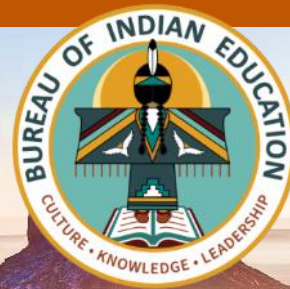


The Monthly Newsletter



Special Education Director's Welcome Message:

Greetings from the BIE-DPA Special Education Program!

This is our fourth newsletter of the school year. I hope you find the information that is being disseminated useful in your everyday work as educators and school administrators to providing timely special education services to students with disabilities across the country. Today, I'd like to share with you BIE's State Systemic Improvement Plan. The SSIP has a State Identified Measurable Result, which is to increase the percentage of youth engaged in postsecondary activities, including education, training and/or employment as measured by APR Indicator 14C (all youth enrolled in higher education, competitively employed, enrolled in other post-secondary education or training, or some other employment).

This work is supported by a Theory of Action that identifies three improvement strategy strands, which you can review by visiting [this link](#). Our goal is to increase the percentage of students engaged in postsecondary activities, including education, training and/or employment as measured by the post-school outcomes survey that is completed annually by schools funded by the BIE one year after the student left high school. This is a shared responsibility and requires the collaboration of the BIE, schools, teachers and students, which will lead to positive outcomes for students with disabilities.

Dr. Eugene Thompson (Diné),
Supervisory Education Specialist

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME
FEATURED ARTICLE
NEWS AND UPDATES
UPCOMING EVENTS
SPOTLIGHT
TIPS AND TRICKS
IMPORTANT DATES



Featured Article:

Summer Training Series

The DPA previously shared there were plans to hold a national conference. Since the newsletter publication, details on summer training opportunities have changed. The DPA is pleased to share the following information:

SAVE THE DATE

DPA's 2024 Interactive Data Workshop is partnering with the Principals Leadership Academy and fiscal training for summer training opportunities for BIE-funded school staff. Tentative dates for these opportunities are June 10-14 and June 24-28. More details, including location and registration, will be provided to schools soon.

Submit a School Story for an Upcoming Newsletter Spotlight

We'd like to include celebrations, updates and success stories from schools funded by the BIE. Take some time to consider highlighting a story or photos from your school, with permission, that can be included in an upcoming newsletter. Click the **orange** button above to fill out a short form, and a member of the team will be in touch with you.

News & Updates:

From the Division of Performance & Accountability



Special Education Parent Survey Now Open

As part of each state's annual performance report submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs, states are required to assess the percentage of parents whose child receives special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. To complete this requirement, BIE-DPA requests schools to share a 10-question survey annually with **all** parents of enrolled students with disabilities receiving special education services. BIE-DPA continues to offer a paper and [online format](#) for parents to complete the survey and provide their important input. For any questions regarding the survey, please contact [Melanie Star](#).

Update on Special Education Policies

The DPA Special Education Program staff are in the process of reviewing comments received during three Tribal consultations held this past October. The next steps currently underway include the following:

- Identifying regulatory and non-regulatory issues
- Finalizing document (now through May 2024)
- Identifying timelines and tasks to support roll out including training (e.g., summer 2024 training)
- Dissemination to BIE-funded schools
- Initial implementation (SY 2024-2025)

BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children

The BIE Advisory Board for Exceptional Children met in Albuquerque, New Mexico, January 18-19, 2024, and addressed a jam-packed agenda. Topics discussed and activities included presentations from schools representing each ADD region. Grace Benally (Wingate High School), Berdine Largo (Mescalero Apache School) and Robbin Sanders (Riverside Indian School) participated in a live panel discussion highlighting successes and challenges related to post-school outcomes, strategies used to engage students who have left high school and are now involved in postsecondary activities, resources for families and many students, and connections to vocational rehabilitation. The advisory board also heard presentations from Consortia of Administrators for Native American Rehabilitation. Lanor Curole, President of CANAR, discussed how many students are being referred to VR, how CANAR services are coordinated with state VR and how students are supported once they are admitted into VR services.





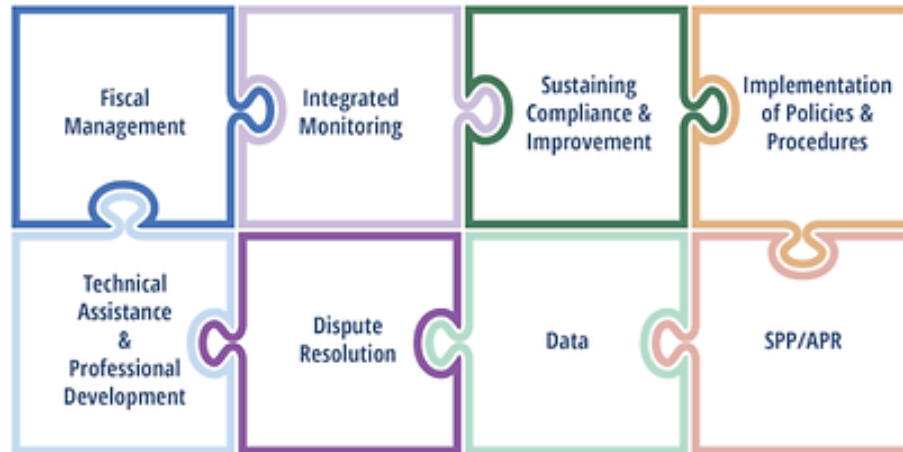
The next in-person advisory board meeting is scheduled for April 25-26, 2024, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Additional information will be forthcoming.

BIE's General Supervision Responsibility

BIE, like all state education agencies, must have a system of general supervision in place to monitor the implementation of IDEA. The BIE's General Supervision System is designed to support practices that: improve academic achievement and functional outcomes for children with disabilities, use multiple methods to identify and correct noncompliance, use a variety of mechanisms to encourage and support improvement and enforce compliance.

BIE's General Supervision System consists of eight components related to the implementation of IDEA; the components inform one another as well as the system as a whole. The components (data, dispute resolution, fiscal management, implementation of policies and procedures, integrated monitoring activities, State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report, sustaining compliance and improvement, and technical assistance and

professional development) are included in the visual below:



This month, we look closely at one component — integrated monitoring. Effective monitoring strategies are integrated into all components of the general supervision system. Multiple data sources and methods must be used to monitor every LEA, or the BIE-funded schools in BIE’s case. Selected monitoring activities must ensure continuous examination of performance for compliance and results. This includes on-site via BIE’s fiscal and programmatic reviews coordinated through BIE’s Chief Performance Office and off-site monitoring activities completed through desk reviews in which BIE utilized NASIS or other systems to assess IDEA implementation and compliance. Technical assistance is available before, during and following any monitoring activities the DPA completes as the state education agency, and the DPA provides a written finding of noncompliance, as appropriate, ensuring each finding is corrected no later than one year from the date of the notification.

Getting to Know Members of the DPA IDEA Team



Tawn Shi (Hello),

My name is Arlene Davis. I am a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa. Our Tribe is in the Turtle Mountains located in the north central part of North Dakota. My family are members of the fish clan. I am married and have four children with lots of grandchildren. I love spending time with my grandchildren. They are my heart.

My favorite pastime is watching the NFL. I am a die-hard Viking fan! I also play golf. But my heart and soul time goes to watching my grandchildren in school sports. I am one proud grandma.

My educational background consists of elementary education, special education and educational leadership. I worked as a high school special education teacher for 14 years, a special education coordinator for 16 years, and an education specialist for the past three years. During my employment as a special education high school teacher, I also coached Special Olympics, high school girls' basketball, middle school girls' basketball and high school girls' track. The best coaching experience was Special Olympics; it was an enormous amount of fun.

Currently, I work as an education specialist for the BIE Special Education Program. It's been a wonderful learning experience. I enjoy helping provide the best support for schools in the BIE and the families in Tribal communities.

Recorded Events

NASIS Micro Training Series

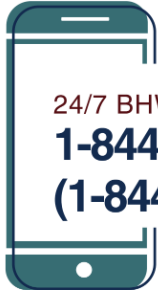
- Session 1 – Secondary Transition Components; Passcode: +s6iAmpN
- Session 2 – Secondary Transition Components Continued; Passcode: \$s*QCW9X
- Session 3 – NASIS Module IEP Editors; Passcode: *205YAKq
- Session 4 – New Look IEP module changes; Passcode: @zOb4sw&
- Session 5 – NASIS Infinite Campus IEP review Micro Training; Passcode: 01tSbwY%
- Session 6 – IEP Module Team Meeting Participants Page; Passcode: C4bK8m.h
- Session 7 – IEP Module Problem Solving; Passcode: +!^V8HQ
- Session 8 – IEP Module Open Discussion; Passcode: !bc2*2L&

Spotlight:

Behavior Health and Wellness Program

The BIE developed the Behavior Health and Wellness Program to provide culturally relevant, evidence-based and trauma-informed behavioral health and wellness services and resources for students and staff at all BIE-funded schools, Tribal Colleges and Universities and all programs and departments funded by the BIE.





24/7 BHWP CALL LINE
1-844-ASK-BHWP
(1-844-275-2497)

BHWP recently launched a new, free 24/7 call line for students and staff members at BIE-funded programs. BHWP professionals provide support for individuals expressing suicidal thoughts, behavioral or substance abuse crises, and emotional distress such as anxiety, depression, trauma and relationship problems.

Tips and Tricks:

Department of Education

In January, the Department of Education provided essential guidance on assistive technology. They shared a [Dear Colleague letter](#) and documented [Myths and Facts Surrounding Assistive Technology Devices and Services](#). This important resource was developed by the Office of Educational Technology and the Office of Special

Education Programs and is intended to increase understanding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act's requirements regarding AT devices and services. Additionally, the guidance highlights common misconceptions regarding AT and includes practical examples of the use of AT devices and services for children with disabilities.



**MILITARY-CONNECTED
CHILDREN WITH
DISABILITIES**

The Department of Education also recently shared resources for military-connected children with disabilities. These students may have added challenges of frequent separation from family and disruptions in services. For more information and resources, please visit [IDEA's website for Military-Connected Children with Disabilities](#).

Local School Performance Plan



In [Native Star](#), all BIE-funded schools with special education programs submit a Local School Performance Plan, which includes improvement activities. The Second LSPP Checkpoint textbox is now open on the Native Star portal. Please submit the Second LSPP Checkpoint report before March 30, 2024. The assigned DPA-IDEA Education Specialist will review and evaluate the progress of all improvement activities for the applicable SPP/APR indicators.

LRP

BIE-DPA partners with LRP Publications to provide three valuable resources for teachers and staff at all BIE-funded schools:



[Special Ed Connection](#) provides resources and tools to help school staff gain a clear understanding of special education requirements and services. There is an entire database of BIE specific resources. Log in, locate the “state specific” feature on the left side of the page, then click on the “BIE” radio button. Resources include

articles, news, forms and tools, guidance and legal decisions pertaining to Indian Education. Please email BIE’s LRP representative, [Kelly Whiting](#), if any information is needed.

[ESEANow.com](#) is designed specifically for education professionals whose priority is providing high-quality services for economically disadvantaged children and their families. This site provides regulatory and practical guidance that is necessary to ensure that students receive the services to which they are entitled. If you need the login information, please email our LRP representative, [Kelly Whiting](#).

The DirectSTEP® eLearning courses explain best practices and the legal requirements for behavior management, autism, IDEA eligibility, IEPs and more. They are ideal for in-house professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals. Self-register today at the [DirectSTEP website](#)! The courses can be completed in 1 hour and are compatible with most media devices. If you need assistance with the courses, please email the LRP training team at PATrainers@lrp.com.

NASIS

The [BIE Individual Education Plan](#) has been updated so the case manager information pulls from the student information editor rather than the team members tool to avoid current

case manager data pulling into historical IEPs. With this update, a new print format, BIE IEP 2023.3, is not available and displays as BIE IEP on the documents tool.

Supporting Secondary Transition

Each year, members of the DPA complete an annual review of a representative sample of all transition IEPs for students with IEPs ages 16 and above in BIE-funded high schools. BIE provides written findings of noncompliance where appropriate within 90 days, making the determination of noncompliance. To verify the correction of noncompliance, DPA's subject matter experts in secondary transition review the original student's file where noncompliance was identified and additional or subsequent student files to ensure the school is correctly implementing the requirements. For any questions on the standards used to verify correction of noncompliance, please reach out to [Ronald Worst](#).

To assist BIE-funded schools with the secondary transition requirements, DPA and partners at WestEd developed two self-paced online courses for high school special education teachers and staff. The first course, *Writing a High-Quality Transition Plan*, focuses on all aspects of developing a high-quality secondary transition plan for students with disabilities. Learners will gain an understanding of the foundation of writing high-quality secondary transition plans and the reason why they are so important, while the second course, *Centering Indigenous Students, Families, and Communities: Ways to Honor, Respect, and Relate*, concentrates on understanding the importance of recognizing and incorporating student culture when creating a high-quality secondary transition plan. To register for these self-paced professional development opportunities, please utilize [this online form](#).

Think College



Think College updated their Family Resources page including new introductory resources, that will help parents of students with disabilities who may not know where to start with college planning. Additional resources help readers learn about student rights and inclusive college options. For more information about this resource, check out their webpage at thinkcollege.net.

Tribal Consultations and Listening Sessions

The BIE has extended the comment deadline to March 31, 2024, for the Indian School Equalization Program and ISEP transportation funding formulas and distribution

methodologies. BIE is also completing Tribal Consultations on the BIE’s Strategic Direction. More information about each of these engagements and previous opportunities are available on the BIE’s [Consultations and Initiatives webpage](#).

Important Upcoming Due Dates:

What	When	Where	For support or questions, reach out to
Parent Surveys	February – June 30, 2024	Parent surveys are completed either online or by returning a paper copy to the school.	Melanie Star
Initial Evaluations	February – June 30, 2024	DPA reports initial evaluation completion rates annually. To support this collection, DPA requests BIE-funded schools to complete this form for all initial evaluations completed between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024.	Ronald Worst or your assigned Education Specialist
Summary of Performance	Spring 2024	Summary of Performance should be completed this spring before the student exits from high school.	Ronald Worst
IDEA Part B Application	June 30, 2024	SY 2024-2025 IDEA Part B School Application is due in Native Star.	Your assigned Education Specialist