



Delaware Department of Education

**Fiscal Year 2018
Interagency Collaborative Team
Annual Report
July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018**

Under 14 *Del. C.* §3124

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**Interagency Collaborative Team
Annual Report for FY 2018
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The Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) is authorized under Title 14 Delaware Code, Chapter 31, Section 3124, <http://delcode.delaware.gov/title14/c031/sc03/index.shtml>. The purpose of the ICT is to provide a collaborative, interagency approach to service delivery for children and youth with disabilities who present unique educational needs that cannot be addressed through the existing resources of a single agency or the regularly offered free, appropriate, public education programs of the State. In addition to planning for individual children, the ICT identifies impediments to collaborative service delivery and engages with partner agencies to recommend strategies to remove them. As established in Delaware Code, the ICT consists of members of specific agencies whose representatives for the FY 2018 reporting period follow:

Robert Dunleavy, Director, Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services, DSCYF
(Harvey Doppelt, designated representative)

Trenee Parker, Director, Division of Family Services, DSCYF
(Kimberly Warren, designated representative)

John Stevenson, Director, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services, DSCYF
(Alicia Kendorski, designated representative)

Marie Nonnenmacher, Director, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, DHSS
(Karen Wilson & Carey Hocker, designated representatives)

Elizabeth Romero, Director, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, DHSS

Michael Jackson, Director, Office of Management and Budget
(Mary Nash Wilson, designated representative)

Michael Morton, Office of Controller General
(Art Jenkins, designated representative)

Mary Ann Mieczkowski, Chair, Director, Exceptional Children Resources, DOE

Michael Watson, Associate Secretary, Teaching and Learning Branch, DOE

In addition, Linda Smith, ICT Coordinator, Exceptional Children Resources, coordinates and attends all ICT meetings and completes all related work. Interagency Collaborative Team case review meetings include representatives of the responsible local education agency (LEA), the parent/guardian or Educational Surrogate Parent, and other invited participants who work with and have knowledge of individual student cases.

Under Delaware Code (14 Del. C. §3124), private placement with financial aid may be sought when an Individual Education Program (IEP) team finds that an eligible child with a disability cannot benefit from the regularly offered, free appropriate public education programs (FAPE), which include regular classes, special classes or special schools. The determination shall be made by the IEP team and the Department of Education that no LEA or other state agency has a suitable program of education for the particular child with a disability. Such private placement shall be in a school or program approved by the Department of Education. The ICT is responsible to review all initial and renewal applications for Unique Alternative services prior to approval by the Secretary of Education. The ICT reviews existing information related to the student's evaluations and assessments; individualized services that have been provided, and proposed educational plans; makes recommendations for alternative education services and / or behavioral health treatment plans as necessary; and ensures coordinated interagency service delivery and funding.

Delaware Code also stipulates that a report is prepared annually to summarize the work of the ICT and provide progress summaries for the information items reported in the previous year's Annual Report. The report is submitted to the Governor, Budget Director, President Pro-Tempore, Speaker of the House, and the Controller General.

Delaware Department of Education Data Reporting Requirements

The reader is asked to refer to the full reporting requirements necessary to protect each student's personally identifiable information, <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2283>.

Please note the following suppression rules for all tables:

1. Any cell whose population value is less than fifteen (15), regardless of the cell's value.
2. Any cell whose corresponding population value is at or above fifteen (15), but whose cell value is less than five (5).
3. Any cell whose corresponding population is at or above fifteen (15), but whose cell value is within five (5) of the population.

Interagency Collaborative Team Procedures

The Interagency Collaborative Team meets monthly to review Unique Alternative applications and twice monthly during the summer months to review annual renewal applications prior to August 31 as required in Code. The ICT reviewed 44 unduplicated cases during FY 2018, which represented 5 more case reviews than the previous fiscal year. The following chart summarizes the ICT approvals and service activities FY 2004 through FY 2018.

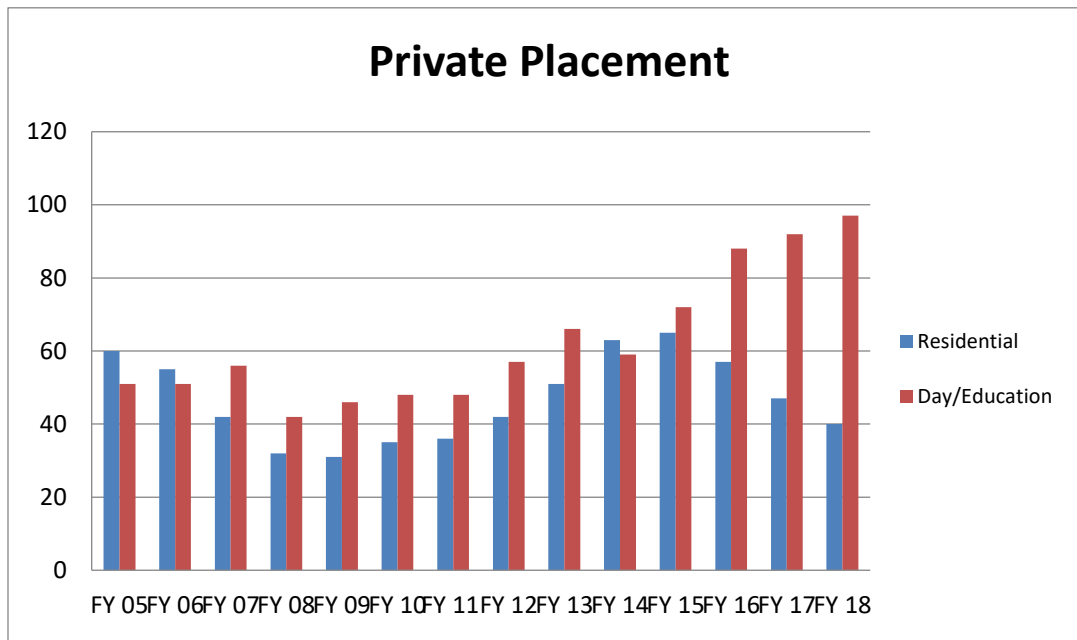
Historical Summary of Unique Alternative Services

	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18
Total # of Cases Reviewed: New, Continuing, Increased Services	69	85	87	77	61	58	46	32	32	43	42	68	37	41	44
Total Served 7/1 – 6/30	217	226	243	220	160	182	105	90	105	120	144	140	142	139	138

During FY 2018, the ICT supported 138 students in a combination of private programs, which include day or residential placements, as well as one-to-one staffing support because one district’s elementary school does not receive Needs Based Funding. The following summary reflects these services during the 2017 – 2018 school year. Since some students transfer between day and residential programs, as well as to temporary mental health treatment or detention centers, each student’s most recent placement during FY 2018 was counted. The number of students served in residential programs at the conclusion of FY 2018 was 40, which is 7 fewer students than in FY 2017. The number of students served in private day programs, education only services, or through individual staffing support totaled 98 students. Due to students’ progress in residential programs, a number of students transferred from services in out – of – state residential programs to in – state day programs during 2017-2018.

At times, students received support for their education program while a partnering agency funded their residential services. This also included students for whom neighboring states’ Family Services Division supported the residential services or students whose residential services were supported by Medicaid due to placement in a pediatric nursing facility. The “education only” arrangement typically occurs when an agency makes a unilateral placement with or without the engagement of the LEA of residence. This is due to a student’s behavioral health, family, or foster care and dependency status. However, the corresponding LEA participates in education funding through the ICT if the student was previously served in a day program with ICT support or if the LEA subsequently determines it cannot provide a free, appropriate public education to the student given their current status.

Summary of Unique Alternative Service Types



The chart above illustrates longitudinal ICT private placements, comparing the number of students who received support for residential services (n=40) with the number of students whose individual staffing support, private day or education-only services (n=98) were supported by the ICT during FY 2018. As noted previously, a number of students transferred from out – of – state residential programs to in – state day programs during FY 2018. This reflects the progress of individual students, as well as the LEAs’ and IEP teams’ work with students, partner agencies, and private programs to successfully transition the youth to day programs with or without outpatient or in-home therapeutic support services. The downward trend in residential placements and upward trend in day programming over the past four years is significant.

The transition to in-state day programming and the overall increase in the number of students supported in day programs were also made possible, in part, due to the opening of High Road Schools in Kent and Sussex Counties in during FY 2017 and 2018 respectively. The additional sites were the result of collaboration among the ICT Chair and Coordinator, the Kent and Sussex County Special Education Directors, and the administration of High Road School of Wilmington and its parent company. The additional locations provided a needed private day option for students from Kent and Sussex Counties. This also enabled students who had progressed to return to Delaware from out of state residential programs and receive a lower intensity of services while living at home and in their communities.

Residential Service by Location

During FY 2018 there were 40 students supported by the ICT in residential programs. This count does not include the additional students who reside in private programs through partner agency support for the residential component. These students are counted as “education only” students since the ICT and partner LEAs support only the education component of their services.

Through collaboration with the Local Education Agencies and families, the ICT attempts to provide residential services to students as close to their homes as possible. During FY 2018, there were no in-state, private residential options available to students. Two of the out-of-state programs, Benedictine School and Shorehaven, are located close to Delaware in neighboring Maryland counties. Neighboring Pennsylvania also provided residential services to 28 students. Additionally, a small number of students received residential services at programs located at a greater distance, which is necessary due to the unique nature of the students’ disabilities or their complex behavioral needs. It is important to note that given a student’s behavioral health needs, it is often necessary to provide services in out-of-state programs that are accredited to provide these necessary services.

Unique Alternative Initial Placement, Renewal and Discharge Processes

A primary role of the ICT Coordinator is the provision of technical assistance to LEA Special Education Directors and Specialists regarding the program options available for new student cases, best practices to support students, and the requirements of Delaware Code and Special Education Regulations related to unique education alternatives. This includes support to complete the processes for initial private placement in collaboration with partner agencies, as well as the annual renewal process. The ICT Coordinator provides annual training in the initial and renewal case review processes, navigating applications and financial document procedures, and a list of the respective LEA’s children and youth who receive Unique Alternative service funding. If the IEP team plans to continue the current services and placement, the LEA is then responsible for preparing information for the ICT to review in order to approve continuation of services through Unique Alternative funding.

The ICT members consider students’ progress and continuing need for unique alternative services in making decisions about whether to renew or continue support. Renewals are typically granted for a full fiscal year. However, in an effort to return youth to their homes and local communities, focusing on least restrictive environment (LRE), the ICT has requested three- and six- month progress updates across the school year for some of the students whose progress data indicate potential readiness to return to their home and local school. At times, the ICT grants approvals for a partial year of funding, with requests for written transition plans that detail supports to be provided to students to facilitate their return to the local community.

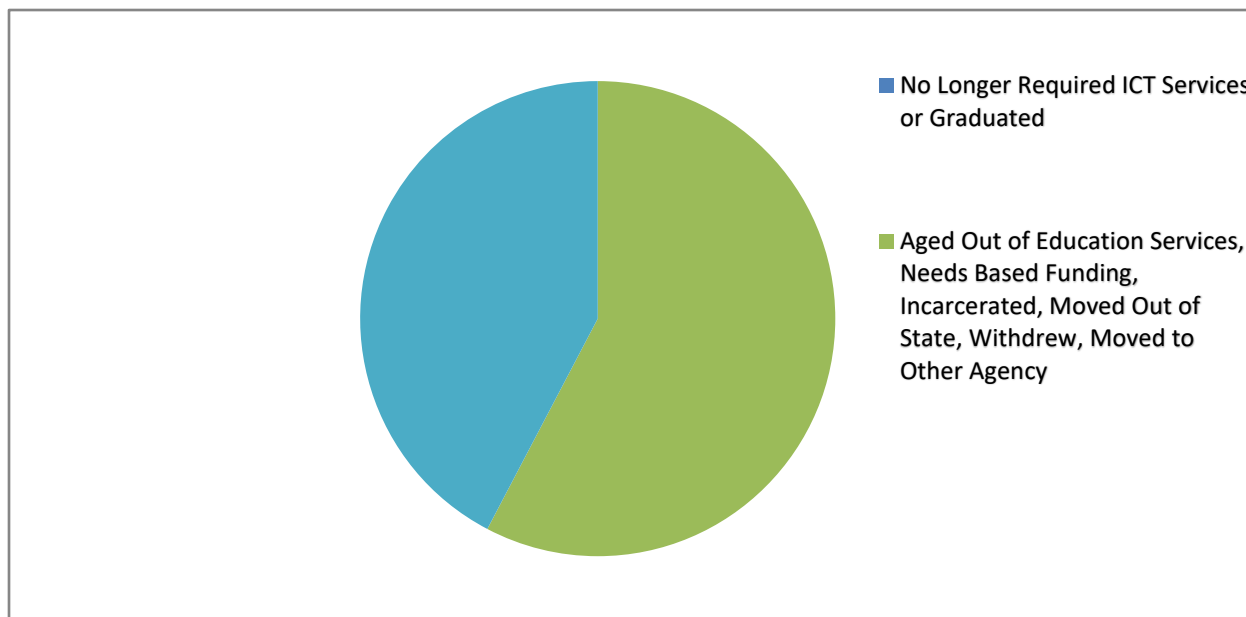
While annual renewal applications are required to be approved prior to August 31 of each year, barriers to timely completion of the renewal process can include LEAs’ difficulty involving some parents in the process, families’ movement across districts or out of state, or maintaining the engagement of students who have reached the age of majority. The ICT Coordinator

collaborates with LEA, partner agency, and private program representatives to address these barriers.

Student Discharge and Exit Summary

The LEA is also required to notify the ICT Coordinator with an explanation when students are discharged from Unique Alternative services. The graph below summarizes the number of students who exited or were discharged from Unique Alternative services during FY 2018 and the corresponding reasons, which included: the increased level of service was no longer required, student transitioned to Needs Based Funding, families moved out of state, students withdrew from the education system, students graduated, students were incarcerated or students aged out at the conclusion of the school year in which they reached 21 years of age. A small percentage of students who withdraw may return to the ICT for support in subsequent years.

Student Exit Summary



During FY 2018, a total of 26 students exited Unique Alternative supports. Of these, students were graduated with a diploma or aged out of school age services at the conclusion of their summer extended school year services; no longer required ICT support and transitioned to a variety of special education supports within their respective LEAs; transferred to residential treatment through a partner agency; moved out of state; withdrew from education services; were incarcerated; or transitioned to the Needs Based Funding Unit.

Students who attain the age of 21 after August 31 of a school year are eligible for services throughout that year. If the IEP team determines a student’s needs necessitate extended school year services, these young adults may continue to receive school-age services through August 31 of their final year of service. It is important to note that students who age out typically continue

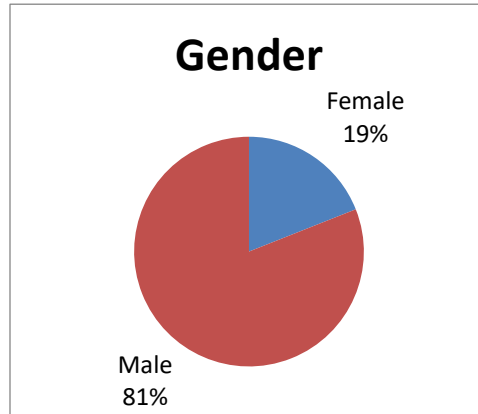
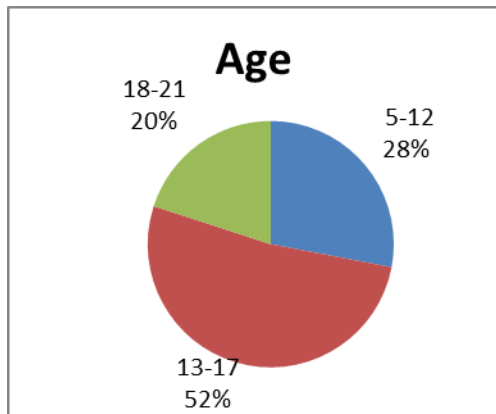
to require specialized and supportive living and work arrangements provided through the adult services system. Collaborative, interagency efforts to support students' transitions to post-secondary education or training, supported or independent employment, and adult services are the responsibility of the LEAs and IEP teams. Planning should begin with the start of the secondary transition process at age 14 years or in preparation for eighth grade and beyond. At the time of ICT approval, the ICT Chair recommends that IEP teams begin transition planning on admission to a private program. The transition plans may focus on return to local schools and home or to post-secondary services, depending on the age and needs of the student.

Unique Alternative Student Population

The following chart and graphs summarize demographic information for the students served by the ICT during FY 2018.

Age and Gender of Unique Alternative Students

FY 2018	Gender			Age		
	Male	Female	Total	5-12	13-17	18-21
Totals	112	26	138	39	72	27
Percentages	81%	19%		28%	52%	20%



Unique Alternative Placements and Costs

During FY 2018, Delaware students in need of Unique Alternative services were served in 11 residential and 15 day programs. Of these, Benedictine, Devereux, High Road, Shorehaven, and Silver Springs/ Martin Luther School can provide both day and residential services. Programs such as High Road School, Devereux, and KidsPeace operate multiple campuses, some of which focus on specialized services. The following information shows a range of costs for both residential and day programs. The costs may represent a combination of tuition, transportation, related services, or enhanced individual supports required by some students with significantly

complex educational and behavioral health needs. Of the programs listed below, Devereux and Shorehaven serve a number of students with very complex educational and behavior needs.

	High Cost	Low Cost
Residential Programs	Shorehaven Elkton, MD \$507,833	Devereux West Chester, PA \$173,827
Day Programs	Vanguard School Malvern, PA \$163,137	High Road School Georgetown, DE \$60,600

Interagency Collaboration

To ensure comprehensive and coordinated service delivery, interagency collaboration is essential to the support of the children and youth supported through Unique Alternatives services. Students’ multiple disabilities and/ or behavioral health needs may contribute to challenges beyond the school setting, such as in the home and community. Many students receive support and services from multiple agencies. The following table summarizes the interagency shared funding necessary to meet the needs of the students served in residential programs through the ICT. Additionally, for students in day programs, a variety of supportive services, such as intensive outpatient and family based services, behavioral consultants, and/ or respite services may also be provided beyond the school day. As previously mentioned, a number of students received ICT support for their education program while a partnering agency funded their residential services due to the students’ intense behavioral health needs, family circumstances, or changes in foster care status. When this occurs, the responsible LEAs participate in education funding through the ICT if an appropriate program cannot be provided to the student in the public schools.

Agency Division	Number of Students with Shared Funding N = 26
Prevention & Behavioral Health	<5
Family Services	<5
Youth Rehabilitative Services	<5
Developmental Disabilities	>21
Substance Abuse & Mental Health	<5
Division of Visual Impairments	<5
Medicaid *	<5

*Students whose education services were supported by the ICT while Medicaid funding their inpatient services in a pediatric nursing facility.

Service Needs and Trends

Increasingly, LEAs and families are challenged with identifying a range of appropriate services and programs that are close to home and meet least restrictive environment requirements for children and youth with complex disabilities and behavioral health needs. When students' needs cannot be met within the public school system, it is often necessary to seek services in private programs located beyond Delaware. This presents complications to families for visits with their youth, participation in counseling, family reunification plans, and transition to the local community.

The ICT members and their respective agencies have increased focus on transition services necessary to facilitate students' return to their families and local communities. To do so requires establishment of additional transitional resources within the State, which could extend beyond the ICT funding allocation.

While agencies expand the range of services available to families and youth in their homes, local schools, and the community, gaps in services continue. A percentage of youth continue to require admission to residential settings, which may occur unilaterally through multiple agencies. Often these students can receive an appropriate education within the local schools but their behavioral health or intense behaviors prevent their ability to remain in their homes with existing resources. Discussions continue across agencies to address these concerns and identify solutions that are cost effective. The ICT Chair and Coordinator continue to participate in these discussions to address the systems issues as well as problem-solve around individual student's needs when cases arise without clear solutions and for whom interagency collaboration is crucial. Despite these concerns, the provisions of Delaware Code are specific in their requirements. That is, Unique Alternative funding can be sought when an IEP team and the Department of Education find that an eligible child with a disability has needs that cannot be addressed through the existing resources and programs of the State. While partner agencies increased efforts to provide community based supports to youth and their families, the need to provide services and financial support for residential placements for some students continues. However, if students can be appropriately served in a Delaware public school, the need for residential services cannot be supported by the ICT.

Major Activities of the Interagency Collaborative Team

This section highlights the major activities relevant to the ICT during FY 2018:

1. The ICT Chair and Coordinator collaborated with administrators at High Road School's sites in New Castle, Kent, and Sussex Counties to monitor program enhancements. Areas of focus continued to include instruction in Common Core State Standards, individualized behavior supports, instruction of replacement skills and progress monitoring, and post-secondary transition services. The expansion to the High Road Schools to Kent and Sussex Counties provided additional services and day program options to students in these counties.

2. The ICT Coordinator continued to serve as a liaison to school districts, charter schools, partner agencies, and private school programs to identify appropriate services for students and collaborate to resolve funding and service issues. The ICT Coordinator engaged in problem-solving consultations regarding specific cases prior to and following ICT approvals.
3. In addition to regular visits to the three High Road School sites, on-site visits for the purpose of initial or triennial approval were completed at LifeWorks School at Rockbourne Falls and Melmark in Pennsylvania and Grove School and Devereux Glenholme in Connecticut. The ICT Coordinator's goal is to approve two additional programs annually to expand service options to LEAs and families, with a focus on identifying additional programs that provide behavioral health services to meet the increased demand.
4. The ICT Chair and Coordinator continued to respond to State Legislators' and Cabinet Secretaries' requests for information related to constituents' contacts for support of their youth. The Chair and Coordinator continued to participate in interagency discussions to explore solutions to placement of students in residential settings, unrelated to the LEAs' ability to provide appropriate education services. These efforts are ongoing.
5. The ICT Chair and ICT Coordinator continued to participate with a group of DOE staff to ensure procedural compliance with the Limitations on the Use of Seclusion and Restraint in public schools. Timely and accurate reporting of physical restraints of students supported by the ICT was monitored across the school year.
6. The ICT Coordinator collaborated with the DOE Education Associate who supervises the Educational Surrogate Parent (ESP) Program to ensure that youth who are in foster care are provided with knowledgeable support in educational decisions.
7. The ICT Coordinator continued to explore options for expanded behavioral health services.

For more information on the Interagency Collaborative Team and its activities, please contact:

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