

Special Education State Advisory Panel (SAP) Meeting Minutes

The SAP advises on the unmet needs related to the education of children with disabilities within the State and provides feedback on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding special education.

Thursday, November 7, 2019

Time	Activities and Next Steps
10:00 am – 10:15 am	<p>Welcome/Opening Activity Jurée Hall, Chair and Ganesh Nayak, Vice Chair</p>
10:15 am – 12 pm	<p>Annual Performance Report Indicators GaDOE is required to submit an Annual Performance Report to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) by February 1st each year. The SAP must advise the State Director of the unmet needs of the state and give feedback concerning targets, progress, slippage, and activities in these areas. You may access additional information about the data using the following link: State and Local Data. During this Panel Meeting, we will address the following indicators: 1, 2, 4a, 4b, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13.</p> <p><u>4a:</u> Percent of districts/LEAs that have a significant discrepancy (by race or ethnicity) in the rate of suspension and expulsions greater than 10 days in a school year for SWD. Statewide data shows that 8 districts were included in the calculation as having met the Cell size and N size. Two school districts were identified as having significant discrepancy.</p> <p><u>Indicator 4b:</u> Percent of LEAs that have significant discrepancy by race and ethnicity in the rate of suspension and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs and policies, procedures or practices that contributed to the significant discrepancy & do not comply with requirements relating to development and implementation of IEPs, use of positive behavioral and supports, and procedural safeguards. In 2018-2019 School Year (SY), 100% (2 out of 2 LEAs) of LEAs met these criteria.</p> <p><u>Indicator 9:</u> Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in Special Education & related services that is the result of inappropriate identification. 2018-19 SY, 0%, no districts demonstrated data in this area.</p> <p><u>Indicator 10:</u> Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.</p>



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	<p>2018-19 FY, 20 LEAs were identified as having disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups (a decrease from 36 during the previous year). Based on the state's data, black students demonstrate greater risk to be identified as having an intellectual disability and emotional-behavioral disorder.</p> <p>11 LEAs were found to be noncompliant based on a review of policies, practices & procedures. Those districts developed corrective action plans to address these concerns.</p> <p><u>Indicator 11:</u> Percent of children who were evaluated within 60 days of receiving parental consent for initial evaluation: 2018-19 SY, 98.54% were evaluated in this timeframe; 35,605 children were referred for evaluation. There were 520 late meetings due to student delays, parent delays, but the vast majority were teacher/evaluator delays. Discussion: Some of the smaller districts do not have their own psychologist so scheduling is a challenge.</p> <p><u>Indicator 12:</u> Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B, who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthday. Statewide, 98.48% have an IEP developed & implemented by their third birthday; this decreased from 99.16%.</p> <p>Reasons include high turnover at Babies Can't Wait (BCW) that creates delays completing evaluations and IEPs. The Department has partnered with BCW to address procedures in this area.</p> <p><u>Indicator 13:</u> Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 & above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated, based on age appropriate transition assessment transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. 91.4% of youth met this comprehensive goal in 2018-19 SY; 521 plans were reviewed across the state & 476 of those were found to be compliant. The Panel discussed perceptions that impact family relations when the student turns 18.</p> <p><u>Indicator 17:</u> Percent of students with disabilities (SWD) who graduate with a regular diploma through age 22. Statewide, 62.5% graduated, decreased from 70% last year. Reasons for slippage include administrative & teacher turnover. There are many state initiatives to improve graduation rates of SWD including the School Completion Toolkit website found here.</p>
12 pm – 1 pm	<p>WORKING LUNCH (PROVIDED)</p> <p>Panel Members will use the target setting feedback sheet to advise the State Director of SAP feedback.</p>
1 pm – 2 pm	<p>Continuation of Annual Performance Report Indicators</p> <p>Annual Performance Indicators: 1, 2, 4a, 4b, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13</p> <p>See notes above</p>

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2 pm – 3 pm	<p>Dispute Resolution Data GaDOE has a regulatory responsibility to implement the Dispute Resolution Process and ensure that parent/student rights are protected. The State will share various trend data.</p> <p><u>Family Engagement and Dispute Resolution Data:</u> Family Engagement includes Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership. 2018-19 SY, they assisted 6016 families, 641 were matched to a trained Supporting Parent. Range of topics includes IEPs, eligibility/evaluation, behavior, parental rights.</p> <p>Special Education help desk: 1200 contacts by phone and email, and 3 walk-ins. Most contacts were parents but included teachers, administrators, etc. Topics included IEPs, dispute resolution, eligibility, 504s, home schooling, and private schools. Help desk can be contacted at (404) 657-9968 and spedhelpdesk@doe.k12.ga.us.</p> <p>IEP Facilitation: Can help IEP teams overcome complex or controversial meetings & assist IEP teams who have had a history of difficult interactions. 36 participating districts in FY 2018-19; there were 83 requests, and 74 Facilitated IEPs held. Many parents don't know about the availability of Facilitated IEPs; find info here.</p> <p>Mediation: Voluntary process that brings parents and districts together to resolve their disagreements regarding any matter under IDEA. Requests increased from 69 in 2013-14 SY to 140 in 2018-19 SY. There are already 142 mediation requests in 2019.</p> <p>Formal Complaints: A written complaint from any person or organization to GaDOE alleging violations of IDEA can be addressed using this process. Formal complaints increased from 101 in FY 2014 to 204 in FY 2019. In FY 2019, there were 122 findings against 33 districts.</p> <p>Due Process Hearings: Written document used for parents or districts to request a formal hearing before an administrative law judge regarding any issue. 2018-19 SY, there were 107 requests (down from the last few years). Trends show that well over half are dismissed by the judge, a small percent ruled in favor of the district and slightly smaller percent ruled in favor of parent.</p>
3 pm – 3:30 pm	BREAK/CHECK-IN
3:30 pm – 4 pm	<p>Georgia's State Determination (Zelphine Smith-Dixon) Each year, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) issues a state determination specific to implementation of IDEA. Georgia's determinations can be found on the determination webpage. The Panel will discuss GA's 2019 State Determination of Needs Assistance and receive any feedback for next steps.</p> <p>Georgia's State Determinations demonstrate opportunities for improved results for students with disabilities. While the State received majority of the compliance results, there are several gaps with the results points to include reading proficiency, dropout and</p>

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	assessment participation. The State, along with the SAP, will continue to address next steps in this area.
4 pm – 4:30 pm	<p>Public Comment(s) This portion of the SAP Meeting is open to the public. The Public Comment procedures can be obtained using the following weblink: Procedures. Public Comment Online Survey Link: Survey Link Requests to provide Public Comments, either by Phone or written submissions, must be received no later than 11/1/2019, as well as, accommodation requests necessary for participation in the public comment process.</p> <p><u>Public Comments</u> 40 public comments were submitted for this meeting! Most public comments were submitted from parents, and the majority of the comments we heard focused on the need for specific, evidence-based interventions for children with dyslexia.</p>
6:30 pm	<p>WORKING DINNER (PROVIDED) Panel Members will use the target setting feedback sheet to advise the State Director of SAP feedback.</p>

Friday, November 8, 2019

Time	Activities and Next Steps
7:30 am – 8:15 am	WORKING BREAKFAST (PROVIDED)
8:30 am – 8:45 am	Opening Activity
8:45 am – 9:30 am	<p>SAP Workgroups and Debriefing Time SAP Workgroups will convene to synthesize feedback per awareness information and presentations.</p>
9:30 am – 10:30 am	<p>Department of Family and Children Services (Josette Franklin) Department of Family and Children Services will provide awareness information that will foster local and state collaboration to meet the needs of children with disabilities. <u>Department of Family and Children Services:</u> Kids in foster care switch schools 6-7 times, which impacts implementation of the IEP. Youth in foster care are three times more likely to be suspended or expelled. 70-84% of youth in foster care want to go to college, but only 3-10% actually attend college. Foster care and problems at school are closely linked; they are at greater risk of learning and thinking differences. These students are less likely to graduate from high school and demonstrate a greater retention risk. Many foster care kids aren't identified as having a disability until they're in foster care. It can be difficult to complete the evaluation process and deliver services to highly mobile students. Almost 80% of inmates incarcerated in prisons have spent time in foster care. 40-50% of former foster youth become homeless within 18 months after leaving care.</p>

	<p>Every Student Succeeds Act Protections: Youth in foster care should remain in their school of origin. Transportation should be provided (collaboration between LEA & DFCS). Students should be immediately enrolled in schools even without all required paperwork. Schools identify a foster care point of contact who is the liaison between the school system and the child welfare agency.</p> <p>Best Interest Determination Process: Factors include age & preference of the child, placement of siblings, influence of school climate, availability and quality of service to meet student's needs, history of school transfers, length of commute. Cost should not be a factor that is considered.</p> <p>Educational Programming, Assessment and Consultation (EPAC) provides education support services to youth in foster care, ages 5-17. Work to understand the effect of childhood trauma on youth's education experience. Provide training to case managers, foster parents, GaDOE on special education, school discipline & the effect of trauma on brain development. Review IEPs for case managers & foster parents and consult with case mangers on specific educational issues (many behavior issues).</p>
10:30 am – 10:45 am	BREAK
10:45 am – 11:30 am	<p>Teacher Pipeline</p> <p>The SAP will follow up on the teacher retention data per awareness information provided during the initial SAP meeting regarding the Council for Exceptional Children Teacher Survey. Link: The State of the Special Education Profession Survey</p> <p>GaDOE is creating a teacher pipeline summit in January to make sure that all sped teachers are certified. Georgia has 2,200 teachers who are not fully certified (11%). A handful of districts have significantly lower levels. The major content area shortages outside of special education is elementary education, science and math.</p>
11:30 am – 12 pm	<p>WORKING LUNCH</p> <p>Department of Corrections (Thaddeus Dixon)</p> <p>Department of Corrections will provide awareness information about the special education process in a correctional facility.</p> <p><u>Georgia Department of Corrections: Special Education Services</u></p> <p>There are 52,000 inmates in Georgia, and 70% does not have a high school diploma. Less than 30% work of this population work towards a GED. 95% of inmates will return to society, and they need to be better prepared. Highest growing age group of inmates statewide is ages 17-24. Everyone under the age of 21 has an intake process; identifies whether there is a high school diploma, whether h/she has a history of special education, cognitive abilities, etc. At age 18, each inmate has the right to decide whether to continue in schooling (not a GED program); very challenging to convince inmates to continue their education. There are special education facilities at 3 prisons for men, 1 for women. Under 50 inmates receive special education services. They're able to participate in postsecondary classes and vocational courses.</p>

12 pm– 12:30 pm	<p>Dyslexia Updates (Zelphine Smith-Dixon) The SAP will receive updates specific to implementation of Senate Bill 48. Dyslexia Webpage Wrap up/Next Steps</p> <p>The State will advise of pilot districts approximately by December 15. A lot of our public comments were on the topic of dyslexia - perhaps due to the fact that our agenda is shared publicly, and awareness of the new legislation and upcoming pilot, policies, etc.</p> <p>Unmet needs: Child find process in public school, private schools, DFCS, prisons, etc. is an ongoing issue.</p>
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