

STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION (SAC)**Special Meeting****July 18, 2011****2:30 PM – 5:00 PM**

State Office Building, Room 307A
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

I. Call to Order

Members Present: Michelle Bidwell, John Burke, Donna Cambria, Sheila Crocker, Ann Marie Cullinan, Richard Douglas, Beth Hart, Stephanie Johnson, Christine Murphy, Katherine Musto, Kelly Neyra, Charlyne Olko, Marcus Rivera, Benjamin Strong, Brenda Sullivan, Nancy L. Taylor, Fernando Tiago.

CSDE/SERC/Guests: Linda Adorno, Brian Cunnane, Terri DeFrancis, Sarah Harvey, Nikki Hendry, Gail Mangs, James McGaughey, Diane Murphy, Anne Louise Thompson,

Member Informed Absence: Ana Acevedo, Rep. Daniel Carter, Joanna Cooper, Catherine Foley Geib, Uswah A. Khan, Julie Swanson.

Mr. Burke called the meeting to order at 2:40pm. Members and guests introduced themselves.

II. OSEP Survey Discussion: Please see attached summary.

- A. "SAC Role" Discussion Questions**
- B. Small Group Discussion Topics**
- C. Sharing Key Findings from Small Group Discussions; Question and Answer**
- D. "Improving Results" Discussion Questions**

Adjournment at 5:06pm – Mr. Burke motioned, Ms. Cambria seconded. All in favor; none opposed.

OSEP Survey Discussion**CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT VISIT STATE ADVISORY PANEL SURVEY****PART B of IDEA****State Advisory Panel (SAP)**

Directions: Each respondent should answer the six questions below regarding your **role on the State Advisory Panel (SAP)**. Marcus Rivera with SAC (whole group); 2:30-2:50pm (20 min)

1. What is your role or constituency you represent on the State Advisory Panel?

- Parent of student with multiple disabilities
- Students with Intellectual Disabilities
- Children and youth with disabilities served by Department of Children and Families
- Responses submitted in writing (5 members):
 - I am a parent who has a child with multiple disabilities. She is medically fragile and visually impaired. My constituency group would be all children with multiple disabilities; intellectual disabilities; developmental delay (ages 3 – 5); orthopedic impairment; speech or language impaired; and those who are either blind or visually impaired.
 - I am a parent of a child with multiple disabilities. He is neurologically impaired (agenesis of the corpus callosum, hypotonic, ADD, and severe migraines). He also has moderate intellectual disabilities, a genetic syndrome (FG Syndrome) as well as speech and language difficulties. His hypotonia affects his eyes/hand coordination, and writing. He has strabismus and amblyopia (eyes) and had heart surgery at a year old to repair a VSD. My constituency group would be all children with multiple disabilities, intellectual disabilities, orthopedic impairments, speech and language impairments and neurological impairments.
 - Parent of a child with disabilities.
 - I am the parent of three children with disabilities who all receive special education. My oldest daughter is diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder, ADHD, Anxiety disorder, and Learning Disorders and her special education classification is OHI. My twins are diagnosed with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, PDD-NOS, ADHD, Anxiety Disorder, and Learning Disorders. Their special education classification is Autism.

2. How does the SAP advise the SEA of the unmet needs in the State in the education of children with disabilities?

- Provide Annual Report to State Board of Education and Legislature
- Share information with different bureaus through regular monthly meetings
- Members serve on many different committees and represent multiple constituencies
- Participate on State Performance Plan indicator groups as well as other stakeholder groups like the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), Transition Task Force

- Responses submitted in writing (5 members):
 - Every year we create a set of priorities as well as participate on various indicator stakeholder groups related to the State Performance Plan. Research and information gathering is done via committee's and ad hoc committees as they relate to our set priorities.
 - At the end of the year we publish an annual report to the State Board of Education and General Assembly and we recommend and advise the State Department of Education our findings.
 - The SAP sets annual priorities that are then matched to specific indicators, which members of the SAP research and report on by committee or ad hoc group. At the end of the year the SAP chair writes an annual report to the State Board of Education and General Assembly that includes the SA's advice and recommendations based on findings. Members sit on committees to advise as well such as CSPD and TTF.
 - SAC members work with various constituencies and legislators, and reviews data (including parent surveys and district self-assessments), proposed legislation, and guidelines concerning the provision of special education services to children in Connecticut.
 - The SAC researches and gathers information regarding unmet or potential unmet needs in the State from various sources. Individual SAC members bring questions and concerns, received from constituents, school staff, or other sources, to the SAC as a whole for discussion and review. The SAC also reviews proposed legislation regarding special education and weighs the impact of such legislation on the needs of students receiving special education. The SAC prepares an annual report identifying areas of concern and unmet needs as well as the efforts of the SAC to address these areas. The SAC is also in regular contact with the SEA throughout the year to review SEA activities and initiatives which may impact students with disabilities.

3. How do you comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities?

- Correspondence with specific legislators
- Testimony at hearings for proposed bills/actions
- Public testimony
- Public Meetings
- Press releases
- Radio show
- Public forums
- Responses submitted in writing (5 members):
 - Through public testimony/public comment to the General Assembly or State Board of Education. On a rare occasion the SAC published a press release.
 - Public comment is made through public testimony to the General Assembly or State Board of Education. Others include: writing on legislation and public forums.
 - The SAC meets and discusses rules and regulations proposed by the State after the legislative committee researches the proposed rules and regulations to

determine if they comply with IDEA. The SAC, after consultation with the legislative committee, determines whether the SAC as a whole supports or opposes the action and if public comment is appropriate.

- The SAC plays an active role in reviewing proposed regulations and legislation related to special education in our State. The Legislative Committee reviews and analyzes proposed regulation changes and proposed legislation, seeks comments and input from all SAC members as well as outside sources, testifies at Public Hearings, and drafts position statements to submit to the General Assembly and the SEA. This testimony and these position statements, either in support of or not in support of the proposed legislation or regulation changes, include explanations, suggestions for revision of the language, and citations as applicable.

4. What is your involvement in advising the SEA in developing and implementing policies and procedures relating to the coordination and provision of services for children with disabilities?

- Collaboration with State Department Consultants and bring issues forward to SAC
- Participate as procedures are developed such as participating in groups that write different guidelines (AT, Autism, etc.)
- Share information with ConnCASE members and other educators
- Responses submitted in writing (5 members):
 - We participate on stakeholder groups; we make public comments and work with SDE staff on ad hoc committees which are responsible for developing and implementing policies and procedures.
 - I participate in stakeholder groups, committees with other SAP members and members of the CSDE who develop and implement policies and procedures for the state of CT.
 - Research legislation and its effect on children receiving special education. Work with legislative committee on formulating recommendations based on research and compliance with IDEA.
 - The SAC is involved in many SEA workgroups, committees, and focus groups charged with developing policies and procedures surrounding identification of children with disabilities, guidelines to assist LEA's in identification and provision of services, parent involvement, increasing time in the LRE, suspension and expulsion, transition services, and LEA training requirements. The SAC also receives regular updates from the SEA on various activities and initiatives with opportunities to ask questions, receive more detailed information, and offer comments and input.

5. What is your involvement in providing the SEA stakeholder input within the State's Annual Performance Report that is submitted to the Department of Education?

- Bring information from stakeholder meetings to the SAC
- Participate in meetings with the SDE liaisons and report out and provide input during the meetings
- Responses submitted in writing (5 members):

- Every year the SAC develops a set of priorities – as members participate in the various stakeholder groups they gather information from that group as it relates to the Council's main priorities. In addition, if there is an unmet need that is discovered and is not already a priority, that member can bring that unmet need to the Executive Committee for review and a decision is made to add that issue to our priorities.
 - From the annual priorities that are set which we then research to decide if there unmet needs exist or whether there is data to support that there has been improvement. There have been times in which a priority has changed and another priority may be added by asking the Executive Committee to review. I bring information from stakeholder indicator meetings to the SAC for review.
 - Various SAC ad hoc committees meet stakeholder groups to discuss research and data that identifies areas that require improvement. Make recommendations based on research to the SDE for inclusion in the Annual Performance Report.
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 - As a representative of the SAC participation in workgroups and stakeholder groups, I've had the opportunity to share information and questions between the SAC and the SEA regarding input into the APR and SPP.
6. **What is your involvement in the preparation and submission of the Annual Performance Report on the status of special education programs operated by the State?**
- Infuse SAC priorities into the stakeholder meetings
 - State Department Personnel actually prepare, edit, and submit the report
 - Review full report at SAC meetings to provide additional input
 - Responses submitted in writing (5 members):
 - Council member participation on the indicator stakeholder groups gives SDE the information/perspective they need to for the APR.
 - My input as a member of the SAP on indicators provides the CSDE information for their APR.
 - Research and summarize various pieces of legislation affecting special education programs in Connecticut. Report to the SAC the status of the legislation and make recommendations to the SAC on legislation that improves the State's compliance with IDEA requirements.
 - No hands on involvement. The SAC is kept informed by the SEA as information is gathered, and has opportunities both as members of stakeholder groups as well as at SAC meetings, to be involved and ask questions as the APR and SPP are developed.

State Advisory Panel (SAP)

Directions: Based on your experience, please provide information about the State's General Supervision and Fiscal management systems, as well as efforts for improving results and functional outcomes for children and youth with disabilities, outlined below. You do not have to respond to each question. The SAP chairperson will summarize comments submitted under each section and provide the summary to OSEP. The chairperson should also provide a listing of all panel members and the membership requirement they fulfill. In addition, include a description of how often the panel meets. This information may also be provided in a conference call.

General supervision - monitoring (the identification and timely correction of noncompliance) of States' systems through self-assessment, on-site visits, record review, etc.; dispute resolution systems such as due process hearings, complaints and mediation; and technical assistance and guidance

GS1: Identification of Noncompliance

CSDE: Terri DeFrancis; SAC: Nancy Taylor (lead), Ana Acevedo, Charlyne Olko; 2:50-3:20pm (30 min).

- 1. Considering the various parts of the State's general supervision (monitoring) system (e.g., dispute resolution, self assessments, on-site visits, etc.), does the State utilize these components timely and effectively in identifying noncompliance in the State?**
 - Yes, significant follow up; SDE consultants are good about returning calls in timely fashion for families and other agencies.
 - Data system lets district staff know right away if they have items in noncompliance.
- 2. If not, how does the State identify noncompliance at the local level?**
 - Through district liaisons, focused monitoring, due process, formal complaints; one SDE consultant assigned to each district.
- 3. What are the strengths and challenges of the State's system in identifying noncompliance? What systems are in place to address the challenges/barriers?**
 - One contact person for each district; high level of responsiveness from SDE staff.
 - Smaller number of consultants available to continue this level of support; changing direction from OSEP.
 - When parents call in a complaint, does it result in a formal complaint? Does SDE keep a record of these calls? Consultant keep call logs. Consultants share information at monthly staff meetings. Consultants may assist with informal mediation or technical assistance and offer guidance for parents who would like to file complaints.

GS2: Correction of Noncompliance

CSDE: Sarah Harvey; SAC: Kathy Musto (lead), Catherine Foley Geib, Uswah Khan; 2:50-3:20pm (30 min)

- 1. What systems are in place to ensure timely correction of identified noncompliance?**
 - Focused monitoring, SPP and APR, dispute resolution and due process; districts self report and submit data.

- 2. What procedures and/or processes does the State have in place to verify correction of noncompliance?**
 - Audit, noncompliance under SPP, systemic noncompliance monitoring, child specific noncompliance, monitoring through complaint process, fiscal management, and due process.
- 3. Does the State implement technical assistance, training, enforcement sanctions, or other specific actions to ensure correction of noncompliance?**
 - Yes, technical assistance targeted to area of noncompliance through ongoing work with the district. Provide general training to districts such as the annual Back-to-School meeting where the state addresses issues that districts struggle with statewide. Reporting to federal government.
- 4. What are the strengths and challenges of the State's system in ensuring correction of noncompliance?**
 - Strength: Involvement of State department when noncompliance is found to work with districts.
 - Challenge: Much of the data is self-reported.
 - Challenge: Two roles for the State (technical assistance and monitoring).
- 5. What systems are in place to address the challenges/barriers?**
 - State department can check data at multiple points. For child-specific issues, districts are required to submit documentation such as a revised IEP; quality of evidence.
 - Districts provide data after a citation of noncompliance to show corrections and improvement, and must show correction within one year:
 - Are there districts that will always be in noncompliance given their circumstances? SDE has very rare cases where a small selection of districts are in noncompliance after one year. SDE spends more time with these districts; imposes sanctions.
 - What types of sanctions? Redirection of IDEA funds each year. SDE looks at the implications of redirection, as funding that was allocated for certain actions will be spent now on new priorities.
 - General supervision focuses on Special Education.
 - When does SDE take a stronger role to influence changes? Case by case basis; investigate other types of sanctions; sanctions dependent on state statutes.

GS3: Dispute Resolution

CSDE: Gail Mangs; SAC: Brenda Sullivan (lead), Sheila Crocker, Kelly Neyra; 2:50-3:20pm (30 min)

- 1. Does the State have practices and procedures in place that are reasonably designed to ensure the implementation of dispute resolution procedures (complaints, due process hearings, and mediation) in the State?**
 - Process is working; increase in numbers but process is working.
- 2. If no, how does the State handle complaints, etc.?**

3. What are the strengths and challenges of the State's dispute resolution system?

- Challenge: Sometimes decisions are not clear; Strength: State uses this to provide further training for hearing officers.
- Challenge: Implementation of decisions in settlements; parties can go back to mediation.
- Challenge: Inability of parents to afford attorneys for hearings.
- Strength: State provides technical assistance to districts to try and resolve complaints.

4. What systems are in place to address the challenges/barriers?

- New staffing.
- What are the top 3 areas for issues after a hearing decision? Not a common problem; parties can discuss what was intended and for how long. Compensatory Education can be awarded. Parties can file a motion for clarification. Situations change (a facility closes; a consultant the parties agreed on might not be available).
- Advisory hearings are underutilized.

GS4: Data

CSDE: Diane Murphy; SAC: John Burke (lead), Donna Cambria, Richard Douglas, Beth Hart, Stephanie Johnson, Ben Strong, Julie Swanson; 2:50-3:20pm (30 min)

1. What mechanisms does the State have in place to ensure that the data collected by its data system is valid, reliable, timely, and accurate?

- SEDAC: multiple ways to look at data collection. (Team reviewed handouts.)

2. What are the strengths and challenges of the State's system in collecting valid and reliable data?

- Strength: Multiple variables; learning from these variables, like relationship to grades.
- Strength: State has staff with special education knowledge across multiple bureaus.
- Strength: IEP audit across state.
- Challenge: Look at all the data and provide input to districts; district staff turnover – a new data person will need time to learn the system.

3. What steps has the State implemented to improve data collection?

- Technology has features that will catch data outliers.
- Workshops held with directors and district data managers.

4. How does the State use and integrate its data across all systems to make informed decisions and to improve outcomes for children with disabilities?

- Sharing of data across organizations/agencies might need to be looked at; compare like data (graduation, dropout, achievement) across general education and special education personnel.

GS5: Implementation of Grant Assurances (Part 1)

- 1. Determinations – What procedures does the State have in place for making local determinations and implementing enforcement?**
 - General procedures were reviewed. Rubrics on CSDE website. (Team reviewed handouts.)
- 2. How does the State inform the public of its determination as determined by the Secretary of Education as well as the State’s determination of local school districts?**
 - All data is available on CEDAR; determination letters are available on the Bureau of Special Education’s website; press release on determinations
- 3. Significant Disproportionality – What are the State’s procedures for collecting, examining and reporting data regarding significant disproportionality?**
 - Complicated system for determining disproportionality; not publicly available because small n size; no public reporting criteria for this; State is just beginning to collect these data.
 - Sorting discipline data concerns.
 - Is there follow up to audits? Three levels: "meets requirements" or a level of TA; or systemic non-compliance-district is added to the following year’s list of audited districts
 - Is there a statewide collection of SRBI data? No, the state does not presently collect information on this.

Fiscal management - mechanisms to ensure fiscal accountability at the State and local level

CSDE: Brian Cunnane; SAC: Ann Marie Cullinan (lead), Michelle Bidwell, Rep. Dan Carter, Joanna Cooper, Christine Murphy, Ron Tamura, Fernando Tiago; 2:50-3:20pm (30 min)

FS1: Distribution

- 1. What is your role, if any, in advising the State’s procedures and practices to ensure appropriate distribution of IDEA funds within the State?**
 - No direct role; receive Part B application for feedback at SAC meeting. (See fiscal attachment at end for more information.)

FS2: Allowable Use of Funds

- 1. Does the State have procedures and practices in place to ensure appropriate management and use of IDEA funds?**
 - Each LEA submits documentation that has goals and objectives; must meet legal and fiscal requirements; districts submit signed assurances.
- 2. What are the strengths and challenges of the State’s system in managing its use of IDEA funds?**
 - Strength: Size of the state: state is small enough for State department to maintain communication with all districts, annual training; fiscal compliance reviews and desk audits.
 - Challenge: Ensure districts spend 100% of their funds; monthly tracking of funds.

3. What steps has the State implemented to improve the use of IDEA funds?

- IDEA fiscal program compliance review monitors Property/Equipment/Supplies, Supplanting, Parentally Placed Private School Students, NIMAS/NIMAC, CEIS, Charter Schools, Excess cost calculations, state and district-wide assessments.

GS5: Implementation of Grant Assurances (Part 2)**1. Parentally Placed Private School – Do children with disabilities placed by their parents in private schools receive equitable services compared with children with disabilities in public schools?**

- Students receive equitable services but they are not entitled to full IEP services: based on proportionate share to districts.

2. Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) – How does the State ensure students are properly receiving CEIS at the local level?

- Two levels-mandatory and voluntary; any district with disproportionality is required to set aside 15% of funds, which must be approved by State department. Districts voluntarily set aside funds for students at-risk (before any special education identification) and funds are tracked for two years.

3. How does the State track students who received early intervening services and subsequently received special education and related services under Part B of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) during the preceding 2-year period?

- Any student who receives CEIS services or any teacher who gets professional development under this – all teachers' students are tracked. Districts submit spread sheet to the Department with this information.

Improving Results – Marcus Rivera with SAC (whole group); 4:45-5:00pm (15 min)**1. What involvement do you have in advising the State on the development of improvement activities and setting targets that would be used to improve performance?**

- Stakeholder groups and committees; LRE Stakeholder group setting targets; Transition Task Force, CSPD.
- Responses submitted in writing (2 members):
 - None.
 - The SAC regularly participates in Focused Monitoring activities as well as on workgroups and committees charged with analyzing performance, developing improvement activities, and setting appropriate targets (i.e., the LRE workgroup, others?)

2. What involvement do you have in analyzing the impact of improvement activities?

- Look at State performance plan; re-analyze data; consultants update SAC on progress.
- Responses submitted in writing (2 members):
 - As a SAC Member we meet with various constituencies to determine whether the needs of children receiving special education services in Connecticut are being met.

We also review legislation that would improve compliance and professional development.

- (See above.) The SAC is regularly involved with SDE in analyzing data regarding the impact of improvement activities during our participation in workgroups and committees. The SAC also has the opportunity to have individual representatives from the SDE address the SAC as a whole to update on improvement activities, outcomes, and next steps with opportunities to ask questions, receive more detailed explanations, and offer input and suggestions.

3. What involvement do you have in assisting the State in identifying resources and TA providers to develop evidence-based improvement activities?

- Recommendations around areas of concern; kept informed such as TA that the State department receives; CSPD provides input into various resources that might be available.
- Responses submitted in writing (2 members):
 - None.
 - The SAC has regularly been kept informed of the SDE's efforts to identify resources and TA providers to develop evidence-based improvement activities. By our participation in Focused Monitoring efforts as well as other workgroups and committees, the SAC has been kept involved in and informed of the efforts of the SDE in identifying resources—both at the state and national level—to assist in developing improvement activities.

4. What are the challenges in ensuring improved outcomes in the State? How are they being addressed?

- Funding and state's efforts to secure additional grants.
- Number of personnel and changing priorities.
- Technology: need back-up system for data to prevent crash.
- Re-prioritize how to meet needs with resources available.
- Priorities and how to improve communication.
- Implementation of SRBI with fidelity critical in terms of identifying students with special needs; need to collect data about who participates in SRBI process, from superintendent to personnel.
- Title I funds and other areas of district accountability are not monitored.
- Towns and communities are losing services and there is an increased demand on districts to provide services.
- Speech service needs are increasing: this a need for resources and time for collaboration with special education and general education personnel.
- Transitioning students into programs (populations in corrections/state institutions): programs are "drying up"; need mental health services.
- Responses submitted in writing (3 members):

- Funding continues to be a challenge to improving special education services. The SDE is researching various grant opportunities that would bring more money to the State for special education services.
- No SAC input and year-long delay of the availability of new REGs is unacceptable and needs to be addressed LOUDLY.
- Initially the Bureau removed itself from actively participating in the SRBI framework formation. It was viewed as a general education initiative. HOWEVER, now SRBI is the linchpin to the referral and admittance in SPED. The SAC needs to be integrally involved via committee, review of public communications, etc. to insure communication is comprehensive.
- It is also imperative that the entire education community understand the interrelationship between SRBI and referral and identification – SAC, districts, sped directors, principals, sped teachers and most importantly the general education teacher.
- While communication to appears to be open regarding SRBI, omissions continue.
- Lack of data collection by the state to insure that students are being identified to ensure accountability and adherence to Child Find.
- There is currently NO REQUIREMENT for using the SRBI framework. Schools only need to provide explicit, systematic and research-based instruction to those students who are suspected in need of SPED services (information previously omitted). Inconsistency of use district to district, school to school.
- Communication and involvement of parents, particularly those in at-risk, urban communities – regarding truancy, tardiness and the impact on achievement.
- Readily accessible multilingual information regarding SRBI and SPED.
- District practices that adversely affect student achievement include: promotion by exception, budget cuts to special education teachers specialists, librarians.
- Core curriculum is important, but teachers are literally teaching to the test. Too much time is being spent on test practice and impedes time for individual student intervention.
- If the City of Bridgeport is asking the state to take over their school system, and schools have been cited for noncompliance for approx. 6 years – serious changes and commitments to education need to be refocused at the highest levels of government, legislature, Department of Education and the Bureau of Special Education.
- The biggest challenge (from my perspective) is the difficulty ensuring consistency of implementation of policies and procedures at the LEA level. Given the amount of data and information disseminated by the SEA, the data collection and reporting requirements of the SEA and OSEP, and the varying needs for improvement from district to district, it is extremely challenging to achieve any consistency across the state regarding improvement outcomes. The SEA is attempting to address these challenges though Focused Monitoring activities as well as various other district-specific initiatives and training.

General Feedback about this process

- This process helpful and informative.
- Would be a great SAC orientation process.
- Helpful to have SDE Staff available.

State Advisory Council on Special Education

July 18, 2011

Grant Assurances and Fiscal: General Information

GS5: Implementation of Grant Assurances

- **Parentally Placed Private School-** IDEA funds must be proportionately set-aside for students with disabilities who attend private, non-profit schools at parental expense. However, there is no “entitlement” for those students with disabilities who attend private, non-profit schools.

The LEAs are required to set aside a proportionate amount of funds based on the previous October census that was filed by the LEAs with the CSDE. Not every parentally placed private school student with a disability has the right to special education services. The LEA determines who will receive services based on information received through a consultation meeting with each private school and input from parents. Services Plans are developed for those students who are determined to receive special education services.

As part of the approval process for each LEA’s IDEA grant, the CSDE’s IDEA Funds Manager calculates the minimum amount of funds that must be set-aside for this purpose. If this minimum threshold has not been documented on the grant application, the budget is amended and the LEA is informed.

- **Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS)-** There are two specific levels of CEIS: 1) Mandated CEIS based on the identification by the CSDE of disproportionality by the LEA; and, 2) LEA voluntarily setting aside funds for CEIS. These funds can only be used for K-12 students and only used for students who have NOT been already identified as requiring special education services.
 - a. LEAs who have been identified as having disproportionality with respect to the identification of students with disabilities, or the placement in particular educational settings of these students, or the incidence, duration and type of disciplinary actions, including suspensions and expulsions are mandated to reserve the maximum amount of funds (15%) of their IDEA funds to provide CEIS to serve students in the LEA, particularly, but not exclusively, students in those groups that were significantly over-identified .
 - b. LEAs can voluntarily set-aside up to 15% of their IDEA entitlement funds for CEIS purposes.
- **Tracking of CEIS-** LEAs must report on a yearly basis to the CSDE a census of the students serviced under CEIS and must track any student who received CEIS services and later eligible for special education services for a two-year period thereafter. This is filed electronically with the BSE’s IDEA Funds Manager prior to the beginning of the next fiscal year.

FS1: Distribution of Funds

- Since the SAC is an advisory council it is hoped that if they should receive questions or concerns from either parents or LEAs regarding the appropriate distribution of IDEA funds they would contact the CSDE with the specific issues or questions.

FS2: Allowable Use of Funds

- **Appropriate management and use of IDEA funds-**

The LEA must submit, as part of its IDEA grant application, specific goals and objectives documenting the proposed use of their IDEA entitlement funds. These goals and objections are then matched by the CSDE IDEA Funds Manager to their propose budgets for consistency. Only when the IDEA Funds Manager is satisfied that all legal requirements have been met for the use of IDEA funds is the grant approved by the CSDE.

- **Managing the use of IDEA funds-**

One of the benefits of Connecticut's system of grant oversight is our size and the excellent working relationship that the CSDE has with each of the State's LEAs. There is constant contact between the State's IDEA Funds Manager and the local school districts. Additionally, there is a yearly training for all directors of special education/pupil services to assist them with the grant writing process.

Our biggest challenge is ensuring that the LEAs fully expend their IDEA funds. The IDEA Funds Manager, beginning in January of the second year of the grants, contacts those LEAs who have an outstanding balance of IDEA funds in an attempt to assist the LEAs in drawing down all of their IDEA grant funds.

- **Ensuring improved uses of IDEA funds-**

The Bureau of Special Education has instituted an IDEA Program/Fiscal Compliance Review to ensure that LEAs have developed the proper policies and procedures in the following areas:

1. Property/Equipment/Supplies;
2. Supplanting;
3. Parentally Placed Private School Students;
4. NIMAS/NIMAC;
5. CEIS;
6. Charter Schools;
7. Excess Costs Calculations; and,
8. State-wide and District-wide assessments.