

***Interagency  
Collaborative  
Team***

**Annual Report**

**FY 11**

**July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011**

*February 2012*

**Interagency Collaborative Team  
Annual Report for FY 2011  
July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011**

The Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) is authorized in 14 Del. Code 31 Section 3124. The purpose of the ICT is to develop a collaborative interagency approach to service delivery for children and youth with disabilities who present educational needs that cannot be addressed through the existing resources of a single agency. In addition to planning for individual children, the Team identifies impediments to collaborative service delivery and recommends strategies to remove them. The Team consists of the following members as established in legislation:

Susan Cycyk, Director, Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services, DSCYF  
(Harvey Doppelt, designated representative)

Vicky Kelly, Director, Division of Family Services, DSCYF  
(John Bates, designated representative)

Carlyse Giddins, Director, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services, DSCYF  
(Susan Burns, designated representative)

Jane Gallivan, Director, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, DHSS  
(Warren Ellis, designated representative)

Kevin Huckshorn, Director, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, DHSS  
(Valerie Zeller, designated representative)

Ann Visalli, Director, Office of Management and Budget  
(Patrick McKeon, designated representative)

Russell Larson, Controller General  
(Michael Morton, designated representative)

Mary Ann Mieczkowski, Chair, Director, Exceptional Children Resources Group, DOE

Linda Rogers, Associate Secretary, Teaching & Learning Branch, DOE

In addition, the ICT Coordinator, Department of Education's Exceptional Children Resources Group, coordinates and attends all meetings and completes all ICT related work. Representatives of the responsible school district, the parent/guardian, and other people, who work with and have knowledge of individual cases, are invited to participate in the Interagency Collaborative Team case review meetings.

Under legislation (14 Del. C. §3124), the ICT is responsible to review all initial and renewal Unique Alternative applications prior to approval by the Secretary of Education. The ICT reviews existing assessment information and proposed educational plans, makes recommendations for alternative treatment plans as necessary, and insures coordinated interagency delivery and funding of services.

The legislation also mandates that a report is prepared annually to summarize the work of the ICT and provide information on the items reported in the previous year's Annual Report. The report is to be submitted to the Governor, Budget Director, President Pro-Tempore, Speaker of the House, and the Controller General in February 2012.

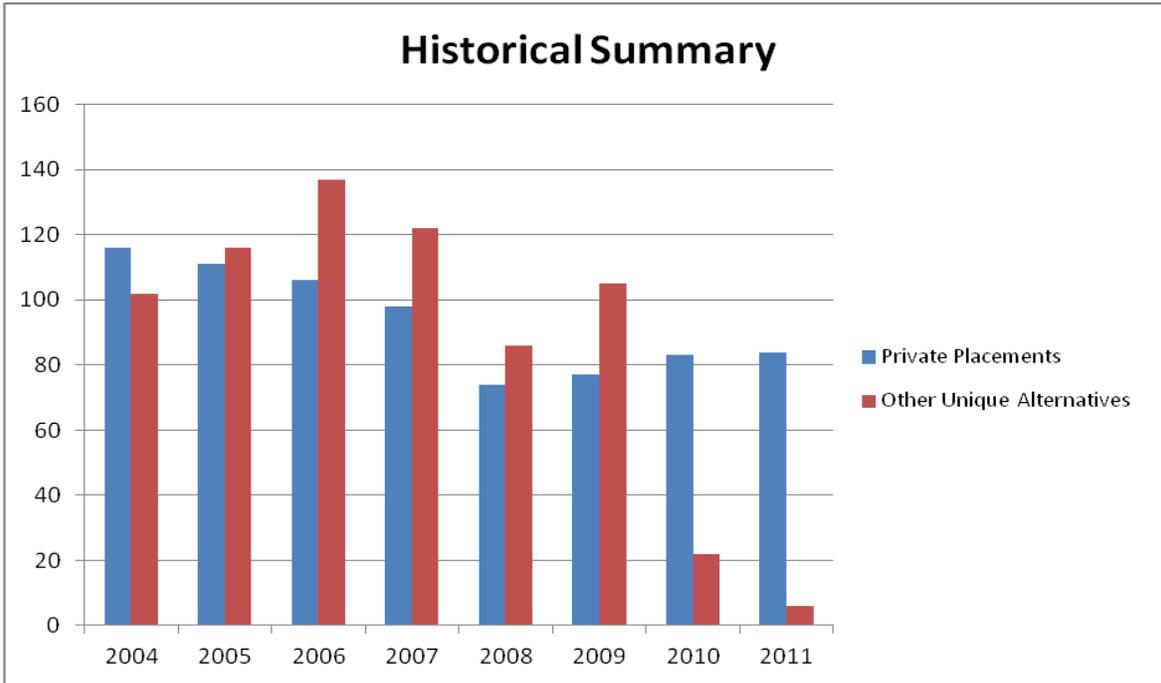
### **Interagency Collaborative Team Procedures**

The Interagency Collaborative Team meets monthly to review Unique Alternative applications and bi-monthly in June and July to review renewal applications. The ICT reviewed 32 new applications during FY 2011. Private placements, including the newly approved applications, totaled 84. There were an additional six students who were approved for Unique Alternative services of one-on-one teacher or special education paraprofessional support. In all, 90 students received services through Unique Alternative funding during FY 2011. The following chart summarizes the ICT approval activities from FY 2004 through FY 2011.

### **Historical Summary of Unique Alternative Services**

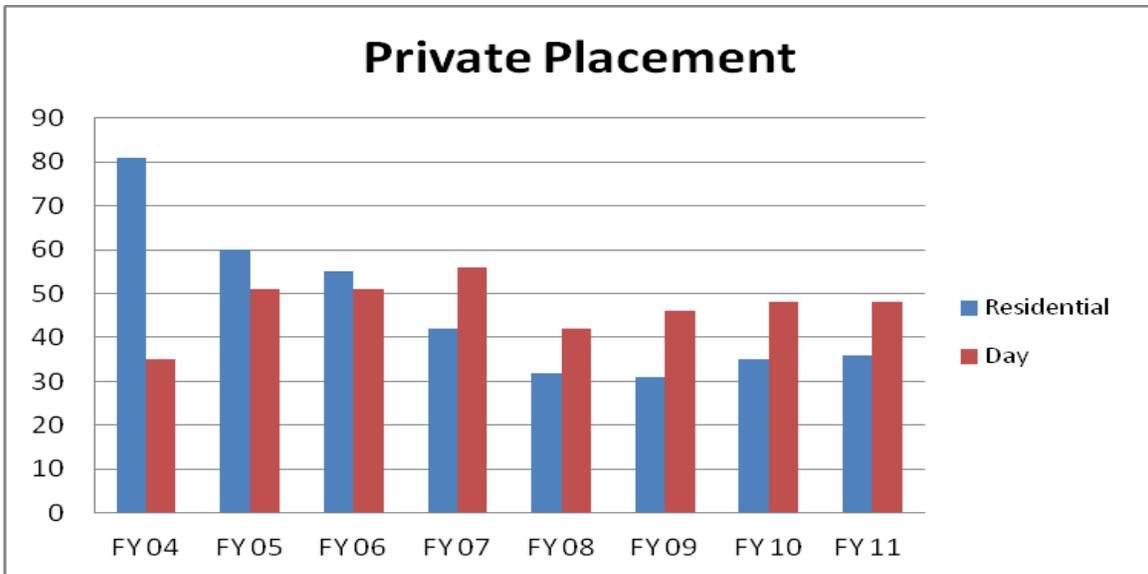
	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11
<b>Total # of new cases reviewed</b>	69	85	87	77	61	58	46	32
<b>Total # private placements</b>	116	111	106	98	74	77	83	84
<b>Total # Other Unique Alternatives</b>	101	115	137	122	86	105	22	6
<b>Total Served 7/1 – 6/30</b>	217	226	243	220	160	182	105	90

## Summary of Unique Alternative Service Types



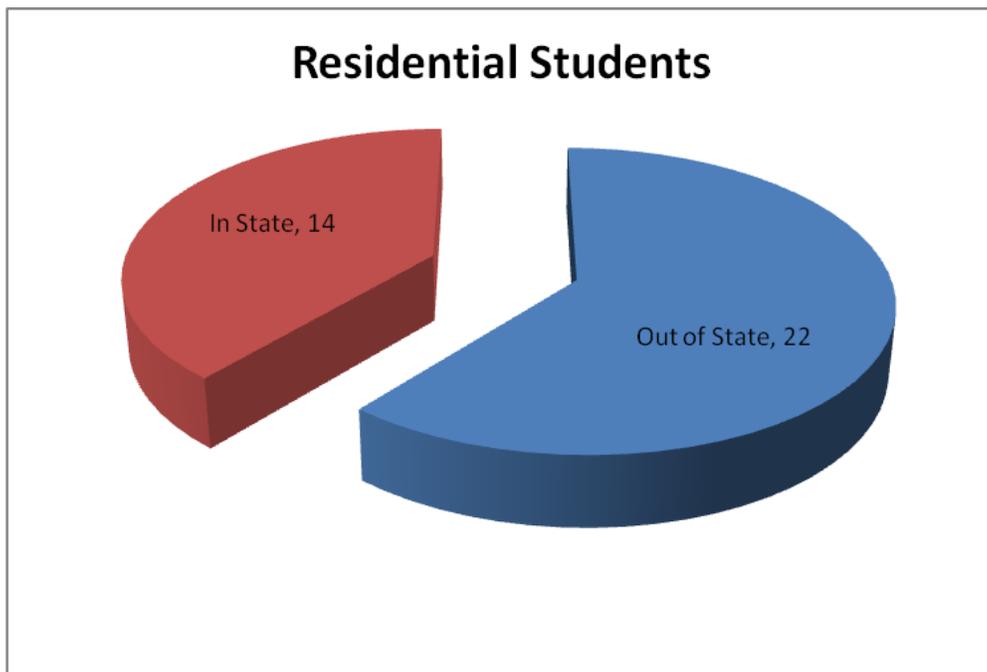
The total number of students served in residential programs during FY 2011 was 36, which is one more than in FY 2010. The number of students served in day programs remained stable with 48 students in private day programs during FY 2011. In addition, during FY 2011 six students received other Unique Alternative services through one-on-one staffing support compared to 22 students in FY 2010. This type of support has decreased significantly over the past two years due to the statewide expansion of the Needs-based Funding System.

Despite the services provided by the Needs-based Funding System, a small number of students have needs or behaviors so severe that they required a teacher and a special education paraprofessional in order to be educated in their classrooms. The paraprofessionals were funded through the Needs-based Unit but the teachers were funded by the ICT. Within this group, two students from Delmar were educated in Maryland and, therefore, not supported by the Delaware Needs-based Funding System. Their special education paraprofessional was provided through Unique Alternative Funding. During the course of FY 2011, one of these students required a more restrictive setting and moved from the district school to a residential setting.



### Residential Services

Through collaboration with the Local Education Agencies (LEA) and families, the ICT attempts to provide residential services to students as close to their homes as possible. The following chart illustrates the number of students (n = 14) served in state at the AdvoServ Program in Bear, Delaware and the number of students (n = 22) served in out-of-state programs. Two of the out-of-state programs, Benedictine School and Shorehaven, are located close to Delaware in neighboring Maryland counties and served 50% (n = 11) of the out-of-state students.



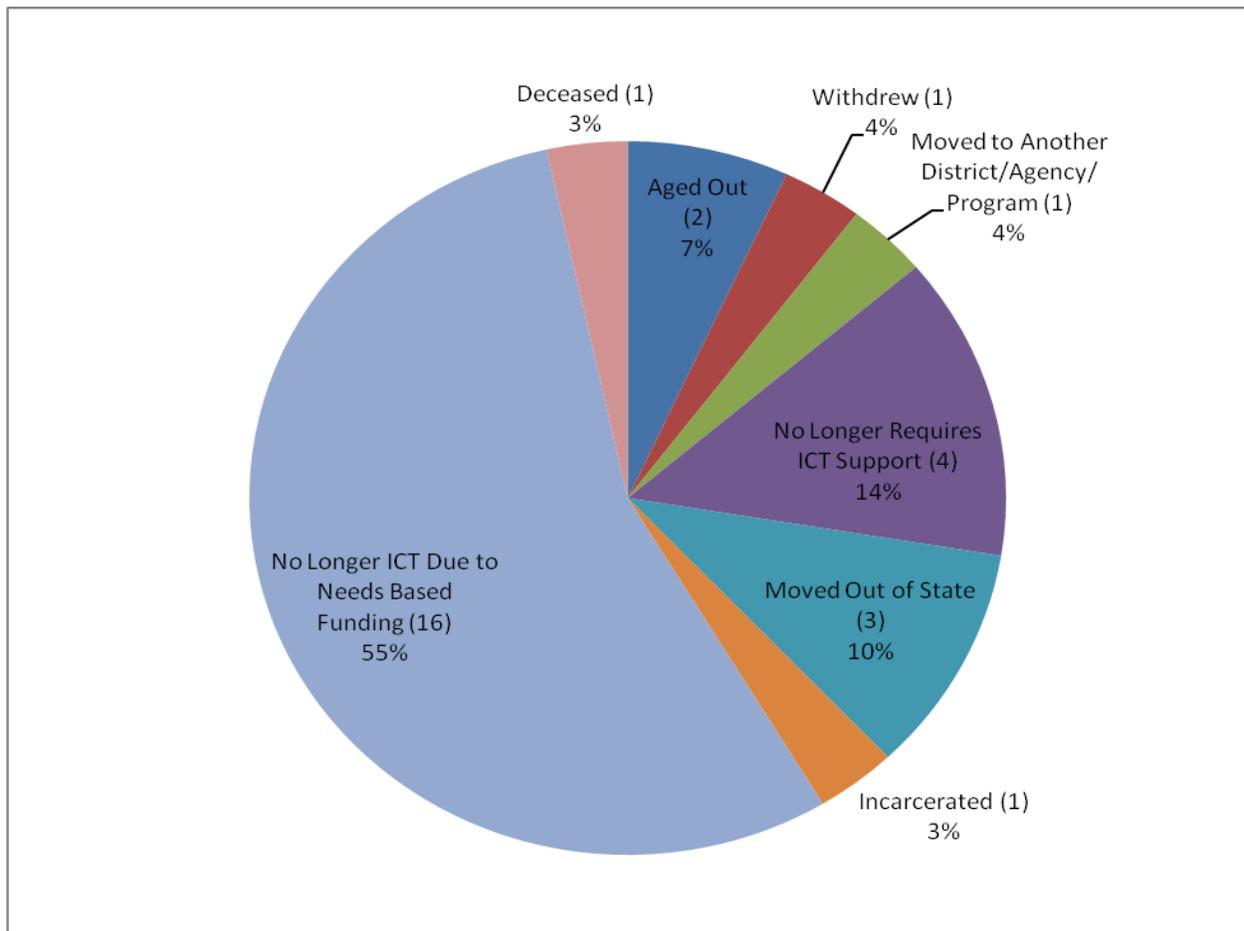
### Point-in-Time Data

New student placements occur at various times across the fiscal year; therefore point-in-time data are provided to represent a snapshot of out-of-state residential placements. On January 15, 2011, 17 students were served in out-of-state residential facilities. Seven students were served within one hour of their homes at Shorehaven in Elkton, MD or Benedictine School in Ridgely, MD. An additional 10 students received services in placements significantly distant from their homes.

### Unique Alternative Service Renewal and Discharge Processes

At the end of each school year, the ICT Coordinator provides each district with a list of children in the district receiving Unique Alternative service funding. The district is then responsible for preparing information for the ICT to review in order to approve continuation of services through Unique Alternative funding. The district is also required to notify the ICT coordinator when students will be discharged from Unique Alternative services, along with an explanation. The following graph summarizes the number of students who exited Unique Alternative services and the corresponding reasons.

### Exited Students



## **Student Discharge Summary**

Students exit ICT supported Unique Alternative services for numerous reasons that include: the level of service is no longer required, families move out of state, students withdraw from the education system, or students age out once they reach 21 years of age. A major factor in the reduction of Unique Alternative services was the expansion of the Needs-based Funding System.

Since June 30, 2010, all Delaware local education agencies and students participated in the Needs-based Funding System. The majority of students who previously received Unique Alternative funding because they required individual support were categorized as complex and services were provided through the Needs-based Funding System. This resulted in a sharp, downward trend in the number of students supported by Unique Alternative funding as represented in the summary table on page 2, *Historical Summary of Unique Alternative Services*. For FY 2011, 16 students exited ICT services and were provided services through the Needs-based Funding unit.

Four students made significant progress and no longer required the intense level of support provided through the ICT, three students moved out of state, and two students aged out of special education services at 21 years of age. It is important to note that students who age out typically continue to need specialized living and work environments provided through the adult system. In each of the following categories, the count of exiting students was one: student was deceased; student moved to another district, agency, or program such as a Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health treatment facility; student was involved in juvenile justice and incarcerated; or student was withdrawn from school.

## **Unique Alternative Student Population**

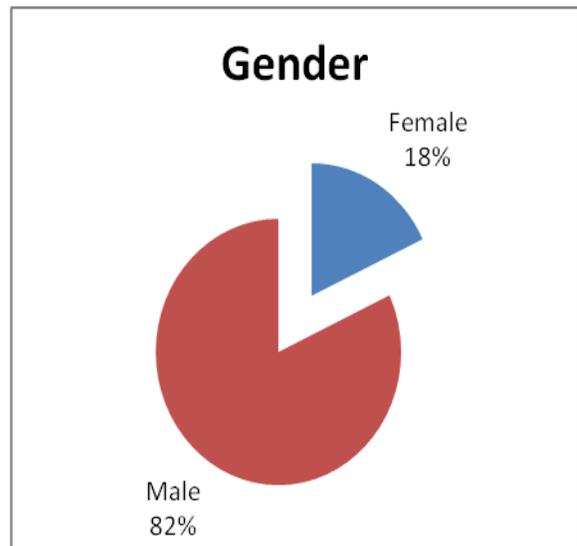
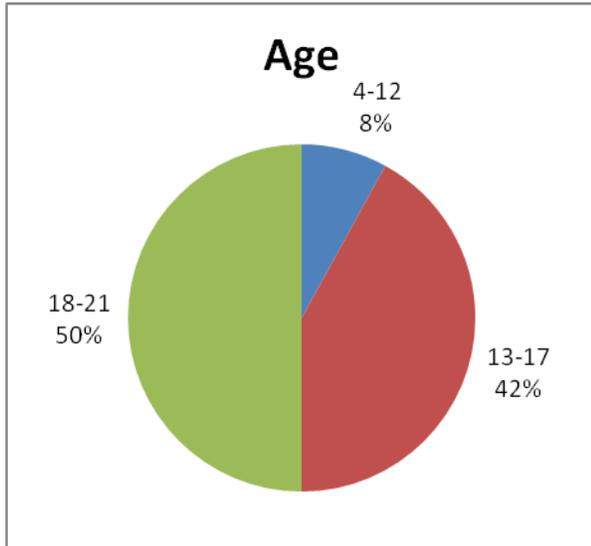
During FY 2011, the ratio of boys to girls remained stable. The number of students in the 4-12 and 13-17 ranges decreased slightly in that both categories were reduced by two students from FY 2010 to FY 2011. There were five more students in the 18 – 21 year range, which is likely the result of the 17 year old students moving into the next age group. The reduction of one-to-one teacher and paraprofessional approvals through the ICT process most likely contributed to the decrease in the younger population.

The following chart and graphs provide demographic information for the students served by the ICT during FY 2011.

### Age and Gender of Unique Alternative Students

FY 2011	Gender			Age		
	Male	Female	Total	4-12	13-17	18-21
Residential Placement	27	9	36	0	16	20
Day Programs	43	5	48	2	21	25
Other Unique Alternatives	4	2	6	5	1	0
Totals	74	16	90	7	38	45
Percentages	82%	18%		8%	42%	50%

### Age and Gender of Unique Alternative Students



### Unique Alternative Placements and Costs

There were 10 residential facilities and eight day programs in use to serve Delaware Unique Alternative students during FY 2011. The following information shows a range of costs for both residential and day programs. The costs represent basic tuition and do not include transportation or individual supports that some students with severe behaviors need in their private program.

#### High Cost

#### Low Cost

Residential Placement	Walden School For the Deaf Framingham, MA \$245,493	Benedictine School Ridgely, MD \$83,565
Day Programs	Devereux Cares Downingtown, PA \$88,000	AdvoServ Bear, DE \$68,115

### Agency Involvement

The children and youth supported through Unique Alternatives Funds present a broad range of disabilities that are severe and complex. Often these students have multiple disabilities that contribute to challenges in the home and community, in addition to the school setting. For these reasons, some students receive services from multiple agencies. The following chart summarizes the interagency involvement necessary to meet the needs of some of the students who are served in residential and day programs through the ICT.

### Interagency Collaboration

Division	Number Involved	Shared Funding
Prevention & Behavioral Health	23	5
Family Services	5	2
Youth Rehabilitative Services	1	
Developmental Disabilities	18	9
Substance Abuse & Mental Health		
Medicaid *	2	

\*This includes children placed at Voorhees Pediatric Center, a skilled nursing facility funded by Medicaid. DOE funds educational costs from Bancroft Education Services.

## **Gaps in Services**

Children and youth with severe disabilities, mental health concerns, and significant behavioral needs present unique challenges to schools and families. Gaps in services that support families and children in their homes and communities continue to exist. This has contributed to an increasing number of students' placements in residential settings by multiple agencies. Often these students can be provided an appropriate education within the local schools, but their mental health or behavioral needs prevent their ability to remain in their homes with existing resources.

The cost to any one agency to support these residential placements is prohibitive and a drain on current resources. Discussions across agencies to address these concerns and identify solutions that are cost effective are ongoing. The ICT Chair and Coordinator continue to participate in these discussions; however the provisions of Delaware Code are specific in their requirements. That is, Unique Alternative funding can be sought when an Individual Education Program (IEP) team finds that an eligible child with a disability cannot benefit from the regularly offered free appropriate public educational programs which include placement in regular classes, special classes, or special schools. Further, the IEP team and the Department of Education must determine that no school district or other state agency has a suitable free and appropriate program of education for the particular child with a disability. Thus, the presenting problem of providing services and financial support for residential placements when students can be appropriately served in a Delaware public school continues to be unresolved.

## **Major Activities of the Interagency Collaborative Team**

This section highlights the major activities related to the ICT during FY 2011.

1. The ICT Coordinator and the Education Associate for Transition Services met with AdvoServ staff as a follow-up to previous case reviews. AdvoServ Program staff agreed to strengthen those parts of the program that were identified, specifically vocational services for older students. This program was reevaluated in April, 2011 and approved as a non-public school eligible to serve students with disabilities, once students are approved through the ICT.
2. The ICT Coordinator served as a liaison to school districts, charter schools, other agencies, and private school programs to identify appropriate services for students. Problem-solving consultations regarding specific cases and referral information about community agencies were provided to districts when requested.
3. On-site visits were conducted by the ICT Coordinator at four schools in use, or for potential use, by the ICT.
4. The ICT Chair and Coordinator participated in interagency meetings across the year to explore solutions to agencies' increased need to place students in residential settings,

unrelated to LEAs' ability to provide appropriate education services. These efforts are ongoing.

5. The ICT Coordinator served on the Child Protection Advisory Council and Child Death Commission as part of the education subcommittee. Training modules regarding enrollment and registration of children in foster care and the educational surrogate parent program were completed.

If you have any questions about this report or would like more information on the Interagency Collaborative Team and its activities, please contact:

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