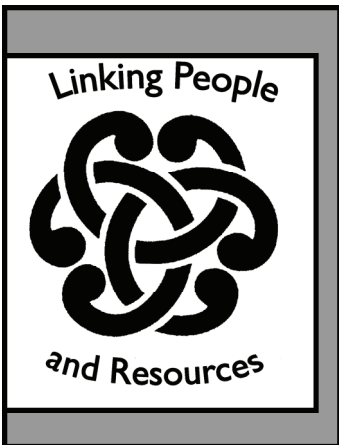


# Regional Wrap-Up

Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU



## ATTENTION PLEASE!

All Library Materials must be returned to the T-TAC Library by May 31, 2006.

### 2006 Content Teaching Academies at James Madison University

June 26-30, 2006

The 2006 Academies will include strands in the following areas:

- K-5 Core
- 6-12 Mathematics
- 6-12 History and Social Studies
- 6-12 Science
- 6-12 English/Language Arts
- K-12 Special Education
- K-12 Special Education, Autism
- Early Childhood (Preschool) Special Education
- K-12 Gifted Education (two strands)
- K-12 Technology (two strands)
- K-12 Art
- K-12 Administrators

Participants may register for credit or non-credit. Sessions will run from 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 a.m. to noon on Friday. A book fair and vendors will be available during the week. Additionally, evening social events are planned Monday through Thursday.

Further information and registration applications are available on the Content Teaching Academy Web site:

<http://coe.jmu.edu/academy2006>.

All information requests regarding registration, billing, on-campus lodging, and/or meals please contact Bonnie Powell via E-mail at <powellbs@jmu.edu> or by phone at (540) 568-4083.

For program information, please contact Dr. Michael Rettig at <rettigmd@jmu.edu>.

Educators holding a conditional or provisional license with a special education endorsement and using the graduate credit option to fulfill an endorsement competency in special education may be eligible for VDOE tuition assistance.

The 2005-2006 Tuition Assistance Program for Special Educators teaching school-age students (ages 5 to 21) is posted at

<[www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/suptsmemos/2005/inf113.html](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/suptsmemos/2005/inf113.html)>.

The Tuition Assistance Program for Early Childhood Special Educators (preschool) is posted at <[www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/suptsmemos/2005/inf180.html](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/suptsmemos/2005/inf180.html)>. Please read the memo and application carefully for details of the program.

For information on tuition assistance programs, special education preparation programs, and vacancies in Virginia school divisions, please check out <[www.teachvirginia.org/becomeone](http://www.teachvirginia.org/becomeone)>.

For those who like to really plan ahead, the 2007 Content Teaching Academies will be held June 25-29, 2007!

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## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

June 22-23: AT and Aug Com: Making the Connections '06. The Inn @ VA Tech & Skelton Conference Center, Blacksburg. Contact T/TAC @ VA Tech, 540.231.5167 or E-mail Glenna: [gsgustaf@vt.edu](mailto:gsgustaf@vt.edu) or Lora: [lkingma@vt.edu](mailto:lkingma@vt.edu). You may register online at <https://www.conted.vt.edu/ssl/augcom>.

July 25: Addressing Social and Behavioral Concerns for Children with Autism/Asperger Syndrome. Presented by Rebecca Moyes, consultant/trainer, author, and parent. Doubletree Hotel, Charlottesville. Sponsored by VA Dept. of Education Training and Technical Assistance Centers. For registration information, contact Region 5 T/TAC @ JMU at 540.568.6746 or 1.888.205.4824. For hotel accommodations, contact the Charlottesville Doubletree Hotel at 1.800.222.8733 prior to July 4.

November 8-11: 2006 TASH Conference. Living the Vision Together: Today, Tomorrow, & Beyond. Baltimore, MD

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This summer, the U.S. Department of Education will host a series of free professional development workshops for teachers across the country. As part of its Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative, the Department will partner with TechNet, a group of technology companies, to develop training opportunities that focus on math, science, and technology. To receive announcements on dates and locations, register for "Teacher Updates" at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) by selecting the link "Teacher" and then "Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative."

(From U.S. Department of Education, *The Achiever*, 5 (3), March/April 2006)



## Collaboration: Transitioning From Middle School to High School

John McNaught, M.Ed.  
VDOE Region 5 T/TAC

In education circles, collaboration has sometimes been defined as an unnatural act between two or more non-consenting adults (Austin, 2000). While this is often the case, it does not have to be. As the work load and expectations on teachers continues to build, it is essential to work smarter, not harder. Successful collaboration has the potential to reduce paperwork, reduce stress, and more efficiently meet the needs of our students while granting them the best chance at a successful and smooth transition.

A key transition time for students with disabilities is the move from middle school to high school. This can be an extremely stressful time for both parents and students. Most students experience apprehension and have numerous questions:

- Will I get lost?
- Will my teachers like me?
- Is the food good?
- Are the teachers mean?
- How will I make friends?
- Where do I go if I have a question?

These are just some of the questions filling our students' heads. The following are some tips for special educators that have both reduced stress and paperwork, and eased the transition from middle to high school for students with disabilities.

### 1. Meet them as eighth-graders.

As a special education teacher, you will most likely be one of the most important people in your student's life for the next four to eight years. It is important to visit the middle school toward the end of the school year and meet the future freshmen. The students are more comfortable on their own turf and will feel more at ease to ask you questions. Also, it provides them with at least one familiar face on the first day of school.

2. Schedule a time for middle school students to visit the high school.

Visiting the high school and seeing you in your classroom are also important in the transition process. Student anxiety will be further reduced by getting a tour of the school, eating lunch, and possibly meeting some of their future teachers before the end of their eighth grade year. This is also a good time to go over your "ground rules" for the classroom.

3. Middle school and high school special education teachers need to collaborate on the IEP that will follow the student to high school.

This is one of the most important aspects in the transition process and a key in the reduction of stress and paperwork. It is essential that the middle school and high school special education teachers communicate on some level. The most efficient way is for both special education teachers to be present at the IEP meeting. This helps ensure that everyone is on the same page (student, parent, and general and special education teachers) and that the IEP is reflective of the student's needs at the high school level. If that is not possible, at the very least the current special education teacher can inform the future teacher of the student's and parent's needs, desires, questions, and concerns for the upcoming year.

4. Call home after the first day of school.

This transition time is also a stressful time for parents. Parents are usually the first to hear when something goes wrong at school and the last to hear when their child experiences success. As a special education teacher, parent contact is essential and starting out on a positive note is important. Making a call home after the first day and simply telling parents how well their child performed will put parents at ease and foster the relationship development between teacher, parent, and student.

Transition is difficult for everyone. Following these steps will not ensure success or a smooth transition but it will start building the trust needed between teacher, student, and parent. In the end, it is this relationship that gets everyone through their toughest days and it is what makes the best days feel so rewarding.

References:

Austin, J.E. (2000). *The collaboration challenge*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

## During This Time of Assessment, Don't Leave Out Behavior

Tony Tallent, M.Ed., VDOE Region 5 T/TAC

March Madness is a phrase that not only applies to the National Collegiate Athletic Association basketball tournaments, but also to the frantic state school systems live in from the day the director of testing shows up with a loaded forklift handcuffed to his wrists until the end of the school year. High stakes testing in Virginia begins in the middle of March with students and teachers at all grade levels focusing on windows of two to three hours over one or two days per subject area to qualify the cumulative efforts of the educational process. During this time, focus is given to supporting students to perform at their best on the Standards of Learning tests. However when the tests end, both teacher and student are in shell shocked states that are only compounded by the call to "keep an academic focus to the end." It is at this time that a successful school can use its data to target a variety of variables to help end the school year in a positive way (LeTendre, 2000).

The following list highlights areas that school referral data may provide that are beneficial in identifying what the focus of preventative measures should be and provides some questions that may facilitate a problem solving approach (Sugai et al., 2000).

- **Location:** Where in the school does most of the referred behavior occur? Is there a way that more supervision can be allocated to that area?
- **Time of Day:** What time of the school day do most of the referred behaviors occur? Do teachers record that data in a consistent manner? How are transition times recorded?
- **Subject:** Is there a particular subject that students seem to be willing to receive an office referral to avoid?
- **Infraction/Reason for Referral:** What type of infraction is most prevalent? Is the infraction related to any of the above areas? After reviewing the previous years data, is there an infraction that seems to increase in the frequency of referral during this time of year?

- *Action Prior to Referral: Are there any steps taken by staff that are particularly effective or ineffective when dealing with problem behavior? What steps are required prior to a referral being written?*
- *Student: Is there a particular student or group of students that seem to need more support during the end of the year to be successful?*

By taking a hard look at these areas, schools can better support staff members and students through the end of the year. This way summer vacation can be for enjoyment, not recovery. To learn more about using discipline data in conjunction with Effective Schoolwide Discipline contact Tony Tallent at the Region 5 T/TAC located at James Madison University by E-mail at tallente@jmu.edu or by phone at (540) 568-3147.

**References:**

LeTendre, G. (2000). The "problem" of minority education in an international perspective. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 33, 577-653.

Sugai, G., Sprague, J. R., Horner, R. H., & Walker, H. M. (2000). Preventing school violence: The use of office discipline referrals to assess and monitor school-wide discipline interventions. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 8, 94-101.

**RESOURCES**

RESOURCES, RESOURCES, AND MORE RESOURCES!

**The VA-INFO Center**

Parent to Parent of Virginia and Family Voices of Virginia announce the new Family to Family Health Information and Education Center of Virginia called the Virginia Integrated Network of Family Organizations... also known as: The VA-INFO Center.

The VA-INFO Center provides all youth and parents of children with special needs, including those with behavioral and mental health needs, service providers, and others:

- One place to call to get information about services and supports for youth and families who have children with special needs from parents of children with special needs;
- Referrals to supports and services throughout Virginia;
- Parent to parent peer support;
- Annual family support conference and other training opportunities; and
- Opportunities to learn about how support services are organized so they are easier to use and understand.

The VA-INFO coalition meets monthly in the Richmond, Virginia area, bringing together youth and families who have children with special needs, representatives from state agencies, community-based organizations, and disability specific support groups from across the Commonwealth to:

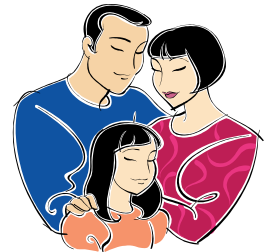
- Talk about the issues facing families,
- Plan a legislative agenda to inform policymakers of the issues, and
- Develop training materials to educate parents and service providers on the service delivery system and other topics of interest.

To join the VA-INFO coalition, learn more about the VA-INFO Center, or to get information, assistance, or support, call (804) 264-8428 or toll free at (877) 264-8366, or visit our Web site <www.va-info.org>.

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**FRAGILE X**

Parents and professionals seeking information on Fragile X syndrome have a resource available to them: the Fragile X Information Center Web site, housed at the Frank Porter Graham Center at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The site may be accessed at



<www.fpg.unc.edu/~fxic> and provides information on such topics as the effects of Fragile X on young children, research findings, family experiences and intervention strategies, temperament, transitions, social skills, sibling issues, and lists of publications, personnel, and resources related to FXS.

## **National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals...**

...has developed guidelines for paraeducator roles and responsibilities as well as model standards for their training and supervision in the publication, *Strengthening and Supporting Teacher/Provider-Paraeducator Teams: Guidelines for Paraeducators' Roles, Supervision, and Preparation*.

The mission of the NRCF is to address policy questions and other needs of the field, provide technical assistance and share information about policy questions, management practices, regulatory procedures, and training models that will enable administrators and staff developers to improve the recruitment, deployment, supervision, and career development of paraeducators. Check out the Web site at <[www.nrcpara.org](http://www.nrcpara.org)>.

(*Research Connections in Special Education*, Number 12, Spring 2003. ERIC/OSEP Special Projects, The ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education, Council for Exceptional Children)

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## **International Children's Digital Library**

The International Children's Digital Library (ICDL) is a five-year project funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to create a digital library of international children's books. The materials included in the collection reflect similarities and differences in cultures, societies, interests, lifestyles, and priorities of peoples around the world. The focus of the collection is on identifying materials that help children to understand the world around them and the global society in which they live. The collection was assembled with two audiences in mind: children ages 3-13 and the teachers, parents, caregivers and librarians who work with children of these ages.

Access the collection at <<http://www.icdlbooks.org>>.

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## **Using the Knowledge Base of 25 Years of Research**

NICHCY, the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities, has announced the launching of a new Research Center, designed to connect users with the research evidence on a wide-range of educational practices for children with disabilities. The Research Center is located at <<http://research.nichcy.org>>.

The Research-to-Practice database, where studies are placed in context and practical examples of the research in action are given, allows users to sign-up to be notified when new research analyses are added.

If you are looking for information about disabilities in children, special education, early intervention, or materials in Spanish, also sign up for NICHCY's eNews service, which is designed to bring the information to your E-mail box. Sign up for eNews at <[www.nichcy.org/SurveyIntro1.html](http://www.nichcy.org/SurveyIntro1.html)>.

Numerous other resources and information are available at NICHY's Web site. All of NICHY's publications are available there, free. NICHY also offers a toll-free number (1.800.695.0285) and information specialists who can respond to your disability-related questions in English and in Spanish.

(From NICHCY's eNews, March 29, 2006)

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## **New Resources at the FREE Web Site**

For hundreds of teaching and learning resources from more than 35 federal organizations, visit the FREE (Federal Resources for Educational Excellence) Web site at <[www.ed.gov/free](http://www.ed.gov/free)>.

(From U.S. Department of Education, *The Achiever*, 5(3), March/April 2006)

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## **Get on Board...Local Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs)**

Local Special Education Advisory Committees in Virginia advise school divisions on the needs of students with disabilities and the improvement of special education services and student outcomes. The Partnership for People with Disabilities and the Virginia Department of Education have announced the Web site for building and maintaining effective SEACs. Visit <[www.vcu.edu/partnership/seac](http://www.vcu.edu/partnership/seac)> for more information.