

OCEC CONNECTION

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It is hard to believe the holiday season is upon us. August 15th seems so long ago. For those of you that would be considered young on the age scale, I have to say each school year does go by a little quicker than the previous one. There has been a great deal of action in the special education arena this school year. The new rules and regulations are now in place along with new forms and a new version of the IEP. I want to thank all of you for your patience with the new IEPware. As you now begin the transformation to the new version don't hesitate to call the OCEC for assistance. As a reminder the new version of the IEPware is now on the OCEC website: www.ocecil.org. Staff may access it by clicking on "Special Education" on the left hand column of the page.

New Forms

There are two new forms that just recently became mandatory.

1. *CONSIDERATION FOR AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER*: This form is found on the IEPware launcher. It must be completed at every IEP meeting held for a student who is identified as being on the autism spectrum. The form should be attached to the IEP and sent to the OCEC for filing.
2. *WAIVER FOR EDUCATIONAL DECISIONS*: Students who turn

November, 2007

18 can now sign a form that will turn over the right to educational decisions to another adult if they so choose. At the time the student turns 18 they should be provided with a form that allows them to decide if they or another adult want to be responsible for making the educational decisions for them. However, the 18 year old may rescind that right at any time. Having this form prevents parents from having to seek full guardianship but may allow them to help in the educational decision for their student. This form was sent to all teachers earlier this year. If you don't have a copy please contact the OCEC.

Extended School Year Preparation

This is the time of year to begin planning for the extended school year discussion that takes place at annual reviews in the spring. For those students who you feel might be in need of extended school year services, I would advise you to conduct your assessments to cover regression/ recoupment before and after the upcoming Christmas break. This is a good time to take that measurement. As you know extended school year is not afforded to all students with IEPs, it is only for those the IEP team feels will be way behind their peers when school starts again in the fall. Also, ESY is not the time to begin introducing new topics or goals; it is only for working on maintaining what the student has or is learning.

Parent Participation in the IEP Meeting

As you know the parent is as much a participant in the IEP development and process as the staff is. To better assist with the IEP development and get parents involved it is highly recommended that teachers communicate with parents on suggested goals and objectives for their student's upcoming annual review. We are finding success in sending home or e-mailing suggested IEP goals and objectives to parents prior to a student's annual review. When parents are given the opportunity to see what a teacher is thinking about for their student's next IEP and offered an opportunity to provide input into the development of goals, the IEP meetings seem to go much smoother and quicker. Parents like to know in advance what the team is thinking. Communicating suggestions and seeking input before the annual review, seems to take away the mystery of the IEP meeting and builds a trust factor between the parents and the team.

Procedural Errors

Procedural errors are things that happen in the IEP process that can turn into big problems if not addressed. Procedural errors consist of missing timelines, not informing general ed. teachers of their IEP responsibilities, not completing the quarterly IEP updates on goals and objectives, ignoring referrals, not completing proper paperwork etc. Individually these procedural errors may not cause great harm but if done frequently and not addressed they can cause real problems for schools and

staff. Please make sure you are always aware of the procedures that accompany special education. If you have a question or are unsure of something don't hesitate to ask.

CHILD COUNT

The child count collection process continues to get more convoluted every year. There continues to be an increase in what needs to be collected. This year the student's middle name is required. Please be sure to include this otherwise an error message will be sent and we will have to contact you about the middle name. As you get your child count information from the OCEC, please take your time in reviewing and correcting; it is very important. We have 1,500 IEPs to enter into the system and send to ISBE; if one error appears we cannot send anything. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Inservice Trainings

The OCEC continues to offer an abundance of inservice trainings for staff in Ogle County. The RtI series is on going and CPI training is scheduled regularly. It is highly recommended a team of staff in each building become CPI trained. It is best if a variety of individuals get trained such as special ed. teachers, regular ed. teachers, administrators, custodians, lunchroom staff and supervisors etc. For more information on CPI trainings contact the OCEC or Ralph Gleissner at the Chana Education Center.

December 12, 2007: The OCEC is hosting an RtI training specifically for secondary schools. Staff will learn

how RtI looks and works at the secondary level. For those of you at the secondary level, this is for you. This training will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

January 18, 2008: The OCEC will be hosting an Intervention Fair including Problem Solving about Problem Solving. Ogle County School staff can learn about and share specific interventions that are working in their local schools. We will be asking schools to share how RtI is working in their schools and what interventions and documentation works for them. With all schools now at some level of RtI, we felt this would be a good opportunity to get together and learn from one another. This workshop will be from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon



AUTISM TEAM AND SUPPORT

The OCEC autism support team is up and running; it has done three consults this first semester. The team is composed of an administrator, a speech therapist, an OT, a social worker, a teacher, a parent, and OCEC autism/low incident support staff. The team will come and spend approximately one-half day at your school observing and meeting with staff and parents. A report will be generated and follow up will take place. Should you want to access this team please contact Mike Papini at the OCEC office.

F.Y.I. Current and past issues of the *OCEC Connection* can be found on OCEC's website at: www.ocecil.org