Dear Mr. McIntosh:

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) acknowledges your letter of June 9, 2008, transmitting the State Plan for the Title I State 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 the 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, was 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 2009 Title I, Part B, and Title VI, Part B, grant awards.

If you or your staff have questions related to this review or the approval of the FY 2009 State Plan, please contact your state liaison Thomas Macy, at (202) 245-6077 or Thomas.Macy@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: Thomas Macy
Edward Anthony, Ph.D., Acting Commissioner
Rehabilitation Services Administration
U. S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-2800

Dear Commissioner Anthony:

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is submitting our Fiscal Year 2009 State Plan electronically via the Internet. I respectfully request that the following material be approved:

- State Plan Pre-Print, Section 1
- State Plan Narrative:

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
   (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

www.wyomingworkforce.org
Edward Anthony, Acting Commissioner  
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June 9, 2008

(e)(2): Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

6.3: Quality, Scope and Extent of Supported Employment Services

The following remain current and are not being updated with this submission:

State Plan Pre-Print, Sections 2 through 8

Attachment 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

Attachment 4.11 (d) (3), Strategies 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

Also enclosed are the following:

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

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Jim McIntosh
Administrator

Enclosures
STATE PLAN FOR THE STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES
PROGRAM
AND
STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
SERVICES PROGRAM

STATE: Wyoming

AGENCY: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

AGENCY TYPE: GENERAL _____ BLIND _____ COMBINED __ X __

SECTION 1: STATE CERTIFICATIONS

1.1 The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (name of designated state agency or
designated state unit) is authorized to submit this State Plan under Title I of the
Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended¹ and its supplement under Title VI, Part B of the Act.

1.2 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title I, Part B of the Act for the
provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the Wyoming Department of Workforce
Services (name of the designated state agency)² agrees to operate and administer the State
Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this
State Plan³, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations⁴, policies, and
procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Section 111 of the
Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services
under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and the administration of the State Plan for the
vocational rehabilitation services program.

1.3 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title VI, Part B of the Rehabilitation
Act for supported employment services, the designated state agency agrees to operate and
administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the
provisions of the supplement to this State Plan⁵, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable
regulations⁶, policies, and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available
under Title VI, Part B are used solely for the provision of supported employment services
and the administration of the supplement to the Title I State Plan.

1.4 The designated state agency and/or the designated state unit has the authority under state
law to perform the functions of the state regarding this State Plan and its supplement.

1.5 The state legally may carry out each provision of the State Plan and its supplement.

1.6 All provisions of the State Plan and its supplement are consistent with state law.

1.7 The Wyoming State Treasurer (title of state officer) has the authority under state law to
receive, hold, and disburse federal funds made available under this State Plan and its
supplement.
1.8 The Administrator, Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (title of state officer) has the authority to submit this State Plan for vocational rehabilitation services and the State Plan supplement for supported employment services.

1.9 The agency that submits this State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

Jim McIntosh
Administrator Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Public Law 93-112, as amended by Public Laws 93-516, 95-602, 98-221, 99-506, 100-630, 102-569, 103-073, and 105-220.

2 Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

3 All references in this plan to "designated state agency" or to "the state agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

4 No funds under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved State Plan in accordance with Section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR part 361.

5 Applicable regulations include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86 and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program regulations in 34 CFR Part 361.

6 No funds under Title VI, Part B of the Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the Title I State Plan in accordance with Section 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

7 Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5. 34 CFR Part 361, and 34 CFR Part 363.
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   (e)(2): Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

6.3: Quality, Scope and Extent of Supported Employment Services
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
Summary of Input 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 Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Administrator.

The following comments were received from the Review Committee:

1. Attachment 4.8 (b) (2), page 2 of 5: Add Wyoming DVR to the list of members of the Wyoming Transition Council.

   Response: Wyoming DVR was added to the list.

2. Attachment 4.10, page 5 of 8: A Committee member questioned the ability of the State to allow an individual with a related Master's Degree to take the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) exam after completion of additional courses in Rehabilitation Counseling.

   Response: The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) prefers degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling, but they will accept related degrees. DVR's Training Officer has contacted them several times for clarification on this matter. As long as the individual has a Master's Degree in a related field and five core courses, they can take the exam.

3. A number of additional comments were received that pertained to typographical errors and use of acronyms in various attachments to the Plan.

   Response: These were corrected as needed.

The Review Committee reported the results of their review to the SRC at their quarterly meeting which was held in Saratoga on May 20 and 21, 2008. No additional comments were received from the SRC.

State Plan Public Hearing

A public hearing on the Draft Plan was held by compressed video on May 27, 2008 in Cheyenne, Casper, Cody, Rock Springs and Sheridan. In addition a toll free phone number was available to the public to participate by telephone if they were not able to go to a video site. Comments received at the hearing, written comments, and DVR’s responses are on file at DVR’s Central Office in Cheyenne.
Excerpts from SRC Quarterly Meeting Minutes

January 30, 2007

DVR Administrator’s Report

SRC was introduced to the new Director of the Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Joan Evans.

Federal: Jim McIntosh informed the SRC that Charles Sadler, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Representative would be in Cheyenne the week of May 21, 2007 and would like to meet with the entire SRC. The 107 Review that used to be conducted out of the Regional Office in Denver is now being conducted out of Washington, DC. RSA is interested in speaking with stakeholders, service providers, and anyone who would like to provide suggestions and feedback.

Department: Jim McIntosh shared that the legislature is currently in session. DVR did not have any bills on the floor, there were however several bills that affected DWS.

Division: It was reported that all of the counselor positions remained filled and the Area 01 Manager Position was still vacant. Concern was shared over the pending retirement of two Lead Assistants.

Severe & Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI): There is open dialogue with State Mental Health in the hopes of beginning to have more of an impact on the SPMIs. DVR will continue to work on being more active with Mental Health to make a bigger impact on this group.

Employee Retention: Kirk McKinney reported that the retention survey identified four areas that DVR needs to improve: 1) Communication; 2) reward and recognition; 3) training; 4) on-boarding/orientation.

Wyoming Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs (WYARN) – Earl DeGroot

Mr. DeGroot gave an update on his progress on the WYARN. Several changes were made to the Draft Copy and information was provided on the changes. Two noted changes were in regards to Ticket to Work (TTW) and the Continuum of Services for People with Disabilities. A special emphasis of the Assessment was placed on Students in Transition.

January 31, 2007

Committee Reports:

Review Committee: Discussed the State Plan. A Draft was distributed to Council members.
Communications Committee: New Committee. Discussion was held regarding the committee taking over responsibility of press releases, advertising, DVR web site of SRC, etc.

Client Assistance Program (CAP) Report

Lee Beidleman has traveled throughout the state and met with many of the local schools. He has discussed Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) and Transition in his travels.

State Independent Living Council (SILC) Report

The Wyoming Department of Transportation has a Public Transportation Project in the works with funding from Medicaid.

Project Brain Rehabilitation and Information Network (BRAIN)

Dorothy Cronin reported that the Project BRAIN Program has hired the Crisis Management Team (CMT) Director. A contract for web hosting has been signed and a Certified Public Accountant has been hired.

Transition

Donna Thompson explained to the council information about Indicator #14.

May 23, 2007

DVR Administrator Report

Federal: Jim attended the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation conference (CSAVR), reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Title IV of WIA (Rehabilitation Act) is still pending.

Division: Jim McIntosh indicated that effort was under way to provide information to Joan Evans, Director, and Lisa Osvold, Deputy Director, to present information to the legislature for funding of 5 new Transition Counselors. They would assist the Transition Consultant. It was anticipated to have the position filled by the end of June. The Transition Consultant would coordinate services between DVR, Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) and Local Education Agencies (LEA’s). Work is being done on a MOU between WDE and DVR. DVR is also working on a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Department of Behavioral Health.

DVR is looking at moving the current computer system (Wyoming Rehabilitation and Employment System - WYRES) to a new platform that would allow it to be internet accessible. This would allow staff greater access. It is anticipated that this would be an expensive process.
There is one counselor vacancy. The counselor in Lander retired and a counselor from Gillette transferred to this office.

Employee Retention: Kirk McKinney reported on DVR’s efforts to better retain staff. A consultant was contracted with to conduct a survey. DVR had a 33% turnover rate. Since October 2006, only two people had left DVR for retirement. Retention plans are being implemented as well as improvements in training and communication.

Jim spoke to the SRC about being a more active partner with DVR. The DVR Liaison will have a greater role in assisting the SRC. The SRC was asked to take more responsibility for the Client Satisfaction Survey, Open House, and the SRC budget. It was proposed that a position of secretary/treasurer be added.

Department: Joan Evans indicated that she is open to discussing issues involving DVR. Lisa Osvold has filled in for the positions of Human Resources Director, Employment Services (ES) Administrator, Information Technology (IT)-Communications Lead, as well as her normal duties. The Governor’s Summit in Jackson is pending. It should be a good opportunity for Employment Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and businesses to work together to find a good workforce.

State Plan
DVR did not receive a good turnout at the public hearings. Suggestions were solicited on how to improve turnout. Discussion was held about expanding sites or having a phone in option.

Project BRAIN
Goals for the quarter were discussed. There were 5 goals: 1) Create 2 pilot CMT’s, define their scope, and recruit members; 2) Create a communication network; 3) Education Network; 4) Communications Tools; 5) Infrastructure.

Transition
Donna Thompson reported that there is currently a focused monitoring on the Special Education Program. They are looking closely at whether or not schools are involving other agencies in the post-secondary goals.

Wyoming DVR Monitoring Review by RSA
RSA is in Cheyenne to conduct a 107 review. Charles Sadler shared the 4 goals of the review with the SRC. 1) Improve service delivery and achievement of employment outcomes for students with disabilities. 2) Improve service delivery and the achievement of employment for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. 3) Improve Quality Assurance and Evaluation components. 4) Improve the effectiveness of the SRC and the SILC.

Information was shared regarding other SRC’s in the nation getting together to form a coalition called the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils.
Dr. Yann-Yann Shieh from RSA provided information regarding the web-based system to look at information on Wyoming and the statistics on Wyoming’s performance. The site also has the ability to compare Wyoming to other states.

May 24, 2007

Committee Reports

Executive Committee: Discussed the need to give the committees more breakout time and better define the committee responsibilities. Discussed the budget and the need for a secretary/treasurer.

Review Committee: With State Plan review complete the committee was open to new duties. Will look at developing a protocol on the Customer Satisfaction Surveys.

Communications Committee: Discussed ways to increase media coverage for SRC meetings and the Open Houses. Committee will work on gathering ideas and the best places to contact.

CAP Report

Lee Beidleman indicated that there were no significant cases. Most client issues are resolved over the phone.

SILC Report

Lee Beidleman indicated that they reviewed the 704 Form. Discussion was held on the upcoming State Plan on Independent Living (IL)and the possible change in funding between Wyoming Independent Living Rehabilitation (WILR) and Wyoming Services for Independent Living (WSIL). SILC is still working on recruiting membership from the Western section of the State.

July 31, 2007

DVR Administrator’s Report

Federal: Jim McIntosh reported that in an update from CSAVR that the Senate is looking at reauthorizing the Rehab Act. Support is there for the DVR Program and hopefully reauthorization will happen soon.

Department: A new Administrator for Employment Service has been hired. Several other positions within the Department are vacant, but the vacancies should be filled soon.

Division: Clay Dokken was hired as the Transition Consultant. Work is being done on developing a consistent approach to transition across the state. DVR is going to hold off on hiring 5 new transition counselors. Efforts will be made to more efficiently utilize existing staff.
Currently effort is being made to fill the counselor vacancies in Gillette and Rock Springs. The State Plan has been submitted to RSA and waiting approval. Work is being done on an MOU with Central Wyoming Counseling Center.

**Transition Report**

Donna Thompson reported that in the monitoring of Special Education Programs, focus has been on Indicator #13 & #14. Progress continues on the MOU between DVR and WDE. It has been changed to an Inter-Agency Agreement.

**Development of SRC Budget**

SRC has been charged with being more fiscally responsible and to establish a line item budget. Currently budget shortages are covered out of case service dollars, but this will not be allowed to continue. Jim McIntosh suggested a budget of $30,000.

**August 1, 2007**

**By-Law Changes**

The By-Laws were amended to add the office of Treasurer and define the responsibilities of the position.

**CAP Report**

Lee Beidleman reported that he gets very few disgruntled clients. He continues to be able to handle most problems over the phone. He is working closely with those involved in Transition to assist with improving these services.

**SILC Report**

SILC has gone through some strategic planning. This process was to make them more accountable to the consumers. The SILC has decided to distribute funding based on the clients served. The State Plan for Independent Living has been submitted. Membership is still an issue, but two new members have been added.

**November 13, 2007**

**DVR Administrator’s Report**

**Federal:** Nothing to report on reauthorization. There is a possibility of pulling Title IV (DVR) out to reauthorize separately, but nothing has happened yet. Transition is still a priority, but it is unknown if there will be an increase in funding to address it.

**Departmental:** The Director and Deputy Director are busy traveling the state to inform people what DWS/DVR does.
Division: DVR’s small business consultant is retiring and we are in the process of recruiting a replacement for her. Retention efforts continue to pay off. There is little room in this year’s budget. Only the basic DVR expenses will be covered. It was also determined that one of DVR’s positions is being paid out of the wrong fund of money. Efforts are being made to find a better source of funding.

CAP Report

Lee Beidleman reports that there has been some turnover in staff at Protection and Advocacy (P&A). The majority of P&A cases are education cases, at the State Hospital and the Training School. Lee presented information on the CAP annual report.

SILC

Dorothy Cronin reported that there is still a great deal of discussion regarding the new funding formula. Some changes were requested in the State Plan for Independent Living. RSA did conduct a review of WSIL. It was noted that the same issues identified 11 years ago are still present today.

Committee Reports

Executive: Future events were discussed and how to coordinate them in the budget. Two applications for membership were received and it was determined to accept Raphael Metcalf. The other applicant was informed that he is application will be retained in case an opening occurs.

Communications: Duties were assigned to committee members.

Excerpts from the SRC’s 2007 Annual Report

July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007

The responsibilities of the SRC are defined in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The SRC is authorized to review, analyze and advise the Wyoming DVR on the performance of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program. In partnership with DVR, the SRC develops and reviews state goals and priorities, evaluates the effectiveness of the VR program, assists in the preparation of the State Plan, and reviews customer satisfaction.

Members are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor, and appointments 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 VR services; medical professions; state educational agencies; and representatives of business, industry and labor.

The SRC meets on a quarterly basis. SRC meeting locations and times are published prior to each meeting in the statewide Casper Star-Tribune newspaper. Future meeting locations,
times and minutes from past meetings are posted at the following web site: http://wyomingworkforce.org/aboutus/partners_assoc_src.aspx or by calling the current SRC Chairperson, Shannon Bodin.

The SRC is dedicated to ensuring that Wyoming residents with disabilities receive effective services by conducting and reviewing a needs assessment survey; reviewing programs and policies being implemented; evaluating the SRC’s Client Satisfaction Surveys, then contacting those surveyed who indicate a desire to discuss concerns regarding their individual VR experience with an SRC representative; and by working in cooperation with such groups as the Wyoming DVR, Wyoming SILC, Parent Training and Information Center, CAP, as well as other agencies to implement a proactive approach for the betterment of persons with disabilities.

Message from Shannon Bodin, Chairperson:
The SRC and DVR are continually assessing and enhancing their relationship in an effort to implement improvements that the state’s citizens with disabilities deserve. As one of the SRC members that is a past recipient of VR services, I have a special empathy for those facing what can often seem like a daunting experience.

We will continue to forge strong bonds with other partners and service providers across the state in an effort to guarantee quality and dignified services to those with disabilities. Another exciting development in this effort is the formation of a National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils. There is much information-sharing and learning that will be taking place as a result of this unification.

The Wyoming SRC is currently composed of three Committees, each with the functions described below.

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 DVR. 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 DVR creates connections between DVR 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 (BLN), 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 State’s 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)(1)

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
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 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 the 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 SRC and in DVR staff training events.

C. Northern Arapaho Business Council

DVR and the Northern Arapaho Tribal Council are in the early stages of developing an MOU concerning rehabilitation services for Native Americans. DVR staff will provide educational/training support to staff of the Northern Arapaho Vocational Rehabilitation (NAVR) program and participate on the NAVR Advisory Council. NAVR staff will participate on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and in DVR staff training events.
D. **Business Enterprise Program (BEP)**

The 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, Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP), 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.

E. **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 (TRS) (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 (text telephone), 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 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, WDE outreach consultants, or DVR counselors.

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

DVR continues to have an MOU with 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.) 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.

G. 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)
- Community Rehabilitation Programs, statewide
- Region VIII Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RCEP)
- Region VIII Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (CRP-RCEP)
- Centers for Independent Living
• Protection and Advocacy, the Client Assistance Program
• Eastern Wyoming College
• Casper College
• Wyoming Epilepsy Association
• Western Wyoming Community College
• Wyoming Work Incentives, Planning and Assistance
• Fred Pryor Seminars
• National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
• State of Wyoming, Department of Administration and Information
• Department of Workforce Services partners
• Laramie County Community College
• Montana State University – Billings
• Utah State University
• Wright State University – Dayton, OH.
• Texas Tech University
• Sheridan (WY) College
• National Rehabilitation Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Materials
Attachment 4.8(b)(2)

Cooperation and Coordination With Other Agencies and Other Entities

(2) Coordination with Education Officials
4.8(b)(2)  Coordination with Education Officials

Wyoming DVR is continuing its commitment to transition services by rewriting the MOU with WDE.

DVR has continued support of 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 WDE 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 WIA, representatives from an IL Agency, representatives from Higher Education or vocational programs, Community Rehabilitation Service Providers, advocates and other local supports. MentorABILITY (Mentor Ability) 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 BLN, 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 Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for each student with a disability determined to be eligible for VR 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 of Wyoming DVR
- 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 established a new Transition Consultant position. The primary responsibilities
of this position are to coordinate with local, state and federal education officials on improving
the process for students in transition. The Transition Consultant is a resource on issues
surrounding transition, provides training to staff and provides a consistent statewide message
from DVR to the LEA’s.

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, WILR, WSIL, Centrum for Disability Services, and CreateAbility
Concepts in providing services to clients.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>OBJECTIVE</strong></th>
<th><strong>METHODS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve and expand transition services to include additional school districts.</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 Acquired Brain Injury (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 Mentor Ability program in Laramie, Sweetwater, Uinta and Fremont Counties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work cooperatively with the WDE on expanding the transition program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Update cooperative agreements with the WDE and LEA’s 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 DVR transition policies to increase the continuity and consistency of services statewide.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DVR 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.
Attachment 4.8(b)(3)

Cooperation and Coordination With Other Agencies and Other Entities

(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers
Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

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 (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 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:

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 (MHC) from which DVR purchases services must be certified by the Division of Behavioral Health.

2006 Needs Assessment

The most recent WYARN was conducted in 2006 and the report was received in February of 2007. The WYARN emphasized three areas: ABI, SPMI, and students in transition from school to work. Consequently, the report has few recommendations directed specifically to cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

However, Primary Finding #1 of the WYARN report identified opportunities for improvement. The finding speaks to the “Continuum of Services necessary for an individual to obtain a job and keep it. Individuals with disabilities typically require the services of diverse
programs, many of which are not vocationally oriented. Therefore, it is imperative 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 be more involved with information exchange. DVR needs to develop more interagency agreements.”

DVR and the Central Wyoming Counseling Center have been negotiating an MOU and hope to have it completed this year. It may become a template for agreements with other mental health providers around the state.

A member of the Rehabilitation Service Providers organization, which consists of the Chief Executive Officer’s (CEO’s) of the community rehabilitation programs in Wyoming, has become an SRC member and participates in SRC meetings. This has enhanced communication with the CRP’s statewide.
Attachment 4.8(b)(4)

Cooperation and Coordination With Other Agencies and Other Entities

(4) 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, MHC’s, the Governor's Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities, State and local education programs, Social Security employment incentives including TTW programs, training programs under WIA, and the employer community represented by the WBLN.

DVR completed a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Mental Health Substance Abuse Services Division in September 2007. The purpose of the MOU is to enhance the working relationship between the Divisions in order to provide more effective services to individuals with disabilities in compliance with Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This includes increased collaboration in the evaluation, planning and implementation of supported employment services for persons with SPMI and transition age youth. Joint training on a bi-annual basis will focus on these issues, among others.

An MOU is being negotiated with Central Wyoming Counseling Center. This agreement requires joint staff training, and specifies procedures for planning and implementing supported employment services to the SPMI population.
<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>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve acquired brain injury services statewide via the 5 year Project BRAIN. 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>
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<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 CRP’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop consistent statewide policy interpretation for field staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educate school district special education staff regarding the use of supported employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop cooperative agreements with Mental Health (MH) service providers to encourage increased use of supported employment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>DVR will actively support programs that provide training to expand and improve job coaching services statewide.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The DVR transition coordinator will enhance School district referrals to DVR via teacher education about the availability of DWS employment services.</td>
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</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 Wyoming DVR.
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 SRC 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. The following chart shows the number of counselors employed since 2002, the number of clients for each year, and the average number of clients per counselor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counselors</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Clients</td>
<td>4016</td>
<td>4155</td>
<td>4180</td>
<td>3954</td>
<td>3759</td>
<td>4007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Number of Clients per Counselor</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The number and types of personnel that are employed by DVR in the provision of VR services are shown below:

Counselors 29  
Area Consultants 5  
Assistants 23  
Administrators 4  
Consultants 7  
Fiscal 4  

**Total** 72

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 and Wright State University as an optional location for distance education. All five programs are Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) certified.

We currently have two (2) counselors working on their master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling at Utah State University, and three (3) 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. Twelve staff members have the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credentials and one individual is preparing to sit for the exam.

**Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel**

Wyoming DVR recruits VR 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 been actively posting current vacancy...
notices with the three universities. This is in addition to placing ads in local and regional newspapers, with DWS, and the Wyoming Job Network (Wyoming at Work). Wyoming DVR, in accordance with the ADA, 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 thirteen counselors who meet or exceed the CSPD requirements. Of the remaining staff that do not meet the CSPD requirements, thirteen 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 2006, use of Retention 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 or 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 web cam technology.

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 four percent pay raise for state employees effective July 1, 2008. Periodically, pay scales are adjusted to be more in line with the current employment market rates.

Last 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 is currently in the process of reviewing the position classification for our Rehabilitation Counselors. The Personnel Division at the Wyoming Department of A&I is preparing to conduct a position survey to determine if the Rehabilitation Counselor is classified and being compensated appropriately for the duties and the knowledge that is required in the position.

**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 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 2006, retention 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>CRC</th>
<th>Master’s Degree</th>
<th>BA/BS</th>
<th>Total Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation Counselors</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29</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>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</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 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 VR Counseling, all have been advised and encouraged to acquire the designation of a CRC 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 A&I, as well as numerous private vendors. Training offered at the DVR in-service has included Ethics, Workers’ Compensation, Independent Living, Transition, Social Security Benefits and Work Incentives. 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.

TTW Update

Ongoing training is held throughout Wyoming on TTW and other Social Security issues. The training was presented by a partnership of the Work Incentives and Assistance (WyWIPA), 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 (GPCDD); the ADA; SE (Supported Employment); Staff Training, Quality Assurance (QA); Transition from School to Work; TRS; Deaf Services; BEP; 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 staff member is currently undergoing training to more effectively communicate with our Spanish speaking clients. 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 WDE, 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 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

An MOU with WDE 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 AT to VR clients who are in school. This agreement specifies joint training on AT, 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. Thirteen percent of the staff have disabilities and sixteen percent are over the age of 60. The State of Wyoming Personnel System follows affirmative action requirements and assures that VR maintains appropriate hiring procedures.
Attachment 4.11

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
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.
Attachment 4.11(b)

Annual Estimates of Individuals To Be Served and Costs of Services
4.11(b)  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, 2007 was 522,830.

**Consolidated Disability and Employment Data, 2000 Census**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2000 Census, Summary File F3</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total persons (civilian, non-institutionalized population)</td>
<td>493,782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, Age 16 – 64</td>
<td>315,859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of population aged 16 – 64</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 16 – 64 with a work disability</td>
<td>30,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total persons aged 16 – 64</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>20,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Employed</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>10,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Unemployed</td>
<td>34.1%</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>Vocational 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&quot; – 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 2009 Projections:**

1. Number of eligible individuals who will receive services under
   
   a. General Rehabilitation Program (Title I, Part B): 3,700
   
   b. Supported Employment Program (Title VI, Part B): 660

   **Note:** Approximately 660 individuals will be served in (SE), but only 324 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: $10,145,400
Attachment 4.11(c)(1)

Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports

(c)(1) State’s Goals and Priorities
4.11(c)(1)  State’s Goals and Priorities

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

1. Successfully rehabilitate 700 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 continue to train staff on requirements for high quality successful closures, through September 30, 2009.

C. Strengthen the new BLN in Buffalo/Sheridan through June 30, 2009, 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 (SBDF) and other resources for starting a small business.

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

Strategies:

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

B. DVR staff will work with CRP’s to increase referral of appropriate clients to DVR for SE services by 5% during Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2009.

C. DVR staff will continue to develop and implement MOU’s with community mental health organizations.

D. DVR and the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division will implement joint staff training as outlined in the MOU.

E. Strategies C and D (Goal 1, above) will also support this goal.
3. Meet or exceed all RSA Performance Standards and Indicators for FFY 2009.

   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 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 DWS 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 retention 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. 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.

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

4. 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. DVR’s Transition Consultant will attend all meetings of the WDE Transition Council.

B. The WDE IDEA Coordinator will continue as a member of the SRC and report activities to the SRC at their quarterly meetings.

C. Identify staff who will become full time Transition Counselors for their Regions.

Attachment 4.11(c)(1): Page 3 of 9
Fiscal Year 2009
D. Implement and evaluate transition policies through September 30, 2009.

E. Continue to monitor the numbers of Transition students referred to DVR by the LEA’s 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 Brain Injury Association of Wyoming (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 interagency agreements with local MH providers to support the expansion of successful employment models for individuals with SPMI, by September 30, 2009.

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

C. 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 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 Department Of Labor 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 and NAVR Projects 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. 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 established evaluation standards and performance indicators for the State VR program. The standards and indicators follow with Wyoming DVR’s results for FFY 2007 (10/01/06 – 09/30/07). Results have not been verified by RSA.

**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 (670)
   Actual Performance: 696

   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: 67.7%

   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 BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

   Required Performance Level: 72.6%
   Actual Performance: 98.0%

   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: 74.6%
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 (BLS) report “State Average Annual Pay” for the most recent available year).

Required Performance Level: .52 (ratio)
Actual Performance: .57

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: 63.8

**Evaluation Standard 2** – Equal Access to Services. A 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: .88

**Factors that may affect performance:**

**Performance Indicator 1.1:** From December 2006 to December 2007, Wyoming added 9500 jobs for an over-the-year growth rate of 3.4%. The state’s unemployment rate was 3.5%. In contrast the U.S. unemployment rate was 4.8% and the U.S. job growth stood at 0.9%. 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: Wyoming’s minimum wage increased from $5.15 per hour to $5.85 per hour in July 2007, and will increase again to $6.55 per hour in July 2008. While this increase in minimum wage is expected to lower our results on this performance indicator, we expect that the required performance level will be met.

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 BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. The latest data available from BLS is from the third quarter of 2007 and is 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:

- 2002: $13.92
- 2003: $14.37
- 2004: $15.00
- 2005: $15.98
- 2006: $17.65
- 2007: $18.35 (preliminary data for third quarter)

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 may decline in the future. There are several reasons: 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 2007), 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.
Attachment 4.11(c)(4)

Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds
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 CRPs statewide. DVR estimates that approximately $757,020 will be expended on Supported Employment services in FFY 2009. Funding sources include: $300,000 in Section 622 funds, supplemented with $457,020 from Title I (Section 110) funds.

Approximately 660 individuals will be served in Supported Employment, but only 324 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.

5. Improved services to the SPMI population will be achieved by implementing joint training with the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division.

6. Completion and implementation of the MOU with the Central Wyoming Counseling Center will improve supported employment services to the SPMI population.

Refer to Attachment 6.3 for additional information on Supported Employment Services.
Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports

(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;
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:

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 VR services available to individuals with the most significant disabilities.

The following activities are being considered for I&E funding in FY 2009:

A. In 2009, DVR anticipates providing continued financial assistance for further expansion of the 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 remain at $400,000 in 2009, with the establishment of a new BLN in Buffalo/Sheridan.

Estimated Cost: $400,000

B. Based on recommendations included in the 2003 and 2006 Needs Assessments, DVR will continue to 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 SRC. 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 SILC; allowable expenditures may include travel, interpreters, and registration fees.

Estimated Cost: $10,000
Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports

(d) State’s Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities:
(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.
One representative from DVR serves on the RFEVR Advisory Council.

The Northern Arapaho Vocational Rehabilitation (NAVR) program is currently in the second cycle of the Federal Grant. This project focuses on the rehabilitation of Northern Arapaho tribal members on or near the Wind River Reservation. One representative from VR will participate on the NAVR Advisory Board.

**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 TTY 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 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division to support the expansion of successful employment models for individuals with SPMI.
**Objective:** Continue to develop Supported Employment (SE) services with MH organizations on a statewide basis.

**Method:** Contacts with MHCs 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:** Provide support for Project BRAIN.

**Methods:** Maintain crisis management teams (CMT’s) statewide.

- Invite all CRP personnel involved with ABI Services to Project BRAIN training as available throughout the 5 year Project term.

- Increase availability and scope of services for individuals with ABI as opportunities evolve via Project BRAIN.

- Integrate CMT services into hospital operations statewide.

- Create a statewide ABI communications network via new and improved features of the ABI website.

- Develop statewide ABI education network via distribution of the training catalogue prepared by Project BRAIN in year one.

- Task Force meetings established in year one will continue quarterly.

- Establish CMT meetings two times yearly to evaluate performance and upgrade protocols as needed.
Students in Transition from School to Work

Objective: Strengthen and improve the working relationship with WDE.

Methods: Continue to have DVR represented on the WDE Transition Council and work to improve timely referrals.

Continue to involve the WDE in SRC activities and meetings.

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

DVR’s Transition Consultant will work with the school districts, WDE, and DVR staff statewide.

Identify regional Transition Counselors in regions that can support them.

DVR will meet with LEA’s to identify best practice policy in the coordination of services between local school districts and DVR field offices.

Objective: Encourage LEA’s to make timely referrals to DVR.

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

Develop procedures with LEA’s to help facilitate more timely exchange of information regarding potential Transition student referrals.

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.
4.11(d)  State's Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities:

(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

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 online at [www.boomersandbusiness.com](http://www.boomersandbusiness.com))
  - Develop a reference manual for older workers (is available online at [www.boomersandbusiness.com](http://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.
Attachment 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
A. Actions taken in support of DVR’s Goals and Priorities identified in the previous State Plan:

1. Successfully rehabilitate 672 or more individuals with disabilities.

   In Federal Fiscal Year 2007, 696 clients were vocationally rehabilitated, including 176 supported employment clients. DVR exceeded the goal for successful rehabilitations by 24.

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

   DVR was not successful in achieving its goal of 205 SE clients becoming vocationally rehabilitated; 176 SE clients were rehabilitated.

3. Meet or exceed all RSA Performance Standards and Indicators FFY 2008.

   DVR exceeded all RSA performance standards and indicators for FFY 2007, and we are currently meeting all standards for FFY 2008.

4. Continue staff recruitment, development and retention.

   Staff recruitment, development and retention efforts continued successfully. Training plans were renamed retention plans which include not only training but other employee issues to improve retention. All strategies were implemented and completed for recruitment and staff development.

   Staff retention:
   In calendar year 2006 4 assistants, 10 counselors and an area manager left. In calendar year 2007 2 assistants left (one of the two retired), 4 counselors left (one retired and one was promoted). This is a reduction in turnover from 28% to 6%, excluding retirement loss.

   All planned strategies for retention were completed. The State of Wyoming is constructing a new employee compensation plan which needs to be completed before an advanced level counselor position for counselors with CRC credentials can be completed.

5. Expand Transition services statewide, for students with disabilities who will be exiting the school system and entering the workforce or post-secondary training.
A transition consultant was hired June 25, 2007. All strategies are being met with one exception: The governor has insisted that no new positions be granted in this biennium; our request for 5 new Transition Counselor positions was denied.

Transition policies were developed and implemented statewide that will result in better consistency serving students transitioning from school to work.

The MOU between DVR and WDE was updated and signed by all parties.

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

The number of ABI cases increased by 12% from FFY 06 to FFY 07, and the number successfully rehabilitated increased by 22%. Project BRAIN is meeting its objectives.

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

DVR completed an MOU with the Department of Health, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division in September 2007. The purpose of the MOU is to enhance the working relationship between the Divisions in order to provide more effective services to individuals with disabilities in compliance with Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This includes increased collaboration in the evaluation, planning and implementation of supported employment services for persons with SPMI and transition age youth. Joint training on a bi-annual basis will focus on these issues, among others.

An MOU is being negotiated with Central Wyoming Counseling Center. This agreement requires joint staff training, specifies procedures for planning and implementing supported employment services to the SPMI population.

The goal of increasing the number of SPMI clients served by 20 was exceeded. The number served was increased by 74. The goal of increasing the number of successful employment outcomes of SPMI clients by 10 was exceeded. 23 more SPMI clients than last FFY were rehabilitated.

8. Increase collaboration with Federal and state agencies, non-profits and other organizations to build stronger relationships.

Completion of the six strategies developed for this goal is still in progress. (A) The SRC and SILC have scheduled a joint meeting for August 2008. (B) DVR’s Assistant Administrator for Field Services has exchanged
information and provided feedback to the Wyoming Veteran’s Advocacy Program, and (C) DVR Counselors maintain contact with the two VA Centers as needed. (D) The DVR Administrator continues to attend the RFEVR Advisory Council meetings, and DVR has provided training and technical assistance to the Project on several occasions. (E) The DVR Administrator was successful in establishing a working relationship with the new director of the Northern Arapaho VR Project, and is working towards development of an MOU with this Project. (F) The Job Corps Center in Riverton is still scheduled to begin operations in 2010, but DVR has not had any formal communication with the Center at this time.

B. Innovation and Expansion Activities:

The following activities were identified in last year’s State Plan for I&E funding (FY 2008). Actual expenditures are for the time period October 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007.

1. In 2008, DVR anticipates providing continued financial assistance for further expansion of the 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
   Expenditures: $129,484

   Report of Progress: The plan for expansion of the WBLN into Casper was postponed due to lack of local support for the endeavor. Efforts were refocused to the Buffalo and Sheridan communities. These communities have joined behind the new development activities now taking place there. Accomplishments include:

   • Meetings with City Councils and County Commissioners to present formal proposals;
   • Meetings with businesses to develop steering committees and choose members;
   • Partnership development meetings with the local Chambers of Commerce;
   • The labor shortage in both Sheridan and Buffalo is of a critical nature; thus, the new WBLN will provide valuable options for how to develop more qualified workers;
   • The processes to hire a Sheridan/Buffalo BLN director are underway.
2. Based on recommendations included in the 2003 and 2006 Needs Assessment, 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
Expenditures: $18,354

Report of Progress:

Create Crisis Management Teams (CMT)

In the first quarter of 2008 a new training catalogue was developed to accommodate implementation of various modules to use for the establishment of CMT protocols in hospitals. In addition, CMT leaders were introduced to the basics of personal futures planning.

Create Communication Network

Development of the new ABI website continued with the addition of new sources of information and assistance for ABI survivors and their families. The quarterly newsletter reaches 1800 people in Wyoming. More than 800 individuals receive reminder postcards about support group meetings each month and attendance at support groups is increasing.

Develop Education Network

Training sessions are being held for the following groups: VA, Department of Corrections, public schools, day care centers, nursing homes, and various service providers. The use of information booths at veterans’ events, conferences, and health fairs has been increasing.

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

Estimated Cost: $30,000
Expenditures: $4,078

Report of Progress: DVR continued funding support for the SRC. Expenditures included travel, stipends, advertising, supplies, meeting room rental, interpreters, and facilitation services. The SRC meets quarterly.
4. Funding support for the SILC: Allowable expenditures may include travel, interpreters, and registration fees.

Estimated Cost: $5,000
Expenditures: $0.00

Report of Progress: Funding support for the SILC continues. Allowable expenditures included travel, interpreters, and registration fees. DVR continued to provide oversight and direction to the SILC.
Attachment 6.3

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

CRPs providing SE 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 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services 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 SE services delivered through CRPs and MHCs.

SE 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.

SE 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.
SE 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 SE 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. SE coordinators market supported employment to employers in their communities;

5. Employers are prominently involved in SE 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 ABI;

7. The 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;

8. The Wyoming Centrum for Disability Services was created in 1998 at Central Wyoming Community College 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; and

9. DVR completed an MOU with the Department of Health, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division in September 2007. The purpose of the MOU is to enhance the working relationship between the Divisions in order to provide more effective services to individuals with disabilities in compliance with Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This includes increased collaboration in the evaluation, planning and implementation of SE services for persons with SPMI and transition age youth. Joint training on a bi-annual basis will focus on these issues, among others.