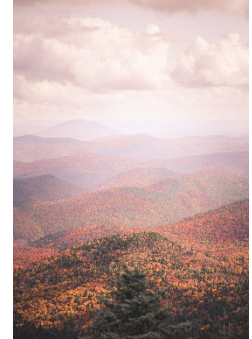


Special Education Nuggets

October 2023

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Items from the Interim State Director of Special Education:

Future Director Check In meeting will be starting September 11 - June 10 from 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., (every 2nd Monday of the month) contact [Sabine](#) if you do not have the meeting link.

Recent Special Education Director – list serv emails sent:

- Weekly Field Memo for September 27, 2023
- Weekly Field Memo for September 20, 2023
- Weekly Field Memo for September 13, 2023
- Guidelines Re: SLD Observations – 9/13/23
- Special Education Director Check In Meeting Topics and Meeting Link 9/11/23
- FY-2024 Special Education Expense Report (SEER) Instructions and Forms 9/6/23
- Special Education September Nuggets – 9/6/23
- Weekly Field Memo for August 30, 2023
- Two new resources - a resource and a training opportunity 8/30/23
- Weekly Field Memo for August 18, 2023

New Team Member:

The Agency of Education has recently hired [Abigale Stannard](#) as our Inclusive Systems and State Systemic Improvement Plan Coordinator. She will be joining the Special Education team and will provide expertise in the areas of inclusive systemic structures to support students with disabilities in the general education environment. This position also coordinates the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), a required statewide continuous improvement process working to improve the academic performance of students with disabilities. Abigale comes to the Agency having worked in several school districts in Vermont with experience in special education case management, math instruction, and general education support structures like 504 plans and Educational Support Teams.

OSEP RESOURCES

RESOURCES:

Read more at [OSERS Blog](#) and in the [IDEA News/Updates](#).

[OSEP Newsletter](#):

September 2023 — Secondary transition, ED Games Expo 2023, Improving Outcomes for Students with Disabilities, Personnel Development, Webinars, Resources and More

August 2023 — General Supervision Guidance, OSEP Fast Facts on Data Collected during the COVID-19 Pandemic, Smart Beginnings, EDTech for All Webinars and More

July 2023 — Empowering Individuals With Disabilities, Tackling Special Education Shortages and More

The U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) National Center for Education Statistics has compiled fascinating [back-to-school facts](#). Examples include:

- Over \$700 billion was spent on education in the 2020–21 school year, with over \$14,000 of expenditures per student.
- Of the 49.4 million public school students, **22.4 million are White**, **14.1 million are Hispanic**, **7.4 million are Black**, **2.7 million are Asian**, **2.3 million are students of two or more races**, **0.5 million are American Indian/Alaska Native students**, and **0.2 million are Pacific Islander**.
- [7.3 million children receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#).
- 69% of school districts reported that the number of students who have sought mental health services increased since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The vast majority of school districts have deployed a variety of strategies to address learning loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as additional diagnostic and formative assessments; remedial services, including extended school day and school year services; and additional mental health and trauma supports.

Research Highlights from the National Center for Special Education Research

[“Leveraging the Voices of Persons with Disabilities in Education Research”](#) summarizes the key themes that emerged from a listening session on the experiences of education researchers with disabilities. The participants discussed how their disabilities shaped their experiences as researchers, including their ability to apply for and conduct IES research grants, and how IES can help build the research capacity of individuals and organizations from various disability communities.

[“What We Are Learning From Research Using NAEP Mathematics Response Process Data”](#) highlights recent findings from NCSER-funded research examining math test-taking behavior of eighth grade autistic students with and without accommodations and encourages new research using soon-to-be-released National Assessment of Educational Progress process data for fourth grade students.

[“Spotlight on Fiscal Year 2023 Early Career Grant Awardees: Word-Level Reading Disabilities”](#) presents an interview with new IES awardee Dr. Kelly Williams, who received an Early Career Development and Mentoring grant to develop and test an integrated word-reading and spelling intervention to improve literacy outcomes for middle school students with disabilities.

Professional Development Opportunities

More [Special Education Rules Change](#) Trainings to come this August!

[Registration](#) for an Indicator 11 and IEP Timelines Training for Special Education Teachers is now available. Please be certain that staff register for this event to ensure that they receive a link to the training. This training will be offered at three different times: November 2nd from 8:00 - 9:00, November 8th from 11:30 - 12:30, and November 13th from 2:00 - 3:00. Participants will increase their understanding of timeline requirements under IDEA, indicator 11, and forms used for initial evaluations and reevaluations. Please share this opportunity with your staff. If this indicator is an area of struggle for your district, please ensure that those involved with special education processes are able to attend.

General Monitoring and Supervision

The Special Education Program Monitoring Team would like to congratulate the following LEAs for successfully correcting all findings of non-compliance for Indicator 13, and have now exited Targeted Monitoring status:

Central VT

Champlain Valley

Franklin Northeast

Lamoille North

Mill River

Montpelier-Roxbury

Rutland City

Windsor Southeast

Extended Special Education Team - Updates:

Interagency/Home Study: (Italic writing below indicates new information)

Interagency:

Brattleboro Retreat Inpatient v. Residential Placement

The Brattleboro Retreat does not currently have a school attached to the inpatient or residential program. [LearnWell](#) is a company that provides tutoring for those placed in the hospital (inpatient) or residential (Abigail Rockwell Children's Center (ARCC)) through the Case Review Committee (CRC). Here is a brief summary of the differences in cost and programming.

Inpatient:

Students who are inpatient at the Retreat may be placed by crisis, a Designated Agency, Emergency Department, or private insurance. Students are screened and determined to be in need of inpatient supports and services. Often, LEAs will not be aware that a student has arrived at the Retreat for inpatient treatment. Students may spend a few days to a few weeks or months in the inpatient unit depending on a variety of factors.

LearnWell will contact the LEA to request entering into a contract for tutoring services, *after they receive written consent from the parent/guardian*. Each student will receive 2 hours per day of general education tutoring. Special Education and related services are not included, and LEAs may need to push in services based on the student's IEP.

If the student was placed in an inpatient unit by another State Agency or Designated Agency, then the LEA may be reimbursed as the student is considered State Placed. If the student was placed by an Emergency Department or private insurance, the LEA will not be reimbursed using State Placed Student funding. When an LEA hears of a student placed in an inpatient unit, consider reaching out to DCF or your local DA to see who placed the student. LEAs can also contact [Alicia](#) for support with their inquiries.

Residential:

Students attending ARCC are placed there by the Case Review Committee by either the Department of Mental Health or DCF. As the Retreat does not operate a school, LearnWell offers tutoring to all students placed at ARCC. LearnWell will reach out to the LEA (*after obtaining written consent from the parent/guardian*) to contract for general education services for students. Each student receives 4 hours of tutoring daily. LearnWell does not offer special education or related services so the LEA will need to provide those services accordingly.

Since students at ARCC are placed by a State Agency, they are considered State Placed and LEAs are eligible for reimbursement. Any special education and/or related services provided by the LEA are reimbursed via Worksheet A. General Education services via tutoring can be reimbursed via the General Education Tuition Reimbursement Request for a State Placed Student. [Cathy Scott](#) can provide you with a copy of the form.

For both the Inpatient Program and ARCC Residential Program, general education services CONTINUE to be provided during the summer months for several weeks, so LEAs may receive invoices from LearnWell for the summer. These tutoring services are automatically provided and are NOT considered to be Extended School Year (ESY) services.

There have been some recent LearnWell concerns regarding who within the LEA should receive the general education/tutoring invoices. I have been directing LearnWell to contact the Special Education Administrators. If requested, I can direct LearnWell to contact business offices or principals. Please contact me at alicia.hanrahan@vermont.gov if your LEA wants me to direct the invoices to another entity within your SU/SD.

[Independent Schools](#)

Nothing at this time.

[Early Childhood](#)

Nothing at this time.

[Data News](#)

Child Count Dates for School Year 2024

Here are some dates to keep in mind for Child Count this coming year:

- December 1, 2023, Child Count Data Collection: to open late November with a due date of December 15, 2023
- June 30, 2024, Exiting Child Count: to open late June with a due date of July 15, 2024

Dates and times of Child Count Office Hours in November and December 2023 will be shared in the November nuggets. AOE is always here to help support your data reporting; reach out at any time to the Special Education Data Team at AOE.ChildCountInfo@vermont.gov

Special Education Finance

Special Education Finance:

- FY23 IDEA MOE Compliance Standard and FY24 IDEA MOE Eligibility Standard email coming in October
- FY23 IDEA CEIS collection to be deployed soon
- FY25 Act 173 Special Education Plan Sections B and D due October 20, 2023, forms will be loaded on the AOE website soon.

If you have questions, please contact [Jennifer Perry](#).

Assessment

Nothing at this time.