



IDEA '97 UPDATE

A MONTHLY FAX BULLETIN FROM OSEP ON IDEA '97 ACTIVITIES
THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

JULY 17, 1997

VOL. I, No. 1

Dear Colleague:

Archived Information

Welcome to IDEA '97 UPDATE, a new report from the Office of Special Education Programs. Now that IDEA '97 is a reality, the work to implement it begins! For the next year, we plan to forward to you, at least once a month, this UPDATE to inform you of activities and events taking place that relate to the implementation of IDEA '97. OSEP plans to continue the spirit of collaboration used to develop the IDEA legislation. With your help, we hope to continue that spirit of unity and openness throughout the implementation. I look forward to sharing our activities, and those of our technical assistance and dissemination partners, with you throughout the next year as we ALL work towards better results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.

Tom Hehir

Director, Office of Special Education Programs

OUTREACH MEETINGS HELD

A wide range of advocacy groups and other organizations have participated in the OSEP/OSERS series of outreach meetings this week. The purpose of the outreach meetings, outlined in a June 23, 1997, letter of invitation from OSEP Director Tom Hehir to the special interest groups, was to provide the opportunity for broad input into the IDEA implementation process.

FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE DEADLINE: JULY 28, 1997

A *Federal Register* Notice was published on June 27, 1997 (pg. 35052) requesting, "advice and recommendations on regulatory issues under the IDEA amendments of 1997". Comments should be received on or before July 28, 1997 and can be forwarded to Thomas Irvin; OSERS; U.S. Department of Education; Room 4607, Mary E. Switzer Building, 330 C Street, SW; Washington, D.C. For further information, contact Thomas Irvin at 202-205-8825 or JoLeta Reynolds at 202-205-5507. TDD may call 202-205-5465 or the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339. Once the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) is published this fall, a series of regional meetings around the country will be held. A copy can be obtained through the Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/proprule/1997-2/062797c.html>.

TRAININGS: THE FEDERAL REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTER NETWORK (FRRC)

The FRRC Network, a group of OSEP-funded centers throughout the country designed to provide technical assistance to States, has been hosting trainings for State Education Agency staff. Department of Education staff members, Suzanne Sheridan from the Office of General Counsel and JoLeta Reynolds, OSEP policy analyst have provided the training.

OSEP PRODUCTS AND INFORMATION: IDEA IS ONLINE

Check out the IDEA '97 home page web site at: www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/. The web site contains an overview of IDEA; a series of questions and answers; Assistant Secretary Judy Heumann and Secretary Richard Riley's remarks at the signing ceremony; a press release issued by the White House on the signing; and a copy of the enrolled bill. We welcome your ideas as we "construct" the IDEA '97 web site to make it useful to you and your colleagues.

LETTERS TO THE FIELD

On July 11, 1997, OSEP Director Tom Hehir sent a letter to State Special Education Directors regarding OSEP's implementation activities. Many of the items outlined in the letter have been included in this first issue of IDEA '97 UPDATE. **On July 2, 1997, OSEP Research to Practice Division Director Lou Danielson** forwarded a letter to OSEP grantees outlining how IDEA '97 will affect their work. The law now combines the previous 14 authorities into 7 authorities under Part D, National Activities to Improve Education of Children with Disabilities. Other changes to the discretionary grant process in IDEA '97 include creating standing panels, by January 1, 1998, to evaluate discretionary applications; developing a way for grantees and other stakeholders' to have input in the FY '98 proposed priority process; and establishing a comprehensive planning process for the discretionary activities beyond 1998.

NEXT IDEA '97 UPDATE: August 15, 1997.

PLEASE HELP US GET THIS UPDATE OUT TO AS MANY INTERESTED PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE -- DISTRIBUTE WIDELY.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:
202-205-5507 (V/TDD), 202-260-0416 (FAX)

www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP

FOR COMMENTS ON IDEA '97 UPDATE:
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