



The BUREAU BLOG

September 14, 2006

SY 06-07 B-2

*From Nancy M. Cappello, Ph.D.,
Interim Bureau Chief
and Blogger*

Welcome to the second monthly Blog from the Bureau of Special Education. The purpose of the blog is to consolidate, in a monthly format, the information and requests that all LEAs receive from the Bureau of Special Education. We are hopeful that you will find this format useful. We will continue to contact selected LEAs, outside of the monthly blog, in reference to information that is usually related to our monitoring activities and responsibilities.

Future plans are to post each monthly blog on the website so that, in keeping with the purpose of a blog, you will be able to go to the blog as opposed to the blog going to you.

There is a plethora of information contained in this September blog so please review it carefully. Some of the information requires an LEA response to Bureau staff. Other items are

Public Act 06-18 – An Act Concerning Special Education

During the 2006 session of the General Assembly, the State Legislature revised several provisions of the state special education statutes to conform to the IDEA 2004 revisions. Please see [Attachment One](#)

IDEA 2004 Resources

The IDEA 2004 website was created to provide a "one-stop shop" for resources related to IDEA and its implementing regulations, released on August 3, 2006. A copy of the regulations and topic briefs can be downloaded from this website at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html>.

The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) has recently published an IDEA comparison guide. You may purchase it at <http://www.nasdse.org/>.

Office of Special Education Programs Implementation Visit

The Federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) will be conducting a monitoring visit in Connecticut on October 3, 4, 5, 2006. The purpose of the visit is to review our system of general supervision and monitoring, verify our systems of data collection to ensure accuracy of data, review our state system of student assessment, and review our State Performance Plan and targets, including LEA specific data. A report will be issued after the visit identifying any findings of non-compliance. OSEP will not be conducting district based visits nor talking with LEAs during this visit. The outcome of the visit will determine if they return to conduct a more in depth review at the LEA level.

Update on Focused Monitoring

The Focused Monitoring Steering Committee has identified a new key performance indicator for the 2006-07 school year. The new key performance indicator will be to *decrease the number of students in all disability categories who are suspended or expelled as defined by Connecticut General Statute (Sec. 10-233a (b))*: "exclusion from regular classroom activities beyond 90 minutes."

Thirty districts have received correspondence from the Bureau requesting an analysis of suspension and expulsion data. From these responses, the Bureau will be identifying 9 districts who will be receiving a focused monitoring site visit this year. These districts will be notified by the end of September. Site visits are scheduled to begin the week of November 13, 2006. Additionally, all districts will receive a copy of their suspension and expulsion data, and a copy of the data maps used to display statewide data on suspension and expulsion in the next few weeks. The department will be hosting a conference on suspension and expulsion to selected school districts on November 20, 2006. More details will follow.

The monitoring team for each district includes a volunteer special education/pupil personnel director from a district not receiving a monitoring visit. If you are interested in participating on a monitoring team please e-mail Deborah Richards at deborah.richards@ct.gov. Deb will contact you regarding your availability during the scheduled visits.

informational and designed to assist you in your work with students with disabilities. We welcome all positive comments.

On behalf my colleagues in the Bureau of Special Education, I wish you a successful year as we work together to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities.



Personnel News:

Ruth Nenortas retired August 31st after contributing 20 years to the work in the due process office. She will be greatly missed. Lisa Spooner has transferred to the due process office and will be supporting the work of that unit which includes investigating complaints, conducting mediations, overseeing due process hearings and other legal matters.

Dr. Lynn Toper, in addition to her other responsibilities, is the contact person for issues surrounding students with disabilities and choice programs in Connecticut. If you have questions about serving students with disabilities

Identification of Specific Learning Disabilities and Response to Intervention (RtI)

The reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) added procedures for identifying children with specific learning disabilities (SLD). **Attachment Two** contains important information about regulatory changes including the requirement that states must not require the use of a severe discrepancy between intellectual disability and achievement for SLD eligibility and must permit the use of a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention.

State Performance Plan (SPP) Information

Reminder – the evaluation timeline data collection and resolution session data collection for the SPP **is due on September 15, 2006**. If you have questions regarding the evaluation timeline data collection contact Deborah Richards at deborah.richards@ct.gov. If you have questions regarding the resolution session data collection contact Gail Mangs at gail.mangs@ct.gov.

In accordance with IDEA, each state must have in place a performance plan that evaluates the state's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of the law and describe how the state will implement this law. It is a six year plan that describes the State's performance on 20 indicators across early intervention and special education. Targets for each year and improvement activities are contained in the SPP. An Annual Performance Report of SPP activities and data are due to the U.S. Department of Education in February 2007. Additionally, the state is required to report annually to the public on the performance of each school district on indicators 1-14. The district level report will be titled "Annual Performance Report on Connecticut's State Performance Plan" and will be individualized with data for each school district. This report is anticipated to be disseminated to the public and to districts in November 2006. If you have questions about the SPP, contact Dana Colon, Education Consultant at (860)713-6944 or email her at dana.colon@ct.gov.

PJ Class Members Mailing List

The Bureau needs to update the mailing list of PJ class members. You should be receiving a data disc in the mail in the next week or so. Please update the list of class members and provide current mailing addresses for all students on the list. This should be the last time we need to collect this information, as our new state wide data collection system will include addresses in the future.

Special Education Data Application and Collection (SEDAC)

The New Special Education Data Application and Collection (SEDAC) is coming soon. You should have received communication from Mary Keenan regarding upcoming training for special education directors and other SEDAC users. **Attachment Three** contains information on additional in-depth follow-up trainings being offered for SEDAC contacts. Please know, in the spirit of the Bureau Blog, we will work diligently to avoid sending emails regarding SEDAC. In order to facilitate communication regarding SEDAC the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) will create a public website containing all pertinent information regarding alerts, notifications, trainings and FAQ's. It will be the responsibility of Directors, district IT coordinators and SEDAC contacts in the LEA to visit the site regularly to learn of important new documents, instructions and training opportunities. The web address for the SEDAC Public Information Site will be: <http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/help/sedac/>. We expect this site to be active on or before September 25th, 2006, and are looking forward to a new school year with an exciting and more user-friendly data application!

in charters, magnets,
open choice programs,
CT technical high
schools and the
vocational/agricultural
center. You may contact
Lynn at
lynn.toper@ct.gov.



Additional Resources:

Parent Training and
Information center
(PTI)
CPAC
1-800-445-2722
(860) 739-3089
V/TDD
www.cpacinc.org

For professional
development and
technical assistance
offerings contact
State Education
Resource Center
(SERC)
(860) 632-1465
www.ctserc.org

Compliance for FAPE at Age 3

CSDE recently followed up with a number of school districts on the 2004-05 PCI data regarding the compliance indicator addressing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) no later than age three for children transitioning from the Connecticut Birth to Three System. Please refer to **Attachment Four** for more information.

Collection of Early Childhood Assessment Data

In October 2006, the Bureau of Special Education will begin collecting Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) data from every school district throughout the State. The ECO data is comprised of child specific information obtained from the Brigance Inventory of Early Development II (IED-II). As a reminder, school districts are federally required to collect entry and exit information on children with disabilities receiving preschool special education. Each school district is responsible for collecting child specific information for every preschool-age child that entered special education on or after May 1, 2006 and is responsible for collecting exit information thereafter on those same children at any point of exit. As explained at several training sessions conducted by the Bureau this past spring, school districts are responsible for assessing each preschool-age child with an IEP using several identified IED-II sub-tests. The selected sub-tests align with the federally required ECO indicators. The IED-II information collected by school districts will be used by the Bureau to report aggregate data to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the federally required Annual Performance Report (APR). Please know that although the Bureau had originally anticipated being able to collect the ECO data from school districts via a secure web based system beginning this fall, such a system could not be developed in sufficient time for federally reporting the ECO data in the APR for the 2005-06 year. As a result, in October 2006, each school district will receive a floppy disc in the mail. The floppy disc will contain a Microsoft Access electronic form. The IED-II assessment results for each child will need to be entered into the electronic form and will be automatically saved back onto the disc. The CSDE expects every school district to input their ECO data for each preschool-age child who entered on or after May 1st, 2006 up until September 30, 2006. Specific instructions on how to use the electronic form will accompany the disc. The disc is to be returned to the CSDE approximately 4 weeks after receipt. Further submission information will be forthcoming along with the disc and instructions for inputting the ECO data.

The Pro-Bono School Expulsion Project

The Pro Bono School Expulsion Project seeks to address the unmet need of legal assistance for low income students in expulsion hearings. There are state and federal procedural protections for disabled and non-disabled children, yet most of these children -- predominantly low income children -- are not represented at these proceedings. For more information about the project, please see **Attachment Five and Attachment Six**.

Paraprofessional Study – Hearing and Public Briefing

The Legislative Program Review & Investigations Committee has been conducting a study on paraprofessionals in CT. The study is focused on whether the State of Connecticut should establish statewide minimum standards for public school paraprofessionals who perform instructional tasks and whether different categories should be established for different duties. Findings and recommendations from this study will be made available in mid December. **Attachment Seven and Attachment Eight** contain the complete approved scope of the study and a recent update to the study. A briefing about the study will be held on September 26 at



Connecticut State
Department of
Education
Bureau of Special
Education
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-713-6910
Fax: 860-713-7051

Mailing address:
P.O. Box 2219, RM 369
Hartford, CT 06145-2219

Visit us on the web at:
www.state.ct.us/sde

10:00 followed by a public hearing at 1:00. These meetings will be held in room 1D at the Legislative Office Building. If you have questions regarding this study, please direct them to Perri Murdica at (860) 713-6942 or perri.murdica@ct.gov

Secondary Transition Planning

Attachment Nine contains a form requesting the name, address, telephone number and email address of the staff member in your district, **most directly responsible** for transition planning at the secondary level. This may be your transition coordinator/specialist, work-study coordinator, and classroom teacher or guidance counselor. You may wish to identify more than one transition contact person per district. This database will be utilized to disseminate appropriate training activities and materials to staff in your high schools (predominately via email with some mailed information). Please do not include your name, as special education directors will always receive copies of any announcement or materials that are disseminated.

Funding Resource:

The CVS/pharmacy Community Grants program accepts proposals for public school programs targeting children with disabilities (under age 18) that address any of the following: health and rehabilitation services; public schools promoting a greater level of inclusion in student activities and extracurricular programs; or creating opportunities or facilities that give greater access to physical movement and play. Deadline: October 31, 2006.

http://www.cvs.com/corpInfo/community/community_grants.html

TBI conference in October

This intra-agency, multidisciplinary conference addresses the complexities of traumatic brain injury (TBI), the implications of identification, intervention and outcomes across the lifespan. See **Attachment Ten** for registration.

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Public Act 06-18

An Act Concerning Special Education

During the 2006 session of the General Assembly, the State Legislature revised several provisions of the state special education statutes to conform to the IDEA 2004 revisions. The state provisions addressed in the public act include the following:

Section 1 of the Public Act revises Section 10-76d concerning the provision of special education. School districts are prohibited from requiring a student to obtain a prescription for a substance covered by the Controlled Substance Act as a condition of attending school, receiving an evaluation or receiving special education services.

Section 4 of the Public Act revises Section 10-76h concerning the state due process procedures:

- Parental requests for hearings are made directly to the school district with a copy of the request sent to the SDE.
- If a school district requests a hearing, a copy of the notice and request provided to the parents must be submitted to the SDE.
- The timeline for hearings has been changed to accommodate the IDEA 2004 requirements for challenging the sufficiency of the hearing request, amending the hearing request and utilizing alternative means to resolve the dispute such as the resolution session or mediation.
- Clarifies the authority of the hearing officer to order reimbursement for a student placed in a private school by the parents.
- Deletes the requirement that mediation must be conducted within 30 days after receipt of the request for mediation. The IDEA 2004 revisions require a longer timeframe for dispute resolution.

Section 6 of the Public Act revises Section 10-76ff concerning special education evaluations:

- Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child must be administered in a language and form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally and functionally, unless it is not feasible to so provide or administer;
- Assessments of children with disabilities who transfer from one school district to another in the same academic year are coordinated with the child's prior and subsequent schools, as necessary and as expeditiously as possible to ensure prompt completion of full evaluations;
- A district may not find a child eligible for special education if the dominant factor for determining eligibility is a lack of instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction, as defined in Section 1208(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965;
- A reevaluation is no longer required prior to a student graduating with a regular high school diploma or aging out of special education. The district is required to provide a summary of academic achievement and functional performance which

includes recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child's postsecondary goals.

Section 7 of the Public Act revises Section 10-76i concerning the State Advisory Council to include such members as may be required by the IDEA as amended from time to time.

Section 8 of the Public Act revises Section 10-94g concerning the appointment of Surrogate Parents to require the appointment of a surrogate parent when a child is an unaccompanied and homeless youth.

Other provisions included in the Public Act are technical in nature, for example, substituting the word "appropriate" for the word "suitable".

If you have any questions about the revisions, please contact Theresa C. DeFrancis at (860) 713-6933.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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To: Directors of Special Education

From: Nancy M. Cappello, Ph.D., Interim Chief
Bureau of Special Education

Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)

Date: September 12, 2006

Re: **Response to Intervention (RtI)**

The reauthorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act* (IDEA 2004), states: 1) a local education agency *shall not be required* to take into consideration whether the child has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability; and 2) in determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, a local education agency *may use a process* which determines if a child responds to scientific, research based intervention. Furthermore, IDEA 2004 permits districts to use up to 15% of their special education funds to develop and implement coordinated, early intervening services for students in K through 12 who have not been identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in the general education environment. These three changes provide an opportunity for districts to develop a unified system of education for all students. An IDEA topic brief on the identification of students as learning disabled is available at <http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/%2Croot%2Cdynamic%2CTopicalBrief%2C23%2C>. Other topic briefs are available at <http://idea.ed.gov/explore/home>.

Not unlike NCLB, IDEA 2004 has set high goals for all school districts, but has provided limited direction as to how to precisely achieve these goals. One strategy that has been suggested is the utilization of a Response to Intervention (RtI) model. By definition, RtI is the practice of providing high-quality instruction/intervention matched to student needs using learning rates over time and level of performance to make important educational decisions (National Association of State Directors of Special Education). RtI is based on principles that the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has embraced for several years, including: universal screening, high quality instruction, early intervention, regular and frequent monitoring of student progress, and utilization of data to make instructional decisions. In an RtI model, supports to students are provided based on students' needs and are not premised on a particular label, program, or place.

The *Guidelines for Identifying Children with Learning Disabilities*, developed by the Connecticut State Department of Education in 1999, have laid the groundwork for RtI. Though not identified by the current term, the concept of RtI was integral in the writing of the previous guidelines ensuring all students were receiving appropriate instruction in the areas of reading and mathematics. Connecticut took a proactive approach to disability identification in its guidelines for students suspected of having a specific learning disability (SLD). The reading and math worksheets were developed knowing that students with severe discrepancy may meet the criterion for learning disabilities for a number of reasons (e.g., lack of participation in consistent, high quality instruction; lack of focus on appropriate skill acquisition; lack of implementation fidelity or intensity, frequency and/or duration, of intervention; or lack of instructional time due to interruptions in learning because of behavioral issues, second language acquisition, mobility, etc.).

IDEA 2004 regulations, Section 300.309(b) state “To ensure that underachievement in a child suspected of having a specific learning disability is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math, the group must consider, as part of the evaluation described in 34 CFR Sections 300.304 through 300.306: (1) Data that demonstrate that prior to, or as a part of, the referral process, the child was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel; and (2) Data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction, which was provided to the child’s parents...” In addition, in determining the existence of SLD, consideration must be given to the child’s response to interventions and if, prior to referral, the child’s response to general education interventions did not result in adequate progress, after an appropriate period of time, the public agency must promptly request parental consent to evaluate the child to determine if the child needs special education and related services.

IDEA 2004 has surfaced volumes of literature and research criticizing use of the discrepancy formula, such as: inconsistencies in identification exist due to significant variations in the use of discrepancy formulas from state to state and district to district; the statistical phenomenon of regression to the mean and differences in the construction of tests make computation of discrepancies complicated and some believe invalid; strict adherence to discrepancy formulas leave no room for clinical judgment which could eliminate some students from service who may, in fact, have a learning disability; and the difficulty to find a severe discrepancy in the early grades, leading to a “wait and fail” model of identification.

Understanding the contextual variables that shape and influence how decisions are made is critical in working toward improved identification methods for accurate SLD determination. Some potential compounding factors include: a desire to get services for students, using multiple criteria for eligibility decisions, low-achievement versus specific learning disability, contributions of multi-disciplinary teams on classification, and the use of clinical judgment.

States and districts are strongly encouraged to approach this process in thoughtful manner. The current *Guidelines for Identifying Children with Learning Disabilities*, with a focus on appropriate instruction, interventions, and monitoring of student progress, should be used as a key component of the identification process while further guidance is being developed. In the meantime, the State Education Resource Center (SERC) will be offering a variety of professional development opportunities throughout the coming year regarding the implementation of RtI in relation to the following topics: Universal Screening, Progress Monitoring, Implementation Fidelity, and Multi-Tiered Interventions. In addition, the RtI state leadership team, along with stakeholders throughout the state, will move forward in their efforts to operationalize RtI in a way that meets the needs of Connecticut students.

If you have questions regarding RtI, please feel free to contact either of the two CSDE Education Consultants listed below:

Perri Murdica
(860)713-6942
perri.murdica@ct.gov

Nancy Aleman
(860)713-6937
nancy.aleman@ct.gov



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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TO: Directors of Special Education and SEDAC Contacts
FROM: Mary M. Keenan, SEDAC Data Collection Manager
DATE: September 07, 2006
SUBJECT: SEDAC Follow-up Training Opportunities

I will conduct 18 Follow-up Training sessions about the Special Education Data Application and Collection (SEDAC) in October and November. Follow-up Training is for SEDAC users and will only be offered on-line via WebEx meetings.

- SEDAC Follow-up Training will provide the SEDAC user with a more in-depth discussion of SEDAC. Some examples are what screens will look like, viewing the student roster and selecting only certain cases, entering special education information, saving records, running reports, discussion of special cases such as Service Plan Students and using the case manager field. There will also be a discussion of the SEDAC – Grants (SEDAC-G). The sessions will not be hands-on but the user should gain a better understanding of SEDAC.
- Training materials with printing instructions will be available prior to WebEx Meeting or at the SEDAC Home page. Participants will be responsible for printing training materials.

WebEx Follow-up Training Meetings (encouraged for all SEDAC users)

- **IMPORTANT:** Districts that plan to attend a WebEx Meeting, must register ahead of time to get set up. After you have emailed me with your training selection at mary.m.keenan@ct.gov, you will receive an email from WebEx. You must open this email and follow the instructions to ensure you can participate. You should do this as soon as you receive the email and before the actual meeting to ensure that your system is ready. This process takes less than 5 minutes, but must be done prior to the meeting itself.
- In addition to signing on to the on-line meeting, you will join a conference call at the meeting time to enable you to participate in the audio portion of the meeting. Instructions for the conference call will be included in your registration email.
- It is helpful to have headsets or a quiet room so you don't disturb office mates.
- If more than one person from a district attends we encourage you to use a quiet conference room where you can have several people around one computer and a telephone on speaker phone so you can hear the auditory part of the presentation.
- You will be able to ask questions. There is a chat page so questions can be directed to everyone in the meeting or privately between participants.

- WebEx Follow-up Training sessions will generally last for one hour and a half, once you have logged into the meeting. Plan to login 5 minutes prior to the meeting start time.

WebEx Follow-up Meeting Date	Morning Session 1	Morning Session 2	Afternoon Session 1	Afternoon Session 2
October 24, 2006	9:00 – 10:30	11:00 – 12:30	1:00 – 2:30	3:00 – 4:30
October 26, 2006	9:00 – 10:30	11:00 – 12:30	1:00 – 2:30	3:00 – 4:30
October 27, 2006	9:00 – 10:30	11:00 – 12:30		
November 2, 2006	9:00 – 10:30	11:00 – 12:30	1:00 – 2:30	3:00 – 4:30
November 7, 2006	9:00 – 10:30	11:00 – 12:30	1:00 – 2:30	3:00 – 4:30

To register, or if you have any questions, contact me at mary.m.keenan@ct.gov.

I look forward to using this new way of meeting to do training with you, which I know will be a learning experience for all.

MMK:mmk

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
Division of Teaching and Learning Programs and Services
Bureau of Special Education
Bureau of Early Childhood, Career and Adult Education



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TO: Directors of Special Education

FROM: Dr. Nancy Cappello, Interim Chief
Bureau of Special Education

DATE: September 15, 2006

RE: Compliance for FAPE at Age 3

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) recently followed up with a number of school districts on the 2004-05 PCI data regarding the compliance indicator addressing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) no later than age three for children transitioning from the Connecticut Birth to Three System. The IDEA requirement to provide a FAPE no later than age three obligates school districts to demonstrate that 100% of the time, children are receiving their special education and related services no later than their third birthday.

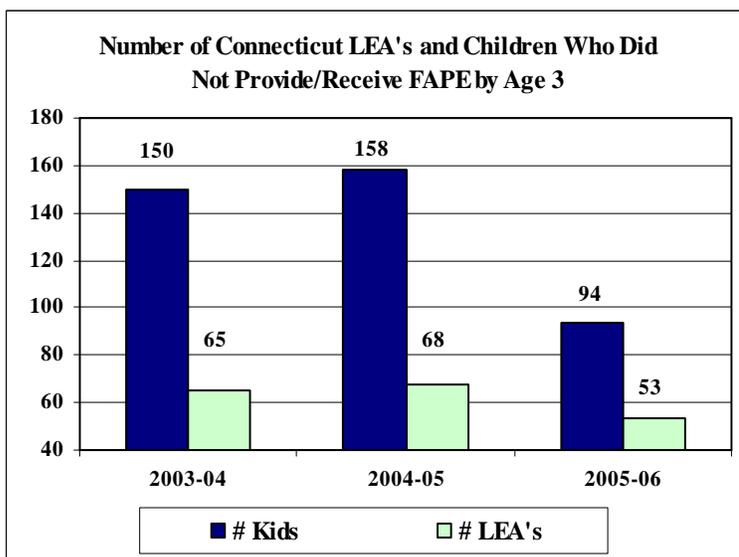
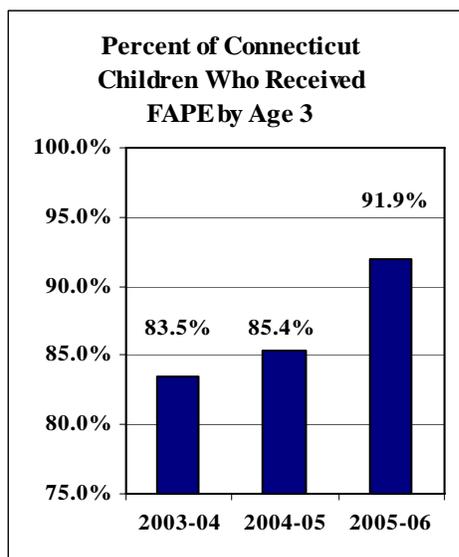
The IDEA regulations at 300.101(b)(i) state that "the obligation to make FAPE available to each eligible child residing in the State **begins no later than the child's third birthday**." The phrase "no later than the child's third birthday" is highlighted to emphasize that the expectation is that all children transitioning from the Connecticut Birth to Three System will be receiving their special education and related services by the time they have their third birthday.

The CSDE is continuing follow-up and analysis of the 2004-05 PCI data on FAPE no later than age three and will shortly begin follow-up on the 2005-06 PCI data. All responses from school districts regarding identified non-compliance for both school years must be received by the CSDE no later than October 1st, 2006. The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) will be visiting the CSDE during the first week of October and will be following up on the FAPE at 3 issue during their site visit to Connecticut. The CSDE is obtaining the required information from school districts in order to report to OSEP on why the State continues to demonstrate non-compliance on this indicator.

Memo: Directors of Special Education
 Date: September 15, 2006
 Re: Compliance on FAPE No Later Than Age 3
 Page: -2-

School districts are advised that preliminary analysis of the 2004-05 data obtained thus far indicates that 92% of the identified non-compliance is related to the reporting of data. The major issue is reporting the wrong date either due to an error in data entry or in using the wrong date to report a FAPE by age three. In 2005-06, the CSDE made attempts to rectify the data issue in the revision of the statewide IEP form. It is anticipated that the use of the "IEP development date" versus the "start date" of the child should resolve any questions regarding what date to report in the State's data collection system. All school districts should be advised that the CSDE will use the "IEP development date" (reported on page 1 of the IEP) to assess FAPE no later than age three. Additionally, the new IEP and data collection system will require school districts to report the reason that a FAPE was not provided for an individual child.

For your information, the CSDE is providing school districts with trend data that the CSDE has been utilizing to measure and report on compliance with providing a FAPE no later than age three. Please be advised that while trend data indicates continued improvement, the CSDE has yet to demonstrate that the State has met the federal mandate ensuring that 100% of all children receive a FAPE no later than age 3. Factors such as school vacations are not justifiable reasons for delaying a FAPE to a child. The CSDE anticipates continued attention, diligence and monitoring of this indicator will result in 100% compliance.



Programmatic questions can be directed to Maria Synodi at (860) 807-2054 or maria.synodi@ct.gov. Questions regarding data and analysis can be directed to Diane Murphy at (860) 713-6891 or diane.murphy@ct.gov.

PRO BONO **SCHOOL EXPULSION PROJECT**

Is Your Child Facing An Expulsion Hearing?

- If you are low income and your child is in need of legal assistance at an expulsion hearing, call Statewide Legal Services (SLS) at (800)-453-3320.
- Because expulsion hearings are often scheduled very quickly, please call SLS *immediately* once you know that your child is being recommended for expulsion.
- SLS is open during the following hours:
 - Mondays & Wednesdays from 9:00a.m. to 3:00p.m.
 - Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays from 9:00a.m. to 4:00p.m.
- The Pro Bono School Expulsion Project has trained approximately 40 private attorneys around the state to handle school expulsion cases. Assuming your case is deemed eligible for the project, it will be assigned to one of the trained attorneys in your area.

Connecticut Bar Association
Connecticut Legal Services, Inc.
New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Inc.
Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut
(800) 453-3320

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PRO BONO **SCHOOL EXPULSION PROJECT**

The Project

- The Pro Bono School Expulsion Project seeks to address the unmet need of legal assistance for low-income students in expulsion hearings. There are state and federal procedural protections for disabled and non-disabled children, yet most of these children -- predominantly low income children -- are unrepresented at these proceedings.
- The Pro Bono School Expulsion Project has trained approximately 40 private attorneys around the state to handle school expulsion cases.

How to Get Help/Referrals

- If you are low income and in need of legal assistance at an expulsion hearing, call Statewide Legal Services (SLS) at (800)-453-3320. SLS will perform an income eligibility intake to ensure that you qualify to receive legal aid services, complete an education questionnaire, provide pro se advice, send out the "School Expulsion" pamphlet, inform you that your case is being referred to the Pro Bono School Expulsion Project, and obtain verbal consent for the potential pro bono referral.
- Once the case is deemed eligible, the case will be given to the SLS pro bono coordinator (John Bozzi) for referral to one of the trained private attorneys.
- SLS is open during the following hours:
 - Mondays & Wednesdays from 9:00a.m. to 3:00p.m.
 - Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays from 9:00a.m. to 4:00p.m.

Connecticut Bar Association
Connecticut Legal Services, Inc.
New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Inc.
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(800) 453-3320

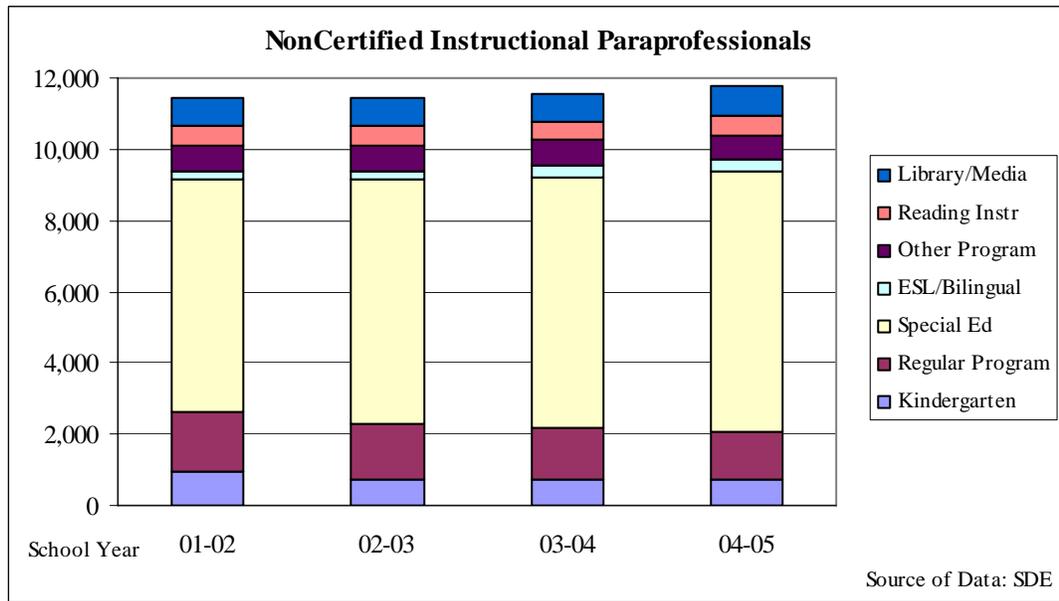
School Paraprofessionals

Study Staff: Anne McAloon and Brian Beisel

Focus of Study: Whether Connecticut should establish statewide minimum standards for K-12 public school paraprofessionals who perform instructional tasks, and whether different categories should be established for different duties

<i>Public School Paraprofessionals With Instructional Responsibilities</i>	
WHO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-certified, school-based employees who work under the direct supervision of a teacher or other certified professional educator • Various job titles including paraprofessional, paraeducator, assistant teacher, teaching assistant, teacher aide/assistant, instructional aide/assistant, classroom aide, special education aide/assistant, bilingual aide/assistant, learning resources assistant, library aide, program aide, education(al) technician, transition trainer, therapy aide/assistant, educational partner, home visitor, educator assistant, child development associate, school aide, and tutor
WHAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist teachers or other certified professional educators with the delivery of instructional and related support services to students; perform tasks that free teachers to spend more time on activities such as lesson planning and direct teaching • Responsibilities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – assisting with classroom management – preparing/organizing instructional materials – giving individualized attention to individual or a small group of students – providing support in library/media centers – supplying computer laboratory or speech-language assistance to students – offering input into assessments and grades – facilitating the inclusion of special education students in general classrooms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>inclusion</i> -- process currently in use to assimilate special needs students within general classroom setting of their local school; instruction occurs first within general classroom, and then, if necessary, in other locations within the school ○ <i>mainstreaming</i> -- process previously used to transition special needs students into public school environment, with majority of their instruction typically occurring at a location within the school separate from the general classroom – visiting home-schooled students
WHEN	Primarily during the school day, but some after-school work
WHERE	In general classrooms, special education classrooms, media centers, libraries, computer labs, language labs, and homes
WHY	To provide additional resources to help teachers and students

HOW MANY



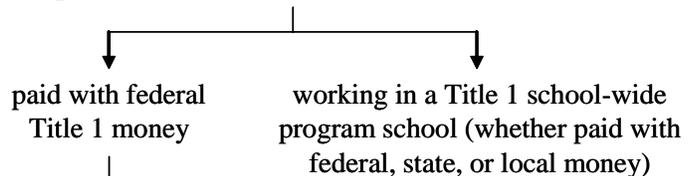
JOB CRITERIA

- **Federal** -- under Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA):

All paraprofessionals paid with federal Title 1 money (including translators and those only conducting parental involvement activities)

↓
Secondary School Diploma or recognized equivalent (i.e., GED)

Paraprofessionals with instructional responsibilities



Secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent (i.e., GED) PLUS
2 years study at institution of higher education or associate's (or higher) degree or passed designated assessment

Although the federal government established the Title 1 requirements, each state had to designate an assessment mechanism for use in that state. Connecticut is one of 36 states using the ParaPro Assessment, which consists of 90 multiple-choice questions covering the subjects of reading, mathematics, and writing. Connecticut requires a score of at least 457 out of a maximum of 480. (Passing scores in other states range from 450 to 467.)

- **State** -- All school personnel must submit to a criminal history records check within 30 days of employment (C.G.S. Sec. 10-221d).
- **Local** -- Individual school districts may establish additional minimum requirements.

School Paraprofessionals

Within K-12 schools, non-teachers perform a variety of duties that directly and indirectly involve students. Instructional functions include assisting with classroom management, providing instructional support services to students, tutoring students one-on-one, conducting parental involvement activities, acting as a translator, and providing assistance in computer labs, libraries, and media centers. Non-instructional functions include clerical tasks, monitoring school lunchrooms, and driving buses.

The individuals who perform these duties are given a variety of titles, including paraprofessional, para-educator, teachers' aide, instructional aide, school aide, teaching assistant, and tutor. One of the most commonly used terms is paraprofessional, and it is the one used by the federal government in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001.

According to the State Department of Education, in October 2004, there were 37,586 full-time equivalent paraprofessional positions in Connecticut. Approximately one-third (13,576) provided instructional services; the rest (24,010) performed non-instructional duties. However, the actual number of individuals employed as paraprofessionals was likely larger because many paraprofessionals are employed on a part-time basis.

Under the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act, paraprofessionals who perform instructional assistance and are paid with federal Title 1 funds or provide instruction in Title 1 school-wide program schools must meet certain requirements measured through educational achievement or testing. Paraprofessionals in applicable positions must have a high school or General Educational Development (GED) diploma plus two years of college credit, an associate's degree, or have passed a paraprofessional assessment adopted by the State Board of Education. The assessment must examine content knowledge in math, reading, and writing, and an understanding of how to assist in the instruction of those topics. (Individuals already employed when the federal law took effect were given until 2006 to meet the requirements, if they wanted to retain their jobs.)

In Connecticut, the State Board of Education designated the ParaPro Assessment, offered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), as the assessment to meet Title I requirements. That test consists of 90 multiple-choice questions that have to be answered within two and one-half hours. The test is available in paper and internet-based formats.

The state of Connecticut has not established any requirements of its own for school paraprofessionals. A couple dozen states do have requirements beyond those mandated by Title 1, but the details vary considerably and, in some cases, only apply to paraprofessionals working in special education.

AREA OF FOCUS

The study will focus on whether the state of Connecticut should establish statewide minimum standards for public school paraprofessionals who perform instructional tasks and whether different categories should be established for different duties.

Scope of Study

AREAS OF ANALYSIS

1. Define the scope of duties performed by school paraprofessionals, noting work performed one-on-one with children versus jointly with other school personnel as well as the role of paraprofessionals in mainstreaming students.
2. Determine the number of paraprofessionals with instructional responsibilities employed by public school systems in Connecticut, including the number who work part time versus full time, and calculate how this has changed in recent years.
3. Develop a demographic profile of public school paraprofessionals with instructional responsibilities employed in Connecticut and, to the extent possible, compare it with the profiles of the student population and the other instructional staff.
4. Summarize the range of existing wage structures for school paraprofessionals in Connecticut, including salary and fringe benefits.
5. Examine the overall role of paraprofessionals in efforts to improve performance for various types of students, including those in special education and home schooling programs.
6. Describe existing education and experience requirements for public school paraprofessionals in Connecticut, and indicate the proportion of people currently in those jobs who meet the requirements.
7. Identify the types of assessment mechanisms available to measure the qualifications of public school paraprofessionals, noting which ones are used within Connecticut.
8. Determine the level of state and local education resources devoted to recruitment, training, retention, and oversight of public school paraprofessionals.
9. Examine paraprofessional turnover rates within Connecticut schools, and, to the extent possible, identify the reasons for such turnover and any accompanying effects on school systems.
10. Describe models used by other states to hire, train, and compensate school paraprofessionals who perform instructional tasks.
11. Review national and academic literature and the experiences of other states regarding whether minimum standards for school paraprofessionals make a difference in student performance outcomes.
12. Estimate the cost of requiring minimum standards for public school paraprofessionals in Connecticut who perform instructional tasks.

Secondary Transition Planning

Secondary Transition Contact Personnel

Enclosed is a form requesting the name, address, telephone number and email address of the staff member in your district, **most directly responsible** for transition planning at the secondary level. This may be your Transition Coordinator/Specialist, Work-Study Coordinator, classroom teacher, or guidance counselor. You may wish to identify more than one transition contact person per district. This database will be utilized to disseminate appropriate training activities and materials to staff in your high schools (predominantly via email with some mailed information). Please **do not** include your name, as Special Education Directors will always receive copies of any announcements or materials that are disseminated.

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***Transition Contact Personnel in
Secondary Programs for Students with Disabilities
2006 - 2007***

Name: _____

Position/Title: _____

School: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ FAX: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

School: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ FAX: _____

Email: _____

Please return no later than **October 13, 2006** to:

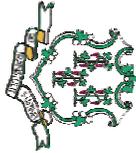
Patricia Anderson
Department of Education
PO Box 2219
Hartford, CT 06145-2219
patricia.anderson@ct.gov

or FAX to: (860) 713-7051

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**Addressing The Complexities Of Traumatic Brain Injury:
Implications Of Identification, Intervention,
And Outcomes Across The Lifespan.**



**State of Connecticut
Department of Social Services
25 Sigourney Street
Hartford, CT 06106**



TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY
An Inter-agency, Multi-disciplinary
Conference

**October 6th, 2006
Hartford Marriot Rocky Hill
Rocky Hill, Connecticut**

Certificates of Attendance will be available

**SPACE IS LIMITED
REGISTER EARLY**

**For more information contact:
Amanda Mangene at
860-424-5668**

The conference is being held at the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill Hotel in Rocky Hill, CT. Hotel reservations can be made by contacting the Marriott directly at 800.228.9290. The discounted rate of \$99.00 per night is available for conference attendees who register by September 15.

Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill
100 Capital Boulevard
Rocky Hill, CT 06067

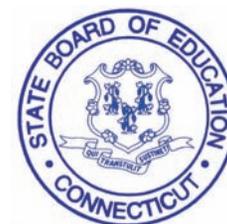
The Hotel is conveniently located:
25 miles South of (Hartford) Bradley International Airport
10 miles South of Union Station (bus and train)
Exit 23 of I-91

Directions

From Bradley International Airport and Points North:
Take I-91 South to Exit 23. At the top of the ramp, turn left. At the second traffic light, turn right. The hotel is the first entrance on right.

From Points South:
Take I-91 North to Exit 23. At the end of the ramp turn right onto West Street. Turn slight right onto Capital Blvd. The hotel is the first entrance on the right.

SPONSORS



Department of Children & Families



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

8:00- 8:45

Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:45- 9:00

Opening Remarks

9:00- 9:30

Yehuda Ben-Yishay, Ph.D

9:30-10:00

Jeffrey Kreutzer, Ph.D

10:00- 10:30

Allen Lewis, Ph.D, CRC

10:30- 11:00

Marilyn Lash, MSW

11:00- 11:15

Break

11:15- 12:30

Concurrent Workshops

A1 - Developing a Trust and Other Legal Aspects of TBI

Sharon Pope, Esq, Dillman & Pope Attorneys at Law

A2 - TBI and Domestic Violence

Sue Parry, Ph.D, NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

A3 - Homelessness and Brain Injury

Mary Roach, MA, CRC, Neuro-Rehab Management, Inc. Melrose, MA
Ellen Harnen, LCSW, Neuro-Rehab Management, Inc. Melrose, MA

A4 - Person Centered Planning: The Hows and Whys

Mary Hibbard, Ph.D , Mt. Sinai School of Medicine
Ralph William Shields, Mt. Sinai School of Medicine

A5 - Back to Work after TBI

Jeffrey Kreutzer, Ph.D, Virginia Commonwealth University

A6 - Non-Accidental Brain Injury in Children: A Medical Perspective

Arnie Graff, MD, Hasbro Children's Hospital, Providence, RI

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

12:30- 1:30

Lunch with Speaker

Claudia Osborn, DO

1:45- 4:45

Concurrent Master Workshops

B1 - Holistic Approaches to Rehabilitation

Yehuda Ben-Yishay, Ph.D, NYU Medical Center

B2 - TBI and Behavior in Community Settings

Harvey Jacobs, Ph.D, Liscened Clinical Psychologist

B3 - Serving Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injuries from Diverse Cultural and Ethnic Backgrounds

Allen Lewis, Ph.D, CRC, Virginia Commonwealth University
Daniel Wong, Ph.D, Eastern Carolina University
Lucy Wong-Hernandez, MS, Eastern Carolina University

B4 - Interpersonal Relationships following TBI

Jeffrey Kreutzer, Ph.D, Virginia Commonwealth University

B5 - TBI in the Prison Population

Pamela Diamond, Ph.D, University of Texas at Houston
Phillip Magletta, Ph.D, Bureau of Prisons

B6 - Practical Strategies for Identifying, Assessing and Teaching Students

Marilyn Lash, MSW



Conference Planning Committee

Dan Bannish, PsyD, Department of Corrections
Lauri DiGalbo, M.Ed, CRC, LPC, Department of Social Services
George Dowaliby, State Department of Education
Sylvia Gafford-Alexander, MSW, Department of Social Services
Ruth Kirsch, LCSW, PhD, State Education Resource Center
Dorian Long, MSW, Department of Social Services
Amanda Mangene, MSW, Department of Social Services
John Sandford, BME, MBA, Family Member
Ada Suarez, MSW, Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities
Susan Werboff, MSW, Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities

Conference Faculty

Yehuda Ben-Yishay, Ph.D, NYU Medical Center
Pamela M. Diamond, Ph.D, University of Texas at Houston
Arne Graff, MD, Hasbro Children's Hospital, Providence, RI
Ellen Harnen, LCSW, Neuro-Rehab Management, Inc. Melrose, MA
Mary Hibbard, Ph.D, Mount Sinai School of Medicine
Harvey E. Jacobs, Ph.D, Richmond, VA
Jeffrey Kreutzer, Ph.D, Virginia Commonwealth University
Marilyn Lash, MSW, Lash and Associates Publishing/Training, NC
Allen Lewis, Ph.D, CRC, Virginia Commonwealth University
Phillip Magaletta, Ph.D, Bureau of Prisons, Washington, DC
Claudia Osborn, DO, FACOI, Michigan State University
Sue Parry, Ph.D, NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, Albany, NY
Sharon L. Pope, Esq., Dillman and Pope, Attorneys at Law, Wethersfield, CT
Mary Roach, MA, CRC, Neuro-Rehab Management, Inc, Melrose, MA
Ralph William Shields, Mount Sinai School of Medicine
Daniel Wong, Ph.D, CRC, Eastern Carolina University
Lucy Wong-Hernandez, MS, Eastern Carolina University



Registration Deadline: September 22, 2006

\$100.00 General Registration

\$50.00 Survivors and Family members

Make check payable to the Department of Social Services

Please mail completed registration form and check to:

SERC-ISSS Initiative

25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457-1520

For questions regarding registration, please contact:

April Judd, Education Services Specialist, at (860) 632-1485, ext. 282.

Applicants will receive written confirmation regarding participation and directions shortly after the registration closing date.

REGISTRATION FORM

Addressing Complexities of Traumatic Brain Injuries 07-23-011/ISSS

(Please Print Clearly.)

Indicate choice of one session: _____ Session 1 (AM) or _____ Session 2 (PM)

Name _____

Home Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Work Phone () _____ Home Phone () _____

Position/Role _____

Email (Please Print) _____

District/Region (school employees only) _____

Age Range/Grade Level _____ School/Program _____

Release time is approved for educators:

Administrator's Signature _____

Indicate lunch choice (circle one): Chicken Fish Pasta

Special Accommodations (please specify):

In which region do you receive/provide services? (school employees only - check one)

____ ACES // ____ CES // ____ CREC // ____ EASTCONN //

____ ED CONNECTION // ____ LEARN

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