



**DCASE**

District of Columbia  
Association for Special Education

*A rising tide lifts all boats*

## **The DCASE/BLACKMAN-JONES ASSESSMENT PROJECT**

Soon after its inception in June 2007, DCASE (*District of Columbia Association for Special Education*) launched an effort to address directly one of the central issues in the Blackman-Jones Consent Decree—the backlog of assessments resulting in or from due process complaints. Many of the students involved in these complaints were placed in DCASE member schools without appropriate and/or updated assessment information, making it very difficult to serve these students.

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) agreed to contract with DCASE to reduce these backlogged assessments, empower member schools to do their own assessments, and help clean up student data long known to be inaccurate. DCASE built a database and created a monitoring system to closely track assessment progress and timelines. It was an enormous project, and we are proud to have made significant progress in a very collegial way with DCPS.

### ***Getting Assessments Done***

Under the project, **our member schools had the autonomy** to assess students who had been identified by the IEP team as needing one or more assessments. If schools had internal capacity, they performed these assessments themselves. If not, they tapped into the DCASE Qualified Provider Network (QPN) for **highly qualified providers** to do the assessments for them. DCASE worked to ensure all assessments were then reimbursed by DCPS through the Assessment Project.

### ***Important Benefits***

#### **The Assessment Project offered real cost savings.**

Any provider participating in the Project—school-based or QPN—agreed to abide by the DCPS Chancellor rate schedule. These rates were fair market rates that “capped” any assessment service to an appropriate maximum, making it more cost-effective for any school to provide much-needed assessments in an economical, but thorough, manner.

### ***Addressing Students’ Needs***

Ultimately, the Assessment Project enabled DCASE and our members to offer a better option to **meet our students’ needs: timely, well-done assessments** that contribute to students’ overall well being and success in the school environment.

***The Final Report is now available online at [www.dcase.org](http://www.dcase.org).***

### ***For More Information...***

or to ask questions about the DCASE/Blackman-Jones Assessment Project, please contact:

**Anne Gay**

**Executive Director**

- **[info@dcase.org](mailto:info@dcase.org)**
- **Fax: 866-688-2641**