



## WORKSHOP SUMMARY

**Event:** Learning Disabilities Strategies

**Date:** March 30, 1999

**Location:** Oregon

### Overview

Oregon has identified learning disabilities as one of the major, yet less obvious, barriers to self-sufficiency. As the state welfare caseload drops, a large percentage of the remaining caseload has been identified or suspected of having some type of a learning disability in addition to other barriers to self-sufficiency. Oregon district and partner staff are wrestling with how to identify clients with learning disabilities and how to package appropriate services to best meet their needs.

Since October 1996, the Seattle-King County Private Industry Council has coordinated a Department of Labor (DOL) funded Learning Disabilities Strategy council. Dan Fey is the learning disabilities coordinator for this project. In March of 1999, Oregon invited Mr. Fey to attend a JOBS Steering Committee meeting to present information on the King County Learning Disabilities project. Mr. Fey described the screening process regarding learning disabilities in use in King County, Washington and also provided a copy of this screening tool. Mr. Fey was very helpful in describing the various types of assistance provided to clients with learning disabilities.

As a result of this presentation, Oregon surveyed each of its districts to determine what learning disability screening processes were in use. The attached document demonstrates the wide range of learning disability services and processes in place. Districts are currently working on adjusting resources to allow more focus on the area of learning disabilities. The information from King County Learning Disabilities project will be invaluable in this process.

In June 1999, Oregon dedicated a staff person in the central office to focus 50 percent of their time on issues surrounding learning disabilities. This staff addition should assist the state of Oregon in developing a full range of resources on learning disabilities. Oregon also hopes to arrange training for AFS staff and partners. The learning disability specialist will work with a multi-agency workgroup in order to develop a statewide coordinated approach to identification, documentation, training and (where necessary) accommodation of learning disabilities. The anticipated results from this coordinated approach include:

- Accelerated basic and occupational skills gains
- Better employment retention
- Fewer drop-outs from classroom and employment settings
- Return on investment - As learning disabled adults become more able to gain, retain and increase family wage employment, there will be a decrease on the human investment support systems necessary.

**OREGON AFS DISTRICT INFORMATION ON IDENTIFYING AND SERVING TANF CLIENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES**

<b>AFS DISTRICT</b>	<b>SERVICE AREA *</b>	<b>SCREENING TOOL</b>	<b>PROCESS TO IDENTIFY CLIENTS</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION SERVICES</b>	<b>SERVICES PROVIDED</b>
District 1	St. Helens	No screening tool	Staff target clients with low BASIS scores and past educational behavior (e.g., IEP, level of difficulty experienced)	Clients are tested by Riverside Industries	Riverside Industries place clients in sheltered workshops
District 2	Washington County	No screening tool	AFS case managers identify clients through self-disclosure or observation of behavior	AFS case managers refer identified clients to Steps Program where they are evaluated by Tualatin Valley Centers	Case managers conduct follow-up with clients. Accommodations are made for students in GED (e.g. additional testing time or alternative test methods). Also, additional time is allocated with career placement specialists  No specialized case management services provided
District 2	North Cluster	No screening tool	Use BASIS scores to screen for learning disabilities and determine need for referral to PCC Testing Center	Upon referral, clients are tested at PCC Testing Center. Results are shared with the client, case manager, and instructor and appropriate accommodations are made depending on student needs	Clients can be placed in ABE and GED classes  No specialized case management services provided
District 2	East Cluster	No screening tool	GED staff identify clients who are not progressing in class and doing poorly on testing services	Staff refer clients doing poorly in GED class to an on-site (part-time) staff person for testing. Use Nancy Payne materials for Employability Track. Also use the contractor VRD when necessary	

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District 3	*	No screening tool	Case managers inquire about any known LD (e.g., being involved in an IEP or past testing) and also use BASIS and WNRD scores to identify potential LD	Once identified, clients are referred to services with Chemeketa	Disabilities specialist helps to set up accommodations and works with staff and students  No specialized case management is provided
District 4	Lebanon Branch	No screening tool	Staff identifies through client self-disclosure, through low BASIS testing scores, through observation (e.g., client requests help filling out an application)		Clients are referred to Adult Basic Education through prime or subcontractor.  No specialized case management for these clients
District 4	*	Use screening tool 2001 through OED	Screened only upon self-declaration. Screening process occurs when claim is entered, when reviewing a claim, or at time of self-declaration	No evaluation tool	Clients are referred to Vocational Rehabilitation. Vocational Rehabilitation provides specialized case management
District 4	Albany	No screening tool		No evaluation tool	
District 5	*	No screening tool	Only identify if IEP or psychological evaluation is present	The contractors - Lane Community College, VRD, and Goodwill - send clients to independent psychologists for assessment	

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District 6	*	No screening tool	Clients are identified through self-disclosure, by staff observations, or through peers - particularly during GED classes	Evaluations provided by the WOOLEY Center.	Use recommendations from the WOOLEY Center in writing their EDP's and make accommodations as needed. Services are provided by UCC and Project Literacy.  Specialized case management services are not provided
District 7	*	No screening tool	Clients are identified either through self-disclosure or staff interaction (i.e., observe behaviors that indicate difficulty reading, writing, or understanding)	Evaluation is through the Psychological Evaluation process or referral to the college, who uses SOI to determine strengths, abilities and learning style inventories	Individual counseling and discussion to better understand and overcome barriers
District 8	*	No screening tool.  Currently, working with Rogue Community College to develop and implement LD tools	Clients are identified either through self-disclosure or community partners (e.g., schools)	Case managers send clients to neuropsychologists for evaluation. Results are shared with case managers and staffed for appropriate services	Branches offer extra help to make sure clients understand paperwork. Clients have the option of working with Southern Oregon Goodwill (SOGI) or VRD. SOGI specializes in working with clients with disabilities to better integrate them into employment. Currently discussions around accessing more accommodation services are taking place

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District 9	*	No up-front screening tool.  Clients of the Life Skills component "Crossing the River" are assessed using the Nancy Payne Learning Inventory	Clients are identified by staff when clients exhibit certain behaviors, such as not being able to complete forms	When necessary, clients are referred to Vocational Rehabilitation for full diagnostic testing. Results are shared as part of staffing with client, case manager, and JOBS partners	AFS staff make referrals to Columbia Gorge Community College (CGCC) and other JOBS program partners for help in identifying and serving clients with barriers to self-sufficiency. The Nancy Payne Learning Inventory is administered by CGCC's Learning Assistance Coordinator  No specialized case management is provided
District 10	*	No screening tool		No formal evaluation process	Make referrals to contractors (i.e., SDS, SSI, VRD) to assist in identifying and serving clients with barriers to employment  Also work closely with schools to assist families. The district has scheduled a future training session on the "Cognitive Brain"
District 11	*	No screening tool	School counselors will attach a copy of an individual's IEP, when applicable, for students who are referred to Linkville Academy	No evaluation provided	No accommodations are offered

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District 12	*	The Learning Needs Inventory, developed at BMCC, is used for Adult Basic Skills Development Program participants		Testing is administered by BMCC Special Services Provider or the BMCC Learning Disabilities Diagnostician. Evaluations are also done by BMCC	Offers accommodations that give students equal access to the learning situation
District 13	Baker County	No screening tool	Clients are identified through SAGE and BASIS testing or may be identified by Life Skills class instructors	Staff often conduct psychological evaluations	Once identified, a client's plan is modified, the Invest Program is utilized, and staff work with schools or mental health programs. Staff also assist clients in applying for SSI
District 13	Pendleton	No screening tool	If LD is suspected, staff works with an instructor from the community college to get appropriate screening materials		Accommodations are made for individual tutors and books on tape to study for drivers licenses  Most classroom information is read aloud in class rather than expecting participants to read to themselves
District 14	*	No screening tool			No referrals are made specifically because of LD. Work closely with VRD when a client may qualify for services

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District 15	*	No up-front screening tool  LD specialist for specific vendors conduct screenings	Clients are identified by contractors -VRD or at Targeting Your Talents Initiative - which have on-site LD Specialists	LD Specialist conducts both screening and testing of clients	Basic Skills and Adult Basic Education clients are referred to the LD Specialist. The LD specialist conducts screening and testing, and then meets with clients at the conclusion. LD Specialist holds a multi-agency staffing for clients  Accommodations include oral presentation, audio tapes, guidance for client and staff on type of activities in which client would most likely be successful. No specialized case management is currently being provided

\* Specific service area not identified