

# Office of Federal Programs Division for Special Education

**Educating Georgia's Future**

**October 7, 2022**

## Welcome

### Greetings from the State Director

Directors,

Do you have a bucket list? Everyone has a list - official or unofficial - of places they wish to visit, accomplishments, and other aspirations. This week has been a bucket list week for me. Earlier today, a colleague from a school district called to ask a question. In just usual pleasantries, I asked how she was doing. Her response was, "Living the dream." Living the dream can be said with different inflections depending on the message conveyed. In my case, this week has been remarkable as it checked off a

bucket list desire but also brought much more than expected. Michael and I are in Jackson, Wyoming, as I write this message. Our grandchildren are now in Salt Lake City, so we wanted to visit and see their new home. We will visit them on the weekends, but during the week between, we have taken a side trip to Jackson and Grand Tetons National Park. After seeing beautiful pictures of the Grand Tetons, I knew this was a destination I wanted to visit. Well, it did not disappoint. The beauty was enhanced even more with the beautiful fall leaves at full peak. I agree with the caller this morning; I am living the dream! I hope you can also share this feeling more often than not. All our weeks do not include visiting grandchildren or seeing beautiful scenery while having a little vacation. Still, we have many opportunities to make a difference in our daily work. So reach high for the mountain top to fulfill your dreams.



Our new director for this week is from Madison County Charter School System. Special Education Director Jermica L. Wynn has served in the education field for 19 years. Be sure to read her thoughts and advice on motherhood. I also enjoyed reading about how she likes to spend her leisure time. Who doesn't love to shop?

Our staff spotlight this week is shining brightly on Ron Washington. He is a much-appreciated and active member of our RDA Unit. We are so happy to have him as part of our team!

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) released a memo on personnel qualifications on October 4, 2022. It reiterates the requirement for certified special education teachers and qualifications for related providers remain the same without flexibility. Please read the article in the blast and the memo. This information is critical to ensure students with disabilities receive Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). You are encouraged to share this information with the district- and school-level personnel relevant to this issue, as most hiring decisions occur outside the Office for Special Education Services. There is no flexibility or waiver for this requirement.

**[MEMORANDUM: OSEP 22-01 - Personnel Qualifications under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\) \(October 4, 2022\).](#)**



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- [IDEA Website](#) (PDF and HTML versions available)
- PDF Link: [MEMORANDUM: OSEP 22-01 - Personnel Qualifications under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\) \(October 4, 2022\)](#).

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Head Start released new documents. The documents aim to encourage collaboration between state educational agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs), and Head Start programs to effectively meet the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements.

- [Dear Colleague Letter on Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\) Services in Head Start](#)
- [Guidance on Creating an Effective Memorandum of Understanding to Support High Quality Inclusive Early Childhood Systems](#)

The International Dyslexia Association of Georgia, the Reading League of Georgia, and the Georgia Department of Education have partnered to present a free live webinar with attendance open to all. Please read the full article in the eblast today. [Unraveling Dyslexia: A Closer Look at the GaDOE Dyslexia Video Series \(#1\) - Wednesday, October 25, 2022](#).



I hope you enjoy the pictures I have shared from our journey. We are still looking forward to visiting Sundance, Utah, later this week. In all seriousness, please make the most of life, whether it is work or pleasure. You can reach the highest mountain tops and live your dream. Enjoy the journey!

Thank you for all you do each day for students with disabilities. Keep marking the items off your bucket list and enjoy life to the fullest.

Keeping students first,

Wina

## Mark Your Calendars

### Special Education Events and Due Dates

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

#### Professional Learning Events

- **October 11, 2022, 1 p.m.** — Special Education Directors' Webinar; visit this [link](#) to register.
- **October 12, 2022, 9 a.m.** — Specially Designed Instruction Series Season 2: How We Design and Deliver SDI Elementary Session (FY23 Georgia's Specially Designed Instruction Project). Visit this [GaDOE Community link](#) to register.
- **October 12, 2022, 1:30 p.m.** — Specially Designed Instruction Series Season 2: How We Design and Deliver SDI Secondary Session (FY23 Georgia's Specially Designed Instruction Project). Please visit this [GaDOE Community link](#) to register.
- **October 12, 2022, 2 p.m.** — HLP #14 Utilizing Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies to Support Memory, Attention, and Self-Regulation (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series). Visit this [GaDOE Community link](#) to register.

**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>.

- **October 13, 2022, 1:30 p.m.** — Special Education Spotlight on FTE Reports & Errors (FY23 Special Education Data & GO\_IEP Webinars). Please visit this [GaDOE Community link](#) to register.
- **October 19, 2022, 2 p.m.** — Fidelity of Implementation: Why So Important? (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series). Visit this [GaDOE Community link](#) to register.
- **October 20, 2022, 10 a.m.** — FY23 SESBAA: Co-Teaching Part 1 (FY23 School-Based Administrators PL Series). Please visit this [GaDOE Community link](#) to register.
- **October 21, 2022, 10 a.m.** — FY23 SESBAA: Co-Teaching Part 2 (FY23 School-Based Administrators PL Series). Visit this [GaDOE Community link](#) to register.
- **October 26, 2022, 2 p.m.** — Teaching ESOL and SWD Dually Identified Students in Secondary Settings (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series). Please visit this [GaDOE Community link](#) to register.

### Important Date Reminders

- **October 11, 2022** — Initial transmission deadline for CPI, FTE, and Student Class with duplicate resolution by **October 18, 2022**.
- **October 15, 2022** — Extended deadline for Budget Submission for all budgets in the Consolidated Application.
- **October 25, 2022** — CPI, FTE, and Student Class end date; superintendent sign-off.
- **October 30, 2022** — Budget Completion Reports deadline for prior year IDEA grants.

## Special Education Personnel Spotlights

### New Director Spotlight

JERMICA L. WYNN

The Georgia Department of Education Special Education Services and Supports Division is excited to feature Jermica L. Wynn in this week's New Director Spotlight. Wynn is the Madison County Charter School System Special Education Director. She has worked in the education field for years. Wynn's work experience includes serving as a paraprofessional, teacher, instructional coach, assistant principal, assistant special education director, and now as special education director. She loves learning and gravitates toward academic events that expose her to new concepts or encounters that allow her an opportunity to use her skills. Wynn is passionate about teaching and enjoys sharing her passion and knowledge.



Wynn finds it difficult to name only one person who has made an impact on her educational career. She has guided, collaborated with, and learned from leaders, colleagues, and students throughout her career. Her experiences working and collaborating with educators in various aspects and roles have influenced and guided Wynn. These educators not only allowed her to view perspectives through a different lens, but they were also genuinely knowledgeable, exhibited outstanding leadership skills, and genuinely loved students and their educational success. She loves to laugh and is extremely loyal to her workplace, family, and friends. Wynn plans to work as an educational professional until retirement.

Wynn and her educational journey go hand-in-hand, but a deeper bestowment would be her connection to being a mother. "Motherhood has gifted me with the opportunity to realize how deeply I can love, and I consider time with my husband and family members precious and irreplaceable," she said.



While Wynn's family is precious and irreplaceable, this avid Georgian, by way of Texas, appreciates her southern roots and culture. She loves to travel, cook, and read. In addition, Wynn enjoys spending time with friends, including colleagues, college classmates, and neighbors, going shopping, watching movies, and eating out at favorite and new restaurants.

## GaDOE Staff Spotlight

### RON WASHINGTON

Ron Washington has worked in education for 22 years and is a Program Specialist in the RDA Unit. Washington previously served as a middle school special education administrator, academic leader, and the Atlanta Public Schools special education coordinator. In addition, he has taught middle school special education for Henry County Schools and as a second-grade teacher at a charter school.



Washington works on projects designed to impact practice and increase student success, including special education guidance for incarcerated students, compensatory services and compliant practices regarding special education students, and CFM and disproportionality guidance. Washington has also worked on special curriculum implementation for students with autism and has supported instruction for students with behavioral challenges.

Washington was raised in a military family and has lived in many places, including Germany. He has been married for 20 years and has three sons (ages 14, 13, and 9) who play baseball, so he and his family spend most weekends at the ballpark. Washington serves as a baseball coach and a speed and conditioning trainer. His hobbies include hiking and biking on local trails

## Practice Pointers

### USED Guidance on Discipline: Question A-2

#### MUST SCHOOL PERSONNEL SUPPORT THE BEHAVIOR NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES?

The answer is yes, per the most recent guidance issued by the United States Department of Education (USED) Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its implementing regulations require Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams to follow specific procedures to ensure IEPs meet the individualized needs, including behavioral needs, of children with disabilities ([20 U.S.C. § 1414\(d\)](#) and [34 C.F.R. § 300.320 through 300.324](#)). For example, the initial evaluation or reevaluation must use various assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child. In addition, it should assess the child in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, social and emotional status ([34 C.F.R. § 300.304\(b\) and \(c\) \(4\)](#); [34 C.F.R. § 300.304 through 300.311](#)).



The IEP team must consider information about a child's current functional (e.g., behavioral) performance provided by parents, classroom teachers, and other service providers when developing the child's IEP ([34 C.F.R. § 300.321](#) and [300.324](#)). Once the IEP development is complete, IEP teams must review the child's IEP periodically, but not less than annually, to determine whether the child is achieving their annual goals. Additionally, they must revise the IEP, as appropriate, to address the following: any lack of expected progress towards the annual goals in the child's IEP and the general education curriculum; any reevaluation results; information about the child provided to or by the parent; the child's anticipated needs; or other matters ([34 C.F.R. § 300.324\(b\)\(1\)](#)).



The LEA must ensure that the child's IEP is accessible to each regular education teacher, special education teacher, related services provider, and any other service provider responsible for its implementation. Further, each teacher and provider must be informed of their specific responsibilities for implementing the IEP and the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports they must provide for the child in accordance with the IEP ([34 C.F.R. § 300.323\(d\)](#)), including any positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies that the IEP team determines are necessary to address the child's behavioral needs.

For more information, please see the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) guidance at [Questions and Answers: Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities and IDEA's Discipline Provisions as revised July 19, 2022](#).

## FY23 Preschool Disability Services Grant

After recalculating the FY23 Preschool Disability Services grant, the State Board of Education (SBOE) determined at their September meeting that the grant needed adjustment. The overall amount of the grant did not change; however, some LEAs may receive an increase or decrease in funds and will, therefore, need to submit a budget amendment. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause and are here to assist with any questions.



## Special Education Data Collection

### IMPORTANT WEBINARS

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

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

If you have questions, please contact Dawn Kemp at [dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dkemp@doe.k12.ga.us) or Linda Castellanos at [lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us).

## Statewide Discipline Technical Assistance

To support LEAs in understanding and implementing the recent OSEP guidance on discipline, the Division for Special Education Services and Supports will host two one-day technical assistance opportunities on November 3 & 4, 2022, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Middle Georgia State University in Macon. You do not want to miss this in-person guidance focused on meeting the needs of students with disabilities and how to apply disciplinary measures for all students appropriately. In addition to hearing the implications of the guidance from GaDOE, this will be an excellent opportunity to have discussions with other school leaders on the topic at the local level. Open to all LEAs; each district can register two individuals to attend the training in person. A virtual meeting registration will also be available.

[Statewide Discipline Training Registration](#)

## New Documents to Encourage Collaboration Between State Agencies, Local Agencies, and Head Start

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Head Start released new documents. The documents aim to encourage collaboration between state educational agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs), and Head Start programs to effectively meet the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements.

- [Dear Colleague Letter on Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\) Services in Head Start](#)
- [Guidance on Creating an Effective Memorandum of Understanding to Support High-Quality Inclusive Early Childhood Systems](#)

These documents make clear that SEAs, LEAs, and Head Start programs are responsible for implementing IDEA to ensure children with disabilities enrolled in Head Start programs receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment.

## Georgia's Specially Designated Instruction (SDI)

### PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SERIES

On September 13 and 15, we hosted our first Specially Designated Instruction (SDI) sessions for administrators and educators and had significant participation, including over 300 participants in our educator sessions. Recordings of these sessions are available in [GaDOE Community](#).

Session 2 of the Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) for Special Education Directors and School Administrators is on October 13, 2022. Dr. Bailey will lead participants in discussions around the question, "What is our current reality, and who are our players?" She will help us understand the importance of relationship building, knowing the students we serve, and why a robust PLAAFP is imperative to designing high-effect size, specially designed instruction.

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

### Upcoming Sessions for Administrators and Directors

- October 13, 2022
- January 26, 2023
- February 21, 2023

Session 2 of Georgia's Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) Professional Learning Series for Elementary and Secondary Educators is on October 12, 2022. This session will dive deeper into the components of SDI and how it looks on an IEP document. Practitioners will explore how SDI begins with the PLAAFP and moves to annual goals and instructional strategies.

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

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

### Upcoming Sessions for Educators

- October 12, 2022
- January 25, 2023
- February 20, 2023

Please contact Yyanisha Bass Bonner at [Yyanisha.Bass@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:Yyanisha.Bass@doe.k12.ga.us) for additional information.

## OSEP Issues Guidance Memo on Personnel Qualifications

OSEP recognizes states face many challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, including a worsening impact on the shortage of special education teachers and related service providers across the country. However, we also understand some states have policies and procedures that may not be consistent with IDEA requirements to address these challenges. Therefore, OSEP believes it is critical to ensure state educational agencies (SEAs) are fully aware of the IDEA requirements related to personnel qualifications and alternate certifications. The linked memo describes these requirements and provides information about resources available to support states' efforts to meet them.

### MEMORANDUM: OSEP 22-01 - Personnel Qualifications under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (October 4, 2022).

- [IDEA Website](#) (PDF and HTML versions available)
- PDF Link: [MEMORANDUM: OSEP 22-01 - Personnel Qualifications under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\) \(October 4, 2022\)](#).

## Unraveling Dyslexia

### A CLOSER LOOK AT THE GADOE DYSLEXIA VIDEO SERIES

The International Dyslexia Association of Georgia, the Reading League of Georgia, and the Georgia Department of Education have partnered to present a free live webinar with attendance open to all.

The Georgia Department of Education, in partnership with Mary Frances Early College of Education at the University of Georgia, developed a four-part dyslexia video series. In each webinar, Dr. Sayeski will unravel the content presented in each video in the series. Drs. Sayeski and Lindstrom will also answer questions to clarify the information further and provide guidance on how best to support students with dyslexia in the school setting.

The series begins with [Video 1: "What is Dyslexia?"](#) This video provides an overview of commonly used definitions of dyslexia and delineates characteristics that may be present from early childhood through upper elementary grades. In addition, dyslexia-related myths are dispelled along with a peek inside the reading brain.

## Budget Announcements

### Online Professional Development Opportunity

Join WestEd's fiscal compliance experts' fall online learning sessions in our four-part [federal programs finance training](#). Learn effective ways to maximize the impact of unprecedented federal funding levels while ensuring compliance with complex federal requirements.

These new training sessions will focus on internal controls and practices needed to comply with complex federal requirements. We invite school business officers and program directors to increase their knowledge of allowable uses of federal funds (IDEA and Title I-A) and the local educational agency maintenance of effort (LEA MOE) requirement under IDEA. The sessions will also help participants prepare better for audits and fiscal monitoring. This program consists of four virtual, interactive training sessions led by Anthony Mukuna and Sara Doutre. These sessions will take place on October 25 and 26, 2022. [Learn more and register at this link](#).



#### Pricing

- One Session: \$90
- Two Sessions: \$180
- Three Sessions: \$270
- Four Sessions: \$360

### Open Office Budget Q&A Sessions

FY23 Cross-Functional Monitoring will begin soon. To help LEAs prepare, the IDEA Budget Unit will utilize the October 2022 open office sessions to take a closer look at the monitoring indicators that IDEA Fiscal, Part B Team will review. We will look at each indicator monitored by IDEA Fiscal, Part B Team, along with the types of documentation uploads for each. We invite all LEAs to join us, even if you are not being monitored for FY23, as sessions will provide important information regarding managing the IDEA Fiscal, Part B Team. The FY23 CFM indicator document is on our [webpage](#). Please join us on October 19, 1-2 p.m., to review the cross-functional monitoring document. Q&A sessions are available for registration in the [GaDOE PL Catalog](#).

### Annual FY23 ESSA and IDEA Cross-Functional Monitoring

The Division of Federal Programs (ESSA and IDEA) is planning for our annual federal cross-functional monitoring webinar for LEAs. This online training will address the federal programs listed below and aims to allow district staff to participate at the time corresponding to their area of program responsibility. Here are a few updates and reminders to assist you in planning for your upcoming cross-functional monitoring (CFM).



- The FY23 CFM indicator document is on our [webpage](#).
- The platform for sharing documents with GaDOE will be available after October 1 in the SLDS CLIP application. You will see an option to select "Cross-Functional Monitoring."
- Training for FY23 CFM consists of prerecorded webinars on each section/program your team will review independently.
- Training for FY23 CFM also includes optional Q&A sessions with GaDOE program staff. Listed below are the dates and times for these optional Q&A sessions.
- Special Education Directors, for your convenience, the prerecorded webinar for IDEA is hyperlinked below. Additionally, you may register for the optional Q&A sessions for IDEA [here](#). Type "CFM" in the search box, click find events and scroll to find the FY23 CFM Q&A IDEA session. If you have questions, please contact your IDEA budget specialist directly.

DATE	TIME	TOPIC
October 07, 2022	10:00-11:00 AM	Monitoring Logistics – Applicable to All Federal Programs
October 07, 2022	11:00-12:00 PM	Federal Programs Overarching Indicators – Applicable to All Federal Programs
October 11, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Title I, Part A - Parent and Family Engagement
October 11, 2022	2:00-3:00 PM	Title II, Part A - Supporting Effective Instruction
October 11, 2022	3:00-4:00 PM	Title IV, Part A - Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE)
October 12, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Title I, Part A - Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged
October 12, 2022	2:00-2:30 PM	Title I, Part A - Foster Care Program
October 12, 2022	3:00-4:00 PM	Title I, Part D - Neglected and Delinquent Children
October 13, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Title III, Part A - Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students
October 13, 2022	2:00-2:30 PM	Title IX, Part A - Education for Homeless Children
October 13, 2022	3:00-4:00 PM	Title I, Part C - Education of Migratory Children
October 13, 2022	3:00-4:00 PM	American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act – Homeless Children and Youth
October 14, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Equitable Services
October 14, 2022	3:00-4:00 PM	Consolidation of Funds
October 17, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Title V, Part B - Rural Education Initiative
October 18, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act and American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act
October 19, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
October 19, 2022	2:00-3:00 PM	School Improvement Grants under Section 1003(a) and 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)

## Open Office

FY23 cross-functional monitoring will begin soon. In addition to the Q&A session on October 19, 2022, the IDEA Budget Unit will collaborate with the Results Driven Accountability Unit to provide three open office hours to take a closer look at the monitoring indicators. We will also have several members of our teams available to answer your questions. The first of the three sessions is on October 26, 1-1:45 p.m. You may register for the session [here](#).

We invite all LEAs to attend. If your LEA is being monitored in FY23, please have a representative attend one of the three sessions.

## More from GaDOE

### Creating Solutions for Educational Success

In partnership with Tools for Life, the Division for Special Education Services and Supports will collaboratively support a day-long training for educators of students with Intellectual Disabilities (OT, PT, SLP, AT, special education low-incidence teachers, and leadership). This one-day training will take place in Macon, November 8-10, with repeat sessions in Athens, November 14-16, to allow as many educators as possible to participate. The venues have a capacity of 100 educators daily, and we anticipate hosting a full house. Please share the training registration with your educators. Each participant will receive an email confirmation after registering for the event.



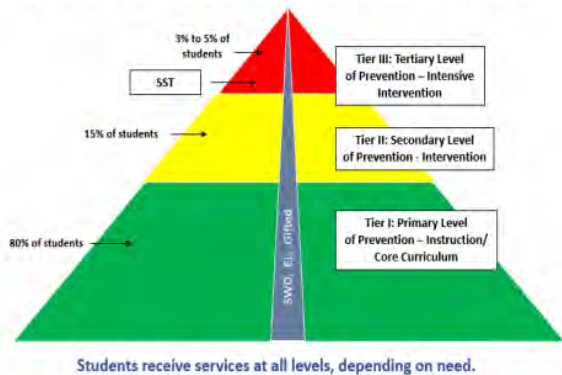
We look forward to seeing you all this November!

## MTSS Snapshot

### WHAT IMPACTS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF A MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)?

What is the most essential component of a house? If you answered the foundation, you are correct. If the foundation is not solid and we begin building the house, we will waste many valuable and costly resources. These resources may include time, money, materials, human resources, and more. Therefore, as we decide on the resources necessary to implement the multi-level prevention system tiers, we must ensure we have the resources required to provide a solid infrastructure. Establishing these resources are readily available before implementation is critical and helps us ensure we can implement the evidence-based interventions for Tiers II and III with fidelity. In addition, it verifies we are not wasting valuable time, money, materials, professional learning, human resources, and more.

School-wide, Multi-level Prevention System



Often competing initiatives may impact the fidelity of implementation of our interventions and affect the effectiveness of an infrastructure. Therefore, before we consider any new initiative, program, or intervention, a great tool is the Hexagon Tool ([The Hexagon: An Exploration Tool NIRN](#)). It is a valuable tool to help us understand how a new or existing program, intervention, or initiative fits our current work. We can use this tool anytime; however, the most common time to use it is during the initial stage of determining the feasibility of an intervention, program, or initiative. If an analysis of this tool proves what we are considering is not a great fit, we can conclude that our infrastructure is inadequate to ensure fidelity of implementation, program, or initiative. As we reflect on our infrastructure, ensuring monitoring tools are in place to collect data is also critically important. Collecting and analyzing this data is also critical to support implementation fidelity.

When implementing a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), you must rate your infrastructure and support mechanisms. The rubric on pages 23-29 of the MTSS Fidelity of Implementation Rubric, [School Fidelity of Implementation Rubric v.01.14.2021](#), has an infrastructure component that could provide essential data for your leadership team. This data can be valuable in helping to determine possible next steps to strengthen the infrastructure of your multi-tiered system of supports.

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).

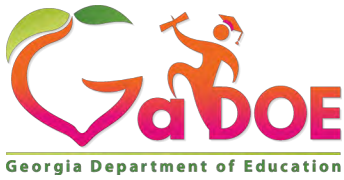
## Office of Federal Programs, Division for Special Education

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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# Office of Federal Programs Division for Special Education

Educating Georgia's Future

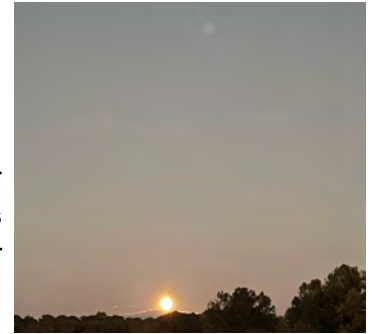
October 14, 2022

## Welcome

### Greetings from the State Director

Directors,

I hope you had the opportunity to see the beautiful Hunter's Moon earlier this week. The Hunter's Moon is the first full moon after the autumnal equinox. The moon appears larger than full moons during the summer months. It is lower on the horizon than most and has a rich golden, almost orange, glow. The name was given to this moon because October was the time of year that hunters needed to hunt and prepare food to store for the winter. It is said to spiritually represent darkness ahead, preparing to face the winter and finding a way to survive. The Hunter's Moon came to indicate the approaching winter and played a part in the survival of the early colonists. As little as we realize, there are signs in nature that we mostly take for granted these days. Just imagine if knowing and understanding the signs could mean the difference in life and death. As the song goes, "And the sign said...". Are you watching for signs? As educators, we often need to read the signs and respond appropriately. Our students provide signs all the time. Be sure to be observant and understand.



Our new director feature this week is Alicia Hartley from Montgomery County Schools. Alicia has served as an educator for 27 years. She has extensive experience as a teacher and loves the bond she has with students and their families. Learn more about Alicia and welcome her as a new director!

Our staff member spotlight is shining brightly on Florence Bry. With over 36 years experience in the field of education, we are thrilled that she has joined GaDOE as a Program Specialist and District Liaison. Read up on how she spends her free time and the animals who have become her labor of love.

Please register for the in-person Statewide Discipline Training scheduled for November 3-4, 2022 at Middle Georgia State University in Macon. Although a virtual link is available, I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to spend the day concentrating on the professional learning without the normal office distractions. The in-person registration is relatively low at this point. Your support is needed to ensure additional technical assistance sessions can be provided with this option. Virtual participation is also encouraged especially to allow participation beyond the 600 that can be accommodated during the two days. Please remember, only 1 day is needed as Friday will be the same content as Thursday. Although we were limiting each LEA to ensure access for everyone, the registration is now open on a first come, first served basis. An accurate count is needed for seating arrangements as well as lunch. See the registration link below. Hope to see you in Macon in a few weeks!

[Statewide Discipline Training Registration](#)

As referenced earlier, most of you recognize the song by Five Man Electrical Band, *Signs*.

Sign, sign, everywhere a sign



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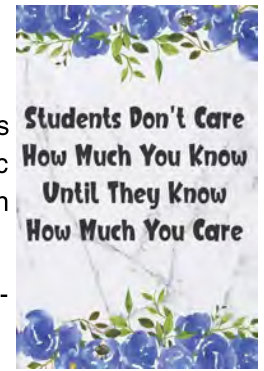
Blockin' out the scenery, breakin' my mind  
Do this, don't do that, can't you read the sign?

Although the song is making commentary on restrictions and rules that tend to divide, as educators make sure you are observant to ensure we see the signs of a child in need. It could be a basic need like food and shelter, the need of friendship, extra help with assignments, someone to listen or someone to say I care. Just read the sign.

Thank you for all you do each day to support students with disabilities. You are making a difference!

Keeping students first,

Wina



## Mark Your Calendars

### Special Education Events and Due Dates

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

#### Professional Learning Events

- **October 19, 2022, 2:00 p.m.** — Fidelity of Implementation: Why So Important? (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP: Implementing EBPs with Fidelity - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **October 20 at 10:00 a.m.** — FY23 SESAA: Co-Teaching Part 1 (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBA: Co-Teaching Part 1 - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **October 21 at 10:00 a.m.** — FY23 SESAA: Co-Teaching Part 2 (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBA: Co-Teaching Part 2 - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **October 26 at 2:00 p.m.** — Teaching ESOL and SWD Dually Identified Students in Secondary Settings (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Teaching Dually Identified Students - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.

#### Important Date Reminders

- **October 15, 2022** — Extended deadline for Budget Submission for all budgets in the Consolidated Application.
- **October 25, 2022** — CPI, FTE, and Student Class end date; superintendent sign-off.
- **October 30, 2022** — Budget Completion Reports deadline for prior year IDEA grants.



## Special Education Personnel Spotlights

### New Director Spotlight

#### ALICIA HARTLEY

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

Alicia Hartley is the Special Education Director for Montgomery County Schools and has been in the field of education for 27 years. Ms. Hartley started her educational career as a paraprofessional in speech and special education classrooms. This quickly led into teaching elementary students with special needs in her former school in Wheeler County. After a year and a half, Ms. Hartley decided to pursue teaching as a special education teacher because it became a passion to serve the students and parents that crossed her path. Ms. Hartley continued in this role until this past year as she became the Special Education Director in Montgomery County. As this was a wonderful opportunity, Ms. Hartley also shared that she would absolutely treasure the years of close relationships with her students, parents, and colleagues.

Aside from the bond and impact of the students and families that she served, Ms. Hartley shared, "Many educators have influenced and poured into me over the years, but the most impactful to my career were my parents. They always strongly encouraged me in the direction of education, and both were instrumental in the guidance and support throughout my career path. Being the oldest of five children, I had lots of practice at home around other children. I worked through high school logging with my daddy, which helped me decide quickly that I would need an education."

Ms. Hartley has been married for 28 years to Tim Hartley, who is a Chief Ranger for the Georgia Forestry. The Hartley's have four children- Savannah (26), Addison (23), Ansley (23), Cooper (19), and their two fur babies, Tinley and Teagan. The Hartleys also love spending time with their only grandson, two-year-old Sawyer. With having a large family, Ms. Hartley loves spending time with everyone, especially Sunday lunches with parents, siblings, and all 20-plus grandchildren.



### GaDOE Staff Spotlight

#### FLORENCE BRY

Florence Bry has worked in education for 36 years and has been a Program Specialist and District Liaison in the Results Driven Accountability Unit since February of this year. Prior to joining GaDOE, she worked in the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System in a variety of roles. She served as an Educational Therapist at a GNETS, as an Autism Consultant, as a Lead Transition Specialist and as a Program Manager. She spent 10 years in the St. Charles Parish School System in Louisiana as an EBD Resource Teacher and as a Special Education Facilitator. She also spent the first six years of my career in a general education setting teaching first and second grades.

Florence has been working with the CFM Team preparing for this year's monitoring cycle. She is also working on the Back to Basics Behavior Series and with the Back to Basics for our GAA students.

Florence has one son, Matthew, who is her heart. She is the proprietor of Rosewood Farms. Rosewood has chickens, goats, bees, a horse, a hog, and lots of dogs and cats. The farm takes up most of her free time but it is a labor of love. In her spare time she enjoys exploring, hiking, and geocaching in the Georgia State Parks or anywhere in the world. When she is inside, she loves to cook and read.



## Practice Pointers

### USED Guidance on Discipline: Question A-3 and A-4

**QUESTION A-3: ARE THERE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES WHOSE BEHAVIOR IMPEDES THEIR LEARNING OR THAT OF OTHERS?**

The answer is yes. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) specifically requires Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams to consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, for any child with a disability whose behavior impedes their learning or that of others. [34 C.F.R. § 300.324\(a\)\(2\)\(i\)](#). The IEP Team may elect to address the behavior through annual goals in the IEP. [34 C.F.R. § 300.320\(a\)\(2\)\(i\)](#). The child's IEP may include modifications to the child's program, supports for the child's teachers or other school personnel, and any special education and related services and supplementary aids and services necessary to enable the child to advance appropriately toward attaining those behavioral goals. [34 C.F.R. § 300.320\(a\)\(4\)](#).



**QUESTION A-4: WHAT STEPS SHOULD A CHILD'S IEP TEAM TAKE TO SUPPORT THE BEHAVIORAL NEEDS OF A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY?**

When a child with a disability demonstrates behavior that impedes the child's learning or that of others, appropriate behavioral supports may be necessary to ensure that the child receives a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The IEP Team must consider, and when determined necessary for ensuring a FAPE, include or revise behavioral supports in the child's IEP. [34 C.F.R. § 300.320\(a\)\(4\)](#) and [34 C.F.R. § 300.324\(a\)\(2\)\(i\)](#). When developing, reviewing, and revising the IEP, the IEP Team should determine whether behavioral supports are needed to ensure the provision of a FAPE to the child in the following: (1) special education and related services; (2) supplementary aids and services; and (3) program modifications or supports for school personnel. [34 C.F.R. § 300.320\(a\)\(4\)](#). Under the IDEA, special education and related services and supplementary aids and services are to be based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable; thus, behavioral supports should be supported by evidence. [34 C.F.R. § 300.320\(a\)\(4\)](#).

For more information, please see the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) guidance found in [Questions and Answers: Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities and IDEA's Discipline Provisions as revised July 19, 2022](#).

## More from GaDOE

### Creating Solutions for Educational Success

In partnership with Tools for Life, the Division for Special Education Services and Supports will collaboratively support a day-long training for educators of students with Intellectual Disabilities (OT, PT, SLP, AT, special education low-incidence teachers, and leadership). This one-day training will take place in Macon, November 8-10, with repeat sessions in Athens, November 14-16, to allow as many educators as possible to participate. The venues have a capacity of 100 educators daily, and we anticipate hosting a full house. Please share the [training registration](#) with your educators. Each participant will receive an email confirmation after registering for the event.



We look forward to seeing you all this November!



## Statewide Discipline Technical Assistance

To support LEAs in understanding and implementing the recent OSEP guidance on discipline, the Division for Special Education Services and Supports will host two, one-day technical assistance opportunities November 3 & 4, 2022 at Middle Georgia State University in Macon from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. You won't want to miss this in-person guidance focused on meeting the needs of students with disabilities and to appropriately apply disciplinary measures for all students. In addition to hearing from GaDOE on the implications of the guidance, this will be a great opportunity to have discussions with other school leaders on implications of this guidance at the local level. Open to all LEAs, each district will be able to register two individuals to attend the training in person. A virtual meeting option will also be available.

[Statewide Discipline Training Registration](#)

## Mathematics Professional Learning Series with RESA

The GaDOE Mathematics Team is partnering with each Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) to provide professional learning on Georgia's K-12 Mathematics Standards, which will be implemented in all classrooms with students during the 2023-2024 school year. We encourage all teachers and teacher leaders to attend one of these professional learning sessions. Participants will explore standards-aligned planning, instructional, and support resources to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to teach and learn mathematics. To view the schedule of sessions and register for your desired session, visit the [Mathematics Professional Learning Series flyer](#).

## Data Reporting Tips

### State Exclude Option

Infinite Campus, a state information system (SIS) vendor, provided the following information on using the STATE EXCLUDE option for 'C' (child find) private and homeschooled students. They are the only SIS vendor that has provided guidance. Please contact your SIS vendor if you have questions about this process. Please share the information below with your SIS staff.

- For FTE 1, do not check/use the state exclude option because private and homeschooled "C" students need to be reported in FTE 1 and this will make the current 22-23 record active until FTE 1 sign-off.
- After signoff in FTE 1, to prepare for FTE 3,
  - do check/use the state exclude option, to exclude the student in FTE 3,
  - OR end date that record (any date after FTE sign-off i.e., 10/25/xx). Do not use this option if the student was enrolled at some point in the year. If you end date the record, you will need to create a new record the following year if the student is still a proportionate share student for your district.
- After signoff in FTE 3, to prepare for Student Record (SR):
  - If you are using the state exclude option, keep the state exclude option checked for students who were never truly publicly enrolled and had only a placeholder enrollment in your SIS. That will exclude these proportionate share students for SR.
  - If the student was truly publicly enrolled at some point in the year, remove the state exclude option. The student will then be included for SR as required.
- In GO-IEP, there is not a state exclude option to determine whether to include the 'C' student in the SR extract.
  - Instead, there are enrollment questions on the profile page.
  - For FTE 1, students with an active Services Plan are correctly included.

- For SR, they are correctly included if the enrollment questions on the profile page show that the student was enrolled at some point in the year.
- For SR, they are correctly excluded if the enrollment questions on the profile page show that the student was NOT enrolled at some point in the year.

### Accommodations Update

- American Sign Language (ASL) is the sign language that is indicated on the state testing Allowable Accommodations charts within the 2022-2023 Student Assessment Handbook (SAH). ASL is the official sign language used at public schools statewide. Please refer to the latest version of the [Student Assessment Handbook](#).
- If a student needs a human test examiner/interpreter to use another form of sign language on a state assessment, please do not select the “ASL only” test accommodations in GO-IEP. The System Test Coordinator is required to submit a Special Accommodation Request to GaDOE for review in advance in accordance with the GaDOE guidelines. This request must be approved prior to including it in the state testing accommodations tab within GO-IEP.
- In GO-IEP, any special request needs to be documented in the MEETING NOTES since there is not a place to document this on the State Testing Accommodations tab. This accommodation will not pull into the accommodation report so staff will need to remember that this is an allowable accommodation. Uploading the email giving special permission on the Documents tab in GO-IEP would also be helpful.

### Students Exiting Special Education

Data Collections has eliminated the error: **E795 – PRIMARY AREA is not blank. REPORT TYPE must = ‘S’**. If a student exits from special education at any time in the current school year, please report the following for the student in FTE:

- **PRIMARY AREA** = P – Z, 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, and
- **REPORT TYPE** = R.

The **PRIMARY AREA** is now reported if the student was an SWD at any time in the current school year, just like Student Record. The exit date and exit event, either 9 or 10, need to be reported as always for Student Record.

There are no changes to reporting students who exited from special education the prior school year. The student is reported as a **REPORT TYPE** = R with no **PRIMARY AREA** reported.

If you have any questions, please contact Linda Castellanos at [lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us).

## Budget Announcements

### Online Professional Development Opportunity

Join WestEd's fiscal compliance experts' fall online learning sessions in our four-part [federal programs finance training](#). Learn effective ways to maximize the impact of unprecedented federal funding levels while ensuring compliance with complex federal requirements.



These new training sessions will focus on internal controls and practices needed to comply with complex federal requirements. We invite school business officers and program directors to increase their knowledge of allowable uses of federal funds (IDEA and Title I-A) and the local educational agency maintenance of effort (LEA MOE) requirement under IDEA. The sessions will also help participants prepare better for audits and fiscal monitoring. This program con-

sists of four virtual, interactive training sessions led by Anthony Mukuna and Sara Doutre. These sessions will take place on October 25 and 26, 2022. [Learn more and register at this link.](#)

**Pricing**

- One Session: \$90
- Two Sessions: \$180
- Three Sessions: \$270
- Four Sessions: \$360

**Important Budget Announcement: Open Office**

FY23 cross-functional monitoring will begin soon. In addition to the Q&A session on October 19, 2022, the IDEA Budget Unit will collaborate with the Results Driven Accountability Unit to provide three open office hours to take a closer look at the monitoring indicators. We will also have several members of our teams available to answer your questions. The first of the three sessions is on October 26, 1-1:45 p.m. You may register for the session [here](#).

We invite all LEAs to attend. If your LEA is being monitored in FY23, please have a representative attend one of the three sessions.

**Annual FY23 ESSA and IDEA Cross-Functional Monitoring**

The Division of Federal Programs (ESSA and IDEA) is planning for our annual federal cross-functional monitoring webinar for LEAs. This online training will address the federal programs listed below and aims to allow district staff to participate at the time corresponding to their area of program responsibility. Here are a few updates and reminders to assist you in planning for your upcoming cross-functional monitoring (CFM).

- The FY23 CFM indicator document is on our [webpage](#).
- The platform for sharing documents with GaDOE will be available after October 1 in the SLDS CLIP application. You will see an option to select "Cross-Functional Monitoring."
- Training for FY23 CFM consists of prerecorded webinars on each section/program your team will review independently.
- Training for FY23 CFM also includes optional Q&A sessions with GaDOE program staff. Listed below are the dates and times for these optional Q&A sessions.
- Special Education Directors, for your convenience, the prerecorded webinar for IDEA is hyperlinked below. Additionally, you may register for the optional Q&A sessions for IDEA [here](#). Type "CFM" in the search box, click find events and scroll to find the FY23 CFM Q&A IDEA session. If you have questions, please contact your IDEA budget specialist directly.

DATE	TIME	TOPIC
October 07, 2022	10:00-11:00 AM	Monitoring Logistics – Applicable to All Federal Programs
October 07, 2022	11:00-12:00 PM	Federal Programs Overarching Indicators – Applicable to All Federal Programs
October 11, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Title I, Part A - Parent and Family Engagement
October 11, 2022	2:00-3:00 PM	Title II, Part A - Supporting Effective Instruction
October 11, 2022	3:00-4:00 PM	Title IV, Part A - Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE)
October 12, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Title I, Part A - Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged
October 12, 2022	2:00-2:30 PM	Title I, Part A - Foster Care Program
October 12, 2022	3:00-4:00 PM	Title I, Part D - Neglected and Delinquent Children
October 13, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Title III, Part A - Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students
October 13, 2022	2:00-2:30 PM	Title IX, Part A - Education for Homeless Children
October 13, 2022	3:00-4:00 PM	Title I, Part C - Education of Migratory Children
October 13, 2022	3:00-4:00 PM	American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act – Homeless Children and Youth
October 14, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Equitable Services
October 14, 2022	3:00-4:00 PM	Consolidation of Funds
October 17, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Title V, Part B - Rural Education Initiative
October 18, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act and American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act
October 19, 2022	1:00-2:00 PM	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
October 19, 2022	2:00-3:00 PM	School Improvement Grants under Section 1003(a) and 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)



## MTSS Snapshot

### WHY IS THE OPENING OF THE LESSON IMPORTANT TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF EFFECTIVE TIER I INSTRUCTION?

As you reflect on planning your standards-based lessons, what are some of the most critical elements of the opening? The opening is essential to ensuring that your students are mastering the standard you are teaching. The opening is also very important in helping to ensure that at least 80% of your students are responding to core instruction, universal level of prevention, and setting the stage for learning/gaining their attention.

A few of the essential components of the opening that will be addressed in this Snapshot are the following:

- Standards and learning targets
- Hook
- Real-world connection
- Standards-based vocabulary
- Explicit modeling

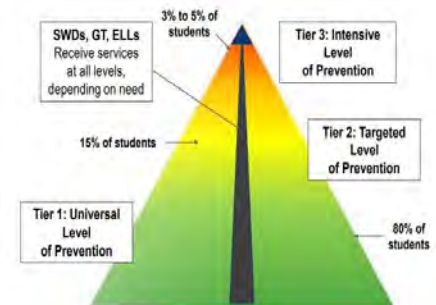
The opening is designed to hook the students into the lesson, establish a real connection to the learning, access prior knowledge and communicate learning expectations. The focus of the lesson should be communicated by ensuring that the students know and understand the standard(s) and the learning target(s).

Strategies teachers may use to hook the students and make the real-world connection include: telling a personal story, using a video, modeling a demonstration or asking a thought-provoking question. If a video is shown, it is important to provide and review guiding questions that help establish a foundation for what is important to learn from the video.

The essential vocabulary from the standard, Language of the Standard (LOTS), should be clearly articulated. Students should be able to have repeated exposure to the vocabulary and be able to ultimately use it as part of their everyday language. Students should also be provided a variety of ways to interact with the vocabulary. These varied opportunities would support the diverse needs/learning styles of your students.

Teachers should also provide clear modeling of the task that is to be completed by the students, when they are released to work independently during the work period. Teachers should show students, through explicit modeling, how to perform a task by demonstrating the series of steps involved before asking students to complete those steps independently. When clear, explicit modeling is not evident, some students are not able to get the most benefit from the work period and these may struggle to work independently. As a result, this can sometimes create behavior problems due to the student's frustration. As teachers reflect on the effectiveness of their openings, it is important to ensure that their lessons are well-planned. This will help to ensure a solid foundation/infrastructure for the students to engage in the rest of the lesson and to help support mastering the standard.

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).



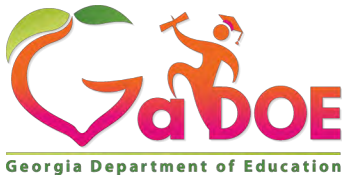
## Office of Federal Programs, Division for Special Education

### CONTACT INFORMATION

**Wina Low**  
 State Director  
 Division for Special Education Services and Supports  
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 Email: [wlow@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:wlow@doe.k12.ga.us)



@GaDOEsped



# Office of Federal Programs Division for Special Education

**Educating Georgia's Future**

**October 21, 2022**

## Welcome

### Greetings from the State Director

Directors,

Thanks to many leaders that have come before us, we have a path forward. Can you imagine that roughly 50 years ago, children with disabilities were often excluded from attending school? It just doesn't seem possible, yet it happened. Much progress has been made in the last 50 years although we would all agree there is work to be done. Our students are in class now but are we providing the specially designed instruction (SDI) needed? If you are not already a part of the SDI professional learning being offered, please contact Kathy Johnson at [katherine.johnson@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:katherine.johnson@doe.k12.ga.us) or Yyanisha Bass-Bonner at [yyanisha.Bass@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:yyanisha.Bass@doe.k12.ga.us) for more information. Our instructional team will be happy to provide support for professional learning and implementation of SDI. Please let us know how we can support your work.



I enjoyed being with our vision educators last Friday at GVEST in Macon. Teachers of the visually impaired are highly skilled professionals working tirelessly each day. A special thanks to Georgia Academy for the Blind and Smokey Powell Center to organize and support GVEST annually. Thank you for all you do!

A special shoutout to West Central GLRS (District 6) and West Georgia GLRS (Districts 11 & 12) for allowing me to be a part of your Collaborative Communities this week. I love visiting your districts. So proud of your work!

Our new director feature is Matthew Hall, special education director for Wilcox County Schools. Matthew has experience as a teacher, transportation director, parent and community engagement coordinator and now special education director. He has been fortunate to be mentored by the previous superintendent to broaden his knowledge. We are glad to have Matthew as a part of SELDA.

This week we are highlighting some amazing things happening in Ware County and Bacon County around orientation and mobility. Read how they helped students practice skills needed to navigate their environment safely. We look forward to highlighting more of your districts in the weeks to come.

Our staff member spotlight is shining brightly on Alisha Williamson. Alisha is our new program specialist focused on instruction for students dually identified as a student with a disability as well as a speaker of another language. Her background as a school psychologist serves her well in this new role. Prior to joining the GaDOE, Alisha worked at The Westminster School and before her work with Westminster, she was a school psychologist for Gwinnett County Schools. Her calm demeanor is much appreciated as well as her strong leadership skills. We are fortunate to have Alisha on our team!

Don't settle for any less than the best! Blaze a new trail for our students with disabilities. You are the leaders to make the change!



@georgiadeptofed

www.gadoe.org

Thank you is certainly not adequate to express how much I appreciate all you do each day. Don't stay safely on the path. Be a trailblazer!

Keeping students first,

Wina



## Mark Your Calendars

### Special Education Events and Due Dates

Please review the [Due Dates Calendar](#) for deadlines and key dates.

#### Professional Learning Events

- **October 26 at 2:00 p.m.** — Teaching ESOL and SWD Dually Identified Students in Secondary Settings (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: Teaching Dually Identified Students - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **November 2 at 10:00 a.m.** — State Defined Alternate Diploma and Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBA: State Defined Alternate Diploma and Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **November 3 at 1:30 p.m.** — Special Education Application Dashboard Overview (FY23 Special Education Data & GO-IEP Webinars) see [Special Education Application Dashboard Overview](#) for registration.

#### Important Date Reminders

- **October 25, 2022** — CPI, FTE, and Student Class end date; superintendent sign-off.
- **October 30, 2022** — Budget Completion Reports deadline for prior year IDEA grants.
- **November 4, 2022** — Timelines Prong 2 is due for LEAs not at 100% on July 31, 2022.





## Special Education Personnel Spotlights

### New Director Spotlight

#### MATTHEW HALL

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

Matthew Hall is the Special Education Director for Wilcox County Schools and has been in the field of education for 13 years. After graduating with an Early Childhood Education degree, Mr. Hall was initially hired as a paraprofessional and worked about six weeks in that role before his principal asked if he would move into the role of Special Education Teacher and work to obtain certification in that area. For the next two years Mr. Hall worked as an elementary inclusion and RTI teacher and then transitioned to first grade, where he taught special education for two years. From there, Mr. Hall transitioned into the role of Parent/Community Engagement Coordinator at the district level, working with all grades for six years. During his seventh year as the Parent/Community Engagement Coordinator, Mr. Hall also became the Transportation Director. In addition to his current roles, last January, during his twelfth year, Mr. Hall was hired as Special Education Director sharing that, "My current Superintendent, Dale Garnto, was the previous Special Education Director and it has been a huge asset to have him still working in the system and serving as my mentor for this new role."

With his bachelor's degree not being in special education, Mr. Hall shared that he had a lot to learn when he added the additional certification during his first year of teaching and that the special education teachers in his school, especially Mrs. Ann Stone Braziel and Bobbie Nell Wilson, all stepped in and helped to coach and teach him how to write an IEP. They also taught him how to better communicate student needs with parents and other teachers. Having that group of coworkers as friends greatly influenced his transition into special education and helped him learn that this was his favorite subgroup to serve.

In addition, Mr. Hall acknowledged that the individual that always stands out as an influence in his career is Julie Childers. Ms. Childers was his Assistant Superintendent when she hired him as the Parent Engagement Coordinator. Mr. Hall shared that, "With her vast knowledge of anything education related, she was always a great resource to teach me new skills and the content of tasks on which she was working. When she became Superintendent, she continued to include me in many school related experiences to help broaden my knowledge of unfamiliar areas. I know my experience working under her leadership helps me to be a better leader today."

Coming from a very close-knit family, Mr. Hall has a nephew and two nieces. Additionally, Mr. Hall, his mother, and two sisters all currently work for Wilcox County Schools with most of his off time being spent doing various activities with them and the rest of his family.

### District Spotlight

#### WARE COUNTY AND BACON COUNTY

The Georgia Department of Education's Special Education Services and Supports Division is excited to feature Ware County Schools and Bacon County School District in our District Spotlight this week.



Students from Ware County and Bacon County participated in an Orientation and Mobility lesson in downtown



Waycross. The lesson focused on street crossings, indoor familiarization, and community communication. The middle and high school students learned skills including how to use a compass, cardinal directions, and listening to environmental sounds to safely navigate the environment. They also had the opportunity to have lunch at a local restaurant and gain experience in familiarizing themselves in unfamiliar areas. Orientation and Mobility is an

area of the Expanded Core Curriculum for students with visual impairments and focuses on the ability of students to be oriented to their surroundings and to move as independently and safely as possible.



### GaDOE Staff Spotlight

ALISHA WILLIAMSON



Alisha Williamson has worked in education for 14 years and currently serves as a Program Specialist for Systemic Improvement and Instruction. More specifically, she is the English Learner Students with Disabilities (EL-SWD) Program Specialist. Her goal is to provide training, technical assistance, resources and content that will support dually identified students across Georgia.

Currently, Alisha is working on several projects to support EL-SWD. She is redesigning the EL-SWD website, facilitating a WIDA virtual workshop for ESOL and special education teachers to build capacity to support EL-SWD instructionally, and working to build resources that provide additional guidance to our LEAs to support EL-SWD.

In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, trying new dishes, and reading.

## Practice Pointers

### USED Guidance on Discipline: Question A-5 and A-6

**QUESTION A-5: WHAT STEPS SHOULD SCHOOL PERSONNEL TAKE IF THEY OBSERVE THAT A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY IS EXHIBITING BEHAVIORS THAT IMPEDE THEIR LEARNING OR THE LEARNING OF OTHERS, BUT THE CHILD'S INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) DOES NOT INCLUDE POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS AND OTHER STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THOSE BEHAVIORS?**



In this case, the local educational agency (LEA) should reconvene the IEP Team, which includes the parent, to discuss next steps to ensure that the IEP addresses the behavior that impedes the child's learning or the learning of others. The IEP Team could decide additional data are needed to determine the child's educational needs including how to address the child's behaviors, and the LEA could seek parental consent to conduct additional assessments to produce the necessary data. If the IEP Team determines it has sufficient information, it could revise an existing IEP such as by providing

the child additional services and supports to help address the child's behavior. If changes are needed after a child's annual IEP Team meeting for a school year, the parent and the LEA may agree not to convene the full IEP Team and instead develop a written document to amend the IEP. [34 C.F.R. § 300.324\(a\)\(4\)](#).

#### QUESTION A-6: HOW COULD IT IMPACT A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY IF THEIR IEP TEAM FAILS TO CONSIDER AND PROVIDE FOR NEEDED BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS?

As the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) noted in its [Dear Colleague Letter on the Inclusion of Behavioral Supports in Individualized Education Programs \(2016\)](#), the failure of the IEP Team to consider and provide for needed behavioral supports through the IEP process may result in a child not receiving a meaningful educational benefit or a free appropriate public education (FAPE). In addition, an LEA's failure to make behavioral supports available throughout a continuum of alternative placements, including in a regular education setting, could result in an inappropriately restrictive placement and constitute a denial of placement in the least restrictive environment. The failure of the IEP Team to consider and provide for needed behavioral supports could also lead to behavior that is inconsistent with the school's code of student conduct. To the extent a child's behavior, including its impact and consequences (e.g., violations of a school's code of student conduct, classroom disruptions, disciplinary removals, and other exclusionary disciplinary measures), impedes the child's learning or that of others, the IEP Team must consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior. [34 C.F.R. § 300.324\(a\)\(2\)\(i\)](#). If the child's IEP already includes behavioral supports, upon repeated incidents of child misbehavior or classroom disruption, the IEP Team may need to meet to consider whether the child's behavioral supports are being consistently implemented as required by the IEP or whether they should be changed. It is critical that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provisions, designed to support the needs of children with disabilities and ensure a FAPE, are appropriately implemented so as to avoid an overreliance on, or misuse of, exclusionary discipline in response to a child's behavior.

For more information, please see the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) guidance found in [Questions and Answers: Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities and IDEA's Discipline Provisions as revised July 19, 2022](#) and Questions C-8 through C-10 in [Questions and Answers on Individualized Education Programs \(IEPs\), Evaluations, and Reevaluations - Revised September 2011](#).

## More from GaDOE



### Low Vision Clinic Openings

The Smokey Powell Center is happy that we can provide satellite Low Vision Clinics across the state. We understand that it can be difficult to transport students to Macon or other areas that offer these clinics. Please take advantage of our off-site clinics so we can continue to offer this service to you and your students.

We have last minute openings for our Low Vision Clinic in Muscogee County for Tuesday, October 25. There will also be a Low Vision Clinic in Columbia County (Augusta area) November 15. Please send in your referral packets to Heather Francis and for more information, contact Heather directly at [hfrancis@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:hfrancis@doe.k12.ga.us).

As always, the Smokey Powell Clinic and all devices are at no cost.



## Creating Solutions for Educational Success

Register your staff (teachers at all levels, OT, PT SLP, AT Leadership) now to attend one of six opportunities for a day long make and take that will inspire improved access to instruction for all students!

In partnership with Tools for Life, the Division for Special Education Services and Supports will collaboratively support a day-long training for educators of students with Intellectual Disabilities (OT, PT, SLP, AT, special education low-incidence teachers, and leadership). In addition to receiving a copy of the book "Make Stuff and Love People" participants will spend a full day with the book's author, Dr. Therese Wilkomm. Dr. Willkomm will also discuss AT solutions for students with vision and hearing loss, the need for communication, and self-regulation strategies. During this hands-on professional learning day, each attendee will return not just with some great ideas but also 10 multi-use devices to support students in their classrooms.



November 8-10 from 9:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.: Macon Marriott City Center – 240 Coliseum Dr, Macon GA 31217

November 14-16 from 9:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.: The Classic Center – 300 N Thomas Street, Athens GA 30601

Please share the [training registration](#) with your educators. Don't miss out on what may be the best one-day PL session this year!

## Data Reporting Tips

### State Exclude Option

Infinite Campus, a state information system (SIS) vendor, provided the following information on using the STATE EXCLUDE option for 'C' (child find) private and homeschooled students. They are the only SIS vendor that has provided guidance at this time. Please contact your SIS vendor if you have questions about this process. Please share the information below with your SIS staff.

- For FTE 1, do not check/use the state exclude option because private and homeschooled "C" students need to be reported in FTE 1 and this will make the current 22-23 record active until FTE 1 sign-off.
- After signoff in FTE 1, to prepare for FTE 3,
  - do check/use the state exclude option, to exclude the student in FTE 3,
  - OR end date that record (any date after FTE sign-off i.e., 10/25/xx). Do not use this option if the student was enrolled at some point in the year. If you end date the record, you will need to create a new record the following year if the student is still a proportionate share student for your district.
- After signoff in FTE 3, to prepare for Student Record (SR):
  - If you are using the state exclude option, keep the state exclude option checked for students who were never truly publicly enrolled and had only a placeholder enrollment in your SIS. That will exclude these proportionate share students for SR.
  - If the student was truly publicly enrolled at some point in the year, remove the state exclude option. The student will then be included for SR as required.
- In GO-IEP, there is not a state exclude option to determine whether to include the 'C' student in the SR extract.
  - Instead, there are enrollment questions on the profile page.

- For FTE 1, students with an active Services Plan are correctly included.
- For SR, they are correctly included if the enrollment questions on the profile page show that the student was enrolled at some point in the year.
- For SR, they are correctly excluded if the enrollment questions on the profile page show that the student was NOT enrolled at some point in the year.

### Accommodations Update

- American Sign Language (ASL) is the sign language that is indicated on the state testing Allowable Accommodations charts within the 2022-2023 Student Assessment Handbook (SAH). ASL is the official sign language used in public schools statewide. Please refer to the latest version of the [Student Assessment Handbook](#).
- If a student needs a human test examiner/interpreter to use another form of sign language on a state assessment, please do not select the “ASL only” test accommodations in GO-IEP. The System Test Coordinator is required to submit a Special Accommodation Request to GaDOE for review in advance in accordance with the GaDOE guidelines. This request must be approved prior to including it in the state testing accommodations tab within GO-IEP.
- In GO-IEP, any special request needs to be documented in the MEETING NOTES since there is not a place to document this on the State Testing Accommodations tab. This accommodation will not pull into the accommodation report so staff will need to remember that this is an allowable accommodation. Uploading the email giving special permission on the Documents tab in GO-IEP would also be helpful.

### Students Exiting Special Education

Data Collections has eliminated the error: **E795 – PRIMARY AREA is not blank. REPORT TYPE must = ‘S’**. If a student exits from special education at any time in the current school year, please report the following for the student in FTE:

- **PRIMARY AREA** = P – Z, 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, and
- **REPORT TYPE** = R.

The **PRIMARY AREA** is now reported if the student was an SWD at any time in the current school year, just like Student Record. The exit date and exit event, either 9 or 10, need to be reported as always for Student Record.

There are no changes to reporting students who exited from special education the prior school year. The student is reported as a **REPORT TYPE** = R with no **PRIMARY AREA** reported.

If you have any questions, please contact Linda Castellanos at [lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:lcastellanos@doe.k12.ga.us).

## Budget Announcements

### Online Professional Development Opportunity

Join WestEd's fiscal compliance experts' fall online learning sessions in our four-part [federal programs finance training](#). Learn effective ways to maximize the impact of unprecedented federal funding levels while ensuring compliance with complex federal requirements.



These new training sessions will focus on internal controls and practices needed to comply with complex federal re-

quirements. We invite school business officers and program directors to increase their knowledge of allowable uses of federal funds (IDEA and Title I-A) and the local educational agency maintenance of effort (LEA MOE) requirement under IDEA. The sessions will also help participants prepare better for audits and fiscal monitoring. This program consists of four virtual, interactive training sessions led by Anthony Mukuna and Sara Doutre. These sessions will take place on October 25 and 26, 2022. [Learn more and register at this link.](#)

**Pricing**

- One Session: \$90
- Two Sessions: \$180
- Three Sessions: \$270
- Four Sessions: \$360

**Important Budget Announcement: Open Office**

FY23 cross-functional monitoring will begin soon. In addition to the Q&A session on October 19, 2022, the IDEA Budget Unit will collaborate with the Results Driven Accountability Unit to provide three open office hours to take a closer look at the monitoring indicators. We will also have several members of our teams available to answer your questions. The first of the three sessions is on October 26, 1-1:45 p.m. You may register for the session [here](#).

We invite all LEAs to attend. If your LEA is being monitored in FY23, please have a representative attend one of the three sessions.

**Annual FY23 ESSA and IDEA Cross-Functional Monitoring**

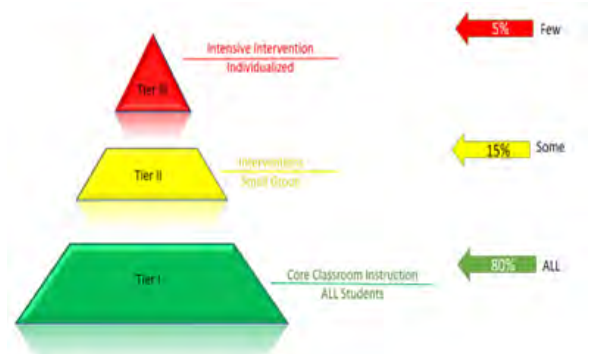
The Division of Federal Programs (ESSA and IDEA) is planning for our annual federal cross-functional monitoring webinar for LEAs. This online training will address the federal programs listed below and aims to allow district staff to participate at the time corresponding to their area of program responsibility. Here are a few updates and reminders to assist you in planning for your upcoming cross-functional monitoring (CFM).

- The FY23 CFM indicator document is on our [webpage](#).
- The platform for sharing documents with GaDOE will be available after October 1 in the SLDS CLIP application. You will see an option to select "Cross-Functional Monitoring."
- Training for FY23 CFM consists of prerecorded webinars on each section/program your team will review independently.
- Training for FY23 CFM also includes optional Q&A sessions with GaDOE program staff. Listed below are the dates and times for these optional Q&A sessions.
- Special Education Directors, for your convenience, the prerecorded webinar for IDEA is hyperlinked below. Additionally, you may register for the optional Q&A sessions for IDEA [here](#). Type "CFM" in the search box, click find events and scroll to find the FY23 CFM Q&A IDEA session. If you have questions, please contact your IDEA budget specialist directly.

**MTSS Snapshot**

**WHAT ACTIONS SHOULD WE CONSIDER IF 80% OF STUDENTS ARE NOT RESPONDING TO TIER I INSTRUCTION?**

The foundation of an effective multi-tiered system of supports is ensuring that an effective Tier I program is meeting the needs of approximately 80% of its students. When implementing a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) the image of the pyramid comes to mind, which is made up of three tiers. The foundation of this framework is Tier I, where 100% of students in Georgia receive their daily core instruction based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and a valid and reliable curriculum.

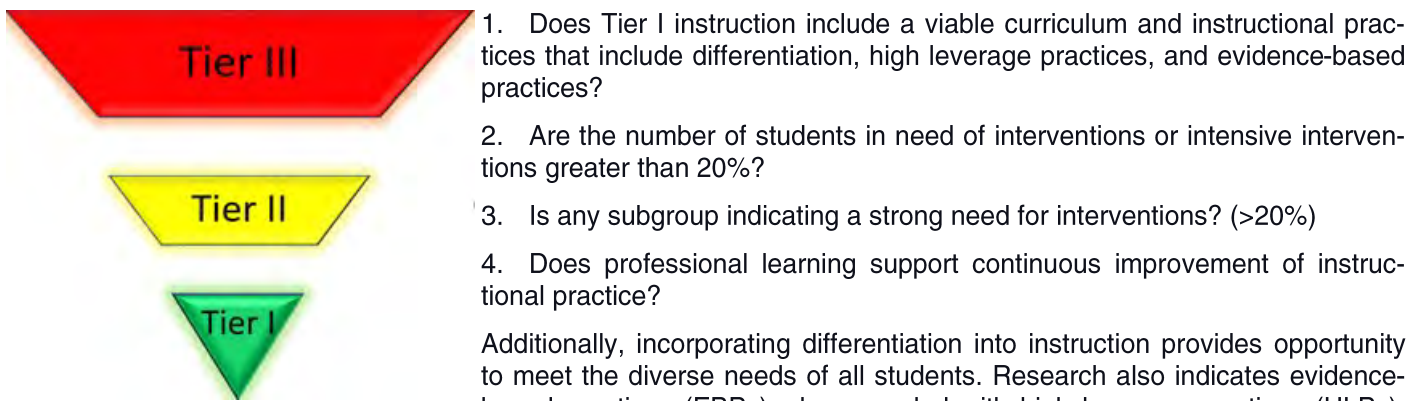




Tier I is considered the most important level of support because it provides the foundation for successful teaching and learning in school. According to Dr. Tessie Rose Bailey, Principal Technical Advisor for the American Institutes for Research, “The greatest threat to MTSS implementation and school success is poor quality Tier I.” Furthermore, she states, “Districts and schools cannot buy or intervene their way out of poor-quality Tier I instruction.” There has to be an intentional focus on providing effective Tier I instruction, since interventions alone are not the solution. It is important that all learners, including students with disabilities (SWDs), English Learners (ELs) and gifted students, receive the adequate supports and/or accommodations in order to access and/or extend the Georgia Standards of Excellence to meet the diverse needs of these students.

Providing effective Tier I instruction is critical in order to meet the needs of ALL students. It should be designed adequately so all students have the supports needed to access the core curriculum. To ensure that students with disabilities have access to effective Tier I instruction, it is critical that they have access to specially-designed instruction (SDI), that allows them to access the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and ensures their right to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). [Free Appropriate Public Education \(FAPE\) \(34 C.F.R. 300.101-300.113; Georgia Rule 160-4-7-.02\)](#). English Learners (ELs) also should be provided with adequate high leverage practices that allow them to be able to access effective Tier I instruction, [High Level Practices for Teaching ELs](#).

When 100% of the students are receiving access to Tier I instruction and at least 80% are not being successful, there are some actions for intensifying instruction at Tier I that should be considered. These actions involve the collective efforts of leaders, teachers, support staff, and parents, [Tips for Intensifying Instruction at Tier 1](#). If your school has an inverted pyramid, the additional questions below should be considered by the leadership team to determine possible root causes for this concern.



Additionally, incorporating differentiation into instruction provides opportunity to meet the diverse needs of all students. Research also indicates evidence-based practices (EBPs) when coupled with high leverage practices (HLPs), [High-Leverage Practices | TeachingWorks](#), provide a continuum of supports which result in a rapid response to academic and/or behavioral needs. All of these practices are applicable to all classrooms to help support implementation of effective Tier I instruction. However, even with quality Tier I instruction, it is recognized that some students will need layered supports that may be provided at Tiers II and III.

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).

## Office of Federal Programs, Division for Special Education

### CONTACT INFORMATION

**Wina Low**  
*State Director*  
 Division for Special Education Services and Supports  
 Cell Phone: 470.316.8636  
 Email: [wlow@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:wlow@doe.k12.ga.us)



@GaDOEsped

## Welcome

### Greetings from the State Director

Directors,

With Halloween just around the corner, Thanksgiving is not far behind. The fall leaves are simply beautiful this week in north Georgia. If not at full peak, the next few days will certainly bring a crescendo to the gorgeous patchwork of colors. While we were visiting in Utah a few weeks ago, our youngest granddaughter, Josie, had to model her Halloween costume. She will be a T-Rex for the holiday. Josie's costume is really elaborate. She looks like a costumed dinosaur like you might see at an amusement park. The costume inflates increasing her height by almost double. She has a place to see (and breathe) that is at the base of the dinosaur's neck with the head extending at least another two feet. Apparently, the school has a tradition of allowing costumes to be worn at school on Halloween. I can't see how this will work but I am sure the children will have a great time. I am looking forward to the feedback from Josie after being a dinosaur all day. Josie is thrilled about wearing her costume. I hope the day goes just as she is imagining. Seeing the excitement and wonder through a child's eyes is just about as good as it gets!



Our district highlight this week is from Camden County Schools. Special education teacher, Janice McMillian, has built a unique program to address many necessary skills. With the creation of Vendependence Company, Ms. McMillian is providing job training skills, self-determination and so much more through this unique opportunity. Please read the full article as it is a story that needs to be heard. I am so proud of this work!



District 17-South GLRS had some Halloween fun at their October Collaborative Communities Meeting. Sharing laughter, love and fun is essential for these dedicated leaders. Lots of cookie decorating talent was also on display!

Our new director this week is Sommer Clark from Worth County Schools. Sommer brings 20 years of experience to her new role. When she has vacation time, her favorite place is the "happiest place on earth" and Hilton Head Island is a close tie. Sommer has a very sweet inspiration as to why she chose this field. Thank you, Sommer, for sharing your journey.

Our staff spotlight is shining brightly on Yyanisha Bass Bonner. Yyanisha is a Program Specialist in our Instruction and Systemic Improvement unit. She brings a wealth of knowledge including a strong background in behavior management. We are so grateful she has joined our team.

Pumpkin spice, candy corn, fall leaves, pumpkin carving and trick or treat for the children are among some of the best that fall has to offer. I have great memories of trick or treating as a child. I lived on South Main Street in Jasper. All the children for about a quarter of a mile radius gathered to trick or treat. I am sure when we were younger that parents must have accompanied us, but my memory is from about 7 years old until we were too old to trick or treat, we just all went together. We would walk for blocks and blocks to gather our candy. One house always left their candy on the front porch to "self-serve" from a big black cauldron. We thought that was great! Everyone knew what to expect at each house as the candy was comfortingly predictable. Times are different now, but the excitement and wonder is still there.

Catch some of this magic for yourself!

We often take for granted how fortunate we are to work in a profession that allows the perspective of students to be on full display. Even if it has been a long time since you were a classroom teacher, I know just thinking about the upcoming holiday festivities will make you smile. Remember, the little moments are truly the big moments in our lives. Enjoy every minute! Hope you find the house with the full-size candy bars.

Thank you for all you do each day to provide some of those special moments for our children. You are appreciated.

Keeping students first,

Wina



## Mark Your Calendars

### Special Education Events and Due Dates

Please review the information below and the [Due Dates Calendar](#) for deadlines and key dates.

#### Professional Learning Events

- **November 2 at 10:00 a.m.** — State Defined Alternate Diploma and Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBA: State Defined Alternate Diploma and Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **November 3 at 1:30 p.m.** — Special Education Application Dashboard Overview (FY23 Special Education Data & GO-IEP Webinars) see [Special Education Application Dashboard Overview](#) for registration.
- **November 8 at 1:00 p.m.** — Special Education Directors' Webinar see [November Webinar](#) to register.
- **November 9 at 10:00 a.m.** — Serving ESOL/SWD Dually Identified Students State (FY23 School Based Administrators PL Series) see [SESBA: Serving ESOL/SWD Dually Identified Students - GaDOE Community](#) for registration.
- **November 9 at 2:00 p.m.** — Positive Behavior Supports in Secondary Settings (FY23 SSIP Fall PL Series) see [SSIP Series: PBIS in Secondary Settings - GaDOECommunity](#) for registration.

#### Important Date Reminders

- **October 30, 2022** — Budget Completion Reports deadline for prior year IDEA grants.
- **November 4, 2022** — Timelines Prong 2 is due for LEAs not at 100% on July 31, 2022.



#### 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>.



## Special Education Personnel Spotlights

### New Director Spotlight

SOMMER CLARK

The Georgia Department of Education’s Special Education Services and Supports Division is excited to feature Sommer Clark for our New Director Spotlight this week.

Sommer Clark is the Special Education Director for Worth County Schools and has been in the field of education for 20 years. Providing all her years of service in Worth County, Ms. Clark served four years at Holley Elementary working with 3rd-5th grades in a small group, fifteen years at Worth County Primary Preschool Special Education, and this year being her first year as Special Education Director.



Ms. Clark’s career truly began when she took an Intro to Special Education course in college to help her mother with her sister, Amber. Amber has Down Syndrome, had an IEP, and really struggled once she got to high school. Upon taking the Intro to Special Education class, Ms. Clark’s class was charged with observing several classes and when observing the special education classrooms, she felt right at home and knew this was what she should do with her life. Ms. Clark shares, “Amber taught me more about how to be an effective teacher to both parents and kids, than I could ever gain in any class or training. Amber is currently living her best life watching the television show ‘Saved by the Bell’ and listening to country music, as she continues to teach me how to help kids and parents.”



Married to her college sweetheart, Brad, Ms. Clark loves her wonderful family with the highlights being their two great daughters, 15-year-old Brantley, and 11-year-old McKinley. The Clarks’ favorite vacations are Disney World and Hilton Head Beach.

### District Spotlight

CAMDEN COUNTY SCHOOLS

GaDOE’s Special Education Services and Supports Division is excited to feature Camden County Schools in our District Spotlight this week.



Camden County teacher Janice McMillan has spent many years teaching students in the GAA program the life skill of counting money using “play” money, yet it seemed they were never able to generalize the skill to “real” coins in real life situations. In 2004, she asked a local vendor, A&J Vending, if her students could start counting and rolling the money for them from their vending machines in the teachers’ lounges at Camden Middle School. They agreed, and once started, the students really enjoyed practicing this skill using real coins that had real meaning behind them. In 2011, the owner of A&J Vending was moving, and had 10 machines that he needed to sell. Around the same time, Janice was searching for a meaningful way to honor her stepmother, who had recently lost her battle with ovarian cancer. She excitedly purchased the machines for her students in memory of her stepmother.



The following year, the machines were installed at Camden County High School, Camden Middle School, and Matilda Harris Elementary School. The students began learning all about how to start and run a vending machine business. They began by researching and surveying faculty and staff members to determine the most popular snacks. Then, they went shopping and learned about how to increase profits by finding the best price per unit when buying snacks in

bulk. The students began making all the decisions about the ins and outs of the business. They decided how much to price each item, what to stock in the machines, how to refund money when the machine made an error, how to keep track of inventory, when to pull items as they reached their expiration dates, perform sales analysis to make changes to the inventory as needed, and count the money in the machines. The students became so independent in managing the machines, they began calling it the “Vendependence Company” because the students involved in the program were learning independence through the vending machines. As a high school teacher, Janice always focused on the importance of transition, and continually seeking ways to improve the post-secondary outcomes for the students of Camden County. There are so many benefits to the students learning and expanding on the vending machine business. It is a business that can provide a flexible schedule for those who depend on others for transportation, as well as something that can be maintained as little or as much as the owner chooses.

As the years passed and the program proved to be a success, Camden County’s Special Education Department purchased more vending machines to put at other schools in the county to be managed by the students in the GAA program. Over the years, several students have graduated and been awarded one of the original “inherited” machines upon graduation to begin their own small business right out of high school. Who wouldn’t want to be a business owner by the age of 22? The program has been such a great success for teaching students to prepare for and plan their future in an exciting, meaningful way!



## GaDOE Staff Spotlight

### YYANISHA BASS BONNER

Yyanisha Bass Bonner has worked in education for 19 years and is currently a Program Specialist for Instruction and Systemic Improvement within DSESS. Over the last 19 years, special education advocacy has always been at the forefront of her efforts. She has spent the duration of her career teaching and administering/supervising K-12 programs within Marietta City Schools, Paulding, Cobb, Fulton and Atlanta Public School Districts. Her 19 years of experience have afforded her opportunities to provide professional development and training to educators, administrators and parents in and around the Atlanta-Metro area; relative to behavior management, para educator best practices and specially designed instruction.

Yyanisha is currently leading the division’s work concerning Georgia’s Specially Designed Instruction Project with a goal of increasing the functional and academic achievement of students with disabilities. She is also engaged in the collaborative creation of an additional professional learning series with our RDA Unit, Back to Basics Behavior Edition, which will be offered regionally to our LEAs as well as a Back-to-Basics Behavior series for State Schools.

Yyanisha is the proud mother of a very busy 13-year-old son who takes after her and her husband and is ranked top 20 in the southeast on the basketball court. When she and her husband are not coaching, traveling for basketball, or at their son’s Jazz Band concerts, you’ll likely find her reading journal articles exploring teacher perception of ethnicity and culture and its impact on academic achievement, performance and success as she works toward dissertation completion. If there’s any free time left over, she is probably playing with their two dogs or indulging in a self-care activity at the spa!

## Practice Pointers

### USED Guidance on Discipline: Question B-1 and B-2

#### QUESTION B-1: DOES THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA) DEFINE “DISCIPLINE”?

The answer is no. The IDEA does not define “discipline.” The IDEA and the implementing regulations at [34 C.F.R. §§ 300.530 through 300.536](#) explain the rights of children with disabilities and the authority of school personnel when a child is suspended, expelled, or temporarily placed in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for disciplinary purposes. For the purposes of this Q&A, “discipline” is intended to mean the consequences a school imposes on a child who violates a school’s code of student conduct or rules as determined by school personnel.



#### QUESTION B-2: DO THE IDEA’S IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS PRESCRIBE SPECIFIC DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS THAT A LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY (LEA) MUST TAKE WHEN A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY VIOLATES A SCHOOL’S CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT?

The answer is no. The IDEA does not prescribe specific disciplinary actions an LEA must take, but it does set some limits. For example, the IDEA does not preclude an LEA from disciplining a child with a disability for violating a school’s code of student conduct like any other student, but it does preclude an LEA from doing so in situations where the disciplinary action would result in a change in placement and the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the school’s code of student conduct is determined to be a manifestation of the child’s disability, with the exception of disciplinary removals due to “special circumstances.” [34 C.F.R. §§ 300.530\(c\) and 300.530\(g\)](#).

For more information, please see the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) guidance found in [Questions and Answers: Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities and IDEA’s Discipline Provisions as revised July 19, 2022](#).

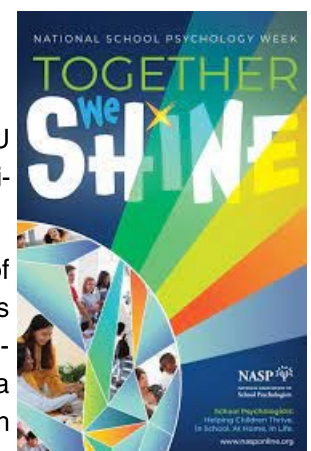
## More from GaDOE

### National School Psychology Week

National School Psychology Week (NSPW) is November 7–11, 2022!

The GaDOE Division of Special Education Services and Supports want to say THANK YOU to all the School Psychologists in our beautiful state. We appreciate all the hard work, sacrifice, and dedication you display each day for Georgia students.

School Psychologists are uniquely qualified professionals who support the development of the Whole Child. They display expertise in diverse learning needs, data collection, progress monitoring, assessment, counseling, research, intervention development, mental health, instructional support, and a variety of other areas. They are a common thread throughout a students’ PK-12 career and help foster student success. School Psychologists partner with families, schools, teachers, counselors, administrators, and others to ensure students have a supportive learning environment.





“Together We Shine” is the 2022 theme designated by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). School Psychologists are truly bright stars in our LEAs and are true collaborators to ensure student success.

Thank you again for all you do day in and day out and please take time to thank a School Psychologist, November 7-11, 2022!!

## Creating Solutions for Educational Success

Register your staff (teachers at all levels, OT, PT, SLP, AT Leadership) now to attend one of six opportunities for a day-long make and take that will inspire improved access to instruction for all students!

In partnership with Tools for Life, the Division for Special Education Services and Supports will collaboratively support a day-long training for educators of students with Intellectual Disabilities (OT, PT, SLP, AT, special education low-incidence teachers, and leadership). In addition to receiving a copy of the book “Make Stuff and Love People,” participants will spend a full day with the book’s author, Dr. Therese Wilkomm. Dr. Willkomm will also discuss AT solutions for students with vision and hearing loss, the need for communication, and self-regulation strategies. During this hands-on professional learning day, each attendee will return not just with some great ideas but also 10 multi-use devices to support students in their classrooms.

November 8, 9 or 10 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.: Macon Marriott City Center – 240 Coliseum Dr, Macon GA 31217

November 14, 15, or 16 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.: The Classic Center – 300 N Thomas Street, Athens GA 30601

Please share the [training registration](#) with your educators. Don’t miss out on what may be the best one-day PL session this year!



## Budget Announcements

### Annual Grant Close Out Procedures

We are quickly approaching our annual deadline for FY22 completion reports to be submitted for each of your federal grants.

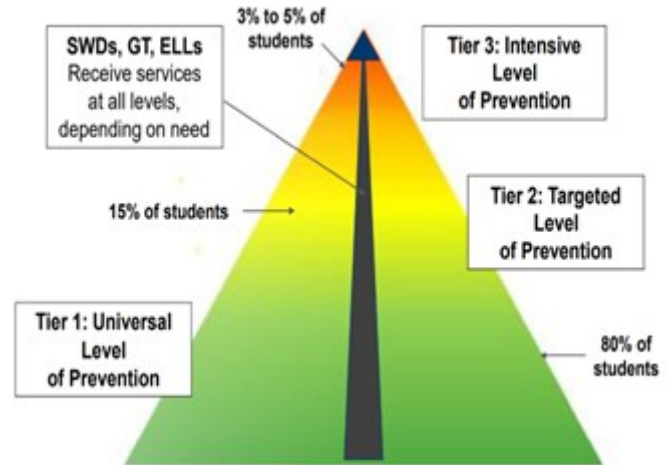
- FY22 Completion Reports are due on October 30.
- FY22 carryover will be calculated after the completion report deadline. The goal is to have carryover calculated as quickly as possible.
- LEAs needing extra time to submit the FY22 completion report for any grant may request an extension. The request for an extension must be submitted by October 30. To request an extension, please go to the [Completion Report Extension Request](#).
- If the LEA receives an extension to the deadline of October 30, the carryover calculation may be delayed for that grant. Carryover will be calculated monthly for each grant, and not on an individual basis by LEA. Completion reports submitted beyond the approved extension timeline may not be accepted and expenditures will need to be moved to current year funds. Carryover will then be calculated and available to the LEA.

Please contact your grant program specialist if you have questions or need assistance.

## MTSS Snapshot

### WHY IS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CRITICAL WHEN BUILDING A SOLID INFRASTRUCTURE FOR TIER I OF THE MULTI-LEVEL PREVENTION SYSTEM?

As we reflect on the effectiveness of the three tiers of the multi-level prevention system, professional development is a critical component. The multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) framework is not a “wait-to-fail” model. It is a preventative framework that supports the academic and/or behavioral needs of students. It supports students who need remediation and/or acceleration. As districts and schools implement this framework, it is important to provide professional development that establishes a common understanding that MTSS is not the gateway to special education, but a preventative framework that supports improved outcomes for ALL students.



As we build the infrastructure for effective Tier I instruction, professional development is necessary to ensure that all educators are adequately prepared to know the intent of the standards and to know how to teach the standards with fidelity. Professional development (PD) that focuses on effective implementation of a standards-based classroom is essential, [GaDOE SBC Instructional Framework July 2016](#). Effective professional learning that provides teachers with effective strategies/best practices to enhance Tier I instruction, [High-Leverage Practices | TeachingWorks](#) is necessary. In addition, PD that enhances educators’ knowledge of evidence-based practices that support teaching of the standards is critical, [WWC | Practice Guides](#). Additional math and English Language Arts resources can be found on the GaDOE’s website, [Mathematics](#) and [English Language Arts Program](#), to support professional development efforts for effective Tier I instruction.

Many of our students with disabilities are served in the general education setting. As we reflect on effective Tier I instruction in the general education setting, we have to ensure effective co-teaching is implemented, Co-Teaching [Series](#). Professional development should be provided for co-teachers to enhance their co-teaching experience and maximize their use of the small group co-teaching approaches. This professional learning should help to support efforts to ensure specially-designed instruction, [Specially Designed Instruction \(SDI\)](#) is implemented effectively and that our students with disabilities are receiving an appropriate education according to their unique needs. As we reflect on some of the professional development needs/resources mentioned to support Tier I instruction, it is important to also ensure that as professional development is provided, opportunities are provided for follow-up and coaching to support fidelity of implementation and sustainability efforts.

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).

## Office of Federal Programs, Division for Special Education

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