

Baltimore County Public Schools

Office of Third Party Billing

Annual Report

2000-2001 School Year

**Report Composed by:
Charles Tyler, Fiscal Supervisor
Office of Third Party Billing
November, 2001**

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Division of Business Services

Office of Third Party Billing Charles Tyler, Jr., Fiscal Supervisor

**Suzanne Belt
Accountant**

**Kay Crofoot
Administrative Secretary**

**Jane Mullen
Infant & Toddlers Administrative Secretary**

**Shirley Bawtinheimer
Data Clerk**

**Amanda Killian
Data Clerk**

**Ingrid Pierre-Louis
Programmer**

**Anthony Richards
Programmer/Analyst**

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Office of Third Party Billing
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Office of Third Party Billing

Annual Report

July 2000 – June 2001

I. Historical Overview

The Third Party Billing program commenced in the Spring of 1992 as a collaborative effort between Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) and the Baltimore County Department of Health (BCDH). Third Party Billing is a systemwide effort of the Baltimore County Public Schools designed to recover health care costs from Medicaid for health care services rendered to Baltimore County Public School students. A copy of the Third Party Billing organizational chart is attached as Exhibit A. Related service data is submitted by speech/language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, audiologists, psychologists, nurses, and social workers. Transportation services provided to special education students are also a billable service. Currently, there are 4,348 eligible special education students identified in Baltimore County. These students constitute 34.78% of the Special Education population and 4.19% of the students attending Baltimore County Public Schools. Funds recovered from the Third Party Billing program supplement existing programs by creating a host of staff positions, as well as supplies and equipment from several programs. Some of these items are listed below:

STAFF

- 5 speech/language pathologists
- 5 Psychologists
- 34 special education teachers
- 10 school social workers
- 3 pupil personnel workers
- 14 instructional assistants
- 10 interpreters
- 16 health assistants

SUPPLIES & EQUIPMENT

- speech/language therapy
- psychology
- social work
- occupational therapy
- physical therapy
- nursing services
- school-based health centers

During the 1993-94 school year, Medicaid approved regulations for the billing of case management services. Baltimore County was the first jurisdiction in the state to submit case management claims to Medicaid. Case management data is submitted by special education teachers or speech/language pathologists who coordinate special education services for students. A portion of the case management funds are returned to each school participating in the program, based upon the number of case management encounter data forms submitted for case management. Schools have utilized the additional funds for the following staff positions, supplies and materials.

STAFF

- parent helpers
- instructional assistants
- speech pathologists
- psychologists
- reading specialists
- special education teachers

SUPPLIES & EQUIPMENT

- adaptive equipment
- test forms and kits
- special education curriculum materials
- audio equipment
- speech supplies
- computers, printers, & software
- spellers

The Baltimore County Public Schools' Third Party Billing program is a model across the state of Maryland for the recovery of health care costs from Medicaid for services rendered to students pursuant to their Individual Education Plan (IEP).

II. Major Accomplishments of the Office of Third Party Billing

- Increased revenue for BCPS by 16.15% over FY 2000
- Increased Identification of special education Medicaid eligibility students by 13.3% over FY 2000
- Developed mechanisms for monitoring the encounter data received from related service staff
- Revision of the Third Party Billing brochure
- Revision of Third Party Billing encounter data form
- Regional training sessions conducted for IEP chairpersons regarding Case Management procedures
- Monitoring of all case management encounter data forms received from schools in order to determine compliance of schools
- Expansion of Medicaid eligibility file for all special education students with assistance of schools
- Provided technical assistance and training to case managers in schools in order to understand Medicaid requirements
- Distribution of 137 certificates of Achievement awards to schools
- Revision of Case Management, Related Services, and Infant and Toddlers training manuals
- Revision of School Based Health Center billing process
- Collection of non-public school data for transportation billing

III. Special Education Medicaid Population

Presently, the Baltimore County Public Schools has 4,348 Medicaid eligible special education children for whom encounter data forms are collected and claims submitted to Medicaid. This figure constitutes 4.19 percent of the children currently receiving special education services. Exhibit B denotes the increase in Baltimore County Public Schools students who are eligible for the Third Party Billing program by fiscal year. The increase from the 1999-2000 school year was 512, a 13.3 percent increase, one of the highest increases in the history of the Office of Third Party Billing. This accomplishment is directly correlated to the heightened effects of Principals, IEP Chairs, Special Educators, and Related Service providers to secure additional Medicaid information from parents. The Office of Third Party Billing has also modified its own internal process and procedures in order to assist in the Medicaid determination process. On a weekly schedule, the data in the student data tracking system is matched against the data in the Third Party Billing system. The end result is a report of students who are new to special education. This list is then checked using the electronic verification system in order to determine Medicaid eligibility. Schools are then informed regarding the status of the student and can submit encounter data forms for reimbursement. Exhibit C shows the process for a Third Party Billing registration.

IV. School Based Training Sessions

One of the trademarks of the Office of Third Party Billing is to provide a wide array of training sessions to Baltimore County Public Schools employees. These sessions include related service provider training sessions, IEP chair training sessions, and school-based training sessions.

Related service provider training sessions are usually refresher meetings designed to communicate new information regarding billing procedures to returning employees. As needed, separate training sessions are held for related service providers who are new to Baltimore County Public Schools. These training sessions are more intensive, and are designed for employees who can have a varied knowledge of billing requirements and procedures. Each attendee receives a Related Service Training Manual, which is revised annually in order to ensure accurate information for school-based staff.

Training for all IEP chairs is completed on an annual basis. The sessions are designed to provide an overarching approach to the Third Party Billing program. In addition, the sessions show the IEP chairs how to ensure accountability in the submission of case management encounter data forms.

The Office of Third Party Billing also provides school-based training sessions. Such meetings allow the special education teachers and other service providers with the opportunity to ask detailed questions in a small group setting. All meeting attendees receive a Case Management Training Manual, which is revised on an annual basis. Exhibits D, E, and F delineate the training sessions provided during the 2000-2001 school year.

V. Third Party Billing Revenues and Expenditures

A graph of Third Party Billing revenues is attached as Exhibit G. For fiscal year 2001, the Office of Third Party Billing generated \$8,037,182.05 in revenue, a 16.5 percent increase over fiscal year 2000. A flowchart of the Billing Process for an encounter data form is included as Exhibit H.

VI. Incentive Programs

The Office of Third Party Billing has a strong incentive program in place in order to increase the potential reimbursement for services, and to hold schools and offices accountable for the documentation of services.

One of the largest components of the incentive program is the return of a portion of the case management funds to each school. The Principal, IEP Chair, and Case Managers are given the opportunity to determine how the returned funds can be utilized to support and expand special education and health related services in their school. The funds that are

allocated are based upon a percentage of the data submitted. This process ensures equity in the distribution based upon the number of Special Education Medicaid eligible students at each school. Schools have received from \$25.00 to \$30,000.00 through this program.

An additional incentive for schools is the Certificate of Achievement. Commenced in 1996, the Office of Third Party Billing produces a certificate of achievement for each school that submits 95% or more of its potential case management encounter data. The awards are presented to Principals and many of these awards can be seen hanging in the lobby and showcases in Baltimore County Public Schools. A chart delineating the number of schools that have received this award in the past four (4) years is attached as Exhibit I. For the FY 2001, the Office of Third Party Billing also awarded Principals with mugs if their school achieved the goal of one hundred percent compliance with the submission of case management encounter data forms.

VII. Accountability

A major reason for the success of the Third Party Billing program is accountability. The Office of Third Party Billing holds schools and related service office heads accountable for the submissions of encounter data forms. On a bi-monthly basis, all Principals receive a report from the Office of Third Party Billing. This report shows each case management encounter data form submitted, the procedure code, date of service, and provider name. The school-based staff can use this report, as a receipt to ensure that all data was received, and also determine what data was not been submitted. Typically, this dissemination of this information leads to a large increase in the encounter data submitted to the Office of Third Party Billing.

During the 2000-2001 school year, the Office of Third Party Billing also began to produce reports on encounter data forms submitted for all related service office heads. This report allows the office head to monitor the staff at each school. In many instances the submission of encounter data forms can be linked directly to the caseloads of many providers. The use of real-time data as a monitoring tool is an important factor in developing accountability.

VIII. Communication with Parents and Families

The Office of Third Party Billing has always strived to expand and enhance its communications with parents and families. As a result, the Office of Third Party Billing has developed and revised a Third Party Billing registration form for parents to complete and return to their local school. The registration form states that parents should contact the Office of Third Party Billing directly if they have programmatic questions. Many parents take the opportunity and call the Office of Third Party Billing with their questions.

The Office of Third Party Billing has also designed a brochure specifically for parents and guardians. The brochure is written in question and answer format based upon specific questions received from its intended audience. The document addresses issues such as how a child can qualify for Third Party Billing, and how the program can impact on other Medical Assistance benefits. A Third Party Billing registration form is also attached, and can be completed and mailed directly to the Office of Third Party Billing by the parent.

IX. Data Compilation

Chart 1 displays the number and percent of special education Medicaid eligible students by geographic area.

Southwestern (SW) Area	1,059 students
Northwestern (NW) Area	721 students
Central (C) Area	579 students
Northeastern (NE) Area	872 students
Southeastern (SE) Area	1,117 students
TOTAL	4,348 students

Chart 2 displays the number and percent of related service encounters received by type of service.

Audiological Services	229 encounters
Nursing Services	4,692 encounters
Occupational Therapy	8,150 encounters
Physical Therapy	2,543 encounters
Psychological Services	6,470 encounters
Social Work Services	3,205 encounters
Speech/Language Therapy	52,900 encounters
TOTAL	78,189 encounters

Chart 3 displays the number and percent of case management encounters received by geographic area.

Southwestern (SW) Area	9,292 encounters
Northwestern (NW) Area	6,129 encounters
Central (C) Area	5,052 encounters
Northeastern (NE) Area	8,250 encounters
Southeastern (SE) Area	10,335 encounters
TOTAL	39,058 encounters

Chart 4 shows the number of case management encounters received by type of service.

IEP Review Modification	3,572 encounters
Initial IEP Development	245 encounters
Monthly Ongoing IEP	
Case Management	34,202 encounters
TOTAL	38,019 encounters

X. Next Steps for the Third Party Billing Program

- **Increased Use of Technology (Web Site, Imaging)**

The Office of Third Party Billing will be implementing a web page in the fall of 2001, which will be a portion of the Baltimore County Public Schools web site. While the web page is in the planning stage, the page will contain a multitude of information regarding Third Party Billing, including Frequently Asked Questions by parents, guardians, case managers, related service providers, and school-based administrators. In addition, critical documents such as the encounter data form, list of diagnosis codes, action plan for the use of Third Party Billing funds, and registration form.

The Office of Third Party Billing has been working with many Baltimore County Public Schools offices in order to explore the possibility of imaging the document required for billing, the encounter data form. Such a process would allow the office to stop storing encounter data forms on site, and immediately box and send entered forms to the Warehouse and Distribution Center. The images of the encounter data forms would then be stored on a compact disk, allowing for efficiency in locating the forms in the event of an audit. The original of the document would also be on file in the Warehouse if needed for an audit.

- **Autism Waiver**

During fiscal year 2000, the Legislature of the State of Maryland approved an autism waiver. The intent of this waiver is to assist parents of autistic children to be able to maintain the child in the family setting. In order for a child to qualify for the autism waiver, the family must be willing to institutionalize their child, as well as declare the child as a family of one. Once these declarations are made, the child must be determined as medically eligible by a psychologist, and paperwork completed by an autism team. The Maryland State Department of Education will then work with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to place the child on the autism waiver. After these tasks are completed and approved, the Office of Third Party Billing can then bill for services as provided by the district. The services, units, rates, and descriptions are as follows:

Service	Unit	Rate-100%Full Federal Participation	Description
Day Habilitation Regular Day Habilitation Intensive Day Habilitation Intensive Individual Support Services Therapeutic Integration Services	1 hour 1 hour 1 hour 1 day	\$28.00 \$53.00 \$25.00 \$80.00	No more than 12 hours per date of service for regular day habilitation service and intensive day habilitation service combined. Maximum of 16 units per date of service for intensive individual support service. Only one unit per date of service for therapeutic integration service.
Respite Care	1 hour	\$12.50	Maximum of 24 units per date of service and 168 units per 12 month time period. Not available for the same date of service as regular or intensive residential habilitation.
Family Training	1 hour	\$82.00	Maximum of 6 units per day of service and 60 units per 12 months.
Environmental Accessibility Adaptations	1 unit	Maximum of \$1,500	Maximum of \$1,500 per 36 months, prior approval required.
Autism Waiver Service Coordination Initial Assessment Ongoing Assessment Reassessment	1 unit 1 month 1 unit	\$500.00 \$150.00 \$275.00	1 unit of initial assessment per lifetime. 1 unit of ongoing assessment per month and maximum of 12 units per 12 months. Maximum of 4 units of reassessment per 12 months

- **HIPPA Compliance**

In August 1996, President Clinton signed into law the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). One part of this Act, referred to as Administrative Simplification, is aimed at reducing administrative costs and burdens in the health care industry. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to adopt national uniform standards for the electronic transmission of certain health information.

Within 18 months of enactment, the Secretary of HHS is required to adopt standards from among those already approved by private standards developing organizations for certain electronic health transactions, including claims, enrollment, eligibility, payment, and coordination of benefits. These standards also must address the security of electronic health information systems.

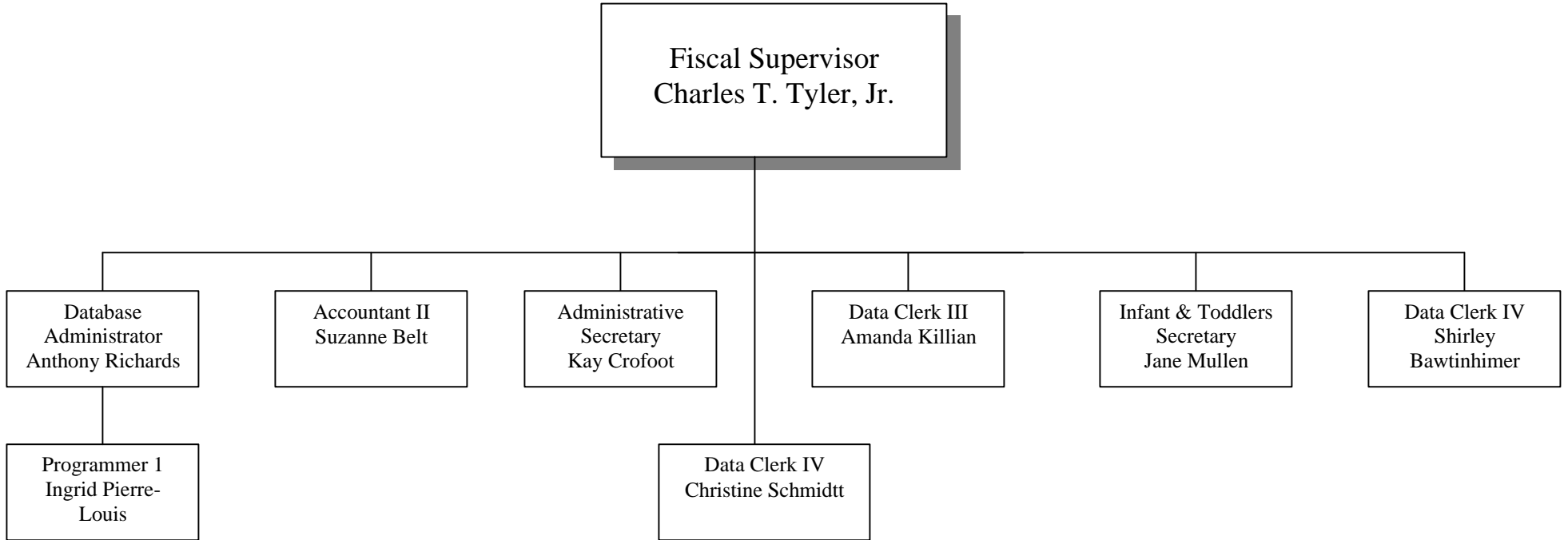
The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 will have a dramatic impact on all billing completed by the Office of Third Party Billing including School Based Health Center billing as well as Infants and Toddlers billing. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene must become compliant with the HIPPA regulations on or before October 1, 2002. All Local School Systems and Local Education Agencies must reach compliance by the same deadline. To date, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has not informed Local School Systems and Local Education Agencies what fields for the file format will be required, or if the data currently submitted will be modified. Once the information is gleaned, the Third Party Billing system will likely require a major upgrade so that billing can continue.

- **Licensed Certified Professional Counselors (LCPC)**

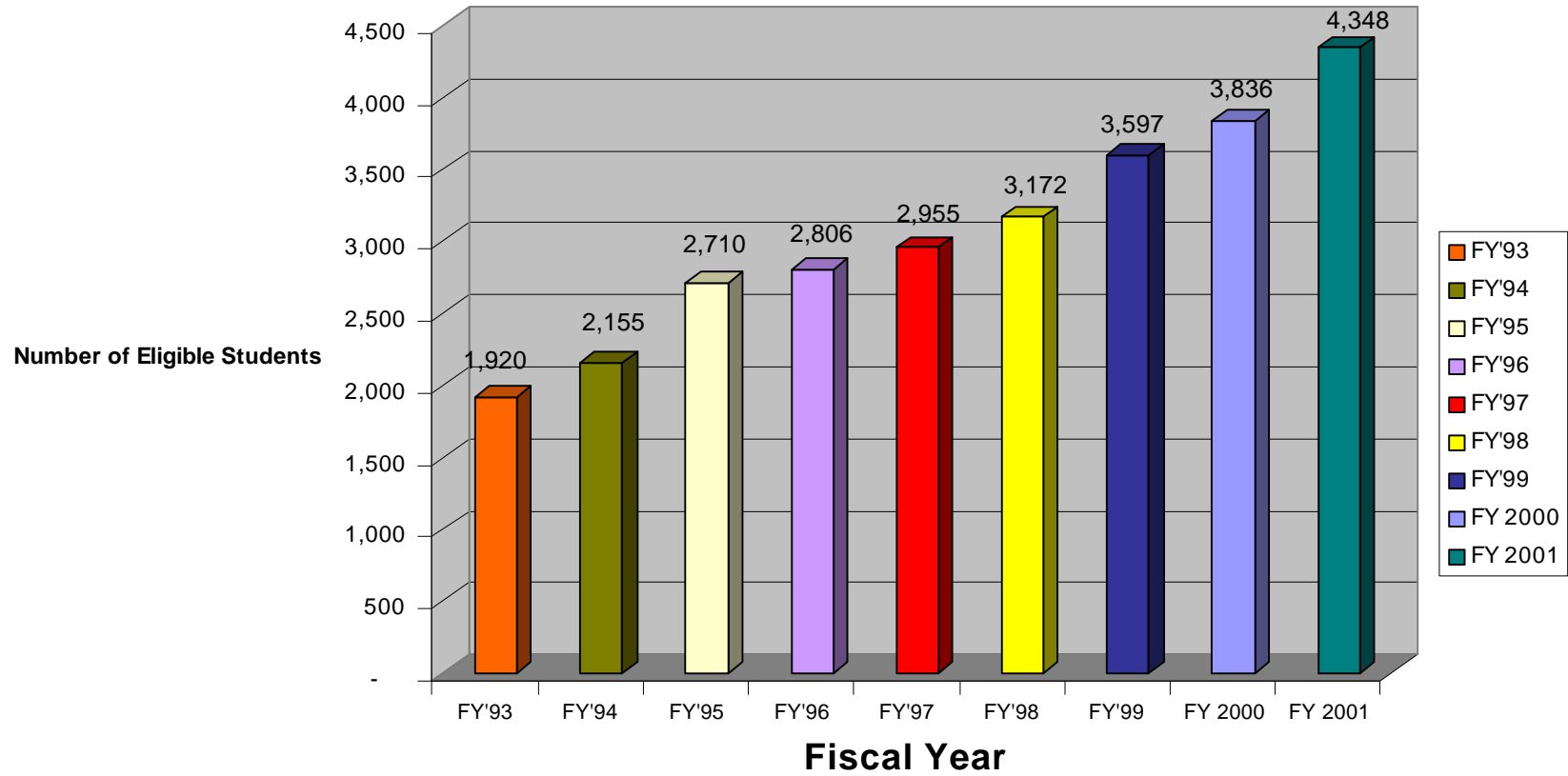
As of July 1, 2001, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has approved regulations permitting Licensed Certified Professional Counselors (LCPC) to bill Medicaid for medical services denoted on an IEP. In Baltimore County, 24 of approximately 1500 guidance counselors are certified as LCPC's. These individuals will be trained in November of 2001 on the requirements of Third Party Billing. It is anticipated that the additional revenue generated from this program will be approximately \$50,000.00 the potential for revenue will expand, as Baltimore County Public Schools counselors become LCPC's.

EXHIBITS AND CHARTS

**Baltimore County Public Schools
Division of Business Services
Office of Third Party Billing**

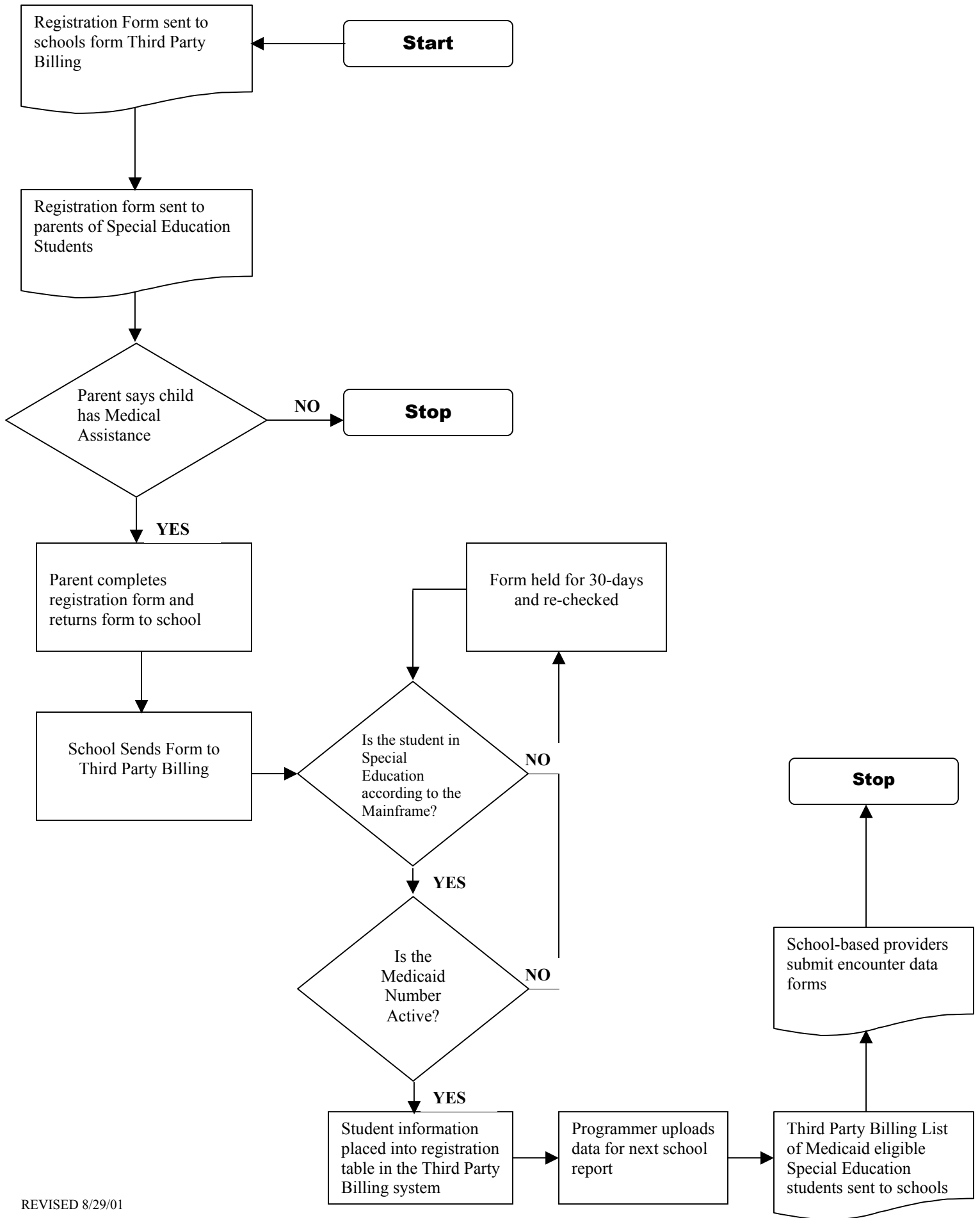


Students Eligible for the Third Party Billing Program by Fiscal Year



Process For A Third Party Billing Registration

Exhibit C



THIRD PARTY BILLING STAFF DEVELOPMENT TRAINING SESSIONS
2000-2001 School Year

Date of Meeting	Time of Meeting	School Name	Contact Person	Title	Number of Staff Trained	Date of Follow-Up Letter
October 5, 2000	11:00 a.m.	Baltimore Highlands Elementary	Barbara Shields	Assistant Principal	4	October 6, 2000
November 21, 2000	10:30 a.m.	Berkshire Elementary	Sharon Marquette	Assistant Principal	4	November 22, 2000
November 10, 2000	10:00 a.m.	Campfield Early Childhood Learning	Shirley Cotton	Assistant Principal	11	November 15, 2000
September 26, 2000	1:30 p.m.	Chase Elementary	Patricia Blair	Assistant Principal	2	September 27, 2000
September 1, 2000	11:00 a.m.	Deer Park Elementary	Theresa Lafferman	Assistant Principal	7	September 6, 2000
October 5, 2000	1:00 p.m.	Dogwood Elementary	Angela Tanner	Assistant Principal	5	October 10, 2000
September 25, 2000	10:05 a.m.	Dundalk Middle	Stacy Attar	IEP Chair	6	September 26, 2000
October 12, 2000	3:30 p.m.	Edmondson Heights Elementary	Barbara Davis	Assistant Principal	9	October 17, 2000
September 18, 2000	9:30 a.m.	General John Stricker Middle	Barbara Victor	Special Education Team Leader	10	September 20, 2000
September 12, 2000	9:00 a.m.	Grange Elementary	Linda Whalen	Assistant Principal	7	September 13, 2000
September 14, 2000	10:00	Gunpowder Elementary	Sue Torr	Assistant Principal	1	One-on-one meeting
December 14, 2000	2:30 p.m.	Hampton Elementary	Susan Eisenhart	Assistant Principal	3	December 19, 2000
August 22, 2000	10:00 a.m.	Hebbsville Elementary	Bradley Palmer	Assistant Principal	4	August 23, 2000
August 29, 2000	1:00 p.m.	Hebbsville Elementary	Bradley Palmer	Assistant Principal	2	August 31, 2000
October 31, 2000	8:00 a.m.	Johnnycake Elementary	Thomas Bowser	Assistant Principal	6	October 31, 2000

THIRD PARTY BILLING STAFF DEVELOPMENT TRAINING SESSIONS
2000-2001 School Year

Date of Meeting	Time of Meeting	School Name	Contact Person	Title	Number of Staff Trained	Date of Follow-Up Letter
October 24, 2000	3:00 p.m.	Lansdowne Middle	Dyan Gardiner	Special Education Chairperson	5	October 25, 2000
August 29, 2000	9:00 a.m.	Logan Elementary	Kathleen Bishop	Assistant Principal	5	August 30, 2000
March 30, 2001	10:00 a.m.	Martin Boulevard Elementary	Carolan Stewart	Assistant Principal		April 6, 2001
September 25, 2000	8:30 a.m.	McCormick Elementary	Kevin Lindsey	Assistant Principal	5	September 26, 2000
October 17, 2000	2:30 p.m.	Milford Mill Academy	Venice Williams	Special Education Department Chair	10	October 18, 2000
September 11, 2000	9:30 a.m.	Relay Elementary	Paula Sutton	Assistant Principal	4	September 11, 2000
September 18, 2000	11:00 a.m.	Sandy Plains Elementary	Tara Crones	Assistant Principal	6	September 20, 2000
November 22, 2000	1:00 p.m.	Seventh District Elementary	Christena Struben	Assistant Principal	4	November 30, 2000
October 18, 2000	9:00 a.m.	Sussex Elementary	Jennifer Dunkle	Assistant Principal	6	October 18, 2000
December 11, 2000	9:00 a.m.	Timonium Elementary	Patricia Kaiser	Assistant Principal	7	December 11, 2000
September 6, 2000	3:00 p.m.	Woodbridge Elementary	Sherri Boxer	Assistant Principal	6	September 7, 2000
September 28, 2000	3:00 p.m.	Woodlawn Middle	Sylvia Jones	Special Education Team Leader	8	September 29, 2000