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| **A group of hands holding up colorful letters  Description automatically generated****This year’s Special Education Board meetings** have focused on pressing issues facing educators and support professionals across the state. Discussions during these meetings have made it clear that staff shortages and student behavior challenges, for students with and without disabilities, are consistently the key problems for PSEA members. These challenges have hit special education particularly hard.**During the Special Education Board Conference at the Penn Stater in April**, we were fortunate to have a variety of great professional learning experiences, and we look forward to our next conference, April 12-13, 2024, at the Hershey Lodge, where we will celebrate 50 years of special education. Please mark your calendars and consider joining us! |
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| **A group of houses with trees and grass  Description automatically generated****Professional Learning Exchange****The PSEA Education Services Department has expanded professional learning content** offerings in a variety of ways to meet the needs of our members. In particular, PEARL, PSEA’s hub for online learning, has many interactive opportunities for EA and ESP members to earn Act 48 and Chapter 14 credits online. Additionally, Education Services continues to host book discussions, webinars, and Zoom sessions that offer a wide variety of professional learning opportunities. Please check out these opportunities at [www.psea.org/prolearning](http://listserv01.psea.org/trk/click?ref=ztdu81631_1-287dx31bc6x0581&). |
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| **A cork board with black letters and colorful pins  Description automatically generated****IDEA’s Implementation****School districts continue to navigate the challenges of providing students a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) post pandemic**. Collaboration and coordination with families are critical to providing services in the least restrictive environment and to reviewing the current needs of students with special needs. In Pennsylvania, some students have opted to stay in school for an additional year to fulfill transition plans made prior to the pandemic. It is unclear whether the Legislature will amend the law to allow students with special needs to continue to enroll in public school beyond age 21. |
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| **Special Education Advisory Panel and PDE Bureau of Special Education****The Special Education Advisory Panel has been active this year**. Our focus continues to be on transition, LRE, behavioral and mental health, and family engagement for both early intervention and school-age services. The Bureau of Special Education is forecasting priorities that include the release of a new Prior Written Notice (NOREP) for implementation in November 2023. Targeted learning content related to classroom management and structured literacy will be offered through PaTTAN.**The Attract-Prepare-Retain (APR) initiative continues**, as does the collaboration with OVR and Unified Sports. Mentoring and networking through the APR grant will continue. Please consider being a mentor to new educators and school psychologists responsible for providing critical services to students.**Mentoring information is available on the PaTTAN website**. Additional information from the Bureau of Special Education is available through their [Bulletin for Educators](http://listserv01.psea.org/trk/click?ref=ztdu81631_1-287dx3225bx0581&).   **The Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR) provides a variety of resources** for parents and educational agencies to resolve educational disputes. Mediation, a free, voluntary, and confidential alternative to a formal due process hearing, is one option to support early resolution efforts. Parents or educational agencies can contact ODR by going to [The Office for Dispute Resolution](http://listserv01.psea.org/trk/click?ref=ztdu81631_1-287dx3225cx0581&)  or calling the **ConsultLine** at 1-800-879-2301.**Several grant opportunities are available to both school districts and special educators through the Bureau of Special Education.** Once again, PaTTAN will be offering direct support for school districts through Comprehensive Customized Supports (1-3 years with grant funding), as well as emergent support for new teachers and critical support for crisis and professional development for ongoing, evidence-based best practice. |
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| **State Board of Education****The State Board of Education recently reviewed the Model MOU regarding school safety** and recommends no changes to the guidance. The **Council of Basic Education** updated the board on the benefits of the proposed funding in Gov. Josh Shapiro’s FY 2023-23 proposed state budget. The board also recognized “Teacher Appreciation Week,” and honored Dr. Lee Burket, who is retiring after leading PDE’s Bureau of Career and Technical Education for 17 years. |
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| **A road with a white arrow on it  Description automatically generated****Looking Forward****Region Trainings****In-person and virtual training** will continue for both RCPE and leadership events.**As the end of the 2022-23 school year approaches**, we wish all of you a relaxing and rejuvenating summer. The work you do for students is critically important, and we thank you for all your efforts to improve academic outcomes.**If you are attending the Gettysburg Summer Leadership Conference**, please join us for the Special Education forum on Tuesday, July 25 starting at 5 p.m. The location on Gettysburg’s campus for the forum will be announced soon. |