



Provide infrastructure and supports for leaders, teachers, and families to meet the whole child needs of each student and improve student outcomes and school climate resulting in increased quality of life and a workforce ready future.

October Friday Email Blasts



Provide infrastructure and supports for leaders, teachers, and families to meet the whole child needs of each student and improve student outcomes and school climate resulting in increased quality of life and a workforce ready future.

October 2, 2020 Email Blast

From Federal Programs - Division for Special Education Services and Supports

Directors,

The *Phil Pickens Leadership Award* is named after the late Phil Pickens who served as state director for special education and founded the *Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership (GaPMP)*. Each year, the Phil Pickens' leadership award is presented to a parent mentor and special education administrator who exemplify his vision of families and schools working together to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

The GaPMP would like to celebrate the **2020 Phil Pickens Leadership Award winners**.

Amanda Locke, Evans County Parent Mentor
Tania Amerson, Bartow County Special Education Director

Department of Early Care and Learning Training Resources (DECAL)

Local preschool teachers (general education and special education) may attend DECAL's trainings. It is not necessary to have a Georgia Pre-K class in your school district. Trainings will include in-person and virtual training webinars for preschool teachers. If you have questions regarding DECAL Trainings, contact Veronica Thomas using email (Veronica.Thomas@decalf.ga.gov) or phone (770-357-7036).

Resource #1: Here is the **Georgia Professional Development System** link where teachers and staff can register for preschool teachers trainings: [Link](#).

Georgia Professional Development System Registration Instructions

Step 1: Go to the Georgia Professional System website at

<https://gapds.decal.ga.gov/>

Step 2: Click the subheading **Trainings**

Step 3: Scroll down to **Find Scheduled Trainings**

Step 4: Complete the information page to register for a training

Resource #2: Here is registration information for DECAL preschool teachers **Georgia SEEDS for Success Pyramid Model Classroom Training** (social emotional learning and developmentally appropriate practices).

There is not an online registration system. Interested participants will register by calling DECAL at 1.833.354.HELP or emailing DECAL at Inclusion@decal.ga.gov.

You will need to have available the following information: District Name, School Name or Early Learning Center, Number of Participants (Teachers, Administrators, Support Staff, etc.), and Proposed Training Date(s). Helpful Attachment Links: [DECAL Inclusion Training Menu 2020](#) or [DECAL SEEDS Webinar Training Menu PS](#)

Introductory Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) Training

You may register to attend an **Introductory GELDS Training** on October 28 from 1 – 3 pm. Registration will be limited to 96 participants. When possible, participants are invited to co-view the training as a group on one computer. The training will be recorded, and participants should log on by 12:45 p.m.

This training is the same GELDS training that was provided during the last two school years. It is most suitable for new preschool special education teachers. Contact Dr. Micole Talley with any questions: Email: mtalley@doe.k12.ga.us or Phone: 404-695-2126. Register in advance for this meeting: [Registration Link](#).

Data and GO-IEP TEAM

The Data and GO-IEP Team posted a link to the recording and powerpoint for the September 28 webinar, **Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Questions & Answers**, on the Data Collection and Reporting page, [Data Collection and Reporting](#), linked from the Special Education Services and Supports webpage.

The powerpoint contains additional slides about topics and questions discussed during the presentation.

If you have questions, contact the [Data and GO-IEP Team](#). Contact information for each team member is included in the presentation.

Warm regards,
Zelphine Smith-Dixon, Ed.D.,
State Director, Division for Special Education Services and Supports

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Atlanta, Georgia

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October 13, 2020 Email Blast

From Federal Programs - Division for Special Education Services and Supports

Directors,

I wanted to make you aware of two Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents that were released on September 28. The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services' Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) released a Q&A document in response to inquiries concerning implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B provision of services in the current COVID-19 environment.

Link: [Questions and Answers on IDEA Part B Provision of Services](#)

Additionally, the Office for Civil Rights issued a COVID-19-related technical assistance document to assist K-12 schools in meeting their obligations under Federal Civil Rights Laws.

Link: [Questions and Answers for K-12 Public Schools in the Current COVID-19 Environment](#)

On Tuesday, October 13, we will host the Special Education Directors' Webinar. You may register using the following link: [Registration Link](#).

We hosted the Special Education Directors' Forum on October 2. You may view the archived recording for the Forum: [Recording Link](#).

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Alternate Assessment Waiver

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) will be seeking a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education (US ED) regarding the alternate assessment 1.0 percent participation cap put in place under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Prior to submitting the waiver, the GaDOE is seeking comments from local educational agencies (LEAs) and other education stakeholders.

In submitting the 1.0 percent participation cap waiver, the GaDOE is requesting that US ED allow the State a year to implement further guidelines and interventions to support LEAs in ensuring the appropriate administration of the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA). During the one-year waiver period, the GaDOE's offices of Special Education and Assessment and Accountability would work collaboratively to ensure LEAs are provided the necessary support and technical assistance.

Additional waiver details are available in the alternate assessment waiver public notice. You may access the notice using the following link: [Public Notice](#). If you have any comments or questions pertaining to this waiver, please send them to Dr. Allison Timberlake, Deputy Superintendent for Assessment & Accountability, by October 16: Email: atimberlake@doe.k12.ga.us.

Special Education (SE) Dashboard Feedback

Please complete the following survey to provide us feedback to ensure the enhanced SE Dashboard is as informative and useful as possible. All feedback is appreciated. [Survey Link](#)

Language and Literacy Assessments (Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing)

Dr. Stacey Tucci is the Language and Literacy Director in the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), Division of State Schools. In 2018, Governor Nathan Deal signed ACT 462 into law, which formally amended OCGA 30-1-5. One of the requirements of the amended code is biannual language and literacy assessments for all Pre-K through 3rd grade students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing.

Biannual language assessments will be administered to evaluate students' language in:

- Spoken English (e.g., Peabody Picture Vocabulary test (PPVT), Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOWPVT), Comprehensive Assessment of

Spoken Language, Second Edition (CASL-2)),

- American Sign Language (ASL) (e.g., Gallaudet Proficiency Levels for ASL, Northern Signs Research ASL Receptive and Expressive Language tests) or
- Spoken English and ASL if the child is bilingual-bimodal (i.e., uses two modes of language – spoken and signed).

Biannual literacy assessments will be administered to evaluate students' on-grade-level reading and may include assessments like the Johns Basic Reading Inventory (BRI), GKIDS, STAR Reading tests, MAP Reading tests, and the 3rd Grade Georgia Milestones (ELA).

Dr. Tucci is working with an advisory committee to develop a short battery of language and literacy assessments to fulfill the requirements of OCGA 30-1-5. She would like to understand how your school system is assessing language and literacy growth for students who are D/HH. It is important to note specifically what test are currently administered, by whom, and how often and how those assessments are used to guide programmatic decisions.

Dr. Tucci would like to include tests (in the required assessment battery) that you are already using in your school system. Please complete the fillable survey and email (stucci@doe.k12.ga.us) it back to Dr. Tucci no later Monday, October 26. Click Here: [Survey Attachment Link](#)

Parent to Parent Training

Webinar: What a Great IDEA! A Brief Overview of Special Education for Parents and Families

Date: Wednesday, October 14th at 6:00 pm

Register via the link below: [Registration Link](#).

Webinar: School Reopening and Special Education Services

Date: Thursday, October 22nd at 10:00 am

Register via the link below: [Registration Link](#).

Warm regards,

Zelphine Smith-Dixon, Ed.D.,

State Director, Division for Special Education Services and Supports



Provide infrastructure and supports for leaders, teachers, and families to meet the whole child needs of each student and improve student outcomes and school climate resulting in increased quality of life and a workforce ready future.

October 19, 2020 Email Blast

From Federal Programs - Division for Special Education Services and Supports

Directors,

Here is the link to the Directors' Webinar: [Webinar Recording Link](#).

Please complete the following survey to provide us feedback to ensure the enhanced Special Education Dashboard is as informative and useful as possible. All feedback is appreciated. [Survey Link](#)



CARES Act Training Dates

You asked and we answered! GaDOE will be offering 2 additional CARES Act webinars to support LEAs with equitable services.

CARES Act Special Education Grant – Equitable Services ***New Date***
GaDOE will provide updated guidance on holding consultation to address any possible discrepancies between summer 2020 proportionate share allocations based on total enrollment and Fall 2020 proportionate share allocations based on Title I, Part A section 1117 (residency/poverty). Special Education Directors implementing this grant are encouraged to attend.

Date: Friday, October 23, 2020

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Registration Link: [Link](#).

CARES Act Grants Equitable Services Q&A

This webinar will be open Q&A around equitable services.

Date: Wednesday, October 21, 2020

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Registration Link: [Link](#).



Parent to Parent Training

Webinar: School Reopening and Special Education Services

Date: Thursday, October 22nd at 10 am

Register via the link below: [Registration Link](#).

Georgia Inclusive Postsecondary Education Consortium (GAIPSEC)

The GAIPSEC's announces a Virtual College Fair. The College Fair will take place on Thursday, October 29 from 3 pm - 4:30 pm. Students, parents, teachers and administrators can learn more about inclusive college opportunities for students in Georgia. There will be a representative from each college available to ask questions at the end of the presentations. The registration deadline is October 25, 2020.

Registration link: [Link](#).

If you register and unable to attend, you will receive a recording of the sessions. For more information, contact Sombal Bari (sombal.bari25@uga.edu) or Darien Todd (dtodd14@gsu.edu).

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**2020 OSEP
Summit**

Attract, Prepare, Retain:
OSEP National Summit on
Improving Effective Personnel
for Children with Disabilities

OSEP Summit

The Office of Special Education Programs will host Attract, Prepare, Retain: OSEP National Summit on Improving Effective Personnel for Children with Disabilities virtually on October 27-29, 2020!

About the 2020 OSEP Summit

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is hosting a virtual summit focusing on strategies to attract, prepare, and retain effective personnel—general and special education teachers, early childhood personnel, and related services providers—who have the knowledge and skills needed to provide effective instruction, interventions, supports, and services to children with disabilities. This topic disproportionately affects children with disabilities and their families due to the many unfilled positions and high attrition rates among special education teachers, early childhood personnel, and related services providers.

The 2020 OSEP Summit is an opportunity to bring together various stakeholders to explore potential strategies and innovative approaches to address this critical need. The virtual event will be held over three days and participants may register for each event individually or attend all three. The schedule for the summit will be as follows:

2020 OSEP Summit Schedule

Tuesday, October 27

3:00 – 4:30 P.M. Eastern Time Panel on Attracting Effective Personnel [Register Here](#)

Wednesday, October 28

3:00 – 4:30 P.M. Eastern Time Panel on Preparing Effective Personnel [Register Here](#)

Thursday, October 29

3:00 – 4:30 P.M. Eastern Time Panel on Retaining Effective Personnel [Register Here](#)

Each event will be hosted by OSEP Director Laurie VanderPloeg. The sessions will feature an expert from a field outside of education, a panel discussion of practitioners and researchers, and leverage points for special education and summary from a leader in the field on each topic.

Improving how we attract, prepare, and retain effective personnel for children with disabilities is a critical need that will only be resolved by prioritized and collaborative efforts. We thank you in advance for your efforts toward this endeavor. We look forward to you all joining us!

Additional information will be posted at the [OSEP Summit Website](#).

Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact the Summit planning team at osep-meeting@air.org.



Georgia Mathematics Equity Virtual Summit 2020

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), in partnership with the Constellations Center for Equity in Computing at Georgia Institute of Technology, is hosting the 2nd Annual Georgia Mathematics Equity Summit. At the Georgia Department of Education, we always aim to provide equitable opportunities for all children within Georgia's mathematics classrooms. The goals of the summit are to support educators and build a compassionate and unified community to help students excel in mathematics education through the lens of equity and access.

The Summit will be held on Tuesday, November 10 (9 am - 1:30 pm). Summit Participants will engage with K-12 and higher education leaders and teachers through panel discussions, concurrent sessions, and facilitated working groups. They will have the unique opportunity to reflect on the importance of mathematics equity and access. The participants will also strategize around the role of leadership in closing long-standing and pervasive achievement gaps. This year's summit will include the introduction of computer science and STEM education as a vehicle for providing equitable learning experiences for all students.

To register for the 2020 Georgia Mathematics Equity Summit and find out more information, please visit the [Georgia Mathematics Equity Summit webpage](#).

Warm regards,
Zelphine Smith-Dixon, Ed.D.,
State Director, Division for Special Education Services and Supports



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October 23, 2020 Email Blast

From Federal Programs - Division for Special Education Services and Supports

Directors,

October is National Dropout Prevention Month. The implications of dropping out are high for students, families, communities, and society as a whole; therefore, it is pivotal that we bridge the gaps for students at-risk of dropping out by utilizing effective interventions and identifying students early (Wilkins & Bost, 2015).

National Dropout Prevention Month challenges our nation to become better informed about how to prevent students from dropping out of school. The following resources are provided to support local educational agencies (LEAs) in increasing graduation rates and decreasing dropout rates.

The [School Completion Toolkit](#) provides links to state and national resources, as well as, successful practices from LEAs across the state, aimed at improving outcomes for all students, including students with disabilities.

Resources are shared on the [GaDOE School Completion Toolkit webpage](#).



Georgia Learning Resources System

Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS)

GLRS is a network of 18 regional programs that provide training and resources to LEA personnel, parents of students with disabilities, and other interested individuals to support the achievement, graduation rate, and post-secondary success of students with disabilities. The programs are funded by the Georgia Department of Education, Division for Special Education Services and Supports, and are operated in collaboration with Regional Educational Service Agencies and LEAs that serve as fiscal agents for the programs. GLRS programs are funded with federal discretionary funds made available through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA).

GLRS staff are specialized in providing professional learning, technical assistance and coaching for LEAs on a variety of topics related to students with disabilities. Despite a pandemic, the GLRS reached over 33,000 educators and parents by providing over 3,700 professional learning and technical assistance sessions for 2019-2020 school year.

Quarter 1 Summary of Deliverables for July – October 2020: The GLRS held 1,848 Professional Learning and Technical Assistance Sessions with over 12,626 leaders, teachers, support staff and families. In addition, the GLRS has collectively attended 331 contractor meetings and 246 contractor professional learning events to gain knowledge and skills to support districts in addressing distance learning needs and other relevant needs. They have produced 50 state priority products for virtual learning modules and 46 regional priority virtual products.

Each month, the GLRS ([GLRS Contact Information](#)) hosts, in collaboration with your district liaison, a Collaborative Community Meeting designed to address regional needs of special education directors. They also provide timely GaDOE updates related to IDEA. Your regional GLRS is ready to support you during this time and assist you in improving outcomes for students.

Transition Resources

The Transition website has new resources to assist teachers to provide

transition services and support to students. These resources include [Transition-Focused Activities and Resources for Distance Learning](#). These resources are divided into categories and include career, college, employment, daily living skills, life skills, recreation, self-determination, education/academics, and educators' resources. Resources are added each month. The Georgia Department of Education does not endorse any non-Georgia Department of Education websites or products contained within these pages or through external hyperlinks. It is at the discretion of individual LEAs and schools to determine appropriate resources to serve stakeholders. You may use the link below to share additional resources that you believe will be of benefit to transitioning students with disabilities. For more information, contact Elise James (ejames@doe.k12.ga.us).

Submission Link: [Submit Transition Resources](#)

Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy Considerations Tool Training

The Georgia Department of Education, Division of Special Education Services and Supports, will be providing training in the use of The Considerations for Educationally Relevant Therapy (Considerations Tool). The Considerations Tool has been developed to assist occupational therapists (OTs) and physical therapists (PTs) working in the educational environment in determining the need for educationally relevant therapy in the schools. This tool is used by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team when determining services needed, and the IEP team makes the final decision.

Date: November 12, 2020

Time: 9:30 am - 3:30 pm

Registration Link: [Using the Considerations for Educationally Relevant Therapy Tool](#)

The link to the training will be sent out to registrants a few days before the training.



Parent to Parent Training

Webinar: Georgia Medicaid & Katie Beckett Deeming Waiver

When: Tuesday, October 27 at 11 AM

Facebook link: [Link](#)



Georgia Mathematics Equity Virtual Summit 2020

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State Director, Division for Special Education Services and Supports