



## Federal Programs



August 5, 2022 Email Blast

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

Directors,

In the words of a famous author, Dr. Seuss,  
“You’re off to great places. Today is your day.  
Your mountain is waiting. So get on your way!”

Other inspiring quotes from the beloved Dr.  
Seuss include:

-“The more that you read the more things you  
will know. The more that you learn, the more  
places you’ll go.”

-“Why fit in when you were born to stand out.”

-“Sometimes the questions are complicated, and the answers are simple.”

-“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer  
yourself in ANY direction you choose.”

-“I will teach tiny humans, here or there. I will teach tiny humans everywhere!”

As I am sure you have noted, each quote has great meaning as we start the  
new school year. Dr. Seuss brings a universal point of view for everyone.

Embrace the possibilities and get on your way!

Our first Director’s Webinar is Tuesday, August 9 at 1:00 p.m. The first webinar  
is scheduled until 2:30 p.m. Among topics to be addressed: Prior Written

YOU'RE OFF TO GREAT PLACES  
TODAY IS YOUR DAY  
YOUR MOUNTAIN IS WAITING  
SO GET ON YOUR WAY

-- DR SEUSS



*You're off to great places. Today is your  
day. Your mountain is waiting. So get on  
your way. - Dr. Seuss*

Notice, 1% participation rates and the implications for the waiver renewal, request to reactivate GTID numbers and update from NASDSE. **August Directors' Webinar Registration link**

Our district highlight is about Long County Schools. More than 200 teachers attended professional learning on Specially Designed Instruction (SDI). Learn more about their effective partnership with Coastal GLRS and First District RESA. Way to go Long County!

Our staff spotlight is shining on Glenda Henderson. Glenda is a Program Specialist and supports Metro East and West GLRS as a District Liaison. Glenda is knowledgeable, dependable and always so very kind. Her leadership is treasured. Be sure to wish Glenda a Happy Anniversary for 30 years of marriage!

An important message was released this week from our OSEP Director, Valerie Williams. Her comments are in regard to the new discipline guidance released in July. I am sharing an excerpt from her message:

My key message to you is that we need to stop relying on suspensions and expulsions, shortened school days, informal removals and other punitive practices as primary responses and consequences for children. The Department's Civils Rights Data Collection shows that

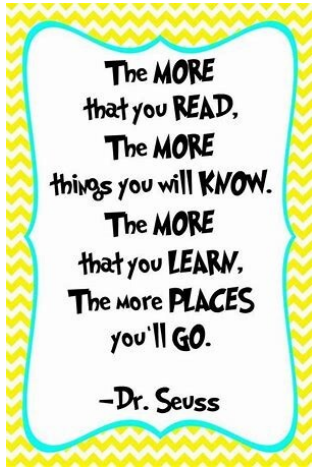
-Preschool students served under IDEA accounted for 22.7 percent of total preschool enrollment but 56.9 percent of preschool students who were expelled.

-School-age students with disabilities served under IDEA represented 13.2 percent of total student enrollment but received 20.5 percent of one or more in-school suspensions and 24.5 percent of one or more out-of-school suspensions.

Further, IDEA section 618 data show that during 2019–20 school year, Black children with disabilities made up 17.2 percent of children with disabilities aged 3–21 served under IDEA yet accounted for 43.5 percent of all children with disabilities aged 3–21 served under IDEA who were suspended out of school or expelled for more than 10 school days. Imagine the thousands of days of instructional time restored if in five years we reduced the suspension and expulsion rates by 50% and then every five years reduce the rates by another 50%. As laid out in the Positive, Proactive Approaches to Supporting the Needs of Children with Disabilities: A Guide for Stakeholders, the tools and resources are available and have a solid research base. In contrast, suspensions and expulsions lack a research base, except for the ability to **propagate the school to prison pipeline**.

All of the **discipline guidance** is available, including:

1. Questions and Answers: Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities and IDEA's Discipline Provisions; and
2. Positive, Proactive Approaches to Supporting the Needs of Children with Disabilities: A Guide for Stakeholders.



*The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go. - Dr. Seuss*

Over the next few months, we need to share the guidance with district and building leaders as well as all school personnel. This guidance should be used to reinforce the importance across all of our work. Discipline is a tough area to address and brings many different perspectives. Unfortunately, the data shows the need for substantial change.

Thank you in advance for embracing the opportunity to provide leadership to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

Just one more thought from Dr. Seuss, "Today you are you. That is truer than true. There is no one alive that is youer than you." Stay true to yourself. I am

proud of 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.



*Latest news*

### Coming Up

**August 10, 2022 at 10:00 AM** – Special Education Law 101 (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see **SESAA- Special Ed Law 101 - GaDOE Community** for registration

**August 11, 2022 at 10:00 AM** – Parental Rights, Complaints, and Due Process (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see **SESBA: Parental Rights, Complaints, Due Process - GaDOE Community** for registration.

**August 23-24, 2022** – The **Data, Privacy, and Cybersecurity Conference** in Athens, Georgia. The conference webpage is **FY 22 Data, Privacy, and**


**Cybersecurity Conference.** The conference is full, and the conference organizers are now maintaining a waiting list. If you are registered and are now unable to attend, please contact the organizers to have your registration removed to enable those on the waiting list to participate.

**August 24, 2022 at 2:00 PM** – Integrating ELA Content for Secondary Students with Disabilities (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see *\*SSIP Series: Integrating ELA Content for SWDs - GaDOE Community* for registration.

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**August & September 2022** – Regional Budget & Data Sessions are scheduled. Information about the sessions and registration information is available on the Professional Learning Events website linked below.



**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>.**

*Professional Learning Events*

## Reminders

**August 31** – Continuation of Services (CS) is due in the SE Applications Dashboard. CS is now open in the SE Applications for data entry. *Note: ONLY for applicable LEAs, if an LEA had any students with OSS > 10 days without services, data entry is required.*





*Lake County School System logo*

## **District Highlight: Long County Schools**

Debbie Wingate, Special Education Director in Long County led the initiative to intentionally have all 200 plus teachers trained on specially designed instruction! Their goal was to ensure all teachers were trained with the necessary tools to improve Tier I instruction to close learning gaps. A few factors helped Long County make this decision.

Based on data, students' scores showed a significant loss of learning due to the pandemic, in particular, students with disabilities. Next, the teacher shortage has always been a challenge but has increased significantly in the last few years. Because of this, Long County has hired several special educators who do not have a special education background and are considered out of field. Also, they recognized that specially designed instruction benefits not only students with disabilities but all students. They are very excited about this school year and the continued support from Coastal GLRS/FDRESA as they will engage in Action Planning GPS (Monitoring and Accountability of clear and observable expectation) Coaching OT (observations and feedback of Tier I instruction), and continued PD for ME (professional development for engagement).

Way to IMPACT, Long County!



*Glenda Henderson, Program  
Specialist, Georgia  
Department of Education  
Division of Special Education  
Services and Supports*

## **GaDOE Staff Highlight: Glenda Henderson**

Glenda Henderson has worked in the field of education for 35 years. Her very first job in education was as a paraprofessional in GNETS. She later began working with students with Intellectual Disabilities and then as a co-teacher in one of the Metro districts where she spent 16 years in the classroom. Glenda loved every moment of being with her students. For 15 years, she worked as a Special Education Lead Teacher with close to 150 students with disabilities in one school before retirement.

Glenda is currently a Program Specialist with the Results Driven Accountability Unit where she is a District Liaison (DL) for 12 local educational agencies in Metro East/West (District 4). Prior to that, she was a DL for District 5 for 4 years. As part of the Results Driven Accountability Unit, she is responsible for general supervision and monitoring support under Georgia's Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (GCIMP) to help guide LEAs in Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) applicable federal regulations, and Rules of the State Board of Education implementation.

One of Glenda's focus areas is Cross Functional Monitoring. In coordination with two other DLs, she has developed procedures to help LEAs navigate the process for Policies, Practices, and Procedures and compliant IEPs. This past year, they added office hours for LEAs to join the RDA Unit and the Budget Unit to ask questions about the process. They have focused on communication between the RDA Unit and the LEA. The goal has been to help reduce stress during the monitoring process. Glenda has also researched and presented around the state on Specially Designed Instruction.

This week, Glenda and her husband celebrated thirty years of marriage. They have three children, one granddaughter, and a fur baby named Kobe. Glenda enjoys bicycle riding, traveling, and reading.



*Person presenting information*

## Directors' Webinar

It's almost time! The FY23 Director's Webinars begin August 9 and continue every second Tuesday of the month from 1:00 p.m. to 2:15 pm. *(Please note that the August 9 webinar is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.)* These webinars offer the just-in-time information you need to be current with best practices in supervision and monitoring in your district.

If you have any questions, please contact Lynn Holland at [lholland@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:lholland@doe.k12.ga.us) or Belinda Tiller at [Belinda.tiller@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:Belinda.tiller@doe.k12.ga.us).

### Directors' Webinar Registration



Arrows

## Practice Pointers – General Supervision First Component: State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Reports (APR)

The system for general supervision includes eight components that must align together in a comprehensive integrated system. Within the first component, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that each state develop a State Performance Plan (SPP) that evaluates the state's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of IDEA and describe how the state will improve its implementation and results for children with disabilities.

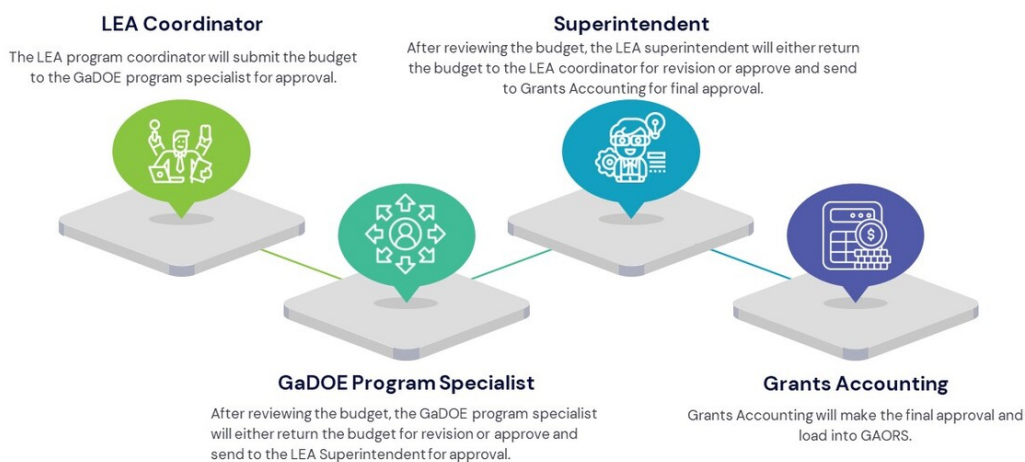
An Annual Performance Report (APR) is required to report on the results of the state's activities and describes progress or slippage in meeting the measurable and rigorous targets set in the SPP. The APR is submitted each year and includes trend data for each year. The SPP/APR is developed with input from the State Advisory Panel (SAP) and reviewed by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). From that review the state receives a determination from OSEP (i.e., Meets Requirements, Needs Assistance). Each state must use the targets established in the SPP and the priority areas described in **34 C.F.R. § 300.600(d)** to analyze the performance of each local educational agency (LEA).

The SPP/APR is developed for a six-year interval with a measurement table, and there are 17 total Indicators. Each of the 17 indicators designed to measure effective special education programming have a target. The SPP/APR is also composed of **Results Indicators** and **Compliance Indicators**. The **Results Indicator Targets**, such as graduation rate, can be set by the State. Results Indicators require targets that must show an increase over baseline, be rigorous, and are set with the advice of stakeholders (Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4a, 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, and 17). The **Compliance Indicator Targets**, such as Child Find, are set by OSEP and have a mandatory target that is set at 0% or 100% (Indicators 4b, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13). Most Indicators use data from the most recently completed full school year (SPP/APR due February 2022 will be based upon school year 2020-2021 for Indicators 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17). However, there are three Indicators that use lagging data from a year prior to the most recently completed full school year (SPP/APR due February 2022 is based upon school year 2019-2020 for Indicators 1, 2, and 4).

For more information please see **State Performance Plan (SPP), Annual Performance Reports (APR) and Annual Determinations** and **Engaging in the 2020-2025 State Performance Plan (SPP) / Annual Performance Report (APR)**.

## ConApp Budget Approval

The budget approval process is changing



## FY23 Consolidated Application Budget Approval

The budget approval process has changed to better support our LEAs. This new 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.



*Person writing on a paper*

## **FY 23 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.

**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 below.

**Survey:** After registering for your session, complete the **GaDOE IDEA Budget and Data Technical Assistance Survey** to enable the Budget and Data teams to provide information based upon your input.

Please contact Dawn Kemp, [dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us), or Malissa Roberts, [mroberts@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:mroberts@doe.k12.ga.us), with any questions.

**Date:** August 29-30, 2022

**Location:** Middle GA GLRS, 80 Cohen Walker Dr., Warner Robins, GA 31088



## **SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- Middle GLRS - GaDOE Community Registration**

**Date:** September 1-2, 2022

**Location:** North GLRS (Larry Walker Education Center), 1860 South Main St.,  
Ellijay, GA 30540

## **SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- North GLRS - GaDOE Community Registration**

**Date:** September 8-9, 2022

**Location:** South GLRS, 245 N. Robinson St., Lenox, GA 31637

## **SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- South GLRS - GaDOE Community Registration**

**Date:** September 12-13, 2022

**Location:** East GLRS, 4683 Augusta Hwy SE, Dearing, GA 30808

## **SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- East GLRS - GaDOE Community Registration**

**Date:** September 15-16, 2022

**Location:** Southeast/Coastal GLRS, 201 West Lee St., Brooklet, GA. 30415

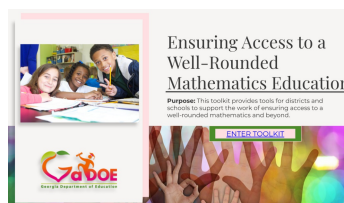
## **SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- SE GLRS - GaDOE Community Registration**

**Date:** September 26-27, 2022

**Location:** Georgia Department of Education

205 Jesse Hill Jr. Dr., Atlanta, GA 30303, Twin Towers/West Tower 20th Floor,  
Empire Room

## **SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- Metro - GaDOE Community Registration**



*Ensuring Access to a Well-  
Rounded Mathematics Education  
Toolkit*

## **Mathematics Resources**

### **Ensuring Access to a Well-Rounded Mathematics Education**

## Toolkit

We value your input and encourage you to review the Ensuring Access to a Well-Rounded Mathematics Education Toolkit. This toolkit provides resources to support the implementation of high-quality mathematics instruction while addressing learner variability.

Please provide your feedback by visiting this link: **Ensuring Access to a Well-Rounded Mathematics Education Toolkit**.

*Please note: The link to the DRAFT toolkit is listed within the feedback form.*



*Graphs and data with a calculator*

## FY23 Federal Allocations – IDEA

The State Board of Education (SBOE) approved FY23 federal formula allocations for ESSA and IDEA programs during its July 21, 2022, meeting. Grant Award Notices (GAN) to the Consolidated Application will be in the MyGaDOE Portal by August 5, 2022. LEAs with approved FY23 CLIPs may begin budgeting funds when they are available in the Consolidated Application by August 5, 2022. Formula grant allocations for ESSA and IDEA may be found **here**. Please note, FY23 allocations for the State Preschool Disability grant and State Interagency grant will go to the SBOE in August.



*Parent to Parent of Georgia logo*

## P2P August Trainings

**NOW/COMP Training for Participant Direction: Choosing a Fiscal Agency**

Full Presentation offered on two dates. Participants can choose one or both dates. In this two-part series, you will hear from Acumen and Continuum, Georgia's NOW/COMP waiver fiscal agents.

What will you learn?: Both sessions will cover information on Participant Direction, how to get started, and the role and responsibilities of the employer and the fiscal agency.

Who should attend?: Parents/Representatives and Individuals who are:

- ✓ Currently Participant Directing
- ✓ Considering the Participant Direction model

Wednesday, August 10 at 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

**August 10 meeting link**

Thursday, August 11 at 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

**August 11 meeting link**

### **WAZE to Adulthood Student Training: Participating in Your IEP Transition Plan (for Youth and Young Adults)**

Please join us as we discuss with Youth and Young Adults information on transition planning and the importance of their participation and self-advocacy in order to be successful in their education, future employment, and independent living.

Thursday, August 29th at 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**August 29 meeting link**



*Preschool Database QR code*

### **Preschool Special Education Database Update Form**

The purpose of this database is to ensure that we have preschool contacts to share important programming information.

By August 31st, you should submit the database update form using the link below or the QR code. If no update is needed, the FY21 contacts will be used for the FY22 database. Contact Barbara Ross at [Barbara.Ross@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:Barbara.Ross@doe.k12.ga.us) with any questions or concerns.

### **Preschool Special Education Database Update Form**

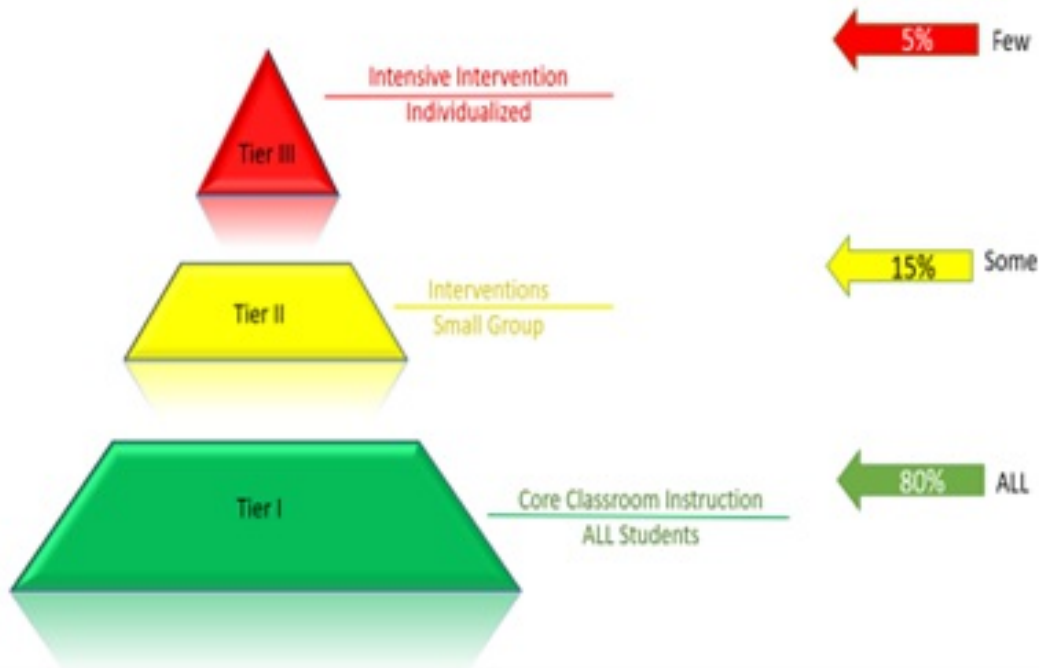


*People in a group giving high fives*

## **MTSS Snapshot: What happens when an intervention is not implemented with fidelity?**

As we have reflected on the fidelity of the implementation of our interventions at Tiers II and III, it is important to address the following:

- Understand how to effectively implement the evidence-based intervention, as it is intended.
- Gather and organize the resources necessary for implementation (i.e. professional learning for all staff involved, teacher and student resources, observation tools, schedule that allows for exact implementation, time for teams to analyze data and determine next steps, etc.).
- Adhere to the implementation procedures of the intervention.



As we continue to consider these critical actions we must also:

- Establish an implementation team to analyze data and to problem-solve barriers with implementation
- Provide initial and ongoing professional learning and support for the implementation of the intervention, based on data
- Use existing guidelines or create explicit guidelines for the implementation process
- Monitor ongoing implementation fidelity through collecting and analyzing student and staff data and determining next steps, **Implementing with Fidelity**

Collecting ongoing data to determine the effectiveness of these interventions is extremely important. Using existing data reports provided with computerized interventions is very important. This data is used to determine if students are progressing through the intervention as expected. This data may also help to determine whether additional professional learning may be needed for the staff (leaders, teachers and/or paras) implementing the intervention. Effective implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) also focuses on building a solid infrastructure, **Infrastructure**, for the intervention that provides supports for staff, students and parents. As we continue to reiterate the importance of fidelity, it is important to note that poor fidelity of implementation significantly impacts the reliability of our progress monitoring data and ultimately negatively impacts the academic and/or behavioral progress of our students. We cannot say an intervention did not work, if we did not implement it as prescribed. Hence, a poorly implemented program/intervention can lead to failure as easily as a poorly designed one, **IRIS | Page 1: Fidelity of Implementation.**



To help support districts and schools with their work of ensuring fidelity of implementation of effective Tier II and Tier III interventions, the Georgia Department of Education is offering a free online application, **Georgia Online MTSS/SST (GO-MTSS/SST)**. It is designed to help districts and schools facilitate data-based decision making within a tiered system of supports for students. Districts and schools can use this tool to help the Student Support Team (SST) adhere to the Student Support Team (SST) State Board rule by providing a format to record and to maintain information and documentation of a student's response to intervention. For additional information on GO-MTSS/SST, contact Dr. Rondalyn Pinkney at [RPinckney@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:RPinckney@doe.k12.ga.us).

For additional information, feel free to reach out to the MTSS regional coaches or Karen Suddeth, [ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us) to learn more.

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August 12, 2022 Email Blast

## Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education



*Dog days of summer*

Directors,

We have all heard of the dog days of summer, but do you really know what it means? I thought I knew but much to my surprise it is more than just the hot days in July and August. The dog days of summer refers to when the dog star, Sirius, is the brightest star in the sky other than the sun. Sirius is just one star of many stars that form the constellation, Canis Major, meaning “Greater Dog”. This happens annually from July 3 - August 11. During ancient times in Greece, Rome and Egypt, it was thought that the rising of the dog star contributed to the extreme heat of the season. Sirius means “scorching” in Ancient Greek and thus we have the dog days of summer. I would argue that the dog days seem to linger in Georgia just a little longer. Even with all the heat this summer, soon we will begin to enjoy cooler days. Check the stars to see if you can still see Sirius.

Hope you enjoy our new feature beginning with this issue. Our new directors participating in SELDA will be featured throughout the year. Please reach out to offer support and build our network of strength. Together we are so much stronger.

Veronica Crenshaw is a perfect way to begin our new director’s feature. She is the director at Georgia Cyber Academy. Before joining Georgia Cyber, Veronica

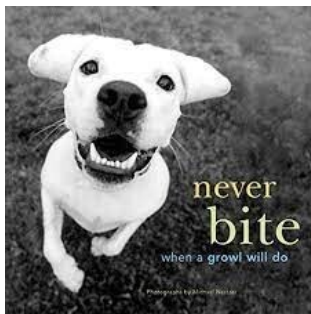
worked in our Dispute Resolution unit. I was so sad to see her leave but happy for her opportunity to serve as a special education director.

Thank you for attending the Director's Webinar on Tuesday. If you were unable to attend, the presentation and recording are posted on the webpage.

Please read the article in the eblast about the U.S. Department of Education Opportunity: **MyTeachingPartner™ Instructional Coaching**. This opportunity may appear to be a random offer, but it is much more. The American Institutes of Research (AIR) sent this specifically to us in hopes we could recruit local educational agencies to participate. If interested, please contact the project team at: AIR team at [SecondaryCoachingProject@air.org](mailto:SecondaryCoachingProject@air.org) or Dr. Marlene Darwin at [mdarwin@air.org](mailto:mdarwin@air.org).

If you are registered to attend the Data Conference later this month, please be sure to participate in the sessions provided for special education leaders on budget and data collection and reporting.

Our staff spotlight is shining on Laurie Ponsell. Laurie is a District Liaison in addition to wearing many hats in leading Indicators 11, 12 and 13 work. Her work in Ware County has served as a model in increasing student access to post-secondary opportunities. On a personal note, Laurie is just delightful. We are very fortunate to have her on our team.



*Never bite when a growl will do.*

In staying with my theme this week, I would like to share lessons we can learn from our dog. **Never bite when a growl will do!** Wise advice.

Hope your school year is off to a great start. Please let me know how we can better support your work.

Thank you for all you do! You are making a difference.

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.



*Latest news*

## Coming Up

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**August & 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.* 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. Please contact Dr. Dawn Kemp [dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us), if you have any questions.



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*Veronica Crenshaw, Special Education Director, Georgia Cyber Academy*

## New Director Spotlight: Veronica Crenshaw

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

Veronica Crenshaw is the Special Education Director for Georgia Cyber Academy and has been in the field of Education for 10 years. Within her educational tenure, Veronica has had the opportunity to work as a 6th grade ELA and Social Studies Teacher, a Program Specialist in the Family Engagement and Dispute Resolution Unit at GaDOE, a District Special Education Compliance Liaison, and a Board Vice Chair for Atlanta Smart Academy.



*Veronica Crenshaw with colleagues*



Teaching that knowledge is power, Veronica's parents have been the most impactful people in her educational career and have supported her through all her endeavors and achievements, such as when she graduated from law school. Impactful and forward thinking, Veronica is fluent in Spanish, is the mom of two boys (5 and 7), loves watching a good movie or reading a good book, and loves to travel.



*Laurie Ponsell, Program Specialist, Georgia Department of Education Division of Special Education Services and Supports*

## **GaDOE Staff Highlight: Laurie Ponsell**

Laurie Ponsell has worked in the field of education for 21 years. She currently serves as an Education Program Specialist in the Special Education Services and Supports - Results Driven Accountability Unit (RDA) at the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). Her role as a District Liaison (DL) to First District RESA is to provide guidance supporting the IDEA and general supervision. In addition, as a Program Specialist for Transition, she provides guidance to districts across the state on developing compliant transition plans that are meaningful and lead to successful postsecondary outcomes for students. She works alongside team members throughout the year on our Transition Collaborative's Strategic Plan for improving opportunities and outcomes for students with disabilities. She also works with the Data and GOIEP Team on Timelines (Child Find and Early Childhood Transition) Reporting.

Laurie began her career as a teacher of students with disabilities in 2001. Prior to joining the GaDOE team, she served as a Special Education Coordinator for nine years. Throughout her career in education, she has had the opportunity to serve students with disabilities in grades 1st -12th in multiple settings and

subjects.

To increase the graduation rate of students with disabilities, as a Special Education Coordinator in the district, Laurie collaborated with others to begin an initiative to help students with disabilities discover pathways to success. By providing students with disabilities information, resources, and guidance about available programs and post-secondary options, they were able to help students recognize their potential in reaching their post-secondary goals. The team guided students throughout the process on how to locate and access information about post-secondary education and training programs. In addition, the team provided after-school tutoring and support so students could take the required entrance exams and receive their accommodations as needed. Results of the initiative increased the number of students with disabilities graduating and enrolling in College or Technical School, increased student's self-advocacy skills, and lead to increased participation in dual enrollment. Also, to give more of our students access to job training and development of employability skills, she worked with district leaders to create a Living Skills Lab. With the success of the Living Skills Lab and its impact on student engagement and skill development, they wanted to provide more students access to skill development. They put together a plan and opened a Coffee Shop to be operated by the students. This provided opportunities for students to learn valuable employability skills and interact with their same-aged peers and adults outside of the classroom.

In her current role, she has worked with the RDA Unit developing guidance documents and resources to support our work in compliance and best practices for Transition (Indicator 13), Timelines (Indicators 11 and 12), and Cross-Functional Monitoring. She has developed a tool for teachers to use for guidance during the transition planning process that will help the IEP team: focus on creating plans that are meaningful, write appropriate goals, document progress and follow-up on transition services and activities, and aid in completing the Postsecondary Outcomes Survey. She is looking forward to getting this tool on the website for teachers to access. Also, she has developed new Transition Planning and Compliance modules that will soon be ready to access on the GaDOE website.

Laurie has been married for 26 years and has two sons and two dogs (Shiba Inus). Her youngest just completed his freshman year of college. She loves to recycle, upcycle, garden and work on DIY projects. Along with her family and a few friends, she added a new bedroom and bathroom to her house. She installed all of the flooring in both rooms and put in her dream IKEA PAX closet system. She also loves to travel and her favorite place to visit is London. She loves researching her ancestors and discovering new relatives from around the

world through DNA. She was thrilled to learn that she is related to many U.S. Presidents, royal families throughout history, a descendant of multiple signers of the Magna Carta and some famous entertainers (including The King and The Duke).



*Arrows*

## **Practice Pointers – General Supervision Second Component: Policies, Procedures and Effective Implementation**

States are required to have policies and procedures that are aligned with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 34 C.F.R. § 300.100. Georgia's [Special Education Rules](#) support the state-level implementation of the IDEA. In addition to the state rules, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) outlines specific strategies in the [Special Education Implementation Manual](#). Each chapter of the Implementation Manual relates to the processes and best practices for implementing the Georgia Rules for Special Education, and it is not intended to state new law or supplant any federal or state laws, regulations, or requirements. The GaDOE has also provided [Sample Special Education Forms](#), which may be used by local educational agencies (LEAs) to support compliant practices.

Each LEA is responsible for developing policies and procedures and ensuring effective implementation. A primary purpose and benefit in having written procedures is so that everyone in the LEA implements the special education rules and regulations in the same manner to ensure compliance with the IDEA. LEA policies and procedures are designed and implemented to improve results for students with disabilities, should be aligned with IDEA and the state rules, and should include how each rule is implemented by the LEA. These policies and procedures should be reviewed yearly and updated as needed.

### **Resource**

[Georgia Special Education Rules Outline](#)



MY TEACHING PARTNER-SECONDARY PROJECT

*My Teaching Partner - Secondary Project*

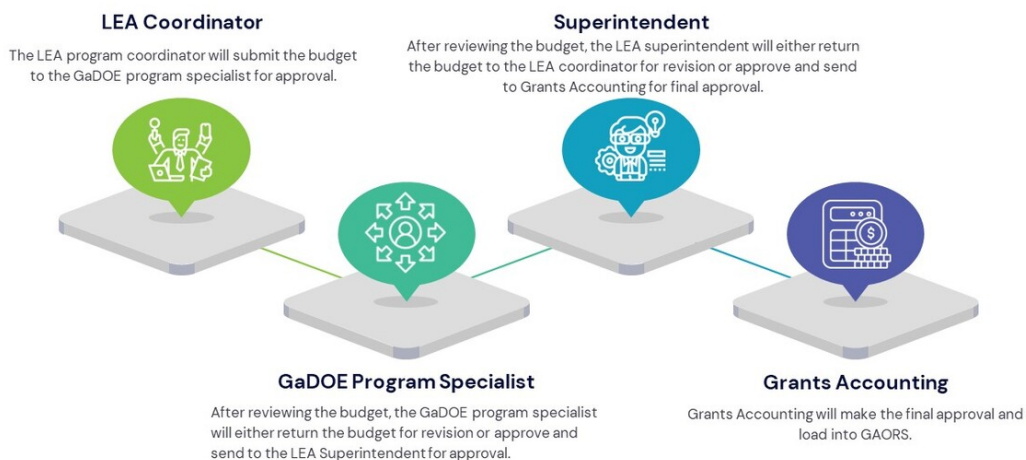
## U.S. Department of Education Opportunity: MyTeachingPartner™ Instructional Coaching

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded a competitive grant to the American Institutes for Research (AIR), Teachstone, and Learning Forward to expand access to *MyTeachingPartner* with middle and high school teachers in various districts. This grant is intended to provide resources to build a district's coaching capacity. Those interested in discussing potential involvement for their district should reach out to the AIR team at [SecondaryCoachingProject@air.org](mailto:SecondaryCoachingProject@air.org) or Dr. Marlene Darwin at [mdarwin@air.org](mailto:mdarwin@air.org) to learn more.

MyTeachingPartner™ Instructional Coaching Flier

### ConApp Budget Approval

The budget approval process is changing



### FY23 Consolidated Application Budget Approval

The budget approval process has changed to better support our LEAs. This new 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.



*Person writing on a paper*

## **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 below.

**Survey:** After registering for your session, complete the [GaDOE IDEA Budget and Data Technical Assistance Survey](#) to enable the Budget and Data teams to provide information based upon your input.



Please contact Dawn Kemp, [dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us), or Malissa Roberts, [mroberts@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:mroberts@doe.k12.ga.us), with any questions.

**Date:** August 29-30, 2022

**Location:** Middle GA GLRS, 80 Cohen Walker Dr., Warner Robins, GA 31088  
SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- Middle GLRS - GaDOE Community Registration

**Date:** September 1-2, 2022

**Location:** North GLRS (Larry Walker Education Center), 1860 South Main St., Ellijay, GA 30540  
SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- North GLRS - GaDOE Community Registration

**Date:** September 8-9, 2022

**Location:** South GLRS, 245 N. Robinson St., Lenox, GA 31637  
SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- South GLRS - GaDOE Community Registration

**Date:** September 12-13, 2022

**Location:** East GLRS, 4683 Augusta Hwy SE, Dearing, GA 30808  
SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- East GLRS - GaDOE Community Registration

**Date:** September 15-16, 2022

**Location:** Southeast/Coastal GLRS, 201 West Lee St., Brooklet, GA. 30415  
SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- SE GLRS - GaDOE Community Registration

**Date:** September 26-27, 2022

**Location:** Georgia Department of Education  
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Dr., Atlanta, GA 30303, Twin Towers/West Tower 20th Floor, Empire Room  
SpEd Budget & Data: Tools for the Job- Metro - GaDOE Community Registration



*People reviewing applications*

## Important- FY22 Continuation of Services (CS) in SE Applications

CS information is now available inside the CS Application located in the SE Applications. It is critical for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to check the CS Application to determine if data entry is required. There are 31 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with data entry required for students with disabilities with >10 days of OSS without services. Each data entry also requires uploaded supporting documentation. Guidance information for the process can be located on the [Data Collection and Reporting website](#) or in the HELP document inside the SE Applications. If you have any questions regarding the CS process, please contact Dr. Ron Washington at [ron.washington@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ron.washington@doe.k12.ga.us) or Dr. Dawn Kemp at [dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us).



*Graphs and data with a calculator*

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

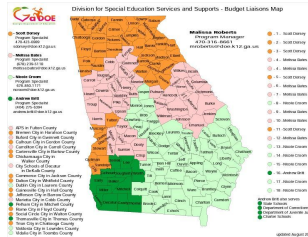
Local educational agencies (LEAs) will submit the completion report for **subgrant expenditures** (i.e., proportionate share and Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) or Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) expenditures) differently for FY 2022. The reporting change is 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**.



*Budget Liaison Map*

## Budget Liaison MAP

Directors, the FY23 Special Education Budget Liaison map is available. Please review the map for your assigned budget liaison. The budget liaison map is also located on the Special Education Budget Unit's website. Please don't hesitate to contact your budget liaison if you have any questions throughout the school year.



*Budget document with graphs and data*

## 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 Melissa Bates at [Melissa.Bates@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:Melissa.Bates@doe.k12.ga.us).



*Parent to Parent of Georgia logo*

## P2P August Trainings

### **WAZE to Adulthood Student Training: Participating in Your IEP Transition Plan (for Youth and Young Adults)**

Please join us as we discuss with Youth and Young Adults information on transition planning and the importance of their participation and self-advocacy in order to be successful in their education, future employment, and independent living.

Thursday, August 29th at 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

[August 29 meeting link](#)



*Preschool Database QR code*

## **Preschool Special Education Database Update Form**

The purpose of this database is to ensure that we have preschool contacts to share important programming information.

By August 31st, you should submit the database update form using the link below or the QR code. If no update is needed, the FY21 contacts will be used for the FY22 database. Contact Barbara Ross at [Barbara.Ross@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:Barbara.Ross@doe.k12.ga.us) with any questions or concerns.

## Preschool Special Education Database Update Form



*Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership logo*

## **GA Parent Mentor Partnership: Sharing the Journey**

When the Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership (GaPMP) was established in 2002, the vision was for parents with the lived experience of raising a child who receives special education services to provide information and support to other families. This lived experience was considered a gateway to establishing the connection between home, school and community that ultimately leads to better post-school outcomes. Twenty years later, we are still at it and our theme for FY23, Sharing the Journey, reflects the continued value we place on family experience and mentoring. This year, we will have 101 parent mentor positions. If your district is new to the GaPMP, returning after taking time off, or your parent mentor will be new, please fill out the JotForm below.

### FY23 GaPMP New Parent Mentor Form

## **New Parent Mentor Orientation**

All new parent mentors will be invited to an orientation on August 16 at 9:00 a.m. We also invite any district staff who is interested to also join us.

### New Parent Mentor Orientation Registration

## **2022-2023 Kickoff!**

If you are returning to the GaPMP this year and your parent mentor remains the same, we look forward to seeing you again at the FY23 Kickoff, September 7-8. Although the event will be virtual, there will be locations for those who choose to meet and “attend” together. Registration will be provided soon!

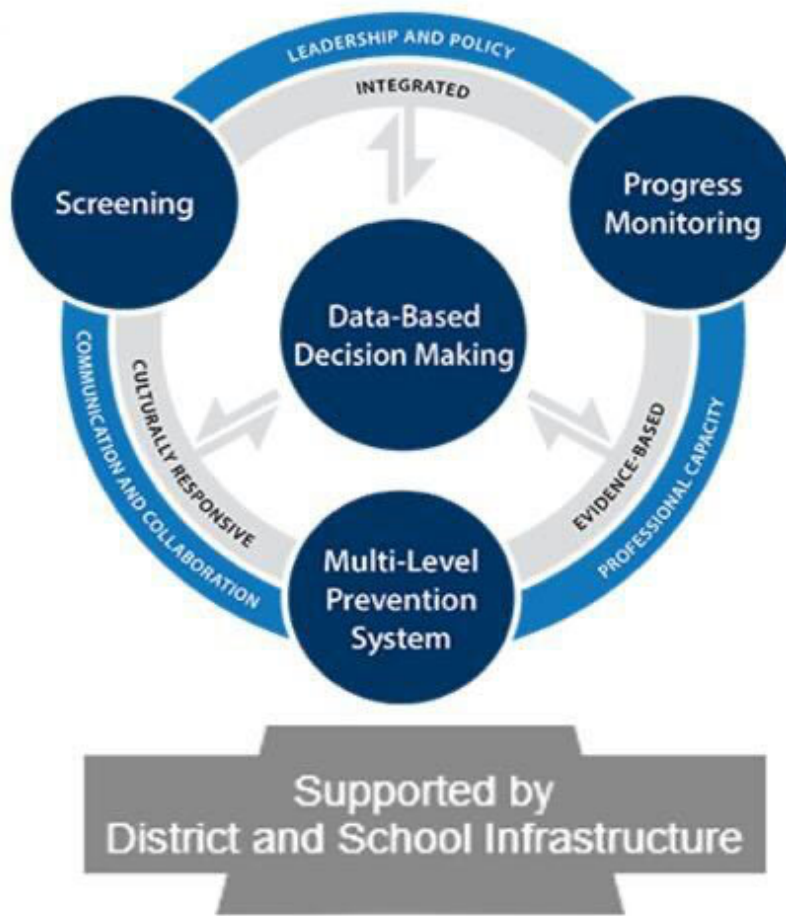


*People in a group giving high fives*

## **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 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, [ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ksuddeth@doe.k12.ga.us) to learn more.

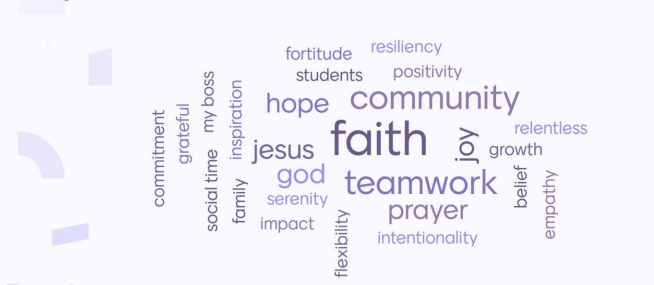
## Welcome

### Greetings from the State Director

Directors,

If asked to give one word that will be your source of strength for this year, what would it be? Thanks to Glenda Henderson, Program Specialist in the Results Driven Accountability Unit, GLRS Directors, GNETS Directors and GaDOE staff had just that opportunity earlier this week.

**List one word that will be your source of strength for this year.**



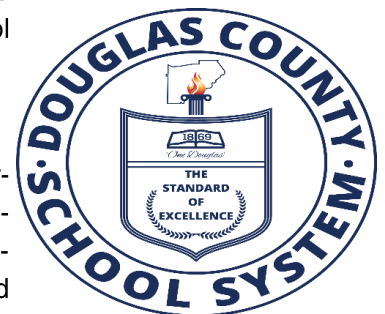
You can see from the graphic that if you didn't know this was about educational leaders discussing their source of strength for their professional work, you might certainly think it was created through a faith-based setting. Not to stray too far but Wow! I could not be prouder of the responses. Glenda provided a gift during this routine monthly meeting to center our thoughts around our personal motivator for the school year. These words are powerful! The collection of words demonstrates the depth of commitment, passion and positivity surrounding our work. My word was "hope". I could have said

optimistic -but hope is what my inner voice said when posed with this question. It is my sincere hope that through our work we provide the necessary resources, professional learning, best practice, technical assistance, and the list could go on - to support all local educational agencies to provide quality services for students with disabilities. Again, I hope our plans provide a variety of supports and services, but I am most hopeful of the difference I feel we can all make with specially designed instruction for students with disabilities. Special education is complex. One size does not fit all. Still, my hope rests in our focus on instruction. Take a moment and select your word of strength, then take it to the next level with your staff and teachers. I think you will be amazed by the collection of energy, sincerity and power that can result from the commitment to make a difference with hope!

Our district highlight this week comes from Douglas County Schools. It is my pleasure to share a press release from Douglas County Schools about Alexander High School freshman, Chris Morgan.

Shared from Douglas County School's Facebook account:

Alexander High School freshman Chris Morgan is on a winning streak. Recently, Morgan traveled to California and won the 2022 Junior Varsity International Braille Challenge. The competition, which is sponsored by the National Braille Institute, tests competitors' fundamental braille skills, including reading comprehension, spelling, speed and accuracy, proofreading, and charts and graphs.



"Challenges in life will come and go. These braille challenges give him the extra boost he needs to reach for the known and unknown," said Chris' mother Tee Morgan. "They help him persevere when things get tough." Visit [Douglas County's website](#) to read more about Morgan's impressive victory!



A special thanks to Cheryl Handley, Executive Director of Program for Exceptional Children, and staff for their leadership and commitment to excellence! I am so proud of this impressive accomplishment!

Our staff spotlight is shining brightly on Dr. Maisha L. Jack. Maisha is a Program Specialist with the Results Driven Accountability Unit. She also serves as a District Liaison. Maisha is steady and sure. She takes a big challenge and very quietly makes the necessary change. Maisha is masterful with the support she provides. She is very knowledgeable yet nurturing to support LEAs. Maisha is one of the busiest people I know but seems to make time for everyone. In addition to her work with GaDOE, Maisha is an Amazon Best-Selling Author. She is just amazing!

Don't forget the Data Conference starting next week. The schedule for the conference can be found on the [2022-2023 Data Privacy, and Cybersecurity Conference webpage](#). Be sure to eat breakfast on your own as breakfast is not provided this year. Special education sessions are listed below for planning purposes. Hope you will attend.

Data Conference Presentations Schedule for DSESS August 23-24, 2022			
August 23 Tuesday Morning	August 23 Tuesday Afternoon	August 24 Wednesday Morning	August 24 Wednesday Afternoon
FTE Back to Basics- 1 Presenters: Dawn Kemp, Linda Castellanos Time 10:00 to 10:50 Location: Parthenon 1 & 2 in Thomas St. Building Upper Level	Student Record and Special Education: A Critical Reporting Relationship- 3 Presenters: Dale Rose, Emily Dishman Time: 1:00-2:50 PM Location: Parthenon 1 & 2	Student Class: Special Education Delivery Models-4 Presenters: Dawn Kemp, Linda Castellanos Time: 9:00 to 9:50 AM Location: Parthenon 1 & 2	Navigating the Disproportionality Maze-7 Presenters: Alicia Mercer, Bridget Still, Dawn Kemp Time 1:00 to 2:50 PM Location: Grand Hall 3 in the Thomas Building Lower Level
FTE Update for Special Education- 2 Presenters: Linda Castellanos, Dawn Kemp Time 11:00 to 11:50 Location: Parthenon 1 & 2	Student Class Update for Special Education-5 Presenters: Linda Castellanos, Sharon Armour, Dawn Kemp Time: 3:10-4:00 PM Location: Parthenon 1 & 2	State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report: Why does it matter for LEAs?-6 Presenters: Dawn Kemp, Linda Castellanos Time: 10:00-10:50 AM Location: Parthenon 1 & 2	
		Equitable Services and Proportionate Share for IDEA- 8 Presenters: Malissa Roberts, Dawn Kemp Time 11:00 to 11:50 Location: Parthenon 1 & 2	

What does hope really mean? Hope can reduce feelings of helplessness, increase happiness, reduce stress and increase our quality of life. According to Wisdom Cultivators, people who are hopeful see demanding situations as opportunities rather than challenges. Psychology Today says that hope is related to positive outcomes. Charles R. Snyder, considered a leading expert on positivity, shares that hope allows individuals to approach concerns with a mindset and strategy to promote success. With hope, the chance of accomplishing goals is more likely. Hope should include goal setting, strategy and motivation. With hope on our side, we can make a difference!

Thank you for all you do to provide hope for students and their families.

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

- **August 23-24, 2022** – The [Data, Privacy, and Cybersecurity Conference](#) in Athens, Georgia. The conference webpage is [FY 22 Data, Privacy, and Cybersecurity Conference](#). **The conference is full, and the conference organizers are now maintaining a waiting list.** If you are registered and are now unable to attend, please contact the organizers to have your registration removed to enable those on the waiting list to participate.
- **August 24, 2022 at 2:00 PM** – Integrating ELA Content for Secondary Students with Disabilities (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Integrating ELA Content for SWDs - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **August 31, 2022 at 10:00 AM** – MTSS, SST and Intensive Interventions (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see MTSS, SST, and Intensive Interventions - GaDOE Community for registration.
- **August 31, 2022 at 2:00 PM** – Integrating Mathematics Content for Secondary Students with Disabilities (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Integrating Mathematics for SWDs - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **August & 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. 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. Please contact Dr. Dawn Kemp [dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto: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

- **August 31** – Continuation of Services (CS) is due in the SE Applications Dashboard. CS is now open in the SE Applications for data entry. Note: ONLY for applicable LEAs, if an LEA had any students with OSS > 10 days without services, data entry is required. If you have questions about this process, please contact Dr. Ron Washington at [ron.washington@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ron.washington@doe.k12.ga.us) or Dr. Dawn Kemp at [dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us).



## New Director Spotlight: Angie Sowell

The Georgia Department of Education's Special Education Services and Supports Division is excited to feature Angie Sowell for our New Director Spotlight this week. Angie Sowell is the Special Education Director for Echols County Schools and has been in the field of Education for 14 years. Teaching kindergarten for a few years prior to moving into special education, Angie taught elementary and middle school students for eight years in a variety of settings and felt that her time spent teaching in an EIP Kindergarten class and making many accommodations and modifications for the EIP students helped prepare her for special education.

Also serving as the district Gifted Coordinator for nine years, Angie believes that "special education and gifted education are truly not that different, just different ends of the spectrum!"

Two years prior to becoming the Special Education Director, Angie served as the school system's Alternative School Director and feels the time spent in special education prepared her to develop positive relationships with students and that those bonds allowed her to work with students placed in alternative education to meet their goals. Enjoying the role as Alternative School Director, Angie always found herself trying to find ways to bond with the students and develop corrective action plans to move them back into the regular classroom. Though a rewarding role, Angie has shared that she was excited to be back with her special education team as director and looks forward to watching growth, as they push their students to be their best.

When she is not serving students and families, Angie loves spending time with family and friends, especially if it involves the beach - any beach! Her downtime is spent with her husband of 23 years and their 19, 16, and 15-year-old children. Angie love dogs and has a dachshund and a very large, 100-pound goldendoodle who is much too large to live in the house, but he is a big baby and thinks he is human.



## GaDOE Staff Highlight: Dr. Maisha L. Jack



Dr. Maisha L. Jack has been in the field of education for 25 years. She has been both a special education teacher and a general education teacher. Maisha's first job in education was as an Early Start Preschool Inclusion Teacher in Lexington, Kentucky. After moving to Georgia, she collectively worked 14 years in one of the Metro districts as a Pre-K teacher, Pre-K inclusion teacher, K-5 Interrelated teacher, K-3 self-contained teacher, 5th grade special education co-teacher, and as a general education 5th grade teacher. Upon embarking on another Metro school district, Maisha was a self-contained primary noncategorical teacher for one year and spent the remaining five years as a Special Education Lead Teacher, providing support to special education students and parents in four different elementary schools across the district.

Currently, Maisha is a Program Specialist with the Results Driven Accountability Unit (RDA). As part of the Results Driven Accountability Unit, she is responsible for general supervision and monitoring support under Georgia's Continuous

Improvement Monitoring Process (GCIMP) to help guide LEAs in Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) applicable federal regulations, and Rules of the State Board of Education implementation. Among other projects, Maisha is currently collaborating across the division as updates are received from OSEP, co-leading on the LEA Determinations Team, and aiding in contributed writing for the weekly blasts for special education directors.

Additionally, within the RDA Unit, Maisha is a District Liaison for 37 local educational agencies (LEAs). Supporting 12 LEAs in Region 10 and 25 LEAs for the State Metro Charter Districts, she takes pride in providing ongoing group

and/or one on one technical assistance to each LEA, which she believes is key in establishing trusted relationships in being able to offer guidance and support. She provides daily support to 37 local education agencies in planning, scheduling, and teamwork. She works collaboratively with four GLRS directors to provide technical assistance to the special education directors in both Region 10 and the Metro Charter LEAs.

In her first three years at GaDOE, Maisha planned and facilitated monthly meetings with the State Charter Schools Commission and Federal Programs for collaboration and dialogue on how to better support and bridge gaps to serve and support LEAs across the state.

In her spare time, Maisha enjoys spending time with her family, working in her garden, watching sports, playing with her dogs, traveling, and writing. She recently traveled to Morocco and had the pleasure of seeing some of the most beautiful plants and landscaping that she has ever seen. Maisha also recently became an Amazon International Best-Selling Author, having collectively authored and coauthored seven books across different genres.

## Practice Pointers – General Supervision Third Component: Integrated Monitoring Activities

Georgia has integrated monitoring activities which enables the State to: 1) identify noncompliance using a variety of sources and systemic issues with results, 2) ensure correction of the noncompliance in a timely manner, 3) verify valid and reliable data, and 4) ensure consistency with the requirements set forth in federal guidance. Monitoring of federal programs is conducted to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education. Monitoring emphasizes accountability for using resources wisely. It serves as a vehicle for the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) to help local educational agencies (LEAs) achieve high-quality implementation of educational programs.

Fidelity of compliant practices is enforced by using a tiered monitoring system that enables the State to monitor all LEAs every year. For those monitoring activities that involve active review of LEA's procedures and student records, such as [Cross Functional Monitoring](#), [Disproportionality](#) and [complaint investigations](#), LEAs submit requested documentation and data to the state in the portal application. All monitoring activities provide the State with evidence of general supervision processes, as well as local policies, procedures, and/or practices. Documentation is reviewed to determine if the LEA demonstrates compliance or non-compliance. When non-compliance is determined, the LEA's have up to one year to correct any noncompliance identified during any monitoring review. LEAs are also provided technical assistance based on the reviews to better support the LEA in achievement of targets and progress in continuous improvement. Student record reviews for due process procedural compliance are a component of Georgia's Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (GCIMP) to meet the state's general supervision responsibility.

For more information, please visit our website at [General Supervision - Georgia's Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process \(GCIMP\)](#) and [Results Driven Accountability](#).

## Updated Information- FY22 Continuation of Services (CS) in SE Applications

LEAs with any student having > 10 days OSS without services are required to enter a cessation reason for each student and upload supporting documentation in the CS Application. Updated guidance information regarding documentation for the process can be located on the [Data Collection and Reporting website](#) or in the HELP document inside the SE Applications. If you have any questions regarding the CS process, please contact Dr. Ron Washington at [ron.washington@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ron.washington@doe.k12.ga.us) or Dr. Dawn Kemp at [dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us).





## 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 Great News! 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 Melissa Bates at [Melissa.Bates@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:Melissa.Bates@doe.k12.ga.us).

## 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.



Georgia  
Parent Mentor  
Partnership

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

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

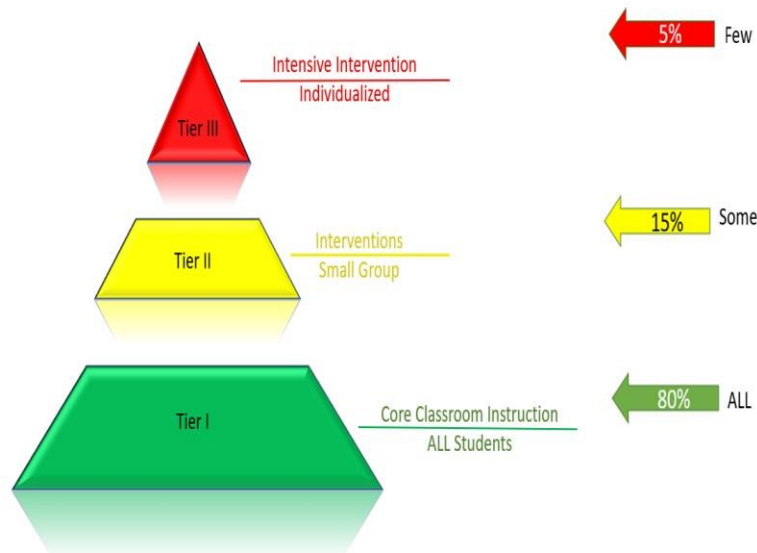
[Sharing the Journey Registration Link](#)

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](mailto:aladd@doe.k12.ga.us) and complete the [New Parent Mentor Form](#).



## MTSS Snapshot: What actions can we implement to increase the effectiveness of our Tier I instruction?

The foundation of an effective multi-tiered system of support is ensuring that there is effective Tier I instruction for all students. If the needs of at least 80% of your students are not being met with effective Tier I instruction, it is important to reflect on possible barriers or root causes that could be impacting your students' achievement.



As you reflect on the essentials of building a solid infrastructure for effective Tier I instruction, you can reflect on the level of implementation with the following actions:

- Facilitating effective (co) planning and professional learning among all members of the grade-level, including ELL and special education teachers with a discussion; ensuring a discussion around the fidelity of the standards; [Collaborative Planning Tools](#)
- Ensuring an intentional focus in implementing an effective three part - lesson, while ensuring there is an effective opening, work period and closing each day; [GaDOE SBC Instructional Framework](#)
- Implementing effective differentiation and vocabulary strategies to meet the diverse needs of students and to support mastering the Language of the Standard (LOTS); [Vocabulary Strategies Toolbox](#)
- Ensuring that all students who are receiving Tier II and III supports are receiving it, in addition to and not in place of Tier I instruction. Interventions at Tiers II and III should complement Tier I instruction
- Monitoring the progress of all students during the lesson; frequently checking for understanding and clarifying misconceptions
- Ensuring the pervasive use of High Leverage Practices, [Homepage | TeachingWorks](#)
- Ensuring instructional common commitments are communicated and monitored for fidelity of implementation

As you reflect on the effectiveness of Tier I instruction in your school, these are just a few actions that can be discussed. Implementation of these actions can significantly impact the effectiveness of Tier I instruction. It is also very important to develop fidelity resources and be able to collect data and to monitor the level of implementation of these actions. Discussion around implementation of each these seven actions could provide a great starting point in determining root causes that may be impacting the effectiveness of your Tier I instruction. It is also important to note, that if you are struggling with many of these actions, determine which one or two actions can be implemented and monitored to make the greatest impact.

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



# Office of Federal Programs Division for Special Education

Educating Georgia's Future

August 26, 2022

## Welcome

### Greetings from the State Director

Directors,

On September 7-8, the Parent Mentor Partnership will hold their annual meeting. Parent Mentors and Special Education Directors will gather at regional viewing centers or join the fun virtually. After 20 years of the partnership, Parent Mentors are still going strong. Please take a moment to watch the video. [CONFERENCE PROMO VIDEO](#). The theme for this year is Sharing the Journey. We have all heard the journey can be more fun than the destination. Let's continue



the journey together while setting the goal of a Parent Mentor or Family Engagement Specialist in every school district. The parent perspective and voice are essential to support all students and their families. We should continue to be intentional in our planning and implementation to ensure everyone is included in the journey.

PowerPoint presentations from the Data Conference are available through the links below. If you were unable to attend, please take advantage of these resources and feel free to reach out to our team to provide any technical support needed. We are with you on this journey.

- [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](#)

Our district highlight this week is from Haralson County Schools. Having just opened a new College and Career Academy, the district is offering Teaching as a Profession as 1 of the 15 pathways available to the students. Great way to address the recruitment of teachers! Be sure to read the full article to learn more.



@georgiadeptofed

www.gadoe.org

Our staff spotlight is shining brightly on Sharon Champion. Sharon provides valuable support to the Dispute Resolution Unit. Sharon always has a very calm demeanor and conducts business with grace. We are very fortunate to have Sharon on our team!

I enjoyed participating in Collaborative Communities in Northeast GLRS, Middle Georgia GLRS and East Central GLRS in August. I love visiting your region and spending time with each of you. Looking forward to visiting several other locations during September. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity. I learn so much from each of you.



Life is a journey that begins with one step. Can you imagine more than 20 years ago when the idea of the Parent Mentor Partnership was just beginning to develop? Fearless leaders like State Special Education Director Phil Pickens led the way with this concept and made Parent Mentors a reality for Georgia. Patti Solomon was the first leader of the partnership while Anne Ladd, our current leader, continues to grow the work. It has certainly been a journey, but we are so much better because of our work together. Famous author, Ralph Waldo Emerson is credited with saying, "Life is a journey, not a destination." It is not about arriving. Travel it well and enjoy every step along the way as the journey is the reward.

A big thank you to all Parent Mentors! The parents that support us now as well as those that led the journey.

I appreciate each of you!

Keeping Students First,

Wina

## Special Education Events & Due Dates

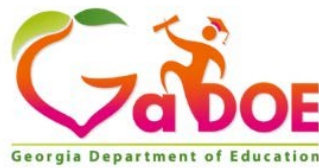
Please review our [Georgia DOE SPED Calendar](#) for upcoming events and the [Due Dates Calendar](#) for deadlines and key dates.



### Coming Up

- **August 31, 2022 at 10:00 AM** – MTSS, SST and Intensive Interventions (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see MTSS, SST, and Intensive Interventions - GaDOE Community for registration.
- **August 31, 2022 at 2:00 PM** – Integrating Mathematics Content for Secondary Students with Disabilities (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Integrating Mathematics for SWDs - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **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.
- **August & 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](mailto: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

- **August 31** – Continuation of Services (CS) is due in the SE Applications Dashboard. CS is now open in the SE Applications for data entry. **Note:** ONLY for applicable LEAs, if an LEA had any students with OSS > 10 days without services, data entry is required. If you have questions about this process, please contact Dr. Ron Washington at [ron.washington@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:ron.washington@doe.k12.ga.us) or Dr. Dawn Kemp at [dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us).

### New Director Spotlight: Heather Rivera

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

Heather Rivera is the Special Education Director for Baconton Community Charter School and has been in the field of education for 20 years. Within her educational tenure, Ms. Rivera began her career through a high school work-based program that provided college credits while working with preschool children. While transitioning to special needs pre-k where she taught hearing and visually impaired students in preparation for transition into the public school system, a leap was taken to adult education where she taught reading and language to adults and ELL students who were illiterate and looking to enter the workforce and/or college. Finding that her passion is watching the "light bulb" moments, teaching middle school general and special education can also be added to Ms. Rivera's educational resume.

Believing in herself and believing that there is always room for learning and growing is something that Ms. Rivera stands by, and her goal is for others to have that same belief. The person who is attributed to impacting Ms. Rivera's educational career is her dad. "He always pressed that education is the one thing that cannot be undone." Ms. Rivera shared that her dad was the smartest person in her life and that he was an example of just how far one could go if they were able to read and think on their own. "He instilled in me that being able to pick up a book or read an article and carry on a knowledgeable conversation about worldly topics is worth so much more than money."

Proud wife to an awesome man and a mommy to 3 amazing children from sunny South Florida, Ms. Rivera and her family make memories by traveling to new places and doing new things. Happiest when she is outside and has free



time doing yard work and building projects, Ms. Rivera shares that the heat is where she is happiest. While also coaching cross-country and track during the school year to connect and destress, Ms. Rivera is a huge fan of sushi and will never pass up an invitation to pho. Overall, God and her family are at the center of all that she does.

### GaDOE Staff Highlight: Sharon Champion

Sharon Champion has been in the field of education for 15 years. Her current role is Administrative Assistant with the Dispute Resolution Federal Programs. In this role, she processes special education complaints regarding students which include letters and emails to parents and school districts. Previously, her role was administrative assist / travel coordinator for PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports). In this role, her responsibility was to ensure that all travel arrangements were made for the team, coordinate sign-in sheets, ensure training facilities were set up and attendees received pertinent information. She was also the onsite host. Previously, she was the principal's secretary at Mount Zion High School in Clayton County. Her duties included keeping the principal on point, managing the front office administrators, securing substitute teachers for classrooms and frequent interactions with students and parents.

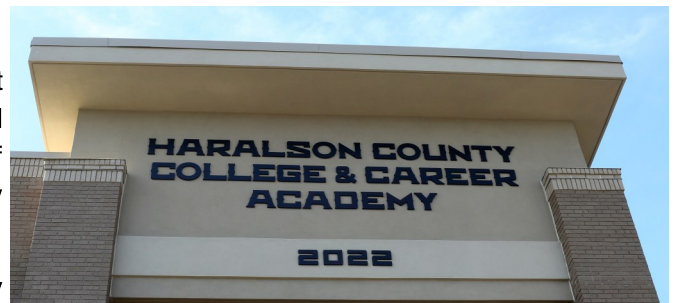
While working in Dispute Resolution, Sharon has had many great ideas for helpful communication to parents regarding the complaint process.

Outside of spending time with her two grandchildren, Sharon's hobbies include yoga, dancing and feeding birds in her front yard.

### District Highlight: Haralson County

This week we want to celebrate Haralson county who just opened their new College and Career Academy this school year. The district is offering Teaching as a Profession as 1 of the 15 pathways available to the students. What a great way to address the recruitment of teachers!

The school system's mission is to provide their community with a skilled workforce. This is addressed in the College and Career Academy's fifteen Pathways that are evaluated annually to determine alignment with Haralson County's local and regional workforce needs. We look forward to celebrating the amazing outcomes from this locally funded endeavor.



To read more about Haralson County College and Career Academy, head over to their [Facebook page](#). Congratulations Haralson County!

## Practice Pointers – General Supervision Fifth Component: Data on Processes and Results

As a part of a state's general supervision responsibilities, data are used for decision making about program management and improvement. This process includes data collection and reporting; data examination and analysis; public reporting of data; status determination; and improvement activities. The Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that data are collected from local educational agencies (LEAs) through a state-reported data collection system and reported in the Annual Performance Report (APR). To effectively use the data, LEAs must regularly update the data, and the state must routinely examine the collected data. The state uses the data, as well as information from other sources to evaluate the performance of the state and the LEAs on the State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators.



In addition to the SPP/APR, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires all states to report annually to the public on the performance of each LEA located in the state on the targets established in the State Performance Plan. The purpose of the Annual Reports is to provide information on the data indicators that measure both the state and individual LEA annual progress compared to the targets established in the SPP. In addition, OSEP will make an annual determination of the state's efforts to meet the requirements of IDEA as reflected in the Part B Results-Driven Accountability Matrix (RDA Matrix) which includes the following data elements: Reading Assessment, Math Assessment, Exiting Data, and Part B Compliance Indicators. The complete language for each indicator is located in the [Part B SPP/APR Indicator Measurement Table](#).

For more information, please visit our website at [Special Education Annual Reports and Data Analytics](#), [Data Collection and Reporting](#), and [State Performance Plan \(SPP\), Annual Performance Reports \(APR\) and Annual Determinations](#).

## 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](#)
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**Time:** 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

[Special Education Office Hours Registration Link](#)

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Georgia  
Parent Mentor  
Partnership

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

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[Sharing the Journey Registration Link](#)

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## Office of Whole Child Supports: 2023 Webinar Series

There are Professional Learning Opportunities available from the Office of Whole Child Supports.



### School Nursing 101: Introduction

The first webinar of a series hosted by GaDOE Office of Whole Child Supports, this presentation focuses on an overview of the most important facets of school nursing. Some of the topics that will be covered are the scope and practice of school nursing, medication administration, screenings, legal implications, and immunizations.

**DATE:** Tuesday, August 30, 2022 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

[Register for School Nursing 101 Webinar](#)

### Back to School: Supporting Students and Staff

The Office of Whole Child Supports will provide helpful information on determining the needs of students in the new school year. Proper staffing, referral techniques, and training in order to meet the needs of students and staff will also be discussed.

**DATE:** Friday, September 16, 2022 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

[Register for Back to School: Supporting Students and Staff](#)

### School Nursing 101: Medication Administration

The second webinar of a series hosted by GaDOE Office of Whole Child Supports, this presentation focuses on an in-depth discussion about best practices of medication administration in the school setting. Presenters will be Lead School Nurses with vast experience in establishing medication procedures and protocols in their own district.

**DATE:** Tuesday, September 27, 2022 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

[Register for School Nursing 101: Medication Administration](#)

### Identifying, Preventing, and Responding to Bullying

This webinar will assist school staff members in increasing their knowledge of the dynamics of bullying by identifying, preventing, and responding to bullying behaviors. Participants will also learn about school requirements in Georgia's bullying law.

**DATE:** Friday, October 21, 2022 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

[Register for Identifying, Preventing, and Responding to Bullying](#)

## Behavioral Intervention: Addressing Challenging Behaviors



The educational impact of discipline on students with disabilities can be far reaching and expansive. As detailed in OSEP's most recent guidance, students with disabilities continue to be sus-

pendent out of school, expelled and removed from school by way of a “shortened school day” or other informal removals at an alarming rate. These responses to difficult and challenging behavior lack a research base and often support the continuation of said behavior.

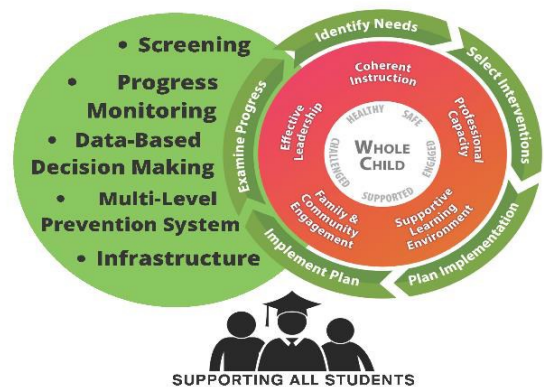
In our efforts to improve and promote positive outcomes for students with disabilities, we must understand the importance of addressing difficult student behavior by meeting those challenges with support that includes research based, behavior strategies that are implemented consistently and with fidelity. The IRIS Center recently released updated modules on “Challenging Behavior” focused on understanding the cycle of acting out behavior and strategies to address challenging behaviors. The guidance shared within these modules supports our charge to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

- [Addressing Challenging Behaviors \(Part 1, Elementary\): Understanding the Acting-Out Cycle](#)
- [Addressing Challenging Behaviors \(Part 2, Elementary\): Behavioral Strategies](#)

[The IRIS Center. \(2005, 2022\). Addressing Challenging Behaviors \(Part 1, Elementary\): Understanding the Acting-Out Cycle.](#)

## MTSS Snapshot: Why is progress monitoring important to the MTSS process?

As we implement a multi-tiered system of supports, the effectiveness of supports provided at Tiers II and III is contingent upon fidelity of implementation of the evidence-based interventions and effectiveness of progress monitoring data. Progress monitoring is key when determining responsiveness to an intervention and is needed to determine when adaptations need to be made to an intervention. However, it is critical that the intervention is implemented with fidelity, in order for progress monitoring data to be valid and reliable [Progress Monitoring](#).



When collecting progress monitoring data for a student, it is vitally important to identify a measure to assess the skills targeted by the intervention. This is the first step that needs to be ensured to maximize the benefits of Tiers II and/or III supports and the progress monitoring data. As data teams analyze this data, it is important to quickly determine if the intervention needs to be changed to a new one or simply adapted. When making decisions about adaptations, the team may consider the dimensions of the [Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity](#) (strength, dosage, alignment, attention to transfer, comprehensiveness, behavioral or academic support, and individualization). It is important to note that when considering an intervention for a Tier III support, the same intervention used for Tier II support may be used and adapted according to the Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity.

It is also important to collect progress monitoring data at a minimum of weekly for Tier III supports and monthly for Tier II supports, [Progress Monitoring Fact Sheet](#). However, some schools and/or districts may require progress monitoring data to be collected weekly for Tier II and III supports. Weekly progress monitoring has proven to be very beneficial, since it allows for additional data points to be collected and analyzed quicker. This also allows for more timely adaptations to interventions to be made sooner, when needed.

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