



Volume 3 Issue 2

Fall 2001

Welcome Back!

Welcome back to another school year and this new edition of Inside Colorado Special Education!

Since our last Newsletter, the Special Education Services Unit at the Colorado Department of Education has experienced a number of changes. Of great significance is the expansion of the Unit to include Gifted/Talented and Advanced Academic Services. On August 15, Ms. Leslie Chislett joined us as the Principal Consultant to oversee this program. (Mr. Frank Rainey, who retired from the Department in the spring to move to a new position at the University of Denver, was the former coordinator of this program)

Including the Gifted/Talented services in the Special Education Services Unit is mutually beneficial to both students with disabilities and the students with exceptional learning abilities in that many similarities exist in the training needs of the educators serving these students. Leslie Chislett brings excellent experience and skills to the Department. Most recently she was an assistant principal in a primary school in Rochester, NY where she was born and raised. Prior to that she was a district level Coordinator of Gifted Education, staff developer and classroom teacher. For a number of years she has been an instructor at the University of Connecticut's Summer Enrichment Teaching and Learning Institute. Last spring when her husband decided to

accept a job opportunity in the Denver area, Leslie's first reaction was, "Denver, the state's capital, -- wouldn't it be wonderful to work at the state level pursuing my passion for Gifted Education?" What a surprise for Leslie when she found the posting on the Internet for the position she now holds.

We also have added a Program Evaluator to the Special Education Services Unit. Jason Glass joined us in August, after moving from his hometown in Kentucky. Since August 2 he has been working very hard on completing our report back to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in Washington D.C. on how we will correct all areas of non-compliance with IDEA. These non-compliance citations came in a report from OSEP last spring that was generated as a result of the on site visits to Colorado during the 1999-00 school year. The report to OSEP is due October 1, 2001 and it will be posted on the web page. Immediately following that deadline, Jason will be drafting the annual revised State Improvement Plan for the Colorado Special Education Advisory Committee's approval at the October 25 meeting.

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Inside CDE Special Education newsletter is published and edited by the University of Colorado-Denver, Campus Box 193, P.O. Box 173364, Denver, Colorado, 80217-3364. Phone: (303) 556-6143.

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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 quarterly 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.

The *Inside Special Education* newsletter is made possible by a contract to UCD by the Colorado Department of Education.

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Teacher Shortages: The Problem and Possible Solutions



For this fall edition of *Inside Colorado Special Education*, I want to bring our attention to the most critical concern in education today, which is the teacher shortage problem. We face the problems throughout education, but it is even more significant in special education for teachers and all related service providers. Knowledge about the best instructional practices is not enough without qualified professionals in our schools.

“Teacher expertise is the single most important determinant of student achievement. Recent studies consistently show that each dollar spent on recruiting high-quality teachers, and deepening their knowledge and skills, nets greater gains in student learning than any other use of an education dollar (Ferguson, Greenwald, Hedges & Laine as cited in Darling-Hammond, 1997).”

Data exists on the specifics of the teacher shortages and should be analyzed on a school, district, and regional basis to plan effectively and determine the strategies to solve the problems that are unique to each situation. In every situation multiple options should be considered to respond to the existing educator shortages. Causes of the problem could be linked to any number of circumstances, depending on location, economy, training availability, etc. Current research repeatedly identifies eight contributors to the teacher recruitment/retention problem. I believe that this information can be generalized to cover all special education related professions where shortages exist:

- Teaching is not viewed as a highly valued career.
- Enrollment is low in existing higher education training programs.
- Employed teachers leave the profession because they are not adequately prepared and therefore don't experience success in their work.
- Ongoing effective professional development as part of the job is not available or adequate.
- Teachers lack confidence and don't have “control” of their work.
- Teachers do not have the administrative support they need to flourish in the job.
- Teachers do not have the adult assistance they need to accomplish all of the work involved including individualized instruction, reports, record keeping, etc.
- The seemingly low salaries are a disincentive to becoming a teacher or staying in the profession.

Just as the causes for teacher shortages are multifaceted, so are the solutions. Following are just a few ideas that could be considered in Colorado:

- In communities where teaching positions are hard to fill, the community, including business leaders, should collaborate with the schools in developing recruitment strategies which could include: targeting middle school, high school and local college students as potential teachers; developing advertising campaigns that might include incentives such as free or partial coverage of tuition, housing options, etc. The media could raise the public's awareness on the value and importance of teaching.
- Colleges and Universities should give their teacher-training programs a high profile and should collaborate with school districts on

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No More Field Trips on Test Days: How Students with Disabilities Benefit from the CSAP

Janet Filbin
Senior Consultant
Colorado Department of Education

In the not so long ago past, students with learning challenges would not have taken the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP). Many assumed that children and youth receiving Title I, special education and second language services would severely compromise the scores of the school. Most would have even been sent out of the building on trips to the zoo so that they would not interfere with their peers attention to the task at hand. Since the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1997 and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1994, states and districts are required to include these students in large-scale assessments and report the scores within the accountability framework. The outcomes of these mandates are to provide an accurate picture of how **all** children in today's schools are progressing toward academic content standards as well as to raise the bar for students for whom expectations may have been minimized in the educational system.

The great news is that these outcomes are being realized in Colorado. Students with disabilities have made significant gains on the CSAP. The assumption that the majority of students on IEPs score unsatisfactory is incorrect. In fact, in those grade levels and content areas that the assessment has been administered over time, students with disabilities have demonstrated a continuous increase in performance. For example, the percentage of gain for 4th grade students on IEPs scoring in the proficient and advanced category on the reading assessment is a stunning 109% since 1997 (figure 1). Over the past 4 years, 3rd grade students achieving proficient or advanced on the reading assessment has risen from 19% to 31% (figure 2). And, while not showing as spectacular gains as 4th graders, the 7th grade reading scores indicate that the number of students with disabilities achieving at the proficient or advanced category have almost doubled since 1999 (figure 3).

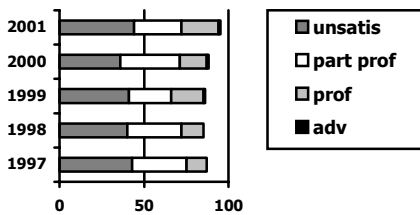


Figure 1—4th Grade Reading

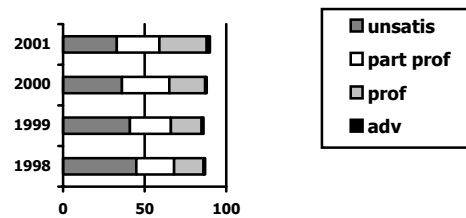


Figure 2—3rd Grade Reading

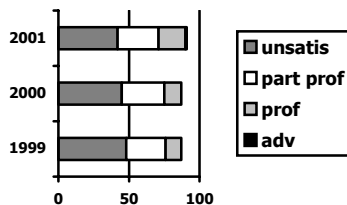


Figure 3—7th Grade Reading

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Regional Professional Development Councils

The Colorado Department of Education is now in the third year of implementation of the Regional Concept for delivering educational services from the Colorado Department of Education. The Special Education Services Unit has supported this effort in numerous ways, including the establishment of Regional Professional Development Councils that are comprised of representatives of all areas of education and are functioning in each of the eight regions. By last spring all councils had identified the professional development needed in their regions to support students in closing the "achievement gap" as evidenced by the CSAP scores and other evaluative measures. As a result special education and gifted education funding has been allocated to each region to assist in the provision of the professional training this school year. Part time staff who live in the regions are employed by the Colorado Department of Education to facilitate the Professional Development Councils. If you want more information about the Councils or the training being provided, contact your Regional Professional Development Coordinator:

Southwest: **Sandra Berman-LaFrance**: Lafrance@frontier.net
 Denver Metro: **Jane Keen** 303-556-3941 or Keen_J@cde.state.co.us
 Northwest: **Valinda Yarberry** Yarberry_V@cde.state.co.us
 Southeast: **Susan Beeman** 719-549-7679 or susanna_bee@yahoo.com
 Pikes Peak: **Peter Matthews** 719-262-4117 or Matthews_P@cde.state.co.us
 North Central: **Betty Moldenhauer** moldenhauerb@hotmail.com
 West Central: **Dick Dowell** 970-242-3177 or Dick_Dowell@ceo.cudever.edu
 Northeast: **Ann Blackburn** 970-774-6152 or ablackburn@nebores.com

For information on the Colorado Regions or a variety of other educational resources, check the web-page: <http://www.cde.state.co.us>



Sliver Grant Funds Available!

There are still Special Education Sliver Grant funds available for Districts/BOCES, about \$700,000! Proposals are due Friday, October 26, 2001. Be sure to talk to your Special Education Director before you apply, since you must have his/her approval.

If you have any questions regarding the grant process, please contact Cyndi Boezio at 303-866-6853. If you need forms or directions, please contact Patty Lucio at 303-866-6645 or download them at:

www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/Sliver-SetAsideGrants.htm.

Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP)

PEP conferences are family centered conferences designed to offer support, information, and education to parents and professionals. **PEP** promotes the partnerships that are essential in supporting and including children with disabilities and their families in all aspects of the school and community.

We invite you to attend one of these **PEP** conferences:

November 1,2,3, 2001 -- Grand Junction,
Colorado

February 21,22,23, 2002 -- Estes Park,
Colorado

Teacher Shortage

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- providing training and employment
- Quality pre-service training programs are needed in colleges and universities. Recently, the Colorado Board of Education approved standards for general education training programs in the state. Standards for special education programs are pending approval.
- In-service training must be systematic and based on the needs of the students as well as the knowledge and performance of the individual teacher.
- The teacher's work schedule must include enough time to allow for quality peer interaction, effective planning, and ongoing learning relative to student achievement. They must have access to qualified mentors or coaches to assist them as needed in their own professional development goal setting.
- Educational leaders must know and understand effective models of staff development and how to implement them for systemic change. They must have the skills to use research based coaching or mentoring to support teachers. Currently, a number of Colorado administrators are accessing quality coaching for themselves to assist them in acquiring these skills.
- Schools and districts must recruit and employ trained and qualified para-educators. Develop a professional development system that moves para-educators through seamless programs that prepares them as licensed teachers.
- Consider a variety of unique compensation options for teachers including: pay for performance, student loan forgiveness incentives, loan payback opportunities, increase salaries by increasing the school year, scholarships with a requirement for a minimal number of years of service, attractive continuing education scholarships, low cost/no cost housing options in rural communities, etc.

Lorrie Harkness
State Director of Special Education

Luanne Todd Receives International SIM Leadership Award

Luanne Todd, President of *The Learning CoachSM*, received the SIM Leadership Award from the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning at a formal awards ceremony held in Lawrence, KS. This award is presented to outstanding leaders who have brought about significant changes in the field of education on behalf of at-risk youth.

Luanne Todd was honored for creating greater awareness and use of quality educational materials for teachers and students. Through her efforts, students most at-risk for academic failure, particularly low-achieving students or those with learning disabilities, have received higher quality instruction and greater opportunities for success in school and beyond.

The **S**trategic **I**nstruction **M**odel is a powerful system for promoting adolescent literacy across the curriculum. The 2001 SIM Leadership Awards recognize individuals who have become demonstrated leaders in the SIM International Training Network. This network encompasses more than 1,000 educators across the United States and several other countries. As an SIM Trainer, Ms. Todd has provided staff development to teachers for more than ten years.

The Learning CoachSM, a Golden, CO based professional development company in the education field, works with schools and districts to help them meet the critical challenges of successfully teaching "Strategic Content Literacy Skills" to diverse groups of adolescents.

The Learning CoachSM
Golden, CO 80403-1492
(303) 215-1400



PREPARING FOR THE 2002 CSAP-ALTERNATE

Terri Rogers Connolly, CDE

Once again we are preparing to administer the CSAP alternate assessment for those few students with IEPs who cannot take the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) test as it currently exists because it does not match their individualized curriculum. Even if appropriate accommodations to the CSAP administration were provided, these students would not be able to take the general CSAP due to the nature and intensity of their disability, the content being assessed and the materials used in the general assessment. Generally, these students are working on the underlying skills or the key components of the content standards in order to provide them the access they need in order to achieve the benchmarks in each content area. The IEP team must make the determination of whether or not the CSAP is appropriate for each student with an IEP. Most students will participate in the general CSAP, with determination reflective of their individual needs, not on the category of their disability, expected performance on the CSAP or where they receive their educational services.

This past year the CSAP-Alternate for fourth grade reading and writing was administered statewide for the first time to fourth grade students that were determined by their IEP teams to need an alternate measurement of their performance. Results are expected in November. A state, district, school and individual student report will be issued, just as with the general CSAP.

Now we are in the process of identifying third graders and fourth grade students to participate in the alternate in the spring of 2002. **The CSAP-A will be administered this year February 1 through March 8, 2002, PRIOR to the general CSAP administration**, which is scheduled to begin March 11. Additionally, a sample of students in fifth, seventh, and tenth grade will be identified who can participate in pilot assessments for these grade levels. Teachers of each student must be identified in order to gain their participation in the appropriate administration training. Criteria for determining whether or not a student is eligible to take the CSAP-A in either the third or fourth grade; draft criteria for fifth

(math), seventh and tenth grade literacy have been disseminated, and will be available soon on our website (www.cde.state.co.us).

Many students need assistive technology to perform certain skills. If the majority of the advanced indicators listed on the eligibility criteria are consistently seen in their repertoire, the CSAP-A will NOT be an appropriate way to measure their learning, and the general CSAP will still be the most appropriate assessment. It is possible that a student might take the alternate in one content area (reading/writing) and take the general CSAP in math. Students in other grade levels where an alternate is not yet available will continue to use their IEP goals & objectives as their measure of progress. Awareness training about the CSAP-A and making eligibility determinations will be provided from 4:00-7:30 p.m. through distance learning in various sites around the state on October 25, 2001, and on October 24 in the Colorado Springs area only. Training for the teachers to administer the pilot assessments for their students will be provided in the Denver area on **November 7, 2001**. Training for the actual third/fourth grade administration will be provided **January 8, 9 or 10th, and possibly January 12, 2002** (one day to be held in various parts of the state) to identified teachers and to a limited number of district assessment coordinators/special education directors/coordinators and SWAAAC team leaders.

If you have questions about the process or the training, or if you would like to join our state advisory group in the development and implementation of the CSAP-A, please contact:

Terri Connolly (303-866-6702)
connolly_t@cde.state.co.us

or

Janet Filbin (303-866-6703)
filbin_j@cde.state.co.us

RESERVE THIS DATE!!
2002 School Social Work Conference
September 27-28, 2002
 Winter Park, CO



In response... to the tragedies in New York and Washington DC, we want to remind/provide you some guidelines to support students, families, and staff. They are drawn from a variety of sources, and we have included references to internet addresses for centers specializing in disaster response. Given that the emergency is one that is affecting everyone across the country, it is important for us all to be ready to provide some form of information and assistance.

Below are a few quick points and some resources for you to draw upon.

- Immediate responses to disasters include shock and denial. These are normal, protective reactions. Shock leaves one feeling stunned or dazed. One may temporarily feel numb. As shock subsides, reactions vary.
- Common responses include persistent fears (about being separated from family), sleep disturbances, loss of concentration and irritability, physical complaints, withdrawal and listlessness. These symptoms occur as part of the normal, immediate human response to overwhelming events.
- Adults can begin to restore emotional well being by acknowledging feelings, asking for support, reestablishing routines, reaching out to others. They can care for the needs of children and youngsters by listening to their feelings and fears, providing information to clarify what occurred and whether it can affect their lives, and by reestablishing routines that will comfort and reassure.
- For more details on responding, see the Quick Find on our website <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> - Go to the Center Response section and scroll to "Crisis Prevention and Response." One of the things you will find cited is our resource aid "Responding to a Crisis at a School" which contains specific guidelines for responding and follow-up in the weeks to come. You can download this with a click and print off the relevant materials.

A few additional resources:

Coping with emotions after a disaster: <http://www.psychworks.com/PTSD%20response.htm>

Managing Traumatic Stress, American Psychological Association. <http://www.apa.org>

After a Disaster: Steps You Can Take to Cope with a Stressful Situation <http://www.wright.edu/sopp/cps/TraumaticStress.html>

Helping Children After a Disaster: Facts for Families from the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry <http://www.aacap.org/>

National Center for PTSD has a large literature base <http://www.ncptsd.org/>

Center for Mental Health in Schools

UCLA Dept. of Psychology
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563
(310) 825-3634 / Fax: (310) 206-8716
Email: smhp@ucla.edu
Web: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>



**Reserve this
date!**

**2002 Affective Needs Conference
January 11th, 2002**

Keynote Speaker: **Dr. John W. Maag**
*Professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Specializing in the education and treatment of children and
adolescents with emotional and behavioral disorders.*

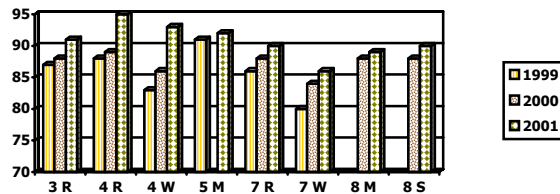
Conference topics will include Attention Deficit Disorders, Behavioral Issues, Social/Emotional Issues, Autism, Early Childhood, Counseling and other affective needs for students.

No More Field Trips On Test Days

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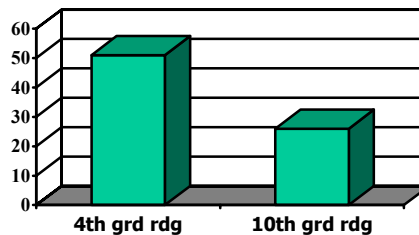
As performance scores have risen, the number of "no scores" for students on IEPs has steadily declined. Figure 4 illustrates that a relationship exists between the number of years the assessment is administered and the number of students who take the test. This means that more students are participating each consecutive year at greater rates in the CSAP. The 2001 data for 4th grade reading indicate that 95% of students with disabilities took the general CSAP or CSAP A.

Figure 4—Students on IEPs Participating in the CSAP/CSAP A



CSAP summaries also suggest that accommodations may be one of the factors that influence participation in the assessment. The 2001 CSAP data reflects that 51% of the 4th graders on IEPs received at least one accommodation during the testing administration (figure 5). Although this was the first year of administration, only a quarter of the 10th graders taking the reading test received accommodations. So how did these two grade levels compare? At the 4th grade, 23% of students on IEPs scored at in the proficient or advanced category with 5% no scores. Although 19% of the 10th grade students with disabilities scored in the proficient or advanced category, 16% of students on IEPs did not take the test.

Figure 5—% of students receiving accommodations during the 2001 CSAP



While CSAP may continue to be challenging for a few students on IEPs, it is critical for families and educators to understand the importance of maintaining all students in state testing. National studies report that increased exposure to the general curriculum, greater academic expectations and increased networking between general and special education are benefits realized by including students with disabilities into the assessment system (Thompson & Thurlow 2001). In addition, since accommodations need to be in place for a student at least 3 months prior to the CSAP assessment, more teachers are incorporating accommodations into their typical instruction. The performance of Colorado students confirms that an inclusive accountability system can result in higher expectations and improved learning outcomes.

Thompson, S., & Thurlow, M. (2001). *2001 State special education outcomes: A report on state activities at the beginning of a new decade*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes.

Request for Information or Mailing

NAME:

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WORK PHONE:

E-MAIL:

THE MAILING LIST:

ADD NAME REMOVE NAME MAKE INDICATED CHANGES

NEWSLETTER FEEDBACK:

COMMENTS:

(1-revise, 5-fantastic)

Overall Quality	1	2	3	4	5
Overall Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Overall Content	1	2	3	4	5

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