



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Directors, Exceptional Children Programs  
Lead Administrators, Charter Schools  
Directors, State-Operated Programs

**FROM:** William J. Hussey, Director *WJH*  
Exceptional Children Division

**DATE:** November 28, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Funding through PRC 118 for Support for Related Service Retention & Autism Coaching Teams

The Exceptional Children Division is pleased to continue allocating PRC 118 funds to support retention and professional development (PD) of related service personnel and Autism (AU) Coaching Teams. These funds are intended to assist LEAs in:

- Recruiting and developing Related Service personnel/programs for
  - Occupational Therapists (OT)
  - Physical Therapists (PT)
  - Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP)
  - School Psychologists
  - Orientation and Mobility Specialist (O&M)
  - Audiologists
- Developing LEA-based AU Coaching Teams to work in public schools

### Related Service Retention

For the 2016-17 school year traditional LEAs will receive \$4,000 (OT, PT, SLP, School Psychologists) and an additional \$1000 each for Audiology and O&M. Charter Schools/state-operated programs will receive \$900 (OT, PT, School Psychologists) and an additional \$200 each for Audiology and O&M, when services are provided. This will assist with the support of school-based professionals' representation at two statewide/lead meetings each school year (travel, lodging and subsistence). Through PRC 118, each Exceptional Children Director should identify an individual from each discipline to attend each meeting. The PRC 118 funds are also intended to support other professional development and/or capacity building initiatives for all therapy staff, such as participation in the Conference on Exceptional Children and Summer Institutes (<http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/conferences-profdev/annual-conference>).

Representatives who attend these PD sessions are expected to disseminate information to colleagues to promote best practices in the LEA. **These funds should not be used to fund positions, purchase classroom-specific or student-specific materials, or pay for service delivery contracts.**

Please find below additional suggestions for use of the PRC 118 allocation:

- Reimbursement for state licensure
- Reimbursement for individual malpractice insurance
- Reimbursement for continuing competence activities
- Reimbursement for membership in professional organizations
- Professional journal subscriptions and other professional resources
- LEA library of professional resources (as above) and reference materials

### **EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN DIVISION**

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

- Administrative supports and technology for itinerant providers (e.g. laptops, communication equipment)
- Assessment and treatment materials

### **Autism Coaching Teams**

Allocations should be used to build capacity by sending local teams to professional development, travel, lodging, substitutes, local training efforts and team consultations with your schools. This money can also be used to bring in outside experts or send teachers and/or team members to other Autism-specific training. **It should not be used to buy classroom-specific or student-specific materials or pay stipends, fund positions or service delivery contracts.** Purchasing books or materials that are necessary as part of a specific workshop is permitted. In addition, some LEAs have used funds to establish lending libraries to make books and other resources available to staff working with students with Autism. These are allowable purchases but funds for these types of materials (that are not part of a training) can comprise no more than 20% of the allocated PRC 118 funds. Consultation with outside experts and agencies can comprise no more than 30% of funds. At least 50% of funds must be spent on professional development related activities. LEAs and Charter Schools should spend all funds within the allotted timeframe.

Since there has been some misunderstanding regarding the appropriate use of funds in previous years, below is further clarification of unallowable use of AU PRC 118 funds.

Please review the following examples of inappropriate purchases:

- Hardware (Smart Boards, iPads/other tablets, iPods, computers, laptops, printers, laminator, etc.)
- Software (Boardmaker, TeachTown, Classroom Suite, etc.)
- iTunes cards
- Shoebox tasks
- Professional organizations memberships
- Parent nights (refreshments per LEA guidelines and supplies)
- Supplies/materials that are student or classroom specific
- Indirect costs
- Funding of stipends, positions or service delivery contracts
- Workman's compensation

Below are examples of allowable expenses or ideas for using funds:

- Providing PD to staff who work with students with AU in the LEA (substitute pay, material costs, refreshments-state per diem allowance)
- Sending staff who work with students with AU to local, state, and national conference relative to Autism (registration fees, substitute pay, mileage and lodging costs)
- Bringing in outside consultants to address AU program needs (not individual student concerns)
- Material/resources needed for local training
- Lending Library items

Expenses should be directly related to the goals the AU Coaching Team has developed as part of the strategic plan. Plans should be reviewed on a regular basis and revised, as necessary. If the strategic plan for your district is revised, please send the revised plan to your regional AU Consultant.

All PRC 118 funds **must** be spent or encumbered by June 30, 2017. Expenditures **must** be reported in the mid-year by January 31, 2017, in order to receive the second allocation of funds. Failure to report at mid-year will result in reduced funding. In addition, the end-of-year Combined Expenditure Reports and End-of-Year strategic plan goal progress report **must** be completed by July 1, 2017.

Questions regarding PRC118 funding for Related Service Retention Support and AU Coaching Teams can be directed to Sherry Thomas, Assistant Director, at [sherry.thomas@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:sherry.thomas@dpi.nc.gov) or (919) 807-3992.

For questions regarding appropriate expenditure or content-specific meetings, please contact the appropriate consultant:

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