Mr. Keith J. McIntosh, Administrator  
1st Floor - East Wing  
1100 Herschler Building  
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Dear Mr. McIntosh:

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) acknowledges your letter of June 25, 2007, transmitting the State Plan for the Title I Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Program and Supplement for the Title VI-B Supported Employment (SE) Services Program in the form of a preprint of affirmative assurances and required attachments on behalf of Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, in compliance with Sections 101(a) and 625 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (the act).

The State Plan in the form of a preprint of affirmative assurances and required attachments, along with the Certifications Regarding Lobbying for both the VR and SE programs, were reviewed to ensure conformity with statutory provisions of the act, implementing regulations and the administrative requirements of RSA. Based on this review, the State Plan is approved. In accordance with the approval of the State Plan materials, RSA is making available to Wyoming its FY 2008 Title I, Part B, and Title VI, Part B, grant awards.

If you or your staff have questions relative to this review or the approval of the FY 2008 State Plan, please contact your state liaison, Pedro Romero, at (202) 245-7645 or at pedro.romero@ed.gov.
We appreciate your timely submission of this information and your continuing efforts to assist individuals with disabilities to achieve high quality employment outcomes.

Sincerely,

Edward Anthony, Ph.D.
Delegated the authority to perform
The functions of Commissioner for the Rehabilitation Services Administration

cc: Pedro Romero
June 25, 2007

Edward Anthony, Acting Commissioner
Rehabilitation Services Administration
U. S. Department of Education
Mail Stop 2800 PCP Room 5007
7100 Old Landover Road
Landover MD 20785-1605

Dear Commissioner Anthony:

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is submitting our Fiscal Year 2008 State Plan electronically via the Internet. I respectfully request that the following material be approved:

- State Plan Pre-Print
- State Plan Narrative:
  - Attachment 4.2(c) Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations
  - Attachment 4.8(b) Cooperation and Coordination With Other Agencies and Other Entities
  - Attachment 4.10 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
  - Attachment 4.11 Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports

Note that Attachment 6.3 (formally 7.3), Quality, Scope and Extent of Supported Employment Services, remains current and is not being updated with this submission.

Also enclosed are the following:

- Section 1 of the State Plan Pre-Print
- Form ED 80-0013 for Title I
- Form ED 80-0013 for Title VI-B

In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order 2004-2 (May 18, 2004) this material has not been submitted to the Wyoming State Clearinghouse (Budget Division of the Wyoming

www.wyomingworkforce.org
Edward Anthony, Acting Commissioner
Page 2 of 2
June 25, 2007

Department of Administration and Information) for review. This Executive Order exempts programs previously authorized by the Wyoming Legislature from the review process.

Sincerely,

Jim McIntosh
Administrator

Enclosures

cc: Adrienne Smith, RSA
Table of Contents

4.2(c): Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations

4.8(b): Cooperation and Coordination With Other Agencies and Other Entities
   (1): Cooperation with Agencies That Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities
   (2): Coordination with Education Officials
   (3): Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers
   (4): Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

4.10: Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

4.11: Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports
   (a): Results of Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs
   (b): Annual Estimates of Individuals To Be Served and Costs of Services
   (c)(1): State’s Goals and Priorities
   (c)(4): Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds
   (d): State’s Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities:
      (1) To Address Needs Assessment and to Achieve Identified Goals and Priorities;
      (2) To Carry Out Outreach Activities to Identify and Serve Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities Who Are Minorities
      (3) To Overcome Identified Barriers Relating to Equitable Access to and Participation of Individuals with Disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program
   (c)(2): Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities
Attachment 4.2(c)

Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
Comments from the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

The SRC’s Review Committee was provided with the initial “working” draft of the Plan in order for them to provide their input early in the planning process. The Committee’s comments and suggestions on this initial draft are then taken into consideration before a second draft is prepared for review by the DVR Administrator.

The following comments were received from the Review Committee:

1. Attachment 4.8(b), page 2 of 14: Beginning with “Currently, a special effort….” and page 14 of 14, appear to be a repeat of the same information.

   Response: Page 14 was a repeat of the same information, so it was removed.

2. Attachment 4.8(b): Wyoming Independent Living Programs should be added to the list of organizations stated on page 2.

   Response: This program was added to the Wyoming Transition Council list.

3. Attachment 4.10, page 4 of 9: Paragraph 2 states that Wyoming DVR has raised the pay scale for all field professional and paraprofessional staff. It is unclear if this refers to the 3% annual pay raise or the recent restructuring of paraprofessional staff salaries. As currently written, it seems somewhat misleading and further clarification would be helpful.

   Response: This paragraph was revised, expanded and clarified.

4. Attachment 4.10, page 4 – 5 of 9: The last paragraph, which refers to Personnel Standards, is somewhat confusing. The second sentence states: “Specifically, Wyoming DVR adheres to the personnel standards as set forth in RSA Information Memorandum (IM) 99-30. That is, an individual must have a Master’s degree in rehabilitation or another Master’s degree, which would allow the person to meet national Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) requirements.” The next paragraph seems to contradict this statement by stating that “DVR does hire individuals with a bachelor’s degree in a related field with a minimum of two years relevant work experience.” It would be helpful to include further explanation as to how this meets the RSA personnel standards or changing the statement on page 4 to read “DVR strives to adhere to the personnel standards set forth in RSA Information Memorandum (IM) 99-30.”
Response: The statement was changed to read as requested above.

5. Attachment 4.11, page 4: Recommendation #16 states that there is a need to inform all age appropriate special education students. Since there are DVR eligible students in the school system who are not in a special education classroom, efforts should continue to assure that these students are informed of DVR services as well.

Response: Although this Needs Assessment “Finding” only refers to special education students, DVR is certainly aware of the need to identify all students with disabilities in the school system, and work with those who can benefit from DVR services. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DVR and the Wyoming Department of Education also specifies that all appropriate students with disabilities should be referred to DVR.

6. Attachment 4.11, page 19: Under the area Students in Transition from School to Work, exploration of the use of Regional Transition Counselors should be included as a method in addition to the state wide full time Transition Coordinator.

Response: At the time the working draft was prepared, DVR was still exploring the possibility of hiring a Transition Coordinator. DVR has decided that this position is definitely needed, and the draft has been changed to reflect this decision. In addition, we have now added to the draft that we will explore the need for the Regional Transition Counselor positions, as recommended in the Needs Assessment.

The Review Committee reported the results of their review to the SRC at their quarterly meeting which was held in Cheyenne on May 23 and 24, 2007. Although no additional comments were made by the members of the SRC, several suggestions were offered on ways to increase attendance at the State Plan public hearing. Those suggestions will be used for next year’s public hearing.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
Public Hearing

A public hearing on the Draft Plan was held by compressed video on May 23, 2007 in Cheyenne, Casper, Cody, Rock Springs and Sheridan. Comments received at the hearing, written comments, and DVR’s responses are on file at DVR’s Central Office in Cheyenne.
“The State Plan, and any revision to the State plan, includes a summary of input provided by the Council, including recommendations from the annual report of the Council, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction described in Sec. 361.17(h)(4), and other reports prepared by the Council, and the designated State unit’s response to the input and recommendations, including explanations of reasons for rejecting any input or recommendations of the Council (Sec. 361.16(a)(2)(v)).”

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Reports

Excerpts from SRC Quarterly Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2006:

Review of State Plan

Chairman of the Review Committee, Joe Thomas, was unable to attend, therefore, Steve Miedziak, Coordinator for the State Plan, gave the Council an update of the Plan’s progress. Council Member Lee Biedleman asked that two very minor changes be made to the plan. The next step in the process will be the Public Hearing via compressed video in Cheyenne, Casper, Rock Springs, Sheridan and Cody.

DVR Administrator’s Report

Federal: Jim McIntosh reported that DVR has not been reauthorized yet and there is no idea when it will be.

Needs Assessment: The Request for Proposal (RFP) will open on March 8. It was set up to where there were to be written questions submitted by any perspective respondents; no questions were received.

Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) RFP: This RFP is due on March 20. Written questions were required and two different entities have done so.

Client Assistance Program (CAP) Report

Councilman Biedleman reported that the Client Assistance Program (CAP) is currently working on closing a case which has been an ongoing situation with DVR for approximately eight years and an active CAP case for one year.

State Independent Living (SILC) Report

Councilman Biedleman represented Wyoming SILC at the State Independent Living Council conference in Orlando, Florida in January. He mentioned that the Wyoming SILC had
mentioned becoming a 501 C3, however, after his visit with other states that have a 501 C3 status, he felt that it would not be beneficial for Wyoming to go this direction. The SILC has also been talking about holding Open Houses. At their next quarterly meeting they will be holding a strategic planning session.

**Transition**

Donna Thompson, representative from the Department of Education (WDE), passed out documents used by the Department of Education’s Special Programs Unit to assist with student transition, which will at some point, be referred to DVR. Starting this year, the School District will complete a **Summary of Performance** report for any student exiting the school system with a diploma. This document will assist those working with the student after graduation in post secondary education, whether it is a technical school, junior college, or assistant living center, giving them an idea of the student’s achievement level, functional performance and their accommodations. IEP Post-Secondary Transition Services needs were also discussed.

**February 7, 2006:**

**Client Satisfaction Survey (CSS)**

The CSS was once again discussed. Since this was such a new form, **it was suggested that no changes are made to the form for at least six months, so that some experience can be gained and then see what it needs and tweak it at that time.** It was also suggested that there be some guidance, restrictions and training prior to SRC members talking to clients. Once again, questions were raised as to the confidentiality of the survey. Some members felt this issue was sufficiently covered by the letter attached to the survey when it is mailed out. **Council Member Nancy Geehan was asked to tweak the cover letter to make it clearer to those filling out the survey.**

**Committee Reports**

- Executive Committee: Continue looking to fill vacancies on the Council.
- Review Committee: No report.
- Communications Committee: Continues to look for a chairperson to head committee.

**New Business**

Jim McIntosh brought up a situation that recently occurred in DVR. He explained that the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) had recently provided Congress an overview on every state in the Union on their ability or inability to serve individuals that are blind or have visual impairments; Wyoming as a whole did not shine. When they interviewed Jim, he told them that if DVR could not find the services within the state, DVR would look outside the state to identify and obtain the services required. However, with the limited number of individuals with blindness or visual impairments in the caseloads, this was not a big problem for DVR. Unfortunately, the information they provided to Congress was only half truths. The NFB, using national statistics, indicated that 6 percent of Wyoming’s population should have visual
impairments; DVR is working with 2.6 percent. DVR is working with all individuals that are referred. Jim has been corresponding with Senator Enzi’s office and has provided statistics which shows DVR is working in a cooperative effort with this group.

Council Member Nancy Geehan had three questions regarding the Workforce Investment Act (WIA): 1) what is the current status of WIA; 2) with the upcoming administration budget cuts, are there more cuts to come; and 3) is there anything that the SRC can do as a group to support that program as it relates to pending budget cuts and current budget cuts. Jim McIntosh replied that WIA is 100 percent Federal funding, but would not affect DVR. Even though funding for rehab is really not an issue, he thought a letter of support from the SRC supporting or maintaining the WIA funding level would be a good idea.

A motion was made to hold a discussion at the next meeting in Cody, on what should be included in a letter of support for the WIA program. Motion was seconded. The motion passed with one dissenting vote by Council Member Dr. Thone, who voted no. Council Member Nancy Geehan was asked to write a draft letter for the SRC to review at the May meeting.

June 19, 2006:

DVR Administrator’s Report

Federal: The House is making another attempt to cut Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding; this will not affect DVR. There has been no reauthorized yet; therefore, on October 1st DVR will receive the first of many continuing resolutions.

Client Satisfaction Survey

Interviews conducted by Council Members of DVR clients who returned their survey were discussed.

Introductory Letter: Councilman Biedleman gave members a copy of an introduction he drafted for use when contacting DVR clients regarding their survey. It was recommended that in talking with the client, it should be asked if they have talked to their counselor regarding their concerns.

Draft of revised cover letter: Tabled until the August meeting.

Client Assistance Program (CAP) Report – Lee Biedleman

They are starting an outreach program reaching out to Brain Injury support groups throughout the state. And have also started working on transition, scheduling meetings within the schools and meeting with department chairs and teachers.

Independent Living (SILC) Report – Lee Biedleman
At their last meeting, both Wyoming Independent Living Rehabilitation (WILR) and Wyoming Services for Independent Living (WSIL) gave their reports. Dorothy Cronin, the Brain Injury Association of Wyoming (BIAW) Director, also gave a report. The SILC is also struggling with membership issues. WILR staff made two presentations; one on transition through the Youth Core Program and WYTAP, a financial loan program for individuals with disabilities. They are working on their strategic plan.

**Transition**

**Recent Activities:**
Assisting WDE developing focused monitoring documents.

Participated in presentation on new transition initiatives at Spring School Improvement Conference, March 2006.

Received training on Work Keys which is utilized for the Hathaway Scholarships.


Research Based Tools and Strategies for Improving Outcomes for Secondary Youth with Disabilities and International Conferences, October 2006.

Worked to make the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) conference on transition relevant to all involved agencies. Strongly encouraging DWS involvement, particularly DVR counselors and WIA case managers, to participate and also to learn about the new transition requirements.

**Wyoming Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs (WYARN) – Earl DeGroot**

Mr. DeGroot met with Council for the first time since being awarded the project. His PowerPoint presentation summarized the proposed work plan for the project and he was able to gather feedback and input. He will be updating the Council at the August meeting.

**June 20, 2006:**

**SRC Training**

In anticipation of several new members coming on, discussion was held on what type of training is needed and when would be the best time to hold such training. One suggestion was to contact the Regional Continuing Education Program (RCEP) in Greeley, Colorado to conduct a similar training as was held at the Counselor In-Service; Councilman Biedleman will check into
this option and November as a possible date. Another idea was to hold a session on what DVR is and how the SRC plays into the partnership with DVR. **A recommendation was made to hold the business meeting on first day and training on second day.**

### Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) - Charles Sadler

Mr. Sadler spoke to the Council on the importance of the SRC/DVR partnership in working with RSA to maintain and improve the effectiveness of the VR program in particular, as well as the other programs under the Act. It is the RSA’s vision for the future that the SRC become a more active partner in working with the State VR agencies. Mr. Sadler indicated that SRC member recruitment is a problem nationwide. After meeting with the SRC and DVR staff to answer questions and gather input, Mr. Sadler met with the SRC without DVR staff present.

**August 8, 2006:**

### DVR Administrator’s Report

**Federal:** DVR did well in meeting all RSA Standards and Indicators for SFY06 and is doing equally well meeting the Federal goals ending on September 30th. On a National perspective, the Senate chose to pass their version of the Workforce Investment Act, which includes Title IV, the Rehab Act. There was some hope that it would continue through the process and there would be a reauthorization. However, that is not going to happen; WIA can not make it through the pre-conference committee and it is very unlikely that it will pass until after the Presidential Election. How will this affect DVR: other than not having guidance from the new law, there will be continued resolutions for funding, and services will continue.

**Brain Injury (ABI):** The ABI Request for Proposal (RFP) was sent out statewide with one response returned: Brain Injury Association of Wyoming (BIAW). This proposal was not what DVR was looking for; therefore, BIAW has worked it over and has resubmitted it. RSA was consulted on a few simple questions; however, at the present time answers have not been received.

**Transition:** Without the Reauthorization of the Rehab Act, DVR does not have a firm direction or commitment from Congress as to what their expectations are. Transition will become a very important piece of the Rehab Act and Transition will remain a focus for the DVR staff.

### Client Satisfaction Survey

Kirk McKinney reported that currently there is approximately a 35% return on Client Satisfaction Surveys. Results are distributed to Area Managers for staff training. A draft cover letter was distributed to the Council for their review.

### Wyoming Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs (WYARN) – Earl DeGroot

Mr. DeGroot made his second appearance before the Council, giving an update on what
has been accomplished to this point. He will again update the SRC at the November meeting.

August 9, 2006:

Committee Reports

Executive Committee: Discussed membership attendance and recruitment.

Review Committee: Discussed purpose of the committee and assignments.

Communications Committee: Mega Conference and decided to have a booth; will get together via phone conference and work with the Department’s Marketing individual to create a tag line to explain to the average person what the SRC does.

SRC Training

At the June SRC meeting, members expressed an interest in training: what is DVR, what is the process, what are the responsibilities of SRC Members, etc. Councilman Lee Beidleman was going to contact the Regional Continuing Education Program (RCEP) at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) to see if they would be willing to conduct such training. A concern was expressed to have any training held in the summer months.

Client Assistance Report (CAP)

Councilman Beidleman was unable to make the second day of the SRC meeting, therefore, his report was read by Chairperson Terech. He has contacted RCEP and asked if they would be available for SRC training, however, at this time has not received a response. Rock Springs in November may cause them some hesitation. As soon as a response has been received, he will notify the SRC Chair.

CAP Report: Starting outreach to ABI support groups around the state; will be promoting DVR and Independent Living services; doing transition meetings with the School Districts in those same communities; and will attempt to team with DVR Area Managers at the transition meetings.

State Independent Living Council (SILC) Report: No report at this meeting.

Department of Education (Transition) Report:

Council Member Donna Thompson indicated that because of the new federal guidelines, there are some changes in what is happening with transition in education. Their Secondary Transition Council has started up again and they will be doing training for Special Ed Directors and Case Managers next week in Casper. At this point there are 88 individuals signed up, which definitely shows that there is a need for this in the state. Because of the new guidelines, the
Department of Education is looking at the way they monitor the special education program. In the past it has been focusing on compliance monitoring; now it has been changed to focus monitoring and they are looking at specific indicators, how the schools are doing in those areas and how WDE can specifically help them. On Indicator 13, they are looking at the way schools are writing at the transition IEPs to make sure they are addressing issues to help the student to their post-secondary goal. There are now disability coordinators at the University of Wyoming and the Community Colleges and most districts now have a Transition Coordinator. The Wyoming chapter of the Council for Exception Children (CEC) conference will be held on October 19 & 20 and it will also focus on transition. The Mega Conference is October 12 & 13 and the Employment Conference in Spearfish, South Dakota, is October 17 & 18.

**November 8, 2006:**

**DVR Administrator’s Report**

**Federal:** With change in leadership in the House of Representatives it will probably mean a total rewrite of the Rehab Act. This is good news. As reported earlier, the House and Senate have not been able to work things through, even to the point of putting together a committee to help resolve the differences. The new leadership will see this a lot differently and it is anticipated that the Rehab Act will look remarkably different. There is a possibility that a funding package will be added to the transition piece, however, it may not be enough money to do much good.

**Wyoming Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs (WYARN) – Earl DeGroot**

Mr. DeGroot gave an update on his progress on the WYARN. His next update will be at the next SRC meeting, in January 2007.

**Project B.R.A.I.N. – Dorothy Cronin**

Ms. Cronin indicated that the B.R.A.I.N. contract (Brain Rehabilitation and Information Network) has now been signed, as of November 1st. At the present time they are seeking a crisis management team director. The Council was provided with a summary of the project, as well as the projects key components. Pilot projects are planned in the communities of Cheyenne and Riverton. She will continue to update the Council on the progress of the project.

**Client Satisfaction Survey (CSS) Introductory Letter**

After review of the CSS introductory letter, the Council made the following suggestions: add a toll free 1-800 number if there are any questions and shorten the letter. Chairperson Shannon Bodin will work on the letter and get it to Central Office.

**Transition – Donna Thompson**

Council member Donna Thompson explained to the council Indicator #13 as presented at the School Improvement Conference on September 26, 2006. The new Special Education
Chapter 7 Rules, guiding the State of Wyoming, are being rewritten at this time and the final draft should be ready by the end of the week. The public comment period is 45 days; it will then go to the Governor for signature. They are hoping to go out to districts by February.

November 9, 2006:

Committee Reports

Executive Committee: Discussed possible meeting locations for 2007.

Review Committee: Discussed the upcoming timelines for the State Plan.

Communications Committee: Discussed tag line and logo for the SRC and their purpose. They asked the Council for clarification on these issues. It was explained that at the last SRC meeting they had discussed this issue and had decided to go with the tag line and forgo the logo.

Client Assistance Report (CAP)

Councilman Lee Beidleman indicated that he has been working with ABI support groups throughout the State; the only communities yet to visit are Laramie and Cheyenne. He recently attended a Region VIII RCEP conference in Spearfish, South Dakota. One of the themes of this conference was employment and working with the ABI from a counselor’s perspective. While traveling throughout the State, Councilman Beidleman made several visits to schools and Junior Colleges talking with disability directors about transition and the issues they are facing.

State Independent Living Council (SILC) Report:

There is a new SILC Chair, Bill Marsh. The SILC continues to struggle with membership. They are going through some of the same growing pains the SRC has gone through.

Board Member Training

Dr. Ken Gale’a, Director of the Regional Continuing Education Program (RCEP) at the University of Northern Colorado made a presentation to the Council on DVR and SRC history.

Excerpts from the SRC’s 2006 Annual Report

July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006

The SRC is authorized to review, analyze and advise the Wyoming DVR on the performance of the Vocational Rehabilitation program. In partnership with DVR, the SRC develops and reviews state goals and priorities, evaluates the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program, assists in the preparation of the State Plan, and reviews consumer satisfaction.
Members are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor, and are based on personal qualifications and the needs of the Council. Members are a representation of persons with disabilities; disability advocacy organizations; current and former consumers of vocational rehabilitation services; medical professions; state educational agencies; and representatives of business, industry and labor.

The SRC meets four times per year on a quarterly basis. Meetings are held in various communities throughout Wyoming and are open to the public. Locations and times are published in the Casper Star Tribune newspaper, Wyoming’s statewide publication.

The SRC is dedicated to ensuring persons with disabilities throughout the state of Wyoming receive needed services by conducting and reviewing a needs assessment survey; reviewing programs and policies being implemented; developing a consumer friendly client satisfaction survey; and by working in cooperation with such groups as the Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Wyoming Statewide Independent Living Council, Parent Training and Information Center, Client Assistance Program, and other agencies to develop a proactive approach for the betterment of persons with disabilities.

Message from the Chair:

I am proud of the strong partnership the SRC has forged with partners across the disability community. It is through these partnerships and a close and focused interaction that we will prevail despite current and future challenges. During this past year the SRC has continued to work closely with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) to expand employment opportunities for individuals who experience a disability. I want to thank the members of the SRC for their hard work and dedication that helped strengthen the VR program this past year. Our membership is comprised of caring people who desire to ensure that all citizens with disabilities in Wyoming have fair and equal access to rehabilitation services. The past year has been very positive and productive, and the SRC looks forward to a continued partnership with VR. We are working together to provide quality services to ensure that the needs of Wyomingites who experience a disability are being met in the most effective manner.

Executive Committee Report:

The Executive Committee works toward the coordination and the establishment of working relationships between DVR and the SRC. Members of the committee discuss new nominations for the SRC, policies, and solutions to improve the communication between DVR and the SRC.

The goal of this committee is to facilitate a positive partnership between DVR and the SRC. Both entities are crucial in the success of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The SRC’s suggestions and advice are to provide a stronger and more effective DVR.
**Communications Committee Report:**

The Communications Committee, as required by the Rehabilitation Act, has the responsibilities of coordinating and communicating with other councils and human resource entities; performing and coordinating public relations; and maintaining the Employer Recognition Program. Staying informed of the activities of other organizations concerned with the disabled population provides powerful networking tools and helps to avoid duplication of efforts.

Promoting the awareness and function of Vocational Rehabilitation creates connections between VR consumers and the employers who can benefit from hiring them. The Communications Committee makes employment information available to employers, consumers, and parents by participating in the annual Mega Conference, as well as other conferences and opportunities to increase SRC and DVR visibility.

The importance of the employers’ efforts to utilize people of differing abilities cannot be overlooked. This committee, by collaborating with the Business Leadership Network, recognizes employers around the state who support employment of people with disabilities. Without employers’ willingness to recognize people’s talents, VR efforts and a willing workforce would go untapped.

The Communications Committee takes great pride in helping the SRC be an active partner in recognizing and utilizing Wyoming’s often untapped workforces.

**Review Committee Report:**

The Review Committee has the yearly responsibility to review DVR’s section of the State Plan. Other responsibilities are to make sure client satisfaction survey results are accounted for from DVR. This is a very important role of the SRC, and the Review Committee is reviewing client concerns regarding the DVR service delivery system. This committee reviews the State Plan and identifies any changes that may need attention.
Attachment 4.8(b)

**Cooperation and Coordination With Other Agencies and Other Entities**

1. Cooperation with Agencies That Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities
2. Coordination with Education Officials
3. Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers
4. Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services
Cooperation and Coordination with Other Agencies and Other Entities

(1) Cooperation with Agencies That Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities

A. U. S. Department of Agriculture and State Use Contracting Programs

The Wyoming Rural Development Council is a collaborative public/private partnership that brings together six partner groups: local/regional government, state government, federal government, tribal government, non-profit organizations, and private sector individuals and organizations. One DVR Program Specialist participates in Rural Development Council activities.

The Wyoming Rural Development Council has four goals:

- Assist rural communities in visioning and strategic planning
- Serve as a resource for assisting communities in finding and acquiring grants for rural projects
- Serve and be recognized as a neutral forum for identification and resolution of multi-jurisdictional issues
- Promote, through education, the understanding of the needs, values, and contributions of rural communities

B. Shoshone Tribal Business Council

DVR and the Eastern Shoshone Tribal Business Council have a written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning rehabilitation services for Native Americans. Special Federal grant funds for services to Native Americans living on or near the Wind River Indian Reservation were first awarded seven years ago. The five year grant ended and a new five year grant was funded through Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), providing seamless service to this Native American population.

DVR staff participate on the Red Feathered Eagle Vocational Rehabilitation (RFEVR) Advisory Council. RFEVR staff participate on the State Rehabilitation Council and in DVR staff training events.

C. Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) is part of Resource Development Services (RDS) for DVR. It is responsible for the administration of vending machine placement and services in State buildings and other small businesses that may operate in State buildings. This necessitates close working relationships with vending service providers, building administrators, job coaches, CRPs, and other government agencies.

The main objective of BEP is to assist individuals with disabilities in planning and setting up small businesses. Other entities are often involved in this process, including the Small
Business Administration, the Small Business Development Centers, the Wyoming Women’s Business Center, the Wyoming Business Council, Social Security, private sector businesses, U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development, and Rocky Mountain Inventors and Entrepreneurs’ Congress. The BEP Rehabilitation Specialist is a member of the Wyoming Women’s Business Center Advisory Board.

D. **Wyoming Relay/Deaf Services Program**

The Wyoming Relay/Deaf Services program is also part of DVR’s RDS. This program coordinates and cooperates with numerous Federal, State and local agencies and programs for the provision of services to individuals with communication impairments.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Wyoming Legislature gave DVR administrative authority over Wyoming Telecommunication Relay Service (also known as Wyoming Relay). The legislation established a special fee as the method of funding. DVR, through a competitive bid process, awarded a contract to a telecommunication service provider and oversees that contract. DVR also works cooperatively with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Wyoming Public Service Commission (PSC), Local Exchange Carriers, and Radio Common Carriers to ensure that Wyoming Relay provides a quality telecommunications relay service to relay conversations between people who use text telephones (TTYs) and people who use the standard telephone network. Wyoming Relay meets or exceeds all operational, technical, and functional federal and state standards.

The legislation establishing Wyoming Relay also created a committee on telecommunications services for the communications impaired. The Governor appoints the seven members of the committee. DVR collaborates with this consumer-based committee to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of current services, to determine the need for new services, to develop marketing and outreach plans, to establish the rate of the special fee, and to determine equipment needs for the telecommunications equipment distribution program.

Wyoming Relay works cooperatively with DVR staff, phone companies, independent living centers, educational outreach consultants, special education teachers, consumer groups, assistive technology service providers, public health agencies and senior citizen centers to provide information and training on obtaining and using specialized telecommunications equipment including TTYs, amplified phones, and telephone signaling devices for consumers with communication impairments.

The Wyoming Relay/Deaf Services program also provides training and information on how to use TTYs, relay service, assistive devices for persons with communication impairments, and the requirements of the ADA in providing services for persons with communication impairments including how to find and use interpreters. This training is provided to individuals; students; businesses; organizations; and city, county, state, and federal agencies. Wyoming Relay/Deaf Services has developed a specialized training program and works cooperatively with local and state law enforcement agencies, providing training to public safety dispatchers to ensure that 911 is accessible to callers using TTYs. Additionally, all peace officers and
detention officers going through the law enforcement academy receive training to ensure that they are providing accessible services to individuals with communication impairments.

DVR works collaboratively with Wyoming Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (WYRID) to develop and modify a form which serves as a tool for assessing the skill level of interpreters. This form is distributed to all known interpreters in the state. The completed forms are then used to develop a list of interpreters. This list is distributed to the general public, individuals, businesses, organizations and agencies.

Consultation by the Wyoming Relay/Deaf Services Consultant to facilitate the transition of students with hearing impairments is provided at the request of the student, parents, school personnel, Department of Education outreach consultants, or DVR counselors.

E. Division of Workers’ Safety and Compensation (WC)

DVR continues to have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Division of Workers’ Safety and Compensation (WC) which is located in Wyoming’s Department of Employment, but is not a Workforce Investment Act (WIA) “partner.” The purpose of the MOU is to clarify procedures and responsibilities when an injured worker applies for the vocational rehabilitation option. (Refer to Wyoming Statutes, 27-14-408.) Cross education between DVR and WC staff is scheduled for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 DVR in-service. A handbook for clients explaining the WC and DVR processes is distributed to both agencies’ staff. A communication system to resolve client issues has been established and will continue.

F. Cooperation in Training Activities

DVR routinely collaborates with other organizations to provide training opportunities for DVR staff, as well as for staff of other agencies. The following is a partial list of collaborating organizations:

- University of Wyoming
- Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND)
- Wyoming Department of Education
- Governor’s Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Small Business Development Centers
- Wyoming Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery (WYSTAR)
- Sheridan College
- Community Rehabilitation Programs, statewide
- Region VIII Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RCEP)
- Region VIII Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (CRP-RCEP)
- Centers for Independent Living
- Creative Training Accelerating Talent
- Protection and Advocacy, the Client Assistance Program
- Prairie Institute
- Eastern Wyoming College
- Casper College
Wyoming Epilepsy Association
Western Wyoming Community College
Wyoming Benefits, Planning, Assistance and Outreach
Fred Pryor Seminars
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
State of Wyoming, Department of Administration and Information
Department of Workforce Services partners
Social Security Pass Cadre
Laramie County Community College
Montana State University – Billings
Utah State University
Coordination with Education Officials

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is continuing its commitment to transition services by rewriting the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE).

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has continued support of Local Education Agencies (LEA’s) by involvement with community transition teams and transition related programs so that the needs of the school district as well as the individual student are met. Transition training was conducted on the local, statewide, and regional levels. DVR plans to continue support of training programs so that LEA’s will see the benefit of actively participating in transition and to assist with compliance with new state and federal regulations. DVR’s current MOU with the Wyoming Department of Education with the following stated purpose:

The purpose of this MOU is to enhance the working relationship between the parties in order to provide more effective services to individuals with disabilities in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. This includes working more closely in evaluating, serving, and planning for individuals eligible for vocational rehabilitation and developing a means for transfer of items of assistive technology to DVR for eligible individuals as they make the transition from the classroom to the workplace.

This MOU has provisions which include:

1. Joint training between staff of both agencies.
2. Referral procedures.
3. Technical Assistance to school districts.
4. Monitoring of transition students’ progress.
5. Sharing of client statistical data.
6. Use, ownership, and payment for assistive technology devices and services.
7. Provision of vocationally-related services by DVR, to include situational assessment, career exploration, job shadowing, vocational guidance and counseling, and work experience for students determined eligible for DVR services.

In addition to the state level MOU, cooperation between LEA’s and DVR offices ensures that a transition team is established to facilitate the development and accomplishment of the objectives and long-term goals. These teams meet for Individual Education Program (IEP) development and scheduled planning sessions. The planning sessions, which include parents and consumers, determine the schedule of transition from the school system to vocational rehabilitation. This process also includes students with disabilities who are not receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Community team members participating in the planning sessions may include Youth Case Managers from the Workforce Invest Act program, representatives from an Independent Living Agency,
representatives from Higher Education or vocational programs, Community Rehabilitation Service Providers, advocates and other local supports. MentorABILITY is often a transition team participant in the communities in which they are located. This program provides mentoring, job shadowing, work search skills and supports for transition age students. It is part of the Wyoming Business Leadership Network, an organization supported by DVR. With a comprehensive transition team, the referral process is enhanced, outreach is improved, roles are more clearly defined and transition services are coordinated. Assessments, consultation and technical assistance are also planned and provided to the LEA and the student. Individual meetings and community planning sessions allow DVR to provide for the development and completion of the IPE for each student with a disability determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services before the student leaves the school setting.

Currently, a special effort in the area of transition from school-to-work is being devoted to improving IEPs for outcomes and quality as opposed to process. The Wyoming Transition Council, of which DVR is a member, has recently become more active. Members of this council are those individuals and organizations with an interest in the development and implementation of programs and services that facilitate students with disabilities moving from high school to post secondary education, training, independent living and/or employment. The Wyoming Transition Council includes:

- Individuals with disabilities, could be a youth or recent exiter
- Parents of children with disabilities, birth — 26 years
- Representative of institutions of higher education that prepare special education and other related services personnel
- Administrators of programs for students with disabilities
- Local education officials/teachers
- General Education Administrators
- Representative of vocational education
- Representative from a public agency in charge of foster care/homeless children
- Representative from a state juvenile correction agency
- Representative of public schools
- Representative of vocational, community or business organizations concerned with the provision of transition services to students with disabilities
- Representative of Wyoming Independent Living Program
- WDE Transition Consultant
- Institutions, WDE ex-officio member
- Deaf and hard of hearing, ex-officio member

The council has been active in a wide variety of transition activities and trainings. They have assisted in adapting forms and providing feedback to the WDE and LEA’s to help them meet the requirements of IDEA, No Child Left Behind, as well as the WDE State Performance Plan and the Annual Performance Report. There has been significant involvement in designing and implementing a required one year post graduation survey to monitor if the student is involved in education, training or employment. An exit interview will be completed upon graduation with transition information gathered and documented. The council has also assisted in developing standards, policy and forms to ensure that the transition portion of an IEP can be
documented and monitored. Other projects include developing a new and more easily understood transition handbook, assisting in transition trainings, and developing new procedures for community involvement to enhance a more comprehensive and systematic transition process.

DVR is also a member of the WDE’s stakeholder group which serves as the guiding group for the WDE’s Continuous Improvement and Focused Monitoring Process. This group, because of its broad representation, also serves as the Stakeholder Group for the WDE State Performance Plan and the Annual Performance Report. Each of the twenty indicators of the WDE State Performance Plan was recently reviewed with this group, who carefully considered the data for each indicator and reasons for progress or slippage for each indicator. The group provided input for establishing targets and improvement activities by indicator as needed. Several indicators are directly concerned with transition such as Indicator 13, which monitors the way schools are writing IEP’s to ensure they are addressing the necessary issues to assist students in achieving their post-secondary goals.

The Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities functions as an advisory agent to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction on special education issues. DVR is a participant in this panel, which also includes business and professional entities, teachers, school administrators, state governmental agencies and parents from across Wyoming. This group participated in a variety of projects such as developing targets and goals for the WDE State Performance Plan and the Annual Performance Plan and provided input on graduation standards and disability definition. It is involved with transition is several capacities and has a committee concerned with secondary transition.

In anticipation of upcoming mandates from the Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act and IDEA, DVR is creating a new Transition Consultant position. The primary responsibilities of this position would be to coordinate with local, state and federal education officials on improving the process for students in transition. The Transition Consultant will be a resource on issues surrounding transition, provide training to staff and provide a consistent statewide message from DVR to the local education agencies.

Services for the Visually Impaired

Collaboration with WDE’s Services for the Visually Impaired (SVI) and special education assists students and adults with disabilities in several ways. For example, the Montgomery Trust (a private trust specifically earmarked for the visually impaired) can provide assistive technology equipment to both visually impaired youth and adults. Also DVR collaborates with SVI, Wyoming Independent Living, Centrum for Disability Services, and CreateAbility Concepts in providing services to clients.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>METHODS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve and expand transition services to include additional school districts.</td>
<td>Hire a Transition Consultant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explore the need for Regional Transition Specialists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue training and team building to include personnel from Education, DVR, Mental Health, and ABI professionals as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue coordination and cooperation at State and local levels to create new transition teams and maintain existing ones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to work with the Access 2 Ability program in Laramie and Uinta Counties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work cooperatively with the Wyoming Department of Education on expanding the transition program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Update cooperative agreements with the Wyoming Department of Education and Local Education Agencies as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase contacts and education of school personnel to enhance the transition program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase implementation of transitional services to students 16-21 years of age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop policies specific to transition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation also has an MOU with Wyoming Institutions of Higher Education (IHE). The purpose of this MOU is to guide the planning and delivery of support services to individuals with disabilities who are mutual clients of DVR and students enrolled at a Wyoming IHE, so that there is a seamless delivery system for those services which overlap. These IHEs include the University of Wyoming and Wyoming’s seven community colleges.

This MOU has provisions which include:

1. DVR and IHEs are not required to alter their policies, which are different from each other, for providing services or support.
2. IHEs are required to provide services and accommodations to DVR clients only to the same extent as they are provided to other students with disabilities.
3. DVR is not prohibited from contracting with individual IHEs to provide services or support for DVR clients beyond those required to assure equal access to educational opportunities.
4. Information exchange and joint training.
5. Referral procedures.
6. IHEs will not require students who have a disability to apply for DVR funding before providing services or support. Nor will they deny or delay the provision of services or support while DVR is determining the student’s eligibility for DVR services.
7. In situations where referral has been made to an IHE for services, the appropriate IHE staff may be involved in developing the Individualized Plan for Employment.
8. The DVR Counselor and IHE staff will respect the individual’s right and responsibility to fully participate in all decisions regarding his or her vocational future.
9. Definition of reasonable accommodations and auxiliary aids.
10. Guidelines for the provision of auxiliary aids including that the funding source for auxiliary aids will be determined on an individual, case by case basis depending on the setting and the individual’s status as a student or DVR client, and in the case of equipment, a determination of who will retain ownership.
11. Additional guidelines for the provision of interpreter services.
12. Guidelines for the provision of different types of real-time captioning services.
(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

Community Rehabilitation Programs

Section 101(a)(15) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, sets forth requirements for the conduct of a statewide needs assessment, which must include an assessment of the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) within the State.

As defined in the Rehabilitation Act (Section 7 (25), a “community rehabilitation program” means a program that provides vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities … to enable the individual to maximize opportunities for employment, including career advancement. The term “community rehabilitation program” refers to any such community-based agency, regardless of the type(s) of disabilities customarily served, or the agency’s primary funding source.

DVR has conducted a number of statewide needs assessments since 1989 which have served to guide and direct the focus of DVR’s use of CRPs. In 1996, DVR executed a contract with private consultants to conduct a Wyoming Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs (WYARNs) study that was completed in October, 1997. A follow-up WYARN update was completed by consultants in 2000. A focused 2003 WYARN began again in May 2003 and was completed in August 2004. The following relative data is taken from the WYARN 2003 Report:

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation makes extensive use of these programs, primarily to provide supported employment and related services. Information has been gathered from Rehabilitation staff, representatives of community rehabilitation programs, the State Rehabilitation Council and other key informants. This input, along with supporting statistical data, is used in this 2003 WYARN report to identify effective service models and opportunities for expansion, dissemination or replication of services shown to be most effective.

Utilization, Findings and Capacity of Community Rehabilitation Programs

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation makes extensive use of community rehabilitation programs, primarily to provide supported employment and related services. All Regions of the state continue to be served to some degree by community rehabilitation programs operating under the state’s developmental disabilities and behavioral health programs, or by independent organizations. Coverage is comprehensive for individuals with developmental disabilities, although a few agencies affiliated with the Developmental Disability (DD) system still do not provide extensive supported employment opportunities. These gaps have been, to a degree, filled through the use of independent non-profit or for-profit agencies, and through the employment of free-lance job coaches.

There are still geographic, programmatic and disability-related gaps in the capacity of community rehabilitation programs to provide the array of services the State Rehabilitation agency needs for other clients with the most significant disabilities:
• Although there is progress, there are substantial gaps in services to persons with acquired brain injuries;
• State of the art supported employment services for persons with severe and persistent mental illnesses are more widely available than at the time of the previous Needs Assessments, but are still not available to all communities; and
• The potential for community rehabilitation programs to play a more substantial role in preparing students with disabilities for the transition from school to employment in the community has not been fully explored.

Historically, the Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has made very effective use of community rehabilitation programs in serving the clients with the most significant disabilities. Over the past several years, significant progress has been made in encouraging mental health centers, among other providers, to become more involved in providing supported employment services.

Progress rarely happens in a straight line, however. In some instances, promising efforts at collaboration with service providers have lost ground for reasons that may or may not be under the control of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. In some cases, local staffs have succeeded in finding or developing alternative resources for supported employment services.

The demonstrated effectiveness of supported employment services in providing employment opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities argues for persistence in the face of adversity. With some mental health centers in particular, it is in the long-term interest of individuals with severe and persistent mental illness that collaborative supported employment programs are developed.

Policies for the use of Community Rehabilitation Programs

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation’s use of community rehabilitation programs continues to reflect a commitment to integrated, community-based employment.

The Division has issued a policy to the effect that CRP’s must be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), unless the organization has been in existence for less than 12 months, or has been providing services to clients for less than that time.

The Division also maintains a policy that Mental Health Centers from which DVR purchases services must be certified by the Division of Behavioral Health.

Conclusion

There is clearly a need for action on the part of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to support expansion or enhancement of the capacity of community rehabilitation programs to serve individuals with acquired brain injuries or severe and persistent mental illness. Monitoring of the evolving role of community rehabilitation programs in serving youth in transition from school to work may also be productive.
Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

It is the mission of Wyoming DVR to advance opportunities for Wyoming citizens with disabilities to be employed and independent in the least restrictive and most integrated environments possible. To this end, DVR has established and continues to maintain strong working relationships with State agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of supported employment services throughout Wyoming.

In Wyoming, supported employment means persons with the most significant disabilities obtaining community integrated, part-time or full-time employment at competitive wages with benefits equal to those commonly accepted throughout the work force.

The goal of Wyoming's supported employment program is to increase community integration, individual independence and productivity for persons with the most significant disabilities. In support of this goal, the Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will:

- Continue cooperative efforts with school districts and other rehabilitation entities to enhance supported employment programs statewide;
- Continue to support the Wyoming Business Leadership Network (WBLN) with expansion to additional Wyoming communities that will enhance supported employment services; and
- Encourage dedicated funding for long-term support needed by supported employment clients. This will include networking with the Division of Behavioral Health, Regional Service Providers (RSP) of Wyoming, Mental Health Centers, the Governor's Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities, State and local education programs, Social Security employment incentives including ticket to work programs, training programs under the Workforce Investment Act, and the employer community represented by the Wyoming Business Leadership Network.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>METHODS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve and maintain supported employment services and programs statewide.</td>
<td>Continue statewide supported employment services over the plan period to the extent that Federal Section 622 funds are available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain services to include all disability groups, with an emphasis on individuals with severe and persistent mental illness, with acquired brain injury, and with transition age students, as outlined in the recommendations section of the 2006 Wyoming Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue support for the maintenance and expansion of the Wyoming Business Leadership Network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve acquired brain injury services statewide via the 5 year Project B.R.A.I.N. that began November 1, 2006.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve utilization of existing long-term support mechanisms via focused counselor and assistant training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to educate and train service providers to bring Assistive Technology (AT) services to more supported employment clients statewide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue serving people with severe and persistent mental illness through supported employment services provided by Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DVR will continue to pursue cooperative and collaborative efforts with the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) and the Wyoming Association for Persons in Supported Employment (WYAPSE). Both programs are administered by and located at the University of Wyoming in Laramie, Wyoming. Statewide assistive technology services are available to supported employment clients. Direct AT services are available at the Centrum A.T. CRP located in Casper, Wyoming. This service was developed with the financial assistance of the WYDVR.
Attachment 4.10

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
Policies, Procedures and Activities to Establish and Maintain a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Wyoming DVR’s Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) includes procedures and activities undertaken to insure an adequate supply of qualified rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals. This system has four goals:

♦ Identify the current professional training needs of staff and plan for skills and knowledge development of staff one to five years from now;
♦ Coordinate personnel development activities with the Wyoming Department of Education as specified by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
♦ Coordinate a means to address training needs of current staff using institutions of higher education; and
♦ Coordinate activities to ensure staff are adequately trained and prepared to expand and improve services to clients.

The State Rehabilitation Council has had an opportunity to review and comment on the development of plans, policies, and procedures regarding: 1) the plan for recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel, 2) personnel standards, 3) staff development, and 4) personnel to address individual communication needs.

Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

Wyoming DVR maintains a system for collecting and analyzing data on an annual basis, which includes information on personnel needs, a plan for recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel, personnel standards, staff development, and personnel to address individual communication needs. Information on the number, location and disability types served; number of agency personnel and level of education; and training needed to improve skills and maintain certification levels is included in this section.

Qualified Personnel Needs

Total counselor number is 29. An additional counselor was hired at the beginning of 2005 to bring Wyoming DVR to this level of counselors. The following chart shows the number of counselors employed since 2001, the number of clients for each year, and the average number of clients per counselor.
### Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counselors</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Clients</td>
<td>3968</td>
<td>4016</td>
<td>4155</td>
<td>4180</td>
<td>3954</td>
<td>3759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Number of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients per Counselor</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number and types of personnel that are employed by DVR in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services are shown below:

- Counselors: 29
- Area Consultants: 5
- Assistants: 23
- Administrators: 4
- Consultants: 5
- Fiscal: 4

**Total**: 70

During the next five years it is projected that Wyoming DVR will add one position, a Transition Consultant. Replacement of personnel, leaving for any reason (in the next five years) based on previous years’ experience, will be as follows:

- Counselors: 20

**Total**: 20

### Personnel Development

Wyoming currently does not have an institution of higher education which prepares rehabilitation professionals. The three nearest rehabilitation training programs are the University of Northern Colorado, Utah State University and Montana State University which concentrate on private and public rehabilitation respectively. Wyoming DVR also utilizes Texas Tech University as an optional location for distance education. All four programs are Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) certified.

We currently have three counselors working on their master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling at Utah State University, and two attending Montana State University. The training process is monitored by having the attending staff members send a copy of each semester’s registration and a copy of his or her grades to verify course completion. There are currently nine field staff members and two Administration staff members that have received a master’s degree from Utah State University, and one staff member has received his master’s degree from Montana State University. There are fifteen staff members who have a master’s degree in something other than Rehabilitation Counseling. Thirteen staff members have a CRC and four individuals are preparing to sit for the exam.
Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Wyoming DVR recruits vocational rehabilitation counselors from the University of Northern Colorado, Utah State University and Montana State University whenever possible. Wyoming DVR actively participates on the advisory boards of the University of Northern Colorado and Utah State University, and has worked to improve communication with both schools to announce open positions and to recruit potential counselors. DVR has continuous recruitment ads and has been actively posting current vacancy notices with the three universities. This is in addition to placing ads in local and regional newspapers, with the Department of Workforce Services and the Wyoming Job Network (Wyoming at Work). Wyoming DVR, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, seeks to employ and advance qualified individuals with disabilities as well as minorities.

Wyoming DVR lists counseling staff vacancies with the Rehabilitation Recruitment Center of the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials, and thus has national visibility for counselor openings as they occur. Periodic announcement of staff position openings are sent via e-mail from a listserv of CORE Graduate Programs. DVR also maintains a listserv for smaller colleges in the area that have Master level programs in related fields.

Wyoming DVR attempts to hire individuals that meet the CSPD requirements, but if for some reason this is not possible, an attempt is made to hire someone with a related Bachelors degree and two years of experience. This new hire is made aware that at the end of his or her one year probationary period, he or she will be expected to apply to and attend a CORE accredited school to receive a master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. It is expected of him or her to have this master’s degree finished in four years.

Wyoming DVR currently has fifty-eight individuals that meet or exceed the CSPD requirements. Of the remaining staff that do not meet the CSPD requirements, eight are currently working on starting a master’s degree program, and the balance are currently in a probationary period and will begin working to meet the CSPD at the appropriate time.

Wyoming DVR actively updates and implements a system which addresses current and projected personnel training needs. Coordination between Wyoming’s personnel training needs and institutions of higher education occurs when the CSPD consultant and division administrator participate in the university program advisory meetings. DVR also participates on the Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RCEP) advisory board and CRP-RCEP Board.

Wyoming DVR began developing training plans in 2004, stemming from the use of the Professional Development Guide and Matrix, the performance appraisal system, an annual training needs survey, and via focus groups. In 2004, use of work plans was instituted as well. The CSPD consultant tracks training needs of all employees and addresses those needs through annual in-services for both counselors and assistants. DVR also sends individuals to training sessions provided by the State of Wyoming Personnel Division and private and public vendors. Staff is also supplied information on providers’ websites to assist with expressed training needs. Training in specific areas, such as assessment, vocational guidance and counseling, job placement strategies, rehabilitation technology, and topics addressed in the Training Needs
Assessment, are addressed at the annual statewide in-service, regional in-services, on-the-job training with the Area Consultant and Training Officer, and/or by means of a contracted vendor. DVR is currently looking into the possibility of delivering training to staff by means of various technologies that are available.

Wyoming DVR has made a conscious effort to address retention and recruitment of staff by raising the pay scale for all field professional and paraprofessional staff. The state legislature has approved a five percent pay raise for state employees effective July 1, 2007. Periodically, pay scales are adjusted to be more in line with the current employment market rates.

Earlier this year, the Personnel Division at the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information (A&I) completed a review of all DVR’s Assistant positions. It was determined that most of the Assistants were not classified appropriately; their duties were commensurate with a higher, more responsible classification level. As a result, the AD-04 Assistants were reclassified to AD-03, and the AD-03 Lead Assistants were reclassified to AD-02.

**Wyoming DVR Futures Group**

The DVR Futures Group is designed for those staff who are interested in moving into new/different roles within the Division and in developing the future direction of DVR. The current membership includes Counselors, Assistants, Program Consultants and Fiscal staff. Membership is open to any permanent employee, with approval of the supervisor and DVR Administrator.

This group meets periodically to provide input on business issues affecting the Division. They work directly with DVR’s Assistant Administrators, and may attend selected Management Team meetings to provide input. They also identify projects which may benefit DVR. The Futures Group is or will be involved in several projects, including staff retention issues, policy development, marketing of DVR services, and peer mentoring.

**Personnel Standards**

Wyoming DVR is committed to hiring qualified rehabilitation staff beyond the current minimum standards established by the State of Wyoming Personnel Division. Specifically, Wyoming DVR strives to adhere to the personnel standards as set forth in RSA Information Memorandum (IM) 99-30. That is, an individual must have a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling or another master’s degree, which would allow the person to meet national Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) requirements.

Because of our extreme difficulty in recruiting and hiring qualified rehabilitation professionals, when faced with no other alternative, DVR does hire individuals with a bachelor’s degree in a related field with a minimum of two years relevant work experience. (Note: This is the State of Wyoming’s personnel standard). In so doing, the individual is advised formally of DVR’s expectations, as they pertain to personnel standards, and is offered the position only with their acknowledgement and agreement to pursue a master’s degree. If a counselor has received education funding through the Agency, the individual contractually agrees to continue...
employment with DVR for three years subsequent to obtaining their master’s degree. If employment is terminated prior to this time, repayment may be required on a pro-rated basis.

Based on standards developed through the personnel system, each staff member participates in the annual Performance Appraisal System which analyzes job performance and identifies training needs. DVR continues to do annual training needs assessment of all staff and the CSPD Specialist tracks these training needs and links individuals to appropriate training. Training needs for the statewide in-service are determined by polling all DVR staff. Other avenues of obtaining training needs, such as focus groups, are also utilized. Counselors have immediate access to reference materials. This includes internet resources, reference books, and consultants. Beginning in 2004, work plans were instituted and training needs are addressed.

Wyoming DVR will assess counselor training needs on an individual basis in order to assure that we are in compliance with personnel standards per RSA-IM-99-30. DVR’s Human Resources Development (HRD) staff member maintains individual counselor records that identify training needs, training received to date, and anticipated target dates for attainment of Master’s/CRC. Priority of training includes time parameters for completion as follows:

1) Individuals with bachelor’s degree → Master’s Rehabilitation
   3 to 5 years

2) Related master’s degree → CRC
   1 to 3 years

Progress towards identified training needs is monitored and tracked annually on an individual counselor basis.

Wyoming DVR's CSPD attempts to create our own qualified rehabilitation counselors through the distance learning grant at Utah State University and other universities. All staff without master’s degrees are required to take advantage of the Utah State University or other distance learning programs with financial assistance from the Agency. The following table details the qualifications of current field staff (there is currently one counselor vacancy):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>CRC</th>
<th>Master’s Degree No CRC</th>
<th>BA/BS</th>
<th>Total Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation Counselors</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Consultants</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Comprehensive Personnel Development System focuses not only on creating qualified rehabilitation counselors in Wyoming but on retention as well. The training grant is used to coordinate training activities to help counselors maintain their Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credentials and encourage other counselors who may qualify to obtain their CRC.
Of those counselors/consultants having master’s degrees, in areas other than Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling, all have been advised and encouraged to acquire the designation of Certified Rehabilitation Counselor in accordance with the methods offered by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC). A record on each counselor/consultant towards accomplishment of the Agency standard is kept and monitored as to progress.

Staff Development

In 2004, Wyoming DVR began dispersing training budget funds on a regional basis. Prior to this, the funds were distributed on a “first come, first served” basis. This change was made to allow area managers to have more control over the training budgets and subsequently the training made available to staff. Staff development procedures have been described above.

A wide variety of training has been made available to counselors and consultants. This training has been provided by Wyoming DVR, State of Wyoming Department of Administration and Information (A&I), as well as numerous private vendors. Training offered at the DVR in-service has included Learned Resilience, Safety and Security, Job Accommodations, Small Business Development, and proper case file documentation. Training offered through the State of Wyoming has included computer applications and supervisory skills. Training offered by private vendors has covered a wide range of topics, including diagnoses/disorders, career building skills, leadership skills, and job coaching/job development. While this list is not all inclusive of trainings offered or attended, it does illustrate the variety available to counselors and consultants in Wyoming.

Assistants

DVR assistants are provided training through various methods. New assistants are trained by the lead assistant in the area, the counselor(s) that the assistant works with, as well as the area consultant. This approach to training the new assistant helps the assistant become acquainted with the procedures for that particular office and allows him/her to better meet the needs of the clients the Agency serves. On a yearly basis, the assistant and the area consultant produce a list of training topics that the assistant and the area manager feel would be most useful for the assistant. This list is used as the basis for that individual’s training in the upcoming year. Additional training topics that are of interest to the assistant can be chosen even if they are not identified on the list. Training topics that assistants have availed themselves to in the last year have included various computer skills, stress management, dealing with difficult people, and teamwork. Again, this list is not inclusive but does represent a variety of training available to these employees.

Ticket to Work (TTW) Update

Ongoing training is held throughout Wyoming on Ticket to Work and other Social Security issues. The training was presented by a partnership of the Wyoming Benefits Planning and Outreach (WyBPAO), the PASS-CADRE (Plans for Achieving Self Sufficiency), Protection
and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) and DVR. A number of DVR staff have taken advantage of these trainings.

**Procedures to Disseminate Research**

The DVR Central Office does maintain a lending library that contains some reference materials relevant to VR counseling. Reference materials are often requested by field staff or area consultants and may be purchased for their use. In-service speakers/trainers often provide research information, as do many conference presenters. Program consultants in DVR’s Central Office stay current on trends in their specialty areas and share this with field staff. Specialty areas include: Governor’s Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities; the Americans with Disabilities Act; Supported Employment; Staff Training, Quality Assurance; Transition from School to Work; Telecommunication Relay Service; Deaf Services; Business Enterprise Program; and small business planning. As mentioned previously, all DVR staff have access to the internet for research purposes.

**Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs**

DVR has established and maintains minimum standards to ensure the availability of personnel within DVR who are trained to communicate in the native language or mode of communication of the client, either by hiring applicants with these skills or by developing current staff skills in these areas. The DVR handbook is available in Spanish. Interpreters are hired, as the occasion warrants, in order to effectively communicate with clients who utilize other languages. Several staff members have sign language skills and the Agency helps them maintain and improve those skills. A program consultant, who specializes in services for the deaf and hard of hearing, is available to help ensure that quality services are provided to this population. Essentials such as orientation to DVR, eligibility, etc., are on tape or in Braille for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Other needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired are met through purchase of services or from the Department of Education, Services for the Visually Impaired.

**Performance Evaluation System**

DVR must conform to the State of Wyoming Personnel Rules, which includes a Performance Appraisal system. This system requires that reviews be conducted twice a year with each employee. It can lead to improved performance through the analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and subsequent identification of training issues. This system does not impede the accomplishment of the purpose and policy of the VR program including serving the most significantly disabled. Also, counselors are assisted by their immediate supervisors, who review cases and act as consultants, trainers and resources regarding the vocational rehabilitation of clients.

The quality assurance/improvement consultant, who also serves the Human Resources Development (HRD) function, reviews case files on a regular basis with a standard protocol. He reports findings to the field services administrator, recommending solutions and/or training to continually correct deficiencies, and to recognize and report those practices working well.
Coordination of Personnel Development Under IDEA

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Wyoming Department of Education establishes reciprocal referral services, utilization of each Agency’s services and facilities to the extent practicable and feasible, and joint planning activities to improve services to individuals with disabilities.

This MOU strengthens the transition process and the availability of assistive technology to VR clients who are in school. This agreement specifies joint training on assistive technology, IDEA and other pertinent legislation. Refer to Attachment 4.8(b)(2) for additional information on this MOU and DVR’s coordination with education officials.

Affirmative Action

DVR assures that it takes affirmative action to employ and advance qualified individuals with disabilities and minorities in employment. Fifteen percent of the staff have disabilities and eight staff persons are over the age of 60. The State of Wyoming Personnel System follows affirmative action requirements and assures that VR maintains appropriate hiring procedures.
Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports

(a) Results of Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of the Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals with Disabilities and Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs
(b) Annual Estimates of Individuals to Be Served and Costs of Services
(c)(1) State’s Goals and Priorities
(c)(4) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds
(d) State’s Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities:
   (1) To Address Needs Identified in the Comprehensive Assessment and to Achieve Identified Goals and Priorities;
   (2) To Carry Out Outreach Activities to Identify and Serve Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities Who are Minorities; and
   (3) To Overcome Identified Barriers Relating to Equitable Access to and Participation of Individuals with Disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program
(e)(2) Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities
4.11(a) Results of Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of the Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals with Disabilities and Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs

2006 Wyoming Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs (WYARN):

The Rehabilitation Act, as amended in 1998, requires each state to conduct a Needs Assessment every three years. The purpose of the Needs Assessment is to identify and understand the needs of individuals with disabilities in the State and to use that information to make appropriate operational and programmatic adjustments to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of services to those individuals. While this assessment focused on all individuals with the significant disabilities, project administrators requested that “students in transition” receive additional attention.

The 2006 Needs Assessment was a statewide assessment, jointly conducted by DVR and the State Rehabilitation Council, examining the need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State, and describing the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the vocational rehabilitation needs of:

1. individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their needs for supported employment services;
2. individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have not been served or are underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this Title;
3. individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system (other than the vocational rehabilitation program), as identified by such individuals and personnel assisting such individuals through the components;

The State goals and priorities are based on an analysis of:

1. The performance of the State on the standards and indicators established under Section 106 of the Act;
2. Other available information on the operation and the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program carried out in the State; and
3. Any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), under Section 105(c) and the findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under Section 107.

Results of the 2006 Needs Assessment will assist the Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) in evaluating its priorities and in establishing an action plan to guide future rehabilitation program development. The goal is to provide the foundation for an action plan that identifies opportunities for improving program performance in the following three critical areas with special emphasis on students in transition:
1. Traumatic and Acquired Brain Injury programs development.
2. Severe/persistent mental illness (SPMI) programs development.
3. Students in Transition. Especially important were to:

   a.) Determine the potential pool of referrals to the Agency from all schools statewide;

   b.) Develop strategies for improving working relationships with school district personnel and programs statewide;

   c.) Propose new alternative methods to identify school children with disabilities rather than wait for referrals;

   d.) Explore the willingness of school districts statewide to provide office space in the school for VR counselors; and

   e.) Identify and inventory all existing organizations and resources currently offering transition services and recommend ways the Agency can link with these services to improve the Agency’s transition services statewide.

**METHODOLOGY**

The assessment took place between May 1, 2006 and February 28, 2007. The work plan, which was developed in conjunction with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), required the completion of the following tasks: collect demographic data; convene six focus groups; conduct two mail surveys; complete numerous interviews; develop summaries of relevant state and federal programs; determine efficacy of DVR services; examine other states’ infrastructures; analyze collected information; and generate recommendations. During the assessment period, the consultant met four times with the SRC.

As indicated above, the assessment sought information from a number of sources. DVR client focus groups were conducted in Cheyenne, Casper, Rock Springs, Lander, Worland and Sheridan. In total, 47 people attended the focus groups. A mail survey was sent to 944 DVR clients. The survey yielded a 25.9 percent response rate. Another mail survey was sent to the special education coordinators in the 48 school districts. This survey yielded a 66.7 percent response rate. The assessment also collected information about numerous state and federal programs. Some of these programs offer services that are often not considered to be vocational oriented. Nevertheless, they offer important support services that help an individual maintain long-term employment. The identification and description of these programs required numerous interviews and considerable Internet research. In total 26 individuals were interviewed during the assessment. The assessment also collected information from three surrounding states via telephone interviews to examine the student in transition service delivery infrastructure in those states. Also, innovative ideas utilized in other states were identified through Internet research. In addition to the above, a considerable amount of time was spent outlining the history of the Rehabilitation Act and developing an understanding of current federal requirements, especially relating to students in transition.
FINDINGS

The 2006 Wyoming Assessment of Resource Needs (WYARN) was designed to identify areas of need throughout the state. Inherent to the assessment process is an attempt to identify areas needing improvement and to make recommendations accordingly. Because a needs assessment focuses on needs, areas of strength are often overlooked. Therefore, the following findings should not be construed as a criticism of DVR’s overall operations. The findings simply identify opportunities for improvement.

Primary Finding #1: The assessment found that, in the past few decades, there has been a national trend toward expanding programs offering in-home and community-based services such as independent living skills training, transportation, medication management, mental health counseling, etc. These services are a very important part of the “Continuum of Services” necessary for an individual to obtain a job and keep it. Traditional vocational rehabilitation, limited to job training and job search, is often not enough. Individuals with disabilities typically require the services of diverse programs, many of which are not vocationally oriented. Therefore, it is imperative that numerous program administrators coordinate their services. Even though DVR does not have control of, or responsibility for, many of these programs, a successful outcome for many DVR clients demands more DVR involvement with these programs. DVR needs to do more to facilitate coordination. DVR needs to be more involved with information exchange. DVR needs to develop more interagency agreements.

Primary Finding #2: The assessment indicates a need for more consistent interpretation and implementation of DVR policy among DVR field staff. Some of the inconsistency appears to be related to staff turnover. Some inconsistency appears to be related to misunderstanding of policy. Some inconsistency appears to be related to the state office not precisely conveying policy to field staff.

Primary Finding #3: The assessment indicates a need to substantially expand DVR activities related to students in transition. Currently, the DVR Transition Consultant spends only 15 percent of his time on transition activities. Other states typically devote more FTEs to transition coordination. Opportunities exist for DVR to utilize non-federal funds from other agencies to leverage additional federal DVR funding for this purpose. In some cases, it may be possible to utilize 20 percent non-federal funds to leverage 80 percent federal funds.

Other Findings:

#4: There is a need for DVR to conduct more outreach activities. Some potential client referral sources, such as schools, law enforcement agencies, supportive service agencies, advocacy groups, medical professionals, and social workers, are not well informed about the services DVR provides.

#5: There is a need for DVR to get the family more involved. The family can play an important role in encouraging the client.

#6: There is a need for DVR counselors to be flexible when discussing employment/education options with a client. Clients indicate that they sometimes are
made to feel that they should seek a lesser job or pursue a lesser educational goal than they desire.

#7: There is a need for longer-term educational services for those who have difficulty completing a course of study in the normal timeframe.

#8: There is a need to develop more cooperative agreements with mental health providers including community mental health centers.

#9: There is a need to identify and remove “disincentives to work” that may discourage students in transition (and others) from continuing their education and seeking employment. Loss of Medicaid or Medicare is potentially a major disincentive.

#10: There is a need to expand and improve job coaching services.

#11: There is a need for DVR to do more follow-up with clients. Clients indicate that they often initiate follow-up contact and then wait for an appointment.

#12: There is a need for more transportation services.

#13: There is a need to provide better access to assistive technology, especially the more expensive technology.

#14: There is a need to explore additional opportunities for coordinating DVR services with Work Force Investment Act services.

#15: There is a need for school district special education personnel to engage in discussion about “the percentage of 11th and 12th grade special education students who might benefit from DVR services.” Survey results revealed responses ranging from 10 percent to 100 percent. This seems to imply confusion about the nature of DVR services and/or who might benefit from them. This likely has implications for the referral process.

#16: There is a need for school district special education personnel to inform all age appropriate special education students about the existence of DVR and the type of services DVR offers. There is a need for high school personnel to increase the referral rate to DVR. Generally, there is a need to adhere to the intent of the M.O.U. that has been signed by DVR and the Wyoming Department of Education.

After careful consideration of all information collected for the 2006 Wyoming Assessment of Resource Needs, a number of recommendations have been developed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) met on January 30, 2007 to review the findings of the 2006 Wyoming Assessment of Resource Needs. After reviewing the findings, the SRC
developed the following recommendations:

**Recommendation #1:** DVR should develop a statewide “Interagency Outreach” position. The individual hired to fill this position should work closely with relevant federal, state and local programs to promote information exchange and the development of interagency agreements. It is important that the individual work closely with all programs that promote independence, not just the ones that focus on employment. Subsequent to the 2003 WYARN, DVR substantially expanded interagency activities relating to people with a brain injury. Now, in addition to continuing these activities, new efforts need to be directed at people with a severe and persistent mental illness as well as DVR clients in general. (Note: New outreach efforts are also needed relating to students in transition. These are addressed separately in recommendation #3).

**Recommendation #2:** DVR should continue to promote consistent policy interpretation and implementation among the field offices. Inconsistency noted during the assessment goes beyond students in transition, but it was especially noted relating to students in transition.

**Recommendation #3:** DVR should devote more personnel time to students in transition. While placing a Transition Counselor in many of the 48 school districts has been contemplated by some officials, this may not be practical due to the large number of new positions that would be required. It may also not be needed in some of the smaller school districts. Alternatively, it is recommended that DVR create a full-time statewide “Transition Consultant” position and five regional “Transition Counselor” positions. Duties of the statewide coordinator should include: managing the transition program; hiring, supervising and training the regional specialists; developing and refining DVR transition policy; training DVR personnel regarding transition policy; developing cooperative agreements with various organizations; promoting employment opportunities for students; organizing workshops and conferences; developing and maintaining a transition web site; etc. Because the regional specialists will work directly with local organizations including school districts, it is important that these organizations have input regarding the duties of the regional specialists. Therefore, it is recommended that a multi-agency task force be convened for the purpose of developing a Position Description and Qualifications (PDQ) statement for the regional specialists.

**Recommendation #4:** DVR should consider expanding paid, or partially paid, work experience for students in transition. While some paid work experience opportunities are currently available, opportunities exist to improve coordination with LEA’s and to share the cost relating to paid work experience.

**Recommendation #5:** In addition to the specific recommendations listed above, DVR should address each of the other findings of this report.

**Other Components of the Statewide Workforce Investment System**

Nearly all the mandated WIA partner programs are located within the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Employment Services (ES) Division. DVR and ES staff have worked in a cooperative manner for years and even more so since DWS became a Department on July 1, 2002.
Most DVR and ES offices are co-located at the one-stop centers across the State, and referrals between the two divisions are routine. The ETA 9002A Report shows that 2,244 Persons with a Disability* were registered with ES as active job seekers for the 12 month period ending June 30, 2006. Of that total, 2,224 received staff assisted services as noted below:

- 986 – Career Guidance
- 238 – Job Search Activities
- 1,879 – Referred to Employment

* “Person with a disability” is self disclosed by the customer when registering with ES and does not necessarily meet the definition of person with a disability as used by DVR.

In addition, 328 individuals with a disability were served through the WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs during this time period.

DVR's management information system shows that of all DVR clients served during State FY 2006 (7/1/05 - 6/30/06), approximately 6.2% (235 individuals) were referred to DVR by a "One-Stop Center"; this is primarily the ES Division.
Annual Estimates of Individuals To Be Served and Costs of Services

The number of individuals in Wyoming who are potentially eligible for DVR services under the State Plan is derived from the United States Census (2000), Summary File F3. **Note:** The U.S. Census Bureau’s estimate of Wyoming’s population on July 1, 2006 was 515,004.

Consolidated Disability and Employment Data, 2000 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010 Projected (4.1% increase)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total persons (civilian, non-institutionalized population)</td>
<td>493,782</td>
<td>514,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, Age 16 – 64</td>
<td>315,859</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of population aged 16 – 64</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 16 – 64 with a work disability</td>
<td>30,952</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total persons aged 16 – 64</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>20,389</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Employed</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>10,563</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Unemployed</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table describes the potential base of future DVR clients, as adjusted for projected population growth from 2000 to 2010. (Table 3.11 from the WYARNs 2003 report and is based on the 2000 Census Data)

Potential Applicants for Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Projected to 2010

(Civilian non-institutionalized individuals ages 16 – 64)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Rehabilitation Planning Groups</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010 Projected (4.1% increase)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total State population</td>
<td></td>
<td>493,782</td>
<td>514,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Group 1</td>
<td>Individuals ages 16-64 with a work disability who were not working, Census 2000</td>
<td>10,563</td>
<td>10,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Group 2</td>
<td>&quot;Potential applicants” – Planning Group 1, less current applicants</td>
<td>8,839</td>
<td>9,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Group 3</td>
<td>Annual applicants, existing DVR caseload</td>
<td>1,724</td>
<td>1,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Group 4</td>
<td>Annual applicants determined by DVR to have “significant” disabilities</td>
<td>978</td>
<td>1,018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fiscal Year 2008 Projections:

1. Number of eligible individuals who will receive services under
   
   a. General Rehabilitation Program (Title I, Part B): 3,572
   b. Supported Employment Program (Title VI, Part B): 642

   **Note:** Approximately 642 individuals will be served in supported employment (SE), but only 311 will receive services from the $300,000 Title VI, Part B grant, if available. The rest of the SE individuals will receive services from the Title I, Part B grant.

2. Costs of services for the estimate in #1: $5,147,252

   **Note:** This estimate is for the cost of services provided directly to the individuals. These services, which are purchased from vendors, include the following: eligibility/needs assessment, physical and mental restoration, training, maintenance, transportation, etc. This estimate does not include administrative costs such as staff salaries, staff travel, telephone, postage, rent for office space, indirect costs, etc.
4.11(c)(1) State’s Goals and Priorities

Goals and priorities in carrying out the Vocational Rehabilitation Program, jointly developed and agreed to by DVR and the SRC:

1. Successfully rehabilitate 672 or more individuals with disabilities.

   Strategies:

   A. Monitor progress for successful closures on a monthly basis, using WYRES reports of cases in Status 26 and Status 22.

   B. Area Managers will train staff on requirements for a successful closure, by March 31, 2008.

   C. Establish a new Business Leadership Network in Casper by June 30, 2008, and monitor progress of all BLN's on a monthly basis using the WYRES BLN report and monthly reports submitted by the BLN's.

   D. Increase by 5% the number of clients using the Small Business Development Fund and other resources for starting a small business.

2. Successfully rehabilitate 205 or more Supported Employment individuals with the most significant disabilities.

   Strategies:

   A. Monitor progress of successful Supported Employment closures on a monthly basis, using WYRES Supported Employment reports.

   B. DVR staff will work with Community Rehabilitation Programs to increase referral of appropriate clients to DVR for Supported Employment services by 5% during Federal Fiscal Year 2008.

   C. Strategies C and D (Goal 1, above) will also support this goal.

3. Meet or exceed all RSA Performance Standards and Indicators for Federal Fiscal Year 2008.

   Strategies:

   A. All strategies listed in this section will support this goal.
B. Monitor progress on each Indicator at least quarterly and advise staff of results.

C. Implement corrective action as needed, if the possibility exists that any Indicator might not be achieved.

4. Continue staff recruitment, development and retention.

Strategies:

A. Staff recruitment

1. Recruit potential VR Counselors through the University of Northern Colorado, Utah State University, and Montana State University through personal visits and/or other methods of communication.

2. Provide continuous recruitment ads and current vacancy announcements to these Universities, and place ads in local and regional publications.

3. List Counselor vacancies with the Rehabilitation Recruitment Center of the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials.

4. Maintain DVR’s Listserv for smaller colleges in the area that have Master level programs in related fields.

5. List all DVR staff vacancies with the State Personnel System, and on the Department of Workforce Services web site (Wyoming at Work).

B. Staff development

1. Conduct annual in-service training for Managers/Counselors, and Assistants.

2. Area Managers will conduct at least one regional in-service training on topics specific to the needs of the Region.

3. As needed, individuals will attend training provided by the State Personnel Division, public and/or private vendors.

4. Supervisors will develop a training plan specific to each of their staff, updated annually.

5. The CSPD Consultant will track training needs of all staff through an annual survey and review of training plans.
6. Refer to the CSPD Attachment (4.10) for additional information on Counselor attendance in a Masters Degree program and working towards the CRC credential.

C. Staff retention

1. Supervisors will develop a retention plan for each of their staff, and review it annually.

2. DVR Administration will work towards establishing an advanced level Counselor position for those Counselors who have CRC credentials.

3. The Assistant Administrator for Field Services will conduct one retention survey to be distributed to all staff. Results will be shared with all staff, and reviewed by Administrators for potential improvements to retention efforts.

4. DVR will participate in "Employer of Choice" initiatives developed by the Department of Workforce Services.

5. Maintain the processes which allow staff to have input into division-wide decisions, including periodic meetings of the Futures Group; meetings and/or other methods of communications with the WYRES Advisory Group; periodic visits to the field offices by the Administrator and Assistant Administrator for Field Services; and the annual White Hat Tour (statewide visit to all DVR offices by the Administrator and Assistant Administrators).

5. Expand Transition services statewide, for students with disabilities who will be exiting the school system and entering the workforce or post-secondary training.

Strategies:

A. Hire a Transition Consultant by July 1, 2007.

B. The Transition Consultant will attend all meetings of the Wyoming Department of Education Transition Council.

C. The Wyoming Department of Education's IDEA Coordinator will continue as a member of the SRC and report activities to the SRC at their quarterly meetings.

D. Request legislative support for five Transition Counselor positions in the next biennium (July 1, 2008).

F. Update the MOU between DVR and the Wyoming Department of Education by October 1, 2007.

G. Establish a baseline for numbers of Transition students referred to DVR by the Local Education Agencies through the use of WYRES Transition Reports; increase the number of referrals in succeeding years.

6. Increase services and employment outcomes for individuals with ABI.

Strategies:

A. Monitor progress of Project BRAIN through quarterly written reports provided to DVR by BIAW, and updates provided by BIAW to the SRC at their quarterly meetings.

B. Work cooperatively with BIAW to enhance services for individuals with ABI, through attendance at meetings, BIAW sponsored training sessions and conferences, and consultation with BIAW staff when requested.

C. Increase the number of ABI clients served by 5%.

D. Increase successful employment outcomes of ABI clients by 5%.

7. Increase services and employment outcomes for individuals with SPMI.

Strategies:

A. Develop an interagency agreement with the Division of Behavioral Health to support the expansion of successful employment models for individuals with SPMI, by September 30, 2008.

B. Develop interagency agreements with local mental health providers to support the expansion of successful employment models for individuals with SPMI, by September 30, 2008.

C. Increase the number of SPMI clients served by 20.

D. Increase successful employment outcomes of SPMI clients by 10.
8. Increase collaboration with Federal and State agencies, non-profits and other organizations to build stronger partnerships.

Strategies:

A. The SRC will hold at least one joint meeting with the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC).

B. The Assistant Administrator for Field Services will take a lead role to increase collaboration with the Veterans Administration (VA) through periodic contact and exchange of information with Wyoming's US DOL Veteran's Employment and Training Service (VETS) Director, and the VA Representative in Cheyenne.

C. DVR Counselors will meet at least quarterly with staff at the VA Centers in Cheyenne and Sheridan to increase referrals, and improve coordination of services to mutual clients.

D. Collaborate with the RFEVR Project on the Wind River Reservation through DVR staff attendance at their Advisory Council meetings, and providing training and technical assistance to their staff as requested.

E. Continue open communication with the Northern Arapaho VR Project, and work towards development of an agreement similar to the Memorandum of Agreement with RFEVR.

F. Establish communication with the new Job Corps Center scheduled to open in Riverton, Wyoming (in 2010), as an information and referral source.
**Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators:**

Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act required the establishment of evaluation standards and performance indicators for the State VR program. The standards and indicators follow with Wyoming DVR’s results for FFY 2006 (10/01/05 – 09/30/06):

**Evaluation Standard 1 – Employment Outcomes.** A Designated State Unit (DSU) shall assist any eligible individual, including an individual with a significant disability, to obtain, maintain, or regain high-quality employment.

(1) Employment Outcomes

i. *Performance Indicator 1.1.* The number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period compared to the number of individuals who exit the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period.

   Required Performance Level: Equal or exceed previous performance period (664)
   Actual Performance: 670

ii. *Performance Indicator 1.2.* Of all individuals who exit the VR program after receiving services, the percentage who are determined to have achieved an employment outcome.

   Required Performance Level: 55.8%
   Actual Performance: 72.7%

iii. *Performance Indicator 1.3.* Of all individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, the percentage who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program (BEP) employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

   Required Performance Level: 72.6%
   Actual Performance: 98.6%

iv. *Performance Indicator 1.4.* Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities.

   Required Performance Level: 62.4%
   Actual Performance: 67.3%
v. **Performance Indicator 1.5.** The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self, or BEP employment with earning levels equivalent to at least the minimum wage as a ratio to the State’s average hourly earnings for all individuals in the State who are employed (as derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics report “State Average Annual Pay” for the most recent available year).

Required Performance Level: .52 (ratio)
Actual Performance: .61

vi. **Performance Indicator 1.6.** Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentage who reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at exit and the percentage who reported their own income as the largest single source of support at application.

Required Performance Level: 53.0
Actual Performance: 64.9

**Evaluation Standard 2 – Equal Access to Services.** A Designated State Unit (DSU) shall ensure that individuals from minority backgrounds have equal access to VR services.

i. **Performance Indicator 2.1.** The service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all non-minority individuals with disabilities.

Required Performance Level: .80
Actual Performance: .87

**Factors that may affect performance:**

**Performance Indicator 1.1:** From December 2005 to December 2006, Wyoming added 13,900 jobs for an over-the-year growth rate of 5.3%. This is the fastest job growth since November 1981. The state’s unemployment rate was 3.0%. In contrast the U.S. unemployment rate was 4.5% and the U.S. job growth stood at 1.4%. By February 2007, the Wyoming unemployment rate was 2.3%, the lowest it has been since 1979. Because of these factors, we envision that some potential applicants for VR services may not even be reaching our doors; they can simply apply for positions either through Employment Services at the WIA one stop center or directly with the employer who has the opening, and have a fairly good chance at being hired if they meet the qualifications. This is especially true for individuals who are willing to relocate to where the jobs are. This could negatively impact the number of successful closures in the future.
Performance Indicator 1.2: For the same reason noted above, results on this indicator could show a decline in the future - fewer successful closures and the same (or more) unsuccessful closures. However, at this time, we are relatively certain that the required performance level can be met.

Performance Indicator 1.3: Legislation recently passed by Congress to increase the minimum wage could have a negative impact on Wyoming DVR’s ability to meet the required performance level in the future. Wyoming’s current minimum wage is $5.15 per hour, but will increase to comply with the new minimum wage scale.

Performance Indicator 1.4: We do not anticipate any problem meeting the required performance level.

Performance Indicator 1.5: The energy boom that is occurring in Wyoming has resulted in an increase in the average earnings for Wyoming residents, which has not yet been completely reflected in the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. The latest data available from BLS is from the third quarter of 2006 and is just beginning to reflect the increase in wages. The BLS data for average hourly earnings in Wyoming (average weekly wage divided by 40 hours per week) follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average Hourly Earnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>$13.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>$13.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>$14.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>$15.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$17.65 (preliminary data for third quarter)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although Wyoming DVR has not had a problem meeting the required performance level on this indicator, we expect that our actual results will decline in the future and the possibility does exist that at some point we may not be able to attain the required level.

Performance Indicator 1.6: We do not anticipate any problem meeting the required performance level.

Performance Indicator 2.1: Although DVR has always exceeded the required performance level for this indicator, our performance level has declined over the last few years. We expect that there are several reasons for this. There are two Section 121 American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Grants, Red Feathered Eagle and Northern Arapaho, on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. Although the ethnic makeup of DVR's clients closely mirrors the ethnicity of the Wyoming population, American Indians living on or near the Reservation may be more likely to participate in one of these local projects than the State program. American Indians comprise approximately 2.4% of Wyoming's population (2005 Census), and a great majority live on or near the Reservation.

While the unemployment rate for Fremont County, where the Reservation is located, was 4.4% (December 2006), 2000 Census data shows the American Indian unemployment rate on the
reservation at 32.2%. Jobs are difficult to find on the Reservation, and like many clients DVR works with, people often do not want to relocate. In addition, the culture of this population tends to accept a person with a disability more readily, and does not emphasize a need to overcome or circumvent the impediment to employment that might exist due to a disability.

Wyoming DVR believes that one of the biggest factors affecting performance is that the required performance levels are mandated, and are the same for all General/Combined Agencies regardless of economic and other factors which are different for every State. Performance levels should be negotiated between RSA and each State Agency, as they are with the WIA Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker Programs.
4.11(c)(4)  Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds

Title VI, Part B funds will be used and distributed through five DVR regional budgets. Rehabilitation Counselors at the local level will authorize Supported Employment services as needed from a variety of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) statewide. DVR estimates that approximately $814,056 will be expended on Supported Employment services in FFY 2008. Funding sources include: $300,000 in Section 622 funds, supplemented with $514,056 from Title I (Section 110) funds.

Approximately 642 individuals will be served in supported employment (SE), but only 311 will receive services from the $300,000 Title VI, Part B grant, if available. The rest of the SE individuals will receive services from the Title I, Part B grant.

This estimate is for the cost of services provided directly to the individuals. These services, which are purchased from vendors, include supported employment job development and job coaching. This estimate does not include administrative costs such as staff salaries, staff travel, telephone, postage, rent for office space, indirect costs, etc.

Supported employment services are available statewide, with twenty CRPs currently participating in the provision of services.

1. Individuals with the most significant disabilities have access to supported employment services on a statewide basis;

2. Within each CRP, a supported employment coordinator has been designated and a network of coordinators exists statewide;

3. Supported employment coordinators market supported employment to employers in their communities; and

4. Employers are prominently involved in supported employment throughout the State.

Refer to Attachment 6.3 (formerly Attachment 7.3) for additional information on Supported Employment Services.
4.11(d)  State's Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities:

(1) To Address Needs Identified in the Comprehensive Assessment and to Achieve Identified Goals and Priorities;
(2) To Carry Out Outreach Activities to Identify and Serve Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities Who are Minorities; and
(3) To Overcome Identified Barriers Relating to Equitable Access to and Participation of Individuals with Disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program

(1) To Address Needs Identified in the Comprehensive Assessment and to Achieve Identified Goals and Priorities;

DVR has provided innovation and expansion (I&E) funding for activities designed to continue addressing some of the needs identified in the previous and current Needs Assessments (WYARNs). Most activities are designed specifically to expand and improve the vocational rehabilitation services available to individuals with the most significant disabilities.

The following activities are being considered for I&E funding in FY 2008:

A. In 2008, DVR anticipates providing continued financial assistance for further expansion of the Wyoming Business Leadership Network (WBLN). The time frame for expansion to additional communities is two years, to insure that operations are fully stabilized before WBLN begins a new project. DVR anticipates that I&E funding for the WBLN will increase slightly to $400,000 in 2008, with the establishment of a new BLN in Casper.

Estimated Cost: $400,000

B. Based on recommendations included in the 2003 and 2006 Needs Assessments, DVR will support I&E funding for a project targeted towards improving and expanding services for individuals with ABI (Project BRAIN).

Estimated Cost: $100,000

C. DVR will provide funding support for the State Rehabilitation Council. Expenditures may include travel, stipends, advertising, supplies, meeting room rental, interpreters, facilitation services, and costs related to consumer satisfaction/outreach.

Estimated Cost: $30,000

D. Funding support for the State Independent Living Council; allowable expenditures may include travel, interpreters, and registration fees.

Estimated Cost: $5,000

Attachment 4.11: Page 19 of 35
Fiscal Year 2008
(2) To Carry Out Outreach Activities to Identify and Serve Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities Who are Minorities

Populations that are Unserved or Underserved

The 1992 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act strengthened the requirements for outreach to “individuals with disabilities who are members of groups that are currently unserved and underserved, including members of minority groups.” Project Consultants who conducted the Needs Assessments in 1997, 2000 and 2003 found no evidence of any population defined by region, type of disability, age, race or ethnicity that is not being served. The 2003 Needs Assessment noted specifically:

“Although the population of Wyoming as a whole is primarily white, some communities across the State have significant populations of individuals reporting other racial or ethnic affiliations.”

“…a comparison of Vocational Rehabilitation caseload data to data from Census 2000 clearly shows that patterns of service closely mirror the racial and ethnic diversity of the Wyoming population at large. Notably, the Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to serve American Indians in proportion to their representation in the State’s general population despite the presence of the two Native American vocational rehabilitation programs on the Wind River Reservation.”

Services to Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities Who are Minorities

Native Americans

Objective: Promote opportunities to enhance equal access and quality service for individuals who are culturally diverse within the rehabilitation system.

Methods: Continue to have Native American representation on the State Rehabilitation Council and State Independent Living Council.

Continue participation in the Consortia of Administrators for Native American Rehabilitation.

Objective: Maintain and promote the Section 121 VR Projects for Native American Rehabilitation Services on the Wind River Reservation.

Methods: The Red Feathered Eagle Vocational Rehabilitation (RFEVR) was awarded new grant funding for up to five additional years, starting October 2004. This Project is an effective way to provide rehabilitation services (especially culturally
appropriate services) on the Wind River Indian Reservation and to those Native Americans living near the Reservation.
Two representatives from DVR serve on the RFEVR Advisory Council.
Continue discussions with the Northern Arapahoe representatives to develop a Memorandum of Agreement similar to the RFEVR agreement.

**Objective:** Section 121 Project staff to attend the DVR annual Counselor and Support Staff In-Service Training sessions.

**Method:** Advise Project staff of in-service training through invitation/announcement, including a copy of the agenda.

**Objective:** Include Project staff in surveys of training needs assessments and advise of training availability.

**Methods:** Forward training needs surveys to Project staff for completion.
Send training announcements as appropriate and place Project staff on mailing lists.

**Objective:** Collaboration between the Wyoming Relay/Deaf Services Program and the Section 121 Projects on availability of services.

**Method:** Provide information to the Project staff and their consumers on the availability and use of the Wyoming Relay, the distribution of teletypewriters (TTYs) and amplified phones; obtaining assistive devices, obtaining qualified interpreters and developing interpreter training that addresses culturally appropriate services.

The populations discussed below were identified in the 2006 Needs Assessment as “underserved.” All were being served, but in less-than representative numbers, or less effectively than other populations. The discussion below focuses on describing efforts made to better serve these groups.

**Persons with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI)**

**Objective:** Improve and expand services to persons with SPMI.

**Method:** Encourage the Division of Behavioral Health to support the expansion of successful employment models for individuals with SPMI.
**Objective:** Continue to develop Supported Employment (SE) services with mental health organizations on a statewide basis.

**Method:** Contacts with mental health centers and promotion of SE services.

**Objective:** As training becomes available in the area of working with and serving those with mental illness, have DVR staff and appropriate mental health personnel attend. Invite mental health personnel to attend DVR in-service when appropriate topics are involved.

**Method:** Invite mental health personnel to attend DVR in-service at no cost to them when the training is being presented in their area of the State. Alert mental health personnel to training via other entities.

**Persons with Acquired Brain Injuries (ABI)**

**Objective:** Fully implement Project B.R.A.I.N. development plan.

**Methods:** Establish Crisis Management Teams (CMT’s) statewide.

Invite all CRP personnel involved with ABI Services to Project B.R.A.I.N. training as available throughout the 5 year Project term.

Increase availability and scope of services for individuals with ABI as opportunities evolve via Project B.R.A.I.N..

**Students in Transition from School to Work**

**Objective:** Strengthen and improve the working relationship with the Department of Education.

**Methods:** Continue to have VR represented on the Wyoming Department of Education Transition Council and work to improve timely referrals.

Continue to involve the Department of Education in State Rehabilitation Council activities and meetings.

Continue to encourage LEA’s to identify students with disabilities and make timely referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation.

Hire a full time Transition Consultant to work with the school districts, Department of Education, and DVR staff statewide.

Explore the need for five new regional Transition Counselor positions, as identified in Recommendation #3 from the 2006 Needs Assessment.
**Objective:** Encourage LEA’s to make timely referrals to VR.

**Methods:** Field staff communication with the LEA personnel to educate them regarding VR mission and services.

Reinforce the importance of timely referrals to DVR by the LEA’s personnel.

VR staff will attend IEP meetings when invited by the school.

Identify new systems to improve referrals and working relationships, including replicating successful service models existing within the state.
To Overcome Identified Barriers Relating to Equitable Access to and Participation of Individuals with Disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program

General Education Provisions Act (GEPA):

GEPA requirements include describing proposed steps to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, Federally-funded programs. The potential impediments to equitable access or participation include gender, race, national origin, color, disability or age. In addition to the proposed steps previously described in this Attachment, the following actions have been or will be taken to ensure equitable access and participation in DVR's programs:

1. The 2006 Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs identified three disability populations of concern in Wyoming: Persons with acquired brain injury (ABI), persons with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI), and students with disabilities who will soon transition from school to work.

   A. DVR has entered into a contract with the Brain Injury Association of Wyoming to develop a statewide program that will organize and mobilize existing organizations into a cohesive unit that will support the needs of the ABI population.

   B. DVR has developed working relationships with most of the Mental Health Centers in Wyoming, using the supported employment service model as the method to better serve the SPMI population. DVR continues to include additional Centers as they become interested in participating in this service model.

   C. Students with disabilities continue to be a special concern for DVR. Distance and the lack of staff make it difficult to have the positive impact needed on all of Wyoming's 48 school districts. DVR staff attempt to attend all Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings that have vocational implications. Staff also provides Special Education Directors and teachers with information on DVR's transition services.

2. Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)

   A. DVR has an MOU with the University of Wyoming and all Wyoming Community Colleges. This MOU is designed to guide the planning and delivery of support services to individuals with disabilities who are mutual clients of DVR and enrolled at a Wyoming institution of higher education.

   B. An MOU is in place with the Section 121 Program on Wyoming's Wind River Reservation. Through this MOU, DVR provides consultation with Project staff and Native Americans with disabilities.
C. The Wyoming Division of Workers’ Safety and Compensation and DVR have an MOU to provide rehabilitation services to DVR eligible individuals who have been injured in job-related accidents. Joint training for both Divisions is scheduled for April and June, 2007.

3. Individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing have potential barriers to equal access and participation due to their disability. DVR has taken steps to ensure equal access and participation in our programs for these individuals.

A. Training has been provided to DVR Counselors, Assistants and Managers on: the use of text telephones (TTY); the use of telecommunications relay service (Wyoming Relay, internet and video relay); Deaf culture; strategies for communicating with hearing-impaired clients; and the use of sign language interpreters during Regional in-services which are conducted periodically across the state.

B. DVR collaborates in many ways with the Wyoming Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (WYRID): to identify all known sign language interpreters in the State; to evaluate their skill level using a method which was jointly developed by DVR and WYRID; and to compile and distribute the list of interpreters to all DVR staff, other service providers, government agencies, businesses and individuals.

C. Training is routinely offered to service providers, government agencies and private sector businesses on Deaf culture, communication strategies, use of interpreters, use of text telephones and Wyoming Relay. This type of training facilitates appropriate referrals to DVR as well as the provision of services and employment for DVR clients.

D. Wyoming Relay is a program administered by DVR. A public awareness campaign is conducted on an on-going basis which includes radio, television, print and billboard advertising statewide. The campaign was designed to educate the public on the availability of 7-1-1 and CapTel to call individuals who have a hearing impairment, and not to hang up when receiving a Relay call.

4. Older workers: The "Boomers and Business" initiative is a cooperative effort between Wyoming's Governor, AARP Wyoming and the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services to assist older workers to find employment and plan for Wyoming's retirement "boom." Current US Census predictions indicate that by the year 2020, Wyoming will lead the nation with the largest percentage of residents greater than 65 years of age.

To effectively address older workers' needs, a collaborative partnership of senior employment specialists, workforce representatives, and private and public sector organizations was formed.
Boomers and Business Goal:

- Wyoming recognizes the need for the Baby Boom generation to contribute meaningfully to the state’s workforce and economy.

Tiered Plan to Achieve Goal:

- Expand the role of the Department of Workforce Services Workforce Centers in serving older workers:
  - Enhance communication of services available regarding older workers to employers, employees, and the public.
  - Train front line personnel on older worker issues.
  - Enhance the Department of Workforce Services database to more effectively capture data on older workers.
- Educate employers about the valuable resource of older workers:
  - Develop a reference manual for employers (is available on-line at www.boomersandbusiness.com)
  - Develop a reference manual for older workers (is available on-line at www.boomersandbusiness.com)
  - Create presentation materials about the value of older workers.
  - Create a distribution list to disseminate materials about the value of older workers.
- Expand the role of the Community Colleges in serving older workers.

All Divisions within the Department of Workforce Services are committed to helping businesses find qualified older workers, and to helping older workers access employment and training opportunities.

Assistive Technology Services and Devices:

A broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices are provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process. Wyoming DVR uses the Centrum for Disabilities, a non-profit agency that provides AT evaluations and equipment to clients throughout the state. An AgrAbility program began in May 2006 as a grant program administered by the University of Wyoming. The Assistant Administrator, Field Services, is on their Advisory Panel, and DVR will continue to work with them to provide AT services to the agricultural community. AT services and devices are available on a statewide basis.
4.11(e)(2) Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

Actions taken in support of DVR’s Goals and Priorities identified in the previous State Plan:

A. Goals:

1. Successfully rehabilitate 664 or more eligible vocational rehabilitation and supported employment clients in an efficient and effective manner.

   DVR provided support to field staff in their efforts to provide quality rehabilitation. In Federal Fiscal Year 2006, 670 clients were rehabilitated, including 202 supported employment clients.

   This goal has been met.

2. Work with clients who need supported employment services and close 198 or more successfully.

   In Federal Fiscal Year 2006, 619 clients received supported employment services; 202 were rehabilitated.

   The strategy to include supported employment funds in the counselors’ case service budgets has been successful in terms of streamlining the process for counselors and assistants. This strategy has been in place for some time and continues to be effective.

   This goal has been met.

3. Continue staff development and improve recruitment for qualified rehabilitation counselors.

   Staff development continues with major in-services for counselors and assistants, regional in-services and training identified by individuals to improve skills and knowledge base. Specific learning objectives and time frames were developed for newly hired counselors and assistants.

   DVR continues to recruit regionally and via the Internet. DVR maintains contact with schools that produce rehabilitation counselors, and has expanded attendance at college and university job fairs to improve recruitment.

   This goal will continue to be addressed.
4. In partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council, complete a comprehensive statewide needs assessment.

The Needs Assessment has been completed; final report from the contractor delivered to DVR on February 3, 2007. Refer to Attachment 4.11(a) for the executive summary of this document.

This goal has been met.

5. Provide statewide consistency and reliability of casework.

DVR has established a statewide quality assurance (QA) program. Consistency and reliability have been the focus of QA and training efforts. The management team will continue to meet quarterly so that casework, practices and policies remain consistent statewide.

This goal will continue to be addressed.


DDS has implemented a paperless system to enhance services. DDS receives continued support from the DVR central office. All DDS performance standards continue to be met.

This goal has been met.

7. Maintain the process where staff has input into division-wide decisions.

The DVR Administrator and Assistant Administrator for Field Services visit all field offices regularly, to solicit input on policies, procedures, computer enhancements, retention efforts, and other issues. The Administrator and Assistant Administrators together visit each office once a year on the “White Hat Tour.” There is no formal agenda for this tour; all staff have the opportunity to speak with the Administrators about anything that is of interest to them.

The DVR Futures Group continues to meet regularly, providing staff with a more structured forum to provide input and ideas to the Administration. The WYRES Advisory Group provides valuable feedback on potential changes and enhancements to DVR’s management information system. An electronic (intranet) suggestion box has been developed to allow for input while maintaining complete confidentiality of the individual submitting the suggestion.
At the Department level, DVR staff have the opportunity to participate in a monthly teleconference with the leadership, plus attendance at the Department’s annual business meeting.

This goal will continue to be addressed.

8. Market VR services.

Marketing and public relations efforts are conducted routinely by many of the DVR staff, as part of their regular job duties when promoting DVR services and developing referral sources across the state. In addition, DVR is assisted with marketing efforts through activities of the SRC and WBLN.

The SRC has a display booth with information about DVR as well as the SRC. This booth is manned by SRC members and/or DVR staff at Wyoming’s annual MEGA Conference, and at the Wyoming APSE (Association for Persons in Supported Employment) conference. At the SRC’s quarterly meetings, they sponsor an open house and invite clients and the general public to meet with them, where they promote DVR and solicit input on DVR programs.

The WBLN does extensive marketing of the BLN and DVR in the five communities where they are located. They also sponsor special events such as career fairs and disability awareness training.

The Wyoming Relay program, which is administered by DVR, conducts an on-going public awareness program that includes television, radio, print and billboard advertising statewide. The most recent campaign was designed to educate the public on availability of 711 and CapTel. This program also has a booth with information about Relay and DVR, which is used at local Health Fairs and the Wyoming Hearing Impaired conference.

This goal has been met.

B. Priorities:

1. Participate in the Department of Workforce Services activities/initiatives to promote integration of services in order to optimize client services in an efficient and effective manner.

Efforts to collocate Divisions with DWS continue with three new locations: Worland, Laramie, and Douglas.
VR staff have taken a proactive role in DWS meetings to help mold the direction of the Department and to develop a working relationship with all members of DWS. DWS Business Plan goals that were a VR responsibility were met in calendar year 2006.

2. Work with Mental Health Centers (MHCs), Wyoming State Hospital, Division of Behavioral Health, Division of Developmental Disabilities and Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) to develop more comprehensive services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI) and for individuals with acquired brain injury (ABI).

DVR has undertaken a new effort to work with the Wyoming Department of Health, Division of Behavioral Health, to develop a more comprehensive approach to statewide services for individuals with SPMI. As noted in other sections of this Plan, DVR has contracted with the Brain Injury Association of Wyoming to expand and improve services available to individuals with ABI.

3. Collaborate with the Native American VR Projects and provide appropriate support within DVR’s resources.

Two DVR staff members attend Council meetings for these projects, and have provided training and technical assistance on various aspects of the rehabilitation process, employment issues, fiscal issues, and policies.

4. Increase collaborative efforts with the school districts, the Department of Education, Independent Living Centers, and other organizations to identify all students with disabilities who will be transitioning from school to work, and strengthen transition programs for these students.

DVR staff attend transition meetings and IEP meetings for students with disabilities in transition. One DVR counselor is a member of the statewide transition council.

5. Maintain and promote major components/initiatives for effective Succession Planning, including the Futures Group.

DVR’s Futures Group is made up of staff interested in providing input on issues affecting DVR. Several Futures Group members have been promoted; as staff express an interest in promotion they have been encouraged to participate in the Futures Group. The group has been expanded to include any DVR staff member who is interested in participating.
6. Promote coordinated efforts with Synergy and Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) to further develop Business Leadership Networks (BLNs).

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to work closely with SYNERGY to develop and expand new BLNs statewide. Expansion of BLNs is primarily based on two items: have current BLNs matured to the point that attention and energy can be redirected to establishing the new BLN; and has the timeframe for expansion been met. The goal is to expand every two years, with Casper as the next project.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation supports the expansion of the WIND project that develops working relationships with small communities that probably could not support a BLN. The WIND approach is to gain support of vendors and customers, then incorporate the business concept into the mixture. DVR staff represent the Division on the WIND council.

7. Support the Ticket to Work Incentives Improvement Act (TWWIIA) initiative.

Staff in the DVR’s central office provide assistance to callers requesting information about the Ticket to Work program and its relationship to the vocational rehabilitation process. Ticket recipients are referred to the Wyoming Benefit Planning Assistance and Outreach (WyBPAO) program and the local Vocational Rehabilitation office. A management information report was developed on Ticket to Work clients for use by central office and field staff to assist with caseload management. Training continues to be provided to DVR staff on this subject.

8. Refine and improve staff retention efforts through the use of staff surveys, field visits from administrators, and employer of choice initiatives.

Retention has continued to be a focus for the Division; the retention consultant hired in June 2006 has provided the Division with numerous options and programs that will enhance retention. The Administrator and Assistant Administrators continued to travel throughout the State to obtain feedback from all staff on issues and concerns within the Division.

9. Increase collaboration with Federal and State Agencies, and non-profit and other organizations to build stronger partnerships.

DVR continues to work with our W.I.A. partners to provide better services to mutual clients. DVR has established working relationships with other organizations in the State to develop the teams for successful rehabilitations.
10. Promote the use of DVR’s Small Business Development Fund (SBDF), and other grants and resources for clients interested in starting a small business enterprise.

The SBDF was explained to all new DVR counselors in order to promote its use. 150 DVR clients were counseled regarding self-employment options, small business opportunities, and business planning.

Funding for business start-up costs was provided for 27 DVR clients with significantly disabling conditions. The total amount of SBDF funds expended was $118,256; an average expenditure per client of $4,480 for business start-up costs.

11. Quality Assurance Program

Wyoming VR has developed, and is continuing to refine, a quality assurance program, which is designed to address the corrective actions and recommendations identified in RSA’s FY 2004 107 review.

Each corrective action and recommendation is being addressed with the goal of reaching at least a 90% accuracy rate on each item. Goals include training emphasis with counselors, assistants and area managers at in-services; a change to Comprehensive Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs section in the Wyoming Rehabilitation and Employment System (WYRES); and an alert system based on WYRES to give staff a tool to help manage the caseload. The corrective action plan was approved by RSA. Quarterly reports on QA progress are sent to RSA.

The QA Program has been refined to address any of the issues that are part of an RSA review or as internal needs dictate. The QA review form that is used in the field highlights areas of concern that have been brought to light by RSA or DVR administration. The QA consultant was able to review 587 cases in the past year, and the five Area Consultants reviewed 453 cases.

The QA Consultant developed an electronic QA program that allows for QA reviews to be conducted quicker with the ability to provide the reports as soon as the review is complete to allow staff to make immediate corrections on any area of concern.

C. Innovation and Expansion Activities:

The following activities were identified in last year’s State Plan for I&E funding (FY 2007). Actual expenditures are for the time period October 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006.
1. In 2007, DVR anticipates providing continued financial assistance for further expansion of the Wyoming Business Leadership Network (WBLN). The WBLN has operated in the Rock Springs area of Wyoming for one year. The time frame for expansion to additional communities is two years, to insure that operations are fully stabilized before WBLN begins a new project. Thus, DVR anticipates that I&E funding for the WBLN will remain the same in 2007.

Due to the loss of the WBLN project director in Gillette and the disappointing support from the Gillette community, WBLN efforts in Gillette will be phased out in 2005 and early 2006. Funding will be re-directed to establish a BLN in Casper in 2006.

Estimated Cost: $399,061
Expenditures: $102,907

Report of Progress: BLN expansion was discussed by the WBLN team at its June 2006 directors meeting, and follow-up discussions with the DVR management team in Cheyenne on June 26, 2006. The consensus was positive regarding potential expansion.

On August 16 & 17, 2006, the WBLN general manager conducted formal preliminary meetings to determine community interest and support towards potential BLN establishment in Casper, WY. Meetings were arranged with the following organizations:

- Executive Director of the Casper Chamber of Commerce;
- DVR area manager;
- The Honorable Renee Burgess (Casper Mayor);
- Natrona County School District – Special Ed Program;
- Centrum for Disability Services.

When evaluating Casper (or other potential new BLN community) the WBLN now evaluates the potential for work with LEA’s as part of the feasibility process – as investment from school districts may be a critical component of the WBLN budget. Natrona County School District – Special Ed Program indicated that BLN assistance does not seem to be needed. This undermines Casper’s potential to become a new BLN site.

The WBLN plans to explore this matter further with the school district by April 30, 2007. Should those consultations prove more favorable than the initial meetings, the WBLN shall proceed in a revisit to Casper in May 2007 to meet with the DVR manager, counselor team, and the Chamber of Commerce. The WBLN must
determine whether the school district will support a new BLN and potential contract to help finance its development and operation.

The WBLN feasibility study recommendations regarding development of a new BLN in Casper will be presented to DVR late spring 2007. If Casper is found to be unfavorable, the WBLN may have other communities worth consideration that may include the following:

- Green River
- Douglas
- Laramie
- Pinedale

2. Based on recommendations included in the 2003 Needs Assessment, DVR will consider the use of I&E funding for a project targeted towards improving and expanding services for individuals with ABI.

   Estimated Cost: $100,000
   Expenditures: $16,667

   Report of Progress: The first ABI Request for Proposal (RFP) resulted in one proposal being submitted, by the Brain Injury Association of Wyoming (BIAW). The BIAW is currently an information and referral service. The proposal was a continuation/expansion of that information and referral service. Since DVR had a more global systems change in mind for the new proposed project, it was rejected. The RFP was revised and released on December 5, 2005. The contract with BIAW commenced on November 1, 2006. This project B.R.A.I.N. is scheduled to receive funding in the amount of $100,000/year or up to $500,000 for five years.

3. DVR will provide funding support for the State Rehabilitation Council. Expenditures may include travel, stipends, advertising, supplies, meeting room rental, interpreters, facilitation services, and costs related to consumer satisfaction/outreach.

   Estimated Cost: $20,000
   Expenditures: $9,221

   Report of Progress: DVR continued funding support for the State Rehabilitation Council. Expenditures included travel, stipends, advertising, supplies, meeting room rental, interpreters, and facilitation services. The State Rehabilitation Council met four times, per the requirements. The State Rehabilitation Council continues to support and advise DVR.
4. Funding support for the State Independent Living Council: Allowable expenditures may include travel, interpreters, and registration fees.

   Estimated Cost: $5,000
   Expenditures: $0.00

Report of Progress: Funding support for the State Independent Living Council continues. Allowable expenditures included travel, interpreters, and registration fees. DVR continued to provide oversight and direction to the State Independent Living Council.
Attachment 6.3 (formerly 7.3)

Quality, Scope and Extent of Supported Employment Services
Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) providing supported employment services in Wyoming must be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Community Mental Health Centers (MHCs) providing supported employment services must be certified by the Behavioral Health Division of the Wyoming Department of Health. The DVR Management Information System includes criteria to measure integration, client satisfaction, scope of service, client wages and hours worked per week, variety of work options, and disability groups served. This data collection system allows DVR to make informed decisions to modify, improve, or expand supported employment services delivered through CRPs and MHCs.

Supported employment services provided to individuals are coordinated through an individualized plan for employment (IPE) that includes a description of the services needed; the identification of the state, federal, or private programs that will provide the continuing support; and a description of the basis for determining that continuing support is available.

Supported employment services, which may be provided to individuals with significant disabilities include, but are not limited to:

1. If necessary, a supplemental evaluation to the evaluation of rehabilitation potential provided under 34 CFR Part 361.

2. Job development and placement into competitive, community integrated employment.

3. Traditionally time-limited services needed to support the trainees in employment, such as:
   a) Intensive on-the-job skills training and other training provided by skilled job trainers, co-workers and other qualified individuals, and other services specified in 34 CFR 361.48, in order to achieve and maintain job stability.
   b) Provision of follow-up services, including regular contact with employers, trainees with significant disabilities, parents, guardians, or other representatives of trainees and other suitable professional and informed advisors in order to reinforce and stabilize the job placement; and
   c) Discrete post-employment services following successful case closure by DVR, that are unavailable from an extended services provider and that are necessary to maintain the job placement.

Each client’s IPE describes the timing of transition into extended services to be provided by other state agencies and private non-profit organizations following the termination of time-limited services by DVR. DVR will provide traditionally time-limited services for a maximum of 18 months, unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been established in the IPE.
Supported employment services are available statewide, with twenty CRPs currently participating in the provision of services. The following represent improvements in quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services statewide:

1. Twenty CRPs (including MHCs) throughout the State have implemented supported employment programs;

2. Individuals with the most significant disabilities have access to supported employment services on a statewide basis;

3. Within each CRP, a supported employment coordinator has been designated and a network of coordinators exists statewide;

4. Supported employment coordinators market supported employment to employers in their communities;

5. Employers are prominently involved in supported employment throughout the State;

6. The Department of Health, Division of Developmental Disabilities continues to be used as a resource for supported employment services for individuals with acquired brain injuries;

7. The Wyoming Business Leadership Network (WBLN) was established in 1998 with the strong support of DVR. The WBLN is an employer driven system dedicated to improving employment opportunities for individuals having significant disabilities; and

8. The Wyoming Centrum for Assistive Technology was created in 1998 with the strong support of DVR. The Centrum delivered assistive technology and job site accommodations to individuals with significant disabilities statewide, beginning in 1998, through 2004. The Centrum has been reorganized as an off-campus 501(c)(3) corporation.