

FROM THE DIRECTOR

February 2, 2018

INDIANA OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATES

Dear Colleagues:

The Northeast Indiana Special Education Cooperative rolled out the red carpet for me last week, scheduling visits to two high schools, one middle school, one elementary school, and an 18-22 year old transition program. To be honest, I have not had the opportunity to visit many schools in the northeast corner of the state and was looking forward to learning about the special education cooperative that includes 13 districts and spans 4+ counties.

My first stop was at Westview High School where Stephanie Oakley was demonstrating the new SRA reading curriculum. Her passion for her work was clearly evident. Ryan Park Elementary was my next stop where I observed Julie Culver-Smith, a primary functional skills teacher, lead “Mad Scientist Monday,” when all 1st graders in the school enjoy learning new science vocabulary and concepts. I only had time for a quick hello to Laura Harrington, the grades 2-5 teacher who was also providing SRA reading instruction before moving onto Choices, the 18-22 year old transition program. I was given the grand tour by one of the students who explained her various work experiences, while others filled out job applications.

My last two stops were of particular interest to me mainly because of the Certificate of Completion requirements the Department has been developing. I was impressed with the academic rigor and the variety of strategies used in Rachel Burley’s class at Hamilton High School: small group instruction, the use of a Smart Board, a YouTube instructional video, and assistive communication devices. I saw it all in an impromptu visit that was not on our original schedule.

My final stop was at DeKalb Middle School where Mindy Lake was also using effective teaching strategies in large and then small group math instruction. Her progress monitoring tracking system and para professional training manual were both very impressive. When asked about the Certificate of Completion, she expressed concerns about implementation. Luckily I had just visited her colleague at Hamilton High who could serve as a good resource as the co-op implements the changes.

In closing, I was encouraged to witness instruction aligned to grade level standards, the intentional inclusion of students in general education classes, the emphasis on creating an age appropriate environment, and the use of technology even in the smallest of districts. Kudos to the staff and the administration I met that day and special thanks to Mary Burton, Executive Director, for arranging the tour and spending the day with me.



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

OSE NEWS YOU CAN USE

Short Share TIPS Series: Goals Development Checklist

The [Office of Special Education](#) is happy to release another video in the Short Share TIPS series. In partnership with our [Indiana IEP Resource Center](#), the latest video discusses a [Goals Development Checklist](#). In addition, the checklist can be accessed [here](#). We hope you enjoy it!

Indiana's 1% Waiver for the Cap on Participation in the Alternate Assessment

In September, the Office of Student Assessment and Office of Special Education sought public comment on its request for a waiver on the number of students who could be tested using an alternate assessment on annual statewide Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR) tests.

Per the federal regulations, the total number of students assessed in each subject using an alternate assessment may not exceed 1% of the total number of students in the State who are assessed in that subject. Indiana, based upon historical data, anticipated that approximately 1.4% of students would be assessed using the alternate assessment. Since this exceeded the limit, Indiana requested a waiver to the 1% cap for one year (34 C.F.R. §200.6(c)(4)).

In the beginning of January, the Office of Student Assessment sent an email to Corporation Test Coordinators, Special Education Directors and Superintendents of districts that **exceeded** the 1% participation in the alternate assessment for the 2016-17 school year. [This video](#) was shared in that email. Any next steps mentioned only have to be completed by districts that **exceeded** the 1% cap.

US Education Department Rejects Other State's Request for Off-Grade Testing Waiver

In January, the U.S. Education Department rejected a waiver request submitted by New York. New York's waiver was seeking to test less than 1.5% of students with significant cognitive disabilities at their instructional level rather than at their grade level, as mandated by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

In the January 16 letter, the ED made it clear that **ESSA requires that states apply the same challenging academic content standards to each and every public school student**, and with the exception of alternate assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, states must administer the same academic assessments for measuring achievement to all students.

The letter stated, *"Waiving these requirements would undermine the intent of the statute that states set high expectations that apply to all students and hold schools accountable for reaching those expectations."*



FROM THE DIRECTOR

ISTAR-KR GUIDELINES

Assessment Q & A

Q1. Why is the completion of the ISTAR-KR required?

A1. The ISTAR-KR is the assessment tool used to report Early Childhood Outcomes (Indicator 7) to the US Department of Education. This report includes students with IEPs who had an exit assessment completed between July 1 and June 30 of the reported school year.

Indicator 7 includes:

- A. Social and Emotional Skills
- B. Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills
- C. Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Their Needs.

Q2. Who enters the data points into ISTAR-KR?

A2. ALL Teachers of Record are responsible for entering the data. Discussions with parents and school staff can take place in order to accurately report the student's skills. If the student also attends a community based preschool that completes the ISTAR-KR, the Teacher of Record enters the information with input from the community based teacher.

Q3. Which students should be assessed using ISTAR-KR?

A3. ALL students (ages 3-5) with IEPs. "Walk-in" speech students are included.

Q4. What assessments are used to report to the US Department of Education?

A4. The data points included on the entrance assessment (completed within 6 weeks of enrollment) and the exit assessment (completed within 6 weeks of exit of program) are used to determine the amount of growth the student demonstrated in those 3 outcomes listed above under Indicator 7.

Q5. When is an exit assessment completed?

A5. "Exit" is selected for the type of assessment when the student is going to kindergarten the next year, or is no longer eligible for special education services. Exit assessments should not be given for students who move, parents revoke consent, or any other reason other than the two stated above.

NOTE: Students participating in On My Way PreK will have an exit at the end of each year due to specific requirements for that program.

Q6. When completing the exit assessment, what exceptionality should be selected?

A6. The exceptionality of the student that was selected while the student was eligible for special education services should also be selected for the exit assessment.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Project SUCCESS

Project Success Spring 2018
Regional Trainings

Project SUCCESS' Spring 2018 Regional Trainings will focus on providing support to **administrators, supervisors, and coaches** of teachers of students with significant disabilities. As always, this professional development is at **no cost** to attendees!

[Sign Up Today](#)

Regional Training Objectives:

- Learn how Project SUCCESS supports districts and teachers in implementing higher expectations for students with significant disabilities.
- Understand how Content Connectors align to Indiana Academic Standards to guide classroom instruction.
- Recognize elements of best practice to provide effective feedback and evaluate teachers of students with significant disabilities.

Click on the links below for additional information on each location:

[February 14 – Fort Wayne](#)

[February 21 – Indianapolis](#)

[February 22 – Vincennes](#)

Project SUCCESS needs your input! [Please complete this short survey](#) to help them determine the current needs for information and professional development related to the Certificate of Completion. The survey will be open until February 9th.

Thanks!

FROM THE DIRECTOR

UPCOMING Training Sessions Offered by IRN Partners Across the State

- 2018 February 9 ISMHI Addressing the Social, Emotional, Behavioral Health Needs of Our Students-New Albany
- 2018 February 13 [IEPRC](#) Writing Standards-Aligned Goals @ Indianapolis
- 2018 February 15 [IEPRC](#) Advanced Reporting: The Basics of Reports and Data Collection @ Indianapolis
- 2018 February 16 [IEPRC](#) Developing Behavior Intervention Plans @ Merrillville
- 2018 February 21 [IEPRC](#) Writing Standards-Aligned Goals @ Merrillville



Indiana Hands & Voices
**Scholarship Opportunity
for
Deaf / Hard of Hearing Students**

This scholarship is open to all Indiana residents who are deaf and/or hard of hearing who are currently enrolled in, or plan to attend, an college or university for the 2018 – 2019 school year. The chosen applicant will be awarded a one-time \$500 scholarship.

[APPLICATION](#)

Application DEADLINE March 30th, 2018
Winner will be notified by May 4th, 2018

Other Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

ICASE Spring ConferenceFebruary 14-16, 2018

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