



WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN 2016 – 2017

Issues to watch out for this coming year that will have an impact

Dr. John Opperman
OAPSA Executive Director

Medicaid Schools Program (MSP)

- November 2015, CMS sent letter to Ohio Department of Medicaid
- Late January, ODE distributed that letter: requires ORP process for reimbursement
- Order, Referral or Prescription by physician, P.A., or nurse practitioner
- Many issues and concerns over the past months
- Effective date August 1st – not clear what will be happening
- Requests made for extension to allow time to figure out compliance with ORP
- One option would be an extension until end of calendar year

MSP continued

- Another option: new related services have ORP and phase in existing per IEP cycle
- MSB leaving Ohio citing legislative and regulatory climate; referring clients to HBS
- Wide variation of responses by districts;
- Some districts getting out, others hiring nurse practitioners, etc.
- For some districts, this presents ethical and logistical issues
- (e.g., prescription w/o seeing child)

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

- Phase 2 of SSIP concluded this spring (end of second year)
- Process will be rolled out to school districts over the next three years
- This year, pilot introduction involving selected SSTs and school districts
- Main focus: LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading & Spelling)
- Based on brain research and appropriate sequences to teach reading skills

SSIP continued

- Does not replace the curriculum used by a district
- Rather, it provides guidance, professional development and other resources for the district to use
- LETRS training will help ensure fidelity in teaching language/reading skills
- Next year, more SSTs and schools will be added
- Process will continue through 2020

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- Every Student Succeeds Act contains mostly just the changes to prior law
- Signed December 10, 2015; makes significant changes to NCLB / ESEA
- Ohio's NCLB waiver continues through September 30th
- Rather than prescribed federal mandates, states set their own goals and interim progress measures
- Allows innovative assessments that are high quality, worth taking, and time limited
- Regulations do not specify any percentages for indicators or a range for weighting
- Additional considerations for English Learners as determined by states

ESSA continued

- Each subgroup must be considered separately (no combining)
- All public charter / community schools must be included in accountability measures
- Provides suggestions for “consistently underperforming” but allows flexibility in definitions
- Looks at inequities such as ineffective, out-of-field and inexperienced teachers
- Parent engagement through clear, robust and ongoing information about results (report cards)
- HQT no longer required by NCLB but it is embedded in Ohio Revised Code (legislation)

OEC Determinations

- Second year in a row, Ohio received “needs assistance” rating
- Primarily because of high rates of alternate assessment and graduating by modified requirements
- Participation rates of SWDs have dropped in each of last three years
- “Needs Assistance” triggers additional requirements including OSEP technical assistance
- OEC must submit report in 2017 including actions taken resulting from TA
- OEC will release district-level “Special Education Ratings” this month

Parent Notice / Universal forms / IEP corrections

- Parent Notice of Procedural Safeguards (Whose IDEA Is This?) lengthy and outdated
- OEC is working on a new version (different title) that should be available in the fall
- Appears districts will start school year with “Whose IDEA...”
- Ongoing concern about the inconsistencies of the various software programs for IEPs, ETRs, etc.
- Creates major problems when students move from one district to another
- Last spring, OEC awarded a contract to have recommendations for “universal forms”
- Report expected this fall; unclear what next steps will be

OEC changes continued

- IEP has not been updated for several years although changes have occurred
- For example, age for transition changed from 16 to 14
- Without updated forms, districts individually are dealing with making correct entries
- OEC has made arrangements for corrections to be made to existing IEP form
- Unclear when this updated form will be available
- There are many other changes that ultimately need to be made, but not with these limited corrections

Ohio Coalition (OCECD)

- Long-standing annual grant from OEC still held up; reasons unclear
- Delay has been for entire 2015-16 school year; no indications 2016-17
- Parent Mentors in districts throughout Ohio not being supported; spotty communication from OEC
- OCECD taken various steps to reduce costs because of grant hold-up
- Examples include reducing rented space, supplies, telephone expenses, and reassigning staff
- Because Parent Mentor support not funded, some staff time reduced
- Launched a Mentoring 4 Reading Achievement (M4RA) program
- IDEA grant for Parent, Community, and Educator Collaboration continues
- Parent Training and Information Center grant also continues from USDoE

Gender issues / Title IX

- Departments of Justice and Education released “guidance” in June re: transgender students
- Based on and clarifies 1972’s Title IX; model policies are available
- Involves using bathrooms corresponding to gender identity and preferred pronouns and names
- Great variations in districts in Ohio; challenges will continue
- This is also an issue at the national level with states taking different positions

Shortages of school psychs and other related services providers

- Shortages last year based on STRS changes and also impact of corrective actions by some districts
- For school psychs, shortages affected by limitation of 100 school psych interns in state budget
- Both the dollar amount per internship and the number of internships unchanged for many years
- Also, limitations on number of universities offering school psych graduate programs (only nine, mostly full time)
- There are also shortages in the areas of OT and PT
- Degrees of shortages vary in different parts of the state (e.g., major in S.E. Ohio, less in N.E. Ohio)
- Caseloads and Ratios uncertainty and long delays have had an impact on all related services

Ohio Association of Pupil Services Administrators (OAPSA)

- Numerous and wide variety of membership benefits (see brochure)
- Conference schedule for 2016 – 17:
 - September 30th, December 9th, February 9th & 10th, and May 5th
- Meetings held at Quest Business Center, Polaris
- OEC updates at every meeting
- Ongoing communication with members; frequent email updates; “requests for input”
- Ashland U graduate credit anticipated

Contact Information

- For further information about this presentation or about OAPSA, please contact:

Dr. John Opperman

OAPSA Executive Director

419-566-4289

jjopperman@aol.com