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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

DCDT Friends,

Welcome to the beginning of another year of DCDT membership! John Naisbitt believed that leadership involved “finding a parade and getting in front of it.” In my new role as president, I am inclined to agree with Naisbitt’s description in light of the “parade” of expert special education leaders and practitioners who have aligned themselves with DCDT. I humbly accept the baton from those who have served before me, and I promise to nurture and encourage future leaders!

Several new board members have joined our ranks for the 06–07 year. Welcome to Sherrilyn Fisher as DCDT vice president. Hailing from Kansas, Sherrilyn is an experienced board member after serving as the chair of the DCDT Publications Committee several years ago. Another Kansas DCDT member, Mary Morningstar, was elected as the northwest regional representative. Peg Lamb was re-elected as the northeastern regional representative and Liz Getzel was re-elected as secretary. Finally, Donna Kennedy has been nominated and appointed as chair of the Government Relations Committee. Welcome to the Board!

Thank to Mike Wehmeyer for his years of service to DCDT. Our DCDT board’s loss is a gain for the Past Presidents’ group! Randi Swenson and Susan Loving both served as regional representatives who helped facilitate connections with state subdivisions. Randi has agreed to share her skills and talents by serving on the Marketing Committee. Laura Eisenman has stepped down as chair of the Government Relations Committee. I know how much DCDT members have appreciated her leadership and timely legislative and policy updates. Collectively and individually, these DCDT members have made significant contributions to our organization, and we thank them for their professional generosity!

I am indeed fortunate to collaborate with the extraordinary leaders who comprise our DCDT Executive Committee. Donna Wandry has assumed the position of past president, a role



in which she has embraced projects with her usual levels of energy and enthusiasm. As president-elect, Colleen Thoma has competently guided DCDT through several conferences, represented DCDT in CEC meetings, and has taken a lead role in steering our conference practices. Jane Williams’ stewardship of our DCDT treasury has resulted in our financial stability. Jane, along with newly elected Sherrilyn Fisher and Liz Getzel, completes our DCDT leadership team. A list of other board members can be found on our DCDT Web site (<http://www.dcdt.org>).

No sooner than we celebrate a successful conference hosted by our resourceful colleagues in New Mexico, we embark on our October 18–20, 2007 conference in Orlando. Florida DCDT members are busily planning to ensure you will have a “magical” transition to our conference held on Disney property. Grab your mouse ears and bring your family!

Along with his other contributions, Alexander Graham Bell was certainly astute when he said, “Great discoveries and improvements invariably involve the cooperation of many minds.” DCDT welcomes your involvement, your expertise, and your ideas about how to strengthen our organization. We must revitalize and diversify our membership efforts by paying particular attention to the recruitment of members from underrepresented groups, along with student, parent, and associate members. Please share the DCDT story with transition stakeholders, and come join the parade!

COLLABORATING WITH DIVERSE POPULATIONS INCLUDES PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE AND ACCURATE INFORMATION

The cultural and linguistic diversity of our nation's population provides a robust resource of knowledge, perspectives, and traditions. In the area of transition planning and instruction, acknowledging and addressing diversity is part of being effective educators and service providers (Leake & Black, 2005). Culturally responsive approaches to special education include providing information to families and youth so that they can consider all the options that are available to them (Kalyanpur & Harry, 1999). Parent and family involvement is key to successful post-secondary transition (Wandry & Pleet, 2003).

A recent analysis of the readability of parents' rights and responsibilities in special education revealed that the English language reading level of states' documents explaining procedural safeguards to parents were written at a 9–10th grade reading level, about the reading levels of many parents (Fitzgerald & Watkins, 2006). Information regarding the number of states that offered documents in languages other than English, or the readability and accuracy of translated materials, was not included in the study. The article calls into question our efforts to reach out to families and individuals. Creating documents that are consumer-friendly seems doable and the potential benefits (increased participation and collaboration, decreased frustration and alienation) would be well worth our efforts.

How can we make information more accessible to all families?

- Take time to get to know families and understand the specific barriers to participation that they face.

- Provide information orally and on paper. Take a minute to read important documents (or parts of a document) aloud with family members who struggle with printed material.
- Provide documents in the family's dominant language.
- Invite families to ask questions during formal and informal interactions.
- Invite families to share copies with other members of the family, friends, or community leaders.
- Follow up with family members and give them the opportunity to revisit issues or ask questions at a later date.

Fitzgerald, J. L., & Watkins, M. W. (2006). Parents' rights in special education: The readability of procedural safeguards. *Exceptional Children*, 72, 497–510.

Kalyanpur, M., & Harry, B. (1999). *Culture in special education: Building reciprocal family-professional relationships*. Baltimore, MD: P.H. Brookes Pub.

Leake, D., & Black, R. (2005). *Cultural and linguistic diversity: Implications for transition personnel*. Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Secondary Education and Transition.

Wandry, D., & Pleet, A. (2003). *A practitioner's guide to involving families in secondary transition*. Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

A COLLABORATIVE TRANSITION EXPERIENCE: INCREASED PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Mark Riney, West Texas A&M University
Bernadette Kelley, Florida A&M University

At the turn of the 20th century most young men and women made the transition from adolescence to adulthood through an apprenticeship model. In other words, young adults learned by working with their elders, who instructed them in their occupations or trades. For example, adolescents learned about agriculture by doing farm-work under the guidance of a capable farmer. As young adults learned on the job, they were socialized into the realities and responsibilities of adulthood. In contrast, adolescents coming of age in our current era of technology often are not exposed directly to the adult world of work-related responsibilities because school learning typically emphasizes knowledge different from that of students' future employment as adults.

To assist students entering the adult world and to increase their opportunities to make meaningful career choices after completing their secondary education, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 and IDEA of 1997 were enacted. School-to-work programs have the potential to provide students with disabilities real-world learning experiences, which connect learning in school to practical applications on the job.

The practical knowledge gained from school-to-work programs is especially valuable if students have access to jobs that provide ongoing training related to their career interests (Izzo et al., 2001). However, not all students who are eligible for services engage in career-planning activities.

There are still many students with disabilities who conclude their secondary experience without the needed career-planning skills to enter the job market or higher education. For students with disabilities, assistance in career decision-making and the development of career-planning skills is still an essential component for successful entrance into the adult world. Career-planning skills empower students to make sounder decisions for future employment and post-secondary education.

The acquisition of a sense of control in choosing a career is a significant attribute of students with disabilities who are successful in making the transition into the world of adult responsibilities (Hitchings et al., 2001). Although all students potentially profit from training in career-planning skills, this type of training is especially important for students with disabilities because they often have lower levels of self-efficacy for making career decisions and are more pessimistic about their potential for future employment than are students without disabilities. Students with disabilities require a great deal of encouragement

and support from parents to increase their levels of self-efficacy as well as the effectiveness of their career-planning training sessions. Strong parent-teacher partnerships enhance student success in school-to-work programs and transition planning. Building parent-teacher partnerships and opening avenues of communication for parents to voice their concerns provides more opportunities for parents and teachers to assist students in making a successful transition to employment and post-secondary education.

In brief, effective school-to-work programs and transition planning training are key components in providing students opportunities to make a smooth transition to adulthood; nevertheless, parental involvement is important as well. Positive parental interactions are the foundation of a student's support structure. Students eventually exit secondary education but their relationships with family members remain active throughout adulthood. Although the apprenticeship model for young adults is in many respects a thing of the past, increasing students' career decision

making self-efficacy through effective training programs with greater parental involvement in the transition process enhances students' opportunities for successful employment and socialization into adult life. Faculty at West Texas A&M University and Florida A&M University are collaborating to develop a School-To-Work model for secondary students with disabilities that will strengthen parental involvement in career and life decisions.

REFERENCES

- Hitchings, W. E., Luzzo, D. A., Ristow, R., Horvath, M., Retish, P., & Tanners, A. (2001). The career development needs of college students with learning disabilities: In their own words. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice, 16*, 8-17.
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NEWS FROM THE NORTHEAST REGION

WISCONSIN AND ILLINOIS

The newly formed Illinois and Wisconsin DCDT Chapter has met three times since this spring. There is a great deal of interest in launching this chapter as many parties have called to indicate interest. At this time Dr. Tom Holub will remain president for one year. Joann Hartman will serve as vice president. An executive board is being assembled at this time to plan and organize activities for the chapter. All interested parties wanting to get in on the ground floor of launching DCDT in Wisconsin and Illinois contact Tom Holub (tholub@edgewood.edu).

MICHIGAN

The Michigan DCDT organization is now under the leadership of President Cathy Schmidt, of Oakland Schools. Several transition workshops will be offered at Oakland Schools, which are open to DCDT members. On December 4, 2006 Jim Patton will present a workshop on the Transition Planning Inventory, transition assessments and how to package this valuable student data in the Summary of Performance. Denise Bissonnette will be back for a return engagement on January 25, 2007. Her workshop on "The Art of Creating Opportunity: 12 More Tools for Employment" is sponsored by Oakland Schools and Oakland Community Mental Health. Denise will provide tips on tools for students, assessments, goals/dreams, actions, and job development. Job developers and placement specialists will learn new strategies for opening doors with employers and resolving employer concerns. Denise Bissonnette's workshop will be held at the Troy Hilton. For more information on these workshops check Oakland Schools' Web site (<http://www.oakland.k12.mi.us>) or contact Cathy Schmidt (Catherine.Schmidt@oakland.k12.mi.us).

INDIANA

Teresa Grossi, president of Indiana DCDT, reports that Indiana kicked off the school year with a statewide transition conference, "The Road to Results." With approximately 450 people in at-

tendance, this conference reflected an interagency collaborative with students, parents, advocacy groups, school personnel, Vocational Rehabilitation, adult agencies and colleges in attendance. The enthusiasm from the two keynoters and concurrent sessions gave people ideas to go back and implement. The officers of Indiana DCDT plan to come together in the next few months to develop specific activities to support transition personnel and keep transition as a major focus. To get involved and get more information contact Teresa (tgrossi@indiana.edu).

PENNSYLVANIA

The Pennsylvania Community on Transition Conference was held on July 19-21, 2006 at the Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel. It was attended by over 800 people from Pennsylvania and the nation. The theme for this year's conference was "Expanding Capacity:



Jan & Ken manning the DCDT table

Realizing Outcomes." Attendees included state and national dignitaries, educators, counselors, agency personnel, parents, and young adults with disabilities. Besides over 75 sessions related to transition services, features at the conference included: the Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network, Keynote and Feature Presentations, a Resource Room Fair, Local Transition Coordinating Council Fair, and a Vendor Fair. The primary purpose of the conference was to expand the capacity of community partners in promoting the successful transition of youth with disabilities in the following areas: Post-secondary Education and Training, Employment, Community Participation, and Healthy Lifestyles. According to eval-

"News from the Northeast Region" continued from page 3

uations, the Transition Conference was a great success! For further information on Pennsylvania DCDT and future activities contact President Ken Deitmen (*kdeitmen@pattan.net*).

NEW YORK

According to Elizabeth Hall, President, New York DCDT will sponsor two regional transition fairs in the state. The target audience will be 7–12 graders. Each transition fair will have 13–15 agency representatives to talk with students. This is the fifth year of sponsoring the transition fairs. More than 124 students attend each year.

At NYCEC in Albany, NY in October 2006 there will be a transition strand for participants and a transition table sponsored by New York DCDT. Look for the columns on transition and upcoming events in the *Exceptional* (NY CEC journal). NY DCDT will co-sponsor a mini-grant for MS/HS teachers who follow CEC and DCDT missions/outcomes. The money will be used to expand and strengthen transition and special education programs in the state. For more information on NY DCDT activities and to get involved contact Elizabeth Hall (*halle@geneseo.edu*).

OHIO

President Robert Baer at Kent State University reports that the Ohio DCDT Team will plan the annual transition conference,

to be held May 2007, with other state agencies involved in transition. Ohio is participating on the research committee on post-school outcomes of National DCDT. In addition, the Ohio DCDT team will work with the state and local education agencies on collecting and analyzing the Ohio Longitudinal Transition Surveys. Any organizations in the state of Ohio can use the new Ohio DCDT Board at their conferences or meetings for the purposes of promoting Ohio DCDT membership. Contact Robert Baer for more information at (*rbaer@kent.edu*).

NEW JERSEY

Tracy Amerman is interested in reinvigorating a DCDT chapter in New Jersey. She is an assistant professor of special education at New Jersey City University and has been involved in transition in the state for over 10 years. She has been in touch with Marjorie Goldstein, past president of New Jersey DCDT, who would love to see the revival of DCDT. Contact Tracy Amerman (*tamerman@njcu.edu*) or Marjorie Goldstein (*goldsteinm@wpunj.edu*).

We would love to establish chapters on the East Coast! Any DCDT members in the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont interested in starting a DCDT chapter can contact Peg Lamb, Northeast DCDT regional representative (*drpeglamb@yahoo.com*).

ATTENTION DCDT MEMBERS FROM THE SOUTHWEST REGION!

ARIZONA	ARKANSAS
CALIFORNIA	COLORADO
HAWAII	LOUISIANA
NEVADA	NEW MEXICO
OKLAHOMA	TEXAS
UTAH	GUAM
MEXICO	

Are you interested in a leadership role?

DCDT is accepting nominations for

Southwest Regional Representative

If you are interested, please contact
Kris Webb (*kwebb@unf.edu*).

NOTES FROM NSTTAC: THE NATIONAL SECONDARY TRANSITION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

During our first six months, NSTTAC has interacted with numerous partners and technical assistance and dissemination centers, including the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities, the National Post-School Outcomes Center, the Regional Resource Centers, and more than 45 states and territories. This collaboration has provided many opportunities to network with others in generating promising practices to improve secondary transition planning and services.

NSTTAC is responsible for generating knowledge, building capacity, and disseminating information to improve transition services at the state level. One of the project's first responsibilities has been to assist states in collecting data on Indicator 13* of their State Performance Plans. As part of the materials created for Indicator 13, NSTTAC developed in partnership with OSEP a proposed checklist for collecting data on this indicator, which is available on the Web (<http://www.nsttac.org>).

NSTTAC has facilitated cadre meetings and facilitator meetings, as well as follow-up Summer Transition Institutes in both New Mexico and Oklahoma in recent months, including developing individualized team-planning tools. NSTTAC will continue to assist with these states as they work to improve secondary transition services.

Future activities include: (a) making our various levels of technical assistance available to other states; (b) hosting our first national forum, "Making the Connection: Indicators 1, 2, 13, & 14* of State Performance Plans" to be held September 20, 2006 in Denver, CO in conjunction with the National Accountability Conference. This forum will bring together NSTTAC, OSEP, the National Drop-out Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities, and the National Post-School Outcomes Center to help states plan data collection and program planning around these four indicators; (c) developing an interactive Web-based tool for the Indicator 13 Checklist; (d) developing a Web-based national transition activities and resources map; (e) developing a transition assessment guide, (f) publishing our first electronic newsletter in August, 2006, and (g) releasing "A Systematic Re-

view of the effects of Curricular Interventions on the Acquisition of Functional Life Skills by Youth with Disabilities" and related Research to Practice materials. This is the first of a series of meta-analyses conducted by Brian Cobb and Morgen Alwell as part of the What Works Transition Research Synthesis Project.

***Indicator 1: Percent of youth with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular diploma compared to percent of all youth in the state graduating with a regular diploma.**(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

Indicator 2: Percent of youth with IEPs dropping out of high school compared to the percent of all youth in the state dropping out of high school.(20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))

Indicator 13: Percent of youth aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the child to meet the post-secondary goals. [20 U. S. C. 1416 (a)(3)(B)].

Indicator 14: Percent of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of post-secondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school. (20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

IDEA 2004 AND NCLB 2001: WHAT PROVISIONS PROMOTE TRANSITION SERVICES?

Many of us are familiar with the broad changes in transition requirements from the 1997 to 2004 Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (and new regulations), but few are aware of the provisions in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) that complement IDEA to support transition services for special populations of youth. This article reviews both.

MAJOR CHANGES IN IDEA 2004

Initiation of Transition Services Is Moved From Age 14 to 16.

The required transition services begin at age 16. IDEA 1997 moved the date to age 14, and IDEA 2004 returned it to *age 16 once again* (beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team) (IDEA 2004 300.320). In 1997, Congress reasoned that the transition process needed to begin at age 14 because waiting until age 16 was too late for many students to plan an academic or vocational course of study and to provide the needed transition services consistent with the student's post-secondary goals (H.R. No. 105-95, 1997, p.102). The age 14 provision was also designed to assist youth to transition from middle to high school, a crucial year of development and adjustment for all youth. As a result, post-secondary outcomes began to improve for some students in school districts that provided early planning (Weidenthal, 2006). Many are also integrating transition planning into the standards-based framework for students in general education classes. Under IDEA 2004, the U.S. Department of Education will allow a state to continue to require transition service before age 16 for all students in the state as long as they identify in writing to the LEAs that the decision is a state-imposed requirement (IDEA Regulations, 300.320 (b), Comment and Discussion).

Whether the student chooses employment or post-secondary education, many need to prepare well in advance, beginning earlier than the final year of high school (before 16) to provide enough time to (1) prepare the student to be actively engaged in decision making and the IEP process during high school; (2) develop a course of study and related transition services that are aligned with the post-secondary goal; (3) conduct assessments needed to determine appropriate post-secondary goals, transition services and supports; (4) prepare the student for self-determination and self-advocacy in the post-secondary setting (Martin, et al); and (5) prepare for adult life in academic, social, career-vocational, and independent living domains.

Shift in Emphasis to 'Results' and Performance Reporting.

IDEA 2004 placed greater emphasis on accountability for improving transition outcomes for youth, modifying the definition of transition from an "outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities" to a "results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities". Under the statute and the new regulations for IDEA 2004, released on August 14, 2006 by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education, the IEP must also include (1) appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based on age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and (2) transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals (IDEA 2004 Sec. 614). States must also develop six-year State Performance Plans (beginning 12/05) and

"IDEA 2004 and NCLB 2001 . . ." continued from page 5

annual performance data (beginning 2/07) around 20 indicators. The 13th Indicator relates to transition services for students: "Percent of youth aged 16 and above with an individualized education program (IEP) that includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet the post-secondary goals." [IDEA 2004 20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B)].

HOW DOES NCLB SUPPORT TRANSITION?

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB, P.L. 107-110) requires strategic cross-agency planning and collaboration to support transition needs of several special needs groups.

Transition Support for At-Risk Populations. At-risk youth are more likely than their peers to drop out of school, experience educational failure, or be involved in activities detrimental to their health and safety. Available research shows that children raised in economically disadvantaged families are at greater risk of low academic achievement, behavioral problems, poor health, and have difficulties with adjustments to adulthood (Hale, 1998; Land & Legters, 2002). Approximately one million youth per year leave school without completing their basic educational requirements (Barr & Parrett, 2001). Adolescents with emotional and behavioral disabilities (EBD) have only a 41.9 percent graduation rate and the highest dropout rate of any disability category (25rd Annual Report to Congress, 2001). NCLB devotes Title I, Part D to prevention and intervention programs for children and youth who are neglected, delinquent or at-risk and provides support for those in transition out of institutions into their base schools.

Youth in Transition From Correctional Facilities. Youth with disabilities are substantially over-represented in the juvenile justice system (Quinn, Rutherford, & Leone, 2001; Rutherford & Quinn, 1999). Youth with specific learning, emotional or behavioral disabilities are also more vulnerable to alternative placement outside their base school or in juvenile or adult corrections than youth not identified as disabled. Youth placed at risk for involvement in the juvenile justice system, including students with disabilities, must receive support and preventative services to minimize their vulnerability. Furthermore, ethnic minorities are dramatically over-represented in the population of young offenders. One 10-year study of 105,000 youth in public and private juvenile detention, correctional and shelter facilities revealed that 86.5% were young men from ethnic-minority backgrounds, including 40% African American and 18.5% Hispanic, ranging in age from 13 to 17 years old.

NCLB includes specific provisions for transition services and supports for youth, particularly minority populations, transferring into the community from correctional facilities such as

adult jails, juvenile detention, less secure detention facilities, or protective shelters. School districts are required to focus on the transition and academic needs of students returning from correctional facilities. As students transition from correctional facilities to their local schools, follow-up services can ensure that their education continues and they can meet the same challenging state standards required of all students.

Women and Children in Poverty. Women and children account for more than three-quarters of households with incomes below the poverty level. Unmarried teen mothers need access to day care, transportation, and other supports that will enable them to complete high school, enter employment and pursue advanced education (National Council for Research on Women, 2001). NCLB focuses particular attention on the needs of women in poverty to assist them in completing high school and entering employment.

Transition Support for Native Americans. Native American students with disabilities face unique challenges to successful transition. High unemployment (70% on some reservations), lack of familial support, and high poverty levels all play a role in the high dropout rates and a heightened risk for failure to assume adult roles and responsibilities after leaving high school (Blasi, 2001; Leake, Kim-Rupnow, & Leung, 2003). NCLB devotes Title VII to Native American, Hawaiian and Alaskan education and support for career preparation and post-secondary education.

CLOSING

It is important for transition personnel to become familiar with NCLB provisions that support transition as well as those in IDEA, particularly for youth with disabilities who are integrated into general education, those with transition needs who do not have IEPs, and those with 504 plans. Transition leaders are well poised to educate general educators about the complementary provisions in NCLB and IDEA that can be coordinated on behalf of all youth.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carol A. Kochhar-Bryant is professor of special education at the George Washington University, Past President of DCDT and a former Governmental Relations chair. Her recently published book, *What Every Teacher Should Know About Transition and IDEA 2004* (2007, Allyn & Bacon), is a practical guide to the concepts and processes of transition services for youths with disabilities that are required under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) of 2004 and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. For more information, see the Web page (<http://src.pearsoned.com/s97is.vts>).

CDEI IS EXPANDING TO THREE ISSUES PER YEAR!

We are pleased to announce that in 2007, CDEI will be expanding to three issues per year! We plan to publish a spring, summer, and fall issue, with one issue per year being a special issue (hopefully the summer issue, but we can be flexible on this). To get us started, we have asked Dalun Zhang and Audrey Trainor to co-edit a special issue on Cultural and Linguistic Diversity and Transition, which is scheduled for summer, 2007.

At this point, we are ready to begin soliciting ideas for additional topics, as well as for proposals for special issues including suggested special topics, editor or co-editors, and proposed manuscripts for the issue. So, if you or someone you know would like to suggest or talk about ideas for special issues, please feel free to contact either David Test (704-687-8853; dutest@email.uncc.edu) or Bob Algozzine (704-687-8859; rfaalgozz@email.uncc.edu).

AUGUST 14, 2006: THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ISSUES FINAL PART B REGULATIONS EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 13, 2006

By **Donna Martinez**

You may access the Final Regulations (307 pages total—preamble part 1, 101 pages; regulations 96 pages; and part 2, 117 pages) at the Web page (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html>).

A fact sheet that describes the nexus between IDEA and NCLB is found at the Web page (<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/speced/ideafactsheet.html>).

A search within Regulations using the keyword “transition” (as related to youth 16–22) found the following items:

- page 13 – section 300.43, Transition services
- page 25 – section 300.168 Membership of State Advisory Panel

- page 39 – section 300.320 Definition of Individualized Education Program; 300.321 IEP Team
- page 41 – section 300.324 Development revision and review of IEP—Failure to meet Transition Objectives
- page 51 – section 300.600 State monitoring and enforcement
- page 54 – section 300.622 Consent
- page 58 – section 300.704 State-level activities

An alphabetical index of headers within IDEA, 2004 and their corresponding legislation numbers begin on page 68.

The Department of Education also published national model forms, including IEPs, Notice of Procedural Safeguards, and Prior Written notice. They are located at the Web page (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html#tools>).

PARENTS COLUMN THE PERFECT PARENT: A JOB DESCRIPTION

Wanted: Perfect parents for each youth with disabilities as he/she is transitioning from school into adult life. Parents with human failings and other life issues need not apply.

Job Responsibilities:

- Cooperate with school personnel, keeping all appointments and not letting personal, work or life issues interfere with parenting responsibilities for your youth.
- Support school personnel to implement the IEP, reminding them gently if needed.
- Investigate adult service providers, asking the right questions and evaluating whether each would be a match for your youth.
- Complete applications for adult services, being careful not to overstate your youth’s capabilities, thus disqualifying him/her for services.
- Put your youth’s name on waiting lists with perfect timing so that his/her name will come up just prior to graduation time.
- Locate work opportunities for your youth in your community for summer or weekends, ensuring that work hours won’t interfere with school responsibilities.
- Research post-secondary programs that provide educational or training opportunities as well as needed accommodations. Make appointments with support service offices.
- Mentor your youth to develop a strong work ethic, time-management, money-management, decision-making, and interpersonal skills.
- Manage outside support services (medical and therapies) and keep the school informed.
- Facilitate your youth in developing self-determination skills so he/she takes the lead in all or most of the above.
- Understand that youth with disabilities are teenagers, prone to moods and impulsive behavior. Always forgive and provide the right balance of tough love and tolerance. Never lose your patience or become frustrated. Remember, you have all the answers.
- Mentor and support other parents who are just learning how to parent a transitioning youth with disabilities. Maybe start a support network and arrange guest speakers.
- Volunteer to join the school improvement team, special education advisory board, or other influential school committee.
- Advocate for funding for transition programs (new or continuing) to school administrators, school boards, or state legislatures. Draw attention to dire consequences for youth if funds are cut.
- And other duties as assigned.

This is what we expect of parents, isn’t it?

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR ASKS—COULD IT BE YOU?

Do you have an interest in special education policy? Want to advocate for services for children and youth with special education needs? Enjoy networking with other educators at the grassroots-level? Want to know more about national DCDT? If so, consider volunteering to help the DCDT Government Relations Committee. No special background is required. Some typical activities of the committee include:

SUPPORT DCDT’S INVOLVEMENT IN CEC’S CHILDREN & YOUTH ACTION NETWORK (CAN)

The DCDT Government Relations Chair is DCDT’s representative to CEC’s grassroots advocacy network. Commit-

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tee members could participate in CAN sessions at the annual convention to learn more about advocacy issues and methods. Committee members can also help deliver grassroots advocacy trainings at DCDT or other conferences. CEC provides a wealth of advocacy resources and ideas through CAN. You can learn more about CAN activities online at the Web page (<http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/PolicyAdvocacy/CAN/AboutCAN/default.htm>).

INFORM DCDT MEMBERSHIP OF CURRENT LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY INITIATIVES.

CEC sends weekly policy updates and special alerts to CAN members, who in turn forward the information to their own board and members. Currently, DCDT has almost 1,500 individuals on its e-mail policy update list! Also, articles about policy and advocacy issues are needed three times each year for the DCDT newsletter. Thus, you could support committee activities by spreading the word or writing!

INFORM OTHERS ABOUT DCDT'S POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS.

As needed the chair gathers input from members and the DCDT board regarding current issues (such as the upcoming "No Child Left Behind" Act reauthorization) and then works with the board and others to develop and disseminate DCDT's recommendations.

If you have expertise in particular areas or have skill at tapping into others' expertise and views, you can assist the chair in developing and disseminating DCDT's policy statements. Depending on your talents and interests, another helpful activity would be posting new transition policy resources on the DCDT Web page.

If you'd like to learn more about the Government Relations Committee activities, contact Donna Martinez (dmartin336@aol.com) or Laura Eisenman (eisenman@udel.edu).

MEET DONNA MARTINEZ, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR

It is an honor to be succeeding Laura Eisenman as DCDT's Government Relations Committee chair. Laura has done an excellent job keeping us all up to date on the critical issues in special education policy. I bring to DCDT Government Relations the tri-part perspective of professional, parent, and advocate for individuals with disabilities. I've been an active member in CEC for over 10 years and a highly qualified teacher licensed in special education teacher and general education with 13 years of experience. I am a doctoral candidate in the Leaders for Systems Change Program of the Teacher Preparation for Special Education Department at the George Washington University examining parent involvement in the transition of their young-adult child with intellectual disabilities. I am also a parent of a young man with Down syndrome in his transition years of school. I advocate so individuals with intellectual disabilities may truly have a "life like yours."

A NOTE FROM YOUR EDITOR . . .

Greetings from the Wild, Wild West!

On behalf of DCDT, I would like to thank all newsletter contributors for your continued support. I have rejoined the faculty at West Texas A&M University. Please contact me (gwilliams@mail.wtamu.edu) with more submissions. Hope this school year is the best ever!

Gwen Williams, Editor

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