



Interagency Collaborative Team

Annual Report FY 12

July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

February 2013

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The Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) is authorized in **Title 14 Delaware Code, Chapter 31, Section 3124**. The purpose of the ICT is to provide a collaborative interagency approach to service delivery for children and youth with disabilities who present educational needs that cannot be addressed through the existing resources of a single agency. In addition to planning for individual children, the ICT identifies impediments to collaborative service delivery and recommends strategies to remove them. As established in Delaware Code, the ICT consists of members of specific agencies whose representatives for the FY 2012 reporting period follow:

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

Vicky Kelly, Director, Division of Family Services, DSCYF
(John Bates, designated representative)

Carlyse Giddins, Director, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services, DSCYF
(Susan Burns, designated representative)

Jane Gallivan, Director, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, DHSS
(Warren Ellis, designated representative)

Kevin Huckshorn, Director, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, DHSS
(Valerie Zeller, designated representative)

Ann Visalli, Director, Office of Management and Budget
(Patrick McKeon, designated representative)

Russell Larson, Controller General
(Michael Morton, designated representative)

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

Linda Rogers, Associate Secretary, Teaching & Learning Branch, DOE

In addition, the ICT Coordinator, Department of Education's Exceptional Children Resources Group, coordinates and attends all meetings and completes all ICT related work. Representatives of the responsible school district, the parent/guardian, and other people, who work with and have knowledge of individual cases, are invited to participate in the Interagency Collaborative Team case review meetings.

Under Delaware Code (14 Del. C. §3124), 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 and / or behavioral and mental health treatment plans as necessary; and insures coordinated interagency delivery and funding of services.

The 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 to be submitted to the Governor, Budget Director, President Pro-Tempore, Speaker of the House, and the Controller General in February 2013.

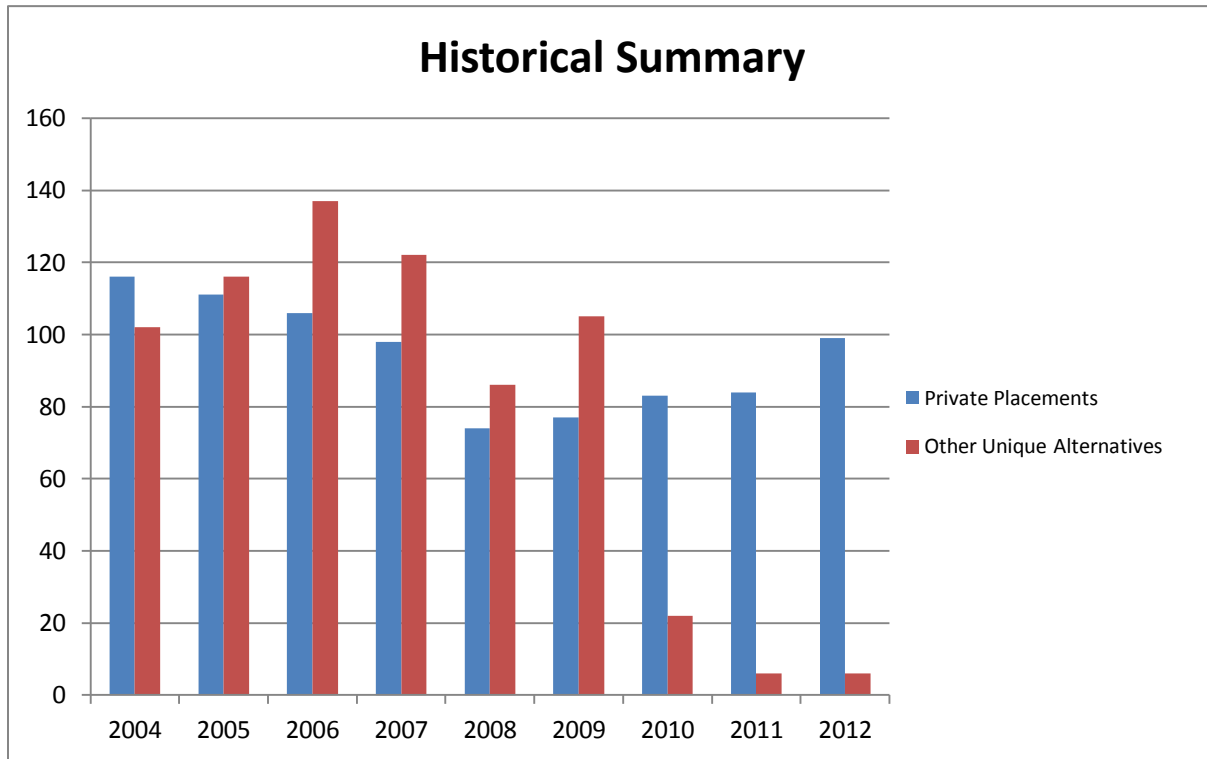
Interagency Collaborative Team Procedures

The Interagency Collaborative Team meets monthly to review Unique Alternative applications and bi-monthly in June and July to review annual renewal applications. The ICT reviewed 32 new applications during FY 2012; of these, one request was denied due to the District's need to provide additional services and continuum of placements to the student prior to ICT approval. Private placements, including newly approved applications, totaled 99. There were an additional six students who were approved for Unique Alternative services of one-on-one teacher or special education paraprofessional support. In all, 105 students received services through Unique Alternative funding during FY 2012. The following chart summarizes the ICT approval activities from FY 2004 through FY 2012.

Historical Summary of Unique Alternative Services

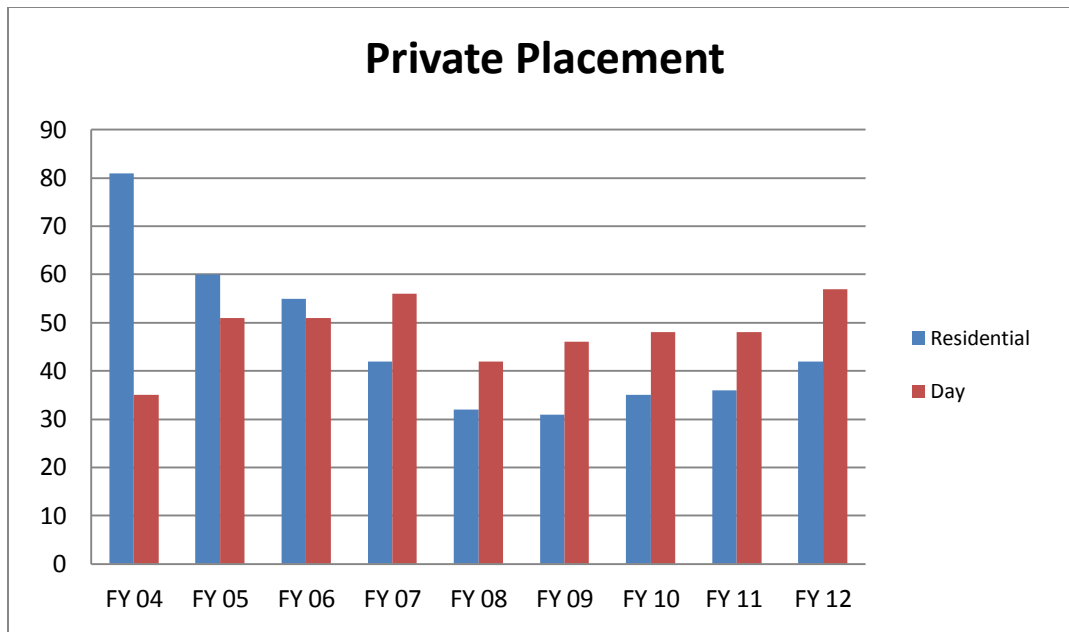
	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12
Total # of new cases reviewed	69	85	87	77	61	58	46	32	32
Total # private placements	116	111	106	98	74	77	83	84	99
Total # Other Unique Alternatives	101	115	137	122	86	105	22	6	6
Total Served 7/1 – 6/30	217	226	243	220	160	182	105	90	105

Summary of Unique Alternative Service Types



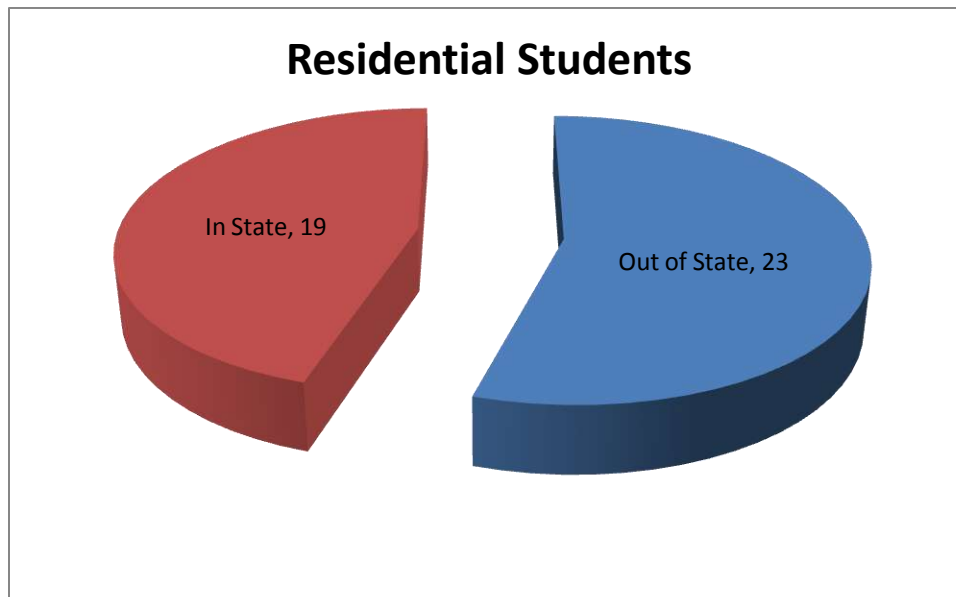
The total number of students served in residential programs during FY 2012 was 42, which is six more than in FY 2011. The number of students served in day programs increased by 9 to 57 students in private day programs during FY 2012. In addition, during FY 2012 six students received other Unique Alternative services through one-on-one staffing support; the same number of students received one-on-one staffing in FY 2011. This type of support has decreased significantly over the past three years due to the statewide expansion of the Needs-based Funding System.

Despite the services provided by the Needs-based Funding System, a small number of students have needs or behaviors so severe that they required a teacher and a special education paraprofessional in order to be educated in their classrooms. Two students' paraprofessionals were funded through the Needs-based Unit with their teachers funded by the ICT. Four elementary students from Delmar were educated in Maryland and, therefore, not supported by the Delaware Needs-based Funding System. Their special education paraprofessionals were provided through Unique Alternative Funding.



Residential Services

Through collaboration with the Local Education Agencies (LEA) and families, the ICT attempts to provide residential services to students as close to their homes as possible. The following chart illustrates the number of students ($n = 19$) served in state at the AdvoServ Program in Bear, Delaware and the number of students ($n = 23$) served in out-of-state programs. Two of the out-of-state programs, Benedictine School and Shorehaven, are located close to Delaware in neighboring Maryland counties and served 39% ($n = 9$) of the out-of-state students.



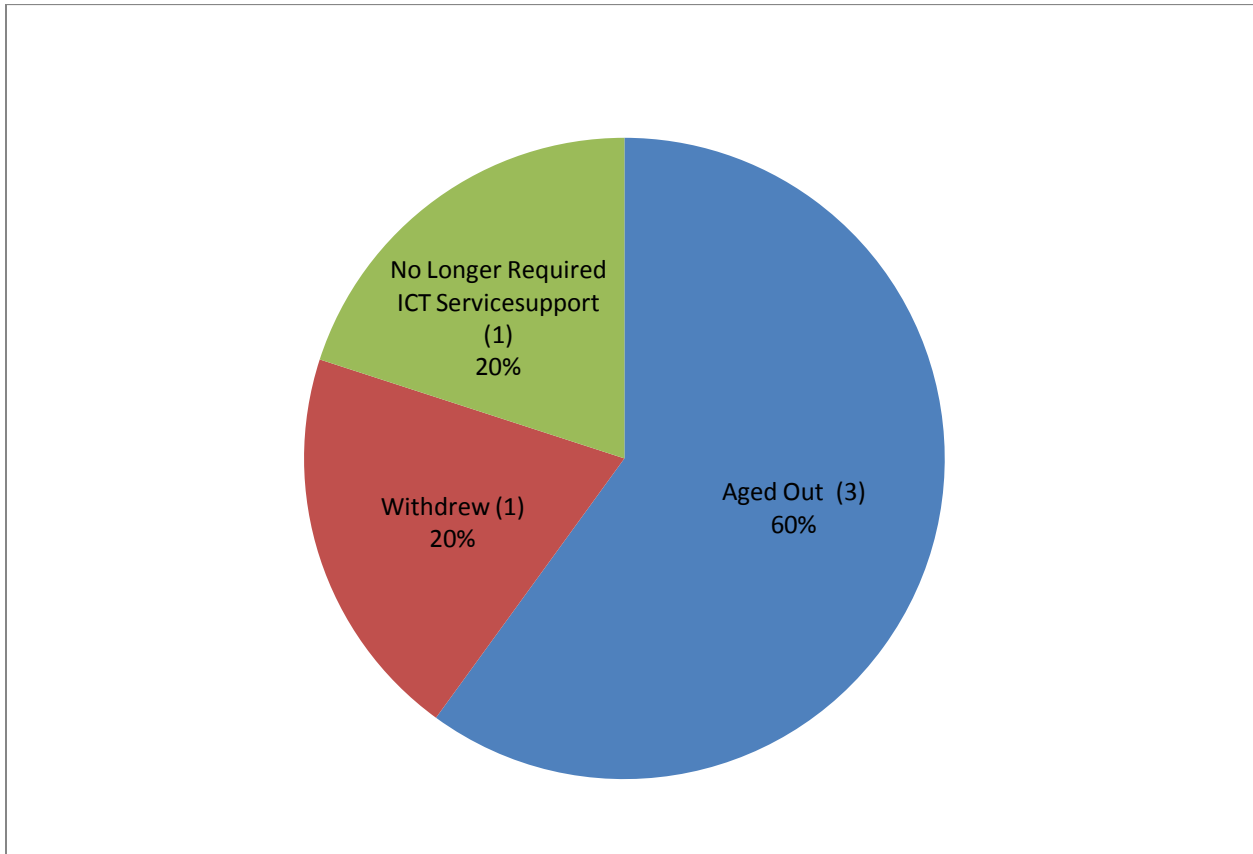
Point-in-Time Data

New student placements occur at various times across the fiscal year and, likewise, students transition out of ICT supported placements across the year. Therefore, point-in-time data are provided to represent a snapshot of out-of-state residential placements. On January 15, 2012, 17 students were served in out-of-state residential facilities. Eight students were served within one hour of their homes at Shorehaven in Elkton, MD or Benedictine School in Ridgley, MD. An additional 9 students received services in placements significantly distant from their homes.

Unique Alternative Service Renewal and Discharge Processes

Annually, the ICT Coordinator provides each district with technical assistance regarding the provisions of the Delaware Code related to private placement procedures, application and financial documents, and a list of children in the district receiving Unique Alternative service funding. The district is then responsible for preparing information for the ICT to review in order to approve continuation of services through Unique Alternative funding. The district is also required to notify the ICT coordinator when students will be discharged from Unique Alternative services, along with an explanation. The following graph summarizes the number of students who exited or were discharged from Unique Alternative services and the corresponding reasons.

Student Discharge Summary



Student Discharge and Exit Summary

Students exit Unique Alternative services supported by the ICT for multiple reasons that include: the level of service is no longer required, families move out of state, students withdraw from the education system, or students age out once they reach 21 years of age.

During FY 2012, three students "aged out" of special education services at 21 years of age. It is important to note that students who age out typically continue to need specialized living and work environments provided through the adult system. Efforts to support students' transition to supported or independent employment and adult services are the responsibility of the Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and IEP teams. Additionally, one student withdrew from school and one student no longer required Unique Alternative services and returned to a district placement.

Unique Alternative Student Population

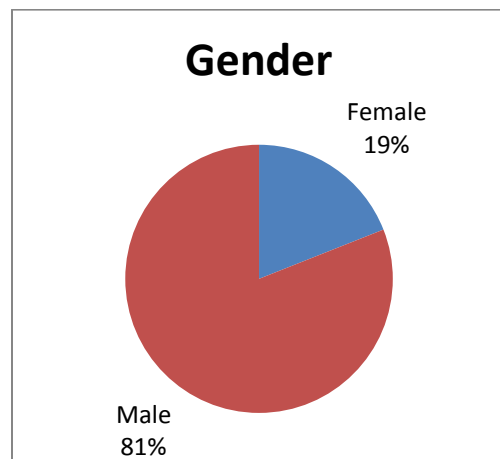
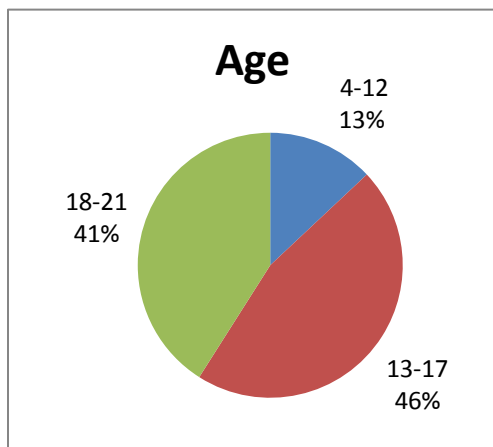
The following are demographic comparisons from FY 2011 to FY 2012. The ratio of boys to girls remained stable with a slight increase in the percentage of girls from 18% to 19%. The number of students in the 5-12 range increased from 7 to 14, students in the 13-17 range increased from 38 to 48, and the number of students in the 18 – 21 year range decreased from 45 to 43. Three of the four students previously reported as exited or withdrawn were from the 18 – 21 year range.

The following chart and graphs summarize demographic information for the students served by the ICT during FY 2012.

Age and Gender of Unique Alternative Students

FY 2012	Gender			Age		
	Male	Female	Total	5-12	13-17	18-21
Residential Placement	33	9	42	1	19	22
Day Programs	48	9	57	7	29	21
Other Unique Alternatives	4	2	6	6	0	0
Totals	85	20	105	14	48	43
Percentages	81%	19%		13%	46%	41%

Age and Gender of Unique Alternative Students



Unique Alternative Placements and Costs

During FY 2012, Delaware students in need of Unique Alternative services were served in 13 residential and six day programs. The following information shows a range of costs for both residential and day programs. The costs represent basic tuition and do not include transportation or enhanced individual supports that some students with severe behaviors require in their private program.

	High Cost	Low Cost
Residential Programs	Melmark Berwyn, PA \$318,640	Benedictine School Ridgely, MD \$ 81,524
Day Programs	Devereux Mapleton Malvern, PA \$162,027	High Road Wilmington, DE \$ 61,484

Agency Involvement

The children and youth supported through Unique Alternatives funding present a broad range of disabilities that are severe and complex. Often these students have multiple disabilities that contribute to challenges in the home and community, in addition to the school setting. For these reasons, some students receive services from multiple agencies. The following chart summarizes the interagency involvement necessary to meet the needs of some of the students who are served in residential and day programs through the ICT.

Interagency Collaboration

Division	Number Involved	Shared Funding
Prevention & Behavioral Health	21	7
Family Services	1	1
Youth Rehabilitative Services	1	
Developmental Disabilities	25	12
Substance Abuse & Mental Health	0	
Combined Agencies (PBH/DDDS)	14	
Division of Visual Impairments	1	
Medicaid *	2	

*This includes students placed at Voorhees Pediatric Center, a skilled nursing facility funded by Medicaid. DOE funds educational costs from Bancroft Education Services.

Gaps in Services

Children and youth with severe disabilities, mental health concerns, and significant behavioral needs present unique challenges to schools and families. Gaps in services that support families and children in their homes and communities continue to exist. This has contributed to an increasing number of students' placements in residential settings by multiple agencies. Often these students can be provided an appropriate education within the local schools, but their mental health or behavioral needs prevent their ability to remain in their homes with existing resources.

The cost to any one agency to support these residential placements is prohibitive and a drain on current resources. Discussions across agencies to address these concerns and identify solutions that are cost effective are ongoing. The ICT Chair and Coordinator continue to participate in these discussions; however the provisions of Delaware Code are specific in their requirements. That is, Unique Alternative funding can 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 educational programs which include placement in regular classes, special classes, or special schools and may also include increased staffing support. Further, the IEP team and the Department of Education must determine that no school district or other state agency has a suitable free and appropriate program of education for the particular child with a disability. Thus, the presenting problem of providing services and financial support for residential placements when students can be appropriately served in a Delaware public school continues to be unresolved.

Major Activities of the Interagency Collaborative Team

This section highlights the major activities related to the ICT during FY 2012.

1. The ICT Chair and Coordinator conducted onsite visits and discussions with AdvoServ Program administrators and staff, toured the facilities, visited classrooms, engaged in reviews of program procedures and practices, and attended individual student IEP meetings. ICT Agency partners also participated in onsite meetings.

Discussion topics included improvements in IEP services such as Post-Secondary Transition, positive behavior support in the form of instruction and progress monitoring of replacement skills, reduction in focus on punitive and invasive behavior strategies, consultation of medical staff with families when medication recommendations are made, and systematic reporting to LEAs and supporting Agencies when reportable events occur. AdvoServ Program administrators and staff agreed to strengthen collaboration and reporting practices, and attend to improvements in identified areas of programming, specifically positive behavior supports for all students and secondary transition services for older students. This program had been reevaluated in April, 2011 and approved as a non-public school eligible to serve students with disabilities, once students are approved through the ICT, through June 2014.

2. The ICT Coordinator served as a liaison to school districts, charter schools, other agencies, and private school programs to identify appropriate services for students. Problem-solving consultations regarding specific cases and referral information about community agencies were provided to districts as needed or requested.
3. On-site visits were conducted by the ICT Coordinator at three schools in use, or for potential use and approval, by the ICT.
4. The ICT Chair and Coordinator participated in interagency discussion to explore solutions to agencies' increased need to place students in residential settings, unrelated to LEAs' ability to provide appropriate education services. These efforts are ongoing.
5. The ICT Chair served on the Child Death Commission as part of the education subcommittee.
6. The ICT Chair and ICT Coordinator collaborated with advocacy groups around issues of student restraint procedures. The ICT Chair and a DOE Education Associate provided technical assistance to Delaware legislative aides and a State Representative to inform discussions of potential legislation in this area.
7. The ICT Coordinator collaborated with the DOE Education Associate who coordinates the Educational Surrogate Parent (ESP) Program to insure that youth who are in foster care or are Wards of the State are provided with knowledgeable support in educational decisions.

If you have any questions about this report or would like more information on the Interagency Collaborative Team and its activities, please contact:

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