



G-CASE COMMENTS

An Affiliate of the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders

President's Corner

Notes from the Executive Director



Tris Gilland

Hello, G-CASE friends! I hope you are all well and looking forward to a productive closing out of yet another school year. I do understand the level of tiredness that comes with this time of year. Please be sure you are taking care of YOU as you continue to take care of others.



Sarah Burbach

I am writing this column from a hotel room in Savannah while members of the selection committee for the *G-CASE Special Education Administrator Academy* are in another room applying a strict rubric to choose the 30 strongest applicants for the 2022-2023 cohort. This process is even more difficult because we had eighty-five (85!) of your brightest future leaders apply for the thirty spots. The need is great. I am so glad that G-CASE is responding to the Professional Learning needs of our membership to ensure that our future administrators will be highly-trained and ready to assume leadership roles. We will be rolling out the next level of administrator guidance on May 12th with our *Coordinator Skills Institute*. Based on registration numbers so far, we will have over 100 Coordinators participating! That need is great, too.

G-CASE is happy to share many successes for the 2022-2023 school year. We received awesome feedback following both Fall and Spring Conferences; our Administrator Development Academy has proven to be successful; our membership continues to be strong; and our G-CASE Executive/Advisory Boards continue to work to provide us meaningful professional development as well as to strive to support those who are providing services to students with disabilities across our great state. We realize that you and your students are the heart of our work and we continue to ask that you let us know what you need. We are here for you! Enjoy some sunshine and fun this Summer – you certainly deserve it.

Appreciate you all so much,

Tris

TEACHER
self-care challenge

We work extremely hard as teachers, ensuring our students get the best education each day. We often forget about our own personal self-care needs. Select one week and try a different self-care challenge each day. Cross off each box as you complete the challenge.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Try Meditation. Apps like Calm and Headspace are a great place to start. | Start a Gratitude Journal. Write down 1 thing each day you are thankful for. | Try exercise. Walk your neighborhood or in an indoor mall. Find a yoga video on YouTube. Just move! |
| Treat Yourself! Do nothing teaching related for 24 hours. | Meal Plan. Write down your favorite go to meals in your phone. | Make a mix tape. Create a happy music playlist on iTunes or Spotify. |
| Spoil yourself and go for one personal care appointment: massage, pedicure, manicure, haircut or waxing. | Drink Water. Try Flavored, carbonated or Fruit infused water for a change. | Forge Connections. Call, text, DM or visit with a friend you have not recently connected with. |

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As we close out this school year, G-CASE President Tris Gilland will be moving on to the role of “Immediate Past-President” while Cassandra Holifield assumes the presidency. Tris has worked hard to provide skills-based professional learning for our members, as evidenced by the conferences and webinars she has designed and hosted over the last two years. Tris will be leaving her current role knowing that G-CASE is strong in membership (over 600 members), advocacy for our students, and professional learning for our educators. Thank you, Tris; Welcome, Cassandra!

The Day on Capitol Hill



Another legislative session has come and gone at the Capitol and once again education was one of the main topics in both the House and Senate chambers. Some highlights from this past session include the approval of a \$2000 teacher pay raise for FY23, a budget that adds back \$383 million previously cut from the QBE formula, and HB385 the Teacher Return to Work Bill. Throughout the session, representatives from G-CASE and GAEL were advocating on your behalf to make sure our voices were heard. On Tuesday, February 22nd, members from PAGE,

GAEL, and GACTE joined together in Atlanta for the Day on Capitol Hill. Participants had the opportunity to hear from multiple State Legislatures as well as our State Superintendent. Following the morning session at the twin towers, members walked across the street to the Capitol to advocate for our students. Please know your voices were heard this legislative session. Thank you to each one of you who took the time to reach out to your legislatures this past year. Many Representatives and Senators shared how they had received multiple phone calls, letters, and emails during this session on the topic of education. Although our General Assembly is done meeting for the year we cannot let up on advocating for our students and teachers across the great state of Georgia. Please continue to build relationships with your legislatures and share your concerns with them. They want to hear from you. This summer, G-CASE representatives will travel to Washington D.C. to attend the Special Education Legislative Summit.

Jenny Millward and Sean Cooper
G-CASE Co-Legislative Chairs

Dyslexia Rule Nearing Adoption!

The State Board of Education Dyslexia Rule Review Committee is completing work on the proposed rule (SB48), which should be presented to the State Board in June. G-CASE members Todd Williford, John O'Connor, and Sarah Burbach serve on this committee and report having had a positive experience working with stakeholders representing school and system leaders, dyslexia advocacy groups, psychologists, GaDOE legal and special education staff, SSTAGE, parents, and SLPs -- all knowledgeable about dyslexia. The group was charged to "ensure the development of a policy that provides for timely and effective referral and support for students in kindergarten and grades one through three who have been identified as having characteristics of dyslexia, other disorders, or both." The GaDOE will be revising the current Dyslexia Informational Handbook to align with the new rule, once adopted.

Georgia
Dyslexia Collaborative

G - C A S E P R E S E N T S

CSII

C o o r d i n a t o r S k i l l s I n s t i t u t e

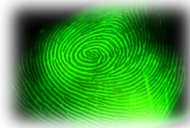
Thursday, May 12, 2022
9:00 A.M - 4:00 P.M.

548 Christmas Avenue
Bethlehem, Georgia 30620
(30 minutes from Athens)

ADVANCING THE PIPELINE: COORDINATOR SKILLS INSTITUTE (CSI)

Overwhelmed by the response to *the Special Education Administrator Development Academy (ADA)* for teachers, G-CASE will be initiating the next level of administrator training this year – the *Coordinator Skills Institute (CSI)*. This group will meet on May 12th for a one-day conference led by past, present, and future G-CASE Presidents that will include topics including Maximizing Funding through FTE; Budget; Allotments; Building and Sustaining Relationships; Communicating with Stakeholders; Projections and Human Resources Planning; Leading an MDR; Dispute Resolution; and Personnel, all topics that came from the G-CASE Survey of Directors.

Join us face-to-face for a one-day Drive-In Conference to learn practical, useful, timely, advanced, and needed Special Education Administration information.



IDEAL CANDIDATES

Coordinators, Program Managers, and Specialists, as well as new hires for the next school year at this level.

Click [HERE](#) to Register

Boxed lunch and snacks provided

Thank
you



2022 G-CASE Spring Legal Forum Sponsors
March 7-9, 2022
The Classic Center, Athens

G-CASE PAST-PRESIDENTS HONORED

G-CASE Past-Presidents were honored Sunday, March 6th before the Spring Legal Forum with a special dinner and get-together at South Kitchen in Athens.

Past-Presidents Allison Oxford (2015-2016), Christi Teal (2011-2012), Greg McElwee (2018-2019), Jennifer Donnelly (2013-2014), Jimmy Pitzer (2016-2017), Jo Ann Brittingham (1974-1975), Zabrina Cannady (2019-2020), and Traci White (2014-2015) attended, along with current President Tris Gilland, President-Elect Cassandra Holifield, and Executive Director Sarah Burbach. Following the meal, President Gilland asked the group to highlight one important focus of each presidency.

Perhaps the most interesting information shared was by Jo Ann Brittingham, who described working on the original federal law 94-142, which later grew into IDEA.

Past-Presidents are highly respected and valued by G-CASE! G-CASE Past-Presidents with Active Memberships are represented by the Emeritus Council and several will be presenting at the G-CASE Coordinator Skills Institute (CSI) next month.



Houston County Sharks Supporters Presented ASPIRE Award

Submitted by: Dr. Zabrina Cannady

Several Houston County Sharks supporters received awards from the American Association of Adapted Sports Programs (AAASP). The Adapted Sports Programs in Recreation and Education (ASPIRE) Awards recognize individuals who serve as role models and advocates for adapted sports. Adapted sports programs allow students with physical disabilities to reap the physical, social, emotional, and academic benefits of competitive athletics resulting in personal and social empowerment.

The 2021 ASPIRE AWARDS were held virtually on October 24. Thirty-seven nominees across the United States were recognized. The Sharks' nominees were represented in five categories and named the winner in two.



Dr. Jenny Millward, Director of Students Services for the Houston County School District, received the ASPIRE Advocacy Award. This award is reserved for those who demonstrate exceptional efforts toward the needs and rights of individuals with disabilities.

Rene Langlois, Houston County Sharks Volunteer and hearing impaired interpreter, received the Gail Hendricks Volunteerism Award. This award is presented to an individual or organization that has demonstrated exceptional efforts in support of an adapted sports league.

Other Houston County Sharks supporters who were recognized were:

- Christy Jones, Coach of the Year Award nominee;
- Anna Henry, Coach of the Year Award nominee;
- Jeff McDaniel, The Gail Hendricks Volunteerism Award nominee;
- Miranda Lawhorn, Outstanding Female Athlete nominee; and
- Houston County, Rachel Gerrity, Rene Langlois, Jamie Schneller, and Home Grown Yoga, School-Based Program Award nominee.





SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY (Special Education ADA)

Culminating Projects

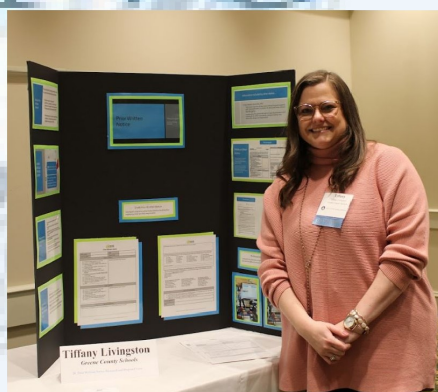
The curriculum of the **Special Education Administrator Development Academy (Special Education ADA)** is based upon the seven *Administrator of Special Education Advanced Leadership Standards* set forth by the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). As part of the Special Education ADA, participants completed a culminating project in which they illustrated their understanding of a chosen advanced standard by creating a product that is representative of the components related to the selected standard that can be used to advance the outcome of students with disabilities in their own school systems. Scan the QR Code for the entire project by the number listed -- many of which will be useful to systems across the state!

| Participant/System | Topic |
|---|--|
| Arlene Hyman, Newton County | 1. Discipline and Social-Emotional Issues and Impact on Academic Success for Students with Disabilities |
| Becky Chatham, Forsyth County | 2. Tier 1 Behavior Intervention for Teachers and Students |
| Blair Loggins, Banks County | 3. Special Programs Newsletter (Communicating with Stakeholders) |
| Britleigh Sherlock, Seminole County | 4. The Impact of Intensive Reading Intervention |
| Chelsei Norris, Appling County | 5. Developing a Mission & Vision Statement for Special Education |
| Fadia Hazama, Bibb County | 6. Guided Data Dig |
| Heather Rivera, Baconton Community Charter School | 7. Revision/ Update of: Office of Program for Exceptional Children General Supervision Policies, Procedures, and Practices Manual |
| Heidi McDaniel, Glynn County | 8. Training Modules for New Special Education Teachers and Administrators |
| Jordan Lee, Lowndes County | 9. Extended Reading Education at the High School Level |
| Kelly Semeyn, Coffee County | 10. County wide Paraprofessionals Training Sessions (one session for Inclusion and one for Self-Contained) |
| Kristyn Ivey, Johnson County | 11. Progress Monitoring 101 |
| Mallory Sandiford, Ben Hill County | 12. Those "Sticky" Reminders |
| Marcel Carter, Newton County | 13. A Survival Guide For Special Education Teachers |
| Marie Curtis, Troup County | 14. A Spotlight on Exceptional Education in TCSS- Quarterly Publication |
| Meadow Krockum, White County | 15. Special Education Student Data Meetings |
| Melissa Bedford, Upson County | 16. Stronger Together: Increasing Student Achievement Through Effective Co-Teaching Strategies |
| Mia Hortman, Taylor County | 17. All Progress is Growth |
| Michael Baker, Pickens County | 18. Pickens County Schools Behavior Data Collection and Implementation System |
| Nelko Battle, Douglas County | 19. LEAP Developmental Chart |
| Nichole Winchester, Pulaski County | 20. Pulaski County Special Education Procedures Manual |
| Paula Cooper, Houston County | 21. Improving Student Outcomes Through Streamlined Pathway Supports |
| Rachel Johnson, Muscogee County | 22. Lead Teacher Training |
| Renata Brown, Bibb County | 23. The Classroom Connection: Study Skills for Success |
| Sonya Roberts, Muscogee County | 24. Developing Our Greatest Assets (Designed for Special Education Dept. Chairs) |
| Stormy Ruff, Bartow County | 25. Procedures Guide Resource |
| Susan Wilson, Douglas County | 26. DCSS Co-teaching procedural manual |
| Thomas Holtzner, Columbia County | 27. Increasing Participation in General Ed. Settings |
| Tiffany Livingston, Greene County | 28. Prior Written Notice: Research and Proposed Form |
| Tracey Wendel, Glynn County | 29. No One Ever Told Me How to know what to teach as a Special Education Teacher |
| Zach Hobbs, Forsyth County | 30. Strategies for a Successful Co-teaching Classroom |



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY (Special Education ADA)

**CULMINATING
PROJECTS
ON DISPLAY**



How would you rate your experience as a member of the First Cohort Group of the Special Education Administrator Development Academy?

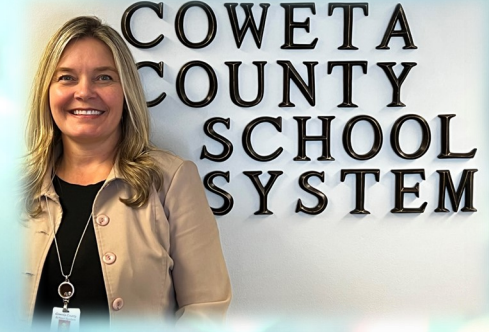
1 2 3 4 5

5.0 ★
average rating



Chrissy Dement Named 2022 G-CASE Outstanding New Special Education Director

Coweta County Special Education Director **Chrissy Dement** was recognized as the 2022 G-CASE Outstanding New Special Education Director at the G-CASE Spring Legal Forum in Athens. In order to be eligible for this coveted honor, the candidate must:



- be a current Special Education Director in his/her first three years administering special education programs and/or services, who exemplifies G-CASE and CASE's ethics, values, and standards
- be a member of G-CASE and CEC/CASE
- demonstrate exemplary leadership and service as a special education administrator
- show care and concern for students and families with disabilities
- contribute to the field of special education
- be actively involved in professional and community affairs
- be recognized as an outstanding leader in his/her local district and/or by the state

Chrissy has been the special education director in Coweta County for less two years. Her Assistant Superintendent told G-CASE that Chrissy "is always there to help in any possible way, treating everyone with the same level of care, concern, and respect to make things happen. She exemplifies excellence in action." Her team reports that Chrissy "consistently displays confidence, perseverance and strength, working tirelessly to improve collaboration among district departments and ensuring that students with disabilities are always a part of the conversation." Chrissy "is an active participant on the system's Strategic Leadership Team and Curriculum partnerships, RESA Collaborative Communities, as well as SELDA. Her deep understanding and inquisitive nature regarding special education rules, budgets and grants, data collections and reporting, strategic planning, dispute resolution, high leverage practices and specially designed instruction is a tremendous asset to our district. She continually pushes us to explore innovative ways to improve our processes and outcomes for our students using data and results driven accountability. She has very quickly become that leader that other district leaders rely on."

G-CASE is honored to bestow this prestigious award to Chrissy.



Election Results



Dr. Brad Bowling, G-CASE Vice-President

Director of Special Education, Barrow County Schools

(Will progress to the role of G-CASE President in 2024-2025)



Dr. Damita James, Treasurer

GLRS Director, Middle Georgia RESA

2022-2024

G-CASE SPRING LEGAL FORUM: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL

G-CASE members were exposed to “all things legal” at the 2022 Spring Legal Forum held at The Classic Center in Athens in March. Four hundred and fourteen (414) members participated in the conference face to face or virtually and really learned – from the presenters and from their peers! Phil Hartley kicked off the forum by updating current legal and legislative implications for Georgia, followed by current and former GAEL Executive Directors Buddy Costley and Dr. Jimmy Stokes providing a VERY current legislative update. Our own GaDOE State Director Wina Low challenged directors “Reach for the Stars,” while Dr. Christi Teal, 2011-2012 G-CASE President (and now the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources with the Carroll County Schools) gave participants a glimpse into the world of Human Resources and Personnel, as they relate to special education. Attorneys Beth Morris and Reagan Sauls tested the knowledge of directors who may be “drowning in documentation,” while Sherry Culves cleared up all questions regarding Prior Written Notice. Dr. Kurt Hulett, a new presenter to Georgia, broke down Substantive Compliance and Julie Weatherly, esq. ended the conference with her annual Year in Review, providing important COVID and Non-COVID Court and Agency Guidance.

The conference offered other highlights, as well. Participants in the first Cohort of the *Special Education Administrator Development Academy (Special Education ADA)* showed off their culminating projects during a “Science-Fair” type Showcase and then received special recognition from the entire conference assembly. Coweta County Director of Special Education was named as the 2020 G-CASE Outstanding New Director. Each Conference Sponsor addressed the group and hosted nighttime activities for new, potential, or continuing clients. The semi-annual G-CASE Business Meeting focused on the myriad of activities undertaken by G-CASE this year. Plans are already in the works for the 2023 Spring Legal Forum, which will be held at The Classic Center on March 6-8, 2022.





What does CNA and SWD have in common in Bleckley County? Meaningful Inclusive Partnerships!

Submitted by: Dr. Cindy Felkins

This school year students with significant cognitive disabilities have been given many opportunities to be included in various classrooms. One of those opportunities has been with the CNA class taught by Mrs. Candi Dykes at Bleckley County High School in Cochran, Georgia.

It all started when one student, Dalia, stated she would like to work in healthcare after she graduates. The high school special education staff asked Mrs. Dykes if it would be possible for Dalia to check out the CNA class to see what it is all about. Mrs. Dykes did not even hesitate! She immediately said, "YES!" Dalia began to audit the CNA class daily where she is exposed to and can practice many skills that would enhance her future working in the healthcare industry. Dalia has learned so much already and not just about healthcare but in forming relationships and what it feels like to be included. She is truly a "natural" in healthcare according to Mrs. Dykes! Mrs. Dykes and her entire class have been pouring a lot of love and teaching into Dalia and it has been one of the coolest things to witness this school year!

Since Dalia had such a positive experience, Mrs. Dykes and her class expanded the invitation to the this entire classroom of students with special needs. Now the two classrooms collaborate and plan many joint activities that they can do together. The activities have ranged from a scavenger hunt, making friendship bracelets, a balloon toss, Q&A games to a St. Patrick's Day party!



In asking several of our students what these opportunities mean to them, Dalia stated "It is really cool and good because I want to work at a nursing home in Cochran! I also love making new friends!" and "I like going in there and doing fun stuff!" and "It is amazing!"

Mrs. Dykes also asked her students what the collaboration and inclusion meant to them and they stated, "It is a lot of fun!" and "I wish we could do it more often!" Some of the CNA students recently told Mrs. Dykes that they made arrangements to include Dalia and Cameron (her prom date) in their dinner plans for the night of prom! How exciting is that?!

This experience has been as much of a joy for the CNA students as it has been for our students with disabilities. They have truly felt included and comfortable in Mrs. Dykes' class! Her class welcomed them all with open arms and afforded our students opportunities to do new things and make a lot of new friends. This has been an incredible year and we are so very thankful for special people like Mrs. Dykes and her students who "choose to include!"



Do you want to see the great work your district is doing highlighted in the next newsletter? Email your submissions to jennycarpenter03@icloud.com



Oconee County Schools All-Star Game

Submitted by: Suzanne Korngold



On April 15, Oconee County Schools had the pleasure of hosting All-Star Games at North Oconee High School for all students (elementary-high) in our adapted curriculum setting. This wonderful event was a time for all students to be included and succeed. All students participated in two different events, from a variety of track and field choices. Events included traditional events (100 M dash, running long jump, and javelin throw), level A events (softball throw, tennis ball throw, standing long jump, 50M walk, and assisted walk),

level B (wheelchair relay, wheelchair

obstacle course, and level C Motor Activity Training Program events (MATP activities are for those with severe intellectual disability and significant physical disabilities to participate in activities appropriate to their abilities).

We had 80 special education students from the elementary, middle, and high school participated in Friday's All-Star Games. Oconee County Civitan Club made a donation to support the cost of student T-shirts, popcorn, Kona Ice, face painting, and medals! Numerous student helpers from OCHS and NOHS assisted the participants as the day captured the true spirit of inclusion!



Save the Dates

G-CASE Coordinator Skills Institute (CSI)
Winder, GA
May 12, 2022

G-CASE Administrator Development
Academy (ADA)
June 2022-March 2023

GAEL Summer Conference 2022
Jekyll Island Convention Center
June 10-13, 2022

Annual CASE/CEC Legislative Summit
Westin, Alexandria, VA
Washington, DC
July 10-13, 2022

G-CASE 2022 Fall Conference
Hyatt Regency Hotel, Savannah, Georgia
November 16-28, 2022

2023 CEC Convention
Louisville, Kentucky
March 1-4, 2023

April 2022 G-CASE Conference
The Classic Center, Athens, Georgia
March, 6-8, 2023



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ON-LINE!



@GeorgiaGCASE



@GCASE2



gcase2020



<http://gcase.schoolinsites.com>

Dr. Jennifer
Carpenter

Editor
Communications Co-Chair,
G-CASE Executive Board

jcarpenter@nwgnet.org

G-CASE serves the members of CASE who live and work in Georgia! Our major goal is to improve services to children with special needs.

We strive to provide leadership and support to members by providing input into the policies and practices in Georgia which impact the quality of education and by providing support to the professionals who serve the students of Georgia.