

AOE Year in Review 19-20 School Year

With Dr. Jacqui Kelleher
June 11, 2020

INTRODUCTION

Roles and Responsibilities

- State Director of Special Education: [Jacqueline Kelleher, MA, Ph.D.](#)
- Coordinator for Behavioral Supports: [Tracy Harris](#)
- Early Childhood Special Ed/IDEA 619 Coordinator: [Katie McCarthy](#)
- IDEA Part B Data Managers: [Cassidy Canzani](#) and [Brandon Dall](#)
- Inclusion and Accessibility Coordinator: [Ana Kolbach](#)
- Inclusive Systems Coordinator: [Betty Roy](#)
- Part B Special Ed Program Monitoring Manager: [Tonya Rutkowski](#)
- Post-Secondary Transition Coordinator: [John Spinney](#)
- Special Education Programs Manager: [Chris Kane](#)
- Educational Consultant/Ed Surrogate: [Ernie Wheeler](#)
- Special Education Monitoring Specialist, [Simona Kragh](#)
- Inclusive Practices Coordinator, [Katy Langevin](#)
- Special Education Monitoring Technician: [Rebecca Gile](#)
- For questions on Legal, please contact [Clare O'Shaughnessy](#)
- For Finance questions, [Brad James](#) or [Jennifer Perry](#)

Technical Assistance

- Special Education Technical Assistance is available 24 hours/day through the general email and voicemail system.
- These methods of communication are monitored regularly during business hours and a response is generally provided within 24-48 hours.
- Please contact our team at (802) 828-1256 or at AOE.SpecialEd@vermont.gov.

Vision Statement

Our Purpose

- **Agency of Education Purpose Statement**

The Agency of Education implements state and federal laws, policies, and regulations to ensure all Vermont learners have equitable access to high-quality learning opportunities. The Agency accomplishes this mission through the provision of its leadership, support, and oversight of Vermont's public education system.

- **Special Education Vision**

Our team, together with all stakeholders, ensures access, opportunity, and equity by providing solution-based oversight, leadership and support to build capacity and improve student outcomes.

Federal Updates

OSEP Requirements

- SEA IDEA Part B Grant application submitted May 15th
- SPP/APR Clarification Period ended – OSEP making SEA Determinations at the end of June
 - Needs Assistance

OSEP Requirements slide 2

- **Significant Disproportionality Policy and Procedure Ready for Implementation**
- IDEA requires states to collect and examine data to determine whether significant disproportionality, based on race and ethnicity, is occurring in school districts with respect to:
 - 1. The identification of students as students with disabilities, including the identification of students with disabilities in accordance with certain impairments;
 - 2. The placement in selected educational settings of such students; and
 - 3. The incidence, duration, and type of disciplinary removals from placement, including suspensions and expulsions.

OSEP Requirements

slide 3

- **Significant Disproportionality Policy and Procedure Ready for Implementation**
- IDEA requires that any LEA identified with significant disproportionality must take specific actions to address that disproportionality, including targeting expenditures from the following year's IDEA Part B grant for these activities. LEAs will receive a letter detailing their three-year risk ratio analysis of disproportionality, and any required actions if significant disproportionality is determined. If an LEA has been identified as having significant disproportionality, the LEA is restricted from reducing its Maintenance of Effort (MOE) level by using the 50% reduction rule.

OSEP Requirements

slide 4

- **Significant Disproportionality Policy and Procedure Ready for Implementation**
- Additionally, an LEA identified with significant disproportionality is required to:
 - review and, if appropriate, revise policies, practices, and procedures to ensure compliance with the requirements of IDEA;
 - publicly report on the revision of policies, practices, and procedures; and
 - reserve 15 percent of its total IDEA Part B allocation and spend those funds on providing CCEIS to address factors contributing to the significant disproportionality. The AOE will be coming out with further guidance on allocations for CCEIS and addressing factors contributing to significant disproportionality.

OSEP Requirements

slide 5

- OSEP Fast Facts Released May 6, 2020 – Children and Youth with Emotional Disturbance: https://sites.ed.gov/idea/osep-fast-facts-children-IDed-Emotional-Disturbance-20?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=
- Vermont highest percentage in the nation: 17.36% in SY 2018-19

OSEP Updates

- Waiver Authority for the Period of Availability for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Funds for Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2018 - Vermont is applying for this waiver
- This waiver will permit VT SEA and subgrantees (e.g. local educational agencies) to use Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2018 IDEA Part B grant award funds for an additional year beyond what is known as the Tydings period. This action is taken as a result of the on-going national emergency declared by the President under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and to assist in planning for how to resume or continue the provision of special education and related services for children with disabilities and their families. We submitted a waiver request for an extension of the period of availability in Section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) for FFY 2018 IDEA Part B grant award funds. Upon approval of a waiver, the FFY 2018 IDEA Part B grant award funds will be available for obligation through September 30, 2021 and may be liquidated through December 30, 2021.

OSEP Updates slide 2

- **FY 2020 Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K-12 Education Models (ESF-REM) discretionary grant competition.**
- State educational agencies will propose projects that: (3) demonstrates a rationale to address the specific educational needs of their States, as related to remote learning.
- We are in the 81-100% bracket of need
- Application due June 29th

Federal Reminder

- Initial Evaluation: VTmtss does not replace the special education process. If at any time parents believe their child has a disability that is affecting his or her learning, they have a right to request an evaluation for special education. VTmtss cannot be used to delay or deny this evaluation if the child is not making progress in learning and the lack of progress is not due to the lack of instruction. In addition to the information gathered through VTmtss, other forms of evaluation must occur to determine if a child is eligible for special education and parent's written consent is required for the evaluation.

Federal Reminder slide 2

- OSEP periodically reviews LEA websites for Special Education Policies and Procedures. Please make sure to have your policies and procedures uploaded, current, and easy to locate on your website. For technical assistance, contact our TA line by phone or email and we will connect you to a staff member.

Year in Review

Some highlights

- COVID-19 guidance for special education
- Sprint teams COVID 19 guidance for all
- Developed and piloted new GSMS
- Data Retreats – Quarterly Day Long Analyses
- Virtual BEST – Week of June 22nd
- Restructured/New Special Education Team
- Differentiated TA
- Paraprofessional Training

Some highlights slide 2

- Rubric for evaluating discipline policies
- On site monitoring visit
- Significant Disproportionality policies and procedures – public hearings
- SOP and transition forms – contact John Spinney for details
- CADRE WSC and revamping process
- Part of approving independent schools

Some highlights slide 3

- SSIP revamping
 - Ed Camp/Ed Benefit/Annual Meetings reported out/Scaling Up
- SPP/APR revamping
- Listening Tour
- Regional meeting attendance
- Act 173 presentations
- 344 Educational Surrogate Parents assigned
- Ongoing Technical Assistance by phone and email

Some highlights slide 4

- IEP Goal writing workshop with AIR
- Moved to 100% teleworking
- Model Discipline policies
- Stakeholder engagement
- Parent representation on the Special Education Advisory Council – reinvigorated relationships
- RFPs for low incidence disabilities
- Sample IEPs
- Interagency Collaborations

Some highlights

slide 5

- Core Transition Team Sold Out Fall Transition Team Conference October 2019
- Active engagement with national TA providers and regional leaders
- Revamped Special Ed Team website to launch the week of June 15th
- Did we mention guidance and memos??? You were inundated and we learned through the process...thank you for your patience and ongoing feedback.

Vision for the Future

Quotes

- "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." – Helen Keller
- "Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results." – Andrew Carnegie

Strategic Planning

- *Monitoring*
- *Identification, Evaluation, and the offer of free appropriate public education (FAPE)*
- *Training, Support, Technical Assistance and Development*
- *Student, Family, and Community Engagement*
- *Internal evaluation of Special Education Team/Extended Team impact on compliance and continuous improvement*
- *Significant Stakeholder Input*
- *Transparency*
- *Timely and accurate reporting*
- *Clear and consistent communication*
- *Collaboration*
- *Meeting your needs – Leadership. Oversight. Support*

Upcoming Due Dates

Upcoming Due Dates

- No GSMS roll out this summer – more information in August
- Upcoming Monitoring Cycle will be out mid to late July
- Local Determinations mid to late July
- Publically posted on website in addition to individual notifications
- TA is available to help meet these requirements

Child Count

- The Child Count Exiting Collection will be opening at the end of the month, below are some bullet points for you:
- Reference date = June 30
- Deadline = July 15
- Students must be reported if they:
 - Exited special education in a district
 - Exited Early Childhood Special Ed in a district (even if they're staying in the district for Kindergarten)
- Early Childhood Outcomes assessments and scores are required for students who:
 - Are exiting Early Childhood Special Ed in a district
 - Have been served at least 6 months

Child Count

slide 2

Note:

- If a child transitions from ECSE to Kindergarten, another program, another district, etc, they are not leaving Special Education and their IEP is still intact. Sometimes districts misconstrue Exit ECO as exiting Special Ed and this is not the case. So replace exiting with transitioning. Sometimes, children do leave special ed at this time but it isn't very common.

IDEA Part B Subgrantee Applications

Note:

- GMS is open
- Allocations are being entered into the system
- Pre-recorded webinar on Programmatic Activities: Workplan Strategies, Budget Descriptions, Proportionate Share, and Coordinated Early Intervention Strategies available the week of June 15th on our website – download the powerpoint and it has a voice overlay narrative and access to helpful links.

Upcoming Guidance

Act 173: Supplemental Technical Assistance

- Educational Support Teams (EST)
- Local Comprehensive Assessment Systems (LCAS)
- Coordination of Curriculum
- Needs-based Professional Learning

Guidance in the Works

Focus is on Supporting the Students and the Field on Re-Opening:

- Comp Ed for those who turned 22 during the pandemic and may not have completed
- Calculating for Comp Ed
- Evaluations
- Progress monitoring
- IEPs in the Fall – do we need to change? Remote considerations? Interim IEP/Addendum/DLP
- Ways to consider LRE
- Remedy the Loss of Skill – remedy plans/recoupment/foundational process in place
- Plan for ways in which instruction can continue for students who are not able access in-person learning for COVID-19 related reasons, even if their grade level/group/class has returned in-person.
- Resources, supports and professional learning offerings for Directors/teachers/paras around topics such as COVID-19, trauma, and students with disabilities?
- Mental Health/SEL

Guidance in the Works

slide 2

Focus is on Supporting the Students and the Field on Re-Opening:

- Structure of getting back to school – the Transition: planning, monitoring and supports (social stories)
- Strategies for masks and hygiene training
- Contingency planning for emergencies/emergency response – SWD
- Interventions and not disciplinary response for noncompliant behavior
- Virtual work based learning/options for transition programs
- Working with Families During the Reopening – managing home/work/school
- Student engagement: Attention Spans and Screen Time
- Modification and accommodations of assignments in hybrid and virtual environments.
- PreK guidance, memos, outreach, tools and resources

You will be able to request Professional Development Through Our Website!

Please Remember

- Our obligations are to support and serve students 3-21 utilizing this guidance.
- Guidance may change and we seek to update as often as necessary to make sure you are informed.
- We are moving through this unchartered territory together and the AOE seeks to support our educational partners and families.
- [AOE Recent COVID19 Guidance](#)

Appreciation for the Field

THANK YOU!!!

- Innovation
- Creativity
- Professional expertise and strategic problem solving
- Reimagined education system
- Quick and responsive
- Caring about ensuring FAPE in the LRE to the greatest extent possible
- Humor during challenging times
- Reflective practitioners
- Support each other
- Patient
- Seeking continuing education on their own time
- Willingness to engage often with AOE

Director Check Ins

- See you tomorrow at 2:30
- We will continue the Friday 2:30 dialogue as long as it works for you.
- Next State of the State will be in September and occur every other month with a focus on requirements, activities, updates, due dates, and forecasts for what lies ahead...