Directors' Advisory Council

November 8, 2016

Questions and Answers

1. What is going to be done for the 8 LEAs who are on the watch list for systemic issues under Indicator 11?
   The LEAs that were considered "at-risk" will be notified by letter. Then, the assigned monitoring consultant and SPP/APR consultant will arrange a technical assistance conference call to determine the next steps.

2. When will the new IEP data management system be implemented?

   We project August 2017, unless the contract is not completed by the end of the year.

   >What will be the rollout plan for ECATS? When will the rollout plan come out?

   Current plans are to begin the rollout, with Universal professional development, at March Institute 2017.

   >Did we transition to ECATS because it is more user friendly than CECAS?

   Changes were needed in our current data management system. When these were not available, the decision was made to move to a RFP to secure all needed updates and enhancements to the data management system for EC.

   >Will Medicaid be part of the new ECATS system?

   Yes, a Medicaid module will be available to all LEAs (traditional and charters). It will not be mandatory that this module be used, but will be provided free, and LEAs may choose to use the vendor for billing purposes.

3. What are the requirements to be a statewide facilitator? How much does it pay?

   A preferred candidate would have extensive experience with EC policy, process and conflict resolution. The facilitator would need to balance this knowledge and experience with the requirement to remain impartial. The facilitator's role is to develop a mutually agreeable meeting agenda, assist the parties to resolution through the use of

problem-solving strategies and strong written and interpersonal skills. Facilitators are compensated by the assignment at a flat rate of $650.00. Travel expenses are reimbursed based on the specifics of the assignment.

4. When will superintendents be trained more on MOE and EC budgets?

   Maintenance of Fiscal Effort (MOE) training is being planned for the March Institute for EC Directors and Coordinators. MOE training has been provided to Finance Officers at both the NCASBO conference in February and the Finance and Business Summer Institute in July. Consideration could be given to Regional trainings for EC Directors/Coordinators and their Superintendents on MOE and EC budgets.

5. Ways to use PRC 118 (AU) for students identified as at risk (not yet EC identified)?

   PRC 118 Funds are not allocated based upon individual students. These funds are allocated to support teachers and coaching teams in building school and district capacity and professional development in the area of autism. The funds are based upon the Districts strategic plan that they submit to NCDPI. A memo will be going out soon that will address allowable and inappropriate purchases.

6. Have the PRC funds been released yet?

   The first installment of PRC 060, and PRC 082 & PRC 029 funds have been released. PRC 118 should be released prior to Thanksgiving holidays; the remainder of PRC 060 should also be released soon.

7. Can DPI send out new state forms?

   No. The new state forms cannot be used or distributed until the IEP management software is in place. The EC Division does not want to incur the additional costs for the new forms to be uploaded into CECAS nor does it want to pass on these costs to LEAs who are third party users. Slight adjustments to the lay-out of the forms may occur when the new software vendor has been secured. Finally, issuing the new state forms absent the professional development regarding EC processes could unintentionally create compliance violations and flawed practices at the local level.

8. In reference to the 90-day timeline when is that effective? Missing 90-day timeline.

    Evaluations must be conducted, eligibility determined, and for an eligible child, the IEP developed and placement completed within 90 days of a written referral. [NC 1503-2.2(c)(1)]

9. What's MOE?

    Maintenance of Effort requires local education agencies (LEAs) to demonstrate that the level of state and local funding remains relatively constant from year to year. At the local level, IDEA requires that local education agencies (LEAs), as a condition of eligibility for Part B funds, submit a plan that provides assurances to the state education agency (SEA) that the LEA shall not use IDEA monies to reduce the level of **expenditures** *from state and local funds for educating students with disabilities below the level of those expenditures for the preceding fiscal year. 20 U.S.C. § 1413(a)(2)(A)(iii). The SEA should be able to determine the comparison year when the LEA most recently met MOE by each of the methods; local, state and local, local per capita, and state and local per capita. Additionally, an SEA will find the LEA eligible for an award of Part B funds in a fiscal year based on this standard if the LEA* **budgets** *for the education of students with disabilities at least the same total or per capita amount as the LEA expended for that purpose from the same source(s) for the most recent prior fiscal year.*

10. Does PD come out of EC budget when administrators and/or regular ed teachers are encouraged to attend?

    Funding for professional developmental (PD) can come out of EC funds. LEAs should check the specific Program Report Code (PRC) chart of accounts that they are working with to ensure there are account codes for professional development. Examples of account codes that could be used for PD are; 196 Staff Development Participation Pay, 197 Staff Development Instructor, 312 Workshop expenses.

11. The ESSA federal law allows for flexibility with regard to HQ teacher licensure. With IDEA, this special education federal law does not allow for flexibility with regard to special education teacher licensure and EC teachers who serve as teacher of record at the middle and high school level. Can the NCDPI EC Division clarify its position regarding HQ status of EC teachers as there is differing legislation among the ESSA and IDEA laws?

    Nothing has changed regarding licensure of EC teachers

12. What is the IEP team's obligation to support OCS students who have completed coursework, but still need work hours to meet graduation requirements? Shouldn't the IEP still support the student in reaching all graduation requirements?

   Yes, it is the responsibility of the IEP Team to identify and provide appropriate supports for all Students with IEPs to assist them in meeting all graduation requirements.

13. When an OCS student requires a CTE modified blueprint (taking the CTE course more than once), should the student receive a CTE credit for the first and second half of the course (if taking the course twice to receive the whole blueprint)? Or, is the intention to have 4 unique CTE courses (unique course codes) completed, given the graduation requirement of 4 CTE credits for a high school diploma?

   It is recommended that students be given credit for mastery of the objectives for each part of the CTE blueprinted course; otherwise students on the OCS Pathway taking two part CTE courses would actually be taking those courses over (8) semesters to receive the required (4) credits.

   *CTE has created a guidance document that addresses developing the CTE blueprint and CTE assessments as they relate to students on the OCS Pathway. We will share this document once it is available.

14. How does the EC Division recommend services be provided and documented for high school students who are on a block schedule? (sessions per year, per semester, or per week) We especially need advice for students who receive services all in one semester.

    Points to consider:

   Does the student's need for specially designed instruction end just because the semester changes or the course ends?

   How will the student's unique needs be addressed all year long (direct instruction, accommodations, ancillary aids and supports, etc.)?

   If services are starting and stopping based on a school schedule rather than the student's unique needs, could someone argue "administrative convenience" is the priority not the student's needs?

The preferred method of documenting services is noting the intensity, frequency and duration by the week.

Could intervention time be built within a block schedule all year long?

Could there be year-long course that runs across all blocks?

15. What is the current structure of the Monitoring Consultants and the types of support provided to an LEA? If an LEA has a question or needs support, how is that need met?

The monitoring consultants are divided regionally. For regions with high concentrations of LEAs, the monitoring consultants have divided the LEAs equitably with a lead monitor identified to ensure timely technical assistance. Monitoring consultants are available to trouble-shoot compliance questions, assist with the documentation of supports and services in IEPs, help prepare for on-site visits, and offer technical assistance for compliance indicators.

The list of monitoring assignments for particular LEAs is attached and will be posted to the website under the "Monitoring" tab. (see attached document as well)