



## Message from Executive Director ... Stephen Aguirre



# High Plains REC #3

Regional Education Cooperative for Colfax, Harding, & Union Counties

**IDEA has been reauthorized ...** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA 2004) has replaced the IDEA 1997 and most changes will be effective as of July 1, 2005. How these changes affect students in Northeastern New Mexico will depend, at least in part, on how the U.S. Department of Education interprets them through policies and regulations and how they are implemented at the state, district, and school level. Although there is still much to be defined and we have not yet received interpretation of IDEA 2004 from the New Mexico Public Education Department, there are critical changes affecting students with disabilities and their families that we must start planning for. A few of the significant changes are outlined below. Note: This is just a summary and should be used only as an introduction. A review of the complete IDEA 2004 legislation is critical prior to making any changes in current special education policies and/or procedures.

### IEP PROCESS

- 1. Short-term objectives.** A significant part of the IEP in the past has been the development of short-term objectives aligned to meet each student's measurable annual IEP goals. Short-term objectives as part of the IEP no longer exist for most students. Such short-term objectives are only required for the very small percentage of students (generally less than 1% of students with disabilities) who are taking alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards. However, a student's academic IEP goals must be aligned with standards and benchmarks. Thus, even if these short-term objectives are not mandated by law, short-term objectives may still be a part of the IEP. IDEA 2004 still requires a description of how progress toward meeting annual goals will be measured. Without short-term objectives, educators may have virtually no way of measuring and documenting whether their students are making progress in achieving their annual goals.
- 2. IEP progress reports.** The progress the student is making toward meeting the annual goals must be reported, but there is no longer a reference to "the extent to which the progress is sufficient to attain the goal by the end of the year."
- 3. Transition information in IEP.** The amendments clarify that the transition process for a student with a disability now begins at age 16 and is not merely a plan for transition.
- 4. IEP attendance and participation.** According to IDEA 2004, IEP team members can be excused from attendance if their area is not being discussed. The new provisions allow alternate means of meeting participation (e.g. conference calls), consolidation of reevaluation meetings and other IEP meetings, and a pilot program authorizing up to 15 states to use multi-year IEPs. However, written parental consent is required before these actions can occur.

### High Plains Regional Education Cooperative

R. Stephen Aguirre, Executive Director  
Dana Stoltz Gray, Director of Programs

144 South First Street  
Raton, NM 87740

Phone: 505-445-7090

Fax: 505-445-7663

Visit : [www.hprec.com](http://www.hprec.com)



## Message from Executive Director (cont. from page 1) ...

5. **Transfers between school districts.** Services comparable to those described in the IEP in effect before a student's transfer must be provided by the new school district. These services must continue until the previous IEP is adopted, or a new IEP is developed, adopted, and implemented.

### DUE PROCESS

1. **Procedural safeguards notice.** The procedural safeguards notice will be distributed only once a year except that a copy must be distributed upon initial referral, when a parent makes a request for an evaluation, when a due process complaint has been filed, or if a parent requests a copy. The notice will no longer be automatically distributed with the IEP team notice or upon reevaluation.

2. **Statute of limitations.** Parents now have two years in which to exercise their due process rights after they knew, or should have known, that an IDEA violation has occurred.

### DISCIPLINE

1. **Stay put.** The right of a student with a disability to "stay put" in his/her current educational placement pending an appeal is eliminated for alleged violations of the school code that may result in a removal from the student's current educational placement for more than 10 days. Previously, the law only denied "stay-put" rights to students with disabilities involved in drugs, weapons, or other dangerous behavior or activity.

2. **Services to be received in interim alternative educational setting.** A student is entitled to receive programming and services necessary to enable him/her to receive a free appropriate public education consistent with section 612(a)(1) during the period in which he/she is in an interim alternative education setting. Under IDEA 2004, the student must be provided services to enable him/her to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward meeting the goals in the IEP. The new provision replaced language requiring that a student in an interim alternative educational setting receive services and modifications, including those described in the student's current IEP, which will enable the student to meet the goals in the IEP. The change in language cannot be interpreted as diluting any of these services that are consistent with the definition of FAPE because a student with a disability must continue to receive FAPE during the period of removal from his/her current educational placement.

Continued on page 11

## Paraprofessional Assessment in Maxwell

by Regina Lane, Principal

The Paraprofessional Assessment is designed for prospective and practicing paraprofessionals in education. The assessment was developed in response to the federal legislation known as "No Child Left Behind"; which was signed into law by President Bush in January, 2002. The following Maxwell paraprofessionals have completed their assessments: Carol Martinez, Coleen Hildebrandt, Khristi Peterson, and Kristin Johnsson. Congratulations to these hard-working ladies! Many thanks to Dr. Kaye Peery, Yolanda Trujillo, and Leslie Simmons for their help and support during the Maxwell Paraprofessional Assessment preparation and testing!

## Congratulations TTT Participants

As of December 2004, there have been 10 graduates of the HPREC Transition to Teaching Project. A HUGE congratulation to following participants who completed the project and earned their teaching degree Fall semester, 2004:

- Nancy Gomez
- Sybil Holland
- Melissa Olona
- Carmen Valerio



**If you would like to learn more about the TTT project, call Dana Stoltz Gray at HPREC today!**

# First Teacher to Receive Level III Licensure

## Barbalee Blair, Clayton Municipal School's Teacher, Is Our 1st Local Teacher To Receive Level 3 Licensure Under The New 3-Tier Licensure System

The new 3-Tiered Licensure System, established by the State of New Mexico in 2003, ensures teacher quality through accountability and support. This new system was designed to find ways to mentor beginning teachers, interpose with teachers as they advance through Professional Development Dossier and still show promise, improve the job satisfaction of quality teachers, and exalt the teaching profession by providing a professional educator licensing and salary system.

Clayton High School's own Barbalee Blair is the first teacher in the High Plains Regional Education Cooperative service area to receive her Level III license through our 3-Tiered Licensure Trainings presented by Midge Graham (former Des Moines Superintendent). Level III qualifies Barbalee as a Master Teacher with seven plus years of instruction in our schools. She is also the first teacher in New Mexico to reach this goal.

**Congratulations Barbalee ... Great Job!!**



## New Changes to the Teacher Loan Program

Do you teach math, science, or special education? Have you taught for five years in a Title I school? If you answered "yes" to both of these questions, the U.S. Department of Education would like you to know that you may be eligible for new loan forgiveness limits recently signed into law by President George W. Bush.

The Taxpayer-Teacher Protection Act (P.L. 108-409) authorizes up to \$71,500 in loan forgiveness to eligible, highly-qualified math, science, and special education teachers. This dramatic increase of \$12,500 above the previous loan limits is meant to ease the shortage of teachers in key subject areas. The increased amount of teacher loan forgiveness is available to new borrowers (teachers with no outstanding loan balances prior to Oct. 1, 1998, who borrow eligible loans prior to Oct. 1, 2005). The additional loan forgiveness will provide substantial relief for existing teachers and an incentive for prospective teachers to teach in subjects and schools that have difficulty hiring highly qualified candidates.

For detailed information on the program and to find out if you qualify for the loan forgiveness, please call the Department's Federal Student Aid Customer Service hotline at 800-433-7327. For more information on the loan forgiveness limits visit: <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/dpccletters/GEN0414.html>.

**HPREC welcomes**

***Paul Romero***

***Education  
Technologist***

**to the HPREC Team!**

If you have technology questions or need assistance, please contact Paul @

505-445-7090

[hprecpaul@bacavalley.com](mailto:hprecpaul@bacavalley.com)



# Upcoming Professional Development Activities

## HPREC Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Project Training

PBS is a system-level approach to preventing and responding to school and classroom discipline problems. PBS develops school-wide systems that support staff to teach and promote positive behavior in all students. By reducing behavioral problems, PBS creates and maintains safe learning environments where teachers can teach and students can learn.

### **PBS Addresses:**

- High rates of problem behavior that interfere with learning
- Ineffective and inefficient disciplinary practices
- Lack of supports for staff to address problem behavior
- Lack of general and specialized behavior interventions
- Negative school climates
- Reliance on crisis/reactive management



**Presenter:** Jeff Sprague, Ph.D.

**Date:** February 25 & 26 and April 15 & 16, 2005

**Location:** February: Raton High School Media Center  
April: Philmont Scout Ranch

**Time:** 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Audience:** School-based teams that are comprised of 3 - 5 members. An administrator **MUST** be a member of the team.

## DIBELS Summit 2005

DIBELS Summit 2005 is an exciting learning opportunity for DIBELS leaders, researchers, and implementation team members who are seeking additional knowledge and professional dialog to facilitate their learning and work with the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS).

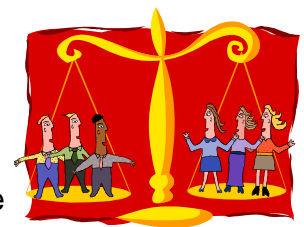
**Date:** March 10 - 12, 2005

**Location:** Tamaya Resort at Santa Ana Pueblo

**Audience:** DIBELS leaders, researchers, and implementation team members

## 6th Annual Special Education Law Conference ~ IDEA 2004: What Every Educator Needs to Know.

IDEA 2004: HOW DOES THE “WEDDING” OF THE NCLB ACT AND THE IDEA AFFECT YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT? The “Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004” was passed November, 2004. IDEA 2004 will result in significant changes in the ways public schools refer, evaluate, identify, serve, assess, and discipline students with disabilities. The new law reinforces the mandates of the NCLB for students with disabilities, and emphasizes that schools are accountable for ensuring that these students have access to, and are successful in, the general education curriculum. The purpose of this conference is to review the changes made to existing law by the IDEA 2004.



**Presenter:** Melinda Baird, Esq.

**Date:** April 11 - 12, 2005

**Location:** Wyndham Albuquerque Airport Hotel

**Time:** 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Audience:** Teachers, administrators, parents, special education directors, and parent advocates, and attorneys

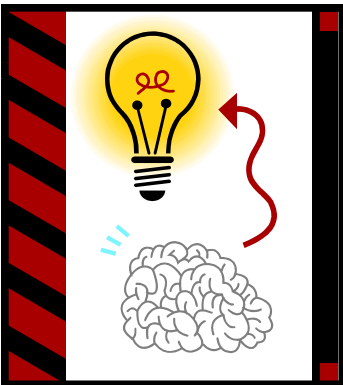
# Upcoming Professional Development Activities

## Autism Education Conference for Educators and Parents

This exciting, quality workshop, designed for educators and parents, will cover the following topics: (a) Autism: Understanding the Diagnosis, (b) Applied Behavioral Analysis, and (c) Teaching Strategies for Children with Autism.

**Presenter:** Karen Colvin, Soaring Eagles Center for Autism  
**Date:** April 18, 2005  
**Location:** Buster Brown Building, Philmont Training Center, Cimarron  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
**Audience:** Teachers, administrators, ancillary personnel, parents, and TTT participants

## Saturday Series: Brain Boogie



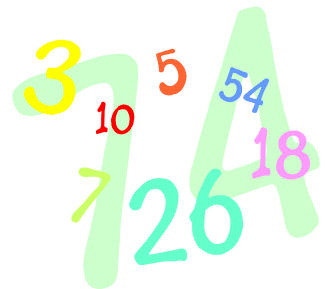
Think of your classrooms and your students...have you considered that every brain, due to its different dendrite connections, experiences, and memories, is as different as each individual's fingerprints? Every person we meet has different backgrounds, needs, abilities, and wants. As teachers, the thought of trying to reach each of these brains is overwhelming, but there is good news. There are similarities in how we learn best – brain compatible strategies that you can implement immediately in your classroom help your students grow new dendrite connections in their brains. This interactive hands-on workshop will begin to address the structure and function of the brain, the role of memory, and match instruction to how the brain learns best using the research of Dr. Patricia Wolfe, Dr. Robert Sylwester, Eric Jensen and other leading researchers.

**Presenter:** Elisabeth Nixon-Peterson, Center for the Education & Study of Diverse Populations  
**Date:** April 30, 2005  
**Location:** Raton Alternative School  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
**Audience:** All teachers and administrators (K-12)

## Mapping Your Math Curricula (K-12)

Don't miss out on this hands-on workshop designed for school-based teams to map and align their mathematics curricula with New Mexico's Standards and Benchmarks.

**Presenter:** Melville Morgan, Ph.D.  
**Date:** April 22, 2005  
**Location:** Raton High School Media Center  
**Time:** 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
**Audience:** School-based teams comprised of teachers and administrators (K-12)



To register for these workshop/trainings or for more information, please call Hollie at HPREC (445-7090)  
**Space Limited ~ Register Today!**

# HPREC Calendar of Events



## February

- 2/4 & 2/7 • Social Studies Curriculum Fair ~ International Bank ~ 9am-5pm
- 2/12 • Saturday Series ~ Classroom Management for Secondary Teachers ~ 9am-3 pm
- 2/17—2/20 • AASA Conference for Superintendents in San Antonio, Texas
- 2/22 • Clayton Child Find ~ Alvis Elementary ~ 9am-3pm
- 2/25-26 • PBS Team Training ~ Raton Media Center ~ 8:30am-4pm

## March

- 3/2 • Des Moines Child Find ~ 8:30am-2:30pm
- 3/3 • Literacy Night ~ Longfellow Elementary ~ 6pm
- 3/10 • Springer Child Find ~ Wilferth Building ~ 3pm-6pm
- 3/10—3/12 • DIBELS Summit 2005 ~ Tamaya Hotel/Resort, Santa Ana Pueblo
- 3/14 • Cimarron Child Find ~ 11am-3pm ~ Elementary Gym
- 3/16—3/18 • Raton Child Find ~ Longfellow Elementary ~ 8am-2pm
- 3/22 • DIBELS Training ~ Alamogordo
- 3/25 • HPREC Closed

## April

- 4/4 • Roy & Mosquero Child Find ~ Mosquero 9am-11am ~ Roy 1pm-3pm
- 4/5—4/8 • Spring Budget Workshop ~ Albuquerque
- 4/11—4/12 • Special Education Law Conference ~ Albuquerque Wyndam Airport ~ 7:30am-4pm
- 4/15—4/16 • PBS Team Training ~ Philmont Scout Ranch ~ 8:30am-4pm
- 4/18 • Eagle Nest Child Find ~ 11am-3pm ~ Elementary Gym  
• Autism Training ~ Philmont Scout Ranch ~ 9am-5pm
- 4/19 • HPREC Board Meeting ~ 9:30am
- 4/21—4/22 • Tri-Annual Special Education Meeting ~ Albuquerque  
• Math Curricula Alignment and Mapping ~ Raton Media Center 8:30am-3:30pm (4/22 only)
- 4/27—4/28 • Reading First DIBELS Training ~ Tamaya Hotel/Resort
- 4/30 • Saturday Series ~ Brain Boogie ~ Raton Alternative School ~ 8:30am-4pm



# APPLAUSE! APPLAUSE! APPLAUSE!

*"Kudos to **Ms. Janice Green** for representing Mosquero Schools by traveling to New Hampshire in mid-January to attend a seminar with "Project Harmony". This project helps to build connections among teachers of different countries."*

*~ Carolyn Mayer, SPED Director  
Mosquero Municipal Schools*

*"I want to applaud **Tom Mitchell** for filling in as a permanent substitute for our 4th, 5th, & 6th grade class. It has been a challenge for him. We commend him for a job well done! Also, congratulations to **Susann Bailey** upon the arrival of her daughter, Madison Lyn. We are so appreciative that she has returned to work with us. I applaud her dedication! Last, but not least, I applaud our Superintendent, **Mr. Tim McCoy**, our **School Board**, our entire **staff**, & our **student body** for working together as a team to help our students become successful citizens!"*

*~ Carolyn Mayer, SPED Director  
Mosquero Municipal Schools*

*"I want to offer applause to all the teachers in the region, but particularly to those in the **Clayton Schools**, for completing the PDP and moving forward with completion of dossiers. Also, **many, many thanks to Midge Graham** for all of her help in making both of these things possible! Congratulations to **Barbalee Blair** for having the first dossier in the state approved!"*

*Jack Wiley,  
Superintendent  
Clayton  
Municipal  
Schools*



*"We started a pilot project at Roy Schools involving Juniors and 7th graders and Lindamood Bell. Our test data had shown that the classes had been reading below level. Bob Anglin, HPREC, trained our High School staff on the reading program in November, 2004. Our instructors then started using the Lindamood Bell method of instruction. In early January, 2005, we tested the same students using MAPS, and found the data showed all students had improved. The classes improved from 24% to 71%. Recently, I sat in on a class where all the students were engaged & participating in the training...they really enjoy the program. Thanks to the staff and students for their accomplishments."*

*~ Rick Hazen, Superintendent  
Roy Municipal Schools*

*"A huge congratulations to **Mrs. Regina Lane** for her outstanding performance and achievement as this year's New Mexico Middle School **Principal of the Year**. We are all so very, very proud of her and honored to have Regina working with us in Maxwell. Also, thank you for a job very well done to **Mr. David Salas** and the **Maxwell Student Council** for putting together this year's Colfax County Spelling Bee."*

*~ Dr. Kaye Peery,  
Superintendent  
Maxwell Municipal Schools*

*"I would like to applaud Clayton Schools for graciously loaning us the floor covering for our gym, while we waited for ours to arrive."*

*~ Andrea Good, Superintendent  
Des Moines Municipal Schools*

*"Thank you to our morning sunshine, Ms. Marilyn Withers, driver for Raton School Bus #57. Thanks for the warm smile first thing every morning, as she picks up our special children for school. The special attention she gives to each and every child is wonderful. We appreciate Ms. Withers recognizing each child by hanging their drawings in the bus for everyone to enjoy and we appreciate her friendly smile and "good bye" at the end of the day. Ms. Withers is greatly appreciated by the parents!"*

*~ Ms. Jenny Garcia, Parent  
Raton Public Schools*

*"Congratulations to all of the staff and students at Springer Elementary School. They will be recognized on March 10th in the Capitol Rotunda for their commitment to continuous school improvement. The "Schools On The Rise Day" will take place during the legislative session. This recognition will feature the schools accomplishments and best practices along with 19 other schools statewide. The schools being recognized have met Adequate Yearly Progress in 2004, met standards in 2003 and have succeeded in the area of school improvement."*

*~ Zita Lopez, Superintendent  
Springer Municipal Schools*

*"A HUGE thank you to the HPREC office staff who continue to go above and beyond ... **Lisa Gonzales, Mary Lloyd, Hollie Fish, Christine Montoya, and Esther Torrez!** Your dedication, professionalism, and commitment to excellence is appreciated by all."*

*~ Steve Aguirre & Dana Stoltz Gray  
High Plains REC #3*

# Are You a Highly Qualified Paraprofessional?



As you know, the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires paraprofessionals in Title 1 programs or Title 1 school-wide programs to have their New Mexico Level III license by **Jan. 8, 2006**. Across Region #3, there are only about 10 percent of paraprofessionals that have met this new standard. Due to the fact that the deadline is rapidly approaching, it is essential that all paraprofessionals understand the requirements. Title 1 paraprofessionals who do not meet the new standards are at risk of reassignment or replacement. If you were hired after January 8, 2002, you already should meet these requirements. If you were hired prior to January 8, 2002, begin the process today!

## Who is Covered?

Every paraprofessional who works in a Title 1 program (targeted assistance or school-wide) must meet the new standards. Your principal can tell you if you work in a Title 1 program. In general, it means that all or part of your salary is paid with funds that your school gets under Title 1.

## What if I was hired after January 8, 2002?

The general rule is that all Title 1 paraprofessional must have a high school diploma or GED, be eighteen years of age, **and** one of the following:

- An associate's degree (including at least 15 hours of non-remedial degree coursework)
  - 3 hours of language arts/reading or language arts/reading pedagogy;
  - 3 hours of writing or writing pedagogy;
  - 3 hours of mathematics or mathematics pedagogy;
  - 6 hours of reading, writing, and math readiness, or professional education, or classroom management, or teaching assistance, or special education; **or**
- Complete 48 semester hours of academic credit (including at least 12 semester hours in non-remedial coursework)
  - 3 hours of language arts/reading or language arts/reading pedagogy;
  - 3 hours of writing or writing pedagogy;
  - 3 hours of mathematics or mathematics pedagogy;
  - 6 hours of reading, writing, and math readiness, or professional education, or classroom management, or teaching assistance, or special education; **or**
- Obtain a passing score of at least 70 percent on a paraprofessional assessment (check with your district on the test that they are requiring).

## What if I was hired prior to January 8, 2002?

If you were hired prior to January 8, 2002, you must still obtain a Level III license by January 8, 2006. The general rule is that all Title 1 paraprofessionals must have a high school diploma or GED, be eighteen years of age, **and** one of the following:

- An associate's degree (including at least 15 hours of non-remedial degree coursework)
  - 3 hours of language arts/reading or language arts/reading pedagogy;
  - 3 hours of writing or writing pedagogy;
  - 3 hours of mathematics or mathematics pedagogy;
  - 6 hours of reading, writing, and math readiness, or professional education, or classroom management, or teaching assistance, or special education; **or**
- Complete 48 semester hours of academic credit (including at least 12 semester hours in non-remedial coursework)
  - 3 hours of language arts/reading or language arts/reading pedagogy;
  - 3 hours of writing or writing pedagogy;
  - 3 hours of mathematics or mathematics pedagogy;
  - 6 hours of reading, writing, and math readiness, or professional education,

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# Are You a Highly Qualified Paraprofessional?

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or classroom management, teaching assistance, or special education; **or**

- Obtain a passing score of at least 70 percent on a paraprofessional assessment (check with your district on the test that they are requiring); **or**
- Successfully demonstrate competency through a portfolio assessment (if approved by district).

## Are there any Exceptions?

Yes. If your only duties are in parent involvement or translation, you can meet the new standards with just a high school diploma or GED. If your job does not involve giving instructional support to students (e.g., you are a bus driver or a cafeteria aide) you do not have to meet the new standards at all. If you think you may qualify for either of the options, please contact your principal to confirm that you fit in this category.

## Teaching in the 21st Century by Shari Zimmer, Cimarron School District



“What effect does technology have in developing positive student attitudes and improved academic success?” This is a good question and is one that has prompted much research. Students have diverse learning modalities and each of those needs must be addressed in daily instruction. One problem is that many teachers tend to teach to only several of the learning modalities. Instructional technologies can provide an opportunity for a teacher to target a diverse population of learners. Technology instruction is not faultless; however, when used effectively it allows a teacher the ability to go beyond the typical curriculum and instruction lessons to open doors into the learning process that stimulates the students in ways not possible before. At the present time in the American Educational system, it is safe to say that the majority of students, as well as teachers, enjoy the opportunity to learn by incorporating technology as an instructional tool.

Students have the ability to formulate an understanding of difficult subjects' content by visualizing the concepts along with the use of technology. Research has proven that technology, when used as drill and practice, is a waste of time. A high percentage of educators across the nation still do not have a grasp on what technology can provide in relation to interactive learning while covering diverse learning needs of the student population.

Technology instruction must be used as a tool for developing higher order thinking skills. It also is an excellent way to provide visual and interactive learning opportunities for students on a daily basis. This should be a high priority with teachers in today's school systems. We must prepare our youth to be productive citizens in the twenty-first century workplace. The Technological Age is upon us, and it can't be ignored any longer. We must create educational opportunities that prepare the children to be successful in their future jobs which will rely heavily on technology. Times have changed and we must change with the times. Educational change must target instructional opportunities involving technology and how its use can develop technological savvy learners with the ability to think logically and be literate.

**“It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy  
in creative expression and knowledge.” ~ Albert Einstein**



## HPREC Staff

Stephen Aguirre, Executive Director  
 Dana Stoltz Gray, Dir. of Programs  
 Paul Romero, Educ. Technologist  
 Mary Lloyd, Program Coordinator  
 Lisa Gonzales, Business Manager  
 Hollie Fish, Program Assistant  
 Esther Torrez, Human Resources  
 Christine Montoya, Admin. Assist.  
 Bob Anglin, Reading Specialist  
 Petra Bertola, Behavior Specialist  
 Midge Graham, 3-Tier Consultant

## HPREC Board of Directors

Annette Johnson, Cimarron  
 Jack Wiley, Clayton  
 Andrea Good, Des Moines  
 Kaye Perry, Maxwell  
 Tim McCoy, Mosquero  
 Bill Walz, Raton  
 Rick Hazen, Roy  
 Zita Lopez, Springer

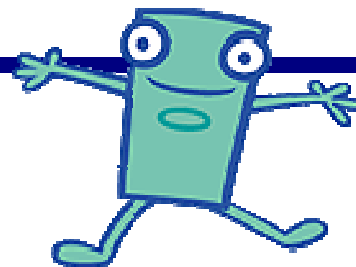
Professionalism  
 means  
 consistency  
 of quality.  
 ~ Frank Tyger

## Spread the News ... Child Find Screening in Your Community

Clayton: February 22nd ~ 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
 Des Moines: March 23rd ~ 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
 Springer: March 10th ~ 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
 Cimarron: March 14th ~ 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
 Raton: March 16-18th ~ 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
 Mosquero: April 4th ~ 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.  
 Roy: April 4th ~ 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
 Eagle Nest: April 18th ~ 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

## Got Digi-Blocks?

If you have attended an HPREC training on using **Digi-Blocks** and would like to have additional Digi-Block materials/kits for your classroom, contact Dana Stoltz Gray, HPREC Director of Programs, at 445-7090. We have a few extra kits that are available to teachers who are dedicated to using these hands-on manipulatives to teach early mathematics concepts. **Call today!**



## HPREC Social Studies Curriculum Fair a HUGE Success!

Many thanks to everyone who turned out for the recent Social Studies Curriculum Fair and made our event such a success! We had over 50 people attend the Fair from the following school districts:

Maxwell  
 Raton (Kearny, Columbian, Longfellow, Raton High School)  
 Springer  
 Des Moines  
 Wagon Mound  
 Mora  
 Cimarron (Cimarron Elementary/Mid/High School & Eagle Nest)  
 Las Vegas City Schools  
 Mosquero

**Social Studies Curricula (K-12) are available to check out and review at HPREC, call today!**

# Advocating for Your Child

by Jenny Garcia

Hello, my name is Jenny Garcia, from Raton. I am a parent advocate for PRO, Parent's Reaching Out. What is PRO? A statewide non-profit organization that focuses on working with and teaching parents, caregivers, educators, and other professionals the skills, resources, and tools they need to promote healthy, positive, and caring experiences for families and children throughout New Mexico. Funded and operated by families in 1981, PRO has been helping parents of children with disabilities and special health care needs for over 20 years. In 1998, PRO expanded their scope of work to include all families and children. Staff, comprised of parents, are located throughout the state and represent the diverse cultures and ethnicity of New Mexico. A wide network of volunteers are available to provide support to families within their communities. In addition, they provide workshops and trainings. If you are interested or would like more information, please call PRO at 1-800-524-5176 and ask for Yolanda Garcia. You may also contact me at 445-8605. As one parent said, *"I do know that no two families are alike, but we all experience unique situations, and it's nice to talk to someone who understands."*



Visit [www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org)

A fabulous resource for information about teaching kids to read and helping those who struggle.

**Available at HPREC ...**

**Launching Young Readers** is a series of half-hour PBS television programs that look at different reading strategies to help young children learn to read. Filmed in schools, libraries, and research centers around the country. The following titles are available at HPREC:

- Roots of Reading
- Sounds and Symbols
- Fluent Reading
- Writing and Spelling
- Reading for Meaning



## Message from Executive Director (cont. from page 2) ...

**3. Manifestation Determination Review.** Before IDEA 2004, the burden was on the school district to show that the student's behavior resulting in a disciplinary action was not a manifestation of the student's disability before being allowed to apply the same disciplinary procedures as they use for non-disabled students. The burden of proof for the manifestation determination review has now been shifted to the parents who have to prove that the behavior was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the disability. The language requiring the IEP team to consider whether the disability impaired the student's ability to control or to understand the impact and consequences of the behavior has been deleted.

**4. Special Circumstances.** Since 1997, IDEA had expressly authorized schools to unilaterally remove students to an interim alternative educational setting for as long as 45 days for offenses involving drugs and weapons – even if the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability. Although school authorities have always had the authority to respond to an emergency and to unilaterally remove any student with or without a disability who is causing serious bodily injury to another, now schools can also unilaterally remove students for 45 days for "inflicting serious bodily injury." This term is defined as involving a substantial risk of death; extreme physical pain; protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

**5. 45 day limit.** The 45 calendar day limit on the removal for these offenses has been changed to 45 school days, which is significantly longer (i.e., now 9 instead of 6 weeks of school).

**6. Functional Behavioral Assessments.** The requirement for Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavioral Intervention Plans are maintained in the discipline provisions.

***For more information on IDEA 2004, attend the HPREC Special Education Law Conference, April 11-12, 2005. Call HPREC today for more information.***



# FACT SHEET: Dealing With Suicide Risk

## Suicide Risk

Students at risk for suicide are increasingly common. Due to the fact that suicide rarely happens without some warning, school faculty need to take all comments about suicide thoughts seriously, especially if the students share the details of a suicide plan.

When a student is considered to be at risk for suicide, the parent/guardian must be contacted and involved from the beginning. Whenever a suicide risk exists, the situation must be managed by an appropriately trained crisis response team or mental health professional. Under no circumstances should an untrained person attempt to assess the severity of suicidal risk. In cases of suicidal risk, school personnel must maintain confidential records of actions taken. Confidential documentation will help to ensure that appropriate assessment, monitoring, and support are provided to the student. Should the student commit suicide, the school will have record that documents the school's effort to intervene and protect the student.

## Suicide Threats: Do's and Don'ts

1. **DO LISTEN** to what the student is saying and take his/her suicide threat seriously. Often suicidal thinking comes from a wish to end deep psychological pain. Death seems like the only way out ... but it isn't. Let the person know you really care. Talk about your feelings and ask about his or hers. Listen carefully to what they have to say. Examples include: *"I'm worried about you, about how you feel"*, *"You mean a lot to me. I want to help"* and/or *"I'm here, if you need someone to talk to"*.
2. **DO OBSERVE** the student's nonverbal behavior. Facial expressions, body language, and other concrete signs often are more telling than what the student says.
3. **DO ASK** whether the student is really thinking about suicide. If the answer is "yes", ask how s/he plans to do it and what steps have already been taken. This will convince the student of your attention and let you know how serious the threat is.
4. **DO GET HELP** by contacting an appropriate crisis response member or mental health professional. Never attempt to handle a potential suicide by yourself.
5. **DO GET EMOTIONAL SUPPORT** for yourself as well. These circumstances can be quite upsetting. You should not go through this process alone.
6. **DO STAY** with the student. Take the student to a social worker or mental health professional and stay with the student for awhile. The student has placed trust in you, so you must transfer that trust to the other person.
7. **DON'T** act shocked or allow yourself to be sworn to secrecy.
8. **DON'T UNDERESTIMATE** or brush aside a threat ("You won't really do it; you are not that type") or try to shock or challenge the student ("Go ahead. Do it!").
9. **DON'T** let the student convince you that the crisis is over. The most dangerous time is precisely when the person seems to be feeling better. Sometimes, after a suicide method has been selected, the student may appear happy and relaxed. Therefore, you should stay involved until you get the student help.
10. **DON'T** take too much upon yourself. Your responsibility to the student in a crisis is limited to listening, being supportive, and getting him/her to a trained professional. Under no circumstances should you attempt to counsel the student.

Adapted from the *Resource Guide for Crisis Management in Virginia Schools*, Office of Compensatory Programs, Virginia Department of Education.

**To get help call Crisis Response at 1-800-920-6333 or Suicide Hotline 1-800-784-2433**

**To get a free copy of *In Harm's Way: Suicide in America* or *Watch for Signs ... Youth Suicide***