

BRIC Special Education Cooperative

Director Denny's Directions

The 2009-2010 school year is nearly 25% complete and it's time for our fall/winter newsletter. Things have been a hoppin' here at the BRIC office and it's important to bring a few items to your attention. First off, a great deal of thanks go to our Coordinators who have been busier than usual this fall puttin' out fires for some reason. And, what a job they did with our due process training sessions! If you attended the training you learned there are a number of changes in Mn. SPED statues and rules. Having served the last two years on the State Special Education Task Force, this Director appreciates first hand just how difficult it is to effect these important changes in order to relieve front line staff of administrative, procedural burdens and the additional paperwork that often come with such procedures. Two areas of particular importance are the changes in the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act where a manifestation determination is no longer required beyond what is in Federal law (see discipline chart on BRIC web site). An IEP Team for the purpose of conducting a manifestation determination must include "relevant" team members including "at least one of the child's teachers" v. the entire Team. The other area is the fact that transition planning now begins "during grade 9" v. the former "by grade nine or age 14, whichever occurs first". There are many other changes, too numerous to mention here but they will all serve to bring long overdue relief to the procedural burdens of special education service delivery. Here is hoping you can continue to navigate through all the red tape and maintain a sense of priority because after all, our number one priority is teaching and learning for the students we serve. And that's what it is all about my friends. Hang in There! Spring will be here before you know it.

A favorite quote: ***"No one single factor is more important to effective instruction than the relationships staff convey about one another to their students"***



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CIMP

BRIC and its member Districts continue to participate with the MN Department of Education's Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process or CIMP. Last spring each District established CIMP leadership teams to assist with data analysis and developing action plans. The leadership Teams will meet this year to review CIMP action plans and plan for implementation of improvement plans. All MNCIMP reports have been accepted and approved by the Minnesota Department of Education. The CIMP reports will be posted on the BRIC website and a link to the reports posted on each member District's website.

In addition, each District is working toward 100% correction of monitoring citations resulting from the record review conducted last spring. Many of the citations have been corrected and the District release from the citations as a result. BRIC Coordinators will be contacting IEP/Case managers regarding remaining citations and corrections. Please contact your Coordinator if you have any questions concerning the monitoring citation correction process.

BRIC Staff Reporting

BRIC Student Report:

Please submit your completed BRIC Student Monthly Report to Sarah in a timely manner. Reports need to be submitted by the first Wednesday of each month.

Random Moments: Please respond to the Random Moment as soon as possible. They are time sensitive and need to be recorded as quickly as possible. Also, please make sure to answer **all** of the questions and give detailed answers of what you were doing at that time.

If you have questions on how to respond to a Random Moment, please contact your coordinator or check the chart posted on the BRIC website under the Random Moment heading.

FYI Special Education Teachers

Child Count 2009: The December 1 annual child count is underway. Remember to communicate any/all changes to your MARSS building reporter for data entry as soon as possible and on a regular basis so the District's MARSS data is maintained and kept accurate.

Attention Paraprofessionals: ParaPro testing is available through the BRIC office for those paras that have not met "Highly Qualified" status at this time. Please contact Angie at the BRIC office or your BRIC coordinator to set up an appointment.

Consultation Requests: Requests result from needs identified by a student's evaluation and/or IEP/IFSP team. Requests for BRIC consultants must be submitted on a request for consultation form to your BRIC coordinator. Please fill out the requests completely and attach any relevant paperwork. A copy of the approved request with consultation date will be mailed to the special education teacher listed on the requests. For students moving into the district with related services on the IEP please be sure to fill out a request for consultation form.

New/Transfer Students: Make sure to review the Evaluation Report on new students to verify that Minnesota eligibility criteria has been met. Forward a copy of the most recent IEP/IFSP and Evaluation to the BRIC office for all SpEd students.

Due Process Reminders

Copy all Due Process: BRIC requires a copy of all due process paperwork completed for each student. Please forward a copy of the student's IEP/IFSP, Evaluation, and any other paperwork as completed. This includes students who are evaluated, but are not eligible for services. Remember to complete MARSS forms for these students indicating Evaluation Status.

Just a reminder to validate and finalize the IEPs/IFSPs on Sped Forms prior to sending a copy to BRIC. If the IEPs/IFSPs are not validated and finalized, the word draft either appears as a watermark when printing or is printed in the upper left hand corner of IEP/IFSP. If we get copies of IEPs/IFSPs with the word "draft" on them, we will return them to you with a reminder to finalize.

Due Process Updates: ECSE teachers are reminded that for Part C children evaluation information is now embedded in the new IFSP and a separate evaluation report is not required **unless** the child is concurrently qualifying for Part B services. In that situation, the Part C evaluation is embedded in the new IFSP and the Part B evaluation information would be written in a traditional evaluation report.

Open Enrollment: IEP/IFSP managers are responsible to ensure that a resident district representative is invited to all IEP/IFSP meetings.

Emergency Health Cards: IEP Managers need to provide these to bus drivers for those students with special transportation needs.

MTAS: Please be sure to document on the IEP if a student will be taking the MTAS as an alternative to the MCA II. In order for student to take the MTAS, certain requirements need to be met. If you are considering the MTAS for any of your students and have questions regarding the requirements, please contact the coordinator assigned to your program / district. Also, anyone who will be administering the MTAS needs to be trained on a yearly basis. Your District Assessment Coordinator or your BRIC coordinator will have information regarding options for MTAS administration training which will occur in March 2010.

Licensed Team Members: Remember, you must have a licensed special education teacher in attendance in all identified/suspected areas of disabilities. In the Case of ASD, there must be a professional on the Team who has documented knowledge of the disability.

Extended School Year (ESY): When addressing extended school year services on the IEP, please note the documentation required to indicate ESY is needed. If you have questions regarding ESY services, contact your coordinator.

Upcoming Workshops

Please check the website below for up and coming events through Region 1 & 2.

www.greater-mn-online.org

Trouble registering on-line?

E-mail Sarah at

sfinlays@bric.k12.mn.us

Inventory of BRIC Equipment

The BRIC needs to periodically take inventory of all BRIC special equipment.

If you have BRIC equipment in your service area that is not being used, needs repair, or is obsolete, please contact Sarah at the BRIC office or your BRIC Coordinator.

BRIC Telepractice Services

BRIC has begun implementation of speech/language telepractice services at LOW and Littlefork. This is an exciting service option which uses the internet product "VIDYO", a high quality internet streaming program to provide face-to-face services over the

Scheduling BRIC Consultants & Related Services Staff

Remember that consultation with a school psychologist and other providers (Audiologist, OT, PT, DAPE, Vision, D/HH, PI) is required prior to obtaining permission for an evaluation requiring their services and/or involvement. Also, please be respectful of the use of all BRIC consultants and related services staff. We need to notify staff when it is not necessary to travel due to cancellations and/or other last minutes changes in scheduling. You can contact Sarah at the BRIC office to relay such messages.

Plan ahead when requesting services from BRIC consultants and psychologists for participation in evaluations and team meetings. To adequately meet the needs of all districts, these individuals are planning 30 days in advance and are very appreciative when provided adequate notice of upcoming meetings and evaluations. IEP/IFSP teams can consider telephone conference calls or written input from consultants/related services providers with adequate notice.

Medical Assistance

Information

- * ALL MA logs are due in the BRIC within 5 days after the last service day of the month.
- * Use the correct form and fill in the blanks!! Outdated forms will be returned & you will need to transfer the information to the correct form.
- * ALL MA logs must have the month, date and year as well as the child's given first and last name. You may create a master form for each child with all identifying information and duplicate as needed.
- * If the service is not listed on the IEP, do not turn in MA paperwork on it. If you are not sure, check the IEP.

Documentation Requirements

- * Daily for PCA services
- * Weekly for other services
- * Avoid Ditto marks or vertical lines when listing repeated activity.
- * Documentation must be in ink.
- * Originals must be turned in to the BRIC, not the copies you maintain for your records. Maintain records for 5 years.

PCA Logs

- * Trip logs should be attached to the PCA logs.
- * If more than one PCA is providing the service, the PCA must provide initials for services provided. Only the person actually providing the services can document on the log.
- * **Annual** time studies are required for all new students receiving PCA services. The time study is taken over 2-4 weeks to determine the amount of time it actually takes to complete all covered PCA activities. Submit a copy of the IEP service page of the IEP with the completed time study. Contact Kim at BRIC if you need worksheets to assist with time studies.

MARSS

- **Change points where you must inform MARSS personnel include:** Evaluation (referral & assessment), Qualify/ Not Qualify, IEP/IFSP status change i.e. setting, primary disability, services and when a student graduates, moves, drops or ages out.

BRIC continues to provide updated special education information, resources and links via the BRIC website at www.bric-k12.com

MARSS, continued

- Need to look up a MARSS code? Check out the BRIC website. Questions about MARSS? Ask your Building SPED contact person (listed on BRIC web), MARSS recorder or contact the BRIC office.
- IEP/IFSP managers should verify caseloads with the building MARSS contact person on a regular basis.
- Remember to inform your MARRS contact about any new or transfer special education students and any federal settings changes and disability categories for your existing caseload.
- Status forms should be used to communicate this information and are available from the BRIC office or on the BRIC website.

Federal Settings Calculations: MARSS data and the calculation of Federal Settings are critically important in the rate calculations for each District. Please refer to the federal setting calculation sheet or check the BRIC website. Please be sure to notify your MARSS contact person each time there is a setting change.



- SpEd Forms updated several forms recently to match the new MDE monitoring requirements including the new IFSP. The updated Evaluation Report or ER contains new headings designed to prompt users to include the additional information MDE now requires.

This update has helped districts write compliant ERs. However, when teams conduct a reevaluation and choose to over-write the existing ER (which was constructed using the old template) they are not prompted to include the additional information required by MDE - such as a "summary" and "adaptations/modifications to allow the student access to the general education curriculum."

To make sure all the required information is addressed within the ER when conducting a reevaluation, SpEd Forms is recommending the following procedure:

1. Archive the existing ER, by clicking on the finalize ER button at the top of the evaluation report page.
 2. Next, select a new, blank template from within SpEd Forms.
 3. Then begin entering the reevaluation information into the ER using the new template.
- If you try to add a new student in SpEd Forms and you receive a message that "This student already exists", please call Angie at the BRIC office and she will search our SpEd Forms server for the student and change the case manager to you. This will eliminate duplicate student issues.

BRIC Welcomes New Employees

Jessica Curry – Para, Cass Lake-Bena

Brandon Griffin – EBD Teacher, Blackduck H.S.

Megan Kasper – Speech Language, Cass Lake-Bena

Pam Sauve – Para, Littlefork

Paul Tarutis – DCD Teacher, Cass Lake-Bena

Cathy Woitke – Consultant Speech/ Language Telepractice Services LOW & Littlefork-Big Falls

