

Monday Bulletin on Services to Youth

To Coordinate... To Enhance... To Serve... Through Communication...

Release of Final IDEA 2004 Part B Regulations

During a roll-out event at the Department of Education on August 3, 2006, Education Secretary Margaret Spellings announced the release of the long-anticipated final regulations for Part B of the IDEA 2004 law, which President Bush signed into law on December 3, 2004. The statute reauthorizes the nation's federal special education programs.

In this edition of Monday Bulletin we have included information about the new regulations, as well as resources for further investigation. In future editions, we will provide more detail about how the regulations will be implemented in Michigan.

Apply Now for Youth Leadership Forum 2007!

Deadline is December
15, 2006.

For an application and
more see:

www.mylf.org

LEAD & MANAGE MY SCHOOL

Raising the Achievement of Students with Disabilities: New Ideas For IDEA

From the Department of Education web site:

www.ed.gov/admins/lead/speced/ideafactsheet.html

"No Child Left Behind and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act have put the needs of students with disabilities front and center. We now have a laser-like focus on helping these kids." — U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings

Students with disabilities have made great strides in the classroom over the past three decades, sparked by the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]. This revolutionary law paved the way for children with disabilities to enjoy full access to educational opportunities.

Another revolutionary law, the No Child Left Behind Act [NCLB], promised a quality education to every K-12 student, including students with disabilities, for the very first time. Signed in 2002, NCLB has made the academic achievement of these students a national priority, leading to even greater classroom progress.

In August, the U.S. Department of Education announced new final regulations under the IDEA that will help schools, districts and states implement IDEA and NCLB seamlessly to ensure that the goals of each law are met. The changes, shaped by thousands of public comments from educators, parents and others, will help make the laws' promise a reality in every state, school district and classroom for the nation's 6.6 million students with disabilities.

Before And After IDEA

On Nov. 29, 1975, President Gerald Ford signed into law the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, now known as IDEA. It guaranteed students with disabilities access to a free and appropriate public education. Prior to IDEA, American schools educated only about one in five students with disabilities. After the law was implemented, their school attendance and graduation rates increased substantially:

- » The number of students with disabilities completing high school rose 17 percentage points between 1987 and 2003, while participation in postsecondary education more than doubled (source: U.S. Department of Education).

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The No Child Left Behind Act

Although access for students with disabilities was guaranteed, academic achievement was not. An “achievement gap” grew, aggravated by what President Bush has called the “soft bigotry of low expectations.” The No Child Left Behind Act committed the nation to ensuring that all students can read and do math at grade-level proficiency by 2014, with states assessing students annually to ensure continuous progress. The law also breaks down the results by student group so that no child falls through the cracks. Since the law was passed:

- » 95 percent of students with disabilities are participating in state reading assessments (2003-04); and
- » Reports show students with disabilities are receiving more classroom time and attention.

Given the opportunity to succeed, students with disabilities have shown real academic gains:

- » Reading scores for 4th-graders with disabilities increased more than 20 points between 2000 and 2005, four times greater than their peers;
- » While the achievement gap between students with and without disabilities declined by a third (from 50 to 32 points).

Students with disabilities have responded well to NCLB’s accountability measures. In 2003-04, only 13 percent of schools that missed their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals did so based solely on their performance.

Aligning IDEA To NCLB

On December 3, 2004, President Bush signed into law the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, reauthorizing IDEA and aligning the law with the goals and purpose of No Child Left Behind. These two historic laws are now working together to ensure that high standards are set for all students with disabilities, and that every child receives a quality education.

Inviting The Public To Comment

Following IDEA’s reauthorization, the Department’s Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) solicited ideas for draft regulations to implement the law. This gave parents, teachers, administrators and advocates the opportunity not just to review and adapt to the changes, but to help shape them.

Citizen comments were carefully considered and led to a number

of changes. For example, public comment on the identification of students with learning disabilities led to a clarification of how this determination will be made.

The Final Regulations

The final regulations are designed to do what’s best for students. There is a new focus on ensuring that students with disabilities achieve to high standards. In addition, the final regulations:

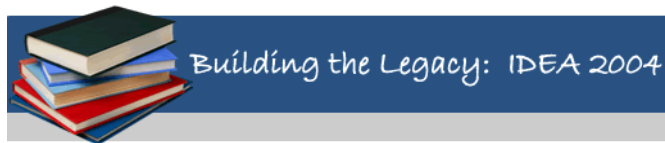
- » Provide flexibility in spending resources to ensure that students with disabilities are identified early and accurately, and that they receive the support they need;
- » Ensure that students with disabilities have highly qualified teachers;
- » Reduce burdensome paperwork for educators and administrators; and
- » Strengthen parents’ involvement in their children’s education.

Making The Changes User-Friendly

The Department of Education has put together a user-friendly package to guide the public through the changes, including an analysis of the public’s comments and a summary of the major changes since the draft regulations’ publication. OSERS is developing a comprehensive plan to aid state and local educators and officials, with technical assistance, an easy-to-navigate Internet index, and a new curriculum to train providers, parents and advocates. Log onto <http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html> to view the final regulations.

Other Support For Students With Disabilities

- » In Dec. 2005, Secretary Spellings released proposed regulations explaining how the Department would allow states to develop new and appropriate assessments for certain students with disabilities that the latest research shows can achieve to high standards within an expanded time frame.
- » In Sept. 2005, President Bush signed a law allowing Gulf Coast states to access \$25.9 million in federal vocational rehabilitation funds to support students with disabilities affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
- » In April 2006, the Department unveiled a “Tool Kit on Teaching and Assessing Students with Disabilities” to help states and school districts implement NCLB’s accountability measures.



Dedicated IDEA "One-Stop Shop"

The Department of Education has launched a web site for resources related to implementing IDEA and related regulations. Look in the left column for video clips regarding changes.

Check it out at: <http://idea.ed.gov/explore/home>

NCLB and IDEA: What Parents of Students with Disabilities Need to Know and Do

This report discusses the intersection between the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). IDEA, in its latest update by Congress, has been more closely aligned with NCLB, making it equally important that parents become familiar with the ways the two laws have been positioned to work together to improve academic achievement of students with disabilities. The report can be found at <http://www.education.umn.edu/nceo/OnlinePubs/Parents.pdf>

Improving Results for Students with Disabilities: Findings from the 1997 National Assessment Studies

Following the 1997 reauthorization of IDEA, Congress asked the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) "to examine how well schools, local education agencies, states and other recipients of assistance" were making progress toward specific goals.

The report prepared by Abt Associates for the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, provides a synthesis of key findings that have emerged to date across the currently available data from seven national assessment studies. It includes information on findings linking positive outcomes to parent involvement, steps states have taken to strengthen family involvement, and information on ways that poverty and family environment relate to outcomes for students with disabilities. A range of related resources including reports, PowerPoint presentations, and fact sheets are also available on the Abt web site:

<http://www.abtassociates.com/Page.cfm?PageID=40388>

From REFERENCE POINTS: <http://www.pacer.org/tatra/>



Web site Features Services for Michiganians with Disabilities

SEPTEMBER 18, 2006 - Robert W. Swanson, Director of the Department of Labor & Economic Growth, and Teri Takai, Director of the Department of Information Technology, today announced the State of Michigan has launched a web site devoted solely to the interests and concerns of people with disabilities.

Developed by Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth in collaboration with the Michigan Department of Information Technology, the site contains information about accessible housing, employment assistance, assistive technology, and accessible transportation, among many other topic areas.

"It's important to reach Michigan citizens with disabilities and provide them with easy access to the information and services that they need," Takai said. "We can't rest on the fact that Michigan.gov was just ranked as the best in the country. We must continue to move the site forward through worthwhile initiatives like this one."

DLEG initiated the web site to encourage easier access to the department's Commission on Disability Concerns, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, and Michigan Commission for the Blind. The development team incorporated the many other state and federal resources available to people with disabilities on the new web site.

"We anticipate the web site will be very useful not only for individuals with disabilities, but also for family members and those in the medical, vocational rehabilitation, education, social work, and other human service professions," Swanson said. "The site provides direct links to specific programs as well as to state and federal laws that benefit people with disabilities."

The web site address is www.michigan.gov/disabilityresources. Persons with suggestions for making the site more helpful and user friendly are encouraged to contact the site manager at disabilityresources@michigan.gov.

Transition for Youth with Disabilities: A Look at State Programs, Progress, and Promising Practices, is a report by the Center for Workers with Disabilities Task Force on Youth in Transition. Get it now at: <http://www.aphsa.org/disabilities/home/index.htm>

MRS Transition Facts...

Through partnership and resource development with the Michigan Department of Education/Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (MDE-OSE) MRS...

- Supported MDE-OSE/EIS Transition Grant funding, totaling \$4,465,000 to local communities. Nine of the 2007 grant applications specifically refer to the MiConnections "Guideposts."
- Assessed the quality and effectiveness of grant-funded programs by reviewing Transition Grant proposals and final reports from Michigan's 57 Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) and three state agencies serving youth, and made recommendations about future funding.

Save the Dates • Events & Training

JANUARY

The Art of Creating Opportunity: 12 New Tools for Students in Transition with Denise Bissonnette

January 25, 2007

The Hilton - Troy, 5500 Crooks Road in Troy, MI
FREE - Pre-registration required by January 18. Space is limited. More information at www.oakland.k12.mi.us, click on "Register Online," then locate class. Questions on content: Cathy Schmidt, 248.209.2504. Sponsored by Oakland Schools and Oakland County Community Mental Health

FEBRUARY

Career & Technical Preparation Conference

February 11-13, 2007

Detroit Marriott

Sponsored by Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth & Ferris State University,

MARCH

Annual Transition Services Conference

"Taking Care of Business"

March 5-7, 2007

Bavarian Inn, Frankenmuth, MI

More information at: <http://www.michigantsa.com/>

APRIL

Workshop with Denise Bissonnette

April 11, 2007

Sponsored by Michigan Rehabilitation Association's Job Placement Division

MAY

MI-AHEAD Conference

May 18, 2007

2006-2007 NASDSE Satellite Conference Series

Each year the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), offer this personnel development series to state education agencies to share with stakeholders.

The Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS) annually purchases this satellite conference series from the NASDSE to share with our stakeholders (e.g. school personnel at the intermediate, local and public school academy levels, parents, community organizations, etc.) at no cost to them.

For more information see the OSE-EIS Web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/ose-eis>

Please forward or print this bulletin for others.

E-mail your contributions or ideas for "Monday Bulletin on Services to Youth" to Lynn Boza: bozal@michigan.gov or call 517/241-3957.

To subscribe, contact Lynn Boza as above.

Views expressed in Monday Bulletin articles are not necessarily the views of the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth nor Michigan Rehabilitation Services.