

## 6. Describe how the district will meet the following IDEA performance goals:

- IDEA Performance Goal 1: Improve graduation rate outcomes for students with disabilities

Cook County has a graduation rate of 75%, according to the most recent data published in Special Education Annual Reports. This rate exceeds the state target rate of 76.46% for graduation with a regular diploma. The drop out rate for students with disabilities in Cook County using the same data source is 10%, which is lower than the state target of 22.56%. Cook County met both targets for the school year 20-21.

This district met the established target for Post-school outcomes in 2 out of 3 areas based on 20-21 data. Students enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school was 16.67%, which is lower than the state target of 27.4%. Students who were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school was 55.56%. This exceeded the state target of 55%. The percentage of students who were enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school is 83.33%, exceeding the state target of 81%.

In Cook County's pursuit of increasing high school graduation rates and lowering dropout rates, we will implement checkpoints to address two of the top reasons students dropout of school according to the National Dropout Prevention Center: Missed too many days of school and failing grades. ([Why Students Drop Out - Dropout Prevention](#))

To address attendance issues, case managers and special education coordinators will use the At Risk Dashboard in Powerschool for monitoring. Those students who are found to be at risk for excessive absences will be referred to the parent engagement coordinator. For those students who do not show an improvement in attendance, a referral to the Behavior Analysis Team (BAT) will be required. The Behavior Analysis Team is the student's IEP team including the school psychologist, school counselor, and parent engagement coordinator.

Academic performance will be monitored using the At Risk Dashboard in Powerschool as well. The IEP team will convene to review data, determine root causes for lack of academic performance, and implement interventions to address identified those causes. Case managers will monitor the academic performance of students on their caseload. Special education coordinators will monitor academic performance for their assigned school.

Cook County has implemented several initiatives to address those factors that contribute to dropout. One of those initiatives is Check and Connect. Cook County formally trained 12 mentors this year in Check and Connect. These mentors will provide support to those students who were identified as high at risk based on a combination of academic achievement, attendance, and behavior concerns. Initially, our mentors will focus on

students at the middle school level; however, the district intends to expand the mentoring program to the high school level.

Another initiative that is vital to student success is improving the reading ability of our students. Special education teachers are required to provide research based reading interventions to students that read below grade level expectations. Cook County has assigned a reading specialist to support special education teachers in designing instruction and implementation as well as coaching on effective reading strategies. The reading specialist will deliver professional development on reading as well. In addition, one of the district's special education coordinators is working towards her Dyslexia endorsement and will redeliver professional development as well.

New to our initiatives is the position of Parent Mentor. Cook County was awarded the Parent Mentor Grant for the upcoming year. We will be collaborating with the GADOE to implement this position and as we learn more about best practices we will define procedures to support the success of our students.

- IDEA Performance Goal 2: Improve services for young children (3-5) with disabilities

Child Find in Cook County is a collaborative effort between the community, Babies Can't Wait, and the school district. Cook County's Child Find procedures are published on the district's website and are published in the Cook County newspaper. Brochures are distributed at pediatrician's offices, Cook County Health Department, and Head Start as well.

The most recent published data for Preschool Least Restrictive Environment reflects that 53.33% of our preschoolers with disabilities are served in the regular class 80% or more of the day. This well exceeds the state target of 32.54%. Preschool students with disabilities that are served inside the regular classroom less than 40% of the day is at 26.67%, which is below the state target of 41.32% Preschool students with disabilities that are served homebound is 0%.

The district has two classrooms that offer co-teaching and para support for preschoolers with disabilities. Students are further supported with speech language services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and other related services based on needs. Cook County uses Bright from the Start model. Pre K and special education teachers use GELDS to ensure that students acquire the skills necessary to transition to kindergarten with success. A third classroom offers support for preschool students with more severe disabilities. To increase the district's opportunity to serve more students, services are provided in a morning session or an afternoon session for 3 year old students and a full day session for 4 year old students. Special education teachers received training and professional development this year on PECS, Discrete Trial Training, and Antecedent Based Intervention.

In 20-21, Cook County had 34 students enrolled in preschool with an IEP. Upon enrollment, 50% of those students substantially increased their growth in the area of positive social-emotional skills. This is below the state target of 81%. 58.82% percent of preschoolers with an IEP were functioning within age expectation when they exited pre k as compared to the state target of 63%. In the area of acquisition skills, 57.89% showed substantial growth when exiting Cook County's program compared to 83% at the state. 55.88% of Cook County's students were functioning within age expectation and exceeded the state target of 46%. 43.75% of these students showed substantial growth in the area of use of appropriate behaviors compared to 81% at the state target. 55.88% were functioning near age appropriate level compared to 72% of the state target.

The district will continue to provide professional development opportunities on instructional practices, specially designed instruction, and behavior strategies. The special education coordinator position is now a full time position and will incorporate early transition responsibilities to ensure a cohesive continuum of services. Teachers are required to attend 4 district wide PLC meetings each year as well. The addition of a Parent Mentor to our staff will also provide training opportunities to families of students 3-5 who are initially placed so that parents will have a better understanding of special education.

- IDEA Performance Goal 3: Improve the provision of a free and appropriate public education to students with disabilities

Cook County is committed to ensuring the provision of a Free and Appropriate education to all students. The district views FAPE as a comprehensive plan that ensures placement in the student's least restrictive environment, the provision of services, and well planned and implemented specially designed instruction all of which are based on the individual needs of each student.

The most recent LRE data shows that 80.75% of students with IEPs are served in the regular class 80% or more of the day. This far exceeds the state target of 62.73%. The percentage of students with an IEP that are served in the regular class less than 40% of the day is at 16.25% compared to the state target of 16.58%. The percentage of students with IEPs served in separate schools is .5% compared to the state target of 1.48%.

IEP teams meet as often as necessary, but not less than once every 12 months, to review student needs and make decisions about each student's least restrictive environment, services, and goals. To increase the amount of opportunity for support, the district has added 4 co teaching positions, two respectively at the primary and elementary schools. This will allow the special education teacher the opportunity to spend more extensive, quality instructional time in their caseloads classroom. The district's offer of FAPE considers a full continuum of services for students ages 3-21. IEP teams make each determination based individual student needs.

The district will be implementing several tools to support teachers as they support students which will significantly impact FAPE:

- AIMSWEB PLUS - a consistent district wide platform for progress monitoring of IEP goals.
- Insights to Behavior - provide quality FBAs and BIPs, allow for monitoring of behavior, and provide research based intervention guidance
- Essential for Living - a communication, behavior, and functional skills curriculum and assessment tool

Specialists in the areas of Autism, Behavior, Reading, Transitions, Significant Disabilities and Assistive Technology will continue to offer support to teachers. The addition of a Parent Mentor will also provide another level of support to our students and families. .

Professional learning this next year will focus on progress monitoring, coteaching, specially designed instruction, and behavior strategies. New teachers will be assigned a mentor through our Cook Cares program. Mentors are experienced teachers and are required to meet monthly with their mentee. Mentors and mentees attend quarterly PLCs with the Cook Cares coordinators. The Cook Cares coordinators also do monthly checkins with new teachers. New teachers will also participate in the Georgia Teacher Provider Program through RESA. A coteaching coach from RESA will also be working with our new coteaching teams throughout the year.

- IDEA Performance Goal 4: Improve compliance with state and federal laws and regulations

Cook County received 100% on Timely and accurate data. Cook County schools added a special education coordinator position to each school for this past year. The coordinator is responsible for planning and facilitating all IEP meetings, writing high quality compliant IEPs, and monitoring compliance at their respective schools. This has greatly improved the quality of compliant IEPs. Coordinators meet with the special education director once a month to review procedures, discuss challenges, and develop solutions to those challenges. Through these collaborative meetings, processes have been greatly improved and streamlined.

Case managers are responsible for delivering services, specially designed instruction, and progress monitoring of IEP goals. Case Managers are monitored at the school level by the principal, assistant principal, and special education coordinator.

The special education director completes compliance spot checks on IEPs and eligibility documents throughout the year for each coordinator. Special education coordinators use the IEP training Document from GADOE to write IEPs and check for compliance. Staff is trained on compliance through our PLCs. The special education director also monitors progress reports through GOIEP to ensure they are completed timely. Additionally, the special education director meets with building administrators to provide support and

professional development on discipling students with disabilities. The special education procedures manual will be reviewed over the summer to refine procedures and add general supervision as we prepare for cross functional monitoring.