

**OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL  
SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH  
DISABILITIES**

**PROGRAM:** Office of Vocational and Educational Services for  
Individuals with Disabilities (VESID)

**DESCRIPTION:**

VESID's mission is to promote educational equity and excellence for students with disabilities while ensuring that they receive the rights and protections to which they are entitled; assure appropriate continuity between the child and adult services systems; and provide the highest quality vocational rehabilitation and independent living services to all eligible persons as quickly as those services are required to enable them to work and to live independent, self-directed lives.

State Operations

VESID promotes educational and vocational achievement for students with disabilities, ages 3 to 21, and for adults. It administers special education programs and services in New York's school system and provides support for families, educators and other staff. VESID's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program provides specialized programs and services that assist youth and adults with disabilities in preparing for, finding, and adjusting to employment. The office also works with businesses that are interested in hiring and maintaining a skilled workforce. VESID administers 39 Independent Living Centers (ILCs) and 15 Early Childhood Direction Centers across the State and provides administrative oversight to the New York State School for the Blind and the New York State School for the Deaf. VESID also oversees statewide networks responsible for providing training and information to parents, educators, and others involved in educating preschool and school-age students with disabilities.

**REGENTS GOALS:** 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6

**AUTHORITY:**

**Federal Statute:** (see specific programs)

**Federal Regulation:** (see specific programs)

**State Statute:** (see specific programs)

**State Regulation:** (see specific programs)

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

State-	50.2%
Federal-	48.8%
Special Revenue-	1.0%
Total-	\$2,092m

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED:** n/a

**CONTACT OFFICE 1:** Deputy Commissioner's Office

**TELEPHONE:** (518) 474-2714

**FAX:** (518) 474-8802

**PROGRAM:** Allowances to State-Supported Schools for the Blind, Deaf, Severely Physically Disabled and Severely Emotionally Disturbed

**DESCRIPTION:**

The allowances to 11 State-supported schools provide for the education of students who are deaf, blind, severely physically or emotionally disabled under §4201 of the Education Law and Chapter 1060 of the Laws of 1974. The State-supported schools receiving aid under this Program are:

Schools for the Deaf

- Cleary School for the Deaf, Ronkonkoma (Suffolk County)
- Lexington School for the Deaf, New York (Queens)
- Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf, Mill Neck
- New York School for the Deaf, White Plains
- Rochester School for the Deaf, Rochester
- St. Francis DeSales School for the Deaf, New York (Brooklyn)
- St. Joseph's School for the Deaf, New York (Bronx)
- St. Mary's School for the Deaf, Buffalo

Schools for the Blind

- New York Institute for Special Education, New York (Bronx)\*
- Lavelle School for the Blind, New York (Bronx)

Schools for Physically Disabled Children

- Henry Viscardi School, Albertson

\*This school also serves students with emotional disabilities.

Chapter 1066 of the Laws of 1974, which added §4204-a to the Education Law, provides for State reimbursement of tuition costs for the education of deaf infants below the age of three, and their parents attending programs approved by the Commissioner at various public and private facilities, including schools for the deaf listed in §4201 of the Education Law.

The annual appropriation for the §4201 program funds 35 percent of the prior school year operating expense and 65 percent of the current school year operating expense. In addition, the appropriation covers costs for the Deaf Infant Program, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services grants, payments to the New York State Dormitory Authority for approved capital projects, and the retirement costs of employees of the 11 State-supported schools.

**REGENTS GOALS:** 1; 3; 5; 6

**AUTHORITY:**

**Federal Statute:**

**Federal Regulation:**

**State Statute:** Education Law Sections 4201 and 4204-a

**State Regulation:** 8NYCRR Part 200

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

State-	96.1%
Federal-	3.9. %
Special Revenue-	0.0%
Total-	\$122.8m

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED:** Approximately 1,800 students each year.

**CONTACT OFFICE 1:** VESID Special Education Quality Assurance

**TELEPHONE:** (518) 473-6108

**FAX:** (518) 473-5769

**PROGRAM:** Case Services

**DESCRIPTION:**

Case Services appropriations for the basic Vocational Rehabilitation Program provide educational and vocational services to individuals whose disabilities impose barriers to employment. The Program provides a wide range of services to individuals with disabilities including evaluation, job training, equipment and technology, counseling and guidance and placement. The primary goal of the Program is to enable individuals with disabilities to achieve gainful employment. When employment is achieved, the investment pays dividends to the State. The annual wages earned by those same individuals exceeded \$200 million and will grow each year. These earnings form the base for their tax contributions and stimulation of the economy.

The savings to State agencies, the tax contributions and the economic stimulus of these workers' spending recur and grow every year that these people work. Therefore, the return on the initial investment continues over the individual's working life.

Professional vocational rehabilitation counselors across New York State in Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities' (VESID) 15 District Offices and 10 outstations help individuals with disabilities choose careers that are consistent with their individual strengths, priorities, abilities, capabilities, interests, informed choices and that meet current and future job market opportunities.

Purchased case services make up the largest single area within VESID's program. Examples of case services include evaluation; training and related supports at such places as community rehabilitation agencies, boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES), trade schools, colleges and universities; transportation; and vehicle modifications. The combination of federal funding (Title I Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act) and State matching funds supports the entire VESID program including vocational counseling, purchased case services, unified contract costs, related administrative costs and indirectly applied charges. Federal funding is formula driven. State case services funding is required in concert with the basic federal award to meet the costs of VESID's increasing demand for services.

The following are some of the highlights of VESID's 2008-2009 accomplishments in meeting its goals:

- 12,911 people with disabilities received assistance in obtaining employment.
- 9,494 people were placed in integrated employment with no supports, including self-employment.
- The number of individuals placed in supported employment or integrated employment with supports decreased from 2,973 in SFY 2007-2008 to 2,872 in SFY 2008-2009.

**REGENTS GOALS:** 3; 4; 5; 6

**AUTHORITY:**

**Federal Statute:** Rehabilitation Act - Title I

**Federal Regulation:** 34 CFR 361 Et. Seq.

**State Statute:** Education Law Sections 1001-1008

**State Regulation:** 8NYCRR Parts 246 and 247

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

State- 29.8%

Federal- 70.2%

Special Revenue- 0.0%

Total- \$181.0 m

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED:** 100,454 for FFY 2007-2008

**CONTACT OFFICE 1:** Administration and Operations

**TELEPHONE:** (518) 486-4038

**FAX:** (518) 486-4154

**PROGRAM:** Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDCs)

**DESCRIPTION:**

ECDCs provide information and referral assistance to families and professionals in linking children with disabilities, birth to age five, to needed community services. This includes assistance in securing evaluation and assessment services, preschool special education programs and services, transportation, medical services, funding, social services and parent education/support programs. The Education Department is the single State agency responsible for this Program. ECDCs assist over 11,000 parents each year, including over 21,000 follow-up calls and matching 12,600 children with appropriate services. They respond to over 27,000 requests for information from families, agencies and professionals each year. Information is provided in a neutral manner, so all appropriate options for services are provided, including the option of receiving services in integrated settings with nondisabled peers.

Without continued funding, thousands of families with young children will be left to make crucial decisions at different times during their child's life without the necessary information; decisions that will impact on their child's educational standards, employment opportunities and future independence. ECDCs provide the initial link to information and services from birth, a critical need that continues throughout the life of a child with a disability.

**REGENTS GOALS:** 4; 5; 6

**AUTHORITY:**

**Federal Statute:** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B

**Federal Regulation:** 34 CFR 301

**State Statute:**

**State Regulation:** 8NYCRR Part 200

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

State-	0.0%
Federal-	100%
Special Revenue-	0.0%
Total-	\$2.7 m

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED:** 22,720 parents and children; 15,470 professionals trained (2007-2008)

**CONTACT OFFICE 1:** Program Development and Support Services

**TELEPHONE:** (518) 486-7462

**FAX:** (518) 473-5769

**PROGRAM:** Education of Children with Disabilities

**DESCRIPTION:**

§4410 Preschool Services

Under §4410 of Education Law, school districts are responsible for assuring the provision of special education services to eligible preschool children with disabilities (ages 3-4 years). Counties contract with approved programs and service providers selected by local boards of education and make 100 percent payment to providers. Pursuant to Chapter 642 of the Laws of 1996, counties are reimbursed by the State for 59.5 percent of the approved costs for services.

§4408 Summer School Services

Children with disabilities, ages 5-21 years, may receive special programs and/or services during July and August, if recommended by the Committee on Special Education. The county of residence is responsible for 10 percent of the cost and the local school district is responsible for 20 percent of the cost. The State Education Department is responsible for the remaining 70 percent of the cost. Costs incurred for services provided during July and August to children with disabilities in the State schools in Rome and Batavia and the State-supported §4201 schools are included. Also included in this account are payments for summer students who are placed in Office of Mental Health residential treatment facilities. Pursuant to Chapter 82 of the Laws of 1995, beginning in 1995-1996, no single payee may receive more than 45 percent of the appropriation for this Program. In addition, no payments will be made after July 1, 1996 based on a claim submitted later than three years after the end of the school year in which services were rendered except in cases where such payment is the result of a court order, judgment, or final audit.

**REGENTS GOALS:** 1; 2; 5; 6

**AUTHORITY:**

**Federal Statute:**

**Federal Regulation:**

**State Statute:** Education Law Sections 4408 and 4410

**State Regulation:** 8NYCRR Part 200

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

State- 86.5%

Federal- 13.5%

Special Revenue-

Total- \$983.2m

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED:** 63,966

**CONTACT OFFICE 1:** VESID Special Education Policy Unit  
**TELEPHONE:** (518) 473-2878      **FAX:** (518) 473-5387

**PROGRAM:** Independent Living Centers (ILCs)

**DESCRIPTION:**

Independent Living is a program providing individual and systems change services through 39 not-for-profit ILCs across New York State. ILCs are nonresidential programs that provide a range of services to support New Yorkers with disabilities with living, learning and working in their communities. ILCs also work to increase program and physical access to all services available to the general public.

ILCs are based on a self-help model and State law requires that the majority of all ILC boards of directors be comprised of individuals with disabilities. ILCs provide an array of services to enable people with disabilities to choose lifestyles and services that maximize their independence and self-direction. Core services include: information and referral, peer counseling, individual advocacy, independent living skills development, personal assistance services, employment housing, transportation and related services.

On the systems level, ILCs have led their local communities in implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act and in program development to support individuals in least restrictive living environments. ILC expertise and services are in high demand and will remain so for the foreseeable future. Two particular populations benefiting from ILC services are youth in transition from school to adult life and individuals seeking supports to leave or circumvent admission to institutional settings.

**REGENTS GOALS:** 3; 4; 5; 6

**AUTHORITY:**

**Federal Statute:** Rehabilitation Act - Title VII  
**Federal Regulation:** 34 CFR 367  
**State Statute:** Education Law Sections 1120-1124  
**State Regulation:** 8NYCRR Part 248

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

State-	93.0%
Federal-	7.0%
Special Revenue-	0.0%
Total-	\$13.3m

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED:** 80,069 for FFY 07-08

**CONTACT OFFICE 1:** Independent Living Services Unit

**TELEPHONE:** (518) 474-2925

**FAX:** (518) 473-6073

**PROGRAM:** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

**DESCRIPTION:**

IDEA makes it possible for states and local educational agencies to receive federal funds to assist in the education of students with disabilities ages 3-21. In order to remain eligible for federal funds under the law, states must have policies and procedures in effect that comply with federal requirements including, but not limited to, policies and procedures that demonstrate:

- All children and youth with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, will receive a free appropriate public education at public expense.
- Education of children and youth with disabilities will be based on a complete and individual evaluation and determination of eligibility.
- An individualized education program is developed, reviewed and revised for every child or youth found eligible for special education.
- To the maximum extent appropriate, all children and youth with disabilities will be educated in the least restrictive environment and a continuum of alternative placements will be available.
- The rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected through procedural safeguards.
- Children suspected of having disabilities are located through child find procedures.
- Confidentiality of personally identifiable information will be ensured and protected.
- The State has appropriate professional requirements that establish suitable qualifications for personnel providing special education and related services.

The federal government allocates funds to New York State based on a census of children ages 3-21 in the State. A portion of the funds is allocated to schools based on the total school enrollment and the State's poverty rate.

Each year, special education services are provided to approximately 63,039 students with disabilities, ages 3-5 and 390,202 students with disabilities, ages 6-21. Federal discretionary dollars support initiatives such as statewide training and resources networks, parent centers, general oversight and monitoring activities, quality assurance and federal compliance.

**REGENTS GOALS:** 3; 4; 5; 6

**AUTHORITY:**

**Federal Statute:** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B, 601-682, as amended, PL 108-446

**Federal Regulation:** Title 34 CFR 300

**State Statute:** Article 89, Article 81

**State Regulation:** 8NYCRR Parts 200 and 201

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

State-	0.0%
Federal-	100%
Special Revenue-	0.0%
Total-	School Age Total (regular)=\$721.5M
	Preschool (regular)=\$33.2M

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED:** 453,241

**CONTACT OFFICE 1:** VESID Special Education Policy Unit

**TELEPHONE:** (518) 473-2878

**FAX:** (518) 473-5387

**PROGRAM:** Integrated Employment

**DESCRIPTION:**

Through the passage of Chapter 515 of the Laws of 1992, integrated employment, including supported employment, is implemented through a collaborative interagency process. This legislation designated Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) as having the primary responsibility for the coordination of program development and administration of integrated employment. VESID accomplishes this in collaboration with its interagency partners through innovative approaches directly with business, industry and labor and through enhancements in the provision of supported employment services. Collaboration with interagency partners to implement the State's workforce development efforts is also critical.

Integrated Employment – Workforce Development and Marketing

The primary focus of VESID's Workforce Development and Marketing is to target specific business sectors, industries, trade associations, and labor unions to accomplish the following:

- Enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Provide technical assistance to aid business and industry in recognizing the value of people with disabilities as valued employees and a powerful consumer segment.

Supported Employment

Supported employment provides job-based training and support services to individuals with the most significant disabilities to enable them to obtain and maintain competitive employment in integrated work settings in the community. For administrative and funding purposes, the Program is conceived as having two phases: intensive and extended services. Intensive services assist individuals to obtain jobs and become proficient in the performance expectations of an employment setting. Extended services provide individuals with the services and supports needed for the long-term retention of their employment upon completion of their intensive training phase. Funding for extended service requires coordination with the Office of Mental Health (OMH) and the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD).

**REGENTS GOALS:** 4; 5; 6

**AUTHORITY:**

- Federal Statute:** Rehabilitation Act  
**Federal Regulation:** 34 CFR Parts 361, 363  
**State Statute:** Education Law Section 1004  
**State Regulation:** 8NYCRR Parts 246 and 247

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

State-	92.0%
Federal-	8.0%
Special Revenue-	
Total-	\$16.5 m

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED:** Extended - 4,500; Intensive - approximately 5,000 a year with 3,000 at any given time

**CONTACT OFFICE 1:** Vocational Rehabilitation Operations

**TELEPHONE:** (518) 486-4031

**FAX:** (518) 473-6073

**PROGRAM:** New York State Schools for the Blind and for the Deaf

**DESCRIPTION:**

The New York State School for the Blind (NYSSB) at Batavia provides 12-month educational and residential services to students who are blind and have additional disabilities. NYSSB offers a day program along with a five-day residential option. Consideration for admission to the school is given to school-age students (5 - 21 years of age) who are blind, residents of New York State and who have an additional disability. A Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), acting in coordination with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) from the district of residence, reviews the individual evaluation conducted at the school, develops an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and determines the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The Program addresses The New York State Learning Standards and Alternate Performance Indicators for Students with Severe Disabilities.

The school conducts the annual registration of all students in New York State classified as legally blind for procurement of special media materials produced by the American Printing House. This annual census is used to determine New York State's eligibility for Federal Quota Funds used to purchase these specialized materials and textbooks in alternate formats. The school facilitates the purchase of these specialized products and also maintains and circulates a library of textbooks in large print and Braille to students throughout the State. It offers weekend and week-long short-term, skill-based programs to students classified as legally blind that attend programs in their local school district. The school circulates resource information, as needed, to school district personnel and to teachers of the visually impaired throughout the State. A variety of training opportunities are offered to district staff that provides services to students.

The New York State School for the Deaf (NYSSD) at Rome provides 10 and 12-month educational and residential services to students who are deaf. NYSSD offers a deaf infant program (birth to age 3) that provides home-based services, a day program and a five-day residential option. Consideration for admission to the school is given to students, ages 3 through 21, who are deaf and residents of New York State. A MDT, acting in coordination with the CSE from the district of residence, reviews the individual evaluation conducted at the school, develops an IEP and determines the LRE. The school offers an elementary unit that provides appropriate educational programs to students ages 3 through 13; a high school unit that provides educational services to students ages 14 through 21; an alternative education program that includes job and life skills training to transitioning students 14 through 21 years of age; and a Cochlear Implant Program, along with early intervention services for deaf infants under 3 years of age. NYSSD is proud of its wide array of after class activities and interscholastic sports teams.

**REGENTS GOALS:** 1; 3; 5; 6

**AUTHORITY:**

**Federal Statute:**

**Federal Regulation:**

**State Statute:** Education Law Sections 4301-4357

**State Regulation:** 8NYCRR Part 200

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

State- 0.0%

Federal- 1.2%

Special Revenue- 98.8%

Total- \$20.7 m

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED:** 56 NYSSB and 78 NYSSD = 134

**CONTACT OFFICE 1:** School for the Blind at Batavia

**TELEPHONE:** (585) 343-5384

**FAX:** (585) 344-5557

**CONTACT OFFICE 2:** School for the Deaf at Rome

**TELEPHONE:** (315) 337-8400

**FAX:** (315) 336-8859

**PROGRAM:** Readers Aid Program

**DESCRIPTION:**

Eligible students who are deaf, deafblind, or blind; are residents of New York State; and are matriculated in a degree-granting program may receive a monetary grant to employ readers, notetakers, or interpreters to provide access to information vital to their studies, enabling them to succeed in their academic undertaking. During the 2006-2007 academic year, 411 students attending 41 institutions of higher education received Readers Aid Program funds; 215 were deaf, 222 were blind, and 4 were deafblind.

**REGENTS GOALS:** 3; 4; 5; 6

**AUTHORITY:**

**Federal Statute:**

**Federal Regulation:**

**State Statute:** Education Law Section 4210

**State Regulation:** 8NYCRR Part 147

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

State- 100%

Federal-

Special Revenue-

Total- \$0.3 m

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED:** 421

**CONTACT OFFICE 1:** Program Development and Support Services

**TELEPHONE:** (518) 474-5652

**FAX:** (518) 473-5769

**PROGRAM:** Social Security Reimbursement Account

**DESCRIPTION:**

Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) assists eligible Social Security beneficiaries by providing them with work preparation, employment placement and counseling services. The Social Security Administration is authorized by law to pay for vocational rehabilitation services for Social Security Income (SSI) recipients who become employed and are no longer eligible for Social Security benefits. VESID files claims to receive reimbursement for each individual's rehabilitation services.

**REGENTS GOALS:** 3; 5

**AUTHORITY:**

**Federal Statute:** Federal Social Security Act

**Federal Regulation:**

**State Statute:**

**State Regulation:**

**FUNDING SOURCE(S):**

State-	0.0%
Federal-	100%
Special Revenue-	0.0%
Total-	\$4.8m

**NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED:** 400

**CONTACT OFFICE 1:** Fiscal and Administrative Services Team

**TELEPHONE:** (518) 486-4038

**FAX:** (518) 486-1027