

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

### INDIANA OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATES

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For the past two years, a group of committed stakeholders including parents, school personnel, Vocational Rehabilitation, Work Force Development, and members of the Department of Education (DOE) have been developing new requirements for earning a Certificate of Completion. Although most students with disabilities are capable of earning a diploma, for a small population of students a Certificate of Completion (CoC) path is determined by a case conference committee to be more appropriate.

Concerns raised by parents, educators, outside agencies, and employers about the post high school outcomes of students who receive a Certificate of Completion prompted a review of the CoC. As a result, a course of study for the CoC was developed that encourages increased access to academic instruction, requires emphasis on employability skills as part of the curriculum, and promotes job related experiences and activities while students are still in school.

On December 6, 2017, the State Board of Education approved sixty (60) applied courses for the 2018-19 school year that, along with credit bearing courses, support the requirements of the course of study for the CoC. The approved courses align with alternate achievement standards related to the general education content standards. Although the course titles are new, requiring academic instruction to students with significant cognitive disabilities is not. The Department of Education and Project Success have provided professional development on instruction for the alternate achievement standards since 2014. During the past year, many resources have been developed and teachers, administrators and school counselors have had multiple opportunities for training related to changes to the CoC. Vendors for school information systems have been informed and are ready for implementation. DOE data reports have been adjusted to reflect the CoC changes.

The Department is ready to support schools and expects schools to put the new requirements in place for the freshman class of 2018-19. However, because some schools have requested additional time for implementation, the department will not require schools to report credits or applied units for course completion until the 2019-20 school year. Whether schools begin submitting data on course completion in 2018-19 or the following school year, it is expected that schools will continue to provide academic instruction and opportunities to develop employability skills to all students on a Certificate of Completion path.

Additional Certificate of Completion information and guidance can be found [here](#).

#### **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.*