

ECHO Strategic Plan Report

Legend:

AFL is red.

ABLE/Satellite is purple.

EC Program is pink.

CD is blue.

DHH is green.

FOCUS Programs (ECHO School and PHI/VI) are orange.

PACE is forest green.

ECHO-wide activities are reflected in black.

Goal 1: To support positive student educational and post secondary outcomes and annually increase percentages of students meeting and exceeding state standards.

Sub Goal 1—Provide instruction and curriculum that is rigorous, relevant, differentiated and aligned to the Illinois State Learning Standards.

Action Plan Activities:

Develop Curriculum Maps in the Content Areas to Guide Instruction.

- ECHO: Sponsored a workshop with Dr. Ann Johnson on Curriculum Mapping. In attendance were representatives from all ECHO Programs.
- ECHO: Introduced the concept of curriculum mapping to staff and designed a plan commencing with diary mapping using an electronic template.
 - DHH: Staff introduction occurred during 8/17/09 Orientation. Template input was designed during Staff Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting on 12/14/09.
 - DHH: All staff (certified) signed up for Google Docs. Diary Maps were sent to Site Coordinators to start input at each site. Deadline will be set during January 10th SAC meeting.
 - ABLE/Satellite: School Improvement workshop on Curriculum Mapping occurred in October for staff, followed by a workshop on monthly Literacy Diary Mapping in November.
 - ABLE/Satellite: Developing a Wikispace where maps can be posted as completed.
 - FOCUS Programs: Initiated mapping of Life Centered Career Education (LCCE) curriculum and curriculum for Conductive Education.
 - FOCUS Programs: Will meet on January 12th and January 14th to move forward with Literacy Mapping.
 - CD: Diary Maps will be introduced to the staff in January. Continued small committee work scheduled at team meetings on Feb. 19th and 25th, and Mar. 18th and 24th.
 - PACE: Staff was introduced to the concept during October SIP day.
 - PACE: Staff are completing Diary Maps in reading or their subject areas.
 - EC: Staff have done preliminary mapping for State Standards for Mathematics and now are mapping for Literacy.

- AFL: Mapping introduced with a focus on literacy. Numeracy is planned for Semester II. Curriculum mapping is on-going.

Identify and Obtain Scientific Research-Based Resources and Materials that Support the Development and Implementation of a Rigorous, Relevant and Differentiated Curriculum.

- ECHO: Sponsored a workshop entitled: Accessing General Education Curriculum for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities; staff from all programs were in attendance.
- ECHO: Established an electronic template that outlines the tiered reading materials utilized in each program. All programs have postings on the template. DHH will submit in January 2010.
- ECHO: Programs have identified scientific research based instructional materials appropriate to the needs of their student populations.
 - CD: Implementing Kaleidoscope, Horizons, Reading Mastery, Corrective Reading, Jolly Phonics and REAL MATH, which are all researched-based programs.
 - DHH: Subscribed to Reading A-Z in November. Membership is held at each site. Staff access level readers on an ongoing basis. DHH assisted in publishing research article on phonics instruction and teaching reading to DHH students.
 - FOCUS Programs: Implementing a sequential and mapped Science Curriculum with additional supplemental materials to be implemented in January of 2010.
 - FOCUS Programs: Utilizing Six Pillars of Character curriculum materials for enhancement of students character, social, emotional and self-awareness repertoires as a component of Social Science Instruction.
 - FOCUS Programs: Utilizing Don Johnston's Start to Finish Libraries of Universally Designed Literature for use in all relevant content areas.
 - ABLE/Satellite: Implementing 10 Delta Science Modules with classroom sets of readers to support science instruction based on the 4 curricular topics (Life, Earth, Physical, Scientific Processes).
 - ABLE/Satellite: Implementing the Early Literacy Skills Builder, a research based literacy program designed for students with moderate to severe cognitive deficits.
 - ABLE/Satellite: Developing a plan to implement a general education novel adaptation to be piloted Spring 2010 and ready for use Fall 2010 at multiple grade levels.
 - ABLE/Satellite: Utilizing literacy programs that include Edmark, Corrective Reading, Open Court Phonics and Reading Program.
 - EC: Implementing Early Skills Builder, a research based literacy program designed for students with moderate to severe cognitive deficits. Utilizing the Language for Learning Program and introducing the Touch Math Pre-K Program that utilizes a multisensory approach.
 - PACE: Implementing a Pre-Algebra and Algebra Program for Grades 7 and 8. This program includes CD's, manipulatives, and on-line help. Science Kits by Delta are also being utilized.
 - AFL: Implementing A+ software to supplement and enhance core subject differentiation. Implementing "My Reading Coach" to enhance the literacy initiative.

- AFL: Utilizing new science laboratory materials and Shakespeare novels at tiered levels.
- AFL: Developing a plan to enable English teachers to differentiate instruction.

Embed Multiculturalism into the Curriculum throughout the School Year.

- CD: Utilizing theme-based units to embed multicultural awareness through historical events and people across the curriculum and all grade levels.
- DHH: Implementing the Adults Role Models in Education Deaf (A.R.M.E.D.) program on an ongoing basis. Students are exposed to deaf adults through this program and access deaf culture. DHH uses a Deaf Studies Curricula from ISD (Illinois School for the Deaf) and Gallaudet.
- FOCUS Programs: Utilizing thematic materials including the Don Johnston materials to embed multiculturalism across content areas.
- FOCUS Programs: Received a donation of multicultural children's literature for use as supplementary reading materials, which are housed in the ECHO School Library.
- PHI-VI: Embedding multiculturalism through social work intervention groups at all levels but particularly at the high school level including the Strong Beautiful Women Group and the Men's Group.
- AFL: Utilizing thematic materials that are multicultural throughout Character Education Classes, English classes, and Social Studies classes.
- AFL: Promoting diversity as well as social and community awareness using activities that include, but are not limited to, Black History month, drug awareness, animal cruelty awareness, social awareness education, anti-bullying, STD prevention, and teen parenting.
- PACE: Providing ongoing thematic units, programs and activities throughout the curriculum that promote diversity and social and community awareness. These include Black History, drug awareness, animal cruelty awareness, fire prevention, stop the violence, and acts of kindness.

Integrate Technology into the Curriculum and Instruction

- ECHO: Joined Infinitec and sponsored multiple trainings.
- ECHO: Desktops and laptops are being used in all classrooms.
 - CD: Provided overview of Infinitec web site and resources with all certified staff at October team meeting. Staff has attended workshops that have been sponsored by Infinitec.
 - CD: Utilizing technology for EASY IEP, AIMSWEB, Reading programs such as AZ and AR, keyboarding skill development, Smart Boards, Co-Writer and Write Outloud software programs, and for researching information.
 - DHH: All staff are registered for Infinitec. DHH assisted 15 families in purchasing computers through Infinitec. More families are in the process of application.
 - FOCUS Programs: Utilizing intensive technology as a differentiation tool for access to the curriculum. The tools

include: screen reader technology for access to text that may be above reading level but at appropriate content level; ample application of visuals including Boardmaker support for curriculum concepts and for communication development; a variety of means of computer access for physical disability needs including eye gaze technology and switch and alternate keyboard technology; digitized text, brailled and iconically represented text and a full range of adaptive software including concept and skill development software and writing support software and augmentative communication software.

- FOCUS Programs: Utilizing the strengths of key staff who have extensive experience and masters degrees in assistive technology to match student need to tools using the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI) nationally granted and research supported approach.
- PHI-VI: Coordinating necessary assistive technology tools with the Smart Board technology at pilot sites; while awaiting procurement from stimulus funds for implementation at the remaining FOCUS Sites.
- FOCUS Programs: Developed a nationally recognized strategy approach for successful use of iconic representations of language and concepts for communication via light and high technology applications, accomplished collaboratively through a partnership with the Dynavox Corporation.
- FOCUS Programs: Utilizing Boardmaker Plus Representational and Talking software for each classroom and has recently procured coordinating stand alone communicators to allow the students to have access to the same voice output communication abilities in all of their various school environments. Additionally, pertinent classrooms have low tech digitized communicators to support classroom activities and individual needs.
- PACE: Utilizing computers to support reading and math activities. Research skills and PowerPoint presentations are incorporated into the curriculum. Pre-Algebra and Algebra students were provided with a CD to work at home.
- PACE: Staff attended Infnitec workshop.
- EC: Staff attended Infnitec workshop as well as ATIA Conference and a conference on Augmentative and Alternative Communication.
- EC: Preparing a plan to integrate Smart Boards into the curriculum.
- AFL: Assisted 10-15 families in securing computers for home use through Infnitec.
- AFL: Promoting virtual learning in the area of Spanish.
- AFL: Supporting differentiated instruction through the use of two computers in each classroom. Graphing calculators are used in all math classes, 7 Smart Boards have been installed in Math and Science rooms, and all students take a computer class every other semester. Two rolling carts with 10 computers each are available to all classes for project based work.

Integrate Social Emotional Skill Development into the Curriculum

- CD: Staff attended a weekend training on Social Thinking by Michelle Garcia Winner in Peoria. They have offered 3 training sessions for all staff, certified and uncertified, developed a power point presentation, and have begun using lessons in social work group. A Parent Night is being planned in January to introduce this effective program for social development to parents and guardians.
- CD: Three classrooms have actively participated in PBIS at Lester Crawl School.
- DHH: Utilizing ISD and Gallaudet Deaf Studies Curriculum with comprehensive attention to identity issues. Social workers provide services through yoga and the arts for expression and stress reduction. Social workers are versed in the Illinois State Standards for Social/Emotional areas.
- DHH: Working with Illinois Service Resource Center to implement PBIS program wide, including the itinerant students. Completed initial program training and kick off and implemented Cool Tools and Celebration, which took place on December 4, 2009 in the Holy Ghost gym.
- EC Program: Staff participated in the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) Training sponsored by StarNet.
- ABLE: Staff are incorporating Michele Garcia Winner's Social Thinking Program into their curriculum and instruction.
- FOCUS Programs: Implementing the Life Center Career Education Curriculum (LCCE) and the Six Pillars of Character Education Program. Staff development is being provided to support the implementation of these programs.
- PACE: Moved to emerging PBIS status and attended the PBIS Alternative School Workshop and presented PACE's PBIS Acknowledgement System at the Fall PBIS Conference. PACE also initiated PBIS Parent Connector Program and Ambassadors of Kindness Program.
- AFL: Enrolled all students in Personal and Social Responsibility, which addresses the State of Illinois SEL goals and objectives. Students with disabilities have IEP goals that relate to social emotional skill development.
- AFL: Psychologists and Social Workers work with students individually and in groups to facilitate social emotional growth.
- AFL: Staff attended PBIS Alternative School Team Professional Development and are addressing the initiatives during team meetings. Currently in PBIS Initial Skill Status.

Sub Goal 2—Provide ongoing evaluation to track the efficacy of curriculum and instruction in improving student outcomes to meet learning standards and post secondary goals.

Action Plan Activities:

Conduct formative and summative assessments of student progress. Maintain a data base to track student progress and analyze performance trends.

- ECHO: AIMSWeb data is being used for benchmarking and for progress and strategic monitoring in three programs.
- ECHO: Collected ISAT/IAA Data for 07/08 and 08/09 to analyze student progress and drive instruction.
 - CD: Certified staff are trained in AIMSWEB and are benchmarking, progress monitoring, and presenting data at IEP meetings.
 - DHH: Utilizing Stanford Achievement Tests (SAT) as formal measure of student progress. This is the only standardized test that maintains norms for DHH students. Progress is measured annually in the Fall. Results are gathered and statistically determined by national organizations. The program receives data regarding progress as compared to other national DHH students as well as results compared to hearing student norms.
 - FOCUS Programs: Data from Dynavox strategy based interventions have been charted and graphed in classrooms to drive instruction.
 - FOCUS Programs: Life Center Career Education Curriculum (LCCE) assessments are utilized in ECHO School and High School PHI-VI as pre- and post- assessments.
 - FOCUS Programs: Annual PHI/VI achievement assessments are completed for long range monitoring using formats appropriate to the needs of low incidence disabilities.
 - PACE: Reading and Math progress is monitored using AIMSWeb. SWISS tracks behavioral data in order to determine the effectiveness of PBIS.
 - AFL: Reading progress is tracked using AIMSWeb. Behavioral data is tracked using PowerSchool. Math is monitored through the use of pre and post tests.

Utilize Technology to Maintain Data Base (EasyIEP, SWISS Data, PowerSchool, etc.)

- ECHO: AIMSWeb data is being used for benchmarking and for progress and strategic monitoring in three programs.
 - FOCUS Programs: Base Ten Response Format by Leonard LaPointe utilized in instruction. Charting is done automatically from the digital data tracking format.
 - AFL: Behavior is tracked using PowerSchool.

Solicit Feedback from all Stakeholders Regarding Student Outcomes.

- FOCUS Programs: Presented at two national conferences and sought feedback regarding the data specific to student outcomes as related to the Dynavox and ECHO partnership.
- PACE: Completed team implementation meetings monthly during initial implementation of PBIS to obtain staff feedback. Currently completing a unified action plan and a monthly survey review to identify those students that need to be moved to Tier II check-in and check-out interventions.

Sub Goal 3—Provide Transition Programming to Support Student Success.

Action Plan Activities:

Explore Student Interests and Aspirations.

- DHH: Freshman take the EXPLORE test in addition to taking the Personal Growth and Development (PG&D) class as a freshman and/or sophomore.
- PHI-VI: All students and their parents are interviewed in depth about interests and expectations at age 14 with a contact made by the vocational coordinator. Subsequent queries and follow up occurs until graduation.
- ECHO School: Students in the Achieve ECHO School program are interviewed in depth about interests and expectations at age 14 with a contact made by the vocational coordinator. Subsequent queries and follow up occurs until graduation. Students in the Bravo and Care ECHO School programs are either interviewed along with their parents or the parents are queried about life goals and expectations with a contact made by the social worker who serves their particular classroom. Subsequent queries and follow up occurs until graduation.
- PACE: Eighth graders take the EXPLORE Test and a social worker will work with individuals 13 ½ or older to explore career options.
- AFL: Juniors and seniors participate in Cooperative Work Training (CWT) to explore career possibilities and their interests. Students create resumes and participate in mock interviews.
- AFL: Students explore the world of work at the AFL Job Fair.
- AFL: Students get a taste of culinary arts through the AFL Transition Lab.

Collaborate with all Stakeholders (Students, Parents and Community).

- CD: Staff attended the District 205 transition planning meeting.
- DHH: Staff work in collaboration with the TF South Counseling staff to develop student courses of study.
- FOCUS Programs: Staff work in collaboration with local and state agencies to develop work opportunities for students with physical, health, vision or cognitive disabilities.
- FOCUS Programs: Staff work in collaboration with the Illinois Center for Rehabilitation and Education (ICRE) and the Illinois School for the Visually Impaired (ISVI), as well as board advisory members for ISVI who have developed further vocational development opportunities for low-incidence service populations.
- FOCUS Programs: Staff partner with all available community workshops and service agencies to further opportunities for students' post graduation opportunities.
- FOCUS Programs: Staff hold parent meetings annually to further the parental involvement in their child's personal outcomes, and in local and state advocacy efforts.
- PACE: Utilizing the Virginia vocational online assessment, surveys are completed by parents and students.
- AFL: The Cooperative Work Training (CWT) teacher and Targeted Independent Employment (TIE) teacher work with

community partners in order that eligible students are set up with Department of Rehabilitation (DRS) prior to graduation.

Engage Community Partners in Collaborative Planning with Students and Families.

- FOCUS Programs: Staff work in collaboration with local and state agencies to develop work opportunities for students with physical, health, vision or cognitive disabilities.
- FOCUS Programs: Staff work in collaboration with ICRE and ISVI, as well as board advisory members for ISVI who have developed further vocational development opportunities for the low incidence service population.
- FOCUS Programs: Staff partner with all available community workshops and service agencies to further opportunities for students' post graduation.
- FOCUS Programs: The vocational coordinator serves on several workshop boards and participates in advocacy efforts for transition opportunities.
- FOCUS Programs: Staff hold parent meetings annually to further the parental involvement in their child's personal outcomes, and in local and state advocacy efforts.
- DHH: Staff work collaboratively with TF South staff during college night activities.
- DHH: Coordinate school visits from Gallaudet and NTID post-secondary programs.
- PACE: In addition to an annual Career Day, PACE hosts a luncheon where the students can meet and ask questions of the Mayor, Police Chief, Fire Chief, and representatives of Veterans Associations.

Infuse Career Exploration and Career Awareness Activities into the Curriculum.

- DHH: Integrated in the PG&D coursework.
- FOCUS Programs: Coursework in career exploration and in work behaviors is provided at the 10th grade in PHI-VI High School.
- FOCUS Programs: LCCE Curriculum being implemented addresses career exploration and work behaviors.
- AFL: Integrated into CWT coursework which is available to juniors and seniors.
- AFL: Life Skills students use the LCCE curriculum, which address career exploration and work behaviors.

Extend Learning Outside of the Classroom through Work-Study and Service Learning Activities in the Community.

- DHH: Transition facilitator works with DRS enrolling all eligible students in the STEP program.
- FOCUS Programs: Students participate in community and workshop activities while in school according to individual need and are supported for academic pursuit of post high school educational opportunities as is individually appropriate prior to their graduations.

- **FOCUS Programs:** Participate in community based relevant curriculum and service learning activities on a regular basis both in-house and within the community (i.e. ECHO School teams each worked to support a charitable organization or community outcome in November of 2009; PHI-VI high school students volunteer at a local nursing home in various capacities as a service learning opportunity.)
- **AFL:** Students participated in a beautification project at the school this summer, through a grant obtained from Todd Stroger.
- **AFL:** Students participate in service learning projects in the construction trades program and recycling projects.

Goal II: To Increase the Employment and Retention of Diverse, Highly Qualified and Effective Personnel by 5% annually.

Sub Goal 1—Facilitate Partnerships with Universities and Professional Organizations in the Recruitment and Advancement of Diversified and Highly Qualified Staff.

Action Plan Activities:

Conduct Annual ECHO Open House for Local College and University Representatives.

- **ECHO:** University Open House is scheduled for April 14, 2010.
 - **DHH:** Maintains relationship with University Department Heads for Deaf Education (Illinois State University and MacMurray) and directly sends vacancy notices to the schools. Recruit directly from Michigan State and Ball State Universities.
 - **FOCUS Programs:** Maintains a relationship with the GSU College of Health Professions Programs in Communication Disorders, Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy. Calls are made to university networks for specific teaching positions and relationships have developed based upon our willingness to support student interns and teachers. FOCUS Programs have supported well over 10 types of internships, practica or student teaching opportunities representative of various categories of position.
 - **PACE:** Supervised student teachers, social work interns, Type 75 practicum students, and students performing observations from Loyola University, Governors State University (GSU), St. Xavier University (SXU), Northern Illinois University (NIU), and Chicago State University (CSU).
 - **PACE:** Mentored two District 205 students interested in the field of Psychology.

Attend Job Fairs at the Colleges and Universities with High Minority Student Populations.

- **ECHO:** Will participate in Governors State university job fair on February 18, 2010.

- **FOCUS Programs:** Effort has been made to participate in educational opportunities offered through the Minority Students Grant for Speech Language Pathologists at Governors State University and to present to classes at a variety of universities for potential candidates and encouragement of applicants to ECHO.

Post Staff Vacancies at Colleges and Universities with High Minority Student Populations.

- **DHH:** Sends postings directly to the teacher training schools in Illinois, Indiana and Michigan

Participate in Professional Organizations as Members and Leaders.

- **ECHO Cooperative:** Staff membership is maintained in the following organizations.
 - American Education Research Association (AERA)
 - Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
 - Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education (IAASE)
 - Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA)
 - Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO)
 - South Suburban School Business Officials (SSSBO)
 - National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
 - American Speech Language and Hearing Association (ASHA)
 - Illinois Speech Hearing Association (ISHA)
 - Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA)
 - Illinois School Psychology Association (ISPA)
 - Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
 - **DHH:** Maintains membership in Alexander Graham Bell Association, Illinois Supervisors of Programs for Hard of Hearing and Deaf Individuals (ISHI), Illinois Teachers of Hard of Hearing and Deaf Individuals, Registry for Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), National Association for the Deaf. Subscribes to the Oxford Journal of Deaf Studies, Volta Review and the American Annals of the Deaf for research in the field.
 - **FOCUS Programs:** Staff has presented as recognized experts at ATIA and at ASHA. A Past President of AER is a staff member. Staff participates in the monthly Infnitec Assistive Technology Consortium meetings.

Promote and Establish Cohort Programs with Local Colleges and Universities.

- **ECHO:** Collaborated in the development and hosts a Chicago State University Master's Cohort that commenced Fall 2009.
- **ECHO:** Collaborated in the development and hosts a Governors State University Master's Cohort that commenced Winter 2010.
 - **CD:** Supervises student clinicians for Speech Pathology from GSU and SXU and provides field experience observations for students.
 - **DHH:** Supervises students from the Speech program at GSU, providing experiences with Aural Rehabilitation.

- **FOCUS Programs:** Supported well over 10 different categorical types of internships, practica or student teaching opportunities from various universities.

Sub Goal 2 - Provide Professional Development Opportunities that Support and Advance Teaching and Learning
Action Plan Activities:

Conduct Annual Staff Needs Assessment.

- ECHO: Will conduct an electronic staff needs assessment with results disaggregated by program and professional category in the Spring of 2010.
 - **DHH:** Conducts annual needs assessment in the Spring of each school year. The assessment is completed at the site level and then brought to the SAC. Program needs are discussed and a staff development schedule is determined by the end of the school year.
 - **FOCUS Programs:** Conducts annual staff needs assessments to consider programmatic needs.

Develop Annual Program Professional Development Plans.

- ECHO Cooperative: Sponsored the following professional development trainings:
 - Menta De-escalation and Physical Restraint Training
 - ECHO De-escalation Training
 - Functional Behavioral Analysis Training
 - ABA Prevention and Intervention Training for staff and Behavior Intervention Teams
 - CSFEL
 - I-Aspire RtI Eligibility Training
 - I-Aspire Advanced Reading Assessment Trainings
 - Curriculum Mapping 101
 - Accessing the General Ed Curriculum for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities
 - Secondary RtI Trainings
 - EasyIEP Update Trainings
 - AIMSWeb Training
 - Web 2.0 Training
 - **FOCUS Programs:** Sponsored the following professional development trainings:
 - **Communication and Academic Vocabulary Support Trainings via Dynavox**
 - **ASHA Webinar on Selective Mutism**
 - **Conductive Education core team educational support**

Establish Professional Learning Communities in Each Program

- ECHO: All programs are beginning to develop a culture and structure that promotes professional learning communities. The process of curriculum mapping lends itself to collaborative staff discussions regarding student learning. Within programs there is focused attention and dialogue on what students need to learn, how to assess their learning and how curriculum and instruction should be adjusted in response to student need. Provisions

- will be made for grade level and vertical articulation among staff in the review and development of curriculum maps after Diary maps are completed.
- ECHO: A professional learning community has been established among administrators and has formalized as monthly leadership meetings where curriculum and instruction is the focus.
 - ECHO: As a prelude to the development of professional learning communities, programs have involved staff in committee work to afford staff opportunities to work collaboratively, problem solve and work toward a common goal.
 - CD: There are teacher committees on discipline, curriculum, newsletter, parent orientation, AIMSWEB, and autism. Staff identify the areas they want to focus on each year and professional development opportunities are developed to address staff needs and interests.
 - DHH: The Staff Advisory Council (SAC) supports the administrator in developing a culture and structure for professional communities within the program. Discussions also occur at the site level utilizing both bottom up and top down strategies.
 - FOCUS Programs: The following committees are in place: Curriculum/Technology, Behavior, VIP Olympics, School Spirit, Sunshine, Prom , Safety, Vision Technology, Newsletter, Handbook/Document Review, Vision Family Events. Additionally, there are Ad Hoc groups that work to put together clinics for low vision, augmentative communication assessments and other evaluative purposes in coordination with staff from hospitals and agencies.
 - FOCUS Programs: Site Meetings are held monthly at each PHI-VI Site and at ECHO School. Meetings provide an opportunity for collaborative discussion of student needs and program needs and provide a vehicle for staff development. This year site meetings have also been instituted for paraprofessionals.
 - DHH: Interpreters hold informal ongoing sign language groups.
 - EC: Committees include Curriculum, Library, Behavioral Supports (CSEFEL), Student Activities, and Safety.
 - AFL: Teacher committees include Behavioral Intervention, Team Leaders in each program, Core Curriculum, PPS Team, Safety and Principal Advisory Committee (PAC).
 - PACE: Committees include Grade Level Teams, Dean Round Table, Clinical Team, Curriculum, Newsletter, Parent Orientation, and Principal Advisory Committee (PAC).

Ongoing Professional Development is Encouraged and Supported.

- ECHO: Sponsored program staff attendance at trainings on Social Thinking, CRISS, CHAMPS Classroom Management, Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavioral Intervention Planning.
- ECHO: Administrators participate in trainings sponsored by the Midwest Principals' Association and the Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education
- ECHO: Sponsored multiple trainings on Web 2.0 for administration and staff.
 - FOCUS Programs: DYNVOX Project trainings to support communication and academic performance have been offered.

- FOCUS Programs: Staff attended the Assistive Technology Association Conference (ATIA), the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired Conference (AER), and trainings on behavior, autism and emotional development.
- DHH: Web Literacy, Expressive Writing, Visual Phonics, PBIS and Fairview trainings have been provided for staff.
- DHH: Staff provide state-wide trainings on the use of Direct Instruction with hearing impaired and deaf students.
- AFL: A+, PowerSchool, My Reading Coach, De-escalation, PBIS, and Menta trainings have been provided for staff.

ECHO Maintains a Mentoring Program for New Teachers.

- CD: Two mentors have been trained and one is currently a mentor to a new teacher.
- DHH: There are four mentors/mentees. An Interpreter mentoring program is being researched.
- FOCUS: There are several participants in the formal mentoring program as mentors and mentees. There is also a network of informal mentoring at each site.
- EC: Currently there are 3 mentors and 4 mentees
- AFL: Five mentors are trained and three are currently mentoring new teachers.

Goal III: To Provide a Network of Support to all ECHO Stakeholders

Sub Goal 1—Implement More Effective Systems of Communication, Including the Utilization of Technology.

Action Plan Activities:

Ensure All Stakeholders Have Access to ECHO Web Pages.

- CD: Daily communication is via ECHO e-mail.
- DHH: All communication is via email and staff members are required to check their email on a regular basis.
- FOCUS Program: Staff have all been trained in use of e-mail and are required to use it for regular communications and are routinely directed to the ECHO Website for forms, information, etc.
- PACE: Communications for lesson plans, meetings, and memos are done via e-mail. Considering the implementation of Google Docs for program wide curriculum mapping.
- AFL: Staff are required to check their e-mail at least twice daily. Most communication is done via e-mail.

Implement EasyIEP Throughout the ECHO Network.

- ECHO: Conducted EasyIEP update trainings, hosted an EasyIEP User Group Meeting, is a member of the EasyIEP Management Team, and will pilot EasyFax.

- DHH: Utilizing EASYIEP for Domain, Eligibility and Annual Review meetings. Staff is required to input student reports in the system.
- FOCUS Programs: Utilizing EASYIEP for Domain, Eligibility and Annual Review meetings. Staff members are required to input student reports in the system and to do their report card updates of IEP goal progress.
- AFL: Utilizing EasyIEP for all portions of the Annual Review, Domain and Eligibility processes. Parents are able to see the information being entered throughout the entire process.
- PACE: Utilizing EasyIEP for all meetings. Report cards and weekly progress reports are sent via the Internet.
- EC: Utilizing EasyIEP for Domain, Eligibility, Annual Reviews, and quarterly IEP updates.

Utilize Technology to Support Parent Involvement at Meetings.

- CD: Parents have requested and received phone conferences in lieu of personal attendance at meetings. Reports have been faxed in advance at parent's request.
- DHH: Utilizing computer and LCD projector when possible to project IEP documents during meetings.
- FOCUS Programs: Utilizing phone technology to include parents who are unable to attend meetings in person.
- AFL: Parents are routinely e-mailed and included via conference phone if they are unable to attend meetings.
- PACE: Provides phone conferences upon request.
- EC: Conducts annual reviews via phone conferences when parents are unable to attend in person.

Implement Web Based Registration Processes for Professional Development.

- ECHO: Provides on-line registration for all ECHO sponsored workshops.
 - DHH: Utilizing on-line registration for State sponsored conferences.

Expand the Dissemination of Electronic Information and Publications.

- ECHO: All Programs have access to ECHO and Infinitec Web Pages. Provided Web 2.0 trainings for administrators and staff. All administrators are using Google Docs for Strategic Plan documentation.
 - DHH: Utilizing Google Docs for Interpreter Domain and Curriculum Tiers.
 - FOCUS Programs: Administrators routinely use Google Docs for administrative communication and are training all staff in Google Docs for use as a format for Curriculum mapping.

Sub Goal 2—Provide a Continuum of Professional Development Opportunities Based on Annual Needs Assessment and State Wide Initiatives.

Action Plan Activities:

Identify ECHO and District Professional Development Needs Through an Electronic Needs Assessment Process.

- ECHO: An electronic Needs Assessment will be conducted in the Spring, 2010.

Utilize Technology for Professional Development (i.e. webinar, video library, etc.)

- ECHO: Developed a DVD Library of various presentations.
 - CD: Has in-serviced certified staff on available Infinitec professional development videos.
 - DHH: Scheduled for Web Literacy training, January 2010. SAC members in-serviced on Google Docs, December 2009. All certified staff signed on to Google Docs by December 18, 2009. Many staff participated in Word, EXCEL, PowerPoint trainings provided by ECHO.
 - FOCUS Program: Staff participated in Word, EXCEL, PowerPoint trainings provided by ECHO. Diagnosticians participated in Web 2.0 trainings. Offered a Webinar training via ASHA on Selective Mutism for a cost efficient way to access quality training on the topic.
 - EC: Staff participated in technology workshops in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
 - AFL: Staff participated in various webinars including PBIS, EasyIEP, and PowerSchool. Staff have participated in Excel, PowerPoint, and Word workshops.
 - PACE: Staff participated in PBIS Webinar.

Post Training Opportunities on ECHO Website.

- ECHO: Ongoing schedule of trainings posted on website, including IST training opportunities.
 - DHH: Posted Sign Language classes on ECHO Website, which are open to district staff, parents and selected community members.

Sub Goal 3—Promote Collaborative Partnerships

Action Plan Activities:

Ensure that Each Program Has a Parent Advisory Council.

- ECHO: Established Parent Advisory/Behavior Intervention/Discipline Committee. All ECHO Programs are requested to have parent representatives attend the annual committee meeting.
 - FOCUS Programs: Has POEM which is a parent group that supports school and student activities. ECHO School is planning a parent dinner to begin a more formalized approach to achieve an Advisory Council.
 - PACE: Has monthly meetings with parents (Donuts for Dads / Muffins for Moms). These meetings center around questions, concerns, and suggestions parents may have. There has been

a significant increase of parent participation due to this program.

- **AFL: Forming a parent group and implementing a PTSA.**

Provide Information in Order that Parents Have Access to Community Resources.

- **CD: Social Workers provided a table of community resources at the September Parent Orientation meeting. Resources are also provided at IEP meetings by Social Workers and Nurses.**
- **DHH: Social Workers provide ongoing resources through telephone contacts and home visit contacts.**
- **FOCUS Programs: Routinely support parents in the transitions that occur for their children including multiple parent bus field trips to the Daley Center for attaining guardianship with the support of the Social Work and Vocational Experts. Staff members frequently accompany parents on trips to access medical, sheltered workshop, psychiatric, and other health and related community resources. Nurses and Social Workers routinely find agency linkages pertinent to the highly individualized needs of students. The VIP Olympics has community partners organized at tables for parental interaction.**
- **AFL: Social workers and psychologists provide students and parents with community resources to assist with issues such as: teen pregnancy, drug and/or alcohol abuse, SSI, DRS, medical and psychiatric services, etc.**
- **EC: Parents received information regarding community resources and supports during a workshop provided by the Arc of Illinois.**
- **PACE: Brochures and community resources are available to parents on an ongoing basis.**

Provide Training Opportunities to Parents/Community.

- **ECHO: Hosted Strengthening Families Community Café, Strengthening Families Parent Cafés, posted Parent Connect Links on ECHO website and conducted annual Parent Advisory/Behavior Intervention/Discipline Committee meeting.**
 - **DHH: Conducts annual parent meetings: Pizza Party (December-2009) and Ice Cream Social (Spring-2010).**
 - **FOCUS Programs: Home visits are utilized for parental training to address specific parent concerns or student needs. Parents are also referred to the South Suburban Parent Academy or other community sponsored opportunities annually. Annual training for transition support for parents is also provided.**
 - **CD: Conducted Parent Orientation meeting.**

Survey a Sample of Community Members Regarding Satisfaction with ECHO Programs and Services and Also the Need for New Programs and Services.

- **ECHO: Developed and conducted electronic Bus Survey.**
 - **CD: Conducts parent survey regarding satisfaction of Annual Review and Eligibility meetings.**

- DHH: Conducts parent survey at pizza party, with follow up via lunch box express. Social workers also survey parents as part of the Annual Review and Eligibility process.
- FOCUS Programs: Hosts an annual bus company communication breakfast, prior to which the parents are queried regarding their satisfaction. The social workers share the positive and action needed statements with the bus company drivers and administrators for more effective practice and communication. The bus drivers are also given opportunities to gain information regarding student disabilities and to address any specific concerns.
- PACE: Conducted a survey regarding the effectiveness of the IST Program.
- EC: Completes a family needs survey every year in order to determine future topics for parent meetings.

Goal IV: To Maximize Cost Effectiveness

Sub Goal 1—Ensure responsible fiscal management.

Action Plan Activities:

Address the Fiscal Health of Member Districts when Developing and Operating ECHO Programs.

- ECHO: Considers district enrollment trends and Annual Financial Report (AFR) when developing budget.
 - FOCUS Programs: Inform staff of the fiscal issues within the state/ region and ECHO's responsibility to be fiscally conservative in their approaches to addressing student needs.
 - FOCUS Programs: Have embedded practices which access existing medical and/or community resources and supports to procure needed assistive technology services such as: the Augmentative Communication Evaluation Clinic in partnership with the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago; the Low Vision Clinics to procure Vision Technology and the wheelchair and orthotics supports.

Maintain tuition increases at no more than 5% maximum, unless prohibited by mandated class size restrictions and/or IEP requirements.

Report monthly to ECHO Advisory board on revenues, expenses, and fund balances.

- ECHO: Completes monthly reports for Board Meetings.

Review existing fiscal controls with auditor annually and discuss ways to enhance them.

- ECHO: Reviewed with auditor on 1/6/2010. Report did not indicate any material findings.

Review fund balances with ECHO board annually.

- ECHO: Reviewed at the December 2009 Board meeting.

Sub Goal 2—Seek new funding sources and work with local, state and national officials on school funding

Action Plan Activities:

Identify and write for at least one competitive grant each school year.

- ECHO: Writing collaborative Quality Improvement Center (QIC) for Early Childhood RFP with Strengthening Families Illinois.
- ECHO: Awarded DCEO energy conservation grant.
 - **FOCUS program: Received Conductive Education Grant from Coleman Foundation.**
 - **EC Program: Awarded Boundless Playground Grant.**
 - **FOCUS Program: Partnership resulting in Dynavox support resulting in free trainings and augmentative communication materials and equipment.**

Lobby for additional and/or increased education funding from federal, state and local sources each year.

Request for staff, parents and board members to communicate with the legislature regarding new funding sources.

Encourage staff advocacy regarding educational legislative matters.

- ECHO: SCOPE, SSSBO, and IASA membership and attendance at monthly meetings to get updated on legislative matters that need to be disseminated to staff and parents to support advocacy efforts.

Sub Goal 3—Provide technical assistance and support to member districts

Action Plan Activities:

Provide at least one in-service per year on current issues affecting member districts (i.e. ARRA funds, tuition/billing process, Medicaid, etc.)

- ECHO: Conducted in-service training regarding ARRA Expenditure Reporting for District Special Education Administrators in December 2009.

Update ECHO Financial Resource Guide for districts annually and present to new member district superintendents and others as requested.

- ECHO: Conducted an orientation meeting for New Superintendents on 11/13/2009.

Promote and encourage ongoing communications with districts regarding state and local fiscal procedures and/or issues.

- DHH: Consults with School Districts regarding charges/fees for students at state facilities (Illinois School for the Deaf, Mental Health and Deafness, Centerview School).

Sub Goal 4—Support district efforts to reduce ECHO referrals and review inclusive, inter-district and other instructional models to identify least restrictive program options

Action Plan Activities:

Provide professional development opportunities for ECHO member districts to support implementation of RtI model.

- ECHO Cooperative: Sponsored the following professional development trainings:
 - Menta De-escalation and Physical Restraint Training
 - CSFEL Training
 - I-Aspire RtI Eligibility Training
 - I-Aspire Advanced Reading Assessment Trainings
 - Secondary RtI Trainings
 - AIMSWeb Training
 - IST Trainings

Provide opportunities for discussions with member districts regarding instructional models that will reduce reliance on ECHO programs.

- ECHO: Promotes IST services to maintain students within district programs. A survey has been conducted to identify usage and further needs. The IST services have been presented at Board Meetings and District Rep Meetings.
 - PACE: IST team members are available for consultation, observation, and development of intervention plans in order that students remain at their home schools.

Provide technical assistance to districts as requested.

- ECHO: Provides ongoing IST services and support with LRE compliance.
 - DHH: Organizes and plans annual nurses meeting to discuss district hearing and vision procedures and requirements.
 - FOCUS Programs: Diagnosticians and Itinerant teachers provide technical assistance to districts when pertinent needs of a particular student suggest it upon referral/request by the district.

Goal V: To Ensure a Safe and Healthy Learning Environment for all Students

Sub Goal 1—Ensure the security of all ECHO school buildings.

Action Plan Activities:

Conduct an evaluation of all ECHO school buildings' entry systems and recommend necessary changes.

- **FOCUS Programs:** Reviewed entry and key systems for the ECHO School building with ECHO Architects. Installed two additional exterior cameras to complete a 360° view of ECHO building.
- **PACE:** Updating the electrical system.

Conduct a review of the ECHO Crisis Plan with each self-contained building's first responders and amend the plan to be more specific to each building, the program's student population and the municipality.

- **ECHO:** Crisis plan was reviewed by ECHO principals in December and the Joint Agreement Manual was updated. Included in the Manual are procedures and reporting forms. A protocol for meeting with building First Responders was developed. Each building is scheduled to conduct their First Responder meeting no later than January 31, 2010.
 - **FOCUS Programs:** Review the Crisis Plan each year with the staff at their orientation meetings and the safety committees reinforce maintenance.
 - **PACE:** Review Crisis Plan annually and hold quarterly safety meetings.
 - **EC:** Attended Crisis Plan meeting in order to review Crisis Plan with First Responders.
 - **AFL:** Review Crisis Plan each year with staff at orientation meeting and the safety committees reinforce maintenance.

Develop an evaluation instrument to evaluate implementation of all aspects of the Crisis Plan for each ECHO self-contained school building.

Sub Goal 2—Conduct enrollment study to determine facility needs and usage.

Action Plan Activities:

Analyze enrollment data and identify trends for each ECHO Program/Site.

- **ECHO:** Analysis of enrollment data is an agenda item for Finance Committee meeting scheduled on 1/12/2010.
- **ECHO:** Conduct ongoing assessment of utilized and under-utilized space at each ECHO Program/Site.

- ECHO: Submit monthly program enrollment data for inclusion in Board Packet.
- ECHO: Discuss enrollment trends at budget meetings.
- ECHO: Review monthly site walk-throughs to confirm that all sites are utilizing existing space completely.

Contact member districts first for space needs for ECHO satellite and self-contained programs.

- ECHO: Initiated contacts with member districts in October, November & January regarding the availability of classroom space. Non-member districts were also contacted in October and November.
- ECHO: Surveyed area Cooperatives in December 2009 regarding policies and/or procedures for securing classroom space.
- ECHO: Analysis of classroom space needs for 2010-2011 is an agenda item for Finance Committee meeting scheduled on 1/12/2010.

Sub Goal 3—Ensure the safe support and control of students who present with directed and non-directed aggressive behavior.

Action Plan Activities:

Recruit and hire an individual to provide applied behavioral analysis support to ECHO Program Intervention Teams.

- ECHO: Recruited and hired a Board Certified Applied Behavioral Analyst (ABA) for the 2009/2010 school year.

Expand, train and utilize sensory integration and de-escalation techniques and environments for controlling student behaviors.

- **FOCUS Programs:** Developed a Serenity Room for the provision of a individual calming environment for students. Included an occupational therapist as a member of the student support team and outlined when speech language pathologists and occupational therapists should be consulted for their input into student behavioral breakdown issues; as both sensory and communication needs are often a causal factor for triggering negative behaviors.
- **FOCUS Programs:** The ABA and diagnostician have worked with each classroom at ECHO School to implement pictorial schedules utilizing pictorial and representative Boardmaker.
- **AFL:** Students participate in weekly classroom community meetings. De-escalation techniques are taught in Personal Social Responsibility (PSR) classes.
- **PACE:** Students provided weekly anger management groups. These sessions focus on de-escalation, relaxation, and cognitive behavioral techniques.

Identify, secure and train staff in de-escalation and physical restraint procedures appropriate to a public school setting.

- ECHO: All Behavior intervention personnel have been trained and certified in the MENTA method of de-escalation and physical restraint. ABLE and FOCUS

- behavior intervention para-professionals have been trained to work with their respective student populations by the ABA.
- ECHO: All ECHO School and ABLE staff members have been trained in prevention and de-escalation by the ABA.
 - ECHO: The student support teams were trained in physical restraint procedures and have had follow up training discussions and refreshers during the 09-10 year.
 - CD: All staff were trained in de-escalation and staff representatives were trained in physical restraint
 - FOCUS Programs: Staff were trained in de-escalation during orientation in August of 2009.
 - PACE: Behavioral staff and support staff were trained by MENTA in physical restraint. All staff were trained in de-escalation procedures.
 - AFL: Behavioral Intervention Team was trained by MENTA in physical restraint.
 - EC: Staff representatives were trained in physical restraint. All new staff were trained in de-escalation procedures.