



IDEA '97 UPDATE

A MONTHLY FAX BULLETIN FROM OSEP ON IDEA '97 ACTIVITIES
THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

AUGUST 18, 1997

Archived Information

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BY END OF YEAR, OSEP PLANS TO CONDUCT ON-SITE VISITS TO EACH STATE AND OUTLYING AREA TO AID IN DEVELOPMENT OF STATE - IDEA '97 IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

EDITOR'S NOTE: Many thanks to those of you who provided positive feedback to the first *IDEA '97 UPDATE*. It appears that we are fulfilling a need. I hope you will continue to give us input so that we can make this as informative as possible.

LETTERS SENT TO STATE DIRECTORS.

OSEP has sent two letters to State special education directors which provide information on how OSEP is refocusing its 1997-1998 monitoring efforts. The first letter, sent by Tom Hehir (July 28, 1997), states that OSEP will conduct on-site visits to each State to facilitate the development of State-specific IDEA '97 Implementation Plans that: (1) address the revisions to IDEA; (2) incorporate all outstanding corrective action plan requirements; and (3) include significant parent, advocacy and LEA involvement in the development of the Plan. The second letter, sent by Monitoring and State Improvement Planning Division Director Ruth Ryder (August 12, 1997), provides additional details on the upcoming monitoring process. These letters are summarized below.

Dr. Hehir's July 28, 1997 letter addressed the composition of the Implementation Team for each State. The August 12, 1997 letter further clarifies that many States intend to use their State advisory panel or other constituent group in the planning process. This is considered an acceptable approach. The letter adds that the composition of the Implementation Team should include, at a minimum, "individuals representative of constituent groups."

The Implementation Plan will include: (1) a list of requirements of IDEA 1997, which the State will need to make changes to in existing State statutes, regulations, and practices in order to ensure compliance; and (2) specific steps the State will take to ensure compliance. These steps will include timelines for completion, list of required resources, designation of responsible staff, and method of verifying. In addition, any outstanding Corrective Action Plan from previous OSEP visits will be incorporated into this Plan.

PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING PLAN.

A summary of the Implementation Plan process is as follows:

- ⊃ State Implementation Team **conducts SEA assessment** to determine compliance status.
- ⊃ State Implementation Team, with assistance from OSEP staff, **develops the Plan**.
- ⊃ Implementation Team **gathers public input** on Plan.
- ⊃ OSEP **approves** Implementation Plan.
- ⊃ State **executes** Implementation Plan.
- ⊃ State and OSEP **verify** implementation.

The first monitoring visit is scheduled in Montana for the week of August 25, 1997.

In reference to the upcoming monitoring visits, OSEP Director, Tom Hehir, states the following: "We in OSEP consider these site visits to the States as a great opportunity to, first hand, work with the State Agencies and their partners as a team, to assure effective implementation of IDEA '97."

NEXT IDEA'97 UPDATE:

SEPTEMBER 19, 1997

Upcoming UPDATE topics will include: ⊃ Summaries of recent memoranda to States ⊃ Status of Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) and the regional meetings ⊃ 1997-1998 State site-visit schedule ⊃ IDEA information online.

PLEASE HELP US GET THIS UPDATE OUT TO AS MANY INTERESTED PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE -- DISTRIBUTE WIDELY.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:
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