

The Bureau Bulletin



From the Bureau of Special Education

Brief from the Chief

Throughout Connecticut, the flurry of annual activities associated with staff and students' return to school are in full swing. With that return comes the renewed effort of educators across the state in continuing to assess the strengths and needs of all students in order to inform instruction that reflects the high expectations they hold for each and every child. And parents and families also have renewed hopes and high expectations for their children. Clearly, we must all continue to work together to attain the goals that we all strive to reach for all children, including children with disabilities.

Little did I know a short time ago that I, too, would be swept up in the busy time of back to school, but I am pleased to be here. I appreciate the warm welcome that I have received from staff here as well as from many of you as I return to the Bureau on a limited basis. I am excited to be back in the Bureau and will do whatever I can to support and guide its important work.

I hope that each of you had a chance to get away, spend time with those about whom you care and find other ways to rest and relax a bit this summer. This not only helps "recharge the batteries," but also helps to maintain some balance and perspective in our lives.

Have a tremendous beginning to the school year and, on behalf of the entire Bureau, I look forward to seeing you at our annual Back-To-School Meeting on September 20th.

George Dowaliby, Manager, Bureau of Special Education

Mark Your Calendars...

The 7th Annual Bureau of Special Education Back-To-School Meeting
Monday, September 20, 2010, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cromwell

Paraprofessionals as Partners: The 15th Annual Statewide Conference
Tuesday, October 26, 2010, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cromwell (click [here](#) for more information)

2010 Special Education Data Collection Timeline

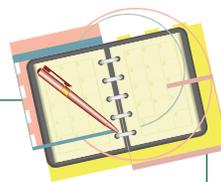
Training Dates:

SERC – September 7, 17, 23, and 24 EASTCONN – September 14
Education Connection – September 13 CES – September 15

Due Dates:

- Evaluation Timelines – Accurate Due Date: **August 31, 2010**
- Exitters PSIS/SEDAC – Timely Due Date: **September 15, 2010**
- Exitters PSIS/SEDAC – Accurate Due Date: **September 30, 2010**
- Early Childhood Outcomes – Timely Due Date: **November 1, 2010**
- Early Childhood Outcomes – Accurate Due Date: **November 15, 2010**
- SEDAC-G December final certification statutory Due Date: **December 1, 2010**
- SEDAC – Oct 1 Child Count Timely Due Date: **December 5, 2010**
- SEDAC – Oct 1 Child Count Accurate Due Date: **December 15, 2010**

Click [here](#) to view a complete copy of the Timely and Accurate Data Collection calendar.



Summer 2010



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Indicator 4B: A New Requirement for the State Performance Plan

Suspension and expulsion rates for students with disabilities are now being examined by race/ethnicity.

Through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004), states are required to examine data, including data disaggregated by race and ethnicity, to determine if significant discrepancies are occurring in the rate of long-term suspensions and expulsions of students with disabilities (SWD). If discrepancies are determined to be significant, the state must then review and, if appropriate, revise (or require the district to revise) its policies, procedures, and practices relating to the development and implementation of individualized education programs (IEPs), the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, to ensure that these policies, procedures, and practices comply with the IDEA (34 C.F.R. Section 300.170).

This is monitored through Indicator 4 of the State Performance Plan (SPP):

- 4A: Percent of districts identified by the State as having a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of children with IEPs for greater than 10 days in a school year; and
- 4B: Percent of districts identified by the State as having a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of children with IEPs of greater than 10 days in a school year by race/ethnicity and that have policies, procedures, and practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and that do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.

In Connecticut, significant discrepancy is defined as follows:

- 4A: Greater than 2 percent of students with disabilities in a district suspended or expelled out-of-school (OSS) for a cumulative total of greater than 10 days in a school year.
- 4B: A Relative Risk Index (RRI) greater than or equal to 2.0 for suspensions or expulsions for serious offenses of students with disabilities by race/ethnicity for a cumulative total of greater than 10 days in a school year.

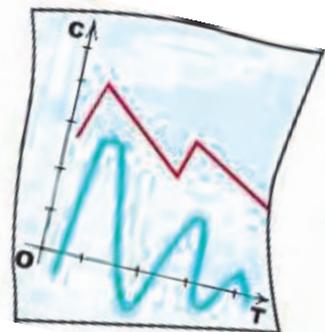
NOTE: For details regarding the calculation of significant discrepancy, see Connecticut’s SPP at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322094>.

District suspension/expulsion data submitted through the ED166 collection system are analyzed by Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) staff to determine if a significantly discrepant rate of suspensions/expulsions for students with disabilities exists under 4A and/or 4B. Next, each identified district is notified by the CSDE and is required to complete a self-assessment to determine if the data are a result of noncompliance in the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards. Then the completed self-assessment is submitted for review by CSDE personnel. If noncompliance is identified, an official finding will be made and corrective actions will be issued.

The finding of noncompliance and subsequent correction is reported in Connecticut’s Annual Performance Report (APR) submitted to the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on February 1 of each year. Findings of noncompliance may also affect a district’s determination category of Meets Requirements, Needs Assistance, Needs Intervention or Needs Substantial Intervention. If the district is in compliance, there will be no further action.

The self-assessment is posted on the CSDE Web site at: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322094>

Click [here](#) for more of this article.



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Information on the Modified Assessment System



The schedule for release of Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) results to districts includes an early July electronic dissemination, simultaneous posting on www.ctreports.com, and an August paper report from Measurement Incorporated. District staff who need access to this information for planning and instructional purposes should contact their CMT/CAPT District Test Coordinator.

Reports for students who were assessed with the Modified Assessment System (MAS) Reading and/or Math test are released following the same schedule. MAS results are reported out this year with associated performance standards. These standards are basic, proficient and goal.

Additionally, results are reported for strands on each test along with the established mastery criteria.

Students participating in the CMT/CAPT MAS from the spring 2010 assessment will be included in the school and district Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) performance calculations just as they would be for the standard assessment, on any of the levels of performance (e.g., basic, proficient, goal). For the purpose of calculating AYP at the district level, the number of students who score at the proficient level and above on the CMT/CAPT MAS shall not exceed 2.0 percent of all students in the grades tested unless scores on the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist at the proficient level and above do not reach the 1.0 percent cap.

The CSDE shall include the scores of the students who exceed the percentage cap in the AYP calculations at the district level as below basic. However, there is no cap on how many students in a district can participate in the CMT/CAPT MAS if they meet the eligibility criteria.

Eligibility is based on identifying the appropriate assessment, given each student's disability. For more information on eligibility criteria, click [here](#).

In the [Spring 2010 Bureau Bulletin](#), the bureau discussed standards-based IEPs and the importance of curriculum to develop IEP goals and objectives. Students being considered for the MAS must have an IEP that reflects skills in the content standards for the student's enrolled grade (in other words, a standards-based IEP); curriculum and daily instruction that focuses on standards-based goals in the areas of math, and/or language arts for the area that the MAS will be taken; and access to grade level curriculum.



Online Credit Recovery

In May 2010, legislation passed making online credit recovery coursework a reality for all students, including those with special needs. This legislation requires local education agencies (LEAs) with dropout rates of greater than 8 percent to offer online courses as one way for students to recover credits.

In June, Commissioner Mark K. McQuillan issued a memo alerting school superintendents to the *Success Through Online Credit Recovery* program, a CSDE-sponsored pilot enabling Connecticut students to earn credits over the summer in courses in which they had previously been unsuccessful. Students had the opportunity to complete graduation requirements or recover enough credits to begin the fall semester on schedule to graduate with their peers. Course design took into consideration practical applications of specific content and was structured to engage students in English, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Six to ten weeks was the anticipated course completion time with access being gained through existing summer school programs or by students independently at home or on a community-based computer. All credit recovery courses were offered free of charge. For questions related to this article, contact Jay Brown at jay.brown@ct.gov or (860) 719-6918.

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Restraint and Seclusion Update

The restraint and seclusion regulations became effective May 7, 2009, when the regulations were filed with the Secretary of the State. The regulations require the recording and reporting of instances of the emergency use of physical restraint or seclusion consistent with the requirements of Section 46a-153 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Section 3 of Public Act 07-147. The regulations also require the recording of the emergency use of restraint or seclusion to be done on a standardized incident report developed by the CSDE. A draft copy of a standardized incident report was developed and disseminated in the May-June 2009 Bureau Bulletin. The intent of this draft was to assist school districts in compiling the data the CSDE may request regarding the emergency use of restraint and seclusion in the public schools. The draft by the CSDE did not conform to the reporting requirements of Section 46a-153.

Attached you will find the model [Incident Report for the Use of Emergency Seclusion](#) and the model [Incident Report for the Use of Emergency Restraint](#). These forms replace the draft found in the May-June 2009 edition of the Bureau Bulletin. School districts should review the incident reports they are currently using to ensure they conform to the requirements of Section 46a-153. The model forms provided by the CSDE in this bulletin contain all the elements required to be reported. At this time, school districts may use the CSDE model Incident Report for reporting the emergency use of restraint or seclusion, or the incident report form currently in use by the school district, provided the form being used by the school district contains all the required elements.

Please note, the school district must attempt to notify parents by phone, e-mail or other method of communication, which may include sending a note home with the child, on the day of or within 24 hours after the emergency use of physical restraint or seclusion. The school district must also send a copy of the incident report no later than two business days after the emergency use of physical restraint or seclusion. If, however, seclusion is included in the IEP as a behavior intervention, the PPT may determine a timeframe and manner of notification of each incident of seclusion. This information is to be included in the student's IEP. If you have any questions, please contact Theresa DeFrancis at theresa.defrancis@ct.gov or 860-713-6933, or Colleen Hayles at colleen.hayles@ct.gov or 860-713-6922.



Restraint and Seclusion Injury Reports

Approved Private Special Education Programs as well as Regional Education Service Center special education programs are reminded that P.A. 99-210 (An Act Concerning Physical Restraint of Persons with Disabilities) requires special education programs to report to the Commissioner of Education any incident in which the use of physical restraint or seclusion within the program results in physical injury to a student.

This written report must include the name of the student; the student's date of birth; the student's disability; the date, time and location of the injury; a description and cause of the injury; and indication whether or not the student was in restraint at the time of the injury, as well as the total number hours the student was in restraint within the previous 24 hours. Any other further actions, including on-site first aid and medical intervention, or investigations taken by your facility must also be noted, along with the name and full address of the facility. The report should be forwarded, within two business days of the incident, to Colleen Hayles of the Bureau of Special Education.

In the event that the report contains information regarding a serious injury or death, that information will also be reported to the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities and, if appropriate, to the Office of Child Advocate. With regard to a definition of "serious injury," the CSDE is using the same definition that is being used by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Specifically, "a serious injury is an injury that requires medical attention beyond which would be included in the category of routine first aid." Examples of such medical attention include sutures, diagnostic x-rays to determine fractures, placement in casts, etc. Please contact Colleen Hayles at colleen.hayles@ct.gov or 860-713-6922 if you have questions regarding this matter.

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Restraint and Seclusion Reminders

Districts are reminded that appropriate oversight of restraint and seclusion policies and practices are critical, including regular review of policies and procedures regarding restraint and seclusion. As detailed in a circular letter from Commissioner McQuillan to Superintendents on August 16, 2007, <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/circ/circ07-08/C5.pdf>, page 12, at initial planning and placement team meetings, boards of education must provide the parent, guardian, surrogate parent or pupil with information about the laws and regulations concerning physical restraint and seclusion in schools (Sections 1 to 5, inclusive, effective October 1, 2007). Best practice indicates that this information also be shared with parents of currently identified students at the annual review or next scheduled PPT. Staff needs to be well trained and continuously educated regarding proper use of restraint and seclusion and policy guidelines. If you have any questions related to this article, please contact Theresa DeFrancis at theresa.defrancis@ct.gov or 860-713-6933, or Colleen Hayles at colleen.hayles@ct.gov or 860-713-6922.

Supportive **Tool** for Students Who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing

A tool designed to assist in addressing the special language and communication considerations of Deaf/Hard of Hearing students is now available. The Connecticut Coalition for the Education of Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing has developed a tool to assist PPTs in the development of an appropriate communication plan as required in the IEP. For students who are deaf/hard of hearing, special consideration of their language and communication needs is required through IDEA and is reflected on page 10 of the IEP. Districts are encouraged to use this plan at the initial PPT for each student who is deaf or hard of hearing, review the plan, and, if appropriate, revise it annually to assure that each student’s unique needs are identified and addressed. While the completion of this tool reflects the combined efforts of the Coalition’s partnership with the Connecticut State Department of Education, the work has only just begun; the overarching goal of the Coalition is to recommend a blueprint for the education of students who are deaf and hard of hearing in Connecticut. The blueprint will focus on the provision of a communication-driven educational program for each student that meets the state’s high academic standards and supports the social and emotional development of learners. Please keep posted to the bulletin for updates or contact Colleen Hayles directly at colleen.hayles@ct.gov or 860-713-6922.

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Bureau Happenings

Bureau of Special Education Builds Capacity

In order to better serve special education students, parents, local school districts, and all stakeholders, the Bureau of Special Education (BSE) has added professional staff to assist in carrying out the important work of the bureau. Recent additions to the BSE staff include Marcus Rivera, with responsibilities related to complaints and focused monitoring; Ashley Roberts, whose primary responsibilities relate to focused monitoring as well as the surrogate parent program; Margery Stahl, whose primary responsibility relates to autism; Kim Traverso, a liaison consultant for the Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, whose primary responsibility working with the BSE relates to school counseling; and Jay Brown, with primary responsibilities related to secondary education and transition. Jay has also been designated as the editor of the Bureau Bulletin.

We welcome these staff members and look forward to their contributions. For additional information, please contact Jay Brown at jay.brown@ct.gov or 860-713-6918.



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Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS)



As some of you may know, school districts have the option of setting aside up to 15 percent of their IDEA grant funds for CEIS purposes. CEIS activities are defined in IDEA (Section 300.226) as (1) professional development for teachers and other school staff to enable such personnel to deliver scientifically based academic and behavioral interventions, including scientifically based literacy instruction, and, where appropriate, instruction on the use of adaptive and instructional software; and (2) providing educational and behavioral evaluations, services, and supports, including scientifically based literacy instruction.

These CEIS services are designed to assist at-risk students who, without these interventions, have the possibility of being referred for a special education evaluation. In the past some school districts have used these funds to provide intensive literacy and math instruction, during either the typical school day or school year. Some have opted to serve these students in an afterschool or summer program. These CEIS services are available only to K-12 students. Please take note that Pre-K students are NOT eligible for these services.

IDEA requires that school districts annually report the number of students who receive CEIS and those that subsequently receive special education and related services during the next two years. If the school district provides professional development for teachers and other school staff, the school district is required to track the students of those staff to gather data on the success of interventions or the need for referral to special education.

If you should have any questions regarding the use of CEIS, please contact Brian Cunnane at brian.cunnane@ct.gov or 860-713-6919.

CEIS Reminder

School districts that utilized IDEA funds for CEIS for the 2008-09 school year must complete the CEIS census sent to all districts on June 7, 2010. The CEIS census was due on July 1, 2010. If your district utilized IDEA funds in this way and you have not yet completed the CEIS census, please contact Brian Cunnane at brian.cunnane@ct.gov or 860-713-6919.



Focused Monitoring District Selection for 2010-11 School Year

The Focused Monitoring Steering Committee has concluded its spring meetings to assist in advising the Bureau of Special Education in its focused monitoring efforts. The focused monitoring system will be investigating the academic achievement of students with disabilities in the 2010-11 school year. Superintendents are informed if their districts are selected to participate in focused monitoring activities. These activities consist of a data wall and root cause analysis session, site visits, and an improvement planning session. Site visits will begin in November and continue through April. Watch for future Bureau Bulletins for updates. For questions related to focused monitoring, contact Ashley Roberts at ashley.roberts@ct.gov or 860-713-6946.



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Paraprofessionals

In an effort to improve communication with districts regarding paraprofessionals, the CSDE has identified a central office employee in each district to serve as the contact person for paraprofessional issues. This person's role is to act as a liaison between the district and the CSDE and to disseminate information of importance to paraprofessionals. This communication includes information about personnel development opportunities, policy updates, resource availability, information exchange, data gathering regarding best practices, and networking across districts on effective practices for paraprofessionals. Please click [here](#) to review the information included in this monthly communication. For questions related to paraprofessionals, please contact Iris White at iris.white@ct.gov, 860-713-6794 or Perri Murdica at perri.murdica@ct.gov, 860-713-6942.

The State Education Resource Center (SERC) has recently published the *LRE News*, Spring/Summer 2010 edition. Featured in this publication is a focus on Paraprofessionals. Articles on their roles, effective use, pertinent legislation and Frequently Asked Questions are included. Click [here](#) to review this edition of the *LRE News*. For questions about this publication, please contact Perri Murdica at perri.murdica@ct.gov, 860-713-6942 or Rhonda Kempton at rhonda.kempton@ct.gov, 860-713-6924.



Assistive Technology Update



The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) requires planning and placement teams (PPTs) to consider if students need assistive technology (AT) services and devices in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). When appropriate, PPTs shall provide AT services that assist students in selecting, acquiring and using AT devices, such as evaluation; acquisition, adaptation, maintenance, and repair or replacement of AT devices; and training for students, district personnel and families. (20 U.S.C. §1401(2)).

The Connecticut Tech Act Project (CTTAP) offers Connecticut schools different device loan programs to help the schools meet this responsibility under the IDEA 2004. Please click [here](#) for some examples of CTTAP offerings or visit the CTTAP Web site at <http://www.cttechact.com/resources>. For further information, please contact Sarah Harvey, sarah.harvey@ct.gov or 860-713-6936.



Approved Private Special Education Programs

An updated [directory of Approved Private Special Education Programs](#) is now available on our Web site. Each special education program has updated its program description and contact information, as appropriate. For more information about approved private programs in special education or about the process for becoming an approved private special education program, please contact Colleen Hayles, Coordinator of Approved Private Special Education Programs, at colleen.hayles@ct.gov or 860-713-6922.

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Date Change Alert: CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Training



As previously shared with District Test Coordinators, and in the Spring Bureau Bulletin, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) will be providing training for special education teachers who will be administering the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist to students in March 2011.

Initial CMT or CAPT Skills Checklist Training

Special Education teachers who will be administering the CMT or CAPT Skills Checklist during the 2010-2011 school year who have not received CSDE training during the 2007-08, 2008-09, or 2009-10 school years, nor the CSDE Certified Rater Training, must attend one of the half-day sessions of this REQUIRED training prior to test administration in March 2011.

* indicates a change from dates originally shared with District Test Coordinators and published in the Spring Bureau Bulletin.

Thursday, September 30, 2010	ACES, Hamden
Friday, October 1, 2010	CES, 25 Oakview Drive, Trumbull
Tuesday, October 5, 2010	CREC, Coltsville Building, Hartford
Thursday, October 7, 2010	LEARN, Old Lyme
Friday, October 22, 2010*	EASTCONN, Hampton
Tuesday, October 19, 2010*	Education Connection, Litchfield

For more information regarding this article, please contact Janet Stuck at janet.stuck@ct.gov or 860-713-6837.

* * *

New Feature: **Bulletin Web Site References**

Do you like to print out the bulletin but wish you had easier access to the information behind the links? Beginning with this edition, all of the links referenced in each article are available under the heading **Bulletin Web Site References**.

With this new resource, you no longer have to skim through each article online to identify and print the additional embedded articles and references. Simply print the bulletin, then go to [Bulletin Web Site References](#) and individually print any or all of the materials listed there.

The links will remain embedded in the articles for the convenience of our online readers.

We hope this new feature will make reading and using the bulletin even easier. If you have any questions, contact Jay Brown at jay.brown@ct.gov or 860-713-6918.



Federal Focus

Federal Guidance Regarding Transition



In portions of a Question & Answer document released by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), state educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), parents, and other stakeholders were provided information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements relating to individualized education programs (IEPs) and transition services. To view an excerpt of the Question and Answer document specifically related to secondary transition, click [here](#). For the complete document related to IEPs, click [here](#). For questions related to secondary transition, please contact Dr. Patricia Anderson at patricia.anderson@ct.gov, 860-713-6923, or Jay Brown at jay.brown@ct.gov, 860-713-6918.

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AD/HD Awareness Week: September 12-18, 2010



Governor Rell has signed an official statement declaring September 12-18, 2010 as AD/HD (Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) Awareness Week in Connecticut. You can find more information regarding Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder at ADD.org or www.ADHD.org.



Feedback Welcomed

The Bureau Bulletin is designed to be an informational tool for school districts, parents and all stakeholders to gain the latest information on what's happening in special education at the federal, state and bureau levels. Over time, districts have shared the many ways they use the bulletin, from administrators reading it themselves and disseminating the information to allocating entire portions of department-level meetings to discussing and dissecting the articles.

While districts can decide locally how to use the information in the Bureau Bulletin, we devote a great deal of time to creating a document that is of significance in the service of children with special needs. With this in mind, we'd like to develop an ongoing opportunity for feedback and suggestions toward improving and maintaining a practice of excellence.

Throughout the school year, please feel free to offer feedback and topic suggestions so that the bulletin continues to be a valuable tool. Please forward your feedback and suggestions to Jay Brown at jay.brown@ct.gov. List "BUREAU BULLETIN" as the subject of the e-mail.

Click [here](#) for Bulletin Web Site References

(For more information, see [page 8](#).)

Nondiscrimination Statement

The State of Connecticut Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons and does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. Inquiries regarding the Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to the Affirmative Action Administrator, State of Connecticut Department of Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457-1543, 860-807-2071.

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