



**U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)
Executive Summary**

OMB No. 1890-0004
Exp. 10-31-2007

PR/ Number # (11 characters) **H323A050003**

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) applied for the State Personnel Development Grants Program (CFDA 84.323A) in May 2005 and received notification of the grant award in September 2005.

Over the past several years, Connecticut has intensified statewide improvement efforts through participation in the Office of Special Education Program's (OSEP's) Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (CIMP) as well as its reiteration as OSEP's Continuous Improvement and Focused Monitoring System (CIFMS). Connecticut completed an extensive self-assessment and developed a comprehensive long-range State Improvement Plan which was implemented, updated, and revised, with progress reported annually in Connecticut's Annual Performance Reports (APRs) for Parts B and C for FFY 2001-2004. In addition, Connecticut has submitted the required State Performance Plan (SPP) and is working to ensure that the activities of the SPDG support and align with the desired outcomes of the SPP. The SPDG project specifically builds upon and extends the reach of the successful initiatives undertaken through Connecticut's State Improvement Grant (SIG) (2000-2005).

CT SPDG Project Framework

Current implementation of the SPDG program is a collaborative effort between the CSDE, responsible for Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Connecticut Department of Mental Retardation (DMR), Lead Agency for Part C, and the State Education Resource Center (SERC). Other partners include Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU), the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), the CT State Department Mental Retardation Birth to Three System, and select high-need urban local education agencies (LEAs) including Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, and Waterbury. A strong foundation of previously well-established collaborative relationships among lead agencies has and should continue to benefit from the development of the SPDG program.

The long range goal of the CSDE's work is to reform and improve Connecticut's system for personnel preparation and professional development. The aim is to accomplish systemic change through a comprehensive package of professional development strategies focused on expansion of the workforce and improvement in outcomes for children with disabilities. The SPDG supports a portion of the state's overall comprehensive personnel development strategy through targeted efforts in the following four professional development focus areas: (1) paraprofessional recruitment, (2) early intervention providers' professional development, (3) scaling-up evidence-based practices through professional development, and (4) enhancing collaborative relationships between parents and schools.

To accomplish this long range goal with a focus on these four targeted areas, Connecticut has coordinated its Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Plan with Connecticut's Improving Teacher Quality State Grants Program (Title I, Part A of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 [NCLB]), managed through the Division of Teaching and Learning. It reflects a jointly conducted analysis of state needs for professional development and is aligned with Connecticut's plans submitted under Section 111 and 2112 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The CSPD Plan was developed with broad-based input from a council of diverse stakeholders including teachers, principals, parents, administrators, paraprofessionals, other school personnel, early intervention and related services personnel, and individuals with disabilities. SPDG partners and state agencies affiliated with SPDG are also represented on the CSPD Council and many are involved in, or responsible for other state and federal grants.

Evaluation Activities in Year Two:

Evaluation activities for year two have focused on implementation of the multi-level evaluation model and plans for data collection. This has included frequent communication between the project evaluator, CSDE staff, and individual Project

Directors, clarifying expectations, and establishing a timeline for year two data collection, analysis and reporting. Year Two evaluation activities include:

1. A logic model approach to program development and evaluation (also employed in the CT SIG evaluation) was used as the foundation to clearly identify project objectives, activities, outputs and outcomes for year two.
2. Projects were visited by the evaluator at the beginning of the year in order to review Year Two logic models, clearly identify the scope of individual year two projects and their activities, review evaluation questions, and begin discussion of possible data collection methods.
3. A new report template for the semi-annual reporting process for SPDG projects was developed. The purpose of the new template was to ease the burden of reporting for projects. The semi-annual progress report format requires projects to: (1) align their goals and objectives with federal and state goals and objectives, (2) identify indicators that will be used to monitor project progress, (3) report activities, or outputs, occurring during the six-month reporting period, and (4) report outcomes. The report organization parallels the logic model that projects were asked to develop.
4. An annual CT SPDG meeting was attended by project directors, project staff, representatives from the CT State Department of Education, and the external evaluator. Technical assistance with evaluation was provided and projects shared their individual successes and challenges.
5. Site visits were conducted by the evaluator at the completion of the project year. Project directors, project staff, and a purposive sample of program recipients were interviewed. Project reports were reviewed and data collection plans further developed.

Year Two Successes and Challenges:

During interviews conducted as part of the SPDG evaluation activities, the SPDG Program Director and individual Project Directors identified some of the successes and challenges of the second year.

Successes

1. All four projects successfully began implementation of their planned activities.
2. All four projects have developed a data collection plan.
3. Attention continues to be devoted to systemic change and sustainability of individual project activities.
4. The formative and summative evaluation process for all grant activities continues. All evaluation activities have been implemented to date.

Challenges

1. Determining appropriate measures to demonstrate progress on some of the project objectives.
2. Accomplishing systemic change given the complexities of the state, regional and local educational systems.
3. Changing longstanding societal attitudes regarding special education and regular education.
4. Integrating SPDG goals and objectives with other on-going state initiatives to avoid a fragmentation of efforts and inefficient use of resources.



**U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)
Project Status Chart**

OMB No. 1890-0004
Exp. 10-31-2007

PR/Award # (11 characters): **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

1. Project Objective Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

Establish a teacher licensure program which will recruit, enroll, support and assist paraprofessionals currently employed in CT school districts to meet state certifications requirements for both elementary and special educators.

I.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
120 Paraprofessional will be trained and earn licensure as special education teachers	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		30	/		13	/	

I.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Urban LEAs will have a pool of licensed special educators from which to draw to fill personnel vacancies.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		13	/		2	/	

I.c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
There will be an increase in the diversity of the special education teaching workforce in targeted districts.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		7	/		8	/	

I.d. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
A long-range plan for reform of the teacher licensure system will be developed.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

I.e. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Support for sustaining the program and replicating it in additional school districts will be obtained.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Objective 1 of the Connecticut State Professional Development Grant (SPDG) addresses pre-service teacher preparation through a program to recruit and train special education teachers. The Paraprofessional Recruitment Program is designed to allow paraprofessionals to earn teacher licensure, while also focusing on increasing diversity in the special education teaching workforce in Connecticut’s urban districts.

The four urban school districts of New Haven, Hartford, Waterbury, and Bridgeport were selected by Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) for the recruitment program. Dr. Pamela Brucker, Chairperson of Special Education and Reading at SCSU is the project director overseeing the program. All districts agreed to participate as indicated by formal letters of commitment to the CSDE. Factors considered in the LEA selection process included the number of minority students in the district, the number of minority special education teachers in the district, economic status of the community, the percentage of vacancies with no qualified person found, teacher attrition, and the number of qualified paraprofessionals from which to recruit.

Paraprofessionals currently employed in the four targeted urban districts are being recruited into the Paraprofessional Recruitment Program, one district at a time. To be eligible for the program, paraprofessionals must (1) have a minimum of three years of experience in the district, (2) have completed two or more years of higher education, (3) have received a recommendation from the building principal, (4) have received a passing score on the Praxis I, and (5) have a grade point average of at least 2.75.

The first year of the program began last year with the New Haven School District. The additional three LEAs will be phased in over the next three years. New Haven was chosen for the initial cohort because SCSU is located in New Haven and has an established partnership with the district. Dissemination of program materials occurred in the spring of 2006 rather than fall of 2005, as readiness for program implementation was determined between SCSU and CSDE to be more appropriate at that time to allow for greater success in recruitment. Individual letters explaining the program were sent to 107 paraprofessionals in New Haven and informational flyers were sent to New Haven elementary schools. Seventy of the 90 paraprofessionals in New Haven were determined to be eligible for the Paraprofessional Recruitment Program. Thirty candidates were asked to begin the program in New Haven and certification classes began in June 2006. Every effort is being made to create diverse cohorts of paraprofessionals

from each of the targeted districts. Recruiting for the Hartford cohort began in the fall of 2006. There are 64 eligible Hartford paraprofessionals and seven complete admissions files. Recruiting for the Bridgeport cohort will begin in the fall of 2007.

In the summer of 2006, 30 New Haven candidates began two certification courses (worth 3 course credits each) and took the Praxis I exam. Praxis I tutoring was offered in math and reading. Praxis I exams were held on June 10th and August 5th. After completing six course credits, all participating paraprofessionals were required to have passed the Praxis I exam in order to continue in the program. As a result of attrition, largely due to the Praxis I exam, 13 paraprofessionals remain in the New Haven cohort. Plans are being discussed to create a second New Haven cohort using 11 candidates from original New Haven cohort. Hartford candidates have attended Praxis I tutorials and will begin certification classes in June.

Recruitment for the PACE (Paraprofessionals as Certified Educators) Committee was initiated with a broad group of stakeholders and representatives from various state and educational agencies. Commitments from approximately 50 percent of the possible participants have been received. The purpose of the committee is to plan for the sustainability and/or replication of the program. Plans are being developed for the committee to assist with a Paraprofessionals Recruitment Program replication guide to be used by school districts, institutes of higher education, and other state agencies.

A data collection plan has been agreed upon by CSDE, SCSU and Glen Martin Associates. Data will be collected that allows progress on each of the project and OSEP objectives to be demonstrated. Baseline data collection will begin in the fall of 2007. The principle data sources will be a survey, conducted annually, of paraprofessionals in the program as well as program graduates; a principals survey, the Paraprofessionals Recruitment Program database, and CSDE data.

Year Two Project Activities

1. New Haven candidates progressed through the Paraprofessional Recruitment Program.

a. Twelve Praxis exam tutorials were conducted for New Haven candidates, beginning in May 2006. An average of five candidates attended each tutorial. Candidates received instructional materials and sample exams.

b. Certification classes were held for candidates twice weekly in June through July of 2006 and once weekly in September 2006 through May 2007. Candidates were provided with textbooks, notebooks, school supplies, stipends for babysitting services, and food.

c. Dr. Brucker and grant assistants held monthly meetings with candidates to review their files. Candidates received handouts related to their files that were used to streamline the process and ensure all necessary materials were included.

d. Currently, two candidates have earned Durational Shortage Area Permit (DSAP) certification and are teaching in the New Haven Public Schools as they continue coursework towards full certification.

2. Recruitment activities began for the Hartford cohort.

a. A planning meeting was held in Hartford. Administrators from Hartford Public Schools and representatives of the district's paraprofessionals were present, as were Dr. Brucker and Ed Roman of SCSU. Attendees received a handout concerning the recruitment process.

b. Flyers were sent to 150 paraprofessionals in Hartford. Three informational meetings for Hartford paraprofessionals were held in the district. One-hundred and five paraprofessionals attended the first informational meeting and received informational packets. At the second meeting, 64 attendees completed information sheets. At the third meeting candidates received applications to the Paraprofessional Recruitment program and SCSU. By the time of the third meeting, seven candidates had complete application files. The remaining candidates will receive acceptance notification pending a review of their application files.

c. Four Praxis exam tutorials were conducted by three tutors, one of whom is bilingual. Seventeen eligible paraprofessional program candidates regularly attended the Praxis I tutorial and as many as 26 candidates may attend. Twenty-six Praxis I study guides for math and reading were distributed, as were sample exams.

3. Biweekly coordinator meetings were held

At the coordinator meetings files for candidates were created and updated, the Paraprofessionals Recruitment Program database was updated, and handouts for informational meetings were produced.

4. Recruitment for the PACE Committee was initiated.

Commitments from approximately 50 percent of the possible participants have been received.

5. Data collection plan has been agreed upon by CSDE, SCSU and Glen Martin Associates.

Data will be collected that allow progress on each of the project and OSEP objectives to be demonstrated. Baseline data collection will begin in the fall of 2007. The principle data sources will be a survey, conducted annually, of paraprofessionals in the program as well as program graduates; a principal's survey, the Paraprofessionals Recruitment Program database, and review of CSDE data.

Performance Measures

1a: 120 paraprofessionals will be trained and earn licensure as special education teachers.

Evaluation Question(s): Did the Paraprofessional Recruitment Program meet its recruitment goal for the New Haven cohort? What were Paraprofessional Recruitment Program completion and certification rates?

Indicator(s): Recruitment cohort size; recruitment cohort completion rates; Praxis I and II results; CT Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) portfolio results; provisional and permanent certification rates.

Data Collection: Recruitment records; admissions records; project progress reports; paraprofessional program database; participant surveys; participant focus groups; project director interviews.

Year Two Target: Thirty New Haven paraprofessionals will be on track for licensure as highly qualified special education teachers.

Due to attrition, 13 New Haven paraprofessionals are left in the cohort. Eleven New Haven paraprofessionals are awaiting the results of Praxis II. Plans are being developed to admit a second New Haven cohort of students from original New Haven cohort. As the list for the second cohort contains 11 students, the target of 30 New Haven paraprofessionals licensed as highly qualified special education teachers will not be met.

1b: Urban LEAs will have a pool of licensed special educators from which to draw to fill personnel vacancies.

Evaluation Question(s): Did the number of special education vacancies in the targeted district decline? Did the number of available special education teachers in the targeted districts increase? Did Paraprofessional Recruitment Program graduates teach in the targeted districts?

Indicator(s): Number of available special educators in targeted LEA pre and post program; number of personnel vacancies in targeted LEAs pre and post program; percent of graduates hired in targeted LEAs.

Data Collection: CSDE data; participant surveys.

Year Two Target: One half of the enrolled paraprofessionals with a BA will complete the requirements for Durational Shortage Area Permit (DSAP) by the end of the year.

Two of the program participants are on a DSAP in New Haven. Eleven graduate students have the appropriate number of credits to earn a DSAP. However, due to a CSDE requirement that all special education DSAP candidates must pass the Praxis II exams for Elementary Education if they are not currently highly qualified, these students have not yet received DSAP certification. As a result of this requirement, program students had to be prepared for two more Praxis exams.

1c: There will be an increase in the diversity of the special education teaching workforce in targeted districts.

Evaluation Question(s): Did this project increase the diversity of the teaching workforce in targeted districts? What factors affected completion and graduation rates?

Indicator(s): Percent of teaching workforce in targeted districts by race/ethnicity pre and post program; diversity/educational background of cohorts.

Data Collection: Participant demographic data; participant survey; CSDE data.

Year Two Target: One half of paraprofessional participants having an ethnic or culturally diverse background at the end of the year. It is estimated that 60 percent of project participants are members of minority groups. To obtain more reliable data, students will be asked to report their race/ethnicity and languages in a student survey in the remaining years of the project.

1d: Develop a long-range plan for sustaining recruitment and retention of teachers in urban areas.

Evaluation Question(s): What are the retention rates of program graduates who were subsequently employed as teachers? To what extent were these initiatives sustained and replicated in additional school districts?

Indicator(s): Number of program graduates teaching in targeted districts three years after certification; number of additional districts or IHEs involved in program; replication guide.

Data Collection: CSDE data; student survey; project director interviews

Year Two Target: Potential members of PACE committee identified and have agreed to participate. Initial meeting held and objectives for Year Three defined.

Recruitment for the PACE committee has begun and commitments have been received from about 50 percent of potential members.

Progress

1. Thirteen paraprofessionals from New Haven continue to move toward special education certification.
2. Two paraprofessionals from New Haven have received DSAP certification and are currently working under this certification in New Haven Public Schools.
3. The New Haven cohort is ethnically diverse.
4. Recruitment of potential members of a PACE (Paraprofessionals as Certified Educators) Committee has begun.

5. There are seven complete admissions files from the 64 eligible Hartford paraprofessionals. Acceptance for other applicants is pending a file review of application materials.

Challenges

1. The acceptance process for the Paraprofessional Recruitment program is lengthy. Difficulties with transferring community college credits and Praxis I results are responsible for much of this challenge.
2. It is proving difficult to transfer some of the community college credits of some students with Associates Degrees. It is particularly difficult to fill all-university requirements with transfer credits for some students. Dr. Brucker and CSDE report they are investigating whether limiting the number of candidates with Associates Degree for the last two cohorts would be necessary. The decision will depend in part on the number of candidates from Bridgeport and Waterbury with Bachelor's Degrees.
3. Many eligible Paraprofessional Recruitment Program candidates from New Haven did not pass the Praxis I. Six of these candidates were within a few points of passing. Dr. Brucker reports that she expects passing the Praxis I exam will be challenging for the Hartford paraprofessionals as well. Math, in particular, is difficult for many candidates. This is helping to inform acceptance criteria for future applicants. It is university policy that a candidate cannot be formally matriculated into a program until successfully passing Praxis I. In order to reach the project's target number of certified paraprofessionals, a bilingual Praxis tutor has been hired and discussions are being held to plan for a potential second cohort of New Haven candidates.
4. Navigating the SCSU bureaucracy with a non-traditional program and students is difficult. Dr. Brucker and grant assistants have addressed specific admissions issues with the SCSU admission department for the Paraprofessional Recruitment Program candidates, creating a more streamlined process.

Looking Forward

1. The New Haven cohort will receive their Praxis II results.
2. Two certification classes for the Hartford cohort will begin on July 1st.
3. Meetings in Bridgeport for the next cohort of paraprofessionals will be held.
4. Baseline data collection will begin in the fall of 2007.
5. The PACE committee will begin meeting and planning for sustainability and replication of the Paraprofessionals Recruitment Program.



**U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)
Project Status Chart**

OMB No. 1890-0004
Exp. 10-31-2007

PR/Award # (11 characters): **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

2. Project Objective Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

With a panel of national early intervention experts, develop, field test, and nationally disseminate a video training manual and self-study guide for early intervention providers, care givers, and parents on strategies for supporting infants and toddlers with disabilities through natural routines in natural environments.

2.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Providers will have the knowledge and skills to describe the coaching model to parents and caregivers and to implement it.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

2.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
There will be a better match between families' expectation of IDEA Part C services and why they receive them.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

2.c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Families will express that they have acquired increased knowledge and skills to enhance their child's development.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

2.d. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Families and childcare providers will be more knowledgeable about routines-based early intervention as a result of the video and their interactions with providers.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Objective 2 of the Connecticut State Professional Development Grant (SPDG) is to educate parents, caregivers, and early intervention providers on the best practices in early intervention in order to enhance outcomes for infants, toddlers and their families. This objective includes the development and national dissemination of two videos, an introductory video for parents who are entering the Birth to Three System and a training video for Birth to Three service providers, and a training manual and self-study guide on strategies for supporting infants and toddlers with disabilities through natural routines in natural environments. The purpose of the introductory video for parents is to better match the expectations of parents and providers by creating a shared understanding of best practice in early intervention.

The Connecticut Department of Mental Retardation (DMR), the designated Lead Agency for Part C of the IDEA, is responsible for the implementation of the Early Intervention project. Deborah Resnick, Part C Council for State Personnel Development (CSPD) Project Coordinator, is overseeing all aspects of video development. In addition a Video Advisory Group (VAG) is advising Deborah Resnick. The VAG is composed of the Birth to Three Project Coordinator and Regional Managers, service providers who have been identified as being exemplary by the Birth to Three Management Team, three external consultants, and representatives from parent groups, program directors, and UConn’s Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities.

Because a good home visit has many components, of which coaching is just one, the VAG adjusted the stated focus of the videos to best practices in early intervention. The purpose of the training video is to present the components of a successful home visit, which include coaching. The practices discussed in the video will not be described as coaching but as best practices, with coaching as a component of best practices.

An RFP was issued for video production. Responses to the RFP are expected in June.

Families and service providers have been solicited to appear in the videos through an informal survey.

An evaluation and data collection plan was developed. In addition to focus groups and interviews, an existing family survey, a post-training survey, and the existing Birth to Three focused monitoring system will be used to evaluate the Early Intervention Providers project. Once created, the video will be piloted in two to three Birth to Three programs which have requested technical assistance in coaching and two to three programs which are considered model programs. The evaluation instruments will be used with the families and staff of these programs.

In addition, a draft of new guidelines for the provision of early intervention services in natural environments was produced. In 1999, the Birth to Three System developed Service Guideline #2 Natural Environments. The purpose of the guideline was to inform providers about how to provide

services in natural environments using the family's routines. These guidelines were very focused on where rather than how services were delivered. Through the SPDG, the Guidelines were updated so that they are consistent with the way in which providers are trained to deliver early intervention services. The draft of the new guidelines was completed April 1, 2007. Comments on the draft were solicited from representatives of parents and Birth to Three service providers, the Interagency Coordinating Council, and all programs. A forum to review the draft of the new guidelines will be held in June 2007.

Year Two Project Activities

1. Video Advisory Group (VAG) met to discuss implementation of the Early Intervention Project

a. The VAG met six times in Year Two of the CT SPDG. At VAG meetings the following topics were discussed:

- Evaluation of the Early Intervention Providers Professional Development project;
- Components of a successful home visit;
- Types of families and locations to be included in the videos;
- Types of service visits to be included in the videos;
- Types of situations that might be encountered in a home visit;
- Approach to use in filming families for the training video, namely, to capture families in the midst of activities demonstrating the best practices in early intervention;
- RFP for video production;
- Recruitment of families and service providers for the videos; and
- National experts to be featured in videos and contracted to write video storyboards and scripts, and training manual and self-study guide

2. Focus of video changed from coaching to best practices.

a. Because the topic of coaching is somewhat controversial among service providers, the VAG changed the stated focus of the video to best practices in early intervention. The purpose of the video is to present the components of a successful home visit, which include coaching. The practices discussed in the video will not be described as coaching but as best practices.

3. Video production company sought.

a. The State Education Resource Center (SERC) was contracted to find a video production company. SERC has identified three possible video production companies. An RFP has been issued; the responses are due in June. The RFP specified there would be four to 10 families in the video which would be filmed over four to five days. The RFP also specified the VAG would be able to participate in editing the video.

4. External consultant to write the video storyboards and scripts, training manual, and self-study guide sought.

a. Bonnie Keilty, Ed.D, of George Washington University is no longer available to research and assist in the writing of the video scripts, training manual and self-study guide. A search for a new external consultant has begun.

5. National experts on best practices in early intervention sought.

a. Schedule conflicts have caused some difficulty in consulting on the Early Intervention project with M’Lisa Shelden, PT, Ph.D. and Dathan Rush, M.A. of the Family Infant and Preschool Program (FIPP) of Morganton, North Carolina. A search for another expert to appear in the video and discuss the best practices featured in the video is underway.

6. Types of families, service providers, locations, and best practices to be featured in videos discussed.

a. The VAG is making a priority of featuring a wide range of family types and possible home visit situations in the video.

b. The approach to filming will be to capture families in the midst of activities demonstrating the best practices in early intervention.

7. Families and service providers solicited to be featured in the videos.

a. Selection will be completed by the fall of 2007.

8. Draft of new guidelines for the provision of early intervention services in natural environments was produced.

a. Service Guideline #2 Natural Environments was updated so that it is consistent with the way in which providers are trained to deliver early intervention services. The draft was completed April 1, 2007. Comments on the draft were solicited from representatives of parents and Birth to Three service providers, the Interagency Coordinating Council, and all Birth to Three programs. A forum to review the draft of the new guidelines will be held in June 2007.

9. Evaluation and data collection plan developed.

a. In addition to focus groups and interviews, an existing family survey, a post-training survey, and the existing focused monitoring system will be used to evaluate the Early Intervention project. Once created, the video will be piloted in two to three Birth to Three programs which have requested technical assistance in coaching and two to three programs which are considered model Birth to Three programs.

b. The video will be viewed by all service providers in the pilot Birth to Three program. A survey will be created to evaluate the video training of the project.

c. Providers in these pilot programs will be asked to suggest families who are entering the Birth to Three System who might be willing to participate in the piloting of the video. Families who agree to participate in the video pilot will receive the introductory video for families and a family survey already used by the Birth to Three System, modified, if necessary, to allow progress on achieving project objectives to be determined. As it can take some time for behavioral changes to occur, these families will be surveyed again six months and 12 months later and/or upon leaving the Birth to Three System.

d. The Birth to Three System's focused monitoring will also be used to determine progress on achieving project objectives. If necessary, the questions used during the focused monitoring can be adjusted to serve the purposes of the evaluation.

e. The next step is to solicit programs to pilot the videos and to develop or modify the surveys and focused monitoring system to be used in evaluation.

Management of Project Objective

In an effort to focus project implementation as it moves forward, a clearly defined set of evaluation questions deemed most important to program coordinators and participants were finalized. A series of performance measures were also identified that would be used to consistently determine if evaluation questions were being answered over the life of the grant.

The following details the four performance measures specifically identified under the Early Intervention project. Each performance measure is aligned with at least one of the project's evaluation questions, along with specific indicators of progress and the planned method of data collection.

Performance Measures

2a: Providers will have the knowledge and skills necessary to describe the coaching model to parents and caregivers and to implement it.

Evaluation Question(s): As a result of dissemination of the training video, manual, and self-study guide, do providers have the knowledge and skills to describe and implement best practices to parents? To what extent are providers using best practices?

Indicator(s): Increase in provider knowledge and skills; parent perceptions of provider's skills/knowledge; supervisor perceptions of provider skills/knowledge; percent of providers targeted through evaluative focused monitoring demonstrating coaching skills.

Data Collection: Parent interviews; family survey; provider interviews; supervisor interviews; retrospective pre-post training session evaluations; observations during state focused monitoring.

2b: There will be a better match between families' expectations of IDEA Part C services and what they receive.

Evaluation Question(s): To what extent did this project clarify parent expectations regarding the role of early intervention and increase their knowledge and skills related to promoting child development?

Indicator(s): Change in parent expectations of early intervention; increase in parent knowledge/skill.

Data Collection: Family survey, parent interviews.

2c: Families will express that they have acquired increased knowledge and skills to enhance their child's development.

Evaluation Question(s): Did families express that they have acquired increased knowledge and skills to enhance their child's development?

Indicator(s): Parent perceptions of own knowledge and skills

Data Collection: Family survey; parent interviews

2d: Families and childcare providers will be more knowledgeable about routines-based early intervention as a result of the video and their interactions with providers.

Evaluation Question(s): As a result of this project, do providers and families have increased knowledge and skills related to routines-based early intervention?

Indicator(s): Provider increase in knowledge and skills; parent perception of provider skills/knowledge; supervisor perceptions of provider skills/knowledge; parent increase in knowledge and skills.

Data Collection: Parent interviews; provider interviews; supervisor interviews; retrospective pre-post training session evaluations; state focused monitoring; family surveys.

Looking Forward

1. An external consultant to write the video storyboards and scripts, training manual, and self-study guide will be contracted with by the fall of 2007.
2. Responses to the RFP for a video production company are due in June.
3. National experts on best practices in early intervention will be contracted with by the fall of 2007.
4. Families and providers to be featured in the videos will be selected by the fall of 2007.

5. The families, service providers, locations, and best practices to be featured in videos will be decided.
6. A forum to review the draft of the new guidelines will be held in June 2007.
7. Programs will be solicited to pilot the videos and family surveys and the Birth to Three System's focused monitoring system will be modified as necessary for the evaluation of the Early Intervention Providers Professional Development project.



**U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)
Project Status Chart**

OMB No. 1890-0004
Exp. 10-31-2007

PR/Award # (11 characters): **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

3. Project Objective Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

Scaling-up Evidence-based Practices: Provide the statewide targeted professional development required to scale up selected practices system-wide, providing general and special education teachers and administrators with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs, and improve the performance and achievement of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities.

3.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Groundwork will be laid for systemic changes, long-term sustainability, and institutionalization of evidence-based practices through shared meaning and vision.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			4 / 4	100		/	

3.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
A multi-component system will be developed to facilitate statewide replication of evidence-based practices.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			1 / 1	100		/	

3.c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Evidence-based practices will be replicated with fidelity in selected school districts.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

3.d. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Selected LEAs will receive on-site, job-embedded, evidence- or scientifically-based professional development.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

3.e. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Skills of general and special education teachers, staff, administrators, and parents will be increased.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

3.f. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Results for students with disabilities in these selected districts will improve.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Objective 3 of the Connecticut State Professional Development Grant (SPDG) is to provide the statewide, targeted professional development required to "scale up" effective evidence-based practices statewide. This SPDG project pairs model districts with selected additional scaling-up districts in order to implement evidence-based effective practices across the state. The Special Education Resource Center (SERC), the CSDE's designated technical assistance provider will lead the implementation of this project. Marianne Kirner, Director of SERC, will serve as the SPDG Project Director.

Three topical priority areas have been chosen to be the focus of the scaling up efforts of the CT SPDG: Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS), Early Intervention Project (EIP)/Response to Intervention (RtI), and Prevention/Intervention. The Prevention/Intervention topical area will be divided between two prevention models: School-Based Literacy Teams: A Three-Tiered Approach and Best Practices in School Counseling/Developmental Guidance Curriculum.

Groundwork has begun to ensure long term sustainability of the evidence-based practices targeted by the Scaling-up Evidence-based Practices project of the CT SPDG. To support project implementation and sustainability, a multi-component system is under development. Five model districts for

PBS and EIP/RtI have been selected. A technical assistance visit was conducted for each of the model PBS districts. Finally, measures to ensure fidelity of implementation, to measure results for students with disabilities, and to measure the skills of teachers, staff and administrators for PBS and EIP/RtI have been developed. Baseline data has been collected for the PBS and EIP/RtI model districts.

Year Two Project Activities

1. Three Topical priority areas chosen.

a. Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS), Early Intervention Project (EIP)/Response to Intervention (RtI), and Prevention/Intervention were the three topical areas selected by SERC and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE).

b. The Prevention/Intervention topical area will be divided between two prevention models: School-Based Literacy Teams: A Three-Tiered Approach and Best Practices in School Counseling/Developmental Guidance Curriculum.

2. SPDG Scaling-up Evidence-based Practices project aligned with the CT Vanguard Schools, Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI), and Reading First initiatives

a. The CSDE, SERC and other partners have agreed that the scaling up efforts complement the Vanguard Schools, Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI), and Reading First initiatives.

3. SERC and CT SDE sponsored meeting with a goal to create a comprehensive system of behavioral and mental health

a. SERC and CSDE personnel participated in initiatives regarding behavioral and/or mental health.

b. The meeting was facilitated by University of Connecticut with a goal to begin discussions about creating a comprehensive system of behavioral and mental health school-based supports in CT schools.

c. The meeting was designed to identify various initiatives/programs in the state of Connecticut and determine which are evidence-based and which are not. SERC and CSDE plan to improve efficacy and efficiency by reallocation of staff and other resources to those projects with a scientific base.

4. Invitation to apply for PBS models disseminated and two model districts (Killingly and Windham) selected.

a. Application for PBS program was developed and over 70 applications were sent to individuals in 19 LEAs in December 2006.

b. Two informational meetings held in November 2006.

c. An evaluation team was assembled and reviewed the applications and conducted verification visits in December 2006.

d. Two selected model districts notified in February 2007.

5. Invitation to apply for EIP/RtI models disseminated and three model districts selected.

a. Application for EIP/RtI program was prepared in December 2006 and reviewed in January 2007.

b. Over 320 applications were sent to individuals in 41 LEAs.

c. Three informational meetings were held in February 2007.

d. An evaluation team was assembled and reviewed applications in March 2007.

e. Verification conducted in April 2007.

f. Three model districts were selected and notified in May 2007.

6. Meetings and dialogue devoted to discussing the development of human and fiscal resources to maintain, expand, and then sustain PBS and EIP/RtI.

a. SERC held meetings with the Regional Education Service Center (RESC) Alliance, the State Level PBS Leadership Team, the State Level EIP/RtI Leadership Team, the Scientifically Research Based Intervention (SRBI) Advisory Panel, and the Steering Committee of the CT Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) to discuss development of human and fiscal resources to maintain, expand, and then sustain PBS and EIP/RtI.

7. Web site plan developed.

a. As the Vanguard School Initiative is funding much of the cost of the web site to be developed as part of the multi-component system to facilitate state-wide replication of evidence-based practices, the web site will be framed around the Vanguard Schools rubric.

8. Criteria established for replication with fidelity, improvement of the skills of students, teachers, staff and administrators and improvement of results for special education students.

a. Invitation to Apply for PBS and EIP/RtI included a delineated selection process.

b. Verification visit for PBS included the implementation of the School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET) which identified current PBS implementation levels in the schools. The SET is a research-validated instrument consisting of 28 questions designed to assess and evaluate the critical features of the PBS. Initial scores on the SET will be used as baseline data and compared to future SETs to delineate continuous improvement as well as replication with fidelity. The SET will also be used as a measure of results for students with disabilities and the skills of teachers, staff and administrators.

c. Invitation to Apply for EIP/RtI also included a delineated selection process. During verification visits baseline evidence was collected through interviews, observations, document review, and data analysis. This data constitutes a measure of the current implementation levels of EIP/RtI in the schools. The measurement process will be repeated for documentation of continuous improvement and replication of fidelity. This measure will also be used to measure the results for students with disabilities and the skills of teachers, staff and administrators. SERC Early Intervening Services program data will also be used to measure results for students with disabilities.

9. Technical assistance/action planning for PBS model districts initiated

a. SERC consultants assigned to Killingly and Windham began meeting with school personnel.

b. School-Wide Information System (SWIS) is a web-based information system designed to help school personnel to use office referral data to design school-wide and individual student interventions. SWIS training will be scheduled by the end of the school year for both districts.

Management of Project Objective

In an effort to focus project implementation going forward, a clearly defined set of evaluation questions deemed most important to program coordinators and participants were finalized. A series of performance measures were also identified that would be used to consistently determine if evaluation questions were being answered over the five years of the grant. The following details the six performance measures specifically identified under the Scaling-up Evidence-based Practices project. Each performance measure is aligned with at least one of the project's evaluation questions, along with specific indicators of progress and the planned method of data collection. Evidence of short-term progress is included for each measure.

Performance Measures

3a: Groundwork will be laid for systemic changes, long-term sustainability, and institutionalization of evidence-based practices through shared meaning and vision.

Evaluation Question(s): Was groundwork laid for systemic changes, long-term sustainability, and institutionalization of evidence-based practices through shared meaning and vision?

Indicator(s): Collaborative dialogue and planning across best practices initiatives.

Data Collection: Project progress reports; project director interviews.

Short Term Evidence: The project director reported that the CSDE, SERC and other partners have agreed that the scaling up efforts complement the Vanguard Schools, Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI), and Reading First Initiatives. She also reported collaborative dialogue and planning across best practices initiatives have occurred. Implementation of the PBS and EIP/RtI projects has begun.

3b: A multi-component system will be developed to facilitate statewide replication of evidence-based practices..

Evaluation Question(s): Was a multi-component system developed to facilitate statewide replication of evidence-based practices?

Indicator(s): Increased resources available for replication of evidence-based practices.

Data Collection: Project progress reports; project director interviews.

Short Term Evidence: Additional personnel at SERC have been trained in PBS and EIP/RtI. Web site planning underway.

3c: Evidence-based practices will be replicated with fidelity in selected school districts.

Evaluation Question(s): Were evidence-based practices implemented in selected LEAs as a result of this initiative?

Indicator(s): Evidence of implementation of evidence-based practices.

Data Collection: SET scores. EIP/RtI verification/fidelity measure developed by SERC.

Short-Term Evidence: Baseline SET scores and EIP/RtI verification/fidelity scores have been collected.

3d: Selected LEAs will receive on-site, job-embedded, evidence- or scientifically-based professional development.

Evaluation Question(s): What were the initial effects of on-site, job-embedded professional development on general and special education teachers, staff, administrators, and parents?

Indicator(s): Increased skills and knowledge of participants; application of skills and knowledge.

Data Collection: Participant surveys; follow-up participant interviews; project progress reports, SET scores, SWIS scores.

Short-Term Evidence: The project director reported that the PBS model districts have each received one technical assistance visit.

3e: Skills of general and special education teachers, staff, administrators, and parents will be increased.

Evaluation Question(s): Did the skills of general and special education teachers, staff, administrators, and parents increase?

Indicator(s): Improved SET, improved EIP/RtI scores, and improved SERC Early Intervention Program indicators.

Data Collection: Participant focus groups; participant surveys; follow-up participant interviews; site visits/observations; project progress reports; SET scores; EIP/RtI scores, and SERC's Early Intervention Program indicators.

Short-Term Evidence: Baseline data has been collected for SET scores, EIP/RtI scores, and SERC's Early Intervention Program indicators.

3f: Results for students with disabilities in these selected districts will improve.

Evaluation Question(s): To what extent and in what specific ways were student outcomes improved as a result of this initiative?

Indicator(s): Increased student achievement; improved student behavior; improved SET scores, improved EIP/RtI scores, and improved SERC Early Intervention Program indicators.

Data Collection: Student and parent interviews, SET scores, EIP/RtI scores, and SERC's Early Intervention Program indicators.

Short-Term Evidence: Baseline data has been collected for SET scores, EIP/RtI scores, and SERC's Early Intervention Program indicators.

Progress

1. Groundwork has begun to ensure long term sustainability.

2. A multi-component system is under development.

3. Model districts for PBS and EIP/RtI were selected

4. Technical assistance visits have begun for PBS model districts.

5. Measures have been developed to ensure fidelity of implementation, to measure results for students with disabilities, and to measure the skills of teachers, staff and administrators for PBS and EIP/RtI.

6. Baseline data has been collected for PBS and EIP/RtI.

Challenges

It is very difficult to demonstrate results for students with disabilities, as testing is not an appropriate measure for these students. Discussions continue regarding how to best measure results specifically for students with disabilities.

Looking Forward

1. Technical assistance/action planning will be initiated in the summer of 2007 for the EIP/RtI model districts.
2. Work will begin on the newsletter to be developed as part of the multi-component system to facilitate state-wide replication of evidence-based practices.
3. Invitation to apply for Prevention/Intervention models will be developed and disseminated, applications will be reviewed, and model districts will be selected.
4. Invitation to apply for PBS, EIP/RtI, and Prevention/Intervention Scaling-up districts will be disseminated and Scaling-up districts will be selected.
5. Discussion on how to document increased academic and behavioral achievement for students with disabilities will continue.



**U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)
Project Status Chart**

OMB No. 1890-0004
Exp. 10-31-2007

PR/Award # (11 characters): **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

4. Project Objective Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools: Increase parent-school collaboration in selected school districts by providing training, information and support to parents and school staff, particularly with regard to parent involvement in the development of the IEP and ongoing involvement in the child's programs.

4.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Participating districts will develop or enhance an improvement plan which details specific strategies and/or activities for enhancing collaboration.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			4 / 4	100		/	

4.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Pre-service and practicing school personnel will be prepared to collaborate with families.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

4.c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Parents of students with disabilities, age 3-21, will participate as full partners in the planning and implementation of their child's program.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

4.d. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Prepared with better information and increased knowledge, parent-school relationships will be strengthened.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			4 / 4	100		/	

4.e. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
A working framework for continued parent-school collaboration will be sustained in participating districts, with the prospect for replication in additional districts across the state.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			4 / 4	100		/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Objective 4 of the Connecticut State Professional Development Grant (SPDG) focuses on increasing parent-school collaboration in selected school districts by providing training, information and support to parents and school staff, particularly with regard to parent involvement in the development of the IEP and ongoing involvement in the child's program.

The agency responsible for Objective 4 of the SPDG is the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC). CPAC is a statewide nonprofit organization established under IDEA that offers information and support to families of children with any disability or chronic illness, age birth through 26. CPAC is committed to the idea that parents can be the most effective advocates for their children, given the confidence that knowledge and understanding of special education law and its procedures can bring.

In Year Two of the Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools project, four districts were selected to be invited to participate in the project. One invited district chose not to participate, despite having identified CPAC as a resource in an existing district improvement plan. Two other districts are under consideration as a replacement for this non-participating district. Among the other three districts, one district plan was completed. Time, staff availability and multiple district initiatives impeded the development and implementation of a district plan in the remaining two districts. Although only one district plan has been collaboratively developed, the project director reports that she expects the development of other districts' plans will benefit from CPAC's experience in developing a plan with this initial district.

The project director is negotiating with CSDE to change the Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools to target fewer districts than originally planned. As a result of this potential change, the level of resources necessary for developing improvement plans likely to result in systemic change can be devoted to a smaller number of districts. Changing the attitude and skills of staff in working with families will require significant resources. Although there is a willingness to support the intent of the project in targeted districts, it will require significant CPAC and district effort to expand the required training and technical assistance to all staff. Another change proposed by the project director is to move the

direction of this SPDG project from developing Parent Advisors for each district to developing district teams responsible for enhancing collaborative relationships between parents and schools.

Informal technical assistance and training began with staff in Killingly, Montville, and Waterbury. In addition, collaboration with Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs) was initiated. The purpose of this collaboration is to improve the preparation of pre-service educators to collaborate with families. CPAC also collaborated with leaders of targeted districts to initiate activities designed to improve parent-school collaboration, such as conducting a needs assessment and training that involved both parents and district staff.

CPAC collaborated with the external evaluator to develop methods measuring the strength of parent-school relationships and to design a system to annually evaluate implementation of the district improvement plan.

Enhancing school-parent collaboration is an effort that requires systemic change involving many resources. There are limited examples of schools, even at the national level, that have been able to demonstrate success in facilitating parent involvement. The project director reported she has been participating in Connecticut's Vanguard School's Advisory Committee. Vanguard Schools are identified as reaching a level of academic achievement and excellence on a number of indicators over a period of time. One of the indicators used to demonstrate excellence in Vanguard Schools is a measure of home-school collaboration. The project director plans to use a similar indicator in evaluating the Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools project.

Year Two Project Activities

1. Four selected districts (Killingly, New Haven, Montville, and Waterbury) were selected to be invited to participate in the project.
 - a. CPAC staff and a CSDE consultant used Connecticut Parent Education Survey data and other data sources to choose four districts to be asked to participate in the project. Districts were selected on the basis of the quality of the relationship between district schools and parents.
2. A letter of invitation was sent to the Special Education Directors of the four selected districts.
 - a. Four districts were invited to participate in the Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools project in Year Two of the project. New Haven chose not to participate, despite having identified CPAC as a resource in an existing district improvement plan. Two other districts (Norwich and New London) are under consideration as a replacement for this non-participating district.
3. Guidelines for district plans based on objectives of the SPDG project were developed.
 - a. Plans were developed collaboratively with the Special Education Directors of the participating districts.

4. CPAC collaborated with district staff and parents to begin developing improvement plans.

a. A district plan for Killingly was developed. Montville postponed the planning meeting until the fall of 2007 and Waterbury has not been able to meet with CPAC to develop a formal plan but has worked with CPAC on relationship-building activities that involve parents and staff until a formal plan is developed.

5. Project director is negotiating with CSDE to target fewer districts with a goal of developing improvement plans likely to result in systemic change.

a. The project director and her colleagues decided that targeting four districts per year for the Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools project was not conducive to systemic change, since systems change requires targeted interventions and support over an extended period of time. Reducing the number of districts will allow CPAC to provide more intense, focused interventions and support to truly effect systems change.

b. Another change proposed by the project director is to move the direction of this SPDG project from developing Parent Advisors for each district to developing district teams responsible for enhancing collaborative relationships between parents and schools. This change is also intended to support systems change.

6. Informal technical assistance and training began with staff in Killingly, Montville, and Waterbury.

a. CPAC identified CPAC staff and personnel from Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) to conduct training and technical assistance.

b. A Power Point presentation on parent-school partnerships was developed and piloted in a non-participating district. The project director reported she would like to use this as part of a more formal in-service training on parent-school relationships in each of the targeted districts.

7. Collaboration with Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs) initiated.

a. A letter was sent to all CT teacher preparation programs encouraged them to share resources on family-school partnerships with faculty and informing them of availability of parent presenters through the Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools project.

i. Presentations were requested by CT Council of Exception Children, Southern CT State University, and University of Hartford.

b. The project staff is working with CT Comprehensive System of Personnel Development Family Work Group to develop a training video that will be available to all IHEs with teacher preparation programs.

c. The project staff attended a meeting sponsored by the Teacher Certification Bureau to advocate for incorporation of family involvement training in higher education.

d. A presentation on working with families was prepared for the annual Council on Exception Children conference.

8. CPAC collaborated with leaders of targeted districts to initiate activities designed to improve parent-school collaboration.

a. CPAC established contact, through activities and the distribution of materials, with parents of students with disabilities in each of the four participating districts.

b. CPAC conducted outreach activities with the CT Family Support Network, local parent support groups, Youth Service Bureaus, regional Department of Mental Retardation and Department of Children and Families staff, the Help Me Grow program and the School Readiness program.

c. Leadership personnel in three targeted districts have distributed information to parents and staff in their districts about CPAC and state sponsored training and information activities.

9. CPAC collaborated with the external evaluator to develop methods to measure the strength of parent-school relationships.

a. A post-PPT post card has been developed. Its purpose is to measure the effect of district improvement plans and changes in the strength of parent-school relationships. Families and school staff will receive the postcard at their PPT. This postcard is being distributed at PPTs in Montville in May and June of 2007 at the request of this district.

b. Focus groups and interviews will also be used to determine if changes in the strength of school-parent relationships have occurred.

10. CPAC collaborated with the external evaluator to design a system to annually evaluate district implementation of the district improvement plan.

a. A post-PPT post card has been developed. Its purpose is to measure the effect of district improvement plans and changes in the strength of parent-school relationships. Families and school staff will receive the postcard following their PPT.

b. Focus groups and interviews will also be used to determine if the district improvement plan is having its intended effect.

c. Standard sign-in sheets and post-training/activity surveys will also be used.

d. Other data collection tools are being developed to evaluate the unique aspects of each district's improvement plan. For example, in Killingly there may be a sign-out sheet for the new Resource Library, a mechanism for counting hits to district web sites once parent information is posted, and the number of requests for information or technical assistance by targeted district parents and staff in the CPAC database.

Management of Project Objective

Each performance measure is aligned with at least one of the project's evaluation questions, along with specific indicators of progress and the planned method of data collection. In Year Two of the project, the Independent Evaluator worked with project directors to set appropriate short-term targets for performance measures for the current budget periods.

Performance Measures

4a: Participating districts will develop or enhance an improvement plan which details specific strategies and/or activities for enhancing collaboration.

Evaluation Question(s): Did participating districts develop or enhance an improvement plan?

Indicator(s): District improvement plans.

Data Collection: Project progress reports; project director interviews.

Year Two Target: Four district improvement plans will be submitted to CT State Department of Education.
One district improvement plan was developed.

4b: Pre-service and practicing school personnel will be prepared to collaborate with families.

Evaluation Question(s): Did district improvement plans and training for families and school personnel increase collaboration between families and schools?

Indicator(s): Family participation rates in training; increase in family skills and knowledge regarding their child's special education program; increase in family satisfaction with parent-school relationships; personnel participation rates in training; increase in personnel skills and knowledge about special education programs; decreased number of parent-school disputes.

Data Collection: Evaluation of trainings; attendance data at trainings; family participant focus group, surveys and interviews; school personnel focus groups and interviews; project progress reports.

Year Two Target: CPAC will conduct at least one training/technical assistance in each of the four districts. CPAC will advocate for parent involvement in student training.

CPAC began informal technical assistance and training with staff in Killingly, Montville, and Waterbury. The Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools project staff attended a meeting sponsored by the Teacher Certification Bureau to advocate for incorporation of family involvement training in higher education.

4c: Parents of students with disabilities, ages 3-21, will participate as full partners in the planning and implementation of their child's program.

Evaluation Question(s): As a result of this initiative, were parents better able to advocate for appropriate educational services for their children? To what extent did project activities include family members from underserved populations?

Indicator(s): Family participation rates in transition meetings; family participation rates by race/ethnicity, dominant language; family participation in PPT and IEP development.

Data Collection: Family participant focus groups and interviews; school personnel focus groups and interviews; CPAC and LEA archival data; post-PPT postcard.

Year Two Target: CPAC will establish initial contact through activities and the distribution of materials, with parents of students with disabilities in each of the four districts.

CPAC conducted outreach activities with the CT Family Support Network, local parent support groups, Youth Service Bureaus, regional Department of Mental Retardation and Department of Children and Families staff, the Help Me Grow program and the School Readiness program. Leadership personnel of the three participating districts distributed information to parents and staff in their districts about CPAC and state sponsored training and information activities.

4d: Prepared with better information and increased knowledge, parent-school relationships will be strengthened.

Evaluation Question(s): Were parent-school relationships strengthened?

Indicator(s): Parents state relationship with their school has improved; school personnel state their relationship with parents has improved

Data Collection: Parent interviews; school personnel interviews; parent survey; school personnel survey; project director interviews.

Year Two Target: A comprehensive data collection plan to track parent-school relationships through the duration of the project will be submitted to SDE.

A post-PPT post card has been developed. One of its purposes is to measure changes in the strength of parent-school relationships. Families and school staff will receive the postcard at their PPT. This year parent interviews were used to determine if the district improvement plan is having its intended effect. These two interviews indicated parents participating in activities in Killingly do believe relationships between parents and schools have become more collaborative. In the future, focus groups and interviews with school staff will also be used to determine if changes in the strength of school-parent relationships have occurred.

4e: A working framework for continued parent-school collaboration will be sustained in participating districts, with the prospect for replication in additional districts across the state.

Evaluation Question(s): To what extent was this initiative sustained and replicated in additional school districts?

Indicator(s): Number of additional districts involved in the program; retention of districts in the program.

Data Collection: Project progress reports; project director interviews.

Year Two Target: A system/process to annually evaluate district implementation of the improvement plans and their potential to be sustained will have begun.

A post-PPT post card has been developed. One of its purposes is to measure the effect of the district improvement plan. Families and school staff will receive the postcard following their PPT. This year parent interviews were used to determine if the district improvement plan is having its intended effect. These two interviews indicated parents participating in activities in Killingly do believe relationships between parents and schools have become more collaborative and that these changes will be sustained. Standard sign-in sheets and post-training/activity surveys will also be used to evaluate the Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools project. Other data collection tools are being developed to evaluate the unique aspects of each districts improvement plan. For example, in Killingly there may be a sign-out sheet for the Resource Library, a mechanism for counting hits to district web sites once parent information is posted, and the number of requests for information or technical assistance by targeted district parents and staff in the CPAC database.

Progress

1. Four selected districts (Killingly, New Haven, Montville, and Waterbury) were invited to participate in the project.
2. Guidelines for district plans based on the objectives of the SPDG project were developed.
3. One district improvement plan was developed.
4. Informal technical assistance and training began with staff in Killingly, Montville, and Waterbury.
5. Collaboration with Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs) was initiated.
6. CPAC collaborated with leaders of targeted districts to initiate activities designed to improve parent-school collaboration.
7. CPAC collaborated with the external evaluator to develop methods to measure the strength of parent-school relationships.
8. CPAC collaborated with the external evaluator to design a system to annually evaluate district implementation of the district improvement plan.

Challenges

1. Enhancing school-parent collaboration is an effort that requires systemic change involving many resources. There are limited examples of schools, even at the national level, that have been able to demonstrate success in facilitating parent involvement. CPAC and project staff continue to seek out models, or components of models, that demonstrate success.
2. Time, staff availability and multiple district initiatives impeded the development and implementation of a district plan in two districts. One district will begin developing their improvement plan in the fall of 2007. The other district continues to work with CPAC in conducting activities within district that help improve parent-school relationships; discussions are being held to determine when a district improvement plan might be developed.

Looking Forward

The following activities are expected to be implemented within the coming months:

1. A district will be selected and invited to participate in the Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools project. This will bring the number of participating district to four.
2. Three district plans will be developed. The fourth district will develop a plan at the appropriate time.
3. Progress reports will be developed for the participating districts.
4. Data collection plans will be completed and implemented.



**U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)
Project Status Chart**

OMB No. 1890-0004
Exp. 10-31-2007

PR/Award # (11 characters): **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

5. Project Objective Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

OSEP Program Objective 1: Provide personnel with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of, and improve the performance and achievement of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities.

5.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Long Term Measure: The percentage of State Personnel Development Grant projects that successfully replicate the use of a scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practice on a statewide or district-wide basis.	PRGM	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			4 / 4	100		/	

5.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Long-term Measure (OSEP Indicator 1.1): The percent of personnel receiving professional development through the SPDG based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional practices.	PRGM	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

5.c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Program Performance Measure # 1 (OSEP Indicator 1.2): The percentage of SPDG projects that have implemented personnel development/training activities that are aligned with improvement strategies identified in their State Performance Plan (SPP).	PRGM	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			4 / 4	100		/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Long Term Measure: The percentage of State Personnel Development Grant projects that successfully replicate the use of a scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practice on a statewide or district-wide basis.

Target: 100% of the SPDG projects will successfully replicate the use of a scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practice on a statewide or district-wide basis.

Explanation of Progress:

Project 1: The Paraprofessional Recruitment Program

Objective 1 of the Connecticut State Professional Development Grant (SPDG) addresses pre-service teacher preparation through a program to recruit and train special education teachers. The Paraprofessional Recruitment Program is designed to allow paraprofessionals to earn teacher licensure, while also focusing on increasing diversity in the special education teaching workforce in Connecticut's urban districts.

The four urban school districts of New Haven, Hartford, Waterbury, and Bridgeport were selected by Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) for the recruitment program. Paraprofessionals currently employed in the four targeted urban districts are being recruited into the Paraprofessional Recruitment Program, one district at a time. The first year of the program began last year with the New Haven School District. The additional three LEAs will be phased in over the next three years.

Recruitment for the PACE (Paraprofessionals as Certified Educators) Committee was initiated with a broad group of stakeholders and representatives from various state and educational agencies. Commitments from approximately 50 percent of the possible participants have been received. The purpose of the committee is to plan for the sustainability and/or replication of the program. Plans are being developed for the committee to assist with a Paraprofessionals Recruitment Program replication guide to be used by school districts, institutes of higher education, and other state agencies.

Years Four and Five have been scheduled to focus on sustainability including a systems analysis and planning process to evaluate potential systemic responses to increase paraprofessional entry into the profession. Recruiting partners to be included in a systems change planning process include Connecticut Department of Higher Education, IHE training programs, community colleges, teachers and paraprofessional unions. The goal is to develop a cooperative agreement or Memorandum of Understanding between these institutions that will facilitate the movement of potential candidates into the profession, with a plan to seek sustained state funding.

Project 2: The Early Intervention Video Program

The Early Intervention Providers Professional Development project will provide professional development that will result in the use of integrated activities within the family setting, with a particular emphasis on routines-based early intervention in natural environments. This project is also designed to bring parents and providers closer together in their expectations of the Part C Birth to Three Model. It is also expected to ease the transition process between Part C and Part B, under the assumption that positive experiences with the early intervention programs will help prepare

parents to build relationships with their child's early childhood service providers.

Grant funds will be allocated for duplication and dissemination of the video and study guide/training manual, both state-wide and nationally. Further dissemination of the video will occur through presentations at national or regional events.

Project 3: Scaling-up Evidence-based Practices

Project 3 will provide the statewide, targeted professional development required to scale-up effective practices system-wide, thus providing general and special education teachers and administrators with the knowledge to improve the achievement of children with disabilities through evidence-based practices. Model districts will be paired with scaling-up districts in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in designated critical performance areas. The critical performance areas are Positive Behavioral Supports, Early Intervention Program/Response to Intervention, and Prevention/Intervention.

Project 4: Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools

Project 4 will increase parent-school collaboration in selected school districts by providing training, information, and support to parents and school staff, particularly with regard to parent involvement in the development of the IEP and ongoing involvement in the child's program. Although Project 4 was initially going to collaborate with 4 districts per year in constructing and implementing district improvement plans for parent-school collaboration, concerns about sustainability and systems change may potentially lead Project 4 to focus on more complete change in fewer districts.

Long-term Measure (OSEP Indicator 1.1): The percent of personnel receiving professional development through the SPDG based on scientific-or evidence-based instructional practices.

Target: 100% of personnel receiving professional development through SPDG will receive PD based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional practices.

Explanation of Progress:

Connecticut continues to make every effort to obtain the best available research and data available before adopting programs or policies that will affect a significant number of students. The state's previous SIG projects sought to provide professional development based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional practice and this effort is expected to continue as SPDG directors move forward on project implementation.

The SPDG program has and will continue to consult with staff, evaluators, IHEs, academic journals and state and national experts to further strengthen the project's foundation in research-based practices. An extensive search of professional development activities of scientific- or evidence-based instructional practices has begun and is expected to continue throughout the implementation of SPDG projects. The expectation and the target are both 100%.

All instruction in the Paraprofessionals Recruitment Program is evidence-based, reported the project director. The Paraprofessional Recruitment Program is aligned with the National Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards and CT state teacher standards, and addresses the “highly qualified” teacher requirements under NCLB. SCSU is state-approved and meets the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and NCATE standards. The other three projects all reported that they make every effort to use evidence-based professional development practices.

Program Performance Measure #1 (OSEP Indicator 1.2): The percentage of SPDG projects that have implemented personnel development/training activities that are aligned with improvement strategies identified in the State Performance Plan (SPP).

Target: 100% of SPDG projects will have implemented personnel development/training activities that are aligned with improvement strategies identified in the State Performance Plan (SPP).

Explanation of Progress:

The following summary identifies which SPP improvement strategies are currently aligned with SPDG project activities (Refer to Project Status Charts A1-A4 for a description of planned project specific data collection methods).

As was the case for SIG (2001-2005), the Connecticut State Performance Plan (SPP) has and will serve as the framework for the SPDG projects. SPP improvement strategies currently aligned with SPDG project activities include:

Project 1: The Paraprofessional Recruitment Program

The Paraprofessional Recruitment program is targeted towards improvements in the high need urban districts of Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, and Waterbury. Professional development and training activities will be a component of the paraprofessional program in each of these districts. In 2002-2003, these four districts were among five LEAs in the state identified as not making adequate yearly progress for whole district math and reading (State Department of Education Reports District ‘Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)’ under NCLB, January 26, 2005). In addition, the program is designed to target diversity in the recruitment of paraprofessionals, recognizing that a multi-cultural educational environment is a vital component of a quality education. SPP indicators and respective improvement strategies that are aligned with Project 1 include:

SPP Indicator 3: Participation and performance of children with disabilities on statewide assessments, measured by the percent of districts meeting the State’s AYP objectives for progress for disability subgroups.

- SPP improvement strategies for Indicator 3 that align with Project 1: (1) the provision of targeted training and support to LEAs and schools that do not make AYP, (2) support of students with disabilities on state-wide assessments, (3) professional development activities enhancing instructional programs within the schools, and (4) the coordination of NCLB and IDEA activities at the CT SDE as they relate to student achievement and districts making AYP.

SPP Indicator 9: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification.

SPP Indicator 10: Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.

- SPP improvement strategies for Indicators 9 and 10 that align with Project 1: Examination of professional development activities, curriculum, and instructional practices and early intervening services, including academic and behavioral interventions.

Project 2: The Early Intervention Video Program

The Early Intervention Providers Professional Development project will provide professional development that will result in the use of integrated activities within the family setting, with a particular emphasis on routines-based early intervention in natural environments. This project is also designed to bring parents and providers closer together in their expectations of the Part C Birth to Three Model. It is also expected to ease the transition process between Part C and Part B, under the assumption that positive experiences with the early intervention programs will help prepare parents to build relationships with their child's early childhood service providers. Part C SPP indicators and respective improvement strategies that are aligned with Project 2 include:

Part C SPP Indicator 1: Infants and toddlers receive the early intervention services on their IFSPs in a timely manner.

Part C SPP Indicator 2: Infants and toddlers primarily receive early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children.

Part C SPP Indicator 3a: Infants and toddlers demonstrate improved: Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships).

Part C SPP Indicator 3b: Infants and toddlers demonstrate improved: Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language communication).

Part C SPP Indicator 3c: Infants and toddlers demonstrate improved: Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Part C SPP Indicator 4b: Families participating in Part C report that early intervention services have helped the family effectively communicate their children's needs.

Part C SPP Indicator 4C: Families participating in Part C report that early intervention services have helped the family help their children develop and learn.

Project 3: Scaling-up Evidence-based Practices

Project 3 will provide the statewide, targeted professional development required to scale-up effective practices system-wide, thus providing general and special education teachers and administrators with the knowledge to improve the achievement of children with disabilities through evidence-based practices. Model districts will be paired with scaling-up districts in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in designated critical performance areas. The critical performance areas are Positive Behavioral Supports, Early Intervention Program/Response to Intervention, and Prevention/Intervention. SPP indicators and respective improvement strategies that are aligned with Project 3 include:

SPP Indicator 1: Percent of youth with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular diploma compared to percent of all youth in the State graduating with a regular diploma.

SPP Indicator 2: Percent of youth with IEPs dropping out of high school compared to the percent of all youth in the State dropping out of high school.

- SPP improvement strategies for Indicators 1 and 2 that align with Project 3: Identify model programs in the areas of graduation and drop-out and disseminate information to other districts.

SPP Indicator 4: Percent of districts identified by the State as having a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of children with disabilities for greater than 10 days in a school year.

- SPP improvement strategies for Indicator 4 that align with Project 3: Provide targeted training to individual districts on reducing the rates of suspension and expulsion.

Project 4: Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools

Project 4 will increase parent-school collaboration in selected school districts by providing training, information, and support to parents and school staff, particularly with regard to parent involvement in the development of the IEP and ongoing involvement in the child's program. SPP indicators and respective improvement strategies that are aligned with Project 4 include:

SPP Indicator 8: Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.

- SPP improvement strategies for Indicator 8 that align with Project 4: (1) Develop and provide training to LEAs and families regarding tools for writing measurable postsecondary goals and objectives (e.g., checklist, Summary of Progress, CT Frameworks) to improve transition services, (2) Pilot use of pre-PPT meeting checklist in two LEAs, (3) Pilot use of post-PPT meeting comment postcard in two LEAs, (4) In connection with SPDG, partner with selected LEAs to develop and implement individualized local plans to enhance collaboration between families and schools.

SPP Indicator 13: Percent of youth aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet the post-secondary goals.

- SPP improvement strategies for Indicator 13 that align with Project 4: Develop and provide training to LEAs and families regarding tools for writing measurable postsecondary goals and objectives (e.g., checklist, Summary of Performance, CT Frameworks) to improve transition services.



**U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)
Project Status Chart**

OMB No. 1890-0004
Exp. 10-31-2007

PR/Award # (11 characters): **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

6. Project Objective Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

OSEP Program Objective 2: Improve the quality of professional development available to meet the needs of personnel serving children with disabilities.

6.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
		Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
Program Performance Measure #2 (OSEP Indicator 2.1): The percentage of professional development/training activities provided through the SPDG based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practices.	PRGM		/			/	

6.b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
		Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
Program Performance Measure #3 (OSEP Indicator 2.2): The percentage of professional development/training activities based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practices, provided through the SPDG, that are sustained through on-going and comprehensive practices (e.g., mentoring, coaching, structured guidance, modeling, continuous inquiry, etc.).	PRGM		/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Program Performance Measure #2 (OSEP Indicator 2.1): The percentage of professional development/training activities provided through the SPDG based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practices.

Target: 100% of professional development/training activities provided through SPDG will be based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practices.

Explanation of Progress:

See Long-term Measure/OSEP Indicator 1.1 on Project Status Chart A-5.

Program Performance Measure #3 (OSEP Indicator 2.2): The percentage of professional development/training activities based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practices, provided through the SPDG, that are sustained through on-going and comprehensive practices (e.g., mentoring, coaching, structured guidance, modeling, continuous inquiry, etc.).

Target: 100% of professional development/training activities provided through SPDG will be sustained through on-going and comprehensive practices (e.g., mentoring, coach, structured guidance, modeling, continuous inquiry, etc.).

Explanation of Progress:

SPDG projects are likely to achieve a high degree of success in developing sustainable professional development programs due to the state's standing collaborative relationships among lead agencies, the success of the previous SIG Grant, and the state improvement planning and implementation work already initiated. In addition, the objectives and activities of the SPDG grant are coordinated with Connecticut's State Personnel Development Plan and support the state's overall comprehensive personnel development strategy.

Evaluation activities that will contribute to the goal of sustainability include: (1) a triangulation among multiple data sources that will assure validity and reliability of evaluation findings, (2) data collection, such as document analysis, participant interviews, focus groups, and site visits that will be conducted throughout each project year, and (3) on-going informal reports to the project implementers and stakeholders that will address implementation effectiveness.

Project specific examples of on-going and comprehensive practices that are expected to sustain SPDG activities include:

Project 1: The Paraprofessional Recruitment Program

Districts in the program have agreed to provide support to candidates through a locally designated mentor or support person, preferably a practicing special educator in the district, who will provide information, mentoring, and coaching to the candidate.

A Paraprofessionals as Certified Educators (PACE) Advisory Committee is being formed by the project director. The purpose of this committee is to develop plans for sustainability and/or replication of the Paraprofessional Recruitment Project.

Years Four and Five have been scheduled to focus on sustainability including a systems analysis and planning process to evaluate potential systemic responses to increase paraprofessional entry into the profession.

Recruiting partners to be included in a systems change planning process include Connecticut Department of Higher Education, IHE training programs, community colleges, teachers and paraprofessional unions. The goal is to develop a cooperative agreement or Memorandum of Understanding between these institutions that will facilitate the movement of potential candidates into the profession, with a plan to seek sustained

state funding.

Project 2: The Early Intervention Video Program

The video developed under Project 2 will demonstrate the best practices in early intervention to both providers and families. When using best practices in early intervention, families will take advantage of teachable moments that occur throughout the day. Research has shown a responsive caregiver style of interaction to have positive influences on the long-term cognitive and social/emotional development of children with or at risk of developmental disabilities.

The video will also give providers the opportunity to learn to give instructions on the "how-to of best practices in early intervention", show examples of implementation in the field, and engage in discussions. The project plans to use this form of interactive learning to help providers internalize their understanding of the best practices in early intervention and become more comfortable presenting them to others.

Grant funds will be allocated for duplication and dissemination of the video and study guide/training manual, both state-wide and nationally. Further dissemination of the video will occur through presentations at national or regional events.

Project 3: Scaling-up Evidence-based Practices

LEAs that have demonstrated effectiveness in implementing one of the priority area programs (model districts) will be replicated by pairing them with struggling LEAs, thus avoiding the "one shot" professional development activity and providing ongoing follow-up and support.

The intent is to work intensively with a relatively small number of scaling-up districts and use the successes and lessons learned to broadly share information statewide through a variety of professional development, networking, and dissemination strategies.

Model districts will receive funds to be used for planning and professional development for replication, development of the project's coaching and technical assistance model, onsite visits, coaching the selected scaling-up districts, and preparation for statewide professional development.

Planned activities by SERC, the state's designated technical assistance provider, include a newsletter and a website.

Project 4: Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools

Project 4 is building and expanding upon an established comprehensive system of support (Families as Partners Initiative) that has previously delivered training and assistance in developing strong relationships between educators and parents.



**U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)
Project Status Chart**

OMB No. 1890-0004
Exp. 10-31-2007

PR/Award # (11 characters): **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

7. Project Objective Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

OSEP Objective 3: Implement strategies that are effective in meeting the requirements described in section 612(a)(14) of IDEA to take measurable steps to recruit, hire, train and retain highly qualified personnel in areas of greatest need to provide special education and related services.

7.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
OSEP Indicator 3.1: In States with SPDG projects that have special education teacher retention as a goal, the statewide percentage of highly qualified special education teachers in State identified professional disciplines (e.g., teachers of children with emotional disturbance, deafness, etc.) who remain teaching after the first three years of employment.	PRGM	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

As the Paraprofessional Recruitment Project is focused on recruitment of paraprofessionals, only a portion of those efforts are targeted towards retention. At this time, Connecticut cannot establish a target for statewide new teacher retention as a result of its paraprofessional recruitment under the SPDG. The Paraprofessionals as Certified Educators (PACE) Committee will advise Southern Connecticut State University on this indicator. Targets for the performance measure are expected to be set in Year 3 and data collection will begin in the fall 2007.

Although OSEP Indicator 3.1 concerns the statewide percentage of highly qualified special education teacher who remain teaching after the first three years of employment, data will also be collected to determine what percentage of Paraprofessional Recruitment Program students intend to teach in special education upon certification and what percentage of Paraprofessional Recruitment Program students remain teaching after the first three years of employment. Data sources will include a Paraprofessional Program database, state and LEA data, Praxis I and II results, Connecticut Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) portfolio results, provisional and professional certification rates, a principal survey, and a survey of current and former students of the Paraprofessional Recruitment Program.

Features of the Paraprofessional Project that support evidence of progress in the area of highly qualified special education teacher retention include:

The new Paraprofessional Recruitment Program is aligned with the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards, CT

state teacher standards, and addresses the “highly qualified” teacher requirements under NCLB.

Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) is state-approved and meets Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and NCATE standards.

Criteria for eligibility for paraprofessionals in the program will include a minimum of three years of experience as an instructional paraprofessional in the district. Such a commitment demonstrates a readiness and/or willingness to remain in the district as a special education teacher.

Paraprofessionals are recruited directly from the district community with the intention of increasing diversity in the special education teaching workforce in Connecticut’s urban districts. In 2002, the President’s Commission on Excellence in Special Education, recommended that recruitment and retention efforts would benefit from a focus on reaching out to our nation's most talented individuals who represent the diversity of children in the classroom.

Districts in the project must commit to preferential hiring of paraprofessionals who successfully complete the program and earn licensure as special education teachers.

Districts must provide support to candidates during the program through a locally designated mentor or support person, preferably a practicing special educator in the district, who provides information, mentoring, coaching and support. The opportunity to foster new relation-ships and to build a support system within the district will likely increase teacher retention.



U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)
Project Status Chart

OMB No. 1890 - 0004
Expiration: 10-31-2007

PR/Award #:
H323A050003

SECTION B - Budget Information *(See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)*

A. Actual Expenditures for Reporting Period (May 6, 2006 – May 1, 2007)

committed \$ 981,901

B. Provide explanation if you are NOT expending funds at the expected rate.

Some activities have been delayed due to:

- Need to ensure integration of SPDG goals and objectives with other on-going state initiatives to avoid a fragmentation of efforts and inefficient use of resources
- Project activities have been modified to provide more sustainable, effective and achievable systems change outcomes
- Other agencies' requirements in processing contracts and grant funding
- Difficulty in obtaining district-level commitment to implement project activities

C. Describe any changes to your budget that affected your ability to achieve your approved project activities and/or project objectives.

- None

D. Describe any significant changes to your budget resulting from modifications of project activities.

- None

E. Do you expect to have any unexpended funds at the end of the current budget period? (Explain why, provide an estimate, and indicate how you plan to use the unexpended funds (carryover) in the next budget period.)

- Yes ~ \$ 500,000
- While long term objectives have remained the same, some project activities have been adjusted in response to stakeholders' needs. This has required much coordination among the projects, the Department, and other stakeholders involved which has consumed more time than anticipated, thus further delaying project activities. Also, as districts' responsibilities increase and a myriad of initiatives are requesting district support, there has been some difficulty for those districts to commit time and resources despite their eagerness to support SPDG activities.
- Carryover funds will be absorbed thru grant activities.

F. Describe any anticipated changes in your budget for the next budget period that require prior approval from the Department.

- None



U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)
Project Status Chart

OMB No. 1890 - 0004
Expiration: 10-31-2007

PR/Award #:
H323A050003

SECTION C - Additional Information *(See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)*

Current Partners

Current partners have remained the same since the last budget period. There are no anticipated changes for the next budget period.

1. Paraprofessional Recruitment Program
Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU), New Haven, CT
Dr. Pamela Brucker
2. Early Intervention Video and Training Manual
Department of Mental Retardation, Birth to 3 System, Hartford, CT
Debra Resnick
3. Scaling Up Evidence Based Practices
State Education Resource Center (SERC), Middletown, CT
Marianne Kirner
4. Enhancing Collaborative Relationships Between Parents and Schools
Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), Niantic, CT
Nancy Prescott

There are no anticipated changes to grant activities for the next budget period. However, activities within individual projects may be adjusted according to the needs of stakeholders as each project moves forward. Use of data collection and evaluation instruments will assist in making informed decisions regarding any adjustments to project activities, as well as input from involved stakeholders.

Some CSDE personnel changes have occurred since the last reporting period and are anticipated to change for the next budget period. Currently, Nancy Cappello is the Interim Chief for the Bureau of Special Education, which is the agency that oversees this grant. At this time, it is unknown what future personnel changes will be made. CSDE will inform the OSEP Project Officer once personnel changes have occurred.