha.Bass@doe.k12.ga.us.

Special Education Due Dates FY23 Calendar Revised

The FY23 Special Education Due Dates Calendar posted at [Data Collection and Reporting](#) has been revised to reflect new due dates for Prong 1 (September 23, 2022) and 2 (November 4, 2022) in the Timelines Application. The Calendar is also posted in the Special Education Applications Dashboard.

Please contact Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us or Linda Castellanos at lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us if you have any questions.

MTSS Snapshot: Why is effective vocabulary instruction critical for effective Tier I instruction?

As educators plan for teaching the Georgia Standards of Excellence, it is essential that the Language of the Standard (LOTS) be reinforced. If students do not know the intent of the standard, they are already at a disadvantage in mastering the standard.

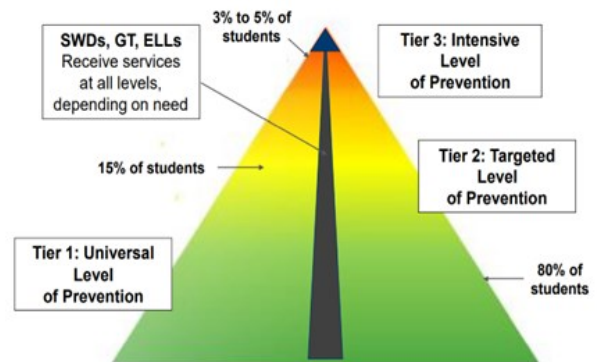
During planning, teachers should identify specific strategies to teach and reinforce LOTS during the opening and work period to ensure students understand the demands of the standard. Explicitly teaching vocabulary has the potential to empower students to read, comprehend, and analyze new texts of increasing complexity, with modeling as the key. Engaging strategies that help promote retention of the vocabulary need to be discussed by collaborative teams.

At Tier I, deconstructing the standard includes making sure the critical vocabulary is understood by the students, [Ga-DOE Deconstructing the GSE 5-Step Protocol ELA Example](#). Use of this 5-Step Protocol can assist with this process. As teachers determine strategies to help with understanding the vocabulary, several strategies can be obtained from [Vocabulary Strategies Toolbox](#).

When referencing the IES Practice Guide for English Learners in Elementary and Middle School, it is important to teach each set of academic vocabulary words intensively across several days using a variety of instructional activities, [English Learners Practice Guide](#). When teaching math in the early grades, it is essential to teach clear and concise mathematical language and support students' use of the language to help them effectively communicate their understanding, [WWC | Assisting Students Struggling with Mathematics](#). In order to be able to do this, there has to be an intentional focus on ensuring students have a thorough understanding of the essential vocabulary of the standard. As we support students in kindergarten through 3rd grades, it is also essential to teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative and vocabulary knowledge.

In the IES Practice Guide for Reading Interventions for Grades 4-9, there are a plethora of recommendations that can be used to support effective vocabulary instruction from elementary through high school, [Providing Reading Interventions in Grades 4–9](#).

As we reflect on the useful recommendations throughout many of the IES Practice Guides, it is so important to spend ample time with supporting students with understanding the vocabulary of the standard. Many of the recommendations in the Practice Guides are essential to strengthening the infrastructure for effective Tier I instruction and should be considered as “crucial conversations” when (co)planning. Engaging strategies that meet the diverse needs of students should also be considered when (co)planning for effective vocabulary instruction, since “one-size-does-not-fit-all. For additional information, feel free to reach out to the MTSS regional coaches or Karen Suddeth at ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us to learn more.



Welcome

Greetings from the State Director

Directors,

Special education can be a sea of acronyms unless we exercise caution in communicating with stakeholders, especially families. It can almost seem as if we are speaking a foreign language that needs an interpreter. Encountering an unfamiliar acronym as a professional can be disarming. I had such an experience earlier this week. Trying to decipher the acronym and use context to determine the meaning was of little use. Rather than trying to be “too cool for school”, I simply confessed that for me to intelligently discuss a proposed scope of work that I need to understand the acronym used in the document. Do you know what “AUP” means? I did not. You can tell from my message that it was upsetting to not understand. I could have been too embarrassed to ask or even intimidated. My experience this week gave me pause to think of how parents can feel when we meet to discuss interventions, referrals, evaluations, possible disability areas and certainly the development of an IEP. If we are not careful, honestly, we might as well be speaking another language. Same is true for written communication. In most professions, we do have our own method of discussing and communicating professionally but must be sure it is understandable to our audience. Being able to effectively communicate with all stakeholders is just as important as having the professional knowledge. You may be wondering what is “AUP”? It will make sense when explained but being void of the meaning leaves confusion. AUP means agreed-upon procedure. Really simple and easy to understand once you know. Keep this thought close to your heart to ensure we never leave parents wondering.



Our district highlight this week is from White County Schools. Mary Kay Berry shared how she engaged staff in professional learning with **Rock Your Own PD**. You will love to hear how the theme for the year is: **Rock and Roll**. Great theme for staff and teachers to enjoy while learning and sharing. Rock On!

Our staff spotlight this week features Nykia Burke. Nykia is our Legal Analysis Specialist in the Dispute Resolution unit. Nykia works very diligently and quietly. We are so fortunate to have her skill and expertise to support all aspects of dispute resolution. Read the full article to learn about Nykia's “happy place”.

Our featured new Special Education Director is Ms. Kelly Rogers from Greene County Schools. She shares many insights and wisdom from those who have encouraged her during her career. Welcome to the club!

Since I have increased my vocabulary this week, think of all the ways we could use this new acronym of AUP. As a matter of fact, we have some agreed-upon procedures ourselves. In all seriousness, pause and take time to be sure IEPs, Psychological Reports and all forms of communication are clear and understandable. As much as we hope this comes naturally, a little explicit instruction on this topic would be a good reminder for all educators.

Thank you for your dedication to support students and their families. As you know, it takes a blend of knowledge, understanding, compassion and commitment to be effective. Your leadership is making a difference! Special Education Leaders and Teachers are Rock Stars to me!

Keeping Students First,

Wina



Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review our [Georgia DOE SPED Calendar](#) for upcoming events and the [Due Dates Calendar](#) for deadlines and key dates.



Coming Up

- **September 21** at 10:00 a.m. – Special Education Discipline and Positive, Proactive Approaches (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBA: Special Education Discipline - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 27** at 10:00 a.m. – UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support: Special Ed. Law (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: Avatar Labs for Leadership-Sp. Ed. Law - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 27** at 4:00 p.m. - UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support: Coteaching Mediation (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: UWGLive Avatar Labs- Coteaching Mediation - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 28** at 2:00 p.m. – HLP # 7 & 16 Establishing a Supportive Learning Environment Utilizing Explicit Instructional Strategies (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Utilizing Explicit Instruction - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 30** at 10:00 a.m. - UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: Avatar Labs-Sp. Ed. Support - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 30** at 2:00 p.m. - UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBA UWGLive Avatar Labs: Supporting Sp. Ed. - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September** – Regional Budget & Data Sessions are scheduled. Information about the sessions including registration information is available on the [GaDOE Community Professional Learning Events](#) website. A listing of the sessions with specific locations and registration links is in this Email Blast. The format of these sessions will be application based. They will not be a repeat of the Data Collections conference presentations. Please contact Dr. Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us, if you have any questions.



Reminders

- September 23** – Timelines (Prong 1) is due in the SE Applications Dashboard. Note: ONLY for LEAs that were not at 100% on Timelines on July 31, 2022. If you have questions about this process, please contact Laurie Ponsell at lponsell@doe.k12.ga.us, Linda Castellanos at lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us, or Dr. Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us.

New Director Spotlight: Kelly Rogers

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

Kelly Rogers is the Special Education Director for Greene County and has been in the field of education for 15 years. Ms. Rogers has worked in Special Education her entire career in both public and charter schools. She taught both inclusion and self-contained for students in grades Prek-8 and prior to becoming the Director of Special Education, worked as the Special Education Coordinator for Greene County.

Ms. Rogers shared that it would be difficult to identify just one person who has impacted her career in education for as she looks back, she is able to see the numerous amounts of lessons learned from those that she has worked with over the years. She stated, "Zelphia Dunham, the first director I worked for in Greene County, taught me the value of taking time to listen and engage in meaningful conversations with not only those that work in the schools, but also parents and community members. She also never turned down sending me to a professional development opportunity, where I learned more than I could have ever imagined. Barbara Ross, the most recent director that I worked under, was one who was first a Speech Therapist that came into my classroom when I was a new teacher. Over the years that we worked together in different capacities, I learned that if you always put the students first in every decision that you make, all of the rest will work itself out." Ms. Rogers shared that those were just two examples, however there are so many more along the path of her career that she could look back and draw insight to the gifts of wisdom that they each imparted on her.



Ms. Rogers is married to her husband, Ryan, who she met in her first year of teaching in Greene County. The Rogers have two sons, Cole and Brice, and a dog named Molly. The Rogers also loves to travel as a family and spend as much time on the lake as possible.



GaDOE Staff Highlight: Nykia Burke

Nykia has worked in the field of education for 14 years. She is a Legal Analysis Specialist in the Dispute Resolutions unit. She reviews written formal complaints, drafted resolution letters, and legal decisions issued from the Office of Special Administrative Hearings in due process hearing requests. Previously, she worked as an educator in Georgia public schools for eight years, before leaving to attend law school. After law school, she was a coordinator for the adult education program at Atlanta Technical College for two years before coming to work at GaDOE.

Nykia assists with GaDOE's IEP Team meeting facilitation process, which is a collaborative dispute prevention and resolution process used when members of an IEP Team agree that the presence of a neutral third party would help facilitate communication and problem solving.

Nykia's happy place is crocheting afghan blankets and making wreaths. She also loves spending time with her family, friends and, of course, her dog!

District Highlight: White County Schools

The White County School System's Student Services Special Education Department typically has a day of professional learning before school starts every year.

After hearing negative rumblings from the staff about coming in a day earlier than everyone else, the WCSS Student Services Special Education Department decided to approach the Back-to-School Professional Development differently. "Rock Your Own PD," an individualized virtual learning experience, was created.

White County School System

Inspire and equip each student to be a world changer.



WOW! "Rock Your Own PD" was terrific, and the participation and items completed in preparation for the start of the school year blew us ALL away. Honestly, we had more items completed and more thorough learning than we've had for years. You probably think that sounds great, but what did it look like, or how was it different?

The process started after selecting our theme for the year, "Rock and Roll." The team began by deciding what items needed to be completed by all staff before the start of school and determining how to present policies, procedures, and any new information regarding IEPs, etc.



Teachers were given a date and time to come pick up their "Rock Box" in early July. The room designated for pickup was decorated with all types of Neon Rock & Roll paraphernalia and upbeat Rock & Roll Music.



The "Rock Box" contained a "Rock and Roll" t-shirt, an All-Access Backstage Pass with a QR code to access the Google Classroom with the assignments and videos, Pop Rock Candy, RockStar Energy Drinks, Neon Sunglasses, and a variety of other goodies. After logging into the All-Access Backstage Pass via the QR code, teachers were able to view directions, prerecorded screencastify PowerPoints, and checklist score cards with the required assignments and additional opportunities for points. Required assignments were related to caseload preparation, accommodation sharing,

parent contacts/mailed postcards, meeting manager worksheets, and WCSS procedures and protocol screencast. Teachers were able to pick from a variety of different modules that were applicable to their current jobs after they completed the mandatory assignments to achieve a predetermined number of points.



Teachers shared their completed score cards with the Sped Coordinators as well as any other assignments. They were able to work at their own pace on their own time schedule. Who wouldn't want to do this when it's your summer break? Feedback was extremely positive, and prizes were given to the first teacher that completed the assignments and the first teachers that picked up their "Rock Box". Who wouldn't want a Bluetooth speaker or a microphone for your classroom. Everyone is excited and can't wait to see what we do next year.



Practice Pointers – General Supervision Sixth Component: Effective Dispute Resolution

There are several ways to come to a resolution in a dispute with a local educational agency (LEA) over the rights and services afforded to students with disabilities and their families. The quickest and most efficient method is to contact the special education administration in the LEA. The special education director can often assist a family to work out the differences with minimal time and conflict. When a resolution cannot be worked out locally, there are processes guaranteed to families of students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These include: 1) formal complaints, 2) mediation and/or 3) a due process hearing.



Formal Complaint – Any individual or organization can initiate the process, and the time limit for filing is one year from the date of the alleged violation. Alleged violations of federal regulations and the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Rules for Special Education are the issues that can be resolved by the GaDOE Division for Special Education Services in a timeline of sixty days from receipt of the complaint unless extended for unusual circumstances.

Mediation – The parent or LEA can initiate the process, but the agreement to mediate must be voluntary for both parties. There is not a time limit for filing or timeline for resolving the issues specified, and any matter under the IDEA federal regulations and GaDOE Rules for Special Education including matters arising prior to the filing of a due process complaint (there are some exceptions) are issues that can be resolved. The parent and LEA with a mediator can resolve issues, and both parties must agree to the solution in writing. Mediation decisions are legally binding.

Due Process Hearing – The parent or LEA can initiate the process, and the time limit for filing is two years of when the party knew or should have known of the problem with limited exceptions. Any matter relating to the identification, evaluation, educational placement or provision of a free appropriate public education (there are some exceptions) are issues that can be resolved in 45 days from the end of the resolution session unless specific extensions to the timeline are granted. An Administrative Law Judge will resolve the issues.

For more information please see our [Dispute Resolution Process Comparison Chart](#), the [Dispute Resolution Parent Guides](#), and our website at [Formal Complaints](#) / [Mediation Requests](#) / [Due Process Hearing Requests](#).

Special Education Data- Important Webinars

There are six important webinars scheduled to provide LEAs with updates for FY23 Data Collection. These webinars begin October 13, 2022. Please register for these webinars in the Georgia DOE Community linked in the flyer below.

[Data GO-IEP Webinars Schedule FY23](#)

If you have questions, please contact Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us or Linda Castellanos at lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us with any questions.

FY23 Special Education Budget and Data: Filling your Toolbox with the Right Tools

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

The format of these sessions will be application based. They will not be a repeat of the Data Collections conference presentations. If you have an opportunity to attend one of these sessions, please consider attending. **None of these sessions are closed.** There was a glitch last week and a couple of the sessions were accidentally closed. These have been reopened.

Registration: A schedule of the sessions is listed below. Each day of the two-day sessions is from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. All sessions are open for registration in the [Professional Learning Catalog](#). Registration for specific sessions is also available [here](#).



G·V·E·S·T·2022
 THE ONE WHERE WE ARE
**REUNITED AND IT
 FEELS SO GOOD**

Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Training (GVEST) Conference Information

Many times, Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI) feel isolated due to the itinerate nature of the job. Most school-level professional learning opportunities do not apply to our caseloads. GVEST Conference is the best opportunity for TVIs across the state, as well as TVIs from other states, to join

hands and work together to obtain the most current trends in our field. It is a short 2.5 days for us, but we cling to the opportunity.

We appreciate all the support that districts provide by supporting the effort and sending their TVIs to the conference. Please visit the [Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Training website](#) to see the line-up of presenters and to learn more about how to register.

About GVEST

In 2000, the Georgia Department of Education introduced a new conference and called it Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Training, or GVEST. Now, GVEST continues as multiple agencies dedicated to serving students with sensory impairments collaborate to offer professional development training focused on the needs of this population.

GVEST provides an opportunity for Georgia's educators who serve individuals with visual impairments to have spe-

cialized training and to share effective practices and strategies specific to the needs of students and clients with visual impairments. The annual GVEST conference typically takes place in Macon, Georgia each October and provides workshops led by experts in the field of blindness.

GVEST gratefully acknowledges the members of the Conference Planning Committee and Smokey Powell for their support and assistance in the planning and implementation of the 2022 GVEST Conference.

- Tara Bowie, GVEST Committee Chair, Outreach Education Program Specialist SPC
- Heather Boyle, Education Specialist, Georgia Sensory Assistance Project
- Sarah Bussey, SE Region Vision/O&M Services Coordinator AIS, GaAER President
- Dawn Day, Curriculum Director GAB
- Heidi Evans, Director, Georgia PINES
- Stephanie Hardwick, TVI Forsyth County Schools, GaAER Treasurer
- Sharon Lyttle, Outreach Education Program Specialist SPC
- Chris Maniscalco, TVI Coordinator Gilmer County
- Zel Murray, Georgia Statewide Coordinator for Visual Impairments
- Shirley Robinson, Assistant Director for Blind Services Georgia Voc. Rehab Center
- Christine Spratling, Coordinator, INSITE/VIISA, Georgia PINES
- Martha Veto, Education Specialist, Georgia Sensory Assistance Project
- Carmen Willings, TVI Forsyth County Schools, Owner of teachingvisuallyimpaired.com
- Taylor Worland, Lead EIS INSITE/VISSA, Georgia PINES

GVEST is Proudly Brought to you by the Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Academy for the Blind, and the Smokey Powell Center.

Attention Preschool: Babies Can't Wait Report Changes

The Georgia Department of Education recently received information from the Department of Community Health and Babies Can't Wait about an upcoming change related to when districts will be notified of young children enrolled in IDEA Part C who will be transitioning to IDEA Part B at the age of three. In the past, this report has been generated and shared with districts when a child turned 27 months of age. Beginning in October of 2022, the report will be sent to districts when a student turns 31 months of age. This change reflects an effort on the part of the Department of Community Health and Babies Can't Wait to provide a more accurate list by removing children who are discharged or lost to follow-up between the ages of 27 months and 31 months.

Working together, we can ensure that the transition of young children between these two programs is seamless and that those critical early intervention services continue without interruption. Please share this information with the appropriate individuals and departments in your district.

Please contact Barbara Ross, barbara.ross@doe.k12.ga.us, or Lynn Holland, lholland@doe.k12.ga.us with any questions.



Smoky Powell Center Announcement

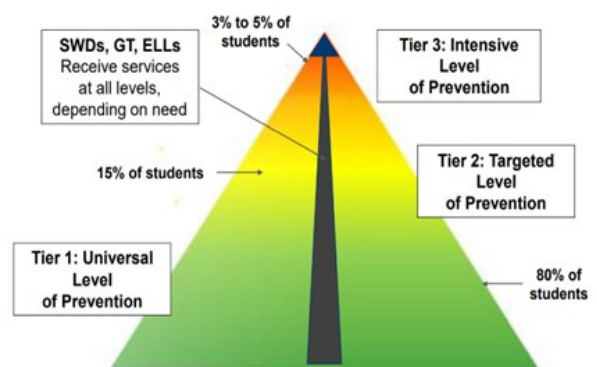
The Smokey Powell Center is happy to announce that we have a second optometrist who will conduct our distance satellite clinics. Please see the [Low Vision Clinic Schedule](#) for available dates. We look forward to seeing you at clinic. As always, our clinics and all devices distributed are free for the districts.

A Low Vision Evaluation is required and stated in our Rules and Regulations for Eligibility for VI. Please be advised that although a Low Vision Evaluation is required for VI Eligibility, best practices are to provide a Low Vision Evaluation every three years or if the student's vision changes. The IEP Team should always have the most updated information and the student should always have the most updated low vision devices.

For more information regarding the Smokey Powell Center, please visit the [Smoky Powell Center webpage](#).

MTSS Snapshot: How do the High Leverage Practices (HLPs) support implementation of the multi-level prevention system?

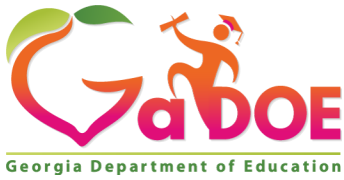
As educators plan for effective Tier I instruction and implementation of evidence-based interventions, use of the High Leverage Practices (HLPs) is essential. The HLPs are the fundamentals of effective teaching. These practices should be used constantly and are critical to helping students learn important content. These high-leverage practices are also central to supporting students' connectedness and wellbeing. HLPs are used across subject areas, grade levels, and contexts. They are "high-leverage" not only because they matter to student learning, but because they are basic for advancing skills in teaching, [High-Leverage Practices – TeachingWorks Resource Library](#).



These practices should be effectively implemented throughout all three tiers of the multi-level prevention system. As teachers reflect on the effectiveness of their Tier I instruction, reflecting on the pervasive use of these practices should be considered. It may be helpful to self-assess your implementation of these practices and determine if additional professional learning is needed to support effective implementation. All of these practices cannot be implemented everyday but should be considered as we plan for effective Tier I instruction.

As we provide supports for students by implementing evidence-based interventions at Tiers II and III, it is essential that HLPs be used to support effective teaching of the interventions. These practices consistently support effective instruction, promote active engagement and support effective relationships/communication with students and families. In addition to these 19 HLPs, there is another set of HLPs for special education, that also can be used by educators to support improving outcomes for students with disabilities, [Four Areas of Practice \(K-12\) | High-Leverage Practices](#). There are also resources that support Georgia educators with implementing the HLPs throughout a multi-tiered system of supports, [Georgia's High-Leverage Practices Webinar: Introduction to High-Leverage Practices Through a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support | High-Leverage Practices](#).

For additional information, feel free to reach out to the MTSS regional coaches or Karen Suddeth at ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us to learn more.



Office of Federal Programs Division for Special Education

Educating Georgia's Future

September 23, 2022

Welcome

Greetings from the State Director

Directors,

Yesterday, the season officially changed from Summer to Fall. The Fall Equinox was on Thursday, September 22, 2022 at exactly at 9:04 p.m. The equinox is not a fixed date or time each year but rather based on an astronomical prediction. The date may vary slightly but always occurs between September 21-24. With the change of season comes cooler temperatures, colorful leaves and shorter daylight hours. Fall ushers in the season of pumpkins, fall festivals, Halloween, Thanksgiving and the beginning of the holiday season. Hot chocolate, campfires, football, the World Series and so much more bring happiness and comfort as the year begins to wind down. Fall is my favorite season of the year. Going to the pumpkin patch, eating pumpkin muffins, decorating for fall makes me very happy. Fall mums are among one of the great joys in life to me. Hope you will take time to enjoy this beautiful time of year and reflect on the meaningful moments in our lives.



[Guidance on the 1% Alternate Assessment](#) was issued this week from the United States Department of Education. As shared earlier this year, we have work to do in reducing the number of LEAs exceeding 1% for the Georgia Alternate Assessment. The joint guidance from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education and Office of Special Education Programs is clear that states must demonstrate progress in lowering the overage or the waiver could be difficult to secure. Increased emphasis is being placed on technical assistance for LEAs exceeding 1%. If your LEA has challenges in this area, please feel free to request technical assistance and plan to attend professional learning to address this need.

Please review the resources available in regard to the Georgia's Public Education Employee Assistance Program.

Our staff spotlight this week is shining on Andrew Britt. Andrew brings extensive experience from the district level having served in various leadership roles. He also is encouraging and positive bringing warmth and knowledge to the work. Be sure to read more and find out about his career as an opera singer! He just celebrated his six-month anniversary here at GaDOE and we are so happy to have him here with us!

Our new director of the week is Crystal Lingefelt from Furlow Charter School. She has some very unique hobbies, one of which is that she also coaches at Furlow. Her 16-year career in education is amazing and we look forward to partnering with her as she continues to find ways to help students and teachers become even more successful.

Falling leaves and cooler temperatures assure us that fall is here once again. Homecoming parades and turkey dinner at school are among the rituals of the season. Grab a sweater and enjoy this time of year!



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www.gadoe.org



Thank you for all you do each day! You have an incredibly challenging yet rewarding role. Even though the fall season is a lovely time of year, educators know that the fall months are of vital importance. Please do not hesitate to let me know how we can support your work. I believe in each of you!

Keeping Students First,
Wina

Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review our [Georgia DOE SPED Calendar](#) for upcoming events and the [Due Dates Calendar](#) for deadlines and key dates.



Coming Up

- **September 27** at 10:00 a.m. – UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support: Special Ed. Law (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: Avatar Labs for Leadership-Sp. Ed. Law - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 27** at 4:00 p.m. - UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support: Coteaching Mediation (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: UWGLive Avatar Labs- Coteaching Mediation - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 28** at 2:00 p.m. – HLP # 7 & 16 Establishing a Supportive Learning Environment Utilizing Explicit Instructional Strategies (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Utilizing Explicit Instruction - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 30** at 10:00 a.m. - UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESAA: Avatar Labs-Sp. Ed. Support - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September 30** at 2:00 p.m. - UWGLive Mixed Reality Avatar Labs for Leadership Support (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBAUWGLive Avatar Labs: Supporting Sp. Ed. - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **September** – Regional Budget & Data Sessions are scheduled. Information about the sessions including registration information is available on the [GaDOE Community Professional Learning Events](#) website. A listing of the sessions with specific locations and registration links is in this Email Blast. The format of these sessions will be application based. They will not be a repeat of the Data Collections conference presentations. Please contact Dr. Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us, if you have any questions.



Professional Learning Events

Upcoming virtual webinars, in-person events, on-demand content, and by-request workshop opportunities are available at <https://community.gadoe.org/events>.

Reminders

- **September 23** – IDEA Budget amendments deadline in the Consolidated Application and grant period ending for Federal IDEA Grants and the High Cost Grant.
- **October 1** – Budget Submission Deadline for All Budgets in the Consolidated Application.
- **October 4** – CPI Cycle 1, FTE Cycle 1, and October Student Class begin.
- **October 11** – Initial Transmission Deadline for CPI, FTE, and Student Class with duplicate resolution by October 18, 2022.
- **October 25** – CPI, FTE, and Student Class end date, superintendent sign-off.
- **October 30** – Budget Completion Reports deadline for prior year IDEA grants.

New Director Spotlight: Crystal Lingefelt

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

Crystal Lingefelt is the Special Education Director for Furlow Charter School and has been in the field of education for 16 years. Ms. Lingefelt started her career as a general education teacher in second grade. After five years, she decided to pursue being a special education teacher because she loved working with students who needed more help. Ms. Lingefelt continued in special education for about seven years before she decided to move to Furlow Charter School where she, again, became a general education teacher. After a couple of years in general education, an amazing opportunity came for Ms. Lingefelt as Furlow Charter School was becoming a state approved charter school, thus in need of a Special Education Director. The Charter wanted Ms. Lingefelt to take this task on and she has soared from there!



Ms. Lingefelt thinks of Valerie Duff as impacting her career the most for Mrs. Duff was her first principal upon starting in education 16 years ago. "She was a wonderful principal and supported my move from general education to special education because she could see my talent with helping students grow! She encouraged me to move to Furlow Charter and a few years later, she convinced me to become the Special Education Director. Thinking back, she was a part of every big move in my educational career, and I am so lucky to know her!"

Ms. Lingefelt has been married for 16 years to her husband and they have two young men, a 12-year-old, and a 14-year-old. The Lingefelts also has two dogs along with chickens and goats at their country home. Ms. Lingefelt likes playing chess and has been the chess coach at Furlow since she arrived at the school. With a liking to play video games and putting puzzles together, Ms. Lingefelt's true hobby is school and finding ways to help students and teachers become more successful and show growth.



GaDOE Staff Spotlight: Andrew Britt

Andrew Britt has been working in the field of education for 34 years. He just celebrated his six-month anniversary at GaDOE as an IDEA budget and grants specialist. The budget team consists of four specialists and a manager, and they are constantly communicating, collaborating, and supporting one another on joint projects. He notes that it is one of the most supportive environments in which he has worked.

Prior to coming to GaDOE, Andrew served in many capacities at the district level. His degrees are in music, and initially he worked as a band and choral director in a public school while moonlighting as an opera singer in the Atlanta area. He auditioned for a touring opera company while in Atlanta, was

accepted, and spent some time touring the United States and Mexico. For the opera aficionados, his go-to roles were Scarpia, Sharpless and Figaro's Count. After touring, he returned to education as a choral director and worked in church music. As a church musician, Andrew started going to Mexico on yearly mission trips, eventually spending each summer there. He soon became a certificated teacher in Spanish and spent 20 years as a modern languages teacher. As a Spanish and French teacher, he received ESOL endorsement, thus starting his work in federal programs.

After he began teaching ESOL, Andrew started working with the migrant and McKinney-Vento programs and assisting with title programs. He worked in supplemental federal programs while he taught for over 16 years. Andrew soon moved to administration serving as a Pre-K Project director, elementary assistant principal, and lastly as an alternative school director as he continued working in federal programs.

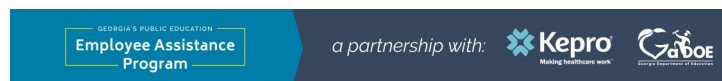
Andrew has completed research on the correlative relationship of beginning band participation and learning a musical instrument to achievement in high school language arts, as well as a three-year project to measure the effects of extrinsic rewards on End of Grade tests in the fifth grade. Working with staff, he also outlined effective interventions for behavior disordered SWDs enrolled punitively in the alternative school. They used the GaDOE reintegration system as a guide and developed a protocol for returning those students to classes with like peers once the term in alternative school had been served.

Andrew is a season ticket holder to the Atlanta Symphony and Atlanta Opera, so he is in the city about once a month for events. He has three older brothers and an older sister. He lives in Montezuma where, since 1933, he and his family have owned the local drycleaners. He serves as an officer (secretary) and on the board of directors for the Georgia Association for Alternative Education. A former tribunal hearing officer, he will complete the requirements to earn the designation of Nationally Certified (Due Process) Hearing Officer (CHO) this year.

Access Resources to Support You with Georgia’s Public Education EAP

Georgia’s Public Education Employee Assistance Program offers a wide variety of resources to help you when you’re facing issues that interfere with your health and wellbeing at home or at work, including up to six sessions of mental health counseling. GaDOE, in partnership with Kepro, provides the EAP for all K-12 public school teachers and staff in Georgia, along with Pre-K teachers. Household members and children up to age 26 are also eligible.

Services provided by the EAP are confidential and at no cost to you, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Access the EAP by visiting www.EAPHelplink.com or calling 1-866-279-5177, access code GADOE.



Here for You.



24 hours a day. 7 days a week.

1-866-279-5477
www.EAPHelplink.com
 Code: GADOE

Practice Pointers – General Supervision Eighth Component: Targeted Technical Assistance and Professional Development



Professional Learning (PL) is the way in which teachers, administrators, and other staff acquire, enhance, and refine the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions necessary to create and support high levels of learning for all students. GaDOE offers Professional Learning events within the [GaDOE Community](#) as one of the many levels of support. The site was created to provide leadership, technical assistance, and resources to the Georgia education community to improve student learning through organizational development and professional learning. Educational stakeholders are encouraged to visit the site often to review the latest agency-wide offerings. Additionally, under [34 C.F.R. § 300.156](#), the GaDOE must establish and maintain qualifications to ensure that personnel necessary to carry out the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including that those personnel have the content knowledge and skills to serve children with disabilities. GaDOE provides ongoing technical assistance that is linked to the indicators and improvement activities as outlined in the State Performance Plan (SPP).

Technical Assistance consists of general technical assistance on a topic that can be provided to individuals or a group of participants. Technical Assistance can include online modules or videos, webinars or other tools and resources to help schools improve their performance and student outcomes. **Targeted Technical Assistance (TTA)** must occur when a local educational agency (LEA) has not met the required target(s) on the state performance goals and indicators. TTA is more focused in levels of support and is provided to assist the LEA with correction of any non-compliance, and to help with improving results and building general supervision.

Communities of Practice (CoP) refers to a group of educators who work together, learn from each other, and develop a collective understanding of how to accomplish a task and improve their practices. This could be achieved, for example, through discussion boards, electronic communications, social networking, or face-to-face meetings. Most Communities of Practice take place on the job or in the work setting which allows all members to contribute their knowledge and expertise to help further the work to complete the goal of the group. Communities of Practice also facilitate sustained interaction and allows teachers and leaders to discover and reflect on their practices and make improvements where necessary. TTA, PL and CoP are supports for LEAs that are linked to SPP data and correction of noncompliance.

For more information please see our website at [Special Education Services and Supports](#) and [General Supervision - Georgia's Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process \(GCIMP\)](#), as well as our [Professional Learning Resources](#) and [Professional Learning Modules](#).

Important Budget Reminder: Initial IDEA Budget Submission Deadline

The IDEA budget submission deadline is quickly approaching. Directors, please don't forget the consolidated application budget approval process changed this year. All IDEA budgets must be submitted and approved by your superintendent by close of business October 1. Please don't hesitate to contact your budget liaison if you have any questions.

Dyslexia: FY23 School Psychologist Webinar

The Dyslexia: FY23 School Psychologist Update technical assistance webinar offered on August 30, 2022 is now available online in the [GaDOE Community](#). The recorded webinar and PDF presentation are available for viewing.

Utilize the search bar and keyword, "School Psychologist" to view previously recorded webinars that align with School Psychologists scope of work.

Special Education Data- Important Webinars

There are six important webinars scheduled to provide LEAs with updates for FY23 Data Collection. These webinars begin October 13, 2022. Please register for these webinars in the GaDOE Community linked in the flyer below.

[Data GO-IEP Webinars Schedule FY23](#)

If you have questions, please contact Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us or Linda Castellanos at lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us with any questions.



Statewide Discipline Training

The Division for Special Education Services and Supports will host two, one-day trainings focused on Discipline on November 3 & 4, 2022, at Middle Georgia State University in Macon from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. This training will provide guidance to help schools support the needs of students with disabilities and to appropriately apply disciplinary measures for all students. It is open to all LEAs; however, each district will only be able to register two individuals to attend the training in person. A virtual meeting option will also be available.

[Statewide Discipline Training Registration](#)

Georgia's Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) Professional Learning Series

On September 13 and 15, we hosted our first Specially Designed Instruction sessions for administrators and educators. We had great participation and over 300 participants in our educator sessions. Recordings for these sessions can be found in GaDOE community and are linked below.

[SDI for Administrators and Special Education Directors Session 1 of 4](#)

[SDI for Educators Session 1 of 4](#)

Session 2 of the Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) for Special Education Directors and School Administrators is scheduled for October 13. Dr. Bailey will lead participants in discussion around, "What is our current reality and who are our players?" She will help us understand the importance of relationship building and knowing the students we serve and why a robust PLAAFP is imperative to designing high effect size specially designed instruction.

[SDI for Special Education Directors and School Administrators Registration](#)

Upcoming Sessions for Administrators and Directors

- October 13
- January 26
- February 21

Session 2 of the Georgia's Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) Professional Learning Series for Elementary Educators and Secondary Educators: How We Design and Deliver SDI is scheduled for October 12, 2022. This session will dive deeper into the components of specially designed instruction and how it looks in the IEP document. Participants will explore how SDI begins with the PLAAFP and moves to annual goals and instructional strategies.

[Georgia's SDI for Elementary Educators, Session 2 Registration](#)

[Georgia's SDI for Secondary Educators Session 2 Registration](#)

Upcoming Sessions for Educators

- October 12
- January 25
- February 22

Please contact Yyanisha Bass Bonner at Yyanisha.Bass@doe.k12.ga.us for additional information.

Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Training (GVEST) Conference Information

Many times, Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI) feel isolated due to the itinerate nature of the job. Most school-level professional learning opportunities do not apply to our caseloads. GVEST Conference is the best opportunity for TVIs across the state, as well as TVIs from other states, to join hands and work together to obtain the most current trends in our field. It is a short 2.5 days for us, but we cling to the opportunity.

We appreciate all the support that districts provide by supporting the effort and sending their TVIs to the conference. Please visit the [Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Training website](#) to see the line-up of presenters and to learn more about how to register.

G·V·E·S·T·2022
THE ONE WHERE WE ARE
**REUNITED AND IT
FEELS SO GOOD**

About GVEST

In 2000, the Georgia Department of Education introduced a new conference and called it Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Training, or GVEST. Now, GVEST continues as multiple agencies dedicated to serving students with sensory impairments collaborate to offer professional development training focused on the needs of this population.

GVEST provides an opportunity for Georgia's educators who serve individuals with visual impairments to have specialized training and to share effective practices and strategies specific to the needs of students and clients with visual impairments. The annual GVEST conference typically takes place in Macon each October and provides workshops led by experts in the field of blindness.

GVEST gratefully acknowledges the members of the Conference Planning Committee and Smokey Powell for their support and assistance in the planning and implementation of the 2022 GVEST Conference.

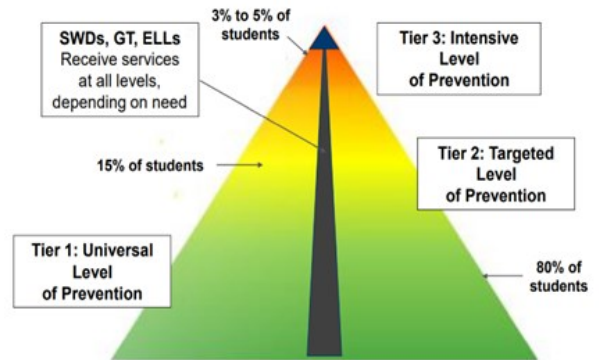
- Tara Bowie, GVEST Committee Chair, Outreach Education Program Specialist SPC
- Heather Boyle, Education Specialist, Georgia Sensory Assistance Project
- Sarah Bussey, SE Region Vision/O&M Services Coordinator AIS, GaAER President
- Dawn Day, Curriculum Director GAB
- Heidi Evans, Director, Georgia PINES
- Stephanie Hardwick, TVI Forsyth County Schools, GaAER Treasurer
- Sharon Lyttle, Outreach Education Program Specialist SPC
- Chris Maniscalco, TVI Coordinator Gilmer County
- Zel Murray, Georgia Statewide Coordinator for Visual Impairments
- Shirley Robinson, Assistant Director for Blind Services Georgia Voc. Rehab Center

- Christine Spratling, Coordinator, INSITE/VIISA, Georgia PINES
- Martha Veto, Education Specialist, Georgia Sensory Assistance Project
- Carmen Willings, TVI Forsyth County Schools, Owner of teachingvisuallyimpaired.com
- Taylor Worland, Lead EIS INSITE/VISSA, Georgia PINES

GVEST is Proudly Brought to you by the Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Academy for the Blind, and the Smokey Powell Center.

MTSS Snapshot: How do student-focused closings impact effective Tier I instruction?

As an educator, have you reflected on the effectiveness of how well you implement each part of the instructional framework, [GaDOE SBC Instructional Framework July 2016](#)? A critical component of effective Tier I instruction is ensuring that you have implemented all three parts of the instructional framework. This is essential in helping to ensure that at least 80% of our students' needs are being met at the Tier I level of the multi-level prevention system.



However, oftentimes the closing may be the most difficult part of the lesson to implement. As educators we typically open the lesson, allow time for the work period, and before we know it... it's the end of the lesson and students are packing up to leave or transition to the next subject. It is so important to allow about 20% of the instructional time to engage students in being actively involved during the closing. The purpose of the closing is to ensure that students are not leaving with any misconceptions regarding the content of the day. The closing is designed to also help educators ensure students have an understanding of the lesson and to highlight areas that need further clarification or re-teaching. There are many strategies that can be used to close your lesson, [50-Lesson-Closures](#). However, it is very important that educators engage the students in the closing and use the data that is collected during the closing to clarify misconceptions, before the students leave the session/lesson. As teachers are collaborating during planning, it is important to discuss/share engaging strategies that can be implemented to enhance their closings. As we continue to strive to strengthen effective Tier I instruction, it is important to ensure a closing is scheduled each day when implementing the instructional framework.

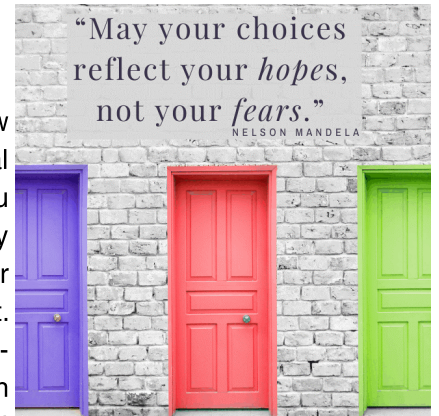
For additional information, feel free to reach out to the MTSS regional coaches or Karen Suddeth at ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us to learn more.

Welcome

Greetings from the State Director

Directors,

As most of you know, I broke my left foot in mid-July after speaking with our new directors. I didn't fall or have an exciting story about how it happened. My sandal slipped a little and I had to do a little dance to keep from falling. Since many of you were in the audience when it happened, you can vouch for me that I thought only my pride was hurt. Unfortunately, I really did break my foot. My summer footwear choices have been minimal since I have a very attractive "boot" on my left foot. This week is the 10 week mark. I had been assured that 6-8 weeks would probably be all I needed to be put back together. My orthopedist appointment was on Tuesday morning. I was so sure that the "boot" and I were parting company that I brought my left shoe in my pocketbook so I could walk out of the doctor's office without my attractive "boot". Sadly, I must report that I have at least 4 more weeks of wearing my right shoe accompanied by my "boot" on the left.



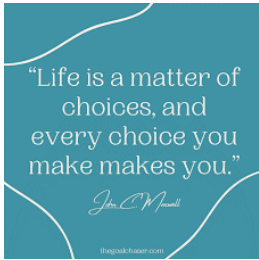
Have you ever been so certain about something that there was no doubt in your mind? I was so very sure or I certainly would not be carrying a shoe in my pocketbook. I have a few choices now, accept it, rebel or wallow in my disappointment. A rebellion will not serve me well for the long term as I need my foot to heal. I refuse to wallow so I guess I will accept my fate and continue to wear my boot with pride. We all have many choices to make each day. In the words of Nelson Mandella, "May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears."

Our staff spotlight is shining on Emily Dishman. Emily is a Program Specialist in the GO-IEP unit. She brings a wealth of experience to her role having served as a building administrator as well as a special education director. Emily is always ready to help. We are very fortunate to have her on the team!

Our new director featured this week is Amanda Oxford from Catoosa County Schools. Not only has she served in multiple GNETS roles, but her desire to work with students with disabilities began long before she began her career!

Everyone needs goals. My goal as of Tuesday is to be back in two shoes that match before G-CASE. To be successful in my goal, I need to make the right choice. You have an opportunity, and honor, to make many choices each day. Although a broken foot is important to be healed, choices we have as special education directors can be life altering. Although it has been said many times, be sure you make the choice as if it were for your own child. It is hard to go wrong, when the child's best interest is at the center of the decision.

We have choices to make each day. Some choices are easy while others are difficult. At times, the choice may pick you! When your choices are not what you expect, make the best of the situation. "Life is a matter of choices, and every choice you make makes you." - John C. Maxwell



Thank you for all you do each day! I appreciate each of you!

Keeping Students First,

Wina

Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review our [Georgia DOE SPED Calendar](#) for upcoming events and the [Due Dates Calendar](#) for deadlines and key dates.

Coming Up

- **October 11 at 1:00 p.m.** – Special Education Directors’ Webinar see [October Webinar](#) to register.
- **October 12 at 9:00 a.m.** – Specially Designed Instruction Series Session 2: How We Design and Deliver SDI Elementary Session (FY23 Georgia’s Specially Designed Instruction Project) see [Georgia’s SDI for Elementary Educators, Session 2 - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **October 12 at 1:30 p.m.** – Specially Designed Instruction Series Session 2: How We Design and Deliver SDI Secondary Session (FY23 Georgia’s Specially Designed Instruction Project) see [Georgia’s SDI for Secondary Educators, Session 2 - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **October 12 at 2:00 p.m.** – HLP # 14 Utilizing Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies to Support Memory, Attention and Self-Regulation (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Cognitive & Metacognitive Strategies - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **October 13 at 1:30 p.m.** – Special Education Spotlight on FTE Reports & Errors (FY23 Special Education Data & GO-IEP Webinars) see [Special Ed Spotlight on FTE Reports & Errors - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **October 19 at 2:00 p.m.** – Fidelity of Implementation: Why So Important? (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP: Implementing EBPs with Fidelity - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **October 20 at 10:00 a.m.** – FY23 SESAA: Co-Teaching Part 1 (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBA: Co-Teaching Part 1 - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **October 21 at 10:00 a.m.** – FY23 SESAA: Co-Teaching Part 2 (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBA: Co-Teaching Part 2 - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **October 26 at 2:00 p.m.** – Teaching ESOL and SWD Dually Identified Students in Secondary Settings (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Teaching Dually Identified Students - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.



Professional Learning Events

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Reminders

- **October 4** – CPI Cycle 1, FTE Cycle 1, and October Student Class begin.
- **October 11** – Initial Transmission Deadline for CPI, FTE, and Student Class with duplicate resolution by October 18, 2022.
- **October 25** – CPI, FTE, and Student Class end date, superintendent sign-off.
- **October 30** – Budget Completion Reports deadline for prior year IDEA grants.

New Director Spotlight: Amanda Oxford

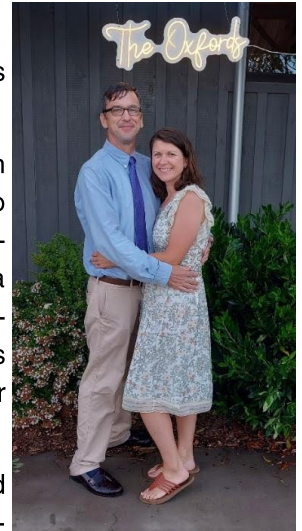
The Georgia Department of Education's Special Education Services and Supports Division is excited to feature Amanda Oxford for our New Director Spotlight this week.

Amanda Oxford is the Special Education Director for Catoosa County Schools and has been in the field of education for 22 years. While in high school, Ms. Oxford had the opportunity to work at Camp Bratton Green as a camp counselor for their Special Sessions. These sessions were for adults with developmental disabilities. This experience helped her develop a love for working and interacting with individuals with disabilities. "I loved that the camp focused on authentic experiences for campers. They ensured that the individuals had access to the environment, tools, and skills they needed to have fulfilling camp experiences whether it be catching fish, ropes course, talent shows, crafts and more."

A wonderful firsthand experience in high school, led to an outstanding career serving and supporting students with disabilities. Ms. Oxford started her career working as a self-contained GNETS elementary teacher in 2001. After 7 years, Ms. Oxford transitioned into the GNETS Area Administrator role for Catoosa County and served Walker County, as well. While finishing her career with GNETS as the Assistant Director for the Northwest GA GNETS program, Ms. Oxford shares that "GNETS was a wonderful family that allowed me to grow and develop as a leader and educator. I had the opportunity to watch educational trends at a regional level, participate in the Principals Advisory Board, and provide training at a regional and state level related to trauma and behavior. I am excited after many years of being based in Catoosa County to be officially part of their team and serving a broader spectrum of individuals with disabilities."

Facilitating authentic experiences has been the focus of Ms. Oxford's work as a teacher and administrator. Throughout her educational career, Ms. Oxford shares that she had the opportunity to gain experience from excellent leadership role models in her GNETS Directors Sandra Sherfield and Greg McElwee, as well as with her local Special Education Director, Becky Conner. Together, they have worked through countless challenging situations over the years, and each was a learning experience.

Ms. Oxford and her husband have two elementary age sons and they love to spend time outdoors with them camping, fishing, hiking, or playing around at the horse farm.



GaDOE Staff Spotlight: Emily Dishman

Emily Dishman has worked in the field of education for 33 years. She has been a Program Specialist for the GO-IEP/Data Team for four years. She started her career in education as a paraprofessional and substitute teacher. She was a Pre-k teacher for 10 years and taught kindergarten for one year. She also taught high school vocational, early childhood education and adult Child Development Associate (CDA) classes for seven years, as well as eighth grade Georgia History for two years. She served in the role of assistant principal for four years at a primary school and was a special education director for six years prior to coming to work at GaDOE in

October of 2018.

Emily collaborated with her team to create learning modules for GO-IEP and provide training and support to GO-IEP districts for data collection and GO-IEP. Her job entails many things including updating the GO-IEP help manual regularly, creating and sending GO-IEP updates and tips to provide districts with the most current information available for reporting and compliance, as well as recruiting and training new districts when they join GO-IEP. She stays busy via the phone, email and the GO-IEP ticket help desk assisting districts with GO-IEP and data issues.

Emily is a mother to two daughters and Maw Maw to six grandchildren from ages 4 - 24. She lives on a small farm in southern Georgia with her two dogs and lots of chickens. She has recently begun raising Standard Bred show chickens (Barred Rock). She hopes to provide students who want to show birds at their local livestock shows or the state fair the opportunity to obtain a quality bird for showing. Emily loves to travel, and the mountains in North Georgia are her favorite places to visit. She works in her yard and garden to soothe her soul. Nothing like a little dirt under your



U.S. Department of Education: Mental Health Learning Series

Join the U.S. Department of Education for a 3-part webinar series on promoting promising practices, resources and understanding existing barriers to mental health services for students. A new school year has begun and the nation is facing a youth mental health crisis. This webinar series will tackle pressing issues facing the field and will highlight ways to support student mental health, increase access to services, and support the whole child. As federal resources, including the existing American Rescue Plan funds, continue to become available for states and districts to support student well-being, the Department will share

promising practices and lessons learned from schools, districts, and national experts, in an effort support the field to help students thrive.

Date: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 at 4:00pm

Topic: Evidence in Action: How States and Districts can Promote Mental Health

[Session 1 Registration Link](#)

Date: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 4:00pm

Topic: The Importance of Trauma Informed Pedagogy and Student Identity in Mental Health

[Session 2 Registration Link](#)

Date: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 at 4:00pm:

Topic: Reducing Stigma and Improving Access to Mental Health Services

[Session 3 Registration Link](#)

Practice Pointers – Cross Functional Monitoring and Results Driven Accountability (IDEA Programs)

States must have policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) monitoring and enforcement regulations. States must also provide a comprehensive general supervision and monitoring system of local educational agencies (LEA) to ensure compliant practices statewide. Georgia’s supervision and monitoring system includes the Cross Functional Monitoring (CFM) process.



The components of Cross Functional Monitoring specifically for IDEA Programs includes: 1) Review of Policies, Practices, and Procedures which ensures the LEA implements special education rules and regulations to ensure compliance with IDEA, and 2) Review of Student Records. General supervision procedures should be clearly outlined in the LEA's Special Education Procedures Manual and be based on our State Rules and Federal Regulations. Professional Learning on IDEA compliance should be ongoing in the LEA. For IDEA Programs, student names are randomly selected by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) from the October Full Time Equivalent (FTE) report and provided to LEAs through the portal Special Education (SE) Applications Dashboard. Student records are reviewed using a Due Process Checklist. Student names will be selected and available to the LEA four weeks prior to scheduled date for CFM. Student records and LEA policies, practices, and procedures should be uploaded no later than two weeks prior to the CFM date. Any additional information needed by IDEA Programs will be requested on the same day as the scheduled CFM date. LEAs should also follow the directions (for uploading IDEA Programs documentation) that can be found in the "Help" tab located in the top right corner of the portal SE Applications Dashboard.

For more information see our [FY23 Special Education Due Process Checklist for Student Folder Review](#), the [FY23 Special Education CFM Training Document](#), and the [FY23 Georgia Special Education Rules Outline](#).

Important FTE Reminder

We have heard from parents that some LEAs have "blackout periods" around FTE time.

This is not necessary and may lead to violations of IDEA. Documents should not be completed late due to these "blackout" periods. Some LEAs may ask staff to conduct annual reviews early if the due date falls around FTE Count Day and it is always permissible to do this early. However, an amendment may be needed at any time for a variety of reasons.

For GO-IEP LEAs, please use the following suggestions to generate the most accurate FTE report from GO-IEP.

1. There are three weeks from count day to sign off.
2. Finalize documents in a timely manner. GO-IEP will pull information from the IEP that was active on count day based on the meeting date and the date services in the IEP began.
3. After FTE count day, continue to use FTE count day for the "as of date" when running the report.
4. Import the GO-IEP extract multiple times between count day and sign off. Errors will clean up as documents are finalized.

Special Education Data- Important Webinars

There are six important webinars scheduled to provide LEAs with updates for FY23 Data Collection. These webinars begin October 13, 2022. Please register for these webinars in the GaDOE Community linked in the flyer below.

[Data GO-IEP Webinars Schedule FY23](#)

If you have questions, please contact Dawn Kemp at dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us or Linda Castellanos at lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us with any questions.



Statewide Discipline Training

The Division for Special Education Services and Supports will host two, one-day trainings focused on Discipline on November 3 & 4, 2022, at Middle Georgia State University in Macon from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. This training will provide guidance to help schools support the needs of students with disabilities and to appropriately apply disciplinary measures for all students. It is open to all LEAs; however, each district will only be able to register two individuals to

attend the training in person. A virtual meeting option will also be available.

[Statewide Discipline Training Registration](#)

Georgia's Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) Professional Learning Series

On September 13 and 15, we hosted our first Specially Designed Instruction sessions for administrators and educators. We had great participation and over 300 participants in our educator sessions. Recordings for these sessions can be found in GaDOE community and are linked below.

[SDI for Administrators and Special Education Directors Session 1 of 4](#)

[SDI for Educators Session 1 of 4](#)

Session 2 of the Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) for Special Education Directors and School Administrators is scheduled for October 13. Dr. Bailey will lead participants in discussion around, "What is our current reality and who are our players?" She will help us understand the importance of relationship building and knowing the students we serve and why a robust PLAAFP is imperative to designing high effect size specially designed instruction.

[SDI for Special Education Directors and School Administrators Registration](#)

Upcoming Sessions for Administrators and Directors

- October 13
- January 26
- February 21

Session 2 of the Georgia's Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) Professional Learning Series for Elementary Educators and Secondary Educators: How We Design and Deliver SDI is scheduled for October 12, 2022. This session will dive deeper into the components of specially designed instruction and how it looks in the IEP document. Participants will explore how SDI begins with the PLAAFP and moves to annual goals and instructional strategies.

[Georgia's SDI for Elementary Educators, Session 2 Registration](#)

[Georgia's SDI for Secondary Educators Session 2 Registration](#)

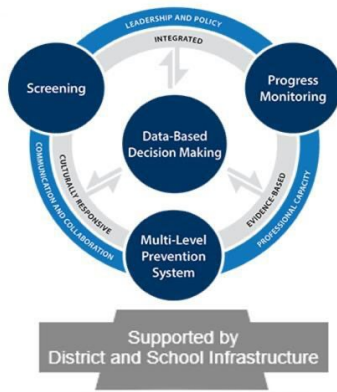
Upcoming Sessions for Educators

- October 12
- January 25
- February 22

Please contact Yyanisha Bass Bonner at Yyanisha.Bass@doe.k12.ga.us for additional information.

MTSS Snapshot: How does building a solid infrastructure impact the successful implementation of an intervention?

One of the essential components of Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students is infrastructure, [Infrastructure.pdf](#). Infrastructure refers to the knowledge, resources and support mechanisms needed to fully operationalize all the components of Georgia's Tiered System of supports into a unified system. In this snapshot, the four essential elements of infrastructure below will be discussed.



- Leadership
- Effective Teaming
- Professional Learning
- Family and Community Engagement

The primary role of leadership is to identify effective practices and to monitor the effectiveness of these practices that impact effective Tier I instruction for all students. Ensuring that the additional supports at Tiers II and III, complement core instruction and do not take the place of core instruction is a critical role of leadership. Leadership should serve as the driving force that develops, implements, and monitors instructional practices so that no more than 20% of the

students will need additional supports at Tiers II and III (combined). Leadership should be skilled at addressing barriers that impede successful implementation of an intervention. Leadership should also ensure that all necessary resources are available to facilitate successful implementation of the intervention, including establishing effective teams.

Effective teams are critical to successful implementation of an intervention. Teams may often need professional learning on how to function effectively as a team and/or how to use the Data-based Individualization Process, [Getting Ready to Implement Intensive Intervention: Infrastructure for Data-Based Individualization | NCII](#). Teams should serve as the problem-solvers and are responsible for analyzing teacher and student level data. They should use a collaborative, decision-making process and be skilled at disaggregating data. Based on their analysis of data, effective teams should be able to suggest next steps in order to positively impact student and teacher outcomes, while leadership supports the follow-up.

Based on the analysis of this data, professional learning may need to be provided for the leadership, teachers and/or parents. When discussing infrastructure, it is critically important for us not to forget the needs of the educators as we implement Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students. Professional learning may need to be provided on effective teaming, [High Leverage Practices \(HLPs\)](#), effective Tier I practices by content area, effective collaborative planning, differentiation, analyzing data, root cause analysis, [Approaches to Root Cause Analysis - Office of Elementary and Secondary Education](#), and/or or explicit instruction, [Features of Explicit Instruction Course Content | NCII](#), etc.

As we work to continue to strengthen the infrastructure, we cannot forget the role of Family and Community when implementing an intervention. Educating the parents on the role they play in supporting a successful intervention is vitally important. Attendance also plays an important role in implementing an intervention and helping to impact fidelity, so ensuring parents are aware of this is important. Providing supplemental resources for parents that can use at home will support successful implementation of an intervention. Including parents in conversations regarding their student's data can prove to be very beneficial.

As we continue to implement interventions within Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students, ensuring there is a solid infrastructure cannot be overemphasized. Collaborating to ensure the role of leadership, effective teams, and family and community stakeholders should be clearly communicated. In addition, addressing the professional learning needs of all of the critical players before and during implementation of the intervention is essential in building and sustaining an infrastructure that supports the implementation of effective interventions.

For additional information, feel free to reach out to the MTSS regional coaches or Karen Suddeth at ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us to learn more.