



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES
STATEWIDE COORDINATOR FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION
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TO: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Schools
Presidents of Boards of Education
New York City Board of Education
Principals of Public Schools
Directors of Pupil Personnel Services
Administrators of Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Schools
Organizations, Parents and Individuals Concerned with Special Education
Impartial Hearing Officers
Commissioner's Advisory Panel for Special Education Services
Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Centers
Regional School Support Centers

FROM: James P. DeLorenzo

SUBJECT: NEW REGIONAL SPECIAL EDUCATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SUPPORT CENTERS

The purpose of this memorandum is to announce the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) new network of technical assistance and school improvement for students with disabilities. With the establishment of new Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Centers (RSE-TASC), NYSED now has a comprehensive and coordinated system of technical assistance and school improvement resources available to directly assist school districts, particularly those school districts with the poorest performance for students with disabilities, in improving results for students with disabilities.

RSE-TASCs replace the former Special Education Training and Resource Network (SETRC), Transition Coordination Sites (TCSs) and regional Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) Centers and provide a new focus, charge and structure for special education technical assistance. We are confident that the new structure will be even more effective in special education school improvement in New York State.



Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Centers (RSE-TASC)

Effective July 1, 2009, VESID's special education network will include 10 RSE-TASC (see Attachment 1). Each RSE-TASC includes both regional technical assistance specialists and special education school improvement specialists who are located within each Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and in each of the Big Five School Districts (Buffalo, New York City, Syracuse, Rochester and Yonkers). While the regional specialists will provide training and technical assistance to groups of school districts across the region, the special education school improvement specialists will be working solely with those school districts identified by VESID for ongoing school district improvement in core instructional areas for students with disabilities.

The RSE-TASC regions are aligned with the Joint Management Team regions of the State and in New York City. As a network, all RSE-TASC will work in partnership with VESID's Special Education Quality Assurance (SEQA) offices, and other NYSED supported initiatives (see Attachment 2) to provide directed technical assistance and professional development to improve instructional practices and outcomes of students with disabilities. The new RSE-TASC are specifically structured with resources that will provide expertise to school districts to improve core instructional programs that research has shown to be effective for students with disabilities and to provide improved coordination of regional resources and accountability to VESID for results. Specialists and their roles and responsibilities within RSE-TASC are as follows:

- RSE-TASC Coordinator will serve as the liaison to VESID for all services provided in the region and to ensure that the technical assistance services are delivered by specialists according to VESID's requirements.
- Regional Special Education Training Specialists will provide training and information through regional training sessions relating to special education compliance and effective practices.
- Bilingual Special Education Specialists will provide regional information and technical assistance to communicate compliance and effective practices for bilingual/English language learner (ELL) students with disabilities.
- Nondistrict Technical Assistance Providers will provide training, technical assistance on special education and school improvement to selected school-age approved private schools.
- Transition Specialists will work with school districts to improve their individualized education programs (IEPs), policies and practices relating to transition planning and services.
- Behavior Specialists will work with VESID designated school districts, and particularly with those school districts with significant discrepancies in the long term suspension rates for students with disabilities, to establish and sustain PBIS within those school districts, and will provide training and technical assistance on positive behavioral supports.

- o Special Education School Improvement Specialists will work with specific low performing school districts and other schools designated by VESID to improve instructional practices primarily in the areas of literacy, behavioral supports and special education for students with disabilities. Their charge is to help school districts build their capacity to close achievement gaps for students with disabilities. These specialists will provide targeted technical assistance to school districts determined by VESID as at risk of or as needing assistance or intervention to meet the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

For the directory of RSE-TASC, see Attachment 1. Attachment 2 provides a list of other NYSED special education technical assistance networks and resources.

Please share this memorandum with appropriate staff, including Directors of Special Education, Committee on Special Education (CSE) Chairpersons, Directors of Pupil Personnel Service, and Principals as well as Parent Teacher Associations. Questions regarding this memorandum may be directed to the Special Education Program Development and Support Services Unit at 518-486-7462 or to the local SEQA Office at:

Central Regional Office	(315) 476-5081
Eastern Regional Office	(518) 486-6366
Hudson Valley Regional Office	(518) 473-1185
Long Island Regional Office	(631) 884-8530
New York City Regional Office	(718) 722-4544
Western Regional Office	(585) 344-2002
Nondistrict Unit	(518) 473-1185

Attachment

Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Centers

REGION 1 – Long Island

Coordinator: Valerie Valenti
vvalenti@esboces.org
Eastern Suffolk BOCES
Sherwood Corporate Center
15 Andrea Drive
Holbrook, NY 11741
(631) 218-4197

REGION 2 – Lower Hudson

Coordinator: Patti Slobogin
pslobogin@pnwboces.org
Putnam-Northern Westchester BOCES
200 BOCES Drive
Yorktown Heights, New York 10598
(914) 248-2289

REGION 3 – Mid-Hudson

Coordinator: Cecilia Dansereau Rumley
celia.dansereaurumley@dcboces.org
Dutchess BOCES
900 Dutchess Turnpike
Poughkeepsie, New York 12603
(845) 486-4840 Ext. 3023

REGION 4 – Capital District/North Country

Coordinator: Kathy Gomes
kgomes@gw.neric.org
Capital Region BOCES
900 Watervliet Shaker Road
Albany, New York 12205
(518) 464-3938, 464-5128

REGION 5 – Central

Coordinator: Scott Slater
sslater@mail.boces.com
Jefferson-Lewis-Hamilton-Herkimer
Oneida BOCES
Arsenal Street Road
20104 NYS Route 3
Watertown, New York 13601
(315)779-7132
1-800-356-4356

REGION 6 – Mid-State

Coordinator: Janel Payette
jpayette@ocmboces.org
Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES
6075 East Molloy Road
PO Box 4774
Syracuse, NY 13221
(315) 492-0081

REGION 7 – Mid-South

Greater Southern Tier BOCES
459 Philo Road
Elmira NY 14903
Coordinator: Rebecca DeBottis
rdebotti@btboces.org
Located at Broome-Delaware-Tioga
BOCES
435 Glenwood Road
Binghamton, NY 13905
(607) 766-3769

REGION 8 – Mid-West

Coordinator: Cyndi Besig
cyndi_besig@boces.monroe.edu
Monroe 1 BOCES
15 Linden Park
Fairport, New York 14625
(585) 249-7025

REGION 9 – West

Coordinator: Sue Locke-Scott
SLockescott@e1b.org
Erie I BOCES
355 Harlem Road
West Seneca, NY 14224
(716) 821-7544

REGION 10 – New York City

Coordinator: Rita Philpot (acting)
Rphilpo@schools.nyc.gov
New York City Department of Education
52 Chambers Street, Room 220
New York, New York 10007
(212) 374-0776 - Office
(917) 445-2853 - Mobile

New York State Education Department (NYSED) Special Education Technical Assistance Centers and Resources

The Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) supports the following special education technical assistance centers and resources through its federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act funds. (Listed in alphabetical order).

Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) Project

NYSED provides funding to the Resource Center for the Visually Impaired (RCVI) for the purpose of assisting school districts to obtain accessible textbooks in alternative formats, such as Braille and large print. For information on resources available through RCVI, contact (585) 343-5384, ext 207.

Center for Autism and Related Disabilities

The Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) works with school districts to assist them in building capacity to develop effective educational programs for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). The Center also provides regional seminars to school professionals and parents on essential components of effective programs for students with ASD. Additional information on resources and assistance available through the CARD project can be found at <http://www.albany.edu/psy/autism/autism.html>.

Early Childhood Direction Centers

Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDCs) assist parents in the referral of their children for special education and provide training and parent education on the special education process; provide information and support for children transitioning from Early Intervention services to preschool special education; provide important assistance to ensure the timely evaluation and provision of services to preschool children with disabilities, including providing assistance to school districts in identifying approved evaluators for children with limited English proficiency; and link families, including those who are homeless or who care for foster children, to community supports such as respite, child care, Medicaid and other social services. More information on ECDCs is available at <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/preschool/ecdc.htm>. A listing of ECDCs is provided at <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/ecdc/locations.htm>.

Higher Education Support Center

The New York Higher Education Support Center (HESC) at Syracuse University promotes high quality inclusive teacher preparation programs and engages in and supports the professional development of selected schools throughout NYS. Additional information is available at <http://www.inclusion-ny.org/>.

Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Centers

NYSED/VESID has established 10 Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Centers (RSE-TASC) to act as a coordinated statewide network of special education technical assistance centers. NYSED directs the technical assistance resources of RSE-TASC to those school districts determined by VESID as at risk of or needing assistance or intervention to improve results for students with disabilities and to meet the State's targets for improvement as identified in the [State Performance Plan \(SPP\)](#). Each RSE-TASC includes both regional technical assistance specialists (such as behavior specialists, bilingual special education specialists, regional trainers, transition specialists and nondistrict technical assistance providers) as well as special education school improvement specialists (SE-SIS) who are located within each Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and in each of the Big Five School Districts (Buffalo, New York City, Syracuse, Rochester and Yonkers). While the regional specialists will provide training and technical assistance to groups of school districts across the region, the special education school improvement specialists will be working solely with those school districts identified by VESID for ongoing school district improvement in core instructional areas for students with disabilities. For additional information, see <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/rsetasc/home.html>.

Resource Center for Visually Impaired

The New York State Resource Center for Visually Impaired provides assistance to support students who are blind and visually impaired in achieving high standards of learning and independence. A Certified Teacher of the Visually Impaired/Orientation and Mobility Specialist is on staff to discuss instructional strategies, specific eye diseases and many other topics with teachers and other service providers, parents and family members who need to know about blindness and visual impairment. Professional services include training and consultation. Resource Center patrons can also take advantage of the special library, which circulates large print literature, adapted assessments and curricula, descriptive (voice captioned) videos for students, educational videos, and professional reference materials regarding students who are blind and visually impaired, including those with multiple disabilities. Specialized instructional materials manufactured by the American Printing House for the Blind are provided free of charge to students registered with the Resource Center as legally blind through the Federal Quota program. For further information, you may contact the Resource Center at (585) 343-5385.

Response to Intervention Technical Assistance Center

VESID provides funding to the State University College at Buffalo to operate the Response to Intervention Technical Assistance Center (Rtl-TAC). Rtl-TAC is part of NYSED's strategy to promote and build school district capacity to implement a systemic, Rtl process. This Center will work directly with 14 schools selected by VESID to develop model Rtl programs. Many of the activities and services of Rtl-TAC are available to assist all school districts in NYS as they develop their capacity to implement an Rtl program. The Rtl-TAC compiles/disseminates relevant and useful information, resources and tools relative to Rtl; conducts professional development sessions relating to Rtl through regional trainings, webinars and other forms of communication to school districts, parents; and is

developing a web-based resource on RtI. Additional information is available at <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/RTI.htm> and at www.nysrti.org.

Special Education Parent Centers

VESID funds thirteen (13) Special Education Parent Centers in NYS. The Special Education Parent Centers will provide parents of children with disabilities with information, resources, and strategies to promote their meaningful involvement in their children's education programs, including information regarding the special education process (referrals, individual evaluations and individualized education program (IEP) development and transition planning); assist in understanding their children's disabilities; promote early resolution of disputes between parents and school districts; promote the use of resolution sessions and special education mediation; assist in understanding procedural due process rights, including the right to impartial hearings and appeals and the State complaint process; and enhance parents' skills and levels of confidence to communicate effectively and work collaboratively with other schools and other stakeholders to advocate and actively participate in their children's education program.

Further information is available at <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/parentcenter309.htm>. A listing of Special Education Parent Centers is available at <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/parentcenters.htm>.

Supporting Successful Strategies to Achieve Improved Results (S³TAIR) Project

Through a federal grant project, VESID funds seven regional facilitators located throughout the State, including one in New York City, to identify school districts with effective instructional practices for students with disabilities and to document the school district's actions that led to these practices. The S³TAIR Project identifies schools that have implemented and sustained effective, evidence-based practices resulting in positive outcomes for students with disabilities, and will support replication of these practices in other schools. The overall goal of this project is to pair low performing districts with districts with effective practices. In 2008-09, VESID identified 31 schools/school districts with effective instructional practices leading to improved results for students with disabilities in such areas as literacy instruction, positive behavioral supports and interventions, effective instructional co-teaching practices and transition planning. Additional information on the S³TAIR Project is available at <http://www.s3tairproject.org/>.

Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality

Through a contract with VESID, the Metropolitan Center for Urban Education's Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality (TAC-D) works directly with school districts to provide technical assistance, resources and professional development to assist NYS school districts in revising policies, procedures, instructional and other practices that have resulted in a disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups (a) in special education and related services, (b) in specific disability categories, (c) or special education placements. TAC-D also provides professional development and support to other NYSED funded technical assistance providers and other school districts with professional development on issues relating to disproportionality by race/ethnicity in special education. Additional information is available at <http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/tacd.html>