CADRE

CADRE
Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education

Oklahoma ~ An Exemplary Dispute Resolution System in Special Education

Profiled in June 2010

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CADRE

Helping Parents and Educators
Create Solutions That Improve Results
for Students with Disabilities

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Oklahoma Dispute Resolution in Special Education
One of Four Exemplary State Systems

Introduction

Between Fall 2008 and Summer 2010, CADRE, the National Center on Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education, undertook a process to identify state special education dispute resolution systems that are particularly effective and to characterize those systems and their components in ways that will be useful to other states that are considering improvement activities. Four states — Iowa, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — were identified as exemplars using the process described below. Profiles were developed so that these states' dispute resolution systems could be viewed in their entirety and used as potential models. Additionally, CADRE is cataloguing items from each of these systems (policies, training materials, forms, brochures, evaluation instruments, etc.) so that they are available for states and others who wish to implement practices or utilize materials that are being successfully used elsewhere.

CADRE used a systematic approach to identify the characteristics of effective dispute resolution systems and the underlying practices and functions that contribute to their successful use by state education agencies. As a first step, fourteen states were identified through the application of the following criteria:

- compliance on State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) Indicators Part B 16–17 and Part C 10–11 for Federal Fiscal Year 2006 (written state complaints investigated and due process hearings completed within timelines);
- levels for performance Indicators Part B 18–19 and Part C 12–13 for Federal Fiscal Year 2006 (resolution meeting written settlement agreement and mediation agreement rates);
- support and utilization of stakeholder involvement in the design, development, and management of their dispute resolution activities;
- investment in and support for innovative dispute resolution processes at the "early stages," including capacity building/prevention, early disagreement assistance, and alternative conflict resolution methods;
- history of using a broad range of required and alternative dispute resolution processes;
- integration or coordination across dispute resolution options;
- evaluation of dispute resolution activities to inform system improvements;
- involvement with CADRE's Dispute Resolution Community of Practice activities (e.g., dispute resolution coordinator listservs, national symposia, other CADRE activities); and,
- characteristics of organization and demography that would provide some variation among exemplar states.

No four states fully met all these criteria. Therefore, the criteria were applied as preferences for the purpose of nominating states for OSEP approval. CADRE's Director met with staff from OSEP to review the criteria and scoring and consider other factors that might suggest worthiness of identification as an exemplar state. The final four "exemplar states" were selected jointly by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and CADRE. CADRE communicated with the State Director of Special Education in each of these states to advise them of their selection, gauge their interest in participating, and secure a commitment of the staff time needed to successfully conduct this project. Each state enthusiastically agreed to participate.

Dispute resolution practices exist within the context of a larger system, including the history and culture of the state with respect to dispute resolution. Each profile presents an overview of the state's dispute resolution system, focusing on some common aspects of system performance and emphasizing the organizational characteristics that seem to be critical for successful operation. While each of the four exemplar states is unique, it is worth noting that they share common attributes. Among these are high levels of stakeholder involvement, investment in early upstream dispute resolution processes, use of technical and content expertise, active participation in the CADRE Dispute Resolution Community of Practice, engagement in continuous quality improvement practices, and thorough documentation of systems.

In addition to the profiles, CADRE is now working with representatives from the exemplar states to identify and document elements and features of dispute resolution practices that are effective and contribute to those states' success. An online searchable repository that will catalogue and provide easy access to resources that inform state improvement efforts is also part of CADRE's activities related to exemplary dispute resolution systems.

While these descriptions were being completed the partner state systems adjusted their operations as a part of their improvement efforts: they rewrote awareness materials, modified evaluation systems, and adopted new procedures. The profiles are, then, merely "snapshots" of these state systems at a point in time. This work begins an effort to capture and communicate what works well and what will help states learn from one another rather than "reinventing the wheel." CADRE looks forward to participating in a continuing discussion about how states can design and implement dispute resolution systems that capably support parents and educators to design effective programs for students.

This document was developed by CADRE as a project for Direction Service, Inc., pursuant to Cooperative Agreement CFDA H326D080001 with the Office of Special Education Programs, United States Department of Education.
This system profile was compiled by CADRE staff members (Teresa Coppola, Anita Engiles, Philip Moses, Marshall Peter and Richard Zeller) in partnership with state representatives. Any inaccuracies contained herein are the sole responsibility of CADRE. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Education. CADRE gratefully acknowledges the significant contributions of the following people, whose insight and expertise were of great assistance:

Oklahoma: Jo Anne Blades and Malissa Cook

Iowa: Dee Ann Wilson, Thomas Mayes and Eric Neessen

Pennsylvania: Kerry V. Smith, Cindy Judy, Dixie Trinen and Suzanne McDougall

Wisconsin: Jack Marker, Patricia Williams, Patricia Bober, Jan Serak, Jane Burns and Nissan Bar-Lev

US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs: Tina Diamond, Hillary Tabor, Lisa Pagano and Melanie Byrd

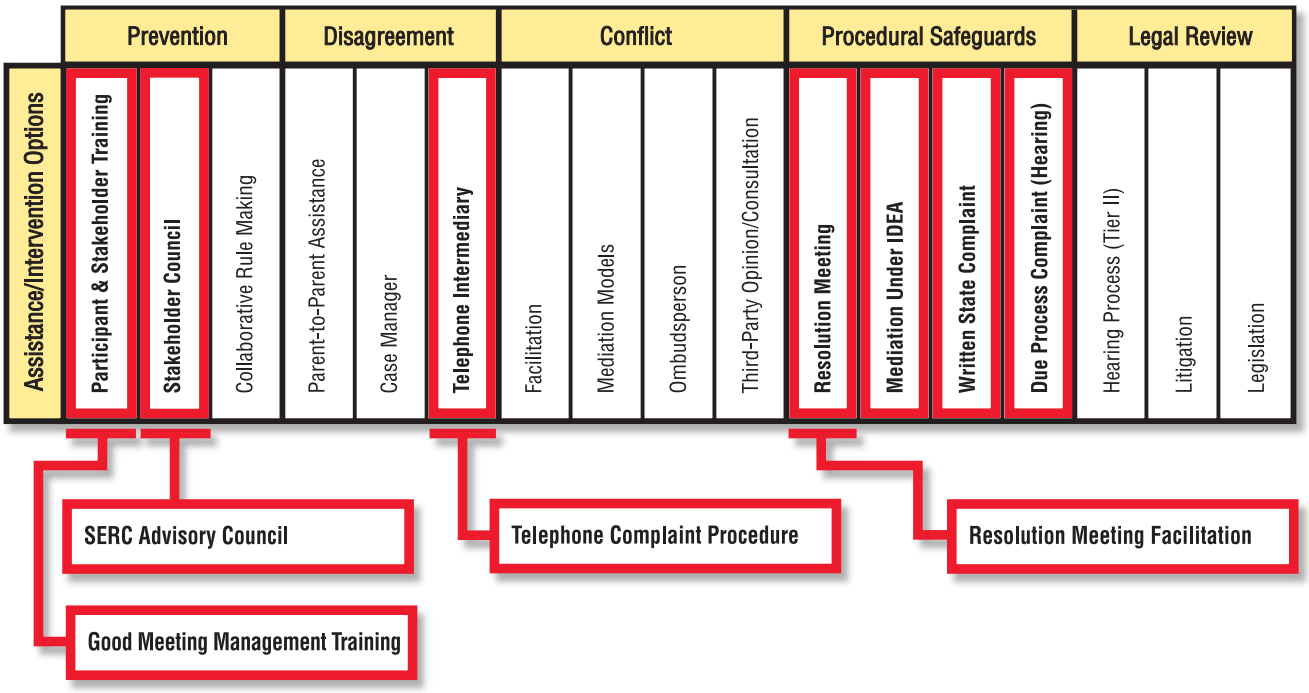
CADRE Consultants: Art Stewart, Tom Kelly and Donna Dickerson

Oklahoma ~ An Exemplary Dispute Resolution System in Special Education

Profiled June 2010

The CADRE Continuum of Processes and Practices

Oklahoma's Dispute Resolution Options in Bold

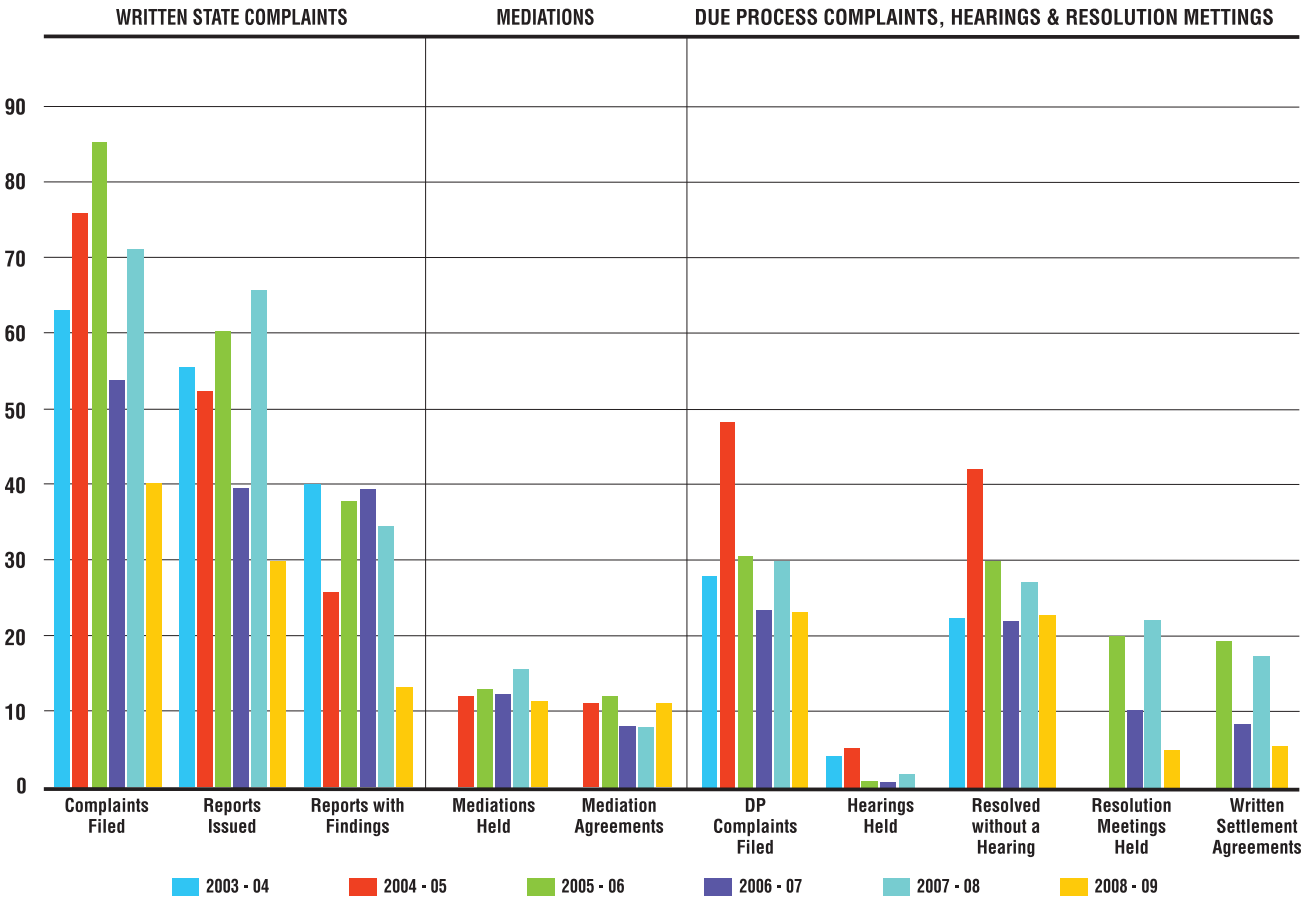


For more information about the CADRE Continuum, see:
http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/aboutcontinuum.cfm

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) serves as an excellent example of a state education agency (SEA) contracting with an external entity to provide dispute resolution services for its IDEA 2004 Part B and Part C special education programs. While the SEA maintains ultimate responsibility for coordinating procedural safeguard activities found in IDEA and continues to directly coordinate investigations regarding formal state written complaints, mediation services, due process hearings and appeals, and resolution meetings, all are managed by a relatively new center housed at an institution of higher learning. On December 1, 2005, the Special Education Resolution Center (SERC) was established at Oklahoma State University for the purpose of managing the special education due process hearing system. Since then, SERC's duties have expanded to include innovative programs that assist parents and school districts to settle disputes at the earliest stage possible. SERC provides highly trained mediators to assist at

any time with disputes over special education issues. It also provides highly trained facilitators for resolution meetings held in conjunction with due process hearing requests. Additionally, SERC is increasingly involved with the development and delivery of stakeholder training.

Figure 1. Oklahoma — Dispute Resolution Activity Events per Year
Source: APR Table 7 and Section 618 Data



The terms used in the figures in this document are either drawn directly from or are shortened versions of data element terms from Table 7, the dispute resolution data reported by states in their APR. Instructions and definitions of all terms used for Table 7 reporting are available at: https://www.ideadata.org/documents.asp#collection

Intake Process

Telephone Complaint Procedure

If a person or parent calls the SEA with a particular issue or problem, the person is directed to a coordinator in the department. Typically, a coordinator receives calls related to the particular content area they are responsible for, but the department trains staff to work across areas so that if the primary coordinator is not available, the call is directed to another member of the team. The coordinator receiving the call speaks to the concerned party and

keeps a formal log of all calls. Following a call, with parental consent, the coordinator contacts the school and attempts to help the parties clarify issues and reach agreement. If coordinators are unable to resolve a problem, they then provide information to the parties about other possible options — including mediation, complaints, and due process hearings — and may refer them to the Special Education Resolution Center (SERC). Through SERC, the SEA provides annual training to its own coordinators on good communication techniques, interest-based negotiation, and other relevant skills.

Optional Processes

Stakeholder Training

In response to the need for conflict prevention skills training, SERC developed a program called *Good Meeting Management* and began delivering it to the staff of local education agencies (LEAs) and family members of students receiving special education services in 2009. SERC staff trained special education directors of the LEAs and then offered the PowerPoint presentation for use within their local districts. SERC has also implemented yearly training for the OSDE staff on communication skills, including training for clerical staff who initially take the phone calls. Additionally, SERC sponsors an annual all-day "legal update" training conducted by a nationally recognized consultant and provided to mediators, facilitators, and hearing officers. This training is also open to educators, parent center staff, and family members. Typically about 130 people attend the training, which is subsidized by both Part B and Part C programs.

- ***Evaluation***. Special education directors reported that material from the *Good Meeting Management* program was very useful and gave them some tools to begin developing skills with their staff. ODSE staff believe the communication trainings have given them better skills to handle calls from unhappy parties who contact the OSDE. The training has helped them gain a better understanding of the source of anger and that the anger is not directed at them personally. It has also helped clerical staff be more patient and compassionate while directing calls. Staff have developed better skills to act as intermediaries in conversations between parents and schools in conflict, supporting better informal complaint resolution.

Lesson Learned

"Early in our work on dispute resolution, we saw that the parties were already firmly entrenched in positions when they came to our center. Some cases were resolved, and some were not. We thought that earlier intervention with the parties might have prevented the deepening of conflict and hurt feelings and anger. We explored ways to build capacity at the local level to address conflicts at an earlier stage, which more likely would build relationships rather than break them down. We began to see that issues were resolved as soon as they could be addressed. We developed a training program called Good Meeting Management. At first we offered this training through our center, but learned that there is great cost involved and that we could not reach all 540 school districts in a timely manner. Now we are developing materials that local districts can use for training within their districts that will help staff become more aware of how to build better relationships with parents. We have said for a long time that outcomes are better for children when parents and schools work together, but we haven't given schools the tools to know how to do that until now."

Jo Anne Blades

Stakeholder Involvement

An advisory council of stakeholders has been established pursuant to the terms of the contract between Oklahoma State University and OSDE for the management of the special education mediation, due process hearing, and appeal systems. SERC formulates policies and procedures with the advice of this advisory council and presents them to the OSDE as a recommendation for positive change. It is the mission of the advisory council to provide recommendations to SERC on: (a) the policies and procedures of the special education mediation, due process hearing, and appeal systems developed by SERC; (b) the recruitment, training, and evaluation of mediators and hearings and appeal officers; and, (c) the process of gathering viewpoints from a variety of stakeholders, with the intention to foster good relations between the stakeholder groups. One example of stakeholder involvement was the advisory council making a recommendation to develop a system of payments to hearing officers which was deemed more fair and reasonable. Another example was its guidance to more effectively create capacity, especially for administrators, to resolve disputes at the local level. This led both to implementation of training programs at the annual administrators' conference and to schools applying for more customized training.

The advisory council is composed of 11 to 13 members who are recruited to: (a) ensure a broad range of backgrounds and experience to reflect the diversity of the state with respect to race, ethnicity, and types of disabilities across the school-age span; (b) to constitute a majority of not less than 51% membership composed of parents of children with disabilities across the school-age ranges defined by the IDEA; and, (c) to represent the OSDE with one member, school districts with four members (including a superintendent, a special education director, a regular education teacher, and a special education teacher), mediators with one member, and community interests with one member.

Members of the council come from locations throughout Oklahoma with about half having personal experience with the dispute resolution system. School membership reflects small, medium, large, rural, and urban districts. Representatives are encouraged to work with their own district as a team to represent school district views on the advisory council. Membership is generally for a two-year term. Members are selected by a nominating committee consisting of one school district representative, one parent representative, and the director and program manager of SERC.

Lesson Learned

"In approaching stakeholders for training, we reached out to existing infrastructures within the state. For example, to provide conflict skills training for school district administrators, we approached an organization that was already trusted and accepted by school district administrators. We could have provided our own training, but by providing it through an accepted and trusted entity we were able to reach more districts in a direct and timely manner. We are extending the same training to other stakeholders through their existing infrastructures. In doing so, we are able to network the training to all existing entities."

Jo Anne Blades

Resolution Meeting Facilitation

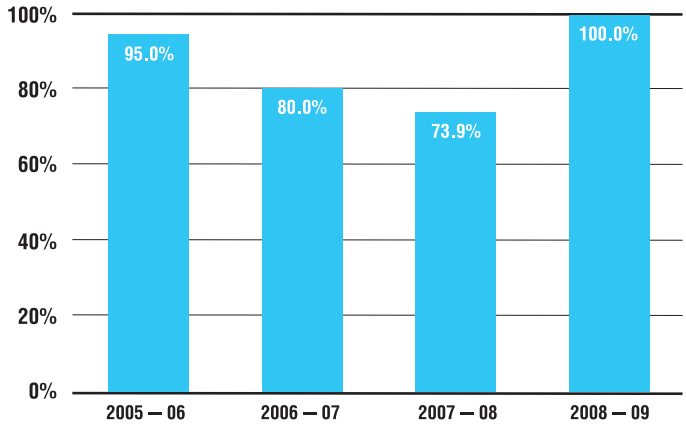
SERC has also made their special education mediators available to serve as facilitators for resolution meetings, with a goal of at least half the meetings to be facilitated. These facilitators are available when both the parents and school district request participation of a neutral third-party. Because the facilitators are independent contractors and not directly employed by SERC, parents are required to sign a consent form to allow the center and the school district to release information to the third-party neutral. The facilitators may contact the parties for a brief interview to establish rapport, better understand the issues in dispute, and discover any underlying matters that may also be driving the conflict. The facilitator's role is to ensure that the parties have an opportunity to participate equally in a structured setting, while adequately addressing the facts and issues raised by the due process complaint. The facilitator will assist the parties in discussions about the due process complaint and attempt to reach a mutually acceptable resolution. The facilitator does not provide legal advice and does not render a decision for the parties. Resolution meetings may be confidential by agreement of both parties. Each party is responsible for understanding and adhering to applicable timelines and deadlines for hearings and appeals in due process. In the past, the facilitator contacted the parties to arrange a time and location for the meeting, but now SERC does this. Very few resolution meetings are not facilitated. See figure 1 above for number of resolution meetings held. The success of OSDE and SERC with this facilitation option is evidenced by a very high agreement rate as shown in figure 2.

- ***Staffing***. SERC's program manager supervises a panel of five facilitators, all of whom are independent contractors.

- ***Qualifications***. SERC does not require resolution meeting facilitators to have a law degree, although presently all of the facilitators do hold a degree in law.

- ***Professional Development***. Meeting facilitators are invited to attend national mediation and facilitation conferences. SERC also provides ongoing training each year to sharpen their skills for overcoming roadblocks to settlement.

Figure 2. Oklahoma Indicator B18 Written Resolution Agreement Rate Source: APR Table 7 and Section 618 Data



- ***Evaluation***. Meetings conclude with an evaluation, and in the pilot year, SERC provided a statistical report to document progress of the program. SERC now provides a final written report containing a summary of the evaluations to OSDE within the contract period; evaluation data is used to identify areas of concern. All attorneys for school districts have reported that they find facilitated resolution meetings helpful to their clients and would like to see the program expanded so that it can be offered for all due process requests. They also commented that this type of facilitation was far superior to mediation programs offered in the past.

Required Processes

Mediation

Until 2009, OSDE contracted with the Administrative Office of the Supreme Court of Oklahoma as the sole provider of special education mediation services through its Alternative Dispute Resolution Early Settlement Mediation System. Following SERC's success with managing other aspects of the special education dispute resolution system, especially the facilitation of resolution meetings (see above), SERC was awarded a contract by OSDE to provide mediation services under IDEA. Now, parties interested in mediation may download either a parent or school district request for mediation form. SERC notifies the other party of the request for mediation. After both parties have voluntarily agreed to mediation, a mediator is assigned. The parent must also sign a consent form releasing information to the mediator. Mediation sessions can take up to a full day, although typically sessions are completed in three to four hours, depending upon the complexity of the issue(s). It is recommended that participants set aside a full day even though the session is likely to conclude in a shorter period of time. For more information about mediation in Oklahoma, see the website: www.ok.gov/abletech/Special_Education_Resolution_Center/Mediation/index.html

- ***Staffing***. SERC's program manager supervises a panel of five mediators, all of whom are independent contractors.

- ***Qualifications***. SERC requires all of the special education mediators to have experience as a mediator or to be a hearing officer. A law degree is not required; however, at this time all mediators happen to hold a degree in law.

- ***Professional Development***. SERC provides training each year to sharpen mediators' skills for overcoming roadblocks to settlement. Mediators are invited to attend national mediation and facilitation conferences related to their duties.

Written State Complaints

As required, the OSDE has a formal complaint management system for filing and resolving specific complaints under IDEA Part B and Part C. Local educational agencies (LEAs) must also have procedures for filing and resolving complaints. Complainants who file with the LEA have the right to request an OSDE review of the LEA's decision. Parents and other interested individuals must be informed by the OSDE and LEAs about the

Lesson Learned

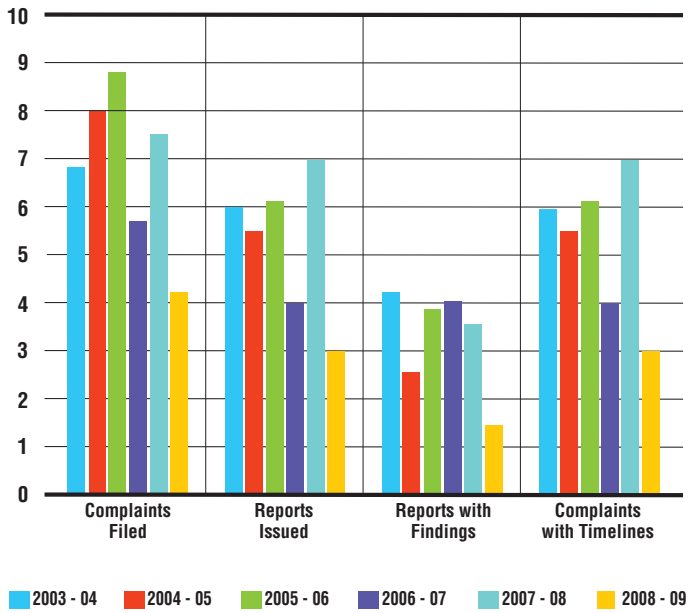
Initially, SERC sent only written information describing programs that were available, particularly about resolution meetings and mediation. Parties did not respond well to written materials as a sole means of communication.
Now, along with written information, SERC staff make personal contact to ensure that the parties have a meaningful opportunity to make informed decisions in their selection of available programs.
The SERC program manager instituted the practice of making personal phone calls to the parties to give an overview of what would happen in the first 30 days of due process. In that call, she offers the use of a neutral third-party facilitator at the resolution meeting. The majority elect to use the facilitation process.

complaint procedures, due process hearings, mediation, and other forms of assistance to ensure compliance and to resolve disputes. If it is found through a complaint that the LEA failed to provide appropriate services to a child with a disability, the resolution addresses both how to remediate the denial of services and how to provide the appropriate services for the child. If a state written complaint and a due process request are filed at the same time, any part of the state written complaint that is also the subject of the due process request (or that has previously been decided in a due process hearing) is held in abeyance until the due process hearing resolves the issue. The due process hearing decision will take precedence. OSDE staff has also been trained in the area of mediation and can help members of the public resolve issues prior to filing a formal state written complaint. With parental consent, the OSDE will make telephone calls to LEAs to assist in resolving issues between parents and the LEA. This has led to a downward trend in the number of filed written state complaints. Additionally, the OSDE complaint tracking system has led to more timely resolution of complaints. See figure 3 for data on the effect of OSDE intervention and the complaint tracking system.

• ***Staffing***. Complaint investigations are assigned to two full-time coordinators in the Special Education Services division (OSDE-SES). These positions also include other duties.

• ***Qualifications***. The positions require graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelors degree in special education, school psychology, communication disorders, or other closely related field. They also require (a) a valid special education certificate, or a valid psychometry, school psychologist, or speech-language pathology certificate; (b) experience as a teacher, related services therapist, school counselor, psychometrist, school psychologist, vocational counselor, transition employment specialist, or program administrator (all with experience working directly with children and youth with disabilities); and, (c) willingness and ability to perform necessary job-related statewide travel.

Figure 3. Oklahoma
Written State Complaint Activity
Events per 10,000 Special Education Students
Source: APR Table 7 and Section 618 Data



• ***Professional Development***. OSDE-SES provides professional development regarding the handling of complaints. This includes both internal guidance as well as training conducted by leading national experts on special education law. The focus is on procedures for investigating a formal state written complaint, tracking the timeliness of the complaint investigation, and information regarding IDEA requirements that often lead to formal written state complaints.

Due Process Hearings and Resolution Meetings

Since 2005, SERC has managed OSDE's Due Process Hearing system. Upon receipt of a due process hearing request,

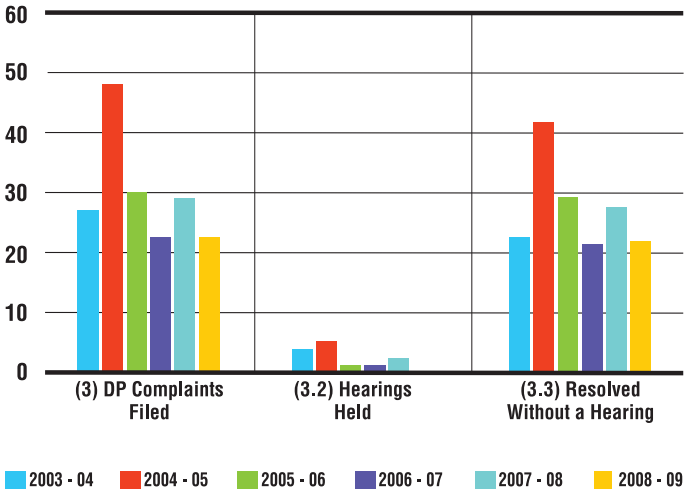
SERC provides general technical assistance to all parties to help them understand the requirements of the due process hearing system. SERC assigns hearing officers at the time of filing for a hearing and takes steps to assist the parties in meeting their responsibilities during the 30-day settlement period. A unique component of this system is the provision of facilitators for resolution meetings to help the parties resolve their dispute (see above). The hearing officer schedules a pre-hearing conference to ensure that the process moves along according to statutory requirements. During the conference, the hearing officer leads a discussion about: (a) whether or not any party intends to object to the sufficiency of the due process complaint; (b) whether the parties have been able to schedule the resolution meeting or whether there is a joint written agreement to waive the meeting; (c) the time frame for a response to the complainant's filing; (d) whether any party anticipates the filing of any pre-hearing motions; (e) any concerns regarding jurisdiction over the controversy, proper parties to the matter, or authority of the hearing officer to grant requested relief; and, (f) whether the parties know how to make proper contact with the hearing officer.

During the initial conference, the hearing officer will also set a time for a second pre-hearing conference in the event the matter does not settle during the 30-day resolution period. The second pre-hearing conference will address issues directly related to the actual hearing, including but not limited to further clarification of the issues and issuance of subpoenas. Settlement of the matter is encouraged, if possible, at every stage. If the entire dispute cannot be resolved, then the unresolved issues move forward to a hearing. This approach, along with other available dispute resolution options, has enabled OSDE to resolve the vast majority of due process complaints without a hearing (see figure 4). For more information about due process in Oklahoma, see the website: www.ok.gov/abletech/Special_Education_Resolution_Center/Due_Process_Hearings/index.html

• ***Staffing***. SERC's program manager supervises a panel of approximately ten due process hearing officers and three appeal officers, all of whom are independent contractors. An attorney who currently represents parents or school districts or who, within recent years, has represented parents or school districts, may not be assigned as a hearing officer. Officers must attend state-mandated training to maintain eligibility to hear cases.

• ***Qualifications***. Hearing and appeal officers are recruited from around Oklahoma and must hold a Master's degree or above in a field related to special education or be an attorney. Preference is given to attorneys based on their basic knowledge of the law and expertise in conducting hearings. All appeal officers must meet the minimum training standards required of hearing officers and have served in that capacity in Oklahoma for at least two years.

Figure 4. Oklahoma Due Process Complaint and Hearing Events per Year Source: APR Table 7 and Section 618 Data



• ***Professional Development***. State-mandated training is provided on an ongoing basis and includes sessions on administrative process, special education, and related issues. Training is also provided regarding Part C of the IDEA, known in Oklahoma as Sooner Start. SERC brings in national experts on special education and special education law to present on the latest developments in special education. Hearing officers are invited to attend national special education conferences related to their duties. Participation in at least two formal group training sessions conducted or approved by the OSDE is mandatory for all hearing and appeal officers and trainees. The OSDE reserves the right to require any hearing or appeal officer or hearing officer trainee to attend any additional training sessions it deems necessary. All formal mandatory training sessions conducted by the OSDE are presented by impartial consultants. All hearing and appeal officers and trainees receive personalized training from the OSDE consistent with their academic and professional backgrounds. Ad hoc group training sessions and information updates are disseminated to all hearing and appeal officers and trainees as necessary.

• ***Evaluation***. Hearing officers are evaluated by both parties to the hearing process, as well as by SERC.

Dispute Resolution Administration

Oversight

Overall responsibility for administering Oklahoma's dispute resolution system is conducted by the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Division of Special Education Services (OSDE-SES). OSDE-SES contracts with SERC at Oklahoma State University. SERC is staffed by a program director, program manager, and administrative assistant. An Excel-based log system allows OSDE to follow a student across required - mediation, due process hearings, written state complaints — processes for dispute resolution.

Relationship to General Supervision

Concerns are addressed weekly at meetings of OSDE staff in which the discussion is focused around current technical assistance being provided. This gives staff an opportunity to hear some of the issues surfacing throughout the state and serves as a way to narrow down which LEAs are struggling with compliance issues so that the Compliance Monitoring Team may address concerns accordingly.

Culturally Relevant Aspects of the DR System

The advisory council includes parents with children having various disabilities across the school-age span and is ethnically and racially diverse.

Lesson Learned

Listen to the concerns of your stakeholder groups and work on shared goals as a basis for making decisions and developing program guidelines. By listening, you can take their needs and respond to each with separate ideas on how to best assist parties resolve disputes. This method worked within due process guidelines, as well as mediation. It is important for stakeholder groups to know that they have a voice and that their needs are being met. When this is the case, stakeholders are more responsive to developing guidelines that are also fair to other groups.

Partner Organizations/Collaboration

OSDE-SES collaborates with the federally funded Oklahoma Parent Training and Information Center, Oklahoma Parents Center, in offering *Creating Agreement* presentations, organizing state and regional conferences, and promoting other activities to involve parents. The SEA has invited Oklahoma Parents Center to present trainings at the meetings of Oklahoma Directors of Special Services (ODSS). Additionally, there are efforts to integrate conflict management into leadership training.

Public Awareness/Outreach

Oklahoma makes available an array of informational resources related to their dispute resolution options:

- ***Print materials and web/electronic resources***

http://sde.state.ok.us/Curriculum/SpecEd/pdf/Docs_Forms/ComplaintBrochure.pdf
http://sde.state.ok.us/Curriculum/SpecEd/pdf/Docs_Forms/Mediation_Brochure.pdf
http://sde.state.ok.us/Curriculum/SpecEd/pdf/Docs_Forms/Due_Process.pdf
http://sde.state.ok.us/Curriculum/SpecEd/Compliance_SES.html
http://www.ok.gov/abletech/Special_Education_Resolution_Center/

The SEA created a parent-friendly handbook that explains principles of special education and contains worksheets to assist parents in collecting information about their child. It is available at the website http://www.ok.gov/abletech/documents/mediationmanual2nd.pdf.

- ***Presentations***. The OSDE-SES provides technical assistance on due process guidelines, resolution meetings, and mediations through breakout sessions at the State Superintendent's Special Education Conference for Teachers and Directors. The sessions focus on IDEA requirements for the provision of procedural safeguards to parents, as well as the obligations of LEAs after a due process hearing request has been filed.

Improvement Priorities

As part of the Oklahoma State Performance Plan, the SEA must demonstrate that it maintains or increases the number of agreements coming out of resolution meetings. The OSDE-SES recently hired an additional complaint investigator to assist in the investigation of formal written state complaints and in other activities.

Lesson Learned

"In approaching conflict resolution skills training, we did not seek to train exclusively about conflict within special education. Recognizing that conflict arises in many areas of education, we offered school districts training in conflict resolution skills targeted to school leaders. We realized that if school leaders had effective skills to resolve conflicts and engage in difficult conversations in general, special education conflicts would also be addressed. The training provided dealt with conflict in any area, and special education conflict was used as just one example of how to deal effectively with conflicts that may arise."

Jo Anne Blades

Key Oklahoma Leadership at the time this Profile was Developed

Sandy Garrett, *State Superintendent of Public Instruction,Oklahoma State Department of Education*
Misty Kimbrough, *Assistant State Superintendent, Special Education Services*
Malissa Cook, Associate *State Director, Special Education Services*
Linda Jaco, *Program Director, SERC*
Jo Anne Blades, *Program Manager, SERC and CADRE Exemplar Contact*

Oklahoma

State Department of Education
Special Education Services
Oliver Hodge Building, 2500 North Lincoln
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-4599
Phone: (405) 522-1464
Website: http://sde.state.ok.us/Curriculum/SpecEd/Default.html

Oklahoma Special Education Resolution Center
Oklahoma ABLE Tech
4825 South Peoria, Suite 2
Oklahoma State University
Tulsa, OK 74105
Phone: (888) 267-0028
Website: http://serc.okstate.edu

CADRE
Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education

The Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE) works to increase the nation's capacity to effectively resolve special education disputes, reducing the use of expensive adversarial processes.

CADRE works with state and local education and early intervention systems, parent centers, families and educators to improve programs and results for children with disabilities.

CADRE is funded by the Office of Special Education Programs at the US Department of Education to serve as the National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education.

CADRE's Priorities

- *Identify effective, cost-beneficial dispute resolution practices and support their implementation*
- *Enhance collaboration between education/early intervention agencies and parent organizations*
- *Promote improved problem-solving skills across stakeholder groups*
- *Assist states to implement the dispute resolution provisions of IDEA'04*
- *Support integration of dispute resolution management and improved state system performance*
- *Compile State Performance Plan data and information on the characteristics of state systems*