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Inside OSEP: Laurie's Letter

Message From Director Laurie VanderPloeg



Hello Stakeholders!

I am looking forward to 2020 and all that we will be able to accomplish to support improved outcomes for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities, and their families. Much of what we do requires a significant financial commitment. I am pleased that congress passed, and the president signed, an [appropriations law](#) that funds the government through the end of fiscal year 2020. The law provides increases in funding under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Part B sections 611 and 619, and IDEA Part C. It also provides stable funding for many of our programs under IDEA Part D, along with increases for educational technology, media, and materials grants and personnel preparation grants, as well as Special Olympics education programs.

I'm especially encouraged by the increased commitment to the personnel preparation grant programs. Attracting, preparing, and retaining effective personnel to serve and educate our population has been a focused effort in my time as OSEP director. Infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities have unlimited potential and deserve a strong, effective educator workforce with the knowledge and skills needed to provide the quality services and education each child deserves. The federal investment in preparing this workforce is a cornerstone of OSEP's role in supporting states in their work to address personnel shortages.

This month's update will probably reach most of you in the new year. I trust that you were able to enjoy time with family and friends throughout the holiday season. On to 2020!

Laurie

OSEP Has a Resource for That. Spread the News!

OSEP, directly and through its partners and grantees, develops a wide range of research-based products, publications, and resources to assist states, local district personnel, and families to improve results for students with disabilities. In this new OSEP Update section, OSEP will highlight the work of its funded projects by focus area with the hope that you will disseminate the resources within your circles, and they within theirs. OSEP supports great work. Help us ensure that everyone knows!



Start Here.

Looking for a place to start? The [OSEP IDEAs That Work](#) website is designed to provide easy access to information from research to practice initiatives funded by OSEP that address the provisions of *IDEA* and the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* as amended by the *Every*

Student Succeeds Act. This website includes resources, links, and other important information relevant to OSEP's research to practice efforts.

Previous Months' OSEP Updates

[The Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education](#)

[The Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems](#)

[The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition](#)

[Center on Great Teachers & Leaders at American Institutes for Research](#)

[National Center on Intensive Intervention](#) at American Institutes for Research

[State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center](#)

[The National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes](#)

[The PROGRESS Center](#)

[National Center for Systemic Improvement](#)

[National Center on Accessible Educational Materials](#)

[IDEA Data Center](#)

[The Center for IDEA Fiscal Reporting at WestEd](#)

[The Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports](#)

The [Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform Center](#) is designed to help state educational agencies, institutions of higher education, and local educational agencies create aligned professional learning systems that provide teachers and leaders effective opportunities to learn how to improve core and specialized instruction in inclusive settings that enable students with disabilities to achieve college and career ready standards.





The [IRIS Center](#) is a national center dedicated to improving education outcomes for all children, especially those with disabilities, by developing free, online resources about effective evidence-based practices and interventions.

Results Driven Accountability: What's Due and What's New

OSEP's Monitoring and State Improvement Planning division conducts many state-focused activities under the umbrella of Results Driven Accountability (RDA). You can read more about this innovative initiative to focus on educational results for children and youth with disabilities and their families [here](#). Additionally, OSEP is examining RDA as a part of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services [RETHINK framework](#).

REMINDER! OSEP's GRADS360° Page Will Stay Live Into 2020

OSEP will continue to use its GRADS360° page for the foreseeable future. We anticipate the that site will remain active until the fourth quarter of 2020/



What this means for the public. All of the publicly-available information currently housed on the website will remain.

What this means for state users: The SPP/APR online submission system currently hosted on GRADS360° is retired. Beginning with the FY18 SPP/APR, due Feb. 3, 2020, states will submit using the Department's universal APR tool currently under development on the [EDFacts](#) Metadata Process System. In the coming months, OSEP will host several informational calls for states on the new system. Contact your state lead if you have questions.

FFY 2018 Part B and Part C SPP/APR Reporting Templates Now Available!

Due to the transition to the new reporting tool, the system will not open for state submissions until Jan. 1, 2020. To help prepare for the 2020 submission, the Part B and C Templates can be accessed below:



OSEP's Monthly Technical Assistance Call to States

OSEP held two national technical assistance calls in December. The [Dec. 12 call](#) focused on the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Staff reviewed the SSIP reporting requirements and provided guidance on how states should document any substantive changes to the SSIP. OSEP also explained how it will review the phase III year 4 SSIPs.

The [Dec. 16 call](#) featured guidance on reporting correction of noncompliance, including prefinding correction, in the SPP/APR. Additionally, OSEP previewed the login and navigation functionality on the new SPP/APR reporting tool. The presentation included two "how to" videos - [logging into the APR tool and quick navigation dashboard tips](#) and [SPP/APR user account overview and how to make updates](#). All SPP/APR resources can be accessed [here](#).

Dose of Data



State IDEA Data Displays

OSEP [published the state IDEA data displays](#) as an attachment to states' FFY 2017 SPP/APR. The Part B and the Part C & Part B 619 data displays present state-reported data on infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities in a transparent and user-friendly format. The data displays are intended to provide the public with a broader picture of state performance in key areas. The data displays are included in the OSEP response section for each state.

Notice of Proposed Priority

OSEP published the [Notice of Proposed Priority for the National Technical Assistance Center To Improve State Capacity To Collect, Report, Analyze, and Use Accurate IDEA Part B and Part C Fiscal Data \(84.373F\)](#) for public comment in the Federal Register on Dec.10.



The proposed IDEA Fiscal Data Center will provide technical assistance to help states understand, collect and report on the following IDEA section 618 statutory requirements: (1) maintenance of state financial support in section V of the IDEA Part B annual state application; (2) IDEA Part B maintenance of effort reduction and coordinated early intervening services data collection; (3) description of use of federal IDEA Part C funds for the state lead agency and the interagency coordinating council in section III of the IDEA Part C annual state application; and (4) system of payments, use of insurance, program income and restricted indirect cost rate/cost allocation plan information in section IV of the IDEA Part C annual state application.

Public comments are due Feb. 24, 2020 and can be submitted through [regulations.gov](#).

Resources and Research to Use



Early Childhood Personnel

The [Early Childhood Personnel Center](#) at the [University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities](#) serves as a national

resource on personnel standards and to assist states to develop an integrated and comprehensive system of personnel development that aligns preservice and inservice training across all disciplines serving young children and their families. One of their featured resources is a map of [Institutes of Higher Education Early Childhood Programs](#). This map provides information about certificate and degree programs in early childhood, early childhood special education and blended programs in each state.

Literacy



The National Center on Improving Literacy developed two tool kits to help families take part in literacy experiences at home. The first toolkit, *Supporting Your Child's Literacy Development*, provides strategies, tips, and activities for families to help their child develop as a reader.

The second tool kit, *Supporting Students with Reading Needs*, developed in collaboration with the [Idaho State Department of Education](#), helps parents and families use everyday time together as an opportunity for learning and building reading skills.



Improvement and Implementation Science

The ECTA Center's [Statewide Implementation Guide](#) is an extensive online resource designed to support state leaders in applying the principles of improvement science and implementation science to implement and scale up evidence-based practices and ultimately to improve outcomes for children and families. The *Guide* focuses on four essential support structures – State Leadership Team, Professional Development Network of Program Coaches, Implementation and Demonstration Sites, and Data/Evaluation systems—and the web site includes a list of [key resources and tools](#) to help state leaders with each essential support structure.

Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities



[TIES Center](#) recently published a resource, titled [Using the Least Dangerous Assumption in Educational Decisions](#). There has been insufficient research to date to know what students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are able to do when given the opportunity to learn rigorous content while provided with appropriate supports. The least dangerous assumption holds that in the absence of conclusive data, educational decisions ought to be based on assumptions that, if incorrect, will have the least dangerous effect on student outcomes and learning.

Engage With Us! Social Media and More

Connect With OSERS on Twitter



OSERS is on Twitter with the latest tweets from special education advocates, educators, families, and students. Follow us [@Ed_Sped_Rehab](#) and tell your friends. We'll see you in the Twittersphere!

Visit the *OSERS Blog* and *OSEP Update Archive*



Blog

Visit our blog for powerful stories and useful information from parents, families, educators, and practitioners in the field. Be sure to bookmark sites.ed.gov/osers for future posts!

You can also check out the [IDEA website newsletter archive](#) for past editions of the *OSEP Update*. Readers are invited to send their feedback on the newsletter to rebecca.walawender@ed.gov.



If you know someone who would like to **subscribe to the OSEP Update** and breaking news, encourage them to **sign up HERE!** This link will also allow subscribers to [manage their subscriber settings](#) and unsubscribe.

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