



Spring 2005

***FROM THE DIRECTOR:
Transitions at CDE***

Lorrie Harkness

This edition of Inside Colorado Exceptional Student Services coincides with the annual transitions that always arrive at this time of the year. Students and their families, educators, and school districts are facing the end of the school year and are thinking toward their summer activities, even as they plan for new beginnings in the fall. Unique to this year in Exceptional Student Services is that we are transitioning to a newly reauthorized IDEA and a new State Director of Exceptional Student Services over the next few weeks.

I will be retiring from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) on June 30, 2005, after enjoying eight years in this position. Interestingly, I began my career at CDE just as the IDEA 1997 Regulations were passed and I am leaving as we begin the implementation of IDEA 2004. I feel fortunate to have participated in the move toward more accountability in education, raising the expectations for the performance of students with disabilities, and in the shift to a more collaborative compliance monitoring process.

Many exciting events and initiatives have marked my years here. Having the opportunity to assist in bringing Gifted Education into the unit was definitely a highlight, as new partnerships developed which then led to more effective and efficient delivery of professional development on behalf of all students with exceptional needs. Being a distant participant in the creation of Regional Professional Development Councils has been rewarding as I hear the reports of the training on the most current practices in education

in some of our smallest and most remote districts in the State. Watching the success of our Positive Behavior Supports initiative has been a joy and now I can see that Colorado will have the same kind of success with the implementation of a "response to intervention" (RTI) model. Like PBS, RTI is a systems change process that intervenes with struggling students quickly and also fosters the connection between Early Childhood and K-12 education. I will miss my close work with the Colorado Special Education Advisory Committee (CSEAC), a group that has evolved into a strong and knowledgeable resource to the State Board of Education and to the education community at large.

Terri Connolly, currently a supervisor in the Exceptional Student Services Unit, will be replacing me for the coming year as an Interim Director. She brings a wealth of experience to the position, having been at the Department for 25 years. She is a champion on issues of assessment and accountability and was a pioneer in the inclusion movement. She was also the Director of a Systems Change grant (SILC) for several years, as a result of which work, we have a number of schools in a readiness stage for "RTI". Terri has led our transition from the former compliance monitoring to a Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process. I am personally delighted to be handing the work I feel so passionate about over to my friend and colleague, Terri.

What you can anticipate about the transition to a

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

new IDEA is the following timeline of events:

- Over the next few months CDE staff along with representative stakeholders will be preparing proposals on what needs to be changed in State Law and the State Rules to align them with IDEA changes.
- IDEA Regulations are expected to be out in May and public comment will be invited for 75 days. The final regulations should be approved by December 2005.
- Following final IDEA Regulations, the proposed changes in State Law will be introduced during the 2006 legislative session
- The proposed Rules changes will be presented to the State Board of Education spring 2006.
- At the same time, drafts of new guidelines and

statewide training on significant changes will be developed and implemented as needed. The goal is to have State law and State Rules in alignment with federal law beginning July 2006.

Clearly there is no shortage of work to do as Colorado transitions into a new school year. We will address new policies and practices as well as keeping up with all current and ongoing projects. As I think about these changes, I just have to say that it has been a pleasure to be a part of such important work for children and families in Colorado over these past years. Moreover, I am so appreciative of the many talented, knowledgeable, and energetic people whose paths crossed with mine for as short as a moment to as frequent as a daily basis. Thank you!



INSIDE CDE SPECIAL EDUCATION NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED AND EDITED BY THE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES UNIT AT THE COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, 201 EAST COLFAX, ROOM 300, DENVER, CO 80203. PHONE: (303) 866-6694.

WWW.CDE.STATE.CO.US/CDESPED

THE INSIDE CDE SPECIAL EDUCATION NEWSLETTER STAFF:

COORDINATORS
 FAYE GIBSON
 SHARRON FIEBER

THE PURPOSE OF THE INSIDE SPECIAL EDUCATION NEWSLETTER IS TO SERVE AS A MEDIUM FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION PERTAINING TO SPECIAL EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF COLORADO AND THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CDE SPECIAL EDUCATION UNIT. THIS NEWSLETTER IS DESIGNED TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ON PROFESSIONAL ISSUES, PROCEDURAL CHANGES, AND UPCOMING EVENTS TO COLORADO EDUCATORS.

ALL VIEWS AND OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHORS AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OR THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO-DENVER.

COLORADO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS:

JARED POLIS, CHAIRMAN
 RANDY DEHOFF, VICE CHAIRMAN
 KAREN MIDDLETON
 PEGGY LITTLETON
 EVIE HUDAK
 D. RICO MUNN
 CLAIR ORR
 PAMELA JO SUCKLA

COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION:

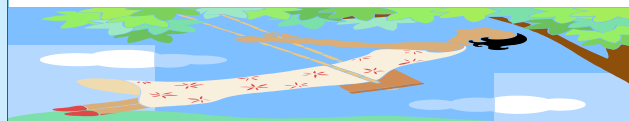
WILLIAM J. MOLONEY

DIRECTOR OF EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT SERVICES:

LORRIE HARKNESS

In this Issue

	PAGE
The What & Why of RTI	3
Regional News	7-14
Deaf Education Summer Institute	15
Special Review	16
School-Wide Positive Behavior	18
Peak Parent Center Provides Training	19
Colorado State Improvement Grant	21
Summer Mental health Institute	22
Sliver Grant Spotlight	23
Focus on Visual Impairment	25-34
Putting a Face on Blindness/VI	25
Definition & Role of the TVI	26
Colorado Instructional Materials Ctr.	27
UNC Training - Visual Impairment	28
CSCB	29
Students With Low Vision: Ensuring	
A Full Toolbox	30
The School O&M Specialist and	
Dual Licensure in Colorado	32
Call For Articles!	34
Summer Institute on Deafblindness	35
Calendar of Events	36
Resources	37
RAFT Project	38
ESSU Regional Professional	
Development	39



The What & Why of RTI (Response to Intervention)

I. RTI and IDEA 2004

The following paragraphs refer to four key passages from IDEA 2004 that relate to RTI directly or that indirectly support an RTI model of research-based instruction and tiered levels of intervention.

One of the most significant changes in IDEA 2004 is the language which states: **when determining whether a child has a specific learning disability ... a local educational agency shall not be required to take into consideration whether a child has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability...** It further states that Local Education Agencies in their determination of a Specific Learning Disability **may use a process that determines if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedures.**

The following language from IDEA 2004 pertains to any disability, but appears to be supportive of assuring that any child being considered for special education has received research-based instruction prior to disability determination: **a child shall not be determined to be a child with a disability if the determinant factor for such determination is-- lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including in the essential components of reading instruction (as defined in section 1208(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 <NCLB> ; lack of instruction in math; or limited English proficiency.**

This passage in the new law would seem to support pragmatic assessment of any student for the purpose of informing instruction and allow for this type of screening to be conducted by special educators. **"The screening of a student by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation shall not be considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services."**

In addition, the law allows that up to 15% of Federal funding may be used to provide **early intervening services to students who have not been identified as needing special education.** This, again, would seem to support the implementation of RTI through a model of tiered interventions.

II. RTI and LD (PCD) Eligibility

The 2004 LD Roundtable (group representing 14 national organizations) in their recommendations for regulations to accompany IDEA 2004, gives the following definition of RTI:

Response to Scientific, Research-based Intervention Process

...is a problem solving framework that may be used to detect student academic and behavioral difficulties and guide the use of scientifically, research-based interventions to provide intense, individualized, student-centered instruction. Individual student responses to general education and intensive specialized instruction are measured periodically and compared to age, grade, or classmate performance. The resulting data of response to intervention measures may be used to inform instruction and, as part of the comprehensive evaluation described in §300.532-300.533 for identification of learning disabilities or other disabilities and determination of eligibility for special education and related services.

Issues/Concerns with Discrepancy Models that have been raised:

- ☆ Discrepancy models have received much criticism for their lack of validity and reliability.
- ☆ Discrepancy models have varied widely state to state.
- ☆ Discrepancy models have been criticized as "wait to fail" models – early identification is difficult.
- ☆ Students have to suffer the emotional and academic stress of failure until the "discrepancy" is large enough.

Some basic underpinnings of a RTI model:

- ☆ RTI relies on the premise that all students receive research-based instruction in general education.

(Continued on page 4)

- ☆ The learning of all students is assessed early and often (ongoing progress monitoring). Assessment is focused on direct measurements of achievement and behavior.
- ☆ If there are concerns about student progress, increasingly intense tiers of intervention are available.
- ☆ Only students who are “unresponsive” to the general education instruction and tiers of intervention are considered for special education eligibility.

Schools and districts in deciding whether to begin to use RTI might consider a few of the key benefits that have been described by various researchers and practitioners:

- ☆ RTI could prevent the “wait-to-fail” phenomenon that often occurs with learning disability identification. (Struggling students receive help more quickly.)
- ☆ RTI ensures ALL students receive high quality, research-based instruction.
- ☆ Provision of services is not contingent upon an IQ score.

Discrepancy vs. RTI	
Focus is on the deficit within the child	Focus is on instruction
Must wait for discrepancy to be large enough to qualify	Instruction is strengthened and the child’s response is measured
Students may have to wait for LD identification to receive interventions	Interventions are available for any student whose achievement is not on target

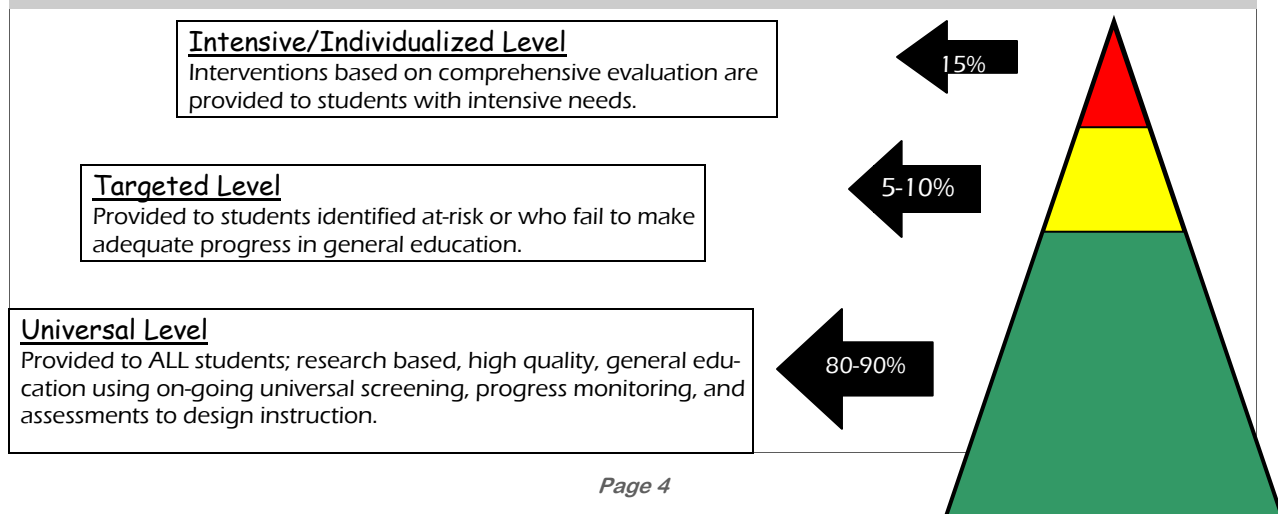
RTI is NOT simply a method to identify students with learning disabilities – it is about improving results for students – the fact that it can help systematically identify students with LD is incidental
 - W. David Tilly, III

III. RTI and Improved Results for ALL Students

We are hearing a lot about Response to Intervention (RTI) in relationship to the identification of students with learning disabilities (Perceptual/Communicative Disabilities). We would contend that RTI is broader than that and should be integrated into any effective school reform effort that strives to meet the needs of ANY student, whether struggling or exceptionally advanced.

Researchers have typically studied the implementation of RTI in the context of a three-tiered system of interventions. The Exceptional Student Services Unit has proposed a basic three-tiered triangle as a way to conceptualize increasingly intense levels of support that might be needed to address academic or behavioral needs of any student.

Colorado School-Wide System for Student Success



IV. Leadership and Systems Change

The successful implementation of *Response to Intervention* will depend on effective systems and leadership being in place at all levels. Certainly, RTI is not something that can be carried out by special educators alone. Rather, it should be considered to be a natural “fit” with other district or school-based reform efforts that are aimed at closing the achievement gap for any student who is struggling. Collaboration between general and special educators at the district, school and classroom levels is essential.

Particularly germane to the implementation of RTI is McREL’s “School Leadership That Works Framework” (Waters, Marzano, McNulty, ASCD presentation, March, 2005). Addressed was McREL’s leadership question: “What must leaders know and be able to do to both improve current forms of schooling and to lead the transition from current forms to new and more productive forms of schooling?” Along with identifying key leadership responsibilities of principals, they emphasized the important difference between stakeholders’ perceptions of the magnitude of a particular change initiative. They delineate the perceived magnitude as being either of a first-order or second-order nature.

According to their definition, a first-order change implies a logical extension of past and current practices intended to make incremental improvements in the current situation. First-order changes can be implemented with current knowledge and skills. A second-order change implies a fundamental or significant break with past and current practices intended to make dramatic differences in the current situation. Second-order changes require new knowledge and skills for successful implementation. They may be perceived as conflicting with prevailing values and norms and as being complex in nature.

McREL researchers stress the importance of leaders at all levels to realize that a specific change or initiative will not be perceived in the same way by all stakeholders. Where some will see a change as the natural progression in school improvement, others will see the change as a significant break from current practice. Leaders will need to employ different strategies and types of support according to stakeholders’ varying perceptions of the change and its impact on their own beliefs and practices. If most stakeholders perceive a change to be second-order, it would be expected that full implementation will take longer to achieve than if the change is most commonly perceived to be a first-order change.

One example of a school improvement model embraced by many schools/districts is *Professional Learning Communities (PLC)*. Within this model, three essential questions are addressed:

- (1) What do we want students to learn?
 - identification of essential knowledge, skills and understandings for all students
- (2) How will we know if they have learned it?
 - ongoing monitoring of progress, common assessments, etc.
- (3) What do we do when some students don’t learn or have already learned it? –
 - provide whatever support needed from a pyramid of interventions so no student left to fail

RTI could then be seen as logical next step for a school implementing *PLC*. In this sense, stakeholders embracing *PLC* or another school improvement model with similar goals might perceive RTI as a first-order change and leaders could expect to realize the full implementation in a relatively short period of time.

V. Readiness for RTI

The Exceptional Student Services Unit of the Colorado Department of Education has started to identify “Indicators of Readiness” for RTI implementation. A Task Force of various stakeholders met to review and revise these indicators. Schools are in various stages of readiness, but most have probably addressed these indicators in some manner through other school reform efforts. These indicators will be the basis for a self-assessment tool that will be available to assist schools/districts in determining “next steps” toward effective RTI implementation.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

The following is a brief description of CDE's proposed **Indicators of Readiness for RTI**:

- ☆ Effective student assistance teams are joint function of general educators and specialists (e.g., special education, G/T, ELL, and literacy specialists), utilize a problem-solving model for improving student outcomes, and exemplify a collaborative process among educators and with families.
- ☆ High quality, research-based curriculum and instruction are evident in general education, particularly in the areas of reading, writing, spelling, math and behavior.
- ☆ Universal screening and prescriptive/ongoing assessment practices that utilize direct measures of strengths and challenges in areas of achievement, talents, and behavior are in place.
- ☆ Levels of intervention are identified and resources allocated; interventions are provided through a flexible service delivery model and evaluated as to fidelity of implementation.
- ☆ Ongoing, job-embedded professional development for all staff that includes follow-up coaching and addresses topics key to successful RTI implementation, such as: collaborative/ data-driven decision making; collaborative delivery of instruction/interventions; research-based instruction/interventions; prescriptive assessment and progress monitoring techniques

VI. Current and Future Work by ESSU:

Certainly, this article only touches the surface of RTI. How it will be incorporated into Colorado's eligibility criteria is yet to be determined. The Federal Regulations to accompany IDEA 2004 need to be released prior to any definitive changes at the state level. In the meantime, there is a lot about RTI that just makes sense and is in alignment with many whole school reform initiatives that aim to improve the achievement of any student who is at risk of not reaching his/her potential. The following bullets summarize key elements of the Exceptional Student Services Unit's plans to clarify what RTI is and to support its implementation across the state. Some of this work has already begun.

- ⇒ Form RTI/LD Eligibility Task Force & Work Groups
- ⇒ Complete a "Readiness for RTI: Self-Assessment Tool"
- ⇒ Provide support documents to assist schools in addressing the readiness indicators
- ⇒ Propose changes to Colorado statute
- ⇒ Increase focus on adolescent literacy (interventions for the older struggling reader)
- ⇒ Continue work through 2005-2006 on new guidelines for RTI implementation and for LD (PCD) eligibility criteria
- ⇒ Propose changes to Colorado rules
- ⇒ Provide ongoing opportunities for professional development and networking

For further information from the varying perspectives of leading researchers and practitioners, I would invite you to explore the papers and PowerPoint presentations from the RTI Symposium sponsored by the National Research Center for Learning Disabilities (NRCLD) in December 2003 at the following website: <http://www.nrclid.org/html/symposium2003>

The following link is to the complete **Learning Disabilities Roundtable 2004** document, "**Comments and Recommendations on regulatory issues under the Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, February 2005.**"

<http://www.cldinternational.org/Pages/articles/LDRoundtable.pdf>

Candy Myers
Principal Consultant
Exceptional Student Services Unit
Colorado Department of Education



Regional News

Southwest

Regional Professional Development projects in the Southwest have focused on two topics this year: Professional Learning Communities and Responsiveness to Intervention. The two topics are well aligned, interdependent, and have the ability to impact at a systemic level. Districts throughout the region have increased their involvement in RPDC projects and these regional initiatives have become highly integrated into school and district goals.

Using the Professional Learning Community structure, the RPDC is working with schools to create and maintain a seamless continuum of learning across general and special education that is based on the multi-tiered prevention/intervention model. School improvement of this nature requires the alignment of general and special education around well defined goals for student learning, a comprehensive system of curriculum-based progress monitoring, and the effective implementation of research and evidence-based educational practices.

In addition to hosting training events, the RPDC has also made a commitment to increasing job embedded professional development. Regional projects have included regularly scheduled collaboration and on-site coaching to support educators as they implement their new learning.

A true highlight of the year in the SW is the increased collaboration and cooperation between the districts, BOCS, and the RPDC. Opportunities to increase educators' skills and abilities were greatly enhanced by support from BOCS, districts, and the C2D3 statewide initiative. The SW RPDC is looking forward to another great year of professional growth and capacity building as we work together with our districts, BOCS, CDE and other state initiatives.

Southeast

Southeast RPDC MAPPING Our Way to Success!

"Wow!" she said. "I can't believe that our kids are actually excited about taking the CSAPs this year." Other principals chimed in, "I've never seen our kids so eager about the tests." "It sure has made a big difference in our school." What is it that has these principals and their teachers approaching the CSAPs so differently this year? It's an RPDC initiative in the Southeast Region called the Achievement MAP (Mastering the Achievement Process). This initiative has reached well over a hundred teachers and administrators in fifteen school districts in the southeast region and continues to reap success and enthusiasm amongst the participants.

The *Achievement MAP* process is a guide for a consolidated approach to achievement planning and implementation. It is not another curriculum or an additional load on your plate. It is a way to organize what you already have on

(Continued on page 8)

Regional News*(Continued from page 7)*

your plate and make it manageable. The Achievement MAP uses a seven step process which provides a topography of achievement planning. It guides educators through each of seven steps – including staff determination of what students most need to learn, analysis of classroom and/or other assessment data, and coaching for implementation of curricula or teaching strategies that are essential for obtaining success for ALL students.

The MAP links to resources that focus and strengthen the work in each step of the process. This model incorporates the work of Rick DuFour's Learning Communities, Robert Marzano's Classroom Instruction That Works, and Schmoker's Results Teams into a consolidated way to effectively and systematically address student achievement by focusing on best practices that are based on rigorous scientific research and collegiality. The seven steps of the Achievement MAP include the following:

Essential Knowledge: Defining Intended Curriculum (Marzano)

Assessment of Essentials: Collect and Analyze data (Schmoker)

Achievement Goal: Implemented Curriculum (Marzano)

Tools and Strategies: Teachers acquire/develop and implement research-based tools and strategies (Darling-Hammond)

Teaching and Learning: Supporting successful application of good teaching strategies (Marzano, Cohen & Hill)

Assessed Goal: Attained Curriculum (Wiggins, Schmoker, DuFour & Eaker)

Additional Support: Using assessment data to identify students who need extended support (Graves)

Research and results from the Achievement MAP pilot projects during this school year indicate the following examples of progress:

Content Area	Pre-Assessment	Post Assessment
8 th Grade Writing Content	38% Proficient	81% Proficient
7 th Grade Writing Sent. Structure	9% Proficient	80% Proficient
HS ACT Tests	38% Proficient	64% Proficient
5 th Grade Math	44% Proficient	88% Proficient
3 rd Grade Reading Fluency	34% Proficient	78% Proficient
10 th Grade Math	43% Proficient	79% Proficient

Additionally, the MAP process provides purpose and specific intent for professional development training provided through the RPDC and gives connectedness to the efforts our teachers make in data-driven decision making, assessment, intended and implemented curriculum and the teaching – learning continuum. Instead of these concepts and activities existing in isolation, teachers now have the roadmap

Regional News

and glue necessary to tie them all together in a structure and process that leads toward greater student achievement and responsibility for their own learning as students become engaged in their own data. That's why there is excitement during CSAP tests in the Southeast Region. Some of us can hardly wait until those results come in!

For additional information about the Achievement MAP process or professional development activities in the Southeast Region, please contact Sandi Hansen, SE RPDC Coordinator at hansen_s@cde.state.co.us or (719) 853-6204.

UPCOMING SE RPDC TRAININGS

April 6	Achievement MAP Cohort 1 workshop	La Junta OJC
April 7	Achievement MAP Cohort 2 workshop	Pueblo Convention Center
April 11	DCIA Coaching	Wiley HS
April 15	DCIA Share-A-Thon	Wiley HS Library
April 18	DCIA Day 1 training	Manzanola
April 19	Achievement MAP Cohort 2 Administrators	Pueblo
	Convention Center	
April 20	SE RPDC Meeting	South Mesa School
April 22	Achievement MAP Cohort 1 workshop	Pueblo
May 2,3	Writing Alive!	La Junta
		Las Animas Elementary
May 6	Achievement MAP Cohort 2 workshop	Pueblo Convention Center
May 27	Writing Alive! Day 2 training	Las Animas Elementary
May 31	Writing Alive! Day 3 training	Las Animas Elementary
June 6,7	Math Strategies for Success	Pueblo
June 8,9	Math Strategies for Success	Lamar

Metro**CHOICE AND CONVENIENCE IN METRO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Success! The Differentiating Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Study Groups offered through the Metro Regional Professional Development Council and the Intervention and Learning Strategies Network of the Front Range BOCES for Teacher Leadership have garnered over 300 participants from 12 Metro Area districts! How did they do it? In large part, by building upon the CDE Training of Trainers in Differentiation and borrowing a few ideas from the successful Colorado Odyssey Project.

(Continued on page 10)

Regional News*(Continued from page 9)*

The Council and the Network considered the diverse needs of Metro schools and districts, the proven effectiveness of imbedded professional development, and the value of choice in their decision to provide this unique opportunity. Educators were offered the chance to join book study groups led by carefully selected facilitators within their school. The facilitators encouraged study, discussion, implementation, and reflection with colleagues. Books which supported school and district goals, as well as differentiation, were chosen by individual groups. Selections included publications such as ***How To Differentiate Instruction in Mixed Ability Classrooms*** by Carol Ann Tomlinson and ***Understanding the Framework of Poverty*** by Ruby Payne. The RPDC Grant provided copies of the selected book, a stipend for facilitators, CU-Denver credit, and a summary conference.

One of the most successful aspects of the project was the culminating "Share-a-thon" on April 16th. "Share-a-thon" topics, related to the books under study, included:

Classroom Instruction That Works: Applying the Strategies with Judi Herm

Differentiated Instruction and the English Language Learner with Maria Uribe

Differentiated Instructional Strategies for Mathematics with Suzie Bley

Organizing and Managing the Differentiated Classroom with Chris Bryan

Wondrous Words: Vocabulary Development Strategies with Linda Block-Gandy

And opportunities to explore helpful strategies, websites, software, and print Material with Debby Middel-Katzenmeyer, Diane Anderson, Molly Leamon, and Kathy Zook and Luanne Todd

The dedication of building level facilitators, support from district and building administrators, and excellent "Share-a-thon" presenters contributed to the unqualified success of this Metro RPDC project. The Council and the Intervention

North Central

and Learning Strategies Network offer them a hearty thanks!

Regional Councils and Partnerships: The Key to Providing Professional Development Resources to Schools

The North Central Regional Council has developed collaborative partnerships in order to identify staff development needs and more effectively provide quality staff development opportunities for special education as well as regular education teachers. Among educators, it is commonly understood that providing resources to schools cannot be accomplished alone. It takes collaboration and the development of partnerships with other organizations to be effective.

In our region, the following questions needed to be answered before we could make appropriate staff development available to the districts in North Central

Regional News

Colorado:

What kind of a partnership do we have to build?

Who needs to be involved?

What can each entity provide and contribute?

Can we accomplish more together than alone? Synergy?

How do we ensure that "turf issues" will not become a problem?

Our first task was to identify organizations that were already involved with staff development activities and that had already established relationships with districts in the region. In the North Central Region, Centennial BOCES had established training relationships with districts and chose to work collaboratively with the North Central Regional Council.

We identified what each entity could bring to the table. The collaborative mindset that emerged enabled the entities involved to invest time and energy to develop trust, determine a common set of values about the purpose and mission of our work, and to break down any "turf issues" that might exist.

CBOCES employs the professional development trainers who use their expertise to respond to the training needs in the area. The Regional Council, in collaboration with Centennial BOCES, submitted grants and received grant funding from the Colorado Department of Education. These grants were based on high priority training needs and training is provided to assist special educators, as well as regular classroom educators to meet the challenges of No Child Left Behind and IDEA.

It was determined that an open forum is essential for effective collaboration among council members. All stakeholders must feel comfortable and appreciated. Council members come to meetings with a vast variety of backgrounds and expertise. Great effort is made to ensure that the individual viewpoints and contributions are respected and valued. Many opportunities exist in council meetings to share ideas and to express concerns as well as needs in a safe setting. The entire Council decides on the staff development priorities based on various data. Subcommittees composed of volunteers that range from university professors to special education directors, as well as parents meet frequently to address the fine details.

The trainings offered by our Council in cooperation with Centennial BOCES are based on the National Staff Development Council guidelines. It is the Council's aim to provide our region with the most up-to-date, research based information and training available. All training projects also include a coaching element because research emphasizes that coaching is essential for successful, long range implementation of training programs. Coaching provides practice, assistance and ensures accountability.

Effective collaboration is not an easy task. It takes time to build relationships and create trust among all stakeholders.

Regional News**Northwest****Math in the Mountains - 4 Math Symposium Workshops Scheduled**

We're taking a regional approach to the issue of low math CSAP scores by developing a program based on the intervention triangle that addresses: universal interventions, targeted group interventions and intensive individual interventions. The workshops will be held in 3 locations over 2 weeks for 19 district.

1. Adding It All Together to Make Sense of Math - this workshop is for K-12 teachers, providing a framework for daily classroom delivery of math instruction that will increase student achievement. June 20-22, Brush Creek Elementary School, Eagle
2. The 3 C's of Math: Content, Concepts and CSAP for Grades 3-5 - Teachers will develop an understanding for teaching methods that promote problem solving, communication and reasoning. June 20 & 21, Human Services Bldg. Steamboat Springs
3. Aligning Math Curriculum and Teaching Strategies to CSAP for Grades 6-10 - the focus of this workshop will be on "What is taught, When it is taught, and How it is taught" June 13 & 14, Summit County High School, Frisco
4. Knowing Mathematics - for teachers and administrators Grades 4-6. This research-based approach to instruction helps students who are two or more years below grade level get back on track so they can successfully participate in grade-level curricula. June 13 & 14, Summit County High School, Frisco.

Northeast**2004-05 Professional Development Plan completed**

The Northeast RPDC accomplished a great deal in a short amount of time this spring. The council was able to complete the 2004-05 Professional Development Plan which included the following activities:

- 2-day Transitional Mathematics workshop
- 1-day building level coaching and team building trainings with Randy De Pry
- Reimbursements for one-year SWIS license
- 20-user licenses for Makes Sense Strategies

In addition to following through on the current year's plan, the Northeast RPDC worked together to develop the 2005-06 Professional Development Plan. The Council looks forward to supporting the 32 districts in the northeast by offering professional learning opportunities focused on systemic improvement.

Implementation of these initiatives will help improve the quality of education being provided to all students including those with disabilities and those with exceptional abilities. The 2005-06 activities include:

- Leadership Capacity for Sustained Improvement workshop with Dr. Diana Sirko, Aspen School District Superintendent
- Professional Learning Communities workshop with Dr. Dennis King, Blue Valley School District (Overland Park, KS) Executive Director of School Improvement

Regional News

Continuous Improvement Coaches to support principals and school leadership teams in implementing what is learned in the above workshops
Response to Intervention workshops with Dr. Mark Shinn, National Louis University (Evanston, IL) Professor
Mini-Grant opportunities for schools/districts to support other professional learning opportunities

For additional information, please contact:

Tanya Poe

Northeast Regional Professional Development Coordinator

tmpoe@bresnan.net

303-263-5310

West Central**West Central Looks Forward To 2005-2006**

The overarching goal during the planning for professional development within the West Central region continues to be for it to closely tie to other school and higher education training efforts that directly impact student achievement. It is believed that by increasing knowledge and skills for parents, administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and other specialists the learning gap can be closed for students at risk or failing and for students at risk of not reaching their potential, including those who may be gifted and talented.

The West Central Regional Professional Development Council has worked hard to establish the following priorities for the 2005-2006 school year:

- Provide training opportunities and follow-up for school teams to improve collaboration between special education and general education in implementing effective pre-referral building-level processes that work to reduce over-identification of students with disabilities while ensuring proper individual interventions are made for all students including those who may be a risk or gifted/talented.
- Provide a variety of individualized activities at the local school district level for families of exceptional students including information, materials, and training that the districts have identified as a need in order to increase their participation in their students' education.
- Provide a continued sequence of research-based skills training which will lead to paraprofessional who are qualified to perform their duties as assigned in meeting the identified needs of students with disabilities.
- Provide co-sponsorship of the Crossroads Conference within the region in order to continue to support the statewide initiative and regional goal of assisting schools to develop and maintain appropriate positive behavior supports for all students.

Targeting activities within the region that help school professional and paraprofessional staffs to intervene early with behavioral and academic challenges

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

of students will be the major emphasis of the regional efforts this next school year. Schools, along with the strong supportive relationships established with the parents and families, can truly make a difference in the performance at school of all students.

For more information please contact:

Dick Dowell, Coordinator

West Central Regional Professional Development Council

970-242-3177 r.dowell@bresnan.net

Pikes Peak

Regional Professional Development Council Pikes Peak Region

The Pikes Peak Region has been busy with a number of trainings during the 2004-05 school year with parent, administrator, general and special educator participation. Our Council supported professional development activities that have included *DCIA* and *Cognitive Coaching, Positive Behavior Support, Curriculum Based Measurement, Closing the Achievement Gap* Teleconference, *Parent Mentor Training, Parent Engagement* as a follow-up to the Inclusion Conference, *Student Intervention Team Training*, and a workshop on the *Pikes Peak Literacy Strategies Project*. Most of our activities are initiated and orchestrated by lead agencies/districts with the Council supporting the actual costs of training.

A notable effort in the Pikes Peak Region over the last two years has been the *Pikes Peak Regional Training Project for Paraeducators*. This project has been coordinated through the work of Ivory Mitchell and Patsy Wilborn from the Harrison School District. It has encompassed ongoing CO-TOP academies in addition to Key Train Test Preparation for the WorkKeys test so paraeducators may complete the requirements toward being considered highly qualified under NCLB. We believe approximately 400 individuals will have participated in the CO-TOP academies and a similar number in the Key Train Test Preparation prior to the close of this fiscal year. Additionally, because of the success of this project, the PARA Center has supported a Cohort for 20 participants to transition to the Pikes Peak Community College program for an AA or AGS degree.

We look forward to next school year when we will continue to support professional development efforts that focus on 1) data analysis, 2) instructional strategies, 3) *Response to Intervention*, 4) paraeducator training, and 5) parent engagement. These areas of priority were established through multiple sources of input from various stakeholders.

5th Annual Colorado Deaf Education Summer Institute

June 20 – 24, 2005

Lion Square Lodge - Vail, Colorado

Workshop 1
Progress Monitoring and Instructional Planning
 June 20-21, 9am-noon; 1:30-5:30pm
 Instructors: Susan Rose, Ph.D. & Patricia McAnally, Ph.D.
 University of Minnesota

Workshop 2
Portfolios for Student Growth: Collect, Reflect, Decide, Achieve
 June 22, 9am-noon; 1:30-5:30pm
 Instructors: Susan Jacoby, & Matt Goedecke, Gallaudet University

Workshop 3
Visual Phonics
 June 23-24, 9am-noon; 1:30-5:30pm
 Instructors: Bettie Waddy-Smith, Clerc Center/ Gallaudet University & Vanessa Wilson, Montgomery County (MD) School District

Lodging
 Lion Square Lodge
 660 W. Lionshead Place
 Vail, CO 81657

Participants are responsible for their own reservations and housing. Call the Lion Square Lodge at 800-525-5788. Please indicate CDE when making your reservations. The block of rooms will be held until May 19, 2005.

Lodge Room (sleeps 2)	\$125/night
1 Bedrm (sleeps 2)	\$135/night
1 Bedrm + loft (sleeps 4)	\$190/night
2 Bedrm/2 Bath (sleeps 4)	\$205/night

All rooms include bedding/linens. Condos have an additional sleeper sofa in the living room as well as full kitchen, fireplace, deck and grill. There is also a heated pool and hot tubs. Campgrounds are available in the area for those who wish more rustic accommodations!

Registration Form

Participation is limited for all sessions – Register early

Name _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

School District/

Employer _____

Phone _____ email _____

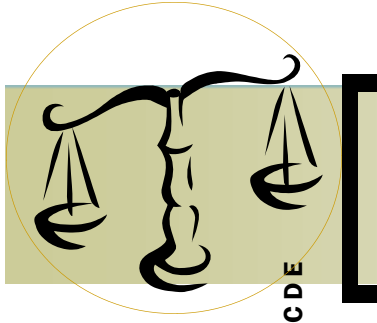
Accommodations Needed: Sign Language Interpreter ___ Other _____

Fees:	in-state fee	out-of- state fee
Workshop 1 (June 20-21):	\$70	\$85
Workshop 2 (June 22):	\$35	\$45
Workshop 3 (June 23-24):	\$70	\$85

Total Fees Paid:
\$ _____

To register: Complete and mail a copy of this form with your check, payable to the Colorado Department of Education, to: Sharron Fieber, CDE-ESSU
 201 E. Colfax Ave.
 Denver, Co 80203

Keep a copy of this form for your records as confirmation of registration.



SPECIAL REVIEW
A NEWSLETTER ABOUT SPECIAL
EDUCATION LAW ISSUES

Exceptional Student Services Unit
 Colorado Department of Education

Changes in effect

Rules for the Exceptional Children's Educational Act

On January 13, 2005, the State Board of Education approved a package of amendments to the ECEA Rules (2005 Amendments). The 2005 Amendments went into effect on March 5, 2005.

The primary focus of the 2005 Amendments is to clarify requirements involving tuition costs for special education students who attend school out-of-district at the parent's choice. Such schools include traditional schools, charter schools and on-line programs ("choice school"). A choice school may claim tuition costs from the child's district of residence if the child spends more than 60% of his/her time in special education as specified by the child's IEP. Tuition costs are those costs in excess of the revenues received by the choice school for educating the child.

Under the 2005 Amendments,

tuition contracts must be established. For charter schools and on-line programs, a tuition rate must also be approved by the State Board of Education. Regardless of whether the choice school seeks tuition costs, the choice school must notify the district of residence that the child is attending the choice school. In addition, new procedures have been added to the ECEA Rules for resolving tuition disputes.

The Amendments also involve other important changes to the ECEA Rules. For example, administrative units of attendance now have primary responsibility for special education functions. There are also changes in the placement rules to address the unique circumstances of on-line education.

Because it is not possible to summarize all of the 2005

changes to the ECEA Rules in this short article, we strongly encourage our readers to take the time to carefully review the 2005 ECEA Rules. You may access the 2005 ECEA Rules at:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/download/ECEARules2005.pdf>

It is also important to note that the 2005 Amendments do not address IDEA 2004. At this time, OSEP anticipates that new regulations implementing IDEA 2004 will be finalized in December 2005. After the federal regulations are final, CDE will begin its own process to align the ECEA Rules to IDEA 2004. CDE's current goal is to have amended ECEA Rules in place by July 2006.

By Laura L. Freppel
 Senior Consultant, CDE



**Visit our
 Website**



- Our home page is found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/index.htm>
- For Parents Rights and other special education informational brochures: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/info.htm>
- To view the Rules for the Administration of the Exceptional Children's Educational Act: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/download/ECEARules2005.pdf>

Burden of Proof

Who bears the Burden of Proof in a Due Process Hearing?

According to the Special Education Dictionary, “burden of proof” is defined as: “Generically understood as the duty of one of the parties to a legal dispute to prove a fact or an issue in dispute such that the decision maker will rule in the party’s favor; technically comprised of two separate components: the burden of production and the burden of persuasion. Neither the IDEA statute nor regulations address who has the burden of proof in proceedings under the IDEA, making it largely a matter of state or local law. Courts have followed several different approaches in allocating the burden in judicial and administrative proceedings under the IDEA. For example, in *Urban v. Jefferson County School District R-1*, 21 IDELR 985 (D. Colo. 1994), the court stated that the burden of proof varies depending on the adequacy of the IEP.” Norlin, John W., Esq. (Ed.). (2003). *Special Education Dictionary Revised Edition*, Horsham, PA:LRP Publications. Depending on the jurisdiction, the burden of proof issue is approached differently.

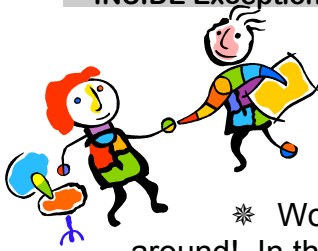
In *Weast v. Schaffer*, “An ALJ ruled the parents bore the burden of proving the IEP was inadequate. But on appeal, the District Court placed the burden of proof on the district and awarded the parents reimbursement. Reversing the lower court, the 4th Circuit decided there was no reason to depart from the general rule of allocating the burden of proof to the party seeking relief.” *Weast v. Schaffer*, 377 F.3d 449, 449 (2004). In its decision, the 4th Circuit stated that “by the time the IEP is finally developed, parents

have been provided with substantial information about their child’s educational situation and prospects.” “In sum, Congress has taken into account the natural advantage a school system might have in the IEP process, including the administrative hearing, by providing the explicit protections we have outlined. As a result, the school system has no unfair information or resource advantage that compels us to reassign the burden of proof to the school system when the parents initiate the proceeding.” *Weast v. Schaffer*, 377 F.3d 449, 454. The Court finds that “the IDEA does not allocate the burden of proof, and we see no reason to depart from the general rule that a party initiating a proceeding bears that burden,” and they “hold that parents who challenge an IEP have the burden of proof in the administrative hearing.” *Weast v. Schaffer*, 377 F.3d 449, 456 (2004).

In this 2 to 1 decision by the 4th Circuit, the dissenting judge wrote an opinion maintaining that the district should bear the burden. An appeal of the decision has gone before the U.S. Supreme Court which has agreed to hear the appeal. This ruling is expected by June of this year. Norlin, John W., Esq. (Ed.). (2005). *Supreme Court Bulletin: High court to decide burden of proof issue*, Horsham, P A : L R P Publications.

Publications.





School-wide Positive Behavior Support Happenings

- * Word on SW-PBS is getting around! In the year of initial implementation (2002-03), SW-PBS was piloted at 16 schools in 2 school districts, with 2 PBS coaches. The next year (2003-04), implementation grew to 60 schools in 9 school districts, with 10 PBS coaches. This past school year (2004-05), it grew even further to 136 schools in 21 school districts, with 24 PBS coaches. Next year, SW-PBS is really taking off! We are expecting to implement at 280 schools in 31 school districts! We will have representation in 7 out of the 8 educational regions in the state!
- * It's good to be a PBS Coach! Colorado has created a nationally-recognized coaching model to build capacity across the state. PBS Coaches receive 5 days of intensive training per year to support them in successful implementation of PBS practices, building parent collaboration and using data to drive decision making. The coaches take their experience and expertise back to the teams in their districts to keep the SW-PBS wheel turning smoothly! Jessica Krueger, our recently hired PBS Coach Mentor, will be working closely with the new PBS coaches to answer questions, suggest

ideas and give support.

- * Kiki McGough, PBS Coordinator and Jessica Krueger recently attended the Association of Positive Behavior Supports international conference in Tampa, FL. They were joined by Shirley Swope from PEAK Parent Center and representatives from an exemplar PBS site in Adams 12 Five Star School District. Kiki and Shirley presented a 90-minute breakout session focusing on parent engagement and how to get families involved in PBS. The room was filled to capacity as educators learned "tips and tricks" to getting families more involved. The crowd especially liked playing "Family Engagement Feud" and created quite a ruckus that made presenters in the nearby rooms envious of the fun we were having! The team also presented a poster session demonstrating the Coaching Model used in the state of Colorado for SW-PBS. Many of the "big wigs" from the University of Oregon stopped by to give their stamp of approval and kudos to Colorado for being one of their "shining stars" in the implementation of SW-PBS.



" You cannot hope to build a better world without improving individuals. We all must work for our own improvement, and at the same time, share a general responsibility for all humanity."

Marie Curie



PEAK Parent Center Provides Training and Information to Colorado Families

Overview

PEAK Parent Center has been federally-designated as the Parent Training and Information Center in Colorado since 1985. PEAK also provides technical assistance to 13 parent centers in Colorado, Utah, Kansas, Wyoming, New Mexico, Montana, Arizona, Nebraska, South Dakota, and North Dakota. In addition, PEAK oversees the Denver Community Parent Resource Center that provides training and information to culturally-diverse families in inner city Denver.

The mission of PEAK Parent Center is to ensure that individuals with disabilities live rich, active lives and participate as full members of their schools and communities. To accomplish this mission, PEAK Parent Center provides training, information, and technical assistance to equip parents to advocate successfully for their children. PEAK helps families make informed decisions about early childhood, education, transition, employment, recreation, and other services for their children with disabilities.

PEAK's services include a toll-free hotline staffed by trained parent advisors, a calendar of parent support activities, workshops on topics in special education across Colorado, two annual conferences, *SPEAKout* newsletter, a website, books and videos, a family library, and other services. PEAK is nationally-recognized for its work on inclusive education.

PEAK is a non-profit organization whose services are free or low cost to Colorado families of children with disabilities. PEAK also provides the following fee-based services: consultation on inclusive education, customized in-service training, and project evaluation to schools and districts.

PEAK Workshops

PEAK presents its workshops across the state on topics related to educating children with disabilities. PEAK workshop topics include:

- Understanding IEPs
- Accommodations and Modifications
- Solving the Employment Puzzle for Youth with Disabilities
- Transition—Grade to Grade, School to School
- Understanding Troubling Behavior as Communication
- Understanding ADHD
- NCLB and Students with Disabilities
- Bullying

PEAK Conferences

PEAK offers two conferences each year:

The 2006 Conference on Inclusive Education is scheduled for January 19-21, 2006 in Denver, CO at the Denver Tech Center Hyatt Regency. Now in its 19th year, this national event brings together hundreds of teachers, parents, administrators, related service personnel, and self-advocates to learn educational strategies and best practices.

PEAKs also offers a cultural conference each year for parents and professionals. This year

“Continuing the Circle: Ability and Culture” will be held April 28, 2005 in Denver, CO. The conference offers attendees the opportunity to learn about cultures different from their own, and to discuss ways to join together to enhance the lives of all children.

PEAK Parent Center works in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Education on a number of initiatives;

Positive Behavior Supports Initiative

The purpose of the PBS initiative is to establish and maintain safe and effective school environments that maximize the academic achievement and behavioral competence of all learners in Colorado. PEAK and CDE provide trainings to parents and educators on Positive Behavior Supports including how school-wide programs can complement their efforts at home.

Parent Mentor Project

Another joint initiative between PEAK and CDE is the Parent Mentor Project. PEAK hires part-time mentors in each of the eight regions of Colorado to outreach and share pertinent information with families and educators. Mentors are parents of a child with a disability who have first-hand advocacy experience. They work on statewide efforts, as well as on activities unique to their particular regions. Mentors participate on Regional Professional Development Councils (RPDCs) and serve as regional conduits of information between CDE, PEAK, and the families, and service providers in their regions.

Person Centered Planning Project

This innovative project is also jointly sponsored by PEAK and CDE. Person Centered Planning assists young people across Colorado to identify a plan for the future with a focus on the student’s interests, preferences, and vision. As part of this program, groups including transition-aged young people, their families, and friends meet for a planning session with a trained facilitator. During the sessions, the students and their “circle of support” create life plans for how to reach their goals.

Calendar of Parent Support Activities

This calendar for families and educators is sponsored by PEAK and CDE to get the word out across Colorado about events and activities of interest to parents and teachers of children with disabilities. The Calendar is primarily an online calendar and may be viewed on PEAK’s website at www.peakparent.org. Selected entries are printed twice each year in PEAK’s SpeakOut newsletter. New entries to the calendar editor may also be submitted through PEAK’s website.

PEAK Contact Information

PEAK has offices in Denver and Colorado Springs in addition to Parent Mentors located in eight regions across the state. (See the attached map for mentor contact information.) Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays. Voicemail is available when PEAK offices are closed.

Colorado Springs Office

611 N. Weber Street, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
Toll-free: (800) 284-0251 (Statewide)
Phone: (719) 531-9400
FAX: (719) 531-9452
Email: info@peakparent.org
Web: www.peakparent.org

Denver Office

1212 Mariposa Street, Suite 6
Denver, CO 80204
(303) 864-1900 (Denver)
(303) 864-0035 (Denver)





COLORADO STATE IMPROVEMENT GRANT (SIG): Addressing Colorado's Recruitment and Retention Needs

The Colorado State Improvement Grant (SIG), administered by the Colorado Department of Education, Exceptional Student Services Unit, is in its second year and addresses 2 primary goals: 1) Recruitment and Retention of special educators and related service professionals, and 2) providing School-wide Positive Behavior Support in Colorado schools (see article in this issue). This article will address goal 1.

This five year SIG is being utilized to improve the performance of students with disabilities by addressing the inadequate numbers of teaching and speech/language professionals in our schools. To address this critical need, both recruitment activities and retention activities are underway.

Recruitment 1—SLP Project: One successful activity is aimed at expanding the in-state training capacity so that all speech and language pathologist vacancies within LEAs can be filled with fully licensed professionals. The SIG is partnering with the University of Northern Colorado and the University of Colorado at Boulder to increase the number of graduates trained as speech language pathologists by 25%. In addition, over \$28,000 will be distributed to high need Administrative Units requesting funds to support staff in SLP and SLP-A programs.

Recruitment 2—Transition of Para educators to Special Education Teachers (TOP-SET)

The SIG is partnering with The Par²a Center on the TOP-SET project (Transition of Para educators to Special Education Teachers). Over \$125,000 from SIG and other CDE funds were available for Para educators to become licensed special educators. Next fall additional funds will be available so that districts can participate in this "grow your own" project to increase the number of licensed special education teachers.

Retention 1—The MENTOR Project

Mentoring Educators Now Through On-Going Relationships (The MENTOR Project) has been created to provide support to new and beginning special educators through the power of mentoring. On April 29, 2005, Mary Hasl, our project consultant, spoke to Special Education Directors about the merits of mentoring, the positive impact it can have on teacher performance, and ultimately student achievement. A two-day workshop in Denver on June 14 and June 15 will provide information and skills for teachers that would like to serve as formal mentors to new and beginning teachers starting in the fall of 2005. This year the project will be piloted in the NE and NW regions of the state.

Retention 2—Retaining Alternative Facility Teachers (RAFT Project)

The State Improvement Grant (SIG) is providing funds to special education teachers who are not fully qualified and teach in state-approved alternative facilities. Currently, many facility teachers transfer to school districts once they are fully licensed. The RAFT Project provides stipends to educators to complete their coursework and remain teaching in the facility two years after they are fully licensed. Facility administrators remain optimistic that more special education teachers will remain in their facility.

Retention 3—Support for Vision and Hearing Providers

Another SIG retention activity provides incentives to teachers certified in sensory disabilities in rural areas and "hard to fill positions". Funds are available for providers experiencing excess travel, teaching overload, high caseload, and technology needs. New employees in the region receive the support of an experienced colleague. In addition, "grow your own" tuition stipends are available for rural licensed teachers to obtain an additional endorsement in Deaf education or blind/visually impaired.



Summer Mental Health Institute to Feature Prominent National and Local Speakers

The 2005 Summer Mental Health Institute: "**Partnerships to Promote Positive Social-Emotional Competence**" promises to be an exciting opportunity for school psychologists, social workers and other related services providers to hear from a wide range of experts in the area of socio-emotional competence. The institute will take place on June 9 & 10, from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. at the Lowry Event Center, located at 9026 E. Severn Place, Denver, CO 80220.

The keynote speaker on June 9 will be Dr Hill Walker, professor of Special Education and Co-Director of the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior at the University of Oregon. He will present on both "Overcoming Pathways to Destructive Outcomes by Enhancing School and Social-Emotional Success" and "Evidence-based Early Intervention across Home and School Contexts."

The June 10 keynote, "Supporting Social Emotional Competence and Preventing Challenging Behaviors in Children" will be delivered by Dr. Mary Louise Hemmeter, associate professor in Special Education at the University of Illinois, whose research is related to promoting early effective instruction, social-emotional development and preventing challenging behavior.

Breakout sessions on the second day include a wide range of speakers that will address early intervention and prevention, play-based approaches, social-emotional interventions, intentional family-centered practice, mental health in young children, etc.

1 CEU credit will be offered through UNC. Registration for 2 days will be \$80.

The institute content was designed to respond to needs expressed by a "Futures in School Psychology" survey conducted in the fall of 2004. In addition to RTI, school psychologists reported a strong need for training on evidence based practices related to socio-emotional competence.

In addition to CDE and the University of Denver, other sponsors contributing to this year's institute include JFK Partners, Project Bloom and the University of Northern Colorado.

Registration materials are anticipated to be available by the end March. Please check the CDE School Psychology web page. Information will also be sent to Special Ed. Directors as soon as it is available.

For more information, please Joni Kohlman at jwiener2@du.edu or Barb Bieber at bieber_b@cde.state.co.us.





Sliver Grant Spotlight: Focus on Results Colorado (FoR Colorado)

By Stacy Skalski

The **FoR (Focus on Results) Colorado** project is a 3-year collaborative Sliver grant project between the Cherry Creek School District (CCSD) and Douglas County School District (DCSD). The primary goal of this project is to increase student outcomes by providing quality professional development across two large districts within the context of a three-tiered Responsiveness to Intervention Model (RTI). The project builds upon initiatives by both districts to create and sustain systematic practices that integrate general and special education into a unified system focused on a shared responsibility for student achievement. The deployment of this model was built around the concept that year one would target expanding “knowledge of evidence-based practice” (awareness), year two would target deploying “what works” (exploration), and year three would target system wide “embedded practice” (implementation.)

It has become clear that a shift to a RTI model requires educational leaders to be thoughtful in providing training, supports and structure to ensure that the process is not viewed as a new means for struggling students to enter special education. When developed and implemented with fidelity, all students benefit from practices that encourage educators to use a data-driven processes to collaborate with others.

The FoR Colorado project focuses on five key professional development strands:

Evidenced Based Practice - Using current and empirical professional information as the basis for all professional development activities.

Data Driven Decision Making - Utilization of various types of data to inform educators about student learning (including prediction, progress and outcomes).

Three –Tiered Intervention Practices - Specific intervention skills,

strategies and tools to improve teacher practice in literacy, numeracy and behavior management across all three tiers.

Collaborative Team Process - Using elements of Cognitive Coaching, Critical Friends, and Douglas County collaborative structures that have proven effectiveness.

Parent partnership - Connecting evidence-based practices to collaboration with parents 1 elementary focus and carryover in the home environment.

The emphasis of the first year of this project was building the foundation for the RTI model and providing a general overview of all five of these strands through all project activities.

Four primary needs for this project have been identified: (1) the need to build general education leadership for the RTI model; (2) the need to strengthen the problem-solving team process to improve student performance; (3) the need to improve CBM practices and data-driven decision making across all schools; and (4) the need to Collaborate with the Colorado Department of Education in the development of effective methods and structures for implementing the RTI model.

In order for a RTI model to impact student learning, all educators and administrators must have foundational knowledge, understanding and skills that they can apply consistently and collaboratively. Year 1 of the project focused on building the capacity for RTI leadership within the general education community through participation in an Elementary and Secondary symposium and through the selection of special consultants (District Facilitators) to support the implementation of RTI practices in schools. On October 11, 2004 (elementary) and on January 5, 2005 (secondary) 2-3

(Continued on page 24)

(Continued from page 23)

representatives from all CCSD and DCSD schools were invited to attend the day-long symposia. Over 200 general educators and special educators participated in each symposia and each was kicked off by a presentation by Elliot Asp, well-known data guru formally employed by DCSD and currently employed by CCSD, presenting on Data-Based Decision Making. After Elliot's presentation, participants from DCSD and CCSD broke into separate groups to hear "Show me the Data"-- a session presenting district-specific student performance data available for informing instruction and practice. Participants then attended two of six breakout sessions addressing topics such as Foundations of RTI, Problem Solving Teams, Positive Behavior Supports, Curriculum Based Measurement, Developing Learner Profiles, and Research Based Instructional Practices. Each symposia concluded by having selected schools from each district share their experiences implementing RTI components in emerging practice sessions such as Positive Behavior Supports, parent partnerships, targeted reading instruction, flexible service delivery, data driven decision making, and problem solving teams that work.

In addition to the symposium, Year One of this project sought to develop the capacity of schools by creating a consultation support structure. Each district recruited and selected 15 District Facilitators (5 mental health professionals; 5 special educators; and 5 general educators) to act as coaches to selected schools working to implement the RTI model. These facilitators participated in 2 days of training focusing on developing their problem-solving and cognitive coaching skills. The District Facilitators were then assigned to specific schools to support them in their implementation efforts.

Throughout this project, all foundational, organizational and training materials were assembled into notebooks to assist schools by having a permanent record of resources to support their RTI efforts. Each of these supporting resource notebooks has been

made available to consultants from the Colorado Department of Education for broader dissemination to other school districts working to develop an RTI model.

Evaluation data for the first year of the project shows significant gains in the foundational knowledge (awareness) of CCSD and DCSD employees as a result their participation in the grant. Additionally, the FoR Colorado project has increased collaboration between general and special educators and has strengthened the shared responsibility for the academic success for all students.

A collaborative grant team worked with the support of John Doherty, DCSD Executive Director of Instructional Support Services and Ed Steinberg, CCSD Executive Director of Pupil Services to design and implement this project. Grant team members include Stacy Skalski, DCSD Coordinator of Mental Health Services; Nancy Steele, DCSD Coordinator of Learning Services; Laura Douglas, CCSD Asst. Director of Special Education; Mary Dove, CCSD Staff Development Specialist; Cathy Lines, CCSD, Mental Health Specialist; and Daphne Pereles, CCSD, GT/Learning Specialist. For more information about this project, please email Nancy Steele at nancy.steele@dcsdk12.org or Daphne Pereles at dpereles@ccsdk12.org.



NELSON MANDELA:

Education is the most
powerful weapon
which you can use to
change the world.

Focus on Visual Impairment

Putting a Face on Blindness/Visual Impairment in Colorado

By Tanni Anthony and Ann Hicks



If asked to think of a blind person, most of us will conjure up a handful of famous faces: Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder, Eric Weihanmayer, or Tom Sullivan. Or the face of an aging parent may come to mind or a child or a teacher in one of your schools. You may also think of someone who is not totally blind, but who has significantly limited vision. The term visual impairment includes a host of terms such as blindness, legal blindness, and low vision, each describing different levels of visual loss that cannot be corrected with eye glasses, surgery, or other medical interventions.

Visual impairment can happen at any time of the human life span. It is a low incidence disability in the early years of life, with a prevalence of about 1-2% in the population under the age of 18 years. Colorado has 1,069 children ages birth through 21 years of age who are blind/visually impaired: 59 are infants and toddlers; 186 are preschool age, and 824 are kindergarten through high school age.

Visual impairment in the early years can be caused by a number of factors. The leading cause of pediatric visual impairment in Colorado and the United States is a condition called cortical visual impairment or CVI, which occurs when there is neurological damage to the visual pathways and/or visual cortex. The second and third most prevalent causes include retinopathy of prematurity (ROP) and optic nerve hypoplasia. These conditions fall into the category of ocular visual impairment or problems to a specific part of the eye such as the retina or the optic nerve.

Most students with visual impairment will need to have their instructional materials adapted. About 10 percent of Colorado's children with visual impairment are braille readers. Many students use large print and/or magnification tools such as handheld magnifiers or screen enlargement software on their computers. Other common adaptations might include the use of a slant board to bring reading material closer to the student's eyes, increased contrast between the item being viewed and its background, the use of task lighting, use of color or tactile highlights to equipment and instructional material, and/or tactile maps or graphics.

Colorado has two infant/toddler programs that specialize in visual impairment: the Anchor Center for Blind Children in Denver that offers a state outreach program and the Colorado School for the Blind Infant/Toddler Program, which serves Colorado Springs and the southeastern part of the state. The majority of school age children, preschool through high school, are educated in their home schools. Sixty-three school-age students attend the Colorado School for the Blind on the campus of the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind.

Statistics aside, the face of a child with visual impairment should be the same as any child who is intent on mastering the daily teaching activities at school, the lessons of friendship on the playground, and the routes to and from school and home and everywhere in between. With proper accommodations, a prepared educational team, and high expectations, it is the face of educational success.



Focus on Visual Impairment

The Definition and the Role of a TVI

By Tanni Anthony and Barbara Adams



Ever dream of learning braille? Or being the Annie Sullivan to the Helen Keller of this generation? Or using technology to increase visual access of printed page for a student with low vision, or adapting a physical education game to include a student who is blind, or teaching geography concepts with tactile maps? These are all the skills of a teacher certified in the area of visual impairments (TVI).

Colorado has licensure specific to a teacher certified in the area of visual impairment. The license, entitled Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired for Birth - 21, is reserved for individuals who have graduated from an approved undergraduate or graduate university program specific to educating children with visual impairment. There are rigorous competencies attached to this licensure, as can be found on pages 90-97 of the Rules for the Administration of the Educator Licensing Act of 1991, which are located at www.cde.state.co.us/cdeboard/download/bdregs-301-37.pdf).

The teacher certified in visual impairment is often referred to as a TVI. The focus of this acronym is on the word teacher. This individual should not be referred to as a vision specialist or a vision therapist. There is, however, a special national-level certification, that some TVIs may have called Certified Low Vision Therapist, which is very different from the term vision therapist that is associated with optometric visual exercises. A CLVT is someone who specializes in low vision evaluation and training on low vision devices such as magnifiers.

There are numerous roles of a TVI, as this position requires knowledge of the human development, the regular education curriculum, the impact of visual impairment upon the developing child from birth through 21 years, and the methodology and materials needed for the child to have equal access to the school curriculum. Every child is unique with varying skills, needs, levels of participation, and levels of development. The child's educational team will discuss the type of direct (primary instructor), indirect (collaborating instructors), and/or consultation services that will be necessary from each service provider.

One role that is especially important to highlight is the responsibility of Colorado TVIs to provide the assessment framework for the state-mandated Literacy Modality Plan for every child who is visually impaired. A literacy modality is the method(s) of how a child with a visual impairment accesses information, communicates, and demonstrates literacy. For example, will the child use braille, regular print, tape books, and/or enhanced print as a reading media? It is the responsibility of a TVI to work with the educational team (which, of course, includes parents) to determine the literacy modality(ies) of the child. A Functional Vision and/or Literacy Modality Assessment are the assessment specialties of a TVI. If braille is determined to be a primary or secondary literacy mode for a child, the TVI have a CDE Certificate of Braille Competency on file with his or her administrative unit's human resources office. Visual impairment affects more than a child's academic arena. A TVI is also responsible for ensuring that each child with a visual impairment has access to what is called the *Expanded Core Curriculum*, or "additional knowledge and skills needed beyond the general education curriculum." More information about the Expanded Core Curriculum can be found at <http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/corecurr.htm>.

A Council of Exceptional Children Division on Visual Impairments position paper entitled *The Role and Function of the Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments* by Drs. Susan Jay Spungin and

Focus on Visual Impairment

Kay Alicyn Ferrell can be found on the CEC DVI website at <http://www.ed.arizona.edu/dvi/Postion%20Papers/tvi.htm>. This paper provides an excellent summary of the comprehensive responsibilities of a TVI specific to the following areas: (a) assessment and evaluation; (b) educational and instructional strategies for the learning environment and adapting the curriculum, (c) guidance and counseling, (d) administration and supervision, (e) school community relations.

There are currently about 85 TVIs in Colorado working with close to 1,100 children and youth ages birth through 21 years. More TVIs are needed to fill current vacancies across the state. If you are interested in learning more about the role of a TVI or how to pursue this profession, please contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.



The Colorado Instructional Materials Center

By Ann Hicks

The CIMC (Colorado Instructional Materials Center) is located on the campus of the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind in Colorado Springs. It is our responsibility to ensure that all students with visual impairment have their braille or large print books when they need them. After teachers certified in the area of visual impairment (TVIs) order the books for their students, we look to see if the books are available locally or nationally to borrow or to purchase. If not, then we must either produce them ourselves or pay a vendor to produce them. Math and science books may cost as much as \$17,000 for one copy. It takes at least three pages of braille for each page of print and braille costs anywhere from \$1.75 to \$25 per page. The higher costs are usually math and scientific drawings and graphics.

Our funding comes from three sources. Federal funding comes in the form of a

quota system through the American Printing House for the Blind. This is based on the number of legally blind students in each state and can only be used to purchase products from the APH catalog. The Colorado Department of Education provides federal discretionary funds through ESEA Title VI-B. Because of the high costs of books for students with visual impairments, it has become necessary to assess each school district a fee to help with these costs. The fee for the 2005-06 school year will be \$200 per registered school-aged student (including preschool) who is visually impaired.

Information specific to this assessment fee will be sent out to Directors of Special Education in early May of this year.

For more information about the CIMC, please access their website at http://www.csdb.org/outreach/sb_cimc.html or call Ann Hicks at (719) 578-2195.



Focus on Visual Impairment

UNC TRAINING PROGRAM

SPECIFIC TO VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Grow Your Own - We Have a TVI and O&M Program in Our State!



The University of Northern Colorado offers a Masters Degree in the area of Visual Impairment and a related services license in Orientation and Mobility. This program was established in the 1960s and is recognized as one of the first programs to offer emphasis in the area of the education of young children with visual impairment. It was also one of the first programs to offer a dual certification option in the areas of Visual Impairment AND Orientation and Mobility.

Graduates of the University of Northern Colorado's Visual Impairment Program lead the way in addressing special education needs of students with visual impairment by supporting the unique needs of students who are blind and visually impaired. They work with a wide age range of students, from infants to older children and youth with visual disabilities and their families. Some of the unique skills learned are the braille codes and braille instruction, orientation and mobility, and adaptive technology. Additionally, teachers are trained to plan and conduct successful assessments and educational programs for students with visual impairments in a variety of settings as well as to recommend adaptations and modifications that ensure access to the curriculum.

The Visual Impairment Program at UNC has won the 2001 Best Practice Award for Innovative use of Technology by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and the 2001 Program of Excellence by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.

Special features of the program include online classes throughout the year, a program that leads to Colorado teaching licensure in Visual Impairment and a related services license in Orientation and Mobility. Program information and application is available online at <http://vision.unco.edu>.

For more information please contact Dr. Paula Conroy at (970) 351-1651 or Paula.conroy@unco.edu



Focus on Visual Impairment



The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind— the School for the Blind

By Randy Witte

Back in the "Territory Days" of 1874, General William Palmer gave land to the soon-to-be state of Colorado to establish a school for Deaf students. Some years later, students with visual disabilities were admitted, and today the School for the Blind serves over 60 students enrolled on campus with 30 students aged 0–3 in the infant program that are served in their homes.

The School for the Blind at CSDB is a unique school that combines an educational program along with "the expanded core curriculum for the blind." This curriculum focuses on a general education curriculum, plus the added competencies specific to students who are blind and visually impaired. The School for the Blind provides instruction in this expanded area to include Orientation and Mobility training, Low Vision services, specialized technology instruction, Braille instruction, daily living skills instruction, as well as socialization skills. Some of our students participate in a public school mainstreaming program by taking one or more of their classes in a local public school. The school also provides an infant/toddler program serving this young population in southeast Colorado.

Post-high school students can participate in T-TAPS, or "transition to adult program services." Currently, 14 students are enrolled in this program that emphasizes independence in work skills, daily living skills, and self-advocacy. The T-TAPS program also has 3 students taking one or more classes at Pikes Peak Community College.

The School for the Blind serves as a state-wide resource with its Outreach Program. Students with visual disabilities come to CSDB from around the state for short-term placements, often to be assessed in some of the expanded core curriculum areas. This school year has seen 10 short-term placements, typically lasting for a week.

Several staff members provide additional outreach duties ranging from direct instruction to consultation. Some off-campus students receive services on a temporary basis because there are no other service providers available in their local districts.

Summer is a very busy time at the School for the Blind. Extended School Year and tutoring programs meet for several weeks, and the school hosts several Summer Enrichment camps featuring different themes including Technology, Sports, Daily Living Skills, Orientation and Mobility, Compensatory Skills, and community exploration. Students with visual disabilities from across Colorado take advantage of these fun and friend-building opportunities. CSDB also hosts Family Learning Retreats in June to bring parents and instructors together to learn about their children and have some family fun.

Students in the School for the Blind participate in a variety of activities including Running Club, Children's Literacy, Community Choir, Kamera Kids, Girl Scouts, Rock climbing, golf, fishing, Special Olympics, snow shoeing, skiing, and Book Club, to name a few. Several students serve on the Student Body Government and participate in the El Pomar Youth in Community Service Program. It's a great specialized school in the state-wide continuum of services to students with visual disabilities in Colorado. For more information about the role and services of the School for the Blind, contact Principal Lou Tutt at ltutt@csdb.org or (719) 578-2200.

Focus on Visual Impairment

Students with Low Vision: Ensuring a Full Toolbox

By Tanni Anthony, Ph.D.
State Consultant on Visual Impairment



The majority of the population understands what it means to have a temporary acuity loss by simply removing their glasses or taking out their contact lenses. Without optical correction, vision is blurred at varying levels depending on the degree of nearsightedness, farsightedness, and/or astigmatism for individuals with this condition(s). For about five to ten million Americans, visual acuity loss cannot be corrected with surgery or optics.

The term "low vision" is descriptive of visual impairment that may fall within the mild 20/70 to severe 20/1000 acuity range. A better definition, however, of functional low vision is, "a person who has difficulty accomplishing visual tasks, even with prescribed corrective lenses, but who can enhance his or her ability to accomplish these tasks with the use of compensatory visual strategies, low vision and other devices, and environmental modifications (Corn & Koenig, 1996, p. 4).

Students with low vision typically comprise the majority of the caseload of a teacher certified in visual impairment (TVI). The causes of low vision are varying, as is the resultant vision. Vision may be the dominant mode of learning for some tasks and not for others. The influence of lighting, medications, fatigue, and other environmental conditions will affect the student's visual performance. For example, a child with a condition such as albinism will typically have improved visual performance in environments that are not high in illumination, whereas the dimly lit environment for a person with Retinitis Pigmentosa may be highly problematic. The variance of visual functioning may lead to a misunderstanding of the student's needs for accommodations and specialized instruction.

Research has shown that students with low vision can be overlooked for their unique and highly individualized learning needs (Craig, 1996; Sacks, 1996) School personnel may assume that because the student has vision, he or she does not need adaptive equipment and/or academic or mobility instruction. It is not uncommon that someone may comment, "He *can see*" or "She gets around just fine" without understanding what information may be missed or fragmented due to low vision.

A student with low vision may benefit from a host of learning tools to acquire information specific to school work, mobility, recreation, and daily living. It is critical that each student receive individual attention to assure that he or she has a variety of tools for this purpose. For example, a student with low vision may benefit from braille and the use of the magnification tools such as a stand magnifier or a classroom Closed Circuit

Focus on Visual Impairment

Television (CCTV). Another student may use enlarged print for one task and a pocket magnifier for another task. Different types of lighting may be recommended depending on the task and its environment.

In general, the goal is to provide the student with optical devices and strategies to gain access to standard print in the school environment in the years beyond public school. While a conventional CCTV or a computer with screen enlargement software may be invaluable tools within the classroom or at home, they are not readily portable for tasks in other environments such as reading a restaurant menu, deciphering the price tags at a clothing store, or reading the posted bus route information. A small handheld magnifier and/or a monocular device might be the tools for these latter skills.

Magnification devices should be prescribed by a specialist in low vision after careful evaluation measures. The specialist considers the student's visual ability and the visual demands of tasks and provides direction for incorporating the use of optical devices into the student's daily life. The recommended font size of print material should be based on the functional vision assessment of a certified teacher of students with visual impairment (TVI). Braille instruction must be determined through a collaborative effort by the student's Individual Education Program team under the assessment guidance of a TVI.

CDE's Exceptional Student Services Unit has funded regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics for six years. Since 1999, over 275 students have been evaluated. The mission of the clinics is to "provide lifelong tools for learning, literacy, and independence." The clinics are staffed by an optometrist and TVI with low vision expertise. The purpose of the clinics is not to replace a regular eye exam by the student's local eye health care specialist, but to assess whether the student would benefit from a low vision device(s) such as a magnifier, CCTV, monocular (a handheld telescope for distance viewing), and/or photosensitive or UV protective sun glasses shields. The prescribed devices are sold to school districts and/or the family at cost.

For more information about the assessment and educational needs of students with low vision, please talk to your district or BOCES' TVI or contact Tanni Anthony at <Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us>.

References:

Corn, A. L. & Koenig, A. J. (1996). Perspectives on low vision. In Anne L. Corn & Alan J. Koenig (Eds.) *Foundations of Low Vision: Clinic and Functional Perspectives* (pp.3-25). New York: American Foundation for the Blind.

Craig, C. J. (1996). Family support of the emergent literacy of children with visual impairments. *Journal of Visual Impairments & Blindness*, 90, 194 - 200.

Sacks, A. Z. (1996). Psychological and social implications of low vision. In Anne L. Corn & Alan J. Koenig (Eds.) *Foundations of Low Vision: Clinic and Functional Perspectives* (pp.26-42). New York: American Foundation for the Blind.



Focus on Visual Impairment



The School Orientation & Mobility Specialist and Dual Licensure in Colorado

By Jim Olson, Pat Lewis, Nancy Cozart, and Tanni Anthony
with thanks to the Vision Coalition for their input

Safe and independent travel by an individual with visual impairment is the result of extensive training in the related service area of Orientation and Mobility. A certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist (COMS) teaches travel skills to children with visual impairment. These may include students with visual impairments who are wheelchair travelers, have cognitive and/or physical disabilities, as well as those with a combined sensory loss (combined vision and hearing loss or deafblind).

In Colorado, the term "dual certification" specific to visual impairment refers to individuals who hold a professional teaching license from the Colorado Department of Education specific to teaching students with visual impairments AND a special services license as a School Orientation and Mobility Specialist.. This individual is both a certified teacher and a related service provider.

In Colorado public schools, dually certified individuals are hired so that one individual might address both professional disciplines. The primary role of a teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI) is to teach academic-related compensatory skills and provide the needed accommodations to children from 3-21 who qualify for services under established ECEA guidelines for visual impairment. The COMS teaches travel skills to these same students. Travel skills include a range of concepts and skills depending on the needs of the individual student. One student may be learning to travel from one classroom to another using trailing techniques, another may be using a long cane and learning the techniques of crossing streets to travel from home to school, while another student may be learning bus travel to get to a job site. In addition to the actual mobility component of a student's instruction, the O&M specialist will continually address the spatial concepts associated with travel, self protective techniques, the use of the human guide, map skills, and safety issues.

In addition to the direct instruction of orientation and mobility skills and techniques, the provision of O&M services requires that COMS spend time consulting with staff, parents, peers, and administration; producing tactile and large print maps; planning lessons throughout the community for each student's individual needs; building community relationships; and providing in-service training for a variety of service providers. TVIs do much of the same, emphasizing learning styles, literacy modes, and activities of daily living and compensatory skills. Both certificants comb organizations for donations of

Focus on Visual Impairment

equipment; present for teacher preparation classes; produce individual and specialized materials for each student; continually assess progress, evaluate and prepare reports for students, parents and staff; teach their students social skills; and continually update and enhance their teaching skills by taking classes and attending conferences.

A key component to making the dually certified teacher effective in his/her roles with students is to ensure this individual has a manageable caseload and time to address the education instruction AND travel needs of identified students. Issues develop that may be in direct conflict with providing appropriate instruction in each area of skill in the IEP. It is important to share some thoughts from dually certified TVI/COMSs in Colorado.

"Being responsible for teaching academic-related compensatory skills and teaching O&M lessons is very challenging. I think the two most challenging aspects are finding time to plan quality lessons and scheduling the O&M lessons, especially since they are usually after school. Since each student is at a different skill level and working toward different goals, for both academic skills and O&M, I am planning several specific lessons for each individual student every week. None of my lessons are applicable to more than one student."

"When prioritizing the work week, O&M is often slighted for classroom needs that the TVI is responsible for. O&M instruction always loses out to school work - the test on Europe is more important at that particular time."

"In cases where O&M and TVI services are provided by two individuals, the student benefits from having the expertise of two people - two specialists are what the students deserve. We cannot 'team' with ourselves when we are the case manager, the TVI and the O&M."

"If I had a small enough caseload so I could cover the O&M skills and the academics, it would be positive for me and my students. I love teaching both disciplines and I really feel I can service the whole child with the right amount of time. Right now, my school district thinks I can do everything and does not seem to recognize the two roles that compete for the same hours of the day."

It is important that these professionals work with district personnel to determine effective strategies to provide both the services of a TVI and the COMS without compromise to either needed area to the student.

School district personnel vary greatly in their level of understanding and implementation of reasonable caseloads for dual certified personnel. Colorado has caseload formula for this purpose that was updated in 2004 and is posted on the CDE Blindness/Low Vision webpage (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-BLV.asp>). This form addresses students' needs for services from both the TVI and the COMS. This caseload formula

(Continued on page 34)

Focus on Visual Impairment

(Continued from page 33)

can provide documented information for the necessity of each service provider. Since each student's needs are different, the service provisions for each district are different. Some districts have high needs for both areas of service and others may have greater need just for one. Larger school districts that have more than one dually certified teacher may share students; one service provider to be the TVI and a second as the COMS. When certain districts are contracting services, this model can also work.

Three specific areas make the individual roles of TVIs and COMSs unique within the field of special education. Their instructional emphasis on compensatory skills, activities of daily living, and orientation and mobility combine to address the specialized needs of students with visual impairments. Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists and Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments are two separate and distinct professions. It is not unusual for an individual to pair his/her degree in visual impairment with orientation and mobility, low vision therapy (CLVT), or vision rehabilitation therapy (VRT), but each of these certifications may also stand alone. The knowledge and skills of the TVI reinforce the knowledge and skills of the COMS and vice versa. Together, they address the unique needs of visually impaired individuals throughout their lifetime.



Call for Articles!

WE INVITE YOU TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE FOR A FUTURE ISSUE OF THE INSIDE EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN. BELOW ARE LISTED DEADLINES AND FEATURE TOPICS, ALTHOUGH OTHER TOPICS ARE WELCOME AS WELL.



THE DEADLINE DATE FOR ARTICLES FOR THE WINTER 2005-6 ARTICLES ARE DUE JANUARY 3RD AND SPRING 2006 ARTICLES ARE DUE APRIL 1ST. EDITING ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE/PROVIDED AS NEEDED. TO DISCUSS SUBMISSIONS, OR FOR A LIST OF ADDITIONAL ARTICLE IDEAS TO CONSIDER, CONTACT FAYE GIBSON - GIBSON_F@CDE.STATE.CO.US. MAILING ADDRESS FOR PHOTOGRAPHS OR LOGOS TO ACCOMPANY ARTICLES IS:
INSIDE EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
ATTN: SHARRON FIEBER/FAYE GIBSON
201 EAST COLFAX, ROOM 300
DENVER, CO 80203

SUMMER TRAINING OPPORTUNITY!

The Summer Institute on Deafblindness/Significant Support Needs is scheduled for June 27-29, 2005. It will be held at the Beaver Run Resort in beautiful Breckenridge, Colorado. The featured speaker is Kathee Keller Scoggin, who is with the WA Sensory Disabilities Services Deafblind Project. The theme will be Active Learning: Movement, Exploration, and Early Literacy for Children with Deafblindness and Other Significant Support Needs.

Attendee Outcomes:

1. Identify ways to have conversations with children who are "nonverbal"
2. Identify what information needs to be gathered in order to develop an appropriate educational program for children and youth with combined vision and hearing loss who have additional disabilities.
3. Identify appropriate learning strategies and literacy activities for children and youth with combined vision and hearing loss who have additional disabilities
4. List 4 things that must be implemented in the environment for a passive child or youth to become an active learner.
5. Demonstrate how to connect an activity that is meaningful to the child or youth to the state standards
6. Recognize goals and objectives that consider the child or youth's need for adaptations in the environment, curriculum, delivery of instruction, and instructional strategies.
7. Identify resources within the state and nationally that can support their development and implementation of what they have learned with children with combined hearing and vision loss.

The hands-on training is designed for parents and educational service providers who work directly with children with combined vision and hearing loss (deafblindness) or students with significant support needs and a sensory disability. Priority will be given to parents and educators working with children with a vision and hearing loss. Participants will be limited to 50 persons. The registration form can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Deafblind.asp>

Calendar of Events

- June 8-9 **Gifted Education Work Teams** - Denver, CO
Contact: Jacquelin Medina - medina_j@cde.state.co.us
- June 9-10 **Summer Mental Health Institute: Partnerships to Promote Positive Social-Emotional Competence**
Contact: Barb Bieber - Bieber_b@cde.state.co.us (303) 866-6933
- June 13-15 **Professional Development Academy** - Denver, CO
Contact: Jacquelin Medina - medina_j@cde.state.co.us
- June 14-15 **The MENTOR Project Institute** - Denver, CO
Contact: Cyndi Boezio - Boezio_c@cde.state.co.us (303) 866-6853
- June 20-24 **5th Annual Colorado Deaf Education Summer Institute:** Vail, CO
Contact: Cheryl Johnson - Johnson_c@cde.state.co.us (303) 866-6960
- June 27-29 **U-STARS Training - Westminster, CO**
Contact: Jacquelin Medina - medina_j@cde.state.co.us
- June 27- 29 - **Summer Institute on Deafblindness:** Breckenridge, CO
Contact: Tanni Anthony - Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us (303) 866-6681
- June 29 - July 1 **Communication Summer Institute** - Breckenridge, CO
Contact: Karen Kelly - Kelly_k@cde.state.co.us
Polly Samers - cshassoc@aol.com
- July 25 **Behavioral Summer Training** - Westminster, CO
Contact: www.cde.state.co.us/pbs
- July 26-27 **1st Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Symposium for Returning Teams & BEST Symposium** - Westminster, CO
Contact: www.cde.state.co.us/pbs
- July 26-27 **New School Nurse Orientation Conference** - Frisco, CO
Contact: Judy Harrigan - Harrigan_j@cde.state.co.us (303) 866-6779
- July 26-29 **Annual New School Nurse Orientation Conference**, Frisco, CO
Contact: Judy Harrigan email: Harrigan_j@cde.state.co.us; (303) 866-6779
- July 28-30 **Frontiers in Hearing: Emerging Practices in Hearing Health** - Breckenridge, CO
Contact: www.mariondownshearingcenter.org
- August 10 **Gifted Education Forum** - TBA

Dyslexia:

Overcoming Dyslexia: A New and Complete Science-Based Program for Reading Problems at Any Level - by Sally Shaywitz, MD, Kopf Publishing, 2003

Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children - by Snow, Burns & Griffin, National Academy Press, 1998

Never Too Late to Read: Language Skills for the Adolescent with Dyslexia - by Ann Cashwell Tuley, York Press, 1998

Preventing and Remediating Reading Difficulties: Bringing Science to Scale - Edited by Foorman, York Press, 2003

Handbook of Language and Literacy: Development and Disorders - Edited by Stone, Silliman, Ehren & Apel, Guilford Press, 2004

Websites:

The International Dyslexia Association - www.interdys.org

The Council for Learning Disabilities - www.cldinternational.org

Learning Disabilities Assn. of America - www.Idaamerica.org

LD Online - www.LDOnline.org

Reading Rockets - www.ReadingRockets.org

School Social Work:

National Association of Social Workers: <http://www.naswdc.org/>

National Association of Social Workers - Colorado Chapter:
www.naswco.org

School Social Work Association of America: www.sswaa.org

School Social Work Committee (CO): www.cde.state.co.us/ssw

Mental Health:

Mental Health Association of Colorado: www.mhacolorado.org

Center for Mental Health in Schools: smhp.psych.ucla.edu

National Institute of Mental Health: www.nimh.nih.gov

Center for School Mental Health Assistance: csmha.umaryland.edu

Behavior:

School-wide Positive Behavior Support in Colorado:

www.cde.state.co.us/pbs

School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports:

www.pbis.org



(Continued on page 38)

RESOURCES!

(Continued from page 37)

English Language Learners w/Exceptional Needs:

National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems:

www.nccrest.org

Artiles, A.J. & Ortiz, A.A. (Eds.). (2002). English language learners with special education needs: Identification, assessment, and instruction. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Collier, C. (2001). Separating different from disability: Assessment diverse learners (2nd ed.). Ferndale, WA: Cross Cultural Developmental Education Services.

National Association for Bilingual Education. (2002). Determining appropriate referrals of English language learners to special education. Bethesda, MD: Author. Available online at <http://www.nasponline.org/resources/detail.php?id=22266>.

Carroll, S.A., Romero, I. & Lopez R. (Eds.), (2001). Helping children at home and school: Handouts from your school psychologist/Ayudando a los niños en el hogar y en la escuela: Hojas informativas de su psicólogo escolar. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists. [A NASP Publication: <http://www.nasponline.org/HCHS/index.html>]

Fairfax County Public Schools (2002). CLiDES handbook: Culturally and linguistically diverse exceptional students. Fairfax, VA: Author. <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/OESOL/dia/index.htm>

RAFT Project

The Retaining Alternative Facility Teachers (RAFT) project is an endeavor by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), Exceptional Student Services Unit, to support educators as they complete course work for special education licensure. The project is supported with federal funds through the State Improvement Grant.

RAFT offers teachers in alternative facilities stipends and a bonus for continuing to teach in their facility. This year, the recipients also received a pen/pencil set engraved by students from Zebulon Pike Youth Services Center and a free hour of consultation with one of two selected education trainers.

On January 20, 2005, CDE hosted a luncheon for our RAFT recipients. We were at the Burnsley Hotel and had a fabulous time.



EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT SERVICES UNIT REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



SOUTHWEST

Sandra Berman-LaFrance

3310 East 5th Ave.
Durango, CO 81301
(970) 259-2744
Berman-lafrance_s@cde.state.co.us

SOUTHEAST

Sandra Hansen

P O Box 980, 315 Santa Fe Ave.
La Junta, CO 81050
(719) 383-2623 ext: 18
Hansen_s@cde.state.co.us
Alternate E-mail:
slhansen@centruytel.net

WEST CENTRAL

Dick Dowell

2625 Birch Court
Grand Junction, CO 81506
(970) 242-3177
Dowell_d@cde.state.co.us
Alternate E-mail:
r.dowell@bresnan.net

METRO

Jane Keen

3325-B West 98th Ave.
Westminster, CO 80031
(303) 466-2728
Keen_j@cde.state.co.us
Alternate E-mail:
jakeen@earthlink.net

NORTH CENTRAL

Betty Moldenhauer

3009 Blue Leaf Court
Fort Collins, CO 80526-6246
(970) 226-3136
Moldenhauer_b@cde.state.co.us
Alternate E-mail:
moldenhauer_betty@comcast.net

NORTHWEST

Valinda Yarberry

P O Box 1146
Edwards, CO 81632
(970) 926-3123
Yarberry_v@cde.state.co.us
Alternate E-mail:
yarberry@vail.net

NORTHEAST

Tanya Poe

430 N 6th Ave. B
Sterling, CO 80751
(970) 522-1217
tmpoe@bresnan.net

PIKES PEAK

Sheila Jobs

4825 Lorna Place
Colorado Springs, CO 80915-2378
(719) 497-2331
Jobs_s@cde.state.co.us
Alternate E-mail:
smjobs@aol.com

Request for Information or Mailing Changes

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

THE MAILING LIST:

ADD NAME REMOVE NAME MAKE INDICATED CHANGES

SEND THIS INFORMATION TO:



INSIDE EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT SERVICES
COLORADO DEPT. OF EDUCATION
201 EAST COLFAX, ROOM 300
DENVER, CO 80203

PRSRV STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DENVER, CO
PERMIT 738

