

**TEN HOT TOPICS IN
SPECIAL EDUCATION**

From my perspective

**What State Special
Education Advisory
Panel Members Need
to Know**

2013

-ONE-

STATE SYSTEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN
(SSIP)

INDICATOR 17

THE SUPER INDICATOR

3 Phases

1. Special Education Data Collection
2. Develop State Systemic Improvement Plan
3. Evaluate SSIP

Issues

- APR Indicators have been modified.
- Encourages Collaboration
- Role of the Advisory Panel yet to be determined.

**Possible Roles
Advisory Panel**

- Provides advise on each phase of the SSIP.
- Special Education Director will provide SSIP Updates to the Panel.

-TWO-

STATE CORE STANDARDS

- Forty-seven States have signed on to a national common core standards. This will have a major impact on public schools and will require a shift in focus and a need for massive professional development.

STATE CORE STANDARDS

- The change will help level the playing field and should help children who move or transfer to another school district or State.

ISSUES

STATE CORE STANDARDS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

- How will the common core impact services for children with disabilities? There will need to be an effort to incorporate common core standards in the IEP process.
- Special education staff and parents will need information and training on this shift.

ISSUES

STATE CORE STANDARDS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

CONTINUED

- Teacher training programs will need to get on board.
- States will need to ramp up professional development.
- IEP teams will require training.
- Provide parents with information on the common core.

PANEL

- **The Advisory Panel needs to stay updated regarding common core issues relating to special education.**

-THREE-

SEQUESTRIAN CUTS

- The Budget Control Act of 2011 established a joint select committee in Congress charged with the task of developing a proposal to achieve at least \$1.2 trillion in deficit reduction. Unfortunately, they could not reach an agreement.

Opportunity Lost

SEQUESTRATION

- This failure triggered enforcement funding cuts, called sequestrations.

Forced Cuts

5% - 10% cuts at the SEA Level

ADVISORY PANEL

- Keep current on cuts in your State.
- Are the cuts impacting services?

-FOUR-
RESULTS DRIVEN ACCOUNTABILITY (RDA)

- Last year, the Office of Special Education Programs begin talking and asking stakeholder input regarding Results Driven Accountability (RDA).

Compliance Results

FOCUS ON RESULTS

- As we speak, OSEP is developing a results-oriented accountability process.
- There will be more attention paid to the results indicators.
- This move will not change the requirements of compliance.

ADVISORY PANEL

- Understand the APR results indicators.
- Assist in setting targets and suggest improvement strategies.
- Understand the connection with the SSIP.

-FIVE-
FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- Fiscal accountability in special education continues to be a very hot topic, both at the State and school district levels.

MOE
MOFE
Excess Costs

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- Fiscal is part of the general supervision responsibility of the State Education Agency and School Districts.

ADVISORY PANEL

- Understand that fiscal management is part of general supervision.
- Provide advice, as appropriate.

-SIX-

ESEA WAIVERS

- “No Child Left Behind” is left behind. NCLB is a dying acronym. States have been allowed to submit ESEA waivers that, if approved, excuses them from NCLB requirements, but establishes new accountability requirements.

ESEA WAIVER

- States must show in their waiver how they will have high accountability standards that demonstrate children are making progress as well as how States assist low performing schools. Focus is on individual schools.

ESEA WAIVER
CONTINUED

- Major issue: When ESEA is reauthorized, federal accountability standards will apply.
- Waivers provide a good idea of what will be included in the new ESEA.

ADVISORY PANEL

- Understand how the new requirements impact students with disabilities.

-SEVEN-

SCHOOL CLIMATE, SAFE SCHOOLS AND BULLYING

- Safe schools is a hot topic because of incidents throughout the United States where children are bullied directly or become victims of cyber bullying.

SCHOOL CLIMATE, SAFE SCHOOLS AND BULLYING

- o Safe schools and a positive school climate lead to better performance for all children

ADVISORY PANEL

- o Ask for updates on safe school issues.
- o Suggest ways bullying children with disabilities can be reduced.

-EIGHT-

VIRTUAL SPECIAL EDUCATION

- o Largely because of advancement in technology, virtual education programs are being developed and offered throughout the world.



*Kahn Academy

IDEA AND VIRTUAL EDUCATION

- o IDEA was last reauthorized in 2004— nine years ago! Virtual special education was not an issue in 2004. The current regulations are silent on the issue.
- o Advancements in technology have outpaced the IDEA regulations.
- o Virtual school programs are popping up on the internet.

IDEA AND VIRTUAL EDUCATION

- o How does the IEP team function?
- o How are children evaluated?
- o Who monitors progress and compliance?
- o How does LRE work?
- o What about related services?
- o Who pays for the technology?
- o Role of parents?

VIRTUAL SPECIAL EDUCATION

- o There is a place for virtual special education:
 - Students with severe health issues.
 - Students with extreme behavior issues.
 - Students in rural and frontier areas.
 - Enhancing skills through the use of technology.

ADVISORY PANEL

- Receive updates on virtual special education services in your State.
- Provide advice regarding virtual program management.

-NINE-

AUTISM

- The number of children with autism grows every year. This has created huge challenges for school districts.
- Autism is going from a low to a high incidence.
- There is a disagreement regarding methods in treating autism.

AUTISM

- Not all teachers have not been adequately trained to deal with students with autism or Asperger's. Lack of expertise has resulted in large numbers of complaints and due process hearings across the country.
- Teacher training programs and school districts need to provide professional development opportunities.

ADVISORY PANEL

- Ask for information regarding this disability category and services in your State.

-TEN-

MENTAL HEALTH

- Our country does a fairly good job in addressing the needs of students with physical and health care needs. There is more stigma in relation to individuals with mental health issues.
- There are growing numbers of students with mental health problems and a need for services.

MENTAL HEALTH OPTIONS

- There is a drastic shortage of programs and services for students who need mental health interventions in and out of school.

MENTAL HEALTH COLLABORATION

- There is a lack of collaboration and communication between different agencies that provide mental health services.

ADVISORY PANEL

- Be proactive in regards to mental health services and children/youth with disabilities.
- Increase collaboration between agencies to help better address the challenges.

ADVISORY PANEL

- Members need to be aware of the changing educational landscape and how these issues impact services for children and youth with disabilities.

Thank you!

Questions?

 Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) is the technical assistance division of the Center for Persons with Disabilities, a University Affiliated Program at Utah State University.

 Utah State UNIVERSITY
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Center for Persons with Disabilities

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This information could be made available in alternative format, including large print, Braille, audio tapes, or CD.

**Keep the Main
Thing the Main Thing!**

**13.09.42
Revised 2013**

