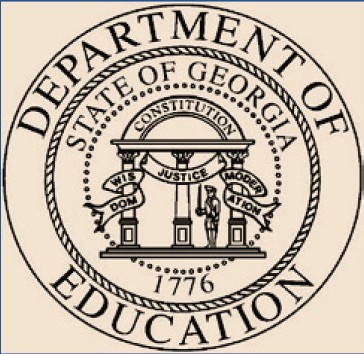
“Making Education Work for all Georgians”



The Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership (GaPMP)

Led by the Georgia Department of Education, (GaDOE) Division for Special Education Services and Supports

FY’ 13 Rookie Training Manual

A Training Tool for New Parent Mentors & Administrator

2012-2013 School Year

MISSION: To Build Effective Family, School, and Community Partnerships That Lead to Greater Achievement for All Students, Especially Those with Disabilities.

OBJECTIVE: To Impact Student Achievement through

Family Engagement Strategies

TAGLINE: Together We Can

LISTEN. LEAD. LINK.

A Family, School and Community Engagement Partnership Established in 2001 by the

**\**



Georgia Department of

Education

**INTRODUCTION**



The Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership (GaPMP) is celebrating 11 years of working together to increase achievement for all students, especially those with disabilities. The

Partnership, started in late 2001 by Phil Pickens, Special Education Director, Georgia Department of Education, (GaDOE), with Family Engagement Specialist Patti Solomon and a small group of parents and administrators, now boasts more than 92 local school

districts reaching more than 75 percent of Georgia families raising children with learning, behavioral and/or physical challenges. In just the past three years alone, Parent Mentors charted more than one million contacts.

Directed and supported by the Division for Special Education Services and Supports (DSESS), the Partnership includes more than 120 administrators and 105 Parent Mentors. The parent leaders, moms and dads of children with disabilities, are hired by local school districts, state schools and the Department of Juvenile Justice to work with families, school teams, teachers, and the community. The goal is to build a bridge of communication between home and school that leads to more successful outcomes for students. Parent Mentors partner with families to increase their engagement in education, address individual concerns and also to support initiatives designed to improve all children’s achievement levels. Although the Partnership under the leadership of the DSESS hosts a statewide conference each fall, it is unique how the Parent Mentor agenda is locally driven, which allows each program to meet the needs of its unique area. The DSESS also coordinates regional meetings four times a year and typically

offers an annual University Session specific to Parent Mentor’s leadership training needs.

Mentors do many things such as: build connections for families in the community; concentrate on the transition needs of middle and high school students as well as pre- kindergarten students; lead task forces; organize training sessions; collaborate with teachers; serve as leaders on community boards; collaborate with Title I Parent Involvement Coordinators; and create family engagement activities in schools.

Most importantly, the mentors listen to both parents and educators, and use their unique knowledge of both worlds to overcome obstacles in communication. The DSESS Family Engagement Specialist coordinates the Partnership statewide by leading trainings, communication and statewide collaboration efforts with other agencies. A Parent Outreach Coach also is contracted by the Division to assist in day to day issues, the guidance of the active Parent Mentor Leadership Council and collecting contact and IDEA Performance Goals initiatives data. The Parent Mentor Partnership Council offers support throughout the year and leads efforts in planning and training. The Council’s regional representative is responsible for working on a consistent basis with new Parent Mentors and for coordinating submission of Annual Plans and Reports.

**Keeping In Harmony with Your Schools, Families and Community**

**For Better Student Results**

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**Unit 1:** “**Just Call Out My Name”**

Questions. Questions. Questions

Patti Solomon, Family Engagement Specialist Office

W 404-657-7328 [psolomon@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:psolomon@doe.k12.ga.us)

Debbie Currere State Family Outreach Coach (Contracted)

770-722-6250 [debbiecurrere@gmail.com](mailto:debbiecurrere@gmail.com)

**Names to Know:**

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State Superintendent of Schools

**Debbie Gay**

Director, Division for Special Education Services and Supports

**Julie Causey**

Project Manager for State Level Projects (Staff support for Parent Mentor Partnership) **Jane Grillo**

Parent Mentor, White County School District &

GaPMP Communications Coach

**Kathy Simmons**

Parent Mentor, Dodge County School District

GaPMP Leadership Council Chair

**GaPMP Leadership Council Advisors**

**Joan Baird**

Special Education Director, Madison County

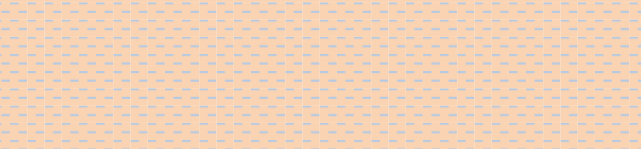
**Frank Williams**

Special Education Director, Bryant County

**Shauwan Carter Daniels,**

Special Education Director, Pelham City Schools

ASK GaDOE



404-656-2800

800-311-3627 [askdoe@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:askdoe@doe.k12.ga.us)

**Names to Check On:**

GaDOE District Liaison (meets regularly with district special education directors) GaPMP Regional Representative (your Parent Mentor regional contact for submitting plans, reports, etc.)

**Title I Parent Involvement Unit** – Michelle Sandrock, Program Manager and

Lakeita Servance, Parent Involvement Specialist

**Getting Started--First Steps:**

To get started as a rookie Parent Mentor, please:

a) **Send all your contact information** (name, title, email address, mailing address, office phone number) and the contact information for your local director/supervising administrator, as well as any other administrator in the district who wants to be informed of GaPMP happenings to [debbiecurrere@gmail.com](mailto:debbiecurrere@gmail.com).

 **Every school district is listed on the parent mentor web site.**

**Please send an individual photo of both you and your director** to Jane Grillo, web editor, [jgrillo@white.k12.ga.us](mailto:jgrillo@white.k12.ga.us) for the Parent Mentor website. The GaDOE approves materials for the public side of web site, but the site itself is housed on the Pioneer RESA server.

 **Also, please send your personal telephone number to Debbie Currere**. We have a personal mentor contact list that is for GaPMP members only. (Providing a cell phone number is optional but just

about all mentors provide a cell phone number so they can contact each other at times when they’re out of the office)

 **Link** [www.parentmentor.org](http://www.parentmentor.org/)**, the official web site, to your school district’s special education page.**

 **Work with the district to promote the parent mentor on the districts’ special education page, along with contact information and office hours.**

b) **Locate office space, set up the office, telephone, computer, email etc.**

Facilities vary widely based on factors such as the district size, tax base, location, demographics, etc. It is generally expected that there will be office space in the

district for the Parent Mentor; it is helpful if it is near other staff who may be working with families.

c) **Read the school district’s** P olicies & P rocedures M an ual. Discuss the local district’s policies and procedures for: attendance, work hours, personnel actions, phone and email use, dress codes, internet use, travel approval, reporting suspected child abuse, and expense reporting. Some of it may apply only to full time employees, but the information will still be useful. You now represent your school district and professional conduct is expected.

**Discuss professional protocols with your Special Education Director**. For example, how are media contacts to be managed, who needs to approve letters,

brochures, or other materials before they are distributed, who approves travel requests, how is time documented, the dress code, managing schedule changes,

reporting deadlines, travel and expense reports, call-in procedures etc.

d) **Attend required trainings and meetings:**

• To get off to a good start, you need to attend Rookie Mentor Orientation training on Wednesday, September 19, 2012 in a pre-conference session from 8:30am – 2pm at Callaway Gardens.

• Critical Training Sessions-Don’t Miss Them:

 **Orientation**

 **Annual GaPMP Kick-Off Conference: September 19-21 at**

**Callaway Gardens**

 **Drive-In University Trainings -** typically scheduled in February

 **Four Regional Meetings** - scheduled throughout the school year.

**Administrators have an open invitation to attend all mentor trainings and meetings. Directors are encouraged to attend the Orientation session or send another administrator with the mentor. Directors are strongly encouraged to attend the Annual GaPMP Kick-Off Conference in September**. The more you know about what is expected and about mentors’ successes and challenges, the better you can support your mentor and the more your district will benefit from having a mentor.

e) **Join the GaPMP listserve,** our primary means of communication between the mentors. Send an email [debbiecurrere@gmail.com](mailto:debbiecurrere@gmail.com) and ask that you be added to our listserve, [parentmentors\_georgia@yahoogroups.com](mailto:parentmentors_georgia@yahoogroups.com).

Once you have been added, send out an email to the list serve introducing yourself. Directors/Administrators are welcome to join the list serve, but most

opt not to because of time restraints. The listserve is a professional communication tool. Parent to Parent of Georgia (GaP2P) leadership are also on our listserve to share information. We work very hard to collaborate with GaP2P,

our state’s Parent Information Training Center (PTI), funded by the US Department of Education under IDEA.

f) **Stay up to date.** Every parent mentor will receive a **thumb drive** at the Kickoff Conference in September with valuable reference and resource information. Thumb drive stations will be set up at the major meetings for updates. Administrators are welcome to bring a thumb drive and copy the material.

• **All important contact information for fellow GaPMP members** will be updated and listed on the thumb drives for the Kick-Off Conference.

**g) Order your GaPMP Name Tag** by letting Debbie Currere know **ASAP** the exact name, title, and school district you want on it. You may also need a

school district identification card or name tag. Ask your immediate supervisor for information on the district’s requirements.

**h) Order business cards** with your name, title, and contact information.

**i) Arrange Phone Message Privacy:** Experience has taught the GaPMP that parents should be able to leave a private message for the Parent Mentor. It is essential that a parent does not have to leave a name for a return call with a district or school secretary. We want to practice confidentiality at all times. This means arranging access to voice mail or setting up an answering machine so private messages can be left for the mentor.

**j) More “to dos…..”**

• **Discuss procedures for staff to review students’ IEPs**. Some districts will require the parent to fax permission. Other districts allow Parent Mentors to review relevant files, the IEPs of students/families with whom you are working, but you will have to record your access to the

file. Usually this is done by signing a log sheet at the front or back of the student’s file folder. You do not have access to all IEPs in the district,

only those of students with whom you are working.

• **Schedule regular meetings with your administrator** so you have opportunities to communicate with each other on a regular basis. It works best to schedule them in the fall for the rest of the school year. At least three meetings a year are the minimum, but some directors may want to meet more often.

• **Arrange childcare or respite care for your children for travel dates**. Directors, please encourage your mentor to reach out to other mentors to navigate the respite district or other childcare options. Mentors, please reach out for help in finding care you can trust. Attending the Annual Kick-Off Conference won’t be a time of stress over leaving your child with a disability if trustworthy respite or childcare is planned in advance.

• **Go online to the GaPMP Learning Curve**, a password protected website, and **sign in on the front page at** www.parentmentors**. org**. To sign in, type **“partnership”** and then your GaPMP region (northeast, northwest, metro, middle, southeast or southwest.) If

at first you are unsure what region you are in, type in any of the region names and you will be linked. You will find a vast array of

materials to use in your local programs, but always secure your

director’s permission first. Also, major announcements and registration materials will be on the Learning Curve. Regional Representatives will help the rookies.

• **Read both Parent Mentor Toolkits on the Parent Mentor website.**

**Unit 2: “Ain’t No Mountain High Enough”** Helpful Hints, Including Confidentiality Leadership Opportunities

**Helpful Hints:**

• **Find your own “mentor” within your department,** someone who can introduce you to key people in the district. If possible, work with the director and this local mentor to make a plan for introductions.

• **Focus on building the important relationships and partnerships**, beginning with everyone in your department and moving out into the schools, the district, and the community. **Title I Parent Liaisons** are important partners as our Graduation Coaches. If your district has been part of the GraduateFIRST project in collaboration with GaDOE through the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), you’ll also want to meet and get to know the **Collaboration Coach** who works out of your regional GLRS Center (Georgia Learning Resources System).

• **Confidentiality safeguards** are important to remember. As an employee, you may not talk about any students with disabilities with anyone unless that person also works with that student. This includes others within the school district, family or friends. It’s easy to get excited about your work and accidently share confidential information. Be careful!!

• **Boundary setting** is critical. As a professional and a school district employee, you must also stay within the boundaries of your job. You can give advice and suggestions as a parent to other parents, but you are not a counselor, teacher, lawyer, or psychologist. You have an important role as a parent who mentors other parents, but it is important to honor the boundaries and not stray into another’s role.

• **Reporting possible or suspected child abuse:** Find out what your school district’s procedures are for reporting suspected child abuse.

• **Respect co-workers** by ensuring that you:

 Are prepared for meetings with talking points and questions

 Arrive on time for meetings and be sure your meetings begin and end on time

 Ensure all parties have the opportunity to actively participate in discussions

 Turn off your cell phone in the buildings

 Wear district name tag/carry business cards with you

 Dress appropriately

 Communicate in an open and responsive manner

 Respect different perspectives and learn from them

 Honor each other’s expertise and experience

 Safeguard confidentiality

 Manage time well; limit interruptions

 Maintain accountability at the local and state level

 Don’t spend too much time on the web researching while at work.

Knowledge from new colleagues on various programs, disabilities, education rules etc. is much more powerful. Spend time listening,

observing and asking questions.

**Leadership Opportunities**

Listed below are a number of statewide or regional activities/organizations that offer Parent Mentors an opportunity for leadership and collaboration. Work with your special education director to determine which of these would be useful in your district. Active participation and collaboration through organizations such as these can extend your influence beyond what it might be otherwise and open doors for future collaboration. Consider your district goals and priorities when selecting programs or activities so that you’re involved important areas, but not overbooked beyond what you can accomplish in a part-time position.

Some of GaPMP’s Partners and Leadership Opportunities:

Parent Mentor Leadership Council

CA.F.E. DIALOGUE Teams, GraduationFIRST

Active Student Participation Inspires Real Engagement

(ASPIRE) A Student-Led IEPs Initiative

Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Partnership

Parent Training Information Center (PTI) – Parent to Parent of GA (GaP2P) Project Search, GCDD

Cultural Competency Team, Center for Leadership in Disabilities, CLD Local Positive Behavior Supports Initiatives led by DSESS

Special Education State Advisory Panel, GaDOE Georgia Council for Developmental Disabilities (GCDD) Unlock the Waiting Campaign, AADD

Family Connections local partnerships

DBHDD Regional Boards

Transition Interagency Councils/Regional Transition Council

Autism State Advisory, DSESS

PTA/PTO Special Olympics/Buddy Ball

**Unit 3: “Circle of Life”**

Your Role as a Parent Mentor: Tool Belt Special Education Handbook GaDOE Website: Parents’ Rights, Performance Goals & Indicators State Performance Plan Goal # 8;

PTA Family Engagement Standards; Parent Survey; IEP Meeting Attendance

Note: As an engaged parent, you may already know some or all of the above. If not, it may seem overwhelming at first, though you will soon be a PRO. Reviewing these materials with an eye to Parent Mentor goals will assist you in your daily work. Keep in mind that all your activities as a Parent Mentor should be tied and embedded into YOUR District’s goals, to provide a partnership approach to student achievement.

**Special Education Family Handbook/Manual**

Most districts offer a special education manual to families as a valuable resource. This may be on the district website. You should print or obtain a hard copy and keep it for reference. It explains how the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the State Board of Education Rules for special education are followed in your school district. It provides the foundation for interactions between the school district and families, as their child is evaluated, eligibility for special education services is considered, the Individualized Education Program is developed, and the IEP is reviewed each year. It also outlines how to handle disagreements between parents and the school district. As a Rookie Parent Mentor, you should be very familiar with everything in this handbook/manual.

**GaDOE Website**

If your district does not have an existing handbook, then you may want to go to the **GaDOE website** to obtain generic information. (Go to [www.gadoe.org](http://www.gadoe.org/)

>Home on the upper left>Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment>Special

Education Services and Supports>Implementation Manual.)

• The I m plem entation M anual explains the state special education rules in parent friendly terms and also provides school districts guidance in

how to implement them. Most districts also provide a handbook for

teachers that could provide useful information on how teachers are expected to implement special education rules. The GaDOE website also includes a wealth of information about education in general and about special education, including eligibility, services, IEPs, assessment, Parents’ Rights, discipline, rules, resources, training etc.

• Make sure you know how to find the **Parents’ Rights** (on the Special

Education page, under Links on the right). Here you’ll find descriptions of

Parents’ Rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in seven different languages, as well as videos in English and Spanish explaining the rights. There is also a parent-friendly version created by

the State Advisory Panel. You can also find **Parent Fact Sheets** on either the GaPMP website or on the GaDOE special education page. It is

important that you understand the Parents’ Rights well.

• **Georgia Performance Goals and Indicators** are also available on the GaDOE web site. These are the state’s Goals for improving special education services and supports and the achievement of students with disabilities. They include Goals such as improving the graduation rate with a general education diploma, decreasing the dropout rate, improving statewide test scores, and increasing the number of graduates who are continuing their education or are employed. The state’s performance on these Goals is measured by Indicators that show whether or not each school district and the state as a whole have met the target for each Goal for the year or not. Each Goal has at least one Indicator; most have several. The Indicators are measures that “indicate” how well the state/district/school is doing at meeting the Goal.

**State Performance Goal, Indicator # 8 for Parent Engagement** “Indicator 8” as you will hear it called is: “Increase the percentage of parents of students with IEPs who report that the school facilitates parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for students with disabilities.” This is measured through a Parent Survey that will be described in more detail later in this Manual. A copy of all of the Goals and Indicators can be found in the Addenda.

**Consolidated Application/ Local Improvement Plan (CLIP)**

Your school district also has an annual plan called the Consolidated Application that includes a special education plan for meeting these statewide Performance Goals and Indicators. You’ll want to review it also. Most, if not all, of your activities should relate directly to helping the school district meet the parent involvement Goal and at least one of the other statewide Goals. A key part of the role of the Parent Mentor is to assist the school district in engaging parents in their student’s education, providing information and resources that will enable them to make informed decisions.

**The PTA Family Engagement Standards**

The PTA Standards are a list the six types of involvement for successful partnerships with families. There are standards for welcoming, communicating,

supporting all students speaking up for each child, sharing power, and

collaborating with the community; they should be the bedrock upon which you build all of your family engagement initiatives and activities. A copy is in the Addenda for your convenience.

**The Parent Survey**

The Georgia Department of Education distributes a Parent Survey annually to the parents at randomly selected schools in order to raise success rates for students with disabilities. The GaDOE asks parents to answer questions to help assist

with helping local schools find ways to better partner with families. The results are posted with school district data on the GaDOE website, in the Summary Tab

of the Special Education Report. All Parent Mentors are asked to assist with the distributing the surveys and facilitating the return of as many surveys as

possible. Large districts will distribute surveys to some schools each year. Medium and small districts will have surveys done some years with no surveys during other years. The schools are randomly selected to achieve a fair

representation of Georgia parents so it is important that the surveys get to the schools that are indicated each year.

**IEP Attendance Data**

All school districts maintain records each year on the percentage of parents of students with disabilities who attend their child’s IEP meeting. As a Parent

Mentor, you can help ensure parents attend the meetings by providing

information and training on the parents’ role in the IEP meeting and how to prepare to contribute at the IEP meeting. The district will report data each year on the percentage of parents of students with disabilities who attend the IEP meeting.

**Unit 4:** “**Hello it’s Me”**

Tips for Introducing Yourself and Your Role

The following strategies can help you inform the school district and community about your role as the new Parent Mentor:

• Introductions at Central Office Staff meetings and Coordinator, Lead Teacher meetings.

• Find opportunities to tell your individual story to central office staff so colleagues can understand the challenges a parent faces and feels raising a child with a disability.

• Your local special education director can send a letter of introduction to school administrators, counselors, teachers, therapists, psychologists, school district partners, etc., describing your role and providing your contact information.

• Create or customize an existing Parent Mentor Brochure with your information.

With your Director’s approval, get a sufficient quantity printed for distribution. (Check the Parent Mentor “Learning Curve” online for samples of existing introductory brochures).

• Meet with principals, counselors, and social workers in each school. Plan visits based on your district’s goals and priorities. Attend family and community

meetings and listen. Make sure you introduce yourself at the meetings.

• Meet with individual school PTA/PTOs. Determine if ALL parents are being included and how you can help. Contact the partners on your community map. Call the GAP2P representative for your area and introduce yourself.

• Build relationships and partnerships with leaders to work towards including ALL parents in their activities – especially Title I and English Language Learners programs.

• Provide information about the Parent Mentor program to local newspapers, with prior approval from your Director and district Media Coordinator/Public Relations Director. Learn the approval protocol for any flyer, news item etc. and never distribute any information without first obtaining approval according to the local

policy. Also find out what to do if a member of the media contacts you directly. Often you will need to refer the call to the Media Coordinator/Public Relations Director before responding to any requests for information or interviews.

• Disseminate your contact information on school web sites, PTA/PTO newsletters, again with prior approval as required by your school district.

 Mail an introduction letter to every family with a student who has an IEP

and/or send a letter to every teacher. By now you know you need prior approval to send the introductory letter.

 Decide with your director what services you are able to provide the first six months. Don’t promise services you are not yet ready to provide.

 Distribute your contact information to intake staff, social workers, psychologists, counselors and diagnosticians to be given to parents at the time of referral or evaluation.

**Unit 5: “We Are the World”**

Partnerships inside the School District;

With Other Agencies; within the Community; And the Parent Leadership Coalition Agencies

You’re strongly encouraged, as a new Parent Mentor, to get an overview of the special education services and supports as well as other student support possibilities such as

the Title I, and English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs. You will need this information on an ongoing basis.

**Partnerships Inside the School District**

 After School Tutoring programs

 Career -Technical and Agriculture Education (CTAE)

 Communities In Schools – connecting community resources with schools

 English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program

 High school Graduation Coaches (limited)

 Media Specialists

 PTA/PTO

 Parent - Teacher Resource Centers (Often funded by Title I)

 School Improvement

 Title I Parent Involvement Program

Title I Parent Involvement Unit offers excellent resources to Parent Mentors and also extends invitations to its regional meetings.

**Partnerships with Other Agencies within the Community**

Parent to Parent of Georgia (GaP2P) – Georgia’s federally funded Parent Information

and Training Center. This is a key partner and a great source of information for parents. Please spend some time on their excellent website to familiarize yourself with GaP2P

and the services and resources available. Most important to begin is to travel on their

**Road Map to Services and Supports**.

**Parent Leadership Coalition Agencies: Sharing information and resources to create better outcomes for children**

• Bright from the Start - Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, Childcare

Inclusion and Pre-K Coordinators

• Children with Special Needs, Babies Can't Wait, Project SCEIs, Parent Educators, Georgia Department of Education, Division for Special Education Services and Supports and Title I Parent Outreach

• Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD)

• Parent to Parent of Georgia

• Georgia Department or Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD)

• Georgia Family Connection Partnership

• Institute on Human Development and Disability (IHDD)

• Leadership Institute on Developmental Disabilities, Georgia State University

• State PTA

• State Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC)

**Unit 6: “Defying Gravity”**

Using the Learning Curve/Other Internet Resources

The Learning Curve: An Introduction

General Disability Information Links

**The Learning Curve: An Introduction**

The Learning Curve is the Parent Mentor Partnership’s online resource. It contains updated resources, mentor directories, current initiatives, calendars and scheduled events, and as well as Parent Mentor tips and featured stories. It houses a wide variety of resources including downloadable materials created by mentors that you can customize for use in your own district: Power Point Presentations, Brochures, Flyers, Newsletters and a variety of other handouts and resources.

**Other Internet Resources GEORGIA Links:** [**www.parentmentors.org**](http://www.parentmentors.org/)

The official site of the Parent Mentor Partnership of Georgia, providing families, educators and community members information on team building, communication strategies, family support, personal stories from parents and educators, links to resources and best practices in family engagement, as well as initiatives at the state, regional and local school level.

[**www.cobbparentmentors.eboard.com**](http://www.cobbparentmentors.eboard.com/)

A bulletin board format used by Parent Mentors in the Cobb County School District to quickly get out information to families and educators on upcoming events and topics. The site also archives past information for easy referral.

[**http://www.gadoe.org**](http://www.gadoe.org/)

The official site of the Georgia Department of Education with links on the Special Education Section to a **Transition Manual** to assist families and students to understand adult learning, working and living options. In addition, there is a link to the IDEA Implementation Manual created by 60 educators and 10 parents in a chapter format explaining the State Rules on Special Education in parent friendly terms.

Make sure you check on the Parent Section! In addition, go to Parent Involvement under Title I for the

Parent Friendly Schools model and many other resources.

[**GeorgiaStandards.Org**](https://www.georgiastandards.org/Pages/Default.aspx)

Provides information on the Georgia Performance Standards and the Common Core Standards that outline what students are expected to know and to do in each subject area at each grade level. There is a section specifically for parents as well as sections for educators providing lesson plans and other resources, along with links to other education sites.

[**http://www.p2pga.org**](http://www.p2pga.org/)

The site of the state’s Parent Training Information Center and a vast resource database on supports and services including information about Navigation Teams at the local level. There is an extensive database and trained parents answer the phone 40 hours a week.

[**www.partnershipsforsuccess.com**](http://www.partnershipsforsuccess.com/index.php)

An initiative of the Georgia Council for Developmental Disabilities that provides students with disabilities opportunities to participate with their non-disabled peers in areas of recreation, social activities, sports, and community service. It also offers a self-determination curriculum and training on Student-Led IEPs.

[**www.georgiapta.org**](http://www.georgiapta.org/)

Georgia PTA site that partners at the state level as well as in local communities with the

GaDOE and Parent Mentors in family engagement initiative

**OHIO LINKS (Our Partner in Parent Mentor Development)**

<http://www.ocecd.org/parent_mentor.php>

The Ohio Parent Mentor Program, an initiative by the Ohio Department of Education

(ODE) and the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities. (OCECD)

During the early 1990's, OCECD worked with Ohio parents of children with disabilities

and the ODE to establish a statewide parent/professional collaboration model to support

the appropriate education of children and youth with disabilities. This was the

collaborative model Georgia modeled to establish its Parent Mentor Partnership.

[**http://www.ode.state.oh.us/**](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/) **(Don’t forget GaDOE’s model)**

For a Virtual Tour of a Family Friendly School go to the Ohio Department of Education website. Click Family and Community Engagement > Learning Supports

[**http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/service/p/project-search/default/**](http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/service/p/project-search/default/)

The Project Search High School Transition model which is being used in many districts in Georgia is the collaboration effort a school district, Vocational Rehabilitation, a business, and a supported employment agency.

**National Family Engagement Research Links:**

[**www.sedl.org/connections**](http://www.sedl.org/connections)

The National Center for Family and School Connections with Schools provides toolkits, webinars, a literature database, a research synthesis, and briefs/handouts on family and community connections.

[**http://www.partnershipschools.org**](http://www.partnershipschools.org/)

The National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University provides a variety of resources including NNPS Samplers with ideas for researched family

engagement in areas such as reading, math, and science, as well as ideas across grade levels.

[**http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/fine-family-involvement-network- of-educators**](http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/fine-family-involvement-network-of-educators)

A Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE) is a community of thousands of

educators, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers dedicated to strengthening family–school–community partnerships. There is no cost to become a FINE member.

**National Resources** [**http://www.eric.ed.gov**](http://www.eric.ed.gov/)

The Education Resources Information Center, including sections geared to families.

[**www.ideapartnership.org**](http://www.ideapartnership.org/)

Site of the DIALOGUE problem solving method used in Georgia’s C.A.F.E. DIALOGUEs on dropout prevention and early childhood issues and links to National Communities of Practices on many key education issues facing families are included.

[**www.fape.org**](http://www.fape.org/) The Families and Advocates Partnership for Education (FAPE) links families, advocates, and self-advocates to information about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

[**http://www.pacer.org**](http://www.pacer.org/)

Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights–PACER Center, is the National Center for the Technical Assistance ALLIANCE for Parent Centers funded by the U.S.

Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

[**www.ndpc-sd.org**](http://www.ndpc-sd.org/)

The National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SD) assists in building states’ capacity to increase school completion rates for students with

disabilities and is a partner in Georgia’s GraduateFIRST project through the State

Personnel Development Grant.

[**www.nichcy.org/**](http://www.nichcy.org/)

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHY) is a national information and referral organization and its site contains many valuable publications, as well as a database to enable the searcher to find national organizations that provide information to families of children with disabilities. The [State Resource Sheets](http://www.nichcy.org/states.htm), which lists the governmental and non-profit organizations that provide services to families of children with disabilities.

**Unit 7: “We are Family”**

The Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership (GaPMP)

**Regional and Statewide Meetings**

Parent Mentors focus on local family engagement initiatives, but the Partnership is funded in part through the Georgia Department of Education’s Division for Special Education Services and Supports. The Parent Mentors’ activities are expected to support the school district’s efforts to improve the achievement of students with disabilities and to engage families in their child’s education. Regional and statewide meetings provide information on best practices for improving family engagement, planning and implementing successful projects, assessing results and collecting outcome data, The meetings also provide an opportunity for collaboration and problem solving as mentors share successes and work to overcome barriers.

Early each fall, a Leadership Conference is held for the Regional Representatives and Leadership Council to participate in leadership training and explore best practices for family engagement. Each September, the big event is the GaPMP Kickoff Conference for all Parent Mentors and the special education administrators from their districts. Many GaDOE special education staff attend so this is a good opportunity to meet them. Regional meetings are also held four times a year in each of the six regions, allowing more in-depth discussion of local issues and more collaboration time.

**The GaPMP Directory**

The Directory is a listing, by GaPMP Region, of Parent Mentors, with their local school district and their GaDOE district. Check the Directory to find out what GLRS/GaDOE district you’re in, as the six GaPMP regions and the17 GLRS/GaDOE districts are not an exact match. When you receive it on your thumb drive at the Kickoff Conference, please check the directory for your listing. Remember, to stop by the Thumb drive Station for

up to date information. All rookies receive a thumb drive at Orientation. Mentors are classified based on their years of Parent Mentor experience as either:

• Rookies - 1st year mentors

• Varsity - 2 or more years of experience

**The Parent Mentor’s Professional Role: Representing Your District**

• As a Parent Mentor, you are a representative of the school district so act accordingly. Professional behavior and communication are expected, as with all school district employees. The district’s policies and procedures for attendance, holidays, travel approval, expense reports, confidentiality, and professional conduct apply to all employees, including the Parent Mentor.

• You should obtain permission from your Director, or supervising administrator, to attend required conferences and training sessions. Please apply for approval/permission well in advance as some districts have a long approval process. Registration costs and hotel expenses for approved overnight stays are usually paid by each school district. Contact your Regional Council Representative or trainer for specific questions.

**Parent Mentor Partnership Leadership Council:**

Leadership opportunities abound within the Parent Mentor Partnership. The Leadership

Council consists of an Executive Board and Regional Council Representatives. The

Council meets separately twice a year for specific training and to provide direction and guidance for the Parent Mentor Partnership. The GaPMP Directory lists all members of the Partnership, the Council, Executive Board, and Regional Representatives. Be sure to check it out.

Please feel free to contact YOUR Regional Council Representatives with any questions or comments. The Representatives also coordinate submission of required plans, reports, and contact data to the state staff. The name of your Regional Representative will be

provided at Orientation.

**Unit 8: “Working 9 to 5”**

Statewide Expectations: The Family Engagement Initiative

There are several statewide expectations for all Parent Mentors. Because the GaPMP is partially funded through GaDOE, the Partnership is accountable for meeting these statewide expectations. Mentors also participate in a variety of other activities and collaborative efforts in their districts and communities, but they have common statewide requirements, including planning, implementing, and reporting the results of a Family Engagement Initiative, attending state and regional meetings, and maintaining and reporting data on the number of parent contacts made each month.

**Overview:**

You’re expected plan and carry out a Family Engagement Initiative each school year that provides parents with knowledge and skills to do at least one of the following Vital

B ehaviors. These are behaviors that research has shown make a difference in student

achievement if parents do them routinely.

• Routinely help their high school student plan for college or further education after high school and for a career**.**

• Routinely help their preschool, elementary, or middle school child learn at home using materials provided by the school to target one area of need.

Each school district and each Parent Mentor are accountable for submitting:

1. An **Annual Plan** describing the Parent Engagement Project. The plans are revised as needed throughout the school year and updated or redone annually.

2. An **Annual Report** that summarizes the results data collected as the

plan is implemented and at the end of the year.

The Parent Mentor Partnership uses the Family Engagement Project data as one way to measure the impact of the Parent Mentors in their districts and in the State.

The Annual Plan includes: 1. State Performance Goals with their Indicators,

2. Vital Behaviors, 3. Benchmarks and data collection procedures.

As a Parent Mentor, you will work with your director to create your plan. It will then be revised throughout the year as you make changes based on either the success of what

you’re doing or on what you’ve found needs to be changed because it’s not working.

**Developing the Annual Plan**

**a. Select Your Statewide Indicator:** IDEA is enforced through the Performance Goals and Indicators which give the local districts the opportunity measure progress toward the goals for the entire state. Each school district that receives federal funds through IDEA must

work on the Goals and measure their improvement using the Indicators. GaDOE sets statewide targets each year for the Indicators. All experienced mentors work on Indicator 8 and one other Indicator. Rookies only address Indicator 8 in their first year so your Indicator is already decided for your first year. You’ll want to meet with your director soon

after you start work though to find out what Indicators are in the school district’s improvement plans, so you can begin to think about which one you’ll want to work on in your second year. Planning for the second year will begin in the spring, so you’ll need to schedule another meeting with the director in the spring of your first year and annually from then on.

**SAMPLE Indicator: Indicator 7B: Increase the percentage of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improved acquisition and use of skills.**

**b. Name the Family Engagement Initiative**—a name for the project describing how it relates to the statewide Indicator

**SAMPLE Initiative: Preschool Reading Readiness Project**

**c. Create SMART Goals—**specific, measureable, attainable, results-oriented goals with a timeline—that are aligned with the school district’s improvement plan. The goals include:

i. **Target Group—**Which parents will you work with? Parents of all students with an IEP, at certain schools, at certain grade levels, who have children

with a certain disability?

ii. **Criteria for Success—**how much improvement will you consider to be successful?

iii. **Indicator—**the overall Indicator that you want to improve at the target

school.

iv. **Timeline—**when will you collect data to see if the Goal is met?

**SAMPLE GOAL:** Increase by at least 5 points the percentage of preschool children with IEPs at ABC, DEF, GHI, and KLM Elementary Schools who demonstrate improved language, communication, and early literacy skills at the end of the school year by the end of the ’12-’13 school year. (Data to Report: School district’s preschool outcome data for the percentage of preschoolers with IEPs at the targeted Elmentary

Schools who improved to “Near same age peers” or “comparable to same age peers.”)

**d. Core or General** Vital B eh av iors are two general vital behaviors that research has determined make a difference for students if parents do them routinely during the school year

• Parents routinely help their child learn at home using materials provided by the school to target one area of need. (preschool, elementary, and middle school)

• Parents routinely help their student plan for college or further education after high school and for a career. (high school)

**SAMPLE Core** Vital B eh av ior**:** Since our example is for preschool, we’ll be using the core vital behavior for preschool: Parents routinely help the child learn at home using material provided by the school to target an area of need.

**e. Specific** V ital B eh av iors **for your targeted parents—**these describe the specifics for the parents you’re working, what materials they’ll be using, how will they use them, how often. You’ll create three to five of these that you’ll teach parents how to do, help them practice, and then ask them do routinely with their child at home.

i. **Specific** Vit al B ehavior(s): a list of about **3-5 specific behaviors that targeted parents, students, or teachers will do** over the course of the school year in order to achieve the desired results of the initiative. These describe very

specifically the behaviors that parents will do to either help their young child learn at home or help their teenager plan for college or further education.

ii. **Timeline---**the deadline for collecting the final data showing whether or not the

goal has been met.

iii. **Data Collection**—How will you collect the data? How will you know how many parents completed the vital behaviors?

**SAMPLE Specific Vital Behaviors:**

1. Parents will read at least two books a month to their child, each book three times or more. [Data

collection on a calendar for how many books, how many times.]

2. Parents will use more than one language improvement hint when reading to their child: reading with expression, predicting/checking prediction, using pictures, asking questions, child sequencing events to retell the story. [Data

collection calendar for using more than one hint.]

**f. Family Engagement Activities---**describe the **activities that the mentor will do** to implement the initiative. This may include descriptions of training, presentations, practice activities, conferences, collaborations with school personnel, materials to be created or used, how “understanding data” and “vital behaviors data” will be collected etc. The focus is on what the mentor will do. In parenthesis after each activity, indicate which PTA standards relate to that activity.

**SAMPLE Family Engagement Activities/Mentor’s Activities:**

1. Work with preschool teachers to develop training for parents in how use each of the hints while they read. (Collaborating)

2. Schedule the parent meetings and plan icebreaker activities. (Welcoming and Communicating)

3. Ask preschool teacher to demonstrate with a child how to

read to the child using the hints. (Student Success)

4. At the second meeting, ask parents who attended the first meeting to demonstrate reading with the hints. (Share Power, Collaborate)

5. Ask parents to invite another parent to come with them to the second meeting. (Advocate)

**g. Benchmarks**

• Tim eline b enchm ark s set a deadline for when you will complete your family engagement activities over the school year. You may set deadlines for your own

activities if you find that helpful. It is not required.

• Data benchm ark s let you know if you’ve met the criteria you set for success in terms of how many parents are doing the specific vital behaviors at home with their children. Set a minimum of three dates during the year for collecting data on whether

the criteria have been met. If early data reveal that the training or practice are not effectively helping participants **do the** vital behaviors, then there is still time left in the year to try another way to achieve the desired results. You need to include data

benchmarks in your plan. They are now required.

a) Data B enchm ark = Vital B ehavior **+ Dates for checking the Data +**

Criteria for Success

**b) Criteria for success** describe the level of performance that will be considered to be successful achievement of the goals. What percentages of parents doing the vital behaviors will you consider to be a success? If you get less than that when you check, it’s time to consider how to revise or improve training or practice. If you meet or exceed it, you’ll know you’re on the right track and you can continue as planned.

**SAMPLE Data Benchmarks:**

1. Parents read at least two books a month to their child, each three times or more. Data collection: on a calendar to see how many books were read and how many times.

October: 20% - read two books a month, at least three times each

January: 30% - read two books a month, at least three times each

May: 40% - read two books a month, at three times each

2. Parents will use more than one language improvement hint when reading to their child. The hints are: reading with expression, predicting/checking prediction, using pictures, asking questions, child sequencing events to retell the story.

October: 20% used more than one hint each time

January: 30% used more than one hint each time

May: 50% used more than one hint each time

**The Annual Report**

At the end of each school year, you’ll submit an annual report that summarizes the results data for your Family Engagement Initiative. It will include the percentages of parents who actually did the Vital Behaviors you taught them and the data that shows the whether or not you met you Goal(s).

For example, using the preschool readiness project example above, the end-of-the year report would include data for each benchmark check in October, January, and May on:

1. The percentage of parents who read at least two books to their child, each book at least three times.

2. The percentage of parents who used more than one language development hint each time.

The report would indicate whether or not the criteria for success were met at each of benchmark checks.

**It would also include data on the overall Goal**:

1. The percentage of preschoolers with disabilities overall at the target schools who demonstrated improved language skill, communication, and early literacy skills at the end of the school year.

2. The percentage of preschoolers with disabilities at the target schools whose scores by the end of the school year were nearer or comparable to their same age peers.

The Annual Report would also indicate whether or not the expected improvement of 5 points had been achieved.

Training is provided for parents in how to do the specific vital behaviors; the vital behaviors are demonstrated and parents are given an opportunity to practice them and get feedback on how they are doing. Parents are then asked to actually do the vital behavior at home with their child on a routine basis. The Mentor checks with them at least times during the year to see if they are doing the vital behaviors as often as suggested. The data from these checks are called benchmark data. The Mentor uses this data to see if project is on track. If it is, the plan continues to be implemented. If not, the Mentor knows some adjustments or revisions are needed in the plan. Maybe more practice is needed or the parent need and question and answer session. The next time a benchmark data check is done, the Mentor will know if the new activities worked. Benchmark data and revised plans are turned in at the next regional meeting.

At the end of the year, the Mentor completes the Annual Report that provides data on the Goals and the benchmarks and indicates whether or not the goals and benchmarks were met.

**Unit 9: “You Don’t Love me Anymore”**

Ensure you are maintaining Confidentiality and using good

Steps to Dealing with Parent Concerns

**General Hints**

 Listening and communication skills.

 Collect all available background information

 The student's file may be reviewed, with prior parent permission or as per

School District protocol, if you are working with the family/student. You do not

have access to all IEPs, only those of students/families with whom you are directly working.

 If required, with guidance from the Director or supervisor, you can act as a

liaison to assist in resolving the concern or dispute.

 Ensure that the parent/guardian has a copy of the GaDOE Dispute Resolution Sheet. This can be found on the GaDOE website and in many counties is included in the Parent Welcome Packet when a child enters into the Program for Exceptional Children.

NOTE: Discuss these steps with your Director/supervisor before proceeding. There is specific updated information available on the DOE website, regarding dispute resolution. Please check this out. You can also direct the parent to information on the site.

**Informal Resolution/Local**

1.) Suggest that the parent talk with the child’s teacher(s). If necessary, request an IEP team meeting to discuss concerns. At the meeting focus on the issue at hand. Keep the discussion ALL about the student and his or her educational needs. Remember that everyone is on the same team, working to ensure an appropriate education for the student.

2.) If the concern is still unresolved, discuss it with lead special education teacher

3.) If the concern remains unresolved, discuss it with the principal

4.) If it is still unresolved, discuss the concern with the special education director or his/her designee.

5.) Finally, if the concern hasn’t been resolved yet, discuss it with the

superintendent.

Remember that professional protocols may exist in the district for making appointments ahead of time to see the teacher, lead teacher, principal, director, or superintendent. Find out what these are and be sure to keep your immediate supervisor informed at each step along the way, especially if contacting the principal or superintendent.

**Formal Resolution/GaDOE**

If the issues are still unresolved after every effort to correct the problem locally, parents may elect to use the formal IDEA dispute resolution options. It is always recommended

to first try to resolve the problem with the teacher, school or school district, so encourage parents to try to resolve the issues locally before turning to these formal

options.

**The three formal dispute resolution options are:**

• Filing a Formal Complaint

• Requesting Mediation

• Requesting a Due Process Hearing

The procedure to follow for each of these options can be found on the GaDOE website. Go to [http://www.doe.k12.ga.us](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/). Click on Home on the upper left > Curriculum and Assessment > Special Education Services and Supports. Scroll down to Dispute

Resolution and click on the desired option. The parent should follow the directions as indicated for the option they wish to pursue.

Be sure to notify your immediate supervisor and the special education director if a parent intends to file a complaint or request mediation or a due process hearing. It is important to follow up with the parent/district to check on the outcome. It may help to direct parents to agencies and proactive support groups and resources to support their

ongoing needs.

**Don’t forget the parent-friendly explanation forms on major special education issues and regulations on the GaDOE website.**

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**Addendum**: **Taking Care of Business**

PTA STANDARDS/ SAMPLE FORM AND EXAMPLE/GaPMP Targeted INDICATORS/TERMS

PTA Standards/ Sample Plan Form and Example of Plan/Terms

National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement

Note: Also PTA Standards and used in the School Keys Strand on Family Engagement:

**PTA’s National Standards for Family-School Partnerships**

Stan dard 1 : W elcom in g all fam ilies in to th e school com m un ity—Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class. When parents volunteer, both families and schools reap benefits that come in few other ways. Literally millions of dollars worth of volunteer services are performed by parents and family members each year in the public schools. Studies have concluded that volunteers express greater confidence in the schools where they have opportunities to participate regularly. In addition, assisting in school or program events/activities communicates to a child, "I care about what you do here".

In order for parents to feel appreciated and welcome, volunteer work must be meaningful and valuable to them. Capitalizing on the expertise and skills of parents and family members

provides much needed support to educators and administrators already taxed in their attempts to meet academic goals and student needs. Although there are many parents for whom

volunteering during school hours is not possible, creative solutions like before- or after-school

"drop-in" programs or "at home" support activities provide opportunities for parents to offer their assistance as well.

Stan dard 2 : Com m u n icatin g effectiv ely—Families and school staff engage in regular, two- way, meaningful communication about student learning. Communication is the foundation of a solid partnership. When parents and educators communicate effectively, positive relationships develop, problems are more easily solved, and students make greater progress. Too often school or program communication is one-way without the chance to exchange ideas and share perceptions. Effective home-school communication is the two-way sharing of information vital to student success. Even parent-teacher conferences can be one-way if the goal is merely reporting student progress. Partnering requires give-and-take conversation, goal setting for the future, and regular follow-up interactions.

Stan dard 3 : Supporting student success—Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students’ learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively. Student learning increases when parents are invited into the process by helping at home. Enlisting parent’s involvement provides educators and administrators with a valuable support district, creating a team that is working for each child’s success. The majority of parents are willing to assist their students in learning, but many times are not sure what assistance is most helpful and appropriate. Helping parents connect to their children’s learning enables parents to communicate in powerful ways that they value what their children achieve. Whether it’s working together on a computer, displaying student work at home, or responding to a particular class assignment, parent’s actions communicate to their children that education is important.

Stan dard 4 : Speak in g up for ev ery ch ild—Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success. Studies have shown that schools where parents are involved in decision making and advocacy have higher levels of student achievement and greater public support. Effective partnerships develop when each partner is respected and empowered to fully participate in the decision-making process. Schools and programs that actively enlist parent participation and input communicate that parents are valued as full partners in the education of their children. Parents and educators depend on shared authority in decision-making districts to foster parental trust, public confidence, and mutual support of each others efforts in helping students succeed. The involvement of parents, as individuals or as representative of others, is crucial in collaborative decision-making processes on issues from curriculum and course selection, to discipline policies and over-all school reform measures.

Standard 5 : Sharin g pow er—Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs. Parents are a child’s life support district. Consequently, the most important support a child can receive comes from the home. School personnel and program staff support positive parenting by respecting and affirming the strengths and skills needed by parents to fulfill their role. From making sure that students arrive at school rested, fed, and ready to learn, to setting high learning expectations and nurturing self-esteem, parents sustain their children’s learning. When staff members recognize parent roles and responsibilities, ask parents what supports they need, and

work to find ways to meet those needs, they communicate a clear message to parents: We value you and need your input in order to maintain a high-quality program.

Standard 6 : Collaborating w ith com m unit y —Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation. As part of the larger community, schools and other programs fulfill important community goals. In like fashion, communities offer a wide array of resources valuable to schools and the families they serve.

When schools and communities work together, both are strengthened in synergistic ways and make gains that outpace what either entity could accomplish on its own:

• Families access community resources more easily;

• Businesses connect education programs with the realities of the workplace;

• Seniors contribute wisdom and gain a greater sense of purpose; and ultimately,

• Students serve and learn beyond their school involvement.

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**State Performance Indicators**

**Most Often Used in Parent Engagement Initiatives**

Indicator 13, IDEA Performance Indicator Increase the percentage of transition aged students with disabilities who have coordinated and measurable IEP goals and transition services that will lead to attainment of post-secondary goals.

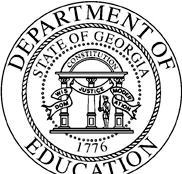
Indicator 12, IDEA Performance Indicator: Increase the percentage of young children referred by parents, or other agencies prior to age three who are determined eligible and have an IEP implemented by the third birthday.

Indicator 3, IDEA Performance Indicator: Increase the performance of students with disabilities on statewide assessments when given appropriate accommodations.

Indicator 8, IDEA Performance Indicator: Increase the percentage of parents of children receiving special education services who report that schools encouraged parent involvement to improve results for students with disabilities.

A lw ays Go on th e Learn in g Cu rv e to Dow n load th e M ost Up to Date Form s

**Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership**



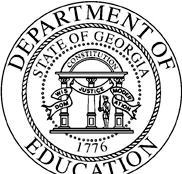
**FY 13 PLAN Form (Sample)**

**GaPMP Strategy: Data-Driven and Measureable**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Parent Mentor(s):** | | **Date Submitted: Date**  **Revised:**  **Date Revised: Date**  **Revised:** |
| **Special Education Director:** | | **Direct Report / Supervisor:** |
| **District:** | | **District Group Size:** |
| **Region:** | | **2011-2012 IEP Parent Attendance**  **Rate at Annual Meeting: % Student Attendance Rate at Annual Mtg: %** |
| **Parent Survey in FY 12?** | | **Latest Survey Data Reported: Return Rate % Satisfaction Rate %** |
| **Targeted State Annual IDEA Indicator(s):** Rookies only do #8 | **Indicator #**  **Baseline Data 11-12:**  **# 8 Improve the percentage of parents of children receiving special education services who report that schools encourage parent involvement to improve results for student with disabilities.**  **Baseline Data 11-12: 35 % returned 30 % satisfied** | |
| **Family Engagement**  **Initiative(s) for above targeted IDEA Indicator(s)** | **Give your initiative a name or title that shows what it’s all about:** | |
| **GaPMP SMART Goal(s)**  **with Vital Behaviors:**   Specific   Measurable   Attainable   Realistic/Results- Oriented   Timely | **GOAL(S):** | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **VITAL BEHAVIORS (3-5)** |
| **Family Engagement**  **Ongoing Activities Directly**  **Tied to Meeting the**  **Indicator(s)**  **Relate to PTA Standards:**  1 .W elcom e  2 .Com m u n icate  3 . Stu dent Su ccess  4 .A dv ocate  5 . Sh are pow er  6 . Collab orate**)** | **Describe the parent engagement activities you’ll do to complete your initiative and how they relate to the PTA**  **standards:** |
| **Benchmarks (Use for**  **Revision)** | **Deadline Benchmarks:**  **Data Benchmarks:**  **Data Benchmark = VITAL BEHAVIOR + Dates to Check**  **+Criteria for Success** |
| **Building Parent Leaders and Parent Capacity in the work of the Family**  **Engagement Initiative to meet the IDEA Indicator(s)** | **How will you build parent leaders?** |
| **Number of Contacts** | **987** |

**Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership**



**FY 13 SAMPLE PLAN**

**GaPMP Strategy: Data-Driven and Measureable**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Parent Mentor(s): Sue Ellington** | | **Date Submitted: 5.25.12**  **Date Revised: Date Revised:**  **Date Revised:** |
| **Special Education Director: Marie West** | | **Direct Report / Supervisor:** |
| **District: XYZ School District** | | **District Group Size: Medium** |
| **Region: Metro** | | **2010-2011 IEP Parent Attendance**  **Rate at Annual Meeting: 46% Student Attendance Rate at Annual**  **Mtg: 49%** |
| **Parent Survey in FY 11? Yes** | | **Latest Survey Data Reported: 11-**  **12 school year**  **Return Rate 35% Satisfaction**  **Rate 30%** |
| **Targeted State Annual IDEA Indicator(s):** Rookies only do  #8 | Indicator #: Increase the percentage of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improved knowledge and skills in  language and reading readiness.  **Baseline Data 11-12:** 53% nearer same age peers  59% comparable to same age peers  **# 8 Improve the percentage of parents of children receiving special education services who report that**  **schools encourage parent involvement to improve results for student with disabilities.**  **Baseline Data 11-12:** 35 % returned 30 % satisfied | |
| **Family Engagement Initiative(s) for above targeted IDEA Indicator(s)** | **Give your initiative a name or title that shows what it’s all about:**  Preschool Language and Reading Readiness Initiative at ABC, DEF, and GHI, and KLM Elementary Schools | |
| **GaPMP SMART Goal(s) with**  **Vital Behaviors:**   Specific   Measurable   Attainable   Realistic/Results- Oriented   Timely | **GOAL(S):**  1. Increase the percentage of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improved language skill, communication, and early literacy skills at the end of the school year by 5 percentage points. (Near same age peers + comparable to same age peers data from  the district’s preschool outcomes data) | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **2.** The percentage of preschool children, with IEPs and parents who completed the summer activities, who maintain or improve their  readiness skills scores over the summer, will be at least 65%. (pre/post scores on district’s readiness index**)**  **VITAL BEHAVIORS**  1. Parents will read at least two books a month, each three times or more. [Data collection on a calendar for how many books, how many  times.]  2. Parents will use more than one language improvement hints when reading to their child: reading with expression, predicting/checking  prediction, using pictures, asking questions, child sequencing events to retell the story. [Data collection calendar for using more than one hint.]  3. Parents will use the Readiness Kit activities and books provided by the school to complete readiness games twice weekly over the summer. [Calendar for dates games done.] |
| **Family Engagement**  **Ongoing Activities Directly**  **Tied to Meeting the**  **Indicator(s)**  **Relate to PTA Standards:**  1 .W elcom e  2 .Com m u n icate  3 . Stu dent Su ccess  4 .A dv ocate  5 . Sh are pow er  6 . Collab orate**)**  **Note: Post readiness data will be collected next August when the children return from their summer vacation and the first readiness index is given. (Student success, collaboration)** | **Describe the parent engagement activities you’ll do to complete your initiative and how they relate to the PTA standards:**  1. Three preschool workshops for parents from the target schools will be held. Parents of all preschool children with IEPs will be  invited to attend. The librarians at each school will keep a  shelf of preschool level books for parents to check out to read to their child. The preschool teachers will demonstrate how to read to children and use the language development hints. Show parents how to collect their data by marking the data calendar and tell them about the prizes at the end of the year for collecting it. (Welcome, Communicate, Student Success)  2. Parents will practice reading to their child using the hints with each other after viewing the demonstration of how to read to your child at the first session. (Topics: reading with  expression, predicting/checking prediction, using pictures, asking questions, child sequencing events to retell the story.)  3. 3At the second workshop, data will be collected on how many parents have read to their child, how often, and how many  strategies were used. Parents who attended the first session will review the strategies with new participants and practice with them. Parents will practice reading a book using at least  two of the strategies. Each one/bring one contest with a gift card for each parent who brings another parent to the meeting. ( Share Power, Collaboration, Student Success)  4. At the final workshop, data will be collected on reading to their children. The Summer Readiness Games will be provided and  use of all the items will be demonstrated and practiced. As a celebration of successful parent engagement, business- donated prizes for all parents who provided data for the vital  behaviors. (Collaboration)  5. Offer two practice sessions for parents to get more practice, if they are interested.  6. Create a phone tree to get information out to parents |

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| **Benchmarks (Use for**  **Revision)** |  |
| **Building Parent Leaders and Parent Capacity in the**  **work of the Family**  **Engagement Initiative to meet the IDEA Indicator(s)** |  |
| **Number of Contacts** |  |

**What Do All These Terms Mean?**

What is a P erform an ce Goal? It is a target that sets expectations for performance. Research indicates that setting challenging; attainable goals leads to high performance.

Performance Goals set challenging and attainable expectations for the state and its school districts:

**What is an** I n dicator**?**

As you know, there are 16 indicators under the IDEA State Performance Goals. Indicators “indicate” the level that will be considered successful performance. If that level is achieved, the goal is met. If it is not achieved, the goal is not met.

An Indicator helps the school district know how far it has gone on reaching the goal. Each goal has two to four indicators that help it evaluate its progress.

**What is a** B est P ractice**?**

This is a way to do things that moves the performance closer to the target. Best

Practices are methods that other mentors have successfully used to meet or improve performance on the Goals. If you follow these same processes, you will have an easier time reaching the Goal. Best Practices should be the most efficient and effective way of accomplishing the Goal to date.

**We are Ongoing Activities?**

These are the actual events designed to ultimately reach the indicator and eventually the goal. The activities can have short term measurements leading to the long term goal. Strategies help

**What is a SMART Goal?**

A SMART Goal describes what Parent Mentor will achieve by the end of the year. It indicates what level of performance will be considered successful on the Annual Indicator.

**SPECIFIC:** What is the target group? Who will do what? When? Where? How? Why? **MEASURABLE:** How much? How many? How well? How will I know I met the goal? **ATTAINABLE:** What steps are needed to reach the goal?

**REALISTIC/** High expectations, but reachable in one school year.

**RESULTS** What can get done this year? Do my activities lead meeting the goal.

**Timely:** When will the goal be reached?

**What are Vital Behaviors?**

Vital behaviors are the behaviors or actions that lead to the results you want. They are the few high-leverage actions that, if parents routinely do them, produce the outcomes

you’re after. Vital Behaviors are key to change efforts. Change efforts often fail because they either focus on the results but don’t identify the specific behavior to get there, or they spend time and energy to many actions, rather than focusing on the vital

few. Another frequent problem is working hard to help parents gain new knowledge, but not giving them practice in using the new knowledge or coaching and assistance in

how to do it. The term vital behavior comes from a book called Influencer: The Power to Change Anything by Kerry Patterson, Jospeh Grennu, David Maxfiled, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler, published in 2008 by McGraw Hill. It’s a book well worth your time to

read.

For the GaPMP there are two core, or general Vital Behaviors. All Mentors must work on one of them, depending on the grade level of the targeted students in the Initiative. These are behaviors that research has shown make a difference in student achievement if parents do them routinely.

• Routinely help their high school student plan for college or further education after high school and for a career**.**

• Routinely help their preschool, elementary, or middle school child learn at home using materials provided by the school to target one area of need.

Then the Mentor describes specific vital behaviors to show what parents in the Initiative will do. These describe how the parent will help the student plan for college or how the parent will help the child learn at home. These vital behaviors are then used to create benchmarks that indicate the percentage of parents who actually to the vital behaviors that will be considered to be successful. The Parent Mentor uses the benchmark checks

to decide if the plan is working. If the benchmarks are being met, everything is on track to meet the Goal by the end of the year. If the benchmarks are not met, the Mentor needs to make changes in the plan to get back on track.

**What is a Benchmark?**

A benchmark is a checkpoint and method for collecting data on the parents’ progress in routinely doing the vital behaviors they have been taught. A benchmark becomes a standard for comparison and an indicator of success or the need for change if the results don’t meet expected levels of performance. You use two types of benchmarks in the data collection process: deadline benchmarks and data benchmarks Deadline benchmarks are simply dates you set for completing the activities that need to be done to implement your initiative. They can be included in the Annual Plan if you find them useful. They are not required.

Data benchmarks are created by adding a checkup date and success criteria to each vital behavior. Data benchmarks are now required. Data benchmarks should be checked at least three times over the school year to find out if parents are actually doing the vital behaviors that will get the results you want for your initiative. If you find that the success criteria have been met, you know you’re on the right track to get the results you want.

If you find that the success criteria haven’t been met, you know that you need to make changes. Examples might include providing more practice for parents, more training, or demonstrating the vital behaviors again in order to achieve the desired results.

**Extra Credit Reading: How Did We Get Here?**

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) at the US Department of Education measures the success of the Georgia Department of Education’s work in assisting students with disabilities by looking annually at whether or not the state overall and each individual school district has met the targets for each Performance Goal and its related Indicators as established in the **S**t**ate Performance Plan. (SPP)**

The **Annual Progress Report (APR)** is Georgia’s annual update on the SPP to OSEP. In the APR, GaDOE reports: the new annual data; updates the targets if needed; and describes new or revised statewide initiatives, based on the state’s success or challenges in meeting the established targets. In some cases the activities in the SPP will be updated. The SPP and APR are available online at the GaDOE website.

Each district looks at its data for each of the IDEA Performance Goals - with the Indicators that follow underneath each goal – and describes how the district will work toward meeting the targets in its **Comprehensive Local Improvement Plan. (CLIP**) which is a part of the **Consolidated Application** that each school district writes annually. The CLIP is sent to the GaDOE each summer for review. The Parent Mentor is listed on the CLIP as a partner working toward meeting the targeted IDEA Performance Goal(s).

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**FY'13 Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership**

**Regional Breakdown**

(Participating Districts are in Bold BLACK & Participating Districts w/New/Ooen PM

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| NORTHEAST | NORTHWEST | METRO | MIDDLE | SOUTHEAST | SOUTHWEST |
| Regional Representative  Amy McCollum | Regional Representative  Jodi Mazzolini | Regional Representative Nancy Grabe & Renee Davis | Regional Representative  Allison Stevenson | Regional Representative Amanda Locke & Tameka Tribble | Regional Representative  Vicki Williams |
| (]ast Georgia GLRS) Burke, Columbia, EmanueL Glascock, Jefferson, Jenkins Lincoln, McDuffie, Richmond, Taliaferro, Warren, Wilkes counties  iJ:::!orth Georgia GLRS) Banks, Dawson, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpki!!. Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union, White counties;  **igesville Cit;):** | iJ:::!orth Central GLRS) Cherokee, Fannin, Gilmer, Murray, Pickens, Whitfield counties; Dalton City  iJ:::!orthwest GLRS) Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade, Floyd, **Gordon, Haralson,** Paul.djng Polk, Wa lker counties; Bremen, Calhoun, Cartersville, | (Metro East GLRS) Dekalb, Fulton, Gwinnett, Rockdale counties; Buford and **Decatur Cities**  (Metro West GLRS) Clayton, Cobb, Douglas,;, Forsyth counties; Atla nta and Marietta Cities  Atlanta Area School for the Deaf | (]ast Central GLRS) Baldwin, Bleckley, Dodge Hancu-ck Jasper,  Johnson, Laurens,  Montgomery, Pulask Putnan1 Telfair, Treutlen, Washington, Wheeler, Wilcox, Wilkinson connties; Dublin City.  (Metro South GLRS) Butts, Fayette, Henry, LamarP, ike,  Griffin-Spalding, Thomaston-Upson cmmtles  (Middle Georgia GLRS | (Coastal GLRS) Bryan, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, Long, Mcintosh counties.  (South Central GLRS) Atkinson, Bacon, Brantley, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Pierce **Ware** counties  (Southeast GLRS) Appling, Bulloch, Candler, Evans, Jeff Davis, Screven, Tattnall, Toombs, Wayne counties; Vidalia City.  )  gs  (Exce12tions)  **Emanuel**  (13 Districts - 14 PM) | (South Georgia GLRS) Ben Hill, Berrien, Brooks, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Tift, Turner counties  (Southwest GLRS) Baker, Calhoun, Colquitt, Decatu r, Dougherty, Early, G1"adv Lee, Miller, Mitchell, Seminole,Iu!dJ, **Thomas,** Worth counties; Pelham and  **Thomasville** cities.  (West Georgia GLRS) Chattahoochee, Clay, Crisp, Dooly, Harris,  :Nlacon, **Marion,** Muscogee, Quitman, Randolph, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor, Webster counties.  (13 Districts -13 PM) |
| Chickamauga, Rome and | |
| **Trion Cities**  QYest Central GRLS) Carroll, Coweta, Heard, Harris, **Troup** counties Carrollton City  Georgia School for t he  Deaf  (14 Districts - 14 PM) | Dept of JJ  **OdJ::ssel· Sch2QJ/** |
| iJ:::!ortheast Georgia  GLRS)  Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Madison, Morgan, Oconee, O!!lelhorpe **Walton** counties,  Commerce, Jefferson and  Social Circle cities.  (18 Districts - 19 PM) |
| **n l:!lf'r cade.n!v** |
| CExceptions)  **Cherokee, Muscogee**  (15 Districts -22 PM) |
| Bibb, Crawford,  **Houston, Jones,**  Monroe, Peach, Twig counties  Georgia Academy for the Blind  (]xceQtions) |
| **Meriwether, Harris**  (19 Districts - 20 PM) |

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**LEARN, LINK.LISTEN**

The Georgia Parent mentor Partnership Division for Special Education Georgia Department of Education