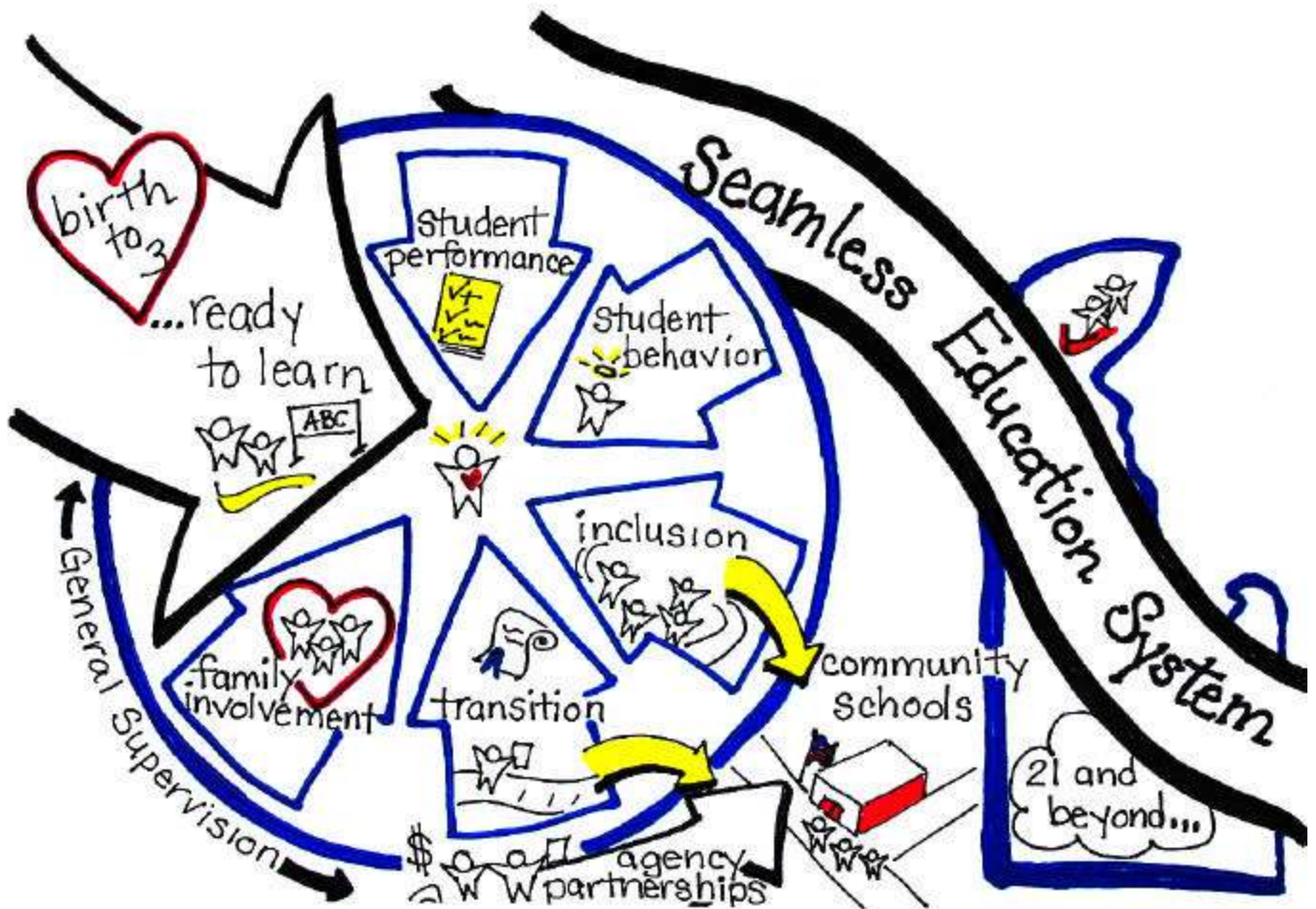


Special Education Services In The First State

Second Annual Report of the State Improvement Plan 2002 - 2003

Executive Summary



Exceptional Children and Early Childhood Group
Curriculum and Instructional Improvement Branch
Delaware Department of Education

September 2003

The “*Special Education in the First State*” cover illustrates Delaware’s *Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH)* to the future for children with disabilities. The vision was developed by stakeholders as the first step in creating the State Improvement Plan. Special thanks go to Vicki Spence, Educational Diagnostician at Leach School in the Colonial School District for the design of Delaware’s vision.

Introduction

Delaware's commitment to the concept of "Continuous Improvement" represents unity of stakeholders across our state. Delaware is committed to implementing school reform initiatives that lead to improved student results for all children. The state's report, *"Special Education Services in the First State"*, *Second Annual Report of the State Improvement Plan 2002 – 2003* reflects its commitment.

The Partners' Council for Children with Disabilities (PCCD) in collaboration with staff from the Delaware Department of Education developed Delaware's State Improvement Plan (SIP). Seven priority areas were selected and ranked by the PCCD. Targets and benchmarks have been set by the PCCD for some priority areas and related indicators.

The priority areas in rank order are to:

1. Improve student performance;
2. Increase student placement in the least restrictive environment;
3. Improve student behavior;
4. Increase family involvement;
5. Increase student completion of high school;
6. Improve general supervision; and
7. Improve availability of family friendly information.

These goals are aligned with Delaware's Biennial Performance Report, the State Improvement Grant, and the goals adopted by the Delaware State Board of Education through the Delaware Content Standards.

"Special Education Services in the First State" focuses on results for children receiving special education services in our schools and serves as a mechanism to annually reflect to our stakeholders, the progress made and continuous improvement needed. Additional information pertaining to each priority area can be found in the full report.

The executive summary and full report can be obtained at:

http://www.doe.state.de.us/exceptional_child/ececehome.htm

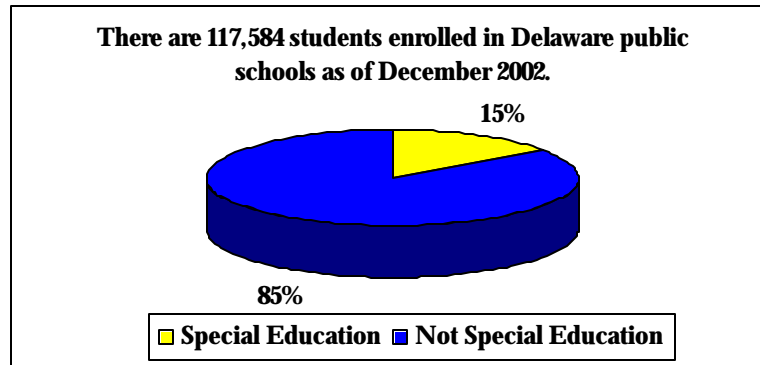
Requests for copies can be addressed to:

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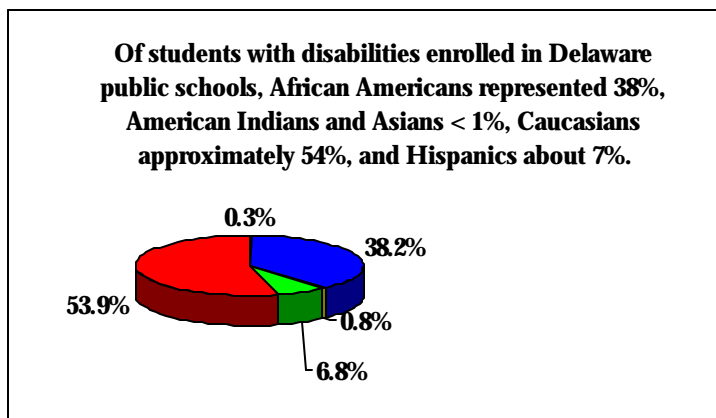
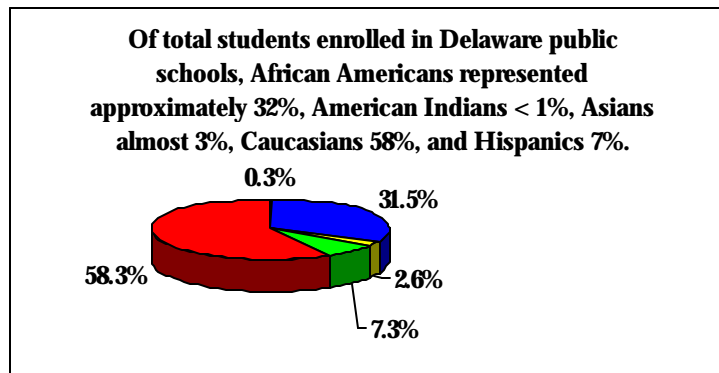
Statewide Enrollment Demographics

Delaware's 19 school districts and 11 charter schools enrolled 117,584 students as of December 2002. The December 2002, Child Count Report submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) indicated 17,817 students with disabilities ages 3 – 21 being served in Delaware. This is approximately 15% of the total number of students enrolled in Delaware public schools.



The charts below show data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, representing total students enrolled and students with disabilities enrolled in Delaware public schools as of December 2002.

- African American
- American Indian
- Asian
- Caucasian
- Hispanic



- African American
- American Indian
- Asian
- Caucasian
- Hispanic

Priority Area One: Improve Student Performance

Indicator A: Increase the percentage of children with disabilities participating in the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) with no accommodations, with accommodations, and on the Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment (DAPA).

Targets and Benchmarks – Indicator A

The participation rate for students with disabilities in all grades is targeted at 100% which is aligned with the state's definition of participation rate as included in Delaware's approved school and district accountability plan.

Present Levels of Performance – Indicator A

Assessments are made available for all Delaware students. Students with disabilities participate in the DSTP unless included in the DAPA. In March, 2003 DSTP-1 reading, mathematics, and writing was administered to all students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 10. Students with disabilities at grades 3, 5, and 8 participated at a rate of approximately 98% and above; a consistent increase from previous years. Grade 10 students' participation increased at an average over 7% across the three years.

Students with Disabilities Participating in Spring Administrations of the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP)				
Year	Grade 3	Grade 5	Grade 8	Grade 10
2003 Reading	99.6%	99.7%	98.9%	96.1%
2003 Mathematics	99.7%	99.7%	98.5%	95.5%
2003 Writing	99.7%	99.5%	98.4%	94.9%
2002 Reading	98.6%	98.4%	97.0%	94.8%
2002 Mathematics	98.8%	98.5%	97.1%	94.1%
2002 Writing	97.0%	99.0%	97.4%	94.9%
2001 Reading	97.7%	98.0%	95.1%	88.3%
2001 Mathematics	97.7%	98.0%	95.1%	88.3%
2001 Writing	97.7%	98.0%	95.1%	88.3%

Students included in the 2003 DAPA at grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 are shown on the following page. These students participated at a rate of 91% and above; a decrease from 93% and above in 2002. It is difficult to make interpretations due to the small sample size of students which may skew results.

Students with Disabilities Participating in the Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment (DAPA)				
Year	Grade 3	Grade 5	Grade 8	Grade 10
2003	98.7%	96.7%	91.0%	93.2%
2002	100.0%	100.0%	93.5%	98.2%
2001	100.0%	95.8%	90.0%	98.5%

Indicator B: Increase the percentage of children with disabilities meeting the standards.

Targets and Benchmarks – Indicator B

The PCCD set the following targets and benchmarks for reading and mathematics:

- ▲ By 2005, children with disabilities meeting/exceeding the reading standards will be targeted at approximately 56% in grade 3, 35% in grade 5, 28% in grade 8, and 23% in grade 10. Approved benchmarks indicate that the percentage of children with disabilities meeting/exceeding the reading standards will increase per year by 6% in grade 3, 4% in grade 5, 3% in grade 8, and 3% in grade 10 to the targeted percentage for each grade by 2005, with a two year progress check point in 2003.
- ▲ By 2005, children with disabilities meeting/exceeding the mathematics standards will be targeted at approximately 51% in grade 3, 41% in grade 5, 13% in grade 8, and 12% in grade 10. Approved benchmarks indicate that the percentage of children with disabilities meeting/exceeding the mathematics standards will increase per year by 6% in grade 3, 6% in grade 5, 2% in grade 8, and 2% in grade 10 to the targeted percentage for each grade by 2005, with a two year progress check point in 2003.

DSTP writing performance targets and benchmarks for children with disabilities at grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 were not set by the PCCD during 2002 – 2003. The group is still gathering information to determine if fair benchmarks can be set for this test.

In 2003 – 2004 the PCCD will be charged with establishing new targets and benchmarks for English language arts and mathematics which will align with the state's targets and annual benchmarks as included in Delaware's approved school and district accountability plan.

Present Levels of Performance – Indicator B

Students with disabilities are performing primarily below the standard at all grade levels on the DSTP reading, mathematics, and writing; however, across 2001 - 2003, data generally indicate an increase in the percentage of students with disabilities with a valid score, meeting/exceeding the standard at all grade levels. Results from the 2001, 2002, and 2003 administrations of the DSTP are presented on pages 4 – 7. The charts represent **all** students: those tested under regular conditions and those tested with accommodations.

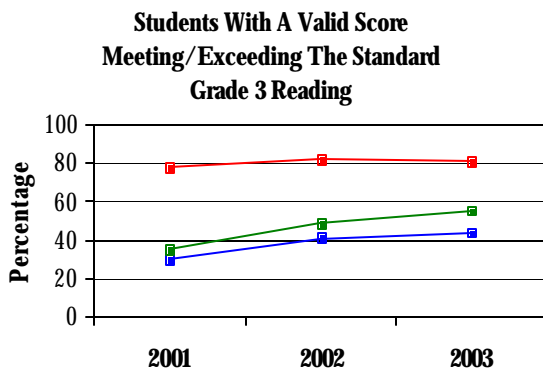
Students tested with accommodations that did not interfere with the comparability of their scores to the scores of students tested under regular conditions are included (aggregated) in the school, district, and state test results in the *DSTP State Summary Report* and the *DSTP On-Line Reports*. Students tested with accommodations that interfered with the comparability of their scores to the scores of students tested under regular conditions were not included (non-aggregated) in the school, district, and state test results in the *DSTP State Summary Report* and the *DSTP On-Line Reports*, however, **all** students receive an individual score report.

When making interpretations of data across the three years of the DSTP, note that these data represent different groups of students at each grade level, and this should be considered when measuring progress or a lack thereof.

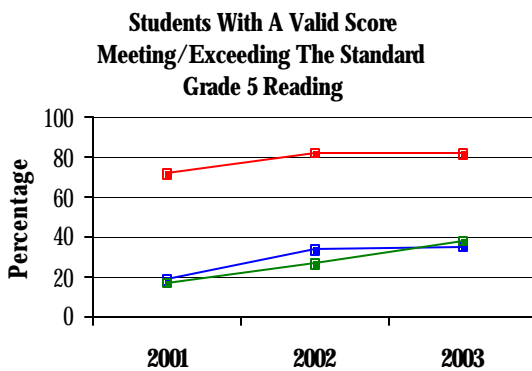
Scores for **all** students with disabilities (DSTP/DAPA) with a valid score are included as earned in the state’s district, school, and student accountability indices. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) ratings for Delaware schools and districts were released in August, 2003 and can be viewed in the “*Special Education Services in the First State*”, *Second Annual Report of the State Improvement Plan 2002 – 2003* full report.

Reading:

■ Not Special Education ■ Special Education – Aggregated ■ Special Education – Non-Aggregated



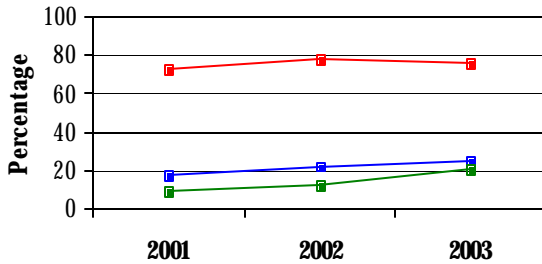
Target: 56% meeting/exceeding by 2005						
Benchmark: 6% increase per year to target year 2005						
	N	2001	N	2002	N	2003
■	7760	77.73%	7788	82.06%	7758	81.44%
■	634	29.81%	577	42.11%	471	44.16%
■	388	35.16%	481	48.03%	627	55.74%



Target: 35% meeting/exceeding by 2005						
Benchmark: 4% increase per year to target year 2005						
	N	2001	N	2002	N	2003
■	7234	72.48%	7469	82.57%	7593	82.26%
■	832	18.99%	776	33.89%	664	35.39%
■	387	17.27%	374	26.95%	588	38.69%

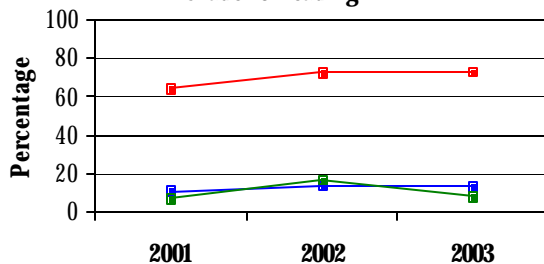
■ Not Special Education ■ Special Education – Aggregated ■ Special Education – Non-Aggregated

**Students With A Valid Score
Meeting/Exceeding The Standard
Grade 8 Reading**



Target: 28% meeting/exceeding by 2005						
Benchmark: 3% increase per year to target year 2005						
	N	2001	N	2002	N	2003
■	7346	72.79%	7737	78.08%	8056	75.62%
■	994	17.51%	1030	22.04%	1062	25.52%
■	262	9.36%	232	12.63%	459	21.07%

**Students With A Valid Score
Meeting/Exceeding The Standard
Grade 10 Reading**



Target: 23% meeting/exceeding by 2005						
Benchmark: 3% increase per year to target year 2005						
	N	2001	N	2002	N	2003
■	7070	64.31%	7011	72.89%	6717	73.05%
■	687	11.06%	862	13.92%	809	13.10%
■	156	7.19%	161	16.95%	147	8.01%

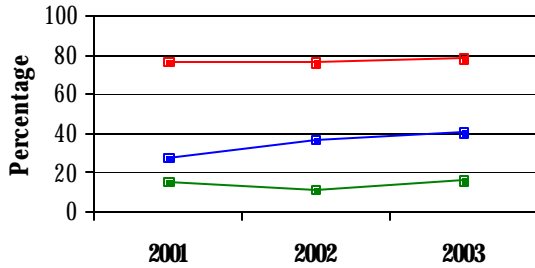
State and Federal Initiatives

The reading focus of the State Improvement Plan is underway. Twelve Reading First Schools are completing the initial training and will be fully operational at the start of the 2003 – 2004 school year. Planning efforts are underway for early literacy and reading/writing supports for grades four through twelve. This year an added focus will be on the concept of universal design for learning and other strategies to ensure students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum.

Mathematics:

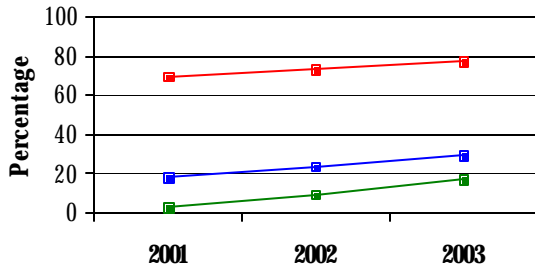
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**Students With A Valid Score
Meeting/Exceeding The Standard
Grade 3 Mathematics**



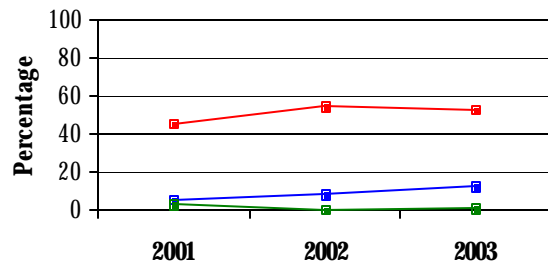
Target: 51% meeting/exceeding by 2005						
Benchmark: 6% increase per year to target year 2005						
	<u>N</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2003</u>
■	7770	76.60%	7781	76.39%	7797	77.91%
■	941	27.74%	971	37.18%	1021	40.65%
■	82	15.85%	91	11.46%	81	16.05%

**Students With A Valid Score
Meeting/Exceeding The Standard
Grade 5 Mathematics**



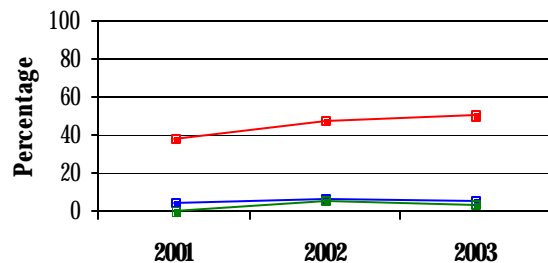
Target: 41% meeting/exceeding by 2005						
Benchmark: 6% increase per year to target year 2005						
	<u>N</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2003</u>
■	7244	69.27%	7484	73.38%	7609	77.32%
■	1159	18.03%	1069	23.76%	1156	29.33%
■	59	3.39%	82	9.62%	95	17.33%

**Students With A Valid Score
Meeting/Exceeding The Standard
Grade 8 Mathematics**



Target: 13% meeting/exceeding by 2005						
Benchmark: 2% increase per year to target year 2005						
	<u>N</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2003</u>
■	7323	45.76%	7687	54.09%	8068	53.26%
■	1183	5.58%	1158	8.12%	1400	12.14%
■	69	2.90%	102	0.47%	120	0.83%

**Students With A Valid Score
Meeting/Exceeding The Standard
Grade 10 Mathematics**

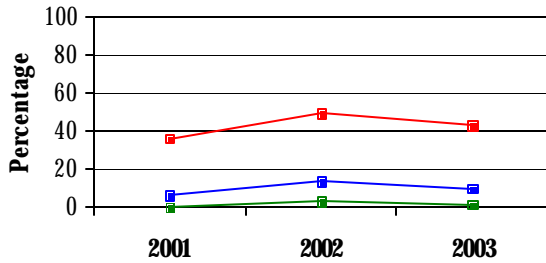


Target: 12% meeting/exceeding by 2005						
Benchmark: 2% increase per year to target year 2005						
	<u>N</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2003</u>
■	7028	38.15%	6984	47.82%	6697	50.40%
■	781	4.74%	908	6.72%	874	5.49%
■	50	0.00%	97	5.43%	85	3.53%

Writing:

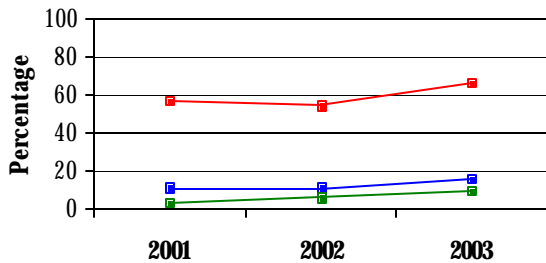
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**Students With A Valid Score
Meeting/Exceeding The Standard
Grade 3 Writing**



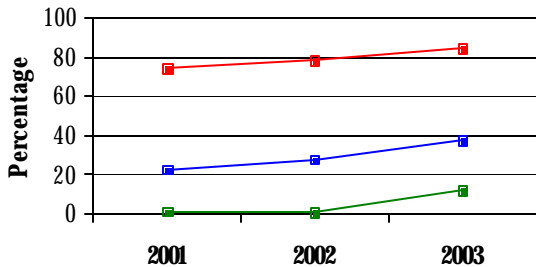
	<u>N</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2003</u>
■	7775	35.94%	7803	49.51%	7769	42.94%
■	924	6.49%	954	13.73%	1007	9.73%
■	56	0.00%	65	3.08%	83	1.61%

**Students With A Valid Score
Meeting/Exceeding The Standard
Grade 5 Writing**



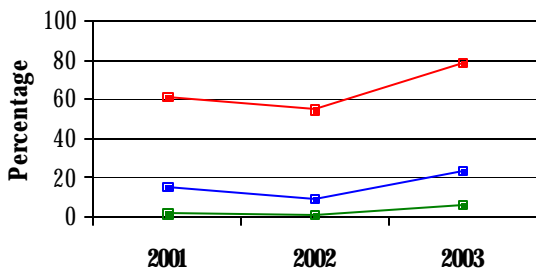
	<u>N</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2003</u>
■	7253	57.16%	7488	54.77%	7609	66.63%
■	1170	11.03%	1080	11.30%	1152	16.15%
■	56	3.58%	79	6.33%	93	10.18%

**Students With A Valid Score
Meeting/Exceeding The Standard
Grade 8 Writing**



	<u>N</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2003</u>
■	7371	74.48%	7769	78.36%	8062	84.66%
■	1196	22.83%	1176	27.64%	1382	37.48%
■	68	1.47%	89	1.13%	118	12.01%

**Students With A Valid Score
Meeting/Exceeding The Standard
Grade 10 Writing**



	<u>N</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>2003</u>
■	7132	61.68%	7057	54.63%	6740	78.87%
■	795	15.60%	940	9.57%	879	23.78%
■	51	1.96%	78	1.28%	80	6.42%

Priority Area Two: Increase Student Placement in the LRE

Indicator A: There will be an increase in the number of students with disabilities effectively included in the general education classroom and participating with their non-disabled peers. (Compliance Issue)

Indicator B: New school building plans include classrooms that are inclusive and facilities that are fully accessible.

Indicator C: Measure impact of student placement on individual student outcomes

Targets and Benchmarks – Indicator A

By 2003, the number of preschoolers in an Early Childhood Special Education Setting will decrease to 19%; a decrease by 1% per year to 19% in target year 2003.

By 2005, the number of students with disabilities ages 6 – 21:

- in general education classes greater than 80% of the day will increase to 47%; an increase by 3% per year to 47% in target year 2005, with a two year progress check point in 2003.
- in separate settings will decrease to 3%; a decrease by 0.5% per year to 3% in target year 2005, with a two year progress check point in 2003.

Targets and Benchmarks – Indicator B

This is an indicator in process. Targets and benchmarks will be established as development and implementation progress.

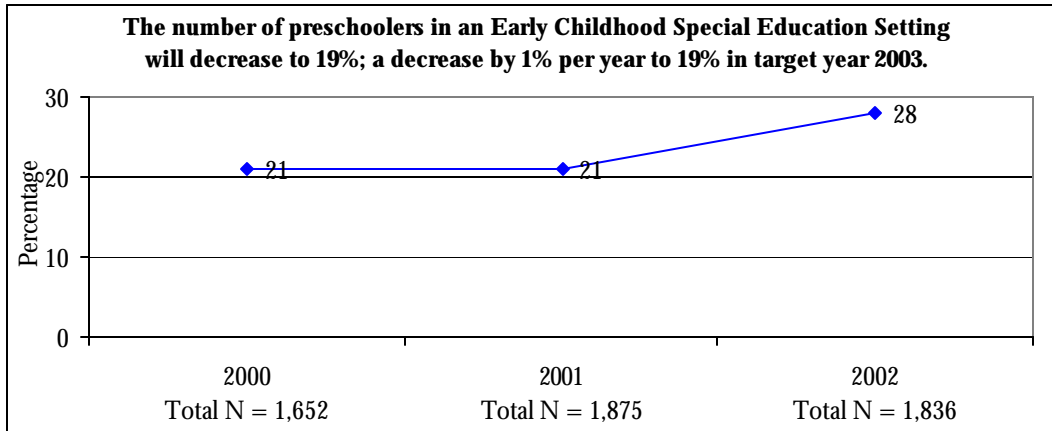
Targets and Benchmarks – Indicator C

Once baseline data are available the LRE Subcommittee will make recommendations to the PCCD in order to make data-based decisions and set appropriate targets and benchmarks for this indicator.

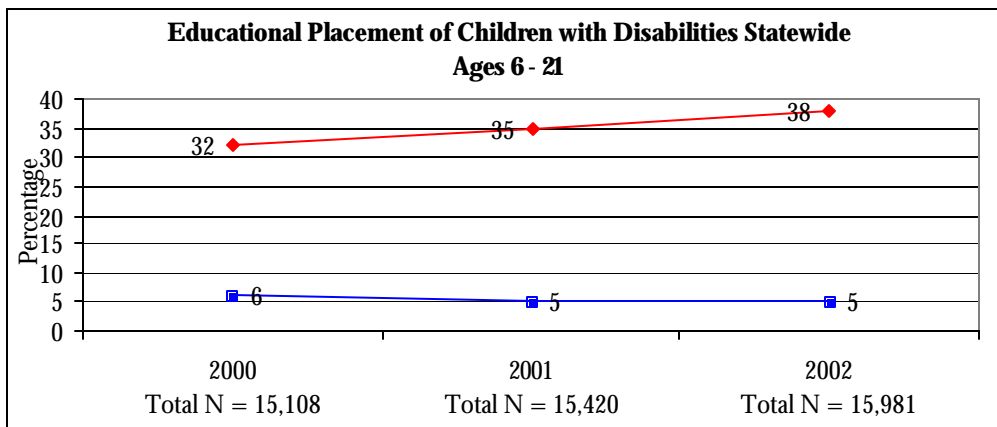
Present Levels of Performance – Indicator A

The charts on the following page show statewide, educational placement data for children with disabilities served in Delaware. As indicated in the first chart, children served in the Early Childhood Special Education Setting in 2002 – 2003 represented 28% of 3 – 5 year olds, a increase of 7% from the previous school year. This increase is primarily a result of several district's self-assessment findings. The findings were directly related to inconsistencies in data collection and reporting definitions at the district-level. These districts have identified the inconsistencies as an area for improvement and strategies for improvement were established in their improvement plans.

Nationally approximately 46% of students with disabilities ages 6 – 21 receive special education services in the regular class 80% or more of the day, as reported in 2000 – 2001. During this same time, Delaware served about 32%. Students served in the regular class remain well below the current national average; however, more recent data shown in the second chart indicate a minimal, but consistent increase in the number of students with disabilities effectively included in the general education classroom and participating with their non-disabled peers.



- In the Regular Class > 80% of the Day
- Special Education in Other Separate Settings



Present Levels of Performance – Indicator B

Delaware’s Administration Services is developing New Construction Standards. The Department of Education will use these standards from which to build their New School Construction Standards. The Inclusive Schools Initiative Subcommittee is currently collecting data regarding acoustics; lighting; electricity; telecommunications; physical access; transportation; and curriculum, supplies, and books from a variety of persons working in the building with students with disabilities. The findings will be synthesized and communicated with the School Construction program at DOE for incorporation into the New Construction Standards.

Present Levels of Performance – Indicator C

The University of Delaware, Center for Disabilities Studies is conducting a study following a cohort of students through the fifth grade to determine effects of placement on student assessment results. The findings will be available early in the 2003-2004 school year.

The Delaware Inclusive Schools Initiative

The Delaware Department of Education established the Inclusion Project in 1996 with the intent to provide the means for appropriately serving children with disabilities in quality inclusive settings whenever and wherever possible. During the 2002-2003 school year the name changed from the Delaware Inclusion Project to the Delaware Inclusive Schools Initiative. The focus expanded from students with significant cognitive and sensory disabilities to all students with disabilities. The purpose of this initiative is to promote meaningful inclusion for toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.

Vision

All students with disabilities will have the opportunity to participate in the general education curriculum and activities within regular education settings with their peers. The vision is that this inclusive environment will lead to positive social and educational outcomes for all students.

Goal

Students will attend schools and classes with their neighborhood peers. In order to facilitate this change, the project focuses on:

- Raising awareness levels of teachers, parents, students, and administrators of the benefits and possibilities to be achieved by including students with disabilities in the general education curriculum and activities within the regular educational setting;
- Enhancing the skills of teachers in providing accommodations and modifications of the curriculum, setting, and material to meet student needs;
- Facilitating regular and special education staff cooperation and collaboration through joint planning and teaching;
- Developing program configurations that facilitate the integration of children with disabilities into age appropriate classrooms with their typical peers; and
- Developing a cadre of trained teachers and administrators who will, in turn, share their knowledge and skills with others.

Priority Area Three: Improve Student Behavior

Indicator A: The percentage of children with disabilities receiving long-term suspensions or expulsions will decrease.

Indicator B: The number of days children with disabilities are suspended will decrease.

Indicator C: The percentage of children with disabilities committing Title 14, Delaware Code §4112 incidents will decrease.

Targets and Benchmarks – Indicators A, B, & C

Targets and benchmarks will be set by the PCCD in 2003 – 2004; which are aligned with “No Child Left Behind”.

Present Levels of Performance – Indicators A, B, and C

While all of our stakeholders agree addressing challenging behavior is an important issue, there have been reporting issues surrounding regulations for student conduct, suspensions, and expulsions. Because of the inconsistencies in the data, there are no benchmarks currently set for this priority area. DOE has created a data reporting system to ensure accuracy of these data. These data will be used to set benchmarks in the fall 2003, with the PCCD. Data reported to OSEP in 2001 – 2002, are shown in the tables below and on the following page. These data will serve as the baseline year for Indicator A. The baseline year for Indicators B and C is based on 2002 – 2003 data. These data will be available in the fall 2003, and incorporated into the 2003 – 2004 State Improvement Plan.

Children with Disabilities Ages 3-21	Number and Percentage of Children Removed to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting by School Personnel and Number of Removals for Drugs and Weapons		
	Unduplicated Count and Percentage of Children By Disability N = 152	Number and Percentage of Unilateral Removals by School Personnel for Drugs By Disability N = 108	Number and Percentage of Unilateral Removals by School Personnel for Weapons By Disability N = 100
Mental Retardation	11.8%	10.2%	14%
Emotional Disturbance	9.9%	14.8%	10%
Orthopedic Impairments	8.6%	11.1%	5%
Specific Learning Disabilities	65.8%	59.3%	70%

*Only disabilities with the largest number reported are shown in the table.

Children with Disabilities Ages 3-21	Number and Percentage of Children Suspended or Expelled > 10 Days and Number Percentage of Out-of-School Suspension/Expulsions		
Disability*	Unduplicated Count and Percentage of Children By Disability N = 408	Number and Percentage of Single Suspension/Expulsions > 10 Days By Disability N = 17	Number and Percentage of Children with Multiple Suspension/Expulsions Summing to > 10 Days By Disability N = 397
Mental Retardation	14.5%	5.9%	14.9%
Emotional Disturbance	12.3%	0.0%	12.6%
Orthopedic Impairments	9.8%	11.8%	9.8%
Specific Learning Disabilities	62.3%	82.4%	61.5%

*Only disabilities with the largest number reported are shown in the table.

Delaware Positive Behavior Support Initiative

The Delaware Positive Behavior Support Training Initiative is a collaborative project with the Delaware Department of Education, the University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies, and Delaware's Public Schools. The systems change goal of the Delaware Positive Behavior Support Initiative is to have every teacher and administrator in every school district in the state knowledgeable about and engaged in the use of Positive Behavior Supports as a means to enhance the learning of every student.

The Positive Behavior Support Initiative (PBS) has been working with schools to gather multiple sources and types of information related to improving student behavior. An evaluation comparing the improvement of PBS schools to non-PBS schools across numerous indicators (e.g., change in the number of suspensions/expulsions, attendance rates) is underway. During the spring of 2003, data were collected from a sample of schools using the School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) (Sugai, Lewis-Palmer, Todd and Horner, 2001). The SET results can be used to determine which features of PBS are in place, set annual goals, design and revise procedures, and compare year to year efforts. The SET is conducted by outside evaluators who, through interviews of staff/students and document review, determine a score across numerous domains. The report will be available during the fall 2003.

To emphasize the hard work of our first exemplary PBS schools, DOE recognized Harlan Elementary, Brandywine School District and North Laurel Elementary, Laurel School District as “Superstars in PBS” and presented each school with a banner. These Superstar Schools were able to reduce the number of office referrals and suspensions. Because of the growing awareness of the effects of PBS in these schools, the number of schools implementing school-wide PBS expanded from 2 to 12 in full implementation with 4 other schools at various levels.



From left: Martha Brooks from DE Department of Education; Jeff Roth, Anne Eitelman, and Ann Hilkert, from the Brandywine School District



From left: Brian Touchette from DE Department of Education; Gail Fowler and Cristy Greaves from the Laurel School District; and Martha Brooks from DE Department of Education

Priority Area Four: Increase Family Involvement

Indicator A: The percentage of families satisfied with their child’s education will increase.

Indicator B: The percentage of families (youth) responding they were actively involved in decision-making will increase.

Indicator C: The percentage of families (youth) responding they were treated with courtesy and respect will increase.

Indicator D: The percentage of families satisfied with their child’s placement will increase.

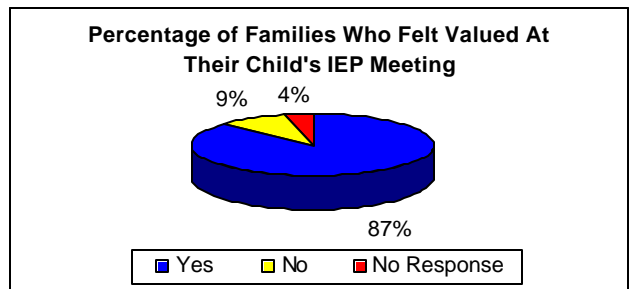
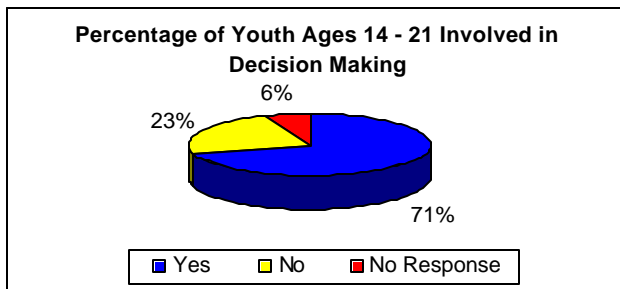
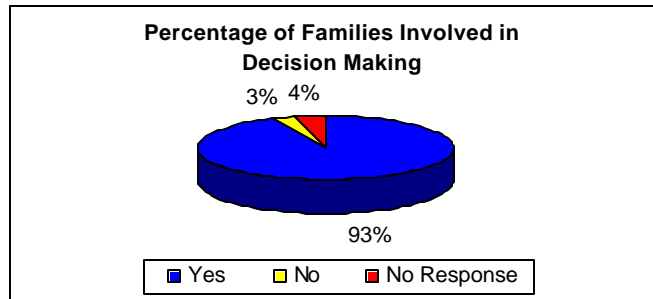
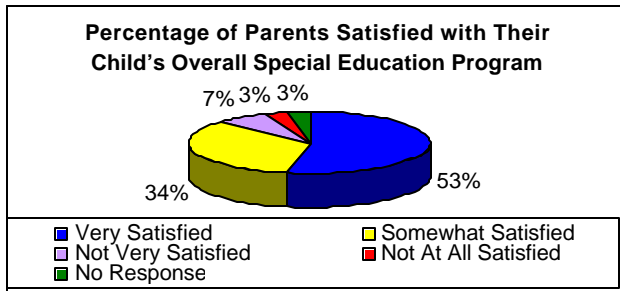
Targets and Benchmarks – Indicators A, B, C, and D

The 2002 - 2003 Family Satisfaction Survey data along with October 2000, baseline data will be used by the PCCD to make data-based decisions and set appropriate targets and benchmarks for this priority area.

Present Levels of Performance – Indicators A, B, C, and D

In an effort to gauge various levels of family satisfaction, the second Family Satisfaction Survey was developed, disseminated, and analyzed by the Family Involvement Subcommittee of the PCCD through the University of Delaware, Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS). The survey was administered and results were shared with districts statewide. Districts involved in the 2002 – 2003 Continuous Improvement Compliance Monitoring System (CCMS) used these data as a self-assessment resource.

The total population of the Family Satisfaction Survey was 17,817 students' families. Survey participants rated their overall satisfaction with special education services on a four-point scale: 1 = Not at all satisfied; 2 = Not very satisfied; 3 = Somewhat satisfied; and 4 = Very satisfied. The mean score of the Family Satisfaction Survey was 3.41. There were 2,860 respondents to the survey, which resulted in a 16.1% response rate. District and charter school response rates varied from 9% to 32.5%. County response rates were similar with New Castle County at 16%, Kent County at 16.9% and Sussex County at 16.9%. The charts below indicate responses to some of the satisfaction questions. A comparison between the first and second Family Satisfaction Survey will be available in the full report.



Family Involvement Subcommittee

The subcommittee is currently working on the development of a family-friendly packet of information to help inform families and make them full partners in the education of their children with disabilities.

Priority Area Five: Increase The Number Of Youth In Special Education Who Successfully Complete High School

Indicator A: The percentage of youth in special education completing high school will increase.

Indicator B: The annual dropout rate for youth in special education will decrease at the secondary level.

Targets and Benchmarks – Indicator A

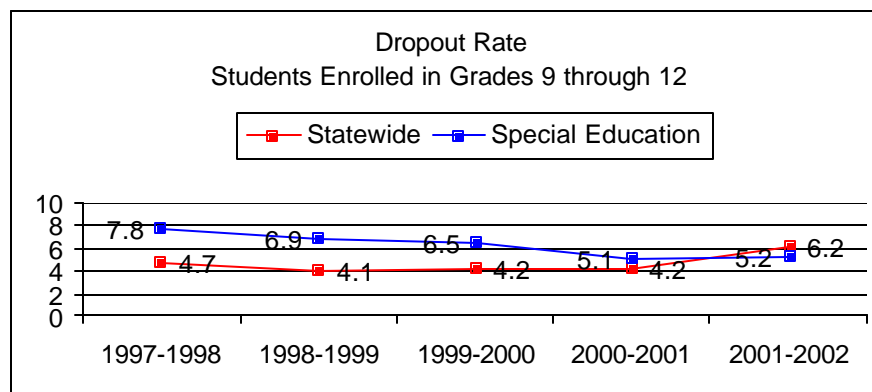
By 2005, the number of youth in special education completing high school will increase to 44%; an increase of 0.5% per year to 44% in target year 2005, with a two year progress check point in 2003.

Targets and Benchmarks – Indicator B

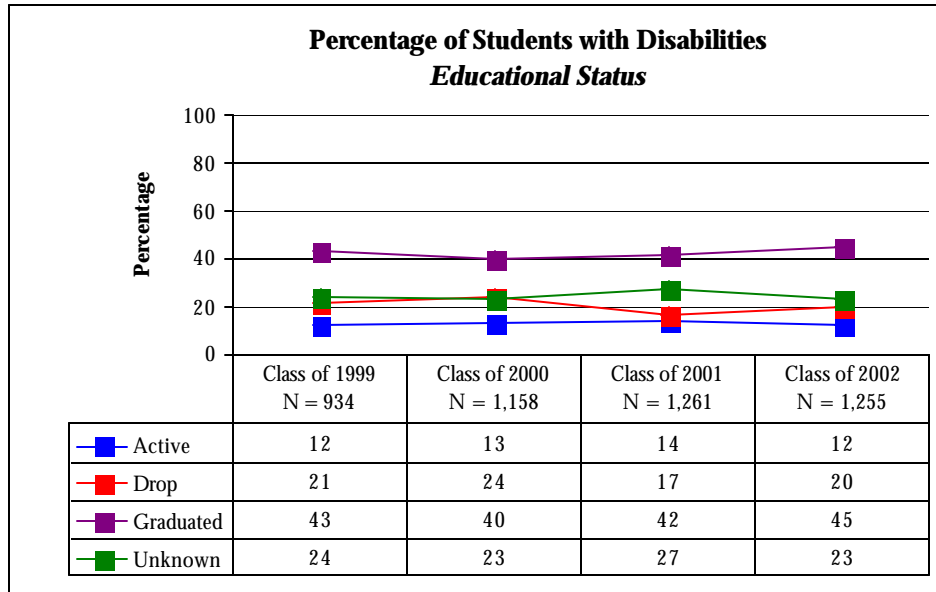
By 2005, the annual dropout rate for youth in special education will decrease to 3.1. The annual dropout rate for youth in special education will be less than or equal to their non-disabled peers; a decrease of 0.5 per year to 3.1 in target year 2005, with a two year progress check point in 2003.

Present Levels of Performance – Indicators A and B

Increasing the number of youth in special education completing high school and decreasing the number dropping out at the secondary level are areas of concern. The charts below and on the following page indicate improvement in these areas; however, the first chart shows that the dropout rate for 2001 – 2002 has remained stable. This is due to a change in reporting of dropouts. Districts can no longer report students as “unknown”. **All** students must be accounted for. The impact of this change will not be apparent until the Class of 2004 is reported.



The second chart below shows the educational status of cohorts of students. This educational status accounts for all youth in special education in the cohort, shows their educational status in four years, and enables districts to make data-based decisions around planning and programming.



Indicator C: The percentage of youth in special education receiving a diploma compared to a certificate of performance will increase.

Indicator D: The percentage of youth in special education going on to 2- or 4-year colleges will increase.

Indicator E: The percentage of youth in special education employed within 2 years of leaving school will increase.

Targets and Benchmarks – Indicator C

By 2005, the percentage of youth in special education receiving diplomas compared to certificates of performance will increase to 95%; an increase of .75% per year (based on 2001 data) to 95% in target year 2005, with a two year check point in 2003.

Present Levels of Performance – Indicator C

	Diplomas	Certificates
Class of 1998	93%	7%
Class of 1999	91%	9%
Class of 2000	92%	8%
Class of 2001	92%	8%
Class of 2002	92%	8%

The percentage of youth in special education receiving a diploma compared to a certificate of performance has remained consistent over the last three years. The PCCD will closely monitor any changes in the percentages of diploma and certificate recipients due to statewide adoption of different diploma levels for the Class of 2004 and beyond.

Targets and Benchmarks – Indicators D and E

Indicators D and E are under development by the Secondary Transition Subcommittee of the PCCD. Data collection systems are being defined and enhanced in an effort to accurately report these data. This fall, the Secondary Transition Subcommittee of the PCCD will review recent post-school outcomes data for indicators D and E and make recommendations to the PCCD. During the coming year, targets and benchmarks will be established.

Student Connections

The Student Leadership Advisory Council held its first annual Youth Leadership Forum in May 2003. Over 65 people attended listening to students give their perspectives on improving their educational experience and making collaborative plans to support leadership activities in local high school programs. During the 2003 – 2004 school year, more local youth leadership student clubs will be formed with youth leaders from each club participating on the state council.

Priority Area Six: Improve General Supervision

Indicator A: Monitoring at the state/LEA/agency levels will lead to direct improvement in student performance at the school/program level.

Indicator B: The monitoring process at the LEA/agency levels will involve continuous monitoring that ensures on-going improvement in program quality.

Indicator C: Level of parent awareness improves regarding screening and/or evaluation for their children.

Indicator D: There is a decrease in the number of days between request and decision for due process cases.

Indicator E: The state is able to ensure that FAPE is provided to all students in interagency programs including incarcerated youth with disabilities.

Targets and Benchmarks – Indicators A, B, C, D, and E

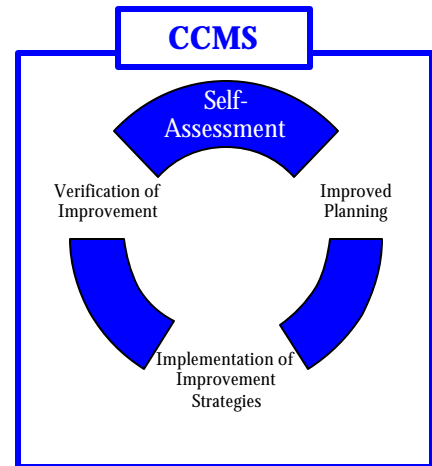
These data are under development based on district and charter school participation in the CCMS process.

Present Levels of Performance – Indicators A and B

Eight districts were involved in the 2002 – 2003 Continuous Improvement Compliance Monitoring System (CCMS) cycle. Five have submitted self-assessment documents; and three are currently in the writing stage. Two improvement plans have been submitted for review.

Present Levels of Performance – Indicators C, D, and E

Indicators C and D tie to the State Improvement Plan's Goals XII, XIII, and XIV and their Strategies for Improvement. Indicator E currently has no Goal or Strategy for Improvement. The General Supervision Subcommittee of the PCCD is responsible for monitoring all of these indicators and making recommendations to the PCCD for possible changes.



Priority Area Seven: Improve Availability of User Friendly Information

Indicator A: The percentage of families responding on the family survey indicating information is accessible and easily understood will increase.

Indicator B: Guides and brochures are developed by committees, which include parents/consumers.

Indicator C: A variety of guides, brochures and other technical assistance materials are available.

Indicator D: Materials are available in Spanish.

Indicator E: Materials are available on the web.

Targets and Benchmarks – Indicators A, B, C, D, and E

This is an area of ongoing process development. Targets and benchmarks will be established as development and implementation progress.

Present Levels of Performance – Indicators A, B, C, D, and E

The goal of this priority area is to increase the diversity of methods of sharing information with families, educators, and the general public. Some activities to achieve this goal are listed below:

- A packet of information for families is currently under development. This packet is designed to eliminate all the jargon in order for families to understand the special education system in Delaware and how to access special education services.
- Information and materials are available and up-to-date on the Delaware Exceptional Children web site at http://www.doe.state.de.us/exceptional_child/ececehome.htm

Next Steps

Delaware is committed to the concept of “Continuous Improvement”, and views the State Improvement Plan (SIP) as a working document. The PCCD and its various subcommittees meet on a regular basis to review, plan, and update Delaware’s SIP and align it with all state and federal initiatives. In 2003 – 2004 the PCCD will be charged with reviewing all indicators, targets, and benchmarks for the two year check point. All strategies for improvement and evidence of change will continue to evolve as new data inform programs on improving results for students with disabilities.

Members of the PCCD 2002 – 2003

Member	Representing
Rosanne Griff-Cabelli	Birth to Three Program
Helenann Stimer	Child Development Watch
Robin Fantl	Child Development Watch
Pam Harper	Day Care Providers
Peter Doehring	Delaware Autistic Program
Martha Brooks	Delaware Department of Education
Martha Toomey	Delaware Department of Education
George Smith	Delaware Department of Education, Executive Secretary to the PCCD
Janet Cornwell	Delaware Early Childhood Center
Pat Maichle	Developmental Disabilities Planning Council/ Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Nancy Colley	Division for Developmental Disability Services
Charlene Dolgos	Division for Visually Impaired
Roy Lafontaine	Division of Developmental Disabilities Services
Faith Moore	Education Surrogate Parent Program
Bernhard Greenfield	Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Wendy Strauss	Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Kathy Minke	Higher Education
Kim Beauchamp	Parent Information Center of Delaware
Maria Mendoza	Parent Information Center of Delaware
Marie-Anne Aghazadian	Parent Information Center of Delaware
Crystal Taylor	Parent/Charter Schools
Beth MacDonald	Parent/Interagency Coordinating Council
Beth Beitzel	Parents of Children with Disabilities
Kathie Cherry	Parents of Children with Disabilities
Lauren Padgett	Parents of Children with Disabilities
Robert Katz	Private Schools
Candace Bedrock	Reading Assist Institute
Carolyn Cotter	Related Services
Jeffrey Roth	School Administrators
Karen Lechner	School Administrators
Raquel Johnson	School Administrators
Nancy Panico	School Psychologists
Peggy Lashbrook	Statewide Deaf/Blind Program
Edward Bosso	Statewide Deaf/Deaf-Blind Programs
Kathy Gerstley	Teachers
Marilyn Baker	Teachers
Rita Landgraf	The ARC of Delaware
Robert Gringrich	The ARC of Delaware
Beth Mineo-Mollica	University of DE, Center for Applied Sciences & Engineering
Michael Gamel-McCormick	University of DE, Center for Disabilities Studies

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