

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Overview:

This document contains the recommendations of the Special Needs Task Force to the state plan. These recommendations refer to “special needs” students, and the Task Force has used that term broadly to include special needs areas such as:

- Aging
- ADHD
- Autism
- Developmental Disability
- Head Injury
- Mental Illness
- Mental Retardation
- Physical Disability (such as vision or hearing loss)

There are several major themes that have been continually discussed throughout the meetings relating to the recommendations. First, there is consensus that the Special Needs Task Force continue to exist. The group is active and responsive and dedicated to advocating for students with special needs in ABLÉ. The Task Force has been integral to the development of the ABLÉ core trainings on learning disabilities. Recently, Task Force members have volunteered to function as mentors or coaches to those who may request assistance in working with adults with special needs.

The second important issue that runs through all of the recommendations discussed is the need to focus on systemic change at the program level. Changes will only endure if program administrators are guiding their staff and students with a clear vision and plan for serving students with special needs. The changes and adaptations that are made in ABLÉ programs and classrooms to better serve adults with special learning needs will benefit all students in ABLÉ programs and can result in increased student progress and retention.

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Task Force Name: Special Needs Task Force

Task Force Members (Names, titles and agencies):

<p>**Jim Austin OSU Evaluation Project</p> <p>Bill Baker Rehabilitation Program Specialist Workforce Development Unit, WA-2 Ohio Rehab Services Commission</p> <p>Jenny Davis Education Coordinator Miami Valley Literacy Council</p> <p>Mary Grace DeStefanis Instructor Cleveland Municipal Schools Dist.</p> <p>Jeff Fantine Director C/SE ABLEResource Center</p> <p>Karen Hibbert Education Coordinator West Central Community Correctional Facility</p> <p>Jane Hines Director Adult Workforce Development</p> <p>Fran Holthaus Director Upper Valley JVS – ABLER</p> <p>Robbie James Resource Specialist Central/Southeast ABLEResource Ctr</p> <p>Karen Keller ODMRDD</p> <p>**Kathy Knall Researcher/Trainer Southwest Resource Center Sinclair Community College</p>	<p>Lynn Jacobs ABLE Director Coshocton County Job & Family Services</p> <p>**Connie Leading GED Testing Accommodations Manager State GED Office</p> <p>Dayna Moebius Instructor Columbus Literacy Council</p> <p>Diane Morawski Director Medina County Literacy Council</p> <p>Nancy Moshtaghi Instructor Pickaway County ESC ABLER</p> <p>Sharon Reynolds Curriculum and Training Specialist Central/Southeast ABLEResource Ctr</p> <p>Karen Scheid ODE - ABLER</p> <p>Katrina Seymour ABLE Coordinator Pickaway Co ESC ABLER</p> <p>Robbie Thomas - Director Or Alexa Noel – School/Community Coordinator Cincinnati City Schools - ABLER</p> <p>Laura Weisel PowerPath</p> <p>Connie Zang Instructor Licking County JVS - ABLER</p>
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Number of Meetings: 4

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Agenda or Objectives/Expected Outcomes (for each meeting):

Meeting #1: May 19, 2005:

Agenda/Outcomes

1. Discuss goals and outcomes
2. Discuss plan and format for strategy development
3. Brainstorm the *Vision* (large group)
 - a. Guiding questions
 - i. How do we want ABLE 's service to students with special needs evolve over the next five years?
 - ii. What do we want local programs to "look like" with respect to serving adults with special learning needs?
4. Describe how we can achieve the *Vision (the Plan)*
 - i. What support is needed at the state level to get where we want to go?
 - ii. What PD will be needed and in what format?
 - iii. How can other agencies and programs assist us to achieve our goals?
 - iv. What additional resources/materials do programs need?
 - v. What are the reasons for the barriers?
5. Where should we go next? (*Recommendations*)
 - i. What programs, projects and initiatives should be continued or begun to move toward our vision?
 - ii. What are the most critical next steps?
6. Solutions
7. Divide research topics - basic research due by July meeting

Meeting #2: July 13, 2005

1. Review minutes from May meeting
2. Review State Recommendations template
3. Share research findings
4. Drafting recommendations - Small group work
5. Small groups report out
6. Prioritize recommendations - large group

Meeting #3: September 7, 2005

Conference call

1. Categorizing, refining and prioritizing recommendations

Meeting #4: October 3, 2005

1. Specific feedback on recommendations 2, 3, 6.

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Description of the Work (Summarize the entire task force process.):

The Special Needs Task Force was already a functioning task force with a core group of active members. Several new members were added to the Task Force to participate in the process of drafting recommendations for the Ohio State Plan. These members are indicated in the member list with asterisks. Denise Pottmeyer attended the first meeting (May 19, 2005) we held during this process. She discussed the purpose of the committees, gave suggestions for a timeline and format for drafting recommendations.

The facilitators presented the process that this committee would follow. We began with a large-group brainstorming session to address the questions,

- a. How do we want ABLE 's service to students with special needs evolve over the next five years?
- b. What do we want local programs to “look like” with respect to serving adults with special learning needs?

We were able to group the issues into categories and then had small groups work though addressing each individual category (those notes are attached). After coming back together as a large group, various members of the group volunteered to team up and research the different topics that were raised.

We met again on July 13, 2005. After reviewing the minutes from the previous meeting, the facilitator presented the template that the state has requested we use for our recommendations. Members shared their research findings and then we went into small groups to draft recommendations (using the template as a guide) based on the research and previous discussion. Minutes were distributed via email and are attached.

The next meeting was a conference call. We looked at the drafted recommendations (14) and grouped/categorized them as best we could. We discussed prioritization and then decided that one person should draft final statements and send them out to the task force for comment. That was done and the minutes are attached.

On October 3, we met for an hour during lunch at the OLN meeting. I shared the draft of the full template and asked for revisions and comments – specifically on recommendations 2,3 and 6. I will make revisions and send out to group one final time.

* Add to/adjust the template as needed to record the task force's process.

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

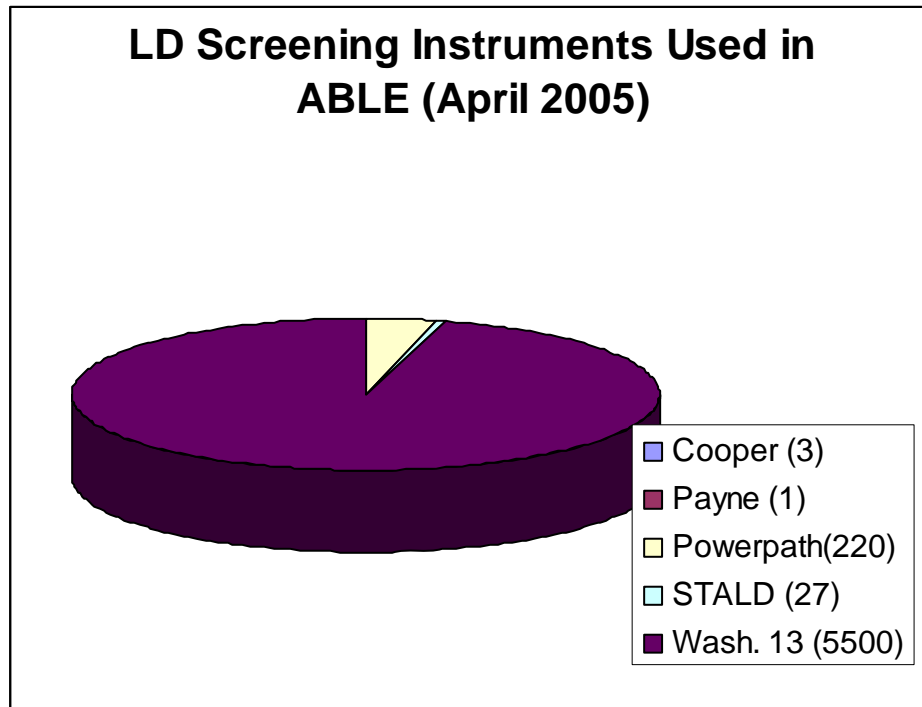
Task Force Name: Special Needs Task Force	Task Force Contact: Sharon Reynolds
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RECOMMENDATION #1:

Assessment/Evaluation: Improve and increase the proficient use of effective screening and assessment instruments in ABE programs.

Supporting Data:

All programs in Ohio ABE are required to offer a screening for learning disability. There are six tests recommended. As of April 30, 2005, ABE programs in Ohio have offered **5098** screenings for Learning Disabilities (of which 290 were refused). The vast majority of programs are offering the Washington - 13. (*Data from ABLElink*). The Washington-13 is not recommended as a stand-alone screening to then refer adult students on for diagnostic testing by a psychologist. It was not normed on the ABE population and will most likely over-indicate. There were **750** (more than the total of all other screenings combined) screening results indicating LD. Most of those must have been from the Washington-13.



We are beginning to recommend that program start to use a secondary screening (such as PowerPath or CSIP) before referring a student for diagnostic services.

What this data does not show is the number of students with vision problems who are not being offered a screening (Out of approximately 56,000 potential ABE students, only 152 vision screenings were offered) or who are choosing not to be screened (24 vision screenings were refused). This is true for hearing as well. Only 146 hearing screenings were offered and 17 were refused.

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Projected Outcomes:

Programs will choose more intensive screenings for learning disabilities or use a secondary screening if they use the Washington-13. Programs will use the information gained from the LD screenings to guide their planning and instruction.

Programs will implement a plan for offering vision and hearing screenings.

Implementation Strategies and Timeline:

- a. Investigate the use of different and more effective assessment instruments which may highlight LD issues
- b. Increased support for levels 1 and 2 learners and programs that serve them
- c. Create PD or amend current training to reflect the connection between assessment and instruction
- d. Offering professional development on LD screening to instructors – with a focus on the practical applications – giving people an opportunity to practice the screenings
- e. Develop the coaching aspect of PowerPath to assist in re-certification of program staff
- f. Increase the capacity of ABLE staff to record/collect/enter data in to ABLElink
- g. Increase awareness of the importance of reporting data
- h. The issues of assessment in ESOL should continue to be investigated and researched

Potential Funding:

Additional Information:

Priority:

High

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Task Force Name: Special Needs Task Force	Task Force Contact: Sharon Reynolds
RECOMMENDATION #2: <u>Awareness/Advocacy:</u> Assist programs to increase community awareness of the ability of ABLE programs to work with adults with disabilities	
Supporting Data:	
Projected Outcomes: Increased community awareness of ABLE programs will result in more students being served by ABLE.	
Implementation Strategies and Timeline: <ol style="list-style-type: none">Be sensitive to cultural issues (including rural/urban, poverty, Appalachian, ESOL) when planning a marketing campaignIncrease student involvement in planning and advocacyIncrease ABLE awarenessIncrease the use of the OLN to promote ABLE locallyCommunicate with employers and post-secondary education about the qualifications of ABLE studentsDevelop state-supported marketing programsDevelop corporate sponsorsDevelop PD around marketing – capitalize on the success of ABLE studentsDevelop partnerships with special needs providers – model after LD-TANF partnershipsUtilize literacy coalitions to build relationships with employers	
Potential Funding:	
Additional Information:	
Priority: High	

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Task Force Name: Special Needs Task Force	Task Force Contact: Sharon Reynolds
RECOMMENDATION #3: <u>Best Practices/ Instruction:</u> Promote effective instruction and integration of statewide initiatives through increased communication across programs and initiatives	
Supporting Data: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practices for working with special needs students work for all students	
Projected Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comprehensive effective services for students• Student progress	
Implementation Strategies and Timeline: <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Help program staff implement research-based practices at all levels - especially for those students at levels 1 and 2 (special needs)b. Identify areas for further research to assist instruction and level progress for intermediate studentsc. Create PD or amend current training to reflect the connection between assessment and instruction	
Potential Funding:	
Additional Information:	
Priority: High	

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

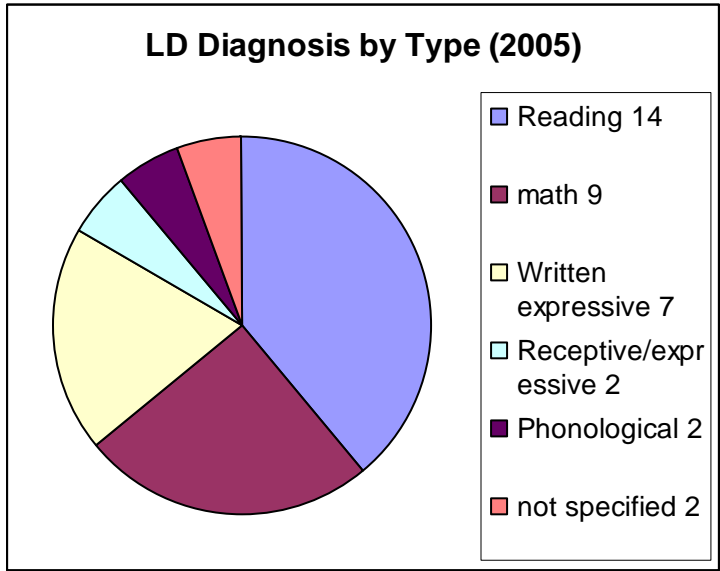
Task Force Name:	Task Force Contact:
Special Needs Task Force	Sharon Reynolds

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Technology: Provide access to assistive technology for all students who need it and integrate technology into ABE services and instruction

Supporting Data:

Out of 5098 screenings given for learning disabilities, 53 referrals for diagnostic services were made, with a resulting 36 actual diagnosis given (*data from ABLElink, April 30, 2005*). These students are now entitled to accommodations in the classroom. These will include assistive technology. There are certainly many other students (between 50-80% of students in ABE programs may have some type of learning disability) who choose not to be diagnosed – but can more work more effectively through the use of assistive technology.



In addition to the need for assistive technology for ABE students with learning disabilities, there are ABE students with vision or hearing function problems who can greatly benefit from assistive technology. Eight students were diagnosed with hearing problems as a result of hearing screening and 3 received hearing aids. Sixteen adults in ABE programs in Ohio were diagnosed with vision problems as a result of screening.

What this data does not show is the number of students with vision problems who are not being offered a screening (Out of approximately 56,000 potential ABE students, only 152 vision screenings were offered) or who are choosing not to be screened (24 vision screenings were refused). This is true for hearing as well. Only 146 hearing screenings were offered and 17 were refused.

These students are struggling along with potentially undiagnosed hearing or vision problems. In addition to increasing the number of screenings offered, assistive technology can help these students make progress.

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Projected Outcomes:

Access to assistive technology will support student progress and retention.

Implementation Strategies and Timeline:

Potential Funding:

Funding could be obtained by developing relationships with:

1. Corporate sponsors with an interest in disabilities (Kinkos, Schwab, Pfizer)
2. SERCC Centers
3. Community and civic organizations
4. Universities and Community Colleges
5. Advocacy organizations
6. NGOs or other non-profit agencies related to special needs

Additional Information:

Priority:

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Task Force Name: Special Needs Task Force	Task Force Contact: Sharon Reynolds
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RECOMMENDATION #5:
Instructional Support: Help program staff implement research-based practices at all levels

Supporting Data:

Between 21 and 23 percent of the adult population, or approximately 44 million people, according to the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), scored in Level 1 (see description above). Another 25-28 percent of the adult population, or between 45 and 50 million people, scored in Level 2. Literacy experts believe that adults with skills at Levels 1 and 2 lack a sufficient foundation of basic skills to function successfully in our society.

Many factors help to explain the relatively large number of adults in Level 1. Twenty-five percent of adults in Level 1 were immigrants who may have just been learning to speak English. More than 60 percent didn't complete high school. More than 30 percent were over 65. More than 25 percent had physical or mental conditions that kept them from fully participating in work, school, housework, or other activities, and almost 20 percent had vision problems that affected their ability to read print (from <http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/faqs.html#literacy%20rates>)

Adult Literacy Estimates

State: Ohio	Area Name: Ohio	
Area Type: State (Overall)	Region: Midwest	Population Age 16+: 8,349,183
Mean Literacy Proficiency: 275	Percent at Level 1: 18	Percent at Level 1 or 2: 45

Census Predictors

(Based on 1990 U.S. Census Data)

Education	%	Race/Ethnicity *	%
Education less than 9th grade:	7	White:	88
Education between 9th and 12th grades:	17	Black:	11
High school diploma or equivalent:	36	Native American:	0

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Received some college - no degree:	19	Asian / Pacific Islander:	0
Received Associates Degree:	5	Other race:	1
Received Bachelors Degree:	10		
Attended graduate school:	5	Recent Immigrant	%
		Recent Immigrants:	0
English Proficiency	%	Weeks Worked	%
Speak English very well:	98	Between 39 and 52 weeks:	52
Speak English well:	1	Between 26 and 39 weeks:	5
Speak English not well or not at all:	1	Between 13 and 26 weeks:	6
		Between 1 and 13 weeks:	6
Labor Force Status	%	Did not work:	31
Employed:	59		
Unemployed:	4		
Not in the labor force:	37	Work Disability	%
		% With work disability:	13
Occupation	%		
Professional, technical, managerial:	28		
Sales, administrative assistant:	27		
Service:	25		
Laborer:	20		

* Hispanic origin, a different Census variable, was not used as a predictor because its impact on literacy was captured by English proficiency and immigration variables.

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Projected Outcomes:

After being sufficiently trained on using research-based instructional practices, teachers will see increased progress with all students.

Implementation Strategies and Timeline:

1. Identify areas for further research to assist instruction and level progress for intermediate students
2. Increased communication of best practices across programs and initiatives to promote effective instruction and integration of statewide initiatives

Potential Funding:

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Additional Information:

Priority:

For FY 2004 only 54 % of the students completed level 1 and 61% completed level 2. Only 54% completed level 3 and 52% completed level 4. Contrast this with 67% completing level 5 and 76 % completing level 6 (*from Ohio ABLE 2004 annual report*). With the average length of stay of an ABLE student being 50 hours, implementing research-based practices is critical in order to get the most use of the short time we have with our average student.

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Task Force Name: Special Needs Task Force	Task Force Contact: Sharon Reynolds
RECOMMENDATION #6: Continue to offer services to those special needs students who can benefit from ABLE services (who can set a goal, make progress towards that goal).	
Supporting Data: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Many of those most in need of literacy services are the hardest-to-serve and may have learning disabilities or physical, emotional, or mental impairments.	
Projected Outcomes: All students who are able to set a goal, make progress towards that goals and who are not a disruption to the classroom can benefit from ABLE services. ABL teachers are adequately trained to serve low level students with potential developmental disabilities.	
Implementation Strategies and Timeline: <ol style="list-style-type: none">ODE should make a clear statement as to who ABL can and should serveEnsure that ABL teachers have adequate opportunities for training to gain the skills they will need to feel competent teaching ABL students with developmental disabilitiesDevelop collaboration with County Boards of MR/DD modeled after the LD/TANF agreementAssist local programs to develop collaborations with community agencies that also offer services to adults with developmental disabilities.Discuss funding alternatives with ABL directors	
Potential Funding: <ol style="list-style-type: none">County Boards of MR/DDBusinesses that employ adults with developmental disabilitiesOffer ABL classes in workshops or worksites	
Additional Information:	
Priority:	

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Special Needs Task Force

Minutes

May 19, 2005

1. MR

- a. **What support is needed at the state level to get where we want to go?**
 - i. Recognition by state and Feds as valued population
 - ii. Clear accepted definition;
 - iii. Decision Policy
 - iv. Policy – clearly defined & enforced
- b. **What additional resources/materials do programs need?**
 - i. Teaching Strategies
- c. **What PD will be needed and in what format?**
- d. **How can other agencies and programs assist us to achieve our goal?**
 - i. Other states research - survey for MR services
 - ii. Resources/services/training - Local MRDD Boards, State MRDD
 - iii. Figure how, when, where psych info available
- e. **What are the barriers to achieving our vision?**
 - i. Reasonable means to track gains
 - ii. Staff needs to know what to expect “reasonable expectations”
 - iii. No statewide education/ABLE policy
 - iv. Not understanding MR/DD
 - v. Parents or individual “protected” from diagnosis
- f. **Reasons for the barriers?**

2. AD/HD

- a. **What support is needed at the state level to get where we want to go?**
 - i. Funding
 - ii. Diagnosis
 - iii. Training
 - iv. Curriculum Development
- b. **What additional resources/materials do programs need?**
 - i. Technology
 - ii. Current info
 - iii. Specialists (access to)
 - iv. Connection to K-12
- c. **What PD will be needed and in what format?**
 - o Training
 - i. How it affects Adults
 - ii. More teaching strategies
 - iii. Sugar Allergies
 - iv. Prof. Development/Format?
 - Strategies – in-service, website, mentoring, publication (clients and family)
 - One treatment does not fit all!

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- Multiple disciplines involve in presentation of treatment/strategies
- Curriculum Development
- d. How can other agencies and programs assist us to achieve our goal?**
- e. What are the barriers to achieving our vision?**
 - i. Misunderstanding of the condition
 - ii. more understanding
 - iii. increase knowledge of diagnosis
- g. Reasons for the barriers**
 - i. Misinformation
 - ii. “guilt”
 - iii. If I understand it - it might “be me”
 - iv. Not major need Hands on “Activities” for teaching manipulatives

3. Hearing Impairment

- a. What support is needed at the state level to get where we want to go?**
 - i. options for those who want to learn ASL
 - a.** Build relationships with other agencies who serve deaf adults
 - ii. funding for interpreters and other accommodations
 - iii. Professional Development
 - a.** Deaf Culture
 - b.** Blind Culture
- b. What additional resources/materials do programs need?**
 - i. materials and software
 - ii. teaching materials
 - iii. legal advice for programs
 - iv. diagnosis directory etc...
- c. What PD will be needed and in what format?**
 - i. Professional Development
 - a.** Deaf Culture
 - b.** Blind Culture
 - c.** ASL
 - ii. instructional model in place; when student walks in door-
 - iii. teaching strategies
 - iv. materials and software
 - v. teaching materials
 - vi. legal advice for programs
 - vii. Auditory Development Training
- d. What are the barriers to achieving our vision?**
 - i. Lack of understanding of ADA related to deaf services
 - ii. Lack of Funding for interpreters
 - iii. Lack of relationship with other agencies who serve deaf adults
 - iv. Misunderstanding of the condition
- e. Reasons for the barriers?**

4. Vision Impairment

- a. What support is needed at the state level to get where we want to go?**
 - i. Curriculum
 - ii. Texts and texts on tape
 - iii. Software
 - iv. Books on tape

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

- v. research on problems/effect on learning
- vi. Professional Development
- vii. Hands on materials
- viii. Access to 1 on 1 training
- b. What additional resources/materials do programs need?**
 - i. Community
 - ii. Assistive Technology
- c. What PD will be needed and in what format?**
 - i. PD –
 - ii. with students as presenters
 - iii. How to use resources
 - iv. Curriculum
 - 1. Texts and texts on tape
 - 2. Software
 - 3. Books on tape
- d. How can other agencies and programs assist us to achieve our goal?**
 - i. Local non-profit and civic groups
- e. What are the barriers to achieving our vision?**
 - i. Diagnosis
 - ii. Cost
 - iii. Find the problem, then what?
- f. Reasons for the barriers?**

5. Learning Disabilities

- a. What support is needed at the state level to get where we want to go?**
 - i. Reconsider use or Eliminate Washington 13 find better quick instrument
 - ii. Mentoring programs (good programs mentor struggling programs)
 - iii. Support National and local advocacy by students and teachers
 - iv. Special Research project
 - v. Traveling LD consultant
 - vi. Teaching experience models
 - vii. Continuing education for staff with \$ and make distance available;
 - viii. Translate assessment into curriculum
- b. What additional resources/materials do programs need?**
- c. What PD will be needed and in what format?**
 - i. LD – more practical teaching strategies
 - ii. More training on software teaching programs
 - iii. Teaching experience models
 - iv. Translate assessment into curriculum
 - v. Mentoring programs (good programs mentor struggling programs)
 - vi. Continuing education for staff with \$ and make distance available;
 - vii. “300” series training
- d. How can other agencies and programs assist us to achieve our goal?**
- e. What are the barriers to achieving our vision?**
 - i. Diagnosis
 - ii. Labeling
 - iii. Diagnosed later in life
- f. Reasons for the barriers?**

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Special Needs Task Force

Minutes

July 13, 2005

1. LD Brochure:

C/SE is developing a multi-page brochure (combining and updating 2 brochures created by OLN) to use in discussing learning difficulties/disabilities with ABLE students. Feedback has been gathered from the Task Force and format has been changed to be similar to the ABLE annual report. Suggestions were made to print it on colored paper, perhaps yellow, use bigger font size, reduce number of words, emphasize important words, use bullets, and to list some accommodations.

2. LD Plan Rubric:

Some confusion occurred over the use and purpose of the Rubric developed by C/SE. It was suggested that the format be changed to a checklist instead of a rubric. There is no current consensus at ODE as to how or if the LD Plans will be evaluated. The general feeling was that this would have been helpful for programs to have prior to completing their LD Plans.

3. Review of Minutes from May Meeting

- In reviewing the minutes, the question was raised as to how to get "Bobby approval," on our website.
- The minutes didn't reflect the importance of connecting assessment and instruction. The connection between the STAR program and how it uses assessment to guide instruction was discussed.
- People shared how their programs integrate assessment and instruction as well as how they use adaptations and accommodations in the classroom.
- It was said that training is needed on how to develop an ILP and involve students in the planning.
- Sample ILPs are needed

Next Steps:

- Develop online panel of experts (from the Task Force)
- Develop Technical Assistance team – or coaching team – from Task Force members – who are willing to do site visits and mentor programs upon request.
- Need to offer training in MSSL programs (such as Wilson, Stevenson, etc.)
- Develop videos showing MSSL programs and other best practices at work in the ABLE classroom
- More integration between Resource Centers

4. Research

Vision/Hearing Impairment

- Most states don't have policy on serving adult students with v.i/h.i.
- Suggestion was made to upgrade or centralize a volunteer registry which could help identify people who have special skills (ASL) or experience working with special needs students
- Need to develop online database of services for v.i/h.i
- PAVE was suggested as a source for research on vision therapy

Tracking Progress

- Connecticut and Wisconsin gave info on how they tracked progress at lower levels – Use TOPSPro in CASAS
- North Carolina serves MRDD students. ABLE is run thru the community colleges there. *Denise can send out a msg to other states asking them how they serve this population if at all.*

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- The DD Council has grant money to support enforcement of the ADA – Karen will check into inviting a rep to our next meeting.

AD/HD

- CHADD website
- Dale Jordan's book

MSSL

- Kathy presented a summary of the different MSSL programs. (attached)
- Tom Diebold is doing a session on the different MSSL programs on March 10 at SWABLE.

Advocacy

- Ohio has no functional state LDA chapter – it has been suggested that the Task Force members start a chapter in Ohio. Use VALUE and involve adult students
- Need PD on how to build and use an Advisory Board – would be a good session for the Directors meeting.

5. Small Groups

Worked in small groups using the template to discuss our recommendations for the state plan.

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

Special Needs Task Force

Conference Call Minutes

September 7, 2005

1:00 – 3:00pm

Attending: Diane Morawski, MaryGrace Destephanis, Jaff Fantine, Sharon Reynolds, Karen Scheid, Kathy Knall, Katrina Seymour, Nancy Moshtagi, Fran Holthaus, Laura Weisel, Robbie James, Connie Zang, Jenny Davis

Recommendations from last meeting (July 13, 2005) were grouped into 5 categories

1. More effective assessment which may highlight LD issues
2. Helping Program Staff implementation of research-based practices (special needs)
3. Assistive Technology/Integrating technology into service
4. Awareness and advocacy
5. Identify areas for further research to assist instruction and level progress for intermediate students
6. Create different progress markers for students who have completed 1 or 2 levels but then plateau
7. Access to assistive technology for all students
8. Increased communication of best practices across programs and initiatives to promote effective instruction and integration of statewide initiatives
9. Increased support for levels 1 and 2 learners and programs that serve them
10. Create PD or amend current training to reflect the connection between assessment and instruction
11. Develop volunteer/mentor network or recruitment program
12. Increase ABLE awareness
13. Develop special needs resource materials/information
14. Continue to serve the hardest-to-serve and provide support for programs to do that

Categories:

1. Assessment/Evaluation

- a. More effective assessment which may highlight LD issues
- b. Create different progress markers for students who have completed 1 or 2 levels but then plateau
- c. Increased support for levels 1 and 2 learners and programs that serve them
- d. Create PD or amend current training to reflect the connection between assessment and instruction

2. Awareness/Advocacy

- a. Awareness and advocacy
- b. Increase ABLE awareness

3. Best Practices/ Instruction

- a. Helping Program Staff implementation of research-based practices (special needs)
- b. Identify areas for further research to assist instruction and level progress for intermediate students

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

- c. Increased communication of best practices across programs and initiatives to promote effective instruction and integration of statewide initiatives
- d. Create PD or amend current training to reflect the connection between assessment and instruction

4. Support/Assistive Technology

a. Technology

- i. Assistive Technology/Integrating technology into service
- ii. Access to assistive technology for all students

b. Instructional Support

- i. Helping Program Staff implementation of research-based practices (special needs)
- ii. Identify areas for further research to assist instruction and level progress for intermediate students
- iii. Increased communication of best practices across programs and initiatives to promote effective instruction and integration of statewide initiatives
- iv. Increased support for levels 1 and 2 learners and programs that serve them
- v. Create PD or amend current training to reflect the connection between assessment and instruction

c. Resources/Materials

- i. Develop volunteer/mentor network or recruitment program

5. Challenging Issues

- a. Language and Culture
- b. Physical Disabilities
- c. Developmental Disabilities (one of which is MR)

Task Force recommended that Sharon drafts statements (SEE PAGE 4) based on grouping and sends to task force for revision/edit/comment to be returned to Sharon by **September 16**.

- Systemic change is the overarching goal and ultimately the outcome of all of the recommendations ideas the task force has developed.
- Discussion on serving adults with mental retardation.
 - ❖ Level completion is difficult for many students with MR
 - ❖ Difficult to show progress
 - ❖ Many plateau and stay at one level
 - ❖ Levels 1 and 2 should be split – but that has to be done at the federal level
 - ❖ We cannot exclude anyone – may be legal ramifications (Laura will investigate this issue)
 - ❖ As long as students can set a goals and benefit from ABLE services then we should serve them
 - ❖ There are options as to “count” these students – (i.e. use another funding source and do not enter them into ABLElink)
 - ❖ The question was raised that ABLE programs may be able to get reimbursed for providing tutoring services from MRDD county resources ..Diane will investigate.

Next meeting set for **October 3** at the OLN Meeting at the University Plaza Hotel in Columbus. It will only be a lunch meeting around 12. (more info to come). We will review the recommendations one final time before submission to ODE.

Items for next full meeting scheduled for Tuesday, November 1, in Columbus

- a. Further discussion of development of "special needs assistance team."
- b. Ask for volunteers to join "Best Practices Subcommittee" to work on development of MSSL videos (classroom examples) and attend MSSL training and offer MSSL training (with SWRC?) for the state?
- c. Plan next meeting... Do any members want/need to rotate off Task Force?

Draft Recommendation Statements (in BOLD)

2. **Assessment/Evaluation: Improve and increase the proficient use of effective screening and assessment instruments in ABLÉ programs**
 - i. Investigate the use of different and more effective assessment instruments which may highlight LD issues
 - j. Increased support for levels 1 and 2 learners and programs that serve them
 - k. Create PD or amend current training to reflect the connection between assessment and instruction
3. **Awareness/Advocacy: Assist programs to increase awareness of ABLÉ in local communities**
 - k. Increase student involvement in planning and advocacy
 - l. Increase ABLÉ awareness
4. **Best Practices/ Instruction: Promote effective instruction and integration of statewide initiatives through increased communication across programs and initiatives**
 - a. Help program staff implement research-based practices at all levels - especially for those students at levels 1 and 2 (special needs)
 - b. Identify areas for further research to assist instruction and level progress for intermediate students
 - c. Create PD or amend current training to reflect the connection between assessment and instruction
5. **Support/Assistive Technology**
 - a. **Technology: Provide access to assistive technology for all students who need it and integrate technology into ABLÉ services and instruction**
 - b. **Instructional Support: Help program staff implement research-based practices at all levels - especially for those students at levels 1 and 2 (special needs)**
 - i. Identify areas for further research to assist instruction and level progress for intermediate students

Special Needs Task Force Recommendations

- ii. Increased communication of best practices across programs and initiatives to promote effective instruction and integration of statewide initiatives

- d. **Resources/Materials**

- i. Develop volunteer/mentor network or recruitment program

6. Challenging Issues

- a. Language and Culture
- b. **Physical Disabilities:**
- c. **Developmental Disabilities (one of which is MR):** Continue to offer services to those students who can benefit from ABLÉ services (who can set a goal, make progress towards that goal).