

Archived Information

ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTERS

The Regional Resource and Federal Center Program assists State educational agencies (SEAs) in building their capacity to improve services for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. The role of the six Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) is to provide advice and technical assistance to administrators and educators in SEAs, local educational agencies, and other appropriate public agencies. Information related to the activities conducted by the RRCs is included in each Annual Report.

FEDERAL RESOURCE CENTER CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE: 1997

According to its cooperative agreement with the U.S. Office of Education, the Federal Resource Center (FRC) is responsible for:

- 1) identifying emerging issues and trends relevant to improving outcomes for students with disabilities;
- 2) promoting systemic reform; and
- 3) coordinating the Regional Resource and Federal Centers (RRFC) network and Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Technical Assistance and Demonstration (TA&D) Projects.

To this end, the FRC has focused its efforts on a number of proactive strategies to identify and disseminate information about emergent issues and trends in special education. The RRFC *LINKS* quarterly newsletter describes policies, practices and activities related to issues and trends in the field of special education. Articles are contributed by the Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) and the OSEP TA&D network of technical assistance projects. One issue--violence, a growing problem in American schools--was addressed in an issue of the newsletter. The article discussed the views of State directors, family and school strategies to prevent or cope with violence, and effective service delivery to students with emotional disturbance, and training of teachers for those students. Additionally, violence prevention in schools, and specifically violence prevention related to teaching special needs students, was the focus of one of many topical discussion workgroups established to respond to the need for information about needs and trends in special education. In 1997, the RRFC network will publish a data base on violence prevention resources on one of the Great Lakes Area Regional Resource Center Web sites.

Systemic education restructuring has been a primary focus of the FRC. The issue of education reform and systems change was addressed in several articles in the spring 1996 RRFC *LINKS*. Reform seminars for State educational agency (SEA) directors, early intervention systems change for infants, toddlers, and young children using interagency collaboration and stakeholder involvement strategies and strategic cross-agency planning and technical assistance were described in the articles. In the winter 1997 *LINKS*, the emerging concern over educational standards and accountability was discussed from a national, regional, State, teacher, and student IEP perspective. The issues covered in that edition mirror many of the views echoed at the 1996 Department of Education (ED)-sponsored meetings concerning the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA).

The potential of technology in special education is a major focus of information dissemination efforts carried out by the FRC and RRFC network. Articles were published in *LINKS* about using the Web and other tools to disseminate information and provide technology support to educators and students. Technology has been a topic at the FRC's OSEP TA&D conferences. The FRC expanded the 1997 TA&D conference to include discussions of technology's key role in meeting regional and local educational goals. Each RRFC has a Web site that provides information, resources, and technical support that is available in their individual regions and in the RRC system as a whole. The award-winning FRC Web site provides one-stop shopping for anyone who wants to learn about OSEP's TA&D projects, special education in the various States, or the RRFC network.

Sharing technology and technological expertise enables the RRFC to interact with regular education technical assistance providers to meet national goals. Technology continues to play a major role in professional skill development, information retrieval, and dissemination. The Technical Assistance Information System (TAIS) network operated by the FRC and RRC is one way to communicate information. The TAIS offers a way for customers to access technical assistance agreements, information requests, and products quickly. The TAIS has matured with the growth in advanced technology. The TAIS will be housed on regionalized data bases, and RRC staff will be able to access it easily on behalf of their regional clients. In addition, the FRC national TAIS data base will allow sophisticated searches across network RRC programs.

The annual OSEP Technical Assistance and Dissemination Conference has provided a forum for significant issues and trends in special education and needed support services. The TA&D conference enabled the network of OSEP providers to discuss common needs, and offered OSEP staff and OSEP TA&D project staff a forum in which to meet and confer on significant issues affecting regular and special education. Topical training and presentations offer information about new ways of solving difficult problems and enable TA&D providers to enhance their skills. The 1997 conference included presentations on the latest in education technology coordination and collaboration, meeting and conferring with IASA regular education partners, and work sessions on current issues in the special education community.

The FRC took a lead role in convening an RRFC editorial advisory board to guide the FRC in producing documents to assist the RRFC network work with States to include students with disabilities in current reform efforts. The advisory board consisted of professionals knowledgeable of and involved in school and State education reform activities. They identified a number of key questions and issues regarding education finance reform, standards, and assessment and accountability, as well as other issues. In spring 1997 the RRFC network will

publish the first of these documents; they will cover the topic of educational finance reform.

An important component of any system of technical assistance and dissemination is its ability to communicate information in a quick and comprehensive manner. The RRFC network has set up a number of workgroups to expand its capacity to communicate on significant issues that affect States and their clients. Emerging issues, such as responding to the needs of large urban school districts, and existing issues, such as access to a State policy database, services related to State monitoring, mental health service coordination, diversity, professional development, transition, etc., are discussed in monthly teleconferences. These topics are often also the subject of daily e-mails between workgroup members. One of the more sophisticated communication networks is the RRCs' information retrieval and dissemination workgroup, which posts individual State and multi-State information requests on a daily basis. One can observe this network processing requests across regions as often as three to five times in a 24-hour period. The FRC regularly participates in a number of workgroups and is involved in all groups on a rotating basis.

Northeast Regional Resource Center: Addressing Emerging Issues in Special Education

Large Cities Meeting on Education Reform and Special Education

Through a multiregional technical assistance agreement with the South Atlantic and Great Lakes Area Regional Resource Centers, and in collaboration with the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative of the Education Development Center (EDC), the Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC) convened a meeting of representatives from several large urban school districts to share and discuss education reform initiatives and how special education affects or is affected by these efforts. NERRC recommended that city representatives include leaders in special education and general education. Cities participating included New York, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, and Milwaukee. Each district provided an overview of current thinking, initiatives, and concerns as to how to ensure that special education is an integral component of a State or district's education reform agenda. In addition to district staff, representatives from OSEP, including Thomas Hehir, OSEP Director, participated.

Common themes emerged regarding each district's work and challenges, as listed below:

- decentralization of special education services, staffing, and budget, which reinforces the increased responsibility and accountability of the building principal;
- use of data to guide improvements in education programming and instruction;
- revamping of special education funding at the district and State levels to ensure that there are no incentives to place students with disabilities in more restrictive placements and that there is greater balance among services and programs in school buildings;
- decategorization of special education programs and services, restructuring of staff, and use of incentives to promote placement in the least restrictive environment;
- affect of high-stakes assessment and standards on special education programs and students with disabilities, specifically regarding testing accommodations and relationship to high expectations for all students;
- increased attention to the provision of supports within general education and use of prereferral systems;
- shifting and transient student populations;
- focus on special education services, not programs;
- increased collaboration among all educational programs in the district, such as Bilingual and Title I;
- affect of choice schools and charter schools on students with disabilities;
- ensuring access to special education programs and services through building accessibility;
- increased focus on prevention, including strengthened efforts toward improving early childhood programming, literacy, and reducing school dropouts;
- problems with balancing State and Federal compliance as well as litigation with quality programs and services;

- blending of district leadership roles and responsibilities, for example, two districts have eliminated the position of director of special education; and
- professional development for general education and special education staff that is systematic and addresses some of the issues identified above.

This meeting was the first time that these major cities were brought together to share common issues and concerns. All participants noted the value of this dialogue, particularly with OSEP staff present, and all expressed an interest in meeting again. The proceedings document produced as a result of the meeting has informed the RRC network about significant urban issues. In addition, increased linkages among the RRCs, large cities, and OSEP were established.

Race, Language, and Special Education Symposium

Based on NERRC's work with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and two Desegregation Assistance Centers, it was evident that a need existed to identify and share best practices and program models with SEAs and selected local educational agencies (LEAs) regarding the provision of services to culturally and linguistically diverse student populations.

NERRC, OCR, Project FORUM of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), and the National Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative co-sponsored a 2.5-day symposium on race, language, and special education. Participants included SEA representatives from six of the States served by NERRC and local district teams from 18 school districts in those States. National experts addressed issues such as prereferral and assessment, literacy, teaching and instructional strategies, and parent and community involvement. In addition, methods of conducting self-evaluations regarding the placement of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education were reviewed. SEA participants became better informed as to how to target and provide local school district support and technical assistance. Local school district teams enhanced their knowledge of strategies to better address the learning needs of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. The State and local school district needs that were identified will guide future NERRC work with States in its region. Ongoing regional and State-specific follow-up activities are envisioned.

Mid-South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC)

The MSRRC serves Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. An increasing concern of State and local personnel has been providing effective services for children and youth with emotional or behavioral disabilities. The MSRRC is working at local, State, regional, and national levels to help educators, parents and other service providers find ways to coordinate and improve services for such students. One example of such an effort can be found in Kentucky.

For the past several years, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has worked with other agencies to improve interagency efforts to develop and provide effective in-State services for children and youth with emotional or behavioral disabilities. These efforts have resulted in fostering interagency collaboration, especially at the State level, which has decreased the number of out-of-State placements. Additionally, KDE is working to improve practices for identifying children and youth with emotional or behavior disabilities (EBD) who are in need of services, for example, specialized instruction. In addition to this increased level of effort, more resources are needed to support schools serving these students.

There is a widespread perception that schools are unsafe and undisciplined. The popular response has supported removal of students with behavioral problems or disabilities rather than finding appropriate intervention. Pre-service teacher training has focused on academic content rather than behavioral intervention. School staff often have not had an understanding about behavior, nor have they developed effective skills in behavioral intervention strategies. While interagency cooperation had occurred at some levels, there was need for outside assistance to help staff from various divisions across KDE come together to coordinate their multiple efforts.

The KDE asked the MSRRC to assist with identifying strategies and actions that would build on existing improvement efforts and move them forward in addressing the needs of the EBD population. KDE provided the funding and the MSRRC provided facilitation, information, and product development. The goal was to increase capacity at the district, community, and State levels to effectively meet the needs of Kentucky students with EBD. By realizing this result, students would experience greater success, and there would be a decrease in the number of dropouts, suspensions, expulsions, and unnecessary placements in alternative schools. Immediate outcomes of the assistance would include:

1. a shared vision (model) of effective school-based approaches to discipline and behavior intervention to provide guidance to schools and lead to more consistent State approaches and decisions;

2. a technical assistance system in place and accessible to schools for support (e.g., training, consultation, crisis intervention, information) in meeting the challenges they face with students who exhibit emotional and behavioral challenges; and
3. local school staff working collaboratively within schools and across agencies to develop preventive and interventive strategies and supports for students and families.

To ensure buy-in across the State, a stakeholder team was formed and included representatives from other agencies, teachers (both special and general education), principals, superintendents, parents, higher education, the Governor's office, the school boards association, and KDE staff. This team was brought together to generate the ideas and concepts that would make up a plan of action. Additionally, a smaller team, consisting of KDE staff from two divisions and a higher education representative, was used to synthesize stakeholder ideas and generate the final version of a plan. The final plan included a vision, a set of beliefs, strategies for moving forward, and a position paper describing what is needed to create schools that effectively address behavioral and emotional needs.

While the plan was being developed, two other efforts were initiated. First, a cadre of specialists was pulled together to form a technical assistance network to provide consultation and support to local schools. Second, a third team began meeting to begin developing the capacity to provide schools with best practice information using technology--specifically the Internet and the KDE Web site.

The results of these efforts are beginning to be felt. Ten schools have received funds (combined special education and Title IV) to help them become model school sites for demonstrating effective ways to address behavior and create safe schools. The effort is generating enthusiasm and interest. The Web page went on-line in March 1997. The KDE lead staff person is currently leading an effort to use the State's experience with the development of their behavior Web page to create a Web page and link for the Collaborative Training and Technical Assistance Group. This is a group made up of multiple agencies, all addressing the needs of children with EBD. This group has designated and is supporting two model sites engaged in developing model strategies for serving these students, such as school-based wrap-around services.

This group also is working to coordinate training and technical assistance through the Web site.

KDE reports that feedback from the local level is very positive. School district personnel are more confident in developing appropriate programs to address the needs of students with emotional and behavioral disabilities and all students in general. There have been reports that volatile situations have been stabilized with the help of the consultant pool.

KDE was asked about the role of the MSRRC and responded that probably the State “would not have pulled it off without the help of the Center.” The reported key to being effective was that the MSRRC provided an independent facilitator and resource person who was able to mediate among a variety of representatives and who provided access to extensive information. The MSRRC assistance helped the state focus and ensure continuous support throughout the effort until the desired outcomes were achieved and the State had increased capacity to maintain the system.

South Atlantic Regional Resource Center (SARRC): Arkansas--A Statewide Initiative for Training Paraprofessionals

It was in 1991 that the State of Arkansas identified the need to train paraprofessionals to help meet the needs of students in general and special education classes. A task force consisting of personnel from early childhood and Part H programs, the University Affiliated Program, Arkansas Special Education Resource Center (ASERC), and the State Department of Education was formed to identify competencies for paraprofessionals working with all students.

In 1993, the Arkansas Department of Education solicited the assistance of SARRC to provide assistance in reviewing the list of competencies, identifying best practices in other States, and develop a training packet. The task force convened on several occasions to outline the content to be included in a training packet and design a training strategy. SARRC developed the training packet consisting of four sections or modules: *Legal Aspects of Educating Children and Youth with Disabilities*, *Roles and Responsibilities of Paraprofessionals*, *Instructing Students with Disabilities*, and *Diversity*.

In spring 1994, two sections of the training packet were pilot tested in three regions of the State. The trainers were local special education supervisors. The training on *Roles and Responsibilities of Paraprofessionals* included teams of paraprofessionals and teachers. The session on *Legal Aspects of Educating Children and Youth with Disabilities* included only paraprofessionals. The results

of the pilot tests provided feedback to the task force regarding the completion of the other two sections of the training packet.

The four components of the training packet were completed in July 1995, after which statewide training for paraprofessionals was offered. A total of 125 individuals attended the training sessions, with 50 attending the training on *Roles and Responsibilities*, 35 on *Legal Requirements*, 20 on *Diversity*, and 20 on *Instructing Students with Disabilities*. In December 1996, follow-up questionnaires were mailed to those participants to determine the impact of the training sessions. A partial summary of the results is reported below:

- Paraprofessionals reported the effectiveness of their communication with their teachers improved as a result of the training.
- Paraprofessionals are sharing classroom responsibilities with the teachers to a greater extent since the training.
- Paraprofessionals became more aware of issues surrounding confidentiality.
- Attitudes about including students with disabilities in the general education program changed to become more positive.
- Paraprofessionals recognized the importance of individual differences among students and learned to individualize instruction.
- Paraprofessionals are using more positive techniques when disciplining students.

Additional training was conducted in January 1997 using a satellite hookup in 35 sites throughout Arkansas and two in other areas (Oklahoma and U.S. Virgin Islands). Approximately 800 paraprofessionals were trained using this approach.

Although the members of the task force have changed since the inception of this project, it continues to meet to tackle new issues related to paraprofessional training. Two additional training modules are currently being developed: *Early Childhood Education* and *Secondary Education*. In addition, the task force is in the process of developing standards for paraprofessionals which will lead to a certification or license. The hope is to have a tier system in place ranging from entry level to an associate's or bachelor's degree for paraprofessionals.

This technical assistance project had some far-reaching effects at the State, local school district, and classroom levels. It gave agencies the opportunity to collaborate and take responsibility for preparing effective paraprofessionals to work with all students. It also serves as a basis for additional policy development in terms of establishing a certification or license for paraprofessionals. The SARRC was also able to build the capacity of the SEA to continue to take the lead on the task force to accomplish additional goals and objectives of the group. The work which was accomplished over the past few years was described at the 15th National Conference on the Training and Employment of Paraprofessionals in Education and Rehabilitative Services.

Great Lakes Area Regional Resource Center (GLARRC): Mediation Workgroup and Behavior Management Training

Mediation Workgroup

One of the outstanding technical assistance activities in which the GLARRC has been working on a region-wide basis is in the area of mediation. Mediation is an alternative to the costly and sometimes ineffective litigation options which at times are invoked by the representatives of students with disabilities and their families against school districts.

GLARRC is Region 4 of the RRC network and provides technical assistance services to the States of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. In November 1988, GLARRC and the NASDSE conducted a national survey to determine which States had a mediation system that was used either before or after a party had requested a due process hearing. Out of the seven GLARRC States, three had not yet developed a mediation system.

In an effort to better support the Great Lakes States, a regional mediation workgroup was established to: (1) improve States' mediation training, (2) assist mediators and administrators to clarify mediation issues, (3) assist States in their efforts to increase the awareness of other mediation systems and practices, (4) provide the State mediators the opportunity to network with other special education mediators, and (5) support States in their mediation development. The mediation activity, called the "Region 4 Mediation Workgroup," studies and promotes mediation as a more effective and less costly negotiation and conflict resolution option to the litigation between school districts and students. Through facilitation, GLARRC provides the leadership to instigate collaboration among the States and to support a national networking capacity among the States in

implementing or improving and expanding their mediation systems. The following examples highlight the results of the efforts of the mediation workgroup:

- Through the mediation workgroup activity, Indiana consulted with several of the GLARRC States that had already implemented a mediation system. In 1989, Indiana established a formal mediation system. Their quest for continuous improvement in their mediation system has resulted in a recent request for GLARRC to facilitate regularly scheduled teleconference calls and meetings with their 16 mediators around the State. Mediators have reported that this forum has assisted in “troubleshooting problems encountered during mediations,” “assisted in keeping them abreast on current mediation events,” and “added to one’s breadth of knowledge and training.”
- In 1992, GLARRC provided technical assistance and consultation to the Minnesota Department of Education for its development of a Special Education Mediation Services. In 1996, Minnesota reported cumulative mediation data which was collected over a 4-year period. They found that 91 percent of the cases mediated ended in agreement. Moreover, 95 percent of the people using the mediation services stated that they would use it again. Mediation is now a well-known option for parents and school staff in Minnesota.
- Wisconsin is designing a mediation system that it plans to have in operation for the 1997-98 school year. Its planning committee has used the GLARRC mediation resources extensively in the committee development and design stage.

Region 4 mediation workgroup members (representatives of the seven States served by GLARRC) agreed to participate in a 5-year longitudinal study that has been based on the calendar year and December 1 child count data. The survey collected five common data points and has provided participating SEAs information on trends across the 4 years in which data were collected. This is the last year of the study (1996-97). It has been reported that this information has been a valuable resource for decision making for several SEAs.

Behavior Management Training, Evaluation, and Revision

Reduced behavior problems, a change in attitude toward discipline, and the building of a collaborative model were some of the goals of a restructuring initiative piloted by the Ohio State Education Department to better serve students in their schools. The State requested assistance from GLARRC to evaluate the

initiative, to suggest revisions based on the evaluation, and to work with it to expand the initiative.

This initiative is ongoing and growing, according to information gathered by evaluations to date. In addition to establishing partnerships with organizations, including The Ohio Education Association, the Ohio Parent Teacher Association, the Child Advocacy Center, and the Elementary School Administrators, initial evaluation data indicate that teams in the project for 1 year had positive results in a number of areas. The following data show the average percent of change across buildings based on numbers reported:

- 41.3 percent increase in use of new strategies;
- 16.5 percent increase in student awards;
- 16.9 percent reduction in the number of disciplinary referrals;
- 5.7 percent decrease in the number of out-of-school suspensions;
- 3.4 percent reduction in drug, alcohol, or tobacco infractions;
- 22.7 percent decrease in weapon infractions;
- 5.1 percent reduction in verbal threats made by students;
- 45.6 percent reduction in student assaults;
- 50.9 percent decrease in expulsions;
- 15.4 percent reduction in drop-outs;
- 22.9 percent increase in the number of school volunteers; and
- 17.2 percent increase in parent attendance at meetings.

In addition, the follow-up survey of those schools that dropped out of the formal training of the project indicates that 75 percent of the schools still focus on discipline in a positive, proactive, instructional, and systematic manner.

With GLARRC's assistance, Ohio plans to expand the collaborative relationships established to date, to integrate the training used for this initiative with other major initiatives, and to provide focused assistance for the students with severe behavior problems.

Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRC)

The MPRRC serves 11 States and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), which has schools spread across 23 States. During 1996-97, the MPRRC provided these States with over 100 technical assistance activities in special education.

During the past 5 years, States have requested a total of *25 technical assistance activities in the area of special populations*. For technical assistance through the MPRRC, the category can be defined as issues relating to the education of students who have disabilities that are medically related or disabilities of low incidence, such as students who are deaf, blind, or both. Other disabilities in this area could include:

- autism;
- attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder;
- fetal alcohol syndrome/effects; and
- students with special health care needs.

The service options for these groups of students could include one or a combination of the following:

- special education;
- section 504; and
- General education.

Many students served by special education programs fall under the general category of "other health impaired." These students generally have limited strength, vitality, or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems, such as a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia or diabetes that adversely affects their educational performance. With improved medical care and technology, students with special health care needs are attending public schools at a higher rate, requiring schools to provide health services to maintain these students in a safe educational environment. The issue is further complicated by each State's Nurse Practice Act, which outlines which health care procedures can be delegated (through training and supervision) to a nonhealth care provider, such as a teacher or paraeducator.

Because of the issues relevant to this population, all States in the MPRRC region have requested some type of technical assistance with various aspects of serving students with special health care needs. Recently, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, Utah, Colorado, and the BIA have requested technical assistance to develop guidelines for educators and administrators serving students with special health care needs. The guidelines usually address the following topics:

- legal issues,
- service options,
- Nurse Practice Act,
- health care procedures that can be delegated,
- developing an individualized health care plan,
- developing an emergency plan,
- effective assistive technology, and
- parent responsibilities.

In all cases, the guidelines have been developed by a group of stakeholders, including parents, educators, health care providers, SEA staff, and MPRRC staff. After the guidelines are completed, training materials are developed to provide in-service training to school teams. Recently, in North Dakota, teams from all over the State gathered to be trained as trainers. Their job was to return to their schools and train other educators and administrators. Their training packet included:

- State guidelines,
- a presentation outline,
- overhead transparencies, and
- parent information.

This was a wonderful resource for each school to utilize to keep staff current on providing appropriate services. It also established a consistent message and method of serving this population throughout the State.

In many cases, the technical assistance has led to changes in the State's Nurse Practice Act, allowing delegation of certain health care procedures to trained school staff. Examples of some procedures include catheterization, suctioning, administration of medications, and tracheal tube adjustments. These activities have also increased the communication and collaboration between educators and health care providers.

These technical assistance activities have built the State's capacity to serve students with special health care needs, resulting in improved programs and services.

Western Regional Resource Center (WRRC): Transition and Beyond

Transition was targeted in 1984 by OSEP as one of its five priority areas (the others being monitoring, LRE, parent involvement, and early childhood) for RRC assistance to SEAs. SEAs in the Western region have continually sought to improve policies and to support programs to increase the success of students with disabilities as they move from school to work. The WRRC has provided leadership in the region and, nationally, has been actively involved in SEA-led efforts at the State and local levels. These strategies illustrate the benefits and longer term impact which can come from deliberate, collaborative interventions at several different levels across time.

NATIONAL GUIDES: In the early 1990s, the RRCs received numerous requests from States for specific guidance in meeting the intent of the transition amendments in IDEA. The WRRC took the lead in collaborating with the MP RRC and the National Transition Network (NTN) to draft a preliminary checklist for districts to follow in implementing the transition requirements. A draft of the checklist was first presented at a WRRC regional transition forum. This began the development of an accessible, adaptable, and functional document on transition for teachers, families, administrators, and providers. *IDEA Transition Requirements: A Guide for States, Districts, Schools and Families* has been distributed nationwide (initial printing of 3,500 copies), is available through the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials in paper and electronic form, and is electronically available from the WRRC Web site. Several hundred copies also have been requested through the National Clearinghouse. The guide was distributed at the 1996 OSEP monitoring meeting. The monitoring checklist section was adapted and reprinted in California's *Special Edge* newsletter and in LRP's *The Special Educator*.

In response to State needs to improve transition outcomes, OSEP funded the Statewide Transition Systems Change (STSC) grants in 1991 and asked the WRRC to coordinate the efforts of 12 States that initially received grants. The WRRC sponsored a series of conference calls and facilitated a national meeting in Washington, D.C., to encourage those States to exchange information and help establish a strong national network of transition stakeholders. When OSEP awarded the NTN the responsibility for national coordination and technical assistance for the STSC grants to the NTN, WRRC helped effect a seamless transfer of these functions to NTN. Continued collaboration with NTN and now with the National Transition Alliance (NTA) maintains national connections among technical assistance projects and States for continued program improvement.

REGIONAL SUPPORTS: The WRRC holds regular teleconferences for transition specialists in each of its regional SEAs. These teleconferences promote networking and peer resources among the States and provide information and guidance in critical areas. Additionally, the calls provide ongoing access to information from OSEP-funded State system change grantees and school to work efforts. Teleconferences focus on policy issues and program considerations. Call topics have included: highlighting effects or progress of specific States' programs, reviewing IDEA compliance requirements, featuring speakers on areas of interest such as accessing college.

An important function of RRCs is connecting practitioners with experts who can address specific needs. The WRRC provided that connection in its transition work by contracting with the Arizona SEA's transition specialist to produce a Fair Labor Standards Act Training Manual. This manual has been disseminated widely and used for training in other States.

An area of significant concern for States in the Western region, with special ramifications for transition, has been the provision of educational services to youth with disabilities in correctional facilities. Of particular concern are services to the population of incarcerated individuals with disabilities (generally ages 18-21, but sometimes younger) in adult correction facilities and programs. OSEP monitoring reports cite States out of compliance for providing services to this population (25 of 50 OSEP site visits over the past 4 years have resulted in citations). Acting on increasing requests from States and responding to the Federal findings, the WRRC recently re-introduced regional technical assistance on corrections education. Earlier work, the original "Corrections Connection" (1992), resulted in a resource document disseminated and cited nationally, and a regional meeting focused on the older incarcerated youth. The current activity supports a regional network of State-level education and correction staff. This network is engaged in an informal needs assessment process designed to collect common information about policies and programs for all the States in the Western region. Once completed, the information will be used during teleconference conversations on shared issues and will help the WRRC appropriately target assistance to individual SEAs.

IN THE FIELD: Two recent examples of specific State or local assistance are in American Samoa and Oregon. The WRRC began working with the American Samoa SEA in 1990 on its initial policy and guideline document for a collaborative special education and vocational rehabilitation work-study program. During 1995-96, WRRC staff helped both the special education and vocational rehabilitation staff revise the document, incorporate IDEA transition requirements, and evaluate the island's school-to-work program.

The Oregon SEA requested WRRC assistance to respond to legislative concerns about local program successes in serving and aiding the transition of students with developmental disabilities from school to work. The assistance involved facilitating an interagency team (special education, mental health, vocational rehabilitation) review of programs and preparing a report to the legislature. The report offered a series of recommendations to the SEA on State system improvements. The WRRC has also assisted Oregon in gathering local data and facilitating an interagency task group focused on how to sustain the successes the State facilitated through its State transition change grant, which expires fall of 1997.

**Table D-1
Regional Resource Centers (RRC) and Federal Resource Center (FRC) Programs**

	States Served
<p><u>Region 1: H028A30002</u></p> <p>Edward Wilkens Northeast RRC (NERRC) Institute for Program Development Trinity College of Vermont Burlington, VT 05401 Telephone: (802) 658-5036 FAX: (802) 658-7435 TTY: (802) 860-1428 WEB: http://www.interact.uoregon.edu/wrrc/nerrc/index.htm</p>	<p>Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont</p>
<p><u>Region 2: H028A30008</u></p> <p>Kenneth Olsen, Director Midsouth RRC (MSRRC) University of Kentucky 126 Mineral Industries Building Lexington, KY 40506-0051 Telephone: (606) 257-4921 FAX: (606) 258-1901 TTY: (606) 257-2903 WEB: http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/projects/msrrc/index.htm</p>	<p>Delaware, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia</p>
<p><u>Region 3: H028A30005</u></p> <p>Timothy Kelly, Director South Atlantic RRC (SARRC) Florida Atlantic University 1236 North University Drive Plantation, FL 33322 Telephone: (954) 473-6106 FAX: (954) 424-4309 No TTY Line WEB: http://www.fau.edu/divdept/sarrc/</p>	<p>Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands</p>

ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTERS

Table D-1 (cont'd)

	States Served
<p><u>Region 4: H028A30004</u></p> <p>Larry Magliocca, Director Great Lakes Area RRC (GLARRC) The Ohio State University 700 Ackerman Road, Suite 440 Columbus, OH 43202 Telephone: (614) 447-0844 FAX: (614) 447-9043 TTY: (614) 447-8776 WEB: http://www.csnp.ohio-state.edu/glarrc.html</p>	<p>Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin</p>
<p><u>Region 5: H028A30009</u></p> <p>John Copenhaven, Director Mountain Plains RRC (MPRRC) Utah State University/Drake University 1780 North Research Parkway Suite 112 Logan, UT 84321 Telephone: (801) 752-0238 FAX: (801) 753-9750 TTY: (801) 753-9750 WEB: http://www.usu.edu/~mprrc/</p>	<p>Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, Bureau of Indian Affairs</p>
<p><u>Region 6: H028A30003</u></p> <p>Richard Zeller, Director Western RRC (WRRC) University of Oregon College of Education Eugene, OR 97403 Telephone: (503) 346-5641 FAX: (503) 346-5639 TTY: (541) 346-0367 WEB: http://interact.uoregon.edu/wrrc/wrrc.html</p>	<p>Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau</p>

Table D-1 (cont'd)

	States Served
<p data-bbox="537 457 1049 489" style="text-align: center;"><u>Federal Resource Center: HS93033001</u></p> <p data-bbox="516 520 1073 804" style="text-align: center;">Carol Valdivieso, Director Federal Resource Center Academy for Educational Development 1975 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 800 Washington, D.C. 20009-1202 Telephone: (202) 884-8204 FAX: (202) 884-8443 TTY: (202) 884-8200 WEB: http://www.dssc.org/frc/</p>	