



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Thomas R. Bice
State Superintendent of Education

January 13, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education
FROM: *Thomas R. Bice*
Thomas R. Bice
State Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: Alabama Autism Initiative

The Alabama State Department of Education, Special Education Services, is pleased to announce the Alabama Autism Initiative as part of the state plan to meet goals and objectives in Alabama's PLAN 2020. As part of our commitment to helping educators and parents better meet the educational needs of children and young adults, our goal is that all Alabama students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) will have access to effective, integrated learning environments and highly trained school staff in order to make progress toward academic, social, communication, behavior, and adaptive skill development.

In an effort to increase regional and local district capacity to effectively educate students with ASD in the Least Restrictive Environment, the Alabama Autism Initiative includes the development of a statewide leadership team to include one person from each local education agency (LEA). The LEA team leader will be the contact person for collaboration and training purposes.

As now required for obtaining professional services, Requests for Proposals (RFP) for various services and trainings in the area of ASD were posted and have been awarded. Glenwood, Inc., was awarded the contract for providing ASD educational diagnostic evaluations as part of our efforts to provide early identification services. Glenwood, Inc., will also provide follow-up consultation and technical assistance following a diagnostic evaluation that may include a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan.

As part of the Alabama Autism Initiative, we are pleased to offer training to LEAs in evidence-based practices of applied behavior analysis. The Learning Tree was awarded a contract to provide training by Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA) for individual LEAs in classroom management techniques using various behavior analytic techniques. Training in the use of a data-driven model of assessment and program development will also be offered. Trainings will be conducted on-site to allow the trainee to perform the tasks in his/her classroom environment. Individual student consultation services may also be requested from a BCBA for behavior reduction or skill acquisition issues that may be outside the area of expertise of the LEA.

In order to build capacity for providing evidence-based practices for preschool students with ASD, onsite individual preschool program assessments for LEAs may be conducted by The Learning Tree staff. Five days of follow-up training in the identified areas of need will be provided at a preschool

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site operated by The Learning Tree. A one- to two-day follow up at the LEA preschool will be conducted by The Learning Tree staff within three weeks after training to monitor progress.

In order to increase transition skills for independent living, employment, and advocacy for students with ASD, The Learning Tree will provide workshops for up to 25 teachers to include an assessment of the skill level of the participants with a workshop tailored to the needs of the participants based on the identified needs. Trainings will include an overview of transition goals and methods for collaborative advocacy among students, parents, and teachers. Trainees will learn to administer assessments for transition planning, interpret assessment results, design goal-oriented instruction, and integrate transition activities into the Individuized Education Program (IEP) process.

The Learning Tree was awarded a contract through the RFP process to provide training in crisis management techniques to prevent and diffuse dangerous behaviors. Professional Crisis Management (PCM) training classes will consist of three days of instruction and materials for up to ten participants per class.

Additional information is enclosed regarding how to apply for services and trainings along with detailed information regarding the LEA team leader for the statewide leadership team through the Alabama Autism Initiative. For more information, contact Ms. Lisa Highfield at lhighfield@alsde.edu or call 334-242-8114.

TRB/LH

Enclosures

cc: City and County Special Education Coordinators
Mrs. Sherrill W. Parris
Dr. Linda Felton-Smith
Dr. Warren Craig Pouncey
Ms. Crystal Richardson

FY14-2028



ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES
ALABAMA AUTISM INITIATIVE

**LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY
LEADERSHIP TEAM APPLICATION FORM**

The Alabama State Department of Education, Special Education Services, is pleased to announce the Alabama Autism Initiative as a part of our plan to meet goals and objectives in Alabama's PLAN 2020. We are committed to helping educators and parents better meet the educational needs of children and young adults affected by autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disabilities.

OUR GOAL

All Alabama students with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) will have access to effective, integrated learning environments and highly trained school staff in order to make progress toward academic, social, communication, behavior, and adaptive skill development. Alabama students with ASD will transition into adulthood with high levels of independence, and will be prepared for postsecondary education and employment opportunities that lead to positive outcomes and quality of life.

AUTISM LEADERSHIP TEAM

In an effort to increase regional and local district capacity to effectively educate students with ASD in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), the Alabama Autism Initiative includes developing a statewide leadership team to include one person from each LEA. The LEA team leader will be the contact person for collaboration and training purposes and will be a key factor in successful implementation of evidence based practices at the LEA level. The LEA team leader should meet the following criteria:

- Staff member who can make a commitment to participate in training sessions.
We anticipate one full-day session by the end of the 2013-14 school year.
- Staff member with background, experience, or training in the area of autism.
- Staff member that is qualified to provide coaching and turn-around training to the LEA.
- Staff member that can commit to completing online training modules or other training requirements.
- Staff member with the administrative and fiscal support to attend training sessions.
Most training sessions will be held at the regional service centers and will not require overnight travel.

LEA: _____ TEAM LEADER APPLICANT NAME _____

CONTACT NUMBER: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Please complete the LEA Team Leader Application Form and submit to Ms. Susan Goldthwaite at sgoldthwaite@alsde.edu or call 334-242-8114 for more information.



ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES ALABAMA
AUTISM INITIATIVE

REQUEST FOR SERVICES
The Learning Tree

LEA: _____ Date: _____

Person Requesting: _____ Position: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Please check the area of services being requested below. The request will be reviewed and if additional information is needed, we will contact the person requesting assistance. The Learning Tree will contact you for additional information and to schedule the requested services. Please e-mail this form to Ms. Lisa Highfield at lhighfield@alsde.edu or call 334-242-8114 for more information.

___ ***Consultation for Individual Students-Board Certified Behavior Analyst***—This service should be determined by the IEP Team for students with critical behavioral needs after all other local efforts have been tried and documented to be ineffective by the IEP Team. Individual student consultation services may be requested for behavior reduction or skill acquisition issues that are outside of the area of expertise of the LEA. Services may include a specific functional behavioral assessment and development of a behavioral intervention program for a student based on his/ her individual needs. Services will be provided by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst from The Learning Tree.

___ ***Applied Behavior Analysis and Technical Assistance***—Training will be provided by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst for small groups of teachers in individual LEAs in classroom management techniques using various behavior analytic techniques. Training in the use of a data-driven model of assessment and program development will also be offered. These trainings will be conducted on-site and will allow the trainee to perform the tasks in his/her classroom environment.

___ ***Preschool Best Practices for Students with ASD***—In order to build capacity for providing evidence based practices for preschool students with ASD, onsite individual preschool program assessments for LEAs will be conducted by The Learning Tree staff. Five days of follow-up training in the identified areas of need will be provided at a preschool program site operated by The Learning Tree. LEA preschool teachers will be paired with a teacher from The Learning Tree to have specific behaviors modeled, will then be demonstrating the behaviors with feedback provided by The Learning Tree staff. A one- to two- day follow up at the LEA preschool will be conducted by The Learning Tree staff within three weeks after training to monitor progress.

___ ***Transition Training***—Workshops for up to 25 teachers will be made available to include an assessment of the skill level of the participants with a workshop tailored to the needs of the participants based on the identified needs. Trainings will include an overview of transition goals and methods for collaborative advocacy among students, parents, and teachers. Trainees will learn to administer assessments for transition planning, interpret assessment results, design goal-oriented instruction, and integrate transition activities into the IEP process.

___ ***Crisis Management Training***—Classes in Professional Crisis Management (PCM) taught by a certified PCM instructor to individuals selected by the LEA. Training will focus on crisis management techniques that prevent and diffuse dangerous behaviors. Classes consist of three days of instruction and materials for each participant up to ten participants per class.



ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES
ALABAMA AUTISM INITIATIVE

REQUEST FOR SERVICES
Glenwood, Inc.

LEA: _____ Date: _____

Person Requesting: _____ Position: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Please check the area of services being requested below. The request will be reviewed and sent to Glenwood, Inc. You will be contacted by Glenwood for additional information and to schedule the requested services. Please e-mail this form to Ms. Lisa Highfield at lhighfield@alsde.edu or call 334-242-8114 for more information.

_____ **Educational Diagnostic Evaluations for Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Glenwood, Inc. will coordinate and provide timely diagnostic evaluations in the area of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) for students referred for an evaluation by local education agencies. Glenwood, Inc. will provide experienced and qualified consultants to administer the evaluations. Evaluations include: case preparation, on-site parent interview with the ADI-R, teacher/school personnel interview, student observation, ASD rating scales, ADOS-2 administration, consultation, and feedback with school and family. A diagnostic summary will be left at the school with a comprehensive report provided to the LEA within 14 calendar days of evaluation.

_____ **Diagnostic Evaluation Follow-up Services**

Following an educational diagnostic evaluation for autism, services determined by the IEP Team may include individual student consultation and technical assistance for behavior reduction or skill acquisition that may include a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan through consultation with a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (when indicated by the IEP Team) or by staff with advanced degrees in a relevant field with additional training and qualifications in functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans.