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## ABSTRACT

This volume provides an overview of the proceedings of a 1986 meeting which looked at Transition Institute at Illinois programs that help students with disabilities move into postsecondary study or work, discussed how participants could receive technical assistance, and disseminated project information. Included are the agenda, the findings from the program evaluation, a review of applied research, a summary of technical assistance programs, and a list of participants. Included are the following papers: "Secondary Special Education and Transition from School to Work: A National Priority" (Frank R. Rusch and L. Allen Phelps); "Looking Ahead" (the keynote presentation by G. Thomas Bellamy); "Model Program Evaluation Research Program" (Phelps and Jane Dowling); "Meta-analysis of Secondary Special Education and Transitional Services" (Laird W. Heal); "Student Assessment Research Program" (Robert Linn and Lizanne DeStefano); "Needed Research on the Evaluation of Special Education Transition Programs" (Robert Stake); "Research Priorities in Secondary Special Education and Transitional Services: A National Survey" (Rusch, Jeffrey McNair, and DeStefano); "History of Federal Transition Policy" (DeStefano and Dale Snauwaert); "Social Ecology of the Workplace: Direct Observation of Handicapped and Nonhandicapped Workers" (Janis Chadsey-Rusch); "Parent Survey: Identification and Validation of Transition Issues" (McNair and Rusch); "The Sonoma County Transition Project" (Gail O'Connor); "Secondary Educational and Transitional Services for Handicapped Youth" (Don Hulbert); "Hawaii Transition Project" (Robert Stodden); "The Electronics Industry Enclave Project" (Larry Rhodes); "The Vocational Rehabilitation and Transition Process for Learning Disabled Youth: A Case History Approach" (Patricia Patton and Louise Reifman); "Project Employment" (Patricia Catapano); "Employment Retention Program" (Robert Gaylord-Ross); "Postsecondary Interaction Model for Learning Disabilities" (Mary Morris and Jan Leuenberger); "Illinois Competitive Employment Project" (Tom Lagomarcino); "Project REDDY: Real Employment Alternatives for Developmentally Disabled Youth" (Dianne E. Berkell). (DB)

ED329063

# Project Directors' Second Annual Meeting

Chadsey-Rusch

**TRANSITION  
INSTITUTE  
AT ILLINOIS**

**BEST COPY AVAILABLE**

The following principles guide our research related to the education and employment of youth and adults with specialized education, training, employment, and adjustment needs.

- Individuals have a basic right to be educated and to work in the environment that least restricts their right to learn and interact with other students and persons who are not handicapped.
- Individuals with varied abilities, social backgrounds, aptitudes, and learning styles must have equal access and opportunity to engage in education and work, and life-long learning.
- Educational experiences must be planned, delivered, and evaluated based upon the unique abilities, social backgrounds, and learning styles of the individual.
- Agencies, organizations, and individuals from a broad array of disciplines and professional fields must effectively and systematically coordinate their efforts to meet individual education and employment needs.
- Individuals grow and mature throughout their lives requiring varying levels and types of educational and employment support.
- The capability of an individual to obtain and hold meaningful and productive employment is important to the individual's quality of life.
- Parents, advocates, and friends form a vitally important social network that is an instrumental aspect of education, transition to employment, and continuing employment.

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The Secondary Transition Intervention Effectiveness Institute is funded through the Office of Special Education Programs, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education (contract number 300-85-0160).

**Project Officer: Dr. Mel Appell**

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**Project Directors' Second Annual Meeting  
Conference Proceedings**

**Edited by  
Janis Chadsey-Rusch  
Merle Levy**

**Loews L'Enfant Plaza Hotel  
Washington, D.C.**

**October 9-10, 1986**

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## INTRODUCTION

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This volume provides an overview of the proceedings from the second of five meetings sponsored by Special Education Programs, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education (contract number 300-85-0160). These meetings are organized by the Secondary Transition Intervention Effectiveness Institute, College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. A primary objective of the Transition Institute is to evaluate the effectiveness of model programs that are funded through the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. Secondary objectives relate to (a) providing program evaluation technical assistance, (b) investigating transition issues through applied research, and (c) providing evaluation research and applied research experiences to graduate students in the area of transition programming.

The meeting was held October 9-10, 1986 at the Loews L'Enfant Plaza Hotel in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the meeting was (a) to provide an update of the Institute's programs, (b) to discuss how participants could receive technical assistance, and (c) to provide an opportunity for project directors to disseminate information and interact with one another.

This document provides a summary of the proceedings from the meeting, including the agenda, an overview of the Transition Institute, the findings from the program evaluation, applied



research, technical assistance programs, an evaluation of the meeting, and a list of the participants and advisory members.

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Frank R. Rusch is Director of the Secondary Transition Intervention Effectiveness Institute.

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## AGENDA

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### The Project Directors' Second Annual Meeting October 9-10, 1986 Washington, D.C.

#### Thursday, October 9

- 7:30 - 8:30 a.m.      REGISTRATION AND COFFEE
- 8:30 - 8:45 a.m.      WELCOME  
Frank R. Rusch, Director  
Transition Institute
- 8:45 - 9:45 a.m.      KEYNOTE PRESENTATION  
G. Thomas Bellamy, Director, Special  
Education Programs, Office of Special  
Education and Rehabilitative Services
- 9:45 - 10:00 a.m.      BREAK
- 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.      EVALUATION RESEARCH FINDINGS  
Five concurrent 25-minute sessions will  
be presented. Pick three sessions that  
are of interest to you.
- Session I  
    10:00 - 10:25
- Session II  
    10:30 - 10:55
- Session III  
    11:00 - 11:25
1.    Model Program Evaluation Information  
      Data Base  
      L. Allen Phelps and Jane Dowling,  
      Institute Staff
  2.    Meta-Analysis of Secondary/Transition  
      Education  
      Laird W. Heal, Institute Staff
  3.    Measurement of Student Characteristics  
      and Achievement  
      Robert Linn and Lizanne DeStefano,  
      Institute Staff
  4.    Review of Extant Data Sources  
      Delwyn Harnisch, Institute Staff
  5.    Research Needs in Evaluation  
      Robert E. Stake, Institute Staff
- 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.      LUNCH

1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Session I  
1:00 - 1:25

Session II  
1:30 - 1:55

Session III  
2:00 - 2:25

#### APPLIED RESEARCH FINDINGS

Four concurrent 25-minute sessions will be presented. Pick three sessions that are of interest to you.

1. School-to-Work Research Needs  
Frank R. Rusch, Institute Staff
2. Transition Policy Research Program  
Lizanne DeStefano, Institute Staff
3. Social Ecology of the Workplace  
Janis Chadsey-Rusch, Institute Staff
4. Research Panel  
Social Support for Employment  
Richard P. Schutz, Institute Staff  
  
National Parent Survey  
Jeff McNair, Institute Staff

2:30 - 2:45 p.m.

#### BREAK

2:45 - 4:15 p.m.

Session I  
2:45 - 3:10

Session II  
3:15 - 3:40

Session III  
3:45 - 4:10

#### FEATURED PROJECTS

Five concurrent 25-minute sessions will be presented. Pick three sessions that are of interest to you.

1. The Sonoma County Transition Project  
Cooperative Model Project  
Gail O'Connor, North Bay Regional Center, Santa Rosa, CA
2. Secondary Education and Transitional Services for Handicapped Youth--Service Demonstration Project  
Dan Hulbert, Career Assessment and Placement Center, Whittier, CA
3. Hawaii Transition Project--Service Demonstration Project  
Robert Stodden, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI
4. The Electronics Industry Enclave Project--Service Demonstration Project  
Larry Rhodes, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

5. The Vocational Rehabilitation and  
Transition Process for Learning  
Disabled Youth: A Case History  
Approach--Rehabilitation Services  
Special Project

Patricia Patton and Louise  
Reifman, San Diego University, San  
Diego, CA

4:15 - 5:00 p.m.

BREAK

5:00 - 6:30 p.m.

EXCHANGE/DISSEMINATION POSTER SESSION

William Schill  
Patricia Tompkins-McGill  
Susan Behle  
Richard Dever  
David Test  
Barbara Elliot  
Dorothy Crawford & Bruno D'Alonzo  
Martha Brooks  
Angela Traiforos  
Dale Thomas & Charles Coker  
Michael Hardman  
Robin Stephens  
Judith Cook  
Barbara Brown, Barbara Steinhilper, &  
Ron Davis  
Justin Marino  
Joseph DeMarsh  
George Tilson  
Terence Collins  
Beth Apostoli & Jessica Swirsky  
Bob Nathanson  
Jim Brown  
Katharine Smith  
Margo Vreeburg Izzo  
Susan Ruder

Friday, October 10

8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Jane Dowling, Institute Staff

9:30 - 9:45 a.m.

BREAK

9:45 - 11:15 a.m.

FEATURED PROJECTS

Five concurrent 25-minute sessions will  
be presented. Pick three sessions that  
are of interest to you.

Session I  
9:45 - 10:10

Session II  
10:15 - 10:40

1. Project Employment--Service  
Demonstration Project

Patricia Catapano, Young Adult  
Institute, New York, NY

Session III  
10:45 - 11:10

2. Employment Retention Program Project-  
Service Demonstration Project  
Robert Gaylord-Ross, Richmond  
Unified School District and San  
Francisco State University, San  
Pablo, CA
3. Postsecondary Intervention Model for  
Learning Disabilities--Postsecondary  
Demonstration Project  
Mary Morris and Jan Leuenburger,  
University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NB
4. Illinois Competitive Employment  
Project--Postsecondary Project  
Tom Lagomarcino, University of  
Illinois at Urbana-Champaign,  
Champaign, IL
5. Project READDY: Real Employment  
Alternatives for Developmentally  
Disabled Youth  
Dianne Berkell, Long Island  
University, Greenvale, NY

11:15 a.m. - Noon

DISCUSSION WITH OSERS STAFF

William Halloran (Chair) and OSERS  
Personnel

1. Secondary/Post Secondary Issues
2. Research Issues
3. Personnel Preparation Issues
4. Severe Handicaps Issues
5. NIHR Issues

Noon - 12:30 p.m.

CLOSING REMARKS

Marty Kaufman, Division Director,  
Division of Educational Services,  
Special Education Programs, OSERS

## BACKGROUND

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### SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION AND TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK: A NATIONAL PRIORITY\*

Frank R. Risch  
L. Allen Phelps

Providing appropriate educational and employment opportunities for youth with handicaps has posed significant, long-standing problems for our nation's citizens, employers, policymakers, and educators. Over the past 15 years federal and state legislation has begun addressing the complexities of providing appropriate secondary education and transition services to our nation's youth. Indeed, the significant societal and personal costs associated with the unemployment and underemployment of these youth have raised the issue to the level of national priority. In all likelihood, employment will remain a national priority until considerably higher levels of employment, educational attainment, and successful community adjustment are realized.

The economic dimensions of unemployment are significant and pervasive among youth with handicaps. Of the approximately 300,000 youth who leave high school each year, the vast majority encounter severe unemployment and underemployment problems. Citing data obtained from a Harris telephone survey conducted in the fall of 1985 with a cross-section of 1,000 persons with handicaps, aged 16 and over, results reported to the Senate Subcommittee on the Handicapped

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\*Reprinted with permission from Exceptional Children (1987, April), Vol. 53, No. 6, 487-492.

during the reauthorization hearing held on February 21, 1986

concluded that:

- 67% of all Americans with handicaps, between the ages of 16 and 64, are not working.
- If an individual with a handicap is working, that person is 75% more likely to be employed part-time.
- Of all those persons with handicaps and not working, 67% say that they want to work.

Without question, youth and adults with handicaps suffer major economic disadvantages in the labor market in comparison to the non-disabled population. The extent to which such difficulties are due to employment conditions in the labor market, inadequate or inappropriate vocational and educational preparation, lack of transitional support services, or other related factors (e.g., employer attitudes, social welfare disincentives) is difficult to determine fully. Regardless of the cause, these conditions create major economic difficulties for our nation's taxpayers and individuals with handicaps.

Depending on the severity of the disability, the annual costs borne by taxpayers for sheltered workshop programs, adult day care services, and income transfer programs that support unemployed persons can run as high as \$12,000 per person annually (Phelps, Blanchard, Larkin, & Cobb, 1982; Walls, Zawlocki, & Dowler, 1986). Alternatively, the economic benefits from placing and supporting individuals in competitive employment include a larger tax base, greater productivity capacity for the nation, and significant

reductions in social costs (Copa, 1984; Rusch, 1986; Wehman et al., 1982).

National surveys have pointed out some of the problems and circumstances encountered by youth with handicaps during and following their enrollment in secondary schools. For example, a national longitudinal study of a representative sample of 30,000 sophomores and 28,000 seniors was initiated in 1980 and included self-identified students with handicaps (Owing & Stocking, 1985). For these students with mild handicaps, whether enrolled in special education or regular education, the prospects for completing high school were generally bleak. The authors reported that:

- 22% of the 1980 sophomores, as compared to 12% of the nonhandicapped students, had dropped out of school between their sophomore and senior years.
- 45% of these sophomores were in the lowest quartile on combined vocabulary, reading, math, and science tests, compared to only 19% of the nonhandicapped students.
- Only 29% were enrolled in vocational education programs.

Other recent investigations have cited the lack of appropriate vocational assessment during the schooling years, the absence of career-related objectives and transitional plans in IEPs (Cobb & Phelps, 1983), and the lack of counseling and career planning services, parent involvement, and comprehensive work experience programs for youth while in high school. Most recently, the lack of cooperative programming with vocational rehabilitation and other agencies to ensure a continuum of necessary support as youth exit



from high school and enter employment has been identified as an obstacle to employment (Rusch, Mithaug, & Flexer, 1986).

Clearly, the need to broaden and strengthen the quality of educational experiences received by youth with handicaps in the transitional phase of their education is imperative. Without better preparation, the likelihood of improving their employment prospects and successful adjustment to living in their home communities will be minimal at best.

### Historical Overview

The economic and educational difficulties faced by youth with handicaps are not new problems. Public concern for the ability of individuals with handicaps to pursue employment first arose during World War I when thousands of American veterans who were physically disabled required assistance in returning to the workforce. In 1918, Congress enacted the first Vocational Rehabilitation Act to serve these veterans, as well as to initiate translation services for blind individuals. Federal legislation for vocational education also was enacted in 1917; however, no attention was paid to youth or adults with handicaps. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s a few programs designed to serve the unemployed (e.g., Civilian Conservation Corps) benefited some youth with mild handicaps. The 1943 Amendments to the Vocational Rehabilitation Act expanded services, including rehabilitation counseling, to persons with mental disabilities.

In the 1950s, work-study programs for youth with handicaps first emerged and later became the leading strategy in the public schools for preparing these youth for postschool employment (Brolin, 1976; Clark, 1976). In the work-study models proposed, youth were provided

with controlled, in-school work, followed by placement in specialized job situations in the community (Miller, Ewing, & Phelps, 1980).

The Kennedy era marked the beginning of a period of considerable federal interest and growth in special education, vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, and other programs designed to assist unemployed youth and adults with handicaps. The 1964 Civil Rights Act spurred a major focus on prohibiting discrimination in education, social services, and other federally sponsored activities on the basis of race and national origin. In the mid 1970s nondiscrimination assurances were extended to individuals with handicaps. During the mid-1960s and early 1970s most states enacted legislation mandating that schools provide special education services to all school-age youth. This was followed in 1975 by the landmark federal legislation entitled the "Education for All Handicapped Children Act" (P.L. 94-142), which ensured that children ages 3 to 21 with handicaps would receive a free and appropriate education.

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 and its subsequent amendments in 1968 and 1976 sought to increase the participation of youth and adults in vocational programs by setting aside 10% of the funds for persons with handicaps. Most recently, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 extended these efforts by mandating the delivery of assessment, support services, counseling, and transitional services for students who are identified as handicapped and disadvantaged.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 resulted in a major emphasis being placed on services for individuals with severe disabilities. State vocational Rehabilitation agencies were mandated to improve

services by ensuring client involvement in the design and delivery of vocational rehabilitation services, to expand program and service capacities, and to organize services around the multiple problems associated with a disability (e.g., transportation, housing, and employment). Subsequent re-authorizations of the Rehabilitation Act have continued to strengthen the framework of mandated services based upon ongoing research, demonstration, and training.

The job training and employment programs enacted under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and presently continuing under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) are also focused upon serving the training needs of these individuals. Additionally, Congress enacted the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit program in the 1970s to provide tax incentives for employers who hire individuals referred through state vocational rehabilitation programs.

Despite these significant federal and state efforts the educational and employment problems of youth with handicaps remain a major dilemma for policymakers, professionals, and others from a broad array of human service fields.

#### A Special Federal Initiative

In the 1983 Amendments to the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1973 (EHA P.L. 98-199), Congress sought to address directly the major educational and employment transition difficulties encountered by these youth. Section 626 of P.L. 98-199, entitled "Secondary Education and Transitional Services for Handicapped Youth," authorized the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) to spend \$6.6 million annually in grants and contracts intended to strengthen and coordinate education, training,

and related services, thereby assisting youth in the transition to postsecondary education, competitive employment, or adult services.

The major objectives of Section 626 are (a) to stimulate the improvement and development of programs for secondary special education and (b) to strengthen and coordinate education, training, and related services to assist in the transition process to postsecondary education, vocational training, competitive employment, continuing education, or adult services. To address these objectives, OSERS announced several grant programs in fiscal year 1984 and 1985: Service Demonstration Models (84.158A), Cooperative Models for Planning and Developing Transitional Services (84.158B and 84.158C), and Demonstrations in Postsecondary Education (84.078B and 84.078C). Table 1 overviews these competitions. Special Education Programs awarded 16 grants under the Service Demonstration Models, 37 grants under the Cooperative Models for Planning and Developing Transitional Services, and 43 Demonstrations in Post-Secondary Education.

In addition to the model demonstration grants awarded under Section 626, Special Education Programs awarded 12 Youth Employment Projects (84.023D) and 15 Postsecondary Projects (84.023G) under the Handicapped Children's Model Program (authorized under Section 641-642 of EHA). Also in fiscal year 1984, Rehabilitation Services Administration awarded five grants for "Transition from School or Institution to Work Projects" under the Special Projects and Demonstrations for Disabled Individuals program (authorized by Section 311 of P.L. 93-112). All of these model demonstration projects are funded for two or three years, although a few projects

are funded for a 12-month period. New grant programs and continuation of the already-formed programs just outlined, and displayed in Table 1, will continue into the future.

#### Institute Formed

As part of the Secondary Education and Transitional Services for Handicapped Youth initiative, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was contracted in August of 1985 to assist in evaluating and extending the impact of the federal initiative. The recently formed Secondary Transition Intervention Effectiveness Institute at the University of Illinois will be studying the issues and problems related to secondary education and transitional services through 1990. This group has adopted a conceptual model for School-to-Work Transition which addresses many of the concerns raised in this article. Within this model, transition is viewed as the intermediate phase of the school-to-work continuum. The activities that occur during transition relate to educational programs and transitional services provided jointly by personnel from the school and the employment sectors of the community, respectively. To be maximally effective, we assume that assessment, training, and job placement activities that occur during this transition period be jointly planned, implemented, and evaluated by special and vocational educators, guidance counselors, social workers, rehabilitation personnel, JTPA personnel, parents and advocates, and co-workers and supervisors from various businesses and industries within the community.

Additionally, the period of transition in this model generally can be viewed as longer or shorter depending upon the severity of the

educational and employment problems encountered by youth. Generally, the degree of overlap in education and services is greater for youth with severe handicaps than for youth with mild handicaps. For individuals with severe handicaps the period of assessment, instruction/training, and placement support may require a period of several years of extensive support, which is unlikely for youth with mild handicaps.

#### Institute Approach

The mission of the Transition Institute at Illinois is threefold. It addresses a series of interrelated applied research, program evaluation, and technical assistance needs related to secondary education and transitional services. The Research Program has adopted a multilevel approach to direct its activities. This approach contends that problems experienced by youth are a reflection of broader systems' problems. Consequently, these problems require that the Transition Institute seek solutions at varying levels within the broader system, including the individual level, the small-group level, the community level, and the societal level.

At the individual level, interventions are person-centered and are directed toward ameliorating problems that target youth may have, for example, social skill problems and problems with generalization and independence. Problems that occur at the small-group level are seen as emanating from difficulties that occur with primary support groups, such as the family and co-workers; thus, interventions are aimed at changing the group's behavior rather than the individual's behavior. At the community level, problems are viewed as the failure of organizations (e.g., the media, unions, employers) to implement

socially desirable values and goals, and consequently interventions are focused upon changing the organizations themselves. The fourth and final level is directed toward changing "institutions" (e.g., governmental organizations, legislation, rules and regulations) with regard to social policy and economics.

In the Evaluation Research Program, one of the five major activities is to collect and summarize information about the model programs funded under the Secondary Education and Transition Services' initiative through FY 1990. Descriptive data from a variety of sources are being collected annually on programs and projects receiving funding from the transition initiative (see Table 1).

The second activity focuses upon a series of analyses that compares audiences, objectives, and program progress. These analyses involve aggregating findings of model programs that share common characteristics to allow statements to be made that relate to a particular model's effectiveness (e.g., the effect of providing long-term follow-up services after placement on a job, the effect on placement rates in communities where interagency cooperation exists versus in communities where such cooperation is limited or nonexistent).

A third major activity of the Evaluation Research Program is to identify appropriate instruments and procedures for assessing the entering and exiting skills of students. The fourth major task entails examining educational, employment, and independent living outcomes attained by youth with handicaps as they exit from school and enter the work force. Data are being collected to determine the



**Table 1**  
**Grant Programs Awarded**  
**Since the 1984 Enactment of P.L. 98-199**

Authorizing legislation/Grant program	Fiscal year	No. of grant awards
Section 626 of P.L. 98-199, Education of the Handicapped Act, 1983 Amendments Secondary Education and Transitional Services for Handicapped Youth: Service Demonstration Projects (84.158A)	1984	16
Secondary Education and Transitional Services for Handicapped Youth: Cooperative Models for Planning and Developing Transitional Services (84.158B and 84.158C)	1984-- 1986	37
Postsecondary Educational Programs for Handicapped Persons: Demonstrations (84.078B and 84.078C)	1984-- 1986	43
Section 641-642 of P.L. 98-199, Part E of the Education of the Handicapped Act (20USC 1441-1442) Handicapped Children's Model Program: Youth Employment Projects (84.023D)	1984	12
Handicapped Children's Model Program: Postsecondary Projects (84.023G)	1984	15
Section 311 (A)(1) of P.L. 93-112, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended Rehabilitation Services: Special Project (84.128A)	1984	5

extent to which transition is being achieved by students with handicaps at the national, state, and local levels.

The final activity of the Evaluation Research Program focuses on evaluation methodology. The program will review basic evaluation issues and alternative paradigms, as well as strengthen the responsiveness of programs and use of evaluation results to ensure program growth and continuity.



The third component of the Transition Institute, the Evaluation Technical Assistance Program, provides technical assistance on evaluation methods to the federally funded secondary and transition model demonstration projects. Technical assistance staff conduct a needs assessment of each funded model program and assist in developing appropriate evaluation strategies to ensure that project directors are able to make statements about project effectiveness.

### Summary

Although several million individuals with handicaps in this country are denied, for various reasons, the opportunity to engage in meaningful employment, these individuals do possess the potential to live and work in the community. These individuals have been the focus of attention by special educators, vocational educators, vocational rehabilitation personnel, adult service agencies, and many other agencies and organizations for the past three decades.

Unfortunately, individuals who are mentally retarded, physically disabled, and/or otherwise disabled, often have not made a successful transition to the community. Most of them either work in sheltered settings, are underemployed, or are unemployed and live with family, relatives, or friends without much hope of participating in their community as most nondisabled persons participate.

There is considerable evidence to suggest that these individuals will not make any major gains in the world of work unless there is a concentrated effort to identify and introduce interventions that will lead to their employment. Focusing upon transition from school to work, as a national priority, will begin to impact on efforts to

employ youth with handicaps who are conspicuously absent from the workplace.

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## KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

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### LOOKING AHEAD

G. Thomas Bellamy

Director, Special Education Programs  
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

As I think about the value of what all of us do, it occurs to me that it is important to say right at the beginning that I come to a generalist job with a specialist background. My background has always been related to people with severe disabilities--to transitions in employment and to residential services--and our field is a lot bigger than that. Also, I'm not in Washington as some temporary terrorist to come in and to accomplish two or three objectives in my specialty area and then to go home. I did that three or four years ago, and that is certainly not the reason that I came to Washington this time. But it also means that I'm very acutely aware of all the things that I have to learn in order to make this Office what it needs to be in our field. So, with that in mind, let me share with you some of my assumptions as I thought about this job and the reasons that led me to the goals that I have set. First, I think that special education as a field is really important. It is easy to say (and I think it is true) that special education is the most visible expression of our society's values about people with disabilities and where they fit into our society. But special education is more than that: It is the field that more than any other is a nexus of law, psychology, education, civil rights, and medicine, and in the combination of those fields we get something

that no one of them individually can create. Special education is what it is and maintains the kind of commitment that it does simply because it must be a combination of these areas.

Special education, I think, is also changing profoundly right now. It is hard to get a real sense of that, standing as we do in the middle of it. But the fact is that our field is very different from what it was five years ago, and decisions made in the next few years will make special education quite different from what it is now. The boundaries have expanded incredibly. The increased emphasis on infancy and toddlers and on early childhood education; the focus on transition programs; the easing of boundaries, if you will, between special education and adult service needs; and the concern not just for the child with the disability, but for his or her family, have broken down many of the traditional barriers between special education and related disability fields. This broadened emphasis has certainly created a lot of pressure for all of us who were trained as special educators to learn many things that we didn't learn when we went to school.

This change is, I think, in many ways exactly what is happening to education as a whole right now. As has often been the case, special education is simply a few years ahead of the rest of the field. Some of the conflicts and issues that are being discussed in the popular press with respect to regular education, such as accountability for the quality of instruction and the relative power of parents and professionals, are issues that I feel we in special education have been struggling with for some time. With that expansion of boundaries, though, has come a complexity in our field

that's both interesting and, I think, challenging. For example, getting input from people in the field used to mean talking to the leadership of one or two major professional organizations. It doesn't mean that anymore, because there are so many different constituent groups with legitimate interests in special education policies that we are just beginning, I think, to develop processes for getting input and for power sharing among those different groups. Parents and adult service agencies are much more involved in policy study than they were a few years ago. Other disability advocacy groups are involved, and increasingly we will see private industry involved in setting special education policies. Those decisions simply won't be made by special education professionals alone, and it is natural that those of us who traditionally were the primary source of information could easily feel let down, simply because we are sharing power with a lot of other groups. In addition, those who traditionally have been outside the policy making process may perceive an opportunity to achieve limited objectives by circumventing the customary processes. This means that we have a challenge ahead of us to maintain the kind of consensus in special education that we have had over time, to include many more groups that have been present, and still to make progress.

The second thing that I think is true about special education, or at least that has led me to be interested in this role, is a belief that absolutely nothing good is done in special education that doesn't have a very clear value base. Everything that we do in one way or another implies a vision about the lives of people with disabilities and where people with disabilities fit into society. By

the same token, nothing really effective is done in special education without a clear technological base, procedures, equipment, and administrative design, so that it works in such a way that the values have an impact on people with disabilities. We only change lives when we have the technology to translate our values into actions that affect those lives. I am convinced that we need a more systematic effort to balance our focus on values and our focus on technology, and to make sure that everything that we do has an explicit component of both. I believe that the most important choices that we will make concern how to combine our values and technology, how to avoid sacrificing either one for the other.

Finally, in approaching the role of Director of the Office of Special Education Programs, I have thought about the role of the federal government in special education. Like all of education, special education is really a local matter. It is financed locally, the decisions are made locally, and most of the important decisions are made between parents and teachers and administrators. But I think it is important to have a sense of exactly what the federal role is. I am convinced that there is one, an important role that has been confirmed in many recent Department of Education documents. The role of the federal government isn't prescriber of special education policy, which is a local matter. The role, I think, really has three parts; the first is to make sure that we create a shared vision of what it is that all of us and people with disabilities want in terms of their roles in society and what education can do about that. One aspect of the building of a shared vision is to develop a consensus among increasingly different interest groups. Second, the

federal government or the Office of Special Education programs can help to build local capacity to provide quality services. We can invest in people and programs and in ideas that provide options for local decision makers. Third, we can insure that the access and the procedural safeguards guaranteed by Public Law 94-142 are maintained.

Thus we can create a shared vision, we can try to build local capacity, and we can insure that the law is enforced. These are the legitimate roles of the federal government right now. These roles have at least helped me to think about what we can accomplish and what our priority goals should be.

Let me move on just to share briefly with you my goals, and the objectives that I have set for the first year. First, the goals result from many conversations with people before I came to Washington and from observing the work of a very dedicated staff since then. I have three goals and a few specific objectives related to each of those goals. The first goal is very ambitious: to improve the quality of special education. The federal investment in quality is primarily through discretionary programs, so when we talk about a federal goal related to improving quality, we mean how we make decisions about discretionary grant monies.

Here I have two specific objectives: First I want to create with you and with our staff very good implementation plans for the priorities that already exist, as they have been expressed by the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary and the Congress. We have a lot on our plates already, such as early childhood transition, traumatic brain injury, least-restrictive environment, and a regular-education initiative for students with learning disabilities,



but our major responsibility is to deal with these priorities. To accomplish this, we will write implementation plans that cut across all of our discretionary programs. Those plans have a lot to do with the kinds of priorities that will be set in discretionary grant programs over the next two to five years.

The second objective is similar, but it relates to the specific discretionary programs that have already been authorized by Congress. I hope that ultimately we will write three- to five-year plans for all of our discretionary programs. This year we will start with personnel preparation, transition, and research. We are writing these three- to five-year plans because I have heard quite a bit of comment about how difficult it is for people to feel that they have real influence on the year-to-year priority-setting process. In fact, the schedules on which those priorities are set and published for comment are such that it is often very difficult to get really broad input. So instead of trying to plan on a year-to-year basis, we'll have an open process of writing a long-term plan that we anticipate will influence the annual priorities for some time.

What I want from you is some help in conceptualizing those plans. I would presume that a long-range plan related to transition would be of some interest. I hope some of the other plans would be of what you think we ought to be doing in the area of transition and how we ought to be doing it. For instance, are model projects the right way to accomplish what we want, or should we have more, smaller projects and fewer larger longer-term projects? Are we giving you the opportunity to apply for funds to achieve these goals that are most important in your community? When you write to me, your

comments will be reviewed and taken into account as we develop the first draft of a plan in a specific area. That plan will be shared, probably on special request and by sending it to project directors and other groups for comments before it becomes final.

This approach is a strategy to get some involvement from the field, which leads me to my second goal. I want to strengthen the partnership between the Office of Special Education Programs and those of you in the field. We in special education have more constituencies than ever before, or perhaps more active constituencies, and that requires a more complex and thoughtful process of involvement. So, my first objective is to create as many opportunities as possible for outstanding people in our field, those with high potential who are in research, training, and service, to spend short periods of time in our office. I think that it is a fair exchange. The opportunities for learning about how to translate research and service and training experience into policy is something that is important to anyone's career, and the potential for a professional with extensive hands-on experience to influence how people in our office think about special education is tremendous. I believe all of us can benefit from such an exchange.

This exchange plan will work in three ways: First, assuming that all the required approvals come through (as I believe they will), we will have an internship program for doctoral students beginning in 1987. This program will enable the best doctoral students in the country to compete for an opportunity to come to Washington for at least three months, to have a seminar with me, and to work directly in their areas of interest. There is no money

behind the internships; it is simply an opportunity that we will structure. The process will include a competitive selection procedure, and it is designed as an experience for the most qualified people in our field.

Second, there is a program called intergovernmental personnel mobility which allows exchanges between state and local governments, universities, not-for-profit corporations, and the federal government. I plan to use that program to bring in people with outstanding leadership potential for periods of one to two years to work in their areas of interest and expertise within special education. Under this program the person's current employer pays at least half of his or her salary and the government contributes the other half. Several people are already considering this program as an option; I expect to announce it as something widely available that would start in the fall of 1987.

Finally, our management team has made a commitment to recruiting nationally for every vacancy within our office that we possibly can. One of the trade-offs is that recruiting locally enables us to fill a position much more quickly, and with the press of work to be done, that is often a great need. However, one of the things that will help us in building the interaction between the Office of Special Education and professionals in the field is a commitment to broad national recruitment for as many of our vacancies as possible. I think you will see something like that coming out at least by the beginning of 1987.

A second objective in strengthening the partnership between the Office of Special Education and the field is that I want to

systematize the opportunities for communication from you. Our long-range plans are the first step in that process. I want to make sure that there is some kind of reliable procedure for expressing ideas and opinions, so that it is not simply a matter of trying to guess the right person with whom to talk or on what schedule to talk with him or her.

Finally, in this area I want to work with the Assistant Secretary, who I believe has already begun to develop a good process for monitoring the states' implementation of PL 94-142. I believe we still have a way to go to make that a reliable and consistent process, and I consider working toward that goal a real objective for this year.

My third goal is to make the Office of Special Education programs a good place for very committed people to work. Like yours, our office only works because of the personal commitment of the people involved. There is nothing in any of our organizational structures that logically creates the level of commitment that we all share. The response that I think we have to have to achieve this level of personal commitment suggests that we share an obligation to take care of each other a little bit in that process. This means trying to make everyone's worklife reasonable, or as much so as we can. Within the Office of Special Education Programs, this means creating an accountability system that enables people to be responsible for professional products, not simply for the day-to-day process of working. It means increasing the programmatic interaction between people in the office and the rest of the field. It means, for example, making sure that the opportunity exists for people in

our office to attend professional meetings like this one, to encourage more meetings in Washington so that those options do exist.

This is where we are starting. Sometimes I feel that we have a very modest set of goals for a year, and sometimes I am completely overwhelmed by those goals. What I need from you is first, your input on the long-range plans and any one of these five topic areas: LRE, early childhood, transition, personnel preparation, and research, as well as referrals of people who you believe would be highly qualified and interested in getting involved in one of the opportunities that we have for people to work for short periods of time in the Office of Special Education Programs.

Let me switch briefly to just a couple of comments about transition specifically, and then we will have a few moments for questions. As I think all of you know, transition is a topic that's close to my own interest. It is very rewarding for me to see tangible evidence that the things that I did when I was in Washington the last time were somehow on the right track. I thought about where we had come in the three years since Congress passed PL 98-199, which defined transition as a priority, which gave us the opportunity to develop the regulations and the initial programs for it in the Office. As I reflect on those decisions, it seems to me that a few things really stand out. One that is important to me is that the basic conceptualization of the program has stood up fairly well. It turns out that people have been utilizing services described in the three bridges' model in some systematic way, and I think that that is useful. It's good to know that, in fact, a conceptualization can

hold up once a lot of people get involved in working on a problem from many different local perspectives.

Second, the outcome focus has held up well. One of the things that the transition movement has done for special education as a whole is to create the beginnings; I don't think we are there yet. We have the beginnings of product accountability in special education. The quality of special education has something to do with what happens to people who leave school. The more that we within transition are able to define exactly what we expect to happen to people when they leave school, in terms of employment, dependency reduction, independent living, and service utilization and the better we become at defining those outcomes through what we are working on, the better the entire field will be at orienting what we do toward our product, that is, the quality of life for our graduates.

Another good thing about the way the transition initiative has evolved over the last few years is the level of local flexibility or local variability. Both the legislation and the Department's work on transition have avoided any prescription of how a community should proceed, how or whether to make interagency agreements, and what kind of programs are good or bad. It was simply a challenge to learn how best to move people reasonably from school to employment, given local communities circumstances. I think we have responded well to that kind of challenge.

As I look at where we need to go from here, it seems to me that one contribution that this group can make to special education is to develop ways to help school districts to keep track of what happens to the graduates. I don't mean a major national study, I mean good

local or state data that enable special education administrators to know year by year the status of the people who finished their special education programs. I believe that providing this kind of information to local decision makers on a regular basis would do more to improve special education than anything we can do with our discretionary money. It is the leadership of the professionals in transition who can create that kind of change.

Finally, I am also convinced that if there is an area or two that we've neglected as we have planned our activities, it is in elaborating thoughtful roles for community and junior colleges in the transition process. There are many models in place; perhaps I haven't read enough, but I don't get a sense that there is a consensus about what we ought to be asking from national community college associations. Another area where I think that we have missed something is that we haven't developed enough direct links between special education and business. We've done a lot to link special education with adult service providers, but the fact is that we are most successful when people leave school and get jobs. It seems to me that we should be adopting some of the techniques that have been successful in the adult service communities, like the involvement of industry leaders in the Project with Industry program or the involvement of direct on-site training in some of the transitional employment services and the involvement of businesses in planning for those services. There are a number of processes that seem to be working, and there is no reason that they cannot work in direct links between special education and business. I will close with that. I'm delighted to be part of your meeting, and wish you well.

## EVALUATION RESEARCH FINDINGS

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### MODEL PROGRAM EVALUATION RESEARCH PROGRAM

L. Allen Phelps and Jane Dowling, Principal Investigators

The Model Program Evaluation Research Program has focused upon identifying evaluation designs that are being used by model program directors. With recent significant and substantial federal investments, identification and dissemination of model program evaluation data bases is extremely crucial to assuring the long-range impact of recent legislation (PL 98-199) upon both school and community-based programs. Usually, professionals from special education, rehabilitation, vocational education, and adult services, as well as employers and parents have a multitude of questions regarding program development for youth. The Compendium of Project Profiles provides comprehensive and current information describing model programs, target audiences, goals, activities, evaluation designs, products, and cooperating agencies and organizations. The 1986 Compendium highlights and summarizes the development of model programs funded during 1985-86.

The 1986 edition of Compendium is organized into eight major sections--one for each of the different funding competitions that occurred in 1984 and 1985. The beginning of each section contains a description of the funding competition and a composite profile that summarizes the various aspects of the projects that were funded within each competition (e.g., students served, project goals,



evaluation design). Individual project profiles follow, which detail the specific components of each model program within the competition.

The design of the Compendium was to ensure the systematic identification of model program components in order to serve the information needs of those individuals interested in transition program development for handicapped youth. In addition, the profile was designed to allow emerging patterns/findings among projects to be documented over the duration of the project. This will be accomplished through the use of primary and secondary project descriptors to be incorporated into a project data base. Utilization of this data base by current and future projects will allow immediate identification of key project components for corroboration or replication. The Compendium will be updated annually for publication and dissemination. The project data base will be updated as information is received from individual projects.

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META-ANALYSIS OF SECONDARY  
SPECIAL EDUCATION AND TRANSITIONAL SERVICES  
Laird W. Heal, Principal Investigator

The first year of activities for the Meta-Analysis Research Program has concentrated on identifying methodology for aggregating information regarding transition from school to appropriate community roles, including employment. During the first year this research program has:

- developed a plan and schedule for aggregating information from OSERS-funded model programs to discover general principles that

define successful training efforts that result in a meaningful community placement.

- reviewed literature relevant to data aggregation and have found transition-related research is almost nonexistent compared to the many research thrusts that have defined special education in the past. Further, existing research suffers from a shortage of experimental or quasi-experimental research designs that compare successful and unsuccessful transitions.
- analyzed model program proposals, permitting the Meta-Analysis Research Program to do preliminary classification and questionnaire construction without disturbing the projects.
- completed a preliminary analysis of the factors that a sample of model program directors find important for facilitating successful job placements. These 13 projects credit themselves with 202 actual job placements, suggesting that these projects are having considerable success in placing students.
- analyzed proposal renewals in order to establish the extent to which projects' initial objectives corresponded with their lists of accomplishments. This analysis indicates a reasonable correspondence between objectives and accomplishments.
- described methodology for completing a report of 50 case studies. These case studies of model programs will be used to determine salient factors in successful placement. Preliminary results indicate very little difference between successful and unsuccessful cases regarding the characteristics of training. Small differences were noted in agency support (with more

support noted for unsuccessful cases) and family involvement (with less family "resistance" in successful cases).

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#### STUDENT ASSESSMENT RESEARCH PROGRAM

Robert Linn and Lizanne DeStefano, Co-Principal Investigators

This research program determined the current practices used by OSERS-funded secondary/transition model programs to assess student characteristics and competencies and reviewed the most commonly used commercially developed instruments for each competency category. Further, the Student Assessment Research Program determined model programs' intended use of assessment data; perceived strengths and weaknesses of current assessment practice; and the extent to which projects were developing new student assessment instruments for local use.

The review of commonly used commercial instruments was intended to provide a readily accessible summary of the characteristics of commonly used instruments. It included information on test content, reliability, validity, standardization and norming, applicability to transition, and utility. The review was supplemented by a bibliography of key references dealing with assessment-relevant issues in special education and transitional services.

Two data sources were used in the analysis of current project practices. First, all funded grant applications were reviewed to determine project demographics, assessment instruments used, use of assessment data, and extent of local instrument development. In the second phase of the study, surveys were sent to all OSERS-funded

model programs to verify the information acquired through grant application review and to determine the strengths and needs of commercially available instruments currently being used for transition program planning and evaluation.

It was found that 12 student competencies were routinely assessed. These competencies included: (a) general ability/intelligence, (b) special abilities, (c) vocational skills, (d) academic skills, (e) language skills, (f) daily living skills, (g) adaptive behavior, (h) survival skills, (i) motor skills/dexterity, (j) life style/consumer satisfaction, (k) social skills, and (l) career interest/awareness. Traditional assessment approaches were overwhelmingly found being used by model programs. This approach is illustrated by the finding that standardized intelligence tests such as the WISC-R and WAIS-R; vocational batteries such as VALPAR Work Samples and the McCarron-Dial Work Evaluation System; and academic skills tests, especially the Wide Range Achievement Test, were cited as the most commonly used commercially available instruments.

Assessment data were used for four major purposes by the model programs: (a) student diagnosis/identification, (b) program placement and planning, (c) monitoring student progress, and (d) evaluating program outcomes/effectiveness. Although projects cited several major weaknesses in commercially available assessment instruments, little instrument development was found being conducted at the local level.

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NEEDED RESEARCH ON THE EVALUATION OF SPECIAL  
EDUCATION TRANSITION PROGRAMS

Robert E. Stake, Principal Investigator

During the 1985-86 academic year the Transition Institute identified needed research on the processes of evaluation that might increase the relevance, validity, and utility of formal and informal reviews of transition projects. Identification of research needs is expected to continue and to be refined by evaluation studies both within the Institute and elsewhere in subsequent years.

Within professional education there is a large and complex specialization of program evaluation. Much of the technical work of this specialization grew out of the development of psychological tests, but each of the professional specialties (e.g., teaching, administration, counseling, nursing) has worked to increase staff talent for recognizing functions of high and low quality. The volume of federal programs since 1960 brought into emphasis a formalism of analysis and reporting common in social science research. The sophistication grew, yet those intimately acquainted with the support and conduct of evaluation knew that the utility of evaluation studies frequently fell short of expectations.

This Research Program drew together philosophers, research methodologists, evaluation practitioners, and special educators for discussions, study, and writing. Together they sought out practices that seemed to be "tried and true," but went on to examine (a) the evaluation practices most problematic, (b) the severest contentions

among rival methodologists, and (c) advocacies driven by undisciplined intuition and self-serving motivation. Together, they identified issues worthy of study and outlined research activities for themselves and their colleagues in special education and evaluation for many years to come.

"Needed-research" getting early attention included the topics of: valuing, heterogeneity of purpose, fixed and flexible designs, contextuality, and the uniquenesses of evaluating special education and transition from school to work. Later on, additional attention was drawn to standards (particularly standards for the conduct of evaluative research) and to social and political frameworks for designing studies and for interpreting findings.

Almost a dozen people assumed responsibility for talking among themselves and others, reading, and writing. In face-to-face meetings they deliberated the issues and selected a set of topics for further deliberation. Ultimately papers were drafted, reviewed, and discussed. Major conclusions and suggested research directions were as follows:

Lizanne DeStefano (Transition Institute) Local agendas and accomplishments valued highly at the local site seldom aggregate across projects to satisfy our need for knowledge about nationwide effort and accomplishment. What needs research apparently is not just ways of improving local evaluation skills and the diversity of values, local and national, but epistemological differences between site specific and cross-site descriptions.

Nick Smith (Syracuse University) Recognizing three kinds of flexibility (i.e., in formation, structure, and accommodation of designs), evaluators should study variation in each of these impacting on evaluation accuracy, utility, and propriety.

Andrew Halpern (University of Oregon) Many sets of standards for evaluation are generic, failing to include those issues that relate specifically to the transition of students with disabilities from school to adult life. Research on the use of standards that relate to student or client eligibility, service delivery, and service outcomes is needed to understand better the critical dimensions in the evaluation of transition programs.

Jeri Nowakowski (Northern Illinois University) Each of the standards of the Joint Committee's Standards for Evaluations of Educational Programs, Projects, and Materials has specific application to the study of transition programs. Since not all can be referenced, research is needed to indicate what emphases will be useful for guidelines and technical assistance.

James Callan (St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Ireland) Evaluators draw upon various theories and social perspectives for making interpretations of interactions within projects. Research by individual evaluators is needed to check the adequacy of their understanding of interpretative literature.

## APPLIED RESEARCH FINDINGS

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### RESEARCH PRIORITIES IN SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION AND TRANSITIONAL SERVICES: A NATIONAL SURVEY

Frank R. Rusch, Jeffrey McNair, and Lizanne DeStefano

The provision of appropriate special education and transitional services relies to a great extent on developing solutions to the problems associated with planning and delivering these services.

Although existing research has identified various problems that confront rehabilitation, vocational, and special education personnel, more information is needed that defines specifically the extent of the problems facing researchers' efforts to identify and improve rehabilitation and educational interventions. This investigation identified such problem areas. The results of the first study identified 25 questions of general concern; in the second study these questions were ranked according to the findings of a survey of selected researchers, model program developers, and administrators in rehabilitation, vocational, and special education. These 25 questions were considered from a systems perspective, and the overall results were analyzed in relation to how they intercorrelated. Finally, each of the respondent groups was invited to identify additional research issues in transition.

The following results were obtained:

- o Twenty-one researchers responded, and the findings were incorporated in 25 questions that focused upon the interventions needed to enhance school-to-work transition.



- o To test the concordance of ratings among respondent groups, an analysis of variance was completed. Results showed that in all but five instances, the ratings of the three groups were not significantly different.
- o In the collective ratings, question 9 was the most highly rated; it recommends investigation of the most appropriate roles and responsibilities for families, teachers, rehabilitation counselors, and vocational educators in the transition planning process.
- o The second (#13) and third (#6) most highly rated questions related to social skills in the workplace. Question 13 addresses social skills and how they can either be taught or compensated for in the workplace. Question 6 asks what types of behaviors are viewed as most aversive or more positive by other significant individuals in the workplace (e.g., co-workers, supervisors, customers).
- o Other questions receiving a mean ranking greater than 8 dealt with such issues as the impact of social-skills training on job performance (#8), intervention strategies to facilitate interagency cooperation (#10), and strategies for enlisting parent support (#23).
- o Perhaps the most notable result, however, was that in 20 of the 25 questions, there were no significant differences among respondents. Each group of respondents assigned high importance ratings to questions at each of the four levels of analysis.

- o Of the questions and comments received, researchers showed the most interest in inservice and preservice training. This result might be expected, given that many of the researchers hold university-affiliated positions.
- o State directors showed the most interest in transition model program research and development, followed by program evaluation, business and industry linkages, federal and state legislation and policy, and inservice and preservice training.
- o Project directors' questions and comments indicated the most interest of the three groups in transition model program research and development, parent advocate involvement, program evaluation, and interagency collaboration. Each of these categories relates in some way to model program development, which would be expected in view of project directors' efforts to develop model programs in their communities.

#### Research Questions Studied in National Survey

1. What strategies do family and friends use to help youth with handicaps adjust to their jobs? Can the effective components of these strategies be isolated and combined to yield one strategy that can be taught to advocates/significant others in the work setting?
2. What rules can be formulated to guide teachers' systematic withdrawal of their instructional programs to facilitate students' independence?\*

3. What job conditions and/or incentives are most effective for increasing the likelihood that co-workers will a) act as advocates, b) participate in data collection, and/or c) participate in training?
4. What interests/interaction patterns exist among potential co-workers, and how can this information be used to facilitate employment for youth with handicaps?
5. Can transitional strategies that result in meaningful employment for the individual be used to facilitate recreational and residential adjustment?
6. What behaviors evidenced in social interactions are viewed as most negative by co-workers, supervisors, customers, or equally significant others within the work environment? What social behaviors are viewed as most positive by this group?
7. In what ways have recently revised social security regulations (e.g., eligibility) produced significant changes in the number of persons participating in income maintenance programs (e.g., Supplemental Security Income)?
8. If students/youth are taught to evaluate social situations, what impact will this have on improving their social performance on the job?\*

9. What are the most appropriate roles and responsibilities for families, teachers, rehabilitation counselors, and vocational educators in the transition planning process? When should this process start?
10. What intervention and collaborative strategies are most efficient for facilitating interagency cooperation, and how can these strategies be implemented at the local educational agency level?\*
11. What type of self-instructional package can students use to develop their independence on the job? What components of this package contribute most in accounting for students becoming independent?
12. What naturally occurring social behaviors prompt other social skills in the workplace, and how can we teach students/youth to respond appropriately to these cues?
13. What social skills are necessary across work settings? If students do not possess these skills, how should these skills be taught or otherwise compensated for in the work environment?
14. What alternative work patterns (e.g., flextime, permanent part-time employment, and voluntary work) facilitate successful employment for persons with mild to severe handicaps, physical disabilities, etc.?

15. If general-case programming is used to teach vocational skills/behaviors outside the work setting, how effectively will these target skills/behaviors carry over to actual work settings?
16. What social skill teaching strategies introduced in one setting result in generalized performance in a second setting (e.g., simulated v. natural, residential v. employment, instructional v. noninstructional)?\*
17. What are employers' and co-workers' attitudes regarding working with employees with handicaps, and vice versa? Do these attitudes vary across handicapping condition/severity, job type, and prior exposure to the other group?
18. How has the "state of the economy" influenced the nature of employment training programs offered to persons with handicaps?\*
19. Who develops income maintenance program policies for individuals with handicaps? Upon what information base do they develop these policies? Which group or key individuals influence these policymakers? What interventions can be developed to influence these policymakers to formulate new guidelines that support independence?
20. What teaching strategies can be developed that change negative attitudes of co-workers and employers toward persons with

handicaps? Do these changes affect overall community employment trends?

21. How can co-workers be taught to assist in the training and evaluation of behaviors related to work?
22. Can social skill training conducted in an employment setting increase positive interactions with co-workers and decrease negative interactions/inappropriate behaviors, and if so, how?
23. What strategies are most effective for enlisting parents' support for transition planning that focuses upon paid employment?
24. How can employees with handicaps be integrated into social events, activities, and networks associated with work settings (e.g., off-site parties, athletic teams, spectator sports)?
25. What attitudes are portrayed by key individuals in the local media regarding persons with disabilities? What effect do these attitudes have on employment? What strategies should educational/rehabilitation agencies use to promote positive portrayal?

\*Results from the analysis of variance indicated disagreement among respondent groups.

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## HISTORY OF FEDERAL TRANSITION POLICY

Lizanne DeStefano and Dale Snauwaert

Few programs enacted by the federal government are created completely anew; most often these programs represent incremental adjustments to an already existing policy in the form of both legislative intent and administrative structure. An understanding of current policy and an informed perspective about future directions in transition policy depend heavily upon an understanding of the history of that policy. Specifically, this research project is concerned with the following questions.

1. Historically, how have federal programs impacting on persons with handicaps developed? By whom were they developed? Upon what information were they based? What were the major political, societal, and fiscal influences on these policymakers?
2. What is the current policy associated with these programs? How many persons with handicaps do they serve? What are the criteria for admission and discharge from these programs?
3. What is the impact of policy on the provision of postsecondary and employment services to youth with handicaps in terms of loss of cash benefits, health benefits, and social services? What are the effects of policy on the willingness of those with handicaps to attempt paid employment and the realistic opportunities of this group to do so? What changes in policy are necessary to make it compatible with the movement to place

even those people with limited work capacity into useful employment? How can those changes be affected?

Each question is considered from the perspective of the individual, the small group, the community, and society at large. The provisions of federal and state legislation, interviews with significant personnel at different system levels, questionnaires and project surveys, and a review of the research literature are used to develop information at each of the four systems levels. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques are used to analyze data.

Regarding our investigation of the historical development of federal transition policy, to date we have identified all of the federal legislative elements that affect transition (e.g., P.L. 98-199). These elements are categorized in terms of the dimension of transition they affect. The following eight dimensions have been identified: special education, vocational education, social security, rehabilitation and vocational rehabilitation, labor civil rights, budget reconciliation, and tax revision. The legislative elements that comprise each of these dimensions in turn constitute a policy system that interactively affects transition.

One of the questions that our historical analysis is attempting to answer is: Does this system function coherently? That is, do the elements along the various dimensions work together in harmony or do they work against each other, thereby impeding transition? Our preliminary findings suggest, for example, that social security (income maintenance) policy may cause disincentive effects toward attaining employment (although the enactment of the SSI Improvements Act of 1986, P.L. 99-643, may reduce these effects). Although it is



too early in our research to determine accurately the overall coherence of the system, we believe an understanding of the whole policy system in historical perspective will aid us in developing future policy that will be both efficient and equitable in supporting transition.

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SOCIAL ECOLOGY OF THE WORKPLACE:  
DIRECT OBSERVATION OF HANDICAPPED AND NONHANDICAPPED WORKERS

Janis Chadsey-Rusch

As more individuals with disabilities enter the workforce, it is becoming increasingly important to identify those social behaviors that are valued and to describe those behaviors in detail. First, the results of recent research have suggested that many individuals with disabilities lose their jobs because they lack appropriate social behaviors. Second, the unemployment status of workers with disabilities ranges from 50% to 80%; it is possible that training in work-related social behaviors may help to lower these unemployment rates. Finally, the acquisition and maintenance of appropriate social behaviors may help to facilitate friendships and social-support networks so that occupational stress is reduced and the quality of life is enhanced.

To date, little research has been conducted that identifies the social behaviors needed for competitive employment, and the few existing studies have used survey methods as the primary research procedures. Although these studies are useful in providing information about employers' expectations for initial employment, there is no assurance that this information is accurate; that is,

there have been few direct observations of social skills at employment sites to confirm these reports.

The purpose of the present study was to observe directly the social interaction patterns of employees with and without handicaps. Using narrative recording procedures, investigators conducted observations across seven different competitive employment sites. The data were analyzed (a) to determine if there was a correspondence between the types of social behaviors directly observed and the types of social behaviors that have been reported as valued by employers, and (b) to determine if there were differences in the social behaviors of workers with and without handicaps.

Sixteen individuals participated in the study, 8 with handicaps ( $x$  IQ = 63), and 8 without handicaps. The first group were participants in a supported work program sponsored by a local rehabilitation agency. The nonhandicapped workers were selected by their employers because they worked at the same time as the handicapped workers and performed similar jobs. Observations were conducted in six food service sites and one printing service location.

The narrative recordings were analyzed by means of a code designed specially for the study. The behaviors included in the codes were based upon patterns derived from the data and from behaviors that employers often cited as being important in competitive employment settings.

A repeated-measures MANOVA design indicated that there were no significant differences in the frequencies of social interactions engaged in by workers with and without handicaps. However, descriptive results indicate that the purposes of the interactions

may differ qualitatively between groups. For example, 74% of the interactions initiated by handicapped workers to supervisors and co-workers consisted of questions and informational comments. Among nonhandicapped workers, 48% of the interactions were used to question and inform, and 16% of their interactions were used to tease and joke. Interactions initiated by supervisors toward handicapped workers was to direct and question, in contrast to only 56% of interactions with nonhandicapped workers. Finally, nonhandicapped co-workers' interactions directed toward handicapped workers involved mostly directions and questions, whereas interactions with nonhandicapped workers involved teasing, joking, and questions. Overall, the most frequently occurring interactions between workers was to inform or comment, then to question, tease and joke, give directions, and offer greetings.

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PARENT SURVEY:  
IDENTIFICATION AND VALIDATION OF TRANSITION ISSUES

Jeffrey McNair and Frank R. Rusch

Parents of children with handicap can assume one of three roles in the transition process: facilitator, minimal participant-nonparticipant, or obstructor. Facilitators contribute to the transition process as integral team members, and they participate in activities such as training or meetings in order to maximize their involvement. The parent who participates minimally or does not participate at all in the transition process gives those who are working with their child a free hand in individual transition program development and implementation. The obstructor or "difficult" parent

often opts for outcomes other than those recommended by the transition teams, owing to philosophical differences, intense stress at the time of transition, a past disagreement with a member of the team, or any of a number of factors. Often the result is that the team avoids the difficult parent.

Transition research needs to investigate the issues of parent involvement, to identify parent concerns, and to develop a profile of parent involvement in the transition process. This study had two objectives: first, to investigate what issues are most important to parents by asking parents to rate transition-related research questions in order of importance, and, second, to investigate parent involvement in the transition process. What are the expectations of parents who are beginning to accompany a child with a handicap through the transition process? Does the parent's involvement reflect the nature of the opportunities provided by the team for parent involvement? To what extent are parental expectations fulfilled, modified, or disappointed? Do parents choose to participate more frequently in programs that they consider to be successful, based on their evaluations of the perceived outcomes?

In order to assess these issues, a Parent Survey was developed that consisted of three sections: (a) rating of research questions, (b) demographic and transition-experience questions, and (c) a FACES III inventory. (The last part of the survey is not included in the present report.)

For the first part, faculty members of the Transition Institute at Illinois submitted 40 questions on subjects of interest in transition research. The questions were categorized as individual,

small group, community, or societal, depending upon the target of intervention. These questions were reviewed by 25 investigators at other institutions, and the questions were then revised in accordance with their suggestions. The resulting survey instrument included 25 questions ordered randomly. Parents were asked to rate the questions on a 10-point Likert scale anchored as follows: 1 = Absolutely essential; 5-6 = Moderately important; 10 = Not at all important.

The demographic and parent-involvement section included questions about the extent of family involvement in a transition program with responses ranging from "has completed a program" to "there is no program that I knew about." Other questions concerned future planning by parents for their child with handicaps, the kind of information parents felt they needed for optimal decision making, the extent of parental involvement in programs, and evaluation of program outcomes.

The sample consisted of 200 families with a child with handicaps from 16 to 22 years of age. Of the 200 questionnaires mailed, 105 were returned, 85 met the criteria for inclusion, and 77 (39%) of these were complete and could be included in the analysis. The results of Part 1 suggest that all the questions were considered important by respondents, and the rank order was not statistically significant. The results of Part 2 indicated that 65% of the families had not been part of a transition team (55% had no knowledge of a transition team); 75% of the respondents knew of adult service opportunities available to children who had completed school. Tables 1 - 4 describe parental expectations for their children with handicaps (Table 1), the information requested by parents for

assessment in planning for youths with handicaps (Table 2), and the involvement of parents in transition programs (Tables 3 and 4).

Table 1. Parental expectations for postsecondary school youth with handicaps (N=77).

<u>Residence</u>	<u>%</u>
With parents	54.8
Group home	28.6
Alone in apartment	28.6
<u>Employment</u>	
Sheltered workshop	28.6
Competitive/supported	48.8
None	7.2
<u>Earnings</u>	
Less than minimum wage	22.6
Minimum wage	28.5
More than minimum wage	26.2

Table 2. Information requested by parents of youth with handicaps for assistance in planning.

	<u>%</u>
Child's skills & capabilities	40.2
Work options	65.9
Community living options	35.4
Increase financial support	19.5
Increase emotional support	24.4
Parent support group	56.1
Adult service agencies	56.1
Increased professional support	47.6

Table 3. Transition program involvement

<u>Group</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>
1. Will be involved	20.6	16
2. Currently involved	28.6	22
3. Have completed a program	13.90	10
4. Unaware of program	37.7	29

Table 4. Comparison of desired and actual extent of participation in the transition process by parents currently involved or having completed program (Table 3, Groups 2 & 3).

	<u>Desired</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Member of team	56.3	30.3
Equal role in decision making	65.6	54.5
Finding potential job placements	43	37.5
Finding community living arrangements	43.8	31.3
Final decision maker	25	28.1
Occasional resource	15.6	12.5
No involvement	0	12.5

Finally, an analysis of program outcomes indicates that transition program involvement has a significant positive affect on parents' formulation of a post-school plan and is associated with increased awareness of community adult source options. These findings are an important part of the consideration of those who plan, develop, and implement transition programs for youth with handicaps.

## FEATURED PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

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### The Sonoma County Transition Project

Gail O'Connor, North Bay Regional Center, Santa Rosa, CA

This presentation describes a model being used to address the problems of identifying and providing viable solutions to the concerns about the inadequacy of community experiences and employment options for youth with developmental disabilities in their transition from school into adult life. A Coordinating Council is being used to promote active involvement of all appropriate agencies in joint planning activities, working agreements, and individualized transition processes. Training modules are being developed for statewide use; the model will be implemented and field tested for severely handicapped youth. The design and methods being used to evaluate this project are described.

### Secondary Education and Transitional Services for Handicapped Youth

Dan Hulbert, Career Assessment and Placement Center, Whittier, CA

This presentation will include a philosophical and programmatic overview of the Career Assessment and Placement Center's "Supported Life" model, which provides a continuum of ongoing services from elementary school through adulthood for individuals who are severely handicapped. The presentation focuses on the transition services continuum from junior high school through adult services, including career education activities, career exploration, work skills program, work adjustment and job shadowing, individual and group on-the-job training, job development/placement, and competitive and supported



employment. The Career Assessment and Placement Center is a secondary education-based program that provides and coordinates all of the above services and has a vendorization agreement with the State Department of Rehabilitation and State Developmental Disabilities Services to provide adult services.

#### Hawaii Transition Project

Robert Stodden, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI

This presentation will describe a cooperative interagency approach for measuring the effectiveness of school to adult community transition programs and services. The processes applied by an interagency transition planning team to develop a model for cooperative transition effectiveness measurement will be presented. The model's conceptual and operational framework will be discussed concerning current data collection activities and the generalizability of model components to other states.

#### The Electronics Industry Enclave Project

Larry Rhodes, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

The purpose of the Electronics Industry Enclave Project is to validate a supported employment enclave model for employing persons with severe disabilities in community jobs. This model is based upon an enclave demonstration program at Physio-Control Corporation in Redmond, Washington. Data on implementation effectiveness, consumer outcomes, and cost-effectiveness will be collected, analyzed, and reported. In addition, the outcomes of the project will include: a replicable model for placing, training, and supporting individuals in an electronics industry company; a manual documenting the model; a

training manual; and an evaluation tool. This presentation will include a brief description of the project's objectives and approach and will focus on the overall evaluation design. A progress report detailing the current evaluative findings will be presented.

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Transition Process for Learning Disabled Youth: A Case History Approach

Patricia Patton and Louise Reifman, San Diego University, San Diego, CA

The vocational rehabilitation and transition process of 10 learning disabled youth is presented. Based on Project WORK's first two years of experience, a model for a team approach to coordinating school and adult services is discussed. Included in the presentation are: (a) a description of the involvement of the vocational rehabilitation counselor; (b) vocational assessment procedures; (c) parent involvement strategies addressing both the difficult and cooperative parent; (d) the coordination of local services including school, vocational rehabilitation, community colleges, social security, and others; (e) job coach strategies; (f) employer contact; and (g) preliminary evaluative findings based on initial vocational assessment predictions and current student employment status. Ten case studies are presented (with slides, handouts, and other materials) to emphasize these seven salient components of Project WORK. Each case study will include results from the initial vocational assessment, procedures for combining IEP and IWRP components, exemplary parent education and advocacy, exemplary community college classes and activities, local work site successes

and failures, social security incentive issues, and documented employment failures and successes.

### Project Employment

Patricia Catapano, Young Adult Institute, New York, NY

This presentation will provide a model of an on-site employment initiative that is being implemented by the Young Adult Institute (YAI). A discussion on the progress and findings of YAI's "Project Employment Program" will provide an in-depth examination of one process that is being utilized to develop dynamic programs to facilitate competitive employment for developmentally disabled persons and to secure successful placements with industry. A major focus of this presentation will be to discuss marketing strategies and job development efforts designed to enlist corporate representation on the project's Business Advisory Board and to assist in the identification and recruitment of businesses for ongoing placements and referrals. This has been achieved by developing and implementing a three-tiered training seminar for top executives, corporate managers, supervisors, and co-workers of Project Employment Program participants.

### Employment Retention Program

Robert Gaylord-Ross, Richmond Unified School District and San Francisco State University, San Pablo, CA

The Employment Retention Program places a variety of disabled youth with serious vocational handicaps in permanent employment positions. Graduating or recently graduated youth (age 18-22) with severe disabilities, learning disabilities, and sensory/physical

impairments are given supported work services. The services include: job development, on-site training, family coordination, co-worker design, job modifications, & follow-up.

Evaluation data from the project are reported for categories such as: type of occupation, earned wages, weeks of employment, and amount of supported work services. A comprehensive model of secondary to adult vocational services is described. A heavy emphasis is placed on community work experience training in the high school years. The important generic work behaviors are identified, and training strategies are described. Specific job retention strategies are also discussed. These include job modifications, social skills training, and co-worker involvement. The role of economic factors and cross-cultural approaches in job placement and retention are also discussed.

#### Postsecondary Interaction Model for Learning Disabilities

Mary Morris and Jan Leuenburger, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NB

The Postsecondary Intervention Model for Learning Disabilities is designed to extend the continuum of special support services for learning disabled individuals into higher education. A visible program with personnel specializing in language and learning disabilities has been integrated into the existing network of campus resources for student services. Specific measurement techniques have been selected to accommodate the range of project activities initiated. Consideration of timelines, limitations in data collection, and the effect of how extraneous variables influenced the selection of measurement techniques are discussed. Examples of program objective monitoring and impact evaluation results under each

objective of the project will also be discussed. The results of the faculty survey, a description and range of referral sources, the percentage of students verified as LD, and the LD students' perceptions of support services are described.

### Illinois Competitive Employment Project

Tom Lagomarcino, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The purpose of the Illinois Competitive Employment Project is to provide more effective transitional services for students with moderate/severe handicaps through the development of a cooperative agreement between two local education agencies and the local rehabilitation agency. A vocational transition planning committee made up of representatives of the participating agencies was established to identify problems related to the issue of transition and to develop solutions to those problems. The project has been instrumental in placing students into competitive employment and in developing supported employment options for those students with more severe handicaps. In addition, the project has centralized all job survey and placement activities across the three agencies. The design and the methods used to evaluate the project will be discussed.

### Project READDY: Real Employment Alternatives for Developmentally Disabled Youth

Dianne E. Berkell, Long Island University, Greenvale, NY

This presentation provides an overview of a successful transition program for youth with autism and addresses issues related to preparing persons with severe handicaps for competitive and supported employment. The presentation focuses specifically on:

(a) methods that have been used to identify and recruit employers,  
(b) assessment and instruction goals for transition programming,  
(c) on-site supervision needs of students (d) interagency networking  
and collaboration, and (e) evaluative findings and dissemination  
activities.

Procedures utilized in implementing the project are described,  
with emphasis given to examining issues and concerns in program  
implementation. Specific obstacles confronted during implementation  
of Project READDY are examined, along with suggestions for dealing  
with potential barriers to employment for persons with severe  
disabilities. Special attention is directed toward an analysis of  
evaluative findings. The evaluation design for Project READDY is  
described, highlighting procedures utilized for the evaluation of  
student achievement, effectiveness of teacher inservice training, and  
employer attitudes.

## EXCHANGE/DISSEMINATION POSTER PRESENTATIONS

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### Transition Research Institute

William J. Schill, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

"Transition Research on Problems of Handicapped Youth" (Project TROPHY) is conducting substantive research designed to identify factors that will assist handicapped youth in making the transition from school to adult life. Project TROPHY will identify those skills needed to facilitate the success of handicapped individuals at work and in the community; determine the means by which such skills might be effectively and efficiently acquired, maintained, and transferred by handicapped individuals; and determine which accommodations and support services will facilitate the integration of handicapped individuals into the community and competitive employment.

### Service Demonstration Project

Patricia Tompkins-McGill, Las Cumbres Learning Services, Inc., Los Alamos, NM

"A Continuum of Coordinated Transition Services for the Developmentally Disabled in Rural Northern New Mexico" is a program aimed at developing and demonstrating a continuum of transitional services to promote competitive and supported employment for developmentally disabled secondary and post-school-aged youth residing in a rural, socioeconomically depressed region. Methods used to accomplish these purposes include sheltered workshops, cottage industry, semi-independent living, and support services to families.

Products include curricula for developmentally disabled adults in several different areas and video public service announcements.

Cooperative Models for Planning and Developing Transitional Services

Susan S. Behle, Utah Department of Social Services, Salt Lake City, UT

"The Utah Transition Planning and Employment Project" is designed to facilitate the transition of students with severe handicaps from high school to community-based adult services. Objectives include the establishment of the technical abilities for the Utah Division of Services to the Handicapped to implement small community-based supported employment alternatives for high school graduates with severe handicaps. In addition, the project will field test model components in six communities in Utah.

Richard Dever, Center for Innovation in Teaching the Handicapped,  
Bloomington, IN

COMPETE is bringing a rehabilitation center and the public schools together to develop cooperative programming for moderately, severely, and profoundly retarded youth so they can make the transition from school to the world of work. The project determines specific vocational and interpersonal skills needed for employment, identifies and validates training sequences and roles for special education and vocational rehabilitation, and implements training programs.

David W. Test, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte,  
NC

"Competitive Employment through Vocational Experience" (CETVE) serves mildly mentally handicapped, hearing impaired, and physically



disabled students at East Mecklenburg High School in Charlotte, NC. CETVE provides job coaching and pre-graduation planning for participating students to improve school-to-work transitions. In addition, CETVE has established a cooperative model that includes vocational rehabilitation, the school system, the business community, and other human service agencies.

Barbara Elliot, Educational Service Unit #9, Hastings, NE  
"A Planning Model for the Development of Intersector Agreements and Transitional Services" addresses the need to improve employment outcomes for special education graduates that are currently characterized by high unemployment rates, low wages, and dependent living arrangements. Methods being used include implementation of Individualized Transition Plans (ITP), increasing parent involvement in the ITP process, ensuring ongoing supported and competitive employment, and working with state agencies to modify policies that pose barriers to local intersector agreements.

Dorothy Crawford and Bruno D'Alonzo, Research and Development  
Training Institutes, Inc., Phoenix, AZ

"The Model for Employment and Adult Living" (Project MEAL) is designed to plan, develop, and implement a model program that provides successful transitions for graduating learning disabled students, with emphasis on optimal employment commensurate with capabilities. MEAL presents a program that links certain handicapped persons who leave secondary schools unready for competitive employment or independent living to available community training/education services.

Martha Brooks, Delaware Transition Project, Newark, DE

"The Delaware Transition Project" is a model for a coordinated school-to-work transition by facilitating communication between special education, vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, mental health, and other agencies and service providers. Strategies include increasing inter-agency awareness, identifying and providing vocational assessments, and developing and refining a planning model.

#### Youth Employment Projects

Angela Traiforos, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, Washington, DC

"The IAM and AW National Demonstration Model for Transitional Services for Handicapped Youths" is promoting the classroom-to-workplace transitions of students with disabilities. The primary goals of this program are: (a) to provide vocational and on-the-job training, (b) to develop work experience opportunities, (c) to place handicapped students in permanent full-time competitive employment, and (d) to provide on-site follow-up to participants and employers.

Dale F. Thomas and Charles C. Coker, University of Wisconsin at Stout, Menomonie, WI

Project ADAPT aims to develop and demonstrate an innovative approach to meet the employment needs of exceptional students as they leave high school. The program consists of three components designed to identify and enhance students' employability: (a) employment readiness assessment, (b) employment readiness training, and

(c) structured job search. The program will be fully implemented in five sites during the 1986-87 school year.

Michael Hardman, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT

"Utah Community-Based Transition Project" (UCBT) is focused on the development of a classroom model for students with severe handicaps. The program facilitates (a) integration of students into the regular high school programs, (b) training in community and competitive employment settings, and (c) systematic transition planning from school into community service programs. The UCBT model has been replicated in seven high schools throughout Utah.

Robin Stephens, Oregon Health Sciences University, Portland, OR

"Employability Support Network of Disabled Youth" was started to establish a network of "employability readiness" support groups of disabled youth. The support groups are designed to develop communication skills, independent living skills, and a positive self-concept to promote successful employment. Adults with disabilities serve as positive role models and facilitators for the youth in the groups.

Judith A. Cook, Thresholds, Chicago, IL

"The Young Adult Model Vocational Program" provides community-based services that result in work-readiness for mentally ill youth exiting secondary schools. The aim is for clients to secure competitive employment or postsecondary training while avoiding rehospitalization. Service components of the delivery model include an intensive prevocational class, a visiting chef's program,

a comprehensive vocational assessment battery, and a young adult job club program to develop job-finding skills.

Barbara Brown, Barbara Steinhilper, and Ron Davis, Rochester City School District, Rochester, NY

"The Rochester (New York) City School's Center Senior High School Work Program" (CWP) provides career education and job placement for 75 "at risk" handicapped youngsters aged 15-21 who are in transition from school to work. Participants are enrolled in the District's Center Senior High School which provides 30 minutes of career education instruction (life and career skills) and 6-15 hours of supervised paid job placement per week for each of the targeted youngsters. Participants are learning disabled, emotionally handicapped, and/or mentally retarded. One New York State certificated special education teacher and three adult tutors, each trained in "essential elements of instruction" methodology, provide the instruction and job-site reinforcement of each student's career related learning objectives as specified by their Individual Education Plan(s).

#### Postsecondary Projects

Justin F. Marino, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

"Intervention to Retain and Foster Advancement in Careers and Employment" (Project INTERFACE) was established for the purpose of designing, implementing, and evaluating a model postsecondary demonstration project for handicapped youth, aged 18 to 22. Project INTERFACE has five major components: job bank and information clearinghouse, computer-assisted instruction, employment training

specialist, project dissemination, and project evaluation and replication.

Joseph P. DeMarsh, Southwest Business, Industry and Rehabilitation Association, Scottsdale, AZ

The aim of Project BRIDGE is to develop, test, and refine a model designed to link handicapped youth with community training resources and competitive employment opportunities. Technical methods include a computerized clearinghouse (of more than 400 programs and services representing 80 discrete types of resources) and ongoing follow-up and placement assistance. Parents, educators, counselors, and youth themselves can access the clearinghouse easily and confidentially by phone.

George Tilson, George Washington University, Rockville, MD

"Job Training and Try-out" (JT&T) is a model program designed to meet transitional needs of "out of school, out of work" handicapped youth, aged 18 to 22. The strength of JT&T lies in the cooperative involvement and support of advocacy groups, vocational rehabilitation, social service agencies, and George Washington University. Job search and placement assistance and one-year follow-up support are provided for program participants. A five-year research study is underway to determine the effectiveness of JT&T.

#### Postsecondary Educational Projects

Terence Collins, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

"The Learning Disabled College Writers Project" is examining the impact of technology (e.g., word processing, voice synthesizers, audio and video taping) on the academic success, career selection,

and transition motivation of learning disabled college students. Participants are assisted in career exploration and in bringing career goals and technological needs to bear on academic planning. The major goal is to create generic writing curricula that are replicable in other postsecondary settings.

Beth Apostoli and Jessica Swirski, Human Services Center, Albertson, NY

"School-to-Work Transitional Services" and "Learning Disability Program" are two projects assisting disabled youth in making transitions into competitive employment and community colleges. The projects work with high schools throughout the New York Metropolitan area, three local community colleges, and a network of local employers. These models incorporate early involvement of employers in advisory councils, speakers' bureaus, and mentorships.

Bob Nathanson, Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY

"The Metropolitan Area Transition Clearinghouse" (Project MATCH) was established to design, demonstrate, and disseminate a model employment linkage program that provides transitional services to disabled college graduates. This is being accomplished through strategies such as a higher education consortium, a data-based clearinghouse linking employers with unemployed disabled graduates, and disseminating outcomes and products to encourage utilization and replication of demonstrated model.

Jim Brown, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN

"Enhancing the Transition of Mildly Mentally Retarded and Learning Disabled Post-Secondary Vocational Education Students into

Gainful Employment." The title and purpose of this project are one; it focuses on three major activities: (a) identifying and analyzing policies that enhance or inhibit transition-related processes, (b) developing a system for identifying and monitoring dropout-prone handicapped students, and (c) training employers to provide additional assistance to handicapped employees.

Katharine Ninia Smith, Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS

"Post-Secondary Education for the Handicapped: Access and Coordination in Rural Kansas" is a demonstration project that addresses the needs of handicapped students to access and successfully to utilize postsecondary services in their transition to adult life. Objectives of this project include self-advocacy seminars, consultation and technical assistance, and information services to increase awareness of handicapped individuals, their families, teachers, and counselors as to the opportunities that are available for postsecondary education.

Susan Ruder, Miami-Dade Community College, Miami, FL

This project is designed to maximize the utilization of existing resources to provide a continuum of services to learning disabled adults so that their employability skills are improved. The project has developed a comprehensive transitional program which features an Assessment Lab and a Psychology of Career Adjustment course for the adults with disabilities and has also developed an inservice training program designed for professionals working with the adults with learning disabilities.

Margo Vreeburg Izzo, The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, Columbus, OH

This presentation displays a new project called Corridors to Careers that is designed to assist teachers and parents in helping youth make a smooth transition from school to a productive independent work life. Corridors to Careers provides up-to-date information, resources, and specific learning activities in the areas of career exploration, job search and survival skills, and independent living skills. The product contains three guides for parents and a training manual that can be used by both teachers and parents.



## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PRESENTATION

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### GOALS AND PROCEDURES OF THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM Jane Dowling

The technical assistance (TA) program provides technical assistance on evaluation methodology to the federally funded secondary and transition model/demonstration projects. The TA program has four major goals:

1. Focus on important evaluation improvement concerns
2. Conduct TA in a timely manner
3. Document and communicate clearly plans and results
4. Work closely with project staff to insure the positive use of TA information.

The following 11 steps comprise the procedures for providing technical assistance.

#### 1. Assess project needs

Ensuring the focus of the TA effort on evaluation improvement concerns is accomplished through the systematic identification of needs. This assessment of needs assists us in planning future TA workshops and on site visitations as well as immediate follow-up with those projects requesting TA today. In addition, interviews are conducted with individual projects who request TA in order to clarify needs further.

A major need expressed by several projects is, How do you formulate evaluation tools that are decision oriented, not just an outcome statement of good or bad? A solution to this problem

requires the systematic identification and classification of barriers/issues that projects face in accomplishing their objectives. By defining the predictors of successful transition, an evaluation plan can include those factors as criteria in evaluating the effectiveness of transition programming. TA can assist in the further validation of those factors identified by individual projects by expediting the implementation in newly funded projects of evaluation methodology that reflects project findings. This process might involve the development of an evaluation protocol that assesses local readiness and resources and answers questions of what capabilities exist, thus giving projects the capacity to respond to previously identified issues/barriers of concern in providing successful transitional services and the achieving of successful outcomes.

## 2. Request for consultation

A request for TA can be made at any time, either by phone or by letter. Every contact with projects is documented using an individual project Communication Action Record Form. In addition, all incoming and outgoing phone calls and correspondence are logged on a daily basis, which ensures that any follow-up activities or callbacks are conducted in a timely manner.

## 3. Identify a specific problem and define it

Before determining the mode of TA, specific problems or issues need to be identified and defined at several levels. This step addresses the problem of ensuring the utility of TA. A myriad of problems have been identified by projects, that is, choosing an

evaluation design, measuring cost effectiveness, methods of data reduction/analysis, and utilization of evaluation results. For example, it is important to determine if your evaluation issue is project specific.

Through this process, TA can assist in the synchronization of projects. Evaluation of impact must focus on those critical issues encountered by projects to promote efficient use of limited resources. This will promote a steady process of development rather than a series of unilateral innovations. Examples of good practice abound throughout the nation, yet so often what has been developed remains unknown, or, if a practice is discovered, logistics prevent its implementation. One factor perpetuating this condition has been limited evaluation studies designed to test the effectiveness of such programs and projects. Another factor is that often the ability of individual projects to provide TA is beyond their scope. The TA program can help existing projects and future transition projects assure effective use of research and practices through the design of evaluation methodology that addresses the issues directly.

4. Analyze the problem in relation to progress of current project activities
5. Determine the mode of TA

The mode of TA selected will be based on three criteria: In conjunction with the needs of the projects, maximum impact, minimum disruption, and cost effectiveness will be considered in selecting the TA mode.

6. Establish a timeline for TA

Once the mode of TA is determined, a realistic timeline will be constructed to ensure the feasibility of the TA activities.

7. Conduct TA

8. Conduct TA process evaluation

Satisfaction with ongoing TA activities and development of possible alternative activities will be determined through survey feedback strategies, information from TA team members, and/or project participants. It is one thing to find that the TA activities are going as planned; it is another to find how those involved perceive their usefulness.

9. Assess the project's need for continued TA

A project's capacity to respond to unmet needs may require the introduction of additional resources. A major function of the TA program will be to identify options and alternatives and to develop recommendations.

10. Conduct TA product evaluation

The degree of success of your project's evaluation effort and of the programmatic effort as a whole is in direct relationship to the degree to which the evaluation is planned from the beginning and the differences between the two perspectives are negotiated. The major concern of OSERS is systems change on a permanent basis. The real challenge henceforth to projects is to maintain, to expend, and to create statewide uniformity by systematic systems change. Through TA product evaluation, the construction and implementation of TA

activities will be assessed in terms of the impact on the development and improvement of evaluation methodology as well as the impact on the nationwide synchronization of projects.

#### 11. Dissemination of TA intervention results

An objective of the Institute is to develop a perspective on the role of the projects and their impact on generic services. I see the TA program acting as a mechanism for facilitating the broadest possible diffusion, utilization, and implementation of the practices/products of transition projects. This will be accomplished through the annual development and dissemination of a general evaluation handbook, working papers by Institute staff and consultants, and general networking through the Interchange newsletter.

EVALUATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY  
FOR OSERS-FUNDED SECONDARY AND TRANSITION PROJECTS

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Jane Dowling

The purpose of the Technical Assistance program (TA) is to provide technical assistance on evaluation methodology to the federally funded secondary and transition model and demonstration projects. In order to ensure the focus of TA efforts on evaluation improvement concerns, an Evaluation Needs Assessment Survey was administered during the Project Directors' Second Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., October 10, 1986. The survey instrument was designed to categorize evaluation concerns into five areas:

1. Identifying the evaluation focus
2. Developing the research design
3. Implementing the evaluation plan
4. Interpreting the evaluation findings
5. Utilizing the evaluation findings

A second purpose of the questionnaire was to assess project interest in specific content areas. Respondents were asked to indicate which topics were of importance to them in the current phase of their project.

The results of the survey will be used to direct future TA activities including selecting topics for regional technical assistance workshops and the Evaluation Technical Assistance: Dissemination Series.

## METHOD

### SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The Evaluation Needs Assessment Survey asked respondents to rate selected evaluation topics within five evaluation areas on three levels. Respondents were first asked to indicate those topics of use in evaluating their projects. Of those topics indicated, the projects then rated the importance of the topic on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = not important at this time; 4 = very important). After rating the importance of the topic, the respondents rated their need for technical assistance on the specific topic on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = low need for technical assistance; 4 = high need for technical assistance). The evaluation areas included:

1. Identifying the evaluation focus
  - A. Identifying those elements of your project that constitute a suitable focus for an evaluation (restating objectives).
  - B. Qualifying program outcomes (type of services delivered by project).
  - C. Assessing the relationship between your project objectives and your program outcomes.
  - D. Assessing and analyzing the intended and unintended effects of your program.
  - E. Identifying key questions to be answered in forthcoming evaluation (types of decisions that the evaluation is expected to address).
2. Developing the research design

- A. Identifying research methodology to answer key questions.
  - B. Identifying the technical requirements of the evaluation design (sampling, timing of measurements, data collection procedures, data analysis).
  - C. Identifying constraints to evaluation (funds, political restrictions, legal limitations, ethical considerations).
  - D. Formulating evaluation questions in terms for which research methodology is suitable.
3. Implementing the evaluation plan
- A. Implementing the evaluation plan.
  - B. Including project staff in evaluation planning.
  - C. Monitoring implementation of the evaluation plan.
  - D. Managing project evaluation activities.
4. Interpreting evaluation findings
- A. Using the results of your evaluation.
  - B. Utilizing evaluation results to make program decisions.
  - C. Identifying information needs of target audiences.
  - D. Involving consumers in evaluation planning.
  - E. Adapting the evaluation when circumstances change.
  - F. Informing program managers about findings.
5. Utilizing evaluation findings
- A. Identifying variables that can be changed by the people who make decisions about the program.
  - B. Developing the evaluation report.



- C. Reporting recommendations on the basis of evaluation results.
- D. Disseminating program evaluation results.
- E. Relating project results to the results of other evaluation (evaluation synthesis).

The Survey also requested data regarding the importance of specific content areas. Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of an area by placing a checkmark next to the specific area. The 13 content areas were:

- cost-benefit analysis
- computerized management information systems
- instrumentation/validity/reliability
- data collection/data analysis
- interagency agreements
- social/interpersonal/life skill development
- job-specific skill training
- employer attitude/acceptance
- systems interface/networking
- community-based training
- competitive/supportive employment
- model replication
- individual transition plans

#### SAMPLE SELECTION

The targeted sample of the Evaluation Needs Assessment Survey included all the project directors (or their appointees) of the OSERS-funded secondary and transition model and demonstration projects. A total sample of 139 projects was identified. Six

projects were being administered by project directors with funded projects in two competitions. The survey completed by these directors was counted only once, reducing the sample size to 133.

#### SURVEY PROCEDURE

The Survey was administered to 102 project directors attending the Project Directors' Second Annual Meeting on October 10, 1986. Of those directors in attendance, 47% completed the Survey. Nonrespondents, including those project directors not attending the Annual Meeting, were mailed a copy of the Survey during the week after the meeting. No telephone follow-up was initiated after the first mailing.

#### RESULTS

##### RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

The Survey yielded a 71% response rate, with 94 projects responding. Of those projects responding, 56% were in their final year of federal funding and 23% were in their first year of funding. Table 1 summarizes the response rate for the projects by competition number.

##### SUMMARY OF RESULTS ON EVALUATION TOPICS

Respondents were asked to rate each evaluation topic according to its importance and, if important, their need for technical assistance on the topic. The results were analyzed to provide information about the 5 evaluation and 13 content areas. Each of the evaluation areas is addressed in the following sections.

Identifying the Evaluation Focus. The topic of "assessing and analyzing the intended and unintended effects of their program"

received the highest rating by respondents, both in importance and in need for technical assistance ( $X = 3.0$ ;  $X = 2.42$ , respectively). Respondents from competition 84.158C (funded summer 1986) gave the highest importance ratings to Identifying the Evaluation Focus. Table 2 summarizes the importance ratings and the need for technical assistance ratings.

Developing the Research Design. "Identifying the technical requirements of the evaluation design" received the highest importance rating as well as the highest need for technical assistance rating ( $X = 2.97$ ;  $X = 2.54$ , respectively). These data are summarized in Table 3.

Implementing the Evaluation Plan. Of the four topics in this area, "Managing project evaluation activities" received the highest importance rating ( $X = 2.89$ ) followed closely by "Implementing the evaluation plan" ( $X = 2.88$ ). Need for technical assistance was rated highest for "Implementing the evaluation plan" ( $X = 2.00$ ). Table 4 summarizes the data for this evaluation area.

Interpreting Evaluation Findings consisted of six evaluation topics. Of these, two received the highest importance ratings: "Using the results of your evaluation" and "identifying information needs of target audiences" ( $X = 2.98$ ). The highest rating for need for technical assistance was "Using the results of the evaluation" ( $X = 2.13$ ). The data for this evaluation area are summarized in Table 5.

Utilizing Evaluation Findings, the final evaluation area, comprised five topics. Respondents rated "Identifying variables that can be changed by the people who make decisions about the program" highest in terms of importance ( $X = 2.92$ ). "Developing the

evaluation report" received the highest need-for-technical-assistance rating (2.47). (See Table 6.)

#### SUMMARY OF RESULTS ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

Respondents were requested to check specific content area topics of importance to them during the current phase of their projects. A list of 13 topics was provided. A frequency count of responses indicated two areas of highest interest: data collection/data analysis and individual transition plans. Highest interest for projects in their final year of federal funding was indicated for data collection/analysis, individual transition plans, employer attitude/acceptance, social/interpersonal/life skill development, cost-benefit analysis, and model replication. Highest interest for projects in their first year of federal funding was indicated for social/interpersonal/life skill development, individual transition plans, data collection/analysis, instrumentation/validity/reliability, and computerized management information systems. (See Table 7.)

#### CONCLUSION

With a 71% response rate to the Evaluation Needs Assessment Survey, it is possible to identify a major trend in the area of evaluation for the transition projects. Overall there appears to be a discrepancy between the perceptions of project staff about what is important and their need for technical assistance (TA) in the five major evaluation areas. Topics related to the day-to-day operation of projects are rated highest in importance and lowest in need for

TA. However, issues related to producing outcome data are rated lowest in importance and highest in need for TA.

These findings suggest that projects are currently focusing on getting their evaluation programs up and running. Schalock (1986) suggests that many programs (e.g., rehabilitation) tend to progress through three distinct phases: (a) resources, (b) system review, and (c) accountability and system interface. Using Schalock's evolutionary phases and the results of the survey, some general conclusions can be drawn about the progression of the transition projects. The need-for-TA ratings indicate that the majority of projects are comfortable with issues occurring during the implementation and monitoring of their evaluation plans, corresponding to Schalock's second phase, systems review. Within this phase, programs are concerned with "how well the system is in place, and whether or not staff are following the policies and procedures of the system." The program is considered to be accountable if policies and procedures are being followed. Systems review becomes the mechanism by which management monitors and evaluates the projects and their compliance with the various parameters and criteria established for the system. In the survey, these areas were rated highest in terms of importance and lowest in need for TA. The need for TA ratings was highest in areas that would fall into Schalock's third evolutionary phase, accountability through client-referenced outcomes. It is during this time, according to Schalock, that programs interface with various public and private sectors of the community and attempt to become more accountable for client-referenced outcomes. This phase includes the development of

transitional plans. In concert with the need for TA ratings, almost half (48%) of the respondents rated individual transition plans as important in the current phase of their projects.

Schalock contends that in the past, many programs did not evolve beyond the second phase because they believed that if they were doing their thing, they were already accountable. Based on the results of the survey, the transition projects appear to be concerned with the third phase, that is, obtaining assistance that will improve their ability to meet measuring and reporting requirements. This emphasis represents an important shift in the evaluation focus for model demonstration projects.

Based on this trend, the Evaluation Technical Assistance Program will be guided by the three areas receiving the highest need-for-TA ratings.

1. Developing the evaluation report;
2. Analyzing the effects of projects; and
3. Identifying the technical requirements of the research design.

In addition to providing individual TA on specific needs identified by projects, the Evaluation Technical Assistance Program will develop a Dissemination Series, which will provide projects with working papers that address these target areas. For example, a working paper on how to develop the final evaluation report will be distributed to all projects. In addition, an evaluation analysis worksheet will be designed and completed on each project. The purpose of this worksheet will be to assist projects in identifying evaluation strategies appropriate to the type of evaluation questions addressed

by projects. The regional TA workshops will address those content areas projects rated highest in importance.

The Evaluation Needs Survey will be administered again during the Project Directors' Third Annual Meeting, and Year 2 and Year 3 ratings will be compared.

#### REFERENCE

Schalock, R. L. (1986, September). Presentation at annual forum, Transitions to employment for handicapped individuals, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Table 1. Project Response Rate by Funding Competition

CFDR No.	Number of Funded Projects	Number (Percent) Projects Responding
84.128A	5	3 (60)
85.158C	17	15 (88)
84.158C	10	9 (90)
84.158A	16	12 (75)
84.086M	11	9 (82)
84.078C	26	21 (81)
84.023G	15	10 (67)
84.078B	15	6 (40)
84.023D	12	6 (50)
84.158B	12	3 (25)
Total	139	94 (71)

\*The total percentage was calculated with 133 funded projects because 6 project directors who were administering 2 projects were counted only once.



**Table 2. Project Ratings for Identifying Evaluation Focus  
by Specific Topic**

Topic	Importance			Need for Technical Assis.		
	Number Responding	Mean	S.D.	Number Responding	Mean	S.D.
1. Identifying those elements of your project that constitute a suitable focus for an evaluation.	61	2.61	1.13	55	1.93	1.06
2. Qualifying program outcomes.	60	2.76	1.09	56	1.75	0.91
3. Assessing the relationship between your project objectives and your program outcomes.	67	2.96	1.07	63	2.09	1.07
4. Assessing and analyzing the intended and unintended effects of your program.	74	3.0	1.0	73	2.42	1.11
5. Identifying key questions to be answered in forthcoming evaluation.	60	2.53	1.01	59	2.08	1.02

**Table 3. Project Ratings for Developing Research Design  
by Specific Topic**

Topic	Importance			Need for Technical Assis.		
	Number Responding	Mean	S.D.	Number Responding	Mean	S.D.
1. Identifying research methodology to answer key questions.	65	2.89	1.12	67	2.21	1.13
2. Identifying the technical requirements of the evaluation design.	70	2.97	1.03	72	2.54	1.53
3. Identifying constraints to evaluation	48	1.98	1.03	49	1.80	0.97
4. Formulating evaluation questions in terms for which research methodology is suitable.	63	2.65	1.17	65	2.12	1.14

**Table 4. Project Ratings for Implementing Evaluation Plan  
by Specific Topic**

Topic	Importance			Need for Technical Assistance		
	Number Responding	Mean	S.D.	Number Responding	Mean	S.D.
1. Implementing the evaluation plan	65	2.88	1.14	63	2.00	1.07
2. Including project staff in evaluation planning.	59	2.81	1.11	58	1.81	1.06
3. Monitoring implementation of the evaluation plan.	63	2.73	1.03	61	1.88	0.90
4. Managing project evaluation activities.	65	2.89	1.11	66	1.89	1.06

**Table 5. Project Ratings for Interpreting Evaluation Findings  
by Specific Topic**

Topic	Importance			Need for Technical Assistance		
	Number Responding	Mean	S.D.	Number Responding	Mean	S.D.
1. Using the results of your evaluation.	65	2.98	1.09	64	2.13	1.07
2. Utilizing evaluation results to make program decisions.	66	2.85	1.06	63	2.03	1.05
3. Identifying information needs of target audiences.	56	2.98	1.03	53	2.09	1.12
4. Involving consumers in evaluation planning.	57	2.63	1.04	57	2.11	1.12
5. Adapting the evaluation when circumstances change.	62	2.29	1.13	57	1.70	1.01
6. Informing program managers about findings.	49	2.55	1.14	47	1.62	0.97

**Table 6. Project Ratings for Utilizing Evaluation Findings  
by Specific Topic**

Topic	Importance			Need for Technical Assistance		
	Number Responding	Mean	S.D.	Number Responding	Mean	S.D.
1. Identifying variables that can be changed by the people who make decisions about the program.	53	2.92	1.11	51	2.18	1.20
2. Developing the evaluation report.	71	2.68	1.21	68	2.47	1.25
3. Reporting recommendations on the basis of evaluation results.	68	2.71	1.21	62	2.18	1.10
4. Disseminating program evaluation results.	71	2.70	1.24	64	2.03	1.12
5. Relating project results to the results of other evaluations.	58	2.36	1.12	56	2.13	1.10

Table 7. Project Response Rate by Specific Content Area (N=94)

Area	Number (Percent) of Projects Responding	
1. Cost-benefit analysis	39	(41)
2. Computerized management information systems	33	(35)
3. Instrumentation/validity/ reliability	28	(30)
4. Data collection/data analysis	45	(48)
5. Interagency agreements	39	(41)
6. Social/interpersonal/life skill development	40	(43)
7. Job-specific skill training	26	(28)
8. Employer attitude/acceptance	40	(43)
9. Systems interface/networking	30	(32)
10. Community-based training	33	(35)
11. Competitive/supportive employment	35	(37)
12. Model replication	39	(41)
13. Individual transition plans	45	(48)

## EVALUATION RESULTS

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### SECOND ANNUAL MEETING

Janis Chadsey-Rusch

#### Scope of the Second Annual Meeting

The Project Directors' Second Annual Meeting, sponsored by the Secondary Transition Intervention Effectiveness Institute, was held October 9-10, 1986, at the Loews L'Enfant Plaza Hotel in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the meeting was to bring project directors up to date on the Transition Institute's activities and to give them an opportunity to exchange and disseminate information.

Invitations to attend the meeting were sent in early June 1986 to all project directors who had received federally funded model demonstration transition grants. Newly funded projects, however, did not receive notification of the meeting until a week or so after they were told their projects were funded (in some cases, notification occurred as late as two weeks before the Second Annual Meeting). Invitations to attend the meeting were also sent to 13 OSERS personnel. Preregistration commitments were received from 140 persons; 180 persons attended the meeting.

The meeting was designed to respond to the input from the project directors who attended the 1985 meeting. The meeting was shortened from three to two days, and a variety of sessions were scheduled so that participants could choose specific sessions that reflected their individual interests. Ten projects were selected as "featured projects"; the directors described their projects and their evaluation designs and methodologies. In addition, more than 20

project directors shared information about their projects during an informal exchange/dissemination poster session.

Evaluation forms were included in a packet of materials that was distributed to all participants on the first day of the meeting. Of the 156 persons who attended the meeting and who were not OSERS personnel or Transition Institute staff, only 43 (27%) of the participants returned their evaluation forms. This report presents the data from those evaluation forms and makes recommendations for the Third Annual Meeting.

### Participant Demographics

Of the 43 persons who turned in their evaluations, 46% described themselves as project coordinators and 22% as project directors. The remaining participants were university personnel (17%), project staff (10%), LEA administrators (7%), researchers (7%), program evaluators (2%), and state MRDD administrators (2%). (Because some participants selected more than one category, percentages are greater than 100%.)

Fifty-six percent of the participants had a master's degree, 34% had doctoral degrees, and 10% had undergraduate degrees. The largest percentage of the participants (44%) were special educators, followed by other educators (24%), rehabilitation personnel (21%), and vocational educators (12%). The number of years of experience in the areas of secondary and postsecondary programming for handicapped persons varied widely: 30% of the respondents had 6 to 10 years of experience, 22% had 3 to 5 years of experience, 22% had 11 to 15 years of experience, 15% had 0 to 2 years of experience, and 12% had 16 or more years of experience. Surprisingly, nearly half the respondents were in their first year of funding (44%), 22% were in



their second year, 20% were in their third year, and 15% were in their last year of funding.

In summary, the majority of respondents to the questionnaire were project coordinators or directors who were in their first year of funding. Most were special educators with advanced degrees and one-third had at least 6 to 10 years of experience in the area of secondary and postsecondary programming for persons with handicaps.

### Evaluation Results

In addition to determining the demographic information from the individual respondents, the evaluation instrument was designed to elicit the respondents' reactions to the organization and content of the 1986 meeting and to seek suggestions concerning the directions that future meetings should take. The items on the instrument were rated on a 7-point Likert-scale format (with 1 indicating low satisfaction and 7 high satisfaction), and additional space was provided for comments. Quantitative and qualitative responses to individual items are reported and discussed below.

Planning and organization of the meeting. On a 7-point scale, respondents gave the planning and organization of the meeting a rating of 6.26. As one individual commented, it was the "best professional meeting I've been to in terms of organization, material dissemination." Those project directors who received late notification of funding (and therefore were informed about the meeting late) were not as happy. This delay in notification, however, was an unavoidable consequence of the nature of the dates of the funding cycles.

Participant expectations. In regard to the extent that the meeting format and agenda met their expectations, respondents gave this item a rating of 5.61. In particular, respondents indicated that the meeting was "much improved over last year" and that the "networking was especially helpful." However, those projects involved in secondary education activities or postsecondary education felt there was too much of an emphasis on "transition to work" and "work/placement."

Institute evaluation program presentations. Respondents give these presentations a rating of 4.93. Overall, the comments were positive: "reports very informative," "handouts were helpful," "I wish they could have been a bit longer--so interesting!" Several respondents suggested the need for longer sessions that involved time for actual discussion of the results.

Institute applied research presentations. These presentations were rated 5.03 and received similar positive comments: "well-organized presentations," "you all have been very productive--your enthusiasm is catching." Again, several respondents felt the sessions were too short and that some sessions were better than others.

Technical assistance presentation. The information on technical assistance was rated 5.31 and was felt to be especially useful for first-year projects rather than second-year projects. However, one respondent noted that they "have a better idea of what to ask for in the way of assistance" and that the needs survey was a "better form" than last year's form.

Featured project presentation. Respondents gave the featured project presentations a rating of 5.53. Although many of the respondents found these sessions useful and "the best part of the meeting," some respondents mentioned that there were too many West Coast projects, too few projects on youth with learning disabilities, too short a time period for the presentations, and some presentations were of poor quality.

Exchange/dissemination poster session. This session was rated 5.52. There was not one negative comment made about this session. Respondents indicated that it was a "good opportunity to interact," "extremely helpful," "fun," and "should always be held."

Amount of information presented. When respondents rated this session a 5.33, they were indicating that there was perhaps too much information presented for the time available. However, the comments indicate that the respondents thought the sessions were presented at a "good pace" and that there was an "excellent balance of information" presented. Several respondents wanted more time devoted to discussing the results in the presentations.

Information exchange. This item was rated a 5.76. Respondents stated that the meeting was a "great opportunity to network" and an excellent chance to "share ideas." Several project directors and coordinators wanted more time with OSERS personnel and also wanted an opportunity to meet with project staff from the same competition.

Overall rating of the meeting. The overall rating of the meeting was 5.95, a high rating that reflected the comments of the

respondents: "great job," "best ever," "very helpful," and "much better than last year."

Negative reactions to the meeting. The negative reactions to the meeting seemed to center around four themes. First, several respondents felt that the quality of the presentations was too uneven; that is, some presentations were judged to be of poor quality. Second, several respondents criticized the fact that the presentations provided the same material as the publications. For example, "The evaluation research findings were the same as in the books; an interpretation of the next step from evaluation results would be helpful." Third, there were discrepancies between what new projects wanted and what was presented. For example, "There was little or no introduction to topics for newcomers in the field," "assumption that everyone knew of the Institute and OSERS staff," and "wanted more research on learning disabled." Finally, respondents indicated that the sessions should be longer and that the intermission time between sessions should be expanded.

Positive reactions to the meeting. The positive reactions to the meeting also centered around four themes. Respondents indicated overwhelmingly that the opportunity to interact with others and to exchange information was a positive feature of the meeting. Second, respondents believed the meeting was well organized and liked the variety of topics included on the agenda. Dr. Bellamy's presentation and the opportunity to interact with the OSERS staff were also considered an extremely positive feature. Fourth, the level of professionalism of the Institute staff and their presentations was mentioned as a positive aspect.

Future directions. The directions that the third annual meeting should take centered around one theme--MORE TIME. Respondents indicated they wanted more time to meet with OSERS staff, more time for the sessions, more time for discussion, and more time to meet with other project directors in their competitions. In addition, respondents indicated the need for presentations to be described more categorically--that is, the presentation descriptions should state whether they were concerned with youth or adults or both, youth or adults with mental retardation, learning disabilities, and behavior disorders; and whether the presentations concerned secondary education, postsecondary education, or employment settings.

#### Conclusions

It is difficult to draw conclusions from these data because only 27% of the participants returned their evaluation forms. However, some trends are apparent. First, the 1986 Annual Meeting was believed to be much improved over the 1985 meeting. For example, last year the overall rating of the Annual Meeting was 3.6, and this year the overall rating was 5.95. In addition, the 1985 participants wanted more information exchange and updates on the progress of different projects. This year, information exchange and the addition of the featured projects and exchange/dissemination sessions were mentioned as positive features of the meeting.

A second trend was that respondents seemed to be satisfied with the direction that the Institute is taking. All Institute presentations received moderately high ratings. Thus, it appears from these two trends that the goals of the Annual Meeting were

accomplished: participants had an opportunity to interact with one another and were satisfied with the Institute's accomplishments.

Next year the Annual Meeting will assume the same organizational format. However, more time will be allocated to individual sessions so that informal discussions can take place, more time will be scheduled between sessions, a greater variety of projects will be asked for formal presentations so that all special interest groups will be represented, and more time will be scheduled for interactions with OSERS personnel.

Project Directors' Second Annual Meeting  
Washington, D.C.  
October 9-10, 1986

Evaluation Results

1. How well was the meeting planned and organized in terms of timing, invitations, hotel arrangements, etc.?

0%	0%	2%	3%	7%	43%	45%	$\bar{x}$ = 6.26
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SD = 0.89
unorganized					very organized		

2. To what extent did the Annual Meeting format and agenda meet your expectations?

0%	0%	4%	10%	32%	27%	27%	$\bar{x}$ = 5.61
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SD = 1.14
not at all					to a great extent		

3. How informative were the Institute's Evaluation Program presentations?

0%	0%	15%	19%	34%	22%	10%	$\bar{x}$ = 4.93
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SD = 1.19
not informative					very informative		

4. How informative were the Institute's Applied Research presentations?

0%	0%	12%	22%	32%	27%	7%	$\bar{x}$ = 5.03
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SD = 1.31
not informative					very informative		

5. How informative was the Institute's Technical Assistance Program presentation?

3%	0%	3%	21%	17%	42%	14%	$\bar{x}$ = 5.31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SD = 1.31
not informative					very informative		

6. How informative were the Featured Project presentations?

0%	0%	7%	7%	35%	28%	23%	$\bar{x}$ = 5.53
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SD = 1.13
not informative					very informative		

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7. To what extent was the Exchange/Dissemination Poster Session beneficial?

0%	2%	2%	13%	26%	38%	19%	$\bar{x}$ = 5.52
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SD = 1.15
not at all			to a great extent				

8. How much information over the two days was presented?

2%	0%	5%	36%	33%	24%	0%	$\bar{x}$ = 5.33
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SD = 4.49
not enough for the time available			too much for the time available				

9. To what extent did the Annual Meeting facilitate information exchange?

0%	0%	0%	12%	29%	31%	29%	$\bar{x}$ = 5.76
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SD = 1.00
not at all			to a great extent				

10. Overall, how would you rate the Annual Meeting as a useful and productive experience?

0%	0%	2%	5%	27%	27%	39%	$\bar{x}$ = 5.95
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	SD = 1.05
poor			excellent				

#### Demographic Information

11. What is your major field of education/training?

21%	Rehabilitation
44%	Special Education
12%	Vocational Education
24%	Other: Psychology, Math, Reading, Child Development, Evaluation Research

12. For how many years have you worked in the area of secondary and postsecondary programming for handicapped persons?

15%	0-2 years
22%	3-5 years
30%	6-10 years
22%	11-15 years
12%	16+ years



13. What is your present position?

<u>0%</u>	Administrator (SEA)
<u>7%</u>	Administrator (LEA)
<u>46%</u>	Project Coordinator
<u>22%</u>	Project Director
<u>10%</u>	Project Staff
<u>17%</u>	University Personnel
<u>2%</u>	Program Evaluator
<u>0%</u>	OSERS Staff
<u>7%</u>	Researcher
<u>0%</u>	Advisory Board
<u>2%</u>	Other: State MRDD Administrator

14. What is your highest education level completed?

<u>0%</u>	High School Diploma
<u>10%</u>	Undergraduate Degree
<u>56%</u>	Master's Degree
<u>34%</u>	Doctoral Degree

15. Year of funding?

<u>44%</u>	First year
<u>22%</u>	Second year
<u>20%</u>	Third year
<u>15%</u>	Last year

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