THE UTAH Special EDUCATOR

VOL. 20 NO. 2

INSIDE

Features

And...
**Monthly Updates
Announcements
Service Directory**

Effective Strategies for Student Success

Strategies for Monitoring Student Progress

Data provide the power to...

make good decisions,

work intelligently,

work effectively and efficiently,

change things in better ways,

know the impact of our hard work,

help us prepare for the future,

and know how to make our

work benefit all children.

Victoria L. Bernhardt

From the Editors

Accountability and the Need for Monitoring Student Progress

Michael Herbert and Cheryl Hostetter

A major theme in special education that is gaining ground in regular education as well is the concept of accountability. IDEA mandates that educators must demonstrate that students are receiving significant educational benefit. New regulations ask special educators to inform parents regularly on their children's progress towards their Individual Education Plan goals and objectives. The concept is logical and appears easy. However, for some, the bold move from research to practice has proven challenging. The intent of this issue of the Special Educator is to introduce the importance of monitoring student progress, discuss barriers to implementation, and provide solutions that are working at the national, state, district and school level.

The professional literature has identified those teacher variables or attributes that are common to effective teachers. These include:

1) effective time management
2) teaching functions
3) academic feedback
4) classroom management
5) academic monitoring

Academic monitoring (as well as monitoring for behavior or functional success) means making informed instructional decisions based on the demonstrated need and progress of students. This notion suggests that some form of data collection must occur, and must be considered in order to maximize individual student achievement. As reported by Hofmeister and Lubke (1999):

"The research literature on the qualities of effective teaching leaves no doubt on this issue: The effective teacher is a manager and decision-maker that continually monitors the class and adjusts instruction based on student performance."

This issue of the Special Educator addresses this very important issue of accountability, and highlights strategies to monitor student progress. Administrators, educators, parents and related service professionals have contributed to our collective understanding of this issue, and offer personal insights and usable strategies for consideration.

Wayne Ball introduces the concept of Compliance Monitoring vs. Continuous Improvement that will be employed at the state level for monitoring state, district and teacher success. Standardized and alternative assessment strategies to monitoring are addressed, and examples given to improve practice.

Richard Young shares with readers how he was introduced to Precision Teaching, and how this powerful monitoring technique has shaped his philosophy and teaching. In a related article, teachers in a rural school share elements of a longstanding, successful cross age tutoring program using Precision Teaching to monitor success and drive instructional decisions. Other educators share successful classroom strategies for monitoring and insuring student success.

Readers are encouraged to review this months' articles, and ask themselves purposeful questions regarding their understanding and practice of strategies for monitoring student progress. These questions may include a self-assessment of their current practice, including:

assignment clarification, assignment follow-up, seatwork monitoring, daily monitoring, and instructional alignment (linkage between curriculum, instruction and evaluation). Educators are encouraged to access a complete discussion of these and other pertinent topics in *Research Into Practice, by Alan Hofmeister and Margaret Lubke*. Like consulting a road map before leaving on a long journey, there is no one way to go. Educators are encouraged to review the efforts of others, adopt what works, and pass along their successes to others.

THE UTAH

Special

E D U C A T O R

Precision Teaching: Some Snap Shots From My Personal Learning Curve

K. Richard Young, Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies,
David O. McKay School of Education, Brigham Young University

Thomas S. Monson stated, "When performance is measured, performance improves. When performance is measured and reported, the rate of performance accelerates." I have used this principle to guide my work with persons with disabilities for over 30 years. I believe the measurement of performance is the foundation of quality teaching and the cornerstone of accountability. At the beginning of my career I was fortunate to teach young children with autism. These children were wonderful; their behavior told me when I was using the right instructional procedure. If I did something right, the child's performance data would immediately show an upward trend on a graph. If I used an ineffective procedure, the learning lines declined or were flat. Based on the child performance data, I modified my teaching until I got it right, i.e., the child learned. As I studied the graphic displays I learned to be more effective, and the child's learning accelerated.

I taught students with learning disabilities and behavior disorders; again the students' performance data revealed my mistakes and guided my teaching. This experience taught me a great deal about effective instruction and behavior management. Teaching was hard work. I had to make decisions every day, dozens of decisions weekly. Without guiding information the decisions were difficult, and I made many incorrect choices. I learned that data-based decisions are more accurate than "gut feeling" decisions. In my experience more data and better data usually yielded more learning, but progress was too slow for these students, who were already one or more years behind their peers.

About this time I was invited to attend a lecture given by Dr. Ogden Lindsley at the University of Utah's Medical School. This was my introduction to the world of Precision Teaching. It was fascinating: this enthusiastic man-with his goatee, bow ties, dual overhead projectors, and blue lined semilogarithmic charts-revealed to me that I was using "Model T" graphs, It was time to move up to Corvette charts with celeration lines, learning pictures, x2 slopes, stages of learning, fluency building strategies, jump ups, and proficiency aims. Wow! The students started to learn faster! I was no longer slowing them down with my outdated technology.

However; my lack of proficiency with Precision Teaching still hindered my students' learning. Then the alphabet king entered my life. Dr. Ray Beck had invited me to Great Falls, Montana to participate in a Precision Teaching trainers' seminar. The training was conducted at the Sacajawea Elementary School. On the first day we were all assigned a personal tutor. My tutor was Jack, a 4th grader. Jack sat down beside me and said, "How fast can you say the alphabet?" Being a brilliant Ph.D., I responded, "I don't know." Jack replied, "Do you want to see how fast I can say it in one minute?" I started the stop watch and tried to count the number of times he got to "z." I believe it was 17 or 18 (over 400 letters per minute); I couldn't count as fast as he talked. Then with a smirk on his face Jack said, "How fast can you say it backwards?" Recognizing defeat before the game even started, I reached for the stop watch. This time Jack was slower, reciting a mere 260 (or so) letters per minute. What a powerful lesson in how performance precedes self-esteem.

Having demonstrated his fluency (his ability to do tasks quickly, easily, and accurately), Jack got to the real business at hand, making me fluent in the use of the standard celeration chart. With a firm resolve not to be totally outdone by this 4th grader, I concentrated my efforts on plotting dots, drawing trend lines, calculating the rates at which students were learning, and making data-based decisions. Back home in Utah, I applied these skills and experienced the satisfaction of seeing increased growth in student learning.

Some great lessons came from the research of several graduate students at Utah State University. Adrian Crawford (Young, West, & Crawford, 1985) demonstrated that students with hearing impairments and severe mental retardation could maintain fluent rates of reading basic survival words (see and sign the word) if they reached fluency rates of over 100 signs per minute during training. Several other graduate students investigated the effects of fluency on generalization from the classroom to the community with children with severe disabilities. Cheryle Long (Long, 1984) demonstrated that fluency aided preschool children in providing adults with needed information, e.g., phone numbers. Vikki Howard achieved generalization of dressing skills with preschool students (Young, West, Howard, and Whitney, 1986).

Michael Byrnes assisted students with learning disabilities in passing the State of Utah high school competency tests through fluency building. Ken Bell (Bell, Young, Salzberg, &West, 1991) worked with students with and without learning disabilities who had failed their high school drivers education written maneuvers tests. By developing the ability to respond fluently, they were able to pass future tests.

Precision Teaching has impacted the lives of a broad range of my friends and colleagues. Ed Cancio used Precision Teaching as part of a functional analysis to eliminate self-injurious behavior with a student with profound disabilities. Christine MacFarlane used SAFMEDS (a Precision Teaching practice strategy) to prepare for and pass her doctoral comprehensive statistical exam. As I have learned from many experiences with children and with graduate students, I have become more fluent in many skills in my personal life. For me, fluency is a critical variable in all learning. I am indebted to Dr. Ogden Lindsley and to others who have helped me help students learn through Precision Teaching.

References available from the ULRC upon request.

Feature Article

Compliance Monitoring-Vs-Continuous Improvement...Utah Takes the Lead

Wayne Ball, Specialist, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center

Times are changing! The way the Office of Special Programs (OSEP) evaluates State Departments of Education has changed and the way States monitor local school districts is changing.

What we have known in the past as "monitoring" is being replaced with a series of events referred to by OSEP as "A Continuous Improvement Process." In the past, evaluation of special education programs has largely been compliance review. However, with the reauthorization of IDEA and accompanying regulations, OSEP has provided the impetus to move from a compliance review type of evaluation process to a more results oriented continuous improvement process. This new process is intended to create a partnership for evaluation between and among educators, parents, students and State Departments of Education. While States and local districts are still responsible for compliance and general supervision, the new continuous process allows them to look at progress of children with disabilities and evaluate the positive results of learning. Utah was one of the states having an opportunity to be evaluated by OSEP this past year using the new process.

Let's take a brief look at OSEP's Continuous Improvement Process:

Based in large part on Congress' findings, as set forth in IDEA 97, and on the results of the National Longitudinal Transition Study, OSEP has found that the Part B (three through twenty one) requirements of IDEA 97 that provide the strongest links to improved educational results for students with disabilities include those addressing:

• Involvement and progress of students with disabilities in the full range of

curricula and programs available to nondisabled children, including general curricula, and vocational education and work-experience programs;

• Participation of children with disabilities in State-and district-wide assessments of student achievement and accountability systems;

• Provision of transition services to enable students with disabilities to move effectively from school to post school independence and achievement;

• Education of children with disabilities with nondisabled children to maximum extent appropriate; and Participation of parents, students, and general and special education personnel in the development and implementation of educational programs for children with disabilities.

• Similarly, OSEP has found that the Part C (birth to three) requirements of IDEA 97 provide the strong links to improved results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

The Continuous Improvement Process consists of the following phases:

Self Assessment
Validation Planning
Validation Data Collection
Reporting to the Public
Improvement Planning
Implementation of Improvement Strategies
Verification and Consequences

How is Utah changing their monitoring process?

The Utah State Office of Education, Special Education Services Unit (SESU), maintains the responsibility for monitor-

ing compliance with Federal and State requirements for providing services for students with disabilities, 3 through 21, under the Individuals with Disabilities Act 97 (IDEA). As the USOE carries out this responsibility, they must also focus on improving educational performance for all students in the State and to effect greater accountability for public education.

Past monitoring efforts have been generally effective in maintaining procedural compliance with Federal and State regulations but have not been used to systematically analyze results, implement change, and evaluate the impact of Special education services on student achievement. Consistent with Federal efforts to create a monitoring system that focuses on program effectiveness and student results, the Utah State Office of Education is developing a model that emphasizes a systemic approach to improve and sustain the service delivery system to positively effect student success. The new system shifts from the existing model of episodic procedural monitoring to one of active strategic planning and continuous improvement within the framework of compliance. The use of such a model enhances the school district's role in the process and enables the USOE to work in partnership with the district providing resources and technical assistance as determined necessary.

As USOE moves forward with the effort to connect program effectiveness with the requirements of IDEA 97, the school district monitoring process will consist of a three phase system with districts entering the process on a five year cycle.

During Phase 1 school districts will conduct a self-assessment to determine areas to target planning for program improvement.

Phase 2 requires the USOE SESU staff to review the district's completed self-assessment. Districts will then develop a District Improvement Plan (DIP) based on the findings of the self assessment.

During Phase 3, districts will submit progress reports related to the DIP and ongoing self-assessment activities in addition to the LEA application and data reports as required by OSEP and USOE.

Technical assistance and support will be available to districts from USOE throughout each of the phases of this process. Program Improvement Planning System workshops will be held annually to provide school districts entering the system with training in the self-assessment and district improvement planning process.

Significant Changes to the Monitoring Process:

• Self-assessment by school districts.
• Greater involvement of parents and other stakeholders.
• Improved collaboration between school districts and the USOE.
• A mechanism to analyze various data sources in order to focus on program effectiveness and student results.
• Technical assistance and resources for program improvement planning and implementation.

Utah to be commended

Utah is to be commended for its proactive role in developing a new monitoring system that captures the intent of IDEA 97 and focuses on positive results for children and youth with disabilities.

Including Students with Disabilities in State and District-wide Assessment ...A Guide for IEP Teams

Donna Suter, Utah State Office of Education

E ducators are increasingly being asked to be accountable for the learning of our nation's students. Questions are being raised as to the effectiveness of current educational programming in preparing students to be competent adults. In response to these concerns, educational reform efforts such as the Goals 2000 and Schools for the 21st Century have system accountability measures built into them including assessment of student academic progress. Many states across the country, including Utah, have also been mandated by their legislatures to develop formalized student assessment systems as a means of evaluating the effectiveness of public education. In many instances, students with disabilities have not participated in statewide assessments of academic achievement nor has there been any analysis of the performance of those students who have been included. System accountability for learner results has been limited for students with disabilities.

Until recently, special education regulations have not required states and local school districts to account for student progress, only procedural compliance with state and federal laws. In reauthorizing the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1997, Congress addressed systems accountability for the educational progress of students with disabilities receiving special education services. The new federal law requires states to assess students with disabilities using the same measures of accountability that are used with students without disabilities. Progress of all students will be measured and reported to the public. Requirements of IDEA '97 related to inclusion of students with disabilities in state and district-wide assessments are as follows:

Children with disabilities must be included in general state and district-wide assessment programs with appropriate accommodations and modifications in administration if necessary.

As appropriate, the state or local school district must develop guidelines for participation of children with disabilities in alternate assessments for those students who cannot participate in state and districtwide assessment programs and conduct the assessments beginning no later than July 1, 2000.

As of July 1998, the IEP team for each student with disabilities is responsible for specifying how the student will participate in state and district assessments.

IDEA '97 states that the IEP must include a statement of any individual modifications in the administration of state and districtwide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the student to participate.

If the IEP team determines that the students will not participate in a particular assessment or part of an assessment, a statement of why that assessment is not appropriate for the student and how the student will be assessed must be included in the IEP.

Utah's Accountability System:

Utah's current accountability system includes two major testing programs that affect significant numbers of students in the state-the Stanford Achievement Test (Ninth Edition) and the Core Assessment Program. These two testing programs each have different purposes and yield different information about student performance throughout the state. Following is a brief description of each program:

1) Stanford Achievement Test. The Stanford 9 is a commercially developed, group administered, norm-referenced test administered in grades 5, 8, and 11

Feature Article

statewide*. The primary purpose of this program is to provide a regular check on the performance of the educational system in the state in the basic curriculum areas by comparing Utah students to a nationwide sample (i.e. the test's norm group). It is designed to be primarily a survey instrument giving a global picture of the performance of a student or school in comparison to a representative group-the norm group. Performance on these tests is not specifically tied to instruction, so a fall administration provides the needed information and does not interfere with core testing in the spring. Individual student results as well as group data are reported for this program. School district participation in this program is mandatory according to state statute.

   2) Core Curriculum End-of-Level/End-of-Course Assessment. This program uses criterion-referenced tests that have been developed by USOE specialists in evaluation/assessment and curriculum, Utah teachers, and other educators from Utah schools. The primary purpose of this program is to provide specific information to teachers, students, parents, and administrators about the extent to which students have mastered state Core Curriculum. Instead of being a general look at students' capabilities in a given subject, these tests are specific measures of the instruction students should have been receiving throughout the school year. The tests are administered in the spring as a measure of students' mastery of the Core Curriculum for a given school year or course. Districts are mandated to assess student mastery of the Core Curriculum. The criterion-referenced testing program yields individual student reports as well as group data. End-of-Level Core Assessments are available in Grades 1-6, Math, Science, and Reading/Language Arts. End-of-Course Assessments are available in Grades 7-12, Math and Science, with Language Arts in development in the near future.

* Your district may choose to test other grades on Stanford 9 and students with disabilities must be included in these administrations as well.

Norm-referenced Versus Criterion-referenced Tests

Norm-referenced tests, such as the Stanford 9, are based on comparisons with a nationally representative group of students in the same grade. The meaning of the scores for norm-referenced tests is tied specifically to student performance relative to the performance of the students in the norm group under very specific testing conditions. If the testing conditions change in any administration from what they were for the norm group, the scores are no longer valid. Therefore, accommodations are limited to those that were provided to students when the test was normed.

Criterion-referenced tests, such as the end of level and end of course tests used in Core Assessment, measure performance against a specific standard (e.g. attainment or non-attainment of a specific curriculum objective), and the meaning of the scores is not tied to the performance of other students. Therefore testing conditions (accommodations) can vary without destroying the usefulness of the scores.

IEP Team Decision Making

The IDEA '97 places the responsibility with the IEP team for deciding which assessments a student will take. The first decision is to determine if the student should participate in the regular assessment program (Stanford 9 and Core Assessment) or the alternate assessment. Decision-making begins by determining the curriculum in which the student is receiving instruction. In most instances, students with disabilities should be receiving instruction in Utah's core curriculum therefore should be included in the regular state and district assessment program. Copies of the Utah Core Curriculum are available through the curriculum specialist in each school district or on the Utah State Office of Education web page.

Using Accommodations/Modifications With Core Assessment:

As previously mentioned, accommodations and modifications are allowable during Core Assessment and should be the same as those used by the student during classroom instruction. Accommodations are strategies employed for the purpose of leveling the playing field for students with disabilities. The content of the tests are not altered, the way the test is administered is altered. Accommodations should be provided for testing when they are routinely provided for the student during classroom instruc-

tion. Understanding the purpose of the test and what it is designed to measure is critical to determining which accommodations would be appropriate for the student on each part of the test. A modification fundamentally alters what is being tested. Providing a student with a core test that is not on grade level is an example of a modification. Whatever decisions the IEP team makes regarding testing and accommodations or modifications must be documented on the IEP.

Alternate Assessment

The purpose of the alternate assessment is to have accountability for the learning of those students who are not being instructed in the core curriculum. It is intended for students with significant disabilities who are being instructed in a functional curriculum or for those students no longer being instructed in the core but who are focusing on preparing for adult life in community based settings. The alternate assessment is currently being developed by a group of Utah special educators and will be piloted during the 1999-2000 in selected sites. Teacher and administrator training is scheduled for spring, 2000. The alternate assessment requirement in IDEA '97 goes into affect July 1, 2000. Please look at the article by Wendy Bills in this issue of the Utah Special Educator for more information about Utah's Alternate Assessment Program.

Conclusion

System accountability for the academic progress of all learners is an IDEA whose time has come. This new requirement places additional responsibilities on special educators and IEP teams to understand not only educational performance levels of students but also how the instructional program of each child fits into the Core Curriculum and state and district assessments. This presents a significant challenge but one that will enhance Utah's educational system as we strive to meet the needs of all students.

If you would like additional information please contact Donna Suter at (801)-538-7576 or e-mail at dsuter@usoe.k12.ut.us, or Hal Sanderson at (801)-538-7814 or e-mail at hsanders@usoe.k12.ut.us. If you need information regarding the braille version of the Stanford 9 please contact Gloria Skanchy at the Utah Schools for the deaf and Blind at (801)- 629-4700.

Maximizing Standardized Assessment: Woodcock-Johnson, Tests of Cognitive Ability

Michael Herbert, ULRC Program Specialist

This is the first installment in an ongoing dialogue concerning the WJ-R. Assessment data is the vehicle that should drive all educational programming. The Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised (WJ-R) is the most widely used battery of tests of achievement in Utah, but the cognitive battery is not always administered. When it is, often only the Standard Battery is administered. This is unfortunate, because the combination or cognitive and achievement batteries yield comprehensive information that pinpoints specific deficits and strategies for effective programming in educational and vocational settings.

The professional literature suggests that specific cognitive deficits (e.g. Short-Term Memory, Auditory Processing, Processing Speed...) often underlie academic failure. Lack of success in the core curriculum is often linked to behavior problems in school. The WJ-R conceptualizes school-based intelligence as a combination of seven cognitive areas or factors, plus Oral Language. By assessing and identifying strengths and weaknesses in each of these processing areas, conclusions can be drawn and the probable causes of learning failure (and often behavior problems) identified.

The WJ-R Tests of Cognitive Ability is composed of 21 tests. Diagnosticians are encouraged to administer selected tests to answer specific referral questions. Authors and researchers of the WJ-R cognitive battery recommend the following general guidelines to practitioners:

Administer Oral Language tests (# 20, 21) to confirm or rule out deficits in language. Refer individuals with low Oral Language scores to speech and language or ESL specialists for further interpretation and assessment.

Administer tests 1-7 as a screener (Broad Cognitive Ability, Standard). If test scores in any one of the subtests are significantly lower (more than 10 SS points), administer additional tests #8-14 to obtain extended cognitive and intra-cognitive scores.

From extended cognitive data (tests # 1-14), identify significant strengths/weaknesses in: 1) Long-Term Retrieval; 2) Short-Term Memory; 3) Processing Speed; 4) Auditory Processing; 5) Visual Processing; 6) Comprehension-Knowledge, and; 7) Fluid Reasoning. Administer additional tests in weakness areas to further identify limitations.

Examine Relative Mastery Index (RMI) scores in each processing area to predict student's expected level of performance compared to peers in mainstream classes.

As a team, identify/design best practice teaching strategies, instructional levels and placement, based in part on intra-cognitive strengths and weaknesses, and RMI scores.

Teach students about cognitive strengths and weaknesses and to advocate for themselves.

Collaborate with regular education teachers to design individualized strategies/interventions and reasonable accommodations to insure success.

Monitor student performance frequently and make adjustments as needed.

Standardized assessment can be a powerful diagnostic tool for the assessment team when used in conjunction with observation and other relevant data. School teams or districts interested in receiving more information or training in assessment interpretation are encouraged to contact the author at the ULRC.
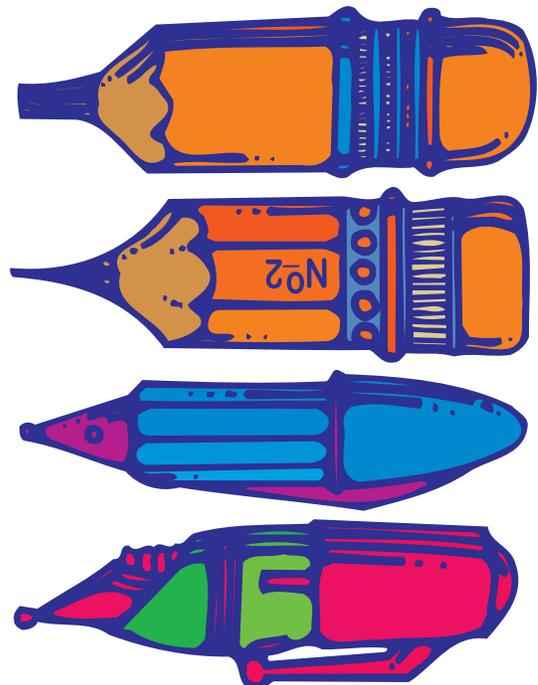
Alternate Assessment-What Is It?

Wendy Bills, Jordan Valley School, Jordan School District

It all began with the Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 97). The new regulations specify that students with disabilities are to be assessed and that those assessment results must be reported to the public. This is not a new concept for the majority of students in the public schools. In fact, students in Utah are accustomed to taking the Stanford 9 in the fall and the core assessments in the spring. However, many students with disabilities have been exempt from this assessment process. The new requirements of IDEA 97 allow students that do not access the general education curriculum to be exempt from the state testing, but these students must be assessed using an alternate assessment. The regulations are very clear on what is required but very unclear on how educators are to fulfill this requirement.

"What is an alternate assessment?" This question was heard frequently and with much confusion at every level of education. The scramble began, with every state interpreting the law and developing their alternate assessment. Utah's comprehensive core curriculum formed the basis for what was to be our state's alternate assessment.

A small, compact document developed by the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) and known as *"Life Skills"* drives Utah's core curriculum. The life skills identified in the document and their accompanying attributes paint a picture of a well-educated person. The core curriculum provides the details. Our goal as special educators is to help students with disabilities become well-educated adults, so why not use *"Life Skills"* to drive the alternate assessment as well?

As a representative group of special educators, our unwieldy band began the trek up *"Alternate Assessment Avenue."* Our mission, if we chose to accept it, was to establish skills within the life skill categories, as opposed to the *"academic"* core, that make up the curriculum of students with disabilities throughout the state and at every level. Yes, this proved to be quite a trek! Our ultimate goal, though, was to create an assessment that highlighted what teachers teach and what students learn without adding undue work to the already massive job of educating students with disabilities.

Many long hours were spent in the conference room with chart paper all over the walls, markers in hand, and junk food on the table. The myriad of discussions ranged from basic stimulus responses to time management skills necessary to obtaining and maintaining a job. The fruit of our labor is an eleven-page assessment listing the life skills of lifelong learning, complex thinking, effective communication, collaboration, responsible citizenship, and employability. Under each life skill are attributes, skills, and examples of what students with disabilities actual-

ly learn during their school years. Following the assessment is an index that lists the skills according to the following domains: Communication, employability, healthy lifestyles, independent living, motor, quantitative, and social skills. These are the areas that educators generally think of when writing goals for their students. This index is meant to aid teachers, enabling them to easily find their students' individual IEP goals within the assessment. Following the design of a protocol and a survey we were ready to pilot!

Jordan Valley School in Jordan School District was our first pilot site. After a one-hour training by Donna Suter and Ken Reavis from the USOE, the faculty at Jordan Valley School eagerly plunged into "test week," which actually was a three-day test window. Every classroom participated in this assessment trial, and we extend our gratitude to each participant. The comments and ratings from the survey greatly enhanced the resulting alternate assessment. As a result of this pilot we added skills to the assessment that we had missed. We also learned valuable information that will aid future training for educators and implementation of the assessment.

Is this project complete? Not by a long shot! The Utah State Alternate Assessment is still in draft form, just waiting for additional sites to pilot it and to give feedback. This is your opportunity to be heard. Next fall alternate assessment becomes a reality. Now, during the research and development phase, each of you has the opportunity to voice your opinion in what will soon be required of you. Take the challenge!

Wendy Bills	Assistant Principal
Rita Bouillon	Speech and Language Pathologist
Rebecca Day	Physical Therapist
Penny Harris	Special Education Teacher
Jean Roestenburg	Special Education Teacher
Gay Smullen	Special Education Teacher

Educator Idea Exchange

The Reading Conference Card Assessment

Rita Garbett, 3rd Grade Teacher, Jordan School District

One of the simplest and most informative ways to assess student reading ability, habits and attitudes is to use the "Reading Conference Card Assessment." This reading assessment was developed by Nancy Livingston, currently a professor at Brigham Young University. Teachers using the "Reading Conference Card Assessment," discover attitudes and behaviors critical to reading development across any grade level. Questions such as: Are students selecting level appropriate reading material? Do they have favorite genres and how can I broaden their interests? Do they read with expression and fluency? Do they reread for clarity and use context clues for meaning? By using the informal "Reading Conference Card," it can provide teachers with valuable information on reading level, vocabulary development and comprehension problems.

To use the "Reading Conference Card Assessment," fill out a card for each student in your class. As you meet with each student, rotate the cards to the back of the pile to assure conferencing with each student on a regular basis. Prepare the students by explaining that you will be conferencing with each of them about their reading and they should be prepared to talk about the particular part they are reading when you come to conference with them. Give the students several minutes to begin reading, then pull up a chair next to the first student you are conferencing with. Explain to the student that they will need to use a whisper voice and have them begin reading to you a paragraph or two in their book. While the student is reading think

of 4 or 5 comprehension questions designed to stimulate reasoning and thinking rather than just recall questions. Suggested question stems might be: Why do you think-? How would you feel-? Would you describe-? as well as What-? When-? or Where-?

When recording conferencing data, first list the book the student is reading at the top of the conference card. If a student continually abandons a book they are reading it becomes a reading concern. Next, record the date and the page number the student is reading from. List the word errors so that teaching for pronunciation and meaning can occur. Then, indicate the rate at which the student is reading by marking a (+) for fluent reading, OK, and w/w for word by word reading. Students should be making less than 10 errors in an approximately 100 word paragraph and comprehension should be at least 80% (4/6 means four out of six questions were answered correctly). Finally, record specific comments on positive areas of student growth, skills and strategies taught, connections made to other books, fluency, attitude, reading comprehension and general interest in reading.

By listening to two or three students each day, teachers usually complete conferences with the total class in about three weeks. These conferences provide time to teach mini-lessons on needed reading strategies, make suggestions of other books to read, and give praise and encouragement to struggling readers. The "Reading Conference

Card Assessment" also allows teachers to diagnose problem areas and gain valuable information to report to parents.

By listening to students read orally, teachers can assess fluency, comprehension, reading strategies and attitudes towards reading. A READER, just like a golfer, never improves on his game when he just haphazardly swings, but with some individualized instruction and help it will improve his game.

A noted educator, Adria Klein once said, "If teachers would go around and do 20 minutes of instructional assessment each morning during independent reading, they would gain an extra six hours of instruction time per month." What a great advantage this could be!

STUDENT READING CONFERENCE CARD

NAME_____ TEACHER_____

BOOKS   (A)_____ (B)_____

(C)_____ (D)_____

DATE	BOOK/PAGE	WORD ERRORS	COMPREHENSION	TIME

EXAMPLE:

DATE	BOOK/PAGE	WORD ERRORS	COMPREHENSION	TIME
10/11	A/ P. 19	courageous scarcity	3/5 -why -hot	w/w
11/3	A/ P. 241	doggedly	4/6 -vocab.	ok

QUESTION STEMS: Begin questions with...

- Who.....?
- What.....?
- When.....?
- Where....?
- How did....?
- Why do you think....?
- What does this word mean?

COMMENTS:

Educator Idea Exchange

Measuring For Success

Jeanna Martin, Weber School District

Looking for a way to enhance student success? Interested in developing a process that will determine success in small increments? Try measuring for success. Here are steps to get you started:

Implementing the monitoring process begins with the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Write specific goals and benchmarks. For example, Johnny will achieve at 80% or better in English for 3 out of four quarters by the end of 2000 school year. A benchmark of that goal could be to come to class with materials, turn in and achieve at least 75% on assignments, etc. After determination of a skill or goal, decide how the students progress will be measured according to the benchmarks. Next, inform the student what is expected if he did not attend the IEP meeting. It is important to monitor the students' progress closely to see if the goal is being achieved or if changes need to be made. Inform other staff members who work with the student about the goals. This will help to ensure that the goals are being generalized into other areas, if appropriate.

Several successful monitoring tools include self-graphing data sheets, Prompt Hierarchy Method and self-monitoring devices. The following three tools can be used for a variety of goals.

1) Self-Graph (Example One)-This method uses a plus/minus system. List the specific steps the student needs to achieve. The student receives a plus if he/she completes the step independently. The student receives a minus if he/she requires any assistance. The pluses are then averaged and graphed. Student progress is easily monitored by looking at the graph. This method can be recorded by the teacher, staff assistant or peer tutor.

2) Prompt Hierarchy Method (Example Two)-This method focuses on the student's ability to achieve a specific skill independently. To use this method select the skill to be measured. Then select a time of day to teach the skill. List the specific steps the student will need to achieve the goal. The student then earns an independent marking (5) if he/she completes the skill without any assistance. He/she earns an indirect prompt mark (4) if the teacher asks the student an indirect question, i.e. What do you do next? If the student is told exactly what to do he/she

receives the mark of a direct prompt (3). If the teacher models the step for the student, the student receives a (2). If any physical assistance is provided the student receives a mark of a (1). The teacher would start one step above the last data point recorded until independent level was reached as determined by the goal.

3) Self-Monitoring (Example Three)-This method has been successful to teach independence by allowing the student to measure his/her own progress. This can be accomplished by teaching the student what is expected, how to use the self-monitoring device, and monitoring his/her own progress.

Keep in mind student success is important in the monitoring process. Measuring success helps the student become more self-reliant. The monitoring process is a visual way of knowing what the student is achieving. This will help the student increase the successes in school and life. Monitoring the student will allow the teacher to see the progress and will also show where instructional changes need to be made. For more information or a copy of the data sheets, jmartin@weber.k12.ut.us.

Educator Idea Exchange

Recordings For the Blind and Dyslexic: A "Sound" Alternative

Jill Gadette-Christensen, Vision Itinerant, Granite School District

Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFBD) is a national, nonprofit service organization that provides educational and professional materials in recorded and computerized formats for individuals whose disabilities prevent them from using standard print. Originally founded in 1948 by Anne MacDonald to provide recorded textbooks for blinded World War II veterans, RFBD has the world's largest collection of accessible format materials. Their library includes nearly 75,000 titles stored in analog tape format, with materials covering elementary through post-graduate level.

Adaptive Equipment Available Through RFBD

Individuals can listen to 4-track audio tapes that are used with a specialized cassette player, available through RFBD. The 4-track audio tapes come with a beep-tone indexing feature that allows a person to locate specific sections within the audio book. The tape player/recorders have variable speed control, beep-tone page review, pause capability, built-in microphone, headphones, and come with limited warranties. The equipment also comes with large print instructions for the use of the cassettes and recorder/player.

Due to increasing demand from its members for service, RFBD is seeking to upgrade production techniques and access tools, such as digital technology. This new technology will combine digital recordings of the human voice, stored in a computer file, with navigation markers to link specific material within a recorded book, such as the book's table of contents or page numbers.

RFBD's "E-Text" (books on computer disk) utilizes synthetic speech and allows users to search for specific phrases to navigate more efficiently within a text. E-Text books may be used with Macintosh, IBM, or compatible personal computers. RFBD members can purchase professional books on E-Text, dictionaries, reference materials, and adaptive tape player/recorders to use with RFBD audiobooks.

Obtaining RFBD Membership

RFBD membership is extended to individuals who are unable to read standard print because of visual, perceptual or other physical disabilities. Sixty percent of those currently served by RFBD are identified as having dyslexia. Prospective members need to complete a registration application form (printable forms are available through the RFBD website or mailing address, to follow). A qualified professional in disability services, education, medicine, or psychology must sign the applicant's registration form to document the individual's disability. Once the application and disability statements are assessed, RFBD will notify applicants regarding their acceptance as registered RFBD members and assign to them a Borrower Identification Number. This number is to be used for all RFBD correspondence purposes.

All members are assessed an initial registration fee of $50; membership may be continued with a $25 annual renewal fee. Membership is required in order to access the RFBD library.

RFBD also offers an annual institutional membership that allows schools and agencies to borrow a set number of books based on projected student need during the course of a membership year. Members may select one or any combination of three membership levels:
Level 1: 25 books at $300 (serves 1-7 students)
Level 2: 50 books at $425 (serves 8-14 students)
Level 3: 100 books at $800 (serves 15-25 students)

Members may order books by single title or multiple copies of a single title, individually, or all at once. Members may also adjust the number of their projected orders by ordering one of RFBD's add-on book packages:
Plus 1: 10 books at $120
Plus 2: 25 books at $225
Plus 3: 50 books at $400

RFBD members receive the following: a free catalog of books that contains an updated listing of RFBD's entire audio and computerized collection, a 5% discount on any RFBD 4-track tape player, computerized book, or related software purchased during the membership year, a strategy guide, and comprehensive guide to using RFBD services.

RFBD's Production Staff and Funding Sources

Located in the United States, RFBD's 32 recording studios are comprised of 4,500 well-trained volunteers who record textbooks on audio tape and prepare reference works on computer disk.

RFBD has no guaranteed sources of income and continually seeks new sources of funding from corporations, foundations, and individuals. RFBD receives a small percentage of its budget from federal and some state governments to help share textbook costs, and encourages its members to contact their legislators to help in the appropriation of funds.

RFBD contacts

Individuals who want to obtain membership for themselves or their children, students or an institution may contact the following:
Mailing Address:
Recordings for the Blind & Dyslexic/Customer Service
20 Roszel Road
Princeton, NJ 08540
Phone: 1-800-221-4792 • E-mail: institution@rfbd.org
FAX: 609-987-8116 (purchase orders)

Educator Idea Exchange

The Tutors Are Here!

Melodie M. Bolli, 2nd Grade Teacher, South Sanpete School District

There is not a morning when I don't hear, whispered excitedly by my students, "The tutors are here!" The tutors are here! Each day we welcome Mrs. Marie Sorenson's fourth grade class into our room for fifteen minutes of Precision Teaching fun.

Cross age tutoring using Precision Teaching began at Ephraim Elementary School twenty years ago. Usually this was a one minute timing in math and reading of a younger student, monitored and charted by an older tutor. Our school has changed principals twice and new faculty have been added, but the program still exists.

In considering strategies for monitoring student progress, cross age tutoring using Precision Teaching has been an excellent vehicle. The tutee charts, and the data charted by the tutor are important components for monitoring progress. Initially I check the tutees progress on their charts daily, noting problems to discuss the next morning with the tutors and tutees. After the first couple of weeks, I only check each chart once a week. At that time I write encouraging post-it notes or concerns I may have to encourage quality charting and tutoring. Each day Mrs. Sorenson and I carefully monitor the partnerships and model good tutoring where needed. Often outstanding tutors and tutees are honored to create a desire for all to do better.

Each fall our tutors are trained in good tutoring strategies, and then reminded throughout the year to:

• Be the tutees friend, encouraging good work, complimenting something positive each day and always leaving a challenge to do a little better.

• Chart the tutees progress in math and reading neatly and carefully, including the tutee in the process.

• Study the chart so the progress can be monitored effectively each day and decisions made to enhance the learning.

• Implement intervention when the desired aims are not reached in a given period of time.

• Share concerns with the teacher.

These tutoring teams are carefully matched up and usually stay together for the entire year. When my youngest son, Regan, was a fifth grader at our school, he was the tutor for a first grade boy named Chris. Nearly every evening he would be as excited to report Chris' progress that day as his own. He delighted in every success Chris experienced during the year. He tried to identify strategies to help him during difficult times. He studied Chris' chart carefully, always monitoring, always scheming a new plan to help him during difficult times. Because of this personal experience, I saw the tutoring process from another angle and was amazed that the enthusiasm carried over from school to home.

We expect a lot from our tutors and as the year goes on, they get very good at their job. I have learned much from watching them work. I have learned to listen to the child. So often their ideas for their learning are far better than mine.

One problem, years ago, was the noise level when each tutee was reading orally during their one minute practice and real timing. A student suggested alternating subjects with half of the students doing math and their neighbor doing reading at the same time. The problem was solved. The tutors could hear the tutees during the timing.

Recently, Arnold's dots were going flat on his math chart, suggesting that he was not improving. His tutor Karley decided to have him say the answers during the practice timing to move him more quickly and boost his confidence for the written timing. It worked.

Tutee Kortni is anxious to learn to chart her own progress so she and tutor Melanie can chart progress together each day making decisions on what her chart reveals.

Our new girl, Megan, has never seen nor done Precision Teaching. She watched intently her first day of class as the tutors marched in and began their job. She was very anxious to be a part of this. The next day Megan had her folder, her reading and math sheets, her charts and her own tutor. I have enjoyed seeing again, through Megan, what this means to each of my students.

I have watched tutors devise many creative strategies designed to help their tutee realize greater success.

Tutee Kimilyn said to the class that when her tutor encourages her during the timing, she gets mixed up. This was valuable information reminding tutors and teachers to appreciate and respect individual differences.

I have learned from watching the interaction of the tutors and tutees that behavior problems between the upper and lower grades are nearly non-existent in our school. Cross age tutoring and the friendships they nurture play a major roll in this success.

I find each year that great academic growth takes place with each student. In a recent Parent Teacher Conference, I re-did the one-minute reading screening that I had administered one month earlier during the first week of school. Almost half of my students more than doubled their first screening score. I will repeat the grade level screening again in the Spring and at the end of the school year. Traditionally, all students double or sometimes triple the initial screening score in one year.

Not only do the tutees benefit from this strategy, but the daily reinforcing of basic math facts and vocabulary is beneficial for the tutors as well.

I feel strongly that Cross Age Tutoring with Precision Teaching is a valuable vehicle that creates success. The components of this strategy continue to assist me in monitoring my students' progress and implementing an effective, proven strategy for student success academically and behaviorally. When I hear my students whisper, "The tutors are here!" I smile with them.

Utah Mentor Teacher Academy

Mentor Moments

Debbie Hayes, Special Education Teacher, Uintah School District

Every group and organization today faces the challenge of responding quickly to new issues in the midst of rapidly changing situations. It is for that reason that our mentor friend, Marilyn Crocker trained fellow mentors on a team process of problem-solving and corrective action planning. This technique is known as "The Maneuver Method".

A brief overview of the Maneuver Method:

This method involves six steps facilitated through a highly interactive team process. Key questions which the group discussion and deliberation focus on include:

1) The Baseline Situation: What are the facts of the current situation?

2) The Winners' Circle: What does the team want to take place in a short period of time which describes "victory"?

3) The Present Terrain: What are the advantages and vulnerabilities involved?

4) The Face of the Enemy: What is the internal vulnerability or the "enemy within", which might keep the team from reaching the winners' circle?

5) The Bold Moves: What are the creative, effective actions which can be taken to move toward the winners' circle?

6) The Implementation Steps: How are the moves initiated: who, when, where and with what resources?

What is the Outcome of Using this Method?

The outcome or product of using this method is basically four-fold. First: it provides a short-term action plan for which implementation can begin immediately. Second, the plan has been developed with input of those responsible for implementation, therefore a kind of 'personal investment' develops. Third: it is a powerful team-building tool. Groups are given the opportunity to focus on a common problem and arrive at an agreement. Fourth: communication improves, consensus building and team collegiality is strengthened. (Refer to the Maneuver Method worksheet)

Mentors in my group found the Maneuver Method to be helpful. We all agreed that the method could be used in many school situations to assist faculties in addressing issues which can impact future goals.

MANEUVER METHOD WORKSHEET

FOCUS ISSUE/PROBLEM:

The Baseline Situation (basic facts)	What are the facts of our current situation with respect to the selected focus question or topic? What have we in place right now? What are the environmental trends which can influence our current and future efforts?
The Winner's Circle (vision or goals)	What will be going on or in place in the future which illustrates "winning with respect to our topic of focus? What are the details of our snapshot of victory?"
The Present Terrain (advantages & vulnerabilities)	Relative to our moving toward the winner's circle, what are our current advantages? What do we have going for us that we can build upon? Relative to the winner's circle, what are our current vulnerabilities? What are the rocks in the road which stand as obstacles?
The Face of the Enemy (the Achilles heel)	Relative to the winner's circle, what is the current internal vulnerability within ourselves as a team that has the potential to block us from moving forward effectively? What is the "face of the enemy" in us?
The Bold Moves (actions)	What are the substantial actions which must be taken over the next six months to leverage our advantages, deal with our vulnerabilities, confront the face of the enemy within and move us toward the winner's circle?
The Implementation Steps (when, who, where, how)	For each of the maneuvers: ♣ Refine the bold moves – is each substantial, necessary, feasible, appropriate: together are they sufficient? ♣ Place each action on the calendar in the month when implementation will be initiated For each bold move complete an implementation worksheet.

Source: Marilyn Crocker & Associates, Inc.

An Interview With...Dr. Ed

Q: Dear Dr. Ed:
I am confused about all the issues around graduation. Do all special education students have a right to earn a regular high school diploma? When should a student earn a certificate (e.g. of attendance) Instead of a diploma? Can the high school/school district "hold" the diploma once a student's age mates have graduated if the IEP team agrees that the student would benefit from continuing his education?

A: Basically, a student who is eligible for special education services has a continuing right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), unless the student has graduated from high school with a regular high school diploma or has reached the age of twenty two. In some school districts, a certificate of attendance or completion is awarded to students with disabilities who have not met the graduation requirements in the very same way nondisabled students must meet them. However, the catch is that because the student was not awarded a regular high school diploma, he/she has a continuing right to FAPE, until a regular high school diploma is earned/awarded or until the student reaches age 22. The same holds true for a student with a disability who earns a GED. Because the GED is not a regular high school diploma, the student is still eligible for continuing special education services. School districts need to be aware that if they choose to give out certificates or diplomas, etc. that are not regular high school diplomas, students will still be eligible for services if they are not yet 22.

Graduation requirements for each student with a disability must be examined on an individual basis by the student's IEP team. Only the IEP team can determine whether graduation requirements as delineated for nondisabled students are appropriate for a particular student with a disability. The IEP must document the nature and extent of modifications, substitutions and/or exemptions to the graduation requirements as determined by the IEP team to accommodate a student with a disability. When the student has fulfilled the requirements as determined by the IEP team, whether they are the same as for nondisabled students or modified as specified above, the student will graduate. (If a regular high school diploma is awarded, special education services must cease; if not, the student is eligible for continuing services.) As you may have guessed, a regular high school diploma may not be "held" by the district if the student with a disability has met the graduation requirements (either as modified by the IEP team or as they are for nondisabled students), even if the parents or IEP team believe the student might benefit from continuing services.

With the regular high school diploma provision in the new federal regulations, IEP teams will want to look very carefully at planning for each special education eligible student's high school program early on.

Q: I have lots of questions about the new emphasis on "access to the general curriculum." It seems to me that if a student is capable of performing academically in the general curriculum, he/she wouldn't need to be referred for special education services in the first place. Also, must a student's IEP address his/her involvement in the general curriculum, regardless of the nature and severity of the student's disability and the setting in which the student is educated? Surely there must be some exceptions to this! Finally, must the measurable annual goals in a student's IEP address all areas of the general curriculum or only those areas in which the student's involvement and progress are affected by the student's disability?

A: Whoa there! You've asked quite a mouthful, but let me try to address your main concerns. First of all, access to the general curriculum does not necessarily mean a place. For example, a severely behaviorally disordered student's behavior may initially require his placement in a self-contained BD class. However, he can be provided appropriate access to the general curriculum, albeit initially in a self-contained setting while he works on improving his behavior to a level where he can perform successfully in a less restrictive setting. At such time, the BD student's placement could be changed to a less restrictive one, perhaps the regular classroom, where he would continue to have appropriate access to the general curriculum.

In enacting the IDEA Amendments of 1997, Congress found that an effective educational system must maintain high academic standards and clear performance goals for students with disabilities, consistent with those for

all students. Such a system must provide for appropriate and effective strategies and methods to ensure that students with disabilities have maximum opportunities to achieve those standards and goals. In many cases, however, students with disabilities will need appropriate supports in order to successfully progress in the general curriculum, participate in State and district-wide assessment programs, achieve the measurable goals in their IEPs and be educated with their nondisabled peers. Accordingly, IDEA-97 requires the IEP team to determine, and the school district to provide, the accommodations, modifications, supports, and supplementary aids and services needed by each student with a disability to be successfully involved in and progress in the general curriculum, achieve the goals of the IEP, and successfully demonstrate his or her competencies in State and district-wide assessments. While special education eligible students may not be able to perform successfully in the general curriculum without supports, careful addressing of individual supports a student requires and then providing them should make all the difference.

The IEP team's determination of how each student's disability affects that student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum is a primary consideration in the development of the student's IEP. This requirement pertains to all students with disabilities (including students educated in separate classrooms and schools), regardless of the nature and severity of the disability. However, it is recognized that some students have other educational needs resulting from their disability that also must be met, even though those needs are not directly linked to participation in the general curriculum.

In assessing a student with a disability, a school district may use a variety of assessment techniques to determine the extent to which the student can be involved and progress in the general curriculum, including criterion-references, standard achievement tests, diagnostic tests and other tests. The purpose of these assessments is to determine the student's present levels of educational performance and areas of need arising from the student's disability so that approaches for ensuring the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum and any needed adaptations or modifications to that curriculum may be identified.

The strong emphasis on linking the educational program of students with disabilities to the general curriculum is reflected in the following requirement:
"....a statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to-(i) meeting the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum; and (ii) meeting each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability. "

Thus, the IEP team for each student with a disability must make an individualized determination regarding: 1) how the student will be involved and progress in the general curriculum and what needs that result from the student's disability must be met to facilitate that participation; 2) whether the student has any other educational needs resulting from his or her disability that also must be met; and 3) what special education and other services and supports must be described in the student's lEP to address both sets of needs. Obviously, all of these requirements present us with many challenges!

Dr. Ed's Thought for the Month:
Children Can Learn

"We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to do that. Whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far." -Dr. Ron Edmonds

Utah State Office of Education

Ask Mae...

A Message from State Director Mae Taylor

Greetings From The Ever-Changing USOE Special Education Offices!

It seems we have been in a constant state of modification lately. Some great things are now falling into place. Following is a description of current changes.

New Staff Members:
This month we are pleased to welcome two new staff members to our talented and diverse staff. Nancy Casillas will assume the position November 1st as Specialist for Fiscal Issues, Data, and Charter Schools. Nancy comes to us with fourteen years teaching experience in special education resource rooms, and has been a specialist at USOE in the Title 1 Services Unit for the past two years. In her new capacity, Nancy will assist districts with the fiscal applications and disbursements and will be responsible for collecting information for the annual data report. She will also provide technical assistance to Charter Schools with their special education students.

Jocelyn Taylor is the new Specialist for OHI, TBI and Autism. Jocelyn comes to us from Weber School District where she was the Communication Disorders Specialist (Speech/Language Pathologist) for 19 years. She has extensive experience teaching students with traumatic brain injuries, other health impairments and autism, and will be providing technical assistance in these areas.

We are very excited to have these two fine new staff members and are especially happy that our position openings are filled and we can get back to working with a full compliment of special education staff.

State Rules:
Last month I updated you on the progress of the new State Special Education Rules. As of this writing they are nearing completion and will be available soon. When they are in draft for review, we will hold public hearings in geographical areas of the state followed by presentation to the State Board of Education for approval. Federal mandate requires that states have new state regulations in force by July 1, 2000, and we are progressing toward that goal.

State Advisory Panel:
Since the inception of PL 94-142 in 1976, we have had a State Advisory Panel, as required by federal statute and regulation.

That panel was known as USBEACH, Utah State Board of Education Advisory Committee on the Handicapped. With disability language improvements, and new regulations, it was deemed time to change the name of the committee to more appropriately align with federal designation. The new name of the state advisory panel, therefore, is USEAP, Utah Special Education Advisory Panel. It meets four times a year and advises the State Office of Education on special education issues that emerge. Current Chair is Diane Dykman of the Utah Parent Center.

Collaboration:
In a renewed spirit of collaboration, USOE's special education staff, special projects, the ULRC, Universities, and the SIGNAL (State Improvement Grant: Networks and Alliances for Learning) Project are meeting frequently regarding collaboration and coordination of activities to assure that state level activities, whether provided by USOE staff, ULRC staff, or project staff such as BEST, UPI, or SIPC, are all speaking from the same philosophy base. A unified system of providing special education preservice, inservice, and staff development activities is a clear goal of this activity. Staff will cooperate across projects to provide staff development and technical assistance.

District and Statewide Assessment Issues:
Under the leadership of Dr. Ginger Rhode and Dr. Donna Suter, we are developing procedures in collaboration with USOE's Evaluation and Assessment Section to assure that all students with disabilities participate in the statewide assessments. Dr. Barbara Lawrence, the state Testing Coordinator, is working closely with Donna and Ginger to assure that we have clear guidelines for the participation of students in the statewide assessment as well as in Core end-of-level tests. In addition, Donna has been working with a committee to develop alternate assessments for those children whose IEP team determines they will not be participating in the district and statewide assessments provided to other students (see article by Donna Suter). The alternative assessment process is being piloted with the cooperation of the Jordan School District (see article by Wendy Bills), and it is our intent to have the procedures in place by the federally mandated deadline of July 1, 2000.

Enough changes for now! Hope you are all enjoying a satisfying and productive year.

Preschool Update

Evaluating Preschoolers

Brenda Broadbent, Education Specialist, State Office of Education

Your assessment team has just been handed a referral for a child who is preschool age (3-5), now what? What should the team be looking for? Does the team have to assess all five developmental domains? Through this article these and other evaluation questions will be answered.

The initial referral and contact with the family is a time to gather critical information. The intake should assist the evaluation team in pinpointing the specific concerns of the parent(s), and in doing so gives the team its starting point in the evaluation process. If at anytime during the evaluation process any team member suspects a disability in any other area that had not previously been identified, evaluation must be expanded to include that domain also. Evaluations are to be used in determining if the child qualifies as a child with a disability according to one of the eligibility categories as defined in the federal regulations and state rules. Furthermore, the team will be determining whether the child needs special education and related services due to the disability that has been determined through the evaluation process.

Preschool evaluation teams must use a variety of tools and strategies to gather relevant functional and developmental information about the child, including information provided by the parent(s). No one single assessment tool/procedure can be used in isolation to determine eligibility, even if that instrument addresses all the developmental domains. (eg. Battelle Developmental Inventory) If the child scores low on one or more of the subtests, the team must then follow up utilizing another tool, strategy, or

procedure to gather more information to substantiate the suspected disability area. These strategies could include observations, checklists, other standardized assessments,etc.

What if the child being referred has already been tested by another agency, or through a privately obtained evaluation? As part of the intake information, the team should ascertain whether the child has ever been evaluated or been provided with services or therapy though a public or private agency. If the parent(s) provide the team with evaluation data from outside sources, the team shall review the existing data and evaluation information, and identify what, if any, other evaluation data are needed to determine whether the child qualifies as a student with disabilities. In accordance with federal regulations, the team must consider all information that a parent brings to the team in determining eligibility. The team can accept evaluation/assessment scores, without accepting clinical or medical recommendations. The team would need to document this very clearly, and follow district guidelines in adding those reports to the child's file. It is not necessary to evaluate a child again if there is already sufficient data to support the team in determining eligibility. If there are missing components or outdated information, the team may determine that they will need to conduct further evaluation.

Referrals from the local Early Intervention program must follow the state and local interagency agreements. Evaluations will be discussed at the transition meeting that takes place between 90 and 120 days prior to the child's third birthday. Evaluations can be conducted by the early intervention team, the school

district assessment team, or a combination of both teams. Evaluations to determine eligibility in the Part B preschool program (for children ages 3-5) must be completed, as eligibility in the early intervention program (Part C-birth to age 3) does not automatically transfer to eligibility in the preschool program. In addition, a medical or clinical diagnosis does not automatically qualify a child for special education services. Any evaluation data that were used to determine eligibility in the early intervention program or to determine a medical or clinical diagnosis can and should be considered by the district evaluation team.

Remember that we are assessing young children who may not be able to sit or attend during numerous evaluations. The team may need to break the evaluation process into several testing sessions. Also during the intake, it would be very helpful to find out from the parent what kinds of reinforcers could be used to extend the child's ability to stick with the assessment process. (eg. edibles, toys, activities etc) Take into consideration lunch, medication and napping schedules when setting up the evaluation time.

The assessment team needs to consider multiple issues when evaluating preschool age children. Age, fatigue, attention span, schedules, and parental input to the team all are key to conducting a comprehensive evaluation that is relevant and functional. Planning ahead can save a team time, as well as frustration. Once the evaluation is completed the team will have the necessary information that can be used in determining eligibility, and in developing the IEP.

Utah's Project for Inclusion

FQA's: Frequently Asked Questions About Inclusion

Danelle Keith, Utah's Project for Inclusion (UPI)

As a support teacher in an inclusive classroom, How can I encourage shared ownership for student monitoring when both regular and special educators are feeling overburdened with tracking student progress?

As a teacher trying to be more inclusive, I remember one of my biggest challenges was transferring some of the ownership for tracking student progress. I was typically supporting students whose educational day was completely guided by their IEP. I felt that some of the data I needed to track would be difficult for the regular education teacher, yet I also recognized that there were many areas that could make sense for the regular educator to monitor if we were just a little creative and flexible. What it came down to was that we both had to take a look at how we were monitoring progress and make some changes. One way we chose to do this was through portfolio assessments.

The initial challenge was, however, that I had my data keeping systems in place and the regular educator had methods that worked for him/her and it was hard to mesh the two. My data usually consisted of base-line information, based on task analyses of various skills, documented by trial by trial data, periodic probes in the natural environment and some anecdotal information. I was usually tracking very specific skills and behaviors. The regular education teacher on the other hand usually kept a grade sheet that reflected grades received and percentages achieved on specific subjects and projects. Creating shared ownership was more than just deciding you do this and I'll do this! We had to look at the methods we were using to track all students progress and start using new methods that were more student-friendly. I had to be willing to get involved in new territory and seriously evaluate how I was monitoring student progress.

The first step was simple but seemed huge. We designated spelling and math as areas that seemed to lend themselves to being tracked in the regular classroom. As students were more involved in these areas of the regular curriculum, participating at different levels in the regular classroom, the scores were more easily and naturally recorded by the regular education teacher. This was a start.

The ownership took a big leap, however, when several teachers chose to move towards more authentic ways of tracking student progress, one of which was using portfolio assessments. The success and enthusiasm of these few teachers spread across the school leading to a school-wide portfolio system being implemented.

Here is some basic information on portfolios. Portfolios can be defined as a purposeful, meaningful and systematic collection of student work that represents an individual's accomplishments, learning, strengths and performance. Depending on the subject area, it may include such items as: writing samples across time, student self-evaluation entries, timed tests, a tape of oral reading, journal entries, final products, etc. This collection gives students, teachers and parents a moving picture of student learning rather than a snapshot of student learning that is seen with more traditional methods. The basic framework for structuring the portfolio may look consistent across a classroom or school, while at the same time allowing for individual student needs and interests. For example, in the writing area, all students in Mrs. Randall's third grade classroom may have samples of writing their own book from rough draft to final draft, but one or two students may have some additional specific examples of their progress in writing their name. One or two other students may have additional samples of the letters they sent to contact publishing companies for the classroom

books. Although each one of those portfolios would look a little different, they would still accomplish the goal of monitoring student progress in more authentic ways.

Portfolios gave me a chance as a special educator to take a look at how I was documenting student progress and collaborate with the classroom teacher in deciding how we could share that portfolio assessment. IEP objectives were accomplished as part of a big picture instead of being met in isolation. And, perhaps most importantly, this process supported our goal of allowing students to demonstrate their competence on individual goals in more relevant ways and in context of natural learning opportunities.

The answer really comes down to the fact that the more authentic ways we can come together in our monitoring, the more the shared ownership will come naturally.

A few tips:

• look for opportunities to attend training on authentic ways of assessing student progress (performance based assessments, portfolio development, rubrics, project learning) and share these methods with teachers in your building

• familiarize yourself with the methods that are currently used by the regular educators in your building

• look for opportunities to educate others in your building about the benefits of monitoring students in natural environments

• participate in the faculty discussions surrounding issues of grading and evaluating student progress for all students at your school

• work with a willing colleague to start a portfolio process in your school or department.

Monthly Update

Utah Learning Resource Center

Keeping Track

Jerry Christensen, ULRC Team Leader

I have the goal of being the best, but I approach everything step by step using short-term goals." Michael Jordan

This month's issue of the Utah Special Educator focuses on strategies for monitoring student progress. Perhaps we should have used a more flamboyant title like "Change Your Life with the Greatest Strategies of All Time!" This article is about the importance of "keeping track". As I'm writing this article, Tracy Stewart, Michael Herbert and the rest of our staff are in the midst of preparing for the International Precision Teaching (P.T.) Conference. As most of you know, P.T. is a set of procedures based on the monitoring of educational or behavioral performance. It also assists teachers in making instructional decisions in order to increase student learning. As a state, we put a great deal of staff time and fiscal resources into developing various skills used in monitoring student progress. One might ask how important is the effort we put into monitoring for students or even our own lives?

I started this article with a quote from Michael Jordan, found in the January 1996 issue of Personal Excellence. His article sounds like a basic Individualized Education Program for any of us in any field. He goes on to say, "When I meet one goal, I set another reasonable goal I can achieve if I work hard. Each success leads to the next one. Each time I visualize where I want to be and what kind of person and player I want to become. I approach it with the end in mind." Once he knew where he wanted to go he kept track of his progress until he reached short-term goals leading to his ulti- mate goal. This strategy of setting goals and monitoring progress toward those goals is used by one of the greatest basketball players of all time!

A second monitoring effort I'm somewhat familiar with is the America's Cup races. It costs a syndicate millions of dollars to campaign a single boat. They set goals for raising money, for the boat itself, for the individual sailors onboard and then they keep detailed track of how they are doing. As part of the racing prepa- ration, people are timing every maneuver in every weather condition the boat makes. When the helmsman moves the wheel in any direction, 15 other people will make adjustments to sails, the sliding blocks, holding the sails to the deck, and even where they are sitting on the deck. Using the results of precise monitor- ing, adjustments will be made until the boat and crew performs up to expectations. When boats are almost identical the advan- tage comes in having your team perform in the most efficient manner possible. The game is different, but again the strategy is the same.

Looking at what some might refer to as a game, a game much more important than Michael making a basket or Dennis bringing home the cup, teachers and students are the players in a game called learning. As educators, we have dedicated our lives to this game and we are intent on "being the best" and helping students "perform in the most efficient manner possible". We use the same plan as Michael and Dennis of setting goals, implementing performance (learning) strategies, monitoring progress and then making educational decisions based on those results. The plan works in classrooms as well as championship basketball. Keeping track is part of how we are making a difference in education as well as our personal lives. I hope this issue of the Utah Special Educator has given you some new ideas on keeping track and generated some thoughts on it's importance. The question now is what are your goals and are you keeping track?

Monthly Update

Project Accountability and the State Improvement Grant

Sharon Neyme, Dan Morgan, Bruce Schroeder, Monica Ferguson

The systematic monitoring of student progress is an essential element of effective instruction. Outcomes and results are more readily improved when the effects of instruction are carefully monitored, and changes made, based on a review of student performance data. Similarly, large-scale statewide systems change efforts adopt the same operational philosophy when it comes to monitoring progress and assessing results. The Utah SIGNAL Project (State Improvement Grant: Networks and Alliances for Learning) has identified a number of evaluation questions-i.e., progress indicators-that will assist in achieving its two overarching goals over the next five years: (1) improving the quality of general and special education and related services, and (2) facilitating partnerships between universities and colleges, parents, school administrators, and educators. Specifically, the SIGNAL team will examine answers to the following questions in monitoring and assessing success of the program:

Is there an increase in the inclusion of students with disabilities in statewide and local assessments?

Are statewide and local assessments valid and reliable for students with disabilities?

Are technical assistance and staff development activities being implemented in participating school districts, buildings and classrooms?

Have building level assessment profiles been developed and used?

How is the accountability assessment information being used to improve consumer participation and, input into (a) improving instructional practices for students with disabilities, (b) linkages with general education, and (c) linkages with the general curriculum?

Has the state's formal accreditation procedures for approval of IHE preservice preparation programs been aligned with State Improvement Plan priorities?

Are technical assistance and staff development activities being implemented in participating school districts, building and classrooms?

Have field-based programs addressing the need to relieve shortages in high incidence mild/moderate certification personnel been implemented in both urban and rural/remote schools?

Have field-based Master's Degree certification programs addressing the shortages for speech/language pathologists been implemented?

Has the SIGNAL Project staff developed and conducted statewide workshops and associated mediated training tools on new IDEA 97 requirements relative to students with disabilities access to the general education curriculum?

Has the SIGNAL Project staff and Executive Management Team developed and implemented a statewide assessment and associated personnel development information system?

Has a field-based general/special education preservice/career professional development model program to prevent and treat reading failure been implemented in both urban and rural/remote schools?

Has the SIGNAL Project staff, in collaboration with Eisenhower grant funding, implemented awareness activities for math and science programs validated for use with students with disabilities participating in the general curriculum?

Has the SIGNAL Project staff, in collaboration with Institutes of Higher Education faculty teams, provided statewide dissemination of multimedia training programs and evaluative checklists on least restrictive behavioral interventions?

Has the SIGNAL Project staff conducted statewide workshops, and developed mediated products and Internet resources to provide professionals and paraprofessionals access to validated instruction in the social curriculum?

Has the SIGNAL Project staff developed and implemented personnel preparation activities that provide teachers with effective behavioral intervention strategies?

Has the SIGNAL Project staff, in collaboration with, Behavioral & Educational Strategies for Teachers implemented the 2-year systems change model programs that involved institute training and technical assistance activities in behavioral/social intervention?

With the increasing emphasis on project accountability, those responsible for projects, grants, programs and curriculums must monitor activities and results as carefully as teachers must monitor student achievement. The overall goal of the SIGNAL is to improve results for students with disabilities. With this in mind, the SIGNAL project staff will be rigorously monitoring project activities in order to achieve maximum efficiency,...and the best possible result for students.

Left to Right: Bruce Schroeder, Monica Ferguson, Sharon Neyme, Dan Morgan

The Parent Center

A Parent Perspective On Strategies to Monitor Student Progress

Diane Dykman, Parent Consultant, Utah Parent Center (UPC)

I am the parent of a teenager who has special needs and receives special education services. I am often faced with complex, challenging issues related to my child's disability. However, meeting my child's educational needs, understanding the special education process, parental rights and responsibilities in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, reauthorized in 1997 (IDEA 97) can be overwhelming!

In the past, I had the misconception that the hardest part of the special education process was to develop an appropriate IEP for my child. I thought it was then up to the special education professionals and others to implement and monitor the IEP. I was on automatic pilot-I had done my part. Well, this attitude created misunderstandings and frustrations for me. I soon realized my mistakes when I began communicating with other members of the special education team and by educating myself through resources. I played a crucial role in monitoring my child' s progress. If I didn't think about what I needed to do in the monitoring process, then I was basically setting up a losing situation for my child. I needed to work in collaboration with others who were delivering educational services. If I wasn't pulling my weight as a partner in the special education process, problems would not be adequately addressed. So the following are thoughts and suggestions that I have learned in the nine years my child has accessed special education services. This information may be helpful to you when you work with other parents who have students with special education needs.

Suggestions For Special Educators To Monitor Student Progress:

The important role of monitoring the IEP for progress is strengthened by the new requirement set forth by IDEA 97. A parent has the right to receive regular reports on their child's progress as often as the school notifies parents of nondisabled students. It is important to discuss how progress toward the annual goals will be measured and how parents will be informed in the IEP team meeting. Identify what kind of reporting will accurately reflect the child's progress. Consider using a daily or weekly tracking system to circumvent problems.

Let parents know that an IEP is not etched in stone and an IEP meeting can occur at any time, not just once a year. The IEP can be modified if progress has not been satisfactory or if problems arise which must be addressed.

Have a year end review or meeting with parents to discuss what was successful and what may not have worked and what should be on the next IEP.

Strategies To Aid Parents In Monitoring Student Progress:

At the beginning of the school year, encourage parents to write a letter, call or meet with their child' s teacher(s). Make copies of the IEP and distribute it to the appropriate people. Review the contents of the IEP, especially the accommodations & modifications. Leave a phone number and best times when they may be reached.

Explain the importance of monitoring and emphasize that it is an ongoing process which requires active involvement by parents as well by special educators, therapists and others involved in the service delivery. Monitoring determines how well the IEP is working and if the goals are appropriate.

Encourage parents to develop a simple daily home tracking system that works for them. The Utah Parent Center has examples of tracking forms. Encourage the use of a student day planner and have parents use positive reinforcers to promote and sustain its use.

Have parents make a list of teacher consultation periods, phone numbers where they can be reached, e-mail addresses and websites which have vital information about assignments, tests and individual student progress.

Inform parents about who they should contact when there are problems in the IEP. Recommend addressing the problem at the lowest level first, then follow the chain of command if the problem can't be resolved. Include all parties involved in the communication and problem-solving process.

Inform parents about community resources available to them to navigate the special education maze and for parent training and additional information.

Utah Parent Center (UPC):
Phone number: (801) 272-1051
Toll Free in Utah: (800) 468-1160 Voice or TDD
To leave a message in Spanish: (801) 272-1067
e-mail: upc@inconnect.com

Although nothing in life ever prepared me for the role of parenting a child with special needs and what it would mean in terms of meeting educational needs, I think the experience has made me a better person. I have formed partnerships with many special educators, educators, school psychologists, administrators, parents and others who have provided services for my child. I need and appreciate their efforts even if I may have a diverging point of view when it comes to educational planning, problem-solving and how to best monitor my child's progress. I respect their point of view and try to focus on a win-win situation. It is through open, direct communication that the most effective strategies have been developed. We all have a different perspectives based on our educational and life experiences but that is what makes the IEP and strategies for monitoring student progress a more dynamic process. Great things can happen when we work together!

Monthly Update

Announcing the
Eleventh Annual Utah Mentor Teacher Academy Conference
Mentoring for the New Millennium
January, 13 & 14, 2000 at The Provo Marriott Hotel
Mark your calendars for two days of learning, networking, food, and fun.

The conference will feature outstanding national and local presenters
and the following topic strands:
 • An Evolutionary Edict: IDEA and the Future
 • Exploring the Expanse: Technology for 2000
 • Exceeding Expectations: Strategies for Students
 • Envisioning and Enduring: Mentoring in a New Decade
 • Energizing for an Era: Self-renewal and Wellbeing

Registration is due no later than November 23, 1999
(A registration form is posted on the ULRC homepage) See you there!

Announcements

UTAH CSPD CONSORTIUM CALENDAR*1999-2000

November 1999

4-6   14th International Precision Teaching Conference. Provo
      Marriott, Provo, UT. Contact Tracy Stewart (801) 272-3431
      or (800) 662-6624.

4-5   Utah Mentor Teacher Academy at the Provo Marriott, Provo, UT.
      Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

4-5   AER Utah Chapter Fall Conference: Year 2000 Vision
      for the Future. University of Utah, SLC.
      Contact Merrilee Peterson (801) 298-1064.

4-6   CEDS Annual Topical Conference. Assessment: Best Practices
      for the Future. San Antonio, TX. Contact Sandra Latchford
      (506) 452-6021 or sandral@unb.ca

5-6   1999 State LDAU Conference. Olympia Park Hotel, Park City.
      Contact Dale Sheld (801) 538-7707.

8-9   Region 6 Preschool Conference (Carbon, Emery, Grand &
      San Juan). CEU Campus.
      Contact Brenda Broadbent (801) 538-7708.

8-10 1999 Regional Conference on Improving America's Schools,
      Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake.
      Contact (800) 203-5494 or www.ncbe.gwu.edu/iasconferences
      for more information.

12   CSPD Consortium. Salt Lake Airport Hilton, Salt Lake City.

19   UCCP School Violence, Salt Lake Community College, Salt
      Lake City, UT. Contact Patricia Bradley 538-7817.

19-20 5th Annual Utah Paraeducator Conference, Snowbird, UT.
      Contact Marilyn Likins (801) 273-1843

December 1999

2-3   Region 2 Preschool Conference (Davis, Ogden, Weber, Box
      Elder, Cache, Logan, Rich & Morgan). Ellen Eccles
      Conference Center, Utah State University.
      Contact Brenda Broadbent (801) 538-7708.

3   CSPD Consortium. Salt Lake Airport Hilton, Salt Lake City.

4-8   31st Annual NSDC Conference, Dallas, TX.
      Contact NSDC (800) 727-7288.

9-12 International Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Conference.
      Washington, D.C. Contact Jerry Christensen,
      (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

January 2000

7   CSPD Consortium. Salt Lake Airport Hilton, Salt Lake City.

13-14 11th Annual Mentor Conference. Provo Marriott Hotel,
      Provo, UT. Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

13-14 Region 4 Preschool Conference (Provo, Alpine & Nebo).
      BYU Campus. Contact Brenda Broadbent (801) 538-7708

14-15 Region 7 Preschool Conference (Millard, North Sanpete, South
      Sanpete, Sevier, Juab, Tintic). Millard High School.
      Contact Brenda Broadbent (801) 538-7708.

20-21 Region 1 Preschool Conference (Salt Lake, Jordan, Murray,
      Granite, Park City & Tooele). U of U Union Building.
      Contact Brenda Broadbent (801) 538-7708.

February 2000

4   CSPD Consortium. Salt Lake Airport Hilton, Salt Lake City.

17-18   Utah Mentor Academy at the Provo Marriott, Provo, UT.
         Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

28-Mar 1 Student Assistance, Ogden Egyptian Center, Ogden, UT.
         Contact Patricia Bradley 5387817.

March 2000

8-9   Transition Conference, Provo Marriott, Provo, UT.
      Contact Nan Gray, USOE, 538-7757.

14-18 20th Annual National Conference, Historic Old Town
      Alexandria, VA. Contact ACRES Headquarters,
      (785) 532-2737.

16-17 Utah Mentor Academy at the Provo Marriott, Provo, UT.
      Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

17-18 Spring CEC/UASCD Conference, Hunter High School,
      6136 W 3785 S, SLC. Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431
      or (800) 662-6624.

25-27 ASCD Conference. New Orleans. Contact ULRC
      (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

31   CSPD Consortium. St. George.

April 2000

28-29 Family Links Conference for Families of People with
      Disabilities. Jordan High School, Sandy, Utah.
      Contact Utah Parent Center (801) 272-1051 or (800) 468-1160.

May 2000

5   CSPD Consortium. Salt Lake Airport Hilton, Salt Lake City.

11-12 Utah Mentor Academy at the Provo Marriott, Provo, UT.
      Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

11-12 Troubled Youth, Snowbird, UT. Contact Patricia Bradley
      538-7817.

*This information is provided as a service. We believe it to be accurate, but it is important to confirm with the contact listed. To obtain additional information and to supply important upcoming dates, please contact the URLC. Current information is also available at the ULRC web site www.ulrc.org Updated October, 99.

SERVICE DIRECTORY

Utah State Office of Education

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Suter, Donna — Specialist, Assessments/Monitoring...538-7576
dsuter@usoe.K12.ut.us

Statewide Projects

Behavioral and Educational Strategies for Teachers (BEST)
USOE, 250 East 5th South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
Deb Andrews, Project Specialist....................... 538-7566
dandrews@usoe.k12.ut.us
Natalie Allen, Specialist, Preschool BEST.........538-7571
nallen@usoe.k12.ut.us

Utah Parent Center
2290 East 4500 South, #110, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117
Helen Post, Director 272-1051
upc@inconnect.com

Utah Project for Inclusion (UPI)
USOE, 250 East 5th South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
Danielle Keith, Specialist...................................538-7716
dkeith@usoe.k12.ut.us
Loydene Hubbard-Berg.................................. ..538-7567
lhberg@usoe.k12.ut.us

Supporting Inclusion for Preschool Children (SIPC)
USOE, 250 East 5th South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
Shelley Kiefer, Specialist...................................538-7907
skiefer@usoe.k12.ut.us

Utah Learning Resource Center
2290 East 4500 South, #220, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117
Jerry Christensen, Team Leader.........................272-3431
jerryc@provo.k12.ut.us

Utah State Improvement Grant (SIG)
2290 East 4500 South, #265, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117
Bruce Schroeder, Project Director......................538-7580
bschroed@usoe.k12.ut.us

Utah Project for Children with Dual Sensory Impairments (CDSI)
Utah School for Deaf and Blind, 742 Harrison Blvd.,
Ogden, Utah 84404
Darla Fowers, Project Coordinator.....................629-4700
bsogd1.dfowers@email.state.ut.us

The Utah Special Educator is a symbol of the leadership of Dr. R. Elwood Pace
Whose vision made the Consortium, the ULRC and this journal possible.

Call for Articles

The 1999-2000 issues of *Utah Special Educator* will focus on providing ongoing information for educators to implement IDEA 1997 as well as a monthly series of articles entitled "Educator Idea Exchange."

"Educator Idea Exchange" Articles
Articles for this section of each issue do not need to focus on the monthly IDEA 1997 topical focus. Educators are encouraged to submit articles describing programs, practices, interventions or strategies that have been successfully implemented in their school or classroom that improve the education of students with disabilities. Articles submitted for "Educator Idea Exchange" should include descriptions of: (1) the program, practice, intervention or strategy; (2) how it can be implemented by others; (3) its impact on teachers and the education of students with disabilities; and (4) reference for others to obtain additional information.

Guidelines for Articles
The following information provides guidelines for submitting an article to the *Utah Special Educator*.

1. Consider the publication's audience. Approximately 5,000 copies of the Utah Special Educator are distributed to all special education personnel and principals throughout the State of Utah as well as several hundred to out-of-state educators. Articles that contain successful srtategies, practical information and specific accomplishments are encouraged.

2. Articles should be 650 to 900 words long. Narrow your focus and be concise.

3. Avoid jargon, abbreviations and specialized terms. For example, spell out Council for Exceptional Childern the first time it is used and reference it with the abbreviation/acronym (CEC) in the remainder of the article. This enables the reader to have a common understanding of terms.

4. Be sure to reference your article when necessary to give credit to other sources.

5. Include a title that entices the reader to pursue your information.

6. Articles must be written and double spaced. If you prefer, send a diskette as well as a hard copy of the article. Computer disks will not be returned. Articles may be submitted on e-mail to: cherylh@ms.provo.k12.ut.us

7. A photograph of yourself may be included to accompany your article. Photographs of classroom scenes are also accepted. If photographs include students and other adults, please obtain their permission to have the photograph published. Photographs will be returned only at the writers request when the article is submitted.

8. All articles may not meet the needs of a specific issue. Writers of submitted articles will recieve notification of acceptance of their article for publication.

Article Due Dates

Month	Due Date
January	December 8
February	January 12
March	February 8
April	April 12

Utah Learning Resource Center

2290 East 4500 South
Suite 220
Salt Lake City, Utah 84117

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Think ABILITY

RECYCLE