

GACEC COUNCIL GOALS FOR 2016-2017

GOAL 1: Outcomes for students with exceptionalities will be improved by monitoring and supporting the implementation of the Annual Performance Report (APR), State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), State Professional Development Grant (SPDG), Every Student Succeeds Act, and review of the Department of Education (DOE) Special Education Regulations.

Activities for this year include:

1. Ensure compliance of IDEA by monitoring and reporting on results of:
 - Annual Performance Report
 - State Systemic Improvement Plan for Part B and Part C
 - State Professional Development Grant
 - Significant Disproportionality
 - DOE Special Education Regulations
 - DOE Focused Monitoring reports for all districts and charter schools, including Needs Based Funding Verification
 - Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 504 Plans
 - Overall DOE enforcement and district compliance of State and Federal requirements.
 - Alternate Assessments
2. Advocate for professional development for teachers, paraprofessionals, specialists and building administrators in area of students with exceptionalities.
3. Advocate for improved accessibility of information on the Department of Education website.
4. Oversee recommendations on Part B and Part C of the SSIP.
5. Review impact of ESSA and prepare for IDEA reauthorization.
6. Continue to monitor the implementation of the Speech Language Pathology Program (SLP).

GOAL 2: Programs and services for students with exceptionalities will be improved by monitoring and advocating for the delivery of evidence-based special education and related services in the least restrictive and natural environments.

Activities for this year could include:

1. Review and comment on Medicaid funding, including programs and system for processing requests for all individuals with special needs. Comments will be sent to DMMA and Medicaid Representatives.
2. Review and comment on proposed Department of Education regulatory changes. Comments will be sent to DOE, State Board of Education and Professional Standards Board for discussion at the State Board of Education meetings.
3. Advocate in order to ensure that educational services and materials, particularly accessible instructional materials (AIM), will be available in all settings.
4. Foster collaboration among agencies that address special education in the State of Delaware.
5. Review and comment on proposed charter school regulations and the development of the charter school framework.
6. Review educational programs in the Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families (DSCY&F) for compliance with FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education).
7. Research and advocate for appropriate physical education services for students with exceptionalities.
8. Provide commentary on school discipline regulations and collaborate with the Department of Education on improving Annual Performance Report Indicators relating to discipline.

9. Monitor and support the reconstitution of the IEP Implementation Taskforce.
10. Monitor implementation, training and use of seclusion and restraints in any agency receiving public funds.
11. Advocate for injury prevention and return to play protection of juveniles participating in DIAA and non-DIAA sponsored activities.
12. Review and monitor implementation of recommendations from the Autism Educational Taskforce as outlined in Senate Bills 93 and continue to advocate for the passage of legislation similar to former Senate Bill 92.
13. Advocate for injury prevention and return to play protection of juveniles participating in DIAA and non- DIAA sponsored activities.
14. Advocate for development of Special Education Councils as required by SB 33 to improve family engagement, parent education and parent advocacy.

GOAL 3: Programs and services for citizens with exceptionalities will be improved by reviewing and advocating for funding, policies and procedures that positively impact and empower citizens with exceptionalities.

Activities for this year could include:

1. Identify, review and provide comments on memoranda of understanding, inter-agency agreements, legislation and regulations. Send comments to the lead agency in the memoranda with copies to the other agencies involved.
2. Promote implementation and compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
3. Advocate for increased and appropriate transition services statewide in accordance with the recommendations of the State Transition Task Force for Emerging Adults with Disabilities and Special Health Care Needs developed by Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 34.
4. Advocate for programs that enable individuals with exceptionalities to live independently and become active citizens in their community.
5. Foster partnerships with other agencies and councils to promote rights and quality of life for individuals with exceptionalities.
6. Assist with the development of legislation to support the inclusion of students with disabilities in the Delaware Stars rating system.
7. Monitor process and services provided for young children transitioning from Part C to Part B.
8. Monitor and support inclusion policies in early childhood programs proposed at the federal and state level.
9. Identify which LEA's have implemented Gifted and Talented programs in accordance with IDEA.
10. Support maintenance and updating of transition website (DeIDHub) to ensure its relevance to transitioning youth with disabilities and/or special healthcare needs and their families.
11. Make recommendations on implementation and compliance of behavioral and mental health services.
12. Monitor implementation and recommendations within the Age of Majority legislation.
13. Promote the implementation of the ABLE Act.
14. Monitor and provide input as appropriate on all legislation impacting individuals with exceptionalities directly or as preventatives.
15. Advocate to provide training and promotion of assistive technology across the lifespan of individuals with disabilities.
16. Monitor and support the implementation of the Supported Decision Making Legislation as outlined in Senate Bill 180 and advocate for training and awareness for stakeholders.

GOAL 4: The GACEC will impact legislators, agencies, councils and other entities through more effective communication strategies.

Activities for this year could include:

1. Continue current modes of communication (letters, outside committee involvement, etc.).
2. Provide training for GACEC members on how to discuss issues with state policymakers and on the GACEC Code of Ethics.
3. Increase partnerships with other agencies and councils that are involved in promoting rights and quality of life for individuals with disabilities.
4. Encourage diversity of participants in GACEC meetings, membership and activities.
5. Encourage collaborative efforts among committees, particularly in working with the Policy and Law Committee, on issues of overlapping interest to individual committees.
6. Encourage Council members to contact their legislators each year to introduce themselves and the GACEC and report back to the Council.
7. Encourage GACEC committees to invite legislative representatives from relevant legislative committees, such as the Education Committee, Health and Social Services Committee, etc. to discuss their priorities for the fiscal year.

GOAL 5: Delaware Department of Education standards-based reform and accountability efforts will be reviewed in order to provide advice and advocacy for the inclusion of students with exceptionalities in all programs and initiatives.

Activities for this year could include:

1. Review and comment on any changes to statewide services and the educational accountability system in relation to the needs of children with exceptionalities.
2. Participate on Department of Education committees and workgroups in order to provide input on issues impacting students with exceptionalities.