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Getting Connected To The Source

This edition links you to a wealth of information that has been disseminated in recent weeks. We will provide you with a short description of the document and then link it for you so you can explore the topic in greater detail.

[PA Bureau of Special Education Report](#)

This report was distributed at the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) meeting on September 28. Director John Tommasini updated SEAP on programs, grants, and training opportunities. This report has a national flavor as it covers a variety of federal projects and awards made to Pennsylvania and those open for states to compete. Of special note, Pennsylvania earned the highest level possible under IDEA on the 20 indicators. This is Pennsylvania's fourth time in five years to reach this level.

Teacher evaluation is covered on page four of the Bureau report. We are finally seeing PDE using the term "multiple measures" of student achievement. Up until September we only heard the term "student growth" being used, which is very different than using multiple measures. There are several intermediate units, career and technical education centers and charter schools signed up for the pilot, along with traditional school districts. Our understanding is the pilot addresses the Danielson model components. The growth component has not been worked out or, as they say at PA State Board meetings, "The formula has not been developed."

Did you find out that you are in the pilot and you also happen to be a special education teacher, related service provider or professional who does not teach academic subjects? I recommend that you check out this link because you need to make your voice heard. The State Board decides what multiple measures determine student growth which in turn will determine your overall score on your evaluation.

You will have firsthand experience using the Danielson model for the first 50 percent of the evaluation tool and should consider the ramification of GROWTH

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Comments or questions about the items in this newsletter may be directed to this mailbox:
bmiller@psea.org

for the other 50 percent. I ask you the question (again). How much do you want the math and reading PSSA, PSSA-M, and PASA to count as growth for your personal evaluation?

[State Performance Plan Update](#)

With this link you will find the PDE PowerPoint handout on several of the 20 federal indicators Pennsylvania is judged on. Of interest are the goals, some of which are set by the state with SEAP recommendations, and others preset by the federal government. The most recent data to be added to the report is 2009-10. The data reflects why Pennsylvania scored so well nationally. This is the article for those of you who like numbers and percents.

[Bureau of Early Intervention Services Update](#)

Part C of IDEA Regulations was released on September 6. The U.S. Secretary of Education visited Erie in September with Alexa Posny, Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. Read all about these newsmakers by checking out the link.

[2011 AYP Report in a Cliff Note Format](#)

PDE shared Pennsylvania's AYP report. Ten fewer districts made AYP this year. As we all know, the challenge is that the bar continues to be raised as we move toward 2014. The good news is 77.1 percent of all students were advanced or proficient in math and 73.5 percent were advanced or proficient in reading. Keep up the good work!!!!

[Fewer Schools Are Considered Persistently Dangerous](#)

There are seven fewer schools on this list this year. All of the schools are in the city of Philadelphia, with nine of the schools making the list for a second year in a row.

[PA Transition Plan to Common Core Standards](#)

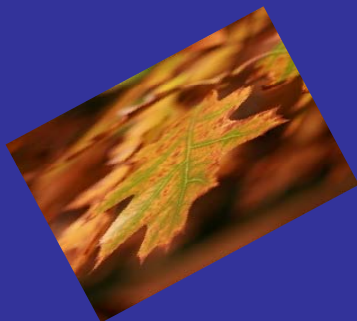
Common Core Standards were adopted so that the state could apply for Race to the Top. We now have to crosswalk and align the school curriculums to our new standards. Attached is the state's master plan.

[How do we make the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment \(PASA\) a meaningful tool for parents and IEP teams?](#)

The Bureau of Special Education is investigating how they can make the reporting format become more user-friendly for parents and the student's IEP teams. The Bureau is involved with a research study in which parents and educators are interviewed to find out what benefits they derive from the current format and recommendations or wish lists for what they would like to see. This research study is dealing only with the issue of making the report more user friendly. The study does not address the PASA, implementation of the test or the scoring. Are you involved with the 1 percent of students who take the PASA? Do you have suggestions? Please send your ideas to Bernie Miller at bmiller@psea.org. Descriptive recommendations are helpful as they will be conveyed to the research-



If you use Twitter, you can receive updates on special education when new information becomes available. Information will be sent as it is received rather than on a daily or weekly schedule. You can sign on to follow at www.twitter.com/bernie_miller



Many current updates and other helpful information on Special Education can be found on the PSEA website-go to www.psea.org
Teaching and Learning > Special & Gifted Education

er. We will also accept examples of how you might see the information conveyed differently. We have attached information on the research study and a copy of the current format for reporting student scores.

Special Education Board in Region Order

Bruce A. Wehler	Central
James A. Johnson	Central-Western
Elizabeth L. Moore-Brill	Eastern
Katherine A. Rutledge	Mideastern
Susan G. Black, Chair	Midwestern
Georganna F. Kresl	Northeastern
David C. Kern	Northwestern
Becky Vandenberg	Southeastern
Tim Dunn	Southern
Patricia Hallam	Southwestern
Victoria Rice Campbell, Vice Chair	Western
Louise Tharp	DPS
Deborah St. Clair	ESP
Kalem Calien	Minority Rep.
Boyd Weiss III	PSEA-Retired
Allison Miller	Student PSEA

Snapshot of Volunteers Working on Your Behalf

Here is a photo of the PSEA Special Education Board and ESP Special Education Committee at their joint meeting this fall. They represent you regionally and come together as a group to convey information and concerns. They take back information on state and national special education issues. They heard speakers from the Bureau of Special Education on current policy issues, assessments, and paraprofessional issues. Make sure you know who your region/division board member is. Many board members have contact lists and share information following their meetings in Harrisburg. Ask them to add you to their list.



Seated left to right: Georganna Kresl, Kate Rutledge, Allison Miller, Becky Vandenberg, Elizabeth Moore-Brill and Debb St. Clair

Standing left to right: Sue Black, James Johnson, Boyd Weiss, David Kern, Vikki Rice Campbell, Kalem Calien, Louise Tharp, Melissa Krafchek (ESP Special Ed Board), Pat Hallam, Karen Hatton (ESP Special Ed Board), Bruce Wehler, Tim Dunn, Deborah Marek (guest), and Carolyn Dorm (ESP Special Ed Board)