



2014 Annual Report

2014 Board of Directors

President:

Donna Noyes (NY)

Vice President/President Elect:

Ardith Ferguson (CO)

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Ron Benham (MA)

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Staff:

Maureen Greer, Executive Director

Sharon Walsh, Governmental Liaison

Message from the President

Dear Colleagues,

I am very pleased to submit the *2014 Annual Report of the IDEA-Infant Toddler Coordinators Association (ITCA)* to the board and members. ITCA is a vibrant Association, organized as a not-for-profit corporation to promote mutual assistance, cooperation, and exchange of information and ideas in the administration of the Part C Early Intervention Program, and to provide support to state and territory Part C coordinators and staff.



To achieve this mission, ITCA is committed to identifying and representing the interest of state and territory Part C programs at the national level; developing and recommending models, standards, policies, and programs that promote quality services to eligible infants and toddlers and their families; and, strengthen current leadership and foster new leadership in Part C programs at the local, territory or state, and national level.

The work of ITCA in the service of this mission is a team effort. (continued on page 9)

Inside this issue:

Meetings and Presentations	3
Initiatives and Collaborations	4
Surveys and Reports	6
Annual Meeting	7
Federal Agency Connections	7

Response to Federal Notices/Public Comment

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education (OSEP), Request for Comments on State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Requirements, April 24, 2014.

Under the leadership of the Data and Legislative & Policy Committees co-

chairs, comments were prepared and submitted to OSEP by the April due dates. ITCA comments on the SPP/APR included specific requests that OSEP extend the timeline for Phase I of the SSIP for at least 4 months, until June 1, 2015; and, that states be permitted to se-

lect a family result as an area of statewide focus for the state systemic improvement plan (SSIP)/Indicator C 11. *OSEP subsequently extended the due date for submission of the SSIP by 2 months, to April 1, 2015; and, revised requirements for*

Continued on page 2

Response to Federal Notices/Public Comment (continued)

the SSIP to allow states to focus their SSIP on family results should they so choose.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Request for Information on Including Results in the Determinations Process, April 25, 2014. Under the leadership of the Data and Legislative & Policy Committees co-chairs, comments were prepared and submitted by ITCA on including results in the determinations process. ITCA recommended the inclusion of both child outcomes and family outcomes in the determinations process, identified several issues to be addressed in the process of including results in this process, requested that OSEP initiate input opportunities with stake-

holders, including Part C Coordinators, and committed to participating and assisting in the process. *OSEP subsequently convened a meeting with Part C Coordinators and ITCA representatives on September 10, 2014, to discuss their proposed approach and sought public comments on the U.S. Department of Education blog for a three-week period concluding on December 12, 2014.*

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Request for Comments on the Secretary's Priorities (July 24, 2014): Under the leadership of the Policy and Legislative Committee co-chairs, comments were prepared and submitted on the Secretary's priorities for discretionary grant funding.

U.S. Department of Education, Request for Comments on 618 Data Collection Forms (August 18th and September 25, 2014): Un-

der the leadership of the Data committee co-chairs, ITCA prepared and submitted comments twice on the 618 Data Collection process and forms issued by OSEP for public comment. The committee asked for and received input from states regarding capabilities for collection and reporting cumulative child counts, which were incorporated into these comments. *OSEP subsequently adopted the cumulative child count as part of 618 data requirements, which was strongly endorsed by ITCA.*

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Request for Comments on Preschool Expansion Program Applications, (February 26th and May 16th) Under the leadership of the co-chairs the Policy and Legislative Committee, two sets of comments were prepared and submitted on applications for the Preschool Expansion Program.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education, Request for Comments on Use of Results in Part C Determinations, December 12, 2014. Beginning with discussions at the ITCA Annual Meeting on September 7, 2014, ITCA made a concerted and focused effort to prepare and submit comments and recommendations to OSEP on the proposed approach for use of results in Part C determinations. In total, 74% of the membership (37 states) participated and/or provided input and strongly endorsed these recommendations. At the request of the Board, the Data Committee led this effort and was assisted by the Policy & Legislative Committee.

Senate Health, Education and Labor Committee (HELP) May 2014. ITCA submitted comments developed jointly with other organizations on the Strong Start Early Childhood bill. Recommendations were designed to strengthen the bill's provisions related to Part C and 619.



Meetings and Presentations

IDEA Partnerships Meeting, January 12-13, 2014: The IDEA Partnership Meeting, an OSEP-sponsored project managed by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education was convened on January 13-15, 2014. ITCA President Donna Noyes attended the meeting on behalf of the Association. The IDEA Partnerships project was funded in 1999 by OSEP to build partnerships across families, practitioners, administrators, and policymakers necessary to accomplish the 1997 amendments to IDEA which require students with disabilities to have access to the general curriculum, the participation of students with disabilities in statewide assessments, and the connection between positive behavioral interventions/supports and academic achievement. There are more than fifty national organizations representing these constituents that participate in the partnership project, including ITCA. The focus of the efforts has been broadened to encompass the 2004 IDEA

amendments emphasizing results for children with disabilities and their families and early childhood programs (Part C and 619).

Autism Speaks Toddler Treatment Network Meeting, May 13, 2014: ITCA was invited to participate in the annual meeting of the Toddler Treatment Network funded by Autism Speaks. ITCA President Donna Noyes represented the Association at this day-long meeting focused on evidence-based practices for toddlers with a diagnosis on the autism spectrum. The universities participating in the Toddler Treatment Network expressed a strong interest in working with state Part C programs to consider ways to implement evidence-based practices in Part C service delivery systems.

Oberkottler Foundation Family Engagement and Outreach Initiative, May 6, 2014: ITCA was invited to participate in a day-long meeting convened by the Oberkottler Foundation to launch their family engagement

and outreach initiative for families whose children have hearing loss. Co-chair of the Professional Development committee, Brenda Knudson-Chouffi represented ITCA at this meeting.

Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children, 30th Annual Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families, October, 2014, St. Louis, MO. ITCA collaborated with CDC representatives Dr. Cathy Rice and Dr. Brian Barger to present a poster session at the DEC meeting, entitled: *Early Identification Leading to Early Intervention Services: Data From Concern to Eligibility.*

Association for University Centers for Excellence in Disabilities Annual Meeting, November 11, 2014: ITCA President Donna Noyes represented ITCA on a panel presentation at the Association for University Centers for Excellence in Disabilities annual meeting in Washington, D.C., along with representatives of the

2014 Committee Chairs

Data:

Lisa Balivet (AK)

Lynne MacLeod (UT)

21 member states participate

Finance:

Ron Benham (MA)

Kim Wedel (TX)

16 member states participate

Legislative:

Susan Ord (UT)

Brenda Sharp (LA)

13 member states participate

Personnel Development:

Sherry Franklin (NC)

Brenda Knudson-Chouffi (NY)

14 member states participate

CDC, Autism Speaks, and Oregon Health and Science University, entitled *Early Identification of Developmental Delays or Concerns to Receipt of Early Intervention Services Among Infants and Toddlers.*

Initiatives and Collaborations

Fiscal Initiative

In 2014, ITCA, with support from OSEP and in collaboration the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA), launched a Fiscal Initiative designed to enhance the knowledge and expertise of Part C Coordinators, staff, and state interagency colleagues on fiscal issues and finance strategies. The Fiscal Initiative approach is two-fold: (1) develop and present webinars for all member states on a variety of fiscal issues impacting Part C Programs; and, (2) provide intensive technical assistance and support to member state teams, selected through an application process, on finance strategies and issues important to their states. This initiative is an outgrowth of the vision and leadership of

Ron Benham and Kim Wedel, co-chairs of the Finance Committee, and ITCA Executive Director Maureen Greer.

During 2014, four webinars were presented on important fiscal topics: Overall picture of Part C Financing, Public Insurance, Private Insurance, and the Affordable Care Act. These webinars are posted and available on the ECTA website: <http://ectacenter.org/~calls/2014/financepartc/financepartc.asp#session1>

The overall response to the webinars has been positive. One comment received was *“I found this series to be very beneficial regardless of what level of understanding you have regarding your Part C system.”*

Ten states were selected to participate in the first cohort of states to receive intensive fiscal technical assistance. State teams participated in two Fiscal Technical Assistance retreats: an initial session in New Orleans in May, 2014 and a follow-up session in Albuquerque in November, 2014.

This is a very important initiative for ITCA. Participating states teams came well prepared to gain knowledge and expertise in financing of Part C services, and work with their state and national colleagues to develop concrete plans to address fiscal problems and concerns in their states.

State teams reported the retreats were a valuable experience, contributing to and enhancing their knowledge of fiscal issues and finance strategies. The opportunities to drill down on fiscal issues, hear from other states about strategies used to address fiscal matters, and include leadership from other non-Part C/EI agencies, including leadership from the state’s Medicaid office, were given as examples of accomplishments achieved through the intensive Fiscal TA retreats. Incoming ITCA President Ardith Ferguson, CO, who has been a participant in the Fiscal Initiative, reports that she has been impressed by tremendous sharing of resources as an important means of giving states

the tools they need to make fiscal improvements.

ITCA has prepared and submitted a proposal to OSEP for continuation of the Fiscal Initiative, including possible funding for a second cohort of state teams for intensive Fiscal TA.

Birth Cohort Study

The Data Committee is continuing its work with member states to collect and report data on participation of birth cohorts in Part C programs. First initiated in 2006, the Data Committee now has data from more than 20 states on referral, evaluation, eligibility, and transition to 619 services for four birth cohorts. These data show that participation rates of infants and toddlers and their families are demonstrably higher when considering children’s full opportunity to receive early intervention services from birth to age three. The average percent of children found eligible for Part C for the cohort of children born in 2010 across participating states was 9.69%, with a range



Initiatives and Collaborations (continued)

of 4.5% - 20.6%.

The Data Committee has had four public health student interns (one working with Utah Part C and three working with New York Part C) assisting with this project. This year, the Data Committee, with the assistance of student interns, designed and piloted a structured interview to be used with Part C data managers and coordinators to gain an in-depth understanding of the policies, data collection methods, and data analyses used by states in preparing birth cohort data. This work will further ITCA's goals to disseminate results of the birth cohort study through presenta-

tions and publications.

Prevalence Study and Use of Diagnosed Conditions for Part C Eligibility

ITCA continued furthered its collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (CDC - NCBDDD) to examine the prevalence of diagnosed conditions resulting in a high probability of developmental delay that many states use for eligibility criteria. The goal of this effort is to establish a "baseline" of the number of infants and toddlers eligible for Part C based on diagnosed conditions. The

Data Committee surveyed states to request information on diagnosed conditions with a high probability of resulting in developmental delay used to establish eligibility for Part C Programs. Through this process, more than 500 different conditions were identified by member states to establish program eligibility. ITCA and CDC - NCBDDD are examining ways to use a subset of these conditions, for which prevalence data are well-established and which are frequently included in states' eligibility criteria, to complete preliminary analyses on expected and actual participation of children with these conditions in Part C Programs.

This collaboration with CDC - NCBDDD has now broadened in scope to include a partnership with the CDC Learn the Signs Act Early team, federal Maternal Child Health Bureau and Office of Special Education Programs, the University of Oregon, the Orelana Hawkes Pucket Institute, and the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center to

2014 ITCA Members

Alaska - 12 years
 American Samoa - 13 years
 Arizona - 14 years
 Arkansas - 9 years
 California - 10 years
 Colorado - 11 years
 Connecticut - 14 years
 Delaware - 14 years
 District of Columbia - 10 years
 Florida - 11 years
 Georgia - 13 years
 Hawaii - 14 years
 Idaho - 14 years
 Illinois - 13 years
 Iowa - 12 years
 Kansas - 14 years
 Kentucky - 12 years
 Louisiana - 12 years
 Maryland - 14 years
 Massachusetts - 14 years
 Michigan - 9 years
 Minnesota - 7 years
 Mississippi - 13 years
 Missouri - 12 years
 Montana - 5 years
 Nebraska - 9 years
 Nevada - 13 years
 New Hampshire - 13 years
 New Jersey - 14 years
 New Mexico - 14 years
 New York - 11 years
 North Carolina - 14 years
 North Dakota - 13 years
 Northern Marianas - 13 years
 Ohio - 13 years
 Oklahoma - 14 years
 Pennsylvania - 12 years
 Puerto Rico - 9 years
 Rhode Island - 13 years
 South Carolina - 7 years
 South Dakota - 10 years
 Tennessee - 12 years
 Texas - 14 years
 Utah - 14 years
 Vermont - 14 years
 Virgin Islands - 10 years
 Virginia - 9 years
 Washington - 14 years
 West Virginia - 13 years
 Wisconsin - 13 years

2015 ITCA Board of Directors

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Jim Coyle (PA)
Brenda Sharp (LA)

Past President: Donna Noyes (NY)

Federal Agency Connections

ITCA works to maintain a strong collaborative relationship with leadership from the U.S. Department of Education. This year, ITCA board members and staff had the opportunity to meet with Acting Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) Michael Yudin; Melody Musgrove, Director and Ruth Ryder, Deputy Director of Office of Special Education Programs

(OSEP), and Libby Doggett, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning on February 28, 2014, at OSEP Offices in Washington, D.C. During this on-site visit, we also had the opportunity to meet with Christy Kavulic and Julia Martin Eile, Early Childhood Team, Research to Practice Division, and Gregg Corr, Director, Division of Monitoring and State Improvement Planning and his staff. These

meetings offered an important opportunity to discuss ITCA member concerns, activities, and priorities with OSEP leadership and stay current on federal issues.

In addition to our February 28, 2014 meeting, other OSEP connections included:

- March, 2014: Acting Assistant Secretary Michael Yudin site visits to Massachusetts (March 7,

2014) and New York (March 21, 2014) Part C programs

- April 23, July 22, and November 4, 2014: Bi-Monthly Calls with Melody Musgrave and Ruth Ryder, ITCA staff and President
- September 8, 2014: Board Meeting with OSEP leadership and staff (New Orleans)
- September 10, 2014: Focused discussion with Member States, ITCA representatives and staff, and ECTA on use of results in the Part C determination process (New Orleans)
- New Part C Coordinators Calls: Quarterly calls with new Part C coordinators, ITCA Executive Director, and OSEP State Contact Priscilla Irvine.

Surveys and Reports

Social Emotional Development Survey:

ITCA collaborated with Riley Child Development Center to conduct a survey of member states on social emotional development, including state-level collaborations with the early childhood community to promote positive social emotional development in young children. Thirty-seven states responded to this survey, which promises to yield a wealth of information on states' efforts in this important area. The survey includes a question about whether states are targeting this area as part of their SSIPs, which is of particular interest to OSEP.

Tipping Points:

This year, 48 states responded to the *Tipping Points* Survey. *Tipping Points* is the most comprehensive and up-to-date source of descriptive information about state Part C programs and challenges and issues impacting states' management and implementation of statewide early intervention service delivery systems. This year's survey included new questions on state infrastructures and preparations for the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). *Tipping Points* 2014 was issued in October, 2014,

Finance Survey:

This year, forty-seven states responded to the *Finance* Survey. The *Finance* survey is the only source of information on financing of Part C services and

All documents referenced in this report are available through the ITCA Office.

Initiatives and Collaborations (continued)

develop and publish a series of articles on eligibility for Part C Programs, the “state of the states” in use of diagnosed conditions, and improve efficiency of access to early intervention services for infants and toddlers with diagnosed conditions. Maureen Greer and Donna Noyes are on the writing team.

New Website

This year, the board members endorsed and the Professional Development Committee co-chairs and members worked with Maureen Greer, Executive Director, to redesign the ITCA website. The website’s theme, “Your Connection to a Positive Outcome – We

are your online link to the resources that help to improve the lives of infants and toddlers with special needs” embodies the mission of ITCA and its members. The new website is organized around three themes: cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. The website is beautifully designed and user-friendly: information

about the Association, Position Statements, Partners, State Contacts, Board-Approved Surveys, Association Reports, the Orientation Manual, and Ongoing Webinars are prominently displayed. Need-to-know information can be easily found and just a click away. Visit the new website at: <http://ideainfanttoddler.org>.

Annual Meeting

ITCA was fortunate to have the opportunity to convene members for our annual meeting on September 6-7, 2014, in New Orleans, Louisiana, in conjunction with the national *Improving Data, Improving Outcomes* meeting sponsored by DaSy, IDC, and ETCA September 8-10, 2014.

On September 6, 2014, two pre-sessions were convened that have become a tradition for ITCA Annual Meetings. The *Orientation For New Part C Coordinators*, organized and convened by the Professional Development Committee, was held from 8:30 to Noon on

Saturday, September 6, 2014. The *Orientation for New Part C Coordinators* is designed to offer new Part C Coordinators the chance to connect with each other and experienced colleagues, and to learn about resources, technical assistance, mentorship and support available from ITCA to assist them as new leaders in the Part C community. Co-Chairs Sherry Franklin (NC) and Brenda Knudson Chouffi (NY) hosted the session, which was attended by five Part C Coordinators who are new to their positions. Board members and representatives of OSEP and ETCA also participated in the ses-

ITCA was pleased to have Gregg Corr, Director, Division of Monitoring and State Improvement Planning, on the session agenda.

The *Finance Think Tank* session was held from 1 PM – 5:30 PM on September 6th. Finance Committee Co-Chairs Ron Benham (MA) and Kim Wedell (TX) led 38 Part C Coordinators and Finance staff in an enlightening exchange of experiences, ideas, and strategies for handling a variety of issues related financing of Part C services, including status and state needs related to OSEP’s required system of payment policies, mainte-

nance of effort, fiscal monitoring, financial, policy, and political dynamics impacting Part C systems, and finance priorities for 2014-15. Discussion was far-reaching, and included national policies impacting Part C systems, including Medicaid (health homes, policy directives of services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders) and the Affordable Care Act.

The ITCA Annual Meeting was convened on Sunday, September 7, 2014. Thirty-six of the **50** member states participated in the full-day Annual Meeting, with 52 representatives in

Continued on page 8

Annual Meeting (continued)

attendance including Part C Coordinators, Part C Data Managers, and a variety of other staff.

The ITCA Annual Meeting is an important gathering for Part C Coordinators and staff. This meeting represents a rare opportunity to network with colleagues from across the nation, to meet long-time and new associates. This year, in honor of NOLA, we started our meeting with a music-filled ice breaker. Participants were asked to introduce themselves and name the title or first line of a Top 40 chart song from any time that best reflects the status of the Part C Program and a one-sentence explanation. With board members leading the way, energized, enthusiastic, and creative colleagues generated a wide range of Top 40 songs describing their Part C systems and experiences, ranging from amusing to heart-warming.

The President's Report followed, with an impressive array of Part C activities and accomplishments resulting from the team efforts of the board, committees, and membership.

Surveys (continued)

focuses on four major areas: funding source utilization; funding levels across federal, state, and local levels; use of public and private insurance and family fees; and, allocation and distribution of resources. The Finance Survey was issued in October, 2014.

Reports were shared by board members on the new website, the Fiscal Initiative, and the birth cohort study. Ron Benham delivered the Treasurers' Report, including 2014 revenues, expenditures, 2015 membership dues, and the proposed 2015 budget, which was adopted by members. The results of the annual 2014 Tipping Points Survey were presented by Donna Noyes, highlighting aggregate findings from the 48 member states who responded to the survey. Ron Benham presented the preliminary results of the Finance Survey.

Work continued through lunch with a Joint Session with the Part 619 Consortium. The joint luncheon offered an opportunity for Part C and 619 Coordinators and staff to discuss State Systemic Improvement Planning progress and challenges, including selection of state identified measurable results.

ITCA also hosted an hour-long joint meeting with Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) chairs, 619 Coordinators, and the Early Intervention Family Alliance during the Annual Meeting. Sharon Walsh, ITCA Governmental Liaison, presented Washington Updates.

Participants had an opportunity to discuss issues surrounding the potential reauthorization of IDEA and the upcoming Reauthorization Summit scheduled for October, 2014.

This year, the State Issues and Challenges Identification session focused exclusively on an extremely important issue for members: the development of recommendations for OSEP on the use of results in the Part C determination process. Members reviewed aggregate data on child and family outcomes, a preliminary list of issues and challenges developed by the ITCA Board, and engaged in an in-depth discussion on use of results in the Part C determinations process. Agreement was reached to focus ITCA efforts in the last quarter of 2014 on preparation and submission of comments to OSEP on use of results in the Part C determination process, highlighting key concerns and recommendations. This meaningful and thoughtful discussion formed the foundation of work by the Board and the Data and Policy and Legislative Committee to prepare comments on this critical policy issue for states, which were submitted to OSEP.



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The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Infant and Toddler Coordinators Association is established to promote mutual assistance, cooperation, and exchange of information and ideas in the administration of Part C and to provide support to state and territory Part C coordinators.

To this end, the Association is committed to:

- ✦ Identify and represent the interests of state and territory early intervention programs at the national level;
- ✦ Develop and recommend models, standards, policies and programs that promote quality services; and
- ✦ Strengthen current leadership and foster new leadership at the local, state/territory and national level.

President's Message (Continued)

The leadership of ITCA staff, Executive Director Maureen Greer and Governmental Liaison Sharon Walsh, is essential to the success of the Association. Their dedication to and support of the members, the Board, and committees is evidenced in the day-to-day operations of the Association and in its many accomplishments. Serving as President this year, I have gained an even deeper appreciation for their commitment, expertise, and highly honed skills in facilitating and guiding the Association. I am deeply grateful for all they do for us and the assistance, encouragement, and wisdom they offered me as President.

The ITCA Board and four committees are primary means by which the Association accomplishes our goals. My sincere thanks to the Board members, Committee co-Chairs, and committee members, all of whom have worked hard this year, contributing their time and energy to the great benefit of ITCA. This report is a tribute to them, and their individual and collective efforts on behalf of our members.

This Annual Report describes the endeavors and achievements of

ITCA in 2014, including public comment submissions, surveys and reports, meetings and presentations, and collaborations with federal and national partners in the disabilities and early childhood community. ITCA aspires to maintain strong and positive connections with U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) leadership and staff, and our work with OSEP is included in this report. Among our successes this year, the Association's work with OSEP [contributed](#) to:

- Two-month extension in the timeline for submission of the State Systemic Improvement Plan, from February 1 to April 1, 2015.
- Inclusion of Family Results as an option for states to select as their area of statewide focus for the SSIP.
- OSEP's engagement of ITCA and its membership on use of results in the Part C determination Process.
- OSEP's inclusion of the cumulative count of infants and toddlers receiving Part C services as part of annual 618 data collection.

- OSEP's support of the ITCA Fiscal Initiative, a collaborative effort of ITCA and ECTA.

The success of any association, including the IDEA Infant Toddler Coordinators Association, is measured by how well its members are served by its labors and achievements. I hope your experience as members of ITCA this year has been a rewarding one, and that our efforts have contributed to your daily successes in leading comprehensive early intervention systems for infants and toddlers and their families. As the results show, the lives of countless young children and families with special needs are improved each year because of the work you do.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President. It has been an honor and privilege to work on behalf of and represent such talented, dedicated, and remarkable colleagues. I look forward to my upcoming year on the board as Past President under Ardith Ferguson's leadership.

**Happy New Year and Best Wishes for 2015.
"The Beat Goes On!"**