



Connecticut State Department of Education
Division of Teaching and Learning Programs and Services
Bureau of Special Education

Part B
ANNUAL
Performance
REPORT

March 2005

Reporting Period
July 1, 2003-June 30, 2004

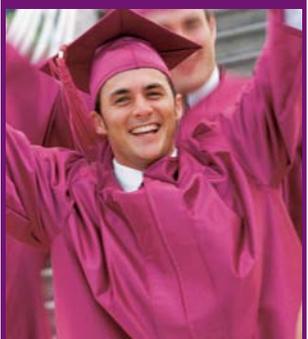
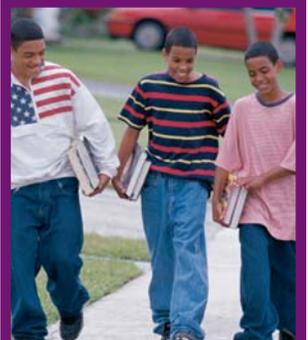
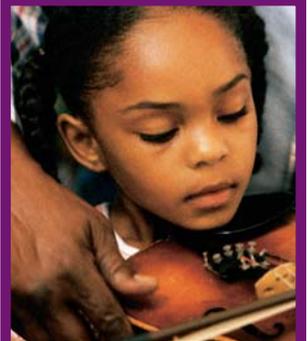
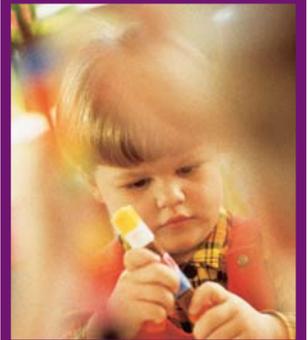


Table of Contents

Introduction	i - iii
Cluster Area I: General Supervision	1 – 26
Probe GS.I: Monitoring Procedures	1 – 6
Probe GS.II: Systemic Identification of Issues	7 – 12
Probe GS.III: Complaints, Mediations and Hearings	13 – 17
Probe GS.IV: Qualified Personnel	18 – 24
Probe GS.V: Accurate and Timely Data	25 – 26
Cluster Area II: Early Childhood Transition	27 – 31
Cluster Area III: Parent Involvement	32 – 39
Cluster Area IV: Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment	40 – 87
Probe BF.I: Racial/Ethnic Proportionality	40 – 45
Probe BF.II: Graduation and Dropout Rates	46 - 48
Probe BF.III: Suspension and Expulsion Rates	49 - 51
Probe BF.IV: Participation in Statewide Assessments	52 - 72
Probe BF.V: Education with Nondisabled Peers	73 - 84
Probe BF.VI: Early Language/Communication Skills	85 - 87
Cluster Area V: Secondary Transition	88 - 94

Introduction

This Part B Annual Performance Report (APR) is the second annual submission to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The components of this report are designed to fulfill the reporting requirements for Connecticut's Self-Assessments, Improvement Plan and Biennial Performance Reports. The report provides an update of the impact of the State's activities to improve performance and compliance.

In the fall of 2001, The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and the Connecticut Birth to Three System (B23) agreed to collaborate on the development of one Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP), Birth to 21, for Connecticut. The two agencies jointly convened the Continuous Improvement Partnership Team (CIPT), a broad based stakeholder group. The CIPT guided the Departments in the development of Connecticut's Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP is organized around nine Part B outcomes and four Part C outcomes, with overlap in the Transition to Special Education Plan. A majority of the indicators, data, analysis of change and activities to promote change that are included in Connecticut's Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) are mirrored in this Part B APR, and under separate cover, the Part C APR. In an effort to maintain continuity and our commitment to the CIPT, the CSDE and B23 will issue a joint report in the spring of 2005 that will include information from the APRs as well as additional information required by the CIP.

In the future, CSDE and B23 plan on convening smaller sub-committees to guide the implementation of the CIP work plans. These plans will be incorporated into the State Performance Plan (SPP) in December, 2005. The sub-committees will be comprised of stakeholders previously involved on the CIPT and will provide input in the development of the SPP, implementation of activities identified in the APRs and future reporting of the APRs.

In addition to the collaboration with our CIPT, this report is a collaborative effort among the following components of the CSDE: Office of Educational Equity, Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Student Assessment, Bureau of Early Childhood/Career & Adult Education, and the Bureau of Special Education. As indicated by two asterisks (**) in the report, 78.6% (11 out of 14) of the goals align with CSDE goals for all students.

Data sources for the report come from federally mandated data collection sources, state mandated data collection sources and survey based data sources. The federally mandated data collection sources include data from the Connecticut Birth to Three System, the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Integrated Special Student Information System (PC-ISIS), the CSDE's ED-166 Disciplinary Offense Report and all data collected by CSDE due process unit on complaints, mediations and due process hearings. State mandated data collection sources include the Public School Information System (PSIS), the Connecticut Mastery Test File, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test file, the ED-540 Graduating Class Report, the ED-525 Drop-Out Report and the Certified and Non-Certified Staff data collection files. Survey based data

sources include a Special Education Parent Survey regarding the P.J. et al. Settlement Agreement and a Special Education Follow-up Survey of Graduates/Exiters of High School. Both of these surveys were conducted by the CSDE.

This report is organized by the five required Cluster Areas: General Supervision, Early Childhood Transition, Parent Involvement, Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment and Secondary Transition. The General Supervision Cluster Area includes an overview of the CSDE general monitoring and supervision mechanisms with much of the efforts of such monitoring reported in subsequent sections of the report. In addition, the CSDE has added one additional Probe under FAPE in the LRE, by including a separate Preschool LRE Probe (BF V (b)).

A response from OSEP on the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2002 Annual Performance Report (APR) was received in December, 2004. In order to assure continued compliance with IDEA, the following information, as required by the report, is included in this APR:

General Supervision:

- Demonstrate correction of noncompliance within one year;
- Demonstrate evidence that complaints are resolved within 60 days;
- Demonstrate evidence that due process hearings are completed within 45 days; and
- Report on change of policy regarding parent expenses for speech services.

Early Childhood

- Demonstrate compliance with FAPE at Three;

FAPE in the LRE:

- Report on policies, practices and procedures used with LEAs identified for disproportionate identification;
- Report on significant discrepancies between LEAs for suspension rates;
- Report on conformity to requirements that placement decisions are made on an individual basis; and
- Report on a plan to collect data for the FFY 2004 APR on Early Language, Communication, Pre-Reading, and Social-Emotional Skills of Preschool Children with Disabilities.

The following attachments are referenced in the report:

Attachment A: Special Education Strategic School Profile 2003-2004

Attachment B: CT State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education Monitoring Tools – 2004-2005

Attachment C: CT Annual Report on the Continuous Improvement Plan, 2003-2004

Attachment D: Parent's Perceptions of the P.J. et al Settlement Agreement, April 2004

Attachment E: Results of the Survey of the P.J. et al Settlement Agreement, Parent Pamphlet

Attachment F: CT Special Education Parent Survey, 2004-2005

Attachment G: Follow-up Survey Graduates/Exiters of Connecticut High Schools, Year 2002

Cluster Area I: General Supervision

Question: Is effective general supervision of the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ensured through the State Education Agency's (SEA) utilization of mechanisms that result in all eligible children with disabilities having an opportunity to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE)?

Probe: **GS.I** Do the general supervision instruments and procedures (including monitoring, complaint and hearing resolution, etc.), used by the SEA, identify and correct IDEA noncompliance in a timely manner?

State Goal: Ensure that the general supervision instruments and procedures (including monitoring, complaint and hearing resolution procedures, etc.) utilized by the Connecticut State Department of Education will identify and correct all IDEA noncompliance issues in a timely manner. **

Performance Indicator(s):

The total number of IDEA non-compliance issues identified and corrected in a timely manner.

1. Baseline/Trend Data

As of the close of the 03-04 school year, 168 of 169 school districts had been issued final close out letters regarding any non-compliance identified within the 1999 -2003 cycle of program reviews. One urban district remains with ongoing issues of non-compliance as identified in the monitoring process, in spite of the continued efforts of the CSDE to facilitate resolution of these issues (see detailed description of effort in Section 3 below, Explanation of Progress or Slippage).

The process to close out districts from 1999 through 2003 required an extensive desk audit with half of the districts under review receiving an on site-monitoring visit. The result of this visit was an exit interview and a preliminary report that noted required or corrective actions for non-compliance items as well as recommendations for improvement for items not found to be out of compliance. Timelines were established for any required action, typically ranging from 3-6 months. Timelines for required actions did not extend beyond one year.

Districts were required to submit an improvement plan addressing all items requiring action and some recommended items. Approximately three months after receipt of the preliminary report, and upon improvement plan approval, the CSDE issued a final report. This report identified any non-compliance items that had not been satisfactorily addressed. Required actions were monitored by the CSDE for completion in accordance with report timelines. In the event that required actions were not completed within the identified time period (within one year) the CSDE and district would work to identify on-going issues of non-compliance, actions required by the district in order to bring them into

compliance, and in some instances sanctions to be imposed by the CSDE in order to bring the district into compliance.

2. Targets

All improvement plans requiring action as a result of monitoring from 1997 through 2002 will be completed.

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage

One CT urban district remains with ongoing issues of non-compliance. These issues include: ensuring that IEP's are implemented and that each student's IEP is available at the school that he/she is attending; ensuring that placement determinations for children with disabilities are made on an individual basis; and ensuring that all students have access to the general education curriculum with corresponding materials.

A consultant from the Bureau of Special Education was assigned to work with a consultant from the Equity Unit of the CSDE to ensure that students are receiving FAPE in the LRE in this district. The CSDE has maintained an ongoing presence in the district through the following activities:

- Meetings with Commissioner of Education and Superintendent of Schools and Cabinet members concerning non-compliance issues;
- Meetings with Representatives of the Board of Education concerning non-compliance issues;
- Meetings with Parent Groups and Building and District-level administrators concerning non-compliance issues;
- Meetings with legal services and district administrators concerning non-compliance issues;
- Meetings with district administrators (Accountability Team) concerning non-compliance issues;
- Provided training through SERC and SDE on school based practices profile, legal issues, IEP's, and LRE;
- Conducted school and classroom visits (K-12);
- Delayed the awarding of IDEA funds;
- Requested IDEA funds to be used in specific areas;
- Required the district to conduct district audit of IEP's and student services;
- Conducted a random audit to determine if IEP services are being implemented; and
- Required district to provide compensatory education for students whose services were not provided.

During the 2003-2004 year, the CSDE established a Focused Monitoring Steering Committee made up of LEA personnel, Bureau consultants, SERC consultants, parents and advocates to design a new system of focused monitoring. The Steering Committee met on a monthly basis. The following activities were conducted by the Steering Committee:

- redesign of the Special Education Profile (Attachment A) including a new method of data verification;
- establish key performance indicators for focused monitoring for 2004-2005;
- establish data indicators and criteria for key performance indicators;
- design site visit rubrics;
- develop methods of displaying and disseminating data; and
- determine methods of parent involvement in site visits as well as methods to collect data from parents during site visits.

In addition, members of the CSDE participated on monthly conference calls on focused monitoring with the Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC), attended the OSEP Monitoring Conference and attended the NERRC Regional Conference on Focused Monitoring with Steering Committee members.

The CSDE identified two key performance indicators, with corresponding data probes, for 2004 -2005:

- I. Monitor any overrepresentation of students with disabilities, in specific disability categories, for all racial and ethnic groups, in comparison to the population of the district's general education enrollment.
 - i. District high outliers (as determined by the standard error of the sample proportion using disability counts and percents by race/ethnicity) for children/youth of all ages (3-21) receiving special education and identified in one of the following disability categories: learning disability, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, speech or language impairment, other disabilities and other health impairment.
 - ii. District disability odds ratios by race/ethnicity for children/youth of all ages (3-21) receiving special education and identified in one of the following disability categories: learning disability, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, speech or language impairment, other disability and other health impairment.
 - iii. District graduation rates for students with disabilities, by race/ethnicity, in comparison to graduation rates for all students by race/ethnicity.

- II. Decrease the number of students in all disability categories who spend time in segregated settings as defined by 0-40% of their day with nondisabled peers.
 - i. District percent of all students with disabilities who spend 0-40% of their time with nondisabled peers.
 - ii. District mean time with nondisabled peers for students with disabilities educated in-district with 0-40% of their time with nondisabled peers.
 - iii. District mean time with nondisabled peers for preschoolers with disabilities, except those receiving itinerant services.
 - iv. District data on the five goals of the P.J. et al. vs. State of Connecticut, et al. Settlement Agreement (PJ Settlement Agreement).

Districts were rank ordered according to their performance on each probe within each indicator. The CSDE will create statewide maps that are color coded for

each district based on their performance. Districts will be identified for a potential site visit and be required to submit an analysis of their data in the areas identified to the CSDE. The district analysis of the data in conjunction with the district data will be used to determine which districts receive a site visit. District will only be chosen for one key performance indicator each year.

Districts identified will receive a site visit for up to one week. The site visit team will include a team leader from the CSDE, additional consultants from CSDE, SERC consultants, parents, and special education directors from outside the district. The review consists of pre-visit planning meeting with the Lead Consultant from CSDE and the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent and the Special Education Director. The site visit is planned and will include a review of district data and trends, record reviews, observations of students, and staff and administrator interviews.

The CSDE will contract with the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) to identify, train and compensate parents to be members of site visit teams. Parents will serve the same function on the team as all other members. Information will be collected from families within the district using two methods. For overrepresentation, phone interviews will be conducted with parents whose children's records are being reviewed. For LRE, a public forum will be conducted in the district for all parents to provide feedback on LRE.

Upon completion of the review, the lead consultant will have an exit conference with the district to discuss findings. A preliminary report will be issued identifying items requiring action and recommendations for improvement. To ensure timely completion of all corrective actions, they will be identified with timelines for remediation in the preliminary report. The districts will be required to attend an improvement planning session to develop an improvement plan, but the corrective actions will not be included in this document as the timelines for improvement plans will be longer than one year.

4. Projected Targets

All required actions defined in Preliminary Focused Monitoring Reports are completed within the timeframes identified in the reports (not to exceed one year).

5. Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets/Results

The CSDE will:

- Develop a manual for CT's System of General Supervision and Focused Monitoring to be disseminated to LEA personnel, parents and via website;
- Develop site visit interview and observation protocols for site visits (See Attachment B) ;
- Disseminate site visit protocols to all LEAs on CD ROM;
- Display and disseminate data on key performance indicators for all districts;

- Identify districts that must respond to correspondence from Associate Commissioner to verify, analyze and explain data on key performance indicators;
- Review districts written response to identify those for site visit;
- Provide state wide training for LEAs on new monitoring system;
- Provide training for CSDE consultants and members of monitoring teams to conduct site visit for focused monitoring;
- Expand contract with CPAC for payment to parents of focused monitoring teams;
- Expand contract with CPAC to conduct phone interviews with families in districts being monitored;
- Conduct a state wide training with the National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) for parents to participate on monitoring teams;
- Contract with external facilitator to conduct focus groups for parents in districts being monitored;
- Conduct two state wide improvement planning sessions for districts who have been monitored;
- Identify training and technical assistance available through SERC to assist districts with implementation of improvement plans;
- Re-convene Focused Monitoring Steering Committee to evaluate the effectiveness of the new monitoring process, make recommendations for improvements and identify key performance indicators for 2005-2006;
- Complete a state self-assessment and develop a work plan to become a state member of NCSEAM;
- Attend OSEP Accountability Conference;
- Participate in monthly NERRC conference calls on focused monitoring;
- Identify CSDE consultant to manage Focused Monitoring system;
- Monitor all required actions in preliminary reports for completion within identified timeframes within one year; and
- Conduct a site visit for one Regional Education Service Center.

6. Projected Timelines and Resources

- Resources for publication of 600 copies of Monitoring Manual;
- Software and printing resources for publications of data maps;
- Resources for statewide conference for 400 participants;
- Training resources to train parents and monitoring teams;
- CSDE, SERC staff and Special Education Directors to conduct monitoring visits;
- Expansion of contract with CPAC to pay parent members of monitoring teams;
- Contract with outside facilitator to conduct parent forums;
- Develop and dissemination of CDs with monitoring tools and data maps for all LEAs; and

- CSDE personnel dedicated to managing focused monitoring system.

Cluster Area I: General Supervision

Question: Is effective general supervision of the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ensured through the State Education Agency's (SEA) utilization of mechanisms that result in all eligible children with disabilities having an opportunity to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE)?

Probe: **GS.II** Are systemic issues identified and remediated through the analysis of findings from information and data collected from all available sources, including monitoring, complaint investigations, and hearing resolutions?

State Goal: Systemic issues are identified and remediated through the analysis of findings and data collected from all available sources, including monitoring, complaint investigations and hearing resolutions.

Performance Indicator(s):

100% of systemic issues identified are remediated through the analysis of findings and data collected from all available sources, including monitoring, complaint investigations, and bring resolutions.

1. Baseline/Trend Data

In addition to the Focused Monitoring System defined in Probe GS.I, CSDE has developed and requires that LEAs utilize (1) the standard CSDE Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual (revised 2003), (2) the CSDE adopted IEP form, and (3) the standard CSDE forms (revised 2003) for providing Notice and Consent as required under IDEA and Connecticut General Statutes. As part of its general Supervisory and Monitoring function, CSDE annually provides each LEA with (1) a Special Education Profile (See Attachment A) which includes a comparison of individual LEA data with state data and with districts in the LEA's Educational Reference Group (ERG), (2) focused monitoring data to highlight where the LEA is atypical in areas related to LRE (as required by the PJ Settlement Agreement) and disproportionate identification of students with disabilities, and (3) focused monitoring data for the twelve outcomes for improving early intervention and special education services for children with disabilities and their families included in the State of Connecticut Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP).

- A. All districts have attested to the adoption and utilization of the CSDE Policies and Procedures Manual (revised 2003) and IEP form in May 2004.
- B. All districts identified and monitored for compliance with the PJ Settlement Agreement (LRE/ID) made progress on their targets set for 2003-2004, and 4 of 24 districts (16.7%) meet all targets set for 2003-04 and their CSDE approved actions plans.
- C. Twenty-nine of the 34 districts identified for disproportionate identification during the 2002-03 school year (2001-02 data) attended the two-day Closing

the Achievement Gap (Summit II) and developed CSDE approved Action Plans to address areas identified as being in need of improvement. Only 18 of the 34 districts were mandated to attend Summit II due to their disproportionate identification of students with disabilities during the 2003-04 school year (2002-03 data), therefore, there was 100% participation by districts with significant discrepancies in their data regarding overidentification for special education.

- D. The following table is a summary of the progress made on targets set for Connecticut CIP:

Table GS.II 1Connecticut CIPT Indicators: Data Sources for Reporting and Effort Update

Outcome	APR Cluster	Definition	Data Source	How Are We Doing?	
Transition into Special Ed	Early Childhood	FAPE at 3	B23 + PCI	76% (02-03) up to 83.5% (03-04)	
	Transition	PK Settings	B23 + PCI	02-03=57.3%, 03-04=60.4%	
		TWNDP	B23 + PCI	02-03=48.1%, 03-04=48.6%	
Parent Participation	Parent Involvement	IEP Satisfaction	Parent Survey	new survey 04-05	
	Parent Involvement	Share Vision	Parent Survey	new survey 04-05	
		Program Options	Parent Survey	new survey 04-05	
		Involvement	IDEA Grant Appl	tba	
		Support Network	Parent Survey	new survey 04-05	
	Parent Involvement	Ed Planning Diverse Parents	Parent Survey	new survey 04-05	
	Parent Involvement	Training for Diverse Parents	Parent Survey	new survey 04-05	
Kindergarten Preparedness		Regular Ed Kindergarten	PCI	75.8% (01-02) to 79.5% (03-04)	
	FAPE in LRE	PK Inclusive Setting	PCI	46.2% (01-02) to 59.7% (03-04)	
	FAPE in LRE	Suspension/Expulsion	ED166	ct up, %dwn 3=pk, 84=k, 58% attack	
Academic Accomplishment	FAPE in LRE	Achivement	CMT/Capt	4th Up in R&M, no change 6,8,10	
	FAPE in LRE	Participation	CMT/Capt	4,6,8 up 10%+, 10th up 30%	
	FAPE in LRE	Graduation with Diploma	PCI	41.8 to 61.8% (89.0 = all)	
		Return to Regular Ed	PCI	steady at 8.6%	
Access and Participation	FAPE in LRE	Home School	PCI	85.2% no change... (pk ID dwon 6%)	
	FAPE in LRE	TWNDP	PCI	57.1% up from 55.4; ID up 10%	
		Access to Modifications and Accomodations in Class	Parent Survey	new survey 04-05	
			Student Survey	new survey 04-05	
		FAPE in LRE	Drop Outs	PCI	new formula: 10.9, 11.5, 8.4, 7.9 (old=4.2)
		FAPE in LRE	Suspension/Expulsion	ED166	4.1% GenEd, 9.1% SpEd
		In-District	PCI	92% (consistent)	
Community Participation		Lost Job - behavior issue	Exiters Survey	Diff keep job=16%, get along w/boss=12%	
		Extracurricular	PCI	Incr all disab & grades, CT=25.1 (up5.6)	
		Community Activities	Exiters Survey	70% social>1/wk, 10% alone	
		PPT Indep. Living Planning	Parent Survey	new survey 04-05	
		Living Independently	Exiters Survey	65% live w/parents; 51% feel indep.	
		Independence Indicators	Exiters Survey	73% d.lic., 68% ck acct., 71% hlth insr 90% access to phone/cell phone	
Self-Advocacy		Attendance at PPT	Student Survey	new survey 04-05	
		Student Educational Planning	Student Survey	new survey 04-05	
		Student Longterm Planning	Student Survey	new survey 04-05	
		Good Life Satisfaction	Exiters Survey	63%=good/great, 4% bad	
Employment & PostSecondary Education	Secondary Transition	PostSecondary Ed	Exiters Survey	57% in sch; 78% in 2/4 yr college	
	Secondary Transition	Gainful Employment	Exiters Survey	68% employed; 35% sales; 47% FT	
	Secondary Transition	Employment Satisfaction	Exiters Survey	21% hlth insr; 50% happy w/job	
	Secondary Transition	Access to Comm. Services	Exiters Survey	12=BRS, 12=DMR, 17=DSS,	
Monitoring & Supervision		Disability Prevalence Trends	PCI	12.10%	
	FAPE in LRE	Race/Ethnicity Trends	PCI	18 districts with sign. Disp.	
	General Supervision	Staffing	ED163/162	98.8% Qualified teachers	
	General Supervision	Complaints, Mediations and Due Process	Bureau File	C=93.4%, M=100%, DP=89.5%	

2. Targets

- A. All districts will attest to their adoption and utilization of the CSDE Policies and Procedures Manual (revised 2003) and IEP form.
- B. The eight districts identified in 2002—2003 which are involved with ongoing LRE/ID monitoring, and the 16 districts newly identified for 2003-2004, will meet all targets set for 2003-2004 in their CSDE approved action plans.
- C. All 34 districts identified for disproportionate identification will attend a two-day summit and develop CSDE approved Action Plans to address areas identified as being in need of improvement.
- D. All indicators identified on the Connecticut CIP will show progress toward the achievement of the specified long-term goal(s).

3. Explanation of progress or slippage

- A. All districts have attested to the adoption and utilization of the CSDE Policies and Procedures Manual (revised 2003) and IEP form in May 2004.
- B. The following is a summary of the progress made on targets set for LRE/ID:

Goals Status as of June 30, 2004

Goal	Goals Not Met	Goals Met	Comments
Regular Class Placement	12 of 24 districts	9 of 24 districts	3 districts did not set targets.
Mean Time with Nondisabled Peers	10 of 24 districts	13 of 24 districts	1 district did not set targets.
Median Time with Nondisabled Peers	7 of 24 districts	15 of 24 districts	2 districts did not set targets.
Home School Placement	12 of 24 districts	11 of 24 districts	1 district did not set targets.
Extracurricular Participation	7 of 24 districts	13 of 24 districts	4 districts did not set targets.

*See a further summary of progress on LRE issues under BF.5.

All districts made some progress on district goals, even those that did not meet their targets. Each targeted district was assigned a CSDE consultant to monitor implementation of and progress towards targets on action plans. Lack of progress for targets was used as an indicator of potential non-compliance. On site-monitoring visits to the eight districts originally identified were conducted to identify any areas of non-compliance related to time with nondisabled peers and access to LRE for students with intellectual disabilities. As part of this review, monitoring included a review of files and observations to ensure that placement determinations for children with disabilities were made on an individual basis and not made upon the numerical goal. This included a review of meeting minutes

and IEPs, documentation of justification for removal from regular education and completion of the state required LRE checklist. No district was found in non-compliance for the method in which placement decisions were made. A copy of all monitoring tools is included in Attachment B.

Eight districts received an on-site monitoring visit. Four of the districts had no findings of non-compliance. The following is a summary of corrective actions identified in four districts (1 district with 2 issues) and the status of compliance with correction:

District	Issue	Status
15	A. IEP did not indicate goals/objectives for modified course content. B. Gen Education teachers did not have access to IEP.	Closed
163	IEP did not indicate goals/objectives for modified course content.	Closed
151	General Education teachers did not have access to IEP.	Closed
156	General Education teachers did not have access to IEP.	Closed

C. Twenty-nine of the 34 districts identified for disproportionate identification during the 2002-03 school year (2001-02 data) attended the two-day Closing the Achievement Gap (Summit II) and developed CSDE approved Action Plans to address areas identified as being in need of improvement. Only 18 of the 34 districts were mandated to attend Summit II due to their disproportionate identification of students with disabilities during the 2003-04 school year (2002-03 data), therefore, there was 100% participation by districts with significant discrepancies in their data regarding overidentification for special education. The remaining 16 districts that had shown improvement in their 2002-03 data were invited to continue their participation with Summit II, but not mandated. Eleven of these 16 districts choose to continue their involvement in the initiative and sent teams to Summit II. Five districts declined to send teams and continue their involvement, which was deemed acceptable considering their data no longer indicated a statistically significant concern. (See a further summary of progress on disproportionate identification issues under BF.1.)

D. Each item on the Connecticut CIP has indicators and targets. For the purpose of this report, some items are reported under Cluster III: Parent Involvement, Cluster V: Secondary Transition; Cluster II: Early Childhood Transition; and Cluster IV: Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment. In addition, the CSDE produces an Annual Report on progress on the CIP, which is included as Attachment C. The Continuous Improvement Partnership Team (CIPT) who proposed changes for goals and future targets reviewed the progress or slippage on the CIP indicators.

4. Projected Targets

- A. All districts will maintain use of CSDE Policies and Procedures Manual and IEP form.
- B. All twenty-four districts identified for LRE/ID monitoring will make progress on the goals of the settlement agreement.
- C. All districts identified for disproportionate identification in 2004-05, using 2003-04 data, will participate in Summit III, create action plans for areas of concern and be considered for future focused monitoring in the area of over-representation by race in special education.

5. Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets/Results

The CSDE will:

- Continue monitoring the implementation of, and progress towards Action Plans to address LRE/ID issues through quarterly reporting and review of data with assigned consultant;
- Identify districts not making progress on LRE/ID Action Plans and require meeting of the district Superintendent and Special Education Director with the CSDE Associate Commissioner and Bureau Chief of Special Education to determine next steps to be taken by district;
- Review data for all LRE/ID districts to determine if data indicates the need for a focused monitoring site visit (see GS I);
- Conduct site visits to monitor the change in identification eligibility for students with intellectual disabilities (class members) to different categories of eligibility;
- Develop and award incentive grants to LRE/ID districts to assist with implementation of Action Plans;
- Continue training and technical assistance offered by the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) for LRE/ID districts;
- See activities in BF1-A for future activities on disproportionate identification;
- Review data for all districts to determine if disproportionality data indicates the need for a focused monitoring site visit (see GS I); and
- Conduct one meeting of the CIPT to determine recommendations for (1) re-design of steering committee to sub-committee structure and (2) re-design of CIPT Annual Report to create one reporting document for APR and CIPT.

6. Projected Timelines and Resources

- Five Consultants from the CSDE will be required to monitor LEAs identified as having LRE/ID related issues (see GSI and BFV);
- One Consultant from the CSDE will be identified to oversee disproportionality initiative (see BFI A);
- Identification of CSDE consultant to be assigned to each sub-committee of the CIPT; and
- Funds from State Improvement Grant (SIG) to support needs identified by CIPT sub-committees.

Cluster Area I: General Supervision

Question: Is effective general supervision of the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ensured through the State Education Agency's (SEA) utilization of mechanisms that result in all eligible children with disabilities having an opportunity to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE)?

Probe: **GSIII.** Are complaint investigations, mediations and due process hearings reviews are completed in a timely manner?

State Goal: The completion of all complaint investigations, mediations, and due process hearings in a timely manner.

Performance Indicator(s):

The total number of formal complaints and mediations and requests for due process completed in a timely manner by CSDE.

1. Baseline/Trend Data

COMPLAINTS

In the 2004 APR (2002-03 Reporting Period), CT reported 15 of 124 complaints were not resolved within the 60-calendar day timeline outlined in 34 CFR §300.661. This was a timely completion rate of 87.9%.

During the 2003-04 Reporting Period, 7 of 106 formal complaints to the CSDE were resolved late, or outside the 60-day timeline. Additionally 2 formal complaints are still pending but with a documented extension. This is a timely completion rate of 93.4%, an improvement over the 2002-03 reporting period and a demonstration of progress toward compliance.

MEDIATIONS

Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-76h(f)(1)(a) provides that "the mediator shall attempt to resolve the issues in a manner which is acceptable to the parties within thirty days from the request for mediation." During 2003-2004, 172 requests for mediation were received. In all instances the parties to the mediation were contacted for available dates for a hearing within thirty days of the date that the mediation request was received by the CSDE. All mediations were conducted as requested.

DUE PROCESS HEARINGS

During the calendar year 2004, 276 hearing requests were received by CSDE. Of this total number of requests, 19 resulted in a fully adjudicated hearing. Seventeen (89.5%) of these 19 fully adjudicated hearings were completed within required timelines (Figure 1.3).

2. Targets

Increase the percentage of complaint investigations completed in a timely manner to 100%

Maintain the percentage of mediations completed in a timely manner to 100%.

Increase the percentage of due process hearings and reviews completed in a timely manner to 100%

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage

COMPLAINTS

A timely completion rate of 93.4% for the 2005 APR (2003-04 Reporting Period), demonstrates an improvement over the 2004 APR (2002-03 Reporting Period), and progress toward compliance.

Upon further investigation, the 3 of the 7 complaints not completed in a timely manner for the 2003-04 Reporting Period were late by only 1 or 2 days and all were due to delayed communications with districts during Christmas holiday periods. The remaining 4 late completions were less than 10 days delayed. Each of these complaints involved additional filings by parents as well as delayed responses in district documentation, and 3 of the 4 were resolved with no non-compliance found. In all instances, there was justification for the delay; however, documentation of the justification and request for timeline extension was not completed.

It was the intention of the CSDE to revise the Department's Complaint Resolution Manual to clarify procedures and timelines for complaint investigators to ensure the timely completion of complaints. This document was completed in its draft form during the 2003-04 reporting year. The CSDE is awaiting reauthorization of IDEA for any final additions or editing prior to adoption and dissemination to complaint investigators. Additionally, the new guidelines for granting an extension to complaint investigations are still in committee. It is anticipated that these guidelines will be finalized during the 2004-05 reporting year for inclusion in the Complaint Resolution Manual.

MEDIATIONS

A timely completion rate of 100% for the 2005 APR (2003-04 Reporting Period), demonstrates maintenance of effort in timely mediation completion.

DUE PROCESS HEARINGS

A timely completion rate of 89.5% for the 2005 APR (2003-04 Reporting Period), demonstrates an improvement over the 2004 APR (2002-03 Reporting Period), and progress toward compliance. The 10.5% of due process hearings not completed in a timely manner represent only 2 hearings. The CSDE provides two formal pre-hearing dispute resolution options, which may have contributed to the decrease in the number of adjudicated decisions. Parents opting for mediations and advisory opinions allow for settlement without proceeding to a full hearing.

Activities contributing to the increase in timely due process completions include: (1) a recommendation made to increase the number of Hearing Officers by 25%; (2) an increase in the monitoring of required timelines and reminders to officers of approaching deadlines; (3)

CSDE encouragement to LEAs and Parents to access mediation and advisory opinion options; (4) hearing officers identifying the mailing date of the final decision order throughout the course of the hearing; and (5) presentations around the state to LEAs and parent advocacy groups regarding alternatives to a due process hearing. Finally, a recommendation has been made to the CSDE to establish a single standard database and data collection calendar for tracing complaints, mediations and due process hearings.

4. Projected Targets

Increase the percentage of complaint investigations completed in a timely manner to 100%.

Maintain the percentage of mediations completed in a timely manner to 100%.

Increase the percentage of due process hearings and reviews completed in a timely manner to 100%

5. Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets/Results

COMPLAINTS

- Update the department's Complaint Resolution Manual to align with the reauthorization of IDEA and disseminate to complaint investigators;
- Finalize the guidelines for granting an extension to complaint investigations for inclusion in the Complaint Resolution Manual; and
- Hire additional staff to support Complaints Resolution at a .7 FTE.

MEDIATIONS

- Seek to hire two additional staff to conduct Mediations at a .15 FTE each; and
- Provide training to new mediators.

DUE PROCESS HEARINGS

- Continue statewide technical assistance presentations alternatives to due process hearings;
- Continue to monitor due process hearings required timelines and send reminders to officers of approaching deadlines;
- Continue statewide professional development for due process hearing officers (8 days of PD per year);
- Continue individualized professional development for due process hearing Officers (\$400 of PD monies per officer per year);
- Recommend inclusion of timely hearing completions as a performance measure on annual hearing officer performance appraisals; and
- Continue the practice of hearing officer identifying the mailing date of the final decision order throughout the course of the hearing.

6. Projected Timelines and Resources

- Maintain sufficient staff to support complaint investigations in 2004-05. During 2003-04, one full-time staff member was assigned to complaint investigations full-time, with an additional 9 consultants available as needed for .05-.15 FTE each.
- Maintain sufficient staff to support mediation resolution in 2004-05. During 2003-04, six consultants were assigned to mediation resolution; one at a .40 FTE and 5 consultants available as needed for .05-.15 FTE each.

Ia: Formal Complaints								
(1) July 1, 2003 - June 30, 2004 (or specify other reporting period: ___/___/___ to ___/___/___)	(2) Number of Complaints	(3) Number of Complaints with Findings	(4) Number of Complaints with No Findings	(5) Number of Complaints not Investigated – Withdrawn or No Jurisdiction	(6) Number of Complaints Set Aside Because Same Issues being Addressed in a Due Process Hearing	(7) Number of Complaints with Decisions Issued within 60 Calendar Days	(8) Number of Complaints Resolved beyond 60 Calendar Days, with a Documented Extension	(9) Number of Complaints Pending as of: ___/___/___ (enter closing date for dispositions)
TOTALS	106	52	13	39	6	54	4	2

Ib: Mediations					
(1) July 1, 2003 - June 30, 2004 (or specify alternate period: ___/___/___ to ___/___/___)	Number of Mediations		Number of Mediation Agreements		(6) Number of Mediations Pending as of: ___/___/___ (enter closing date for dispositions)
	(2) Not Related to Hearing Requests	(3) Related to Hearing Requests	(4) Not Related to Hearing Requests	(5) Related to Hearing Requests	
TOTALS	106	57	66	38	0

Ic: Due Process Hearings					
(1) July 1, 2003 - June 30, 2004 (or specify alternate period: ___/___/___ to ___/___/___)	(2) Number of Hearing Requests	(3) Number of Hearings Held (fully adjudicated)	(4) Number of Decisions Issued within Timeline under 34 CFR §300.511	(5) Number of Decisions within Timeline Extended under 34 CFR §300.511(c)	(6) Number of Hearings Pending as of: ___/___/___ (enter closing date for dispositions)
TOTALS	276	19	17	15	25

Cluster Area I: General Supervision

Question: Is effective general supervision of the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ensured through the State Education Agency's (SEA) utilization of mechanisms that result in all eligible children with disabilities having an opportunity to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE)?

Probes: **GS.IV** Are there sufficient numbers of administrators, teachers, related services providers, paraprofessionals, and other providers to meet the identified educational needs of all children with disabilities in the State?

State Goal(s): Ensure a sufficient number of qualified administrators, teachers, related service providers, paraprofessionals and other providers to meet the identified educational needs of all children with disabilities in the state.**

Performance Indicator:

- A. The percentage of qualified teachers, related service providers, paraprofessionals and other providers.
- B. Maintain the current ratio of FTE certified special education and related services providers to total student enrollments.

1. Baseline/Trend Data

Baseline data for indicator A was set in the 2002-2003 year and reported in the 2004 APR (Reporting Period 2002-03). For indicator B, data reported here from the 2003-2004 year represents the establishment of a baseline. Trend data for this indicator will be reported in the 2006 APR (Reporting Period 2004-05).

Indicator A:

In 2003-2004, Connecticut had 5,050 FTE (Full –Time Equivalent) special education teachers working in LEAs. This is an increase of 35 FTE special education teachers over 2002-2003 (5,015)¹, and an increase of 239 FTE special education teachers over the baseline year 2001-2002. An additional 380 FTE special education teachers serve Connecticut's students with disabilities in Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs), Endowed and Incorporated Academies, Charter Schools and State Unified School Districts #1 and #2 Schools in 2003-2004. This is a decrease of 12 from the number reported in 2002-2003 (392)², but an increase of 35 from that reported for the baseline year 2001-2002

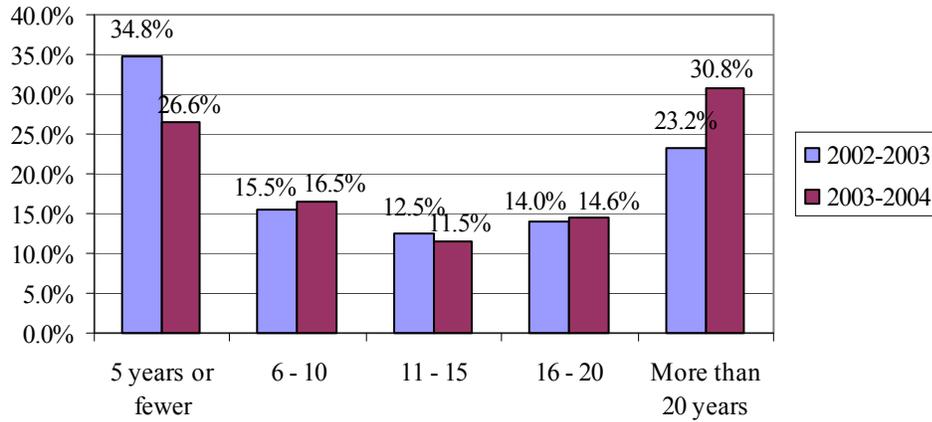
¹ In 2003-2004, changes in data definitions enabled to the CSDE to account for FTEs working in our Vocational-Technical School District. The baseline FTE figures reported last year have been re-adjusted in this report to allow for appropriate comparisons of changes in this data over time.

² In 2003-2004, changes in data definitions enabled to the CSDE to account for FTEs working in our Vocational-Technical School District. The baseline FTE figures reported last year have been re-adjusted in this report to allow for appropriate comparisons of changes in this data over time.

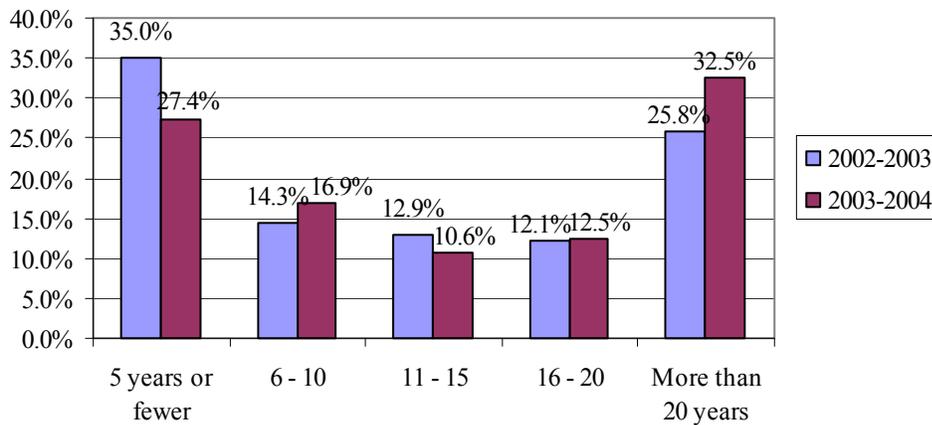
(345). Of this total number of special education positions in 2003-2004, 98.4% were determined to be filled by teachers who are qualified. This is an increase of 10.9% over the percent of special education positions filled by highly qualified teachers in 2002-2003 (87.5%). In 2003-2004, the proportion of teachers in special education positions who were deemed to be qualified roughly equaled the proportion of qualified teachers statewide (98.8%).

Figures GS.IV 1 and GS.IV 2 present breakouts of special education instructional staff and pupil services staff by years of experience for 2002-2003 and 2003-2004. As would be expected with the passage of time, there are less instructional and pupil services staff with less experience in 2003-2004 as compared to 2002-2003, while there are more instructional and pupil services staff with more experience. In 2003-2004, slightly more than 1/4 of instructional and pupil services staff were at the beginning of their careers (0 to 5 years experience) while closer to 1/3 had more than 20 years experience. With respect to their level of education, 80.1% of special education instructional staff and 98.7% of pupil services staff have earned a master's degree or higher. These numbers are roughly the same as compared to 2002-2003 (79.3% and 98.8%, respectively).

**Figure GS.IV 1
Years of Experience Breakout for
Special Education Instructional Staff
(2002-2003 and 2003-2004)**



**Figure GS.IV 2
Years of Experience Breakout for
Pupil Services Staff
(2002-2003 and 2003-2004)**



The number and percent of positions remaining to be filled across all teaching categories declined slightly in 2003-2004 as compared to the previous year, from 8.3% to 8.0%. Although the percent of annual teaching positions remaining vacant in October of the academic year due to no qualified applicants had been steadily declining since 2000, in October 2003 this statistic showed no discernible decrease or increase over the previous year; 5.2% of October 2002 vacancies were due to no qualified applicants, as compared to 5.3% in 2003.

For the past three years, there has been a shortage of qualified Comprehensive Special Education Teachers and Speech Language Pathologists in CT. Just as in 2002-2003, shortages in these areas were ranked 3 and 1, respectively, on the state's list of shortage areas for the 2003-2004 year. As table GS.IV 1 indicates, the percentage of vacant positions remaining unfilled by qualified persons in the area of special education steadily decreased over the past 3 years (from 11.9% in 2001-2002 to 9.7% in 2003-2004). The percentage of vacant Speech Language Pathologist positions remaining unfilled on October 1st peaked at 33.8% in 2002-2003, but is at its lowest rate in three years (16.8%) as of 2003-2004.

Table GS.IV 1									
Positions Available in Shortage Areas, 2001-02 through 2003-04									
Subject	# Positions Available			# Positions Remaining Vacant, No Qualified Person Found			Percent Remaining Vacant, No Qualified Person Found		
	01-02	02-03	03-04	01-02	02-03	03-04	01-02	02-03	03-04
Special Education	590	580	493	70	61	48	11.9%	10.5%	9.7%
Speech Language Pathologist	139	139	95	37	47	16	26.6%	33.8%	16.8%

Indicator B:

Connecticut reports an index of staff (Special Education Aides, Special Education Teachers, School Psychologists and Social, Workers and Counselors, School Counselors, School Nurses (non-certified staff), Speech Pathologists, School Psychologists, School Social Workers, School Nurse-Teachers) per 1,000 students as an indicator of resources for special education students (Table GS.IV 3). In 2003-2004, the highest ratio between staff and K-12 students was for Special Education Aides, followed by Special Education Teachers. School Social Workers and School Nurses have the lowest ratio.

Table GS.IV 3	
Staffing Ratios: Index of Staff (K-12)	
Per 1,000 Student Population (K-12)	
Special Education Aides	12.1
Special Education Teachers	8.4
School Psychologists and Social Workers and Counselors	4.8
School Counselors	2.2
School Nurses (non-certified staff)	1.9
Speech Pathologists	1.5
School Psychologists	1.5
School Social Workers	1.2
School Nurse-Teachers	0.0

2. Targets

- A. Decrease the percentage of vacant positions in special education and student services areas that cannot be filled with highly qualified persons.
- B. Maintain the current ratio of FTE certified special education and related services providers to total student enrollments.

3. Explanation of progress or slippage:

CSDE has succeeded in decreasing the percentage of vacant positions in the area of Speech Language Pathologists and Comprehensive Special Educators. For Indicator B, data reported here from the 2003-2004 year represents the establishment of a baseline. Trend data for this indicator will be reported in the 2006 APR (Reporting Period 2004-05).

To address the shortage of qualified Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) the CSDE has:

- Worked with Manchester Community College, Manchester, Connecticut, to implement a new training program to prepare Speech Language Pathologist Assistants (SLPA). This SLPA program will be consistent with the guidelines of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association for such programs and would lead to an Associates degree for program participants;
- Given a \$40,000 SIG grant to Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) to provide scholarship assistance to bi-lingual students in the Speech Language Pathology preparation programs at both SCSU and the University of Connecticut (UCONN);
- Continued the practice of sending out a notice to LEAs, Regional Education Service Centers and approved private special education facilities prior to the Connecticut Speech-Language-Hearing Association's (CSHA) spring conference. Notice contains information about posting their SLP vacancies with the CSHA's on-going list of job vacancies. This list is posted at the conference and postings can also be submitted for dissemination throughout the year;
- Continued to provide districts with names of state, regional and national companies that provide contracted SLP services. The Bureau's Consultant for School Speech and Language Services continues to link districts experiencing vacancies with SLPs or soon-to-graduate SLPs who have contacted the CSDE about moving to Connecticut and seeking employment information;
- Continued to provide guidance to both LEAs and parents regarding how to deal with situations where speech and language services specified in an IEP are not available because the LEA cannot fill a vacant SLP position. In many of these instances, LEAs are able to contract for services with qualified SLPs who are in private practice, work at Universities or community agencies, are recently retired, etc., until a permanent replacement can be found. In those instances where LEAs cannot provide SLP services from any source, the CSDE advises LEAs and parents that parents may obtain SLP services

privately and that the LEA must pay the private provider directly so that parents incur no costs related to their child's right to a free appropriate public education. The CSDE also advises LEAs and parents of the requirements to consider compensatory speech and language services if the LEA's new hire or contracted SLP or the parent's private SLP cannot timely provide the speech and language services in a child's IEP;

- Increased the total funds allocated to the six year Special Education Teacher Incentive Grant Program (SETIG) by \$61,000 making a total of \$731,300 available to Connecticut students enrolled in special education teacher preparation programs; \$261,000 of new funds were available for the 2003-2004 school year. The goal of this Special Education Teacher Incentive Grant Program is to provide a financial incentive for eligible individuals to complete an approved special education teacher preparation program, thereby increasing the supply of appropriately trained qualified candidates for teacher certification, reducing the current shortage of special education teachers and increasing the diversity of Connecticut's educational workforce. The coordinated marketing effort with partners at in-state campuses and with out-of state programs resulted in:
 - Scholarship support from 7 colleges/universities for 70 applications for 2003 – 2004
 - Eleven of the 67 applications (16.4%) from the in-state programs targeted minority/bilingual categories.
 - 3 applications submitted from two of the out-of-state programs targeting a low incidence area – teachers of the visually impaired (TVI).
 - A total of 67 students receiving awards (19 continuing and 48 new awards); and
- Participated in a University of Massachusetts -Boston program to prepare individuals to teach students with visual impairments. Connecticut's annual contribution to this program is \$30,000. Six Connecticut students are currently matriculated into this certification program. Preliminary discussions have been held between the University of Massachusetts-Boston, the Connecticut State Department of Higher Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education about using CT sites for internships and student teaching experiences and identifying the appropriate process for conferring CT State Certification upon CT residents who complete the UMASS-Boston Program.

4. Projected Targets:

- A. Decrease the percentage of vacant positions in special education and student services areas that cannot be filled with highly qualified persons.
- B. Maintain the current ratio of FTE certified special education and related services providers to total student enrollments.

5. Future Activities to achieve projected targets/results:

The CSDE will:

- Provide funding to SCSU and UCONN to support tuition for bilingual SLP graduate students;
- Work with districts to examine caseload management practices for students receiving speech and language services that address students' IEP goals in cost- and time-effective ways;
- Work with district special education directors to explore recruitment and retention practices;
- Facilitate the development of a regional training program in northwestern Connecticut for individuals who could serve as support personnel for speech and language programs while the program at Manchester Community College is under development;
- Develop CT's Highly Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) process related to the implementation of the "highly qualified" requirements of NCLB;
- Continue the process of revising all of Connecticut teacher certification regulations; and
- Work with UMASS-Boston for CT approval of an out-of-state program that confers "Teacher of the Visually Impaired" certification upon program graduates.

In addition, the CSDE Commissioner has proposed programs and funding for the following initiatives (ED-LIFE; September 8, 2004) related to attracting and retaining qualified teachers:

- The reemployment of retired teachers in priority school districts;
- New teacher induction matching grants for priority districts;
- Tuition vouchers for BEST Mentors/Cooperating teachers;
- Principal leadership incentive grants; and
- Tuition reimbursement program for new administrators in priority districts.

6. Projected timelines and Resources:

During 2004-05:

- Allocate \$40,000 to SCSU and UCONN to support tuition for bilingual SLP graduate students;
- Allocate \$30,000 to UMASS Boston Teacher of the Visually Impaired regional program;
- Designate Bureau of Special Education consultant(s) to participate in revising teacher certification regulations and develop Connecticut's HOUSSE process; and
- Seek legislative support and funding for the Commissioner of Education agenda as proposed in ED-LIFE; September 8, 2004.

Cluster Area I: General Supervision

Question: Is effective general supervision of the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ensured through the State Education Agency's (SEA) utilization of mechanisms that result in all eligible children with disabilities having an opportunity to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE)?

Probe: **GSV.** Do State procedures and practices ensure collection and reporting of accurate and timely data?

State Goal: To ensure the collection and reporting of accurate and timely data.

Performance Indicator(s):

Continue to ensure the collection and reporting of accurate and timely data.

1. Baseline/Trend Data

The previously reported (2004 APR) components of CSDE procedures utilized to ensure collection and reporting of accurate and timely data have been maintained (PC-ISSIS data collection software, data cleaning by data managers, production of special education profiles, and individual student file verification). Additionally, in 2003-04, the CSDE added a Focused Monitoring Data Verification report to provide for ease of identification of major data shifts in multiple areas of special education data used in state and federal reporting as well as monitoring activities. Connecticut also added an additional data analyst to the staff for increased reporting, data cleaning and responsiveness to LEA data needs.

Regarding timely submittal of state reports (federal tables and APR), CT submitted the 2004 Annual Performance Report (2002-03 reporting period) on time, March 31st. Preliminary federal tables for child count, race/ethnicity, and educational placement were submitted on or before the February 1st due date. The preliminary federal personnel and suspension/expulsion tables were submitted on or before the November 1st due date. The preliminary federal exiting table was submitted on or before February 1st as outlined in CT's request for reporting timeline extension, rather than the Nov. 1st due date outlined in regulations.

2. Targets

Continue to ensure the collection and reporting of accurate and timely data.

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage

The preliminary federal exiting table is the only table not submitted according to federal timelines, although this table is submitted on or before February 1st as outlined in CT's reporting timeline extension. Each year since School Year 1996-97, Connecticut has collected exit data using a 12-month reporting cycle from Dec. 1 to Nov. 30. Table 4 exit data are collected the December following the

federal due date of Nov. 1st. Each year, OSEP has granted an extension, with email notification of the extension to Westat.

The addition of the Focused Monitoring Data Verification Reports has increased the visibility of LEA and state special education data and increased the importance of accurate data to local superintendents and directors of special education.

4. Projected Targets

Maintain the collection and reporting of accurate and timely data.

5. Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets/Results

The CSDE will:

- Continue all data collection, cleaning and reporting activities currently in place;
- Publication of state data maps for all focused monitoring indicators; and
- Public dissemination of district data on CSDE website

6. Projected Timelines and Resources

- Maintain current staffing levels.

Cluster Area II: Early Childhood Transition

Question: Are all children who are eligible for Part B services receiving their special education and related services by their third birthday?

State Goal: Children and their families are able to access appropriate educational and community supports and services when children leave the Connecticut Birth to Three System.

Performance Indicator(s):

The total number of eligible three-year-old children with disabilities who transition from the state's early intervention system under the IDEA Part C at age three and who have a transition conference held at least 90-days before the child's third birthday receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) by age three.*

**Note: This performance indicator for a free appropriate public education by age three is defined by Connecticut to reflect IDEA Part B statutory provisions in Section 612 (9) which state that "By the third birthday of such a child, an individualized education program or, if consistent with sections 614(d) (2) (B) and 636(d), an individualized family service plan, has been developed and is being implemented for the child".*

1. Baseline/Trend Data

Baseline for this indicator was established in 2002-2003, the first year of collecting and having available state data on this indicator. Available data in 2002-2003 indicated that 76% of children who exited the state's early intervention system, the Connecticut Birth to Three System, at age three with a transition conference convened at least 90-days before the child's third birthday had a free appropriate public education developed and implemented by age three. Available data in 2003-2004 indicates that 83.5% of children who exited the Connecticut Birth to Three System at age three, with a transition conference convened at least 90-days before the child's third birthday received a free appropriate public education that had been developed and implemented by age three. This increase of 7.5% demonstrates measured annual progress toward full compliance.

As in 2002-2003, the available data in 2003-2004 is based upon a *data merge** using available data from the state's early intervention (IDEA, Part C) and special education (IDEA, Part B) systems. The available data in 2003-2004 identified a total of 911 children who were referred to special education with a transition conference that was convened no later than 90-days before the child's third birthday. A total of 761 of these children received a free appropriate public education by age three. In 2002-2003, 490 children had received a free appropriate public education by age three. This is an increase of 271 children in 2003-04. Connecticut's available data and data analysis of this indicator demonstrates that the state is making measured progress toward 100% compliance in assuring a free appropriate public education by age three for eligible children who exit the IDEA, Part C early intervention system having had a transition conference at least 90 days before their third birthday.

**Note: Connecticut's data merge activities between the state's early intervention (IDEA Part C) and special education (IDEA Part B) systems does not involve the disclosure of*

personally identifiable information from the student's education records. Data merge activities reflect adherence to the IDEA and FERPA requirements, specifically section 99.35 of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) which allows for the disclosure of information for federal or state program purposes.

While the available data indicated that 83.5% or 761 children received a free appropriate public education by age three in 2003-2004, the data merge of available data in 2003-2004 indicated that 150 children, or 16.5%, did not receive a free appropriate public education by their third birthday. The 150 children were from 65 of the 159 school districts that provide preschool special education and related services in Connecticut. Thirty-six of the 65 school districts had only 1 child that did not receive free appropriate public education by age three while there were two school districts that had 12 children, one school district that had 10 children and one school district that had 8 children. State follow-up included record reviews from select communities with a large number of children in which the available data indicated that there were children who did not receive a free appropriate public education by age three, random sampling of school districts and/or telephone follow-up to verify data and/or obtain additional information. For example, the State Department of Education followed up during Focused Monitoring with one such school district whose available data in 2003-2004 indicated that there were 8 children who had not received a free appropriate public education by age three. A record review of all 8 children indicated that 7 of those children did receive a free appropriate public education by age three. The school district had incorrectly entered and erroneously reported these children. The eighth child had not as yet formally moved into the school district and hence the receipt of that child's individualized special education and related services did not begin until the family had established residency, which was after the child's third birthday. The additional information the state obtained through such follow-up activity leads the state to deduce that the actual representation of children who do receive a free appropriate public education by their third birthday is likely higher than the available data indicate.

2. Targets

Eligible three-year-old children with disabilities who transition from the state's early intervention system under the IDEA Part C at age three with a transition conference convened at least 90-days before the child's third birthday receive a free appropriate public education by age three, 100% of the time.

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage

Connecticut's available data and data analysis demonstrate measured progress toward assuring 100% compliance that a free appropriate public education is provided by age three for those children exiting the state's early intervention system. In 2003-2004 the state's available data indicated that a free appropriate public education is being provided to this population of children 83.5% of the time. This is an increase of 7.5% and also represents an increase of 271 children from the previous reporting year. Additional data and related follow-up activities the state engaged in indicate that the available data that is reported may actually under-represent the actual number of children who receive a free appropriate public education by their third birthday and/or who have a free appropriate public education made available to them by their third birthday through an individualized education program created by the child's team.

Additional information for this indicator was gathered not only from school district follow-up but also from a statewide parent survey of all families who exited the state's early intervention system to special education over an eight-month period of time. The IDEA General Supervision Enhancement Grant funded the parent survey on transition. One of the survey questions asked parents to identify whether the child's school district began providing special education and related services by the child's third birthday. Eighty percent (80%) of parents who responded to the survey question about a free appropriate public education by age three indicated that their child's special education and related services did begin by their child's third birthday. This information is consistent with the available statewide data collected by the Department of Education. Eleven parents, or 16% of those parents who responded 'no' to the parent survey question about a free appropriate public education by age three indicated that they as parents opted not to have their child begin receiving their special education and related services even though those services were made available by the child's third birthday. Parents provided comments such as: "the school was willing to have her start on her third birthday – we had family plans scheduled – she started after" and "we decided not to enroll her in the middle of winter..." This additional data source assists the state by providing further information that informs data analysis activities about those children that did not begin receiving their special education and related services by their third birthday. The information provided by parents through the parent survey respondents relative to the question posed about a free appropriate public education by age three indicate that parents are opting not to make their child available even though a free appropriate public education has been made available by the responsible school district. This additional information is another data source that indicates that the available statewide data under-represents the availability of a free appropriate public education by age three for eligible children. This information and the information from the follow-up activities with districts cited earlier indicate limitations/errors with the data for this indicator. It is reasonable to deduce that the percentage of eligible 3 year olds who receive a FAPE by age 3 is higher, perhaps significantly higher, than that the data indicate. A full copy of the parent survey summary and results can be found at <http://www.state.ct.us/sde/deps/Early/PreschoolSE/index.htm>.

The state identified that there were no specific complaints, mediations or due process hearings relative to transition in 2003-2004, as in 2002-2003.

Connecticut contributes progress on this indicator to continued efforts to assure data consistency in the available data through use of a consistent data definition, data accuracy in reporting and in-depth data analysis and follow-up. The state engages in continued dialogue and discussions with school districts, provides training and technical assistance with Part C and engages in a level of monitoring through random sampling and via direct follow-up with school districts. The state also continues the positive and on-going Part C and Part B collaborative activities to assure a smooth and effective transition for all children and their families who exit the early intervention system to special education.

It should again be noted that Connecticut's data definition for this indicator reflects a stringent definition of the FAPE provisions of IDEA as reflected in IDEA statutory language at Section 612 (9) which state that "By the third birthday of such a child, an

individualized education program or, if consistent with sections 614(d) (2) (B) and 636(d), an individualized family service plan, has been developed and is being implemented for the child.” This statutory language has been defined for state data collection purposes. The data is collected by identifying the “start date” of services indicating that an IEP is “being implemented” for a child. That “start date” is then compared to the child’s birth date in order to match the date of a child’s IEP implementation with the child’s third birth date. Statewide data collection and available data does not allow for variability in the data relative to situations such as differing start and end days of school (which vary across the state), weekends, holidays, etc., hence, this additional information about data variability is another data set and factor that informs the state that their statewide data may actually under-represent the provision of a free appropriate public education by age three for those children exiting the state’s early intervention system. The additional data based information from the parent survey also contributes to informing the state that parent choice in when their child receives a free appropriate public education affects the state’s available data by virtue of the start date of service and may well under-represent the number and percent of children who have an individualized education program in effect by their third birthday. Follow-up activities with school districts, such as with the example cited, again contributes to informing the state during their data analysis activities that the percentile obtained on this indicator through the available statewide data collected under-represents and may significantly under-represent the availability of a free appropriate public education by age three for those children exiting the state’s early intervention system.

In such instances in which the state has identified potential non-compliance through the available state data collected, the state has defined and continues to refine, the activities that occur when potential non-compliance is identified. The state has a process for using the available statewide data to identify school districts in which the available data may indicate that the school district is not in full compliance. The state has a systematic process to follow-up with school districts which includes a formal systematic process for contacting the local school district, engaging in a process of data verification with a representative of the school district, identifying the extent to which non-compliance may or may not exist and if non-compliance is identified, requesting that activities be identified and/or a plan be developed by the school district to address and ensure that a free appropriate public education is provided by age three to those children who exit the state’s early intervention system.

Collaborative activities between the state’s early intervention and special education systems take place on an on-going basis and will continue in future years. These collaborative and coordinated activities include continued refining of data and accuracy in data collection for each respective system, statewide training and technical assistance on transition for professionals and parents, joint development of policies, procedures and practices that affect transition for children and families and joint development of information, materials and products on transition to ensure that transitions are smooth and effective for children and their families.

4. Projected Targets

Eligible three-year-old children with disabilities who transition from the state’s early intervention system under IDEA Part C at age three, with a transition conference

convened at least 90-days before the child's third birthday receive a free appropriate public education that has been developed and is being implemented by age three, 100% of the time.

5. Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets and Results

The CSDE will:

- Continue to conduct data merge activities between the Connecticut Birth to Three System and Special Education to inform and guide future activities, including reporting activities, and continue to ensure compliance with IDEA and FERPA;
- Continue to verify the accuracy of the data;
- Continue discussions about how the free appropriate public education at three indicator can be included in the state's focused monitoring efforts;
- Investigate and determine whether the inclusion of the FAPE at Three indicator can be included in the published special education "data maps" which provide a vehicle for systematic identification and follow-up with those school districts who do not demonstrate compliance; and
- Develop and make publicly available a directory of school district contacts in order to assist service coordinators and families in the transition process.

6. Projected Timelines and Resources

- Continue work to write and implement a web-based training on transition in collaboration with the Connecticut Birth to Three System using current resources;
- Continue to conduct data merge activities between the Connecticut Birth to Three System and Special Education to inform and guide future activities, including reporting activities, and continue to ensure compliance with IDEA and FERPA using current resources;
- Continue discussions about how the FAPE at Three indicator can be included in the state's focused monitoring efforts using current resources;
- Investigate and determine whether the inclusion of the FAPE at Three indicator can be included in the published special education "data maps" which provide a vehicle for systematic identification and follow-up with those school districts who do not demonstrate compliance using current resources; and
- Develop and make publicly available a directory of school district contacts in order to assist service coordinators and families in the transition process using current resources.

Cluster Area III: Parent Involvement

Question: Is the provision of a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities facilitated through parent involvement in special education services?

State Goal(s): Parents of students with disabilities, ages 3 through 21, participate as full partners in the planning and implementation of their child's educational program. **

Performance Indicator(s):

- A. The number of parents who report satisfaction with the Individualized Education Program that was designed for their child.
- B. The total number of parents who report that they had an opportunity to share vision and priorities for their child when the IEP was being designed.
- C. The total number of parents, including parents from racially or culturally diverse backgrounds, who report involvement or an opportunity to become involved in their child's educational planning.
- D. The total number of parents, including parents from racially or culturally diverse backgrounds, who participate in or have an opportunity to participate in training activities related to special education issues.

1. Baseline/Trend Data:

Baseline data for these indicators were set in the 2002-03 year and reported in the 2004 APR (2002-03 Reporting Period). Connecticut collects parent data every other year, thus trend data on indicators A through D are not available for the 2003-04 year. In 2003-04, CSDE developed a revised Parent Survey to be sent to a representative sample of parents of students with disabilities in the State of Connecticut. (See **Explanation of Progress or Slippage** below for a discussion of the CSDE's efforts around the development of the revised parent survey.) Data from this survey, which will be administered in 2004-05, will be analyzed and reported on in the 2006 APR (2004-05 Reporting Period).

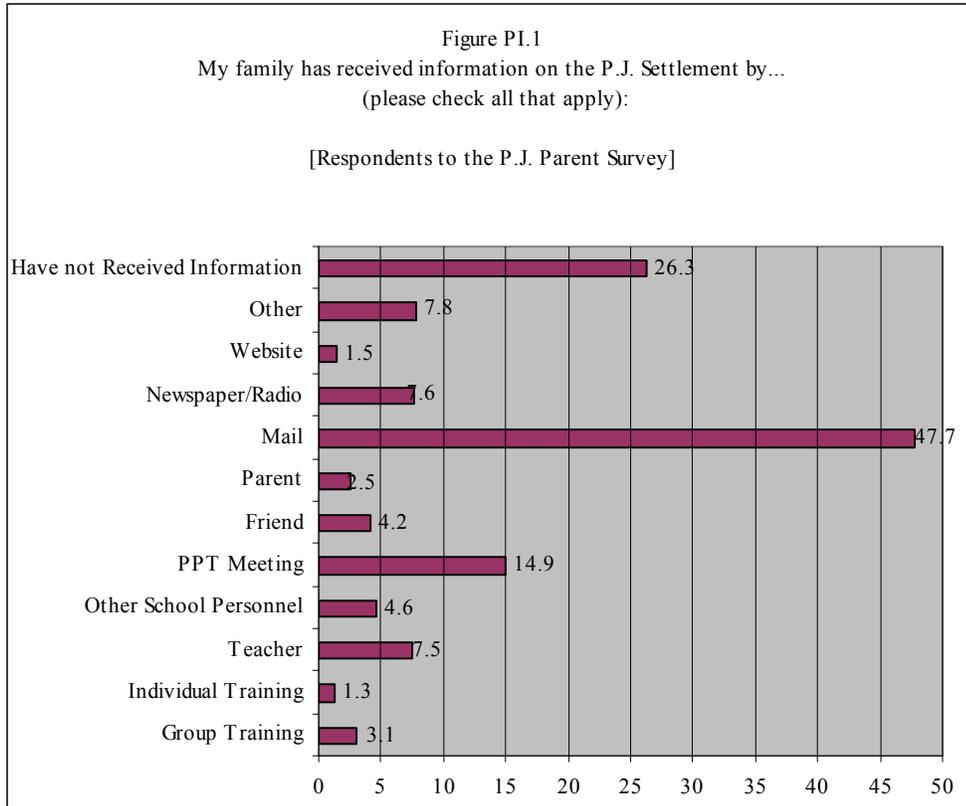
Baseline data are available for activities proposed in the 2004 APR, including:

- 1) Implementation of the Parent Training Plan on LRE, including training of LEAs on conducting parent training in the area of LRE; and
- 2) Collection of data from LEAs on parent training as part of Department's annual IDEA application.

To gather baseline information on the effectiveness of parent training on LRE (Activity 1), a parent survey was conducted to assess parents' knowledge of and reactions to the P.J. et al. v State of Connecticut et al. Settlement Agreement (PJ Settlement Agreement; See Attachment D). The PJ Settlement Agreement was the result of a class action lawsuit addressing the inclusion of students with

intellectual disabilities in regular education classrooms in their neighborhood schools. Over 3,000 (3,220) surveys were sent to families of class members (families who have one or more children identified as having an intellectual disability) via a mailing by the Connecticut State Department of Education in November of 2003. Every attempt was made to include all families impacted by the Settlement Agreement; however contact information was unavailable for some families. Participants were allotted a three-week time frame to complete and return the surveys. Completed surveys continued to be received through January 2004. Of the mailed surveys, 199 surveys were returned due to a wrong mailing address. A total of 679 completed surveys were returned. This represents a response rate of approximately 21%. This survey, to be replicated in the fall of 2005, provides baseline data on parents' knowledge of the terms of the PJ Settlement Agreement, the means by which they learned about the PJ Settlement Agreement, as well as their perceptions of the appropriateness of the instructional planning and placement provided for their child.

One item on the PJ Parent Survey serves as an indicator of how successful schools were at informing parents about the PJ Settlement Agreement. Respondents were asked to select, from a list of various resources, any and all that applied to the statement, "My family has received information on the P.J. Settlement by..." According to the survey, parents were most likely to receive information on the PJ Settlement Agreement from information sent to them in the mail (47.7%), followed by information provided at PPT meetings (14.9%). 26.3% of parents who responded to the survey reported that they had not previously received any information on the PJ Settlement Agreement (Figure PI.1).



Two items on the PJ Parent Survey serve as indicators of parent-school communications on the topic of LRE and the provision of education in the regular education classroom for students with disabilities: i) “When planning your child’s education for this year, did the school team talk about your child being in regular classes?” (Table PI.1) “When planning for your child’s education for this year, did the school team talk about ways to help your child be successful in regular classes?” (Table PI.2). For both questions, the majority of parents who were surveyed (65.1% and 57.9%, respectively) answered affirmatively.

Table PI.1			Table PI.2		
Did the school team talk about your child being in regular classes?			When planning for your child’s education for this year, did the school team talk about ways to help your child be successful in regular classes?		
[Respondents to the P.J. Parent Survey]			[Respondents to the P.J. Parent Survey]		
	Percent	Frequency		Percent	Frequency
Yes	65.1	436	Yes	57.9	386
No	31.5	211	No	39.4	263
Did Not Attend PPT Mtg	3.4	23	Did Not Attend PPT Mtg	2.7	18
Total	98.7	670	Total	98.2	667
Missing	1.3	9	Missing	1.8	12

Data from this survey were compiled and mailed in pamphlet form to survey respondents as well as other parents of students with intellectual disabilities (See Attachment E). This PJ Parent Survey will be replicated and re-administered in the

fall of 2004. Trend data will be available for the 2006 APR (2004-05 Reporting Period).

To gather baseline information on LEA parent training and information activities (Activity 2), data on activities to support parent education, information and training offered by LEAs were gathered as part of the district's annual IDEA grant application. As part of the application, districts were asked to report on the topic and type of parent training activities that plan on conducting in the 2004-05 school year (see Table PI.3). Among the 150 (88.8%) of LEAs that submitted this information, the most popular topic for parent trainings and information activities is in the area of preschool or early childhood related issues. LRE/Inclusion is the second most popular topic, followed by transition. Districts most frequently are planning to provide information in the form of workshops, but written documentation and newsletters were the next most popular forms of communication with parents.

Table PI.3

<i>PARENT PARTICIPATION PLAN for 2004 - 2005 SCHOOL YEAR</i>									
<i>Rank Order</i>		<i>Workshop</i>	<i>Conference</i>	<i>Newsletter</i>	<i>Written Documentation</i>	<i>Committee/ Advisory Group</i>	<i>Support Group</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
1	Preschool/Early Childhood	46	29	32	27	15	21	25	195
2	Inclusion/LRE/PJ	45	22	18	26	29	1	28	169
3	Transition	53	26	15	26	19	12	17	168
4	IDEA-Procedural Safeguards	37	13	16	64	7	7	16	160
5	Disability Specific Info	39	22	17	24	14	18	20	154
6	Behavior/Discipline	45	21	16	28	8	12	21	151
7	Local Policies/Procedures	18	7	24	51	15	3	28	146
8	Parenting	47	17	25	7	8	23	19	146
9	NCLB	26	14	34	30	13	2	18	137
10	Instructional Strategies	36	20	13	15	14	5	22	125
11	Communication	11	13	28	25	17	6	21	121
12	Curriculum	26	14	20	20	18	1	22	121
13	Eligibility Determination/Evaluation	23	18	10	35	9	3	20	118
14	IEP Development	36	18	5	22	11	4	19	115
15	Technology	27	16	16	15	15	5	14	108
16	School/Program Improvement or Planning	14	9	19	15	34	4	11	106
17	Assessment	17	15	17	23	5	2	17	96
18	Related Services	12	19	11	15	7	6	12	82
	TOTAL	558	313	336	468	258	135	350	

2. **Targets** (for reporting period July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004):
 - A. Increase to 90% the total number of parents who report satisfaction with the Individualized Education Program that was designed for their child
 - B. Increase to 90% the total number of parents who report that they had an opportunity to share vision and priorities for their child when the IEP was being designed.
 - C. Increase in the total number of parents from racially or culturally diverse backgrounds who report involvement or an opportunity to become involved in their child's educational planning as measured by:
 - Black and Hispanic Parents report participation in IEP development at the same rate as white parents (92%);
 - Hispanic parents report understanding the discussion of the IEP at the same rate as white parents (95%); and

- Maintain data on all measures for white parents.
- D. Increase in the total number of parents from racially or culturally diverse backgrounds who participate or have an opportunity to participate in training activities related to special education issues as measured by:
 - Increase by 5% the number of parents who report opportunities for training, for white, black and Hispanic parents; and
 - Increase by 5% the number of parents who report attending a parent training for white, black and Hispanic parents.

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage:

Connecticut collects parent data every 2 years. Consequently, data were not available to determine if targets were met in the 2003-04 year. The results of a revised parent survey that will be administered to a representative sample of the parents of students with disabilities in the state of Connecticut will be available for reporting period July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005 and will be reported on in the 2006 APR (See Attachment F). The revised Parent Survey was developed in collaboration with the CSDE Parent Work Group and piloted on a small, non-representative sample of 45 parents of students with disabilities. Upon completion of the survey, the sample respondents were asked to respond to a follow-up questionnaire designed to gather information on the instrument's "face" validity (e.g. to make sure the directions were clear and easy to follow, to learn whether or not the parents felt they were able to accurately describe their experiences relative to their child's special education program). Feedback from this pilot study was used to validate and inform revisions for the survey

The survey sample was designed by an external evaluator, Glen Martin & Associates. The survey will be sent to approximately 6,500 families of students with disabilities, representing 100 schools in CT. The survey sample was created to provide a reliable and valid representation of students based on disability, age, and race/ethnicity. The survey will be sent to all families in English and Spanish, with a pre-addressed, stamped return envelope. The toll free number to the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) was also enclosed for families who required assistance in responding to the survey as was a thank-you coupon for free parent training or a newsletter.

The following is an update on additional activities identified in the 2004 APR (2003-04 Reporting Period) for Parent Involvement:

- The CSDE merged the two parent advisory groups to develop amore coordinated parent participation initiative. This group meets on a monthly basis, not quarterly as identified in the report;
- The CSDE has issued two State Improvement Grants to parent training organizations (CPAC and University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities) to conduct training for LEAs and parents on developing partnerships in the planning and implementation of IEPs. A total of 30 school districts have been targeted. The grant requires extensive data collection as a result of the training and will require follow

up surveying of families and district personnel. The results of this evaluation will be included in the 2006 APR (Reporting Period 2004-05);

- The CSDE, in collaboration with the CPAC, has identified and provided training for families as members of monitoring teams. A parent has been included on all focused monitoring teams (See GS 1.) Parents are paid on an hourly basis for their participation;
- The CSDE has increased the contract with CPAC to provide increased training and support for families, including families as members of state focused monitoring teams; and
- The CSDE continues to contract with SERC for technical assistance to school districts in the area of parent involvement.

4. Projected Targets:

- A. Increase the percent of parents who report satisfaction with the Individualized Education Program that was designed for their child
- B. Increase the percent of parents who report that they had an opportunity to share vision and priorities for their child when the IEP was being designed.
- C. Increase the percent of parents from racially or culturally diverse backgrounds who report involvement or an opportunity to become involved in their child's educational planning as measured by:
 - Black and Hispanic Parents report participation in IEP development at the same rate as white parents;
 - Hispanic parents report understanding the discussion of the IEP at the same rate as white parents; and
 - Maintain data on all measures for white parents.
- D. Increase the percent of parents from racially or culturally diverse backgrounds who participate or have an opportunity to participate in training activities related to special education issues as measured by:
 - The percent of parents who report opportunities for training, for white, black and Hispanic parents; and
 - The percent of parents who report attending a parent training for white, black and Hispanic parents.
- E. Increase in the percent of parents who report that they received information about the PJ Settlement Agreement or participated in training activities related to the PJ Settlement Agreement as measured by:
 - The percent of parents who report that they received information about the PJ Settlement Agreement; and
 - The percent of parents who reported participating in training activities about the PJ Settlement Agreement.

5. Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets/Results:

The CSDE will:

- Convene monthly meetings of the CSDE Parent Work Group to advise on all parent training and information activities;
- Conduct state wide Parent Survey and analyze results;
- Provide training for LEAs and families on LRE and the PJ Settlement Agreement;
- Conduct a follow-up survey of parents of class members regarding the PJ Settlement Agreement;
- Conduct six Parent Forums on LRE as part of Focused Monitoring;
- Recruit and train parents to participate as members of Focused Monitoring teams;
- Analyze the results of the SIG Parent Training Grant and make recommendations for next steps;
- Identify activities for training LEA personnel to provide parent training and information activities as part of future SIG application;
- Contract with CPAC for training and support for parents and training of parents as Parent Advisors;
- Conduct a training for all LEAs with finalized training modules created from SIG Parent Training ;
- Expand the contract with CPAC to include additional Child Find responsibilities and increase their number of bilingual staff;
- Create and publish an informational brochure for parents on statewide Parent Organizations;
- Provide funding to Learning Disabilities Association of CT (LDA), The CT Family Support Council and the CT Coalition on Inclusive Education (CCIE) to support parent training and information activities; and
- Pilot a uniform data collection system of parent phone calls received by statewide Parent Organizations.

6. Projected Timelines/Resources:

During 2004-05:

- Allocate funds from SIG to support stipends and meeting expenses for the CSDE Parent Work Group;
- Allocate funds from the SIG for contracted services for analysis of Parent Survey responses;
- Allocate funds for conducting follow-up PJ Parent Survey;
- Allocate \$45,000 in CSDE funds to contract with CPAC for implementation of parent training in the PJ Settlement Agreement;
- Allocate \$15,000 to CPAC for support and payment of parents as members of Focused Monitoring teams and to conduct parent phone interviews;
- Allocate \$116,000 to CPAC for support of Next Steps Parent Advisor Program;

- Allocate \$5,000 to LEARN for facilitator for LRE Parent Forums;
- Allocate \$7,500 to support parent training activities through LDA, CCIE and CT Family Support Council;
- Allocate \$200,000 in SIG and IDEA funds for Families as Partners Training Grant;
- Allocate resources for design and publication of Parent Organization brochures; and
- Designate a CSDE Consultant to serve as the liaison for all parent partnership initiatives.

Cluster Area IV: Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

Question: Do students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) that promotes a high quality education and prepares them for employment and independent living?

Probes: **BF.I** Is the percentage of children with disabilities receiving special education, by race/ethnicity, significantly disproportionate to the percentage of children, by race/ethnicity, in the State's general student enrollment? For each particular disability category, is the percentage of children, by race/ethnicity, significantly disproportionate to the percentage of children, by race/ethnicity in the State's general student enrollment? For each particular educational setting, is the percentage of children, by race/ethnicity, significantly disproportionate to the percentage of children, by race/ethnicity in the State's general student enrollment?

State Goal: Monitor the racial/ethnic proportions of student with disabilities for disproportionate identification trends.

Performance Indicator(s):

The total number of IDEA noncompliance issues identified and corrected in a timely manner.

1. Baseline/Trend Data

Race and ethnic disproportionate representation was assessed by comparing the proportion of students by race/ethnicity within each disability category to the expected race/ethnicity proportion found in the district or state all student data. This analysis was conducted using the formula $[\pm 1.96 (\text{sqrt} ((P*Q) / n))]$ for the standard error of the sample proportion. As this analysis is less sensitive when used with small groups; findings of significant overrepresentation were interpreted only when the analysis included 20 or more students within the disability category assessed. For areas of identified statistically significant overrepresentation, an odds ratio was calculated to aid in the interpretation of the identified overrepresentation. Statewide data in 2003-04 (2002-03 data) identified four areas each of statistically significant overrepresentation for Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students with disabilities.

CT Areas of Statistically Significant Overrepresentation	Reporting Year 2002-03 Odds Ratios (01-02 data)	Reporting Year 2003-04 Odds Ratios (02-03 data)
Black Learning Disability	1.28	1.30
Black Intellectual Disability	2.95	2.80
Black Emotional Disturbance	2.14	2.24
Black Special Education	1.19	1.24
Hispanic Learning Disability	1.35	1.39
Hispanic Intellectual Disability	2.24	2.07
Hispanic Emotional Disturbance	1.84	1.86
Hispanic Special Education	1.17	1.22

District-level analysis in 2003-04 (2002-03 data) indicated that 18 districts demonstrated at least one area of statistically significant overrepresentation by race/ethnicity for students with disabilities. All 18 of these districts were part of the original group of districts identified in 2002-03. Each of the 18 districts identified with statistically significant overrepresentation during the 2003-04 school year (2002-03 data) were mandated to attend a two-day Closing the Achievement Gap (Summit II) in March of 2004 and develop CSDE approved Action Plans to address areas identified as being in need of improvement. In May of 2004 18 districts were required by the CT Commissioner of Education to respond to a series of questions on how the district was addressing overrepresentation within the context of district goals and the general education environment. Districts from this list will be considered for a site visit as part of the Focused Monitoring during 2004-05 in the area of overrepresentation, one aspect of the statewide focused monitoring efforts (see GSI for additional information). An additional 7 districts did not demonstrate statistically significant overrepresentation, but did have high odds ratios for students in various disability categories in the 2003-04 school year (2002-03 data). The CSDE believed these odds ratios (greater than 1.8) warranted explanation and sent letters asking the district to explain their data.

With regard to educational environment data, the development of the focused monitoring system will include a review of placement decisions for individual students in all districts identified for on-site visits in the area of overrepresentation.

2. Targets

Monitor the disproportionate identification of students with disabilities by race/ethnicity.

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage

During the 2003-04 school year, 18 districts were identified with statistically significant overrepresentation, using school year 2002-03 data. While this is technically a decline from the 2002-03 school year, where 34 districts were identified with potential disproportionality, the formula used to calculate overrepresentation was changed between the two reporting periods. This change in formula was instituted in order to apply a statistical significance test, as well as to align with the formula used by the state for NCLB analysis. Considering the change in formulas, no comparison can be made between the 2 years of data. Therefore, the districts identified for potential noncompliance during the 2003-04 school year, due to overrepresentation by race/ethnicity, should be considered new baseline data.

4. Projected Targets

Monitor any overrepresentation of students with disabilities, in specific disability categories, for all racial and ethnic groups, in comparison to the population of the district's general education enrollment.

5. Future Activities

The CSDE will:

- Send a letter to all districts concerning their data in the area of overidentification;
- Illuminate CT overrepresentation data through the creation of a statewide map that is color coded for each district based on their performance and then posted on the state's web site;

- Identify districts for potential overrepresentation based on race/ethnicity;
- Select overrepresentation districts for Focused Monitoring visits (See GS I);
- Include review of educational environment placement decisions for individual students in districts monitored for overrepresentation;
- Convene the Stakeholders' Planning Group three times to discuss the issue of disproportionality and plan Summit III, Closing CT Achievement Gaps: Overrepresentation of Students in Special Education;
- Apply for a grant from the National Center for Educationally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCRESt), which will provide TA regarding overidentification and allow for state representation at NCCRESt events;
- Require districts selected for Focused Monitoring to develop district improvement plans in this area (See GS I);
- Invite additional districts, as part of Summit III, to participate in district improvement planning sessions around disproportionality issues;
- Select districts to participate in a series of professional development opportunities by Glen Singleton (National Advocate for Educational Equity and founder of Pacific Educational Group Inc., San Francisco, CA) entitled Courageous Conversations. These sessions discuss race as a factor in the over-representation of minority students in special education and facilitate the implementation of equity teams in each district; and
- Issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit to hire a person(s) knowledgeable in cultural competence to advise the department in policies and practices.

6. **Projected Timelines and Resources**

- Support from the Special education Resource Center (SERC) to implement LEA training activities;
- Assignment of a CSDE consultant to monitor the issue of disproportionality;
- Commitment of CSDE general education staff to work collaboratively with special education staff to address the broader issues of high expectations for all students and the closing of the state's achievement gaps;
- Funding to support the cultural competence RFP;
- Funding to support Courageous conversations professional development opportunities for districts via Glen Singleton;
- Funding to support the continued efforts of the Stakeholders planning group; and
- Acceptance of CT's application to partner with NCCRESt.

Disability Counts and Percents by Race/Ethnicity, for Children/Youth of All Ages (3-21), Receiving Special Education and Related Services																			
Connecticut State Department of Education 2003-04 School Year (2002-03 Data)																			
	American Indian or Alaskan Native			Asian or Pacific Islander			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latino			White (not Hispanic)			Other Race			Total
	Count	%	Outlier	Count	%	Outlier	Count	%	Outlier	Count	%	Outlier	Count	%	Outlier	Count	%	Outlier	Count
Learning Disability	84	0.3		187	0.7		4619	16.4	1.30	5171	18.4	1.39	18037	64.0		73	0.3		28,171
Intellectual Disability/MR	15	0.4		52	1.5		984	27.6	2.80	756	21.2	2.07	1753	49.1		10	0.3		3,570
Serious Emotional Disturbance	33	0.4		39	0.5		1772	23.9	2.24	1537	20.7	1.83	4014	54.1		21	0.3		7,416
Speech/ Language Impairment	54	0.3		275	1.7		1993	12.6		2339	14.7		11150	70.2	1.04	66	0.4		15,877
Other Disability	24	0.3		174	2.2		1239	15.9		1391	17.9		4921	63.2		43	0.6		7,792
Other Health Impaired	39	0.4		60	0.6		1047	11.2		868	9.3		7267	78.0	1.52	35	0.4		9,316
Autism	4	0.2		54	2.7		231	11.7		140	7.1		1530	77.5	1.70	16	0.8		1,975
Total	253	0.3		841	1.1		11885	16.0	1.24	12202	16.5	1.22	48672	65.7		264	0.4		74,117
Statewide Data	1,775	0.3		17,204	3.0		77,798	13.5		81,002	14.1		393,899	68.6		2,894	0.5		574,572

Disability Counts and Percents by Race/Ethnicity, for Children/Youth of All Ages (3-21), Receiving Special Education and Related Services																			
Connecticut State Department of Education 2003-04 School Year (2002-03 Data)																			
	American Indian or Alaskan Native			Asian or Pacific Islander			Black/African American			White (not Hispanic)			Hispanic/Latino			Other Race			Total
	Count	%	Outlier	Count	%	Outlier	Count	%	Outlier	Count	%	Outlier	Count	%	Outlier	Count	%	Outlier	Count
Outside Regular Class <21%	139	0.3		471	1.2		5,394	13.2		29,178	71.3	1.14	5,616	13.7		134	0.3		40,932
Outside Regular Class 21-60%	64	0.4		159	1.0		2,662	16.4	1.27	10,624	65.4		2,670	16.4	1.22	55	0.3		16,234
Outside Regular Class >60%	37	0.3		160	1.3		2,951	23.6	2.48	6,026	48.3		3,253	26.1	2.63	56	0.4		12,483
Separate Facilities	13	0.3		51	1.1		878	19.7	1.57	2,845	63.7		663	14.8		18	0.4		4,468
Total	253	0.3		841	1.1		11,885	16.0	1.24	48,672	65.7		12,202	16.5	1.22	264	0.4		74,117
Statewide Data	1,775	0.3		17,204	3.0		77,798	13.5		393,899	68.6		81,002	14.1		2,894	0.5		574,572

LRE Counts and Percents by Race/Ethnicity, For Children/Youth of All Ages (3-21),
Receiving Special Education

Connecticut State Department of Education
2002-2003 School Year Data

Connecticut

Race/Ethnicity	79 - 100% Time w/ Non-Disabled Peers			40 - 79% Time w/ Non-Disabled Peers			0 - 40% Time w/ Non-Disabled Peers			Disability Totals
	Spec. Educ. Count	Spec. Educ. Percent	Outlier Indicator	Spec. Educ. Count	Spec. Educ. Percent	Outlier Indicator	Spec. Educ. Count	Spec. Educ. Percent	Outlier Indicator	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	141	55.7%		64	25.3%		48	19.0%		253
Asian American or Pacific Islander	471	56.0%		161	19.1%		209	24.9%		841
Black or African American	5,407	45.5%	L	2,675	22.5%		3,803	32.0%	H	11,885
White (Not Hispanic)	29,255	60.1%	H	10,684	22.0%		8,733	17.9%	L	48,672
Hispanic or Latino	5,624	46.1%	L	2,679	22.0%		3,899	32.0%	H	12,202
Other Race	136	51.5%		55	20.8%		73	27.7%		264
District Totals	41,034	55.4%		16,318	22.0%		16,765	22.6%		74,117

*L = LRE Distribution by Race/Ethnicity is Below the Total Special Education Population Distribution (Low)

*H = LRE Distribution by Race/Ethnicity is Above the Total Special Education Population Distribution (High)

Cluster Area IV: Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

Question: Do students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) that promotes a high quality education and prepares them for employment and independent living?

Probes: **BF.II** Are high school graduation rates and dropout rates for children with disabilities comparable to graduation rates and dropout rates for nondisabled children?

State Goal: Students with disabilities, ages 3-21, will have equal access to and be active participants in their total school communities. **

Performance Indicator(s):

- A. The percent of students with disabilities who graduate with a regular high school diploma.
- B. The dropout rate for students with disabilities.

1. Baseline/Trend Data

In 2003-04, using 2002-03 data, the graduation rate for students with disabilities was up to 61.8%, from 41.8%, in the previous year. The CT all student graduation rate was 89.0% for the same time period.

In 2003-04, using 2002-03 data, dropout rates for students with disabilities was 7.9%. This continues a 3-year trend of reduction in dropout rates for students with disabilities (11.5% in 2001-02, 8.4% in 2002-03). The CT all student dropout rate was 2.1% for the same time period.

2. Targets

- A. Increase by 5% from baseline, the percent of students with disabilities who graduate with a regular high school diploma.
- B. Reduce the gap between the dropout rate for students with disabilities and the dropout rate for all students in Connecticut.

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage

The increase in 2003-04 graduation rates for students with disabilities, using 2002-03 data, from 41.8% to 61.8% can be explained by a combination of factors: CSDE, drawing on guidance from our CIP (Continuous Improvement Planning), has placed greater emphasis on the importance of setting the goal that students with disabilities are to graduate with a standard diploma; graduation data is as the 'safe harbor' variable for CT's NCLB analysis; and new cleaning activities related to the collection of this variable have been instituted via a cross-reference of the special education exiting data collection and the all student graduation data collection. These data are only expected to increase in accuracy, as they eventually become one united data collection (pilot anticipated in the 2005-06 school year).

The 2004 APR (Reporting Period 2002-03) reported CT's drop out rate for 2002-03, using 2001-02 data, as 4.2%. Prior to 2003-04, CT has seen a 5-year decline in the

dropout rate for students with disabilities, significantly closing the existing gap between students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers. Following OSEP’s elimination of the use of the exit variable “moved, unknown to be continuing education”, the calculation of dropout rate for 2003-04 increased dramatically to 7.9%. In light of the large impact of this change on the calculation of a dropout rate, CT retroactively applied the same logic (students previously reported as moved unknown would be reported as drop outs) to the previous 2 years of data in an effort to examine the impact of this change. CT’s trend using the new formula can be seen below and continues to indicate a declining trend (Table BF.II 1).

Table BF.II 1

Drop Out Rate	Reporting Year		
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
With Moved, Unknown Students as Drop Outs	11.5%	8.4%	7.9%
Without Moved, Unknown Students	4.9%	4.2%	n/a
Statewide All Student Data	3.1%	2.6%	

One concern with the comparison of the dropout rate of students with disabilities to that of the all student data (which logically should include students with disabilities) was the discovery of some districts who were reporting fewer drop outs on the statewide all student collection (ED525) than on the data collection for students with disabilities drop outs. It was discovered that some districts were not reporting their students with disabilities on the all student data collection, since they were reporting them elsewhere. This issue has been clarified and districts are working to align their practices with policy. Much of this confusion will be eliminated with the introduction of the required statewide register/unregister process associated with the state’s existing Public School Information System (PSIS) database. The register/unregister process is anticipated for pilot in the 2005-06 school year. Through this new process, all student exit data will be collected through one mechanism, regardless of special needs status.

In the spring of 2004, CT reported, for the first time, district graduation and dropout rate data for both children with disabilities and their nondisabled peers in the preliminary Special Education Profiles. This process of illuminating exiting data as a rate figure rather than a count of exiters (since 1989 profiles have included a count of exiters) has increased the visibility of the data as well as the attention paid to it by local agencies.

4. Projected Targets

- A. Increase the percent of students with disabilities who graduate with a regular high school diploma.
- B. Reduce the gap between the dropout rate for students with disabilities and the dropout rate for all students in Connecticut.

5. Future Activities

The CSDE will:

- Begin discussions with SERC regarding available professional development to support district efforts in reducing dropout rates and increasing access to graduation with a standard high school diploma for students with disabilities;
- Commence exploration of national programs, which increase the rate of graduation of students with disabilities with a standard high school diploma;
- Communicate with the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SP) and participate in research and teleconference activities;
- Include graduation rates as a selection variable for overrepresentation Focused Monitoring visits (see GSI);
- Continue the practice of releasing to the public, district graduation and dropout rate data for both children with disabilities and their nondisabled peers in the Special Education Profiles; and
- Illuminate CT students with disabilities graduation data through the creation of a statewide map that is color coded for each district based on their performance and then posted on the state's web site.

6. Projected Timelines and Resources

- Maintain current levels of staffing.
- Continue public dissemination of graduation and dropout data.

Cluster Area IV: Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

Question: Do students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) that promotes a high quality education and prepares them for employment and independent living?

Probes: **BF.III** Are suspension and expulsion rates for children with disabilities comparable among local educational agencies within the State, or to the rates for nondisabled children within the agencies?

State Goal: Students with disabilities, ages 3-21, will have equal access to and be active participants in their total school communities. **

Performance Indicator(s):

A. Decrease the disproportionate suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities in comparison to their non-disabled peers.

1. Baseline/Trend Data

Due to the fact that CT did not receive its 2004 APR response letter until December 2004, we were unable to address the concerns mentioned regarding the reporting of suspension and expulsion data within the 2003-04 school year. Since the receipt of the response letter, the CSDE has been working diligently to address the concerns of OSEP and have gone back and analyzed 2002-03 suspension/expulsion data according to the recommended guidelines.

CSDE consultants from the Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Assessment and the Bureau of Special Education have met to review CT's suspension and expulsion data. The areas of suspension and expulsion reviewed included: Special Education Out-of-School Suspensions, Special Education Overall Suspension Rates, and a calculated difference score between the overall suspension rates of students with disabilities and that of their nondisabled peers. Districts were rank ordered on each of these three indicators, a cut score for data of concern was established, and finally, districts were identified as belonging to one of 3 groups: districts with data below the state average, districts with data between the state average and the established cut score, and districts with data above the established state cut score for suspension/expulsion rates of concern. Districts with atypical 2002-03 suspension and expulsion data (2 or more indicators with data above the state established cut score) will be notified in early spring of 2005 and will be required to review their data and explain the patterns in the data. Twenty (20) districts were identified using 2002-03 suspension/expulsion data as districts with data of concern.

2. Targets

Decrease the disproportionate suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities in comparison to their non-disabled peers.

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage

In accordance with recommendations from the 2004 APR response letter received from OSEP, the CSDE has reviewed CT's suspension and expulsion data from 2002-03 in the areas of: Special Education Out-of-School Suspensions, Special Education Overall

Suspension Rates, and a calculated difference score between the overall suspension rates of students with disabilities and that of their nondisabled peers. Districts were rank ordered on each of these three indicators, a cut score for data of concern was established, and finally, districts were identified as belonging to one of 3 groups: districts with data below the state average, districts with data between the state average and the established cut score, and districts with data above the established state cut score for suspension/expulsion rates of concern. Districts with atypical 2002-03 suspension and expulsion data will be notified in early spring of 2005 and will be required to review and explain their data. Twenty (20) districts, using 2002-03 data reported during the 2003-04 school year, were identified as districts with atypical suspension/expulsion data.

The 2003-04 analysis discussed here using the 2002-03 suspension/expulsion data does not represent the establishment of a baseline for future comparison. The State of Connecticut has been working diligently to clarify and consolidate the collection of suspension/expulsion data. Through this process, CSDE departments outside of the Bureau of Special Education have disseminated to local school districts conflicting instructions regarding reporting requirements. During the 2002-03 school year a letter was sent indicating that districts needed to submit in-school suspension data only for serious offenses, but left the definition of serious up to local districts. In September of the 2003-04 school year a clarification letter was sent defining serious offenses. In January of the 2003-04 school year, a letter was sent indicating that districts no longer needed to submit any in-school suspension data to the state and out-of-school suspension data for serious offenses only. Once the Bureau of Special Education received word of these changes and expressed concern, a new letter was sent to districts in March asking districts to report all suspensions for students with disabilities and only serious offenses for nondisabled students. Again, the Bureau of Special Education expressed concern. Therefore, starting with the 2004-05 school year, CT will be collecting in-school suspension data for all serious offenses (using a new expanded list of serious offenses), all out-of-school data regardless of reason for the suspension as well as all expulsion data. These three data elements will be collected for all CT public school students (both students with and without disabilities). The changes discussed here demonstrate that the 2002-03 suspension/expulsion data collection used different collection rules than the 2003-04 data collection, and the 2004-05 will use different rules than either of the two previous years. Therefore, no comparison of data between years can be made at this time and a baseline cannot be established until the 2007 APR (Reporting Period 2005-06) using the 2004-05 suspension/expulsion data collection.

During the 2003-2004 the CSDE conducted a great number of activities to promote appropriate use of suspension and expulsion in Connecticut's public schools. Technical assistance was provided to districts based upon the recommendation of the Continuous Improvement Partnership Team (CIPT).

During the 2003-04 school year, for the first time, Connecticut published in the Special Education Strategic School Profiles suspension and expulsion information (2002-03 data) for each district. District counts and rates were illuminated for in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions and expulsion data for both general and special education students. Statewide data were included for comparison. This new public display of data

drew attention to the disproportionate suspension of students with disabilities within a district as well as across districts.

The statewide Focused Monitoring System (see GS.I for additional information) developed during the 2003-04 school year, used suspension data as probing indicator for site visits for overrepresentation focused monitoring.

Six districts that were awarded Continuation Sliver Grants in the 2002-03 school year, received continued funding for 2003-04 to reduce out-of-school suspensions/expulsions of students with disabilities. The alternative programs developed by the six LEAs varied from school-wide initiatives such as Positive Behavioral Supports to small-group interventions to prevent long-term homebound instruction or out-of-district placement. Reports submitted by the districts revealed that while there were decreases in the rates of suspension, the rates varied across districts.

4. Projected Targets

Monitor the disproportionate suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities among local school districts within CT.

5. Future Activities

The CSDE will:

- Continue Sliver Grant Funding for six districts, during the 2004-05 school year, to reduce out-of-school suspensions/expulsions for students with disabilities;
- Identify any “model” programs from the above funded grants and disseminate information from these programs statewide;
- Continue publication of suspension and expulsion data in the Special Education Strategic School Profiles;
- Create a statewide data map(s) of district suspension/expulsion data for publication on the CSDE website; and
- Continue the practice of disseminating monitoring letters to districts with 2 or 3 areas of concern with regard to the 2003-04 suspension/expulsion data, during the 2004-05 school year, asking districts to review and explain their data. Based upon a review of district responses, additional follow-up with districts will occur.

6. Projected Timelines and Resources

- Maintain current levels of staffing.
- Work to keep lines of communication open between the departments within the CSDE responsible for suspension/expulsion data collection, analysis and dissemination of this data and the Bureau of Special Education.

Cluster Area IV: Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

Question: Do students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) that promotes a high quality education and prepares them for employment and independent living?

Probes: **BF.IV** Do performance results for children with disabilities on State- and district-wide assessment programs improve at a rate that decreases any gap between children with disabilities and their nondisabled peers?

State Goal: There will be a continuous closing of the achievement gaps. **

Performance Indicator(s):

The percentage of eligible students with disabilities who achieve proficiency on the math and reading subject areas of the standard administration of the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) and the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist.

1. Baseline/Trend Data

In 2003-04, the percentage of students with disabilities achieving proficiency or above on the standard administration of statewide assessments remained relatively stable in all grades and subject areas, with the exception of 4th grade math and reading which both showed slight gains (Tables BF.IV 1 and 2).

Table BF.IV

Standard Math	% Proficient 2002-03	% Proficient 2003-04
Grade 4	47.3%	48.6%
Grade 6	44.2%	44.2%
Grade 8	36.7%	36.1%
Grade 10	43.3%	38.6%

Table BF.IV 2

Standard Reading	% Proficient 2002-03	% Proficient 2003-04
Grade 4	27.6%	28.5%
Grade 6	33.9%	33.4%
Grade 8	38.6%	34.6%
Grade 10	43.9%	39.0%

The stability of these scores is encouraging considering the increases seen from 2002-03 to 2003-04 in the number of Connecticut students with disabilities participating on the standard administration of the assessment. CSDE efforts to increase the participation of students with disabilities on the standard assessment have resulted in increases of at least 10% (nearly 500 students) in each grade and subject (Table BF.IV 3). The drastic increase in the 10th grade participation is due to the elimination of out-of-level testing as well as the inclusion of performance on standardized assessments in graduation requirements. Elimination of out-of-level testing for all remaining grades will take effect during the 2004-05 school year.

Table BF.IV 3
Increase in the # of Students
with Disabilities Participating on
Standard Assessments
(2002-03 to 2003-04)

	Standard Math	Standard Reading
Grade 4	13.9%	14.2%
Grade 6	10.8%	11.7%
Grade 8	14.3%	14.1%
Grade 10	33.5%	29.6%

While the number of students with disabilities participating in statewide assessments through the alternate assessment remained relatively stable, gains were seen in both reading and math for students achieving proficiency or above in grades 4, 6 and 10 (Tables BF.IV 4 and 5).

Table BF.IV 4

Alternate Math	% Proficient 2002-03	% Proficient 2003-04
Grade 4	36.5%	38.9%
Grade 6	42.7%	44.1%
Grade 8	54.5%	48.6%
Grade 10	63.0%	67.3%

Table BF.IV 5

Alternate Reading	% Proficient 2002-03	% Proficient 2003-04
Grade 4	60.6%	60.8%
Grade 6	63.3%	61.9%
Grade 8	67.5%	59.7%
Grade 10	74.3%	77.3%

2. Targets

- A. Increase the percent of students with disabilities who achieve proficiency on the math and reading subject areas of the standard administration of the CMT and CAPT.
- B. Eliminate the Out-of-Level testing option for students with disabilities by the spring of 2004.

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage

The CSDE began efforts to investigate the feasibility of redesigning the state's alternate assessment to reflect grade level content in reading and math. Out-of-level testing was eliminated effective the spring of 2004. This impacted the 2003-04 administration of the 10th grade CAPT assessment and will impact the 2004-05 administration of the 4th, 6th and 8th grade CMT assessments. Departmental activities included attention to the principles of Universal Design and access to the general curriculum (including access to standard assessments) in all initiatives and trainings. Extensive professional development was offered in the areas of inclusion (37 trainings), access to the general curriculum and effective instruction (56 trainings). The Division of Curriculum and Instruction designed additional trainings during 2003-04 around state assessments and improving student performance and holistic scoring, in addition to the on-going CMT and CAPT workshops.

4. Projected Targets

The performance results for children with disabilities on statewide assessments improve at a rate that decreases the gap between children with disabilities and their nondisabled peers.

5. Future Activities

The CSDE will:

- Participate in the National Center for Educational Outcomes / Educational Testing Service pilot study (the National Accessible Reading Assessment Project) investigating non-visual approaches to literacy.
- Create a committee to redesign the current state alternate assessment to reflect grade level content in reading and math.
- Offer a 2-day assistive technology conference for K-12 general and special education teachers, paraprofessionals, student support service professionals and administrators regarding available assessment accommodations in an effort to support Closing the Achievement Gaps

6. Projected Timelines and Resources

- Support from the Special education Resource Center (SERC) to implement LEA training activities.
- Maintain current levels of staffing in the Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Assessment.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION A. ENROLLMENT DATA FOR THE MATH ASSESSMENT¹

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS WITH IEPs (1)	ALL STUDENTS (2)
3		
4	5,264	43,593
5		
6	5,808	45,156
7		
8	6,095	46,004
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: ___10___)	5,186	41,971

¹At a date as close as possible to the testing date.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION B. PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON MATH ASSESSMENT

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO TOOK REGULAR ASSESSMENT ON GRADE LEVEL ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS			
	TOTAL (3)	SUBSET WHO TOOK THE ASSESSMENT WITH ACCOMODATIONS (3A)	SUBSET WITH CHANGES TO THE ASSESSMENT THAT INVALIDATED THEIR SCORE ¹ (3B)	SUBSET WHOSE ASSESSMENT RESULTS WERE INVALID ² (3C)
3				
4	4,320	CT Does Not Collect	0	44
5				
6	4,660	CT Does Not Collect	0	59
7				
8	4,814	CT Does Not Collect	0	76
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: <u>10</u>)	4,524	CT Does Not Collect	0	275

¹ Changes to the assessment that invalidate a score are changes in testing materials or procedures that enable a student to participate in the assessment, but result in a score that is not deemed by the State to be comparable to scores received by students without these changes. In some States these changes are called modifications or nonstandard administrations.

² Invalid results are assessment results that cannot be used for reporting and or aggregation due to problems in the testing process (e.g. students do not take all portions of the assessment or students do not fill out the answer sheet correctly).

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION B. PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON MATH ASSESSMENT

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO TOOK OUT OF GRADE LEVEL ASSESSMENT		
	TOTAL (4)	SUBSET WITH CHANGES TO THE ASSESSMENT THAT INVALIDATED THEIR SCORE ¹ (4A)	SUBSET WHOSE ASSESSMENT RESULTS WERE INVALID ² (4B)
3			
4	609	0	0
5			
6	788	0	0
7			
8	833	0	0
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: <u> 10 </u>)	0	0	0

¹ Changes to the assessment that invalidate a score are changes in testing materials or procedures that enable a student to participate in the assessment, but result in a score that is not deemed by the State to be comparable to scores received by students without these changes. In some States these changes are called modifications or nonstandard administrations.

² Invalid results are assessment results that cannot be used for reporting and or aggregation due to problems in the testing process (e.g. students do not take all portions of the assessment or students do not fill out the answer sheet correctly).

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION B. PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON MATH ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO TOOK ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT				
	TOTAL (5)	SUBSET WHOSE ALTERNATE WAS SCORED AGAINST GRADE LEVEL STANDARDS (5A)	SUBSET WHOSE ALTERNATE WAS SCORED AGAINST ALTERNATE ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS (5B)	SUBSET COUNTED AT THE LOWEST ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL BECAUSE OF THE NCLB CAP ³ (5C)	SUBSET WHOSE ASSESSMENT RESULTS WERE INVALID ⁴ (5D)
3					
4	306	0	306	0	0
5					
6	270	0	270	0	0
7					
8	288	0	288	0	0
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: <u>10</u>)	339	0	339	0	0

³ NCLB cap is the limit on the percent of students whose scores can be held to alternate achievement standards in AYP calculations.

⁴ Invalid results are assessment results that cannot be used for reporting and or aggregation due to problems in the testing process (e.g. students do not take all portions of the assessment or students do not fill out the answer sheet correctly).

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION B. PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON MATH ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS WHO DID NOT TAKE ANY ASSESSMENT		
	PARENTAL EXEMPTIONS (6)	ABSENT (7)	NOT ASSESSED FOR OTHER REASONS ⁵ (8)
3			
4	0	29	0
5			
6	0	90	0
7			
8	0	160	0
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: <u>10</u>)	0	323	0

⁵ Provide list of other reasons for exemption with the number of students exempted by each grade and reason for exemption.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION C. PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON MATH ASSESSMENT

REGULAR ASSESSMENT ON GRADE LEVEL (9A)											
GRADE LEVEL	TEST NAME	<u>1</u> Achievement Level ¹	<u>2</u> Achievement Level	<u>3</u> Achievement Level	<u>4</u> Achievement Level	<u>5</u> Achievement Level	Achievement Level	Achievement Level	Achievement Level	Achievement Level	9A ROW TOTAL ²
3											
4	CMT – Gr.4	1,351	846	1,097	794	188					4,276
5											
6	CMT – Gr.6	1,671	896	1,047	835	152					4,601
7											
8	CMT – Gr.8	2,000	1,029	913	676	120					4,738
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: __10__)	CAPT	1,472	1,135	1,079	405	158					4,249

LOWEST ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL CONSIDERED PROFICIENT: 3

¹ Include all students whose regular assessment score was in the lowest achievement level plus all students who received a score but changes to the assessment invalidated their score (column 3C).

² The total number of students reported by achievement level in 9A is to equal the number reported in column 3 minus the number reported in columns 3C.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION C. PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON MATH ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT ON GRADE LEVEL STANDARDS (9B)											
GRADE LEVEL	TEST NAME	Achievement Level ³	Achievement Level	9B ROW TOTAL ⁴							
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
8											
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: _____)											

LOWEST ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL CONSIDERED PROFICIENT: _____

³ Include all students whose score on the alternate assessment on grade level standards was in the lowest achievement level plus all students who received a score but changes to the assessment invalidated their score.

⁴ The total number of students reported by achievement level in 9B is to equal the number reported in column 5A minus that portion of 5D that includes students whose assessment scored on grade level standards was invalid.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION C. PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON MATH ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT SCORED AGAINST ALTERNATE STANDARDS (9C)											
GRADE LEVEL	TEST NAME	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>					9C ROW TOTAL ⁶
		Achievement Level ⁵	Achievement Level								
4	Out-Of-Level (4)	195	140	171	103	0					609
4	Skills Checklist	187	95	24							306
6	Out-Of-Level (6)	380	178	149	77	4					788
6	Skills Checklist	151	95	24							270
8	Out-Of-Level (8)	484	158	135	55	1					833
8	Skills Checklist	148	86	54							288
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: _10_)	Skills Checklist	111	99	129							339

LOWEST ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL CONSIDERED PROFICIENT: 2 for skills checklist and 3 for Out-Of-Level

⁵ Include all students whose assessment counted in the lowest achievement level because of the NCLB cap plus all students who received a score but changes to the assessment invalidated their score.

⁶ The total number of students reported by achievement level in 9C is to equal the number reported in column 4 plus the number reported in column 5B minus the number reported in columns 4B and that portion of 5D that includes students whose alternate assessment scored on alternate standards was invalid.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION C. PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON MATH ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)*

GRADE LEVEL	TOTAL FOR COLUMN 9A (ON PAGE 4)	TOTAL FOR COLUMN 9B (ON PAGE 5)	TOTAL FOR COLUMN 9C (ON PAGE 6)	NO VALID SCORE ⁷ (10)	TOTAL ⁸ (11)
3					
4	4,276	0	915	73	5,264
5					
6	4,601	0	1,058	149	5,808
7					
8	4,738	0	1,121	236	6,095
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: <u> 10 </u>)	4,249	0	339	598	5,186

⁷ The number of students reported in column 10 is to equal the number reported in column 3C plus column 4B plus column 5D plus column 6 plus column 7 plus column 8.

⁸ The number of students reported in column 11, the row total, should equal the number of students with IEPs reported in Section A. If the number of students is not the same, provide an explanation.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION D. ENROLLMENT DATA FOR THE READING ASSESSMENT¹

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS WITH IEPs (1)	ALL STUDENTS (2)
3		
4	5,264	43,593
5		
6	5,808	45,156
7		
8	6,095	46,004
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: ___10___)	5,186	41,971

¹At a date as close as possible to the testing date.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION E. PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON READING ASSESSMENT

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO TOOK REGULAR ASSESSMENT ON GRADE LEVEL ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS			
	TOTAL (3)	SUBSET WHO TOOK THE ASSESSMENT WITH ACCOMODATIONS (3A)	SUBSET WITH CHANGES TO THE ASSESSMENT THAT INVALIDATED THEIR SCORE ¹ (3B)	SUBSET WHOSE ASSESSMENT RESULTS WERE INVALID ² (3C)
3				
4	4,127	CT Does Not Collect	0	83
5				
6	4,561	CT Does Not Collect	0	74
7				
8	4,793	CT Does Not Collect	0	81
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: <u> 10 </u>)	4,549	CT Does Not Collect	0	275

¹ Changes to the assessment that invalidate a score are changes in testing materials or procedures that enable a student to participate in the assessment, but result in a score that is not deemed by the State to be comparable to scores received by students without these changes. In some States these changes are called modifications or nonstandard administrations.

² Invalid results are assessment results that cannot be used for reporting and or aggregation due to problems in the testing process (e.g. students do not take all portions of the assessment or students do not fill out the answer sheet correctly).

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION E. PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON READING ASSESSMENT

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO TOOK OUT OF GRADE LEVEL ASSESSMENT		
	TOTAL (4)	SUBSET WITH CHANGES TO THE ASSESSMENT THAT INVALIDATED THEIR SCORE ¹ (4A)	SUBSET WHOSE ASSESSMENT RESULTS WERE INVALID ² (4B)
3			
4	785	0	785
5			
6	883	0	196
7			
8	848	0	122
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: <u> 10 </u>)	0	0	0

¹ Changes to the assessment that invalidate a score are changes in testing materials or procedures that enable a student to participate in the assessment, but result in a score that is not deemed by the State to be comparable to scores received by students without these changes. In some States these changes are called modifications or nonstandard administrations.

² Invalid results are assessment results that cannot be used for reporting and or aggregation due to problems in the testing process (e.g. students do not take all portions of the assessment or students do not fill out the answer sheet correctly).

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION E. PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON READING ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO TOOK ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT				
	TOTAL (5)	SUBSET WHOSE ALTERNATE WAS SCORED AGAINST GRADE LEVEL STANDARDS (5A)	SUBSET WHOSE ALTERNATE WAS SCORED AGAINST ALTERNATE ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS (5B)	SUBSET COUNTED AT THE LOWEST ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL BECAUSE OF THE NCLB CAP ³ (5C)	SUBSET WHOSE ASSESSMENT RESULTS WERE INVALID ⁴ (5D)
3					
4	306	0	306	0	0
5					
6	270	0	270	0	0
7					
8	288	0	288	0	0
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: ____10__)	339	0	339	0	0

³ NCLB cap is the limit on the percent of students whose scores can be held to alternate achievement standards in AYP calculations.

⁴ Invalid results are assessment results that cannot be used for reporting and or aggregation due to problems in the testing process (e.g. students do not take all portions of the assessment or students do not fill out the answer sheet correctly).

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION E. PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON READING ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS WHO DID NOT TAKE ANY ASSESSMENT		
	PARENTAL EXEMPTIONS (6)	ABSENT (7)	NOT ASSESSED FOR OTHER REASONS ⁵ (8)
3			
4	0	46	0
5			
6	0	94	0
7			
8	0	166	0
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: <u>10</u>)	0	298	0

⁵ Provide list of other reasons for exemption with the number of students exempted by each grade and reason for exemption.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION F. PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON READING ASSESSMENT

REGULAR ASSESSMENT ON GRADE LEVEL (9A)											
GRADE LEVEL	TEST NAME	1	2	3	4	5					9A ROW TOTAL ²
		Achievement Level ¹	Achievement Level								
3											
4	CMT – Gr.4	2361	529	479	570	105					4044
5											
6	CMT – Gr.6	2468	519	577	827	96					4487
7											
8	CMT – Gr.8	2513	571	540	939	149					4712
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: __10__)	CAPT	1477	1131	1129	392	145					4274

LOWEST ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL CONSIDERED PROFICIENT: 3

¹ Include all students whose regular assessment score was in the lowest achievement level plus all students who received a score but changes to the assessment invalidated their score (column 3C).

² The total number of students reported by achievement level in 9A is to equal the number reported in column 3 minus the number reported in columns 3C.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION F. PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON READING ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT ON GRADE LEVEL STANDARDS (9B)											
GRADE LEVEL	TEST NAME	Achievement Level ³	Achievement Level	9B ROW TOTAL ⁴							
3											
4	Skills Checklist										
6	Out-of-Level										
6	Skills Checklist										
8	Out-of-Level										
8	Skills Checklist										
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: _____)	Skills Checklist										

LOWEST ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL CONSIDERED PROFICIENT: _____

³ Include all students whose score on the alternate assessment on grade level standards was in the lowest achievement level plus all students who received a score but changes to the assessment invalidated their score.

⁴ The total number of students reported by achievement level in 9B is to equal the number reported in column 5A minus that portion of 5D that includes students whose assessment scored on grade level standards was invalid.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION F. PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON READING ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT SCORED AGAINST ALTERNATE STANDARDS (9C)											
GRADE LEVEL	TEST NAME	1	2	3	4	5					9C ROW TOTAL ⁶
		Achievement Level ⁵	Achievement Level								
4	Out-Of-Level (4)	na	na	na	na	na					0
4	Skills Checklist	120	98	88							306
6	Out-Of-Level (6)	455	99	62	70	1					687
6	Skills Checklist	103	87	80							270
8	Out-Of-Level (8)	529	82	76	39	0					726
8	Skills Checklist	116	73	99							288
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: _10_____)		77	82	180							339

LOWEST ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL CONSIDERED PROFICIENT: 2 for skills checklist and 3 for Out-Of-Level

⁵ Include all students whose assessment counted in the lowest achievement level because of the NCLB cap plus all students who received a score but changes to the assessment invalidated their score.

⁶ The total number of students reported by achievement level in 9C is to equal the number reported in column 4 plus the number reported in column 5B minus the number reported in columns 4B and that portion of 5D that includes students whose alternate assessment scored on alternate standards was invalid.

ATTACHMENT 3
 REPORT OF THE PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE
 ASSESSMENTS BY CONTENT AREA, GRADE, AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

STATE: Connecticut

SECTION F. PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON READING ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

GRADE LEVEL	TOTAL FOR COLUMN 9A (ON PAGE 4)	TOTAL FOR COLUMN 9B (ON PAGE 5)	TOTAL FOR COLUMN 9C (ON PAGE 6)	NO VALID SCORE ⁷ (10)	TOTAL ⁸ (11)
3					
4	4,044	0	306	914	5,264
5					
6	4,487	0	957	364	5,808
7					
8	4,712	0	1,014	369	6,095
HIGH SCHOOL (SPECIFY GRADE: <u>10</u>)	4,274	0	339	573	5,186

⁷ The number of students reported in column 10 is to equal the number reported in column 3C plus column 4B plus column 5D plus column 6 plus column 7 plus column 8.

⁸ The number of students reported in column 11, the row total, should equal the number of students with IEPs reported in Section A. If the number of students is not the same, provide an explanation.

Cluster Area IV: Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

Question: Do all children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment that promotes a high quality education and prepares them for employment and independent living?

Probes: **BF.V (a)** Are children with disabilities educated with non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate, including preschool?

(Note: This Probe, BF.V(a), relates to children ages 3 through 21 while Probe BF.V(b), relates to children ages 3 and 4)

State Goal: Students with disabilities, ages 3-21, will have equal access to and be active participants in their total school communities.**

Performance Indicator(s):

- A. The percent of students with disabilities who are educated in their home school; and
- B. The percent of students with disabilities who are educated in the regular classroom setting. (>79% TWNDP).

1. Baseline/Trend Data

Baseline data for these indicators were reported in the 2004 APR (Reporting Period 2002-03).

Overall, in 2003-04, 82.6% of CT students with disabilities were educated in their home school (the school they would otherwise attend if not disabled) (Figure BF.V(a) 1). There is no change in this statistic over the baseline year (2002-03). However, two disability categories have seen increases in the percent of students attending their home school: from 71.1% to 75.4% for students with Intellectual Disabilities and from 57.4% to 67.2% for students considered to have “Other Disabilities” (includes students with Visual Impairment, Orthopedic Impairment, Deaf-Blindness, Hearing Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, Autism, Multiple Disabilities, and Developmental Delay). Similar to previous years, students ages 6-18, as opposed to age 3-5 or 19-21, are most likely to be attending their home school (Table BF.V(a) 1).

Figure BF.V(a) 1.
Percent of 3- through 21-year-old SWDs Educated in Home School

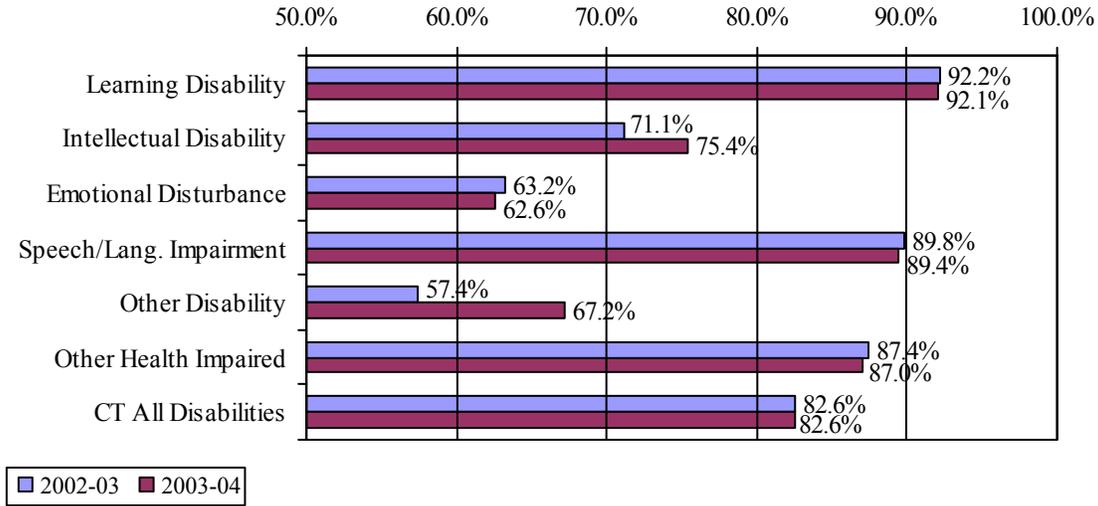


Table BF.V (a) 1														
Percent of 3-through 21-year-old SWDs Educated in Home School by Three Age Groupings														
	Learning Disability		Intellectual Disability		Emotional Disturbance		Speech/Lang Impairment		Other Disability		Other Health Impaired		All Disabilities	
	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04
Age 3-5	65.7	71.2	61.5	55.0	50.0	62.5	73.6	73.1	48.8	49.5	71.1	67.7	59.1	58.9
Age 6-18	92.3	92.2	72.8	77.0	62.6	62.0	93.5	93.2	66.0	77.3	87.7	87.5	85.7	85.9
Age 19-21	91.4	87.1	57.9	64.7	78.2	77.7	77.8	76.9	41.6	40.1	73.1	74.5	66.7	66.6

In 2003-04, there was a 1.7% increase over the baseline year (2002-03) in the percent of students with disabilities educated with their non-disabled peers for greater than 79 percent of the day (Table BF.V (a) 2). This statistic increased for students in all disability categories except students with Other Health Impairments, which saw a decrease of 1.0%. The greatest increases were for students with ID (increase of 1.7%); LD (increase of 2.3%); and MD (increase of 9.5%).

Table BF.V (a) 2														
Percent of SWDs, ages 3-21, Educated in Settings														
	Learning Disability		Intellectual Disability		Emotional Disturbance		Speech/Lang Impairment		Other Disability		Other Health Impaired		All Disabilities	
	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04	02-03	03-04
Regular Classroom Setting (>79%)	62.5	64.5	11.7	13.4	31.5	33.2	70.1	71.5	38.5	48.0	62.1	61.1	55.4	57.1

2. Targets

- A. Increase by 5% from baseline the percent of students with disabilities who are educated in their home school*; and
- B. Increase by 5% from baseline the percent of students with disabilities who are educated in the regular classroom setting (more than 79% of their day is time spent with non-disabled peers (TWNDP))*.

**Note: While the CSDE acknowledges it is not inconsistent with Part B of the IDEA to include numerical goals to increase the number of students with disabilities who spend more than 79% of their day in a regular classroom, the CSDE will continue to monitor to ensure that placement determinations for children with disabilities are made on an individual basis in conformity with the requirements of 34 CFR §§ 300.550-300.556 and are not made based upon a numerical goal.*

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage

- A. The home school target was not met for the 2003-04 reporting period, having remained the same. Throughout the 2003-04 year, districts worked to correct the accuracy of data as CSDE auditing in 2002-03 indicated errors in data entry and data definition discrepancy. CSDE provided additional guidance in the form of training to all districts (October 2003) on error patterns of data and data definition clarification. The impact of districts “cleaning up” data errors was reflected in the 2003-04 data reporting. It is uncertain to what extent or in what “directions” the 2003-04 data was influenced by this training and subsequent district attention to eliminating data errors. Additionally, home school data was collected for the first time in 2001-02 so one would anticipate several years of potentially unreliable data until the definition is better known and utilized for reporting. Additionally, the 3-5 and 19-21 age groupings may also affect utilization of home school as placement. For 3-5 year olds, typically 5 year olds would be in a “home school” whereas 3 and 4 year olds do not by definition receive compulsory school education and “home school” is arbitrarily defined as the school they would attend for kindergarten, which is not frequently utilized as a site for the education of 3 and 4 year olds. Thus,

this age grouping would reduce home school data and would never be expected to increase as the “kindergarten” school is not necessarily the education location for this age group. Similarly, for 19-21 year olds, home school by arbitrary definition is defined as the high school the child would have attended if not disabled. Yet, 19-21 years olds are more frequently being educated in age appropriate placements such as colleges and vocational sites, which are not defined as home school. Thus, home school data for the 19-21 year old grouping will continue to reduce home school data as the high school is not necessarily the education location for this age group. Therefore, only the 5 year olds and the 6-18 year old groupings are most likely to impact achievement of this target.

- B. The regular class placement target was not met for the 2003-04 reporting period, having increased by 1.7% overall. It should be noted, though, that when the data is disaggregated into age groupings, 3-5 year olds increased by 4% (not including students receiving itinerant services); 6-18 year olds increased by 1.9%; and 19-21 year olds increased by 4.6%. The data accuracy issues and auditing process discussed in A. above apply to regular class placement data, as well. It is uncertain to what extent or in what “directions” the 2003-04 data was influenced by this training and subsequent district attention to eliminating data errors for TWDNP data. Also, clarity on data definitions for reporting TWNDP were issued after the 2002-03 data collection and would have influenced the reporting of TWNDP in the 2003-04 data differently for some students, particularly of high school age. Reliability of TWNDP data collection in 2003-04, subsequent to this definition clarification, remains suspect.

Other information:

- Approximately 75% of districts attested to the development and implementation of action plans related to the goals of the P.J. et al. vs. State of Connecticut et al. Settlement Agreement (PJ Settlement Agreement) which including actions around home school and regular class placement;
- The monitoring tools (See Attachment B) used by CSDE during 2003-04 were developed to ensure that LRE decisions for students with intellectual disabilities were made on an individualized basis in accordance with applicable regulations. The tools were utilized to review student records; interview general education teachers and conduct observations of implementation of student IEPs. Monitoring results indicated that of the approximately 45 students reviewed in the 8 targeted districts, IEPs were appropriately developed in 40 of the 45 cases. The remaining cases were returned to team meetings for appropriate action;
- During 2003-04, over 38 districts (sending district/school-based teams) participated in three days of training and up to 20 days of follow along technical assistance on systematic decision-making process for determining placement in the LRE called STEP BY STEP (Stetson and Assoc., INC.); and
- Data on the 24 targeted PJ Settlement Agreement districts indicated that 17/24 districts increased in home school placement and 18/24 increased in regular

class participation (>79% time with nondisabled peers) from baseline year (2002-03).

4. Projected Targets

- A. Maintain the percent of students with disabilities who are educated in their home school
- B. Monitor to ensure that the placement determination for children with disabilities are made on an individual basis (>79% TWNDP)

5. Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets/Results

The CSDE will:

- Conduct statewide Focused Monitoring on LRE as key performance indicator utilizing % of separate class placement; % of out of district placement; mean % TWNDP in-district (K-12); and mean % TWNDP (pre-K) to select districts for review. Review to include low performing districts on these indicators across four different size districts;
- Conduct monitoring to ensure that LRE decisions are made on an individualized basis in accordance with applicable regulations. The monitoring tools will be utilized to review student records; interview with administrators, teachers (general and special education), related service professionals; solicit input from parent through forums; and conduct observations of implementation of student IEPs (See Attachment A);
- Continue to conduct focused monitoring of 24 targeted districts in the area of LRE/ID (intellectual disabilities) through examination of district quarterly data; district self-analysis of decision-making process and justification for removal of students regressing in time with non-disabled peers; on-site focused interviews with selected districts of students regressing in time with non-disabled peers; district self-analysis of progress in home school placement;
- Offer an annual inclusion conference which will include the Expert Advisory Panel (EAP) of the PJ Settlement Agreement;
- Provide extensive training and technical assistance to all PJ Settlement Agreement targeted districts through the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) in the areas of LRE/Inclusion;
- Conduct qualitative evaluation by University of Connecticut regarding impact of state effort on PJ Settlement Agreement across multiple districts (to include home school placement and regular class placement decisions);
- Provide training to the twenty-four targeted PJ Settlement Agreement districts on Empowerment/Participatory evaluation through the University of Connecticut;
- Provide statewide training through SERC on a variety of topics that support regular class and home school placement;

- Provide twenty-four districts with \$25,000 grants to support implementation of action plans to address LRE/ID issues;
- Require twenty-four districts to submit action plans and quarterly data reports on LRE/ID;
- Issue a request for proposal to create an academy to train coaches to provide in-district to support to teachers educating students with disabilities in the general education classroom;
- Issue a request for proposal to create a statewide technical assistance team to respond to districts and parents in need of immediate technical assistance to assist in helping a specific student to remain/return appropriately in/to the student's home school and/or general education classroom;
- Provide an Annual Report to the Court for the PJ Settlement Agreement;
- Meet three times per year with the EAP to advise the state in increasing home school and regular class placement;
- Hold a forum with Superintendents, lead by the CSDE's Commissioner, to discuss student participation in home school and general education classes; and
- Hold meetings for all staff across various Bureaus of the CSDE to discuss efforts to integrate CSDE roles and efforts to address more students needs being met in their home school and general education classes.

6. Projected timelines and Resources

During 2004-05:

- Allocate \$45,000 to contract with the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) for parent training on LRE related activities;
- Allocate \$660,000 for LEA grants in the area of LRE;
- Allocate \$85,000 for Expert Advisory Panel expenses;
- Allocate \$300,000 to the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) to offer professional development training on LRE/Inclusion, statewide;
- Allocate \$270,000 to an organization to conduct a Coaches Academy;
- Allocate \$200,000 to an organization to operate a technical assistance team to assist with student specific needs in home school and general education class placement;
- \$147,000 to University of Connecticut to conduct a qualitative evaluation on the PJ Settlement Agreement and provide training and technical assistance to 24 targeted districts on empowerment/participatory evaluation;
- Provide \$2,400 to Connecticut Coalition for Inclusive Education for parent support activities on LRE related topics;
- Provide \$2,400 to SpEd Net, Inc. and New Canaan Public Schools for inclusive education conference in the Fairfield County region on LRE related topics;

- 14 Bureau consultants to conduct focused monitoring on LRE; and
- 5 Bureau consultants (one assigned full time) to work on the LRE initiative.

Cluster Area IV: Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

Question: Do all children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment that promotes a high quality education and prepares them for employment and independent living?

Probe: **BF.V (b)** Are children with disabilities educated with non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate, including pre-school?*

** (Note: This Probe, BF.V(b), relates to children ages 3 and 4, while Probe BF.V(a), relates to children ages 3 through 21)*

State Goal: Children with disabilities will be prepared to enter kindergarten at age 5.**

Performance Indicator(s)

Children, aged 3 and 4 with disabilities, will receive their special education and related services in settings that are least restrictive.*

**Note: Least restrictive settings are identified and defined utilizing the educational placement definitions provided by the U.S. Department of Education. For the purposes of the Annual Performance Report (APR), the least restrictive environment (LRE) for 3- and 4-year-old children includes those children who are receiving itinerant services and those children whose educational placement is in an early childhood setting or an integrated (e.g., reverse mainstream) setting, all of which provide for the education of pre-school-age children with disabilities along with their non-disabled peers 100% of the time. Educational placements which become more restrictive include: part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education; early childhood special education; separate school; residential facility; and home.*

1. Baseline/Trend Data

Baseline was established in 2001-02 and reported in the 2004 APR (Reporting Period 2002-03). In 2001-02, 46.2% of pre-school children ages 3 and 4 with disabilities received their special education and related services in settings that were least restrictive. In 2002-03, this statistic increased to 57.3%. In 2003-04, the percent of pre-school children ages 3 and 4 who received their services in settings that were least restrictive increased again to 60.4% (See Figure BF.V.b.1).

Data analyzed from 2003-04, indicates that the percent of children receiving itinerant services increased for both 3- and 4-year olds as compared to the previous year (see Table BF.V.b1). Trend data also indicates that the provision of itinerant services has increased steadily for each age for each reporting year from

1999-00 to 2003-04. In 2001-02 there were a total of 726 children (21.8%) receiving itinerant services and in 2003-04 there were a total of 1358 children (27.7%) receiving itinerant services. This is an increase of 5.9% and an increase of 632 children over baseline. Trend data indicates annual increases in this area.

Table BF.V(b) 1

	1999-00			2000-01			2001-02			2002-03			2003-04		
	3	4	3 and 4												
Early Childhood Setting	13.7%	15.9%	15.2%	14.2%	14.4%	14.6%	7.6%	5.9%	6.7%	9.4%	10.1%	9.8%	7.1%	9.3%	8.4%
Early Childhood Special Ed.	33.6%	30.7%	31.6%	34.8%	33.5%	34.1%	34.0%	31.8%	32.7%	31.2%	32.8%	32.1%	34.1%	30.4%	32.0%
Reverse Mainstream	24.5%	19.6%	21.4%	18.1%	19.4%	18.5%	17.9%	17.6%	17.7%	22.4%	20.7%	21.4%	24.4%	24.3%	24.3%
Home	1.3%	3.2%	2.4%	0.7%	0.6%	0.7%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Part-time Setting	9.5%	13.0%	12.1%	11.8%	12.0%	12.2%	16.2%	20.1%	18.4%	8.8%	10.2%	9.6%	5.3%	7.7%	6.7%
Residential Facility Setting	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%				0.1%	0.1%	0.1%			0.0%	0.1%		0.1%
Separate School Setting	2.7%	2.8%	2.9%	3.3%	3.0%	3.4%	1.9%	2.7%	2.4%	0.6%	1.0%	0.8%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%
Itinerant Services Only	14.6%	14.6%	14.3%	17.1%	17.0%	16.6%	22.0%	21.5%	21.8%	27.3%	25.0%	26.1%	28.1%	27.5%	27.7%

The percent of 3- and 4-year-olds receiving services in an early childhood setting decreased from the previous year from 9.8% in 2002-03 to 8.4% in 2003-04 for both age groups combined. Trend data indicates that this decline has been occurring since 1999-00. The percent of children receiving services in an integrated (e.g., reverse mainstream) setting indicates not only an increase from the previous year but also demonstrates a steady increase from 2001-02 for both age groups. In 2001-02 there were 858 (18.9%) 3- and 4-year-old children in an integrated educational placement. In 2002-03, 1009 (21.4%) of 3- and 4-year-old children received services in an integrated setting and in 2003-04, 1204 (24.3%) of 3- and 4-year-old children received services in an integrated setting.

The percent of 3- and 4-year-old children receiving services in a separate school setting has decreased steadily from 2000-2001 indicating the lowest use of that educational placement, at 0.6% for 3- and 4-year olds, since 1999-2000. Trend data indicates that separate school settings and residential settings are rarely used as an educational placement for pre-school-age children. Residential settings have not been used for a 4-year-old child since 2001-2002. Home as an educational placement has steadily declined since 1999-2000 and recent data indicates another decrease in 2003-2004.

In 2003-2004, the placement of 3- and 4-year old students in early childhood settings (8.4%), integrated (e.g., reverse mainstream) settings (24.3%) and including those children receiving itinerant services (27.7%) reflects the least restrictive environment (LRE) for the majority of all eligible 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities receiving special education and related services, a total of 60.4%. This is an increase over the 57.3% of eligible 3- and 4-year-olds receiving services in least restrictive placements in 2002-03, and indicates a 14.2% increase from baseline in 2001-2002 as reported in the 2004 APR (Reporting Period 2002-03).

2. **Targets**

Increase the percent of pre-school children, 3- and 4-years of age with disabilities, who receive their special education and related services in settings that are least restrictive by 20% over baseline established in 2001-02.*

**Note: The CSDE recognizes that while it is not inconsistent with the IDEA, Part B, to include numerical targets to increase the number of children with disabilities who are educated in the least restrictive environment, the CSDE will continue to monitor school districts to ensure that placement determinations are made on an individual basis in conformity with 34 CFR sections 300-550 through 300.556 and are not based upon any numerical goal established by the CSDE.*

3. **Explanation of Progress or Slippage**

Connecticut made continued progress toward increasing the percent of children, 3- and 4-years of age with disabilities who are receiving their special education and related services in settings that are least restrictive. The utilization of least restrictive settings increased from 57.3% for eligible 3- and 4-year-olds receiving services in least restrictive placements in 2002-03 to 60.4% in 2003-2004. This indicates a 14.2% increase from baseline in 2001-2002. A new target had to be established in 2002-2003 for 2003-2004 since the CSDE exceeded their target for 2002-2003. While the 2003-2004 targeted percent of 20% over baseline was not achieved, progress towards increasing the utilization of LRE settings for 3- and 4-year-old children indicates an increase of almost 3% from last year with a 14.2% increase in two years.

It should be noted that the CSDE recognizes that while it is not inconsistent with the IDEA, Part B, to include numerical targets to increase the number of children with disabilities who are educated in the least restrictive environment, the CSDE will continue to monitor school districts to ensure that placement determinations are made on an individual basis in conformity with 34 CFR sections 300-550 through 300.556 and that decisions regarding educational placements are not based upon any numerical target established by the CSDE. Monitoring will include pre-school specific monitoring activities and methods that include reviewing and validating data at the local level, review of individual children's records, forums conducted to solicit input from families, interviews with general and special education staff, and observations of the implementation of individual children's individualized education program (IEP) across educational placements for preschool-age children (See Attachment B).

Progress on providing a least restrictive setting for preschool-age children is attributed to activities that include: the continued development and implementation of CSDE policy regarding the provision of LRE to eligible students; continued public awareness and outreach to the broad early childhood and early childhood special education community relative to LRE; increased accuracy in data reporting and heightened attention to data analysis at the state and local level; CSDE training and technical assistance; CSDE incentives such as

financial support for National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation processes and continued collaboration and coordination between early childhood and early childhood special education.

4. Projected Targets

Increase the percent of pre-school age children, 3- and 4-years of age with disabilities, who receive their special education and related services in settings that are least restrictive.

5. Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets/Results

The CSDE will:

- Provide professional development opportunities;
- Include pre-school LRE in CSDE Focused Monitoring activities;
- Provide incentives and supports, as appropriate and within fiscal resources; and
- Continue CSDE monitoring to ensure that decisions regarding educational placements for 3- and 4-year-old children are made on an individual basis in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws.

6. Projected Timelines/Resources

- Continue to provide professional development opportunities for the broad early childhood and early childhood special education community including specific training and technical assistance on least restrictive environments and related issues for 3- and 4-year-old children - June 30, 2005 and on-going using the IDEA 619 resources and personnel;
- Include a pre-school specific LRE focus in CSDE focused monitoring efforts and activities to address FAPE in the LRE for 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities as well as across the continuum pre-school through grade 12, regular and special education - June 30, 2005 and on-going using the IDEA 619 and 611 resources and CSDE personnel;
- Provide financial incentives to support early childhood and early childhood special education programs in becoming accredited through the NAEYC – and provide related training and technical assistance to support programs in the accreditation process – June 30, 2005 and on-going using the IDEA 619 resources and personnel; and
- Specific activities and methods for ensuring that decisions regarding educational placements for 3- and 4-year-old children are made on an individual basis in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws will include: reviewing and validating data at the local level; reviewing individual children’s records; forums conducted to solicit input from families; interviews with general and special education staff; and observations of the implementation of individual children’s IEPs across educational placements for preschool-age children – June

30, 2005 and ongoing using the IDEA 619 and 611 resources and CSDE personnel.

Cluster Area IV: Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

Question: Do all children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment that promotes a high quality education and prepares them for employment and independent living?

Probe: **BF.VI** Are the early language/communication, pre-reading and social-emotional skills of pre-school children with disabilities receiving special education and related services, improving?

State Goal: Children with disabilities will be prepared to enter kindergarten at age 5 prepared for success.**

Performance Indicator:

No performance targets or indicators were set for 2003-2004.

1. Baseline/Trend Data

No baseline or trend data available.

2. Targets

No performance targets or indicators were set for 2003-2004.

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage

Connecticut made significant progress in 2003-2004 in developing a plan to collect data for the purpose of reporting on the Annual Performance Report and reporting to stakeholders on the relative success of the IDEA 619 program for those preschool aged children receiving special education and related services. Targeted progress was made toward (a) identifying potential developmental indexes for language/communication, pre-reading and social-emotional skills by using the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Preschool Curriculum Benchmark document and the Preschool Assessment Framework and (b) identifying potential measurement options. Additional efforts were made to identify commercial existing tools, measurements and data collection methods. Statewide stakeholders were brought together in a planning process. Educational leadership in this effort was led by the Associate Commissioner of Education and Bureau Chiefs across three divisions of the agency. Stakeholders in the planning process represented early childhood, early childhood special education, special education personnel, data management and analysis consultants and program evaluation specialists. These individuals were also involved in the planning process towards collecting data on this indicator. An additional stakeholder group consisting of early childhood/early childhood special education administrators from the state's urban priority school districts and those school districts with a large proportion of children in poverty, as defined by those children eligible for free and reduced lunch, were also used to gather information and feedback on possible options and opportunities to measure children's progress.

Connecticut is working towards being able to collect data and information regarding this probe and is diverting state resources and attention to this probe especially since this is a new data collection requirement. The CSDE understands the requirement to provide information that the Secretary of Education may require and is working towards fully cooperating in carrying out any evaluation requirements. The State Department of Education understands that the effectiveness of the IDEA 619 program is being measured on the extent to which the language/communication, pre-reading and social-emotional skills of preschool-age children with disabilities receiving special education and related services are improving.

4. Projected Targets

Continue State Department of Education efforts to investigate ways to measure whether children, 3- and 4-years of age with disabilities, demonstrate improvement in their language/communication, pre-reading and social-emotional skills.

5. Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets/Results

The CSDE will:

- Attend national and state-specific training and technical assistance opportunities to acquire information and bring back to state and other stakeholder groups;
- Collect and review the efforts of other states;
- Identify national and state-specific activities and efforts specific to the development of early childhood outcomes and accountability in early childhood, early childhood special education and in other related areas. For example, review the efforts of Head Start relative to data collection, measurement tools, etc., review and follow the work of the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO) and the National Center for Special Education Monitoring and Accountability (NCSEAM) in order to align developmental skill indexes and measurement methods to the work of these national centers;
- Review any state-specific information that may be available from Head Start, specific to 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities to ascertain if similar indicators, tests and measures can be utilized as an initial baseline for measuring child outcomes in language/communication, pre-reading and social-emotional development; and
- Identify when the state will be developing and/or purchasing an assessment and results system for the state's pre-school initiative and determine how child outcome measures can be obtained for 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities.

6. Projected Timelines and Resources

- 3 consultants to attend Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) conference in Salt Lake City, Utah – April, 2005; and

- Other timelines and resources to be determined as state-level and district-level stakeholder groups move forward with the activities described above.

Cluster Area V: Secondary Transition

Question: Is the percentage of youth with disabilities participating in post-school activities (e.g. employment, education, etc.) comparable to that of nondisabled youth?

State Goal(s): Students with disabilities, two years after exiting school, will be employed and/or enrolled in post-secondary education **

Performance Indicator(s):

- A. The total number of students with disabilities reporting participation in post-secondary education on a follow-up survey of exiters
- B. The total number of students with disabilities reporting gainful employment on a follow-up survey of exiters
- C. The total number of students with disabilities reporting satisfaction with their current job on a follow-up survey of exiters
- D. The total number of students with disabilities reporting they received support from an adult service or community agency on a follow-up survey of exiters

1. Baseline/Trend Data:

Survey data from students who have exited special education are collected every two years. Baseline data for these indicators were set in the 2002-2003 year and reported in the 2004 APR (Reporting Period 2002-03). A follow-up survey of exiters from the 2001-2002 school year was designed and data were collected in 2003-2004 (See Attachment G; For a discussion of survey development and sampling design, see Explanation of Progress or Slippage). Data will be analyzed in 2004-2005 and reported in the 2006 APR (Reporting Period 2004-05).

2. Targets:

- A. Increase by 5% over baseline the number of students with disabilities reporting participation in post-secondary education on the follow-up survey of exiters.*
- B. Increase by 5% over baseline the number of students with disabilities reporting gainful employment on the follow-up survey of exiters.*
- C. Increase by 5% over baseline the number of students with disabilities reporting satisfaction with their current job on the follow-up survey of exiters.*
- D. Increase by 5% over baseline the number of students with disabilities reporting they received support from an adult service or community agency on the follow-up survey of exiters.*

**Note: While the CSDE recognizes that it is not inconsistent with Part B of the IDEA to include numerical goals to increase or decrease targets for children with disabilities, CSDE will continue to monitor to ensure that IEP teams for students with disabilities identify transition services needs beginning by age 14 or younger*

if determined appropriate by the IEP teams in conformity with 34 CFR §300.347(b)(1). CSDE will also monitor to ensure that IEP teams for students with disabilities provide needed transition services beginning by age 16 or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team in conformity with 34 CFR §300.347(b)(2). CSDE will monitor to ensure that identification or provision of services is not based upon a numerical goal.

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage

Due to the fact that the Follow-Up Survey of Graduates/Exiters of Connecticut High Schools is conducted every other year, for all indicators, data were not available to determine if targets were met in the 2003-2004 year. The results of a revised Follow-Up Survey (See Attachment G) that will be administered to a sample of students with disabilities who graduated or exited from Connecticut high schools 2002 will be available for reporting period July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005 and will be reported on in the 2006 APR (Reporting Period 2004-05). The Follow-Up Survey was revised with the input from a college freshmen and other recent exiters. The original survey contained thirty three (33) items related to post-school participation in higher education, employment, community activities and agency linkages. The revised survey contained nineteen (19) items related to similar post-school outcomes. Surveys were sent to individuals who had exited special education during the period of January 1 to June 30, 2002 from one of the 169 LEAs State of Connecticut. Surveys were sent to students who exited school for any of the following reasons:

- Graduated with a regular education diploma;
- Graduated with an IEP diploma;
- Reached maximum age; or
- Dropped out of school.

Descriptive data was run on the total population (3, 935) and this was compared to the actual responding sample (695). Investigation of this data reveals that the gender distribution was fairly similar (68% male in the population versus 62% of the respondents) and was nearly identical in terms of disability type. Whites students, however, are overrepresented in the sample (75% of the population versus 87% of the respondents), while Black and Hispanic respondents are underrepresented (12% for blacks and 11% for Hispanics in the total population versus 6% for both groups in the present sample). Likewise, those individuals who graduated with a diploma are over represented in the sample (80% of the population versus 90% of the sample), while those who dropped out are under represented (14% of the population versus 4% of the sample). The most common exceptionality was “Learning Disability” (LD; 49%), followed by “Emotional Disturbance” (ED; 13%), “Other Health Impaired” (OHI; 10%), “Intellectual Disability” (ID; 8%), “Speech” (5%) and “Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder” (ADHD; 5%). The results of this survey will be analyzed and reported on in the 2006 APR (Reporting Period 2004-05).

The following is an update on additional activities identified in the 2004 APR for Secondary Transition:

- The collaboratively funded position of state consultant for Transition Services was maintained throughout this reporting period. The consultant continued to chair the state-level Interagency Transition Task Force, strengthen relationships between vocational rehabilitation and LEA's, and provide statewide training and technical assistance to LEA's, families and agency personnel. The transition consultant served as vice-chair of the Governor's Committee on the Employment of Persons with Disabilities, chair of the Youth Leadership Forum, and represented the Bureau on the Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Project, Connecticut Association on Higher Education and Disability, and the State Independent Living Council;
- The revised exiters survey was disseminated in the Spring 2004 to 3,870 students who exited special education in 2002. The response rate was 22% an increase of 9% over the survey conducted in 2002. Analysis of data was not completed during this reporting period;
- The thirty-member statewide Interagency Transition Task Force continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis. Five subcommittees met on alternate months to implement activities as defined on the Transition Continuous Improvement Plan. Subcommittees included: Training and Technical Assistance; Interagency Collaboration; Employment and Postsecondary Education; Self-Advocacy; and Parent/Student Involvement;
- Fifty-two (52) young adults with intellectual disabilities, ages 18-21 received their educational program in a college, university or community-based environment. Program components included vocational/career internship, social skills activities with typical peers, college courses of interest to the students, independent living skills training and access to recreation/leisure opportunities;
- Twenty-five (25) students participated in intensive career internships in the two LEAs receiving this seed funding. Internships were sought to match student interests and preferences and included higher-level career and technical training opportunities;
- Three LEAs received funds to continue career internships for urban youth with disabilities. Fifty-one (51) students participated in year-long internships to prepare them to transition to employment;
- Approximately 25-30 young adults with disabilities, ages 14-21, meet on a monthly basis to develop self-advocacy and self-determination skills. In addition, presenters are requested to speak on topics related to transition, disability rights and laws and other areas of interest to the students. These Kids as Self-Advocates (KASA) students have developed a PowerPoint presentation and presented at six statewide conferences for educators to inform them of the importance of learning/teaching self-advocacy skills while in high school;

- The African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities (AFCAMP) and Padres Abriendo Puertas (PAP) have developed a transition training manual (English and Spanish) to work with families in Hartford. Four trainings were conducted by each group with approximately 100 families participating in the four series. CD's will be developed for the training modules and disseminated to all Connecticut LEAs;
- Additional SIG and Sliver grants supported LEA's in the development of transition-related components, with most focusing on the development of a continuum of career awareness and training opportunities. One LEA utilized funding to develop a Grade 7-12 Self-Advocacy curricula that has been implemented in the middle and high school. A CD will be developed of this curricula and will be disseminated to all Connecticut middle and high schools;
- The following transition-related workshops were conducted through SERC during this reporting period: Self-Advocacy Skill and Student's Rights and Responsibilities Under IDEA (three regional workshops); Comprehensive on-line transition course; Social Skills and Friendship; Transition to College for Students with Disabilities; MAPS trainings; Managing Challenging Behaviors in the Workplace; and Vocational Assessment Strategies. Approximately four hundred fifty (450) students, staff, families and agency personnel attended these sessions and increased their knowledge of transition-related strategies and components;
- Approximately 20 transition-related training workshops were conducted for families during this reporting period. Training was conducted in collaboration with the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center, Regional Transition Networks and members of the Transition Task Force. In addition, transition training sessions were held at five major state conferences designed for families. Approximately 350 parents increased their knowledge of the transition provisions under IDEA and the components of quality transition planning. Many parents reports they felt more comfortable advocating for appropriate, quality, transition services for their child;
- Two student guides were developed ("Understanding your Rights and Responsibilities under IDEA" and an "Educational Journey from Self Discovery to Advocacy") using SIG funds (\$40,000). Both were translated into Spanish. Statewide dissemination occurred and three regional workshops were conducted to introduce the manual to school personnel;
- Connecticut's comprehensive Transition Manual and Resource Directory was completed during this reporting period. Printing and dissemination of the manual was not completed during this reporting period;
- Competencies for Transition Coordinators and Job Coaches were developed and disseminated through the Bureau periodic updates to LEAs;
- Five regional Transition Coordinator Networks were established. Each network meets on a bi-monthly basis. During this first year of development, transition staff convened to discuss common issues and barriers related to

transition, share materials and define activities for the 04-05 school year;
and

- Thirty six (36) students attended the fifth annual Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities (YLF) in the summer of 2003 with follow-up activities occurring throughout the 2003-2004 school year. All planning was conducted to convene the 2004 YLF.

4. Projected Targets

- A. Increase the percent of students with disabilities reporting participation in post-secondary education on the follow-up survey of exiters.
- B. Increase the percent of students with disabilities reporting gainful employment on the follow-up survey of exiters.
- C. Increase by the percent of students with disabilities reporting satisfaction with their current job on the follow-up survey of exiters
- D. Increase the percent of students with disabilities reporting they received support from an adult service or community agency on the follow-up survey of exiters

5. Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets and Results

The CSDE will:

- Maintain the state level position of Consultant for Transition Services, a position collaboratively funded by the CSDE and the Department of Social Services, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services. The consultant for transition services is responsible for ensuring that all Bureau activities and resources related to transition are focused on increasing positive post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities;
- Continue Bureau participation on key state committees related to the employment and education of individuals with disabilities: State Rehabilitation Council, Governors Committee on the Employment of Persons with Disabilities, Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Council, Connecticut Association on Higher Education and Disability and the Career, Technical Advisory Committee;
- Complete the 2002 Follow-Up Survey of Exiters of Special Education. Compare post-school outcome data obtained from this survey with that obtained from the baseline survey conducted on students who exited special education in 2000;
- Collaborate with the Bureau of Research, Evaluation and Accountability to determine the feasibility of conducting a parallel Follow-Up Study on general education students in 2006;
- Develop a “Summary of Performance” protocol as required by IDEA 2004, to be utilized in all Connecticut LEAs;
- Develop a manual of “Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments” as required by IDEA 2004, to assist school personnel in developing appropriate and measurable long-term transition goals for young adults with disabilities;

- Maintain the thirty (30) member statewide Interagency Transition Task Force with bi-monthly meeting being convened. Revise the Transition Continuous Improvement Plan to reflect activities completed, and future initiatives for 2004-2006 (Note: five subcommittees also meet on alternate months to implement activities as defined on the Bureau's Transition Continuous Improvement Plan);
- Provide funding for eighteen transition-related grants for LEAs as follows;
 - Two (2) to develop transition programs in age-appropriate environments (colleges and universities)
 - Four (4) to develop Start on Success programs (an initiative of the National Organization on Disability)
 - One (1) to develop a collaborative Mentoring Project for youth with Disabilities, in collaboration with the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, the Board of Education and Services for the Blind and the CT Mentoring Partnership Project.
 - One (1) to develop a model for transition-related parent training for minority families in urban districts.
 - Eleven (11) enhance transition-related components at the high school level (community-based career exploration, internships, job training, self-advocacy, social skill development)
- Continue transition training and technical assistance through the Special Education Resource Center (SERC). (Note: ten transition-related workshops will be conducted statewide, in addition to the offering of a comprehensive on-line course for beginning Transition Coordinators.);
- Continue statewide transition related workshops for families in collaboration with the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center and other parent organizations;
- Develop a PowerPoint presentation to parallel Connecticut's Transition Manual and Resource Directory. Identify fifteen individuals interested in participating in a "train the trainer" series. The goal is to increase the capacity of the state to respond to an increasing number of transition-related training and technical assistance requests from LEA's and parent groups;
- Maintain five regional Transition Coordinator Networks designed to provide support to personnel responsible for transition services at the middle and high school levels;
- Conduct a sixth annual Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities (YLF - summer 2004) and plan for the seventh annual Youth Leadership Forum for Student with Disabilities (Summer 2005); and
- Review the files of a sample of students who exited secondary school to ensure that IEP teams for students with disabilities are identifying transition services needs at the appropriate age according to the law and to ensure that identification or provision of services is not based upon a numerical goal.

6. Projected Timelines and Resources:

- Assignment of a CSDE Consultant to serve as liaison for all transition-related initiatives statewide;
- Provide funding to the Special Education Resource Center (SERC) to provide transition-related training and technical assistance;
- Assignment of a Consultant from SERC to assist CSDE staff in planning and managing transition-related training and technical assistance;
- Resources from the State Improvement Grant (SIG), Sliver Grants, and IDEA Discretionary funds to support the implementation of all above-referenced transition related initiatives;
- Members of the state-level Interagency Transition Task Force to monitor and implement statewide transition initiatives as defined on the Transition Continuous Improvement Plan; and
- Resources from the public and private sector to assist in hosting the annual Youth Leadership Forum.

