

**PSC-ED-OSERS**

**Moderator: Paul Steenen**

**February 2, 2018**

**12:00 pm CT**

**Coordinator:** Good day everyone. Welcome and thank you for standing by.

As a reminder, all participants' lines are in a listen-only mode until the question-and-answer session. At that point, if you would like to raise a question, you may press the Star followed by the 1.

This call is also being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this point.

And now, I will turn the meeting over to your host, Paul Steenen. You may begin.

**Paul Steenen:** Good afternoon everybody. For some of you it's good morning. Thank you for joining us on today's call regarding the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Individual's Disabilities Education Act Web site.

We appreciate you taking the time to be on the call. We'll end this call by 1:30 Eastern Time.

On today's call, we will have Deputy Assistant Secretary Kim Richey and Ruth Ryder, OSEP Acting Director.

Before I turn it over to OSERS Deputy Assistant Secretary Kim Richey, I do want to stress that this is an off the record call for stakeholders. Any press on the call should email the press office at [press@ed.gov](mailto:press@ed.gov) if they have any questions or if they have follow-up after this call.

At this time, I'd like to turn the call over to OSERS Deputy Assistant Secretary Kim Richey.

**Kim Richey:** Thanks so much Paul. Hi everyone, good afternoon. As Paul mentioned, the purpose of our call today is just talk to you a little bit about the IDEA Web site and some plans that we have moving forward. Just in general, there're really three things that we would like to accomplish today. And we'd like to recap the events that have led OSERS and specifically OSEP to develop a new IDEA Web site.

We would like to discuss our plans for moving the site forward. And we would also like to solicit feedback from you as your suggestions or concerns specific to the IDEA Web site's next step.

We really appreciate you taking the time in joining in today. We appreciate you making this a priority. And obviously I just want to say that it is very important from my perspective that you all be engaged with us through this process as we look over the next three months of determining what will happen with the old outdated IDEA Web site.

So with that, I really look forward to hearing your input and I am going to hand it over to Ruth Ryder, our OSEP Acting Director to provide more information about today's call. Thanks again.

**Ruth Ryder:** Thank you Kim. Hi everyone. I'm sure you all are aware that we launched a new IDEA Web site in June. This decision came after the departments building the Legacy IDEA 2004 site which we call the Legacy site or [idea.ed.gov](http://idea.ed.gov).

The Legacy site experienced a prolonged outage last February due to technical issues. Even after the Legacy site went back online, the fact that this site was outdated both from a content perspective and especially from a technology perspective was really apparent. In addition, the Legacy site was on an external platform, it was not on the department's Web site.

Secretary (Divaz) at the time directed OSERS to expedite the development of a new updated Web site specific to the IDEA that could better serve our community.

OSERS began immediately to develop a new site on a more current, department hosted Web site platform.

As part of that effort, OSERS spent more than two months collecting feedback broadly from stakeholders that included parents, educators, administrators, service providers and advocates for infants and toddlers, children and youth with disabilities and their families as to what they would like to see on a new site.

It's important to emphasize that the launch of the new Web site did not impact or change the supports of services infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities receive under the IDEA. Its sole purpose was to provide a site with updated information that was already available related to IDEA and to make it a more user-friendly site.

When we launched the new site in June, the site featured the most current statutes and regulations. The Legacy site - the old site was based on the 2004 IDEA reauthorization while the new site updated the statutes and regulations to reflect the December 2015 statutory amendments that were made to the IDEA based on the reauthorization of the ESEA as the Every Student Succeeds Act. And also the June 2017 technical changes to the IDEA regulations that were based on the ESSA.

The new site also centralized IDEA related documents. Prior to June, documents related to the IDEA such as policy documents, state performance plans and annual performance reports and annual reports to Congress were located on another Web site away from the statutes and regulations. Where we

didn't bring over or haven't yet brought over content, we provided links to where people could find that information.

In addition we centralized documents to allow for an updated for a search function. While the Legacy site had a search function co-locating statutes, regulations, policy resources and more all on the new Web site has enabled users to search across all of these areas at one time.

We also updated topic areas. The Legacy site had a more limited topic area list. We provided updated topics on the new sites and remove those that were no longer applicable or that were outdated due to the previously mentioned December 2015 amendments, such as the section on highly qualified teachers.

We also created stakeholders specific resources. We provided more overviews and resources for specific groups such as families, educators and service providers and grantees.

Additionally, OSERS has continued to collect feedback on the new site from stakeholders via our blog and email and phone calls. And we continued to incorporate this feedback. And we thank you for all of your feedback and appreciate your ongoing support as we continue to add content and features to the site.

With updated content, more features and more centrally located information about IDEA from the department, the new IDEA Web site has become the department's primary IDEA resource and has taken the place of the outdated Legacy site.

As such, moving forward, we will be automatically redirecting users who go to the outdated Legacy site which hasn't received significant updates in more than six years to the new IDEA Web site.

The purpose of this effort is to ensure users access the most updated information, so they do not rely on the outdated Legacy site just because they have it bookmarked or it still appears as a top hit on a search engine like Google or Bing.

Starting April 30, 2018, users will still be able to type [idea.ed.gov](http://idea.ed.gov) into their browser, but the [idea.ed.gov](http://idea.ed.gov) will automatically redirect them to the new Web site which is [sites S-I-T-E-S.ed.gov/idea](http://sites.s-i-t-e-s.ed.gov/idea). That's the URL for the new Web site.

But before we automatically redirect users from the Legacy site to the new site, I want to discuss our plans for communicating this redirect and request your feedback and suggestions as we want to ensure that we make this as smooth of a transition as possible for all of those involved.

First, the automatic redirect will occur April 30, after a three-month notification to the public that there will be a redirect from the Legacy site to the new site. So after a lengthy discussion with our office of the Chief Information Officer who does our technology work, it was noted to us that three months is kind of the optimal amount of time to give notification when there is going to be a change such as this.

Second, we're going to work with our grantees to request that any links they still have that go to the Legacy site on their Web site to be updated to reflect resources and pages available on the new site.

Third, we will launch a webpage on the new IDEA Web site that is specific to the Legacy site and contains the resources that were on the Legacy site for historical purposes only. The Legacy page will be on the new site and it will be clearly marked to indicate that some of the resources are outdated and only included on the new site for historical reference. I want to note here that all of

the material on the Legacy site will be retained. Nothing will be totally eliminated. You will be able to access it.

Fourth, while the landing page on the Legacy site currently indicates the content in many cases is outdated, we will update the notification on the Legacy site to inform people the site will be redirected on April 30, 2018 and that they should bookmark the new IDEA Web site.

This, we will continue our communication efforts throughout the next three months by sending notifications as well as follow on reminders to those who are subscribed to OSERS and OSEP newsletters and GovDelivery blast.

Working with our counterparts throughout the department to request, they placed notifications in their newsletters and posting frequent reminders of the automatic redirect through OSERS Twitter account.

Sixth, we will release a series of materials such as short webinars to explain aspects of the new site and site functionalities to help people become more acquainted with the new Web site.

Finally and probably our most important step, we will continue to ensure that staff is available to support stakeholders via email, phone or on our blog so that stakeholders can continue to provide feedback and continue to ask OSERS questions about locating content on the new Web site if they are having a problem identifying comparable resources on the new site.

Shortly after this call, the OSERS blog will be open for comments and we will start our process of notifying the public through a GovDelivery blast which you can subscribe to through the IDEA Web site, under "News and Media".

We will also place a notification with links to the blog and text from the GovDelivery blast to the IDEA homepage under “IDEA Updates”. You can also access the blog from the blog icon on the IDEA Web site.

I also want to note that in addition to ensuring that the content available to our customers is the most up-to-date and the most easily accessible, we have also been asked by the Department’s Office of the Chief Information Officer to bring any external Web site content into the department’s Web site. So we are also being responsible—responsive to our OSIO and ensuring that our—all of our security settings are as high as possible.

I know that was a lot of information and I appreciate you sticking with me as I explained the automatic redirect and the timelines and a quick update of all of the great resources that are on the new IDEA Web site.

I would now like to open the call for any questions and feedback that you may have regarding the Web site. Operator, could you please facilitate questions?

**Coordinator:** Thank you ma’am. We will now begin the question-and-answer session. Once again, if you would like to ask a question, please press the Star followed by the 1 and please make sure to unmute your phone and record your name slowly and clearly when prompted. Your name is required to introduce your question. To cancel your request, you may press the Star-2. One moment please while we wait for the questions to queue up.

To those who would like to ask a question over the phone, you may press the Star followed by the 1 and please record your name when prompted.

Thank you.

As a reminder to all participants who would like to ask a question over the phone, you may press the Star followed by the 1. Thank you.

Once again to all participants who would like to ask a question, you may press the Star followed by the 1.

**Kim Richey:** Hi everyone. This is Kim Richey again. It does not appear that we have anyone on the line today that has any specific questions. I do want to thank Ruth and everybody on the team here in OSEP for really putting such thought and hard work into our efforts to really move forward with this redirect.

And I want to thank you all again for joining us this afternoon and taking the time to really discuss where we are moving forward with our efforts to redirect the IDEA Legacy Web site.

I do really want to reiterate that if you have any questions or comments as we move forward, please visit the OSEP blog which will be posted shortly after the end of our call today at [site.ed.gov/osers](http://site.ed.gov/osers).

Additionally, if you have any child specific issues, please be sure to content your OSEP state customer representative. And as you well know, you can find links to OSEP's state contacts on the contacts page or an icon on the IDEA Web site.

As I mentioned at the beginning of the call, we want this to—we want you all to be informed and to be involved in our work and in our processes moving forward. And so please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or comments or concerns.

So thank you again for joining us today. Have a great afternoon and a good weekend. Thanks again.

**Coordinator:** Thank you speakers. And that concludes today's conference. Thank you all for joining. Participants, you may now disconnect.

**END**