



IDEA '97 UPDATE

A MONTHLY FAX BULLETIN FROM OSERS ON IDEA'97 ACTIVITIES

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Archived Information

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SATELLITE TOWN MEETING: "SERVING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: WHAT FAMILIES, SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES NEED TO KNOW."

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 1998, 8:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M. EASTERN TIME

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley will host a panel of parents, educators and researchers at **The Department of Education's January Satellite Town Meeting** entitled: "**Serving Students with Disabilities: What Families, Schools and Communities Need to Know.**" This one hour interactive forum will look at ways that families, educators and communities can work together to improve the quality of education for students with disabilities and provide schools with the tools to assess what all children are learning. The discussion also will include the recent amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA'97). Specifically, issues addressed at the Town Meeting will be:

- ▶ How can schools work effectively with families of students with disabilities?
- ▶ How can children with disabilities succeed in school today? What are the best ways to ensure that students with disabilities are included in regular preschools and classrooms, school-to-work programs, and all activities of school life to prepare them for the working world?
- ▶ How can schools, teachers and parents set high expectations for all students?
- ▶ What are some of the ways to strengthen early intervention to help ensure that every child starts school ready to learn?
- ▶ What is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and what does it mean for families, schools and communities?

HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED:

This is an opportunity to talk to Secretary Riley! It is also an opportunity for you to bring the broader education community in your hometown together to learn more about IDEA'97 and the education of children with disabilities. Here are some ways to be involved:

Find a site with a satellite dish. Schools, community colleges, and libraries either have a site or know where you can find one. Or call your local educational access station on cable (the station that runs the local school board meetings in your area) and ask it to broadcast the program throughout your community. Over 300 downlink sites across the country are currently registered to show this month's program. To find one near your community, call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

The program is free; however, the Department asks that you register your participation. Visit the Department's Satellite Town web site at: www.ed.gov/inits/stm to register online. To obtain the satellite coordinates, and to get additional ideas on how to build an event in your community, contact: 1-800-USA-LEARN, 1-800-437-0833 (TTY) or E-mail:

Satellite_Town_Meeting@ed.gov

ALL PARENT TRAINING AND INFORMATION CENTERS REPRESENTED AT PTI- IDEA'97 CONFERENCE

OSEP Director Tom Hehir provided opening remarks and OSERS Assistant Secretary Judith Heumann gave an overview of IDEA'97 to over 150 representatives from the OSEP-funded Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) located throughout the country at an OSEP-sponsored Parent Training and Information Conference in Washington D.C., October 26-28. The primary purpose of the Conference was to train PTI staff members on the changes in the new law. The North Carolina PTI, The Exceptional Children's Assistance Center, was the primary coordinator of the 2½-day conference where PTI and OSEP staff members jointly presented on various elements of the new law. Conference attendees were extremely pleased with the information they received as well as the interaction between OSEP staff and PTI staffs. Positive feedback included comments such as, "(It was) great for Dr. Hehir and Judy Heumann to be here, and we appreciated their willingness to answer our questions and acknowledge our hard work!"

TRAINING MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Each PTI was given a training curriculum which includes overheads, handouts, talking points and background information on aspects of the new law. The OSEP-funded National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) and the Federal Resource Center (FRC) developed these materials. The curriculum is based on six principles which have been considered a foundation of the law since its initial passage in 1975: Free Appropriate Public Education; Appropriate Evaluation; Individualized Education Program; Least Restrictive Environment; Parent and Student Participation in Decision-making; and Procedural Safeguards.

State Directors have received a copy of the materials. Additional copies, at \$175 a set, are available for purchase from NICHCY. To obtain an order form, contact NICHCY at: Telephone: 1-800-695-0285 or via E-mail at nichcy@aed.org. Both NICHCY and OSEP anticipate posting this information on their respective web sites within the next few months.

NPRM PUBLIC MEETINGS COME TO A CLOSE: OVER 300 PROVIDE COMMENTS AT 7 MEETINGS

Over 700 individuals attended and approximately 300 spoke at the 7 public meetings that were designed to obtain public comment on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to implement the statutory requirements of the IDEA Amendments of 1997. These comments will be considered in the final drafting of the regulations. Presenters included teachers, parents,, administrators, nurses, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists, school psychologists, advocates, and state directors of special education. Transcripts of the public hearings will be available for public review by December 11, 1997 in Room 3072, Mary E. Switzer Building, 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, DC. Public comments are currently available in Room 3072. Those wishing to review the comments should contact Cheryl Broady, Office of Special Education Programs at (202) 205-8770. OSEP hopes to issue the final regulations by the end of April.

THERE IS STILL TIME TO COMMENT

Written comments must be received by the Department on or before January 20, 1998. All comments concerning these proposed regulations should be addressed to Thomas Irvin, OSERS, U.S. Department of Education, Room 3090, Mary E. Switzer Building, 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, DC, 20202. Comments may also be sent through the Internet to: comment@ed.gov. You must include the term "Assistance for Education" in the subject line of your electronic message. A copy of the NPRM is on the IDEA'97 web site at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/IDEA/frnotice.html>

EDITOR'S NOTE:

IDEA'97 UPDATE currently has a readership of over 200. Please continue to share copies of the **UPDATE** with colleagues. Feel free to let us know what you would like to know about the implementation of **IDEA'97**.

Next IDEA'97 UPDATE: January 16, 1998