

Student Support Team

Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 11

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM GRANTS – AWARDING AND RECEIVING

BEST/Act 230 Grants

This year, the Department of Education received applications for BEST or Act 230 grant awards from 49 different Supervisory Unions to do work in over 100 schools across the state. A wide range of proposals were reviewed by the state BEST team. All the proposals were directed toward either **Building Effective Strategies for Teaching students with behavioral challenges** and/or **providing professional development activities** to meet **students' academic needs**, to the extent possible, **in the regular classroom**.

According to these proposals, schools are engaged in significant efforts designed to improve school climate, culture, instruction, and achievement levels for all students. Many of these are known best practices such as Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), Differentiated Instruction (DI), Response to Intervention/Instruction (RtI), Responsive Classroom, Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) non-violent crisis prevention, and Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI). Additional efforts include redefining student support systems, providing anti-bias education and diversity training, and creating freshmen academies in high schools to assist in transitioning new students.

State Professional Development Improvement Grant

This spring, the student support team gathered a diverse group of professionals to work on a proposal for implementing a system of integrated professional development in the State for addressing the needs of diverse learners. The grant proposal focused on improving our capacity state-wide to (a) deliver services related to Early Childhood and Speech Language Pathology and (b) implement an integrated instruction model that incorporates the elements of RtI, PBS, DI and Concept-Based curriculum.

The five year \$2.6m development grant was awarded to the State of Vermont in August. The team is currently working diligently to define the implementation strategy and timeline for establishing regional professional development teams representing the core components of the proposal. A request for applications from local professionals and schools interested in implementing the Vermont Integrated Instruction Model (VIIM) is forthcoming in January. In February, we will select teams of professionals and pilot schools within a region to begin training for fall implementation of school-wide elements of the VIIM model.

~Rae Ann Knopf

DID YOU KNOW?

34.02% or 615 of 1808 parents of children with disabilities who responded to the parent involvement survey reported that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities ($\pm 2.12\%$ at the 95% confidence level). Vermont has exceeded the measurable and rigorous target for this indicator for FFY 2006 (2006 - 2007) of 30.12%.

Source- To be published February 1, 2008 in the Vermont Part B Annual Performance Report. For additional background on this indicator, see the current APR and SPP available on-line: http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_sped/data_reports_pubs.html

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Happy
Halloween!



SST UPDATES:



What's going on now?

Monitoring Team Update

Parents and peers interested in participating in a special education focused monitoring visit during the 2007-2008 school year are currently being trained to help in facilitating on-site visits. Having parents and peers involved as active members of the DOE Focused Monitoring Team is a critical component of the Focused Monitoring process. Several individuals answered the call and were selected to participate in an on-site visit. They will assist in interviewing staff and/or parents, conducting classroom observations, reviewing data, and actively engaging in the daily discussions regarding special education.

Participants must be available for 2-4 days. Stipends are available for parents. Parent and peer support in this process is crucial to the success of Focused Monitoring and to students with disabilities. Please consider attending one of the trainings to learn more about how you can be involved.

Training is required for all non-Department of Education participants. If you would like to participate at a future date, contact Judy Colby at 828-5126 or at judby.colby@state.vt.us.

Interagency Update

The latest issue of the Interagency Matters! newsletter has been posted at <http://vtcp.blogspot.com>. You can read the full issue by clicking on the title of this post. Articles in this issue cover: Updated forms, Evaluation, Act 264 Board shaping annual recommendations, Trainings, Discussion of lead agency, and a new Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Education and Department for Children and Families.

Data & Technology Update

You should be receiving your child count discs in the mail from the Department of Education soon. We were informed today that the discs came with no paper instruc-

tions. In researching this, we were told that all the documentation you will need is included in the zip file on the disc. Once you insert your CD into your computer and open it, click the zip file. This is a self extracting zip file that will create a folder on your C drive. In that folder will be a folder called "To Print". That folder contains the documentation that you need about the data contained on the disc. Please print all of these documents for your reference.

If you need further help with this, or are having problems with your disc, please contact 828-3777 to let them know the problems so they can work to fix them. If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact 828-1499.

New Resources Available for Education for Homeless Students

Last year, Vermont schools identified and enrolled over 838 homeless students. Every Supervisory Union or School District has designated a Homeless Education Liaison to facilitate this process and to provide training and technical assistance to school staff. To support schools in meeting the requirements of the McKinney Vento Homeless Education Act, the DOE website has been updated with the following information and resources:

The federal definition of **homeless status** is right on the front page:

http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_homeless.html

An up-to-date **list of Homeless Education Liaisons** is also accessible on the front page:

http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_homeless/contact_list_0807.pdf

The technical assistance staff of the **Vermont Homeless Children and Youth Project** can be contacted by clicking into the VHCYP brochure:

http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_homeless/homeless_brochure.pdf

A new version of **The McKinney Vento Homeless Education Act PowerPoint**, a self tutorial and training tool, can be seen at:

http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_homeless/toolbox/homeless_education_0807.pdf

Information on training options and other resources can be obtained by contacting Wendy Ross, State Coordinator, Education for Homeless Children and Youth at 828-5148 or wendy.ross@state.vt.us.

Student Support Team— Save the Date



November

PBS Implementation Schools Coaches Training

Location—Killington Grand Resort
November 28, 2007

State-Wide Leadership Team meeting

Location—Capitol Plaza-Montpelier
November 26, 2007

PBS Implementation Schools Leadership Team Training

Location—Killington Grand Resort
November 29-30, 2007

December

Effective Behavior Supports for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders

December 4, 2007

Location I – Mount Snow, Wilmington-
Cancelled

Location II– Black Bear Tavern & Grille
Saint Johnsbury

Contact: Pat Donahue, Vermont Department of Education, (802) 828-5123 or pat.donahue@state.vt.us

The Third Annual Alternative Educators' Conference

Celebrating the Mosaic of Alternative Education Options for Vermont Students

Wednesday, December 5th, 2007

1:30 – 5:15 (registration 1:00- 1:30)

Optional Dinner: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Sheraton Hotel, Burlington, Vermont

Note: *An Intensive Pre-Conference Workshop*

Beyond Time Out – With Dr. John Stewart

Wednesday, December 5th, 2007

9:00 – 12:00 (registration 8:30 – 9:00)

Sheraton Hotel, Burlington, Vermont

Details at: <http://www.uvm.edu/~cdci/best/?Page=calendarTA0708.html>

Effective Behavior Supports for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Location II– Black Bear Tavern & Grille-
Saint Johnsbury

December 6, 2007

Location III-Killington Grand

December 13, 2007

Location IV – Doubletree Hotel-
South Burlington

December 13, 2007

Contact: Pat Donahue, Vermont Department of Education, (802) 828-5123 or pat.donahue@state.vt.us

January

Crisis Prevention Intervention Training

January 21, 2007

Capitol Plaza, Montpelier-register at

<http://www.uvm.edu/~cdci/best/?Page=calendarTA0708.html>

Scientifically Based Education Resources

The Access Center (K-8)
<http://www.k8accesscenter.org>

Research in Special Education: Scientific Methods and Evidence-Based Practices
ideapractices.org/ps/Final_Manuscript-Scientific_Research_in_Special_Education_R3.pdf

National Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports website—
<http://www.pbis.org>

What Works Clearinghouse
<http://www.whatworks.ed.gov>

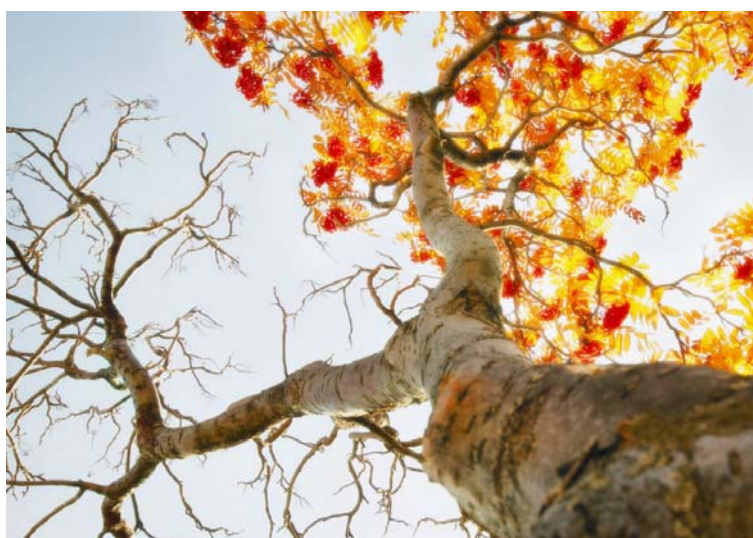
The Florida Center for Reading Research
<http://www.fcrr.org>

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities Research Center website at
<http://research.nichcy.org>

STUMP THE STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

How do I find out what conferences are going on in the Education Department?

<http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/dept/calendar.html>



What's Up with the New Directions in Student Support Initiative?

The original intent of the New Directions in Student Support initiative was re-definition/revision of the Educational Support System in Vermont. The Educational Support System was required by Act 230 in 1990 (re-authorized as Act 157 in 1996), addressed in Act 117 in 2000, and included in the *Vermont's School Quality Standards* (2006.) During the first phase of the initiative as a result of information sharing from school, state agency and organization representatives and informed by the cross-team initiatives of the Vermont Department of Education, there was a realization that the focus of the work needed to be broadened. A *reactive* system of responses to the needs of students *after* a problem is identified was broadened to include a *proactive* focus on what must be in place in, or in partnership with, Vermont schools to ensure the success of ALL students. The addition of a proactive focus supports efforts to make our educational systems more seamless and more closely integrates and aligns the Educational Support System with the general education system creating a comprehensive and integrated system to achieve student success.

This broader focus for the initiative now includes:

- defining the essential elements that must be in place in, or in partnership with, Vermont schools to assure the success of ALL students and for the approximately 30% of students who are not currently successful;
- working to create or enhance those elements of an integrated, comprehensive educational system in pilot Vermont schools and communities;
- discovering what schools and communities need in order to accomplish this task; and identifying any policy changes needed.

The following list indicates what has happened thus far in Phase I of the project:

Phase I: Orientation and Readiness

April 30th 2007 Leadership Summit with Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor, co-directors of the Center for Mental Health in Schools, New Directions in Student Support Project at UCLA

Outcome:

Recommendations about what should happen in Vermont to reduce the achievement gap and address barriers to learning

Formation of a Statewide Planning Committee whose membership includes:

- 37 members
- School Steering Groups (Addison Central SU, Oxbow High School, Braintree Elementary School, Otter Valley Union High School)
- Representatives from state agencies and organizations

2007 BEST Summer Institute Days 1 & 2 with Statewide Planning Committee

Outcome:

Initiation of dialogue regarding the design of a framework for an effective system that brings schools, families, agencies, communities and the Vermont Department of Education together to address barriers to students' learning

2007 BEST Summer Institute Days 3 & 4 with School Steering Groups

Outcomes:

Mapping, by individual school, the current programs and services available across the continuum of students

Development of an individual school blueprint/action plan of major next steps to:

build readiness by engaging local stakeholders;

analyze data to determine the match of current supports to student need, the effectiveness of those supports, and identify gaps and overlaps to be addressed

plan for implementation

The Statewide Planning Committee met on September 25, 2007

At this meeting, the committee brainstormed and named essential elements that must be in place in, and in partnership with, Vermont schools and communities to ensure success for ALL of our students. Look for more about these essential elements and an accompanying visual representation in an upcoming issue of this newsletter. Before adjourning until November 7th, the Statewide Planning Committee also began to compile a list of existing supports and barriers for each element of this comprehensive and integrated educational system.

The following is a list of Phase I activities and desired outcomes for the remainder of this year:

September 2007-June 2008 School Steering Groups

Ongoing development of local readiness and data analysis by School Steering Groups

November 7, 2007 Meeting of Statewide Planning Committee

Desired Outcome:

Apply research in best practices to the categories of essential elements of the comprehensive educational system that must be in place in, and in partnership with, Vermont schools and communities to ensure success for ALL of our students

April 7, 2007 Meeting of Statewide Planning Committee

Desired Outcome:

Initiate development of a rubric for each essential element of a comprehensive educational system that schools and communities could use as a self-assessment tool in building that system

June 2008 BEST Summer Institute: Days 1 & 2

Desired Outcome:

Strategic planning to address barriers to implementing the comprehensive and integrated educational system

June 2008 BEST Summer Institute: Days 3 & 4

Desired Outcomes:

Pilot schools assess degree of local readiness

Pilot schools plan for building or enhancing their comprehensive and integrated educational system

Phase 2 of implementation will begin during the 2008-2009 school year. The following are anticipated activities and desired outcomes for Phase 2:

Phase 2: Phase In

Establish school infrastructure necessary to manage changes and resources in pilot schools

Begin to build or enhance essential elements of a comprehensive educational system in pilot schools

June 2009 BEST Summer Institute: Days 1 & 2

Desired Outcome:

Strategically plan to address unintended consequences and remaining barriers to implementation, based on learning from implementation in pilot schools,

Consider advisability of moving to broader, statewide implementation

June 2009 BEST Summer Institute: Days 3 & 4

Desired Outcome:

Pilot schools create action plan to further build or enhance comprehensive and integrated educational system

Phase 3 and 4: Sustaining and Evolving

Pilot schools continue to build or enhance essential elements of the comprehensive educational system

Pilot schools plan for ongoing maintenance and creative renewal

We are currently compiling the Statewide Planning Committee members' submissions for our "Re-Name the Initiative" competition. There is some excellent chocolate at stake for the winner!

~Bev Heise



THE VERMONT SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Vermont Special Education Advisory Council (VTSEAC) meets in the afternoon on the first Wednesday of each month, September through July, to review topics in special education. The VTSEAC is comprised of:

- parents of children with disabilities
- individuals with disabilities
- teachers
- representatives of institutions of higher education that prepare special educators and related service providers
- State and local education officials
- Administrators of programs for children with disabilities
- Representatives of other State agencies involved in the financing or delivery of related service to children with disabilities
- Representatives from the State juvenile or adult corrections agency.

The Council's mission is to:

- advise the State Department of Education about unmet needs within the State in the education of children with disabilities
- comment on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities
- advise the State Education Department in developing evaluations and reporting on data sent to the United States Secretary of Education annually
- advise the State in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports
- advise the State in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities

Individuals who wish to attend a Council meeting or to present information at a Council meeting, should contact Mary Barton, Chairperson at mbarton@ludl.tds.net or Ernest Wheeler, Department of Education Liaison at ernest.wheeler@state.vt.us or by calling his office number at (802) 828-0564. Copies of the Council's meeting minutes, meeting schedule, and a list of the Council membership are located on the Vermont Department of Education website at:

<http://education.vermont.gov/vseac/>

~Ernie Wheeler



Tip of the Month

Keep young children on track for transition to Part B

School districts that fail to schedule timely IEP meetings for children transitioning from Part C to Part B may find themselves footing the bill for any private services the parents obtain during the interim -- even if the agency providing early intervention services fails to schedule a transition meeting.

In *Rio Rancho Pub. Schs.*, 5 ECLPR 48 (SEA NM 2007), an IHO ordered a New Mexico district to reimburse the parents of a 4-year-old with Down Syndrome for expenses they incurred when they placed their daughter in a Montessori preschool. The IHO recognized that the **New Mexico Department of Health**, which provided early intervention services under Part C, was responsible for scheduling the child's transition meeting.

"The district, however, has an obligation to conduct an [IEP meeting] and begin to provide a FAPE when the child turns 3, whether or not there has been a transition meeting," the IHO wrote, citing the Part B regulation found at [34CFR 300.124 \(b\)](#).

Districts should strive to make a child's transition from Part C to Part B as smooth as possible, regardless of whether it has the full cooperation of the agency responsible for early intervention services. Districts can minimize their potential liability for IDEA violations by taking the following precautions:

- **Don't wait for the Part C agency.** Because the district, and not the agency, will be responsible for a child's delayed receipt of FAPE, the district should plan to convene an IEP meeting regardless of whether the agency schedules a transition meeting. Remember to notify any Part C personnel whose presence is necessary to evaluate the child's special education needs.
- **Become familiar with state guidelines.** Has your state established a specific timeline for IEP meetings? Review your state's education laws to determine whether the IEP team must convene by a particular date or whether there is a deadline for having the IEP in effect.
- **Disregard the child's continued receipt of Part C services.** Just because a child continues to receive early intervention services doesn't mean that the district is off the hook for providing FAPE. A public agency may opt to extend a child's Part C services for a short time when, as here, it delays in providing those services. In such cases, a child can receive Part B services while receiving compensatory services under Part C.

Amy E. Slater, Esq. covers special education issues for LRP Publications.

Post your thoughts, questions and comments on this or any other special education topic at specialconnection@lrp.com.

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~Nancy MacDonald

"The world is not painted or adorned, but is from the beginning beautiful."- Ralph Waldo Emerson

RESOURCES

<http://www.getATstuff.com> is an online "classifieds" where you can find new and used Assistive Technology (AT) devices for sale or donation. Residents of Vermont & all of New England can post an AT or purchase an AT.

Center for Implementing Technology in Education
<http://www.CITEd.org>

Guide to Resources for Promoting Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Practices

http://www.taocommunities.org/ev_en.php?ID=1027_201&ID2=DO_COMMUNITY

See the Online Events page on **SchoolsMovingUp** for future training events at <http://www.schoolsmovingup.net/onlineevents>

Vermont Department of Education

<http://education.vermont.gov/>

The regional school calendar summary for 2007-08 has been posted on the Department's Web site --

http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/directories/school_calendars_08.html

If you need information about human services, log onto www.screendoor.vermont.gov or call 211

Student ID Numbers: We only receive student ID requests by fax and we return IDs to schools by fax to ensure that the proper IDs are going to the proper place. Contact the helpdesk at 828-3777 with any requests for student ID numbers. Thank you for your cooperation.

Employee Update

Sharon Renault– is no longer working for the Department of Education. She has relocated to New Hampshire and is supervising consultants responsible for the care of adults with mental health needs.

Bruce Smith–is joining the Educational Support System (ESS) team as a consultant. Bruce has worked in the Milton School District and most recently Colchester School District as a guidance counselor.



Communication Corner

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM HALLOWEEN CELEBRATION



Guess who is who in Berlin

Upcoming Deadlines

Child Count 12/14

Please note the new
contact number for
Child Count
828-1499