

FROM THE DIRECTOR

AUGUST 4, 2017

INDIANA OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATES

Dear Colleagues, Welcome to another school year! We are excited to have you back and want to alert you to some key OSE projects:

- *Certificate of Completion changes in requirements*
- *Collaborating with other DOE Departments on improving outcomes of each and every student through equity and access*
- *Combining forces with School Improvement, Title Programs, Early Learning and PK-16 Divisions to carry out the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)*
- *Moving to a Results Driven Accountability (RDA) system.*
- *Developing and providing guidance on the Developmental Delay legislation, Virtual Learning, and new Excess Cost (SEEC) procedures*
- *IIEP Upgrades including new translation feature*
- *Ongoing PD for goal writing based on standards, specially designed instruction, serving students in inclusive settings and teaching students with significant cognitive disabilities.*
- *More Short Shares, Spread the Word Publications and our latest media debut in the form of Coffee Talks*
- *Continue tweaking of the ICHAMP System and Part B Grant procedures*
- *Partnering with Early Learning Initiatives to improve pre-school outcomes*
- *Partnering with the Office of Student Services on Mental Health Issues*

Watch in the weeks ahead for information on all of these and more! Have a year filled with success and satisfaction and let us know if we can do anything to support you as the year unfolds. -Pam



Dr. Pamela Wright

Director of the Office of Special Education, IDOE

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OSE Vision Statement

Every student, including those with disabilities, is held to high expectations and has equitable access to educational opportunities that enrich lives and prepare students for future success.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

FEDERAL GUIDANCE:

Eligibility Determinations for Children Suspected of Having a Visual Impairment Including Blindness Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Full Document Link: <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/letter-on-visual-impairment-5-22-17.pdf>

Overview:

On May 22, 2017, the United States Department of Education issued a memorandum in order to provide guidance to assist state and local education agencies in making appropriate eligibility determinations for children suspected of having a visual impairment including blindness.

Why This Matters:

Some states and local districts have added identification or eligibility criteria –for example, “reduced visual field to 50 degrees or less in the better eye” – in addition to the federal definition of “blind and visually impaired.” In one such case, this led to the filing of a state complaint, alleging that an otherwise eligible student was being determined ineligible on the basis of his specific condition not meeting the additional criteria. Such exclusionary criteria are NOT permissible!

Key Points:

- “While States are permitted to establish standards for eligibility for special education and related services, and are not required to use the precise definition of a disability term in the IDEA, these State-established standards must not narrow the definitions in the IDEA.” p.2
- Some federal disability terms contain a modifier – for example the term “intellectual disability” as used in OSEP’s November 12, 2014 letter refers to “*significantly* subaverage general intellectual functioning,” (34 CFR §300.8(c)(6)) and the definition of “orthopedic impairment” refers to a “*severe* orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child’s educational performance” (34 CFR §300(c)(8)). The IDEA gives States discretion to establish additional criteria as to what constitutes “*significantly*” or *severe*.” However, because the federal regulations defining the term “visual impairment including blindness” do NOT contain a modifier, “any impairment in vision, regardless of significance or severity, must be included in a State’s definition, provided that such impairment, even with correction, adversely affects a child’s educational performance.” (emphasis added) p.2
- “States may not use criteria or other definitions for ‘visual impairment including blindness’ that result in the exclusion of children who otherwise meet the definition in 34 CFR §300.8(c)(13). For example, State eligibility guidelines and definitions for visual impairment and blindness may not exclude a child with convergence insufficiency or other visual impairment from meeting the IDEA’s definition of ‘visual impairment including blindness’ if that condition, even with correction, adversely affects the child’s educational performance (e.g., the child’s ability to read and write).” p.2
- The two-step practice, used by some states, of first determining if a student’s vision difficulties fall within a listed criteria or condition, and if so only then moving on to the determination of whether the student’s visual functioning adversely affects the educational performance is “inconsistent with the IDEA.” p.3

PRACTICE POINTERS

- ⇒ **Review your local written and “informal” policies, procedures, or definitions to ensure that you have not included additional criteria that would exclude from evaluation any student with *any* impairment in vision, regardless of significance or severity, if such impairment – even with correction – adversely affects a student’s educational performance (e.g., the student’s ability to read or write).**
- ⇒ Revise any policies or procedures that contain exclusionary criteria or definitions.
- ⇒ Contact Traci Tetrick, ttetrick@doe.in.gov, for questions related to this topic.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Assessment Update

ISTEP+ Assessment Update

Spring 2017 On Demand Data and Reports Availability

Schools may now access online Individual Student Reports (ISRs) reflecting online and paper/pencil results (including all requested rescoring) in PearsonAccess^{Next}. Schools will receive paper copies of these reports (in addition to disaggregation and summary reports in PearsonAccess^{Next}) on August 16. Statewide results will be posted on DOE's Compass shortly thereafter.

Spring 2017 ISTEP+ results are publicly embargoed until the DOE release at the end of August.

The Parent Portal is reactivated and final student scores are now available (reflecting results of any requested rescoring).

Winter 2017 ISTEP+ Grade 10 Retest Information

All students are expected to test online unless approved to use a paper/pencil test book as an accommodation (e.g., IEP, ILP, or Section 504 Plan).

ISTEP+ Accountability Questions?

Please contact the Office of School Accountability SchoolAccountability@doe.in.gov with any questions about how the Spring 2017 ISTEP+ results will affect your school or corporation's AYP calculations.

WIDA Assessment Update

WIDA Screener and Home Language Survey

All schools must administer a Home Language Survey (HLS) to identify the native language(s) of all first time Indiana enrollees. For students who are transferring from an Indiana school, school staff will contact the previous school to obtain the original HLS. The *EL Guidebook*, found at <http://www.doe.in.gov/elme>, includes a sample HLS and a checklist for proper identification.

Formative Assessment Update

Targeting Student Needs using Formative Assessment I

Research supports that formative assessment practices influence student motivation and understanding of concepts resulting in learning gains and growth. This training introduces formative assessment and begins to explore strategies and practices that can be used daily within the classroom. Interviews with teachers and clips of classroom practice show formative assessment and targeted instruction in action. This is the first in a series of training presentations surrounding data-driven instruction and formative practices. More information can be found at <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/formative-assessment-grant>

ILEARN Assessment Update

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) released the request for proposal (RFP) for the ISTEP replacement test, known as Indiana's Learning Evaluation Assessment Readiness Network (ILEARN). RFP submissions will be received through 3:00 P.M. (ET) on August 24, 2017.

The mission of ILEARN's RFP is to secure a qualified testing vendor to develop and administer the ILEARN assessment as well as to address the deployment and reporting of the Grade 3, IREAD-3 assessment. The selected testing vendor will also be responsible for ensuring the successful delivery of computer-adaptive forms.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

NEWS YOU CAN USE



The Office of Special Education’s conceptual framework is now clickable! Resources included in each of the 4 sections include: Definitions, Short Share overviews, Information & Resources, and Technical Assistance & Support. Please take a minute to check it out! <http://www.doe.in.gov/specialed>

IDOE Office of Special Education Short Shares: PGP Certificate

If you have not yet viewed the [IDOE Office of Special Education Short Shares](#), you need to! This series of short, informative videos offers valuable insight, and you can now earn professional growth points when you [document your viewing using this form](#).

[Short Shares](#)

[Survey for PGP Certificate](#)

MORE OSE NEWS....

Spread the Word-Educational Perspectives Survey

Last fall the Indiana Department of Education conducted a survey regarding attitudes towards educating students with disabilities in inclusive settings. We asked Indiana educators and families their personal views about the desirability and feasibility of students with disabilities being included in the general education setting. The results suggest that across Indiana, Hoosiers are very optimistic overall about inclusive practices and the potential for students with disabilities to achieve alongside same age peers. Concerns were raised about how effective implementation can be achieved through practices and resources, and the degree to which the achievement gaps between students with and without disabilities can be addressed. Moving forward, this survey will be sent out annually in October. Please check out the latest ‘Spread the Word’ on this topic [here](#).

Medicaid

The latest **semi-annual report of Medicaid Reimbursements per School Corporation** is available under "General Information" at www.doe.in.gov/specialed/school-based-medicaid.

Preschool Special Education Guidance

Guidance regarding Preschool Special Education Services has been presented in multiple *From the Director* Newsletters. [This issue of Spread the Word](#) contains all the guidance information that has been provided in more detail.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



What's the Buzz???

Q and A from the OSE

The Office of Special Education (OSE) is frequently asked questions about a variety of special education topics. We assume that if one person has a question, probably many more have the same one. As always, keep those questions coming...

Q:

I have heard that general diplomas won't count toward Indiana's graduation rate anymore. Is this true?

A:

Unfortunately this is true. The United States Department of Education (USED) determined the Core 40 to be our default diploma because Indiana has a statute requiring an opt out process. The number of diplomas issued in Indiana were also reviewed, and Core 40 met the 'preponderance' definition; therefore, the General Diploma cannot count toward Indiana's graduation rate.

That being said, the USED acknowledges Indiana has the authority to issue and recognize general diplomas, and no changes are expected regarding the requirement that all schools offer all diploma types including the General Diploma. It is still unclear to which cohort this requirement will apply. IDOE proposed beginning with the new freshman cohort, but no decision has been communicated. Watch for more information from the IDOE as it is received.

Q:

I have a difficult time remembering when all the Part B applications and reports are due. Is there a Part B chart?

A:

Yes! Please see the Part B Chart Below.

Part B Obligation(s)	Date Due	Where to Submit
FY 2018 611 (Part 1) and 619 Applications	July 1, 2017	https://grantmanagement.doe.in.gov
FY 2018 611 (Part 2) Applications	on/before August 31, 2017	https://grantmanagement.doe.in.gov
Last day to modify/encumber funds for FY 2016 grants (611 and 619)	September 30, 2017	partbgrants@doe.in.gov
CEIS/Proportionate Share Reports (FY 2016, FY 2017, FY 2018)	October 27, 2017	partbgrants@doe.in.gov
Last day to request funds for FY 2016 grants (611 and 619)	December 15, 2017	specialpartb@doe.in.gov
FY 2016 Final Report (611 and 619)	December 15, 2017	partbgrants@doe.in.gov

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Indiana Resource Network News



Please don't forget to reach out the [Indiana Resource Network \(IRN\)](#) for resources and TA needs. The IRN is comprised of centers that provide targeted, comprehensive support to schools across the state to improve teaching and learning.

IIEP Update: Data Feeds into IIEP

Two major data related events occurred this summer. First, a new data import file was developed to dramatically improve the reliability of information being fed into the IIEP system, to shorten IEP access turn-around times from 48 hours to overnight, and to enable the development of future improvements, such as SE reporting and IEP translations. Secondly, IDOE completed a significant system maintenance and upgrade between June 15th and June 19th.

As a result of these two improvements, routine data imports were affected, specifically, new user imports and new student imports. IDOE and PCG have worked diligently to resolve the import delay and continue to monitor the situation on a daily basis.

We thank you for your patience and understanding through this improvement; should your school have any remaining access issues, please have a user with District Administrator access seek assistance through the message board or through indianaiep@pcgus.com.

Indiana Center on Teacher Quality (ICTQ) Modules Available

ICTQ Modules now include a self-paced Universal Design for Learning (UDL) online course offering. UDL, Co-teaching, and teacher evaluation modules are available at: <https://ictq.indiana.edu/ictq-hub/hub-modules.html>

ICTQ Co-teaching Level 1

ICTQ Level 1 Certification Training on Co-teaching

Self-paced, fully-online course via Canvas

[More Info](#)

ICTQ UDL Level 1

ICTQ Level 1 Certification Training on Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Self-paced, fully-online course via Canvas

[More Info](#)

INTASS Level 1 Training

INTASS Level 1 Evaluator Certification Training

Self-paced, fully-online course via Canvas

[More Info](#)

FROM THE DIRECTOR

UPCOMING DATES & DEADLINES

August 8, 2017	DOE-TR closes
August 31, 2017.....	Part B FY 2018 611 (Part 2) Applications due

**Special Education Excess Cost (SEEC) Funding Update & Deadline Info:
Clarification regarding SEEC update in the May 5, 2017 issue of "From the Director"**

The August 1 deadline for: 1) vendors sending all invoices to schools, and 2) creation of a written agreement with vendors is rescinded. August 1 was determined to be too soon to implement such significant changes. Having said that, please consider and plan ahead for future change.

Current status of the SEEC process

Currently the process is still the same. Earlier this summer, we met with representative stakeholders to help us examine pros and cons of the current process. Some identified issues were:

What is an "excess cost"? How should it be defined - rigid or flexible? What is the criteria for funding approval? Are there services DOE will never / will always fund? What are usual and customary services that schools are expected to pay by themselves? ETC!

We are beginning to create a guidance list, similar to what Part B grant uses, i.e., "allowable costs." At this point, our "SEEC Allowable Costs" aligns with long-standing practice:

Schools are expected to pay at least \$10.00 of the hourly cost for a highly experienced 1:1 service, interpreters, Brailers, OT, PT, and Speech therapy .

Please stay tuned for more SEEC updates in upcoming issues of this newsletter. Also, keep checking Learning Connection: IDOE-Special Education Administrators/files and bookmarks/SEEC Funding

Coffee Talk Series Coming Your Way



The Office of Special Education is excited to bring you an upcoming new video series entitled *Coffee Talk*. These videos will keep you up-to-date on important happenings and changes that are going on in the world of special education in Indiana. Although similar to the *Short Share* videos, these important "talks" will run a little longer and contain more detailed information that we hope you will find both useful and informative. In the coming weeks, you can look forward to hearing about such topics as Accommodations as well as an update on the upcoming changes to the Certificate of Completion.

We invite you to pull up a seat, grab a cup of coffee (or Red Bull), and spend a few moments with us as we share some important information from the Indiana Department of Education.

For Assistance at any time please contact the Special Education
General Line: 317-232-0570
email: specialeducation@doe.in.gov