

SYNTHESIS OF DISCUSSIONS ABOUT SCALING UP EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

OSEP WORK GROUP: MEETING SUMMARY AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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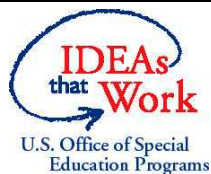


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OSEP SCALING UP WORK GROUP

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the discussions of participants who attended the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) *Scaling Up Work Group* meeting. The Work Group met in Washington, D.C. on March 30, 2001. The report synthesizes both the commentary and the recommendations about the scaling up process that were offered by the Work Group Members for consideration, as appropriate, by OSEP policymakers.

Background

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - Part D* (IDEA-Part D: National Programs) has a core objective of bringing research-validated practices to scale. IDEA-Part D, administered by OSEP's *Research to Practice Division* (RTP), not only supports the generation of new research-based knowledge about validated practices, but also supports training and technical assistance activities to help educators and families use these practices to improve results for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. In addition, RTP, as part of OSEP's Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Plan for FY 2001, is evaluating the extent to which IDEA-Part D investments (a) are responsive to the most critical needs of children with disabilities and their families, (b) are used by practitioners and policy-makers, and (c) result in improved outcomes for children with disabilities. Thus, both IDEA and GPRA mandates support for using research-validated practices to improve results for children with disabilities in states and localities across the country.

The Scaling Up Work Group was appointed and charged with determining an appropriate role for the Federal government in bringing research-validated practices to scale. Specifically, Work Group members were asked to address the following questions:

- Based on research and practical experience, what are the critical issues associated with bringing research-validated practices to scale? And
- What is an appropriate Federal role in the scaling up process?

The Work Group considered the policy implications of an OSEP-sponsored scaling up process that supported the use of research-validated practices in special education classrooms, as well as in the general education classrooms in which most children with disabilities are educated.

Outline of the Report

This report documents the process for conducting the Work Group meetings and presents the Work Group members' responses to the policy questions posed by RTP. Specifically, the next section describes the procedures to recruit Work Group members and conduct the meeting. The third section describes the Work Group deliberations, including presentations, group-wide discussions, and small group recommendations. The report concludes with a presentation and analysis of a summary chart that outlines the final recommendations for which there was consensus among the Work Group members.

MEETING PROCEDURES

This section gives an overview of the Work Group meeting and how the group developed its recommendations.

Lizanne DeStefano (University of Illinois) assisted RTP in planning the Work Group meeting, including recruiting participants, developing the agenda in conjunction with Lou Danielson and Renee Bradley of RTP, and preparing materials and presentations. AIR hosted the meeting, handled logistical arrangements, and helped prepare this report for consideration by RTP policymakers.

Information about the meeting participants, the meeting agenda and proceedings, and descriptions of supporting materials is provided next.

Composition of the Work Group

The Work Group consisted of eleven external members and eight from RTP. External members were selected to represent various constituents of the scaling up process, including researchers, developers, local educational agency administrators, state directors, and technical assistance providers. External Work Group members and their affiliations are listed below:

- Martha Brooks, Delaware State Department of Education,
- Lizanne DeStefano, University of Illinois,
- Lynn Fuchs, Vanderbilt University,
- Charles Greenwood, University of Kansas,
- James Hamilton, American Institutes for Research,
- Francine Mayfield, Clarke County, Nevada Schools,
- Patricia Morrissey, Booz-Allen & Hamilton,
- Kathleen Stringfield, Success for All Foundation,
- Matt Timm, Tennessee Voices for Children,
- Sharon Vaughn, University of Texas-Austin, and
- Mary Wood, University of Georgia

In addition, the following staff from RTP attended the meeting:

- Lou Danielson, Director of RTP (OSEP),
- Renee Bradley,
- Glinda Hill,
- Jane Hauser,
- Kelly Henderson,
- David Malouf,
- Ingrid Oxaal, and
- Marlene Simon.

Attachment A contains contact information for each of these members of the Scaling Up Work Group.

Meeting Agenda

The agenda for the Work Group meeting consisted of the following activities:

- *Introductory comments and charge* to the Work Group, by Lou Danielson;
- *Synthesis of the major issues* in scaling up, by Lizanne DeStefano;
- *Group members' personal experiences* with the scaling up process;
- *Brainstorming Session* -- Generation of major issues in bringing research-validated practices to scale;
- *Large group discussion* of suggested solutions to the issues identified during the brainstorming session;
- *Small group discussion* of the appropriate Federal role in the scaling up process; and
- Development and prioritization of the Work Group recommendations.

Renee Bradley of RTP facilitated the meeting and solicited the input of the Work Group members in responding to policy concerns articulated by the agency.

Supporting Materials and Services

The following materials were disseminated to the Work Group for their review prior to the meeting:

- Carnine, D. (1997). Bridging the research-to-practice gap. *Exceptional Children*, 63 (4), pp. 513-521.
- Elmore, R. (1996). getting to scale with good educational practice. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66 (1), Spring, pp. 1-26.
- Fullan, M. & Miles, M. (1992). Getting reform right: What works and what doesn't. *Phi Delta Kappan*, June 1992, pp. 745-752.
- Gersten, R., & Brengelman, S. U. (1996). The quest to translate research into classroom practice: The emerging knowledge base. *Remedial and Special Education*, 17 (2), pp. 67-74.
- National Association of State Boards of Education (1998). *Sustainability Framework*:

National Association of State Boards of Education Study of Comprehensive School Reform. Alexandria, VA.: NASBE.

- Smith, M., & O'Day, J. (1991). Systemic school reform. In S. Fuhrman and B. Malen (Eds.), *The Politics of Curriculum and Testing: 1990 Yearbook of the Politics of Education Associations*. Washington, D.C.: Falmer Press.
- Vaughn, S., Klinger, J., & Hughes, M. (2000). Sustainability of research-based practices. *Exceptional Children*, 66 (2), pp. 163-171.

In addition, Lizanne DeStefano, University of Illinois, and Don Dailey, AIR, conducted a thorough literature search on scalability, reviewed several scores of abstracts, and assembled a series of the most relevant articles into a briefing booklet for use at the meeting. Attachment B contains the full list of citations for the documents assembled for the meeting.

WORK GROUP DELIBERATIONS

After the introductory charge by Lou Danielson (RTP), Lizanne DeStefano (University of Illinois) summarized research and theory on scalability. This presentation was followed by a session in which each Work Group member reflected upon their personal experiences in scaling up research-validated practices. The Work Group followed this by engaging in a group-wide discussion where they built on Dr. DeStefano's presentation, personal reflections, and readings from the literature to identify issues and strategies to be considered in going to scale with effective practices. Following this discussion the Work Group divided into three small groups to discuss the Federal role in this process, using the issues and strategies identified by the large group as a guide. The small groups reported to the larger group the issues and recommendations generated by their discussions. Finally, taking each of the discussions from the entire day into consideration, including personal reflections and both large and small group discussions, the Work Group as a whole identified recommendations to be formally proposed to RTP policymakers, and each member voted for their top choice.

This section on Work Group deliberations summarizes information presented by Dr.

DeStefano on the concept of scalability, group member personal reflections, issues and strategies identified by the Work Group, and recommendations generated by the small group discussions of the Federal role in moving effective practices to scale. The formal recommendations of the Work Group as a whole, as derived from these discussions, are then presented in the concluding section of the report.

Review of the Literature on Scalability

The meeting began with a presentation by Lizanne DeStefano, summarizing research and theory on scalability. Issues covered during this presentation included the nature of successful change, designing support for change, promoting research-validated practices, and the Federal role in bringing effective practices to scale.

While many children with disabilities have benefited from the accomplishments of successful teachers, schools, and programs, replicating this success on a larger scale has proven to be a difficult challenge. Scaling up effective practices involves change. Much of the literature says change efforts are most successful when there exists a school-wide vision and school climate conducive to learning, enthusiastic and knowledgeable teachers, high-quality curricula and instructional strategies, a high level of engagement, shared decision-making, and parental support and involvement. Little is said about what to do in the absence of these factors.

The literature stresses that the scope and magnitude of the change needs to be considered when planning incentive structures and resources to support it. External (e.g., standards, professional development communities) and internal (e.g., shared vision, researcher/practitioner collaborations) structures are identified in the literature as providing valuable support for change.

The literature says there is need to create intentional processes for reproduction of success. For example, reforms that purport to change practice should embody an explicit theory about how human beings and organizations learn to do things differently. Promoting research-validated

practices is a key issue. Mechanisms are needed to promote the trustworthiness, usability (relevance and feasibility) and accessibility of research validated practices. Developers should address the feasibility of the innovation in terms of scope and magnitude of change, the demand characteristics, and amount of professional development and technical assistance needed to support long-term implementation.

The literature talks about the lack of consideration of the unique circumstances of bringing research-validated practices to scale in special education. This is a critical problem given that the majority of instruction for special education students occurs in general education with general education teachers. Local leaders could potentially help. It seems they play a critical role in bringing research-validated practices to scale, though little has been written about it.

Another issue discussed in the literature is the Federal role in enhancing large-scale adoption of research-validated practices. This role is complex and that involves many activities such as research, model demonstration, outreach, personnel preparation, technical assistance and dissemination, monitoring, formula and discretionary funding, and accountability. Thus, Federal support of going to scale involves pulling several policy levers that consistently promote best practices in the field.

Personal Reflections

Each of the Work Group members shared their personal experiences with scaling up research-validated practices. These reflections are briefly summarized below (see Attachment C for a more detailed and comprehensive review of these reflections).

The Work Group members drew from rich and diverse experiences in scaling up research-based practices to identify a beginning set of ideas and issues about going to scale. Some members talked about their experiences with the Joint Dissemination Review Panel (JDRP) process. They perceived the JDRP as providing an important mechanism for reviewing and supporting large-scale

adoption of effective IDEA-Part D practices. In a related discussion, members reflected on the value of defining standards of practice as a way of institutionalizing effective practice. They believe publishing criteria of effectiveness in and of itself has an impact by raising the standards for effective practice. Other members talked about issues involved in implementing programs and practices developed with IDEA-Part D support. For example, they reflected on how there are usually specific practices, and essential elements of those practices, that need to be implemented and scaled up, rather than the entire program.

A wide range of other issues were discussed, although not in as much depth or detail as those issues listed above. These additional issues included parent involvement, targeting general and special educators, and key characteristics of the scaling up process.

Issues and Strategies

Members' personal reflections set the stage for a group-wide discussion which generated ten issues considered important in bringing research-validated practices to scale. The Work Group also identified possible solutions or strategies to address these issues. The ten issues and strategies are summarized in Exhibit 1. The four overarching themes derived from these ten issues are then discussed next.

Identifying and disseminating research-validated practices

Work group members discussed how a system designed to identify and disseminate effective IDEA-Part D practices would assist developers and local practitioners in bringing validated practices to scale (JDRP-like process). They believe there should be some way of legitimizing and disseminating what we know about effective practices, and identified this as an appropriate Federal role. In a related vein, they talked about how standards of practice developed through such a process can provide an external reference for change. They believe professional organizations and the Federal government should play a role in defining and promoting standards of practice. The

standards of practice would be more generic than a particular intervention, but would define good practice in special education. The standards would serve as the benchmark for monitoring and professional development activities. They should also guide local district and school selection of effective practices.

Exhibit 1: Work Group Issues and Strategies on Scaling Up

Issue	Strategy
A system to identify and disseminate research-validated practices would assist developers and implementers in bringing research-validated practices to scale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be some way of legitimizing and disseminating what we know about effective practices. • It may be useful to see how other fields approve practice.
Standards of practice provide an external reference for change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional organizations and the Federal government should play a role in defining and promoting standards of practice.
Developers should differentiate between essential and negotiable elements of an intervention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seems important to start with the implementation of a core set of elements and a theory of how they should work. • Co-collaboration can develop an intervention beyond the core for a particular context. • Continuous monitoring and research will identify if desired outcomes continue to be met. • It is also important to determine which adaptations are not desirable.
It is necessary to identify incentives or leverage points to encourage local districts to adopt effective practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify multiple leverage points: state, district, and classroom. • School accountability systems could provide incentives for change at both state and local levels. • Continuous monitoring should be focused on implementation of best practices. • Consumer driven accountability requires that both parents and teachers have access to best practices. • Large-scale assessment systems do not always accurately represent students with disabilities. If these assessments are to drive the system, they must be rethought.
An effective strategy for going to scale should be designed to support change over time, considering political and institutional barriers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and accountability systems should support desired change. • As staff turns over, new hires should be selected in terms of how they will complement the change effort, e.g., job descriptions should require experience in the change process.
Change should be both top down and bottom up—systemic in nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While a visionary is important, the process of change should gradually de-emphasize the visionary. The staff as a group should drive practice. • Many developers demand 80% buy-in from local staff before they will begin to work with a school.

Exhibit 1: Work Group Issues and Strategies on Scaling Up (Continued)

Issue	Strategy
Technical assistance and professional development systems must be constructed to support the change process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TA structures must be long term and intense—scaled to the scope and magnitude of the intervention. • An on-site facilitator is very useful. • There should be clear estimates of the time and effort needed to accomplish the change. • Policy and TA should be coherent across various levels.
Any process for going to scale must recognize that most children with disabilities are educated in general education classrooms. General and special educators are both audiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to affect the ways both general educators and special educators are trained. • School improvement teams are good entities to foster change as they usually represent regular and special education as well as parents. • Research and evaluation should examine the effect of the core on both general and special populations.
Advocacy/Stakeholder groups can facilitate the scaling up process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target parents and advocates in the dissemination process. • As they argue for effective practices in IEPs and due process, parents and advocates will drive change. • Lawyers can also use a listing of endorsed practices as can school districts when parents want an intervention that may or may not be supported by of ethey argness.
Marketing strategies are important.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials should be multimedia and easily accessible. • Dissemination/TA should be tailored to various audiences: administrators, school boards, teachers, and parents. • The development of a set of ethey arg practices in special education would be an important statement about what we harg learned, what we can other, and the role of Federal R&D. • Information should bg presented at ditherent levels, e.g., card in wallet vs. detailed implementation guide. • The role of publishers in this process should bg explored.

Using incentives and leveraging points to encourage broad adoption of best practices developed with IDEA-Part D support

The Work Group agreed it is necessary to identify incentives or leverage points for encouraging local districts and schools to adopt practices that harg been developed and validated with IDEA-Part D support. They discussed how accountability systems should focus on student outcomes, but should also include expey ations for standards of practice linked to posi arg results. They identified multiple leverage points: state, district, and classroom. School accountability systems can provide strong incentives for change at both state and local levels. Continuous monitoring should be focused on implementation of best practices. Furthermore, group members

talked about how consumer driven accountability requires that both parents and teachers have access to information about best practices. In a related issue, members discussed how large-scale assessment systems do not always accurately represent students with disabilities. If they are to drive the system, they must be rethought.

Facilitating local implementation and adaptation of interventions

Focusing on individual interventions, the Work Group discussed how developers should differentiate between essential and negotiable elements of an intervention for scaling up. Members talked about how it is important to start with the implementation of a core set of elements and a theory of how they should work. Co-collaboration can develop an intervention beyond the core for a particular context. In fact, group members emphasized how perfect fidelity to program design is unlikely and not necessarily desirable. They emphasized the importance of local communities adapting an intervention to their particular needs and circumstances to facilitate meaningful and relevant implementation that resonates with local needs, and the potential for local adaptation to develop a sense of ownership at the local level. The group further said continual monitoring and research should be conducted to identify if desired outcomes continue to be met. It is also important to determine which adaptations are not desirable.

The Work Group discussed the relationship between implementation, scaling up and change through a number of different perspectives. They believe change should be both top down and bottom up. This relates to adapting an intervention to local needs. Several members said that while a central vision defined by developers of an intervention is important, the process of change should gradually de-emphasize the central vision and shift to local staff driving practice and adapting the intervention to their circumstances and needs.

Using resources to support change over time

Work Group members believe that going to scale should be designed to support change over time, considering political and institutional barriers. One group member reported that many developers demand at least 80 percent “buy-in” from local staff before they will begin working with a school. These issues also relate to designing monitoring and accountability systems aligned with desired change, and using both staff selection and technical assistance to reinforce priorities for change. As staff leave a district or school the process for selecting new staff can focus on recruiting, screening, and eventually hiring personnel who have the skills and values aligned with the goals for change. Group members also talked about how technical assistance and professional development systems can be designed to support the change process. The group believes technical assistance structures should have the following characteristics to effectively support change and scaling up:

- TA must be a long term ongoing part of the change process;
- TA activities should be aligned with the goals for change and coherent across different levels and groups (i.e., elementary, middle, high school, general education, special education);
- TA should be intense and appropriately scaled to the scope and magnitude of the intervention; and
- An on-site facilitator is very useful.

Members emphasized that to effectively encourage change, both policies and technical assistance should be coherent and consistently aligned with the goals for change.

Bringing multiple audiences into the change process

The Work Group discussed how scaling up requires effective marketing and dissemination strategies for reaching a wide range of audiences. They talked about how any process for going to scale must recognize that most children with disabilities are educated in general education classrooms. According to the Work Group, general and special educators are both key audiences,

and training for both general educators and special educators needs to be addressed. School improvement teams were identified as important target audiences. Members said improvement teams are effective entities for fostering change because they usually represent general and special educators as well as parents. They also see advocacy groups facilitating the scaling up process. In reaching these audiences group members believe marketing strategies are important. Materials should be multi-media and easily accessible. Marketing should be tailored to audiences using various formats (e.g. card in wallet vs. detailed implementation guide). Members also said the role of publishers in this process should be explored.

As a final overarching theme, the Work Group members agreed that developing standards for effective practices in special education would be an important statement about “what we have learned” from IDEA-Part D investments and “what we can offer” the field of education. Developing such standards would also highlight the role of OSEP and other Federal agencies in supporting scaling up activities. The resulting issues about the appropriate Federal role in facilitating the scaling up process are discussed next.

Appropriate Federal Role

Following the large group discussion where members identified issues that need to be considered, and how they can be addressed, the Work Group members broke into small groups to focus on the question, “What is the appropriate Federal role in scaling up?” The small groups used the issues and strategies identified in the previous session as a guide for their discussions. Each small group reported back recommendations for the larger group to consider. Cutting across the various small group recommendations, three themes emerged, each of which is discussed below.

How can OSEP support the identification of standards of effective practice?

One of the first steps in scaling up is identification of practices, developed and validated with IDEA-Part D support, that help children learn and grow. The Work Group thought that there is a sense that OSEP could play a leadership role in identifying these standards (see Side Bar *Ways in which OSEP can Support Identification of Standards of Practice*). For example, there is a sense among the group members that districts, schools, teachers, and families in large numbers are adopting programs and practices that have not been validated by a solid research base. At the same time, a coherent and effective system is not in place for identifying what does work and communicating this to these audiences. Therefore, in thinking about appropriate and needed roles for OSEP in the scaling up process, finding ways to support identification of effective IDEA-Part D practices is an important overarching theme coming out of the small group discussions. This involves identification of what works in terms of specific practices, what does not work, and a continuing process of defining standards of effective practice that goes beyond a specific intervention.

Ways in which OSEP can Support Identification of Standards of Practice

- Promote the identification of core elements and parameters for scaling up through a JDRP-like process.
- Identify information on effective practices through research syntheses.
- Establish a directed research priority that focuses on “implementation research”.
- Use information about effective IDEA-Part D practices in OSEP’s long term planning to identify areas where more research is needed.
- Choose three high demand areas and begin to identify and disseminate effective IDEA-Part D practices as a pilot project.
- Hold a “Wingspread” type conference to establish criteria for effectiveness and get the top people in the field to buy into the process.
- Encourage general education to examine effective IDEA-Part D practices by coordinating with other Federal agencies in identifying and disseminating practices.
- Require reporting outcomes for students with disabilities in ways that accurately represent their progress.

One of the key recommendations is to develop promotion of a process for identifying core

program elements, practices and parameters for scaling up. Members believe a process for identifying effective IDEA-Part D practices can be fostered through a JDRP-like process which reviews and evaluates promising practices. Such a process can further be used as a means for identifying standards of effective practices for the field, and could serve as a source for learning more about scaling up these practices.

Another way members believe OSEP can promote identification of effective IDEA-Part D practices is to sponsor a meta-analysis or thorough synthesis of the research literature in selected areas. The National Academy of Sciences and other organizations have produced syntheses of this nature in the past. This could be developed in a way that identifies and begins to build a coherent database on effective IDEA-Part D practices tailored primarily for students with disabilities, as well as those practices that are effective with all students, including those with disabilities. Members talked about how research syntheses updated on a regular basis and communicated through various formats could be effective in identifying what works and where gaps exist. They also emphasized how a valid synthesis will require outcomes for students with disabilities be reported in ways that accurately represent their progress.

A related small group recommendation is establishment of a directed research priority that focuses on implementation research. Members talked about how information gleaned from a synthesis of what works could be used to focus the research priority to increase understanding of how effective practices are implemented under different circumstances and conditions. OSEP is currently sponsoring implementation research, but a research priority that pulls this information together in a coherent way could be especially useful. This could be accomplished through a coordinated constellation of projects, or some other format.

The small groups reported additional ways in which OSEP can begin to identify areas where more research is needed. One group suggested OSEP use information about effective practices in their long term strategic planning. Members believe that as these activities are supported by a

research synthesis, ongoing strategic discussions could work hand in hand with this information to focus attention on important research to practice needs related to effective practices. Another recommended approach is to choose three high demand areas and begin to identify and disseminate effective practices as a pilot project.

Members also talked about OSEP holding a “Wingspread” type conference to establish criteria for effectiveness. Such a meeting could tap into the rich knowledge existing in the field, create visibility for OSEP’s scaling up policy goals, and encourage buy-in among top people in the field on common standards for effective practice.

Finally, members believe it is important to connect these efforts with general education. One small group recommendation is for OSEP to encourage general education to examine effective practices by coordinating with other Federal agencies in identifying and disseminating best practices.

What policies need to be developed by OSEP to facilitate scaling up effective IDEA-Part D practices?

Once standards of effective IDEA-Part D practice are identified, group members believe

OSEP can foster implementation of these practices in the field through various policy levers that influence preservice training, monitoring and accountability systems, and technical assistance (see Side Bar: *OSEP Policies Designed*

OSEP Policies Designed to Facilitate Scaling Up Effective IDEA-Part D Practices

- Provide incentives for higher education to imbed effective IDEA-Part D practices into their preservice programs.
- Support the development of standards of practice for the field of special education through their use in monitoring, technical assistance, personnel preparation, credentialing, and other Federal activities.
- Ensure that continuous improvement monitoring (CIM) and Federally-funded TA promotes the use of effective IDEA-Part D practices at the state level.
- Develop standards of practice for TA that address statement of outcomes, deliverables, relationships with clients, documentation.
- Build requirements for standards of practice into RFPs and new models for demonstration.

to Facilitate Scaling Up Effective IDEA-Part D Practices)

Small group members identified preservice training as a critical source of professional values, accepted norms for practice, and knowledge of effective IDEA-Part D practices. Given this potential influence, it is important that programs expose prospective teachers, administrators and other professional educators to IDEA-Part D endorsed practices. Group members believe OSEP should provide incentives for higher education to imbed these practices into their preservice programs.

Another small group recommendation is that OSEP support and articulate standards of practice for the field of special education by consistently using them in monitoring, technical assistance, personnel preparation, credentialing, and other Federal activities. It is especially critical that a consistent message be sent to practitioners and families on what is effective and endorsed by OSEP. The messages communicated by monitoring, accountability, and technical assistance systems should be aligned with effective IDEA-Part D practices. One group believes OSEP should focus on ensuring that continuous improvement monitoring (CIM) and Federally-funded technical assistance promotes the use of these effective practices at the state level.

Another related recommendation is that standards of practice be developed for technical assistance providers in a manner that facilitates their capacity to help schools and teachers improve services for children. Members suggested that standards for technical assistance should include clear articulation of outcomes that can be expected from assistance provided to clients, expected deliverables, standards for relationships with clients, and documentation of service delivery and results.

Finally, as an additional lever for promoting standards of effective practice, one small group recommended that expectations for using these standards be embedded in priority requirements and new versions of model demonstration and outreach competitions.

How can OSEP facilitate dissemination of information about effective IDEA-Part D practices?

Identification of effective IDEA-Part D practices, and development of policies that encourage adoption of those practices in increasingly broader contexts, are important elements in an OSEP-coordinated process for scaling up promising programs, practices, and reforms. The small groups identified one additional area for Federal involvement: marketing

Ways in which OSEP can facilitate dissemination of information about best IDEA-Part D practices

- Consider a “logo” process for IDEA-Part D endorsed practices.
- Sponsor a public relations campaign on the importance of using effective IDEA-Part D practices. Target parents, educators, and professional organizations.
- Help Congress become an expert on effective IDEA-Part D practices. Link with issues that are of broad concern such as school violence, student achievement, reading. Demonstrate what special education can contribute to improvements in those areas.
- Use PTIs, RRCs, and other established mechanisms to disseminate information about effective IDEA-Part D practices.
- Put conditions on Federal research and innovation funds to encourage a broader and different type of dissemination. Consider strategies for leveraging IDEA-Part B funds.
- Explore the role of publishers in this process.

information and educating various external stakeholders about effective IDEA-Part D practices that should be scaled up (see Side Bar: *Ways in which OSEP can facilitate dissemination of information about best IDEA-Part D practices*). These issues are discussed next.

One group recommendation related to the establishment of a formal review and evaluation process is for OSEP to consider developing a logo for IDEA-Part D practices endorsed by the review process. It would be important to market this logo and communicate what it means, though some members believe a well known logo could reduce the need for other types of dissemination about effective IDEA-Part D practices. Members believe that as schools, teachers, and parents encounter programs and practices that do not have the endorsement logo, they can automatically be placed on alert and should be equipped to ask questions probing into reasons why the practice is not approved.

Another proposed strategy is for OSEP to sponsor a public relations campaign on the

importance of using effective practices endorsed by IDEA-Part D. Members believe the campaign should target parents, educators, and professional organizations. This is consistent with the research to practice approach. Members also believe it is important for OSEP to further develop the research to policy connection by helping Congress become more acquainted with information about effective IDEA-Part D practices. Small group members said that linking effective practices with issues of broad concern such as school violence, student achievement, and reading could be especially effective with policymakers. Group members expressed that it is important to demonstrate improvements that special education can contribute to those areas.

In reaching critical local audiences, such as parents, group members recommend using Parent Training Information Centers (PTIs), Regional Resource Centers (RRCs), and other established mechanisms to disseminate information about effective IDEA-Part D practices in “family friendly” language. In part, this may involve building the capacity for linking researchers and PTI professionals. One related idea proposed by a group is to put conditions on Federal research and innovation funds to encourage a broader and different type of dissemination. They believe OSEP should consider alternative strategies for leveraging Part B funds.

Finally, one group recommended that OSEP explore the role of publishers in this process. They believe bringing publishers into the process could provide a broad range of venues and opportunities for connecting with several audiences: parents, teachers, administrators, policymakers, and other stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Work Group meeting concluded with members reflecting on the full set of issues, strategies, and small group recommendations discussed during the day. Drawing on these sources, the Work Group endorsed a set of recommendations for OSEP to undertake in the near future to foster bringing effective IDEA-Part D practices to scale. Each member voted to indicate their most

important recommendation. The recommendations and accompanying votes are contained in Exhibit 2 and discussed below.

EXHIBIT 2: Final Recommendations of the Scaling Up Work Group

Recommendations	First votes
OSEP should develop and field-test a system to identify effective IDEA-Part D practices at the Federal level.	9
OSEP should develop and field-test a system of dissemination to inform consumers about effective IDEA-Part D practices and to identify commonly used practices that have no evidence of effectiveness.	5
OSEP should work with professional groups such as Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), American Federation of Teachers (AFT), National Education Association (NEA), National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), to develop and promote professional standards for the field.	5
OSEP should develop an accountability framework (applicable at Federal, state and local levels) that promotes the use of effective IDEA-Part D practices.	2
OSEP should examine the potential of using existing networks and activities, such as funded TA providers, state improvement grants, and University Affiliated Programs, to foster the use of research-validated practices.	0

The recommendation receiving the most votes from Work Group members is the concept of OSEP developing and field-testing a system to identify effective IDEA-Part D practices at the Federal level, with nine votes. Such a system could resemble the former JDRP process. This would require developers to report information on effectiveness as well as key assumptions, need for buy-in, core elements, resources needed, level and duration of support, and impact on general and special education students.

Two recommendations received five votes each. One is based on the idea of OSEP developing and field-testing a system of dissemination to inform consumers about effective IDEA-Part D practices and the need to identify commonly used practices that have no evidence of effectiveness. Parents, educators and local and state policy-makers are key audiences. Members believe it is important for these audiences to know what does and does not work.

The other recommendation receiving five votes is that OSEP should work with professional groups such as CEC, AFT, NEA, NASDSE, to develop and promote professional standards for the field. This would be followed by development of an accountability framework that promotes the use of research-validated practices (receiving two votes). Members are interested in a framework that involves frequent assessments throughout the year, be linked to relevant curriculum for an individual child, targets parents and educators as the primary audiences, and possibly involves a restructured IEP process.

Lou Danielson and Renee Bradley of RTP concluded the meeting by thanking each of the participants for their insightful commentary and recommendations about the scaling up process. These recommendations, as documented and summarized in this report, will be considered, as appropriate, by RTP policymakers as part of the agency's continuing concern to ensure that IDEA-Part D investments are widely used to improve results for children with disabilities and their families.

ATTACHMENT A: MEETING PARTICIPANTS

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ATTACHMENT B: CITATIONS OF REVIEW MATERIALS

SCALING UP WORK GROUP MARCH 30, 2001

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ATTACHMENT C: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

SCALING UP WORK GROUP MARCH 30, 2001

A group discussion was held in which each work group member reflected upon their personal experiences with scaling up research-validated practices. A summary list of issues generated in this discussion is presented below.

- The JDRP/NDN process provided an important mechanism for supporting large-scale adoption of effective practices. It provided developers with funds and publicity to work with local districts. Local districts and state agencies had a place to go to find out what worked. NDN made information on best practices very accessible. “Educational Programs that Work” was sent to every district.
- Parents are an important source of leverage in the scaling up process. If parents are knowledgeable about effective practices, they will be better equipped to advocate for them in IEP meetings and other venues.
- In scaling up, you have to accept that nothing is going to be replicated exactly. You have to be able to figure out what is essential to include and what is not.
- Publishing criteria of effectiveness in and of itself has an impact. It raises practice to a new level and focuses parents’ and teachers’ discussion around quality.
- Educational practice is driven by fads, fashion, and foolishness. It would be useful to have some means of identifying what we know works and using that information to battle fads.
- When local districts are adopting a model, it is important that they change it somewhat to make it their own.
- Federal funding priorities should emphasize the importance of research-validated practices in personnel preparation, systems change, and technical assistance. They should emphasize the important of replication and going to scale in the funding of research, demonstration and outreach projects.
- Key characteristics of the scaling-up process include: a reliable, replicable, model that produces results, non-stop research and development, co-construction between developer and implementer, vision and sense of mission combined with a business sense, on-site facilitators, continual professional development, no materials without training, and personal rewards for progress.
- It is just as important to identify what does not work as it is to identify what does.

- It may be possible to identify the essential elements of an intervention by studying the relative effects of naturally occurring variation.
- Standards of practice that are endorsed by the field are one way of institutionalizing effective practice. That will help to resist losing ground when staff turns over or when political winds shift. Professional organizations, advocates, and disseminators can provide external pressure through standards of practice.
- It is important to realize that when we talk about going to scale, we are talking about general education teachers as well as special educators. We have to include general educators and administrators as major audiences.
- It seems that it is important for the federal government to be able to say, “We know a lot, and this is what practice should be.”
- If we are judging effectiveness in terms of meaningful change for all children, then the fact that we are dealing with a special education population makes that difficult, because special education has been based upon judgments of individual progress. It is important that accountability systems accurately and meaningfully represent progress of students with disabilities.