Archived Information

PROFILES OF THE PROGRAM AGENDA

This appendix contains the OSEP program agendas for the: (1) Technology, Educational Media, and Materials Program; (2) Special Studies Program; (3) Program for Children and Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance; (4) National Personnel Agenda; and (5) Program for Children with Severe Disabilities. For each agenda, community members from the respective fields were asked to define a mission statement, current program goals, and future goals.

TECHNOLOGY, EDUCATIONAL MEDIA, AND MATERIALS PROGRAM
Division of Innovation and Development
Office of Special Education Programs

I. Context for the Agenda Process

To set forth an agenda for the Technology, Educational Media, and Materials Program, community members were asked to identify the <u>advances</u> needed for improving the quality, use, and access of technology, educational media, and materials to achieve better results for children and youth with disabilities.

II. Components of the Agenda

<u>Program Mission</u>

To improve results for individuals with disabilities by advancing the creation, evaluation, and use of tools that enable students with disabilities for life-long learning, inclusion, and productivity.

<u>Targets for the Program</u>

<u>Enable the Learner</u>. The Program will foster the creation of state-of-the-art instructional environments, both in and out of school. Technology, educational media, and materials will be used to enable students with disabilities to access knowledge, develop skills and problem-solving strategies, and to engage in educational experiences necessary for them to participate fully and successfully in our society.

<u>Promote Effective Policy</u>. The Program will promote supportive policy making at all levels in government, schools, and business. Such policies should ensure accessibility, availability, effective application, and consistent use of appropriate technology, media, and materials. The policies will recognize that these tools are essential to achieving better lifelong results for individuals with disabilities.

<u>Improve Use Through Professional Development</u>. The Program will encourage investigation of approaches and strategies for training and supporting teachers, administrators, parents, and related service personnel on the uses of instructional

and assistive technologies. This broad group of consumers needs to know what is available and how it can best be used for individuals with disabilities. Acting on such knowledge, they can increase productive use of instructional time; prepare students with disabilities for employment and citizenship; and promote their intellectual, ethical, cultural, and physical growth.

Create Innovative Tools. The program will encourage and support development of varied and integrated technologies, media, and materials which open up and expand the lives of those with disabilities. This can be accomplished by individuals, corporations, or agencies dedicated to improving the educational, social, occupational, and cultural opportunities for all students. Their work should enable individuals with disabilities to achieve the results expected of all students--independence, self-determination, and a quality of life that is productive and personally satisfying.

SPECIAL STUDIES PROGRAM
Division of Innovation and Development
Office of Special Education Programs

I. Context for Agenda Process

To set forth an agenda for the Special Studies Program, community members were asked to identify the information needed to support broad systemic change for achieving better results for students with disabilities.

II. Components of the Agenda

Program Mission

To contribute to the creation of a comprehensive educational and support system in which there is a collective responsibility for providing inclusive programs and individually determined services as a means of meeting unique and diverse needs and ensuring successful results for all children.

Program Information Needs

Management and Regulatory Flexibility. In order to stimulate the integration and participation of children with disabilities in a full variety of regular education settings, promote continuity of services, serve a wider range of children at risk of educational failure, and realize better results for all children, management and regulatory flexibility are needed.

Accountability for Results. To enable the tracking of student progress and the generating of feedback for ongoing system improvement, we need to instill into educational systems accountability for the results of each child's schooling and for use of a comprehensive, community based, family oriented system of education and support.

Community-Supported Schools. To meet the complex and varied needs of students and their families, we need community-supported schools that will become the focal point for family participation in activities and services that foster the development of all children.

School-Oriented Personnel Development Environment and Strategies. To expand the capacity of schools to respond to the diversity of student characteristics and learning requirements, we need to reconfigure the relationships and responsibilities of staff and create an environment of continued professional development capable of improving the learning of all children.

Interagency Collaboration. Families need to be able to enter a comprehensive system of services at any point rather than separately access programs and services from several agencies. In order to reduce gaps in services and realize the full use of existing resources, we need to expand system capacity through interagency collaboration.

Technological Capacity. In order to meet the challenge of remaining current related to an expanding professional knowledge base, developing professional networks, tracking tasks and performance, and increasing responsiveness to informational requests, we need to develop strategies that utilize the existing and emerging technological capacity to obtain, store, analyze and generate knowledge bases.

**PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SERIOUS
EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE**
Division of Innovation and Development
Office of Special Education Programs

I. Context for the Agenda Process

In 1990, Congress authorized a new program for children and youth with serious emotional disturbance (SED) under Part C (Section 627) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). IDEA also mandated a participatory planning process, involving multiple stakeholders in the development of program goals, objectives, strategies, and priorities for all programs administered by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), including the new program for children and youth with SED. Since 1990, OSEP's Division of Innovation and Development (DID) has sponsored numerous meetings and discussions, including teleconferences and focus groups, to implement this planning process and to develop, evaluate, and disseminate a national agenda for achieving better results for children and youth with SED.

II. Components of the National Agenda

Mission and Vision

The Mission is: *Achieving better results for students with SED.* The Vision is: *A reorientation and national preparedness to foster the emotional development and adjustment of children and youth with or at risk of developing SED, as the critical foundation for realizing their potential at school, work, and in the community.*

Program Targets

(1) Expand Positive Learning Opportunities and Results. To foster the provision of engaging, useful, and positive learning opportunities. These opportunities should be result-driven and should acknowledge as well as respond to the experiences and needs of children and youth with SED.

(2) <u>Strengthen School and Community Capacity</u>. To foster initiatives that strengthen the capacity of schools and communities to serve students with SED in the least restrictive environments appropriate.

(3) <u>Identify and Address Diverse Needs</u>. To encourage culturally and linguistically appropriate exchanges and collaborations among families, professionals, students, and communities. These collaborations should foster positive results for all students and result in the identification and provision of services that are responsive to issues of race, culture, gender, and social and economic status.

(4) <u>Collaborate with Families</u>. To foster collaborations that fully include family members on the team of service providers that implements family focused services to improve educational results. Services should be open, helpful, culturally competent, accessible to families, and school as well as community based.

(5) <u>Promote Appropriate Assessment</u>. To promote practices ensuring that assessment is integral to the identification, design, and delivery of services for children and youth with SED. These practices should be culturally appropriate, ethical, and functional.

(6) <u>Provide Ongoing Skill Development and Support</u>. To foster the enhancement of knowledge, understanding, and sensitivity among all who work with children and youth with and at risk of developing SED. Support and development should be ongoing and aim at strengthening the capacity of families, teachers, service providers, and other stakeholders to collaborate, persevere, and improve results for children and youth with SED.

(7) <u>Create Comprehensive and Collaborative Systems</u>. To promote systems change resulting in the development of coherent services built around the individual needs of children and youth with and at risk of developing SED. These services should be family-centered, community-based, and appropriately funded.

NATIONAL PERSONNEL AGENDA
Division of Personnel Development
Office of Special Education Programs

I. <u>Context for the Agenda</u>

To set forth an agenda for the Personnel Preparation Program, community members were asked to <u>identify the needs, goals and objectives</u> for achieving a pool of qualified, diverse, and flexible personnel for serving children and youth with disabilities.

II. <u>Components of the Agenda</u>

<u>Program Targets</u>

<u>Recruitment and Retention</u>. To make sure that the special education and related professions recruit and retain enough people of sufficient quality and diversity to meet the needs of children with disabilities and the needs of their families.

<u>Professional Preparation</u>. To guide a profession in which each succeeding generation of professionals has been rigorously and appropriately prepared and is committed to the highest quality of special education and other services for children with disabilities or their families.

<u>Professional Development</u>. To foster efforts of continuing professional development that respond to both emerging needs and new knowledge and to make appropriate professional development opportunities available to all who need them.

<u>Leadership</u>. To mobilize a system of resources and incentives, and the diverse, versatile leaders needed to prepare and support those who are directly involved in educating children with disabilities and their families.

<u>Objectives To Achieve Goals</u>

The objectives set forth the actions for leading to the achievement of one or more of the program goals. Because of the mutual reinforcement of goals and objectives

in this agenda, the objectives are not necessarily tied directly to a single, individual target. Many of them apply across the program targets.

Recruitment and Retention

Expand and maintain a valid, comprehensive body of knowledge on effective recruitment and retention strategies.

Create outreach and information services that will encourage persons with ability and commitment to explore and prepare for careers in special education, related services, and early intervention. In particular, these information services should give attention to culturally and linguistically diverse persons and individuals with disabilities.

Identify and implement incentives for qualified persons to enter and persist in careers in special education, related services, and early intervention.

Identify and implement strategies to recruit and retain qualified personnel in a wide range of difficult-to-fill positions.

Professional Development and Continuing Preparation

Expand and maintain a comprehensive knowledge base that describes the personnel needs of the profession, guides the tasks of preparing the next generation of leaders and direct service providers, and shapes continuing professional development.

Increase the capabilities of professional preparation programs and systems to prepare personnel and provide for continuing professional development beyond initial preparation.

Ensure that the content of programs of professional preparation and continuing professional development is responsive to both the merging knowledge base of the field and its anticipated needs, especially the needs of changing and diverse populations.

Design and deliver innovative, rigorous professional preparation and continuing professional development programs.

Provide incentives for continuing professional development and effective practice.

Prepare all school personnel to provide appropriate services to students with disabilities.

Develop consortia to plan and offer programs of professional preparation and continuing professional development.

Standards for Professional Preparation and Certification

Adopt rigorous national standards for awarding professional credentials.

Develop credential levels that promote career ladders and professional growth.

Adopt national accreditation standards for programs of personnel preparation that encourage flexibility in design.

Strengthening the Link Between Knowledge and Practice

Generate new knowledge that contributes to advance in practice and appropriately serves the distinct needs of diverse populations.

Translate new knowledge into effective applications and apply new knowledge and technologies in advancing professional practice.

Ensure that advances in practice are responsive to existing and newly identified populations and that they incorporate innovative service delivery models.

Ensure that educators and related professionals have the knowledge and skills necessary for effective coordination and collaboration at the classroom level.

PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN WITH SEVERE DISABILITIES
Division of Educational Services
Office of Special Education Programs

I. Context for the Agenda Process

To set forth an agenda for the Program for Children with Severe Disabilities, program staff solicited input from the community members to refine the vision and conceptualization of an integrated lifestyle for individuals with severe disabilities.

II. Components of the Agenda

Mission

The mission for the Program is to improve results for individuals with severe disabilities as measured by an integrated lifestyle.

In order for the Program for Children with Severe Disabilities to achieve this mission, an operational definition of an integrated lifestyle was formed by program staff. Community members who serve children with severe disabilities were asked to further refine the definition. The operational definition of an integrated lifestyle includes aspects and indicators.

Targets

Seven aspects define an integrated lifestyle. These aspects are: education, employment, social relationships, self-determination, recreation and leisure, neighborhood and community, and home. While the aspects serve to bind the concepts of an integrated lifestyle, indicators operationalize the definition. See table C-1 for the aspects and indicators of an integrated lifestyle for children with severe disabilities.

Table C-1
Framework for the Program for Children with Severe Disabilities

Program Targets		
Aspect	Description	Indicators of an Integrated Lifestyle
Education	Individualized functional curriculums and experiences with students without disabilities.	■ Home school placement ■ Inclusion in regular age-appropriate classes and activities ■ Functional curriculum ■ Community referenced training ■ Individuals and their families integral members of the IEP planning process
Employment	Employment, with the necessary supports, in regular job settings.	■ Individual receives transition services and has employment experiences prior to graduation ■ Individual engages in real work in real workplace settings ■ Individual receives support in the work environment ■ Natural proportions of individuals with and without disabilities are employed at the work site ■ Individual receives wages and benefits appropriate to skills and qualifications ■ Individual communicates with peers in the work environment ■ Individual has transportation to and from work
Social Relationships	Social networks and friendships throughout the individual's life.	■ Individual has friends in the community ■ Individual is included in after school and out of school activities with peers ■ Individual has informal support network of family and friends ■ Individual has long-term, intimate relationships ■ Individual has support in developing social relationships

Table C-1 (cont'd)

Program Targets		
Aspect	Description	Indicators of an Integrated Lifestyle
Self-determination	Making choices that affect all aspects of lifestyle.	■ Individual has opportunities to make real lifestyle choices ■ Individual preferences are valued and acted on in lifestyle decisions ■ Individual is involved in all aspects of lifestyle planning ■ Individual is supported during decision-making processes ■ Individual has ability to affect lifestyle changes
Recreation and Leisure	Access to and membership in clubs, groups, hobbies, and cultural pursuits in the community.	■ Individual has choices about recreation and leisure activities ■ Individual participates in leisure and recreation activities in the community ■ Individual is a contributing member of clubs and groups of his or her choice in the community
Neighborhood and Community	Access to and inclusion in community activities and services.	■ Individual uses neighborhood and community services on a regular basis ■ Individual participates in neighborhood recreation and leisure activities ■ Individual Education Plans include use of neighborhood and community services
Home	Appropriate living alternatives and family involvement at each stage of the life cycle.	■ Participates in the selection of a place to live ■ Individual selected a place to live among a range of options ■ Individual selects roommates (if roommates were desired) ■ Necessary supports were individually determined ■ Individual is pleased with living arrangements ■ Family is pleased with living arrangements ■ Transition planning efforts address where a person will live ■ Choices and desires at home are valued and respected ■ Individual makes decisions about all aspects of home routines (decorating, meal times, vacations)