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Parent Focus

February 2007

Severe Disabilities Study Results Released to the Public

By *Charlie Taylor, Central Office*

After much anticipation, the Severe Disabilities Study was released on Nov. 30, 2006. This news was immediately shared with staff and parents; they were informed how to access the study from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Web site.

Many people were eager to learn how the study portrays State Schools and how educational services are being provided to students with severe disabilities in Missouri and throughout the nation. I was very pleased to see that this study recognizes the important role played by State Schools in Missouri's educational system. Contrary to the fears of some, the study does not contain anything that could be viewed as calling into question the need for the continued existence of State Schools.

Until the study was released, there was a fairly high level of speculation and concern about the outcome and how the results might be used. Greater levels of anxiety were generated by several newspapers throughout the state that printed articles describing the study and quoting individuals who expressed fear that the study would be used as justification to eliminate State Schools.

Now that the study is out, the general conclusion is that it reflects favorably on State Schools. The level of apprehension of most people has been diminished.

Fears were further alleviated by statements made by the Commissioner of Education, Dr. D. Kent King. In a letter sent to all public school administrators, Dr. King informed the administrators about the study and made comments on it. "We will use the results of this study as we continue to seek ways to improve the quality and efficiency of services for children with severe disabilities, both within the State Schools program and in other settings," he said. Dr. King also said, "There has been no proposal, by anybody, to close the State Schools for Severely Handicapped."

The Severe Disabilities Study contains many facts and statements that justify our pride in the important role played by State Schools in educating students with severe disabilities. One of the most striking parts of the study was a quote from one of our parents: "We tried mainstreaming our daughter in kindergarten and first grade and it just didn't work. She pretty much just shut down. So we transferred her to the state school and within a couple of weeks she lit up like a Christmas tree. She went from being the least able child to the queen."

Inspiring stories like this don't happen by accident. It takes the dedication of a group of educators and a family working together to bring about this type of change. I encourage everyone to work toward making this type of positive transformation happen in the lives of all our students.

Overview of the Severe Disabilities Study

In November 2005, the Missouri State Government Review Commission recommended that a study be conducted to examine best practices around the country for improving the delivery of services to severely disabled children.

Acting on this recommendation, Gov. Matt Blunt directed the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to conduct such a study. DESE awarded a contract for the project to LAN Resources. During fall 2006, a great deal of time and effort was spent in providing the information needed by this group to conduct the study. A number of our staff members and parents provided input by participating in surveys and focus groups.

LAN Resources investigated and obtained answers to eight important questions. Here are the answers they found to the questions that are of the most interest to parents:

- **Why do districts serve some students with severe disabilities and refer others to State Schools?** The majority of local school districts surveyed indicate a philosophy of serving students at the local level when possible. Students served by State Schools tend to be older, have more behavioral issues and be more medically fragile. Referrals to State Schools are influenced by parental desires. ➔

Parent Focus

February 2007

State Schools for
Severely Handicapped
P.O. Box 480
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480

Charlie Taylor,
Superintendent



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Information concerning other available resources, programs, etc., is not to be construed as an endorsement by State Schools for Severely Handicapped for any specific product, organization, or philosophy.

- **What are the costs of providing education to severely disabled students in Missouri?**
There are differences in the annual cost of educating students with severe disabilities when comparing various agencies. Local districts in Missouri that serve students with severe disabilities spend an average of \$24,500 per student. St. Louis County Special School District, which serves 454 students, spends \$34,448 per student. State Schools spends \$30,667 per student. The overall per student cost for public school districts ranges from a low of \$12,943 to a high of \$44,080.
- **What are the opportunities for receiving integration services?**
Students in local districts receive the most integration, followed by students in cooperatives. Students in State Schools receive the least amount of integration. The study revealed that 18 percent of students in State Schools receive integration opportunities on a weekly basis; 11 percent are integrated for less than 30 minutes per week. It was reported that the low level of integration at State Schools occurs due to a variety of parental preferences such as concern about student ridicule, transportation time and a perceived lack of overall value to their children's education. Parents of students in State Schools stated they believe the current amount of integration is just right.
- **Is Missouri's current structure for providing education to students with severe disabilities beneficial to students and families?**
The various stakeholder groups believe Missouri's current administrative structures and services for students with severe disabilities are beneficial.

Parent satisfaction

As part of the study, parents were asked for information on their level of satisfaction with various aspects of the educational programs provided to their children. The following statistics describe the relative satisfaction of parents who have children attending State Schools. In almost all cases, these measures of parental satisfaction are higher than those of parents who have children attending a local school district or another type of educational agency.

Some of the statistics measuring parental satisfaction are:

- Parents satisfied with the overall program = 83 percent
- Parents satisfied with the special education services provided = 86 percent
- Parents satisfied with the therapies provided for their child = 80 percent
- Parents felt they were respected in the planning and implementation of the IEP process = 88 percent
- Parents felt their concerns were dealt with promptly and professionally = 81 percent
- Parents felt the staff were appropriately trained to provide the required services = 83 percent

Best practices

The study contained several examples of educational practices that are held up as being effective for students with severe disabilities. Many of these practices have been an integral part of the State Schools program for some time. Some of the best practices cited in the study are:

- **Teaching functional daily living skills and communication skills** – Daily living skills and communication skills are embedded within the State Schools curriculum, which was developed specifically for students who have significant cognitive disabilities. This curriculum is linked to the Missouri Show-Me Standards and contains Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and Alternate Performance Indicators (APIs), which are required in the MAP-A.
- **Functional communication** – The study outlined the importance of functional communication including augmentative and alternative communication devices. For many years, State Schools has made an expansive library of more than 50 augmentative and alternative communication devices available for student learning and communication assessment needs.
- **Community-based instruction** – The study addressed community-based instruction planned around vocational-skills development. Community-based instruction has been an integral component of State Schools' educational programs since the mid-1980s. Supportive employment programs, sheltered workshop training and day activity center preparation are currently available for students (when deemed appropriate by the IEP team) as part of transition planning.
- **Integrated therapy** – Integrated therapy within the classroom was cited as a best practice as opposed to "pull-out" therapies. Realizing the importance of collaboration between therapists and teachers, State Schools implemented an integrated-therapy philosophy of related services many years ago.

(The study is available for review at <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/EffectivePractices/sdstudy.pdf>.)

Expanding Opportunities: Cody's Story

By Stephanie Brooks, Central Office

Knitting is not something typically associated with boys or with students who attend State Schools. But on Jan. 9, Cody Ernst, a 12-year-old who attends H. Kenneth Kirchner State School in Jefferson City, was featured on the evening news knitting a blue and purple scarf.

Cody lives in Eugene with his parents and eight siblings. He is nonverbal and is learning sign language to help him communicate with others. Being on television came about after a church member saw Cody knitting at church and contacted KOMU, an NBC station serving Columbia and surrounding areas in mid-Missouri. News anchor Sarah Hill decided to include Cody in her ongoing "Sarah's Stories" series.

His parents, Micah and Claudia Ernst, and his teacher, Kay Brejcha, were interviewed. Viewers watched Cody knit and saw examples of other items that he regularly constructs out of yarn, pipe cleaners, twist ties and other materials that can be bent or woven. All of Cody's creations are perfectly proportional. Making and holding these objects fulfills a sensory need for Cody and has a calming effect on him. He now wears the first scarf to school.

Back in November, Claudia Ernst was knitting Christmas gifts while Cody watched her intently. Eventually, she cast on some stitches for him and handed over the needles and yarn. He was able to knit after about 10 minutes of instruction from her. Cody already knew how to finger weave from watching his sisters. He still relies on someone to cast on stitches for him, but he has learned to cast off, and he does the basic knit stitch. Cody is very careful with his work and generally does not drop stitches. He now knits with metal needles and whatever yarn is available at home; it is not clear whether he has any color preferences on the yarn he uses.

Claudia Ernst thinks that "knitting broadens his horizons." It gives Cody a leisure activity at home that could be used at school as a reinforcement activity.

The family is not sure



Cody Ernst knits at H. Kenneth Kirchner State School

that Cody understands he is making scarves. At school, teachers lay the completed blue and purple scarf next to his current knitting to see if he is able to make the connection that the next item will also be a scarf.

Cody has extremely good hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills. At home he builds Lego creations that move and is interested in a new construction set. He can also complete 550-piece puzzles. He recently watched family members latch hook a rug, and his parents think he might be able to learn that skill as well. Cody's abilities in these areas are called splinter skills, meaning he excels at certain activities that are uncommon for individuals with his level of development.

Cody's story is an example of what happens when a child is encouraged to explore his or her natural interests and abilities. Rather than saying, "He can't do that," Cody's family was willing to say, "Let's see what happens." It is important that we all remain open to the potential that lies within each of our students.

(Watch Cody's story at <http://www.komu.com>; select "Art with No Limitations" under Sarah's Stories.)



Deciding on IEP Goals and Benchmarks

By Merv Blunt, Central Office

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) team develops a student's IEP goals for the coming year. When deciding what goals are to be taught, it is necessary to prioritize the essential skills the student needs in order to be successful after graduation. Sometimes, IEP team members might have different views on the potential goals. The team should evaluate the suggested goals based on the following criteria. Then, members can determine which goals have the highest priority and must be included in the IEP.

Priority criteria

- **Essential skill** – First, the IEP team should check the State Schools curriculum to see if the suggested goal is identified as an essential skill for students attending State Schools. The focus of the curriculum is skill-based, not activity-based.

- **Building on a student's previous knowledge and skills** – A student is typically more successful at accomplishing an activity if the skills are taught individually and then put together. This method is preferable to trying to teach all the skills needed for an activity at once.

For example, if the IEP team selects a long-term goal of the student brushing his or her own teeth, this activity involves many different skills. The teaching staff would complete a task analysis of all the steps involved in brushing teeth and would advise the IEP team on the step or skill the student is most likely able to achieve. When the student has mastered that skill, the IEP team would select another skill to master, until the student has learned all of the steps. If the IEP team selects the goal of brushing the front teeth and the student successfully learns to do so, an appropriate goal for the next year might be brushing the back teeth and the front teeth. Any skill that is necessary to achieve a long-term goal will have a high priority.

- **The skill has multiple applications and may be practiced in many different locations** – Before a student can be successful at brushing teeth, he or she needs to learn how to grasp items – in this case, a toothbrush. But, grasping is regularly used in other activities: picking up a cup or glass, using a spoon or fork, holding a marker or paintbrush, pulling up pants or putting on a cap, etc. Learning to grasp has many applications, which gives this goal a high priority since the student could use this skill in so many areas at home, in the community and at school.

Another factor in favor of skills with multiple applications is that by having many opportunities to practice the skill, the student will learn it more quickly. Learning skills of universal applicability, such as grasping, reaching, making choices and taking turns, will take

precedence over a skill with limited application, such as learning to use a calculator or learning to count to 10 by rote.

- **The amount of time necessary to teach the skill** – If teaching a skill will take several years, the IEP team must weigh the importance of achieving that skill as compared to using that time to teach several other skills that could be easier to master. If the IEP team determines that a skill is vital for a student to function as an adult, the team must be willing to allocate a significant time period toward achieving that skill.

For example, the IEP team might determine that the most likely placement for a student after graduation is attending a day activity center. This student is currently 8 years old and cannot tolerate being in the classroom with other students. The IEP team determines that she needs to start becoming more comfortable around other people. Currently, she sits in a secluded part of the classroom, separated from the others by furniture. Over the course of the next five or six years, staff will move her closer to the main part of the room and will gradually introduce her to sitting next to other students for limited amounts of time. The intended outcome is that this student will be relaxed around others by the time she is in her mid-teens.

- **The skill is vital** – The article "Preparing Students for Postsecondary Life" lists various skills that are expected of graduates who attend day activity centers. (*This article can be found on the facing page.*) The IEP team must focus on skills that will be vital for students at these centers or other postsecondary settings.

As an example, the ability to communicate wants and needs is expected in day activity centers and all types of employment. The IEP team must decide how the student will communicate since it is vital for students to learn at least one way that they can be understood by others. For students who can speak, communication skills might include learning to speak more clearly, responding to questions, expressing needs and increasing vocabulary.

However, many students at State Schools are nonverbal, and there is no realistic expectation that they will ever become verbal. For these students, the IEP team must select one or more adaptations for communication, and the student needs to learn how to use that choice. Adaptations might include using alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) devices, using laminated communication sheets/cards/booklets, learning sign language or developing consistent gestures (blinking, moving eyes, smiling, moving head) to indicate yes and no and communicate needs.

Asking questions at the IEP meeting

Here are a few basic questions that parents can ask during an IEP meeting to get a better understanding of why a specific skill is or is not a priority.

1. Why is this an essential skill for my child?

2. How will my child use this skill after graduation?

3. What other activities utilize this skill?

4. What skills does my child possess that will help to develop the new skill?

5. Is this skill vital for postsecondary life?

6. What adaptations exist to help my child achieve this skill?

Preparing Students for Postsecondary Life

By Merv Blunt, Central Office

For students to be successful after graduation from State Schools, they need to accomplish the essential skills necessary for a day activity center, sheltered workshop, residential facility or home.

Staff at State Schools completed several projects in the past year to make sure that students are better prepared for life after graduation. The first project was the completion of a curriculum specifically for students with severe disabilities in Missouri. (See the article below.) Another project was to implement the authentic learning initiative, which focuses on teaching skills that are essential for success after graduation.

To reinforce the authentic learning initiative, the building administrators, supervisors for instruction and home school coordinators visited day activity centers, sheltered workshops and residential facilities. During these visits, they observed the

typical activities and the related necessary skills. The results were sent to Central Office and compiled into an overview of the skills needed at facilities throughout Missouri. Although the information gathered was only a sample of the skills needed at each facility, the results have provided valuable information for the teaching staff at the schools and will inform the choices of future Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals.

The following table indicates the top five skills observed at day activity centers in the areas of communication, social interaction, daily living and leisure. Even though this is just a snapshot of what was observed by staff, it is apparent that all of these skills would be appropriate for State Schools' students in any postsecondary setting.

When the IEP team is deciding on goals, be aware of the specific skills required by the postsecondary options available to your child.

	Communication	Social Interaction	Daily Living	Leisure
1	Communicating needs and wants	Demonstrating appropriate interactions/behavior	Feeding self	Working on crafts
2	Choice-making	Engaging in small-group and individual activities	Being toilet trained	Playing card and board games
3	Listening	Cooperating with staff and peers	Washing hands	Playing bingo
4	Following directions	Willingness to travel to different locations in the community	Eating with a group	Engaging in solitary activities: music, books, TV, puzzles, magazines
5	Asking for help	Taking turns	Dressing self	Exercising: walking, swimming, dancing

Revised Curriculum Guide

By Karen Wells, Central Office

On March 1, State Schools will begin using a revised curriculum in all schools. This curriculum includes some of the same information as the 2005-06 curriculum. However, it also contains additional information, many new uses for the curriculum, and it is presented in a slightly different format. The revised curriculum continues to list skills to teach graduate goals, along with connections to the Missouri Show-Me Standards and Alternate Frameworks (MAP-A testing).

The focus of this curriculum is to provide a wide range of authentic skills that are frequently needed by students in the home, community and workplace. The curriculum is also a teaching guide, offering a variety of authentic learning activities for staff to use.

Format

- The curriculum is divided into four grade spans – K-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12.
- Each grade span is divided into six content areas – communication arts, mathematics, science, health/PE, fine arts and social studies.
- Each content area contains authentic life skills and authentic learning activities appropriate for students with severe disabilities.

Information

- **Authentic life skills** are what all students should know to be successful after graduating from State Schools.
- **Authentic learning activities** are real-life activities that assist staff in teaching authentic life skills and in implementing the MAP-A.
- Some content areas provide Grade Level Expectations (GLEs), Strands and Alternate Performance Indicators (APIs) that are used in MAP-A testing.

Uses

- Through the selection of authentic life skills:
 - » the IEP team develops IEP goals and benchmarks.
 - » teachers determine APIs for MAP-A implementation.
- Through the use of authentic learning activities:
 - » staff teach skills.
 - » students master IEP goals and benchmarks.
 - » students achieve graduate goals.

(The revised curriculum is available on the State Schools Web site at <http://www.dese.mo.gov/divspeced/stateschools/CurriculumIndex2.html>.)

Childhood Obesity: How to Keep Our Kids Healthy

By Claudia Rampley, Central Office

Between 5 percent and 25 percent of children and teenagers in the United States are obese. Obesity is defined as an excessive accumulation of body fat. Studies have shown a dramatic rise during the last few decades in the number of obese children in this country.

Being obese increases a child's risk for serious childhood medical conditions:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Hip and other bone problems
- Liver problems
- Early puberty
- Diabetes
- Sleep apnea and breathing problems
- Gastrointestinal diseases
- Heart disease

Guidelines to help your child reduce weight

If the school nurse indicates that your child is overweight or obese, try these ideas:

- Do not use food to comfort your child or as a reward.
- Eat together as a family, and do not watch television during meals. Mealtime should be family time. Create a relaxed atmosphere; eat slowly and enjoy your food.
- Keep only healthy food in your home. Having junk food in the home for other family members encourages sneak eating and other undesirable behaviors.
- Limit television-viewing time. There is a direct relationship between the amount of time spent watching TV and the degree of obesity.
- Praise your child for healthy food choices and physical activity.
- Offer your family structured meals and snacks on a schedule. Model and insist on good meal habits. Eating a small breakfast or skipping breakfast increases the risk of obesity.
- Encourage physical activity. Make sure your child goes outside during the daylight hours. Do chores together, play games in the yard or go to a park. This promotes physical activity and limits the amount of time spent on inactive pursuits.
- Keep healthy snacks on hand, and allow your child easy access to them.

Families should tackle the problem of obesity as a team. Parents and siblings should be supportive, positive role models. The whole family will be healthier when good eating and exercise habits are adopted together.

Healthy Snacks from A-Z

- A** Apples, Apricots
- B** Bananas, Bean Dip, Blueberry Bagels
- C** Cantaloupe, Carrots, Cheese*
- D** Dried Cereal, Dried Fruit Chips
- E** Eggs
- F** Fig Cookies, Frozen Fruit Bars
- G** Graham Crackers, Grapes
- H** Honeydew Melon, Hot Chocolate*
- I** Iced Fruit (grapes or melon cubes)
- J** Juices (100% juice), Jell-O with Fruit
- K** Kiwi, Krispy Rice Treats
- L** Low-fat Pudding*
- M** Milk*, Muffins*, Mangoes
- N** Nectarines, Nuts
- O** Orange Wedges, Oatmeal
- P** Pasta, Peaches, Pita Bread, Pretzels
- Q** Quick Carrot Sticks
- R** Raisins, Rice Cakes (any flavor)
- S** Strawberries, Smoothies with Fruit
- T** Tortillas with Filling, Trail Mix
- U** Unbuttered Popcorn
- V** Vanilla Wafers, Vegetables
- W** Watermelon
- X** eXciting Fruits and Vegetables
- Y** Yogurt
- Z** Zucchini Slices, Zesty Crackers

*Use low-fat versions

School Closings: What to Do When Weather Strikes

Inclement weather

Schools could be closed due to inclement weather. The decision to close a school is made by the building administrator with input about the condition of the roads from transportation personnel, local school districts and the highway patrol. When it is not possible to safely transport at least 50 percent of enrolled students, the school will close.

Parents can find out about school closings by listening to or watching the designated local media. By 6 a.m. on the day of closing, the building administrator will notify the radio and television stations listed in the school handbook.

When classes are already in session, school might close early to ensure the safety of students and staff if weather conditions worsen during the day. Relevant factors include snow and ice storms, anticipated tornado activity, and expected flooding. Early releases typically occur at noon or later. Before buses leave the school, staff must make direct contact with each parent to make certain that someone will be at home to receive the student.

Transportation factors to remember

- If it is difficult to access your home due to ice or mud, the building administrator might ask you to transport your student to and from a convenient location near a main road for both pickup



and drop-off.

- Decisions on whether your child can be picked up in poor weather conditions are made by the building administrator with input from you and bus personnel. Bus personnel do not make this decision themselves. If you are called by bus personnel who refuse to pick up your child, please report this situation to the building administrator.

Closings for other reasons

Schools might be closed due to a lack of water, electricity, heating or cooling. Staff will contact you directly if the school needs to close for one of these reasons; they will make sure arrangements are in place to have someone receive your child. Closing for these reasons could happen early in the morning after the buses are on the road, and the buses might turn around and bring your child home without reaching school.

When there is an epidemic of illness and less than 50 percent of students are expected to be in attendance, school might close for a day or two. Staff will notify you in advance about this decision.

Toll-free number for closed schools

A new statewide toll-free number is available to find out information about closed state office buildings, including State Schools. Information might not be posted until later in the morning. Call (888) 390-9927.

Questions and Answers

Question: Who can help me get my child ready in the morning?

Answer: If you have difficulty getting your child washed, dressed and fed in the morning, contact the Special Health Care Needs bureau to determine if your family is eligible to obtain a personal-care attendant under the Healthy Children and Youth (HCY) program. Staff at the bureau can confirm your eligibility over the phone.

A service coordinator will assess your needs and create a service plan that includes the type of services needed, the number of hours of help per week and the expected duration of the plan. The service coordinator will also identify potential service providers from which you may choose.

To find out more details about this program, contact:

Special Health Care Needs
Department of Health and Senior Services
P.O. Box 570
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570
(573) 751-6246 or toll-free (800) 451-0669
<http://www.dhss.mo.gov/SHCN/HCY.html>

To find out if your child is eligible, contact the regional office in your area.

- Cape Girardeau (573) 290-5830
- Columbia (573) 882-9861
- Kansas City (816) 350-5433
- Springfield (417) 895-6900
- St. Louis (314) 877-2850

Question: How can I find day care for a child who is 14 years of age or older?

Answer: Contact your school's home school coordinator for information about local child care referral agencies or programs offering after-school care. Finding centers willing to take older children and young adults is challenging. Some parents use group homes that are willing to take older children after school.

If your child needs specialized care, contact the local regional center and talk to your child's service coordinator. Find out what respite services are available and whether your family is eligible for financial assistance.

PARENT RESOURCES

Parent Trainings

- **March 10 – 30 Years of Building a Better Life**
Down Syndrome Association of Greater Saint Louis
Clayton High School
1 Mark Twain Circle
Clayton, Mo.

This workshop is for parents, caregivers, relatives and professionals. The sessions cover many topics that affect children and adults with Down syndrome. There will be separate activities for anyone 12 years or older who has Down syndrome.

Registration fees for parents and family members begin at \$40 (family packages are available). The registration fees for teens or adults with Down syndrome begin at \$35. Early registration ends March 3. Late registration costs slightly more. Some scholarships are available.

For more information, call (314) 961-2504 or visit <http://www.stlouisdasa.org>.

- **April 23-24 – Power Up 2007**
Missouri Assistive Technology Advisory Council
Holiday Inn Select
Columbia, Mo.

Power Up features a variety of sessions that provide current information on transition issues, assistive technology services and devices, literacy, and information technology. The conference fee is \$125. Registration is due by April 6.

For more details, call Brenda at (800) 647-8557 or (800) 647-8558 (TTY, within Missouri) or visit <http://www.at.mo.gov/powerup/index.shtml>.

- **National Autism Symposium**

The symposium will not be held this year. Instead, the Missouri Department of Mental Health will be offering three or four regional autism trainings in Missouri. For additional information, call (573) 751-4054 or visit <http://www.dmh.mo.gov>.

Other Resources: ParentLink

ParentLink is a network of people whose mission is to strengthen Missouri's families and communities by linking parents and professionals to information and resources. The organization distributes quality parenting information and materials to help achieve this goal. ParentLink:

- connects parents to needed services and resources.
- operates a toll-free phone service for Missouri parents. The ParentLink WarmLine provides supportive conversation and guidance for parents regarding questions they might have. A WarmLine for Spanish speakers was added recently.
- provides a free resource library of parenting materials. Adult residents of Missouri may borrow materials from the library for free but must pay for the cost of returning the materials. The items cover topics like general parenting concerns, developmental stages, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse,

discipline techniques, toilet training, children with special needs and grandparents raising grandchildren. The library has books, videotapes and audiotapes, as well as a selection of materials for parents of ethnic- and racial-minority students.

ParentLink is based at the University of Missouri-Columbia, giving the organization access to the latest research, best practices and qualified experts. Contact:

ParentLink
1205 University Ave., Suite 1100
Columbia, MO 65211
Toll-free (800) 552-8522

For information in Spanish, call (888) 460-0008. Business hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Visit the ParentLink Web site at <http://outreach.missouri.edu/parentlink/>.



STATE SCHOOLS FOR SEVERELY HANDICAPPED
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Web site: <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/stateschools>

NOTE: If you have items of interest for Parent Focus, please call (573) 751-0706 (Missouri Relay (800) 735-2966) or forward them to Stephanie Brooks, State Schools for Severely Handicapped, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; e-mail: stephanie.brooks@dese.mo.gov.