

BSE Bulletin

News from the
Pennsylvania Department of Education's
Bureau of Special Education

Beyond Barriers to Possibilities!

#SpecialEducationInPA

Fall 2019

PDE Welcomes New Leadership at BSE

Carole Clancy is the new Bureau of Special Education Director, with 25 years of experience in special education, including 15 years as an administrator in urban, rural, and suburban school settings. Ms. Clancy's role is to oversee the work of the Bureau of Special Education (BSE). The BSE works collaboratively with educators, schools, agencies, and other stakeholders across the commonwealth to ensure they are providing students with quality and meaningful educational supports, services, and opportunities, while complying with state and federal guidelines.

Prior to joining the Bureau, Ms. Clancy served as Director of Pupil Services for the Solanco School District, as Director of Special Education at Oxford Area School District, and as the Supervising Coordinator of Special Education Services for the School District of Lancaster.



Amy Pastorak is the new Bureau of Special Education Assistant Director. The majority of Ms. Pastorak's tenure in education has encompassed leadership roles in large, diverse school districts directing programming and supports to increase outcomes for students with disabilities. Ms. Pastorak's role is to support the mission and lead the initiatives of the Bureau of Special Education.

Prior to joining the Bureau, Ms. Pastorak served as Director of Special Education for the Central Dauphin School District, Special Education Supervisor for the Chambersburg Area School District, and Program Director within a residential treatment facility setting. She is also an adjunct professor at Wilson College.



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Director Clancy

Ms. Clancy earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Millersville University. In addition, she holds a Special Education Supervisory Certificate from Penn State University, a Gifted and Talented Education Certification from the University of San Diego, and a Superintendent's Letter of Eligibility from California University of Pennsylvania.

Assistant Director Pastorak

Ms. Pastorak earned a bachelor's degree from Point Park University and a master's degree from Shippensburg University. In addition, she holds a Special Education Supervisory Certificate from Penn State University.

Pennsylvania Meets Requirements for the SPP/APR for the 12th Year!

On June 20, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) informed Pennsylvania's Secretary of Education, Pedro Rivera, that Pennsylvania met requirements for the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR).

OSEP is considering revising the criteria for 2020 to assign greater weight to compliance factors most directly related to improving outcomes for children and youth with disabilities.

OSEP monitors the progress of individual states in meeting performance standards and compliance with legal requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Path to Graduation (P2G) Offers Grants to LEAs

The State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) Path to Graduation (P2G) is an opportunity for local educational agencies (LEAs) to build capacity to increase graduation rates and decrease drop-out rates.

The SPGD P2G:

- Provides up to three years of grants to support LEAs to increase graduation rates and decrease drop-out rates.
- Utilizes data from research demonstrating middle school attendance, behavior, and course performance impacting graduation and drop-out rates.

- Identifies students with emotional disturbance as less likely to graduate in comparison with general education peers.
- Identifies and implements academic and behavioral evidence-based interventions (Strategic Instruction Model (SIM); Check and Connect; Transition Discoveries) using graduation and drop-out data.
- Supports school leaders at the system level to improve transition planning and reduce drop-out rates.
- Enables parents to increase their knowledge and engage in supporting practices that keep

students in school. This work is supported through the Families to the MAX (F2MAX) network, the result of a partnership with the state, the Parent Training and Information Centers (PTI), and the Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRC).

Each LEA team commits to: adopting an Early Warning System, analyzing the data to inform systems and student-level action plans, submitting school and student-level data, participating in professional development activities, implementing intervention practices, and conducting team meetings approximately one hour per month.

BSE Implements Differentiated Monitoring System Pilot for 2019-2020

Twenty LEAs were chosen to represent the diversity and regions of the commonwealth. Participating volunteers will provide feedback throughout the school year to inform next steps and stakeholders.

Significant Disproportionality Update

BSE is implementing significant disproportionality per federal regulations. BSE has notified LEAs who met the criteria, and is providing guidance and support to 69 LEAs identified with significant disproportionality.

Bureaus Work Together on ESSA State Plan

BSE is working collaboratively with PDE's Bureau of School Support as part of Pennsylvania's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Consolidated State Plan. The plan assists schools needing comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) and additional targeted support and improvement (ATSI) to ensure equitable outcomes, supports, and resources. Schools are identified based on three factors: 1) lowest-performing schools; 2) schools with low high school graduation rates; and 3) schools with chronically low-performing subgroups.

Dyslexia Pilot Program Expansion

The Dyslexia Pilot Program is expanding to include 15 schools. The application to participate can be found on the PaTTAN website at www.pattan.net. BSE is identifying which schools initially participating would like to continue in the program, and which schools will be added to the pilot. A PENN*LINK was issued at the end of September. Schools will be identified by the end of October, and will begin participation in the program in early November.

Two Pennsylvania Schools Recognized Nationally

Haverford High School and Fox Chapel Area High School have each received national recognition as one of the Class of 2019's National Banner Unified Champion Schools. PDE support and funding has been critical to the success and incredible growth of the United Champion Schools program. The number of schools PDE partners with has doubled over the past few years. This year, there will be over 200 schools in the program, with a footprint in every area of Pennsylvania.

New Law Offers Virtual Education Grants

A new law was passed June 28, 2019: Keystone Telepresence Education Grant Program. The program enables intermediate units to apply for up to \$30,000 in

annual grant funds to facilitate virtual school for students confined to home due to medical concerns. PDE issued a PENN*LINK at the end of September, and conducted a webinar at the end of October. PDE will score applications and fund programs as resources permit.

BSE Increases Social Media Presence with New Hashtag

BSE has established a unique Twitter hashtag to highlight the positive work happening in special education across the commonwealth. Using a single hashtag supports digital engagement and categorizes content for our audience:

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Interagency Planning Team for Workforce Development

BSE is a member of an interagency planning team under the Workforce Implementation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), participating in the critical work of addressing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the commonwealth.

Coming Soon . . .

In collaboration with BSE, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry will be developing a web page of resources for students, families, and educators.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Tom Wolf, Governor

Department of Education

Pedro A. Rivera, Secretary

Matthew Stem, Deputy Secretary, Elementary and Secondary Education

Carole Clancy, Director, Bureau of Special Education

