



SPECIAL EDITION

Sandy Garrett, State Superintendent of Public Instruction
 Oklahoma State Department of Education
 Special Education Services

Frequently Asked Questions about Children with Autism

If a child is diagnosed with "Pervasive Developmental Disorder," is the child on the Autism Spectrum?

Yes. Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) is also commonly known as the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Other disorders that fall under the umbrella of ASD include, but are not limited to, Asperger's Disorder, Rett's Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS); however, this is not an exhaustive list.



What characteristics do children with autism exhibit?

Autism is characterized by marked problems in social interaction, as well as by delayed and deviant communication development (speech is absent in about 50 percent of cases) and various other behaviors which are usually subsumed in the term "insistence on sameness." Such behaviors include stereotyped motor behaviors (hand flapping, body rocking) and resistance to change. These behaviors are usually evident before the age of three.

Is early intervention recommended for children with an ASD diagnosis?

Yes. The earlier a child receives services and interventions, the more improved his or her developmental academic and behavioral skills will be. Individualized services and interventions can improve independence and productivity for the child, as well as improve the quality of life for the child and his/her family.

What programs and supports are available for families of children with autism in Oklahoma?

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) has partnered with community organizations in order to maximize efforts to train professionals and promote evidence-based practices. Project PEAK, through the OU Health Sciences Center, Child Study Center, provides professional development, technical assistance, on-site collaborative consultation, mentoring, coaching and demonstration teaching, program evaluation, and

What's inside

<i>Frequently Asked Questions About Autism</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Let's Talk Money - Early Intervening Funds</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Compliance Hints and Updates</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>What's Up at the OSDE-SES? Ask Misty</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Professional Development Opportunities</i>	<i>7</i>

"Autism" continued on page 2

It is the policy of the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability in its programs or employment practices as required by Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Civil rights compliance inquiries related to the OSDE may be directed to the Affirmative Action Officer, Room 111, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105-4599, telephone number (405) 522-4930; or, the United States Department of Education's Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights. Inquiries or concerns regarding compliance with Title IX by local school districts should be presented to the local school district Title IX coordinator.

Frequently Asked Questions about Children with Autism (continued)



links to educators and professionals from other disciplines <<http://devbehavior.peds.ouhsc.edu/sssa.asp>>. The Oklahoma Autism Network provides training and offers a resource center allowing professionals to access technology to create visual schedules. Statewide

Training and Regional Supports (STARS) supports the provision of individualized, comprehensive, family-centered, community-based programs and services for people with disabilities through a coordinated training system <www.okautism.org>. To view training opportunities and register for a workshop go to <http://www.ah.ouhsc.edu/tolbert/courses_workshops>.

Does there need to be an official medical diagnosis of autism before a child can be eligible for special education and related services under the category?

Although medical information is a required component of a comprehensive evaluation, a medical diagnosis of autism is not required to determine whether a child may receive services under the category of autism. The term autism also includes related spectrum disorders.

THERE ARE CURRENTLY 1,663 CHILDREN, AGED 3-21, WITH AUTISM BEING SERVED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN OKLAHOMA, AN INCREASE OF 230 FROM LAST YEAR. - CHILD COUNT, OCTOBER 2006

What are ways to address challenging behavior in school?

Often if a pattern of behavior becomes difficult, IEP teams perform a functional behavior assessment (FBA), a precise description of a behavior, its context, and its consequences, with the intent of better understanding the behavior and those factors influencing it. Once the behavior function is identified, which may be more than one, a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) can be written and implemented that utilizes evidence-based strategies and positive behavior interventions and supports. A school should not automatically shorten the child's

school day just because the child poses a challenge behaviorally, but instead evaluate the behavior and implement strategies to promote appropriate behaviors. If these methods are unsuccessful, the IEP team may convene to review placement options.

Helpful Resources:

<www.nichcy.org>
<www.autismspeaks.org>
<www.cdc.gov/ncbddd>
<www.autism-society.org>
<www.nea.org>
<www.firstsigns.org>
<<http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu>>
<<http://pbis.org>>

Sundberg, M.L., & Partington, J.W. (1998). *Teaching Language to Children Teaching Language to Children with Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*. Behavior Analysts, Inc.

Leaf, R. & McEachin, J. (1999). *A Work in Progress: Behavior Management Strategies and a Curriculum for Intensive Behavioral Treatment of Autism*.

Maurice, C., Green, G., & Luce, S.C. (1996). *Behavioral Intervention for Young Children with Autism: A Manual for Parents and Professionals*. Pro-Ed.

Skinner, B.F. (1991, reprint). *Verbal Behavior*. Copley Publishing Group.

American Psychiatric Association. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision*. (2000). Washington, DC.

Landa, R., Holman, K., & Garrett-Mayer, E. (2007). "Social and Communication in Toddlers with Early and Later Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders." *Archives of General Psychiatry* 64:853-864.

Koenig, Kathy. (2007). Information About Pervasive Developmental Disorders. Retrieved July 12, 2007 from the Yale Child Study Center's Web site: <http://info.med.yale.edu/chldstudy/autism>.



Let's Talk Money

Early Intervening Funds

The IDEA provides LEAs with the flexibility to set aside up to 15 percent of their IDEA Part B funds to develop and implement coordinated Early Intervening Services (EIS) for children who are not currently



identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic and/or behavioral supports to succeed in the general education environment (see also 34 CFR § 300.711).

To implement EIS, LEAs may implement activities that include (1) professional development (which may be provided by entities other than LEAs) for teachers and other staff to enable them to deliver scientifically based academic and behavioral interventions; and (2) providing educational and behavioral evaluations, services, and supports. Because these funds are to be spent on children not yet referred to special education services, these funds must remain under the jurisdiction of the LEA receiving IDEA Part B funds, and must not be joined together with another LEA through a LEA Cooperative or Interlocal Cooperative agreement. Additional information regarding permissive use of EIS funds may be found in the *Special Education Funding Manual for IDEA Part B*.

In accordance with 34 § 300.646, the OSDE-SES annually calculates the risk of identification and placement for each race/ethnicity statewide and for each LEA. If the state reaches a risk ratio of greater than 2.0 (i.e., children of the race/ethnicity are more than twice as likely as children of other races/ethnicities to be identified as children with disabilities, identified as having particular disabilities, or placed in particular educational environments), the OSDE-SES will examine the risk ratios of each LEA for local disproportionality. The OSDE-SES has defined local

disproportionality, or overrepresentation (for the purposes of this requirement), as a risk ratio of greater than 4.5 (i.e., children of the race/ethnicity are more than 4.5 times as likely as children of other races/ethnicities in the LEA to be identified as a child with a disability, to be identified as having a particular disability, or to be placed in a particular educational environment). Furthermore, the IDEA requires that LEAs identified as disproportionate be required to set aside (and spend) the maximum amount allowed for EIS in the areas of overrepresentation (see the Data section for more information). If the LEA required to set aside funds for EIS fails to spend the funds, the LEA will have one additional year to carryover the funds for this purpose. If the LEA fails to spend the funds after one year of carryover, the LEA will be cited for noncompliance and will lose the unexpended funds.

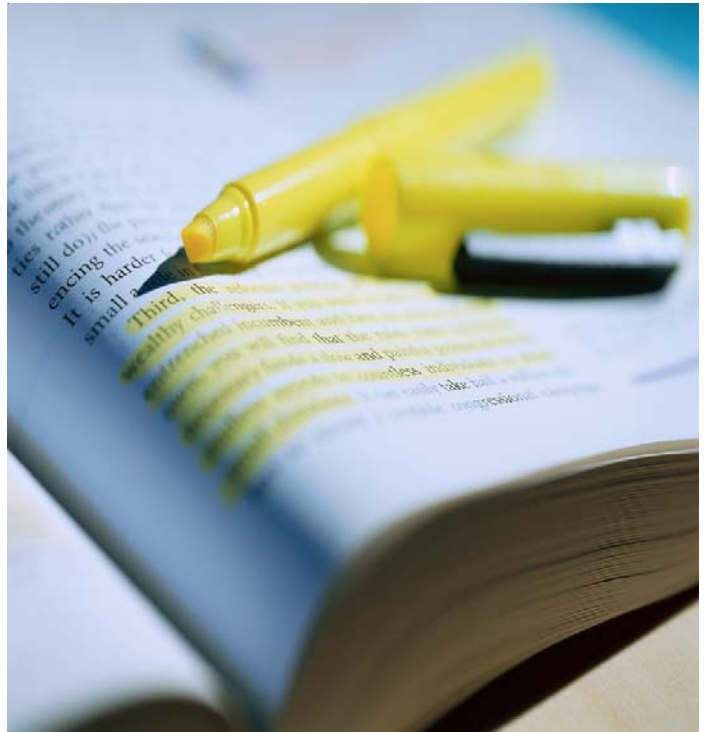


Compliance Hints and Updates

Step Forward in 2007: Updated Policies and Procedures Manual and Forms

The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has ordered fine-tuned adjustments for providing free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities. Significant steps forward include the development of an updated policies and procedures manual and new special education forms that satisfy the directives of IDEA.

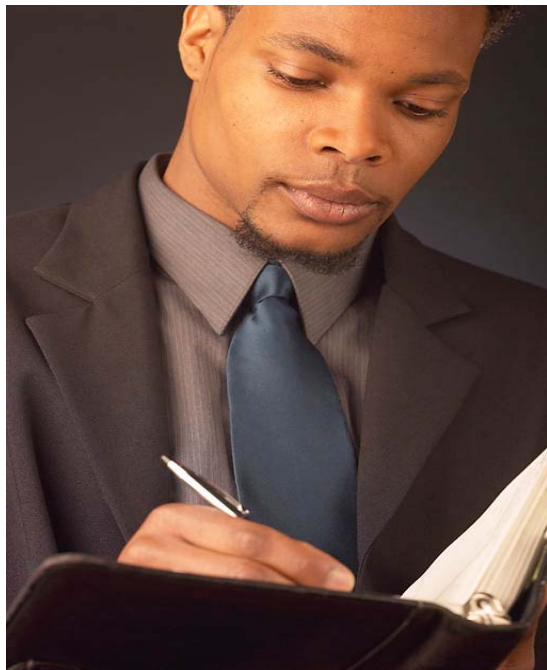
Currently, the Policies and Procedures for Special Education in Oklahoma appears in proposed form, and its design has been in the works for nearly one year. This manual represents countless collaborative hours of input from federal regulations, public and private agencies, and individuals like you who advocate daily for children with special needs. Because of necessary benchmarks required of the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), Special Education Services (SES), the updated policies and procedures manual will not be ready for print until the fall of 2007. This manual will remain in its proposed form until it is approved by the State Board of Education. High-interest topics that appear in the new Policies and Procedures for Special Education in Oklahoma include: addressing transition services for young adults by age



14; OSDE forms designed to be more parent-friendly; updated caseload/class size chart; no requirement for suspected category to be reported on forms for children in Developmental Delay (DD) category; expansion of the Summary of Performance (OSDE Form 15) for young adults with special needs; and an official Comment Form, Reevaluation Attachment, and REDS/MEEGS Form added to clarify and aggregate information.

IEP Institutes have been conducted throughout the summer to offer teacher training. OSDE-SES will continue to provide technical assistance on proper use of the forms and implementing the revised policies and procedures manual by scheduling further instructional opportunities for special education teachers, directors, and administrators. Meetings will be implemented regionally throughout the state for additional training.

For additional information about the OSDE-SES forms or implementation, please contact Ms. Anita Eccard, Coordinator, Special Education Services, by telephone at (405) 521-4865, or by e-mail at <Anita_Eccard@sde.state.ok.us>.



Compliance Hints and Updates

Q: May students with disabilities be exempted from core curriculum mandates set by the state?

A: A student with a disability, who is on an Individualized Education Program (IEP), may be exempted from core curriculum mandates when determined by the IEP team on an individual basis. Whether any IEP might require some or all of the core curriculum courses from the curriculum list in Title 70 O.S. § 11-103.6, is a question to be determined by the IEP team members and the parents on a student-by-student basis, and subsequently approved by the local school district and the State Department of Education in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).



Q: Who determines the graduation requirements for students with disabilities?

A: Students with disabilities graduation and diploma requirements are in accordance with State laws and standards.

In accordance with the [Policies and Procedures for Special Education in Oklahoma, 2002](#), a student's IEP team determines a goal for completion of an appropriate secondary education program. Completion of a secondary education program and graduation with a diploma may be accomplished by the student meeting all graduation requirements or as determined by the IEP team within the scope of IDEA and State law and standards. The IEP team shall be responsible for planning an appropriate education program for the student to benefit from special education based on the individual needs of the student.

Q: Can students with disabilities receive a different form of a diploma?

A: No. students with disabilities having IEPs who satisfy all graduation requirements or as determined by their IEP team within the scope of IDEA and State law and standards must be awarded a standard diploma.

Q: Can students with disabilities transcripts indicate credit for an alternate course title?

A: Yes. Transcripts for students with disabilities should indicate the course title of the actual course the student's IEP team determined would be an alternate course to best meet their individual instructional needs. However, IEP teams need to work closely with counselors and students regarding course of study and post-school outcomes, as some course titles may not be accepted for college admission or scholarship purposes.

For Example:

- If the student received Algebra I instruction by accessing the Curriculum Access Resource Guide Modified (CARG-M) standards to meet their requirement for Algebra I, the course could be titled Algebra I Essentials. If the student received instruction by accessing the Curriculum Access Resource Guide Alternate (CARG-A) standards to meet their requirement for Algebra I, the course could be titled Algebra I Concepts.

"Graduation Credit" continued on page 6

- Again, IEP teams need to work closely with counselors and students regarding course of study and post-school outcomes, as some course titles may not be accepted for college admission or scholarship purposes.



Q: Can students' with disabilities transcripts indicate they are a student with a disability?

A: No. In accordance with the Policies and Procedures for Special Education in Oklahoma, 2002, a student's transcript cannot contain any information which could be considered to be discriminatory based on their disability by referencing their special education placement or category, their special services, their special education test information, or any other reference to their disability.

Q: Can students with disabilities fulfill graduation requirements by taking courses at technology centers?

A: Yes. If the course is determined by the student's IEP team as an alternative course and the course is taught in a contextual methodology which enhances technology preparation. Beginning in the tenth grade, students may be allowed to attend these programs when taught by a teacher certified in the secondary subject area; provided, credit for units or sets of competencies, are approved by the State Board of Education and the local school board.

Q: Do students with disabilities, whose IEP teams have determined an alternative course to fulfill graduation requirements, complete end-of-instruction tests?

A: All students must take end-of-instruction tests prior to graduation, consisting of either the statewide assessment with accommodations, the Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program (OAAP), portfolio, or

the Oklahoma Modified Alternate Assessment Program (OMAAP), as determined by the IEP team in order to meet all graduation requirements.

Q: Do parents of students with disabilities need to choose whether their student will complete the college preparatory curriculum or enroll in the existing state high school graduation requirements as outlined by Title 70 O.S. § 11-103.6?

A: Yes. Title 70 O.S. § 11-103.6 requires all students entering the ninth grade in the 2006-2007 school year to complete the college preparatory curriculum in order to graduate, unless the student's parent or legal guardian approves the student to enroll in the existing state high school graduation requirements.

**Meet your Regional
SoonerStart Coordinators**

If you have a child transitioning from Part C (SoonerStart) to Part B (school-based services) at age three-years-old, it is important to have a SoonerStart contact person. Here are regional coordinators and their coverage areas that can help you with the transition process.

Jeanette Atha serves Clinton, Woodward, and Guymon offices, (580) 323-2100. **Jenni Replogle** serves Kingfisher, Enid, Stillwater, Guthrie, El Reno, and Chandler offices, (405) 375-3008. **Robbyn Morris** serves Lawton, Altus, and Chickasha offices, (405) 224-1050. **LouAnn Mullens** serves Ada, Ardmore, and Durant offices, (580) 924-6562. **Stephanie Kite** serves Norman, and Shawnee offices, (405) 321-4048. **Audra Haney** serves Oklahoma County office, (405) 271-9477. **Ellen Schmeder** serves Tulsa, Okmulgee and Sapulpa offices, (918) 835-8691. **Michele Presley** serves Tahlequah, Claremore, Bartlesville, and Muskogee offices, (918) 458-6577. **Tom Lackey** serves McAlester, Poteau, and Idabel offices (918) 423-1267.

What's Up at the OSDE-SES?

Ask Misty!



Dear Misty,

When is the IEP to be completed for a child transitioning from SoonerStart to school? Because Oklahoma does not have three-year-old classes, what are schools required to provide for a three-year-old with disabilities? Can schools collaborate for three-year-old services?

Sincerely,
Preschool Teacher, Special Education Services

Dear Preschool Teacher,

Children transitioning from Part C (SoonerStart) to Part B must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) written and in effect on or before the child's third birthday. This allows for a seamless transition of services for the child. To date, we have very few school districts that have three-year-old programs. However, the IEP team must determine appropriate services for three-year-old children. School districts should have investigated options available for preschool children prior to the child's IEP meeting. It is beneficial for school districts to plan ahead for options and resources in their community. Head Start, community-based preschools, and school-based services are all options for the IEP team to consider. This will ensure the three-year-old transition timeline is met.

Sincerely,
Misty Kimbrough
Assistant State Superintendent
Special Education Services



Professional Development Opportunities

Monday-Tuesday, August 27-28:
Parent Conference-Improving Student Behavior-Dr. Laura Riffel
Sheraton, Tulsa
Suzanne Taylor, OSDE-SES
(405) 521-3587

Thursday-Friday, September 6-7:
Effective Co-Teaching Strategies
Dr. Marilyn Friend
Coca-Cola Event Center, OKC
Suzanne Taylor, OSDE-SES
(405) 521-3587

Saturday, September 8:
STARS Family FOCUS-Parent Mentorship, Idabel
Judith Grove, OUHSC
(405) 271-1836

Friday, September 14:
STARS Family FOCUS-Personal Leadership Road Map, Tulsa
Judith Grove, OUHSC
(405) 271-1836

Saturday, October 20:
STARS Family FOCUS-Parent Mentorship, Tulsa
Judith Grove, OUHSC
(405) 271-1836

Saturday, October 27:
STARS Family FOCUS-Parent Mentorship, Bartlesville
Judith Grove, OUHSC
(405) 271-1836

Tuesday, November 13:
STARS Family FOCUS-Parent Mentorship, OKC
Judith Grove, OUHSC
(405) 271-1836

Wednesday, November 14:
STARS Family FOCUS-IDEA vs. Section 504, OKC
Judith Grove, OUHSC

State Superintendent's Conference
for Special Education Teachers and Directors

Tuesday, October 23, 2007
Wednesday, October 24, 2007
Cox Convention Center
Oklahoma City, OK
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Misty Kimbrough
Assistant State Superintendent
Special Education Services

(405) 521-4873

Carrie Howell

Division Support Coordinator

(405) 521-4862

Gail Priddy, Associate State Director

Dispute Resolution/Finance

(405) 521-4877

JoAnn Porter, Administrative Assistant

(405) 521-4871

Marilyn Nicely, Administrative Assistant

(405) 521-3378

Susan Benton, Coordinator

(405) 522-5035

Pam Kimery, Coordinator

(405) 522-3246

Tina Tippin, Coordinator

(405) 522-1462

Mark Everhart, Coordinator

(405) 521-4863

Larry Hartzell, Coordinator

(405) 521-3575

Kim Nickerson, Associate State Director

Personnel Development/Data

(405) 522-1464

Belinda Shobert, Administrative Assistant

(405) 521-4857

John Smith, Coordinator

(405) 522-1463

Alicia Limke, Research Consultant

SPDG

Tommie Jones, Administrative Assistant

(405) 522-1461

Candi Robinson, TA Coordinator, SPDG

(405) 522-4365

Leatha Bauter, TA Coordinator, SPDG

Mark Sharp, Associate State Director

SoonerStart (Early Intervention)

(405) 521-4880

Princess Loftis, Administrative Assistant

(405) 521-4155

Cynthia Bernardi-Valenzuela,

Associate State Director

SoonerStart (Early Intervention)

(405) 521-4872

Angela Kelley, Preschool (619) Coordinator

(405) 522-4513

Malissa Cook, Associate State Director

Compliance (Monitoring/General

Supervision/Assessment)

(405) 521-6137

Quinton Dixon, Administrative Assistant

(405) 522-3248

Anita Eccard, Coordinator

(405) 521-4865

Janet Felton, Coordinator

(405) 522-1578

Danita Hollins, Coordinator

(405) 521-4866

Christa Knight, Coordinator

(405) 521-4867

Amy Daugherty, Coordinator

(405) 521-4881

Suzanne Taylor, Coordinator

(405) 521-3587

Cindy Robins, Coordinator

(405) 521-4864

