

U.S. Department of Education

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OSEP FY '06 GRANT PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR CONTINUATION FUNDING
CFDA # 84.323A
PR/Award # H323A050003
Budget Period # 1
Report Type: Annual Performance

OMB No. 1890-0004, Expiration Date: 07/31/2007

****Table of Contents****

Forms

1. Grant Performance Report Cover Sheet (ED 524B) - 2005	e1
Executive Summary E Grants	e3
2. Grant Performance Report (ED 524B) Project Status Chart - Section A - 1	e5
3. Grant Performance Report (ED 524B) Project Status Chart - Section A - 2	e12
4. Grant Performance Report (ED 524B) Project Status Chart - Section A - 3	e18
5. Grant Performance Report (ED 524B) Project Status Chart - Section A - 5	e24
6. Grant Performance Report (ED 524B) Project Status Chart - Section A - 6	e30
7. Grant Performance Report (ED 524B) Project Status Chart - Section A - 7	e34
8. Grant Performance Report (ED 524B) Project Status Chart - Section A - 4	e36
9. Grant Performance Report (ED 524B) Project Status Chart - Section B & C	e42
Attachment - 1	e43
Attachment - 2	e45

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**U.S. Department of Education
Grant Performance Report Cover Sheet (ED 524B)**

Check only one box per Program Office instructions.

Annual Performance Report **Final Performance Report**

General Information

1. PR/Award #: **H323A050003**
(Block 5 of the Grant Award Notification.)

2. NCES ID #: 09
(See Instructions.)

3. Project Title: State Program Improvement Grants
(Enter the same title as on the approved application.)

4. Grantee Name*(Block 1 of the Grant Award Notification.):* CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

5. Grantee Address *(See Instructions.):* 165 Capitol Avenue PO Box 2219

City: Hartford State: CT Zip:06145 Zip+4:

6. Project Director:	First Name	Last Name	Title
	Dana	Colon	Project Director
	Ph. #:	Fax #:	Email Address:
	8607136944	8607137051	DANA.COLON@CT.GOV

Reporting Period Information *(See instructions.)*

7. Reporting Period: From: 10/1/2005 To: 5/6/2006 (mm/dd/yyyy)

Budget Expenditures *(To be completed by your Business Office. See instructions. Also see Section B.)*

8. Budget Expenditures

	Federal Grant Funds	Non-Federal Funds (Match/Cost Share)
a. Previous Budget Period	0.00	0.00
b. Current Reporting Period	414,433.00	0.00
c. Entire Project Period <i>(For Final Performance Reports only)</i>	0.00	0.00

Indirect Cost Information *(To be completed by your Business Office. See instructions.)*

9. Indirect Costs

- a. Are you claiming indirect costs under this grant? Yes
 No
- b. If yes, do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? Yes
 No
- c. If yes, provide the following information:
 Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: 7/1/2005 To: 6/30/2006 (mm/dd/yyyy)
 Approving Federal agency: ED Other (Please Specify)
 Type of Rate (For Final Performance Reports Only): Provisional Final Other (Please Specify)
- d. For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that :
- Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement?
 Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)?

Human Subjects ((See instructions.)

10. Annual Certification of Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval? Yes No
 N/A

Performance Measures Status and Certification ((See instructions.)

11. Performance Measures Status
- a. Are complete data on performance measures for the current budget period included in the Project Status Chart? Yes No
- b. If no, when will the data be available and submitted to the Department? 12/30/2007 (mm/dd/yyyy)
12. To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this performance report are true and correct and the report fully discloses all known weaknesses concerning the accuracy, reliability, and completeness of the data.

Name of Authorized Representative: Betty J Sternberg	Title: Commissioner of Education
Signature:	Date:

Grant Performance Report (ED 524B) Executive Summary Attachment:

Title : Executive Summary E Grants
 File : S:\SPDIG\E-Grants Final\Executive Summary.doc



**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). CT has completed an extensive self-assessment and developed a comprehensive long-range State Improvement Plan which has been implemented, updated, and revised, with progress reported annually in CT'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 CT'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 Special Education Resource Center (SERC). Other partners include Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU), the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), the CT State Department of Social Services/Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (DSS/BRS) 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 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 results for children with disabilities. The SPDG project 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 provider's 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 State Personnel Development Plan (CSPDP) with CT'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 CT's plans submitted under Section 111 and 2112 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The State Personnel Development 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 to Date:

Evaluation activities for year one has focused on initial organization and implementation of the multi-level evaluation model. This has included assuring full participation among all projects by establishing lines of communication, clarifying expectations, and establishing a timeline for data collection, analysis and reporting. Individual projects received notification of funding in the fall of 2005. However, budgets were not in place until spring 2006 and some formal contract development is just being completed. As a result, many of the projects are still in the beginning stages of development and have not yet started to provide services. Additional evaluation activities to date include:

1. A logic model approach to program development and evaluation (also employed in the CT SIG evaluation) was used as the initial foundation to clearly identify project objectives, resources, activities, outputs and outcomes.

2. Phone interviews were held between the Independent Evaluator and all SPDG project directors. The scope of individual projects and their activities were more specifically identified, evaluation questions of greatest importance were determined, and possible data collection methods identified.
3. A semi-annual reporting process for SPDG projects was developed. 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 intended and unintended outcomes. The report organization parallels the logic model that projects were asked to develop.

Year One 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 first year.

Successes

1. Commitment of the Connecticut Department of Education to the SPDG project, evidenced by resource commitment and knowledgeable administrative support.
2. Although most of the SPDG projects had some degree of modifications during initial planning and implementation, none of the changes were a substantial departure from the state's proposed activities.
3. Most project directors have had a high degree of stakeholder involvement in the design and beginning stages of implementation of their projects.
4. The formative and summative evaluation process for all grant activities is underway. All evaluation activities have been met to date.

Challenges

1. Start up for projects delayed due to processing of contracts taking several months (i.e. CPAC)
2. SPDG Program Director not hired until April 2006
3. Changes in leadership at the Independent Evaluator's firm
4. How to accomplish systemic change given the complexities of the state, regional and local educational systems, and the need to change longstanding societal attitudes regarding special education and regular education.
5. Integrating SPDG goals and objectives with other on-going state initiatives to avoid a fragmentation of efforts and inefficient use of resources.

Organization of the Report

The subsequent CT SPDG annual performance report follows the reporting requirements set forth under Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), 34 CFR 75.590. In Section A, a Project Status Chart has been completed for each of the four project specific objectives included in the approved grant application, along with the three program objectives as outlined by OSEP in alignment with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). Activities to date, associated performance measures, indicators of progress and future data collection methods are reported.



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

PR/Award #: **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Project 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.
 Paraprofessional Recruitment: Establish a teacher licensure program which will recruit, enroll, support and assist paraprofessionals currently employed in CT school districts to meet state certification requirements for both elementary and special educators.

1a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
120 paraprofessionals will be trained and earn licensure as special education teachers.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	
1b. 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	%
			/			/	
1c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
There will be an increase in the diversity of the special	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		

education teaching workforce in targeted districts.	Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
		/			/	

Id. 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	%
			/			/	

Ie. 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 new pro-gram to recruit and train special education teachers. The Paraprofessional Recruitment Program is designed to lead to teacher licensure with a spe-cific focus of increasing diversity in the special education teaching workforce in CT’s urban districts. The target population includes paraprofession-als currently employed in CT public schools, particularly paraprofessionals working in DRG I (formerly ERG I), in which most disadvantaged dis-tricts are located.

The new 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. Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) was chosen to partner with the CSDE in this project. SCSU is state-approved and meets the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and NCATE stan-dards. SCSU has already established a dual licensure program leading to elementary (K-6) and special education certification and a comprehensive special education certification,

K-12. Dr. Pamela Brucker represents SCSU and serves as the project director for the Paraprofessional Recruitment Program.

The four urban school districts of New Haven, Hartford, Waterbury, and Bridgeport have been selected into the recruitment program. All have 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.

Year One Project Activities

1. Recruitment information and descriptions of the Paraprofessional Recruitment Program were developed and disseminated: The first year of the program has begun in the New Haven School District with a schedule to phase in the additional three LEAs over the next two years. New Haven was chosen to start the project due to the fact that SCSU is located in New Haven and already has an established partnership with the district. Individual letters explaining the program were sent to 107 paraprofessionals and informational flyers were sent to New Haven elementary schools. Due to the length of time it took to complete the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) resulted in a postponement of funds transfer to SCSU. There-fore, the timeline for the first year was pushed back with the dissemination of program materials occurring in the spring of 2006 instead of the fall of 2005.

2. Eligibility criteria and application process and procedures were developed: To be eligible for the program, paraprofessionals must (1) have a minimum of 3 years of experience in the district, (2) have completed two or more years of higher education, (3) have received a recommenda-tion 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.

3. On-site meeting held in New Haven: On May 8th, an informational meeting was held to explain the program to potential participants. Applications were completed by 90 paraprofessionals in attendance.

4. Review applications and interview eligible participants: As a result of the May 8th meeting in New Haven, 70 of the 90 paraprofessionals were deemed eligible for the program. A selection of candidates was based on the eligibility criteria noted above and with a goal of maintaining a diverse pool of candidates.

5. Notify accepted applicants: Thirty candidates were asked to begin the program in New Haven.

6. New Haven participants begin: The 30 candidates are scheduled to take the Praxis 1 exam and begin two courses this summer. Exams will be held on June 10th and August 5th. Tutoring is presently being offered in math with the first review being held on June 3rd. A tutorial in reading is also planned. After completing 6 course credits, all participating

paraprofessionals are required to have passed the Praxis 1 exam in order to continue in the program.

7. Begin the application process for Hartford, the next LEA to enter the program: Plans are under way to hold an informational meeting in the Hartford school district at the beginning of the next school year.

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. Evaluation questions fell under two categories (1) those questions specific to individual SPDG projects and (2) overarching questions that address the SPDG program as a whole. 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 five performance measures specifically identified under the Paraprofessional Recruitment Program. 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. Due to initial delays in project implementation, the collection of baseline data is not scheduled to begin until fall. As baseline data is collected, the independent evaluator will work with project directors to set appropriate targets for performance measures to be reported in subsequent budget periods.

Performance Measures

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

Evaluation Question(s): Did projects meet their recruitment goals? What were Paraprofessional Recruitment Program completion and certification rates?

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

Data Collection: Archival program data; recruitment records; project progress reports; paraprofessional program database; participant surveys; focus groups.

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

Evaluation Question(s): To what extent were program graduates subsequently employed in the targeted districts? In what areas/grade levels? Did the project increase the pool of licensed special educators to fill personnel vacancies in targeted areas?

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: Program document review; semi-annual project progress reports; LEA archival data; participant surveys

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

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

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

Data Collection: Participant demographic data; participant survey; archival LEA data; CT SDE data.

1d: A long-range plan for reform of the teacher licensure system will be developed.

Evaluation Question(s): Are program graduates good teachers? To what extent did these initiatives result in reform of the teacher licensure system?

Indicator(s): Changes in policy.

Data Collection: CT SDE data; implementer interviews; project progress reports; project director interviews.

1e: Support for sustaining the program and replicating it in additional school districts will be obtained.

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 years program is in place; retention rates of program graduates employed as teachers; number of additional districts involved in program; employer/supervisor evaluations.

Data Collection: CT SDE data; LEA data; implementer interviews; project director interviews; supervisor and principal survey.

Progress

Due to the later than expected start of the program (baseline data is expected to begin in late summer/early fall), measurable progress has been somewhat hard to define. However, the previously described project design and implementation activities demonstrate a strong start towards the projects clearly defined goals. Examples of progress include:

1. The participating LEAs were selected based on a review of demographic information and needs assessment and were determined to have both a large minority population and a number of qualified paraprofessionals from which to recruit.
2. Districts were also asked to commit to preferential hiring for special education teaching vacancies to those paraprofessionals who successfully complete the program.
3. In year one, 30 candidates from New Haven have been chosen to be trained and earn licensure as special education teachers. The involvement of 30 candidates from the other 3 districts over the next five years should result in 120 paraprofessionals trained and licensed.
4. The sequence for involving the other three districts will result in a paraprofessional enrollment which follows a bell shaped curve distribution with the bulk of paraprofessionals enrolled in the 2007-2008 academic year. Years 4 and 5 can then be used to focus on sustainability and replication. This will include a systems analysis and planning process to evaluate potential systemic responses to increase paraprofessional entry into the profession.

Looking Forward

1. Plans to hold onsite meetings in Hartford for the next cohort of paraprofessionals have been made.
2. The first project implementation progress report based on the project's logic model is to be submitted by June 30th.
3. Baseline data collection is set to begin. A CT SPDG database will be created by the evaluation team that will consolidate information related to project outcomes.
4. A July meeting has been set with the CT SPDG Program Director, Project Directors, and the Independent Evaluator to finalize specific evaluation activities and data collection duties to occur in the fall.





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

PR/Award #: **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Project 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.
 Early Intervention: 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.

2a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Providers will have the knowledge and skills necessary to describe the coaching model to parents and caregivers and to implement it.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	
2b. 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	%
			/			/	
2c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Families will express that they have acquired increased	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		

knowledge and skills to enhance their child's development.		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	
2d. 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 “coaching model” in order to enhance outcomes for infants, toddlers and their families. This objective includes the development and national dissemination of a video, training manual, and self-study guide on strategies for supporting infants and toddlers with disabilities through natural routines in natural environments. The goal of the video is to better match the expectations of parents and providers by creating a shared understanding of effective coaching relationships.

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 CSPD Project Coordinator, is overseeing all aspects of video development. In addition, a Video Production Advisory Group (VPAG) will review proposals in response to the RFP for video production, comment on the video script, training manual and self-study guide, make recommendations on filming, and review video segments as they are produced.

In addition to the video and training package described above, this project will develop guidelines for the provision of services in natural environments. 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. This SPDG grant will allow the Guidelines to be updated so that they are consistent with the way in which providers are trained to deliver early intervention services.

Year One Project Activities

1. Formation of a Video Production Advisory Group (VPAG): The VPAG includes the Birth to Three Project Coordinator and Regional Managers, services providers who have been identified as being exemplary by the Birth to Three Management Team, and three external consultants. The Video Production Advisory Group also consists of representatives from parent groups, program directors, and UConn's Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities.
2. Search for video production company: SERC is currently working to identify potential video production companies.
3. Contract with external project consultants: SERC is currently in the process of contracting with Bonnie Keilty, Ed.D, George Washington University, to research and assist in the writing of the script, training manual and self-study guide.
4. Contract with national experts on coaching: SERC is also in the process of contracting with M'Lisa Shelden, PT, Ph.D. and Dathan Rush, MA of the Family Infant and Preschool Program (FIPP) of Morganton, North Carolina. Both Dathan Rush and M'Lisa Shelden will assist with script development and consult on the video, study guide and training manual.
5. Work with consultants to develop scripts for the introductory and training videos: Shelton and Rush are currently working on a script. Questions remain on its availability to this project.

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. Evaluation questions fell under two categories (1) those questions specific to individual SPDG projects and (2) overarching questions that address the SPDG program as a whole. 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 four performance measures specifically identified under the Early Intervention Video 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. Due to initial delays in project implementation, the collection of baseline data is not scheduled to begin until fall. As baseline data is collected, the independent evaluator will work with project directors to set appropriate targets for performance measures to be reported in subsequent budget periods.

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 the coaching model to parents? To what extent are providers using the “coaching model”?

Indicator(s): Increase in provider knowledge and skills; parent perceptions of provider’s skills/knowledge; supervisor perceptions of provider skills/knowledge; percent of providers demonstrating coaching skills.

Data Collection: Parent interviews; provider interviews; supervisor interviews; retrospective pre-post training session evaluations; observations during state 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 parent knowledge/skill.

Data Collection: Pre-post interviews with a random sample of parents receiving introductory video and working with providers who have used training video and supporting materials; paired interviews with providers working with the parent sample.

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

Evaluation Question(s): Did the project meet its goal to produce and disseminate video and related training materials?

Indicator(s): Video and material production schedules; dissemination data

Data Collection: Project progress reports; implementer interviews.

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

Progress

Due to the later than expected start of the program, progress on performance measures has been somewhat hard to define. However, the pre-viously described project design and implementation activities demonstrate a strong start towards the projects clearly defined goals. Examples of progress include:

1. Thus far, Connecticut's early intervention providers have done very well at modifying where they provide services to children and families. State monitoring data shows that 93% of early intervention services have been delivered in natural settings since 2001. This will allow the SPDG project to focus on new ways for early intervention providers to deliver services in natural environments.
2. The Video Production Advisory Group (VPAG) has been formed and all members contacted. This group will be instrumental to the project's progress as they will be responsible for reviewing and commenting at all steps of the video production process.
3. Relationships have been established with an external project consultant. Bonnie Keilty is expected to be a significant contributor to research and script development.
4. Relationships have been established with national coaching experts. Both Dathan Rush and M'Lisa Shelden have worked with a number of states and local early intervention programs to assist administrators and practitioners regarding how to provide supports for families in natural settings. Their expertise will be instrumental to the project.

Looking Forward

1. Plans to hold the first Video Production Advisory Group meeting this summer are underway. Although a date has not yet been finalized, all members of the group have been contacted.
2. Contracts with external project consultants and national experts are expected to be finalized in the near future.
3. Work is expected to continue through the summer on developing scripts for the introductory and training videos.
4. The first project implementation progress report based on the project's logic model is to be submitted by June 30th.

5. A July meeting has been set with the CT SPDG Program Director, Project Directors, and the Independent Evaluator to finalize specific evaluation activities and data collection duties to occur in the fall.



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

PR/Award #: **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Project 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: Building on the LEA Model Programs funded through the CT SIG, this project will provide the statewide, targeted profes-sional development required to scale-up those effective 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. Specific focus areas will include: Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS), scientifically-based literacy instruction, early intervening services and pre-referral interventions, secondary transition, autism, assistive technology, and other critical areas. Through an RFP process, selected LEAs will be paired with LEA Model Programs who will provide professional development, on-site coaching, and support.

3a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Selected LEAs will receive onsite, job-embedded professional de-velopment.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	
3b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Evidence-based practices will be replicated in selected school dis-tricts.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

3c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
A system will be developed for statewide replication of model pro-grams.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	
3d. 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	%
			/			/	
3e. 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. Connecticut has promoted effective practices by funding a number of LEA Model Projects (through its SIG grant, Sliver Grants and other IDEA funds) designed to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in critical performance areas. This SPDG project pairs Model Project Districts with selected additional Scaling-up Districts in order to implement evidence-based effective practices across the state. The State 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.

The target population for this project includes currently employed public school general education and special education teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals. The CT State Personnel Development Plan (CSPD), as highlighted in the March 2005 APR, outlined a number of areas that demonstrated the professional development needs of LEA personnel. CSPD Plan priority areas that have been funded within previously established Model Projects include: Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS), scientifically-based literacy instruction, early intervening services and pre-referral interventions, secondary transition, autism, assistive technology and early childhood transition from Part C to Part B.

An RFP application process will be used to select 6 Model Project districts and 12 Scaling-up districts in two cohorts over the course of the 5 year grant period. An initial screening, state level data review and analysis, and onsite verification will also be a part of the final selection process. Each Model Project district will be paired with two Scaling-up districts in order to replicate the evidence-based effective practices of the model district. The intent is to put evidence based professional development resources with the districts that need it and want it most. Scaling-up Districts that demonstrate both the greatest need for improvement and local readiness for implementation and replication will be paired with successful Model Project Districts.

Year One Project Activities

A revised time-line for this project is currently underway. The following activities have been established as part of the application process.

1. Eligibility criteria for Model Project Districts established: Model projects are expected to demonstrate: (1) a focus on improvement efforts of a “statewide need”, (2) well established partnerships, (3) the ability to build local capacity through professional development, and (4) the potential for sustainability, replication, and systems change in order to improve outcomes for children.
2. Determination of use of grant funds in Model Project Districts: Model Project District grant funds will be used to (1) enhance/expand professional development opportunities in their district, (2) provide release time, substitutes, and travel expenses for district staff to consult, coach, and provide professional development and technical assistance to Scaling-up Districts, and (3) host meetings or trainings for Scaling-up District staff.
3. Eligibility criteria for Scaling-up districts established: Scaling-up Districts will need to meet the following selection criteria: (1) an administrative commitment to the project, (2) demonstrated stakeholder “buy-in”, (3) the completion of a needs assessment and asset mapping process that demonstrates the district’s readiness to undertake the project and its likelihood of success, (4) the demonstration of an in-kind contribution, and (5) a plan to sustain the project when grant

funds expire. Key performance indicators that CT uses in its focused monitoring process will also be evaluated for scaling-up district candidates.

4. Determination of use of grant funds in Scaling-up Districts: Scaling-up District grant funds will be used to (1) provide professional development to teachers, administrators, staff, and parents in the district; (2) provide release time, substitutes, and travel expenses for district staff to visit Model Project Districts and attend off site professional development events; and (3) to host visitors from other LEAs across the state in the second year and final year.

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. Evaluation questions fell under two categories (1) those questions specific to individual SPDG projects and (2) overarching questions that address the SPDG program as a whole. 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. Due to initial delays in project implementation, the collection of baseline data is not scheduled to begin until fall. As baseline data is collected, the independent evaluator will work with project directors to set appropriate targets for performance measures to be reported in subsequent budget periods.

Performance Measures

3a: Selected LEAs will receive onsite, job-embedded 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.

3b: Evidence-based practices will be replicated 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: Participant focus groups; participant surveys; follow-up participant interviews; site visits/observations; LEA archival data; project progress reports.

3c: A system will be developed for statewide replication of model programs.

Evaluation Question(s): To what extent did the project address this objective result in replication of evidence-based model programs?

Indicator(s): Evidence of replication of model programs.

Data Collection: Participant focus groups; participant surveys; follow-up participant interviews; site visits/observations; LEA archival data; project progress reports.

3d: A long-range plan for reform of the teacher licensure system will be developed.

Evaluation Question(s): To what extent did this initiative result in reform of the teacher licensure system?

Indicator(s): Changes in policy.

Data Collection: CT SDE data; implementer interviews.

3e: 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; increased student and parent involvement in PPT, IEP development and the transition process.

Data Collection: Student assessments, including CMT/CAPT and alternative state assessments; standardized and local assessments; IEP re-view, LEA archival data (attendance, behavioral records, PPT participation); student and parent interviews.

Progress

Due to the later than expected start of the program, progress on performance measures can not be currently measured. However, the previously described project design and the success of earlier funded Model Projects will serve as a strong

foundation from which this project can build. Examples of progress under previously funded Model Projects that are expected to continue under this SPDG project include:

1. Throughout the CT SIG grant (2001-2005) model program development projects were funded in the following focus areas: Transition from the CT Birth to Three System to Special Education for 3-Year Olds, Literacy, Transition Services for Secondary Students with Disabilities, Planning for Age Appropriate Environments and Transition Services for Secondary Student with Disabilities (ages 18 to 21), and School-Based Continuum of Behavioral Supports.

Looking Forward

1. The first project implementation progress report based on the project's logic model is to be submitted by June 30th.
2. A July meeting has been set with the CT SPDG Program Director, Project Directors, and the Independent Evaluator to finalize specific evaluation activities and data collection duties to occur in the fall.



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

PR/Award #: **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Project 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.

5a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
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	%
			999 / 999	100		/	
5b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
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)

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 knowledge. 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. At this time, we can-not predict the percent of personnel who will actually receive such professional development. The expectation and the target are both 100%.

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).

Connecticut's Continuous Improvement Partnership Team (CIPT) was first convened in June 2001 and served as the foundation for continuous improvement throughout the 5 years of State Improvement Grant (SIG). The status of Connecticut SIG projects were organized by 10 major activities, sequenced to reflect the Child/Family and Student/Parent Outcomes of the CT Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIPT will continue as the interagency body responsible for

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

Project 1: The Paraprofessional Recruitment Program

The Paraprofessional 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 CSDE 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: (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 Program will provide professional development that will result in the use of integrated activities within the family setting, with a particular emphasis on coaching families, thus improving the child’s development through their everyday routines and activities. 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 providers. SPP indicators and respective improvement strategies that are aligned with Project 2 include:

SPP Indicator 7: Percent of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improved positive social-emotional skills, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

- SPP improvement strategies for Indicator 7 that align with Project 2: (1) ensure the child's skills and behaviors are at the level expected for their age, (2) ensure the child demonstrates positive social-emotional skills at the level expected for their age, and (3) ensure the child has acquired the early language/communication and the early literacy skills expected for their age.

SPP Indicator 12: Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthday.

- SPP improvement strategies for Indicator 12 that align with Project 2: (1) provide parent training opportunities across Part B and Part C service delivery systems to ensure that parents are familiar with transition activities and that parents understand the similarities and differences between the two systems, and (2) work with Part C to encourage early intervention programs that provide opportunities for children transitioning out of the home, and (3) redefine current policies and procedures across Part B and C to reflect the reauthorized IDEA and new regulations.

Project 3: Scaling-up or 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 Project Districts will be paired with Scaling-up Districts in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in designated critical performance areas. Such areas may include Positive Behavioral Supports, scientifically-based literacy instruction, early intervening services and pre referral interventions, and secondary transition. 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 positive behavior support.

Project 4: Enhancing Collaborative Relationships between Parents and Schools

Parent Advisors established through this project will provide training, information, and support to parents and school staff, particularly with regard to parent involvement in the development of the IEP. A statewide network of Parent Advisors will be trained to provide individualized support and assistance to parents and school staff to enable them to understand and advocate for appropriate educational services for their children. SPP indicators and respective improvement strategies that are aligned with Project 4 include:

SPP Indicator 6: Percent of preschool children with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who received special education and related services in settings with typically developing peers (e.g., early childhood settings, home, and part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education settings).

- SPP improvement strategies for Indicator 6 that align with Project 4: Provide parent training opportunities to ensure that parents are informed and knowledgeable about LRE settings for children 3, 4, and 5 years of age with disabilities, particularly those families transitioning from the Connecticut Birth to Three System

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: Use information from the 2005-2006 Parent Survey to maximize parent participation in areas of concern and in specific LEAs demonstrating the greatest need.





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

PR/Award #: **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Project 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.

6a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
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	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			999 / 999	100		/	
6b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
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,	PRGM	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			999 / 999	100		/	

structured guidance, modeling, continuous inquiry, etc.)	

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

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 OSEP Indicator 1.1 on Project Status Chart A-5.

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 CT'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 will be conducted throughout each project year, and (3) on-going informal reports to the CIPT, project implementers, and stakeholders 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 the 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.
- Years 4 and 5 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 CT Department of Higher Education, IHE training pro-grams, 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 “coaching model” of early intervention to both providers and families. The coaching model allows families the opportunity to take advantage of teachable moments that occur throughout the day. A responsive care-giver style of interaction has been shown 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 coaching”, 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 coaching model and become more comfortable presenting it 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

- LEA Model Projects, funded previously through CT SIG that have demonstrated program effectiveness 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 Project Districts will receive funds to be appropriated towards a sequence of planning and professional development for replication, development of the project's coaching and technical assistance model, onsite visits, coaching with the selected Scaling Up Districts, and preparation for statewide professional development.
- Planned activities by SERC, the state's designated technical assistance provider, include a professional development institute, a semi-annual 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 demonstrated training and assistance in developing strong relationships between educators and parents.
- Parent advisors established under this project will receive ongoing support through CPAC, including additional in-depth training regarding how to involve parents in their educational program.
- A trainer-of-trainers model in which Parent Advisors will have CPAC mentors to support them through consultation and coaching will be developed. Parent Advisors will then be able to conduct similar training for school staff and families in their district.



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

PR/Award #: **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Project 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.
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.

7a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
		Target			Actual Performance Data		
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	Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)
Steps towards this program objective began in the implementation stages of the Paraprofessional Recruitment Program (Project 1). Targets for the performance measure are expected to be set in Year 2 and data collection is set to begin in the fall. Data sources will include a paraprofessional program database, State and LEA data, Praxis I and II results, CT Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) portfolio results, and pro-visional and permanent certification rates.

Features of the paraprofessional project that supports 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), who is the initial partner with the CSDE in this project, 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 CT’s urban districts. In 2002, the Presidents’ 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 relationships 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**

PR/Award #: **H323A050003**

SECTION A - Project 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: Building on the success of Families as Partners Initiative, established through the CT SIG, this project will establish Parent Advisors in selected school districts. Upon completion of a collaborative CPAC/LEA training program, Parent Advisors will provide 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.

4a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Selected LEAs will have the support of a Parent Advisor who will provide training, information, and support to both parents of students with disabilities and school personnel in the implementation of special education programs.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	
4b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Parent-school relationships will be strengthened and conflict reduced.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

4c. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Parents of students with disabilities, ages 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	%
			/			/	
4d. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
A network of Parent Advisors will be established across the state.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

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

Objective 4 of the Connecticut State Professional Development Grant focuses on enhancing collaborative relationships between parents and schools. This project will fund, train, and support district level Parent Advisors who will provide ongoing support for families and school personnel in selected districts. This project will build on the success of the Families as Partners Initiative and the Next Steps program, both of which were es-tablished through the CT State Improvement Grant (SIG).

A formal contract for services between the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) and the Connecticut State Department of Education has not yet been completed. CPAC, Connecticut's federally funded Parent Training and Information Center established under IDEA, has worked di-rectly with the CSDE and Special Education Resource Center (SERC) in the past and has an established record of success in facilitating multiple par-ent training projects. As a result, a smooth implementation phase is expected from this point forward. Strategies to address a revised time-line for the project are currently underway.

The goal of this project is to continue to develop and expand a comprehensive system of support and training for educators and parents that will increase collaboration between families and schools. A statewide network of Parent Advisors will be trained to provide individualized support and assistance to parents and school staff to enable them to understand and

advocate for appropriate educational services for their children. Parent Advisor candidates will be recruited from a pool of parents who have completed the Next Steps training program. Next Steps represents entry-level training for parent support volunteers who advise parents in their school districts on a volunteer bases. In addition, CPAC will provide in-depth training regarding how to involve parents in their child's educational program. A trainer-of-trainers model will be followed so that Parent Advisors (with the support of CPAC mentors) can conduct similar training for school staff and families in the district.

Year One Project Activities

A revised time-line for this project is currently underway. The following activities occurred as part of the application process.

1. Eligibility criteria for Parent Advisors established: Parent Advisors must be a family member of a child with a disability and have success-fully completed the Next Steps program. In addition, Parent Advisors will be required to have (1) knowledge of state and federal regulations pertaining to the education of children with disabilities, (2) the ability to remain impartial in counseling others, (3) excellent communication skills both on a one-to-one and group basis, (4) the ability to conduct formal presentations/trainings, and (5) an understanding of a broad range of disabilities.
2. Eligibility criteria for LEAs: In order to receive a grant-supported Parent Advisor, the LEA will need to have already participated in the CPAC Families as Partners Initiative, agree to support the Parent Advisor position after three years, provide office and meeting space in school buildings in the district, and assign a primary LEA contact.

Management of Project Objective

Due to initial delays in the implementation of the Parent Advisor project, evaluation questions and performance measures have not been final-ized. As a result, potential modifications may occur as determined necessary by the Project Director and the Independent Evaluator. The perform-ance measures identified in the application process for the Parent Advisor project are specified below. 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. As baseline data is collected, the Independent Evaluator will work with project directors to set appropriate targets for performance measures to be reported in subse-quent budget periods.

Performance Measures

4a: Selected LEAs will have the support of a Parent Advisor who will provide training, information, and support to both parents of students with disabilities and school personnel in the implementation of special education programs.

Evaluation Question(s): Did this project fund, train, and support district level Parent Advisors in selected districts?

Indicator(s): Number of Parent Advisors trained and placed; Number of Parent Advisors retained during the project period.

Data Collection: Archival project data; Parent Advisor interviews; project progress reports.

4b: Parent-school relationships will be strengthened and conflict between parents and schools will be reduced.

Evaluation Question(s): Did Parent Advisor support and training to 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 person-nel focus groups and interviews; Parent Advisor interviews; project progress reports.

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 chil-dren? 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, FRPL eligibil-ity; family participation in PPT and IEP development.

Data Collection: Family participant focus groups and interviews; school personnel focus groups and interviews; Parent Advisor interviews; CPAC and LEA archival data.

4d: A network of Parent Advisors will be established 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; retention of Parent Advisors.

Data Collection: Project archival data; project progress reports; Parent Advisor interviews; implementer interviews.

Progress

As stated previously, project negotiations are still underway and therefore progress on performance objectives can not currently be measured. However, the Parent Advisor project will build on the success of the Families as Partners Initiative and therefore has a strong foundation from which to build. Examples of progress under the Families as Partners Initiative that are expected to continue under the Parent Advisor project include:

1. As of December 2005, 204 parents and 163 professionals had participated in one of the 31 training sessions held by CPAC.
2. Over 90% of parents and over 97% of staff rated their ability to be actively involved and participate as equal partners in the PPT process as either “good” or “excellent”.
3. Eighty-five percent of parents and 95% of school personnel rated their ability to collaborate in developing IEPs as “good” or “excellent”.
4. Parents also reported that the workshops increased feelings of empowerment, preparedness, and their desire and ability to be effectively in-volved in PPT meetings.
5. School district personnel indicated that the workshops resulted in a greater awareness of the equality of all participants, the importance of in-volving parents, and parents’ perspectives and feelings

Looking Forward

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

1. There will be a formal application and selection process for Parent Advisors.
2. Four districts will be identified through their previous involvement with the Families as Partners Initiative to begin the program.
3. Six additional districts will be identified to participate in the Families as Partners training. Future Parent Advisors from each of these six districts will then be identified to enter into the Next Steps training. Upon completion of the Next Steps training, participants will then be supported by the Parent Advisor project.
4. A July meeting has been set with the CT SPDG Program Director, Project Directors, and the Independent Evaluator to finalize specific evaluation activities and data collection duties to occur in the fall.

The following are proposed activities still being negotiated:

1. Review of data from 2005-2006: parent survey, Focused Monitoring results, compliance/due process data, School Based Practices Profile data from Step by Step project (SERC), CPAC data base of calls from districts and parents, and IDEA grant parent activities.
2. Identify needs and training of potential community supports.
3. Conduct regular and consistent training/technical assistance to district personnel, Parent Advisors, and community supports.
4. Work with Glen Martin Associates to design and implement a system of evaluation with participants at various stages of support – initial, in-intermediate, final, and post.



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

PR/Award #: **H323A050003**

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

Title :

File : C:\Documents and Settings\ColonD\Desktop\SPDG\Evaluation\OSEP Performance reports\June 2006\BudgetSectionB.doc

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

Title :

File : C:\Documents and Settings\ColonD\Desktop\SPDG\Evaluation\OSEP Performance reports\June 2006\OtherSectionC.doc



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.)

As of May 6, 2006

A. Actual Expenditures for Reporting Period: committed \$414,433.00

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

Some activities have been delayed due to:

- Processing of contracts taking several months
- Budgets not in place until spring 2006/summer 2006
- Program Director not hired until April 2006
- Secretarial staff not implemented until April 2006
- 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

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.

Due to the lengthy processing of contracts, activities and funds transfers were postponed until spring 2006. The original grant amount requested to OSEP was \$5,250,000 for which all activities were based upon. However, the final grant award of \$5,000,000 has resulted in some adjustments of activities. Also, the Program Manager was not hired and secretarial staff was not implemented until April 2006, resulting in a decrease of expenditures for this reporting period.

1. **Recruiting Paraprofessionals, SCSU-**

- Budget not in place until spring 2006, resulting in limited activities for year 1
Original: \$ 480,000
Revised: \$ 280,834

2. **Early Intervention, DMR-**

- None
Original: \$ 60,000

3. **Scaling-Up, SERC-**

- None
Original: \$ 354,433

4. **Enhancing Collaborative Relationships, CPAC -**

- Contract and budget not in place as of May 6, 2006, resulting in unexpended funds to this point. Funds expected to be in place summer 2006.

Original: \$75,000

Revised: \$35,000

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.)

- **SPDG Grant- SPDG Project Director:** Reduction in salary and fringe benefit costs associated with administration due to delay in hiring of Project Director and implementation of secretarial staff until April 2006.
 - **Estimate not expended:** \$ 0
 - **Carryover:** absorbed into 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)
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OMB No. 1890 - 0004
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H323A050003

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

A. Current Partners

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