

CADRE Announces Publication of *Oklahoma ~ An Exemplary Dispute Resolution System in Special Education*

EUGENE — December 14, 2010 — Today at the National Center for Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE), it was announced that system profiles for four states have been published. Between Fall 2008 and Summer 2010, CADRE 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. 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.

Oklahoma's Exemplary Dispute Resolution System

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.

Exemplary State System Profile Availability

Each of the state's profile is available individually and all four profiles are included in a single combined document at no charge at

<http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/pdf/Oklahoma%20Profile.pdf>

<http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/exemplarprofiles.cfm>

Founded in 1998, CADRE, as the National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education has a major emphasis on encouraging the use of mediation, facilitation and other collaborative practices as strategies for resolving disagreements between parents and schools about children's educational programs and support services.

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For more information on CADRE:

<http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/>