

FOCUS on Special Education

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**SEAC Get-
Together
Scheduled for
Dec 15 at
Baldwin IC**

For all parents of students on IEPs in our member districts. Refreshments and conversation will be provided! From 6:00-?

Tis the Season for Staying Accountable

December already. I don't believe it either.

As we head into the home stretch for this first semester, it is important that we refocus our efforts on making sure we are reporting out on the goals that we have set for our students.

More than simply a legal requirement, accurately filling out our second quarter progress reports ensures that we are keeping an eye on the targets that were set at the last IEP meeting and considering whether or not adjustments are necessary. Please set this as a priority, as this has been a target for the federal and state audits



in the IDEA file review for the last couple of years.

As you are recording your progress notes, please keep in mind that the measure you are putting in must match the criteria set forth in the original goal. Anecdotal

progress monitoring is only acceptable if it is accompanied by actual progress data. So yes, you can say the student is doing well in progressing in the goal, but include the actual numbers you are using to come to that conclusion. In addition, (continued on Pg. 3)

JANUARY 3-4 INSERVICE TO BE IN HOME DISTRICTS

While we typically get together for an ECKCE Inservice on January 3, we have occasionally encouraged employee participation with their building in-services on

their first day of the second semester. This year all three districts are hosting individual staff trainings which incorporate special education topics and due to logistical considerations we

have decided to forego our time together in favor of encouraging employees to participate with their school teams in the various trainings offered. Enjoy the days!

Often in Special Education, questions arise which you may need the answer to and others may benefit from that answer as well. Each month we will include a few of these questions, so please don't hesitate to ask.

FREQUENTLY (RECENTLY) ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: We just held an IEP meeting before Thanksgiving and progress reports are due in two weeks. Do we still have to do them?

A: Yes, probably. It really depends on how well you closed out the last IEP and how much the goals actually changed. At the IEP discussion, the progress on the previous goals should always be reviewed for appropriateness and present levels of progress. If they have been met and you set new goals, you may not have had enough time to collect progress data on the new ones yet—on the progress reports make a note to that effect. If they were continued or modified, you should be able to carry that data forward to the progress reports, as the data will be consistent for that recording period. Just remember that you must always report out progress quarterly.

Q: If a student with a disability reaches the point where they are up for expulsion, we need to hold the manifestation determination, right? What happens if we can't convince the parent to attend?

A: Manifestation determinations are merely IEP reviews which must be held if a student is facing a long-term suspension. While the review consists primarily of answering two questions, i.e., Was the behavior which resulted in the consideration of a long-term removal the direct result of the student's disability, or was the behavior due to the failure of the school to implement the IEP. It is imperative to review the student's IEP at this time to make this determination. Since it is an IEP review, the same rules apply as to any IEP review meeting. The school must contact the parent to let them know the meeting is occurring and must document those attempts. If the parent does not attend, the manifestation determination must still be made. Because the parent is generally the biggest advocate for the student, when the parent chooses not to attend, the school must carefully consider how to answer those two questions and document the reasons for arriving at the answer to those questions very thoroughly. But just as with any IEP meeting to which the parents have been invited, it needs to be held and finalized. Because there are more stringent timelines on a manifestation determination, there is much more urgency to holding it as the student's FAPE is at stake pending the outcome. Regardless of the outcome, remember that the services to allow the student to access progress in the general education services must be delivered beginning the 11th day of the removal from their current educational placement.

ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE IEP (CONT. FROM PG. 1)

as you are filling out your progress reports and you are struggling to match your measurement with the goal as it is written, you may realize that your original goal may not contain all of the criteria for a SMART goal. Or the measurement used may not be the same as

was first recorded as the baseline data. Remember that your criteria for baseline and your criteria for the actual goal must align in order to determine the rate of progress. If you notice that this is not the case, please consider reworking the goal to make sure that it

can be accurately measured. Depending on when the IEP is due for review, you may need to amend the IEP, but it is necessary to do this in order to make sure you are accountable to that student's progress. We should strive to continually improve our goal writing skills.

Thank you to all of our service providers for helping us get this year off to a great start. Your efforts are greatly appreciated and do not go unnoticed!!!

End Of Year Personal Information Accuracy

Please update your personal information via Frontline if you have had any changes to assure that we get you your year end tax information in a timely and accurate manner. Remember to access Frontline Central by going to eckce.com, scrolling down to click

on Human Resources, then click on the blue box labelled Payroll. On the right side click to access Frontline Central, click on the Frontline Employee Portal. Once you are logged in, go to my forms, forms I can start, then leave requests and personal data sheet will

populate. Click on the Personal data sheet and on the far right, click start this form. The form will open and you can update all of your personal information. Be sure to click submit and you should be all set. As always, thanks for all you do for our kids. Happy Holidays!

IEP Paperwork Deadline Reminder

Just a reminder that your IEP paperwork needs to be turned in in a timely manner. All remaining paperwork from August through December must be

submitted by December 16th. Check your list of students for draft IEPs to determine which ones need to be turned in. If you have any questions at all, please

contact Tristan Normile [@tnormile@eckce.com](mailto:tnormile@eckce.com). Remember to get your paperwork submitted regularly, usually within 10 days of the IEP meeting so that you don't fall behind.



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Don't Forget About the Employee Assistance Program

The holiday season, while delightful and full of hope, can also be a very stressful time at home and in the workplace.

All ECKCE employees have access to our Guardian Uplife Employee Assistance program. This benefit allows you access to many helpful resources, including financial resources,

legal resources, counseling and life coaching to name just a few. We recognize that life in the workplace presents a number of challenges, today more than ever. You don't have to feel alone in your struggle.

To access this free benefit, just go to the link included at the end of this article and enter the access code

“worklife”, all lowercase when prompted. You'll see all of the things that are available to ECKCE employees as well as some outside resources when your request may fall outside of these things.

We care about our employees well-being; please take advantage of this resource. <https://worklife.uprisehealth.com/employee-resources/>

PARAPROFESSIONAL NEWS AND NOTES

As a part of your job duties, you need to turn in inservice hours to Shelly McCart. While many of you do this regularly and have all of your hours completed, we are still looking for many of you to turn in your first hours. Please do so ASAP. Also, please remember that when you are assigned to working with students in the classroom,

you should not be on your phones. Please be mindful of distractions that will take away from your ability to help our struggling learners to be successful. And to update—we have heard your requests for a way to save time on clocking in and out for lunch, but are exploring alternatives that may not be available until later this year.

Finally, don't forget that we appreciate you as much as the students that you support do. Without your dedication we could not provide our students with the things they need to be successful. I hope each of you have a great rest of the year, and remember that we are still giving out gift cards to folks who refer friends to be paras too!