



**A Report on Nine Initiatives
From 2004-2005:**

Regional Task Force Summer Action Grants 2005

Regional Task Force Groups 2004-2005

Partnership Enactment Grants 2004-2005

Faculty Fellowships

Leadership Group for Universal Design for Learning 2004-2005

Teacher Decision-Making in Instruction 2004-2005

Serving Learners with Low-Incidence Disabilities 2004-2005

Preparing Teachers to Implement Transition Planning for Students

Designing an Inclusive Adolescent Teacher Preparation Program

sponsored by the

**Higher Education Support Center
for SystemsChange**

and the

Task Force on Quality Inclusive Schooling

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Executive Summary

The Higher Education Support Center (HESC) prompts and supports New York State colleges and universities in the pursuit of two goals through its Task Force (TF) on Quality Inclusive Schooling:

- To develop and sustain high quality inclusive teacher preparation programs, and
- To engage in and support the professional development efforts of selected high needs schools and districts in the seven regions of the state.

In mid 2004-2005, nearly 70 of the 120 institutions in the state with registered teacher preparation programs were TF members. That is, they made commitments to work toward these two goals in their teacher preparation programs and in their regional work with high needs schools.

In 2004-2005, the HESC provided the TF and its members with a number of initiatives for professional development. The initiatives ranged a leadership group on low-incidence disabilities to developing partnerships for college and school district collaboration to studying teacher decision-making to supporting research in areas of inclusive practice, among others. This report summarizes nine initiatives offered by the HESC and undertaken by the TF and its members, representing 25 awards totaling \$235,732.

Initiative #3C Regional Task Force Summer 2005 Action Grants. TF members and their colleagues collaborated successfully in programs focused to implement opportunities for improving inclusive teacher preparation programs and for engaging in professional development with high needs schools. Six regions in New York State received awards, while one region continued the efforts already underway. A total of \$30,925 in awards was distributed, with the awards averaging \$5,154. Among the approaches taken, regions developed surveys regarding inclusion in high needs schools, implemented in-service for inclusive adolescent education in schools and in teacher preparation, and provided professional development for institutional faculty in Universal Design for Learning. The results in each case were stronger regional identities and an increase in efficacy among task force members, institutions and schools alike.

Initiative #5B Regional Task Force Groups 2004-2005. This initiative was designed to provide leadership in New York State's seven regions to build and sustain quality inclusive teacher preparation and to create successful collaboration with high needs schools districts. Among other tasks, liaisons continued to assess regional needs, provide technical support to institutions and to high needs districts, to foster communication among TF members, and to develop agendas for the TF at the statewide level. The liaisons' efforts directly supported progress toward quality inclusive schooling in the regions at institutions and at high needs schools and helped shape the direction of the TF through its structure and processes. The initiative awards provided stipends for

liaisons, support for institutional faculty to further develop individual programs, support for high needs schools in partnership with TF institutions, and enhanced communication within the regions. A total of \$147,293 was distributed among the seven regions, with awards averaging \$21,042.

Initiative #8B Partnership Enactment Grants 2004 – 2005. Designed originally for schools not currently involved in the School Improvement Grant process in New York State, this year's initiative was directed specifically to New York City. The purpose of the initiative has been to encourage collaboration between institutions and high needs schools. Among the models funded, schools and TF members created in-service opportunities for autism spectrum disorder in one school, enhanced the tutorial structure at another, and developed a study group on inclusive practice at a third. Three Partnership Enactment awards were distributed, totaling \$10,807. The average award was \$3,602.

Initiative #9A Faculty Fellowships. To support faculty research in the area of inclusive practice, the HESC offered this initiative. Studies included a qualitative study of inclusive teacher practice, a review and the implications of literature about membership in inclusive communities, and reading and behavioral interventions for at-risk adolescents. Out of seven proposals, a team of readers awarded \$23,627 to three TF members and their institutions with an average award of \$5,907. The awards were used to release faculty from teaching for the purpose of the research, to stipend collaborating school and institutional personnel, and to hire graduate assistants to gather and to analyze data.

Initiative #10A Leadership Group for Universal Design for Learning 2004-2005. Following up on the study group for UDL in the 2003-2004 fiscal year, this initiative sought to expand the professional development opportunities provided by UDL training and extend the learning developed by higher education faculty. The group researched effective practice, provided continued professional development to institutions and high needs schools, and created articles for a peer-reviewed journal dedicated to Universal Design for Learning. To complete its work, this Leadership Group received \$6,522.

Initiative #11A Teacher Decision-Making in Instruction 2004-2005. A subsequent iteration to the Teacher Decision-Making in Instruction Study Group from the previous year, this Leadership Group continued its work implementing a telephone survey of 400+ general and special education teachers in New York State. Among other things, their findings represent the difficulty of discerning specific "best practice" with regard to teacher decision-making. The group increased the understanding available to practicing teachers and to the research community about the implementation of inclusive classroom practice and any constraints. To further its work, this Leadership Group received \$9,207.

Initiative #14A Serving Learners with Low Incidence Disabilities. Funded for \$3,605 for 2004-2005, this Leadership Group continued its focus from the previous year of investigating the latest promising practices for including students with the most severe disabilities and developing materials to be used in colleges and in teacher preparation programs.

Initiative #15 Preparing Teachers to Implement Transition Planning for Students 2004-2005. This Leadership Group operated in several phases to affect Task Force teacher preparation programs in designing modules to prepare teachers to address issues of transition planning in their classrooms. After a formal survey to gauge the level of institutional awareness about transition issues, curricular materials were developed that covered issues of student self-advocacy, legal requirements, terminology, and IEP development. These materials will be posted to the HESC web site for broad dissemination to Task Force members. \$5,550 was the cost of this initiative.

Initiative #19 Designing an Inclusive Adolescent Teacher Preparation Program. One award of \$7,996 was made to SUNY Geneseo to pursue the design and development of a master's level program in Special Education focused on Inclusive Mathematics practices. After exploring the viability of such a program the year before, several faculty in partnership with a high needs school orchestrated the coursework and the requirements necessary for the program. SUNY Geneseo is awaiting approval for the degree by the full faculty Senate before submitting the program to accreditation by New York State and enrolling students in 2006-2007.

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Preface

The Higher Education Support Center (HESC) prompts and supports New York State colleges and universities in the pursuit of two goals through its Task Force (TF) on Quality Inclusive Schooling:

- To develop and sustain high quality inclusive teacher preparation programs, and
- To engage in and support the professional development efforts of selected high need schools and districts in the seven regions of the state.

In mid 2004-2005, nearly 70 of the 120 institutions in the state with registered teacher preparation programs were TF members.

Toward their commitment to work toward these two goals, TF members and institutions designed inclusive teacher preparation programs, through which prospective teachers would learn to teach all learners. They brought cutting edge practices into college and university courses and associated K-12 classrooms, developing resources and materials for quality inclusive teacher preparation. They forged connections between the preparation of teachers and the continuing professional development needed for vital and responsive schooling systems. The HESC and the TF worked to build direct and strong links between these oft-separated components of the educational enterprise.

The HESC helped create professional development opportunities specifically targeted for teacher educators. These opportunities took the form of independent research, leadership groups, school partnerships, program presentations, material reviews, and testing of innovative practices. The HESC supported networks of teacher educators in seven regions of the state, congruent with the seven Regional School Support Centers (RSSCs). Regional Task Force groups facilitated partnerships with regional high need schools. They provided valuable outside perspectives on the work of schools, institutions, and teachers. The HESC facilitated relationships with local BOCES units, various staff development networks, and the New York State Education Department.

In 2004-2005, the HESC provided the TF and its members a number of initiatives for professional development. The initiatives ranged from implementing co-teaching, to developing partnerships for college and school district collaboration, to supporting research in quality inclusive practice, to preparing teachers to work with students with low incidence disabilities. This report summarizes five initiatives offered by the HESC and undertaken by the TF and its members:

- #3C Regional Task Force Summer Action Grants 2004-2005
- #5A Regional Task Force Groups 2004-2005
- #8B Partnership Enactment Grants 2004-2005
- #9A Faculty Fellowships
- #10A Leadership Group for Universal Design for Learning 2004-2005
- #11A Teacher Decision-Making in Instruction 2004-2005
- #14A Serving Learners with Low Incidence Disabilities 2004-2005
- #15 Preparing Teachers to Implement Transition Planning for Students 2004-2005
- #19 Designing an Inclusive Adolescent Teacher Preparation Program 2004-2005

Initiative # 3C: Regional Task Force Summer Action Grants 2005

Introduction

For the summer of 2005, the HESC offered for the fourth straight year Regional Task Force Action Grants in an effort to support local efforts at planning and implementing collaborative pre-service and in-service opportunities for inclusive schooling. The programs provided under this initiative varied depending upon the needs within each region. Led by the TF liaisons, institutions within the regions and, in many cases, local high needs schools collaborated to create programs. These efforts included strengthening regional focus on the work of the TF, designing and developing a survey of local school district efforts at inclusion, and planning collaborative research strategies among TF members and local high needs schools. In addition, efforts incorporated advancing reflection and discussion on inclusive adolescent education, examining middle level models of inclusive practice, and providing in-service for faculty in Universal Design for Learning.

Six of the seven TF regions participated and were funded through this initiative. See Table 1. (One other region while undergoing reconfiguration continued its work apart from the Summer Action Grant process.) A total of \$30,925 in awards was distributed, each award averaging \$5,154. The awards provided payments for presenters, stipends for the and school district personnel to participate, and reimbursement for the costs associated with implementing large-scale programs (such as travel, clerical expenses, printing, and supplies).

Overview of the Action Grants

The Western Region focused on the implementation of collaborative research opportunities for its faculty and high needs schools and the continued recruitment of institutional personnel to the TF. The day-long retreat experience was constructed to include discussion of the region's research-based focus, the implications of this approach for high need school collaboration, an inventory of current field based research needs, and the design of ongoing recruitment strategies. The program began with a thorough needs assessment of participating institutions with an eye toward implementing best practice in inclusive teacher preparation as well as a retrospective of the year's activities. The outcome of the work was an emphasis on mutual research efforts and school-based and preservice activities, program development, and focused evaluation practices.

The Mid-West Region chose to concentrate its resources on creating a professional development opportunity for TF members focused on Universal Design for Learning (UDL). The day-long in-service focused in the morning on presentations to help educators develop the skills, knowledge, and dispositions to implement UDL and in the afternoon on hands on work time. Presenters for the morning sessions included colleagues from SUNY Geneseo and Nazareth College as well as Sharon Triese, representing Cornell University's Northeast ADA and IT Center. Using their knowledge and experiences in implementing UDL principles in higher education, presenters then mentored session participants which included a doctoral candidate and school district representative. The collaborative nature of the opportunity was remarked as particularly strong in designing the means for UDL's continued impact in the Region.

The Hudson Region implemented a day-long forum which focused specifically on inclusive classrooms at the 7-12 grade level. Teams from the region's institutions and twelve local school districts were assembled to discuss current inclusive practices in co-teaching, differentiation of instruction, and in teacher preparation. These professionals shared information, heard from colleagues in a series of presentations, and discussed improvements in the delivery systems at their respective organizations. As a result of the forum, institutions and school districts identified strategies for further implementation of inclusion and planned next steps to continue collaboration in the region.

The Long Island Region designed and developed, and distributed a survey on inclusive practice to special education directors at School Improvement Grant schools on Long Island. The goals of the survey were several. They were: to develop an annotated bibliography of research on inclusive models of schooling; to understand administrator perceptions of inclusion in schools; and to develop an article to be submitted to a peer reviewed journal on administrators' perceptions of inclusion.

Capitalizing on past work on its collaborative effort to understand middle level inclusive practice, the Mid-State Region designed and implemented a culminating event bringing together its institutional and school district partners and team coaches. Hosted at Cazenovia College, middle level co-teaching teams from three districts in the Mid-State Region met to review the results of the spring's visitations, to share challenges and successes, and to celebrate the successes of the symposium. Plans were continued for a series of meetings throughout the coming year to develop and implement a collaboration of local SETRC and RSSC staff, institutional faculty, and school district representatives to continue to explore and to share best inclusive practice at the middle level. The collaboration engendered by the project helped bring cohesiveness to the regions' efforts.

After a two year hiatus, the New York City Region was able to utilize Summer Action project funds to design and implement a day-long retreat for the Region, focused on developing an action plan for the coming year. The retreat began with the Region's mission statement, drafted in the summer of 2003, and it analyzed barriers to inclusion. The assembled institutional representatives, parents, and high needs school personnel crafted commitments to family support, to teachers currently working in inclusive settings, and to the enhancement of professional development opportunities. In addition, commitments were made to implement strategies to improve inclusive practice and to host pre-service teachers in inclusive settings. Finally, through a targeted public relations strategy, through the use of data to determine Task Force direction, and through continued understanding of the needs of constituents, the Task Force rededicated itself to its growth and to the spread of inclusive practice.

General Observations

For the third year, for the regions participating, the Regional Task Force Summer Action Grant 2004 advanced the implementation of quality inclusive teacher preparation programs and distilled efforts at reaching high needs schools through professional development. It is fair to say that the major focuses of this year's funded opportunities were on: 1) seeking methods to sustain school district and institutional change or 2) strengthening the support for institutions with inclusive programs or 3) developing a deeper understanding of inclusive practice at the secondary level or 4) communicating the work of the Task Force and inclusive schooling to still wider audiences. Institutional faculty and other summer participants continued their fruitful thinking and reflection on the nature of their practice and the infusion of their research and understanding into high needs schools. The Mid-West's UDL training, the West and New York City's focus on regional issues, the Hudson's inclusive adolescent forum, Long Island's survey of inclusive practice, and the Mid-State's middle level visitation initiative all included high needs public school professionals. Likewise, particularly in the case of New York City, parents were active participants in Summer Action for the first time. The results of this initiative continue to point to the viability of regional identities that have been strengthened through on-going collaboration and familiarity. These efforts cannot help but advance the cause of successful inclusive practice in New York State. As continues to be the case through much of the HESC project, numerous connections continued to be forged.

The fourth year for this Initiative witnessed a continued clarity and a focus on outcomes for the opportunities provided. Regional liaisons, in charge of designing, implementing and reporting the summer work, took care to assure that outcomes were planned for and fulfilled. Working in collaboration with HESC, liaisons designed and developed plans for Summer Action with more considerable lead time than had previously been available. As a result, TF members, in several cases, chose to reflect on their work in the group and plan for their work in the coming year. In other cases, TF members chose to bolster

the work they had already achieved and strengthen their ties to high needs schools and other constituencies. Communications of various opportunities became more sophisticated and more timely. Well-designed and detailed evaluation components continued to mark the success of these offerings.

Future Considerations

- The Summer Action Grant program continues to provide unique and necessary opportunities to the seven regions of New York State. The cohesion, focus, and breadth of different regions' work continue to be hallmarks of this initiative's success.

Table 1.
Initiative # 3B: Regional Task Force Summer Action Grants 2005

Region	Institution	Liaison	Initiative Focus
West	SUNY Fredonia	Kathleen Gradel & Kathleen Magiera	Research Development and Planning
Mid-West	University of Rochester	Ann Monroe-Baillargeon	Universal Design for Learning
Hudson	Marymount at Fordham University	Joan Black	Inclusive Adolescent Schooling
Long Island	New York Institute of Technology	Dolores Burton & Darra Pace	Survey of Inclusive Practice
Mid-State	Cazenovia College	Stephanie Leeds	Middle Level Inclusion Symposium
New York City	Touro College	Brenda Dressler	Action Planning

Initiative #5B: Regional Task Force Groups

Introduction

Continuing to recognize that some of the most important work of the TF was taking place at the local level within the seven regions of New York State, the HESC supported a structure of local collaboration among institutions and high needs schools. Fashioned to parallel the state's Regional Support Center (RSSC) network, these collaborations make possible the close interaction and shared efforts of geographically close institutions, schools, and districts dedicated to quality inclusive practice. Regional TF Liaisons were identified and modest fiscal support was provided for their work. As a result, regional activities were strengthened and institutional faculty, generally, felt empowered.

By developing and supporting leadership in the regions, this initiative served to help ensure that issues at the local level were carefully considered and incorporated into the HESC's direction and actions. The regions were represented by their college and university faculty, personnel from local high needs schools and districts, staff from RSSCs and Special Education Training and Resource Centers (SETRCs), and parents from organizations championing inclusion. Meetings of all the liaisons were regularly held as a means to troubleshoot problems, to share actions and decisions being made at the regional levels, and to set the overall direction for the State-wide TF. Within the give and take of this model, regions built capacity among their constituencies, thereby, making still stronger the larger state education system.

With all seven regions represented, TF Liaisons undertook various tasks to provide voice, direction, and support to the work of teacher preparation institutions and high needs partner schools. See Table 2. Among the tasks undertaken by these individuals were: assessing the needs of regional institutions, fostering communication among all parties relevant to public school student achievement, recruiting and supporting teacher preparation programs, and orienting new faculty to the work of the TF. Meetings were held in each region at least four times during the year when communications from NYSED, VESID, and the HESC were distributed, as was news of local initiatives and program developments at member institutions.

The initiative awards provided stipends or salary offsets to liaisons, support for local faculty and for public school personnel for pre-service and in-service opportunities, and material and travel purchases. All 7 regions participated in the initiative. A total of \$147,293 was divided among the seven regions, with awards averaging \$21,042, depending on the duration of the liaison

appointment, and the size and complexity of the region of the state served by the liaison.

Overview of the TF Liaison Role and Activities

The values of the Regional Task Force Liaison initiative are several. First, the TF liaison structure continued to develop the regional identities for which it was designed. Although increased communication among liaisons resulted in the sharing of many common themes and practices, each region used its resources to create programs and to engage in actions that were clearly unique. The West region focused its efforts on sharing information on teacher preparation programs at member institutions, on ensuring the professional development of faculty, on implementing successful school district partnerships, and on advancing urban educational leadership. The Mid-West Region around Rochester encouraged exchanges by some member institutions and the sharing of resources to extend professional development efforts to various partner schools. The Mid-State Region, including Syracuse and Utica, defined goals for itself of developing an understanding of models of middle level inclusion and in extending membership to several geographically disparate institutions. The East Region focused its efforts deliberately on the use of Universal Design for Learning, ensuring post-secondary access to individuals with disabilities, researching low-incidence disabilities, and increasing successful inclusive student teacher placements. The Hudson Region deepened the reach of the TF at institutions and in schools through visitations and extensive in-service, while focusing on the experiences of inclusion at the secondary level. Long Island continued to expand its network of partnerships with schools while analyzing inclusive secondary school programs within the region to understand the nature of their practice. New York City, in 2004-2005, sought greater focus and stronger infrastructure, so the Region banded together to create a consortium of institutions, assessed its institutional needs, and worked to create three viable school partnerships with high needs schools.

Second, the TF liaison initiative built capacity through innovative uses of available networks and by focusing regional efforts on issues of lasting systems change. Routinely, liaisons not only looked among member institutions for commitment and support, they sought and received considerable connection through various regional networks. RSSCs and SETRCs were routinely present and active at regional meetings, particularly in the West, Mid-West, Mid-State, Hudson, and Long Island regions. Parent groups regularly joined region meetings in New York City. Local Teacher Centers and their networks were utilized successfully in New York City and in the Mid-West, and for the purpose of publicizing the 10th inclusion conference in Tarrytown, NY. Continuing to move regional meetings among different member institutions during the course of the year served to raise the TF's profile among faculty and institutional leaders and to acknowledge the maturation of the TF and its inclusive emphasis. Likewise, discussion about a highlighted program at an institution served to hone the

program's focus and to encourage more conceptual thinking about the study of inclusion as well as an understanding of the unique struggle in some regions to locate adequate student placements.

Third, there was a strong emphasis in the regions on continuing to develop and to implement partnerships with high needs schools. Regions built on their work from the previous year to develop strong and viable partnerships that appear as though they will remain because of mutual respect and need. TF membership as well as HESC financial support helped leverage additional funding for institutions to affect public school professional development positively. The TF has also made possible institutional ability to tailor professional development to the particular needs of public school teachers in different partnerships in different regions. Thus, the Mid-West, Hudson, Long Island, and New York City regions moved particularly far forward in pursuing project goals at the level of the public schools and districts. The West Region implemented a successful summit which brought together superintendents from high need districts and the deans of representative schools of education. New York City launched three partnerships with high needs schools. Long Island implemented a survey of inclusive practice at high needs schools.

Fourth, the TF liaison structure, with its regular meetings and communications among liaisons contributed to the above values as well as to the value of strengthening regional commitment to the two goals of the TF. As a result of this structure, New York City continued its consortium model for its institutions patterned after the Mid-West. The Long Island Region published a regular newsletter after the example of the East Region and on the heels of the Hudson Region's efforts. The Mid-West and Hudson Regions undertook to locate its regional meetings in different institutions at which reports about the local programs were shared, replicating the Western Region model. Likewise, because of shared experiences, liaisons continued to be successful at navigating the bureaucratic structures of their respective institutions and then, in turn, understanding and securing their funding apparatus, and providing this learning to other institutional representatives in their regions.

General Observations

Overall, strong leadership and strength of purpose remained hallmarks among the Regional liaisons. Although healthy attendance continued at the State-wide TF meeting in Albany, NY, individual members often opted to attend regional meetings regularly in lieu of the Statewide where communication focused on issues of local as well as Statewide importance. As meetings continued to move from place to place in several regions, college administrators, deans and chair people, were present to greet TF members and learn first hand about the work of the TF.

This initiative continued to carry significant impact for the TF into the 2004-2005 operating year. The information and knowledge shared at the regional level were enhanced by the increased sophistication of the liaisons and their methods of communicating. The continued visibility of the TF through the local efforts of liaisons at host institutions and through regional members was noteworthy. Even more evident this year than last, the TF Liaison structure enhanced collaboration, empowered faculty, and ensured access for colleges and universities to the venue of K – 12 decision-making.

Future Considerations

- The liaison structure represented by this initiative remains a considerable brain trust of individuals with expertise in collaboration as well as broadening perspectives on inclusion at institutions and in schools. Utilizing this expertise fully as well as incorporating the unique vision represented by each region continues to be a challenge for the TF and, more particularly, the HESC. Remaining close to liaison thinking to fashion future structures remains necessary.
- In 2003-2004, a comparison of School Improvement Grant statements of agreement revealed inconsistencies in addressing the balance between the institutional and school district commitments necessary for successful, sustainable partnerships and in securing mutually beneficial relationships. This continues to be a challenge for the TF. The call for commitment process is currently undergoing scrutiny and revision. After fully understanding the process, regional liaisons will be undertaking bigger roles in designing and implementing statements of agreement between institutions and school districts. More importantly, perhaps, the granting process at the level of New York State needs to keep accountable school districts particularly to ensure the development of sustainable partnerships.
- The liaisons, the liaison structure and its functioning is worthy of focused study and further understanding. Their efforts may be showcased during semi-annual NYSATE/NYACTE conferences or at national meetings.
- The HESC should consider including liaisons in discussions about the future of the SystemsChange project.

Table 2.
Initiative #5B: Regional Task Force Liaison Grants Summary

Region	Liaison	Institution
New York City	Brenda Dressler	Tuoro College
Hudson	Joan Black	Marymount at Fordham University
Long Island	Dolores Burton & Darra Pace	New York Institute of Technology
Mid-State	Stephanie Leeds	Cazenovia College
Mid-West	Ann Monroe-Baillargeon	University of Rochester
East	Theresa Ward	The College of St. Rose
West	Kathleen Gradel & Kathleen Magiera	SUNY Fredonia

Initiative #8B: Partnership Enactment Grants 2004 – 2005

Introduction

In the 2004-2005 funding cycle, the HESC again offered Initiative #8B: Partnership Enactment Grants to support new partnerships for inclusive practice between TF member institutions and K-12 high needs schools not participating in a NYS School Improvement Grant. Unlike previous years, this year's grants were reserved for schools in New York City to help augment the School Improvement Grant process which had stalled in the region after several years. As a result, the funded initiatives focused on in-service in inclusive practice, strategies for educating children with Autism Spectrum disorder, and on the tutoring of students with special needs in high school.

The initiative funded three projects, distributing \$10,807 for an average award of \$3,602. See Table 4. Like other awards, the funding was issued by subcontract to institutions participating in the TF. .

Overview of Partnership Enactment Grant Projects

New York City was chosen as the focus area for this year's Partnership Enactment Grants because the School Improvement Grant process has laid largely dormant in the last year. The three partnerships were geographically well spread throughout the city in Brooklyn, mid-town Manhattan and upper Manhattan. All three projects reported positive results; however, the partnership between Manhattan College and P.S. 48 in Washington Heights developed less quickly and completely than the other two partnerships. As has been true in past years with this initiative, there was noteworthy enthusiasm generated among TF faculty because of connections "on the ground" with teachers and professionals in high needs schools. Likewise, in at least one case (Napolitano), direct tutoring relationships were developed between a college and a school making the connectivity of the school district to potential pre-service candidates strong.

This partnership between Marymount Manhattan College and Talent Unlimited High School proved a powerful relationship. In addition to trying to improve the academic and testing performance of at-risk and special needs youngsters at Talent Unlimited, the program sought to involve faculty and pre-service students from the college in the life of the school. Although the high school students' test scores were unavailable by the end of the project as a means to evaluate its impact, the partnership created robust professional ties between the college and the school. It generated much enthusiasm among tutors and students and led to several unintended consequences, among them deeper connections between programs at the college and potential college

attendees from among the students at Talent Unlimited. Therefore, the sustainability of this initiative seems all but assured.

In addition to expanding the after school program between Marymount Manhattan College and Talent Unlimited High School, funded partnerships created professional development opportunities between LIU – Brooklyn and P.S. 24 in Sunset Park (Lava) and between Manhattan College and P.S. 48 in Washington Heights (Wolpert). Each of these projects created the delivery of quality on-site professional development for public school teachers, administrators, related service providers, and para-professionals. Both projects developed strong connections that appeared to guarantee sustainability. The LIU – Brooklyn/P.S. 24 partnership focused on the implementation of an Inquiry Group to discuss related readings on inclusion with the ultimate hope of answering the question: In what ways is the school working to make its actions live up to what its staff say they believe? Subordinate questions included:

- What is the philosophy/mission of P.S. 24 in regard to educating students with disabilities?
- How do we achieve getting children with disabilities into general education?
- How do we define and differentiate the terms mainstreaming and inclusion?
- How do we foster a school community that is responsive to all students and teachers?

The group used several strategies to examine and discuss issues raised by these questions, among them “descriptive review” of students with disabilities and planning for effective co-teaching. The results of the project included the formation of a second Collaborative Team Teaching class at the 5th Grade level and a research project designed to work with the 4th grade Collaborative team which, at the time of the partnership, had already been established.

The Manhattan College/P.S. 48 partnership focused on inclusion for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in general education classrooms. Through workshops and on site visitations, general educators developed greater collaboration skills, expanded their teaching methods, and began using a computer based IEP management tool. Faculty from the college expanded their repertoire for teaching differentiated instruction and classroom management. Field based experiences are now underway at P.S. 48 for Manhattan College pre-service teachers.

General Observations

The projects undertaken for Initiative #8A: Partnership Enactment Grants reflect a growing sophistication on the part of institutions in the TF for involving pre-service teachers in schools in creative ways and for ensuring partnership sustainability. In two of the projects discussed here, pre-service teachers have now become professionally involved in partnership schools and the partnerships

remain vital. The third project (Lava) is being sustained through changes to the system of delivery at P.S. 24 and through the continued research interests of faculty associated with the partnership. Since the New York City school system is so enormous and unwieldy, it would seem that these smaller, school-wide efforts at partnerships with institutions make great sense in the long run. In short, the partnership enactment grants that were awarded in 2004 – 2005 to New York City are successfully doing what they were designed for: 1) the creation of sustainable change regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in public schools, and 2) the sustainable involvement of pre-service teachers and institutions in inclusive settings. Planning for these projects was clearly collaborative, with each school's having considerable input into the direction of each partnership. Beginning with where each school found itself regarding inclusion, the collaborations created a common focus and a shared vision, in addition to organizing fundamental systems change.

This year's projects appear even stronger than last year's Partnership Enactment Grants as evidenced by the depth of change and sustainability that these collaborations enjoy.

Future Considerations

- The focus on sustainability in the Partnership Enactment Grant program points to the value of providing evaluation criteria for similar projects early in the funding process. Providing more evaluation criteria to TF institutions pursuing funding, rather than less, helps guide the partnership process without sacrificing creative freedom.
- With more limited resources, focusing these partnerships in the New York City region has yielded great benefits. School by school and institution by institution, the challenges and strengths of inclusive practice in New York City are becoming more clear. It makes sense, given the success of these partnerships, to continue to fund efforts in New York City.
- With funding levels diminishing, an effort should be made to assess the HESC's efforts at partnership enactment specifically. The recommendation remains for using the partnership rubric (Price, 2003) to ascertain the impact of these collaborations would suggest beneficial directions for future work and potential research.
- The success of HESC's Partnership Enactment program is marked particularly in comparison to other grants with similar intent. One reason for this may be the fact that institutions and institutional personnel control the funding stream once an award is made resulting in conservative yet reasonably targeted budgeting. Another reason may be the shared energy and enthusiasm of institutional and public school personnel who join as equals to create good inclusive practice.

Table 3.
Initiative #8B: Partnership Enactment Grants 2004-2005 Summary

Applicant	Region	Institution	Partner	Focus
Napolitano	NYC	Marymount-Manhattan College	Talent Unlimited High School	Pre-service tutoring of at risk students
Lava	NYC	LIU—Brooklyn	P.S. 24	Inclusive practice at the Intermediate Level
Wolpert	NYC	Manhattan College	P.S. 48	The Inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Initiative #9A: Faculty Fellowships

Introduction

In 2004-2005, the second year for this initiative, the HESC offered faculty fellowships to professors at TF member institutions throughout New York State. The initiative's purpose was to support the pursuit of original research or synthesize current research on issues associated with the TFQIS and its two goals. Possible areas of research included mentoring, disproportional representation of minorities, family engagement, teacher retention, or the inclusion of students with low incidence disabilities. Among the products of this Initiative, the researcher was required to present his or her findings at a Statewide meeting of the TFQIS and to provide a written report of the project's outcomes.

Faculty at TF institutions provided full-scale plans for research including research questions, literature reviews, methodologies, and budgets for the work proposed. Out of five potential research projects, three were funded, totaling awards of \$23,627 or \$7,876 per project. Of the funded projects, two involved original research and one comprised a comprehensive literature review and synthesis. Two of the projects represented continuations from 2003-2004. See Table 5. Subcontracts for the work were awarded to the researchers' home institutions. Reports were required at midpoints in the projects' duration, and final reports were provided at the end of the year of funding. Costs incurred for the projects varied among stipends to participants and for secretarial support, summer salary and fringe benefits for faculty, proportionate salaries for graduate assistants, supplies, materials, postage, and travel within NYS.

Overview of Faculty Fellowships

The knowledge provided through research under the Faculty Fellowship initiative proved significant. Well-designed, well-executed research studies in several areas added to the knowledge of inclusive practice. Projects incorporating original research included efforts to understand the effects of teacher behavior on the association between students' reading habits and classroom behaviors (Rozalski), and to discern the effects of inclusive practice on the professional lives of teachers (Monroe-Baillargeon). The comprehensive synthesis of research focused on issues of membership within an inclusive education context (Erwin). Where reported by principal investigators, the results of the original research proved fruitful. Working with 12 informants at schools with inclusive settings throughout the Rochester, NY area, Monroe Baillargeon designed interviews, surveys, and focus groups to understand their responses to inclusion in their schools. Rozalski focused on the link between reading levels

and disruptive behavior among incarcerated students. In two cases (Rozalski, Erwin), including the comprehensive synthesis project, researchers used the funding as an opportunity to complete research begun in a previous funding cycle. The analysis of the results for one of the faculty fellowship projects had begun at the time of this writing (Monroe-Baillargeon), but a potential publication date had been set for spring, 2006. Analysis of findings continued for the other two research projects.

Generally, the faculty fellowships proved to have beneficial effects outside the research. The original research projects incorporated the efforts of student teacher candidates who were trained in various interventions and in the collection of data. Likewise, these two original research projects were well received in the venues where they were undertaken, adding to the professional growth of staff. Erwin's study on membership has been designed not only to help define this area of interest but to help guide policy and practice. Finally, plans for disseminating the results of the work were wide ranging. Researchers targeted several journals for publication of the results, including *Exceptional Children and Reading and Writing Quarterly*. They developed presentations for, among others, the American Educational Research Association conference in April, 2005.

General Observations

Of the two fellowships comprising original research efforts, the University of Rochester's Ann Monroe-Baillargeon launched a new project in 2004-2005 while SUNY Geneseo's Michael Rozalski completed a two year study. Monroe-Baillargeon focused her efforts on better understanding inclusive practice from the viewpoint of teachers in inclusive classrooms. Acknowledging the volatility of increased demand for student accountability on standardized measures, Monroe Baillargeon created a qualitative study of teachers' experiences in inclusive settings. The study aimed to crystallize the lived experiences of 12 teachers working with ever more diverse populations of students in inner city and suburban venues, given the policy demands for increased student performance.

SUNY Geneseo's Michael Rozalski focused his work on the intersection of reading deficits and behavioral issues among students in a middle school setting in an effort to analyze how teacher behaviors can affect both. In the first year of the fellowship, Rozalski analyzed reading habits and attitudes among students to correlate with discipline referral information logged at the school. With the intention of positively affecting reading experiences and mitigating unruly behavior, Rozalski, in phase two developed interventions for both reading improvement and for better behavior by targeting teacher behaviors in the classroom. The outcomes have been largely positive, particularly with the introduction of technology to the project.

Elizabeth Erwin from CUNY--Queens undertook a synthesis of current research regarding membership in inclusive education. Unlike past efforts, the

project aimed to develop a thorough examination of current literature for a coherent set of recommendations to guide policy and practice. Uniquely, too, Erwin focused the comprehensive synthesis on membership issues from multiple perspectives and disciplines in addition to integrating special education issues. As an exhaustive study, Erwin’s work required her combing electronic databases and print text to read and to analyze sources. In this second year of the project the compilation, the analysis and reporting are being completed.

Table 4.
Initiative #9A: Faculty Fellowships Summary

Lead Applicant	IHE	Region	Focus	Status
Ann Monroe-Baillargeon	University of Rochester	Mid-West	The Lived Experience of Teachers in Inclusive Settings	Continuing
Michael Rozalski	SUNY Geneseo	Mid-West	Project BAROMETER: Behavior and Reading Observations to Make Effective Teaching Even Richer	Complete
Elizabeth Erwin	CUNY Queens	NYC	An Analysis of the Meaning of Membership in Inclusive Environments	Complete

Initiative 10A: Leadership Group for Universal Design for Learning 2004-2005

Introduction

Leadership Groups in 2004-2005 became more sophisticated and focused iterations of Study Groups that had been launched as initiatives during the 2003-2004 funding cycle. Originally, these study groups were dedicated to understanding and creating knowledge in areas such as Universal Design for Learning, Teacher Decision-Making, Family and Community Engagement, Teacher Retention, and Serving Learners with Low-Incidence Disabilities. In several cases, the Leadership Groups 2004-2005 were extensions of the work that had been begun the year before. In other cases, the study groups were allowed to expire with their work for the 2003-2004 funding cycle standing as the completion of their work. In the case of several more, the Leadership Groups were designed specifically for the 2004-2005 year and had no antecedent. In the case of work that carried over, the same TF members that had begun the work remained largely in tact.

As a follow-up to Initiative 10A: Study Group for Universal Design for Learning (UDL) 2003-2004, the HESC created this initiative to continue the understanding of the use of UDL in institutional and public school classrooms and to provide leadership on the subject to the TF. In 2003-2004, the focus of the group was largely on research and exploring the potential of UDL in institutional classrooms. To begin, members of the 2003-2004 Initiatives were trained in UDL at the Center for Applied Technology in Waltham, Massachusetts under the auspices of the New York State Department of Education. At the same time, New York State developed the Technology Resource Education Center (TRE) for the purpose of disseminating UDL to the educational community in the State. With the TRE and the Study Group's help, TF members in 4 of the 7 regions in New York State received education in the principles and strategies of UDL with an eye toward implementing the UDL process in classrooms. This work led to rapid and deep curricular changes in several institutions around the State.

In 2004-2005 five institutional faculty joined the coordinator of the TRE in Albany to coordinate a survey of TF members, and to analyze, implement, and disseminate information and practice using UDL principles and strategies. After submitting a work-plan and having the work approved, Leadership Group members met in various venues, at Statewide Conferences, via telephone conference, and on vehicles for Distance Learning such as *Blackboard*. The cost of the initiative was \$6,522.

Overview of the Leadership Group for Universal Design for Learning

The Initiative #10A Leadership Group advanced understanding about UDL and extended the research base for UDL principles and strategies. Likewise, the group shared the results of its work incorporating and researching UDL in classroom practice with TF members at the semi-annual Spring Conference. Under the guidance of Dolores Burton from the New York Institute of Technology, Ellen Contopidis (Nazareth College), Debbie May (SUNY Albany), and Sharon Raimondi (Buffalo State University), created and implemented an electronic survey of UDL from among faculty members at TF member institutions, compiled a bibliography of UDL resources, developed journal articles regarding UDL, and coordinated pre-service and in-service training opportunities.

The research and dissemination components of the work of this Leadership Group took various forms. The survey and bibliography advanced research on the subject of UDL by collecting resources and expanding the conversation on UDL's application in different content areas and under changing circumstances. The survey focused on the acquisition of knowledge about UDL, its basic applications, and if and how it was being used in college and university classrooms. The bibliography extended to multi-media resources on the function of UDL in K-12 content areas and in teacher preparation programs, and it included syllabi from colleges and universities implementing UDL. Journal articles that the group created for an edition of *Exceptional Individuals* published by the Council for Exceptional Children included an overview of UDL, its use in Math content and in other content areas, its implications for early childhood teaching and learning, and its application in higher education.

The goal of advancing the implementation of UDL through pre-service and in-service opportunities took several forms. Members of the leadership group provided a presentation on UDL to the TF institutions at the Statewide meeting on April 1st, 2005. The group made three different presentations at the Inclusion Conference on May 17th and 18th in Tarrytown, NY. The principles of UDL were presented to the Buffalo, NY public school teaching staff on a District Wide Staff Development Day, and seven days of training for various school system professionals were provided on Long Island in June.

General Observations

This Leadership Group approached its task with vigor and with creativity. Building on its previous work with UDL the year before, the institutional faculty who participated had a clear sense of vision and of the goals they chose to achieve. These goals were made specific in the work plan, and, as a result, the group developed realistic targets for itself in terms of the delivery of product. Because of the group's duration, there was considerable support both for tenured faculty in encouraging the means for them to modify their teaching and continue to grow as scholars, and junior faculty, who enjoyed the benefits of a

collaborative research effort. Having delved as deeply into UDL as this group did, teaching and learning were changed. The Leadership Group now stands as a resource itself for colleges, universities, and high needs schools in the design, development, and implementation of successful UDL practices.

Future Considerations

- Given that institutional faculty in TF member schools are becoming more and more familiar with UDL, developing plans for a summit at which the collective wisdom of the group about advancing UDL in New York State might yield fruit.
- Advancing UDL principles and strategies by targeting their potential use through partnerships with high needs schools, even as a suggested professional development opportunity, would create the potential for disseminating the innovation further K-12.
- Circulating the group’s products more widely, perhaps contacting the Deans of Schools of Education around New York State for assistance would make the audience and interest for UDL larger still.

Table 5.
Initiative #10A: Leadership Group for Universal Design for Learning

Leadership Group Participant	Affiliation	Region
Dolores Burton	New York Institute of Technology, Facilitator	Long Island
Ellen Contopidis	Nazareth College	Mid-West
Debbie May	SUNY Albany	Eastern
Sharon Raimondi	Buffalo State College	Western

Initiative #11A: Teacher Decision- Making in Instruction 2004-2005

Introduction

As a continuation of Initiative #11: Teacher Decision-Making in Instruction 2004-2005 saw the fruition of work implemented in the 2003-2004 grant year. Five institutional faculty and a representative from New York State United Teachers collaborated on the 2003-2004 project. The 2003-2004 study group was originally charged with exploring, researching, and discussing how the choices teachers make in materials, curriculum, and instruction affects the outcomes for all students in inclusive classrooms. In 2003-2004, several institutional faculty collaborated on first, collecting and analyzing research on teacher decision-making in classrooms, particularly as these decisions created impact for students with disabilities, and then designed and provided questions for several focus groups to hone the questions to be used in the survey instrument. Data from these focus groups were then used to create the survey instrument. This team then validated the instrument through several means. A presentation by the principal investigators, Lois Fisch from Utica College and Ann Monroe-Baillargeon from the University of Rochester, at the Fall, 2004 Statewide Task Force Meeting was part of the process for the team's finalizing the instrument. In addition, Benchmark Polling Services helped to refine questions.

2004-2005 saw the ongoing implementation of the telephone survey and the preliminary analysis of results. The focus of the survey was on various accommodations, modifications, and choices made by teachers in inclusive classrooms with regard to instruction as well as on demographic and professional information to clarify participants' involvement. The 6 page twenty-one question telephone survey has several sub categories of answers. The random, stratified sample of 400 + teachers was designed, like the focus groups, to glean information from a broad representation of K-12 teachers including special educators, content area teachers, teachers of the gifted, and teachers in positions of support and enrichment. This Leadership Group received \$9,207 to continue its work in the 2004-2005 funding cycle.

Overview of Teacher Decision-Making in Instruction

The members of this leadership group: Lois Fisch (Utica College), Ann Monroe-Baillargeon (University of Rochester), Susan Salmon (SUNY Geneseo), Cynthia Marie Smith (SUNY Fredonia), Diana Lawrence-Brown (St. Bonaventure University), and Lawrence Waite (New York State United Teachers) undertook an ambitious effort to understand better teacher decision-making in inclusive classrooms. The focus group questions were concentrated on types of pedagogy, methods of teaching, accommodations and modifications, and measurable outcomes as a result of teacher decisions, among other questions.

The telephone survey provided a menu of possible alternatives focusing on issues such as routines, schedules, collaboration, classifications, student motivation, planning time, classroom interruptions, and local and statewide assessments and their impact on teacher decision-making. In addition, the survey invited the possibility of more in depth interviews in the future.

General Observations

Teacher decision-making in classrooms is complex; understanding teacher decision-making is a complex undertaking. Ultimately, the result of the study will provide rich detail for the contextual issues surrounding teacher decisions and better informing the decisions that they make. Understanding about teacher decision-making was increased exponentially as a result of this leadership group’s work with the focus on practices as well as constraints. Importantly, the group developed a clearer understanding of the fact that no “best inclusive practice” exists. Classroom teacher decision-making is highly contextualized and is influenced by significant variations in class size, IEP requirements and quality, available materials and individual needs. Ultimately, the results of the work seem to point to a continuum of “best practice” decisions “rather than one clearly defined set of teacher behaviors, strategies, adaptations, or accommodations.” Clearly, one of the lasting results of the work of this Leadership Group will be on “more effective professional development for in-service teachers” as well as changes in orientation for pre-service programs.

Future Considerations

- The power of this study lies in the extent to which the survey questions were developed and validated, the depth of understanding for which this method allows, and the collaborative nature of the undertaking. It would seem natural, after the results are published, to transform the results into pilots that could be undertaken around the state to better inform teaching practice.

Table 6.
Initiative #11A: Teacher Decision-Making in Instruction

Leadership Group Participant	Affiliation	Region
Lois Fisch	Utica College, Facilitator	Mid-State
Ann Monroe-Baillargeon	University of Rochester	Mid-West
Cynthia Marie Smith	SUNY Fredonia	Western
Diana Lawrence-Brown	St. Bonaventure University	Western
Susan Salmon	SUNY Geneseo	Mid-West
Lawrence Waite	New York State United Teachers	Eastern

Initiative #14A: Serving Learners with Low Incidence Disabilities 2004-2005

Introduction

Funded in 2004-2005 for \$3,605, this Leadership Group represented an extension of the work of the Serving Learners with Low Incidence Disabilities 2003-2004 Study Group. Under the leadership of Terri Ward (College of St. Rose) and Fredda Brown (CUNY Queens) respectively, these groups have pursued two goals primarily: 1) to provide support to higher education faculty in the preparation of teachers to serve a full range of learners, and 2) to provide leadership and guidance to the TF regarding students with low-incidence disabilities. Outcomes for the project carried over from the previous year: support for higher education faculty, digital case examples of inclusive practice in childhood programs, digital case examples of inclusive practice in adolescent programs, curricular activities and assignments connected to relevant internet resources, parent networking, resources related to best practice indicators, TF presentations, and HESC funding strategies for the inclusion of low-incidence disabilities. Specifically, the Leadership Group has worked to review resources by investigating texts, research, and multi-media sources of information such as films and internet connections to help create understanding and assistance to distribute to the TF. Through e-mail, web access, and in face-to-face meetings, the group has also identified cases for videotaping and begun the development of support materials to supplement these studies. With the help of graduate assistants, course syllabi, course activities and relevant references were identified and compiled. A presentation at the spring, 2005 Statewide meeting combined the talents of Leadership Group members and a parent representative working with the group to provide a comprehensive picture of inclusive practice for children with low incidence disabilities. The group has requested an additional year of funding to complete the work it's initiated and a further iteration of this initiative exists through the HESC.

Overview of Serving Learners with Low-Incidence Disabilities

The Leadership Group recognizes its opportunity to communicate valuable information not only to the TF Statewide but to a larger National audience. Therefore, the expertise represented by the Leadership Group members: Fredda Brown (CUNY Queens), Roberta Schnorr and Amanda Fenlon (SUNY Oswego), Linda Davern (Sage Colleges), Terri Ward and Sue DeLuke (College of St. Rose) has considerable power in raising the awareness of low-incidence disabilities in inclusive classrooms. Likewise, this expansive undertaking has utilized resources far a field of what other initiatives have endeavored to collect, looking to films, print, computer, and internet media as well as to the design and development of video-graphic case studies through the Case Maker software.

The group was also able to draw on the collective wisdom of the TF at the spring, 2005 Statewide for a presentation that encompassed communicating with all the various K-12 disciplines represented by teacher preparation institutions. The presentation explored perspectives, strategies, and resources that embraced the full range of learner characteristics with a particular focus on moderate to severe disabilities. In addition, the group was joined by the parent of a youngster with Down Syndrome graduating from high school so that this perspective would also be heard by teacher-educators.

As the group has developed, its attention has also focused on the issue of inclusion of students with severe disabilities for the purpose of achieving the NYS standards and access to the general education curriculum dictated by NCLB. The group has also, then, concentrated its efforts on the development of a variety of materials that could easily be used in the classroom.

General Observations

The strength of this Leadership Group lies in the significance of its study and the fact that its output largely includes products such as resources and materials that can find their way into the hands of all educators P-16 relatively quickly and easily. The use of video-graphic case studies serves to enhance the delivery of examples of instructional practice into pre-service and in-service venues. Joining with a parent also enhances the work, increasing its reach and bolstering its credibility. In addition, this strategy provides the empirical basis which, along with the case studies, argues strongly for all students participating in similar circumstances with access to the same curriculum. Finally, the strong presence that pre-service and graduate students have in the functioning of this Leadership Group makes the potential for increasing the learning and disseminating the results stronger and more immediate.

Future Considerations

- As has already been discussed among HESC staff, extending the work of this Leadership Group to the work of a Learning Community formed at the May, 2006 Inclusion Conference would give voice to a portion of the community of disabled people who are otherwise underrepresented and largely disenfranchised.

Table 7.
Initiative #14A: Serving Learners with Low-Incidence Disabilities

Leadership Group Participant	Affiliation	Region
Terri Ward	College of St. Rose, Facilitator	Eastern
Fredda Brown	CUNY Queens	New York City
Susan DeLuke	College of St. Rose	Eastern
Linda Davern	Sage Colleges	Eastern
Roberta Schnorr	SUNY Oswego	Mid-State
Amanda Fenlon	SUNY Oswego	Mid-State

Initiative #15: Preparing Teachers to Implement Transition Planning for Students 2004-2005

Introduction

Recognizing that effective transition to post-secondary opportunities for students with disabilities has been critical, the HESC designed and developed this initiative to increase the exposure for transition in teacher preparation curricula. Ultimately the goal has been to prepare pre-service teachers to teach transition skills and to prepare districts to facilitate the transition process. The group was diverse and included institutional faculty as well as transition site coordinators under the auspices of the Vocational Education of Students and Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) through the New York State Education Department. In addition, the group was joined by a coordinator for disabilities services at the university level, a retired Special Education Training and Resource Center (SETRC) coordinator, and representatives from VESID itself.

Through the course of several meetings during the year, this Leadership Group set goals and outcomes, convened to discuss models of transition in light of teacher preparation, and developed modules to infuse into teacher preparation course-work. The modules that were completed in the time frame for the Leadership Group included resources focused on teaching self-advocacy and student empowerment, IEP development, and legal and historic issues of transition for students with disabilities. In addition, a survey of TF members regarding their programs' relative knowledge of and comfort with transition was also created, distributed, and tallied as part of this project. The results continue to be analyzed, and the outcomes of the Leadership Group's work will be shared at the Statewide TF meeting in the spring, 2006. The Leadership Group for Preparing Teachers to Implement Transition Planning for Students was funded for \$5,550.

Overview of Preparing Teachers to Implement Transition Planning for Students

The group began with meetings in December to determine goals, objectives and activities to be carried out throughout the year. The basic goals and outcomes were to prepare pre-service teachers to facilitate transition for students with disabilities; to make resources available to faculty and to school districts to facilitate transition; to gauge the current level of use and knowledge in institutions regarding transition to post secondary opportunities. Among the activities and some of the barriers to effective transition that the group discerned, there were included: facilitating collaboration, making transition content available, linking transition site coordination to general education, connecting with families,

developing self-advocacy skills in students, and providing effective practices and research. Out of these, several activities were chosen for completion: student empowerment and self-advocacy, IEP development, and the legal requirements of the transition process. In addition, a fourth module on Transition and other Special Education Terminology was completed outside the scope of this project.

Concurrent with these activities, the Leadership Group designed and developed a survey of TF members to measure levels of transition knowledge and the readiness and/or level of implementation experienced at institutions. Surveys were distributed to members through the mail and the State wide meeting in the spring, 2005. The survey revealed a need for materials and for information on transition and transition issues sought by higher education faculty. The results of the survey generated priorities for the development of the modules reviewed above. The modules were created with the flexibility to be used by institutional faculty and by teachers at secondary education levels. Likewise, although the modules are centered on various themes, they have been deliberately designed so that the lessons can be used independently of one another. They can provide awareness to administrators needing to familiarize themselves with transition issues quickly or they can provide more in depth understanding in the cases of institutional faculty wishing to infuse their courses with transition information. Finally, all the modules have been transposed onto CD and are awaiting their inclusion for on-line Learning Communities sponsored through HESC. Also included were several hundred pages of transition information provided by VESID transition site coordinators as part of the process.

General Observations

Facilitating effective transition across the State of New York is an enormous task. Reaching teachers, let alone pre-service teachers at institutions throughout the State is monumental. In large part, the enormity of the task is the result of little attention paid in past to effective transition planning. Until very recently, transition was not a centerpiece of IEP development. This Leadership Group has begun the process of exposing teacher educators to some of the principles of effective transition and to the knowledge necessary to facilitate it. Among other things, the group has highlighted the need for teaching transition planning at colleges and universities and has developed the means to make this knowledge accessible. Among audiences such as transition service providers, the modules have been favorably received.

Future Considerations

- Given the work of this Leadership Group, next steps may include creating pilots for the transition modules in school districts and among higher education faculty. Tracking the results and modifying the resources would seem important as transition becomes more important.

Table 8.
Initiative #15: Preparing Teachers to Implement Transition Planning for Students

Leadership Group Participant	Affiliation	Region
Brian McIlvain	Eastern Suffolk BOCES Transition Site Coordinator	Long Island
Elizabeth Hall	LG Facilitator, SUNY Geneseo	Mid-West
Eric Bright	St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES Transition Site Coordinator	Mid-State
Harold Mattie	Buffalo State College	Western
Joanne LaCross	Director, Transition Services, VESID	East
Julie Cenci	Coordinator, Transition Services, VESID	East
Kerry McKenna	Southern Westchester Transition Site Coordinator	Hudson
Kim Massaro	St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES Transition Site Coordinator	Mid-State
Maggie Gioia	Syracuse SETRC (retired)	Mid-State
Peter Kozik	Higher Education Support Center	Mid-State
Starr Knapp	Disabilities Coordinator, SUNY Oswego	Mid-State

Initiative #19: Designing an Inclusive Adolescent Teacher Preparation Program 2004-2005

Introduction

Unlike the Leadership Groups launched in the 2004-2005 fiscal year, this initiative was designed to impact teacher preparation in a different way. After an initiative was begun in 2003-2004 to encourage the exploration of inclusive adolescent teacher preparation, Initiative #19 represented the next step in the process of designing and developing inclusive adolescent programs in teacher preparation institutions in New York State where none existed. In considering New York State as a whole, the HESC became aware of the fact that inclusive elementary schools were many throughout the State. Not so with inclusive adolescent programs. By the same token, teacher preparation programs focused primarily on an inclusive elementary course of study. Fewer teacher preparation programs throughout the state focused on inclusive secondary opportunities. This initiative was an attempt to try and encourage inclusive adolescent teacher preparation programs to take shape. Although the initiative was offered to all TF member schools, one grant was awarded to SUNY Geneseo to work to design an inclusive adolescent degree focused on dual certification in mathematics and special education at the master's degree level. This initiative received \$7,996.

With the award came several critical partnerships that needed attention. SUNY Geneseo needed to initiate and maintain contacts with the New York State Department of Education for accreditation of its proposed program. Its faculty also needed to have at the table representatives from a local middle school or high school to help in the design of the program. Led by Michael Rozalski, Ella Cline Shear School of Education faculty created a working relationship through designated liaisons with both NYSED and with several community-based participants including administrators from the Genesee Valley BOCES, Dansville Central School and the Geneseo Central School District. In this way, the design of the inclusive adolescent program was shared among many and was ushered through both the university process and the process of program approval at the state level. Meetings were held on a regular basis to determine needs assessment, program design and course content, and the integration and cross referencing of the proposed program into already existing programs

Overview of Designing an Inclusive Adolescent Teacher Preparation Program

The prospect of designing an inclusive adolescent teacher preparation program required a high degree of coordination. From the outset, SUNY Geneseo faculty were designated as having specific tasks in the process, among them, functioning as liaisons to various constituencies. Several models for potential programs were discussed initially. The merits of each were investigated

to determine which program model would work best to meet the needs of students at SUNY Geneseo. After this exploration and additional meetings with community participants and with liberal arts faculty to hone ideas, the proposed program design has been offered to the college's Graduate Affairs Committee and to its Faculty Senate. Along with this approval, the program has been ready for submission to the New York State Education Department for approval.

Out of this work developed the Master of Science Degree in Adolescent Mathematics Education and Special Education. Upon approval by the Faculty Senate in the Fall, 2005, the design team anticipates seeking program approval from the New York State Education Department in early 2006 and start-up in the Fall, 2006 for the 2006-2007 academic year.

The proposed Masters Degree is a 36 credit course of study that culminates with a candidate implementing a research-based project. It has been designed to accommodate both full and part-time students and requires that all students complete a program of study outline with their advisors before beginning coursework.

General Observations

Traditional kinds of pitfalls beset the process of developing the inclusive mathematics and special education degree at SUNY Geneseo. Navigating the bureaucracy proved challenging as did making sure all the parties in the process were in active touch with one another. Making sure that the program fulfilled the expectations of the Dean of the Ella Cline Shear School of Education and others in the process delayed approval of the program until the Fall, 2005, well beyond the scope of the funding cycle for this initiative. Still, the groundwork was laid successfully for approval by the department, by the college, and by the State of New York. Unique to the process was the incorporation of the thinking of various school districts and administrators and teachers from secondary schools who could make clear their needs for inclusive adolescent teachers. Their input made the program stronger as did consultation with liberal arts faculty and the development of comprehensive cross referencing of courses. In fact, the level of participation that this project engendered opened much of the campus and the Education faculty to a dialogue about needs and resources that might not otherwise have occurred.

Future Considerations

- The daunting nature of creating inclusive adolescent teacher preparation programs where before none existed is daunting; however, broad dissemination of the efforts at SUNY Geneseo might help encourage other institutions. A presentation at a Statewide meeting to start is therefore recommended.