

Special Education Staff Newsletter for the Week of 11/2/2009

The December 1st Child Count

TO: All Special Education Teachers and SERCs
FROM: Marcy Doud, Middle Grades Special Education Supervisor

The December 1st Child Count is upon us!! Students in special education must have three things to be eligible or “counted” on the unduplicated child count: a current evaluation, current IEP, and receiving services on or before December 1, 2009.

It is important that the child count is as accurate as possible! As we merge Easy IEP reports with Campus, we are noticing that some students may not be counted. Students with disabilities who are new to SPPS or returning with an expired IEP are not currently showing up on the Campus Unduplicated Child Count Reports, nor are they showing up in Campus as students with IEPs. This is because their new IEP is created in Easy IEP and the systems do not yet talk to each other to create a special education “flag”. Complicating this issue, the new web-based Placement system does not identify students as needing special education. We are currently working on all of these issues and hope to have them fixed soon; however, we need your help to make sure we are identifying students and receiving funding for them.

The building SERC will be connecting with you to verify the unduplicated child count and the SERCs will be reporting corrections back to Patti Romine. Thank you in advance for your time toward this important task.

Reminder, Strategic Plan Goals and MNCIMP Goals

TO: All Special Education Staff & Building Administrators
FROM: Cecelia Dodge, Director of Special Education

This is a quick note to acknowledge that I am aware that your jobs are extremely tough right now and to thank you for all you do for children and youth with disabilities. It may seem that there is no rhyme or reason to the changes that are occurring in the district this year. In actuality, we are guided by the District’s strategic plan and this year’s highlighted goal of increasing the number of students with disabilities who score proficient on MCA IIs by 10 percentage points. The strategic plan goes through 2011 and has specific action steps under the goal of improving special education services. Additionally, the special education department follows the self-monitoring process that is outlined by MDE. This process, called MN Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (MNCIMP) requires the district to identify areas of non-compliance and set goals to address these. I am sharing these Strategic Plan Action Steps and MNCIMP Goals so that you are better informed on what we are striving for together.

STRATEGIC PLAN STRATEGY E: IMPROVE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

E1: Define and implement a consistent district-wide referral process to assure appropriate identification of students with disabilities, especially in disability areas where there is disproportionate over-identification and under-identification of specific student groups.

E2: Identify and address district targets for lowering the number of students indentified for special education services during the transition from elementary to middle school.

E3: Provide professional development for regular education teachers and special education teachers in strategies for pre-referral interventions and how to collect data on interventions.

E4: Implement a collaborative model of services, which includes Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) with a continuum of services provided to meet the needs of students.

E5: Integrate curriculum and instruction using a collaborative teaching model to increase special education student participation in general education.

E6: Provide professional development for general and special education teachers so that they may provide the necessary accommodations in the general education classrooms to accommodate special education student needs through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process.

E7: Review current caseloads for special education teachers and seek solutions where caseloads are excessively high.

E8: Embed National Standards for Secondary Education and Transition for all special education students in secondary curriculum and Eight-Year Plans.

CURRENT ACTION PLAN GOALS

- Improve Early Childhood Outcome Data Compliance to 100%
- Increase overall percentage students with disabilities scoring proficient on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment II in reading, writing and math.
- Increase the percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped their family.
- Increase special education four year graduation rate through improved transition planning and instruction.
- Increase due process compliance regarding referrals and other compliance areas from 80% to 100%.
- Identification of barriers and challenges to service students (6-21) in the Least Restrictive Environment.
- Increase due process compliance regarding pre-referrals, referrals and time lines for evaluations and IEPs from 90% to 100%
- Increase due process compliance regarding EBD criteria and eligibility from 90% to 100%.

- Increase due process compliance regarding IEP team members and goal statements from 80% to 100%.
- Increase percent of families participating in Part C who report increased rates for Part C Indicator 4 Family Outcomes areas of early intervention services have helped their family, understand their rights , and staff effectively communicate their children’s needs.
- Will increase special education four-year graduation rate and decrease the four-year dropout rate through improved transition planning and instruction.
- Improve Early Childhood Outcome Data on timely evaluation compliance to 100%.
- Improve District compliance on Part C #8, transition planning, to the State’s target of 100%.
- Increase the number of students served in Federal Setting I by 5%.
- Decrease dismissal and suspension rates for students with disabilities.

MCA II/MTAS Reports & MTAS Consideration Guide for IEP Teams

TO: All Special Education Staff

FROM: Mary Kelly, Elementary Special Education Supervisor

Your building level Special Education Resource Coordinators (SERC) have been provided your individual building’s MCA II and MTAS data. They have received training in accessing the Pearson Perspective website to provide assistance in identifying skill sets that the student would benefit from receiving further direct teaching or practice activities based on their MCA II scores:

<http://perspective.pearsonaccess.com/perspective/appmanager/mn/educator>

As IEP teams are making State Testing decisions, the MTAS document located at http://specialed.spps.org/11022009_3.html is for the teams to use in assisting with that decision.

Please contact your building SERC if you have any questions regarding this information.

[Click here](#) to view MCA-II item samplers available on the MDE website

[Click here](#) to view MTAS item samplers available on the MDE website.

Pennies for Peace Newsletter

TO: All Special Education Staff
FROM: Cecelia Dodge, Director of Special Education

Go to http://specialed.spps.org/11022009_4.html to download a newsletter regarding the latest efforts from the SPPS Pennies for Peace campaign.

Last Chance to Register: Reader's Workshop Using MONDO Materials for Educational Assistants

TO: Special Education Elementary Educational Assistants (EA), Special Education Teachers, Administrators
FROM: Mary Kelly & Mary Garrison

On Wednesday, November 4, 2009 (an early release day), all Special Education Elementary EAs will be attending a one-hour session on using Mondo literacy materials during Reader's Workshop (RW). The purpose is to familiarize the EAs with using Mondo materials in RW so that they learn how to access pacing guides and lesson plans and, under the direction of a teacher, to use this information to provide previewing and reviewing assistance for the students they serve.

Two sessions are being offered --- from 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm & from 2:45 pm to 3:45 pm. EAs must register for one of the sessions on [PDExpress](#). Please sign up for the earliest session that is feasible. If a course is full, then put your name on the waiting list.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS: Reader's Workshop using MONDO Materials

- 11/4/2009, 01:15 PM - 345 Plato
- 11/4/2009, 02:45 PM - 345 Plato

COMING SOON---

There will be a follow-up session for Special Education Educational Assistants on Wednesday, December 2nd (early release day) focused on how children learn to read, the main components of literacy instruction, and the role of paraprofessionals in supporting reading. Registration for this session will be posted on PD Express in the next couple of weeks.

In addition, we will be recording both literacy sessions. These sessions will be distributed to special education teachers at a later date to arrange times during the workday for teaching assistants to receive the same training. More information coming soon.

Hold the date! Educational Assistant Development – November 13, 2009

TO: Elementary and Secondary Special Educational EAs, SE Teachers, Principals
FROM: Gail Ghere, Assistant Administrator ARRA

HOLD THE DATE! On Friday, November 13, the district's next professional development day, we will be offering professional development for the special educational assistants. The agenda for the session is being finalized, but there will be morning and afternoon sessions. Both sessions will cover the same topics.

This is a secondary professional development day while elementary EAs have a parent-teacher conference day. Principals and directing teachers should determine if the EAs who are working this day are available to attend the AM or PM session. EAs would report to their school the other half of the day for other assigned duties.

More details with times and location will be posted in next week's SE Newsletter. Registration will be posted on PD Express by the middle of this week.

Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities

TO: All Special Education Staff
FROM: Mary Kelly, Elementary Special Education Supervisor

For more information on these and other professional development opportunities, click on the links below or go to <http://www.specialed.spps.org/calendar.html>.

EasyIEP Help Session

11/4/2009 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

EasyIEP Help Session

11/9/2009 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Inference Strategy

11/9/2009 3:00 PM - 6:15 PM

EasyIEP Help Session

11/12/2009 7:30 AM - 9:30 AM

EasyIEP Help Session

11/16/2009 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

UDL Tech Initiative: Inspiration Software Across the Curriculum

11/16/2009 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

[UDL Tech Initiative: Inspiration Software Across the Curriculum](#)

11/16/2009 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

[EasyIEP Help Session](#)

11/19/2009 7:30 AM - 9:30 AM

[EasyIEP Help Session](#)

11/23/2009 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

[Metro ECSU/R-CSPD Paraprofessional Workshops: Working with High-Stress Students](#)

12/1/2009 4:30 PM - 7:30 PM