

State of the State Report

**With Dr. Jacqui Kelleher
Vermont's State Director of
Special Education
March 4, 2022**

Introduction

Roles and Responsibilities

- State Director of Special Education: [Jacqueline Kelleher, MA, Ph.D.](#)
- Assistant State Director of Special Education: [Chris Kane](#)
- Coordinator for Behavioral Supports: [Tracy Harris](#)
- Early Childhood Special Ed/IDEA 619 Coordinator: [Katie McCarthy](#)
- Federal and Special Education Data Director: [Cassidy Canzani](#)
- Special Education Data Specialist: [Brandon Dall](#)
- Inclusion and Accessibility Coordinator: [Ana Kolbach](#)
- Inclusive Systems Coordinator: [Betty Roy](#)
- Part B Special Ed Program Monitoring Manager: [Tristan McNamara](#)
- Post-Secondary Transition Coordinator: [John Spinney](#)
- Educational Consultant/Ed Surrogate: [Ernie Wheeler](#)
- Special Education Monitoring Specialist: [Simona Kragh](#)
- Special Education Monitoring Technician: [Rebecca Gile](#)
- Mentoring Project Coordinator: [Sienna Tuinei](#)
- Early Childhood Inclusion Coordinator: [Amy Murphy](#)
- Education Programs Manager, Interagency Coordinator: [Alicia Hanrahan](#)
- Assessment Coordinator for Special Populations: [Linda Moreno](#)
- Special Education Staff Attorney: [Clare O'Shaughnessy](#)
- Special Education Finance [Jennifer Perry](#)

Roles and Responsibilities (cont.)

- The State Director of Special Education is responsible, in support and in collaboration with the Special Education Team, for ensuring the successful implementation of federal and state statutes and regulations governing the education of students with disabilities, to ensure they meet their post-secondary goals to live, learn, work, and participate in their communities.
- Primary objectives:
 - Increased graduation rates
 - Closing achievement gap
 - Decreased disproportionality
 - **Qualified workforce at state and local levels**
 - **Sustain Vermont's General Supervision System for Special Education**

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 outcomes for students with disabilities.

Federal Updates

Office of Special Education Programs (1)

- OSEP Director is Valerie Williams.
- To SEAs: Thank you for your timely submissions of the FFY 2020 SPP/APRs on February 1, 2022.
- OSEP Shared Resources since December 2021.
 - [Keeping the Promise](#) – Education and Afghan Resettlement: This website contains educational materials, student and family engagement resources, fact sheets to ensure civil rights to education, policy documents, and general cultural and linguistic facts to help guide teachers, State Education Agencies (SEAs), Local Education Agencies (LEAs), Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), and other community-based education providers. Educators have a unique chance to make a major impact on the Afghan students and families' lives, and we hope that these resources will support you in welcoming our allies into your school community.

Office of Special Education Programs (2)

- OSEP and OSERS Guidance Documents on [COVID-19](#).
- OSEP Fast Facts Visual Data Displays on [Race and Ethnicity](#) of Children with Disabilities Served by Part B (3-21) and [Hand in Hand Supplement](#) to Fast Facts.
- The National Center on Special Education Research provides [highlights](#) of current work in progress.
- The [National Center for Systemic Improvement](#) is the primary source for TA resources during the COVID-19 national emergency for IDEA Part B programs. The [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center](#) is the primary source for IDEA Part C programs.
- National Center on Deaf Blindness [Resources](#).
- SPP/APR Analyses [Booklet](#).
- [DMS 2.0 Resources](#).
- [Equity Driven Systems Coherence](#) – NCSI.

Office of Special Education Programs (3)

- Path to PROGRESS [Podcasts](#) – hot topics in education by educators.
- [Observational Tool](#) for Instructional Supports and Systems.
- [Diversifying the Teaching Field](#) webinar packages.

State Activities

Some Highlights (1)

Program

- SPP/APR Report and Targets submitted 2/1/22.
- Rule Changes TA/PD Development, national review, identification of resources, feedback from stakeholders, Rule Change [website](#), collaboration with ECSE, Finance, VTmtss, and Act 173 work group (internal).
- [Parent Information Session](#) on 2/28/22.
- Model Procedures release.

Some Highlights (2)

Program

- General Supervision System [manual](#) released.
- SSIP report complete and will be posted soon.
- Bi-weekly Directors' Check In.
- Case Study Lunch Club.
- IDEA Regular and ARP TA and Approvals.
- Data Quarterly meetings.

Some Highlights (3)

Program

- Common calendar launch this spring.
- Forms revision over next six months.
- TA support for Indicators and Integrated Monitoring Work.
- Collaboration with Early MTSS and VTmtss on intersectionality with special education.
- FBA training has been revised from 2 full days in person to 3 partial days virtually (updated announcement).
- TCI full and refresher training being offered in March.
- Save the date for [BEST/VTmtss Summer Institute](#).
- Daily TA calls and emails.
- IDEA Part B grant underway – watch for opportunities for Public Comment in March.

Some Highlights (4)

Program

- Critical Shortage Area – Special Education Staff Survey results analyzed and in use and frame Needs Assessment for Mentoring Model.
- Mentoring Model – Project One and Project Two.
- Engagement with CEEDAR State Task Force.
- Ongoing conversations with OSEP State Lead.

Some Highlights (5)

Program

- Monitoring Activities: Next Cycle 3/15/22.
- Published the Vermont Special Education Procedures Manual, providing LEAs with a standardized document that their respective districts may adopt by reference to fulfil IDEA requirements to establish written policies and procedures for implementing federal special education laws.
- Prepared an updated guide to monitoring submissions through our SharePoint system, to help support the field with common questions regarding SharePoint access and usage – available very soon.
- Completed the paperwork burden reduction survey, providing monitoring with excellent feedback on areas we may be able to support improvement.
- For LEAs in cyclic or selective monitoring, the March 15th submission deadline is approaching, please be sure to review information provided and contact AOE Monitoring with any questions you have, we're here to help.
- Plans for future on site visits in a virtual world.

Some Highlights (6)

Program

- Consultation and project planning with National TA Providers: NCSI, IDC, NTAC, ECTA, CIFR. New partnership with CEEDAR.
- Participation in national TA calls with TA providers and OSEP – representing VT.
- Monthly meetings with State Lead, Susan Murray.
- Paraprofessional virtual trainings in progress –using EDMODO platform.
- Preparing for future OSEP site visit and taking inventory of Vermont evidence alignment with federal requirements.
- Frequent engagement with Special Education Advisory Panel.
- Special Ed Team representation on Independent School Approvals.

Some Highlights (7)

Program

- SPP/APR Improvement Activities:
 - Transition/Indicator 13 Trainings
 - LRE Work group
- SSIP gearing up to assist LEAs in broader need areas -in supporting systems changes.
- Indicator 8 survey results say that more than 70% of parents are responding positively about their involvement in their student's education! LEAs received individual score reports. Indicator 8 MTSS/ Early Ed/ Special Ed collaborating around Parent Survey. Data/reports have been shared with LEAs, we have been receiving ideas, discussing, questioning ways of increasing messaging, access, and participation.
- MTSS/Evaluation Manual and Training: Working well with Vendor to help revise guidance on adverse effect/SLD/functional skills.

Some Highlights (8)

Program

- Secondary/Post-Secondary Transition
 - 4-part transition training series was completed: Transition assessments training, transition goals training, Peer learning session, and a final complete I-13 training. Several of these trainings had over 100 participants. All were recorded and are available on the AOE website.
 - Summary of Performance training was completed.
 - One page SOP self review for educators was created.
 - Many, many LEA check ins on their I13 data and what aspects of I13 they need support with (which of the 8 elements do they need support).

Some Highlights (9)

Data/DMAD

IDEA PART B (DEC 1) Child Count Collection:

- All SU/SDs have completed submissions.
- 44 SU/SDs contacted during Data Quality Review:
 - 30 with disputed or duplicate students (these affect state's ability to achieve the federally-required unduplicated count of students)
 - 38 with optional checks (these will improve the quality of the SU/SD's Local APR and LSED data, but will not affect state's ability to achieve an unduplicated count of students or support GSMS and fiscal activities)
 - 8 with high-priority errors (these affect state's federal reporting obligations or ability to support GSMS and fiscal activities)
- Coming up: Verification Reports next month (March). These need to be reviewed and electronically signed.

Here are some details on the FFY 20 SPP/APR Report that you may want to include:

- The 74-page report included approximately 150 data points
- AOE engaged stakeholders in setting 270 targets for the next 6 years

Coming up: Local APRs, Significant Disproportionality identifications and warnings, LSEDs (I don't have exact timing on these as it's generally determined by program when these are distributed in the flow of communications to LEAs).

Some Highlights (10)

Finance

Message from Special Education Finance:

- FY21 CEIS and CCEIS collection completed, ready for eMAPs reporting soon (May 2022).
- FY23 Act 173 Service Plan collection complete.
- December payments and projections complete.
- FY22 Special Education Expense Reports (SEERs) July - October submitted.

Some Highlights (11)

Assessment

Testing and Reporting will resume to Pre-Covid expectations per Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE).

If not already done so, please [sign up](#) to receive the monthly Assessment Newsletter.

State Assessment

- Testing window opens on March 15 and runs through June 10th. Please reserve June dates for make-up testing.
- Alternate Assessment Indicator will be set on 3/1.
 - Please complete the Learner Characteristic Surveys for new and transferring students by 2/25.
 - For students transferring in after 2/28, ATAs will need to contact the VT Comprehensive Assessment Program (VTCAP) Helpdesk. 1-800-218-1184 or vthelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com.

General Assessment/Alt Assessment Contract Updates

- General Assessment – Bid Review Committee recommendation is with the State Board of Education for a vote in March.
- Alternate Assessment – Bids from vendors are due March 3rd.

Some Highlights (12)

Assessment

Testing Certifications

- all Test Administrators (TAs), including Alternate Assessment Test Administrators (ATAs), need to take the [TA General](#) certification training, but **only** ATAs will need to complete the [TA Alternate](#) certification course and quiz to administer the VTAA.
- TA = Teacher Aides (no access to student scores).
- TE = Teachers (access to student scores).
- For special educators – please have the students on your caseload rostered to you to have access to score results. Special Educators and Specialists should have the students on their caseload rostered to them to gain access to student scores in the reporting system.

Accommodations

- Please make sure the Text to Speech Accommodation (Passages on the ELA CAT) are sent to the state for entry into TIDE or Approvals (grades 3-5). The TTS accommodation is set at the SEA level.
- Allow 2 weeks for entries to get posted in TIDE:
 - [Grades 6-9](#)
 - [Grades 3-5](#)
- Speech to Text (STT) will use the same 3-device work-a-round as in the past. We hope this dilemma will be rectified with the new general assessment contract.

Some Highlights (13)

Assessment

Medical Exemptions

- Medical Exemptions will follow federal Guidelines. If you have a student that meets the criteria, please use the online Medical Exemption form to apply.
- Please DO NOT fax or mail Medical Exemptions to the National Life location.
- No COVID Non-Participation Codes in 2022.

Please reach out to [Linda Moreno](#) / 802-828-0505 with any questions.

Some Highlights (14)

- [Rule Changes site](#) and all upcoming office hours and resources – see you in [March](#)!
- Send Accolades to the Nuggets! [Sabine Perry](#).

Available Resources

Supports and How To (1)

- AOE Special Education Team [website](#):
 - Acronym/Initialism [list](#).
- Requesting Professional Development [form](#).
- Special Education Technical Assistance is available through the general email and voicemail system. Communications 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.
- Regional Representatives – reach out.

Supports and How To (2)

• Requests for Data

Periodically, members of the public may find that they have additional needs for state education data that are not met by the existing reports (see above). We have provided two mechanisms by which the public may apply for accessing such data.

- [Data Request Form](#) should be used to make simple, non-research data requests. (Examples: media story, simple fact-checking.).
- [Research Request Application](#) should be used to make research data requests. The completed application is necessary in order for AOE to review the purpose of the research, specific data involved, and level of AOE staff time and effort needed to complete the request. It is also necessary to determine whether the research request is in line with the AOE's analytic priorities. **All research requests require pending or received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval before they can be reviewed.**