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### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
1.	ACES	Area Cooperative Educational Services- one of 6 RESCs in the state
2.	BSEPS	Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Services
3.	CCIE	Connecticut Coalition for Inclusive Education- one of the Plaintiffs
4.	CGS	Connecticut General Statutes
5.	CPAC	Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center- the Parent Training and Information Center for Connecticut stipulated in IDEA
6.	CSDE	Connecticut State Department of Education
7.	CT	Connecticut
8.	CT ARC	Connecticut's national chapter of the Association for Retarded Citizens
9.	DMR	Department of Mental Retardation
10.	EAP	Expert Advisory Panel
11.	ERG	Education Reference Group
12.	ID	Intellectual Disability
13.	IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act- federal special education law of 1997
14.	IEC	Intensive Education Centers-term used in Enfield Public Schools for self-contained classes
15.	IEP	Individualized Education Program
16.	LEA	Local Education Agency
17.	LICC	Local Interagency Coordinating Council
18.	LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
19.	MR	Mental Retardation
20.	NA	Not Available
21.	PCI	Personal Computer Information- name of data collection system used to collect December 1 special education data in Connecticut
22.	PPT	Planning and Placement Team

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23.	Reg. Class	Regular class- defined as greater than 79% time with non-disabled peers
24.	RESC	Regional Education Service Center
25.	SBPP	School Based Practices Profile
26.	SERC	Special Education Resource Center
27.	TWNDP	Time with nondisabled peers
28.	UCE	University Center for Excellence- federal project for training, research and information dissemination located at the University of Connecticut

## INTRODUCTION

The **Annual Report, P.J. ET AL v. STATE OF CONNECTICUT, BOARD OF EDUCATION, ET AL, JUNE 30, 2003**, henceforth referred to as the Annual Report-June 2003, is the second report issued by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) as stipulated in the **P.J. ET AL v. STATE OF CONNECTICUT, BOARD OF EDUCATION, ET AL Settlement Agreement**, henceforth referred to as the Settlement Agreement. The Annual Report-June 2003, is being issued to the Court, the Expert Advisory Panel and the Plaintiffs for purposes of information and for review. The report includes the following information as stipulated in the Settlement Agreement (Settlement Agreement Section III, p. 5):

1. Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) activities related to the five stated goals and implementation of this Agreement for the prior school year;
2. Reports on all statewide and district-by-district data related to the class members (see Appendix A-G);
3. Reports on the documented progress on each stated goal; and
4. CSDE's proposed activities for the next school year to implement this Agreement.

This report is also intended to inform the Expert Advisory Panel (EAP) to assist them in providing annual written comment to the Court, plaintiffs and defendants and in making recommendations relating to progress toward the goals of the Settlement Agreement, development of statewide technical assistance, targeted monitoring, complaint resolution, parent training, and next steps.

The goals of the Settlement Agreement include:

1. An increase in the percent of students with mental retardation or intellectual disability who are placed in regular classes, as measured by the federal definition (eighty (80) percent or more of the school day with non-disabled students).
2. A reduction in the disparate identification of students with mental retardation or intellectual disability by local education agency (school district), by racial group, by ethnic group or by gender group.
3. An increase in the mean and median percent of the school day that students with mental retardation or intellectual disability spend with nondisabled students.
4. An increase in the percent of students with mental retardation or intellectual disability who attend the school they would attend if not disabled (home school).
5. An increase in the percent of students with mental retardation or intellectual disability who participate in school-sponsored extra curricular activities with non-disabled students.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT**

Since the first annual report was issued in September 2002, the CSDE has conducted a multiplicity of activities to implement the Agreement. Those activities, including ones stipulated in the Settlement Agreement, are delineated throughout this report.

Specifically, the Agreement stipulates activities in the areas of Class Membership (pg. 53); Program Compliance Review (Monitoring) (pg. 56); Technical Assistance (pg. 64); Parent Involvement (pg. 70); the Expert Advisory Panel (EAP) (pg. 79); and Complaint Resolution Process (pg. 69).

Over the course of the year, in collaboration with the Expert Advisory Panel and the Plaintiffs, the CSDE has identified several additional areas that have assisted in addressing the items mentioned above. For purposes of this report these areas are each highlighted as individual sections of this report: qualified specialists; disproportionality; preschool; grant activity; state policy reviews; extracurricular activity; plaintiffs; lessons learned; and out of district placements. Each of these areas contributes to the CSDE's implementation of the Settlement Agreement.

## **REPORTS OF DOCUMENTED PROGRESS**

Following is a review of the progress the state and individual districts have made since the implementation of the Settlement Agreement. The information is presented to gain an understanding of the impact of the state's and the districts' efforts on achieving the outcomes of the Settlement Agreement. This section focuses on statewide progress; specific progress of the eight (8) districts involved in focused monitoring this past year (referred to as Level III districts); and analysis of the progress of the fifty-three (53) districts that were identified as having average time with nondisabled peers data for students with intellectual disability at <.5 Standard Deviations below the December '01 state average (referred to as Level II districts).

## STATEWIDE

### STATE - Data Review

Connecticut has demonstrated continuous improvement from the baseline year 1998-99 to 2002-03 in Goal #1- placement in regular class from 9.2% to 11.6%; and Goal #3- mean tie with nondisabled peers from 30.8% to 37.5% and median from 21.5% to 34.8%.

Statewide data has dropped for Goal #4 Home School Enrollment from 71.3% to 70.1% and Goal #5 Extracurricular Participation from 20.3% to 19.7%.

**Table 1-State Goals 1, 3, 4, and 5 from 1998-2002**

<b>GOAL</b>		<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>% of CT K-12 ID/MR students spending 79% - 100% of their time with non-disabled peers (Regular Class)</b>	9.2%	9.6%	10.8%	11.1%	11.6%
<b>3</b>	<b>Mean % of time CT K-12 ID/MR students spend with non-disabled peers</b>	30.8%	31.6%	34.3%	35.4%	37.5%
<b>3</b>	<b>Median % of time CT K-12 ID/MR students spend with non-disabled peers</b>	21.5%	22.4%	30.0%	31.7%	34.8%
<b>4</b>	<b>Home School Enrollment for CT K-12 ID/MR students</b>	No data	No data	No data	71.3%	66.6%
<b>5</b>	<b>Extracurricular Participation for CT K-12 ID/MR students</b>	No data	No data	No data	20.3%	20.2%

The data representing Goal #2- Disproportionality- indicates that prevalence rate of students with intellectual disability in comparison to the total special education prevalence rate remains stable at 0.7%. The count of students with intellectual disability is decreasing, as is the total special education population. An explanation of the



fluctuation in prevalence and count over the past several years is provided in the **State-Commentary** section of this report on page 6.

**Table 2- State Goal 2-Prevalence Rate from 1998-2002**

<b>GOAL</b>		<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Prevalence of CT K-12 ID/MR students</b>	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%
<b>2</b>	<b>Count of CT K-12 ID/MR students</b>	4103	3939	3759	3682	3548

Gender data has remained relatively stable since the baseline year, currently at 56.5% for males compared to state total of 51.65%.

**Table 3- State Goal 2-Male Gender Rate from 1998-2002**

<b>Goal</b>		<b>1998 State</b>	<b>1998 ID</b>	<b>1999 State</b>	<b>1999 ID</b>	<b>2000 State</b>	<b>2000 ID</b>	<b>2001 State</b>	<b>2001 ID</b>	<b>2002 State</b>	<b>2002 ID</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Gender-Male of CT K-12 ID/MR students</b>	51.6%	55.0%	51.6%	55.6%	51.6%	55.3%	51.65%	56.5%	51.5%	56.8%

Disparity of race/ethnicity data has shown a gradual decline in each year from the baseline year in overrepresentation of Black and Hispanic students as intellectually disabled.

**Table 4- State Goal 2 Race/Ethnicity Rate from 1998-2002**

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Race/Ethnicity CT K-12 ID/MR (%)</b>	<b>1998 State</b>	<b>1998 ID</b>	<b>1999 State</b>	<b>1999 ID</b>	<b>2000 State</b>	<b>2000 ID</b>	<b>2001 State</b>	<b>2001 ID</b>	<b>2002 State</b>	<b>2002 ID</b>
	<b>American Indian</b>	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%
	<b>Asian American</b>	2.6%	1.1%	2.7%	1.1%	2.8%	1.1%	3.0%	1.3%	3.0%	1.5%
	<b>Black</b>	13.5%	31.3%	13.5%	30.4%	13.6%	29.7%	13.8%	27.5%	13.5%	27.7%
	<b>White</b>	71.4%	44.6%	70.9%	45.9%	70.3%	46.8%	69.3%	49.7%	68.8%	48.9%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	12.2%	22.1%	12.6%	21.9%	13.0%	21.5%	13.7%	20.8%	13.9%	21.3%

## **STATE - Commentary**

Data reliability, statewide, remains a specific concern for the data elements for goal 4- Home School Enrollment and goal 5- Extracurricular participation. These data were first collected in 2001-02, making 2002-03 data the second year of the data collection.

Legitimate increases and decreases in data are being countered by improved understanding of the data collection and its definition. Over the next several years we would expect these data elements to improve in validity and reliability. The CSDE's concern with the reliability of these data was also discussed in the **Annual Report- September 30, 2002** on page 23.

Calculation of statewide prevalence rates for students with disabilities uses the total population of K-12 students for whom Connecticut is fiscally responsible in the denominator. From 1999-2001, the prevalence rate for CT ID students remained fairly stable even though the count of students identified with ID fell each year. This lack of perceived change in the prevalence data is due to the fact that the count of ID students is very small in relation to the count of all students for whom Connecticut is fiscally responsible, thus making changes in prevalence difficult to detect at the tenth of one percent level. If examined with a much higher level of precision, the ID prevalence rate would show a reduction from 0.7229% to 0.6281% from 1999 to 2002.

On May 30, 2003, all districts in the state were provided with their 1998-99 through 2002-03 district, ERG, and state data relative to the outcomes of the Settlement Agreement. This data, accompanied by the Commissioner's expectation that districts analyze and develop action plans, is anticipated to more significantly impact districts' data in the next several years of collection.

## DISTRICTS

Districts in the state were categorized as a Level I, II, or III district (see Appendix 1-Levels List), based on the December 2001 data (see **Annual Report-September 30, 2003, p. 41 and Appendix 26**). Following is an analysis of the Level III and Level II districts. Progress regarding the remaining Level I districts (108 districts) are reflected in the above analysis of the aggregated statewide data.

### LEVEL III DISTRICTS - Data Review

During the 2002-03 school year, eight (8) districts were identified, as stipulated in the Settlement Agreement, for purposes of monitoring and are referred to as Level III Districts. Level III districts are: Bridgeport; Enfield; Milford; New Haven; Shelton; Waterbury; West Haven; and Windham. **Table 5- Level III District Data** provides an overview of all eight (8) of the districts.

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**Table 5- Level III District Data**

	<b>Bridgeport</b>	<b>Enfield</b>	<b>Milford</b>	<b>New Haven</b>	<b>Shelton</b>	<b>Waterbury</b>	<b>West Haven</b>	<b>Windham</b>	<b>CT</b>
00 TWNDP mean	25.7	21.3	17.4	33.4	28.5	19.9	21.1	29.6	34.3
01 TWNDP mean	24.5	26	23.4	36.7	29	20	18	25.8	35.4
02 TWNDP mean***	34.2	32.1	38.9	38.8	28.2	23.4	30.3	29.1	37.5
Mar 03 TWNDP mean***	36.1	33.6	39.9	39.6	45.1	24.2	30.6	30.9	NA
00 TWNDP median	18.8	15.9	7.1	16.7	27.7	11.0	0.0	23.1	30.0
01 TWNDP median	18.8	27.5	20.2	20.0	31.8	13.8	8.7	23.1	31.7
02 TWNDP median***	18.8	31.8	30.8	28.6	19.1	14.9	23.4	24.6	34.8
Mar 03 TWNDP median***	18.8	33.8	30.8	28.6	51.7	16.0	23.4	30.0	NA
00 Reg. Class	2.4	1.7	0.0	16.7	8.0	5.5	9.1	5.3	10.8
01 Reg. Class	1.2	3.6	5	18.8	8.3	2.0	6.8	0.0	11.1
02 Reg Class***	9.6	0.0	5.1	18.4	5.3	4.4	10.5	2.9	11.6
Mar 03 Reg Class***	10.7	1.7	5.3	19.5	33.3	4.7	10.5	0.0	NA
01 Home School	44	53.47	70	58.4	50	87.8	36.5	77.5	71.3
02 Home School***	42.6	39.6	51.3	58.9	73.7	44.6	50.0	80.0	66.6
Mar 03 Home School***	44.7	56.9	57.9	62.5	77.8	44.7	48.7	73.5	NA
01 Extracurr	12.7	17.9	22.5	19.2	16.7	6.8	8.1	80	20.3
02 Extracurr***	11.2	18.9	15.4	25.4	15.8	4.9	7.9	28.6	20.2
Mar 03 Extracurr***	11.2	19.0	15.8	25.3	16.7	4.7	7.9	29.4	NA
00 Count	334 students	60 students	40 students	508 students	25 students	201 student	77 students	38 students	3759
01 Count	252 students	56 students	40 students	442 students	24 students	205 students	74 students	40 students	3682
02 Count***	198 students	53 students	39 students	338 students	19 students	204 students	76 students	35 students	3547
Mar 03 Count***	197 students	58 students	38 students	344 students	18 students	190 students	76 students	34 students	NA

### **LEVEL III DISTRICTS - Commentary**

While individually designed action plans and technical assistance were provided to each district based on the monitoring findings and circumstances of the district, the following activities were strongly urged to participate of all eight (8) districts, in addition to the activities that had occurred prior to and indicated in the **Annual Report, September 30, 2002**. For more detailed explanation of training activities, refer to Appendix 2- A Report of SERC's Technical Assistance and Professional Development 2002-03.

- Fall 2002 monitoring visits by CSDE to gather data (see Appendix 3-ID Focused Monitoring tools) and to develop ID Focused Monitoring Action Plan (see Appendix 4-ID Focused Monitoring Action Plan)
- Building level teams attending three days of *Step By Step Training*, provided by Stetson and Associates, Houston, Texas.
- Building level teams completing the *School Based Practices Profile (SBPP)* and developing an action plan as a result.
- Spring 2003 monitoring visits by CSDE to verify accuracy of data (see Appendix 5- Data Verification Monitoring Tools).
- District data overview and orientation to LRE for all school administrators (Milford chose not to participate).
- Parent Training provided by Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) in collaboration with CSDE and the University of Connecticut-University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service (UCE) (Shelton chose not to participate).

Following is a review, by district, of each of the eight (8), Level III district's data, and a commentary on that data.

Refer to the LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (p. iii) when reviewing the following charts.

**BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Bridgeport Demographics - (2001-02)**

Total Student Population	23,043
Total Special Education Population	2,598
Count of ID Students (Dec. '02):	198
Number of Schools:	
Preschool-	17
Elementary-	30
Middle-	0
High-	3
Alternative-	1
ERG*	I

\*ERG = Educational Reference Group (see Appendix 6)

**Bridgeport Data Analysis**

	<b>Bridgeport</b>
00 TWNDP mean	25.7
01 TWNDP mean	24.5
02 TWNDP mean***	34
Mar 03 TWNDP mean***	36.1
00 TWNDP median	18.8
01 TWNDP median	18.8
02 TWNDP median***	18.8
Mar 03 TWNDP median***	18.8
00 Reg. Class	2.4
01 Reg. Class	1.2
02 Reg Class***	9.6
Mar 03 Reg Class***	10.7

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01 Home School	44	
02 Home School***	42.4	
Mar 03 Home School***	44.7	
01 Extracurr	12.7	
02 Extracurr***	11.1	
Mar 03 Extracurr***	11.2	
00 Count/Prevalence	334 students	2.2%
01 Count/Prevalence	252 students	1.1%
02 Count/Prevalence***	198 students	0.8%
Mar 03 Count/Prevalence***	197 students	Not Available
<b>Race/Ethnicity and Gender CT K-12 ID/MR (%)</b>	<b>2002 District</b>	<b>2002 ID</b>
American Indian	0.1%	0.0%
Asian American	2.7%	2.0%
Black	41.7%	46.7%
White	10.3%	10.2%
Hispanic	41.2%	41.1%
Male	51.3%	55.8%

\*\*\* This data is preliminary

**Bridgeport: GOAL 1 and GOAL 3**

*Regular Class Placement, and Mean and Median Time with Non-Disabled Peers*

Since 2001-02, Bridgeport has had steady progress of students with intellectual disability spending time with nondisabled peers from an average of 24.5% to 36.1% in March 2003. Students' participation in regular classes has also increased since 2001-02 from 1.2% to 10.7%.

### **Commentary on Bridgeport Goals 1 and 3**

Bridgeport has had a district initiative throughout the past two years on co-teaching that may have influenced this data.

### **Bridgeport: GOAL 2**

#### *Disproportionate Identification- Prevalence, Gender, Race, and Ethnicity*

Since 1998, Bridgeport has had a continuous decrease in the prevalence rate of students identified as intellectually disabled, from 2.4% in 1998-99 to 1.2 % in 2001-02. According to the 2001-02 district data (see Appendix 7-Disproportionality District Data Reports), identification of students with intellectual disability who are black (46.8%) are disproportionate to the general population (43.1%), just slightly above the confidence band interval of 42.1%-44.1%. The district is also high for white students (14.3%) compared to the total district population (11.4%). With respect to gender, Bridgeport over identifies male students as ID with a 2002-03 prevalence rate of 55.8% as compared to district composition of 51.3% male students.

### **Commentary on Bridgeport Goal 2**

This past year the CSDE has conducted training for the district on the state-developed **Guidelines for Identifying Children with Intellectual Disability (2000)** to assist in their high prevalence rate of students with intellectual disability. This issue is being addressed through a broader district initiative of achievement gap issues relative to race/ethnicity.

### **Bridgeport: GOAL 4**

#### *Attending the Home School*

Home School enrollment data for students with intellectual disability has not had any mentionable change.



**Commentary on Bridgeport Goal 4**

This data is anticipated to change given the targeting at this spring's Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings of students transitioning from eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) grade to high school at their home school, rather than to the designated self-contained program that is housed in just one of their high schools. Also, students in elementary schools that are in the self-contained program are being targeted at spring 2003 PPTs to be considered to be returned to their home schools.

**Bridgeport: GOAL 5**

*Participation in Extracurricular Activities*

There has been a drop in data from 12.7% (2001-02) to 11.2% (March 2003).

**Commentary on Bridgeport Goal 5**

There have been no targeted efforts regarding this goal to date.

**ENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Enfield Demographics - (2001-02)**

Total Student Population	6,722
Total Special Education Population	855
Count of ID Students (Dec. 02)	53
Number of Schools: Preschool- Elementary- Middle- High- Alternative-	<u>12</u> <u>1</u> ~ Enfield Street School houses three ½-day classes <u>9</u> <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>1</u> ~ Terra Nova ALC housed at Asnuntuck Community College (No students with ID at Terra Nova)
ERG	F

**Enfield Data Analysis**

	<b>Enfield</b>
00 TWNDP mean	21.3
01 TWNDP mean	26
02 TWNDP mean***	32.1
Mar 03 TWNDP mean***	33.6
00 TWNDP median	15.9
01 TWNDP median	27.5
02 TWNDP median***	31.8
Mar 03 TWNDP median***	33.8

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00 Reg. Class	1.7	
01 Reg. Class	3.6	
02 Reg Class***	0.0	
Mar 03 Reg Class***	1.7	
01 Home School	53.47	
02 Home School***	54.7	
Mar 03 Home School***	56.9	
01 Extracurr	17.9	
02 Extracurr***	18.9	
Mar 03 Extracurr***	19.0	
00 Count/Prevalence	60 students	0.9%
01 Count/Prevalence	56 students	0.8%
02 Count/Prevalence ***	53 students	0.8%
Mar 03 Count/Prevalence ***	58 students	Not available
<b>Race/Ethnicity CT K-12 ID/MR (%)</b>	<b>2002 District</b>	<b>2002 ID</b>
American Indian	0.3%	0.0%
Asian American	2.2%	3.8%
Black	4.8%	15.1%
White	88.9%	75.5%
Hispanic	3.3%	5.7%
Male	50.5%	47.2%

\*\*\* This data is preliminary

**Enfield: GOAL 1 and GOAL 3**

*Regular Class Placement, and Mean and Median Time with Non-Disabled Peers*

The mean time with nondisabled peers (TWNDP) has increased by 1.7% from December 2002 to March 2003, which is a decrease from 2001-02 data (3.6%).

### **Commentary on Enfield Goals 1 and 3**

Enfield currently has “Intensive Education Centers” (IECs), which are segregated classes, at Nathan Hale, Eli Whitney, Thomas Alcorn, and Prudence Crandall schools. This structure impacts both regular classroom placements as well as mean time with nondisabled peers (TWNDP). Total inclusion of one student in the regular education classroom resulted in a very slight increase (1.7%) in data on percent of students in regular class placement. Also, several other students’ time in the regular education setting has been increased. Changes of this goal are very slight as changes in TWNDP are influenced by changes in home-school placements relative to the historical structure in which students with ID were educated. As part of the plan for return students to their home schools, several students will be instructed in the regular education settings instead of in new IECs. Implementation of the planned changes in September 2003, should significantly impact this goal in the positive direction as more students will receive more of their academic instruction in the regular education setting

### **Enfield: GOAL 2**

#### *Disproportionate Identification- Prevalence, Gender, Race, and Ethnicity*

African-American and Hispanic American students are over-represented in special education categories when compared with their representation in the general district or school population. Both of these minority groups of students are over represented in the special education category of Intellectual Disability.

According to the 2001-02 data, while African-American students account for 4.9% of the district’s student population, they are represented in the category of Intellectual Disability at 14.3%. Hispanic American students account for 3.1% of the district’s student population, but they are represented in the category of Intellectual Disability at 7.1%.

## **Commentary on Enfield Goal 2**

Disproportionate identification continues to be an issue in Enfield. While the Settlement Agreement relates directly to students with Intellectual Disability, the ramifications cut across racial or ethnic boundaries and as such are addressed on multiple fronts including the Settlement Agreement and other initiatives.

Enfield will be involved in a CSDE planning grant initiative to identify strategies to address the issue of racial disproportionality in the identification of students with Intellectual Disability as well as other disabilities.

## **Enfield: GOAL 4**

### *Attending the Home School*

During 2001-02, 53.4% of the students with intellectual disabilities attended their home school. This had increased to 56.9% by March 2003.

## **Commentary on Enfield Goal 4**

Enfield has conducted several planning sessions and has a plan to return several of these students to their home school in September. One student has moved back into the home school and one has moved out of the district. All other students currently in grades below fifth grade will be transferred to their home schools. Students currently in the fifth grade who are not in their home schools will stay for the remaining year, as the next natural transition will be to the middle school. There are nine (9) students in out-of-district placements. Of these, two students will graduate in June of 2003 and one will return to the home school in September 2003. The six (6) remaining students, one placed out-of-state by the Department of Children and Families and the others placed by the district, will remain in their current out-of-district placements as determined by the Planning and Placement Team meetings (PPT).

**Enfield: GOAL 5**

*Participation in Extracurricular Activities*

The participation of students with intellectual disabilities in extracurricular activities has gone from 17.9% of this population in 2001-02 to 19.0% as of March 2003.

**Commentary on Enfield Goal 5**

Changes in participation of students with ID in extracurricular activities have been the slowest of the five goals to show improvement. Only in one elementary school was one student with ID included in intramural chorus.

**MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Milford Demographics - (2001-02)**

Total Student Population	7,254
Total Special Education Population	977
Count of ID Students (Dec. 02)	39
Number of Schools:	
Preschool-	3
Elementary-	9
Middle-	3
High-	2
Alternative-	1
ERG	F

**Milford Data Analysis**

	<b>Milford</b>
00 TWNDP mean	17.4
01 TWNDP mean	23.4
02 TWNDP mean***	38.9
Mar 03 TWNDP mean***	39.9
00 TWNDP median	7.1
01 TWNDP median	20.2
02 TWNDP median***	30.8
Mar 03 TWNDP median***	30.8
00 Reg. Class	0.0
01 Reg. Class	5.0
02 Reg. Class***	5.1
Mar 03 Reg. Class***	5.3

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01 Home School	70.0	
02 Home School***	56.4	
Mar 03 Home School***	57.9	
01 Extracurr	22.5	
02 Extracurr***	15.4	
Mar 03 Extracurr***	15.8	
00 Count/Prevalence	40 students	0.5%
01 Count/Prevalence	40 students	0.6%
02 Count/Prevalence ***	39 students	0.5%
Mar 03 Count/Prevalence ***	38 students	Not Available
<b>Race/Ethnicity CT K-12 ID/MR (%)</b>	<b>2002 District</b>	<b>2002 ID</b>
American Indian	0.1%	0.0%
Asian American	3.8%	5.1%
Black	3.0%	2.6%
White	88.9%	84.6%
Hispanic	3.9%	7.7%
Male	50.8%	56.4%

\*\*\* This data is preliminary.

**Milford: GOAL 1 and GOAL 3**

*Regular Class Placement, and Mean and Median Time with Non-Disabled Peers*

Since the initial contact from the CSDE in April 2001, Milford's time with nondisabled peer (TWNDP) hours for students with intellectual disability has substantially increased from 17.4% (00-01 data) to 38.9% (02-03 data).

**Commentary on Milford Goals 1 and 3**

Milford reports it has been cautious in addressing increased time with non-disabled peers to impact regular class placement, however. This appears to be due to the need of the administration for quantifiable information that indicates academic achievement of students



with intellectual disability will not be detrimentally impacted when a student spends increased time in a regular class.

**Milford: GOAL 2**

*Disproportionate Identification- Prevalence, Gender, Race, and Ethnicity*

Milford Public Schools prevalence rate in 2001-02 of students with intellectual disability is 0.6%, just below the ERG and state 0.7% average. The gender of students with intellectual disability in 2001-02 was 55 % male compared to a 51.1% male composition of the total school population. A similar difference continued in 2002-03 data.

**Commentary on Milford Goal 2**

For the 2001-02 data there are only seven (7) students total, representative of non-White race/ethnic groups in the ID population, therefore due to the small number of students in the calculation, this discrepancy with the district data is not statistically significant.

There are no anticipated actions in this goal area.

**Milford: GOAL 4**

*Attending the Home School*

Home school attendance dropped significantly from 70.0% in 2001-02 to 56.4% in 2002-03 with a slight increase to 57.9%, according to the March 2003 report.

**Commentary on Milford Goal 4**

The significant drop in home school occurred for the 2001-02 school year due to a move of a district-wide program from one elementary school to another. This was due to elimination of space for the program at Orange Street Elementary School caused by redistricting and a district plan to bring several district-wide programs together at Live Oaks Elementary School where space was able to accommodate several programs for students receiving self-contained

services. Several students that were affected in this change, moved from their home school where the program was provided in 2000-01 (Orange Street) in order to participate in the district-wide program at Live Oaks Elementary School for 2001-02.

The major emphasis of Milford's planning efforts this past year has been in addressing the home school enrollment issue for the 2003-04 school year and beyond. The district anticipates the transitions of three (3) students from the elementary to the intermediate school will increase home school enrollment as well as two (2) high school students that will be transitioned to attend their home school. In addition, the district plan for any newly identified ID students is for the students to remain in their home school or transitioned to their home school, if they are exiting preschool or kindergarten. Students currently at Live Oaks Elementary School will remain at Live Oaks until they age-out and transition to their Intermediate School unless their parents request a return to their children's home school prior to that time. With this plan there will be two (2) or two students in 2004, four (4) of four students in 2005, and four (4) of four students in 2006 moving to their home intermediate level school.

**Milford: GOAL 5**

*Participation in Extracurricular Activities*

Extracurricular participation dropped from 22.5% in 2001-02 to 15.8% by March 2003.

**Commentary on Milford Goal 5**

There have been no specific additional actions related to this goal than what is currently encouraged and supported by the District.

**NEW HAVEN**

**New Haven Demographics - (2001-02)**

Total Student Population	18,841
Total Special Education Population	2282
Count of ID Students (Dec. 02)	338
Number of Schools:   Preschool-	Pre-K programs integrated into elementary schools and community
Elementary-	22
K-8 -	9
Middle-	7
High-	8
Alternative-	4
ERG	I

**New Haven Data Analysis**

	<b>New Haven</b>
00 TWNDP mean	33.4
01 TWNDP mean	36.7
02 TWNDP mean***	38.5
Mar 03 TWNDP mean***	39.6
00 TWNDP median	16.7
01 TWNDP median	20.0
02 TWNDP median***	28.6
Mar 03 TWNDP median***	28.6
00 Reg. Class	16.7
01 Reg. Class	18.8
02 Reg Class***	18.3
Mar 03 Reg Class***	19.5

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01 Home School	58.4	
02 Home School***	62.4	
Mar 03 Home School***	62.5	
01 Extracurr	19.2	
02 Extracurr***	25.8	
Mar 03 Extracurr***	25.3	
00 Count/Prevalence	508 students	2.8%
01 Count/Prevalence	442 students	2.3%
02 Count/Prevalence ***	338 students	1.8%
Mar 03 Count/Prevalence ***	344 students	Not Available
<b>Race/Ethnicity CT K-12 ID/MR (%)</b>	<b>2002 District</b>	<b>2002 ID</b>
American Indian	0.0%	0.3%
Asian American	1.3%	0.0%
Black	56.3%	67.9%
White	9.6%	10.2%
Hispanic	31.2%	21.3%
Male	51.4%	63.3%

\*\*\* This data is preliminary

**New Haven: GOAL 1 and GOAL 3**

*Regular Class Placement, and Mean and Median Time with Non-Disabled Peers*

New Haven has continuously increased students' with intellectual disability time with nondisabled peers (TWNDP) since 2000-01 and continues to exceed the state and ERG in mean TWNDP and regular class placement. Mean TWNDP has increased from 33.4% in 2000-01 to 39.6% in March 2003; Median TWNDP has increased from 16.7% in 2000-01 to 28.6% in March 2003; and regular class placement has increased from 16.7% to 19.5% during the same time period.

### **Commentary on New Haven Goals 1 and 3**

The TWDNP has increased in the past few years primarily due to two district initiatives. First, New Haven has been adding a regular education classroom each year to Celentano School (previously a segregated school for students with an intellectual disability). The school is now integrated through the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, providing more inclusion opportunities for their pre-K-4 students with ID. Second, newly identified students with intellectual disability and new students to the district who have intellectual disability are placed in their home schools rather than at Celentano School. These students, particularly at the elementary level, spend substantial time in regular classroom settings.

### **New Haven: GOAL 2**

#### *Disproportionate Identification-Prevalence, Gender, Race, and Ethnicity*

The district has reduced the number of students with ID by almost 25% in the past year from 508 students to 344 students. Prevalence has dropped from 2.8% in 2000-01 to 1.8% in 2002-03. Over the past several years there continues a trend of increasing discrepancy between the male prevalence rate for students with intellectual disabilities and the prevalence of males in the total school population with male ID students at 63.3% and total males at 51.4% in 2002-03.

### **Commentary on New Haven Goal 2**

This goal is a primary focus for New Haven and is carefully planning transition programs for those students who have been exited. The prevalence rate was reduced as a result of the following activities in the 2001-02 school year:

- District contracted for an independent review of all ID files to identify identification and/or eligibility concerns;
- District reviewed ID files with serious concerns related to identification and eligibility concerns;
- PPTs re-evaluated selected students based on file reviews;

- District developed plan for transition and compensatory services for all exited ID students.

In addition to file reviews and re-evaluation of students, the district is engaged in:

- Ongoing training for PPT staff on appropriate identification processes;
- Re-designing the district pre-referral system;
- Focusing district-wide professional development on multi-level instruction; and,
- Identifying schools who are over identifying and/or disproportionately identifying students as having an intellectual disability and having them incorporate plans to address the issue into their comprehensive school improvement plans.

#### **New Haven: GOAL 4**

##### *Attending the Home School*

The data indicates an increase in home school attendance from 58.4% in 2001-02 to 62.5% in March 2002-03.

#### **Commentary on New Haven Goal 4**

Errors have been found in the home school data that are being addressed by the district (e.g., students attending magnet schools and schools of choice are not always listed as attending their home schools). No new students with an intellectual disability have been assigned to Celentano School unless it is their home school. The adult students and high school students presently attending Celentano School will be moved to community settings and their home high schools for the 2003-04 school year.

**New Haven: GOAL 5**

*Participation in Extracurricular Activities*

The data indicates that participation in extracurricular activities has increased from 19.2% in 2001-02 to 25.3% in 2002-03.

**Commentary on New Haven Goal 5**

New Haven is continuing to struggle with obtaining accurate data in this area. Nevertheless, the district has taken active steps to ensure that all students with an intellectual disability have access to existing extracurricular activities. In addition, the district is in the process of developing an intramural unified sports program for regular and special education students at the high school level.

**SHELTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Shelton Demographics - (2001-02)**

Total Student Population	5422
Total Special Education Population	398
Count of ID Students (Dec. 02)	19
Number of Schools:	
Preschool-	2
Elementary-	6
Middle-	1
High-	1
Alternative-	1
Spec. Ed.-	1
ERG	D

**Shelton Data Analysis**

	<b>Shelton</b>
00 TWNDP mean	28.5
01 TWNDP mean	29.0
02 TWNDP mean***	28.2
Mar 03 TWNDP mean***	45.1
00 TWNDP median	27.7
01 TWNDP median	31.8
02 TWNDP median***	19.1
Mar 03 TWNDP median***	51.7
00 Reg. Class	8.0
01 Reg. Class	8.3
02 Reg Class***	5.3
Mar 03 Reg Class***	33.3



01 Home School	50	
02 Home School***	78.9	
Mar 03 Home School***	77.8	
01 Extracurr	16.7	
02 Extracurr***	15.8	
Mar 03 Extracurr***	16.7	
00 Count/Prevalence	25 students	0.5%
01 Count/Prevalence	24 students	0.4%
02 Count/Prevalence ***	19 students	0.3%
Mar 03 Count/Prevalence ***	18 students	Not Available
<b>Race/Ethnicity CT K-12 ID/MR (%)</b>	<b>2002 District</b>	<b>2002 ID</b>
American Indian	0.2%	0.0%
Asian American	2.9%	0.0%
Black	2.4%	0.0%
White	90.1%	94.7%
Hispanic	4.5%	5.3%
Male	52.3%	36.8%

\*\*\* This data is preliminary

### **Shelton: GOAL 1 and GOAL 3**

#### *Regular Class Placement, and Mean and Median Time with Non-Disabled Peers*

The mean and median time with nondisabled peers and regular class placement have all significantly increased since 2001-02 to March 2003. Mean TWNDP increased from 28.2% to 45.1%; median has increased from 19.1% to 51.7% and regular class placement has increased from 5.3% to 33.3% during this same time period.

### **Commentary on Shelton Goals 1 and 3**

Shelton identified those students with intellectual disability whose time with nondisabled peers was slightly below the 79% threshold of being considered “regular class placement”.

PPTs were held in February 2003 for several of these students to discuss if regular education placement for an increased amount of time would be appropriate. These PPTs resulted in four (4) students participating more frequently in regular classes with a net change from 5.3% regular class placement in October 2002 to 33.3% in March 2003.

While the regular class placement increase affected both the mean and median time with nondisabled peers data, Shelton also identified several students from Ripton School, a special education facility of the Shelton Public Schools, to be considered for full or partial home school placement and increased opportunities for time with nondisabled peers during the school year. The resulting IEP changes for several of these students affected the mean average time with nondisabled peers from 29.0% in December 2001 to 45.1% in March 2003. Median data changed from 31.8% in December 2001 to 51.7% in March 2003.

**Shelton: GOAL 2**

*Disproportionate Identification- Prevalence, Gender, Race, and Ethnicity*

Shelton Public Schools 2002-03 prevalence rate is below state and ERG averages. The percentage of females identified as intellectually disabled is 63.2% compared to 47.7% of the total school population.

**Commentary on Shelton Goal 2**

The data indicates that Shelton does not over-identify any race or ethnic group. Given the small number of students that affect the gender data, the difference noted above, while appearing quite discrepant, represents two (2) girls and is not statistically significant.

**Shelton: GOAL 4**

*Attending the Home School*

Home school enrollment changed from 50.0% in December 2001 to 77.8% in March 2003.

#### **Commentary on Shelton Goal 4**

In the fall of 2003, Shelton identified several students from Ripton School to be considered for full or partial home school placement and increased opportunities for time with nondisabled peers. During the fall and winter of the 2002-03 school year, PPTs were held for several students of intermediate school age, including three (3) students with intellectual disability, to discuss placement at Shelton Intermediate School. Additionally, three (3) students of elementary age had PPTs to discuss placement at various grade levels within Lafayette Elementary School. All of these placements were the home school for these six students. These PPTs resulted in full transitions in November for five (5) students and a partial day transition for one (1) student to their home school.

#### **Shelton: GOAL 5**

##### *Participation in Extracurricular Activities*

Since 2001-02 there have been no changes in this data, remaining at 16.7% of students participating in extracurricular activities.

#### **Commentary on Shelton Goal 5**

Over the 2002-03 school year, as students returned to their home school, involvement in extracurricular activities, was explored. Heightened focus has been given to encouraging and including students of high school age in extracurricular activities over the course of the 2002-03 school year. There are no extracurricular activities at the elementary level that the District has identified to date. This is still under examination. No data changes are anticipated until the December 2003 data collection to assess students' involvement in extracurricular activities.

## WATERBURY

### Waterbury Demographics - (2001-02)

Total Student Population	16,223
Total Special Education Population	3031
Count of ID Students (Dec. '02):	204
Number of Schools:	
Preschool-	1
Elementary-	19
Middle-	3
High-	3
7-12	1
7-10	1
Alternative-	0
ERG	I

### Waterbury Data Analysis

	<b>Waterbury</b>
00 TWNDP mean	19.9
01 TWNDP mean	20
02 TWNDP mean***	23.5
Mar 03 TWNDP mean***	24.2
00 TWNDP median	11.0
01 TWNDP median	13.8
02 TWNDP median***	14.9
Mar 03 TWNDP median***	16.0
00 Reg. Class	5.5
01 Reg. Class	2.0
02 Reg. Class***	4.4
Mar 03 Reg. Class***	4.7

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01 Home School	87.8	
02 Home School***	51	
Mar 03 Home School***	44.7	
01 Extracurr	6.8	
02 Extracurr***	4.9	
Mar 03 Extracurr***	4.7	
00 Count/Prevalence	201 student	1.3%
01 Count/Prevalence	205 students	1.3%
02 Count/Prevalence ***	204 students	1.2%
Mar 03 Count/Prevalence ***	190 students	Not Available
<b>Race/Ethnicity CT K-12 ID/MR (%)</b>	<b>2002 District</b>	<b>2002 ID</b>
American Indian	0.4%	1.0%
Asian American	2.0%	1.5%
Black	26.8%	31.4%
White	31.3%	26.5%
Hispanic	39.5%	39.7%
Male	51.2%	62.7%

\*\*\*This data is preliminary

### **Waterbury: GOAL 1 and GOAL 3**

#### *Regular Class Placement, and Mean and Median Time with Non-Disabled Peers*

The data collected in March 2003 reflects a slight increase in the percent of time students with intellectual disability spend with their non disabled peers and in regular education settings. Mean TWNDP has continually increased from 2000-01 to March 2003 from 19.9% to 24.2%; median TWNDP has continually increased in the same time period from 11.0% to 16.0%; and regular class placement has fluctuated over this time span from as low as 2.0% to as high as 5.5% with the current percent being 4.7%.

### **Commentary on Waterbury Goals 1 and 3**

A data accuracy check, however, suggests that Waterbury is not yet reporting accurate data, so it is difficult to determine whether or not any improvement is real.

### **Waterbury: GOAL 2**

#### *Disproportionate Identification- Prevalence, Gender, Race, and Ethnicity*

Waterbury's prevalence rate has dropped from 1.5% in 1998 to the current level of 1.2% in 2002-03. Males are overrepresented in the ID population at 62.7% compared to the total school male population of 51.2%. Waterbury is overrepresented in the ID black and populations at 31.4% compared to the total school black population of 26.8%. The difference in the Hispanic overrepresentation of ID students is only .2%. American Indian is overrepresented at 1.0% for ID compared to total school population of .4%.

### **Commentary on Waterbury Goal 2**

The district has recently begun to examine this issue through participating in the 2002-03 State Summit on disproportionality, "Closing the Achievement Gap" and follow up planning session.

### **Waterbury: GOAL 4**

#### *Attending the Home School*

The data analysis suggests that the number of students with intellectual disability attending their home school has declined significantly since 2001-2 from 87.8% to 44.7% in March 2003.

### **Commentary on Waterbury Goal 4**

Waterbury reports that the decline reflects the work Waterbury has done to obtain more accurate data, rather than an actual decline in home school placements. It is likely that the most recent figure of 44.7% is a more accurate reflection of the percentage of students

attending their home school. Waterbury plans to return approximately fifty (50) high school students with an intellectual disability to their home school for the 2002-03 school year.

**Waterbury: GOAL 5**

*Participation in Extracurricular Activities*

The data has decreased from 6.8% in 2001-02 to 4.7% in March 2003 for students participating in extracurricular activities.

**Commentary on Waterbury Goal 5**

The focus of Waterbury's efforts to date has been on Goals 1-4. Therefore, there have been no activities specific to addressing this goal during this past year.

**WEST HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**West Haven Demographics – (2001-02)**

Total Student Population	7,732
Total Special Education Population	830
Count of ID Students (Dec. 02):	76
Number of Schools:	
Preschool-	1
Elementary-	8
Middle-	2
High-	1
Alternative-	1
ERG	H

**West Haven Data Analysis**

	<b>West Haven</b>
00 TWNDP mean	21.1
01 TWNDP mean	18.0
02 TWNDP mean***	30.3
Mar 03 TWNDP mean***	30.6
00 TWNDP median	0.0
01 TWNDP median	8.7
02 TWNDP median***	23.4
Mar 03 TWNDP median***	23.4
00 Reg. Class	9.1
01 Reg. Class	6.8
02 Reg. Class***	10.5
Mar 03 Reg. Class***	10.5



01 Home School	36.5	
02 Home School***	50.0	
Mar 03 Home School***	48.7	
01 Extracurr	8.1	
02 Extracurr***	7.9	
Mar 03 Extracurr***	7.9	
00 Count/Prevalence	77 students	1.0%
01 Count/Prevalence	74 students	1.0%
02 Count/Prevalence ***	76 students	1.0%
Mar 03 Count/Prevalence ***	76 students	Not Available
<b>Race/Ethnicity CT K-12 ID/MR (%)</b>	<b>2002 District</b>	<b>2002 ID</b>
American Indian	0.5%	0.0%
Asian American	2.8%	1.3%
Black	27.1%	38.2%
White	53.4%	44.7%
Hispanic	15.8%	15.8%
Male	50.5%	61.8%

\*\*\* This data is preliminary

### **West Haven: GOAL 1 and GOAL 3**

#### *Regular Class Placement, and Mean and Median Time with Non-Disabled Peers*

Each of these data elements has increased since 2000-01 to March 2003. Mean TWNDP has increased from 21.1% to 30.6%; median TWNDP has increased from 0% to 23.4%; and regular class placement has increased from 9.1% to 10.5%.

### **Commentary on West Haven Goals 1 and 3**

Every student labeled as ID, and who had the greatest potential to be placed in a regular education setting, was identified and was referenced for extensive LRE planning during the spring PPTs. In addition, those students with intellectual disability attending ACES (Area

Cooperative Education Services of the Regional Education Service Centers (RESC)) programs were also discussed and individual students identified for possible return to the West Haven Public Schools resulting in the increase of their time with non-disabled peers. Extensive training, based on Step-by-Step and the SBPP, was shared with district staff and training was completed at targeted buildings.

### **West Haven: GOAL 2**

#### *Disproportionate Identification- Prevalence, Gender, Race and Ethnicity*

West Haven's prevalence has remained stable at 1.0% since 2000-01. Prevalence for ID males is 61.8% compared to district male prevalence of 50.5%. West Haven over-represents Black students in the ID population at 38.2% compared to the district Black prevalence of 27.1% according to 2002-03 data.

### **Commentary on West Haven Goal 2**

West Haven sent a team to attend the March 2003 two-day program, *Closing the Achievement Gaps: Connecticut Summit on Over-identification and Disproportion in Special Education*. Strategies were discussed and an action plan, written in conjunction with West Haven's ID action plan, was formulated. Targets were set to bring the data in line with the district's minority representation. Student files were reviewed and, if appropriate, students were recommended for a re-evaluation to determine the appropriateness of the diagnosis of ID. The district anticipates that all pupil personnel staff will attend an in-service on the Connecticut's **Guidelines for Identifying Children with Intellectual Disability (2002)** (Appendix 8).

### **West Haven: GOAL 4**

#### *Attending the Home School*

Home school enrollment has increased from 36.5% in 2001-02 to 48.7% in March 2003.

#### **Commentary on West Haven Goal 4**

This goal was determined by District administrators to be the key to success of the LRE initiative in the West Haven Schools. Since so many of the West Haven ID students (38%) attend regional education service center programs (ACES) or other district schools, students enrolled in the fourth through tenth grades were selected as potential students to physically re-enter the West Haven Schools. Strategies were given to the two district supervisors who will be chairing the spring PPTS that will determine placement for 2003-04. In addition to the ACES students, home school placement is most problematic at the elementary level. All elementary schools have had extensive training by SERC or attended *Step by Step*, in preparation to assume responsibility for students identified as ID on September 1, 2003.

#### **West Haven: GOAL 5**

##### *Participation in Extracurricular Activities*

There has been a slight decrease since 2001-02 to March 2003 of 8.1% to 7.9% of the students participating in extracurricular activities.

#### **Commentary on West Haven Goal 5**

West Haven met with every ID student and discussed what extra-curricular activities were available at all levels. An in-district resource list of extra-curricular activities was created and distributed at a parent meeting.

## WINDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Windham Demographics - (2001-02)

Total Student Population	3,287
Total Special Education Population	562
Count of ID Students (Dec. 02):	35
Number of Schools:	
Preschool-	6 3~ South Park, Valley Street & Windham ECC
Elementary-	4
Middle-	1
High-	1
Alternative-	1~ Teams Program ~To date no student with ID in this program as the one student registered there cannot be found
ERG	I

### Windham Data Analysis

	<b>Windham</b>
00 TWNDP mean	29.6
01 TWNDP mean	25.8
02 TWNDP mean***	29.1
Mar 03 TWNDP mean***	30.9
00 TWNDP median	23.1
01 TWNDP median	23.1
02 TWNDP median***	24.6
Mar 03 TWNDP median***	30.0

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00 Reg. Class	5.3	
01 Reg. Class	0.0	
02 Reg. Class***	2.9	
Mar 03 Reg. Class***	0.0	
01 Home School	77.5	
02 Home School***	80.0	
Mar 03 Home School***	73.5	
01 Extracurr	80.0	
02 Extracurr***	28.6	
Mar 03 Extracurr***	29.4	
00 Count/Prevalence	38 students	1.2%
01 Count/Prevalence	40 students	1.2%
02 Count/Prevalence ***	35 students	1.1%
Mar 03 Count/Prevalence ***	34 students	Not Available
<b>Race/Ethnicity CT K-12 ID/MR (%)</b>	<b>2002 District</b>	<b>2002 ID</b>
American Indian	0.4%	0.0%
Asian American	0.8%	0.0%
Black	5.8%	5.7%
White	39.1%	22.9%
Hispanic	53.4%	71.4%
Male	51.4%	42.9%

\*\*\* This data is preliminary

### **Windham: GOAL 1 and GOAL 3**

#### *Regular Class Placement, and Mean and Median Time with Non-Disabled Peers*

Windham's mean time with nondisabled peers has fluctuated since 2000-01 with a low of 25.8% and a current high of 30.9%. The mean time with nondisabled peers (TWNDP) has increased by 0.9% since 2001-02. Median TWNDP has increased since 2001-02 to March 2003 from 23.1% to 30.0%. Regular class placement as of March 2003 is 0%.

### **Commentary on Windham Goals 1 and 3**

Windham currently has segregated classes called “Functional Special Education” classes at the high school and self-contained classes at the middle school. Since there are fewer students with ID at the elementary schools, students are more likely to receive instruction in a resource room with some participation in regular education classrooms with 1:1 paraprofessional assistance. The district’s categorical approach to educating students with ID impacts placement in the regular classroom, as well as time with nondisabled peers (TWNDP) for these students. The change from 2.9% in December 2002 to 0.0% in March 2003 is the result of one student who exited special education.

Part of Windham’s action plan is to review the program of each student identified with ID and increase time in the general education classroom where appropriate. The reviews will coincide with spring annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) reviews.

### **Windham: GOAL 2**

#### *Disproportionate Identification- Prevalence, Gender, Race and Ethnicity*

The district’s 2002-03 prevalence rate is 1.1%. Hispanic American students account for 53.4% of the district’s student population, but they are represented in the category of Intellectual Disability at 71.4%. Windham over-identifies females as intellectually disabled at 57.1% compared to the district female prevalence of 48.6%.

### **Commentary on Windham Goal 2**

Gender figures need to be examined for statistical significance. Given the small number of girls this discrepancy may not be significant.

Disproportionate identification continues to be an issue in Windham. Hispanic American students are represented in special education categories significantly above their representation in the general district population. Even though Windham has a high concentration of Hispanic students, in the 2001-02 school year this group was over-

represented in four special education categories, including Intellectual Disability. While the Settlement Agreement relates directly to students with Intellectual Disability, the ramifications cut across racial or ethnic boundaries and as such are addressed on multiple fronts such as the Settlement Agreement and another initiative.

As stated above, Windham will be involved in a CSDE planning grant initiative to plan strategies to address the issue of racial disproportionality in the identification of students with Intellectual Disability as well as other disabilities. The consultant monitoring the Settlement Agreement will collaborate with the consultant monitoring the Disproportionate Identification initiative to engage Windham in this process and monitor its impact on Goal #2 of the Settlement Agreement.

#### **Windham: GOAL 4**

##### *Attending the Home School*

The data has fluctuated from 77.5% in 2001-02, to 80% in 2002-03, to 73.5% as of March 2003.

#### **Commentary on Windham Goal 4**

Windham currently has a program for elementary-age students with ID and other disabilities housed at the high school. Windham stated in its action plan that this program will be relocated to an elementary school by August 2003. The plan did not specify provisions to return each student to his/her home school. Since Windham has only one middle school and one high school, all students who are of intermediate or high school age are attending these schools and thus, are in their home school.

**Windham: GOAL 5**

*Participation in Extracurricular Activities*

Participation in extracurricular activities has dramatically decreased from 80.0% in 2001-02 to 29.4% in March 2003.

**Commentary on Windham Goal 5**

The dramatic decrease in data is attributable to an inaccurate definition being used in the 2001-02 reporting process of extracurricular participation. The 2001-02 most likely reflects changes in district definition. There has been a very slight increase from December 2002 to March 2003 in the percentage of students with ID participating in extracurricular activities. However, the district has developed an integrated sports program to increase unified sports opportunities. The effect of this program will be assessed in the next quarter through the monitoring process.



## **LEVEL II DISTRICTS – Data Review**

Fifty-three (53) districts have been identified as Level II districts. These districts were targeted based on their average time with nondisabled peers data for students with intellectual disability falling <.5 Standard Deviations below the December '01 state average for time with nondisabled peers. Several (5) of the Level III districts also met the criteria for Level II, but these districts have not been included in the following analysis as the Level III districts were addressed in the preceding section of this report.

The Level II districts include: Ansonia, Bethel, Bozrah, Bristol, Brookfield, Clinton, Cromwell, Danbury, Darien, Derby, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Hartford, East Haven, East Lyme, Fairfield, Glastonbury, Hartford, Hebron, Montville, New Fairfield, New London, New Milford, Newtown, North Branford, Norwalk, Norwich, Orange, Oxford, Plainville, Plymouth, Preston, Redding, Seymour, Sherman, Simsbury, Somers, Southington, Stamford, Waterford, Watertown, Weston, Westport, Wethersfield, Windsor, Windsor Locks, Woodbridge, Regional School District #4, Regional School District #7, Regional School District #8, Regional School District #9, Regional School District #16, Regional School District #17.

Of the fifty-three (53) districts, twenty-one (21) had less than twenty students with ID and thirty-two (32) had twenty or more students with ID. Given the impact of small numbers of students on the percentages reported in the data charts, only those districts with twenty or more students with ID will be examined here. These districts were analyzed for a change in data on each of goals #1, 3, 4 and 5 from December 2001 to December 2002.

For goal #1: regular class placement, eight (8) districts showed an increase; twenty-two (22) a decrease and two (2) remained the same

For goal #3: mean-TWNDP, eighteen (18) districts showed an increase and fourteen (14) a decrease

median-TWNDP, sixteen (16) showed an increase; and fifteen (15) a decrease

and one (1) remained the same

For goal #4: home school enrollment, twenty-two (22) increased and ten (10) decreased.

For goal # 5, extracurricular participation, twenty-one (21) increased, nine (9) decreased  
and two (2) remained the same

**Table 6-Data for Districts with > or = 20 students with ID**

	<b>Ansonia*</b>	<b>Bristol*</b>	<b>Colchester</b>	<b>Danbury*</b>	<b>East Hartford*</b>	<b>East Haven*</b>
00 TWNDP mean	19.6	28.8	36.0	29.2	33.1	34.3
01 TWNDP mean	31.8	25.4	40.2	27.1	37.9	32.0
02 TWNDP mean***	33.2	26.0	38.0	29.2	34.8	28.8
00 TWNDP median	0.0	25.0	42.2	22.5	25.6	32.3
01 TWNDP median	27.3	14.3	42.5	16.9	35.1	31.3
02 TWNDP median***	34.3	25.0	43.5	24.0	33.7	25.8
00 Reg. Class	5.0	7.0	4.3	5.5	5.4	10.5
01 Reg. Class	16.9	5.9	0.0	5.8	7.6	4.9
02 Reg. Class***	0.0	2.4	5.0	2.8	0.0	4.9
01 Home School	56.0	67.6	90.5	66.7	86.4	51.2
02 Home School***	65.4	66.7	100	70.4	91.3	53.7
01 Extracurr	12.0	14.7	23.8	10.1	7.6	19.5
02 Extracurr***	19.2	23.8	40.0	9.9	5.8	14.6

	<b>Fairfield</b>	<b>Greenwich</b>	<b>Groton</b>	<b>Hamden*</b>	<b>Hartford*</b>	<b>Manchester*</b>
00 TWNDP mean	39.6	61.2	45.2	28.9	39.0	40.1
01 TWNDP mean	28.9	55.4	37.7	34.4	31.6	38.1
02 TWNDP mean***	24.7	44.8	94.9	33.6	26.6	31.5

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00 TWNDP median	45.1	68.7	38.2	34.5	23.3	37.3
01 TWNDP median	29.8	56.9	37.5	32.4	21.8	37.3
02 TWNDP median***	27.7	44.9	98.5	38.4	21.53	31.0
00 Reg. Class	0.0	42.9	20.7	0.0	21.6	8.3
01 Reg. Class	8.7	40.0	7.7	8.7	12.6	7.5
02 Reg. Class***	0.0	23.3	95.0	7.5	6.4	6.0
01 Home School	87.0	94.3	79.5	58.7	89.9	71.7
02 Home School***	81.0	76.7	85.0	62.3	70.1	66.0
01 Extracurr	34.8	57.1	0.0	17.4	8.2	9.4
02 Extracurr***	38.1	56.7	2.5	24.5	10.3	20.0

	<b>Meriden*</b>	<b>Middletown</b>	<b>Naugatuck</b>	<b>New Britain*</b>	<b>Newington</b>	<b>New London*</b>
00 TWNDP mean	35.2	34.3	52.9	19.0	40.2	34.9
01 TWNDP mean	34.9	35.7	52.7	39.3	46.9	32.0
02 TWNDP mean***	35.9	37.3	49.3	40.4	54.9	35.3
00 TWNDP median	37.3	34.0	46.2	8.3	30.8	33.3
01 TWNDP median	33.3	33.3	56.9	40.0	44.6	38.5
02 TWNDP median***	32.7	37.7	41.5	41.7	61.5	37.7
00 Reg. Class	5.2	9.1	22.7	5.8	17.4	3.4
01 Reg. Class	6.3	10.9	21.7	7.1	26.1	0.0
02 Reg. Class***	8.4	6.7	16.3	6.7	25.9	2.3
01 Home School	52.6	67.4	91.7	53.8	78.3	84.6
02 Home School***	57.9	73.3	81.6	57.1	85.2	95.3
01 Extracurr	93.7	19.6	16.7	9.6	30.4	11.5

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02 Extracurr***	73.7	20.0	16.3	17.2	29.6	18.6

	<b>New Milford</b>	<b>Norwalk*</b>	<b>Norwich*</b>	<b>Plainfield</b>	<b>Southington</b>	<b>South Windsor</b>
00 TWNDP mean	37.0	30.6	32.3	26.8	25.7	25.7
01 TWNDP mean	29.5	28.7	28.4	38.8	29.7	29.7
02 TWNDP mean***	34.9	34.9	33.3	44.5	35.8	35.8
00 TWNDP median	38.3	30.0	36.2	26.7	23.2	64.1
01 TWNDP median	29.0	21.7	25.8	33.8	31.0	64.7
02 TWNDP median***	36.7	21.7	37.5	40.0	41.2	68.8
00 Reg. Class	4.8	8.2	3.0	0.0	3.3	33.3
01 Reg. Class	4.3	11.0	4.4	3.2	0.0	26.1
02 Reg. Class***	0.0	9.2	3.2	8.8	0.0	23.8
01 Home School	91.3	77.0	66.2	83.9	65.4	87.0
02 Home School***	87.0	83.7	69.8	97.1	85.7	85.7
01 Extracurr	0.0	5.0	14.7	12.9	26.9	17.4
02 Extracurr***	0.0	15.3	12.7	14.7	30.0	19.0

	<b>Stamford*</b>	<b>Stratford</b>	<b>Torrington</b>	<b>Trumbull</b>	<b>Vernon</b>	<b>Wallingford*</b>
00 TWNDP mean	28.8	45.9	50.6	42.8	42.1	21.8
01 TWNDP mean	32.3	44.8	41.0	49.2	44.0	38.8
02 TWNDP mean***	31.9	39.1	41.4	38.2	48.7	35.0
00 TWNDP median	20.0	37.0	45.4	36.3	46.2	21.1
01 TWNDP median	26.8	36.7	62.6	49.5	53.8	37.5
02 TWNDP median***	24.3	33.3	44.2	40.6	55.7	31.3

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00 Reg. Class	8.8	15.7	8.1	9.5	3.7	0.0
01 Reg. Class	5.9	17.0	3.2	23.1	5.7	21.2
02 Reg. Class***	5.5	12.5	2.8	6.9	11.1	15.9
01 Home School	73.5	91.5	90.3	100.0	71.4	76.9
02 Home School***	80.8	96.9	83.3	96.6	91.7	63.6
01 Extracurr	0.0	14.9	16.1	100.0	80.0	15.4
02 Extracurr***	0.0	21.9	13.9	34.5	94.4	9.1

	<b>West Hartford</b>	<b>Windsor*</b>
00 TWNDP mean	50.3	39.2
01 TWNDP mean	53.2	29.2
02 TWNDP mean***	46.1	29.6
00 TWNDP median	51.6	43.1
01 TWNDP median	51.6	28.8
02 TWNDP median***	46.5	27.7
00 Reg. Class	13.9	0.0
01 Reg. Class	16.7	0.0
02 Reg. Class***	17.6	2.4
01 Home School	66.7	76.3
02 Home School***	67.6	64.3
01 Extracurr	33.3	52.6
02 Extracurr***	41.2	31.0

\* Selected as one of sixteen districts identified for 2003-04 for more focused review and monitoring. Criteria for selection discussed in MONITORING section – Monitoring –Other Data Areas (p. 59)

\*\*\*This is preliminary data

**LEVEL II DISTRICTS – Commentary**  
(Level II Districts with 20+ ID Students)

In April of 2002 Level II districts were informed by the Commissioner of concerns with their average time with nondisabled peer data for students with ID. These districts were invited to a summer institute and several of these districts were targeted for program review (see MONITORING section of this report-**Program Review-ID Specific**, p. 57).

It is worth noting in terms of actions that may influence districts' data, data reflected in the December 2002 count had been primarily determined as a result of PPTs held prior to the announcement of the Settlement Agreement in May 2002, or prior to a district's receipt of the April 2002 Commissioner's letter of concern with the district's data. It is believed the majority of PPTs in the state are conducted between March and June of each school year. Thus, the December 2002 data reported in the above comparisons probably were negligibly impacted by any state announcement regarding the Settlement Agreement or from the Commissioner's letter indicating his concern with the district's data. Impact of these efforts would most likely not be noted until the December 2003 data collection.

## **DATA ACCURACY**

The CSDE recognizes the critical importance of data reliability and validity for each of the data elements of the five goals. The data presented in this report is preliminary. Corrections and revisions will be finalized in October and reported in the 2004 Annual Report.

Data verification monitoring occurred in the spring of 2003 for seven (7) of the eight (8) focused monitoring districts. Through this monitoring, knowledge of data definitions, calculations, and data entry were examined. Following is a description, by goal of the CSDE's findings regarding data accuracy.

### **Goal #1- Regular Class Placement**

Eighty-six (86) files were reviewed yielding a 6% error rate. The primary errors in this data were based on data entry inaccuracies.

### **Goal #2- Disproportionality: Prevalence, Race/Ethnicity and Gender**

Seventy-seven (77) files were reviewed only for data entry accuracy of eligibility category. This analysis yielded a 0% error rate. Monitoring for appropriateness of evaluations and implementation of eligibility criteria was conducted in the fall 2002, but aggregated data is not available.

### **Goal #3- Mean and Median Time With Non-Disabled Peers**

Eighty-seven (87) files were reviewed yielding a 25% error rate. The errors in this data were almost equally distributed across miscalculations, data entry inaccuracies and definition errors.

**Goal #4- Home School Enrollment**

Seventy-five (75) files were reviewed yielding a 7% error rate. The errors in this data were almost equally distributed between definitional errors and those due to data entry inaccuracies.

**Goal #5- Extracurricular Activity Participation**

Seventy-six (76) files were reviewed yielding a 24% error rate. The overwhelming errors in this data were based on data entry inaccuracies, particularly due to incomplete fields on the IEP that were entered into the PCI system as “student not participating in extracurricular activities”.

The CSDE will utilize the findings of this monitoring in the development of a Data Accuracy Bulletin and workshop activities re: data during 2003-04 (see **Data Accuracy - Training and Monitoring** section of this report, p. 103)



## CLASS MEMBERSHIP

Pursuant with Section I.2 of the Settlement Agreement, a list of public school students in CT who on or after Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999 carry the label of ID/MR and who are eligible for special education services (see Appendix G) was prepared.

Included in Appendix G is a list of class members within each school district from December 1, 1999 with updated lists for 2000, 2001 and 2002. The lists additionally identify students that have exited the ID class for that district due to:

- Graduation with a diploma
- Graduation with a Certificate of completion
- Dropping out
- Returning to regular education
- Aging out (Over 21)
- Deceased
- Moved, known to be continuing their education
- Moved, not known to be continuing education

Due to the nature of collection and storage of PCI data, creating a listing of students that have been reclassified or that indicate to which school district the student has moved is not feasible.

Through dialogue with the plaintiffs and the Expert Advisory Panel, the CSDE has decided to include preschool children as members of the class. The class lists mentioned above include these students. Data reporting on the goals of the Settlement Agreement will be disaggregated for the preschool population separate from the Kindergarten- grade 12 (K-12) population, though. All students that are eighteen through twenty-one years of age are included in the K-12 data lists. All students that are in preschool programs are included in the preschool data lists.

CSDE recognizes as class members, only those students whose primary eligibility is reported to the PCI system as MR/ID. With this said, the CSDE will not and has not denied access to any class mailings to parents that request the information, regardless of whether their child is or is not a member of the class.

## DISPROPORTIONALITY

Efforts in this area have addressed overrepresentation of students with intellectual disabilities in the total population as well as overrepresentation based on gender, race and ethnicity. The CSDE has encouraged districts that have over-identification of students with ID to utilize the Connecticut **Guidelines for the Identification of Students with Intellectual Disability**. In October and January the CSDE presented statewide training and in March 2003 conducted a session for Bridgeport Public Schools regarding appropriate identification. The CSDE, in conjunction with Bridgeport is developing an eligibility checklist to assist PPTs in the eligibility documentation process. Additionally, the CSDE has met with the Connecticut Association of School psychologists to discussions to solicit their input into identification and continued eligibility practices for this population of students. During monitoring, the CSDE examined students' records and made recommendations to districts for students whose files raised questions regarding appropriate identification. Several districts were required to conduct PPTs to reexamine the appropriateness of their identification process.

During this year the State decided to address the issue of disproportionality due to gender, race and ethnicity, as identified in the Settlement Agreement, within a larger context addressing all disability categories and relating to achievement. Training was conducted for approximately two hundred (200) students enrolled in the Hartford Regional Alternate Route to Certification program concerning disproportionality, its link to the Settlement Agreement and "No Child Left Behind" federal legislation. A statewide summit was organized through the use of a statewide stakeholders committee (see Appendix 9-Summit and Stakeholder Committee) and is described in detail in Appendix 2-A Report of SERC's Technical Assistance and Professional Development 2002-03.

Thirty (30) districts were invited to participate in the summit based on over-identification in three (3) or more disability areas, including intellectual disabilities, for Black and Hispanic youth and 1 district for over-identification for American Indian youth. Additionally, another four (4) districts were selected for one over-identification in the area of Intellectual

Disabilities. All thirty-four (34) districts participated in the summit. Each district team, that was to be comprised of general and special education personnel as well as parents, developed an Action Plan to address the issue based on their district's academic and disproportionate data disaggregated by race and ethnicity (see Appendix 10- Summary of Actions). A follow-up Summit meeting was held on May 30, 2003 (see Appendix 11) with twenty-four (24) districts participating.

As a result of their participation in the Summit, thirty-four (34) districts were eligible to apply for a planning grant (see Appendix 12- Planning Grant) for the development of district-wide action plans to address *Closing the Achievement Gaps: Over-identification and Disproportion in Special Education*. Twelve (12) districts applied for this grant.

## MONITORING ACTIVITIES

Monitoring activities have been conducted in five (5) arenas this past year as related to the Settlement Agreement. These systems were Program Review; Program Review-ID Specific; Focused Monitoring; ID- Focused Monitoring; and Monitoring of Hearing Officers' Decisions as described in the **Annual Report- September 30, 2002, pages 30-40** (see Program Compliance Review excerpt- Appendix 13).

### **Program Review**

Program Review is the CSDE's monitoring process used to determine compliance of school districts with the implementation of IDEA and state law regarding special education. The state is divided into six RESC regions with each district in each region of the state undergoing Program Review once in a six-year cycle. For the 2002-03 year, the ACES region was scheduled. This process consists of two categories of monitoring: (1) a desk audit review of all districts; and (2) a selection of a portion of districts for a site visit by the CSDE, based on district data.

Twelve districts (12) were selected from the ACES region for a comprehensive Program Review requiring a site visit. These districts were selected from the twenty-six districts in this region, in part based on data specific to students with intellectual disability in each of the five (5) outcomes of the Settlement Agreement. An additional three (3) districts were selected for this review through lottery from the remaining fourteen (14) districts of the region. Of the fifteen (15) districts selected for site visits, four (4) were identified as Level II districts (Derby, East Haven, North Branford, and Seymour) and received more specific analysis of ID programming during the site visit (see **Program Review-ID Specific** section of this report, p. 57). Additionally, five (5) other districts (Milford, Shelton, New Haven, Waterbury, and West Haven) of the fifteen (15) were identified as part of the eight (8) districts to receive additional ID focused monitoring through the Settlement Agreement (see **ID Focused Monitoring** section of this report, p. 60).

For Program Review, all twenty-six districts in the region were required to complete a comprehensive self-assessment that included an analysis of the data being monitored through the Settlement Agreement (see Appendix 14- Self-Assessment-). As a result of the findings identified through the self-assessment, each district was to develop a continuous improvement plan (see Appendix 15- Continuous Improvement Plan). Monitoring activities in the fourteen districts included file reviews; staff and student interviews; and tours of schools and observations in classes.

All twenty-six (26) districts were issued a preliminary report based on the review of the district's data, self-assessment, and continuous improvement plan. Information gathered during the site visit was also included for those fifteen (15) districts that underwent a site visit. Final reports continue to be completed as they are issued within timelines that extend into July 2003. Any issues raised by the district or the CSDE that related to the five outcomes of the Settlement Agreement were included in the continuous improvement plans for districts (see MONITORING RESULTS section of this report for more detail, p. 61).

### **Program Review - ID Specific**

Of the twenty-six (26) districts in the ACES region, nine (9) were Level II districts (Derby, East Haven, North Branford, Orange, Oxford, Seymour, Woodbridge, and Region #16) and five (5) were Level III districts. Each of these districts was required to have specific analysis and improvement plans for students with intellectual disability in the area of least restrictive environment.

Additionally, four (4) (Derby, East Haven, North Branford, and Seymour) of the nine (9) Level II districts and all five (5) (Milford, New Haven, Shelton, Waterbury, and West Haven) of the Level III districts were selected for site visits. During the visit at least two files of students with intellectual disability were selected for review and observation (see Appendix 16- Program Review-ID Specific Monitoring guidelines?).

## **Focused Monitoring**

Since 1997 the CSDE has implemented a focused monitoring system that has on an annual basis examined districts' data with respect to specific data elements. The CSDE selects specific districts whose data is significantly discrepant with state and/or ERG averages, and requires them to conduct an analysis and develop a corrective action response, as appropriate. The CSDE reviews the district's responses and monitors the actions. During the 2002-03 year, focused monitoring specifically examined the data elements of the Settlement Agreement: race/ethnicity disproportionate representation (December 2001 data); students with intellectual disability-average time with non-disabled peers; regular class placement; home school enrollment; and extracurricular participation (December 2002 data).

## **Monitoring-Disproportionate Representation**

Districts with disproportionate representation based on race and ethnicity (see Appendix 7- District Disproportionate Data Reports) were sent letters from the Commissioner identifying this as an area of concern requiring district action (see Appendix 17- Disproportionate Representation Letter). These districts were: Ansonia; Bloomfield; Bridgeport; Bristol; Danbury; East Hartford; Enfield; Farmington; Glastonbury; Groton; Hamden; Hartford; Ledyard; Manchester; Meriden; Middletown; Naugatuck; New Britain; New Haven; New London; Norwalk; Norwich; Plainville; Stamford; Stratford; Torrington; Vernon; Waterbury; West Hartford; West Haven; Wethersfield; Windham; and Windsor.

Within this group of thirty-four (34) districts, six (6) are Level III districts. These six (6) districts were required to develop a corrective action plan to address disproportionate identification based on race/ethnicity. Also, each of the thirty-four (34) districts were invited to participate in the State Summit on Disproportionate Identification of Students with Disabilities. All districts in attendance were provided with facilitation by the CSDE or SERC on the development of an action plan to address the issue of disproportionate identification of students with disabilities (including students with intellectual disability).

The initial stages of these plans were submitted to the CSDE for review. Each of these districts were invited to a follow-up meeting to the Summit held on May 30, 2003, to discuss the development and implementation of their district's plans and to identify next steps for districts and the state.

### **Monitoring-Other Data Areas**

In April 2003 the CSDE reviewed the other data elements of the Settlement Agreement for all districts in the state (December 2002 data) as part of focused monitoring. Sixteen (16) districts were identified as having data for students with intellectual disability that fell below the state average in three of the following four areas: average time with non-disabled peers; regular class placement; home school enrollment; and extracurricular participation. The sixteen (16) districts were: Ansonia; Bristol; Danbury; East Hartford; East Haven; Hamden; Hartford; Manchester; Meriden; New Britain; New London; Norwalk; Norwich; Stamford; Wallingford; Windsor.

Each of these districts received communication from the Commissioner requesting an analysis and response to their districts' data by July 1, 2003 (see Appendix 18-Commissioner's April 10, 2003 correspondence). A technical assistance session was provided for districts to learn of the specifics to include in the response to the Commissioner. Thirteen (13) of the sixteen (16) districts attended: Ansonia; Bristol; Danbury; East Hartford; East Haven; Hamden; Hartford; Manchester; New London; Norwalk; Norwich; Stamford; and Wallingford). Material was forwarded to the three districts not in attendance, due to unknown reasons: Meriden, New Britain and Windsor. All sixteen (16) districts were requested to include an analysis of data for each of the data elements identified and to develop action plans with specific targets set for each data element. Data verification for accuracy was requested to be conducted as part of the data analysis. This technical assistance session also provided information regarding a grant award (see section GRANT ACTIVITY section of this report, p. 96) available to each district to assist them in the implementation of their action plan. Items for the grant application included those items that were to be

included in the response to the Commissioner's letter (see Appendix 19-Grant Application-LRE Action Plan).

On May 30, 2003, the Commissioner sent a letter (see Appendix 20-Commissioner's May 30, 2003 correspondence) to all districts in the state that included the state and district data from 1998-99 through 2002-03 for each of the outcomes of the Settlement Agreement. The Commissioner requested each district to review the data and develop and implement an action plan in response to each of the five outcomes of the Settlement Agreement for the 2003-04 school year. Districts are expected to keep these plans on file within the district during the 2003-04 school year, making them available to the CSDE upon request.

### **ID Focused Monitoring**

The most intense monitoring to occur with respect to the Settlement Agreement was focused on the eight (8) districts selected in April 2002 based on a review of the districts' December 2001 data for students with intellectual disability in the areas of disproportionality by race/ethnicity; prevalence; time with non-disabled peers; regular class placement; home school enrollment; and extracurricular participation. These districts were: Bridgeport; Enfield; Milford; New Haven; Shelton; Waterbury; West Haven; and Windham.

Monitoring for this group consisted of two phases. The first phase was for the CSDE consultant assigned to the district to gather information regarding the district and its practices for educating students with intellectual disability. Activities consisted of conferences with district central office general and special education administration; building administration; interviews with teachers and related services professionals; observations of classrooms, both separate special education classes and regular classrooms that served students with intellectual disability; and review of student records (see Appendix 3- ID Focused Monitoring Tools). From this information the district and consultant developed a corrective action plan by December 2002 (see Appendix 21- ID Focused Monitoring Action Plans



December 2002). Districts were required to submit student specific data for each of the data elements of the Settlement Agreement by March 1, 2003 (see **Table 5** of this report, p. 8).

The second phase of the monitoring was to conduct file reviews, review of district materials, and interviews with staff to verify the data submitted to the CSDE in the March 2003 data collection (see Appendix 5-Data Verification Monitoring Tools). From this review, the action plans are to be revised to address any data accuracy issues. Additionally, districts were required to establish targets for each of the outcomes of their action plans by June 30, 2003, if the district had not already done this in the December development of the plan (these revised plans were not available for inclusion in this report). Districts were required to submit student specific data by June 25, 2003 that reflects students' IEPs that are to be implemented for the 2003-04 school year (this data was not available in sufficient time to prepare in table form, to analyze, nor to comment on for this report).

### **Hearing Officers' Decisions**

Since May 2003, there has been one hearing decision regarding a member of the class, which was related to the least restrictive environment. The decision was monitored this year for implementation (see description of monitoring system, **Annual Report, September 30, 2002, pgs. 37-38**). The CSDE's monitoring indicates the decision has been implemented since it was ordered in November 2002.

### **Monitoring Results: 2002-03**

Following is a listing of issues identified during the 2002-03 Program Review that relate to the Settlement Agreement goals. The chart indicates those districts that the CSDE "Required" corrective actions or "Recommended" actions to take action based on a finding of the CSDE or the District during the review. The issues that are specifically related to the Settlement Agreement are addressed in this table below. Monitoring results specific to data

verification with the eight (8) ID Focused Monitoring districts (Level III districts) are addressed in the DATA ACCURRACY section of this report (p. 51).

**Program Review 2002-03: A List of District Issues regarding Settlement Agreement**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Recommended</b>
Justification for Removal – use of LRE checklist	Milford, New Haven, West Haven, East Haven, Ansonia, North Branford, Seymour, Woodbridge, Reg. 16, Hamden, Meriden	Derby
LRE ID General	Hamden, Milford, New Haven, Shelton, Waterbury, West Haven, Ansonia, East Haven, Meriden	Derby, North Branford
LRE preschool	Meriden, North Branford, New Haven, Waterbury, Ansonia	Seymour, Wallingford
LRE TWNDP	Ansonia, Seymour, Meriden	Derby, Orange, Wallingford
LRE TWNDP – ID	Reg. 16, Hamden, Meriden, Milford, New Haven, Waterbury, West Haven, Ansonia, East Haven	North Branford
LRE Regular Class – ID	New Haven, Waterbury	
LRE Extracurricular		Orange, East Haven
LRE Extracurricular – ID	Milford, New Haven, Shelton, Waterbury, West Haven, Ansonia, North Branford	
LRE ID Home School	Hamden, Milford, New Haven, Shelton, Waterbury, West Haven	
LRE Home School	Meriden	Derby
Identification	Waterbury, West Haven, Ansonia, North Branford, Hamden	
Identification ID	Hamden, New Haven, Waterbury, West Haven, Ansonia, East haven, North Branford, Meriden	
OOD Placements	West Haven, Ansonia, East Haven, North Branford	New Haven, Derby, Hamden, Meriden

Each district listed in the above chart developed an Improvement Plan to address the issues specifically aligned to their district. Improvement Plans were required whether the issue was identified by the CSDE as one requiring a corrective action or one being recommended for an action. These plans are on file with each district and are being monitored by the CSDE.

## TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Activities of the Settlement Agreement associated with training and technical assistance were coordinated with the leadership and staff of the Special Education Resource Center (SERC). Throughout the year, CSDE staff met periodically with Marianne Kirner, Executive Director; Sarah Barzee, LRE/Inclusion Consultant for District Efforts; and Cathy Wagner, LRE/Inclusion Consultant for Statewide Efforts to plan and coordinate the 2002-03 efforts. These efforts were coordinated into three Levels; Level I for all districts throughout the state; Level II for the fifty-three (53) specifically identified districts; and Level III for the targeted eight (8) districts. For a complete and thorough review of the CSDE's training and technical assistance efforts through SERC, refer to Appendix 2-A Report of SERC's Technical Assistance and Professional Development 2002-03.) Following are highlights of those activities.

For Level I activities, all districts in the state were included in this group. Training included statewide staff development activities offered through SERC, one day of training/technical assistance on the **School Based Practices Profile**; and the availability of an CSDE staff to conduct a presentation at a district's Board of Education meeting on least restrictive environment and the Settlement Agreement.

During this past year, at the request of the district, Oxford, Enfield, East Hampton, and Suffield Boards of Education received a presentation by the CSDE on LRE and the Settlement Agreement. Several Level I districts received training from SERC in the **School Based Practices Profile**.

Level II activities were specific to the fifty-three (53) Level II districts and eight (8) Level III districts. These districts received a two-day summer institute on the Settlement Agreement; an opportunity to host a regional networking session on a topic of the districts' choosing related to inclusive programming; and the opportunity to host one of the parent training

sessions offered as part of the Settlement Agreement (see PARENT TRAINING section of this report, page 70).

Level III activities included:

- Building level teams attending three days of *Step By Step Training*, provided by Stetson and Associates, Houston, Texas.
- Technical assistance provided by SERC as follow up to *Step By Step Training*
- Building level teams completing the *School Based Practices Profile (SBPP)* and developing an action plan as a result.
- District data overview and orientation to LRE for all school administrators (Milford chose not to participate).
- Parent Training provided by Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) in collaboration with CSDE and the University of Connecticut-University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service (UCE) (Shelton chose not to participate).

## QUALIFIED SPECIALISTS

The CSDE has utilized federal professional development funds to begin to address the need identified in the Settlement Agreement for a sufficient number of qualified specialists to assist LEAs in carrying out their training, supervision, and support responsibilities. During this first year four areas of engagement occurred: (1) to increase the number of professionals within the CSDE and SERC that have the expertise to assist LEAs in carrying out the necessary activities for their schools, staff, parents, and students in addressing the outcomes of the Settlement Agreement; (2) to increase the number of experts from throughout the country that LEAs have been introduced to and made aware of their areas of expertise; (3) to identify existing qualified specialists within Connecticut available to assist schools on specific student issues and school-wide issues; and (4) to participate with the University of Connecticut in identifying priorities for the University teacher preparation program to help insure that teacher candidates are better prepared for the education of students with developmental disabilities (including intellectual disabilities) in inclusive settings.

Training has occurred for consultants within the Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Services (BSEPS) and SERC to respond to the training and technical assistance needs of implementing the Settlement Agreement. Trainings were on multiple topics and were conducted specifically for BSEPS and SERC consultants. In addition, BSEPS and CSDE staff have participated in various opportunities that are available to all school personnel in CT.

During the 2002-03 school year, SERC has provided statewide training to school personnel on various topics specific to LRE and inclusive programming, with special emphasis given to students with intellectual disabilities and students with severe disabilities. These trainings have been conducted by many qualified specialists from throughout the state and the country (see Appendix 22- Trainers-list of names and affiliations). Through this offering of trainings and workshops, attendees learned from and had opportunities for personal interactions with over twenty-five (25) experts from around the country to assist them in addressing students'

needs in inclusive environments. Participants at these trainings received nationally published materials of the presenters as well as other written information distributed during the trainings. The Expert Advisory Panel has provided the CSDE with a list of qualified specialists to consider when addressing the goals of the Settlement Agreement (see Appendix 23- EAP Specialists List).

The third area of focus that was begun this year was to address the need for a sufficient number of qualified specialists and the identification of specialists within Connecticut that are available to assist districts either as employees of other state or public agencies; employees of private agencies; or as independent consultants. With the assistance of the plaintiffs and SERC, CSDE identified twenty (20) individuals (see Appendix 24- Qualified Specialists-Recommended List) throughout the state that were recommended as qualified specialists in including children with intellectual disabilities in the least restrictive environment that would be appropriate for supporting the implementation of the Settlement Agreement in schools. This group was convened in January and February to discuss that portion of the Settlement Agreement related to providing a sufficient number of specialists (see Appendix 25- Qualified Specialists-Meeting Agendas).

As a result of these meetings, suggestions of a format for the compilation of a *Resource Directory of Qualified Specialists* were gathered. The CSDE anticipates the publication of a directory later this summer as an initial vehicle for school personnel to identify specialists to assist them in their training, supervision, and support responsibilities for educating students with intellectual disabilities in regular classes. At the meeting, CSDE discussed ways the CSDE could assist them in their efforts (see Appendix 26-Qualified Specialist-What CSDE could offer/provide) and what are the attributes of a qualified specialist (see Appendix 27- Qualified Specialist- Suggested Attributes).

The fourth avenue being pursued is the CSDE's participation with the University of Connecticut, A.J. Pappanikou Center for Developmental Disabilities, A University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service; hereafter

referred to as the UCE. During this year the CSDE has met with the UCE and several qualified specialists from throughout the state to discuss issues of programming for school-aged children with developmental disabilities in inclusive settings. As part of a partnership with the UCE, CSDE staff are participating in the teaching of two courses (offered in the spring '03) and are offered this summer on educating children with developmental disabilities (including students with intellectual disabilities) in inclusive educational settings.



## COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCESS

As stipulated in the Settlement Agreement, the CSDE has an established complaint resolution process that it maintains to resolve complaints pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §300.60.

During this year a team from the Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Services involved with complaint resolution and legal issues was convened to examine the CSDE's complaint resolution process pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §300.60 and all directives of the U.S. Department of Education regarding the complaint resolution process. The Complaint Resolution Manual is currently undergoing final review and edit to be consistent with all directives of the U.S. Department of Education regarding the complaint resolution process and the IDEA as stipulated in the Settlement Agreement. The CSDE anticipates distribution to the field during the summer 2003.

The present data collection system for complaints does not allow for efficient tracking and sorting by disability category. The CSDE will be developing a tracking system of complaints, mediations and due process in the 2003-04 year that will allow for an effective method to track any issue, including those of the Settlement Agreement, by district and student classification, including intellectual disability.

## PARENT TRAINING

The CSDE has provided information to parents of all class members, via written correspondence, multiple times throughout the year. These mailings included notification of the hearing on the Settlement Agreement (see **Annual Report - September 30, 2002, Appendix 3**), notification of the SERC training initiative and offerings (see Appendix 28- Parent Letter October 31, 2002), the LRE newsletter (Appendix 29), which included information on parent training, direct mailing on parent training that would occur in their town (Appendix 30-Parent Letter, February 14, 2003), and the parent training calendar (Appendix 31 - Parent Training Schedule-“World of Options and Opportunities”). The information on the parent training calendar and cover letters from the Bureau Chief were sent to all families in English and Spanish.

### **Mailings to Class Members: Parent Training and General LRE INFO**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Content</b>
May 2002	Class members	Notice of Hearing
October 2002	Class members	SERC booklet, cover letter
Dec 2002	Spec Ed Directors	Request to host training
Jan 2003	Class Members	LRE Newsletter
Jan 2003	Enfield, Newtown Class members	Training announcement
February 2003	Class members	Entire parent training schedule with cover letter
April 2003	Class members	Updated parent training schedule

The CSDE and CPAC met with Parent Training Organizations on four occasions November 6, 2002; January 8, 2003; April 17, 2003; and May 19, 2003 to plan parent training for the year (see Appendix 32- Parent Training Meetings and Membership). In addition, one meeting took place between the CSDE, Connecticut Coalition on Inclusive Education (CCIE) and CT ARC. This initial year of training focused on an overview of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the least restrictive environment (LRE) and the Settlement Agreement. This training consisted of a series of twenty-two, two hour, overview

sessions. The title of the training was “A World of Options and Opportunities” (see Appendix 31). The training was a collaboration between the hosting school districts, the CSDE, CCIE, CT ARC, UCE and CPAC. The SDE recruited host districts through written correspondence (see Appendix 33- Parent Training of LRE Memo 12/06/02) from the Bureau Chief of Special Education to districts that were identified as needing improvement based on data from the five goals of the agreement.

CPAC coordinated the scheduling and the logistics (location, directions, equipment, and identification of district liaison) and follow-up for each session. CPAC designed the training announcement (see Appendix 34- Parent Training-Customized Announcement) with input from the Parent Training Organizations. The training announcement was customized for each district. A flier was also created to advertise the training schedule (see Appendix 31). Parents and staff were encouraged to participate in any of the trainings, regardless of their town of residence. Although the training was targeted to parents of children with an intellectual disability, parents of children with any disability were encouraged to take advantage of the training. The training emphasized that although the Settlement Agreement addresses issues for students identified as having an intellectual disability, all students with disabilities are entitled to an education in the least restrictive environment.

The training sessions consisted of a one hour formal presentation, and an hour-long question and answer session. The formal presentation was designed and delivered by parents and professionals from the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, under contract through CPAC (see Appendix 35- Parent Training- Powerpoint Presentation). The CSDE had a consultant from the Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Services at each session to respond to questions regarding the state’s role in the implementation of the Settlement Agreement. Each hosting district was required to have a district-identified administrator available to answer questions regarding the district’s role in implementing the Settlement Agreement. CPAC staff was present to facilitate each session and respond to questions regarding CPAC’s role in implementation of the Settlement Agreement. In all cases, the Special Education Director for each LEA was present, and in many cases there

were multiple Special Education Directors from surrounding towns. In addition, Special Education Supervisors, Principals, Superintendents, and teaching staff were present at many of the sessions.

The training was advertised through multiple direct mailings to class members by the CSDE. Depending on the size of the district, the districts sent home the training announcement to class members, or to all identified students. The announcement was shared with various other organizations (CCIE, CT ARC, Birth to Three System, Family Support Council, Birth to Three System Mentors Program, and DMR) for dissemination. The training was advertised in CPAC's newsletter and in conversations and other trainings that CPAC staff had with families.

At the conclusion of each session, feedback was collected regarding prior knowledge of the training topic, and satisfaction with the training. Parents were also requested to complete a short survey regarding need for additional training. CPAC plans on conducting follow-up phone surveys with parents regarding how parents were able to use the information acquired at the session, to impact their son/daughter's program.

In addition to the district schedule of training, CPAC and the CSDE have conducted many additional training sessions on the Settlement Agreement. CSDE conducted five workshops for DMR Case Managers and families, in each region of the state (see Appendix 36- DMR Trainings). The content of this training was very similar to the overview sessions held in the districts. An additional training was held for DMR Management Team. CSDE also conducted training for the Greater Hartford LICC. Parent representatives from the CCIE and the Family Support Council participated as trainers in some of the sessions.

**DMR Training Sessions**

Date	Location	Audience	Trainers
1/14/03	DMR East Region	17 parents/case managers*	Richards
1/28/03	DMR NW Region	22 parents/case managers*	Richards
2/19/03	DMR SW Region	30 management team	Richards
2/20/03	Greater Hartford LICC	20 parent/pro	Richards
2/24/03	DMR SW Region	14 parents/case managers*	Richards/Spiers
3/11/03	DMR SC Region	17 parents/case managers*	Richards/Sanchez
3/25/03	DMR NC Region	21 parents/case managers*	Richards/Sanchez

\*All parents in attendance had children who are clients of the Department of Mental Retardation.

CPAC and CSDE have also attended many statewide conferences to share information on the Settlement Agreement with families. This included the statewide Down Syndrome Conference and the Family Support Council Conference.

CSDE staff was asked by some of the targeted districts to conduct parent information sessions for particular audiences of parents. These sessions included one for parents who had students enrolled in Celentano School in New Haven and one for parents of children enrolled in Ripton School in Shelton. As a follow-up to the initial training in Enfield, a session was conducted by CPAC and CSDE staff specifically for parents of young children in the district.

CPAC, in their role as the Parent Training and Information Center in Connecticut, has had extensive contact with families throughout the state regarding the Settlement Agreement. In every training session they have conducted, CPAC staff provide a brief overview of the Settlement Agreement. CPAC has had an increase in the number of calls to the Center from parents who have questions about the agreement. These calls have come from parents who

desire to use the agreement to advocate for their children to be more included, as well as many parents who voice concerns with potential changes in their child's program from one that is a segregated, specialized, out of the district program, to a program in the district.

### **Analysis of Data**

An evaluation summary (see Appendix 37-Parent Training Evaluation Summary) was compiled by CPAC regarding all of the trainings. While four hundred forty-nine (449) persons attended, only one hundred fifty-nine (159) completed the evaluation form distributed during the trainings.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact number of parents of class members who attended the sessions. On the feedback form, many of the parents did not identify themselves as parents of students with an intellectual disability. For example, at the training sessions for the Department of Mental Retardation, one could assume that the parents were parents of children with an intellectual disability. However, even the parents in these sessions, tended not use the term intellectual disability as an identifier of their son or daughter. Although the CSDE is pleased with the turnout for all of the trainings, and our opportunity to impact parents of a wide variety of students with disabilities, we have identified the need for future training to more specifically target the parents of class members.

The CSDE also estimates that the number of parents who actually attended the training underestimates the number of parents who were impacted by the training. Many families called CPAC to register for the training and then did not attend. Each of these families were afforded the opportunity to speak with CPAC staff directly about the Settlement Agreement and training materials were forwarded to families who registered but were unable to attend.

**PARENT TRAINING**  
District Data  
Registrants versus Attendees  
As of June 6, 2003

<b>Date</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>People registered</b>	<b>People attended</b>	<b>Additional packets sent</b>
1/23/03	Enfield	30	29	1
2/5/03	Newtown	12	16	1
2/26/03	East Hampton	39	32	
3/6/03	West Haven	12	21	
3/6/03	Danbury	18	cancelled	
3/13/03	Ansonia	19	rescheduled	
3/19/03	Bridgeport	12	20	
3/26/03	Oxford	16	38	
3/27/03	Glastonbury	14	26	
4/2/03	Milford	37	60	
4/9/03	Ridgefield	4	20	
4/10/03	New Haven	35	60	
4/24/03	Weston	26	15	
4/29/03	Waterbury	23	29	
5/7/03	New Fairfield	9	19	1
5/14/03	Southington	18	24	2
5/15/03	Hartford (English)	6	7	
5/21/03	Windham	6	13	2
5/22/03	Ansonia	11	10	
5/29/03	New London	2	10	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>7</b>

Follow-up to the districts and families have occurred in a variety of ways. A survey is sent to each district following the training to collect feedback on the training and plan the next steps for training in the district (see Appendix 38-Parent Training LRE cover letter and feedback form). As stated earlier, three of the districts requested follow-up training for specific audiences of parents. Other districts have identified additional training for parents who expressed an interest through the USE (Understanding Special Education) Training sponsored by the UCE or the Next Steps Training sponsored by CPAC. In addition, Bureau

Consultants, as well as CPAC staff, continually receive calls from parents who attended the training, as they move forward to use the information to advocate for their children.

CPAC and CSDE have identified the need to develop alternate ways of delivering the information to families who are not likely to attend a formal training program. Next year's training will include increased opportunities for families to receive information in a smaller, less formal format either in a community location of their choice or in their home.

Many of the attendees at the training sessions did not complete the feedback forms (see Appendix 39- Parent Training Request for further information). This is not unusual, particularly for an evening session. Most parents and staff did sign in at the beginning of the training. In order to further ascertain the effectiveness of the training, CPAC plans on conducting some phone surveys.

### **Lessons Learned**

CPAC's experience with the parent training this year has provided a wealth of information for future training activities. The following experiences are examples:

- In one urban district, the parent of a fourteen year old young woman was concerned about moving her daughter from a segregated program, which she had attended for her entire educational career, to a large urban high school. The district offered the parent training session as a "kick-off" to provide families with information. They intended to have follow-up contact with all families prior to the PPT meetings. The parents who attended the training were very upset with their lack of information, given the district had extensively worked on planning for these transitions all year. It was difficult for this parent to see that the district was prepared for these extensive changes, because she had not been involved in the planning. Most of the district's and CPAC's involvement with this parent has been to reduce her anxiety regarding the move. Had she been a part of the extensive planning, she might have more trust



in the district's efforts. Parents need to be part of planning and implementation from the very beginning. We can not assume training at the end of the process is sufficient.

- Parents at one of the trainings requested specific examples. "Show us what it looks like in a high school." "Explain to me what supports look like for involvement in an after school club." Future trainings need to contain multiple, real examples from schools in Connecticut. The examples should be for students with a broad range of disabilities, ages and school communities.
- One of the parent trainers shared an example of her daughter, who is now 12 years old. Her daughter had spent much of her school experience in a segregated setting. As her daughter was aging, this mother felt that her priorities for her daughter had changed. Although she still was concerned about her daughter's academic abilities, opportunities for social relationships and friendships was critical. Parents need to hear from other parents, that your priorities can and will change overtime. This may include going from a more segregated to a more integrated program or vice versa. The need to focus on program development on an individual basis is key.
- Many of the districts were very apprehensive about hosting the training. Unfortunately, the perception exists that when a group of parents of students with disabilities gets together, they create challenges for the district. Districts expressed appreciation with the presence of the CSDE and parent trainers as supports in the training. In reality, each district found the training to be a positive experience for the families and staff, even when parents presented challenges to this initiative. In one of the districts, the parents agreed to continue to meet on a routine basis. This group of parents was eager to move forward to create recreational opportunities in the town. Their focus was beyond anything the district was obligated to do. The districts need to see the benefits of supporting parents to meet and support each other.
- One parent in an urban district attended multiple training sessions. She had always been concerned regarding the lack of emphasis on teaching her young daughter with Down Syndrome to read. After attending two sessions, she called CPAC for additional information on how to use the information in her daughter's PPT meeting.

She was provided additional information and questions to ask at the PPT regarding literacy and curriculum. The impact of the training should not only address the Settlement Agreement, but achievement, high expectations, and to assist families in advocating for their children.

- CPAC was contacted by a Sunday school teacher at a church in an urban setting. They had an African American parent who continually expressed concerns to them that her adolescent daughter had never been assigned homework. The parent and church community believed the district had very limited expectations for this young woman. CPAC conducted training at the church for parents and staff. This parent did not attend the training. As a follow-up to the training CPAC staff visited with this parent in her home. This parent was prepared to meet with school staff the following Monday to demand that her daughter be provided with homework on a regular basis. Many families who want information to assist them in advocating for their children, will not access formal training programs. We need to expand our training to community based groups that parents rely on and trust for information,

### **EXPERT ADVISORY PANEL**

As stipulated in the Settlement Agreement, the Expert Advisory Panel (EAP) was to meet at least three times this year in addition to the initial meeting held in August 2003. Over this year, the EAP has fulfilled this obligation having convened in Hartford in October 2002, March 2003, and May 2003. During these meetings the EAP had opportunities to hear about the activities of the CSDE through: conversations with CSDE consultants and administrators, including Theodore Sergi, Commissioner of Education who participated in the first two meetings, and George Coleman, Associate Commissioner for the Division of Educational Programs and services who attended all four of the meetings; SERC staff, a partner with the CSDE in the development and implementation of the training and technical assistance; and Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) staff who coordinated the parent training. Additionally, the plaintiffs were given the opportunity at each meeting to address and dialogue with the EAP and CSDE. During the March and May meetings, the EAP heard from personnel from each of the eight (8) districts that were identified for focused monitoring. Additionally, several other stakeholders who chose to attend the open meetings, engaged in dialogue with the panel, including Kathleen Whitbread, Ph.D., who has participated in the development and presentation of the parent training and coordinates the UCE school-aged projects; and Pamela Donoroma, an executive member of the Coalition for Inclusive Education, executive director of Futures and Directions, Inc., and a member of the State Advisory Council.

The EAP met for two days on each occasion with an agenda (see Appendix 40-EAP Meeting Agendas) that routinely included a specific opportunity for the plaintiffs and CPAC to address the EAP. Each agenda also allowed for CSDE to update the EAP (in addition to the mailings that occurred prior to each meeting) on CSDE activities as well as allowing for substantial time devoted for the CSDE to receive advice from the EAP. The CSDE engaged the EAP in conversations regarding monitoring, training and technical assistance, disproportionate identification; preschool least restrictive environment; grant application process; state policy and statues on facility construction and excess cost regulations; parent

training activities; development of the annual report for the Settlement Agreement; district level action plans; data collection and analysis; and qualified specialists. Brainstorming, dialogue and priority settings were conducted at each meeting. Each meeting culminated in a listing of consensus recommendations from the EAP, included below.

Following is a list of the consensus recommendations of the EAP from each of the three meetings held this year and their recommendations on the development of the Second Annual Report, with the resulting actions taken by the CSDE for each item.

<b>October Meeting 2002</b>		
<b>Item #</b>	<b>EAP Recommendation</b>	<b>Resulting Action</b>
1	Parent Training- Reduce to postcard size 5 big points	<u>Accepted</u> - see Appendix 41 Parent Training Plan 2003-05
2	Preschool emphasis needed for training (empower them)	<u>Accepted</u> - see Appendix 41 Parent Training Plan 2003-05
3	Increase parent training support	<u>Accepted</u> - see Appendix 41 Parent Training Plan 2003-05
4	Training and TA- Utilize district capacity/obtain written district commitment	<u>Modified</u> - written commitment on action plans for Level I districts from superintendent, special education director and building principals; letter of assurance for all districts in state
5	RFP	<u>Modified</u> - RFPS for select districts- not competitive; see GRANT ACTIVITY section of this report (p. 96)
6	Dec 1 District Plan Review Conf. Call	<u>Modified</u> - District plans were sent to EAP for review in preparation for conversation at March 2003 EAP meeting
7	Dec 1, 2002 Data “Quarterlies”	<u>Modified</u> - Level I districts are reporting December, March and June; Year 2 “16” districts are reporting July, December, March and June
8	Goal 2- Relationship to academic is essential	<u>Accepted</u> - CSDE instituted a statewide initiative on

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		disproportionality, entitled “Closing the Achievement Gap”. Conference focused on speakers and sessions related to achievement’s link to disparate identification for all disabilities, including ID.
9	Other- Next report include improved explanation of how districts were selected for goal #2	<u>Accepted</u> -Disproportionate data and selection mailed to EAP and discussed at May meeting (originally on March agenda, but cancelled due to snow); see Appendix 17 of this report for detailed explanation of selection criteria.
10	Send 8 CIPs to EAP before next mtg	<u>Accepted</u> -CIPS were provided to EAP prior to March meeting through mailing; Districts described efforts to EAP at March and May meetings.
11	Renegotiate next date re: RFP development	<u>Modified</u> -Conference call among EAP members held in February re: RFP recommendations
12	Monitoring-Report Format 1, 3, 4, 5 – RESULTS – EFFORTS 2 - RESULTS – EFFORTS Discussion of findings Include Tables	<u>Accepted</u> -See REPORT ON DOCUMENTED PROGRESS (pgs. 3-51))
13	Extracurricular-Verify data field w/extensive SAMPLE – Do you know defn Locate list of extra curr & partic w/ID	<u>Modified</u> - See MONITORING; DATA ACCURACY; and EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY sections (p. 56, p. 51, and p. 94 respectively)
14	Legal response to transportation question regarding extracurricular	<u>Accepted</u> - Forwarded to Attorney General’s office, verbal response was yes if part of IEP, otherwise it’s an access only issue
15	Transportation System Study to determine if there are alternative means to support integration efforts. Reg ed vs. Sp Ed transportation 1) TA field from school 2) Extra-curricular	<u>Under consideration</u>
16	Clarify Class Membership – LEGAL QUESTION re: - Retain status if declassified?	<u>Under consideration</u>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rationale for exit group (gender/ethnicity)?</li> <li>- how are students served who are not classified ID?</li> </ul>	
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<b>March Meeting 2003</b>		
<b>Item #</b>	<b>EAP Recommendation</b>	<b>Resulting Action</b>
1	Set standards by district to judge progress by each goal – standard is 100% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ At end of general curriculum IEP discussion, address natural environ.</li> <li>➤ Be [sensitive, cautious] when talking about the 100%, so you don't get resistance (needs to be worked into the conversation carefully) “teachable moment”</li> </ul>	<u>Modified</u> - All districts in state, required to set benchmarks for each goal. Level I and second year “16” required to submit to the CSDE by July 2003.  <u>Rejected</u> - Standard not set at 100%; no required numerical standard established.
2	IEP standards-based and method for determining AYP. Making the link to IDEA & NCLB	<u>Under Consideration</u>
3	Leverage thru the Commissioner for selected foot draggers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Don't use frequently, or lightly; document this in the annual report (maybe not ident. LEA-but note it as being used)</li> <li>➤ Use in those districts in context w/other issues (i.e.:NCLB)</li> <li>➤ When districts take \$ &amp; go opposite direction (ex. of when to use this)</li> </ul>	<u>Accepted</u> - implementation to be used as necessary
4	PJ is short term focus – place in context of whole district on each school e.g. Enfield	<u>Modified</u> - While School Based Practices Profile emphasis and training is whole district, and during action planning, grant development, and technical assistance or training

		<p>the district personnel are encouraged to broaden perspective for a whole district , CSDE is clear it will be maintaining specific intense focus during monitoring and data analysis on ID and the use of funds, training, and technical assistance for demonstrated impact on ID students</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Leadership development should be vertical and most often combining general/special educators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Not just admin leadership, but teacher leadership as well</li> </ul>	<p><u>Under consideration</u></p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Getting to scale: 8 to 50 – (A.) 1 grant program; (B.) 2 Tiers I &amp; II only; (C.) Tier I 400k; Tier 2, 10 grants 50k; Bonus 50k, and 5 demo sites – Greenwich etc “No supplanting” Use EAP to review grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Demo Sites: peer to peer ability to visit support LEAs to open doors to others to (see 2 prior items)</li> <li>➤ What’s in it for SDE? What’s in it for LEA? Create incentives to support the answers to these questions</li> <li>➤ Support LEAs because they are quality for all kids, not just P.J. (to be sure visitors are seeing quality in many areas during the observation)</li> <li>➤ Competition critical feature to innovation</li> <li>➤ EAP critique RFP</li> <li>➤ <u>Accountability</u> for this \$ critical \$500,000</li> <li>➤ 8 get \$50,000 (\$25,000 → \$100,000)</li> <li>➤ \$ to chains (3) not one building</li> </ul>	<p><u>Modified-</u> See GRANT ACTIVITY section of report (p. 96) for modifications</p>

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	<p>(this applies to Demo, 8 &amp; comp.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ LEA writes specific criteria for the 8</li> <li>➤ 21 compete \$50,000 (\$500,000)</li> <li>➤ 4-5 Demos = \$400,000</li> <li>➤ \$ balanced w/magnitude</li> </ul>	
7	<p>Public Display of Data Multi-methods:  -Web  -Newspaper  -Press Conference</p> <p>District by District Comparison</p>	<p><u>Modified</u>- All district superintendents have received every districts' data for comparison from 1998-2002</p> <p><u>Under consideration</u>- other public methods of display are under consideration</p>
8	<p>Self-Assessment using PJ data – Required PJ quarterly</p>	<p><u>Modified</u>- All districts in the state are required to conduct a self-assessment using December '02 data and develop an action plan by fall 2003. Level I and second year “16” districts will be developing action plans based on June 2003 data and reviewing data on June/July '03 ; December '03; March '04 and June '04 schedule to revise their action plans, as appropriate.</p>
9	<p>Continuous Improvement Plans Keyed to Self-Assessment</p>	<p><u>Accepted</u>- All districts in state are required to develop action plans by fall 2003.</p>
10	<p>Follow-up on all plans</p> <p>7-10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Put data in front of <u>everybody</u> Getting out to Level II Where they stand &amp; relative to every else</li> <li>➤ Improvement Plan – must address P.J. goals</li> <li>➤ Use what has been learned from 8 to use as a self-monitoring protocol</li> <li>➤ maybe even entire state-Require frequent reporting of data (more often than annually) ¼ ly. ⚙</li> <li>➤ Attach flow-through IDEA to P.J.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Accepted</u>-Data from 1998-2002 provided to every district; action plans with targets set for each goal of the Settlement Agreement required of all districts by fall 2003;</p> <p><u>Modified</u>- Follow up will be specifically conducted for the Level III and second year “16” districts. Spot checking will occur with the remainder of the state based on CSDE's capacity at the time; data required June/July '03, December '03, March '04 and June '04 for</p>



	<p>on LEA Improvement Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Figure out how many LEAs to monitor + capacity to monitor.</li> </ul>	<p>Level III and second year “16” districts</p> <p><u>Under Consideration</u>- attaching IDEA flow-through money to action plans</p>
11	<p>Convene Annual mtg on “Lessons Learned”  Annual Mtg.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Invite all people in CT</li> <li>➤ Have 8 speak to lessons learned</li> <li>➤ Celebrate – 8 are the Stars</li> <li>➤ Grant \$ set aside to present</li> </ul>	<p><u>Under Consideration</u></p>
12	<p>Convene ad hoc groups on selected barrier topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access curriculum</li> <li>2. Building AYP rubrics</li> <li>3. Union Involvement</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sit w/union leadership (Ted) to discuss the issues</li> <li>➤ Don’t present this as a problem – go with we need to look together at this</li> <li>➤ Para – (extracur / trans / etc) (D. Shaw Comment)</li> <li>➤ Rubrics around goal #1</li> </ul>	<p><u>Under Consideration</u></p>
13	<p>Evaluation – EAP critique of Progress toward goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ EAP is an evaluator</li> <li>➤ May conversation</li> </ul>	<p><u>Accepted</u>- This will be included in the EAP’s written response to the Second Annual Report</p>
14	<p>Next Meeting of EAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ May meeting – remaining districts</li> <li>➤ Spread 3-am, 3-pm, same day; ½ hr, 1<sup>st</sup> day</li> <li>➤ Barriers brainstorm</li> <li>➤ Prep for June Report</li> </ul>	<p><u>Accepted</u>-all items included on May agenda; arrival and departure time as recommended; all material provided in advance of meeting</p> <p><u>Modified</u>- Five districts presented Day 1 and one district presented</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Drill down on 8 monitoring reports &amp; protocols</li> <li>➤ Pre K conversation</li> <li>➤ PM Day 1 or AM Day 2</li> <li>-Disproportion</li> <li>-including criteria for ID</li> <li>-quality of instruct.</li> <li>-rich discussion needed</li> <li>-provide info in advance to EAP</li> <li>➤ Wed. pm arrival, Fri. 1:30 departure</li> <li>➤ Proposals sent to EAP that were awarded to 6 LEAs coming to May mtg.</li> </ul>	Day 2; Grant proposals not yet awarded, but will be sent to EAP when completed (July 2003); ID criteria to be discussed during October 2003 EAP meeting;
15	Integrated Related Services topic for mtg agenda in future	<u>Accepted</u> - to be scheduled for January 2004 EAP meeting (unless October 2003 meeting agenda can accommodate this)

<b>May Meeting 2003</b>		
<b>Item #</b>	<b>EAP Recommendation</b>	<b>Resulting Action</b>
1	Identification/criteria. – October meeting	<u>Accepted</u> - Will place on October EAP agenda
2	Data – disproportionality-summer data runs- October meeting	<u>Accepted</u> - Will complete for October EAP agenda
3	Grant criteria- send to districts to assist in the development of action plans of districts	<u>Accepted</u> - Criteria developed and mailed to districts in May 2003
4	Data trend analysis (all 8 & grant recipients)- be consistent in application across all uses of trend analysis  Look at these during Oct mtg	<u>Accepted but deferred</u> -Due to the timing of this request, the CSDE does not have the capacity to complete the grant recipients trend lines until after the issuing of the Second Annual Report.  <u>Accepted</u> - will include on October EAP agenda

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5	Districts need to host the parent training (be clear with the districts, black & white, SDE and LEA can do it together or LEA can create their own way of doing parent training – BUT DO IT)	<u>Under consideration</u>
6	IHE conversation (document reach out, related service, teachers, school psych.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- technical assistance</li> <li>- pre-service</li> <li>- use leverage at state level – Due Process</li> </ul>	<u>Accepted-</u> see section of report on ACTIVITIES 2003-04: Qualified Specialists (p. 102)
7	Take 1:1 situation (Wallingford) to make successful	<u>Under Consideration</u>
8	Contract w/UCE	<u>Under Consideration</u>
9	E- mail conversation about SERC TA; individual LEA effort-measure change  Evaluation model: 1) Methodology consistent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 8</li> <li>- 16</li> <li>- everyone</li> <li>- SERC</li> </ul> 2) Start w/data you have (60-90 days) 3) EAP critique methods of monitoring (fall)	<u>Accepted-</u> see Appendix 2- <u>A Report of SERC’s Technical Assistance and Professional Development 2002-03</u>
10	Preschool (LRE reverse mainstreaming) 50% ? 30% ? natural proportions	<u>Under Consideration-</u> as a Preschool LRE circular letter has just been distributed to the field, this recommendation is being taken into advisement; no decision yet made on whether or not to alter the position taken in the Preschool LRE circular letter
11	Data Trend line	<u>Accepted-but deferred</u> -Due to the timing of this request, the CSDE does not have the capacity to complete for remaining districts until after the issuing of the Second

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		Annual Report.
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<b>Feedback on Second Annual Report June 13, 2003</b>		
<b>Item #</b>	<b>EAP Recommendation</b>	<b>Resulting Action</b>
1	<p>What is the purpose of the report? To present findings only or to inform the court and to inform EAP in order for them to write an independent critique.</p> <p>Re-state the five goals in first three paragraphs and spell out abbreviations for all readers.</p>	<p><u>Modified</u>-CSDE looked at the wording in the Settlement Agreement as to the purpose of the report and included that language.</p> <p><u>Accepted</u>- Listed the goals without abbreviations as paragraph three of the report. Additionally, have included an abbreviations index for readers as a part of the report.</p>
2	Liked district by district data pertaining to 5 goals for Level III districts; summary table that combines all the data by district by goal.	<u>Accepted</u> - Summary table combining Level III districts by district by goal included. Tables of all districts in the state are in a combined table, by goal in Appendixes A-F
3	Drop distinction between mean and median percent time for goal 3.	<u>Rejected</u> -The Settlement Agreement requires the CSDE to report on the mean <u>and</u> median
4	Stick with mean estimates to be consistent with the rest of the data sets	<u>Rejected</u> -The Settlement Agreement requires the CSDE to report on the mean <u>and</u> median
5	Delete all future and anticipatory statements in main body. Write a separate section that outlines the CSDE's projections for the future.	<u>Accepted</u> -Refer to section of report on REPORTS OF DOCUMENTED PROGRESS (pgs. 3-51); future and anticipatory statements are removed from main body
6	Delete all district provided apologia for negative data. . Just report the results without comments - Short, straightforward presentation of the data without a lot of extraneous comments	<u>Accepted</u> -REPORTS ON DOCUMENTED PROGRESS (pgs. 3-51) is separated into <b>Data</b> which is just the straightforward presentation of data and <b>Commentary</b> which is explanatory

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	Write a separate section that outlines all explanations positive or negative.	
7	Highlight and footnote for goals 4 and 5 in the first section the issue of inaccurate data. Drop the rest of the explanation there. Then in explanation section of the report for goals 4 and 5, what are you as CSDE going to do that increases the accurateness and validity of the data.	<u>Accepted</u> - Refer to section of report on DATA ACCURACY (p. 51) and ACTIVITIES 2003-04 (p. 102)
8	Agrees that those with fewer than 20 students can be examined in the aggregate	<u>Accepted</u> -No action required
9	Wants a more detailed district by district, goal by goal, breakout for the more populous districts and the 53 Level II district separately	<u>Modified</u> -District by district tables were compiled for each goal for the 39 of the 53 Level II, more populous districts having 20 or more ID students, rather than tables for all 53 of the Level II districts
10	Would like to see scoring criteria for regular class placement for the LRE action plan noncompetitive grants vs. "time with non-disabled peers"	<u>Accepted</u> -See GRANTS section (p. 96)
11	Build a trend line for the State as a whole and individual targeted districts in Level 1 districts in this report and in Level 2 districts in next year's report. Dr Coulter is available and willing to help you here.	<u>Accepted but deferred</u> -Due to the timing of this request, the CSDE does not have the capacity to complete this until after the issuing of the Second Annual Report. Contact made to Dr. Coulter for assistance on June 19, 2003.
12	Consider a three column table on p. 50 to display EAP recommendation – Column 1 -Rec – Column 2 – Reject – Modify – or Used – Column 3 – Action Taken by CDSE	<u>Modified</u> -While the CSDE would have responded to this recommendation, a two column format was completed prior to receipt of this recommendation from the EAP. Due to time constraints, the CSDE chose not to revise this system, but to assure the information from each recommended column was included in the format seen here.

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13	Commend CDSE for looking into the role of RESC's and the goals of settlement agreement.	<u>Accepted</u> -No action required
14	Preschool addition into the settlement agreement is to be commended.	<u>Accepted</u> -No action required

## PRESCHOOL

Early in the year, the CSDE clarified a question from the plaintiffs as to whether the class membership included preschool-aged children. The CSDE has indicated that children identified as intellectually disabled who are in preschool programs are included in the class. The data for this population of students has been reported for students in the preschool data section of this report (see Appendix F).

During several EAP meetings conversations were held regarding the need to examine LRE practices at this early level as the services, environments and expectations “set the stage” for inclusive practices and family input as the child transitions to kindergarten. Parent training to this age group; clear messages from the CSDE to districts on LRE for preschool; and action plans for focused monitoring of school districts were all included in the conversations and recommendations (see EAP section of this report, p. 79.)

The CSDE issued a preschool education position statement from the State Board of Education in September 2002 (see Appendix 42- Preschool Position Statement) and in April 2003 a circular letter from the Commissioner (see Appendix 43 -Preschool Circular Letter C-28) and a jointly developed Data Bulletin (see Appendix 44- Preschool Data Bulletin) from the Bureaus of Early Childhood and Social Services, Special Education and Pupil Services, and Student Assessment and Research. These documents are intended to inform the field on the CSDE’s position on LRE for preschool children with disabilities, including students with intellectual disability; and the status of the state’s data with that position. The CSDE intends to reinforce to all school districts and stakeholders that LRE for preschool students is required as identified in IDEA and that LRE for this population can be achieved through the utilization of early childhood settings, reversed mainstream settings and itinerant services.

Trainings throughout the course of this past year have focused on many preschool topics, including LRE. These specifically have included CSDE training and technical assistance opportunities sponsored through SERC including the “Together We Will” early childhood

conference that highlighted effective models throughout Connecticut for including preschool aged children in the least restrictive environment. Other trainings that have been offered this year are identified in the Early Childhood Initiative Booklet (see Appendix 2-A Report of SERC's Technical Assistance and Professional Development 2002-03.)

During the 2002-03 school year \$872,400.00 was awarded through federal money grants for preschool LRE programming. This was awarded to nine (9) school districts including: Branford, Bristol, Hebron, Killingly, New London, Redding, Ridgefield, Stratford and Windham. Grant reports are due June 30, 2003, so reporting on the impact of these monies will be reported in the coming year.



## STATE POLICY REVIEW

During the March 2003 Expert Advisory Panel, the CSDE presented several state policies for review and began a conversation with the EAP about the policies' impact on the least restrictive environment for children with intellectual disability. The Connecticut Statutes presented were **State aid for Special Education** (CGS Section 10-76g(a)(b)(c)); **Duties and powers of boards of education to provide special education programs and services. Determination of eligibility for Medicaid. State agency placements; apportionment of costs. Relationship of insurance to special education costs** (CGS Section 10-76d(e)(2) and (3) and (5)); and **School construction grant for cooperative regional special education facilities** (CGS Section 10-76e) (see Appendix 45-Special Education Costs-State Reimbursement Statutes.)

The CSDE has asked the Expert Advisory Panel to review these statutes and provide the CSDE with a written report during the fall of 2003 on any barriers these policies may impose on continuous improvement of the goals of the Settlement Agreement, with recommendations for revisions to these policies as needed.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Efforts to address outcome #3-students participation in extracurricular activities is being addressed in several ways. Foremost the CSDE has been conducting activities to address accuracy of data including clarity of terms and accurate reporting procedures. Trainings were conducted in the fall of 2003 for data managers and other school personnel involved in the annual December reporting. At this training, definitions and examples were offered to assist districts in understanding what constitutes an extracurricular activity and how to report it. In addition, the CSDE provided the districts with a mandatory Individualized Education Program (IEP) document (see Appendix 46- IEP and Appendix 47- IEP-Circular Letter C-4) to be used effective November 2003 which records participation in extracurricular activities, in addition to the already included information on the extent of participation in extracurricular activities and the necessary adaptation and modifications necessary to participate in extracurricular activities. A training manual was issued to the district along with the IEP to explain how to complete these items on the new mandated form (see Appendix 48-IEP Training Document.)

In addition to the training efforts to assist in assuring accuracy of data, the CSDE has conducted data verification monitoring in the Level III districts (see DATA ACCURACY section of this report, p. 51). Districts continue to express the need for clarity on what is considered as an extracurricular activity at the elementary level and for PPTs to have knowledge of the activities that are already occurring within their elementary schools that meet this definition.

One issue that was raised during the Expert Advisory Panel during the October meeting was clarification on the provision of transportation to extracurricular activities. This was verbally clarified by the Attorney General's office that extracurricular activities may include transportation based on the individual circumstances of the student.

For districts that are engaged in developing, encouraging, and enhancing extracurricular participation for students with intellectual disability, the CSDE is making available copies of the *A Study of School-Sponsored Extracurricular Activities in Public School Settings Implications for Professional Development* (see **Annual Report- June 30, 2002, Appendix #12**) for information about the issues and strategies for providing effective extracurricular activities.

## GRANT ACTIVITY

Over the past year the CSDE has been developing several grant proposals to assist districts in their implementation of effective and responsible inclusive practices, specifically to address the outcomes of the Settlement Agreement. Preschool grants are discussed in the PRESCHOOL section of this report on p. 91. Disproportionality grants are discussed in the DISPROPORTIONATE section of this report on p. 55. After conferring with the Expert Advisory Panel and SERC, the CSDE decided to award three different grant opportunities specific to the Settlement Agreement.

The first grant awards of up to a total of \$400,000 will be to the eight (8) Level III districts (up to \$50,000 each) that underwent focused monitoring this past year. The money is intended to assist them in the implementation of their current action plans (see Appendix 49-Grant Application-Focused Monitoring.) One critical element required to receive the award is for the districts to set targets for each of the five (5) outcomes of the Settlement Agreement. Decisions to award the grants will be based on the acceptability of the ID Focused Monitoring Action Plan to meet the grant requirements, and conversations between the CSDE consultant assigned to the district for monitoring and district personnel.

The second grant awards of up to a total of \$800,000 will be to the sixteen (16) districts (up to \$50,000 each) identified as below state averages in three of four of the outcomes of the Settlement Agreement (outcomes # 1, 3, 4 and/or 5). The critical features of this grant include a district-wide team to direct the process; targets established for the outcomes of the Settlement Agreement; developmental program evaluation component to direct and evaluate the process in an on-going manner; and impact across an entire district or feeder-chain (this is for larger districts in which several elementary schools feed to one of several middle schools which feeds to one of several high schools within the district) (see Appendix 19-Grant Application-LRE Action Plan).

The CSDE provided a half day of technical assistance to the sixteen districts (thirteen were in attendance) on the specifications for writing an acceptable application. Decisions to award these grants will be based on criteria developed by the CSDE with recommendations provided by the Expert Advisory Panel at the May EAP meeting (see Appendix 50- Grant Application-LRE Action Plan criteria for approval). Each application will be reviewed by the CSDE consultants conducting focused monitoring for approval.

Included in the criteria for approval of grants is the expectation that targets be set for each of the goals of the Settlement Agreement for 2003-04 and 2004-05. The CSDE will make individual decisions on the appropriateness of targets established by each district. These determinations will be determined based on analysis of the district's data; review of the comprehensiveness and thoroughness of the district's analysis and the appropriateness of the district's response to this analysis.

The third grant awards of up to a total of \$300,000 is devoted to promoting up to eight (8) districts (up to \$50,000 each) that are currently including children with intellectual disability to serve as "spotlight" districts to showcase their efforts to visiting school personnel. The critical features of this application (see Appendix 19- Grant Application-Spotlight) are the willingness to host visitors monthly to explain the successes and challenges of including children with intellectual disability in regular classes in order to promote this successfully in the visiting school, provide role-alike conversations between school personnel from the host district and the visiting district, and to arrange for observations of responsible and effective inclusive programming for students with intellectual disability. The following districts, Farmington, Greenwich, Groton, Guilford, Stafford, Stratford, South Windsor, and Suffield, were selected to be considered for this award based on several criteria: ten (10) or more students with intellectual disability; district data exceeding the December 2002 data for students with intellectual disability in the areas of average time with non-disabled peers; regular class placement; and home school enrollment; ID prevalence rate between .3% and 1.1%; and CMT participation rate at state average in at least one area (reading, writing, or math) across 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

The CSDE conducted a half-day of training for the eight (8) districts being considered for funding. Decision to award these grants will be determined through a review of the application materials and a site visit evaluation (see Appendix 51-Grant Application-Spotlight criteria for acceptance) conducted by two members from the CSDE consulting staff engaged in ID focused monitoring and the SERC consulting staff that oversee training plans for each of the Level III districts.

Grant applications for all three awards are due to the CSDE by July 1, 2003.

## OUT OF DISTRICT PLACEMENTS

Connecticut has a variety of public and private school settings that serve as service delivery options for school districts when determining placement in the least restrictive environment. Some of these programs offer services for their students with disabilities, with nondisabled peers. Additionally, through several of the regional education service centers (RESC) throughout the state, students with disabilities, including students with intellectual disabilities may receive services in an array of settings, with and without nondisabled peers. The six RESCs are ACES (Area Cooperative Educational Services), serving the central portion of the state; CES (Cooperative Educational Services), serving the southern portion of the state; CREC (Capitol Region Educational Services) serving the north central portion of the state; EASTCONN (Eastern Connecticut) serving the north eastern portion of the state; EDCONN (Educational Connections) serving the north western portion of the state; and LEARN serving the shoreline of the state.

The RESCs provide programs for students with disabilities in a variety of ways including segregated out of district programs, segregated classrooms within public school buildings, direct service to students with disabilities who attend their local public school, and technical assistance to districts to meet the needs of a unique student or group of students. School districts, through PPTs, place students in RESC programs. These students are tuitioned by the district to the RESC. RESCs are not considered Local Education Agencies (LEA) under the IDEA. The CSDE has had multiple meetings with the Executive Directors and/or Special Education Directors from the RESCs.

Topics of these meetings have included the following:

- a review of the goals of the Settlement Agreement;
- the impact of the Settlement Agreement on out-of-district placements;
- decision making at PPT meetings;

- the district's obligation to develop programs and services that provide FAPE in the LRE;
- the role of the RESC in transitioning a student back to district;
- the role of the RESC in developing programs/services within local school districts;
- the role of the RESC in providing technical assistance to districts in order to develop programs or meet the unique needs of a student;
- the role of the RESC in assisting a district to develop a program in order to return a group of students with similar needs to the district;
- the more careful review and analysis of need by the CSDE of requests to build regional space/facilities for students with disabilities, including requests from RESCs; and
- ways to provide incentives to districts to provide space for RESC programs in public school settings.

During the course of the 2003-04 school year, the CSDE has instituted Program Review of the RESCs as educational service providers to students with disabilities. In the course of the compliance review, the CSDE has examined patterns of placements of students with intellectual disability in these programs. This review has identified specific districts that have exceptionally high number of students in these placements. This information will be used during the 2003-04 school year to assist in monitoring of school districts regarding the use of out of district placement for students with intellectual disability.



## **PLAINTIFFS**

On September 30, 2003 the first annual report was submitted to the Courts, Expert Advisory Panel and the Plaintiffs as required by the Agreement. This led to a written response by the Plaintiffs in a correspondence to Judge Chatigny dated October 18, 2002 (Appendix 52-Plaintiff's written response October 18, 2002). The CSDE has reviewed this response and provided an opportunity for the Plaintiffs to dialogue with the CSDE and the Expert Advisory Panel regarding issues raised in the response. Multiple issues raised by the Plaintiffs have been incorporated into the activities of the CSDE throughout this past year and in the activities being proposed for 2003-04.

On May 21, 2003 the CSDE met with the Plaintiffs' representatives David Shaw and Ginger Spiers. During this meeting the parties agreed to clearer responsiveness from the CSDE to plaintiffs written reports and issues to assist in the communication process and to effect more rapid change of the Settlement Agreement. The CSDE intends to meet with the Plaintiffs during the 2003-04 year to discuss in more detail the October 2002 letter as no written response or verbal dialogue occurred between the parties in response to the letter.

The Plaintiffs most critical issue was the need for technical assistance and parent training that will impact the advocacy for individual student's programs, with a sustaining impact in the years beyond the jurisdiction of the Settlement Agreement. The parties agreed that this effort should be facilitated and supported in its development by the CSDE, but that CSDE staff should not be attending Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings for decision-making on individual student's programs.

## **ACTIVITIES : 2003-04**

### **Monitoring**

During the upcoming 2003-04 school year, the CSDE will continue to monitor the eight (8) districts identified in 2002-03. Additionally, the CSDE will examine the submissions from the sixteen (16) districts identified for 2003-04 to determine required next steps. During the year, the CSDE will also be contacting districts throughout the state to examine and discuss the implementation of the action plans on file with the districts for the Settlement Agreement outcomes. Monitoring of hearing officers' decisions will continue, as well.

These twenty-four districts will be provided with visual displays of district data specific to the Settlement Agreement showing trend lines as well as projected goal attainment lines.

The focus of monitoring for the eight (8) districts in the upcoming year will be on the participation and progress of students in the general curriculum; use of promising practices; and the availability of supplementary aids and services to support regular class placements. This will require on-site observations, staff interviews and data collection prior to December 2003 and then again prior to March 2004. These districts will continue to be required to update data December 1, 2003 through the annual PCI reporting collection of all students with disabilities, and then again, specifically for students with intellectual disability in March 2004 and June 25, 2004. CSDE consultants will examine districts' data trends (following data submissions) in July 2003; December 2003; and March 2004 and the results of fall and winter monitoring. With this information, the CSDE will develop monitoring reports that will effect the revision of the districts ID focused monitoring action plans. These plans will be examined and revised as appropriate in July 2003, December 2003 and again in March 2004.

The sixteen districts selected for 2003-04 monitoring will be submitting analysis and action plans by July 1, 2003 on goals 1, 3, 4 and 5 of the Settlement Agreement (for description of

submission, see Appendix 19-Grant Application-LRE Action Plan). Districts will be required with the July 1, 2003 submission to include an updated collection of student data specific to the outcomes of the Settlement Agreement that align with IEPs that will be implemented on the first day of school in the fall of 2003. The CSDE will determine, based on the thoroughness and quality of the July submission which districts will require data verification monitoring in the fall of 2004. Districts will need to submit updated data collection in December 2003; March 2004; and June 2004. CSDE will follow up with each district in December and January and then again in March and April to discuss the district's data and the impact of its implementation efforts. The June submission will be reviewed by the CSDE to determine if the district is demonstrating continuous improvement or whether more directive actions need to be instituted.

By September 1, 2003 the remaining one hundred and forty-five districts (145) in the state will be required to complete, implement and retain on file in the district an analysis of its district's data specific to the Settlement Agreement and an action plan to address that analysis, as appropriate. Throughout the remainder of the school year, the CSDE will contact a portion of these districts to discuss and make recommendations as appropriate with regard to the district's efforts and impact on addressing the outcomes of the Settlement Agreement.

Monitoring of hearing officer's decisions will continue during 2003-04 in a similar manner as this past year.

### **Data Accuracy Training and Monitoring**

The CSDE will be providing all districts with a Data Accuracy Bulletin during 2003-04, produced from the lessons learned with the monitoring of the eight (8) focused monitoring districts this past year. In addition to this Data Accuracy Bulletin, protocols for data verification will be included. Twenty-four districts (24), [the eight (8) Level III districts from 2002-03 and the sixteen (16) additional districts targeted for more focused review and

monitoring during 2003-04], are required to submit data verification plans by July 2003 to assure their December 2003 data is valid and reliable.

During the 2003-04 school year, there will be revised PCI training to assist data entry personnel in understanding data definitions and the heightened focus on accuracy. The CSDE anticipates offering professional development on the accurate collection and use of data for directors of special education and additional training offered in collaboration with the Connecticut Council of Special Education Administrators (CONNCASE) regarding these same issues.

Throughout the course of 2003-04 random data accuracy checks will be conducted throughout the state.

### **Technical Assistance**

CSDE through its collaboration with SERC will be expanding its technical assistance plan for the 2003-04 school year. A complete and thorough description of these offerings are included in Appendix 2- A Report of SERC's Technical Assistance and Professional Development 2003-04). Highlights of these items are offered below.

Training and technical assistance will be provided to the eight (8) districts from 2002-03 and to the sixteen (16) districts for 2003-04. Specifically, the **School Based Practices Profile** and *Step-By-Step* training will be offered at no cost to the districts.

Additionally, CSDE will support through SERC, statewide opportunities in the areas of evaluation; IEP development; PPT decision-making; data analysis; instructional delivery models, curriculum accommodations and modifications; the use of supplementary aids and services; and other promising practices in the implementation of services to students with disabilities, specifically students with intellectual disability, in regular classes.

The CSDE is also interested in offering training and technical assistance to districts that are demonstrating effective programming for students with intellectual disability and have district data that exceeds the state averages in educating students with intellectual disability in their home school and in regular classes.

Regarding the activities for addressing goal 2, disproportionate identification, of the Settlement Agreement, the CSDE anticipates coordinating efforts with the Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction and the Commissioner's Office to develop opportunities to address this outcome for all students, and specifically for students with intellectual disability. Efforts to address this goal need more focus during the 2003-04 year.

It should be noted that the technical assistance and training provided through the CSDE and SERC is considered one component of a comprehensive technical assistance system. Other components of this system are to be developed by districts, regional education service centers (RESC), university/college faculty and other "qualified specialists". The CSDE will continue the development and implementation of a comprehensive technical assistance system into the future and as described for 2003-04 in Appendix 2. A Report of SERC's Technical Assistance and Professional Development 2003-04).

### **Qualified Specialists**

During the summer of 2003 the CSDE will be issuing the first edition of a resource directory of qualified specialists that are available to assist districts in the education of students with intellectual disability in their home school and in regular classrooms. It is anticipated that this directory will be revised annually as the pool of specialists expands.

During the 2003 year, through mailings and publicity, other individuals interested in developing further expertise in inclusive programming for students with intellectual disability will be identified. The CSDE will provide an orientation session and training opportunities for these individuals in order to expand the individuals that are identified in the resource

directory. Upon completion of specific requirements, which are currently being developed, these individuals may elect to be included in the state's resource directory. The development of the criteria for inclusion for the directory was begun this past year through the forums with the group of qualified specialists gathered in January and February 2003 (see QUALIFIED SPECIALIST section of this report, p. 66.)

In addition to developing individual consultant's capacity, the CSDE will engage SERC and the RESCs in conversation about developing regional technical assistance teams and individuals to assist districts through the RESC system. The specifics of how these teams would be trained and operate needs to be discussed in greater detail with SERC, school district representatives and the special education and professional development personnel within the RESC system. During the fall of 2003 conversations will begin with an action plan for implementation developed by the spring of 2004.

In addition to addressing in-service training to impact the number of qualified specialists in the state, the CSDE will attempt to begin dialogues with the Department of Higher Education. The CSDE also anticipates holding conversations with the Deans of Education at the state's seven institutions of higher education that prepare special education and related services professionals, preschool through grade 12. These include Fairfield University, Saint Joseph College, Central Connecticut State University; Southern Connecticut State University; Western Connecticut State University; University of Connecticut; and University of Hartford.

### **Parents**

CPAC and CSDE met with the Parent Training Organizations during May and June 2003 to develop a two year training plan (see Appendix 41-Parent Training Plan 2003-05). The plan includes the following:

- Opportunities to provide information to families in a variety of ways including meeting with small groups in community settings and having one on one interactions;
- A focus on families of young children;
- A focus on providing local districts with the tools to customize and conduct their own training;
- Creating opportunities for students with an intellectual disability to be involved in the training;
- Presenting multiple examples of success stories from Connecticut;
- Outreach to families of students who do not have disabilities;
- A focus on the topics of accommodations and modifications and involvement in extra-curricular activities and friendships; and
- Support to identified districts to include families in the planning process from the beginning.

### **Expert Advisory Panel**

For the 2003-04 year, the Expert Advisory Panel (EAP) will be convened at least three times as stipulated in the Settlement Agreement. These meetings have been scheduled with coordination between the CSDE and the EAP for October 9 and 10, 2003; January 22 and 23, 2004; and May 6 and 7, 2004.

In addition to utilizing the EAP in an advisory capacity, the CSDE will be utilizing the EAP to present at SERC's annual statewide LRE conference, *Expanding Horizons*, on October 8, 2004 and again for the leadership conference of administrators in general and special education to be held January 21, 2004.

## **Other**

### Analysis of parent contacts and complaints

The CSDE will be developing a formal system of logging and reviewing telephone contacts received by SERC and the CSDE of parents of the class and complaints received by the CSDE through the complaint resolution system developed under IDEA. These contacts will be analyzed for issue; age of student; district; information provided; findings of complaints and any other pertinent follow up contact and results that may occur.

### Disproportionality

Prior to the October EAP meeting the CSDE will conduct data analysis of districts regarding gender, race, and ethnicity. This data will be made available to districts for further use in developing district and building level responses for the over-identification of students with disabilities, including students with intellectual disability, specific to gender, race and ethnicity.

The State Department of Education is planning to convene Summit II in March, 2004. A Stakeholders' Planning Group will continue to assist in the development of Summit II.

### Preschool LRE

During the summer 2003 an institute is being held for early childhood educators entitled "Inclusive Practices for Preschool Children with Special Needs". The Commissioner has personally invited the eight (8) districts that were involved with focused monitoring this past year as well as the sixteen (16) districts identified for review for the 2003-04 year. Priority selection will be given to the eight (8) focused monitoring districts.

### Spotlight Visits

During the 2003-04 school year approximately five (5) districts will be hosting school personnel from throughout the state on a monthly basis. These five districts will be selected



by the CSDE through a grant process, based on the quality and frequency of provision of services to students with intellectual disabilities in regular classes (see Appendix 19-Grant application-Spotlight and Appendix 51- Grant application-Spotlight criteria for acceptance). They will receive grant monies to support their districts LRE efforts and for hosting visitors from other schools. The five Spotlight districts, as they are referred to, will provide tours, role-alike dialogues, materials, and follow up phone technical assistance to assist other districts in their efforts to provide appropriate instruction in regular education classes for students with intellectual disabilities.

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