The mission of NECTAC is to strengthen service systems to ensure that children with disabilities (birth through 5) and their families receive and benefit from high quality, culturally appropriate and family-centered supports and services. NECTAC provides technical assistance services to all states and jurisdictions’ Early Intervention (Part C) and Preschool Special Education (Section 619) programs through the accomplishment of the 3 performance objectives:

- **Objective 1**: Improve the effectiveness of Part C and Part B Preschool programs by providing high quality, relevant TA to states that increases the capacity of state programs and results in better state and local infrastructure and improved practices.
- **Objective 2**: Collaborate with TA partners to increase the quality of TA services.
- **Objective 3**: Use input from clients, national advisors and existing data to increase understanding of Part C and Part B Preschool issues and priorities in implementing IDEA.

**Progress toward Objective 1**: Improve the effectiveness of Part C and Part B Preschool programs by providing high quality, relevant TA that increases the capacity of state programs and results in better state and local infrastructure and improved practices.

From March 2009 – March 2010, NECTAC provided more than 754 TA services to Part C and Section 619 programs in all 60 states and jurisdictions. Most of the staff time (70%) was spent on individualized TA where the TA was focused on a single state with a specific issue or TA request. The remaining 30% of time was spent on cross-state TA where the TA was designed for multiple states, such as the OSEP National Early Childhood Conference, the conference on Measuring Child and Family Outcomes, the Ninth National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute, the ECO Inclusion Conference Call Series, and the ECO/NECTAC Webinar series. In addition, NECTAC facilitated client listservs, managed an extensive web site, and distributed eNotes to 1700 subscribers.

A total of 5791 individuals (documented services with duplicated count, by each event) participated in NECTAC TA. Nearly half (48%) were state level administrators, typically Part C and 619 Coordinators and staff. Twenty-two percent (22%) were local teachers, service providers and therapists who directly serve young children with disabilities and their families. Other participants included local and regional administrators (13%), personnel development system staff (12%) such as State TA systems staff, and family members and family organization representatives (5%).

NECTAC provided TA on a variety of topics related to the implementation of IDEA. The greatest amount of time was spent supporting states in the areas of developing and implementing systems for measuring child and family
outcomes (19%), expanding opportunities for children to receive services in inclusive environments/LRE with their peers (16%), and assisting with APR/SPPs and data systems (14%).

**Publications**

NECTAC staff published a number of resources to benefit Part C and Section 619 staff and the entire TA&D network. Key publications included:

- **NECTAC TA Systems Model**
- **Evaluating SPP/APR Improvement Activities paper**
- **NECTAC Evaluation Highlights**
- **Part B SPP/APR 2009 Indicator Analysis**
- **Part C SPP/APR 2009 Indicator Analysis**
- **Expanding Opportunities paper**
- **619 Profile**
- **Queries: Screening and Early Identification of Autism Spectrum Disorders**
- **The evolution of the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center**
The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center Model for Long-Term Systems Change

Thinking Points: A Synthesis of Ideas About the Change Process

In addition, NECTAC maintains an extensive web site that provides products via downloads at over 15,000 per month and disseminates a weekly edition of eNotes to 1700 subscribers that is also archived online. A national online survey, 99% of respondents reported that eNotes alerts them to resources that are relevant to their work. Ninety-nine percent of respondents also reported that they read at least 1 to 3 of the article summaries each week. New web products in this reporting period included creating a new ARRA resources page to support states with understanding issues and resources; continued support to the Early Childhood TA Consortium; produced a recorded Orientation to the OSEP National Early Childhood 2009 Conference and published conference materials for the OSEP National Early Childhood 2009 Conference and the conference on Measuring Child and Family Outcomes.

Evidence of Client Satisfaction

Participants rated the quality and relevance of the TA on a scale of 1-5 with 4 being “agree” and 5 “strongly agree.” Results showed 94% of evaluated TA services had a quality mean rating of 4.0 or higher and 97% had a relevance rating of 4.0 or higher. A national survey conducted by an independent external evaluator in February 2010 showed similar results where 97% “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that NECTAC provides high quality services and products, and 99% “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that NECTAC services are relevant to EI/ECSE policies and practices.

Evidence of Project Effectiveness

Participants rated the accomplishment of immediate TA outcomes and provide comments. Intended outcomes related to increasing participant knowledge, resources, skills, and attitudes. Across the year, 93% of evaluated individualized TA had a mean rating above 4.0 (on a scale of 1-5 with 4 being “agree” and 5 “strongly agree”) for accomplishment of intended outcomes, while 81% of cross-state TA had a mean rating above 4.0.

Examples of Participant Comments related to Immediate Outcomes

- I received more information on how to become a better parent advocate and how to get others in my area on board. —Family Member/Family Organization
- My personal intended outcome was to come home with a firm understanding of how to analyze my state’s child outcome data. This outcome was accomplished and I am feeling much better prepared to move on with analyzing the child outcome data. —State Part C Administrator
- I learned ways to increase family involvement. I learned ways to increase training and technical assistance, and materials available to accomplish this. —State Part C Administrator
- I gained so much information regarding actually implementing inclusion programs as well as educating others regarding inclusive practices. —Regional/Local 619 Administrator
Both internal and external evaluation efforts measured the extent to which participants used NECTAC TA to improve state systems, local systems and practices. NECTAC follow-up evaluations asked TA participants to report whether NECTAC TA had contributed to improvements in their states and, if so, examples of improvement. Most respondents (76-99%) reported improved state and local infrastructure and/or improved practices.

A national survey of Part C and Section 619 programs conducted by an independent external evaluator showed that 98% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their state level infrastructure had been improved because of the services and/or products received from NECTAC. Those who agreed or strongly agreed were asked to indicate the area(s) in which they had made improvements. The top three areas of change were state guidance (74%), policies and procedures (73%), and general supervision and monitoring (55%).

The external evaluation of NECTAC showed that 96% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their local level infrastructure had been improved because of the services and/or products received from NECTAC. Those who agreed or strongly agreed were asked to indicate the area(s) in which they had made improvements. The top three areas of change were local guidance (57%), policies and procedures (57%), and general supervision and monitoring (45%).
Data collected by NECTAC as follow up to Major TA and Systems Change initiatives had similar results. For both Major Individualized TA and LTSC TA, an average of 99% of key state contacts reported positive changes to state and/or local systems. For Major Cross-state TA, an average of 76% of respondents reported changes to state infrastructure, local infrastructure or practices.

State system level changes related to areas such as development of policies and procedures such as those for state child outcomes measurement systems or for cross-agency work supporting inclusive practices or transition; personnel development such as training, TA, and competencies; development of procedures and tools for monitoring and general supervision; and identification of resources and conducting cost studies in order to have data for decision-making.

**Examples of Client Comments related to State and Local Systems Changes**

**External evaluation data:**

- Improved understanding of transition requirements is leading to changes in our policies and regulations for transition that is likely to lead to improved compliance on relevant performance indicators.
- Our state is moving towards trans-disciplinary team approach and the multi-faceted aspects of this are complex. NECTAC staff has helped us brainstorm pros/cons and challenges/strengths to ensure the steps we are taking are insightful and thorough in order to be successful.
- The folks from NECTAC have assisted me with policy for inclusion and how to deal with other agencies to provide more opportunities for inclusion.
- NECTAC staff and resources on the website have been extremely helpful as we changed our eligibility criteria, developed transition resources for staff and families, and developed a new IFSP form.
- Relied on the collaboration between NECTAC and WRRC to assist in preparing for OSEP verification visit and to provide TA needed to improve general supervision and monitoring.
- NECTAC assisted with the revision of our monitoring system which has streamlined monitoring at the state and local program level, helped align with the APR requirements and made more manageable at the state and local level.
- NECTAC assisted us in refining our child find policies in a way that made it easier for local programs to implement the statewide policy.
Examples of Client Comments related to State and Local Systems Changes, continued

Internal evaluation data:

- The information assisted us in the fine tuning of our general supervision system. — *State 619 Administrator*
- Development and distribution of a clear definition of the “STATE” EI delivery model. Intensive training and implementation support for EI providers. — *State Part C Administrator*
- We continue to work on our handbook alignment, information to the field, changes in data collection to support transition and SPP/APR and regular monthly meeting with state agencies for planning joint efforts. — *State 619 Administrator*
- Continue to revise policies and procedures, strengthen oversight of financing system for Part C, and strengthen the monitoring indicators for finance. — *State Part C Administrator*
- Our Part B and C staff are meeting on a regular basis. We are in the final stages of completing our updated interagency agreement and identifying needed training. — *State 619 Administrator*

State Examples of System Changes

**New Mexico Transition:** In this reporting year, NECTAC supported the New Mexico transition initiative for improving transition from Part C to Part B/Section 619 for young children with disabilities and their families. At least four key resources have been developed as part of this systems change effort, including a revised MOU between Part C and Section 619, a transition plan for facilitating effective early childhood transitions, revised guidance for training related to transition, and online transition training. Most of these materials are available on the [University of New Mexico web site](http://www.unm.edu):  

- Revised [Memorandum of Understanding Concerning the Transition of Children Among New Mexico Department of Health, New Mexico Public Education Department](http://www.unm.edu)
- Transition Training Plan [Early Childhood Transition Training for Transition Teams: Facilitating Smooth & Effective Early Childhood Transitions](http://www.unm.edu)
- Revised New Mexico Guidance: [Children Transitioning from IDEA Part C to IDEA Part B](http://www.unm.edu)
- On-line Transition Training: [Supporting Family Choice through the NM Extended Part C Option](http://www.unm.edu)

**Florida Expanding Opportunities / Inclusion:** In this reporting year, NECTAC continued to support the Florida Expanding Opportunities initiative for increasing inclusive opportunities for young children with disabilities. The state’s three goals relate to (1) increasing family/public awareness, (2) improving professional development activities, and (3) enhancing policy level work to support inclusion. As a result of the Florida Expanding Opportunities initiative, with the support of NECTAC, a number of key materials have been developed to support inclusion in the state:

- Inclusion Indicators in Young Children’s Early Care and Education Standards: [A Review of State Professional Development Competencies for the Florida Expanding Opportunities Workgroup](http://www.unm.edu)
- Florida Competencies for Early Learning and Development ([competencies diagram](http://www.unm.edu))
- Expanding Opportunities for Inclusion: Children Birth to Five ([public awareness flyer](http://www.unm.edu))
- Expanding Opportunities Professional Development Initiative [Report Template](http://www.unm.edu)
**Michigan Expanding Opportunities / Inclusion:** In this reporting year, NECTAC supported the Michigan Expanding Opportunities initiative for increasing inclusive opportunities for young children with disabilities. The state, with the support of NECTAC, developed an extensive state plan to support inclusion in the state:

- Michigan Expanding Opportunities Plan ([visual depiction](#))
- Michigan Expanding Opportunities: Moving from Great Ideas to Great Actions ([strategic plan](#))
- Michigan Expanding Opportunities: Matrix of Proposed Activities across Workgroups

**Minnesota efforts to measure child outcomes:** In this reporting year, NECTAC supported Minnesota’s 0-5 effort to measure child outcomes using the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF). TA to Minnesota was collaborative between NECTAC and ECO and focused on supporting the state’s efforts to increase the quality of data through quality review and understanding the implementation through an implementation survey. The two final documents developed by MN, with review and feedback from NECTAC are:

- Minnesota Child Outcome Summary Process: [Quality Review Form](#)
- Minnesota COSF [Implementation Survey](#)

**North Dakota Preschool Program efforts to measure child outcomes:** In this reporting year, NECTAC supported North Dakota’s 3-5 effort to measure child outcomes using the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF). TA to North Dakota Preschool Program was collaborative between NECTAC and ECO and focused on supporting the state’s efforts to increase the quality of their child outcomes data. One TA activity focused on review and feedback of a new guidance document that provided a ‘checklist’ for locals to help ensure the quality of child outcomes data. The state now is using these documents with local programs for quality assurance:

- North Dakota Child Outcome Summary Form: [Quality Assurance Checklist](#)
- ND Child Outcomes Summary Form: [Quality Assurance Checklist Directions](#)

**Changes in Practices**

Data collected by NECTAC as follow up to Major TA and long-term systems change initiatives had similar results. An average of 92% of key contact(s) in the state reported changes in practices resulting in part from Major Individualized TA and an average of 86% key contact(s) reported changes in practices resulting from long-term systems change initiatives. For Major Cross-state TA, 77% of respondents reported changes to practices. Improved practices related to areas such as development of local procedures such as those related to collecting and reporting child outcomes data; identifying root causes of noncompliance and plans to correct noncompliance; local training, resources and materials, collaboration across providers to better serve children and families.

The external evaluation of NECTAC showed that 96% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that practices at the local level had been improved because of the services and/or products received from NECTAC. Those who agreed or strongly agreed were asked to indicate the area(s) in which they had made improvements. The three areas most often reported were data collection and monitoring participation (70%), direct service or teaching strategies (47%), and IFSP/IEP development (40%).
Examples of Client Comments related to Practice Changes

External evaluation data:

- Targeted training to EIS personnel improved IFSP development, use of best practices in natural environment services, improved child outcome rating process, etc.
- The local practices have utilized the assessment information towards improving how they assess communication delays. The locals have also utilized the IFSP family centered materials to revise the IFSP and improve family centered practices.
- NECTAC provided guidance related to using assessment and observation for the child outcomes process. Assisted in linking with the ECO materials and provided written materials for guidance to this process, which assisted direct service personnel with implementation. Also the self-assessment process is changing and is allowing early intervention programs to incorporate the child record reviews done throughout the year which will streamline their process and is more efficient.
- The local transition teams have continued to meet to address local issues and develop strategies to improve transition.
- Conference calls with NECTAC staff when planning endeavors aimed at improving local services; direct training of local staff at summer institutes in the state; helping to develop and participate in taping of material for access on the web by local service providers.

Internal evaluation data:

- Better collaboration between Part C and Part B partners. Percentage of children who are transitioning on time has increased. —State Administrator
- I have really used the information on inclusion to assist the LEA's in our state on developing more inclusive programs and classrooms. —State 619 Administrator
- Therapies are being provided in classroom setting that includes typical developing peers in the therapy group. —State 619 Administrator
- We now have a collaborative play group between agencies. Once a month a different agency holds the play group and we invite the community. —Service Provider
Progress toward Objective 2: Collaborate with TA partners to increase the quality of TA services.

NECTAC collaborates with a variety of partners to ensure the quality of NECTAC TA, to increase the quality of others’ TA, and to reduce duplication of efforts. In this reporting period, 70% of Major TA services documented involved collaboration with TA partners. The most common TA partners are the Early Childhood Outcomes Center (ECO), the Regional Resource Centers Program (RRCP), and the Data Accountability Center (DAC). Feedback from a recent TA partner survey showed some very positive results. All partners who responded to the survey agreed collaboration with NECTAC had benefitted their organizations’ work on behalf of young children with disabilities and their families. Highlights from the collaborative work conducted in this reporting period include:

- Collaboratively planned and/or implemented TA
  - Co-sponsored Ninth National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute in partnership with 10 TA projects
  - Co-sponsored the Measuring Child and Family Outcomes conference with ECO
  - Co-planned and hosted the Transition priority team webinar series with NCTAC
  - Supported the web site and co-planned calls for the EC TA Consortium
  - Updated publication on Screening and Early Identification of Autism Spectrum Disorders, a NECTAC collaboration with National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Participated in planning others’ conferences/meetings/webinars:
  - Participated in planning the 2009 Overlapping Part B and Part C Data Meetings
  - Participated in planning the EC 2010: Innovation for the Next Generation Conference
  - Participated in planning the OSEP Mega Meeting
  - Participated in planning the OSEP/OESE Leveraging Resources Meeting
  - Chaired/Participated in planning the EC Workgroup of the Leveraging Resources Meeting
  - Participated in planning aspects of the TA&D Meeting

- Presented at others’ Conferences/ Workshops
  - Presented at the Act Early Regional Summits
  - Presented at the 2009 Overlapping Part B and Part C Data Meetings
  - Planned a session about the Transition Initiative for the Project Directors’ Meeting
  - Facilitated at the NAEYC Professional Development Leadership Summit

- Invited others to present at our conferences/workshops
  - Invited ASHA, NASW, APTA, and AOTA to present at a session at the National EC Conference
  - Invited CRTIEC, DEC, CELL, NPDCI, DAC, RRCP, TACSEI, SpecialQuest and IACC (Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee) to present sessions at the National Early Childhood Conference

- Priority teams:
  - Convening two and participating in six OSEP priority teams: Timely Services, EC Outcomes, General Supervision, EC Transition, ARRA fiscal, Systems Improvement Planning
  - Major accomplishments of priority teams:
    - Developed guidance for indicator C1: Guidance and Suggestions for SPP/APR Indicator C1
- Developed guidance for indicator C7: Guidance and Suggestions for SPP/APR Indicator C7
- Developed a new resource on Evaluating SPP/APR Improvement Activities
- Updates and maintenance to the Transition Initiative Web page
- Webinar/Conference Call on Data Sharing Practices featuring WI and UT
- Supported the Dissemination and development of the NECTC Transition Webinar Series
- Developed a transition TA document on Late Referrals to Part C (under review)
- Supported NERRC, SERRC and NCRRRC in their development of a second needs assessment tool to accompany the Transition Processes document though product review
- Supported an OSEP presentation at the National EC Meeting on transition and the new FAQ

- Participating in other projects’ advisory boards
  - Participated in the Advisory Board Meetings for ECO, DAC, TACC, CADRE, QRIS National Learning Network, National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness, and RRCP
  - Served on DEC board (completed this year). Final tasked included assisting with orientation of the incoming Governor, drafted membership goals for strategic plan, reviewed nominations for individuals running for the Board, reviewed proposals for 2010 CEC conference sessions, and completed agenda for board meeting and participated in final DEC call

- Others participating in our NECTAC Advisory Board
  - Representatives from the following participated in the NECTAC Advisory Board: State Part C and Section 619 Program Coordinators, OSEP, Mid-South TA Network for Parent Centers, the Early Childhood Outcomes Center, Division for Early Childhood/CEC, RRCP, and Early Childhood Parenting Collaborative. In addition, advisers included a Speech-Language Pathologist and Linguist, parents of children with disabilities, and an individual with disability.

- Other: Participated in— RRCP staff meeting, CoP facilitators’ calls, TA Collaboration Calls, planning for EPIC database, OSEP APR Template Workgroup, RRCP Information Specialists’ calls, and NECTAC-RRCP-DAC calls

Progress toward Objective 3: Use input from clients, national advisors and existing data to increase understanding of Part C and Part B preschool issues and priorities.

In order to increase understanding of Part C and Part B Preschool issues and priorities, NECTAC gathers and utilizes input from clients, national advisors and existing data.

- Client input is gathered annually through a formal needs assessment process as well as gathered informally in an ongoing way through TA requests and informal conversations with TA staff.
- Input from national advisors is gathered annually at the Advisory Board meeting.
- Existing data such as SPP/APR reports is analyzed and used as additional input for understanding client needs.

The analyses of assigned APR/SPP indicators for Part C and Part B were completed and submitted to OSEP in May, 2009. NECTAC then summarized state client need areas based on these analyses and other available information. Part C and Section 619 Coordinators responded to an on-line survey to establish the highest priority TA needs of state client programs. The NECTAC Advisory Group provided input into TA strategies to respond to highest priority TA needs. The Annual TA Plan reflecting the highest priority TA needs, addressed with efficient TA strategies within the NECTAC budget and staff capacity, was submitted to OSEP in the October, 2009, monthly administrative report.
Appendix A: Complete List of Links Referenced

5. Part C: http://spp-apr-calendar.rrfcnetwork.org/getfile/view/id/747
9. The Evolution of the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center: http://tec.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/29/1/7
10. The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center Model for Long-Term Systems Change: http://tec.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/29/1/24
12. NECTAC website: http://www.nectac.org/
13. NECTAC archived eNotes: http://www.nectac.org/enotes/enotes.asp
15. The Early Childhood TA Consortium website: http://ectaconsortium.org/
19. University of New Mexico website: http://cdd.unm.edu/ec/Transition/about.asp
20. Revised Memorandum of Understanding Concerning the Transition of Children Among New Mexico Department of Health, New Mexico Public Education Department: http://cdd.unm.edu/ec/PDFs/Transition/Training_Pack/5_MOU.pdf
22. Revised New Mexico Guidance: Children Transitioning from IDEA Part C to IDEA Part B: http://cdd.unm.edu/ec/PDFs/Transition/Training_Pack/7_guidance_doc.pdf
23. On-line Transition Training: Supporting Family Choice through the NM Extended Part C Option: http://cdd.unm.edu/ecspd/Transition/about.asp
27. Expanding Opportunities/Professional Development Initiative Report Template (reporting tool to communicate across initiatives and to help reduce duplication of effort): http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/eval/evidence/FL_ExpOpps_ProfDevInitRpt_Template.pdf
38. EC TA Consortium: http://www.ectaconsortium.org/
41. Act Early Summits: http://www.aucd.org/template/page.cfm?id=547
42. Session at the National Early Childhood Conference: http://www.nectac.org/~meetings/national2009/mtgpresentations.asp#10
46. Transition Initiative Web page: http://www.nectac.org/topics/transition/ectransitionta.asp
47. Webinar/Conference Call on Data Sharing Practices featuring WI and UT: http://www.rfcnetwork.org/content/view/623/47/