

RESA PURPOSE

The purpose of Okefenokee RESA is to provide every school system an opportunity to work cooperatively with neighboring systems to provide the most cost effective services possible to meet their individual needs. The center provides a centralized base of operation for Okefenokee RESA educational consultants, instructional specialists and staff to serve system needs. The Okefenokee RESA houses staff offices, a professional library, instructional resources and work areas. The agency also provides classroom facilities for professional meetings, staff development activities, college courses, conferences, workshops, seminars and individual study.

Okefenokee RESA serves as fiscal and administrative agent for the Georgia Learning Resource System (GLRS) and the Harrell Learning Center (HLC).

The cooperative purchasing and equipment repair staff operate to provide efficient and quality purchasing and services to all school within each system.

GEORGIA LEARNING RESOURCES SYSTEM (GLRS) PURPOSE

South Central GLRS is one of 18 regional programs that provide training and resources to school district personnel, parents of students with disabilities, and other interested individuals to support the achievement, graduation rate, and post-secondary success of students with disabilities. The program is funded by the Georgia Department of Education, Division for Special Education Services and Supports and is operated in collaboration with the Okefenokee Regional Educational Service Agency that serves as the fiscal agent for the programs. South Central GLRS is funded entirely with federal discretionary funds made available through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA).

South Central GLRS staff is specialized in providing professional learning, technical assistance and coaching for school districts on a variety of topics related to students with disabilities including the following:

- Providing professional learning activities and technical assistance to school district personnel (i.e. Least Restrictive Environment/Co-Teaching, Reading and Math projects, Introduction to Exceptional Children, Assistive Technology, Mentoring for New Special Education Teachers, Brain-based Specialized Instruction, ASPIRE: Active Student Participation Inspires Real Engagement, Thinking Maps, Hearing and Vision Screening Certification, Mindset)
- Assisting district personnel in the continuous improvement plan process
- Supporting transition to college or career for students with disabilities
- Facilitating professional consortias (Special Education Administrators/Collaborative Communities, Speech-Language Pathologists, Georgia Alternate Assessment, Okefenokee Regional Transition Alliance, Assistive Technology, Transition Coordinators, School Psychologists)
- Developing other specialties based on districts' needs related to indicators in the State Performance Plan

THE HARRELL LEARNING CENTER

The Harrell Learning Center serves students from the following eight surrounding counties: Atkinson, Bacon, Brantley, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Pierce and Ware. Students are placed at the Harrell Learning Center to obtain the necessary academic and therapeutic support in order to reach their maximum potential. Students in grades kindergarten through twelfth grade are served.

The Harrell Learning Center supports the local school district continuum of services for students with disabilities, ages 5-21. The program provides comprehensive educational and therapeutic support services to students who might otherwise require residential or other more restrictive placements due to the severity of one or more of the characteristics of their disability category of emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD).

The Harrell Learning Center provides an array of therapeutic and behavioral support as well as specialized instruction for students. This support is designed to assist students to progress in the general curriculum and graduate ready for work or post-secondary studies. In addition, the Harrell Learning Center provides support to families and works collaboratively with other community agencies serving students.

Students are referred by their local school districts through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. An IEP team may consider services by the GNETS program for a child based upon documentation of the severity of the duration, frequency, and intensity of one or more of the characteristics of the disability category of emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). This documentation must include prior extension of less restrictive services and data that indicate such services have not enabled the child to benefit educationally. For children receiving services, local schools are actively involved and exit criteria must be developed upon, or prior to, entry into the GNETS program.

Most students served by the Harrell Learning Center are those with intense social, emotional and behavioral challenges. Other eligible students with disabilities may be served in at the HLC when the frequency, intensity, and duration of their behaviors is such that this placement is deemed by those students' IEP teams to be appropriate to meet the students' needs. Students who are served in the HLC classes are those requiring the intensive therapeutic interventions and educational support the Harrell Learning Center is designed to provide.

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