



November 3, 2023 Email Blast



*Bridge and New Orleans*

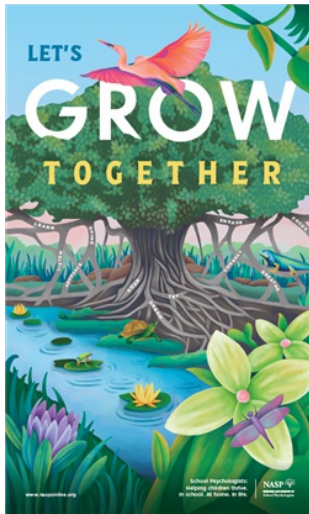
## **Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education**

Directors,

I am writing this message from New Orleans while attending the National Association of State Directors of Special Education. Meeting with other state directors is important to learn not only from presenters but also from each other. On Tuesday, represented Georgia on a panel discussion about teacher retention as the closing keynote event. I am so proud of work across our state addressing teacher retention. All the credit goes to GLRS and the local participating LEAs. I have also been asked by multiple technical assistance agencies and other states about the Special Education School Administrators Academy (SESAA). OSEP has announced the creation of a new technical assistance agency for building leaders, so we are just a little ahead of the curve. A big thank you to Trace Vaughn, Debbie Reagin and Bruce Potts for their leadership with SESAA.

**Happy National School Psychology Week  
(NSPW) to all Georgia's School  
Psychologists!**

Your expertise and support are recognized in continued efforts to improve student outcomes. Thank



you for all that you do. The week of November 6-10, 2023, local educational agencies will celebrate NSPW. The 2023 theme is “Let’s Grow Together,” is inspired by the importance of both personal and shared strengths in our growth, individually and in school communities in every season of life - *National Association of School Psychologists*.

School Psychologists are an integral part of school teams. School psychologists bring knowledge of general education and special education policy, practice, and procedures. Roles and responsibilities vary across LEAs and schools, but also:

- provide direct support and interventions to students
- consult with teachers, families, and other professionals to improve support strategies
- work with school administrators to improve school wide practices/policies
- have an expertise in assessment, mental health, learning styles, data analysis, special education, behavior, multi-tiered system of supports

School Psychologists are experts in assessing distinctive needs, working collaboratively to assist with whole child development, and assisting schools in creating safe learning environments for all students. Let’s continue to grow together and make a difference for all children. Thank you for all you do!



*Illustrated desk with Good Job*

Our next director’s webinar is Tuesday, November 7, 2023 at 1:00 pm. As always, the agenda is packed with information. [November 7, 2023](#)

Please accept my sincerest thanks for all you do each day. I was so proud to share the work being done in Georgia especially our focus on instruction as well as teacher retention at the NASDSE Conference this

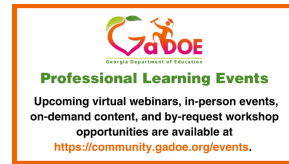
week. Your commitment and support for students with disabilities is very evident.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in a couple of weeks at G-CASE. Please know your are all appreciated.

Keeping students first,  
Wina

## Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review the information below and the Due Dates Calendar for deadlines and key dates.



*Professional Learning  
Events*

### Coming Up

**November 6-9** at 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention: Metro South

**November 6-9** at 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention: East Georgia

**November 7** at 1 p.m. Special Education Directors' Webinar

**November 8** at 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Back to Basics: A Guide to Writing IEPs

**November 8** at 2 p.m. SSIP FY24: Teaching ESOL and SWD Dually Identified Students Secondary

**November 9** 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Back to Basics: A Guide to Writing Transition Plans

### Reminders

**November 10** Timelines – Prong 2 Due for LEAs not at 100% (SE Dashboard) APR Indicators 11 and 12

Visit GaDOE Community for a complete listing of GaDOE Professional Learning Events.

## Practice Pointers – Individualized Education Program (IEP): Annual Goals and Short-Term Objectives



*Arrows*

IEP annual goals are written to address an individual child's needs/deficits in order to enable that child to be involved in and make progress in grade level standards. All children are expected to be working toward grade level standards, so it is not necessary to list those standards in the IEP. The annual goals should address the needs described in the present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP) that will enable the child to progress in the grade level standards-based curriculum and meet the child's other educational needs that result from the identified disability. The goals should be written in measurable form and should describe what the child can be reasonably expected to accomplish within twelve months. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), for children with disabilities who take

alternate assessments aligned to alternate academic achievement standards, the IEP must also include a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives. Short-term objectives are measurable, intermediate steps or targeted sub-skills to assist in accomplishing the annual goal. The IEP Team may decide to write short-term objectives to support annual goals for any children, as appropriate.

For more information, please see our [Special Education Rules Implementation Manual](#), our [IEP Resources and Specially Designed Instruction \(SDI\) webpages.aspx](#)), our [Parent Information Fact Sheets](#), and the [PROGRESS Center at American Institutes for Research / IEP Tip Sheet PLAAFPs](#).

## **Office of Teaching and Learning: October 25, 2023, Right Now Resources**

How can we be closing down October and heading into November? Not going to say a lot here as there is MUCH to read in this week's RNR edition. The Office of Teaching and Learning team continues to be available to serve and support - don't hesitate to reach out and definitely make sure you are marking your calendars to attend in person and virtual sessions offered below that support your focus of work.

Please review the [October 25, 2023, Right Now Resources](#) newsletter for Teaching and Learning Updates, or subscribe on the [Curriculum and Instruction](#) webpage to have them delivered straight to your inbox.



## **Office of Whole Child Supports: Better Ed Bulletin, October 31, 2023**

The Office of Whole Child Supports assists districts, schools, and communities in identifying and addressing student barriers to success while expanding learning opportunities.

Please review the [October 31, 2023, Better Ed Bulletin](#) for updates, or contact Dr. Kiley Thompson, Communications Specialist, at [kiley.thompson@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:kiley.thompson@doe.k12.ga.us) if you have questions or would like to be added to the distribution list.

## **Parent to Parent of Georgia Trainings for November**

## **In Person Training: Crossing the "Medical Bridge: Transition to Adult Healthcare for CYSHCN**

Learn what health has to do with transition; who makes up the transition team and their roles, how to incorporate health transition into a medical home, healthcare financing, legal issues and timelines. Read the flyer [here](#).

**Date:** Wednesday, November 8, 2023

**Time:** 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

**Location:** BCSS Central Office (Metal Building), 65 Gilreath Road Cartersville, GA 30121



*Parent to Parent of Georgia  
logo*

## **Webinar: Where do we go from here? Preparing for transition from high school**

Preparing for Transition from High School

Learn the keys to successful transition, the role of the school in transition planning and things to consider when planning your child's transition to adulthood.

**Date:** Wednesday, November 8, 2023

**Time:** 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Where do we go from here? Preparing for transition from high school  
Registration

## **Webinar: What a Great IDEA!**

Understand the basic components of Special Education and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This course will explain how the process of special education works, including Child Find, Response to Intervention (RTI) and Student Support Teams; making a referral; what to expect from an evaluation; how to prepare for an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting and how to resolve disputes.

**Date:** Thursday, November 9, 2023

**Time:** 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

What a Great IDEA! Registration

## **Webinar: Georgia Home and Community-Based Waivers (NOW/COMP)**

This course will include an overview of Georgia's Medicaid waivers, and will explore specifically the NOW/COMP waivers. You will learn about the eligibility requirements, how to apply, the services covered, and what happens once your

child/young adult's NOW/COMP waiver is funded. You will also be provided some tips and suggestions on how Parent to Parent of Georgia can help you navigate this process.

**Date:** Thursday, November 9, 2023

**Time:** 1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

Georgia Home and Community-Based Waivers (NOW/COMP) Registration

## Upcoming GO-504 Demo Session

Are you planning to attend the Fall GCASE Conference in Savannah, GA November 15, 2023?

GaDOE will be hosting a pre-conference GO-504 Demo session from 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. on Wednesday November 15, 2023, in the Verelst Room on the second level. We would love for someone from your LEA to join us for the session as we share a live navigation of the GO-504 application we are developing. Due to limited space, please only have one person per LEA attend.

Lunch is not included for participants in this session. Please make your lunch plans accordingly.



*People giving high fives in a group training*

## Mathematics Virtual Specialist Program 2023-2024

The GaDOE Mathematics Team is excited to announce the MathCONnect Virtual Specialist Program for the 2023-2024 school year! As we work to support the fidelity of implementation of Georgia's K-12 Mathematics Standards, we are expanding opportunities for teachers to include interaction with virtual mathematics specialists from each region to support the exploration of Georgia's K-12 Mathematics Curriculum Resources.

MathCONnect will consist of three live, synchronous sessions and nine supporting asynchronous experiences to provide more details on the variety of state resources being provided for the newly adopted mathematics standards. The virtual specialists will provide information on the asynchronous experiences and facilitate the grade level/course sessions during the live events.

-1st live, synchronous session: November 15, 2023 + 3 supporting asynchronous sessions

-2nd live, synchronous session: February 7, 2024 + 3 supporting asynchronous sessions

-3rd live, synchronous session: March 27, 2024 + 3 supporting asynchronous sessions

For more information on the MathCON sessions, visit the [MathCOnnect Virtual Specialist Catalog](#).

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November 10, 2023 Email Blast

## Office of Federal Programs - Division for Special Education

Directors,

November is a busy month with elections, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving and several other days/weeks designated as awareness or recognition months. First and foremost, let me recognize our veterans and share my deepest appreciation. Just open a newspaper or read an online story to know of the turmoil in other parts of the world that could also affect our freedom. Thank you, veterans, for your service, commitment, and sacrifice. I was in high school in the early to mid-70s. A big topic of conversation involved the draft and whether the Vietnam War would end before my male classmates had to register for the draft. The war touched many families around us, yet most of my generation was a little removed from fully understanding. As you know, the war ended, and the draft was stopped before my peers turned 18 years old. My parents were young adults during World War II. I have heard my mother recall many times about being in a taxi in Washington DC on a Sunday afternoon when the announcement about the bombing of Pearl Harbor came across the car radio. Believe it or not, my mother was working for the FBI in Washington DC when the war was declared. She was only 20 years old. We owe a great debt to all veterans that have sacrificed to ensure our freedom.



*Kindness changes everything*

Another special day in November is World Kindness Day on November 13. This



special day of recognition is relatively new having been started in 1998. In our current climate, kindness is trendy, but kindness goes much beyond a moment in time. Much like muscle memory, kindness needs to be practiced ensuring kindness is the norm. Kindness goes a long way. I hope we will all spread kindness each day.



*Veterans Day. Honoring all who served.*

Acts of kindness can be small or grandiose. Even better, kindness is contagious. As important as it is being kind to others, you must also be kind to yourself.

I am looking forward to G-CASE next week. If my calculations and memory are correct, I believe this will be my 25th Fall G-CASE Conference. Savannah in November brings lots of good memories to mind. Hope to see you there ready to make more memories!

Keeping students first,  
Wina

## Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review the information below and the Due Dates Calendar for deadlines and key dates.



*Professional Learning Events*

### Coming Up

**November 30** at 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Deaf/Hard of Hearing Core Components Workshop

**November 30** at 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention: West Central

### Reminders

**December 1** Amend IDEA Budgets for CEIS Carryover and Proportionate Share Carryover (Consolidated Application in GaDOE portal)

**December 13** Student Record: Data Cleanse -Closes (Data Collections, Indicators 1, 2, & 4)

Visit GaDOE Community for a complete listing of GaDOE Professional Learning Events.

## Practice Pointers – Individualized Education Program (IEP): Annual IEP Goals and *Endrew F.*



Arrows

### QUESTION 13: HOW CAN IEP TEAMS DETERMINE IF IEP ANNUAL GOALS ARE APPROPRIATELY AMBITIOUS?

The United States Department of Education (USED) has stated in a Question-and-Answer (Q&A) Guidance Document, that the *Endrew F.* decision is important because it informs our efforts to improve academic outcomes for children with disabilities. As the Court stated, “advancement from grade to grade is appropriately ambitious for most children in the regular classroom;” however, the Court also noted that while these “goals may differ...every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives.” In order to make a free appropriate public education (FAPE) available to each eligible child with a disability, the child’s IEP must be designed to enable the child to be involved in, and make progress in, the general education curriculum. The term “general education curriculum” is “the same curriculum as for nondisabled children.” We have previously clarified that the phrase “the same curriculum as for nondisabled children” is the curriculum that is based on a State’s academic content standards. This alignment, however, must guide, and not replace, the individualized decision-making required in the IEP process. This decision-making continues to “require careful consideration of the child’s present levels of achievement, disability, and potential for growth.”

For more information, please see our [Special Education Rules Implementation Manual](#), our [IEP Resources and Specially Designed Instruction \(SDI\) webpages.aspx](#), our [Parent Information Fact Sheets](#), and the [PROGRESS Center at American Institutes for Research / IEP Tip Sheet PLAAFPs](#).

## Office of Teaching and Learning: November 1, 2023, Right Now Resources

As we enter the season of Thanksgiving, may your days be full of TREATS and not TRICKS. The work continues to move us forward, our ongoing collaboration supports us, and TEAMWORK is essential to ensuring we all lead with purpose and clarity.

Gratefulness - I challenge you each day this month to start your day by writing down one thing you are thankful for - big or small - claim it. Watch your list grow

and receive the blessings your list brings. A mindset of gratefulness is a powerful motivator.

Please review the November 1, 2023, Right Now Resources newsletter for Teaching and Learning Updates, or subscribe on the Curriculum and Instruction webpage to have them delivered straight to your inbox.

## Parent to Parent of Georgia Trainings for November



*Parent to Parent of Georgia logo*

### Webinar: Georgia Home and Community-Based Waivers (NOW/COMP)

This webinar will include an overview of Georgia's Medicaid waivers, and will explore specifically the NOW/COMP waivers. You will learn about the eligibility requirements, how to apply, the services covered, and what happens once your child/young adult's NOW/COMP waiver is funded. You will also be provided some tips and suggestions on how Parent to Parent of Georgia can help you navigate this process.

**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023

**Time:** 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Georgia Home and Community-Based Waivers (NOW/COMP) Registration

### Webinar: Georgia Medicaid Basics and an Overview of Home and Community-Based Services

Learn about Medicaid programs and services, including how to qualify for Medicaid based on a child's disability or chronic health condition (Katie Beckett Deeming Waiver). This course will include information on EPSDT, GAPP, SOURCE, and a brief overview of CCSP, ICWP and NOW/COMP waivers.

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**Time:** 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Georgia Medicaid Basics and an Overview of Home and Community-Based Services Registration

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Lunch is not included for participants in this session. Please make your lunch plans accordingly.

## Transition Self-Determination Survey

The Division for Special Education Services and Supports, as part of our Transition Strategic Plan, is attempting to determine what self-determination initiatives are being implemented across the state. Please take a moment to complete the [Transition Self-Determination Survey](#). This information will be used to ensure that we are capable of providing support for your district to improve transition postschool outcomes for students with disabilities. Please complete this survey by Friday, December 15, 2023.

If you have questions, contact Elise James [atejames@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:atejames@doe.k12.ga.us) or Laurie Ponsell at [lponsell@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:lponsell@doe.k12.ga.us).

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## Federal Programs



November 17, 2023 Email Blast

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

Directors,

Thanksgiving is a wonderful time of year. It makes us slow down and reflect on the important things in life. I have been very blessed to have a wonderful family, great friends, and a meaningful career. As I have grown older, I've learned how important it is to understand what really matters before it is too late. In 2018, I lost my oldest sister, Ann. She was 13 years older, so we always had a different relationship. Next to my mother, I knew I could count on her unconditionally. We lived many miles apart for the last 30 years of her life, but I knew she was there. Losing her much too soon made me realize how quickly things can change. Don't miss a moment. Visit, Facetime, call and stay close. Don't figure it out when time has gone by. Count your blessings and be thankful for all those you hold dear.



*Turkey*

The PROGRESS Center recently released a new course, *The What and Why of the Statement of Services and Aids*, that explains the IDEA requirements for the statement of services and aids, the critical role of the statement of services and aids in the development of a high-quality IEP, and how to differentiate between specially designed instruction, related services, supplementary aids and services, and program modifications and supports.



OSEP has released the second blog from the Expect, Engage and Empower initiative. Georgia's student-led IEP process, ASPIRE, and the focus on other self-determination efforts such as the implementation of the SDLMI are great examples of the best practices outlined in the blog. The second blog in a series of blog posts on secondary transition from OSERS on [student-led decision-making in schools](#) is now available. Additional updates on important resources, events, and information will be posted on OSEP's [Expect, Engage, and Empower: Successful Transition for All](#) homepage.

I am very thankful for the opportunities I had as a teacher and a leader to support special education. Special education is rich with opportunities to make a difference. Sometimes just a phone call to a parent to answer questions or provide support can make such a difference. So often we hear from an adult that a teacher believed in them and changed the direction of their life. Having the opportunity to help others is a great reward. When I finished high school at 16 years old, my father did not even think there was a choice other than entering nursing school to be a registered nurse. I was barely 15 years old when he took me for the in-person interview at Georgia Baptist Hospital School of Nursing. I was accepted and registered for classes to begin in July after my high school graduation. Only problem was – I did not want to be a nurse. My oldest sister was a nurse and Daddy thought it was the right career move for me too. I don't think anyone asked me if that was what I wanted. At some point just before I was to start school, I found the courage to say that I did not want to go and would prefer to start college and determine what was next. The explosion was probably heard across most of the United States. Not the way to go about a decision of this nature but I do not regret the road I have taken. Much like nursing, education is a field that helps others but in a different manner. Education has been good for me, and I would not hesitate to make the same choice today. Some of the most thankful moments in my life have involved working with students and their families so I am thankful to serve as an educator.



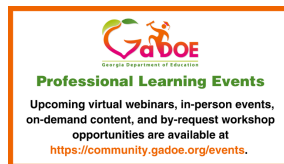
*Happy Thanksgiving*

On Thanksgiving Day, in addition to cooking the traditional feast, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade will be a part of our morning. The parade feels like the official start of the holiday season. There is something magical about Santa at the end of the parade. The Westminster Dog Show is also a must see at our house. We will be rooting for the English Bulldog for Best in Show as Lucy would have it no other way. Happy Thanksgiving! Take time for family and friends and share your thanks.

The next Friday email blast will be the week of November 27, 2023. Taking a break to cook the turkey!

Don't ever doubt that you are making a difference. I am so thankful for each of you!

Keeping students first,  
Wina



*Professional Learning  
Events*

## Special Education Events & Due Dates

Please review the information below and the Due Dates Calendar for deadlines and key dates.

### Coming Up

**November 30** at 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Deaf/Hard of Hearing Core Components Workshop

**November 30** at 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention: West Central

**December 4-7** at 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention: Oconee

**December 5** at 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. Elementary Schools: Special Education and School Administrator Academy: Master Scheduling

**December 7** at 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. Middle Schools: Special Education and School Administrator Academy: Master Scheduling

**December 7** at 1 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. High Schools: Special Education and School Administrator Academy: Master Scheduling

## Reminders

**December 1** Amend IDEA Budgets for CEIS Carryover and Proportionate Share Carryover (Consolidated Application in GaDOE portal)

**December 13** Student Record: Data Cleanse -Closes (Data Collections, Indicators 1, 2, & 4)

Visit [GaDOE Community](#) for a complete listing of GaDOE Professional Learning Events.



*Arrows*

## Practice Pointers – Individualized Education Program (IEP): Student Supports

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires each IEP to include a statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided to enable the child: 1) to advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals; 2) to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and 3) to be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and nondisabled children in the academic, nonacademic, and extracurricular activities. Student supports in the IEP should be based on the student needs identified in the present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP).

For more information, please see our [Special Education Rules Implementation Manual](#), our [IEP Resources](#) and [Specially Designed Instruction \(SDI\)](#) webpages, our [Parent Information Fact Sheets](#), and the [PROGRESS Center](#) at American Institutes for Research / [IEP Tip Sheet PLAAFPs](#).

**Office of Teaching and Learning: November 8, 2023,**



## Right Now Resources

This week's edition of Right Now Resources has several key updates that you will want to take note of and review. We had an AWESOME day at our Teaching and Learning Summit hosted by Northeast GA and Pioneer RESAs. It's always a good day to be with fabulous educators who are leading and implementing purposeful work.

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*Parent to Parent of Georgia  
logo*

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Georgia Medicaid Basics and an Overview of Home and Community-Based Services Registration

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If you have questions, contact Elise James [atejames@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:atejames@doe.k12.ga.us) or Laurie Ponsell at [lponsell@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:lponsell@doe.k12.ga.us).

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