

# The Bureau Bulletin



Fall 2010

*From the Bureau of Special Education*

## Brief from the Chief

### They Came Together Under One Purpose...

Once again on a bright, crisp September morning, the Annual Bureau of Special Education Back to School Meeting brought together special services professionals from around Connecticut.

Charlene Russell-Tucker welcomed the large group of directors, coordinators and supervisors, many of whom routinely attend this annual event, now in its seventh year, to begin their academic year with the latest, most up-to-date information.

Mrs. Russell-Tucker, Associate Commissioner of Education, Division of Family and Student Support Services, spoke about Connecticut's Race to the Top application, both phases one and two. While graciously acknowledging that this year's application was not successful, she offered firm assurance that the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) continues to move forward with educational reform. Further, she reminded the audience that Connecticut has received State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF), with some of those funds being committed to key areas of the reform effort.

Associate Commissioner Russell-Tucker also described recent legislation, PA 10-111, which addresses, among other areas, school governance councils and secondary school reform. She noted the hard work involved with the adoption of the Common Core State Standards as well as the newly developed certification regulations. She applauded the work of Connecticut's educational community in achieving a rating of "meets requirements" regarding the State Performance Plan. Finally, she recommitted the efforts of the CSDE in working together with Connecticut's school districts to continue to deliver high-quality educational services to all children.

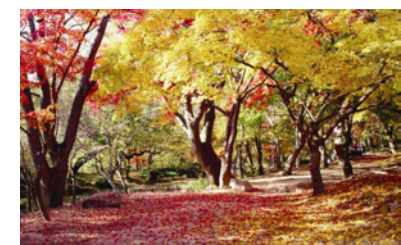
Click [here](#) for more of this article.

Many of the presentations from the Back to School Meeting are on the SERC Web site and can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

### Mark Your Calendars...

- SEDAC-G December final certification statutory Due Date: December 1, 2010
- SEDAC – Oct 1 Child Count Timely Due Date: December 5, 2010
- SEDAC – Oct 1 Child Count Accurate Due Date: December 15, 2010

Click [here](#) to view a complete copy of the Timely and Accurate Data Collection calendar.



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## Secondary Transition News



**There have been well-documented studies demonstrating that transition services are critical to the long-term success of students with disabilities. In addition to the services available to school districts through qualified vocational/transition programs, the number of community-based transition services for 18- to 21-year-olds sponsored by local education agencies (LEAs) has more than doubled in recent years.**

School districts are providing transitional supports not only in conventional ways, but through innovative services as well. As an example, several public school districts have developed a unique approach to providing 18- to 21-year-old students with a totally community-based transition experience without a permanent location. Students in these districts are transported daily to scheduled locations such as a YMCA, college campus, and worksites. Several others are delivering transition services through collaborative partnerships with universities. A true sign that the higher education community has embraced this concept can be seen as more and more colleges and universities join LEAs in developing transition services on their campuses.

Throughout this school year, Dr. Patricia Anderson, lead consultant for secondary transition services at the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), Bureau of Special Education (BSE) will be issuing two challenges as she meets with representatives from Connecticut schools:

1. **Ensure that all students receiving special education services and their families learn what they need to know about the secondary transition process while the students are in the eighth grade, and**
2. **Design district-level transition planning as a student-centered process.**



In an effort to continue to assist LEAs to provide appropriate transition services, the CSDE, BSE is offering or collaborating on a variety of professional development opportunities and resources during this school year. Transition update presentations are scheduled at all of the Regional Transition Networks as well as at ConnCASE regional meetings. The State Education Resource Center (SERC) is offering a number of popular and new workshops, including: *Transition Assessment and the IEP*, *MAPS - Person Centered Planning*, *Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination* and *Ensuring Educational Benefit: Making the Transition IEP a Living Document*. Information about

SERC professional development sessions is available on the SERC Web site ([www.ctserc.org](http://www.ctserc.org)). Also, a revised version of the *Guidelines for Writing Post-School Outcome Goal Statements (PSOGS) and Annual Goals for Students with Disabilities*, as well as an expanded collection of sample *Post-School Outcome Goal Statements*, are available by clicking on the Web links (see next page) and will soon be posted on the secondary transition section of the CSDE's Web site ([www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov)). CSDE/SERC publications include new or revised editions of the *Directory of Transition Services in College, University, and Community-Based Settings*, the *Directory of Transition/Vocational Services*, and the *Connecticut Transition Assessment Resource Manual*.

An exciting and long-awaited resource is the searchable database of community rehabilitation/transition service providers. Queries to this database will result in a list of resources very specific to a given individual's needs, disability, location, or type of service required. Other new resources include e-mail dissemination lists for middle and high school counselors and school social workers.

As secondary transition programming evolves among the state's many school districts, make sure your district remains on the forefront of innovative practices. Stay updated and informed through the numerous publications and professional development opportunities available through the CSDE and our partners.

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The following Secondary Transition updates and related attachments are supplementary to the Back to School Power Point that is posted elsewhere in the Fall *Bureau Bulletin*.

## A. Transition Publications/Resources –

### Post-School Outcome Goal Statements (PSOGS) –

- [\*PowerPoint Presentation on Writing Transition Goals and Objectives: Post-School Outcome Goal Statements\*](#)
- [\*Topic Brief - Post-School Outcome Goal Statements: Frequently Asked Questions\*](#)
- [\*Guidelines for Writing Post-School Outcome Goal Statements \(PSOGS\) and Annual Goals for Students with Disabilities\*](#)
- [\*Sample Post-School Outcome Goal Statements\*](#) (Revised 2010) – Revised at the Spring 2010 Workgroup on Developing PSOGS for Special Populations.

### Publications available on SDE Web site –

- [\*Building a Bridge: A Transition Manual for Students \(2009\)\*](#)
- [\*Building a Bridge: A Transition Manual for Students-Spanish \(2009\)\*](#)
- [\*Directory of Transition Services in College, University and Community-Based Settings in Connecticut \(2010\)\*](#)
- [\*Directory of Transition/Vocational Service Providers \(2010\)\*](#)
- [\*Connecticut Transition Assessment Resource Manual\*](#)

**B. Secondary Transition On-Site Training Visits** – There will be approximately ten site visits planned for the 2010-2011 school year. Most of the districts volunteered to host an informal one-day review of and training on their secondary transition services. Selected LEAs will be notified of the process in late September and the visits will occur between November 2010 and February 2011. If you would like to request a future one-day technical assistance visit to explore your transition services and take advantage of the free technical assistance and expertise of the visiting team, please contact Dr. Patricia Anderson. Professionals who would like to participate on the visiting team may also submit a request.

For questions regarding secondary transition, please contact Dr. Patricia Anderson at [patricia.anderson@ct.gov](mailto:patricia.anderson@ct.gov), 860-713-6923 or Jay Brown at [jay.brown@ct.gov](mailto:jay.brown@ct.gov), 860-713-6918.



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## Assessment of Special Populations



Though always important, the assessment of Connecticut's students took on even greater significance with the onset of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the monitoring of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) at the district and school levels. With that significance came renewed interest in the assessment of students with disabilities. The evolution of the testing process as related to special populations has been one in which there were no easy answers. Testing any population with unique needs, whether those needs involve a disability or otherwise, presents sets of challenges that must be carefully considered in order to ensure fairness for all.

To the credit of all those who have had a hand in bringing Connecticut's standardized testing to the point at which it now exists, it can be considered both comprehensive and valuable in informing instruction and assisting in data-driven decision making. LEAs are strongly encouraged to utilize the results of these tests in this way.

All students in Connecticut schools are expected to participate in statewide assessments, and most participate in the standard administration of the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). While standard administration is appropriate for the majority of students, there exists a small percentage of students for whom the standard administration would represent a significant disadvantage based on their individual, specialized needs. For that reason, accommodations to the administration of each standardized test have been developed. The majority of Connecticut students with disabilities participate using the standard assessments with accommodations.

A useful tool for reviewing information related to the assessment of special populations in Connecticut has been made available through the CSDE and may be viewed by clicking [here](#). The results of the 2010 standardized test administration of the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist, CMT/CAPT Modified Assessment System (MAS), and CMT/CAPT assessment of English Language Learners (ELL) are graphically portrayed in an easy to understand format within the context of this presentation tool.

Additional information may be viewed by visiting the student assessment section of the CSDE Web site at <http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/cedar/assessment/index.htm>. You may also contact Joe Amenta at [joe.amenta@ct.gov](mailto:joe.amenta@ct.gov), 860-713-6855 or Janet Stuck at [janet.stuck@ct.gov](mailto:janet.stuck@ct.gov), 860-713-6837 for answers to questions not addressed in these materials.



## Secondary Transition Information Disseminated Electronically

**Transition Contact Person Dissemination List** – For the past five years, every district with secondary schools has identified one or more professionals to receive secondary transition-related information from the Department via an e-mail dissemination list. If no one is identified, the Director of Special Education is the default contact person. Please submit any changes, additions, or deletions to the Transition Contact Person List to Dr. Patricia Anderson at [patricia.anderson@ct.gov](mailto:patricia.anderson@ct.gov).

**Middle and High School Counselor Dissemination Lists** – These new e-mail dissemination lists were created via grant funds provided by the Department of Public Health to the BSE and the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS). The lists provide an electronic forum to disseminate information about providing services to children and youth with special health care needs, students in special education, and 504 students — especially in the area of secondary transition. Please submit any changes, additions, or deletions to the School Counselor Dissemination Lists to Kimberly Traverso at [kimberly.traverso@ct.gov](mailto:kimberly.traverso@ct.gov).

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## Secondary Transition Information Disseminated Electronically (cont.)

**School Social Worker Dissemination List** – This list was created via the grant funding mentioned on the previous page to provide an electronic forum to disseminate information about providing services to children and youth with special health care needs, students in special education, and 504 students — especially in the area of secondary transition. Please submit any changes, additions, or deletions to the School Social Worker Contact Person List to Scott Newgass at [scott.newgass@ct.gov](mailto:scott.newgass@ct.gov).

These lists will be used judiciously and are intended to provide school personnel working with students with disabilities and their families with immediate information about postsecondary education, training, career, employment and state agency (e.g., BRS, DDS, DMHAS, BESB) resources and professional development opportunities. Note that the contact information on these lists is available to the public via the Freedom of Information Act.



## Data Collection Issues and Updates

As you are aware, a significant amount of data related to students with disabilities are collected each year in response to both state and federal law. Specific data collection related to the Education Stability Act (ESA) has not significantly impacted the Public School Information System (PSIS). In fact, there has been no change in state guidance related to the *PSIS reporting district* or the *nexus district* for this Act. There has, however, been a slight change in guidance related to *resident town*.

A *resident town* is the district responsible for a student's general education costs. In most cases the resident town is where the student is living. However, some confusion has arisen around the ESA's use of the term *school of origin*. This term is utilized most often in cases when a child is placed in out-of-home care by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and that placement is in a town different from the town in which the child had been attending school. In order not to further disrupt the child, DCF may determine that he or she will continue to attend the same school that the child had been attending even though he or she no longer resides in that town. In such a case, the town where the child continues to attend school is the *resident town* and the school that the child continues to attend is the *school of origin*.

Regarding reporting related to the special education data application and collection (SEDAC) data system, newly added features enhance this already sophisticated application. One such added feature allows a standard hard copy report provided by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) three times each year to now be accessed electronically. Similarly, districts will now have the ability to electronically access an array of reports that will serve to greatly enhance the amount of quickly available information for both district-level and building-level data-driven decisions. For additional information on the many other added features as well as field changes related to the SEDAC system, you may view a copy of a comprehensive Data Collection Presentation by clicking [here](#).

Additional major topics covered in the Data Collection Presentation include administrative overrides, desk audits, evaluation timelines, the State Performance Plan, Annual Performance Report and special education data. For answers to questions regarding data collection, please contact Diane Murphy at [diane.murphy@ct.gov](mailto:diane.murphy@ct.gov), 860-713-6891.



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## Publications Update

The BSE strives to inform parents, families, school districts and all other stakeholders as much as possible regarding special education regulations and practices. To that end, the CSDE Web site is host to a significant number of resource documents.

Resource documents are updated regularly. One such document that has recently undergone an extensive revision, [\*Guidelines for Identifying Children with Learning Disabilities 2010\*](#) (LD Guidelines), is now posted in an innovative Web-based format. The preface of this document provides navigation directions and requests feedback from the field. Please make sure to review it and watch for upcoming trainings.

As the application of Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) continues to mature in its implementation throughout the state, many resources for specific applications of SRBI have been made available by the CSDE. These resources are targeted to address many of the requests for guidance received during trainings and technical assistance to school districts. Topics include district SRBI plans, certification, the use of data teams in Connecticut's SRBI process, paraprofessionals and SRBI, suggested actions from the high school think tank, the early childhood SRBI brochure, as well as a Bureau Bulletin article on SRBI and special education referrals. These resources and more may be viewed on the CSDE Web site ([www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov)). For a comprehensive list of these resources, please click [here](#) to view the Back to School presentation on these publications.

For questions regarding the LD Guidelines, please contact Dr. Patricia Anderson at [patricia.anderson@ct.gov](mailto:patricia.anderson@ct.gov), 860-713-6923 or Perri Murdica at [perri.murdica@ct.gov](mailto:perri.murdica@ct.gov), 860-713-6942. For questions specific to SRBI, please contact Perri Murdica.

## Bureau Happenings



### Documentation of Compliance with Resolution Meeting Requirements

A positive relationship between a local school district and the parents of a student with special needs is an essential component of the student's educational program. In the vast majority of cases, a collaborative and respectful relationship does exist. Unfortunately, there are those instances in which these parties reach an impasse and, after considerable effort to resolve a disagreement, find it necessary to move the issue into due process.

In the event that parents request a due process hearing, the school district is required to hold a resolution meeting within 15 calendar days of receiving that request. However, the meeting need not be held if the parent and school district agree in writing to waive the resolution meeting or the parent and school district agree to use the mediation process. If the school district fails to hold the resolution meeting within 15 days of receiving notice of a parent's due process complaint or fails to participate in the resolution meeting, the parent may seek the intervention of the hearing officer to begin the due process hearing timeline.

In either case, the school district has the responsibility of documenting the action. The CSDE has made available a model [Documentation of Compliance with Resolution Meeting Requirement form](#).

Whether using this model form or other written documentation, a signed copy must be sent or scanned and e-mailed to the Due Process Unit of the CSDE. A copy of the model form can be found by clicking the link above or on the CSDE Web site. Should you have any questions regarding this process, please contact Gail Mangs at [gail.mangs@ct.gov](mailto:gail.mangs@ct.gov), 860-713-6938.

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## Attention School Psychologists!

In response to the field, the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education is offering an initial training to assist School Psychologists in understanding and implementing the **Guidelines for Identifying Children with Learning Disabilities (2010)**. Scheduled for Wednesday, November 10, 2010 at ACES in Hamden, this session offered facilitated dialogue regarding the evolving role of school psychologists within the context of the revised guidelines. Through hands-on activities, participants worked with hypothetical data involving students in the referral process for possible learning disabilities as well as within the context of a comprehensive evaluation.

Since attendance for this session was already filled, future sessions are being created to accommodate the overwhelming response. Early registration is strongly encouraged when the next dates are released. For questions related to training content, you may contact Dr. Patricia Anderson at [patricia.anderson@ct.gov](mailto:patricia.anderson@ct.gov) or 860-713-6923.



## Extra! Extra! Your Special Education Teacher Recruitment Materials Have Arrived!

Special education teachers are in demand. Recruiting high-quality teachers into the field is a priority for every school district. Local education agencies (LEAs) often don't have the resources to secure professionally prepared recruitment materials. The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is responding to this need.

The CSDE has requested and received a limited supply of materials from the [Personnel Improvement Center \(PIC\)](#) at the [National Association of State Directors of Special Education \(NASDSE\)](#). These materials, designed to assist LEAs in promoting careers in special education, are high-quality, professionally prepared brochures, briefs, posters and DVDs.

The full-color special education [recruitment brochure](#) promotes the many opportunities offered by a career in special education. Essential qualities and skills are discussed as well as general responsibilities at the elementary and secondary levels. A clear vision of special education teaching as a highly desirable profession with exceptionally positive attributes is articulated in an organized, motivating, and visually pleasing format.

Using a more expanded layout, the [recruitment brief](#) addresses questions such as, Who are special education students?, What do special educators do?, What kind of preparation will I need to become a special educator?, What employment opportunities are there for me as a special educator?, and How can I find out more about special education as a career choice?

An informative 10-minute DVD along with a comprehensive [discussion guide](#), offers professionals a media format for recruiting at community colleges, four-year universities, job fairs, and service organizations. To view a short video clip of the DVD, click [here](#) and scroll to the "One Child at a Time" video. Add to this the 8X10 "Become a Special Educator" [recruitment poster](#) as well as an LEA's own employment opportunities and any district becomes well equipped to catch the attention of potential top teachers.

Take a moment to view each of the available materials through the links above. Distribution to several LEAs and Institutions of Higher Education will take place through the Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification. There will also be a limited number of copies available to additional LEAs for pickup through the SERC Library, first-come, first-served. To obtain copies, please contact Dawn Gosselin at [gosselin@ctserc.org](mailto:gosselin@ctserc.org) or call 860-632-1485, ext. 250.

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## Bureau of Special Education District Liaison Update



As you know, the BSE education consultants adjusted their outreach approach in working with Connecticut school districts last December. Each BSE consultant is assigned as the primary liaison for 8-10 LEAs. All phone and e-mail communication initiated by parents or school personnel from a specific district will be directed to the BSE consultant assigned as the liaison for that LEA. In this way, we can ensure quick and consistent responses to any questions and concerns. Recently, the list of liaison assignments was updated to include additional consultants. Please click [here](#) for the most recent listing of BSE consultant district liaison assignments.

## If You Missed the Bureau of Special Education's Annual Back to School Meeting...

If you were unable to attend the Back to School Meeting, you are in luck! Many of the presentation topics have been organized into articles for your review in this issue of the Bureau Bulletin. You may also access documents associated with meeting presentations on the SERC Web site ([www.ctserc.org](http://www.ctserc.org)) or by using the links embedded in this bulletin's articles.

While we always enjoy seeing you at the Back to School event, if you were otherwise occupied, we hope that you find this resource helpful in keeping you informed. If you need further information regarding accessing these documents, please contact Jay Brown at [jay.brown@ct.gov](mailto:jay.brown@ct.gov), 860-713-6918.

## Advancing Connecticut's Transition Services

Transition services for students with special needs in Connecticut continue to evolve as essential program components in promoting positive post-school outcomes. SERC, as a part of its Transition Initiative, has joined with the CSDE, the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education (UConn), and the BRS to offer free trainings in how to use your district's post-school outcome data while increasing the amount of valuable data collected. Funded through the Connect-Ability grant, these trainings will be offered at CES, ED CONNECTION, ACES and CREC, and a combined presentation will take place for EASTCONN and LEARN. A training flyer with additional information may be viewed by clicking [here](#).

Your district's post-school data reveals what your former students, served by IEPs, are doing one year after leaving secondary school. Data are gathered regarding their enrollment in higher education or other types of training as well as their employment and career pursuits. Having this information as a resource places your district in an excellent position to understand the effectiveness of many of your programs while allowing you to make data-driven decisions regarding future programming.

Participants in these trainings will review the procedures for receiving and interpreting this data annually, brainstorm with other professionals in their District Reference Group (DRG) regarding transition services, develop resources for technical assistance related to post-school outcome data, and plan what can be done beginning this year to improve the response rate to the post-school outcome survey, the instrument used to collect this data.

To register for one of the trainings you may: (1) register online at [www.ctserc.org](http://www.ctserc.org); (2) mail a completed application form to SERC REGISTRATION, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457-1516; or (3) fax a completed application form to 860-632-8870. An application form may be obtained on the SERC Web site.

Registration questions or questions related to the special needs of attendees may be directed to Rebecca Kisluk, SERC Education Services Specialist, at 860-632-1485, ext. 293. For content questions, contact Missy Wrigley, SERC Consultant at 860-632-1485, ext. 397.

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## General Supervision System Update

One of the roles of the CSDE is to assure implementation of federal and state law regarding the education of children with disabilities. This role forms one major aspect of the work of the BSE through its General Supervision System.

Connecticut's General Supervision System is an integrated management system of the CSDE's compliance and program improvement activities, which are designed to improve the educational results and functional outcomes for all children with disabilities by ensuring implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) and Connecticut General Statutes Sections 10-76a to 10-76h, inclusive. These activities include data collection, dispute resolution processes (complaints, mediations, due process hearings), fiscal management, focused monitoring and the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report.

On a regular basis the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) issues federal guidance regarding how states are to monitor state-level and local-level activities mandated under the IDEA. Such is the case with recent federal guidance related to states' reporting of the correction of noncompliance. In response, the CSDE, through an extensive review of its policies and procedures regarding the reporting of the correction of noncompliance, developed a summary of the actions necessary to address this issue.

In summary, OSEP requires states and school districts to correct noncompliance in a timely manner. *Timely correction* is defined by OSEP as a school district's correction of noncompliance and the CSDE's subsequent verification of that correction; both actions are to occur as soon as possible but in no case later than one year after the school district has been notified of the noncompliance. At the Annual Back to School Meeting, Sarah Harvey, CSDE, Education Consultant, presented the specific actions required by school districts and the CSDE to assure timely correction of noncompliance. To view a copy of these materials, please click [here](#).

The CSDE supports school districts throughout the correction of noncompliance process to achieve a meaningful conclusion for children with disabilities, families and school districts. By combining compliance activities with opportunities for technical assistance and training, the CSDE strives to maintain a collaborative partnership with school districts to improve the educational results and functional outcomes for all children with disabilities.

If you have any questions about the General Supervision System, please contact Sarah Harvey at [sarah.harvey@ct.gov](mailto:sarah.harvey@ct.gov), or 860-713-6936.



## New Feature: **Bulletin Web Site References**

Do you like to print out the bulletin but wish you had easier access to the information behind the links? Beginning with this edition, all of the links referenced in each article are available under the heading [Bulletin Web Site References](#).

With this new resource, you no longer have to skim through each article online to identify and print the additional embedded articles and references. Simply print the bulletin, then go to [Bulletin Web Site References](#) and individually print any or all of the materials listed there.

The links will remain embedded in the articles for the convenience of our online readers.

We hope this new feature will make reading and using the bulletin even easier. If you have any questions, contact Jay Brown at [jay.brown@ct.gov](mailto:jay.brown@ct.gov), 860-713-6918.

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## Celebrating the Thirty-Seventh Anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

In a recent release from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), Dr. Alexa Posny commented on the September 26, 2010 anniversary of this landmark Act being signed into law. She noted the Act's critical importance in addressing equity in education and equal treatment of individuals with disabilities. She further spoke to the Act's provision of "comprehensive services and funding for employment and independent living that truly enabled people with disabilities to work and live in the community as never before." With this legislation being initiated almost forty years ago, it serves us well to pause and take a moment to remember *where it all began*. Follow the link to read the full content of [OSERS' news release](#) on this history-making legislation.

### Independent Educational Evaluations

Special education law and regulation is designed to ensure a free and appropriate education for children with special needs. Special education administrators need to have a comprehensive understanding of both federal and state law and regulations. To interpret law and regulation the OSERS responds to questions from the field. Recently, such guidance was provided through an August 2010 letter to a Connecticut parent/advocate regarding independent educational evaluations (IEEs). OSERS addressed issues related to IEEs, including the qualification of the examiner and the choice of specific examiners.

Click [here](#) for more of this article.

### Public Act 10-160, AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNOR CONCERNING THE EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN IN THE CARE AND CUSTODY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

This public act is referred to as the "Education Stability" Act. Its purpose is to require the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to determine a child's school placement when the child is removed from his or her home and placed in out-of-home care. In recognizing that such children often experience significant disruption to their lives as alternate living placements are made, the Act ensures that if it is in the child's best interest, the child will remain in the school he or she was attending just prior to placement.

Though many children are placed each year, the Act applies only to specific children DCF places in out-of-home care: children subject to a 96-hour hold, those placed through an order of temporary custody and those committed to DCF. Note that it does not apply to children adjudicated delinquent, children receiving voluntary services from DCF, or children placed by a state agency other than DCF. The use of the term "out-of-home care" means children in foster care, group homes or residential care may be covered by the provisions of the Act.

Click [here](#) for more of this article.



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## Unified Theater

The BSE often receives information related to unique and interesting programs throughout Connecticut that include individuals with special needs. This article is designed to offer information about one such program, Unified Theater. Unified Theater trains and supports middle and high school students as they create performing arts groups. The theater features the talents of students both with and without special needs. To date, Unified Theater has worked with more than 1,500 students. Participation in the arts and other extracurricular programming brings benefits to students that may include improved performance in school, higher levels of confidence and better relationships with their peers. Benefits are extended to students of all abilities through inclusion and youth leadership. For further information regarding scholarship opportunities the BSE is helping to support, and Unified Theater's upcoming summit on "*Creative Leadership in Inclusion*" visit its Web site at [www.unifiedtheater.org](http://www.unifiedtheater.org).

## Upcoming CALI Training

Registration is now open for many of the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) modules by logging on to [www.sdecali.net](http://www.sdecali.net). As general education and special education continue to unify, it is increasingly important that all staff develop a more universal capacity related to both areas. CALI training builds that capacity across all members of a team in developing competency to collaborate, plan effective instruction and fully understand each student's needs.



## Two new trainings have been added to the schedule this year.

The first, *Effective Tier I Instruction for English Language Learners (ELLs) Basic Training*, is a two-day workshop designed for teams of general education teachers, ESL specialists, and school administrators who are dedicated to improving Tier I instruction for ELLs and who can provide on-site embedded support for other teachers in their school districts.

The second new training, *Educating Our English Language Learners Advanced Training (ELLs)*, is a one-day training designed for those general education teachers, student support personnel, and school administrators who have already completed the CALI Basic: *Instructional Best Practices in Educating our ELLs* or the new *Effective Tier I Instruction for English Language Learners (ELLs)* workshops. This new workshop will consist of three stand-alone modules entitled: *Vocabulary Development for Literacy, Linguistic & Authentic Content, Assessment and the CT ELL Framework* and *Learning Disabilities vs. Language Development*.

To view a detailed training announcement regarding these two new trainings, complete with target audience, expected outcomes, presenters, dates and locations, please click [here](#). Questions regarding CALI registration should be directed to Iris White at [iris.white@ct.gov](mailto:iris.white@ct.gov), 860-713-6794 or Shauna Brown at [shauna.brown@ct.gov](mailto:shauna.brown@ct.gov), 860-713-6586. For general information regarding CALI, please log on to: [www.ct.gov/sde/CALI](http://www.ct.gov/sde/CALI).



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## Early Childhood SRBI Resources

CSDE recently published two documents related to the implementation of Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) in early childhood.

[\*Early Childhood SRBI: Supporting All Children\*](#) is an introductory brochure for early childhood programs just learning about this framework.

[\*Early Childhood SRBI: A Guide for Preschool Programs\*](#) is designed to assist preschool programs in making decisions related to the implementation of this model.

For more information about Early Childhood SRBI, or to request copies of these brochures, please contact Michelle Levy at [michelle.levy@ct.gov](mailto:michelle.levy@ct.gov) or 860-713-6756.



## Click [here](#) for Bulletin Web Site References

(For more information, see page 9.)

## Nondiscrimination Statement

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