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Bureau of Special Education FY'09 Memo #3

Date: July 17, 2008

To: Superintendents of Schools
Special Education Director

From: Office of the Commissioner of Education

Division of Instruction
Bureau of Special Education

Re: Preschool Technical Assistance Network (PTAN)

The NH Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education is pleased to announce that the Preschool Technical Assistance Network (PTAN) has received continued funding to provide statewide professional development activities that promote quality early childhood education/special education programs. The Bureau appreciates PTAN's ability to consistently demonstrate the capacity for both effective and responsive efforts that result in improvements for young children with disabilities, their families, and those who work to support them.

Since 1996 local school districts and SAU's have contributed entitlement dollars to PTAN to fund region-specific professional development and technical assistance activities. Last year thirty-seven districts dedicated over thirteen thousand five hundred dollars to support a variety of activities geared specifically to the needs of their region's preschool special education professionals and paraprofessionals. Monthly clinical support groups focused on all aspects of the preschool outcome measurement system. Examples of other activities funded with these dollars are: disability-specific consultation, trainings about curriculum, therapeutic approaches and behavior management techniques.

The process for local contributions to PTAN is easy: when submitting your annual request for federal special education funds, include PTAN in your project description. Both IDEA and Section 619 Preschool funding are appropriate sources for PTAN contributions; each can be utilized for activities that benefit preschool aged children with disabilities. While Bureau funds support the infrastructure and project activities, local contributions determine regional capacity to engage in expanded activities specifically responsive to the needs of that region's preschool special educators. Regional teams work with their PTAN facilitator to assess and prioritize the most effective use of local contributions.

Data gathered over the past year by an independent evaluator substantiated the value and positive impact of PTAN activities; feedback from the field strongly supported the continuation of PTAN activities to promote increased knowledge and skill and to provide opportunities for key partners in early childhood education and special education to network and collaborate to benefit young children with disabilities and their families. This data provides strong support for continued use of both state and local resources to fund PTAN activities.

Please encourage your lead personnel in preschool special education to take advantage of all that the network has to offer and remember that regional contributions allow greater local control of network activities.

For more information about PTAN please contact the Project Director, Joan Izen at 206-6800 or jiizen@seresc.net.

This document is available in alternate format upon request.