

Urban Perspectives

Winter/Spring 2007

Volume Twelve, Number 1

A PUBLICATION OF THE URBAN SPECIAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP COLLABORATIVE

In this Issue:

National Study Reveals Important Gains for Students with Disabilities in Urban Schools..... 2
Thomas Hehir

Instruct-A-View: A Promising Practice..... 4
C. Elaine M. Smith

Project Updates
NDPC-SD..... 8
Inclusive Schools Week..... 9
Collaborative..... 11

Involving Families of Students with Disabilities in Schools: A Survey with Collaborative Member Districts and Parent Centers

Amanda Dorris
Education Development Center, Inc.

Over the last few years, both the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) have shined a light on the importance of family involvement. School districts that are members of the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (the Collaborative) have been working to increase the participation of families of students with disabilities. Over the course of the last year, Collaborative staff developed, administered, and analyzed a survey focusing on school district outreach to families of students with disabilities in an effort to better understand perceptions about parental involvement and the strategies that urban school districts use to engage parents.

The survey was sent to all Collaborative members, and with the help of the Region I Parent Technical Assistance Center at the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network of New Jersey, the survey was also distributed to 59 Parent Training and Information Centers and Community Parent Resource Centers (parent centers) located in Collaborative member districts. The survey consisted of 35 Likert scale statements and two open-ended questions. The first section addressed the current level of parent involvement and the district's efforts

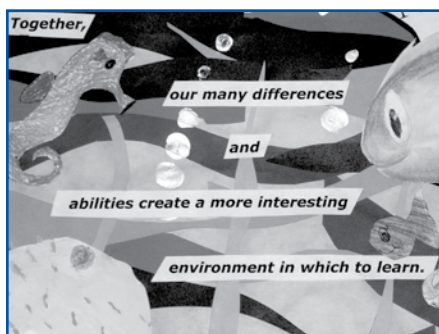
to reach out to parents. The second section dealt with barriers to parental involvement, and the final section asked respondents to describe effective practices they use to involve parents. Collaborative members' response rate was 75 percent, and half the parent centers completed the survey.

Perceptions of Parental Involvement and School District Outreach

Results from the first section revealed interesting differences between district and parent center perceptions. The first questions in the survey asked about current levels of involvement. Strikingly, 87 percent of responding school districts said that parents participate in their child's IEP process, while only 47 percent of parent centers said that this was true. Districts and parent centers did agree that parents of students with disabilities are not represented on every school-level parent advisory committee, nor are they involved in school-wide improvement plans.

The greatest discrepancies occurred in responses to questions that addressed district outreach efforts. Districts believe that they are reaching out to parents in many ways and providing needed training and information, yet results from the parent centers' surveys do not support this

continued on page 3



Sayville Middle School art students in Sayville, New York, took a first prize for the creative group entry in the Grades 6-8 category for the 2006 National Inclusive Schools Week poster contest.



Thomas Hebir
Senior Policy Advisor

Urban educators across the nation have made major progress in reducing dropout rates for students from low-income backgrounds.



<http://www.nlts2.org>

National Study Reveals Important Gains for Students with Disabilities in Urban Schools

Thomas Hebir
Senior Policy Advisor

As you may recall, last year I wrote an article about the National Longitudinal Study-2 (NLTS2) in which I highlighted major positive advances in educational attainment levels experienced by students with disabilities over the last decade (see Winter/Spring 2006, *Urban Perspectives*). A comparison of the data from the two studies indicates major improvement in school completion, college enrollment, and employment. Though most of the gains were experienced by middle- and upper-income youth, there were some important improvements among youth from lower-income households. While the study does allow analysis by type of district (urban, suburban, and rural), relatively little of the analysis done to date is broken out that way. And, given that the Collaborative membership is mixed (some of you may be listed as suburban), the most important issues of concern among members tend to be around low-income students and students of color. Both of these variables have been analyzed extensively by Mary Wagner in reports that are available on the NLTS Web site: www.nlts2.org. To follow are a number of positive, statistically significant findings involving students of color and low-income students.

Urban educators across the nation have made major progress in reducing dropout rates for students from low-income backgrounds. Comparing the two studies, the drop-out rate for low-income youth has been reduced from 59.1 percent to 40.3 percent. For African American, students the movement is even more impressive—from 47.3 percent to 25.2 percent. Though the movement is positive for Hispanics, it is not statistically significant.

NLTS2 documents rising employment rates for students with disabilities in general as well as an increase in students earning above minimum wage. This trend is true for students with disabilities from low-income

backgrounds as well, with the number of these students making above the minimum wage from 53.3 percent to 80 percent. African American students with disabilities who were working for pay after leaving high school improved from 35.5 percent to 61.7 percent.

A major concern for members of the Collaborative has been keeping students in school. Here there is good news as well. The completion rate for low-income students has jumped almost 19 percent, from 40.9 percent to 59.7 percent. For African Americans, the number has gone from 52.7 percent to 74.8 percent. Given that dropping out is associated with poor outcomes (e.g., unemployment and underemployment, incarceration), this change means that thousands of kids have a higher likelihood of a better life.

We all know that attending four-year colleges is highly associated with being able to earn a decent income. NLTS again documents major movement in this direction. The first study showed that relatively few students with disabilities achieved this outcome. This was particularly true for African American youth, who were only going to four-year schools at a .2 percent rate. That number has increased by many factors to the point where the rate is now 12 percent.

Both NLTS1 and NLTS2 identified practices associated with better outcomes. One relevant factor to post-secondary participation had to do with course taking patterns of students with disabilities. That is, those who took challenging regular education courses had a greater likelihood of going on to post secondary education. Unfortunately, in NLTS1, relatively few students with disabilities took these courses. Also, both low-income students and students of color were far less apt to have inclusive options. There has been a major change in course taking patterns of students

continued on page 8

continued from page 1

assertion. In all questions in this section, districts reported that they provide a higher level of services than was perceived by the parent centers—and in some cases, this difference was extreme. For example, 72 percent of districts reported that they provide workshops for parents on their rights under NCLB and IDEA. In contrast, only 13 percent of responding centers reported that their districts provide this service. Sixty-nine percent of districts asserted that they provide training to help parents effectively partner with schools, but only 23 percent of the parent centers surveyed agreed with this statement.

Overall, districts overwhelmingly agreed (90 percent or more) that they were doing a good job of reaching out to parents to encourage participation in IEP meetings and that they routinely communicate with parents in their primary language. Parent centers agreed (53 percent) that schools were communicating in parents' primary language, though they did not agree that districts were reaching out in multiple ways to encourage parent participation in IEP meetings. School districts ranked themselves the lowest on providing services that make it easier for parents to participate, such as child care, transportation, and scheduling meetings at times that are convenient for parents.

Barriers to Parental Engagement

The second section of the survey addressed perceived barriers to parental involvement. Half of the district respondents who completed this portion of the survey ranked "general education parents are not interested in special education issues" as one of the top three barriers to parent participation, making this barrier of highest concern for districts. One respondent elaborated by asserting that if general education parents showed greater concern for the needs of students with disabilities, perhaps all parents could come together and better advocate for special education services.

Districts considered parents' lack of time the next largest barrier to active participation. District staff clearly

understand the difficulties that working parents face, noting, "Parents are working long hours just to get by" and "[Working parents] often lack the resources to be available during the day or the evening." This is clearly a major concern when coupled with the fact that districts rated themselves low in providing flexible scheduling, child care, and transportation.

Districts were also highly concerned that "parents are unaware of best practices in education." One district respondent summed up this problem by saying, "Very often, our parents do not know about the different ways that services can be delivered, nor do they know about the state's mandate to try to keep students in the mainstream as much as possible."

Districts also noted that when parents do not have enough information, they can jump to solutions they have read about or seen on TV without a clear understanding of whether this strategy would be appropriate for their child. Parent center respondents also believe that parents' lack of knowledge of best practices is one of the top barriers to parental involvement. Interestingly, while parent centers thought that the biggest barrier to involvement is parents' lack of information regarding their legal rights, school districts did not rank this as a significant barrier.

Districts noted that professionals' lack of capacity and time to partner with parents is an impediment to effective parent participation. Several district leaders mentioned that professionals are not taught to partner with parents in their pre-service education and that current professional development efforts are not sufficient. They noted that the current professional development opportunities are often "introductory or awareness-level, with insufficient opportunities for more hands-on and ongoing professional development, including opportunities to see effective practices modeled." Respondents were very concerned that teachers and other staff are not given enough time during the day and must spend time after hours if they want to reach out to parents. A few thought that union contracts and the leadership in their

continued on page 6



Amanda Dorris
Education Development
Center, Inc.

Instruct-A-View: A Promising Practice

C. Elaine M. Smith

*Teacher Specialist
Department of Special
Education Services
Norfolk Public Schools*

Students found eligible for special education services because of an emotional disability are often removed from the general education setting due to severe behavioral outbursts, and they are placed in self-contained classrooms where the major focus is teaching alternatives to anti-social behavior. Removal of these students results in limited access to core instruction; ultimately decreases the possibility of positive performance outcomes on classroom, local, and state standardized assessments; and compromises their diploma options.

At Norfolk Public Schools (NPS), we developed an innovative way to use technology to allow these students to access the curriculum. NPS is an urban school district in Virginia comprising approximately 37,000 enrolled students, with 13 percent of the student population receiving special education services. An analysis of special education disaggregated discipline data revealed numerous infractions resulting in out-of-school suspensions. Analysis of discipline data of non-disabled peers at the same grade levels revealed equally disturbing numbers. Consequently, discipline is a district-wide concern.

In an effort to provide effective services for students with disabilities that encourage positive behavioral outcomes, NPS's Department of Special Education offers targeted programming for students with disabilities who present challenging behaviors. At the secondary level, students with disabilities receive instruction within the general setting via a co-teaching model. Positive behavior is taught to these students through weekly identification and review of individualized target behaviors, setting goals, and developing a plan

of action to address those behavioral goals. Inevitably, some students with disabilities, many of whom are working toward an advanced or standard diploma, will periodically require more intensive behavioral supports than can be provided in the general setting. To access an advanced or standard diploma, students with disabilities must be instructed by teachers certified in the core subjects. Because few special educators in Norfolk are content-certified, removal of these students from general education interferes with the successful completion of advanced or standard diploma requirements. It is for this reason that the conception of Instruct-A-View evolved.

Instruct-A-View is an innovative intervention developed by NPS's Department of Special Education and Network Services to ensure that students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum, while providing an alternative to suspension. The program was piloted during the second semester of the 2005–2006 school year at Granby High School under the leadership of Principal Ted Daughtrey and Special Education Department Chair Terese Toth. General and special educators who co-taught in the ninth grade and who demonstrated evidenced-based best practice strategies were selected to participate. One teacher from each of the four content areas (English, Science, Social Studies, and Math) taught Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) units of study and agreed to have sessions recorded and broadcast live. Gerald Hartl, network engineer, managed the technical aspects of the project.

We recorded direct instruction sessions during which teachers introduced new concepts and skills. Sessions lasted 20 to 30 minutes. Under the supervision of a special educator, students with disabilities who exhibited behaviors that required removal from the general education setting had the opportunity

Because few special educators in Norfolk are content-certified, removal of these students from general education interferes with the successful completion of advanced or standard diploma requirements. It is for this reason that the conception of Instruct-A-View evolved.

to continue to receive instruction via Web-casts that they viewed in the Instruct-A-View lab. These instructional sessions were archived on a Web-based server, to be accessed at a later time by students as needed. This strategy was anticipated to assist with remediation of the Virginia SOL skill acquisition while providing students with a temporary alternative to suspension without compromising their diploma options.

The pilot study was a success, partly because Granby High School is a professional learning community that embraces all students, including those with disabilities. During this six-month pilot program, few students with disabilities received out-of-school suspension or required removal from the general education setting. Initial feedback from teachers and students who participated in the pilot has been favorable, and the concept is catching on elsewhere at NPS. Special Education Department Chair Terese Toth commented, "While being present in class is certainly ideal, it is not always possible...Instruct-A-View gives the students the time they need, while ensuring access to their teacher and course work at any time." Feedback from parents also has been positive. For example, one parent stated, "Instruct-A-View sounds like the ideal way for my son to get the support he needs while continuing to get instruction from his teacher. I wish there had been something like this a long time ago."

Instruct-A-View was expanded in the 2006–2007 school year to include an additional middle school and a high school. Granby High expanded the program to the tenth grade and continues to use archived lessons for skill acquisition in the content

enhancement classes for students with disabilities. Further assessment is being conducted to inform decisions about wider use throughout the school district.

We intend to enhance the Instruct-A-View program in the following ways:

- Providing students with the ability to ask questions of (and get clarification from) the general educator, under the supervision of the special educator, during the live broadcast
- Allowing students the opportunity to view the same instruction as their peers while at home
- Providing parents with access, so they may view instruction and assist students with homework
- Allowing all students access from home (because special education students are not the only students who require remediation)
- Using the program as a self-reflection tool for teachers, to foster improved pedagogy and to give new and/or struggling teachers the opportunity to view best practice strategies demonstrated by effective teachers
- Using it as a transition strategy for students in self-contained settings (including more restrictive and alternative sites) who have not yet mastered the necessary skills for inclusion in the general education environment

Instruct-A-View is a promising tool to promote learning and access to the general education curriculum while providing students in special education with a temporary alternative to suspension. It is currently evolving into a valuable resource for all students in the Norfolk Public Schools.

For more information, please contact Elaine Smith at esmith1@nps.k12.va.us.



C. Elaine M. Smith
*Teacher Specialist
Department of Special
Education Services
Norfolk Public Schools*

REGISTER TODAY!

Spring 2007 Collaborative Member Meeting

General & Special Education: Partnering for the Benefit of ALL Students
May 16-19, 2007 • Dallas, TX

www.urbancollaborative.org



continued from page 3

districts discourage meeting with parents outside the contractual work day, even though this type of flexible scheduling is often needed to accommodate parent schedules. The parent centers' responses showed a concern that professionals are unaware of best practices in special education, while districts ranked this barrier as one of the lowest.

Strategies for Increasing Family Involvement

In the third section of the survey, districts volunteered descriptions of practices that they believe are improving parental participation. Responses overwhelmingly revealed that school districts consider the delivery of information as key to improving participation. As one district staff person wrote, "Knowledge is the most important tool you can give a parent." Workshops and special events, including resource fairs, were the most commonly cited strategy for delivering information. Many districts provide workshops on topics related to communication styles and legal rights, as well as instructional practices in special education. Districts often noted that these workshops were successful because of the joint planning and implementation with parent organizations and advisory councils. Two very successful programs addressed a specific district concern. One district hoped to improve parents' understanding of best practices. This district provides intensive training in four half-day workshops that focus on instructional and behavior intervention practices used in special education. Through evaluations, parents have indicated that they appreciate the information, hope for more training sessions, and believe that what they have learned will greatly improve their ability to be involved in their children's IEP development and implementation. For more than 10 years, another district has focused on providing training to families of students in their Exceptional Student Education program whose first language is not English. Over a five-month period, monthly workshops are offered in Spanish and Creole on selected topics, such as parents' and students' rights and home activities to promote learning. The district

pointed out that not only do parents receive information, they also are given an opportunity to network with other parents who speak the same language and who struggle with similar issues.

In the first section of the survey, schools rated themselves low on delivery of services that might improve parents' attendance at events, such as child care and transportation. However, several districts are implementing creative solutions. One district holds workshops on Saturdays and provides a bus that travels to the families' neighborhoods to take them to the events. Another district provides home visits and holds workshops in convenient community locations, such as churches. Another district's Parent Exceptional Student Education Advisory offers a "fun camp" for children while parents are attending workshops.

Parents' lack of time was ranked as a considerable barrier to parent involvement in the second part of the survey, and in the first part of the survey, districts indicated that they are not doing a good job of being flexible for parents. However, districts offered a few examples of ways to address this concern. One district noted that giving three to four weeks notice for an IEP meeting has been effective. Another constantly reschedules meetings to meet parents' needs, but still notes the problems encountered when families request to meet outside of school hours.

Another theme that emerged from the survey results was the importance of people who can bridge the worlds between parents and the school, make parents feel comfortable, increase parent-school communication, and advocate for families when needed. Several districts have added positions for family-school liaisons; in some cases, this staff person is available for all families in the school, and in other cases, he or she is there to support solely parents of students with disabilities. In all cases, the responsibilities of the person in this position are to offer support by attending meetings, explaining the IEP process to parents, encouraging parents to attend events, and serving as an overall liaison. One respondent described a successful

continued on page 7

continued from page 6

parent mentor program funded by the state; the two mentors in each district provide support to other parents in both group and one-on-one sessions. These mentors also sit on several committees to represent parents and voice their concerns.

Districts highlighted the importance of gaining input from parents and working with parent organizations. Several respondents indicated that they provide parents with an evaluation form at each session or workshop so that districts can improve their offerings and meet parents' needs. Many cited the involvement of parents in the selection of workshop topics and the delivery of workshops to other parents. Another district includes parents as trainers for both parent and staff in-service events. Many districts noted their collaboration with local Parent Resource Centers, Parent Training and Information Centers, Parent Advisory Committees, Special Education Parent Advisory Committees, and other parent organizations at the state, county, and district levels. They have found that working with parent groups provides an avenue for distribution of information and recruitment for events. Involving

parent groups in the creation and delivery of events for parents and staff also creates buy-in, helps parents feel comfortable at an event, and ensures that the needs of parents are represented.

In their descriptions of exemplary practices, parent centers overwhelmingly highlighted the importance of working with school districts. These collaborations include training for school personnel on strategies to more effectively partner with families, presenting at parent nights, participating in community meetings organized by the school, and providing needs assessment for a district. One parent center summed up the importance of partnering with the local district by saying, "When you are partners, you work hard at it every day, just like in a successful marriage."

Clearly, both parties understand the value of a strong partnership and are committed to developing their relationships as a key strategy toward improving the education of students with disabilities.

To read the full report, including an analysis of strategies used by parent centers, visit www.urbancollaborative.org.



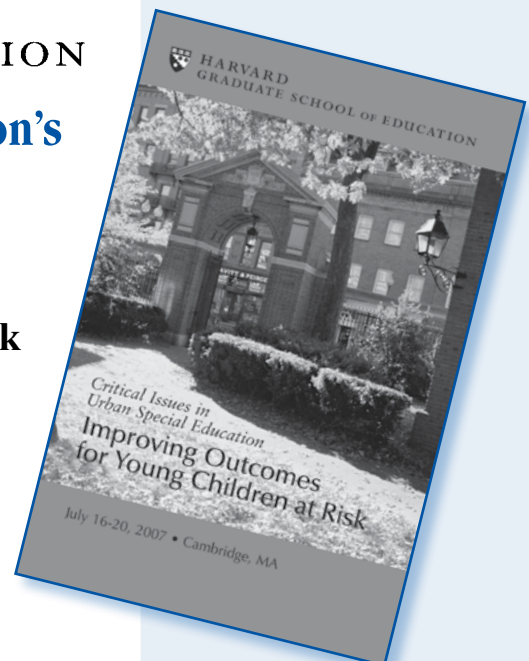
**HARVARD
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

2007 Harvard Graduate School of Education's Institute on Critical Issues in Urban Special Education

**Improving Outcomes for Young Students at Risk
July 16-20, 2007**

*For more information or to register, please visit
<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/ppe/k12/programs/use.html>*

Members Invited!
**Collaborative Dinner at the
Harvard Faculty Club
July 17, 2007**



PROJECT UPDATES



Collecting Better Dropout and Graduation Data

Many states and school districts are experiencing difficulties in collecting, analyzing, and comparing their dropout and graduation data to set improvement targets and plan improvement activities required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). In response to these difficulties, the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SD) has developed a new practice guide, “A Few Steps to Better Data” by Dr. Matthew Klare. The purpose of the guide is to discuss several of the factors that caused difficulties with states’ data and suggest some practical solutions. To improve the state of affairs of high school data, the procedures used in collecting, analyzing, and comparing the data should be consistent. This will permit administrators and teachers to make valid comparisons as well as assessments of states’ performance over

time. Insights gained through such comparisons can help educators and stakeholders identify needs as well as strengths that can be capitalized on to make positive changes that improve outcomes for youth with Individualized Education Programs.

A Few Steps to Better Data is NDPC-SD’s first publication in our new State Performance Plan Toolkit Series and is available in hard copy and PDF format from the Center’s Web site: http://www.ndpc-sd.org/assistance/docs/A_Few_Steps_to_Better_Data.pdf. The series will contain additional guides to assist state education agencies and educators in their development and implementation of improvement activities associated with school completion.

For more information, please visit www.ndpc-sd.org.

continued from page 2

with disabilities between the two studies. Many more low-income students with disabilities are taking core academic classes in regular education. For instance, the number of students taking a foreign language—a factor associated with post secondary participation—has tripled for low-income students with disabilities.

Another factor associated with better outcomes in NLTS1 was integration into regular education classes. Unfortunately, NLTS1 documented that low-income students and students of color were far less likely to be integrated than their regular education counterparts. When the first study was conducted, only 45.1 percent of low-income students took a core academic class in regular education. That number, though still lower than upper income students, has increased to 61 percent. There is additional good news in this study, and I would advise you to visit the Web site: www.nlts2.org.

As you know, the work of leading special education in an urban setting is very challenging and at times thankless. However, the effort is so important to the students and families we serve. In looking at these improvements, I cannot help but admire the work you do and how you have tirelessly labored to improve opportunities for students. I also think of how you have engaged in Collaborative meetings and Harvard Institutes (annual Harvard Graduate School of Education’s Institutes on Critical Issues in Urban Special Education) that have addressed many of the issues identified in this research, how you have shared successful approaches with one another, and how relentless so many of you have been in advocating for students with disabilities in your school districts. So though we have much work to do to improve educational opportunities for all students, take a moment to pat yourselves on the back. You deserve it!

Collaborative Member Districts Celebrate 2006 Inclusive Schools Week

During the *6th Annual National Inclusive Schools Week*, record numbers of schools, schools districts, states, and professional associations demonstrated their commitment to developing schools and communities that are supportive of all children and youth. On Friday, December 8, we received a message from President George Bush, who extended his gratitude and best wishes to all those who celebrated the *Week* and are “committed to helping children with disabilities achieve their dreams.” We also heard many exciting reports from school districts and communities around the country. In Pennsylvania, the Secretary of Education Gerald Zahorchak announced on Wednesday, December 6 that the state will help 74 school districts enhance the classroom experience for students with disabilities with the infusion of more than \$1 million in grants. The Michigan Board of Education declared December 4-8 *Inclusive Schools Week* through an official statewide proclamation. Special thanks to all of the Collaborative members and associates who organized celebrations in their local communities. Some examples of members’ celebrations follow below:

- The **Florida Inclusion Network** held its *6th Annual National Inclusive Schools Week Teachers’ Expo*. More than 300 teachers, administrators, parents, university students, and faculty members from **Miami-Dade County** came together on December 6 for this exciting event. Collaborative teaching teams shared their effective teaching practices, student achievement data, and teaching tips through displays, videos, PowerPoint presentations, and student work samples.
- **Sutton Middle School in Atlanta, Georgia** participated in the *Week* for the second year in a row. Morning announcements focused on inclusion, and students engaged in various celebratory activities during the

homeroom period. Student artwork was displayed in the school, and students were encouraged to compete in the national contest. Teachers completed evaluation forms to allow for better planning and expansion next year.

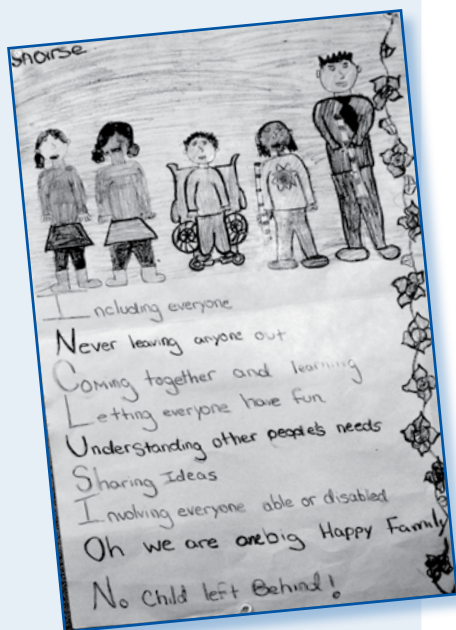
- We received this note from **Waukegan School District in Illinois**: “Visitors and passers-by to Waukegan School District 60’s Lincoln Center will see that we proudly proclaim *National Inclusive Schools Week* with a bold, bright banner....Building principals have received laminated *National Inclusive Schools Week* posters for their buildings, along with Celebration Kits for teachers to use. In addition, students have made 1,800 multi-colored awareness ribbons for staff members to wear to honor the diversity celebrated this week. The district is participating in the National Essay/Poster Contest....In addition to the student and classroom categories for the contest, a category of family entries has been added to the local contest to encourage family involvement in schools. There will be prizes for individual, class, and family entries. *National Inclusive Schools Week* will be celebrated in the individual buildings this year as in the past with various breakfasts, luncheons, videos, and power points honoring the diversity of learners in Waukegan District 60.”
- At the **Patrick O’Hearn Elementary School and the Harbor High School in Boston, Massachusetts**, students prepared poems, essays, and skits to illustrate their experiences attending these inclusive schools. Students presented their artwork and writings on stage and were treated to a concert by Jerry Mack, a celebrated musician who has entertained audiences throughout the Northeast. The schools are using the event to produce a video documentary on the students’ experiences with inclusive education.

continued on page 10

PROJECT UPDATES



Including everyone
Never leaving anyone out
Coming together and learning
Letting everyone have fun
Understanding others people's needs
Sharing ideas
Including everyone able or disabled
Oh, we are one big happy family
No Child Left Behind!



Saoirse McTavish of the Patrick O'Hearn Elementary School in Boston won first place in the *National Inclusive Schools Week* poster contest (Individual category, Grade 4-5)

continued from page 9

These events occurred in partnership with VSA arts of Massachusetts, which helps schools throughout the state teach students with and without disabilities together through the arts. The O'Hearn School and the Harbor School are leading the nation in transition planning and are using the arts to create a K-12 pathway for inclusion for students in Boston.

- **Fairfax County School District** in **Virginia** celebrated for the sixth consecutive year by holding a variety of celebrations that included students across all grade levels:
 - One high school included morning announcements each day of the week highlighting the Best Buddies program, which seeks to include all students in school activities; a student with a learning disability who is Miss Teen Northern Virginia and acts as a mentor to children with learning disabilities; and an interview with a video tech student who has a learning disability. The library displayed books that focus on individuals with disabilities who have achieved personal and professional goals.
 - Joyce Kilmer Middle School held celebratory activities to reinforce the school's commitment to providing an inclusive education for all students. For example, the English department

encouraged students to participate in the poster and essay contest.

- An elementary school in the county involved students, teachers, and families in a number of ways. Students read a quote each morning about inclusion and using caring language. Teachers encouraged class discussions about the quotes, and sometimes related these conversations to other daily activities (poster making, story writing, book discussions, and so on). Staff discussed the various ways they celebrate all students, and worked with the Inclusive Schools Resource Teacher to provide staff development. The PTA encouraged students to enter the poster and essay contest and arranged a display at the school. They also established a Parent Resource Library with books targeting diversity and inclusion.

Downloadable copies of the 2006-2007 Celebration Kit containing lesson plans, examples of inclusive practices, and many other materials that can be used throughout the school year are available on the *Inclusive Schools Week* Web site. CD-ROMs and printed kits, posters, and other products are available for purchase. Please visit www.inclusiveschools.org for more information.

The *Week* continues to be a wonderful opportunity to highlight ways schools and communities can be more welcoming of children and youth with and without disabilities. Please save the date for the 2007-08 celebration: December 3-7, 2007!

NEW COLLABORATIVE MEMBERS

The Collaborative currently links 103 school districts from 28 states plus the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Calgary, Canada. Nine school districts have joined since May 2006. Please join us in welcoming:

- Agawam Public Schools, MA**
- Anaheim Union High School District, CA**
- Canton City Schools, OH**
- Deer Valley USD, AZ**
- Evergreen School District, WA**
- Northeast Independent School District, TX**
- Oxnard Union High School District, CA**
- Cleveland Heights-University Heights City Schools, OH**
- Lakewood School District, NJ**

For a complete list of Collaborative members and enrollment information, please visit our Web site at www.urbancollaborative.org.



The Collaborative's Executive Director David Riley with Judy Elliott, Associate Superintendent of Long Beach Unified School District, and Stevan Kukic, Vice President for Professional Services at Sopris West, who served as keynote speakers of our annual fall meeting. Held November 1-4, 2006 in Memphis, Tennessee, the meeting focused on "RtI: From Theory to Practice to Results."

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE COLLABORATIVE'S 2006 CORPORATE PARTNERS!

columbus

Educational Services

www.columbused.com

Columbus Educational Services is the nation's largest provider of onsite professional staffing and consultative services for individuals with special needs.

SCHOLASTIC

www.scholastic.com

Scholastic Corporation is the world's largest publisher and distributor of children's books and a leader in educational technology.



www.spectrumk12.com

Spectrum K12 School Solutions helps school districts more effectively manage the individualized learning process for all students receiving special services or interventions.

Psychological

Software Solutions

www.psiwaresolutions.com

Psychological Software Solutions, Inc. (PSS) family of Web based software applications revolutionizes the student progress monitoring and IEP reporting process for students with behavioral problems, autism, and other low incident populations.

wireless generation®

www.wirelessgeneration.com

Wireless Generation has pioneered the use of handheld-to-Web technology in PreK-6 classrooms for formative assessment, including screening, diagnosis, progress monitoring, and reporting.

For more information about the Collaborative's Corporate Partnerships, please visit our Web site at www.urbancollaborative.org.



Urban Perspectives

is a publication of the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative. The Collaborative is a leadership development and networking organization for urban special education and general education leaders.

Collaborative Staff:

David Riley

Executive Director

Kristen Layton

Associate Director of Professional Development

Thomas Hehir

Senior Policy Advisor

Elizabeth Fideler

Senior Research Associate

Kacie Beck

Project Coordinator

Charlene Bemis

Conference Coordinator

Deb Hall

Member Services and Outreach Assistant

Jennifer Quinlan

Research Associate

For additional copies or for more information about the Collaborative, contact:

Deb Hall

Education Development Center, Inc.

55 Chapel Street, Newton, MA 02458

Tel: (617) 969-7100 x2168

Fax: (617) 969-3440

Email: collaborative@edc.org

Visit the Collaborative's Web site at www.urbancollaborative.org

PROMOTE INCLUSIVE PRACTICES ALL YEAR!



Whether you are planning ahead for 2007 *Inclusive Schools Week*, or trying to spread the word that

inclusive schools benefit all students all year, the Celebration Kits, posters, bumper stickers, and pencils are excellent promotional tools. Resell them as a fundraiser, use them at professional development meetings, or give them to students and parents. To order materials, please visit www.inclusiveschools.org.

Please visit our Web site for more information:
www.inclusiveschools.org

Inclusive Schools Posters (30"x20")



Inclusive Schools Pencils



Standard No. 2 pencil, metallic blue with silver lettering.

Inclusive Schools Bumper Stickers



Save the date: December 3-7 is the 7th Annual Inclusive Schools Week!

Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative
Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02458-1060

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Boston, MA
Permit # 58241

Address Change? Address corrections can be made by faxing this page with your changes to (617) 969-3440.