Special Educator e-Journal

September 2013

BACK TO SCHOOL

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Update from the U.S. Department of Education

Keeping Students with Disabilities Safe from Bullying

As Secretary Duncan has noted, the Department of Education is committed to making sure that all of our young people grow up free of fear, violence, and bullying. Bullying not only threatens a student's physical and emotional safety at school, but fosters a climate of fear and disrespect, creating conditions that negatively impact learning—undermining students' ability to achieve to their full potential. Unfortunately, we know that children with disabilities are disproportionately affected by bullying.

Factors such as physical vulnerability, social skills challenges, or intolerant environments may increase the risk of bullying. Students who are targets of bullying are more likely to experience lower academic achievement, higher truancy rates, feelings of alienation, poor peer relationships, loneliness, and depression. We must do everything we can to ensure that our schools are safe and positive learning environments—where all students can learn.

To that end, today, ED's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) issued guidance to educators and stakeholders on the matter of bullying of students with disabilities. This guidance provides an overview of school districts' responsibilities to ensure that students with disabilities who are subject to bullying continue to receive free appropriate public education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Under IDEA, States and school districts are obligated to ensure that students with disabilities receive FAPE in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This guidance explains that any bullying of a student with disabilities which results in the student not receiving meaningful educational benefit is considered a denial of FAPE. Furthermore, this letter notes that certain changes to an educational program of a student with a disability (e.g., placement in a more restricted "protected" setting to avoid bullying behavior) may constitute a denial of FAPE in the LRE.

Schools have an obligation to ensure that a student with disabilities who is bullied, continues to receive FAPE as outlined in his or her individualized education program (IEP). IEPs, as well as 504 plans, can be useful in outlining specialized approaches for preventing and responding to bullying, as well as providing additional supports and services to students with disabilities. This guidance also offers effective evidence-based practices for preventing and addressing bullying.

"This guidance is a significant step forward for students facing bullying," said Ari Ne'eman, President of the Autistic Self Advocacy Network, a leading national advocacy organization. "We applaud and commend the Department for reinforcing that when a child is being bullied, it is inappropriate to 'blame the victim' and remove them from the general education classroom. School districts have an obligation to address the source of the problem –the stigma and prejudice that drives bullying behavior."

Bullying of any student simply cannot be tolerated in our schools. A school where children don't feel safe is a school where children struggle to learn. Every student deserves to thrive in a safe school and classroom free from bullying.

Please see the Dear Colleague Letter on bullying below:

Dear Colleague:

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) is committed to working with States to ensure that school districts provide all children with positive, safe, and nurturing school environments in which they can learn, develop, and participate. OSERS is issuing

this letter to provide an overview of a school district's responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to address bullying of students with disabilities.[1]

As discussed in this letter, and consistent with prior Dear Colleague Letters the Department has published, bullying of a student with a disability that results in the student not receiving meaningful educational benefit constitutes a denial of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) under the IDEA that must be remedied.[2] However, even when situations do not rise to a level that constitutes a denial of FAPE, bullying can undermine a student's ability to achieve his or her full academic potential. Attached to this letter are specific strategies that school districts and schools[3]can implement to effectively prevent and respond to bullying, and resources for obtaining additional information.

Bullying of any student by another student, for any reason, cannot be tolerated in our schools.[4]Bullying is no longer dismissed as an ordinary part of growing up, and every effort should be made to structure environments and provide supports to students and staff so that bullying does not occur. Teachers and adults should respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior and send a message that bullying is not acceptable. Intervening immediately to stop bullying on the spot can help ensure a safer school environment.

Bullying is characterized by aggression used within a relationship where the aggressor(s) has more real or perceived power than the target, and the aggression is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying can involve overt physical behavior or verbal, emotional, or social behaviors (*e.g.,* excluding someone from social activities, making threats, withdrawing attention, destroying someone's reputation) and can range from blatant aggression to far more subtle and covert behaviors. Cyberbullying, or bullying through electronic technology (*e.g.,* cell phones, computers, online/social media), can include offensive text messages or e-mails, rumors or embarrassing photos posted on social networking sites, or fake online profiles.

Addressing and reporting bullying is critical. Students who are targets of bullying behavior are more likely to experience lower academic achievement and aspirations, higher truancy rates, feelings of alienation from school, poor relationships with peers, loneliness, or depression.[1] Bystanders, or those who only see or hear about bullying, also may be negatively affected as bullying tends to have harmful effects on overall school climate. Bullying can foster fear and disrespect and negatively affect the school experience, norms, and relationships of all students, families, and school personnel.[2] The consequences may result in students changing their patterns of school participation or schools eliminating school activities (*e.g.,* dances, sporting events) where bullying has occurred. Teachers, school personnel, parents, and students should report bullying when they become aware of it.

Students with disabilities are disproportionately affected by bullying.[3] For example, students with learning disabilities, attention deficit or hyperactivity disorder, and autism are more likely to be bullied than their peers.[4] Any number of factors -- physical characteristics, processing and social skills, or intolerant environments -- may increase the risk that students with disabilities will be bullied. Due to the characteristics of their disabilities, students with intellectual, communication, processing, or emotional disabilities may not understand the extent to which bullying behaviors are harmful, or may be unable to make the situation known to an adult who can help. In circumstances involving a student who has not previously been identified as a child with a disability under the IDEA, bullying may also trigger a school's child find obligations under the IDEA. 34 C.F.R. §§300.111, 300.201.

Whether or not the bullying is related to the student's disability, any bullying of a student with a disability that results in the student not receiving meaningful educational benefit constitutes a denial of FAPE under the IDEA that must be remedied.[5] States and school districts have a responsibility under the IDEA, 20 U.S.C. § 1400, *et seq.*, to ensure that FAPE in the least restrictive environment (LRE) is made available to eligible students with disabilities. In order for a student to receive FAPE, the student's individualized education program (IEP) must be reasonably calculated to provide meaningful educational benefit.[6]

Schools have an obligation to ensure that a student with a disability who is the target of bullying behavior continues to receive FAPE in accordance with his or her IEP. The school should, as part of its appropriate response to the bullying, convene the IEP Team to determine whether, as a result of the effects of the bullying, the student's needs have changed such that the IEP is no longer designed to provide meaningful

educational benefit. If the IEP is no longer designed to provide a meaningful educational benefit to the student, the IEP Team must then determine to what extent additional or different special education or related services are needed to address the student's individual needs; and revise the IEP accordingly. Additionally, parents have the right to request an IEP Team meeting at any time, and public agencies generally must grant a parental request for an IEP Team meeting where a student's needs may have changed as a result of bullying. The IDEA placement team (usually the same as the IEP Team) should exercise caution when considering a change in the placement or the location of services provided to the student with a disability who was the target of the bullying behavior and should keep the student in the original placement unless the student can no longer receive FAPE in the current LRE placement. While it may be appropriate to consider whether to change the placement of the child who was the target of the bullying behavior, placement teams should be aware that certain changes to the education program of a student with a disability (*e.g.,* placement in a more restrictive "protected" setting to avoid bullying behavior) may constitute a denial of the IDEA's requirement that the school provide FAPE in the LRE. Moreover, schools may not attempt to resolve the bullying situation by unilaterally changing the frequency, duration, intensity, placement, or location of the student's special education and related services. These decisions must be made by the IEP Team and consistent with the IDEA provisions that address parental participation.

If the student who engaged in the bullying behavior is a student with a disability, the IEP Team should review the student's IEP to determine if additional supports and services are needed to address the inappropriate behavior. In addition, the IEP Team and other school personnel should consider examining the environment in which the bullying occurred to determine if changes to the environment are warranted.

As discussed above, any bullying of a student with a disability that results in the student not receiving meaningful educational benefit from the special education and related services provided by the school is a denial of FAPE. A student must feel safe in school in order to fulfill his or her full academic potential. We encourage States and school districts to alert Boards of Education, school administrators, teachers, and staff that bullying can result in a denial of FAPE for students with disabilities. We also encourage States and school districts to reevaluate their policies and practices addressing problematic behaviors, including bullying, in light of the information provided in this letter, as well as in OSERS' July 25, 2000, joint Dear Colleague Letter and OCR's October 26, 2010, Dear Colleague Letter. The enclosure to this letter, "Effective Evidence-based Practices for Preventing and Addressing Bullying," includes practices for use as part of any bullying prevention and intervention program to help ensure that school and classroom settings are positive, safe, and nurturing environments for all children and adults.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that students with disabilities have access to high-quality services in positive, safe, and respectful school environments.

Sincerely,

Melody Musgrove, Ed. D.	Michael K. Yudin
Director	Acting Assistant Secretary
Office of Special Education Programs	

Enclosure: Effective Evidence-based Practices for Preventing and Addressing Bullying

[1] This letter is intended to supplement the July 25, 2000, joint Dear Colleague Letter from OSERS and the Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR), which addressed disability harassment under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II of the ADA), and the IDEA (available at:http://www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/disabharassltr.html).

[2] Some bullying of students with disabilities may also constitute discriminatory harassment and trigger additional responsibilities under the civil rights laws that OCR enforces, including Section 504, Title II of the ADA, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. See OCR's October 26, 2010, Dear Colleague Letter on Harassment and Bullying (available at: http://www.ed.gov/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.html).

[3] In the context of this letter "school" includes public preschools; elementary, middle, and high schools; and public agencies, including the State Educational Agency (SEA), Educational Service Agencies (ESA), Local Educational Agencies (LEA), nonprofit public charter schools that are not otherwise included as LEAs or ESAs and are not a school of an LEA or ESA, and any other political subdivisions of the State that are responsible for providing education to children with disabilities. See 34 C.F.R. §300.33.

[4] Although the focus of this letter is peer-to-peer bullying, it is important to acknowledge that it is also intolerable for teachers and school staff to be party to school bullying and disability harassment (*i.e.,* being active participants in bullying), or observers to school bullying without taking action to address the behavior. While teacher-student disability harassment also may constitute a denial of FAPE, those issues are beyond the scope of this letter. We recommend that States and school districts consult with legal counsel regarding their responsibilities and duties in cases of bullying that involve school personnel, including taking the matter seriously, and promptly addressing any problematic behaviors.

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[1] Gini G., & Pozzoli T. (2009). Association between bullying and psychosomatic problems: A meta-analysis. *Pediatrics,*123(3):1059-1065.

[2] O'Brennan, L. M., Bradshaw, C. P., & Sawyer, A. L. (2009). Examining developmental differences in the social-emotional problems among frequent bullies, victim, and bully/victims. Psychology in the Schools, 46(2), 100-115.

[3] Swearer, S. M., Wang, C., Maag, J. M., Siebecker, A., B., & Frerichs, L. J. (2012). Understanding the bullying dynamic among students in special and general education. *Journal of School Psychology,50*, 503-520.

[4] Twyman, K. A., Saylor, C. F., Saia, D., Macias, M. M., Taylor, L. A., & Spratt, E. (2010). Bullying and ostracism experiences in children with special health care needs. *Journal of Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics*, *31*, 1-8.

[5] OCR also has authority to investigate complaints alleging denial of FAPE under Section 504 and Title II. See the July 25, 2000, joint Dear Colleague Letter on Disability Harassment; (available at:http://www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/disabharassltr.html); and OCR's October 26, 2010, Dear Colleague Letter on Harassment and Bullying (available at: http://www.ed.gov/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.html).

[6] See *Hendrick Hudson Central Sch. Dist. Bd. of Educ. v. Rowley*, 458 U.S. 176, 201 (1982)

Calls to Participate

National Youth Leadership Council & Youth Service America Seek Workshop/Showcase Proposals
http://www.nylc.org/news/call-proposals-now-open-monumental
The National Youth Leadership Council and co-host Youth Service America are seeking workshop and showcase proposals for MONUMENTAL, the 25th Annual National Service-Learning Conference® and 26th Annual Global Youth Service Day, a professional development conference for youth and adults who view youth as solutions for stronger communities and schools. Workshop proposals that offer innovative strategies based on research, focusing on results, with well-designed, interactive sessions that do not rely on PowerPoint presentations, and are not sales pitches, are more likely be accepted. Young people are encouraged to submit proposals. Deadline for proposal submission: September 27, 2013.

NCWD /Youth Seeks Applications for Professional Development Demonstrations
http://www.ncwd-youth.info/ksa/demo
The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability/Youth (NCWD/Youth) is offering a professional development opportunity for youth serving organizations (and their partners). The Youth Service Professionals' Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Professional Development Demonstration and Evaluation (YSP/KSA Demo) will provide partnering organizations in three communities with four free full-day interactive training sessions covering the necessary competencies for professionals who work with youth, including pre- and post-training capacity building and support for all sites. Participation is free (lead organizations will receive a stipend to cover administration costs); each site's lead organization must be committed to professional development and evaluation, provide 25-30 trainees, engage two partner organizations, and meet other eligibility requirements.

Youth Transitions Collaborative Seeks Resumes from Youth with Disabilities
The Youth Transitions Collaborative is seeking the resumes of young people and young veterans with disabilities who are looking for work (full-time or part-time) in the private sector. These resumes will be incorporated into a database that will help employers connect with qualified young candidates with disabilities. The National Youth Transitions Resume Database will be national in scope and will be open to young people and employers from across the country. For more information or to submit a resume, contact ytf@aapd.com.

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Special Education Resources

In an article appearing in the September issue of the *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, Lehigh Professor Perry A. Zirkel reports that, based on the latest U.S. Department of Education data, the enrollments for students identified with specific learning disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as a percentage of the special education population and as a percentage of the total K-12 enrollments has declined gradually but relatively steadily from 2005-06 to 2010-11. He discussed the various possible explanations, concluding that response to intervention is not likely to be a major factor, largely due to its relatively recent and still relatively limited implementation.

Perry A. Zirkel

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Lehigh University

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ADA National Network Disability Law Handbook Updated (2013)
Handbook
http://tinyurl.com/l7zzw8x
The updated "ADA National Network Disability Law Handbook," published by the Southwest ADA Center on behalf of The National Network of ADA Centers, provides answers to frequently asked questions about the ADA, the ADA Amendments Act, the Rehabilitation Act, Social Security, the Air Carrier Access Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act, and the Fair Housing Act Amendments.

America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2013 (2013)
Report
http://childstats.gov
The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences has issued "America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2013," a compendium of indicators highlighting the latest data and recent trends on children and their families prepared by the 22 federal agencies of the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. The 16th in an ongoing series, "America's Children, 2013" contains 41 key indicators on important aspects of children's lives and features 7 domains (family and social environment, economic circumstances, health care, physical environment and safety, behavior, education, and health).

AUCD's A Collaborative Interagency, Interdisciplinary Approach to Transition from Adolescence to Adulthood (May 2013)
Report
http://tinyurl.com/moysm7x
"A Collaborative Interagency, Interdisciplinary Approach to Transition from Adolescence to Adulthood," from the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), is a paper by and for directors and staff of the networks of University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Centers and the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities programs.

It aims to promote a dialogue among key stakeholders (including faculty, staff, trainees, individuals with disabilities, family members, policymakers, and partners in local and state disability organizations and agencies) and to facilitate their engagement in pursuing a comprehensive, coordinated, supportive, and successful transition process for youth with disabilities from adolescence to young adulthood.

CDC Issues First Comprehensive Report on Children's Mental Health (May 2013)
Report
http://www.cdc.gov/features/childrensmentalhealth/
The "Children's Mental Health" report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a comprehensive report on children's mental health in America, the first to describe the number of U.S. children (ages 3 to 17) who have specific, diagnosable mental disorders that begin in childhood. These include ADHD, Autism spectrum disorders, anxiety and depression, behavior disorders, mood and anxiety disorders, and other mental health issues that are estimated to affect as many as one in five American children.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Education at a Glance 2013: OECD Indicators (June)
Report
http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag.htm
"Education at a Glance 2013: OECD Indicators" is a report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) providing information on the state of education around the world, with data on the structure, finances, and performance of education systems in more than 40 countries, including OECD members and G20 partners.

Students with Disabilities & the Juvenile Justice System: What Parents Need to Know (2013)
Report
http://www.pacer.org/jj/pdf/JJ-8.pdf
"Students with Disabilities & the Juvenile Justice System: What Parents Need to Know" is a report from PACER Center on students with disabilities in the juvenile justice system. Youth with emotional, behavioral, learning, and cognitive disabilities are at a higher risk for involvement with the juvenile justice system, and are arrested and incarcerated at a higher rate than their non-disabled peers. Designed for parents of youth with disabilities who have already had contact with the juvenile justice system, this guide provides strategies and steps parents can use to protect their child's rights in school and in court. It can be ordered by phone at (952) 838-9000 or (800) 537-2237 (order item JJ-8) or is available in pdf (1.0 MB, 16 pp).

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Update from the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities

RESOURCES FROM NICHCY!

Multiple Disability Fact Sheet (and more).

Check out our latest fact sheet on Multiple Disabilities! Find information about the disabilities that may be involved, where to find help, tips for families, tips for teachers, and more. Each NICHCY fact sheet defines the disability, describes its characteristics, offers tips for parents and teachers, and connects you with related information and organizations with special expertise in that disability.
http://nichcy.org/disability/specific/multiple
http://nichcy.org/disability/specific

All about the IEP.
Explore this rich section of our website to find answers to your IEP questions. Who's on the IEP team? What's in an IEP? What happens at IEP meetings? Can a member of the team be excused from attending an IEP meeting?
http://nichcy.org/schoolage/iep

Need to train others on the IEP?

Check out the 3 training modules on the IEP that NICHCY produced for the Office of Special Education Programs. Each includes a slideshow presentation in English and in Spanish, a trainer's guide, and handouts for participants in English and in Spanish. Download any or all of these three modules: The IEP Team, Contents of the IEP, and When of the IEP Team Meets.

Effective Practices in the Classroom and School.

A critical part of improving educational results for children with disabilities is using effective practices in the classroom and across the school.
http://nichcy.org/schoolage/effective-practices

NICHCY Tips for Teachers Blogs Pinterest Board.
A Pinterest board of helpful blogs from NICHCY and other helpful organizations. Examples of entries include 'Getting Clear on RTI' and "Teaching Students with Emotional Disturbances: 8 Tips for Teachers".
http://pinterest.com/elaineindc/tips-for-teachers-blogs/

RESOURCES FROM OUR FRIENDS AT IDEA PARTNERSHIP

Get the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) dialogue going with the IDEA Partnership's collection.

Need to engage multiple stakeholders in discussions of how to implement the CCSS and how to assess mastery toward them? Use the IDEA Partnership's dialogue guides, which are especially designed to help you engage deeply in the conversation and the work.

http://www.ideapartnership.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1522

IT ALL STARTS IN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES
Multilingual behavior articles for families.

Lots of info for families here on behavior-each of the tip sheets available provides the same content in English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish. Titles include: Five Facts About Behavior; Offering Choices; Transitions; Respond Calmly; Catch Your Child Being Good; and Replacing Challenging Behavior--Teaching Replacement Skills.

http://www.cehd.umn.edu/CEED/events/summerinstitute/2008institute/2008pbsresources/multilingualarticles/multilingualbehaviorarticles.html

Understanding auditory processing disorders in children.

This article from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) sets out to clarify existing confusion about what auditory processing disorders are, so that readers are better able to navigate the jungle of information available on the subject in professional and popular literature today.

http://www.asha.org/public/hearing/disorders/understand-apd-child.htm

Helping your child with AD/HD succeed at school.

School creates multiple challenges for kids with ADD/ADHD, but with patience and an effective plan, your child can thrive in the classroom. As a parent, you can work with your child and his or her teacher to implement practical strategies for learning both inside and out of the classroom. With consistent support, these strategies can help your child meet learning challenges-and be successful at school.

http://helpguide.org/mental/adhd_add_teaching_strategies.htm

THE LITTLE ONES: EARLY INTERVENTION/EARLY CHILDHOOD
How to...The "Challenging Behavior" series.

The Challenging Behaviors Series has been developed to assist teachers and parents in providing the best possible educational opportunities to children with autism spectrum disorders in their home and classroom. Right now, there are 10 fact sheets in the series, including Functional Behavioral Assessment of Young Children and Communicative Alternatives to Challenging Behavior. At the link below, you'll see the series listed on the right.

http://lend.umn.edu/resources/index.asp

Self-guided module: Responsive teaching.

The Self-Guided Learning Module for Responsive Teaching is designed to be used as a self-study in which you can learn at your own pace. This module focuses on specific responsive techniques an adult will use in order to promote a child's exploration of early literacy.

http://earlyliteracylearning.org/responteach1c.php

TACSEI Backpack Connection Series.

The Backpack Connection Series was created by Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI) to provide a way for teachers and parents/caregivers to work together to help young children develop social-emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. Each Backpack Connection handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

http://www.challengingbehavior.org/do/resources/backpack.html

SCHOOLS, K-12
New and improved IRIS Center website!

IRIS produces evidence-based instructional and intervention practices for use in college instruction, professional development activities, and independent learning opportunities for practicing educators. Their Resource Locator offers a wealth of online modules, case studies, and activities. The site itself is gorgeous, and easy to navigate.

http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/

10 brain-based learning laws that trump traditional education.

The fields of cognitive psychology and neuroscience study how the brain takes in, stores, retrieves, and applies information. This article is a fascinating read about "trump cards" in learning -- distilling what science has learned about better and more influential ways of learning.

http://jeffhurtblog.com/2012/01/31/10-brainbased-learning-laws-that-trump-traditional-education/

35 digital tools that work with Bloom's Taxonomy.

Integrating technology in the classroom and engaging students in higher order thinking creates the ultimate learning experience for students. Bloom's Taxonomy and digital tools create an innovative learning environment where students are engaged in their assignments.

http://edudemic.com/2012/11/35-digital-tools-that-work-with-blooms-taxonomy/

27 Tips For Effective Classroom Management

http://www.edudemic.com/2013/07/27-tips-for-effective-classroom-management/

The 200 best special education apps

If you're a special education teacher or are simply looking for an innovative way to reach a student... this is for you. Many apps out there are useful in the classroom, but they're not always easy to find in the clogged-up app store.

http://edudemic.com/2012/02/special-ed-apps/

STATE & SYSTEM TOOLS

School-based programs to reduce bullying and victimization.

This report presents a systematic review and meta-analysis of the effectiveness of programs designed to reduce school bullying. The review follows 26 years of intervention research (from 1983 to the end of May 2009) and makes solid inferences about what works in preventing bullying, for whom, and under what circumstances.

http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/download/718/

District Initiative Inventory

This planning tool can be used to guide the district team's review of past and current programs to get a clear picture of successful strategies, and challenges, along with existing mandates and resource commitments.

http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resources/district-initiative-inventory

IDEA Data Explorer Analytic Tool

This tool provides users with the most recent publicly available state-level IDEA data. The tool may be used to view data trends, generate data reports, copy data into spreadsheets, generate graphics as appropriate to the data selected, and run cross-tabulations using variables collected as part of that data set.

https://www.ideadata.org/DACAnalyticTool/Intro_2.asp

Strategies for successful professional development to support technology integration

What are some of the key requirements for successfully integrating technology into the classroom? Not surprisingly, one requirement is adequate and effective professional development. Read more about research-based ideas for professional development efforts in this article:

http://www.cited.org/index.aspx?page_id=100

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Latest Employment Opportunities Posted on NASET

High School Special Education Teacher

Chicago, Illinois
Job Category: Special Education Teacher

Description:

(Apply online at http://www.applitrack.com/uno/onlineapp/default.aspx)

UNO's educational philosophy is grounded in the principle that the key to student success is the powerful presence of adults in each child's life. Our organization believes in a call to service and a call for service, the type of service that reflects pride, passion, and respect. Because of this, UNO aims to recruit only the most talented, dedicated, and visionary professionals that are capable of creating and cultivating genuine relationships with our key stakeholders; students, parents, and the community.

UNO educators believe in not only establishing the highest expectations for our students, but also taking on the critical responsibility to ensure they are met. To reach this end, we employ strategic evaluative techniques to assess student learning and use this data to drive instructional decision-making. Furthermore, we utilize a variety of instructional methods and interventions in order to ensure that all students achieve mastery of both skills and content knowledge across the curriculum.

UNO educators have urgency for student growth and achievement and rely on our innovation to ensure all students meet the rigorous individual goals set for them. We are results-oriented and regard student learning as the measure of effectiveness of our teaching. Ultimately, we know that we are responsible for the academic and personal growth of our students, and we are willing to do whatever it takes to ensure success. **UNO** teachers are unique in that they realize success is built on relationships. They focus their work on student learning. Furthermore, they whole-heartedly believe that all students can learn and demonstrate that by engaging principles of distributed leadership and distributed counseling. **UNO** ensures that all staff understands that it is our shared responsibility to develop our students, both personally and academically.
Classroom teachers in **UNO** high schools lead the curriculum, instruction, and assessment for students to which they are assigned. They relentlessly pursue student growth and achievement through diligent planning, careful instructional execution, and on-going collaboration with colleagues and the school leadership team.

Requirements:

Education: Bachelor's degree (required), Masters degree (preferred)

Experience: At least one year of teaching experience; co-teaching experience (preferred) • Experience working with children who have been educationally underserved • Strong technology skills and familiarity with electronic IEP systems preferred • Candidate must be able to demonstrate the academic progress of students under his/her leadership and articulate the methods used to achieve those results

Certification: Valid Illinois Type 9, Type 10 or equivalent (required)• ISBE issued LBSI endorsement or equivalent (required) • National Board Teaching Certification (optional)

Benefits:

Salary Commensurate with Experience, Competitive Benefits Package

Apply online at http://www.applitrack.com/uno/onlineapp/default.aspx)
Location: UNO Soccer High School, 5025 S St. Louis Ave, Chicago

Special Education Certified Teachers

Avondale, ARIZONA
Job Category: Special Education 9-12th Grade Teachers Needed

Description:

Agua Fria Union High School District was established in 1955. Today, the district serves the communities of Litchfield, Goodyear, Avondale, Buckeye and part of Glendale with its four high schools. Come be a part of our district, we offer competitive salaries, eligible for health benefits and additional compensation. Visit our website to view our job openings.

Apply at : www.aguafria.org/jobopenings
For questions email: HR@aguafria.org

Minimum Qualifications:

1. A valid Arizona teaching certificate for the position to which the individual is assigned.
2. A valid DPS Fingerprint Clearance Card.
3. Must possess either a Provisional SEI endorsement, a full ESL endorsement, or a full Bilingual endorsement.
4. Must be highly qualified in the core content for the position to which the individual is assigned.

Benefits:

- Eligible for Health Care Benefits
- Competitive Salary Schedule
- Eligible for Additional Compensation for High Needs Position.

Contact:

hr@aguafria.org

Headmaster

Raleigh, North Carolina
Job Category: Head of a private LD school

Description:

The Fletcher Academy: A School of Achievement was founded in 1981 by Dr. Leon Silber as the first school in North Carolina dedicated solely to students with learning differences. For the past decade, under

the excellent leadership of Ms. Junell Blaylock, Fletcher has thrived as a local resource and a national leader in helping exceptional children discover their unique minds and styles of learning.

With Ms. Blaylock's recent announcement that she will retire in June 2014, Southern Teachers Agency has been retained to conduct the search for Fletcher Academy's next Headmaster.

The Headmaster will inherit a unique and effective program, a committed and experienced faculty, and a dedicated board that fully supports Fletcher's mission as an unparalleled, comprehensive private school for students with attention and learning challenges. The new Headmaster will be expected to learn and sustain the Fletcher approach, to continue recruiting and supporting outstanding teachers and staff, to assess needs and provide tools for 21st century learning, and to preserve and enhance the school's very caring, nurturing environment.

Requirements:

As prospective leaders of a closely-knit community, candidates must be approachable, attentive, and clearly committed to students with learning differences. The Headmaster must be organized and creative, knowledgeable about special education, and authentic. Most important, he or she must lead with love, compassion, and a profound desire to help all at Fletcher achieve their very best.

Benefits:

Salary and benefits for this position are above the national median for schools of this type.

Contact:

Interested applicants should submit via email an STA application (available atwww.SouthernTeachers.com), current resume, cover letter list of references, and educational philosophy to

Mr. Jamie Estes
Estes@SouthernTeachers.com.
This position begins in July 2014. For the full position profile, please visitwww.SouthernTeachers.com.

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$125,000 Salary for Master Middle School Teachers!

New York, NY
Job Category: Master Middle School Teacher

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Earn a $125,000 salary and join a team of master teachers at The Equity Project (TEP) Charter School, recently featured on the front page of the New York Times:http://www.tepcharter.org/nytimes.php. TEP is a 480-student 5th through 8th grade middle school in the Washington Heights neighborhood of New York City.

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About TEP Charter School

TEP aims to put into practice the central conclusion of a large body of research related to student achievement: teacher quality is the most important school-based factor in the academic success of students, particularly those from low-income families. In singling out teacher quality as the essential lever in educational reform, TEP is uniquely focused on attracting and retaining master teachers. To do so, TEP uses a three-pronged strategy that it terms the 3 R's: Rigorous Qualifications, Redefined Expectations, & Revolutionary Compensation. For more information, visit us online at http://www.tepcharter.org

Info Session @ TEP
Thinking about applying for a teaching position at TEP? Attend an in-person information session with TEP's Principal, Zeke Vanderhoek. Take a tour of the school, and learn more about the teacher application process and teaching at TEP.
Learn how to RSVP for the event by clicking the following link:http://www.tepcharter.org/session-for-teachers.php

We also have a **Live Online Info Session** too!
Click here for more information: http://www.tepcharter.org/info-session-for-teachers.php

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Upcoming Conferences, Workshops and Events

2013

September

Frames for Change: Approaches for Engaging Youth in School and Community
One-Day Event
September 18, 2013
St. Paul, MN
http://ici.umn.edu/framesforchange/
A free, one-day event to share proven approaches for engaging youth in school and community, including service learning, leadership development, student engagement, youth entrepreneurship, and transition planning. Includes keynote speaker Dr. Martin Brokenleg of Reclaiming Youth International, as well as sessions focused on serving American Indian youth. A limited number of scholarships to the 2-day Check & Connect Training following this event are available to American Indian youth educators (early submissions encouraged). Registration required by September 9, 2013 (September 3 for those applying for scholarship). Sponsored by the Institute on Community Integration, Corporation for National and Community Service, National Youth Leadership Council, American Indian Business Leaders, and Fond du Lac Ojibwe School.

November

2013 "Active Learning Conference" Intervention Strategies For Children With Multiple Special Needs

November 5 & 6, 2013

Holiday Inn – Southgate, Southgate, Michigan

www.penrickton.com

Given the opportunity, any child can learn! Active Learning, an innovative approach developed by Dr. Lilli Nielsen, focuses on establishing motivating learning environments for children with multiple special needs. Join Ms. Patricia Obrzut, M.S., O.T.R/L., as she provides you with this fresh and pioneering approach. Learn how to increase functional independence and developmental skills while reducing stereotypical, self-injurious or aggressive behaviors.

This exciting conference will feature lecture, video and demonstrations. Active Learning equipment and materials will be on display throughout this conference.

Leaders for Life: No Limits – No Boundaries
Conference
November 14, 2013 - November 16, 2013
Williamsburg, VA
http://www.dcdt.org/
The Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) conference, "Leaders for Life: No Limits – No Boundaries" will be held this November. The DCDT webpage includes information about the conference, pre-and-post conference activities, and how to register for the conference.

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Funding Forecast and Award Opportunities

Forecast of Funding Opportunities under the Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs for Fiscal Year 2013
http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html
This document lists virtually all programs and competitions under which the U.S. Department of Education has invited or expects to invite applications for new awards for fiscal year 2014 and provides actual or estimated deadlines for the transmittal of applications under these programs. The lists are in the form of charts organized according to the Department's principal program offices and include programs and competitions previously announced as well as those to be announced at a later date.

FY 2013 Discretionary Grant Application Packages
http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html
This site, from the Department of Education, provides information on grant competitions that are currently open.

Discover: Pathway to Financial Success Grant
http://www.pathwaytofinancialsuccess.org/get-a-grant
Discover is investing up to $10 million in financial education, and any high school can apply for a grant toward a financial education curriculum. Applying schools must have implemented or be looking to implement a financial education curriculum; have a measurement tool planned or in place to assess participation in and comprehension of the financial education curriculum; and agree to share overall results of the measurement tool's pre- and post-curriculum testing with Discover upon the program's completion to assess what worked and what didn't. Maximum award: varies. Eligibility: high schools in the United States. Deadline: none.

Dollar General: Beyond Words Library Disaster Relief
http://www.ala.org/awardsgrants/awards/166/apply
Dollar General, in collaboration with the American Library Association (ALA), the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the National Education Association (NEA), is sponsoring a school library disaster relief fund for public school libraries in the states served by Dollar General. The fund will provide grants to public schools whose school library program has been affected by a disaster. Grants are to replace or supplement books, media and/or library equipment in the school library setting. Maximum award: up to $15,000 to replace or supplement books, media and/or library equipment. Eligibility: public school libraries Pre K-12 located within 20 miles of a Dollar General store, distribution center or corporate office that have lost their building or incurred substantial damage or hardship due to a natural disaster (tornado, earthquake, hurricane, flood, avalanche, mudslide), fire or an act recognized by the federal government as terrorism; or have absorbed a significant number (more than 10% enrollment) of displaced/evacuee students. Deadline: none.

Fender Music Foundation: Grants
http://www.fendermusicfoundation.org/grants/?sec=info
Fender Music Foundation grants of instruments and equipment are awarded to music academies, schools, local music programs and national music programs across America, particularly in-school music classes, in which the students make music; after-school music programs that are not run by the school; and music therapy programs, in which the participants make the music. Maximum award: up to 8 instruments. Eligibility: established, ongoing and sustainable music programs in the United States, which provide music instruction for people of any age who would not otherwise have the opportunity to make music. Deadline: rolling.

AASA: National Superintendent of the Year
http://www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=3404
The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) National Superintendent of the Year Program pays tribute to the talent and vision of the men and women who lead the nation's public schools. Maximum award: recognition; a $10,000 scholarship to a student in the high school from which the National Superintendent of the Year graduated. Eligibility: Any superintendent, chancellor, or top leader of a school system in the United States, Canada, or international school who plans to continue in the profession. Deadline: varies by state.

Kids in Need Foundation Invites Applications for 2013 Teacher Grants Program
http://www.kinf.org/grants/index.php
The Kids In Need Foundation's, Kids In Need program offers Teacher Grants of up to $500 to provide K-12 educators for projects that strengthen creativity, critical thinking skills, and/or core knowledge by engaging students in the learning process. The awards are intended to be used to finance creative classroom projects. The number of grants awarded varies from year to year, depending on the total amount of funds requested. Typically, 300-600 grants are awarded annually. The criteria for applications emphasize innovativeness and merit, clarity of objectives, replication feasibility, suitability of evaluation methods, and cost effectiveness. All certified K-12 teachers in the United States are eligible. Deadline: September 30, 2013.

P. Buckley Moss Foundation: Grants for Teachers of Children Who Learn Differently
http://www.mossfoundation.org/national-educators-grants-0
P. Buckley Moss Foundation Education Grants aid and support teachers who wish to establish an effective learning tool using the arts in teaching children with learning disabilities and other special needs. Maximum award: $1,000. Eligibility: new or evolving programs that integrate the arts into educational programming. Deadline: September 30, 2013.

Foundation for Technology and Engineering Educators Invites Applications
http://www.iteea.org/Awards/granthearlihy.htm
The Foundation for Technology and Engineering Educators, in partnership with Pitsco/Hearlihy & Company, is accepting applications for technology and engineering education programs at any grade level. Through its Excellence in Teaching Technology and Engineering grant program, the foundation will award grants of $2,000 each to K-12 technology and engineering teachers to encourage the integration of a quality technology and engineering education program within their school's curriculum. Applicants must be teachers (elementary or secondary) who are successfully integrating technology and engineering education within their school's curriculum. In addition, teachers must be ITEEA members and be registered for the ITEEA annual conference. Membership materials may be enclosed with the scholarship application. Deadline for applications: December 1, 2013.

Lexus and Scholastic Launch Seventh Annual Environmental Contest for Middle and High School Students
http://lexus.scholastic.com/
The Lexus Eco Challenge will award a total of $500,000 in grants and scholarships to inspire and empower middle and high school students in the United States to learn about the environment and take action to improve it. The program is designed to inspire and empower middle and high school students to learn about the environment and take action to improve it. Eligibility: middle and high school teams comprised of 5-10 students and one teacher advisor. Deadline: Challenge One (Land/Water) – October 7, 2013; Challenge Two (Air/Climate) – November 11, 2013. The 32 finalist teams will be eligible to submit entries for Challenge Three (Final Challenge), with a deadline of January 17, 2014.

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An In-Depth Look at RtI: Using Current Research to Examine Its Effectiveness and Areas for Growth

Eilyn Sanabria

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Abstract

Response to Intervention, commonly known as "RTI," is a method for helping struggling learners in the general education environment *before* they fail and face special education referral and placement. Although a fairly new model, RtI promises to decrease the number of students being referred to special education services and is already being implemented effectively in some schools around the country. However, issues such as the changing roles of general education teachers and school psychologists, as well as its implementation in the Juvenile Justice System, impact the effectiveness of this intervention model. Also, its effectiveness, or lack thereof, on improving the scores of struggling students on standardized assessment instruments is also being questioned by some researchers. This paper will use current research to examine these issues in an effort to provide the reader with an in-depth analysis on the effectiveness and areas for growth of this special education service model.

The way schools meet the learning and behavioral needs of students have changed dramatically over the years. Historically, struggling students who were referred for special education services were automatically tested and, if not eligible for special education services, these students would go back into the general education classroom without any further support for their learning and/or behavioral issues. The implementation of Response to Intervention (RtI) has drastically changed the way students are referred for special education services, as well as how struggling students who do not qualify for these services are being supported in the general education classroom setting. One of the main goals of RtI is for teachers to be able to assist struggling learners *before* they fail and face special education referral and placement. This allows teachers to provide strategies and support to struggling students immediately without having to wait for special education eligibility. Response to Intervention is comprised of three tiers, the first one being general instruction and assessment, the second one being supplementary instruction and assessment, and the last and third tier being specialized instruction and assessment. Since the goal is to be able to provide students with the strategies and specialized instruction they need within the general education classroom, students must move through the tiers until they are making adequate progress and their specific learning and/or behavioral needs have been identified and met. The rationale behind this model is that all students are capable of learning when given the appropriate strategies and resources according to their specific learning and behavioral needs (McDaniel, Heil, Houchins, & Duchaine, 2011).

Although RtI is being effectively implemented in many schools around the country, research shows that it takes approximately three to five years to fully implement this program in a school (Dulaney, 2010). With this in mind, there are also many issues that affect and/or delay the appropriate implementation of RtI in schools, such as redefining the role of general education teachers and school psychologists.

Furthermore, the implementation of RtI in the Juvenile Justice School population is also a somewhat "forgotten" critical issue since approximately thirty-five percent of incarcerated students have a disability (McDaniel et al., 2011). Lastly, the effectiveness of RtI interventions and its impact on standardized assessment scores is also being questioned, thus leaving room for different perspectives on how to best meet the diverse needs of our student population. These issues, among many others, play a major role in the quality of education we provide our (perhaps) most vulnerable students.

The effective implementation of RtI in schools requires that teachers and administrators work collaboratively to ensure that at-risk students are being appropriately and effectively assessed in order to give them the necessary accommodations and/or services to help them succeed in school. A qualitative study conducted in Cedar Middle School, Utah, by Dulaney (2010) shows the importance of collaboration in order to effectively implement RtI. The staff at this school saw the need for a "common purpose" in order to be able to serve the needs of these at-risk students. Aside from Cedar Middle School, the idea of a "common purpose" is also crucial in co-teaching learning environments, where *both* teachers *must* have a common purpose in order to effectively meet the learning and behavioral needs of their struggling students. Furthermore, Dulaney (2010) discusses that the staff at this school wanted to adopt RtI because of its focus on data collection, its regular progress monitoring and its systematic problem-solving team approach. Although the implementation of the RtI service delivery model has been proven to be effective in secondary schools (Epler-Brooks, 2011), the need still exists for individual schools to develop an individualized implementation plan in accordance with their available resources and their student population, which is what Cedar Middle School succeeded in doing through collaborative efforts amongst the teachers and administration. In secondary schools, particularly, the effective implementation of RtI in the general education classroom setting can aid in reducing dropout rates since it will decrease the marginalization or "pull out" of students. Lastly, the increased focus on data analysis can also aid teachers in better preparing their students for college, which is a national concern nowadays due to the large number of students graduating high school who need to take remedial courses prior to enrolling in regular college-credit coursework.

Although some schools across our nation are excelling at implementing RtI, many issues still affect its effective implementation in *all* schools. One of the major issues affecting the implementation of RtI in all schools is the role of the general education teacher, which has been redefined with the adoption of RtI. Since RtI requires that most interventions be done in the general education classroom, general education teachers must now be knowledgeable of strategies, accommodations, and the RtI delivery service model in order to help their students succeed in the general education learning environment, thus adding additional responsibilities for the general education teacher (Benjamin, 2011). A qualitative study (Benjamin, 2011) on the attitudes of three general education teachers towards RtI revealed that teachers' personal influences affect the implementation of RtI in the general education classroom setting. The three general education teachers that participated in this study discussed how they felt that RtI was holding them accountable for "...documenting and addressing learning difficulties in the general education classroom (Benjamin, 2011, p.103)." The positive or negative attitudes from general education teachers toward these additional responsibilities and accountability measures can impact their involvement in the RtI process, thus affecting the services and interventions struggling students receive within the general education classroom. A key to avoiding this is that administration and support personnel provide general education teachers with the necessary resources to carry out appropriate interventions within their classroom. This will result in a decrease in special education referrals, a change in instructional practices by the general education teacher, and an increase in student performance (Dupuis, 2010).

Aside from general education teachers, the role of school psychologists has also been impacted by the implementation of RtI. Even though RtI began as a special education initiative, it has now changed to an initiative to meet the learning and behavioral needs of all students, including gifted students, thus dramatically impacting the role of the school psychologist, who deals with both special education and gifted students (King, Coleman, & Miller, 2011). Although including gifted students in the RtI movement is fairly new, the goal is to recognize students' strengths and/or to support them in the areas in which they are struggling.

The school psychologist plays a major role in this as he/she is at the head of this intervention and serves as the "go-to person" for administrators, teachers, and parents. King et al., (2011), discuss how school psychologists play a major role in identifying and supporting students who are "twice-exceptional" and how this role has changed with the implementation of RtI. However, most of the psychologists who participated in a study conducted by Kristen Mike (2010) "…agreed that RtI should not be the sole criteria for determining a learning disability," thus emphasizing other essential components of learning and instruction, such as evaluation of strategies and interventions being used. Furthermore, since RtI encourages and focuses intervention within the general education classroom, the role of school psychologists has changed from gatekeeping to intervention and nurturing (King, et al., 2011), thus making them responsible for informing and helping teachers to find appropriate strategies even if the student does not qualify for special education services. This makes a tremendous difference in the number of students who are referred for special education services each school year and allows schools to continue inclusion practices while at the same time providing individualized instruction to at-risk students.

Much emphasis is being placed on the implementation of RtI in regular elementary and secondary schools. However, many fail to think about the student population in our Juvenile Justice School system and how RtI will impact their learning. Although these students are incarcerated, many still view it as society's responsibility to see that they are provided with an appropriate education. McDaniel et al., (2011) discusses the importance of identifying students with disabilities in the Juvenile Justice System in order to provide them with the appropriate educational services they need, since thirty-five percent of our incarcerated juvenile population has a disability. Although the end goal of implementing RtI in a Juvenile Justice facility is the same as the end goal of implementing it in an elementary, middle, or high school, there are different aspects that must be considered when implementing RtI in a Juvenile Justice facility, such as security, mental health, transitions, and housing. For this, McDaniel et al., (2011) propose a "…twenty-four hour multidisciplinary approach" that encompasses all of these components, among others. Furthermore, McDaniel et al., (2011) emphasize the importance of involving all members of the multidisciplinary team (administration, teachers, support staff, parents, etc.) in the implementation of RtI so that they all work collaboratively to meet the needs of these students. This, however, also applies to the student population within our public schools, where every stakeholder, including parents, must work together to meet the individual needs of *all* of the students. The goal of implementing RtI in our Juvenile Justice facilities is to "…foster a rehabilitative community for the incarcerated youth (McDaniel et al., 2011)," which sometimes our society tends to neglect.

Another goal of RtI is to improve students' and schools' performance on standardized assessments through the implementation of data-driven instruction targeting specific skills and students. However, many administrators and educators remain skeptical about its effectiveness. Weaver (2011) revealed that the RtI process in reading instruction did not benefit second grade students on standardized test district percentiles. Moreover, third grade students who received RtI instruction in reading had a negative impact on their standardized test district percentiles. The researcher attributes this, perhaps, to the students not receiving intervention at an earlier grade, which emphasizes the importance of early intervention in the primary grades. Although these data might seem disconcerting, additional research needs to be done in this field, since the implementation of RtI is fairly new and there has not been enough time to conduct a longitudinal study to examine its long-term effect on standardized assessment scores.

Response to Intervention, when implemented effectively, will especially benefit those students who are falling "between the cracks" and do not yet qualify for special education services although they are struggling. When implemented effectively, it can help teachers target instruction accordingly and identify at-risk students. However, perhaps the biggest problem with the implementation of RtI (and why so many schools are failing at it) is that the majority of the general education teachers are not, or have not been, prepared to implement it effectively. These are the teachers that have these at-risk students, which is why many of these students have gone, and continue going, unnoticed through our educational system. However, it may be difficult to say how much of this unpreparedness is due to teacher negative attitudes towards RtI and how much of it is due to lack of district and/or school support for these teachers.

It is too early to say whether RtI will be effective in the long-run however, we can all agree, as a nation, that our educational referral and special education systems were in need of a reform that decreased the amount of students being referred to special education services, especially when many of these interventions can be done within the general education learning environment, if provided appropriate support and resources to do so.

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