

# 2025-2026 Special Education Updates for School Leaders from Annette Hyde

## October Updates

**Support Requests** - a reminder that we continue to have specialized teams within the agency to support the unique needs of students. Your core team can support accessing any of these teams as needed:

- Behavior, Autism, and Mental Health Team
- Brain Injury Team
- Significant Disabilities Team
- Assistive Technology Team

**Child Find Learning** - Central Rivers special education staff will be engaged in intensive professional learning this year to ensure consistent and accurate child find processes and procedures. Staff will be out of buildings Oct 24, Oct 31, and Nov 7 for this learning first semester. They will also be engaged in self-assessments and peer reviews of evaluation reports, as well as additional learning specific to preschool evaluations. Eligibility decisions are made by the eligibility team, and districts play an essential role in both this decision and developing an appropriate IEP for eligible students. Learning specific to Child Find for district staff is available as part of our core services and may be recommended by RAs as we continue this improvement effort.

**Special Ed General Supervision dashboard:** The SE dashboard is ready to go! This will help your administrators with their general supervision responsibilities. Here are [the details](#), as well as a [video demo](#). If you are interested in using this dashboard, please fill out [this form](#). The cost is \$922 minimum (or \$3/per IEP student for larger districts). The data is updated every Monday by our AEA data team.

## September Updates

**RA connections:** Regional Administrators will ensure this information is shared with each admin team monthly. This could be through email or meetings or both. It will also be linked in the Leadership Connections newsletter each month.

**Procedural Safeguards manuals:** Parents must be offered a paper copy of their rights booklet at least annually. Districts are responsible for providing copies of this booklet to their special education teachers for distribution. Providing a link to the electronic version is appropriate as long as the option of a paper copy is also offered. Districts needing to print more copies of the Procedural Safeguards manual can do this in-house or through [AEA Creative Services](#).

**Central Rivers AEA & District Partnership:** [This document](#) provides clarity for district and AEA staff regarding roles and responsibilities specific to special education. It primarily focuses on the role of school psychs, social workers, SE consultants and special education teachers, but has implications for LEA administrators and AEA support staff providers also. This represents an overview of AEA's core special education services.

**AEAs role in MTSS – digging deeper:** AEAs have established a [two-year transition plan](#) to align our services with the appropriate use of special education funds. AEA staff will learn more about how best to support intervention and start collaborating with teachers to support intervention design and implementation that aligns with general education interventions.

**Central Rivers AEA's network for Special Education Directors:** Amy and I will host a monthly networking opportunity to help LEA leaders implement things they learn through the policy and practices webinars from the DE and to provide an opportunity to network with colleagues. Our first one will be a joint meeting with Keystone. Based on feedback, we will determine whether to continue jointly or schedule separate opportunities. The first network is scheduled for **September 26 at 12:30 pm**. Invites were sent based on who you indicated as serving in the role of SE Director for your district.

**Re-evaluation procedural change implemented:** AEAs are training staff on a procedural update related to re-evaluations. We will be sharing more details with school leaders and special ed teachers in the coming weeks. The essence of the change is that IDEA provides a provision that a re-evaluation is needed every three years unless the parent and public agency determine it is not necessary. We will work closely with schools and parents to make these decisions. [This document](#) has been developed to support districts with this update.

**Special Ed enhancements:** If you have not communicated with your RA regarding any needed 504 services (they would have reached out) and/or your need for Medicaid billing support for behavior, please let us know this week. Here is the [SE Enhancements](#) document.

**New SE dashboard:** The SE dashboard is ready to go! This will help your administrators with their general supervision responsibilities. Here are [the details](#), as well as a [video demo](#). If you are interested in using this dashboard, please fill out [this form](#).

**Hearing screenings:** AEAs are doing grade-level screening in K & 2nd grade as part of our child find activities. [This video](#) provides nurses, secretaries and administrators important information about the purpose of screening and the logistics that make it successful. Please share in your district. [This document](#) outlines the service and some red flags teachers should be aware of regarding potential hearing concerns. Moving forward, students outside of K & 2 with hearing concerns should be referred to the building's MTSS team and hearing tests will be conducted as part of initial evaluations for special education. These changes are part of our work to align our work with special ed expectations.