

# programs for the handicapped

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69-12

## National Center on Educational Media and Materials for the Handicapped P. L. 91-61

On August 20, 1969 the President signed Public Law 91-61 which provides for the establishment of a National Center on Educational Media and Materials for the Handicapped. Public Law 91-61 amends an earlier law, P. L. 85-905, and authorizes the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to enter into an agreement with an institution of higher education for the establishment, construction and operation of a National Center on Educational Media and Materials for the Handicapped. This Center will provide a comprehensive program of activities to facilitate the use of new educational technology in education programs for handicapped persons.

The Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, in the Office of Education, will administer this new program.

### The Need for a National Center

Congress has long recognized that handicapped children have been deprived of adequate educational opportunities in the United States. Beginning in 1958 with the enactment of Public Law 85-905 and 85-926, Congress moved to provide legislation specifically designed to increase the availability and quality of education for handicapped children. With the enactment of the 1966 and 1967 amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, legislative authority for comprehensive Federal support for the education of handicapped children was established.

Dr. Edwin W. Martin, Acting Associate Commissioner of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, points out that the Federal Government has been committed to training teachers for handicapped children for nearly a decade and there are still far too few teachers available. The Bureau of Education for the Handicapped estimates that 320,000 additional teachers, speech pathologists, audiologists, and other specialists are needed. At present only about 85,000 specialists are available to serve handicapped children. Approximately 40 percent of the more than 5 million children in need of special education services are now receiving such services.

New ways are being sought to provide handicapped children with necessary specialized educational experiences. Continuing work with the Captioned Films for the Deaf Program (authorized under Public Law 85-905) has demonstrated that the proper use of instructional media and materials can contribute to the special educational needs of deaf children.

The success of the Captioned Films for the Deaf program led the Congress, in 1967, to expand that effort to provide instructional media for all handicapped children. However, the availability of materials under Public Law 85-905 has been severely limited by several problems: (a) shortage of trained, qualified personnel to develop such materials; (b) lack of central location for the design and development of special materials and media to meet the special educational needs of handicapped children; and (c) lack of centralization in locale for adapting media and materials presently in use or available for use in regular education programs for special use in programs for the handicapped.

The Bureau of Education for the Handicapped has been supporting 14 Instructional Materials Centers and 4 Regional Media Centers serving distinct regions throughout the country by demonstrating the usefulness of instructional materials in teaching the handicapped. (See map on page 3) The States and local communities are presently supporting additional Instructional Materials Centers. This activity indicates a wide recognition of the need for a national center to coordinate communications between various aspects of a comprehensive media and materials development and delivery system for making instructional media available to all handicapped children.

#### Role of the Center

The new Center will meet this need providing a continuing production source for special materials offering information as to what the balance should be between commercially available materials and specially produced materials developed through research. These can be produced and distributed by the Center or through arrangements with commercial producers or the National Audio Visual Archives.

The Center will be available to the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped as a centralizing agency for its many media activities. It can coordinate activities and provide the theoretical emphasis needed in the broad scale application of media to the needs of handicapped children. It could, for example, conduct studies to determine the effectiveness of media already developed for the deaf with other areas of the handicapped to avoid duplication of efforts with work designed to serve all areas of the handicapped.

The Center will play a specific role in developing material and media for the Model Secondary School for the Deaf, now in its early stages of development in Washington, D. C. The Center will be a central communication link in a system involving the following activities of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped: Regional Media Centers for the Deaf; Instructional materials Centers; the Educational Research Information Center project; Language Instruction to Facilitate Education; curriculum projects under way in research; and a distribution network for captioned films.

# Network of Instructional Materials Centers and Regional Media Centers



Thirteen Instructional Materials Centers (IMC's) and Regional Media Centers for the Deaf (RMC's) form a national network to serve special educators and related personnel.

☆ The symbol locates the 13 IMC's.

● The symbol locates the 5 Regional Media Centers on the map.

Approximately 145 Associate Centers are funded by State and local agencies.

▲ The American Printing House for the Blind, Louisville, Kentucky, serves as a national Instructional Materials Reference Center for the visually handicapped.

□ The Educational Resources Information Center on Exceptional Children (ERIC) in Washington, D.C., disseminates information related to IMC Network activities.

## Construction

As a result of experience obtained in the Captioned Films for the Deaf Program, the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped has found that construction of a specially designed facility is necessary for the production of highly specialized films, videotapes and audiotapes. In addition, proper storage space with humidity and temperature controls is needed for the storage of master films and tapes. The Center will provide a central storage facility for all materials available for use with handicapped children, with an adequate retrieval system to locate, on demand, specific materials or subparts.

The remodeling of existing buildings has generally proven to be unsatisfactory. Production studios require sound treatment, extensive special lighting, and high ceiling spaces which are not generally available. Even after such remodeling the technical results have often been of limited quality.

Space will be available in the Center for training of senior scholars, media specialists and professional personnel as well as teachers of handicapped children so that they may become skilled in the best techniques of instructional technology. The portion of the Center devoted to this activity will have the most flexible design possible so that model learning environments can be demonstrated.

## Inclusion of Profit Making Organizations

The Bureau of Education for the Handicapped has had the authority to contract with profitmaking as well as nonprofit organizations offering resources to perform specific tasks. The number of organizations capable of providing necessary research and development is limited. For this reason the Bureau cannot rely on the grant process which requires the submission of grant requests by organizations to the Office of Education. The Bureau must establish its needs and then contract with outside organizations for their completion. When the situation requires it, the Bureau historically has been empowered to enter into contracts with profit making organizations under authority given the Bureau in research legislation, as well as in the Captioned Films legislation.

## Section-by-Section Analysis of P. L. 91-61

P. L. 91-61 contains a single section which amends the Act of September 2, 1958 (Public Law 85-905), in three respects:

(1) Section 3 of the Act is amended by adding a new subsection (c). Subsection (c) provides for authority for the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to enter into an agreement with an institution of higher education for the purpose of establishing and operating a National Center on Educational Media and Materials for the Handicapped. Paragraph (1) of subsection (c) authorized the Secretary to enter into an agreement with an institution of higher education for the establishment and operation (including construction) of a National Center on Educational Media and Materials for the Handicapped, which will provide a comprehensive program of activities to facilitate the use of new educational technology in education programs for handicapped persons. Such activities shall include designing and developing, and adapting instructional materials, and such other activities consistent with the purpose

of the Act as the Secretary may prescribe in the agreement. Such agreement shall:

- (A) Provide that Federal funds paid to the Center will be used solely for such purposes as are set forth in the agreement;
- (B) Authorize the Center, subject to the Secretary's prior approval, to contract with public and private agencies and organizations for demonstration projects;
- (C) Provide for an annual report on the activities of the Center which will be transmitted to the Congress;
- (D) Provide for compliance with fair labor standards practices. Paragraph (2) of subsection (c) provides for recovery of payments in any case in which the facility ceases to be used for the purposes of the subsection or ceases to be owned by the institutions within 20 years after its completion.

(2) Section 2 of the Act is amended by adding a definition for the term "construction." For the purposes of the act the term "construction" means the construction and initial equipment of new buildings, including architects fees, but excluding the acquisition of land.

(3) Section 4 of the Act is amended to provide for an authorization of appropriations of \$12.5 million for fiscal year 1971, \$15 million for fiscal year 1972, and \$20 million for fiscal year 1973 and each year thereafter.

For additional information on this program contact the:

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