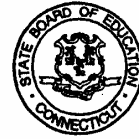





STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Directors of Special Education and Pupil Services
Directors of Private Approved Special Education Facilities
Directors of Charter Schools

FROM: George P. Dowaliby, Chief 
Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Services

DATE: March 28, 2001

SUBJECT: Update #24

BIDDERS MEETING FOR PMHP GRANT

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Primary Mental Health Program (PMHP) Grant was mailed to Superintendents on Friday, March 16, 2001. A meeting for prospective applicants (Bidders meeting) is planned for Tuesday, April 3, 2001, 9:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M., in Conference Room #2 (Fishbowl) at 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown. Please bring your copy of the RFP. If you have any questions, contact Norma T. Sproul at (860) 807-2037.

REVISION TO THE BUREAU'S SAMPLE NOTICE OF PLANNING AND PLACEMENT TEAM MEETING FORM

During recent Program Review activities, we have found a number of instances where the parent notice of a PPT meeting failed to indicate that the student would be invited to attend the meeting, even though one of the purposes of the meeting was to consider transition needs/services. As you are aware, Sections 300.345(b)(2)(ii) and (b)(3)(ii) provide that, if the purpose of an IEP meeting (PPT in Connecticut) is to develop a statement of the transition service needs of the student or consider needed transition services for the student, the meeting notice must "indicate that the agency will invite the student." On the Bureau's previously sample PPT meeting notice form, district staff had to first make a check mark next to a statement indicating that the purpose of the meeting was to "determine transition service needs" and then make a second check mark next to the statement that "the student will be invited to attend this meeting." It was this second statement that was frequently not checked. To make the Bureau's sample PPT notice form more "user friendly" for districts, we have revised the response items. Specifically, the statement that the purpose of the meeting is to "consider transition needs/services" now also includes a statement that the "student will be invited to attend the meeting." This means that, if one of the purposes of the meeting is to consider transition needs/services, and this fact is correctly checked on the meeting notice form, then the requirement that the notice must indicate that the district will invite the student has also been met.

Since this is only a sample form, districts are free to adopt the revised form (enclosed) or to continue to use their current form. However, regardless of which notice form is used, we would emphasize the need for districts to ensure that the individuals who complete these meeting notice forms (as well as any other special education related forms) understand how to fill out the form correctly for the various kinds of PPT meetings the district schedules.

In addition to satisfying this documentation requirement, it is also essential that districts ensure that, beginning at the annual review following a student's 13th birthday, students are invited to all PPT meetings where transition needs or services will be discussed. It is recommended that, as a standard practice, students receive a written invitation to any such meetings. Some districts address the meeting notice for a PPT where transition needs or services are to be considered to both the parents and the student (e.g., Mr. and Ms. Johnson and Susan Johnson), while other districts copy the letter to the student with a note to the student that s/he is invited to participate in the meeting. Similarly, it is important to remember that, if rights under IDEA have transferred to the student at age 18, then PPT notices must be addressed to the student, with a copy of the notice sent to the parent.

It should be stressed that, if transition services are to be effective, they must reflect the needs, interests and preferences of the student. Generally, the best way to ensure that this occurs is to invite the student to the meeting and make certain that the meeting is structured in a way that encourages the student to attend and actively participate. If you have questions regarding this form, please contact Jerry Spears at (860) 807-2034. For questions regarding transition, please contact Karen Halliday at (860) 807-2020.

“REQUESTING” IDEA-PART B, SECTION 611 AND/OR SECTION 619 FUNDING FROM THE CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (CTSDE)

School districts do not automatically receive their IDEA-Part B, Section 611 and/or Section 619 grant funding from the CTSDE. School districts must request those funds (on a monthly basis) by using the ED-111 form. If a district does not submit the ED-111 form to the CTSDE, they will not receive grant funding. A point about the use of the ED-111 form: A district may only request an amount of grant money necessary “to do business” for the following month.

EXPEND ALL YOUR DISTRICT'S 962-000031101 AND 963-000031101 FUNDING ON/BEFORE JUNE 30, 2001

Before the end of the 2000-2001 school year, be sure your district requests 100% of its IDEA-Part B, Section 611 and Section 619 funding coded: 962-000031101 and 963-000031101, respectively. In addition, be sure that your district expends all those funds on/before June 30, 2001. After June 30, 2001 the "life" of the funding encoded 962-000031101 and/or 963-000031101 expires and cannot be used for any purpose. Any such funding, unused as of June 30, 2001, must be returned to the state.

MAY 1, 2001 – DEADLINE FOR MAKING AMENDMENTS TO YOUR DISTRICT'S IDEA-PART B, SECTION 611 AND 619 BUDGETS/PROGRAMS ENCODED: 962-100031101 AND 963-000031101

A reminder that May 1, 2001 is the deadline for making amendments to your district's IDEA-Part B, Section 611 and Section 619 budgets/programs encoded: 962-100031101 and 963-100031101, respectfully. These are the IDEA-Part B, Section 611 and Section 619 programs that operate for the program period July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2002.

A suggested manner of submitting an amendment to an IDEA-Part B, Section 611 project/budget is to:

- Make a copy of the most recently approved budget for the project you wish to amend.
- On that copy, change the amounts of previously-approved individual line items you now wish to amend by drawing a line through the "old" line items and writing the amounts you now wish to have on those line items after the figures you just "lined out."
- Round off all line item amounts to the nearest dollar.
- Most importantly, include a rationale as to why you wish to make the amendment you are making. Amendment requests are not automatically approved and must be supported by an acceptable rationale.
- "Fax" the amended budget document, together with its supporting rationale for change, to Patrick Shaughnessy at (860) 807-2047.

Reminder: Only the purchase of instructional and/or assistive technology is being approved under the "700 line item – property."

IDEA-PART B, SECTION 611 AND SECTION 619 ENTITLEMENT FUNDING FOR FY 2001-2003

Beginning July 1, 2001, it appears that at least 20% in additional IDEA-Part B, Section 611 funding will be transmitted to eligible Connecticut school districts, as compared to the amount being distributed to those same districts in FY 2000-2001. However, since factors related to Pre-K-12 school enrollment and community poverty data (not relative child count) are now utilized to determine individual district entitlements, it cannot be assumed that increased funding will be *uniformly* distributed across all eligible districts. Currently, application materials for next year are being prepared for review within the CTSDE. Unfortunately, the IDEA-Part B, Section 619 (preschool) grant has been flat-funded by Congress. This means that districts should not expect an increase in their IDEA-Part B, Section 619 (preschool) grant for next year.

YOUR DISTRICT'S OBLIGATION TO EXPEND A PROPORTIONATE AMOUNT OF FUNDING FOR THE BENEFIT OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS PLACED IN NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS BY THEIR PARENTS

Each year, each district receiving an IDEA-Part B entitlement grant, under Section 611 and/or Section 619, has an obligation to expend a proportionate amount of funding for the benefit of eligible children placed in nonpublic schools by their parents. Note that this obligation extends to Section 619 (preschool) grants as well as to Section 611 (regular) IDEA-Part B grants. Thus, for example, if a district has two percent of its special education population, ages 3-21, attending nonpublic schools, having been placed in those schools by their parents, that district must, *at minimum*, expend an amount of money equal to 2% of its Section 611 IDEA-Part B grant for the benefit of those nonpublic school students. **Simultaneously**, if that same district has 3% of its special education population, ages 3-5, attending nonpublic schools, having been placed in those schools by their parents, that district must, *at minimum*, expend an amount of money equal to 3% of its Section 619 IDEA-Part B (preschool) grant for the benefit of those nonpublic school students. The mandate to expend the proportionate amount described is defined in the IDEA. A district can expend more than the mandated amount, if it chooses to do so. IDEA-Part B funding may be utilized as a sole source of funding to meet proportionate expenditure obligations, but it is not required to be a sole source. If a district is considering utilizing local funding to meet the proportionate expenditure requirement, the CTSDE advises that district to first secure the written advice of its legal counsel before proceeding to do so. Connecticut statutes neither contain language that is permissive nor prohibitive as to the expenditure of local funding for the benefit of special education students attending nonpublic schools, placed in those schools by their parents.

DIRECTORY OF APPROVED PRIVATE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Enclosed is the March 2001 directory of the privately-operated special education programs which are currently approved by the Department. This directory also will be available on-line, in the near future, at the Department's website. Please contact Art Carey at (860) 807-2032 if you have any questions or comments.

VACANCIES FOR SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS

The Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Services, through Carolyn Isakson, Consultant for Speech and Language Services, is continuing its collaboration with the Connecticut Speech-Language-Hearing Association (CSHA) to assist school districts in securing qualified staff for speech and language programs. CSHA will be holding its spring conference on May 4, 2001. If you have, or anticipate having, a vacancy for a speech and language pathologist and would like CSHA's assistance in advertising it at the conference, please complete the enclosed form and **return it to the CSHA office by April 27th**. CSHA's Career Information Committee maintains a booth in the exhibit area during the conference and provides candidates seeking employment with a current list of job vacancies. The CSHA office maintains an ongoing listing of position vacancies and candidates seeking employment. The office also has a "***JOB HOTLINE***", which is updated on a daily basis. Feel free to copy the CSHA form and use it whenever you have a vacancy that you would like to have listed. You may also request CSHA's candidate list as necessary. Please notify the CSHA office as soon as your position is filled, so that the job listings can be kept current. For further assistance, you may call Maria Parker at the CSHA office at (860) 666-6900.

Carolyn Isakson has just heard from VTA Management Services, a company that contracts with facilities, including public schools, for the services of Speech and Language Pathologists. This company, headquartered in Brooklyn, NY can be reached at (800) 874-3469 or (718) 615-0049. Arlyne Denmark is the Vice-President of Marketing and Sales. You may want to add this company to the list included in Update #23 (December, 2000). As with all this information, we are not endorsing any particular company. Nor are we vouching for the quality of personnel. We are sharing this information as a resource for your staffing crises.

NOMINATIONS FOR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER OF THE YEAR

If you would like to nominate a social worker from your school district for School Social Worker of the Year, please call Karen Myers of the CASSW (Connecticut Association of School Social Works) Executive Board at (203) 972-4410 to get an application and information.

Update #24
March 28, 2001
Page 6

HOMEBOUND AND HOSPITALIZED INSTRUCTION

Occasionally, Bureau staff receive inquiries regarding "Memo 56" (Series 1983-84) which was distributed on July 24, 1984. Please note that this memorandum has been withdrawn effective the date of this Update. Instruction for students who are hospitalized must be provided in accordance with relevant state and federal statutes and regulations. Please contact Art Carey at (860) 807-2032 if you have any questions.

TRANSITION PLANNING

Enclosed please find a copy of the recently revised "Directory Of Resources For Adults With Learning Disabilities And/Or Attention Deficit Disorders In Connecticut". This guide includes state and national resources, programs and agencies that could support individuals with LD/ADD as they transition from high school to adult life. Please copy and disseminate this guide to appropriate personnel in your district including guidance counselors, special education teachers and transition coordinators. Contact Karen Halliday at (860) 807-2020, or karen.halliday@po.state.ct.us, if you have any additional questions.

TYPO IN THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CTOPP

It has come to our attention that a key phrase has been omitted in the instruction manual for the Comprehensive Test Of Phonological Processing (CTOPP). On page 31 of the test manual, the instructions for Rapid Object Naming in (b) state that "the examinee makes more than four errors when naming objects." This section should read, "the examinee makes more than four errors when naming objects on either Form A or Form B." This correction will bring this section into line with the instructions for the other three subtests. Joe Torgesen, the test author, will notify the publisher to make the correction in the next printing of the test manual. Please advise your staff who are using this test to make the necessary changes in order to ensure proper scoring of the test. If you need further information call Carolyn Isakson at (860) 807-2046.

POLICY GUIDANCE NOTICE

The United States Department of Education published in the Federal Register, June 8, 2000, a document titled: "Educating Blind and Visually Impaired Students; Policy Guidance; Notice". A copy of this document is enclosed. The Bureau encourages the school district to make this document available to staff who have the responsibility to program for students with blind or visual impairments and to parents of children who are blind or visually impaired. Please call John Purdy at (860) 807-2045 if you have any questions.

PLACEMENT IN PRIVATE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Please note that, in order to meet regulatory requirements (including §300.349 of the IDEA regulations), prior to placement by a local school district of a child in a private special education program, the Planning and Placement Team must meet to develop the child's IEP which will be implemented in the out-of-district setting. The school district must also take appropriate steps to have a representative of the private program attend the meeting. If, in spite of the district's good faith efforts, the representative is unable to attend, the school district may use other methods, such as telephone conferencing, to ensure participation by the private program in the PPT meeting. This requirement is also applicable to the provision of educational services to children who have been placed in temporary shelters or safe homes which are operated by agencies which also operate approved private special education programs (e.g., Boys Village, The Children's Center, Klingberg Family Centers, and Waterford Country School). Each child who resides in a temporary shelter or safe home should only receive educational services at a site other than a public school setting if a PPT has determined that the child's special education needs are such that the child requires a more restrictive placement or if DCF has restricted the child to the safe home in accordance with the SDE-DCF memorandum (dated June 4, 1999) regarding educational services for residents of safe homes. A child who resides in a safe home or temporary shelter should never "automatically" receive educational services in a private special education program as a result of placement in the safe home or temporary shelter. Please contact Art Carey at (860) 807-2032 if you have any questions.

CAPTIONED MEDIA PROGRAM

Captioned Media Program is a *FREE* video lending library of 4,000 videos, touching a wide variety of topics for students of all ages, funded by the U.S. Department of Education and administered by the National Association of the Deaf. The Videos are "open-captioned" meaning that they will display the text with any TV/VCR. No special decoder device is necessary. The videos are delivered directly to the school and may be kept up to one week. Captioned Media Program pays for the postage. The videos are available for use by teachers and other school personnel who work with student who have a hearing loss, their families, and others who work with this population of students. The videos may also be an additional resource for students who do not have a hearing impairment. Please make this information about Caption Media Program available to your staff. Enclosed is a membership application form. For more information, please contact Debbie Hardwicke, Marketing Specialist, Caption Media Program, at <http://www.cfv.org>.

Update #24
March 28, 2001
Page 8

EDUCATIONAL JURISDICTION FOR DMHAS CLIENTS

Certain individuals who are clients of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) remain eligible for regular education or special education services. Identification of the agency which has educational responsibility for each such individual is dependent upon the residence of the individual. In situations in which the individual resides in a facility which is operated by DMHAS, that agency is responsible for planning appropriate educational services and for funding those services. DMHAS facilities include Blue Hills Hospital, Cedarcrest Hospital, Connecticut Mental Health Center, Connecticut Valley Hospital, Greater Bridgeport Community Mental Health Center, and the "special populations" cottages located on the grounds of Cedarcrest Hospital. In situations in which the individual resides in a setting other than a DMHAS-operated facility, educational jurisdiction lies with the local school district which serves the town in which the individual's parent resides or, if the individual has "no nexus" status, or if the individual has established an independent residence, the local school district which serves the town in which the individual resides. Please contact John Purdy at (860) 807-2045 if you have any questions regarding this matter.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS: STEPS TO PROTECT A CHILD'S RIGHT TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

The procedural safeguards document has been updated to reflect (1) requested additions from OSEP and (2) the amended due process regulations. A copy is enclosed. This copy replaces the 11/09/99 version. Please contact Tom Badway at (860) 807-2017 if you have any questions.

IEP TEAM MEMBERSHIP IN CERTAIN SITUATIONS

The Bureau has recently been asked about IEP team membership when an eligible student only receives speech/language services. It is the Bureau's current position that a Speech/Language Pathologist participating in a meeting for such a student meets both the federal requirement for a special education service provider and the state requirement for a pupil personnel service representative to be present at the IEP team meeting. Please contact Carolyn Isakson at (860) 807-2046, or at carolyn.isakson@po.state.ct.us, with any questions or for further explanation.

Update #24
March 28, 2001
Page 9

**OSEP MEMO 01-06 – GUIDANCE ON INCLUDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
IN ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS**

Enclosed is a copy of OSEP Memo 01-06 that offers guidance on including students with disabilities in assessment programs. This document reiterates the goal of high expectations for all students. It also confirms that the role of **the IEP team is to determine how a student participates in assessment, and that the IEP team cannot exempt students with disabilities from participating in district and statewide assessment.** This second point addresses a question raised at the last CONNCASE Leadership Forum. Please note that on page 5, it states, "It is expected that only a small number of students will participate in alternate assessments."

The Connecticut Department of Education's positions on high expectations, assessment of all students with disabilities, and the relatively limited use of alternate assessments are consistent with those put forth by OSEP in Memo 01-06.

GPD:m
Enclosures

cc: Theodore S. Sergi, Commissioner of Education
George A. Coleman, Associate Commissioner of Education
Edward Preneta, Council on Developmental Disabilities
Bonnie Moran, Special Education Advisory Council
Nancy Prescott, CT Advocacy Center
Superintendents of Schools
Hearing Officers
SDE Staff