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ABSTRACT

Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 authorized the creation of sex desegregation assistance centers (SDACs) to provide local education agencies with technical assistance and training for improving sex fairness in education. This role was later expanded to include assisting local districts in implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. This document reports the results of a survey designed to obtain information on the role, function, and effectiveness of the SDACs, to determine the current need for sex desegregation assistance, to suggest future directions for civil rights assistance activities, and to identify areas for future research and investigation. The surveys were completed by all 11 directors of the SDACs and by 6 of the 10 regional office directors of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). The report focuses on the differing perceptions of the SDAC and the OCR directors, SDAC coordination with other agencies, SDAC evaluation and accountability, factors inhibiting provision of optimally effective services, and achievements in promoting sex equity. The researchers found needs for the services; for consistent administration, support, and federal funding; for coordination between SDACs and other agencies; and for a comprehensive, longterm evaluation of the program. (Author/PGD)

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SEX DESEGREGATION ASSISTANCE CENTERS (SDACs):

A SURVEY OF THEIR PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

by

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## ABSTRACT

How effective are sex desegregation assistance centers (SDACs), and what direction should federally-funded technical assistance and training take in the 1980s?

Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 authorizes the establishment of SDACs to provide sex desegregation assistance services to local education agencies (LEAs) across the country. These centers are responsible for helping school districts comply with Title IX (of the Education Amendments of 1972) and achieve sex equity in education programs and activities. A total of 11 centers are currently operating in the U. S. Department of Education's ten geographic regions.

This investigation used a survey methodology in which SDAC Directors were asked to respond to a questionnaire covering the following areas:

- role, function and effectiveness of SDACs
- the status of Title IX compliance and sex equity in their service region
- future directions for Title IV technical assistance and training in sex desegregation

Directors of the 10 regional offices of OCR (Office for Civil Rights), the enforcement agency for Title IX, were asked to complete a similar questionnaire.

Major findings focus on the SDAC and OCR Directors differing perceptions, the importance of SDACs coordinating with other agencies in providing services, SDAC evaluation and accountability, factors inhibiting the provision of optimally effective service and achievements in Title IX compliance and sex equity.

Conclusions and recommendations include the need for (1) sex desegregation assistance services; (2) consistent administration, support and funding from the federal government; and (3) coordination between the SDACs and other organizations. This was a preliminary investigation that identified areas of concern and areas for future study, including the need for a comprehensive, long-term evaluation of SDAC role, function and effectiveness.

SEX DESEGREGATION ASSISTANCE CENTERS (SDACs);  
A SURVEY OF THEIR PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

Background

The federal government has used several approaches to promote and insure equal educational opportunities in America's public schools. The Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education is charged with enforcing school district compliance with a variety of federal regulations (Titles VI and IX and Section 504)\*. Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act provides training, technical and financial assistance to local education agencies (LEAs) committed to promoting equal educational opportunities for students. The goal of these two complementary efforts, assistance and compliance, is intended to promote and ensure the implementation of federal civil rights regulations in America's schools.

One of the major assistance activities authorized under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is sex desegregation assistance centers (SDACs). These centers are charged with providing public school districts with technical assistance and training to implement sex desegregation and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Eleven regional centers currently serve local education agencies (LEAs) in 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territorial jurisdictions (see Table 1).

These centers were established as separate entities in 1978. Prior to that, beginning with the enactment of the Title IX implementing regulation in 1975, race desegregation assistance centers (then called general assistance centers - GACs) were responsible for expanding their activity to provide sex desegregation services. Separate centers for

\*Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

TABLE 1: Sex Desegregation Assistance Centers  
and Their Service Regions

Region I ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT	The Network, Inc. 290 South Main Street Andover, MA 01810
Region II NY, NJ, PR, VI	Consortium for Educational Equity Rutgers University - New Brunswick Federal Hall - Douglass Campus New Brunswick, NJ 08903
Region III DC, PA, DE, WV, VA, MD	The Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity The American University 3301 New Mexico Avenue, N.W., Suite 252 Washington, D.C. 20016
Region IV FL, GA, AL, MS, KY, TE, NC, SC	University of Miami School of Education and Allied Professions P.O. Box 248065 Coral Gables, FL 33124
Region V OH, IL, IN, MI, MN, WI	The University of Michigan School of Education 1036-54, School of Education Building Ann Arbor, MI 48109
Region VI TX, AR, OK, NM, LA	Stephen F. Austin State University Box 3010A SFT Station Nacogdoches, TX 75962
Region VII IA, NB, KS, MO	Kansas State University College of Education Manhattan, KS 66502
Region VIII ND, SD, CO, MT, UT, WY	Weber State College Ogden, UT 84408
Region IX CA, AZ	California State University/Fullerton 800 N. State College Blvd. Fullerton, CA 92634
Region IX* The Pacific	Far West Lab for Education Research and Development 800 N. State College Blvd. Fullerton, CA 92634
Region X AK, ID, OR, WA	Northwest Regional Education Laboratory 710 S.W. Second Avenue Portland, OR 97204

race and sex desegregation services were established because of a strong belief that school districts were not receiving appropriate sex desegregation services from the general assistance centers. There was a precedent for establishing separate centers because the national origin centers had initially been set up as separate from the race centers. Although other related activities have been funded under the same enabling legislation (grants to state departments of education, grants made directly to local education agencies and grants to universities for training institutes), the desegregation assistance centers (DACs) have received the highest levels of funding of any of the Title IV activities. In 1981-82 there are 15 race and 9 national origin centers serving the country as well as sex desegregation assistance centers (SDACs).

Although the role of the Office for Civil Rights in enforcing Title IX compliance has been examined in several studies, the only external evaluation of Title IV activities was conducted by The Rand Corporation in 1976,<sup>1</sup> prior to the establishment of SDACs. The Rand study was based primarily on the analysis of mail questionnaires from 140 Title IV projects and interview ratings from on-site interviews at 40 Title IV offices and 74 client districts. Also, interviews were conducted with persons administering the Title IV programs. Data gathered from GACs focused on two key variables, the GAC's organizational characteristics and its methods of interacting with district personnel. The study lists characteristics of the more effective GACs in light of these two variables.

The present study represents an attempt to investigate the nature, practices and future role of SDACs. Using a survey methodology, this

study had the following objectives:

- To assess the role, function and effectiveness of SDACs.
- To assess the current need for sex desegregation assistance.
- To suggest future directions for civil rights assistance activities.
- To identify areas for future research and investigation.

### Methodology and Sample

A questionnaire (see Appendix A) was used to collect data, and respondents completed the questionnaire via mail or telephone. The target sample included the 11 SDAC Directors, the 10 Directors of the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) regional offices, current and former Directors of the Equal Educational Opportunity Office in Washington, D.C. and 22 LEAs that have used SDAC services. All were to complete similar forms of the questionnaire so that responses from the different groups could be compared and contrasted.

All 11 Directors of the SDACs completed and returned the questionnaire; six of the 10 Directors of the OCR regional offices completed and returned the questionnaire; one additional Director, indicating a lack of knowledge of SDAC activities, returned a blank questionnaire. The remaining three OCR Directors did not return the questionnaire. No current or former Directors of the Equal Educational Opportunity Office, U.S. Department of Education, responded. Furthermore, the LEA portion of the study was dropped. Several of the responding SDAC Directors are new in their role and have been managing their centers for a very short period of time. Consequently, the SDAC Directors thought that the time span of

their operation has been too short to allow for comprehensive response from the LEAs they service.

The questionnaire covered three broad areas: 1) the role, function and effectiveness of SDAC services; 2) the status of Title IX compliance and sex equity in the service region; and 3) future directions for federally funded technical assistance and training services for sex desegregation in the 1980s. The survey consisted of both specific and open-ended questions.

Sample questions on the survey included:

1. What is the mission or purpose of your SDAC?
2. What do you see as your SDAC's greatest achievement?
3. What resources have you found most helpful in achieving your SDAC goals?
4. How could your SDAC be more effective?
5. Since passage of Title IX, what do you see as the area of greatest change in the school districts in your region?
6. What difference would it make in your region if no funds were available for SDACs?

A copy of the survey is found in Appendix A. The version of the questionnaire for OCR Directors asked similar questions as applicable.

A copy of this survey is included as Appendix B.

### Findings

The findings of the study are organized according to the following categories: (1) Directors' perceptions of the role, function and effectiveness of SDACs; (2) the status of Title IX compliance and sex equity; and (3) future directions for Title IV training and technical assistance



services. Data from the OCR Directors is reported along with that of SDAC Directors, as appropriate.

#### SDAC Role, Function and Effectiveness

Mission - Although phrased differently, the SDAC Directors' statements of their mission focused on helping school districts comply with Title IX and achieve sex equity. Sample mission statements include the following:

- To develop awareness of Title IX and assist districts in implementing quality education that is bias free.
- To provide technical assistance to school districts to comply with the law (Title IX) and then move beyond compliance to equity and then to quality education.
- To assist public school districts in achieving sex equity .... Long range goals call for a public school environment that models cultural pluralism, equitable treatment of all citizens, and a systematic and personal interdependence of both school and community.

In addition, some SDAC Directors included services provided either as part of their mission statement or as their mission statement, e.g., helping teachers, parents and community members recognize and counteract sex bias in the school curriculum; helping administrators develop and carry out plans which ensure sex-fair educational and employment practices.

The regional Directors of OCR stated the SDAC mission differently. They spoke of SDACs helping school districts comply with Title IX or eliminate sexually discriminatory policies and practices. They did not use the terms "sex equity" or "quality education" in any of their statements of the SDAC mission. One reported that the SDAC provided compliance related technical assistance in the areas of Title IX plus Title VI and Section 504.

Services - All 11 SDAC Directors reported providing either awareness and/or skill development services in the following areas:

- Implementation of Title IX and state laws prohibiting sex discrimination.
- Understanding the nature of sex bias and ways to avoid it in school policies and practices.
- Recruiting and employing women and men in areas in which they have been traditionally under-represented.
- Identifying and developing nonsexist management policies and practices.
- Developing nonsexist counseling materials and techniques.
- Creating nonsexist curriculum materials.
- Increasing parent, student and community understanding of and support for Title IX.
- Identifying federal, state, and other resources to assist in achieving their sex desegregation goals.

Although the wording is slightly different, these are essentially the authorized areas of service designated in the Title IV guidelines.<sup>2</sup> Two Directors added specific curriculum areas, such as vocational education and physical education, while another added working cooperatively with state departments of education (SEAs), other DACs, intermediate educational units and other organizations. Only one center reported that it did not provide services in one area, recruiting and employing women and men in areas in which they have been traditionally underrepresented.

Responses from the OCR Directors confirmed that SDACs provided services in all of the areas listed. However, there were six responses indicating that OCR Directors did not know whether the SDAC provided

services in the following areas:

- Recruiting and employing women and men in areas in which they have been traditionally underrepresented.
- Increasing parent, student and community understanding of and support for Title IX.
- Creating nonsexist materials.
- Identifying and developing nonsexist management policies and practices.

Methods of providing service - All SDAC Directors reported that their methods of delivering services included: (1) providing materials, (2) technical assistance through telephone or letter, (3) technical assistance provided in person, and (4) conferences, workshops and training. OCR Directors also reported that they saw SDACs using the same four approaches.

Responses of SDAC Directors reflected differing interpretations concerning the area of service, methods for providing service and the difference between awareness and skill development activities. For example, some SDAC Directors identified assessment of the extent of compliance with Title IX and setting up professional support groups for women administrators as methods of providing service. In another instance, although most SDAC Directors thought that it was possible to provide only awareness level service by letter and over the telephone, a few believed that skill development activities as well as awareness could be accomplished by letter or telephone.

Greatest achievement, disappointment and obstacle - In response to the question regarding the SDAC's greatest achievement, SDAC Directors responded with achievements in services provided and how these services were

provided. Their responses reflected achievements in vocational education, physical education and athletics, development and dissemination of nonsexist materials, setting up model approaches for nonsexist and multicultural education, developing support and assistance for the number and the effectiveness for women in administrative positions, skill development training activities and designing and implementing the Title IX assessment process. In the area of method of providing services, SDAC Directors stressed cooperative relationships with existing agencies, including race and national origin desegregation assistance centers. There was also mention of the importance of providing technical assistance over an extended period of time. The following are representative statements from SDAC Directors:

- Our success in vocational education is helping educators and parents see young people's potential for development. We help them see that opening up sex roles can broaden student potential. Moreover, expanding role options can be done without undermining the indigenous culture.
- Our greatest achievement is the capacity to render intensive technical assistance to individual school districts. We work with them over a long period of time in moving from compliance to equity to quality education for all.
- Our greatest achievement is a model for a multicultural approach to Title IX and sex equity. Although applicable to all school districts, we see this model appropriate for those with substantial minority populations where sex equity may be viewed as a white woman's issue.

OCR Directors emphasized the achievements of SDACs in conducting workshops for school personnel and providing technical assistance to LEAs found in non-compliance with Title IX. They also mentioned cooperative relationships in the field of vocational education, identifying nonsexist management practices, developing nonsexist curriculum,

conducting school desegregation studies, and distributing materials on Title IX, Title VI and Section 504.

In responding to the major shortcoming or disappointment of the SDAC, SDAC Directors' responses fell into three areas: methods of providing assistance, resources, and school district commitment. Under methods of providing assistance, they mentioned the inability to provide comprehensive long-range service due to funding uncertainty, not being able to coordinate with SEAs in providing service; and the fragmentation of sex, race and national origin equity efforts in the service region. In the resources category SDAC Directors mentioned lack of money, staff and time to provide needed services. Comments under school district commitment focused on lack of educator support for and understanding of the issue of sex equity in schools. Consider the following representative responses from SDAC Directors:

- Our biggest disappointment is that we cannot assure districts that we can provide comprehensive, long-range service. That forces them to make tentative plans because of the possibility of our being here today, gone tomorrow.
- In two states, there has not been adequate coordination with the SEA in providing service to LEAs. This has resulted in little, if any, activity in those states.
- There is lack of widespread understanding, support and fervor for the import and potential of sex equity among school personnel and community members.

Comments of the OCR Directors focused on cutbacks in money, staff and services and the lack of communication and coordination between OCR and the SDAC.

SDAC Directors' responses to the major problem or obstacle to providing technical assistance and training fell into the same three categories as the shortcomings or disappointments: methods of providing assistance, school district commitment and resources. Table 2 provides representative responses of SDAC Directors in these three categories.

Under resources the OCR Directors mentioned a decline in staff and services through cutbacks in funds; responses under methods of providing assistance focused on restrictive court interpretations of Title IX, lack of flexibility in how SDACs can enter a district and OCR's lack of involvement in disseminating information about SDAC services.

Evaluation - With 10 of the 11 Directors reporting, the most common form of evaluation reported was record keeping of services provided, i.e., the nature of the service rendered and to whom. (This is required by the U.S. Department of Education as part of each Title IV activity's final report.) Ten Directors reported evaluating conferences, workshops and training while seven evaluated materials disseminated. Evaluation of the other two methods of service delivery - technical assistance by telephone or mail and technical assistance provided in person - was less consistent than assessment of materials and training.

Three centers reported having evaluators who were gathering data regarding the long-term impact of the SDAC service. They indicated that these evaluators were looking for what changes school districts

TABLE 2: Major Obstacles to Providing Services  
(SDAC Directors)\*

\*n = 11 (with some Directors giving more than one response)

Resources		Methods of Providing Assistance		School District Commitment	
Type	Frequency	Comment	Frequency	Comment	Frequency
Staff competition for scarce resources	1	No coordination among the race, sex & national desegregation centers	1	School district perception that other educational needs are more important than sex equity	3
Lack of enough staff or money to travel; schools will not pay for released time	1	Lack of continuity & stability in the administration, purpose & funding levels from fed. gov't.	1	School district attitude: "We've done it; we're perfect and we don't need any help"	2
Lack of full time staff to fully develop relationships with SEAs & LEAs that are not "self-starters"	1	Problems in coordinating training activities with the unions	1	Schools seeing sex equity as extra work that they're reluctant to take on	1
Expensive travel and long distance telephone costs	1	Having to overcome reputation and service record of previous SDAC	1	Lack of widespread support and fervor for the potential of sex equity	1
		Uncertainty in funding that makes long-term planning difficult	1	School people lack the time and support for responding to sex equity	1
		Difficulties in building a network with school personnel	1		
		Indecisiveness on the part of OCR as well as mixed court rulings	1		
		Absence of a national public relations campaign to inform LEAs of SDAC services	1		16

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had made that appeared to be the result of a service provided by the SDAC. No center reported collecting statistical data such as changes in enrollment patterns of female and male students. Finally, no OCR Director responded to the evaluation component of the survey.

Contact with clients - In rating the degree of effectiveness of four listed strategies for gaining entry to a school district, SDAC Directors ranked sponsoring multi-district workshops to serve the needs of districts and/or to interest districts in long-term or in-depth services as 5.9 on a one to seven point scale, with one as low and seven as high. SDAC Directors rated directly contacting the district to request providing services as the second most effective strategy (5.8 on a seven point scale). (See Table 3.) Those strategies rated most effective were also those that the center Directors reporting as using most often.

TABLE 3: SDAC Director Responses on Strategies for Gaining Entry to School Districts

	Average Rating of Strategy Effectiveness on a 7-Point Scale (1 as high - 7 as low)	Number of Responses Indicating Frequency of Use (n = 11)*
Sponsoring multi-district workshops to serve the needs of districts and/or to interest districts in long-term or in-depth services	5.9	6
Directly contacting the district to request providing services	5.8	5
Being referred to a district by a compliance agency such as the Office for Civil Rights	4.9	1
Conducting minimum outreach, responding only to requests that come in	2.8	1

\*Some Directors marked more than one item.



Directly contacting a district was rated as "most frequently used" by six Directors and sponsoring multi-district workshops was ranked similarly by five Directors. One Director added that word of mouth was the most effective strategy for securing entry into a district and the one that leads to the most meaningful type of service.

In terms of service to school district personnel, both SDAC and OCR Directors reported that the populations receiving the most contact were: administrative and supervisory personnel, including Title IX coordinators; teachers; and counselors. Parents, community members, students and board of education members received significantly less contact than these groups. Responses of OCR Directors reflected less comprehensive knowledge of contact time for these groups.

Helpful Resources - In responding to an open-ended question concerning resources. SDACs had found most helpful, Directors mentioned professional associations and advocacy groups, SEAs and other Title IV projects most frequently. Next were Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA) projects and materials and school district personnel. Those resources mentioned least often were OCR, university resources and SDAC developed materials.

Status of Title IX Compliance and Sex Equity - Both SDAC and OCR Directors responded to a series of seven point scale questions (with one being low and seven high, regarding the status of Title IX and sex equity knowledge, skills, commitment and level of compliance with Title IX. (See Table 4.)

In each category - knowledge, skills, commitment and compliance of six role groups - the average ratings of the SDAC Directors are lower by at least one full point than those of the OCR Directors. That difference

TABLE 4: Perceived Status of Title IX Compliance and Sex Equity

	Averages of SDAC Directors (n=10) *	Averages of OCR Directors (n=6):
<b>A. Knowledge of sex bias and discrimination in education</b>		
Board of education members	2.7	3.6
Administrative/supervisory personnel	4.3	5.6
Counselors	4.1	5.5
Teachers	3.9	5.0
Community members/parents	2.6	4.0
Students	2.5	4.2
Average	3.4	4.6
 <b>Skills in eliminating sex bias and discrimination in education</b>		
Board of education members	2.0	2.8
Administrative/supervisory personnel	3.2	4.2
Counselors	3.3	4.3
Teachers	3.2	3.4
Community members/parents	1.8	3.4
Students	2.0	3.4
Average	2.6	3.6
 <b>Commitment to equal opportunity for females and males in education</b>		
Board of education members	3.0	4.0
Administrative/supervisory personnel	3.7	4.3
Counselors	4.2	4.5
Teachers	4.3	4.2
Community members/parents	3.0	4.6
Students	3.9	4.5
Average	3.7	4.4
Average of knowledge, skills, commitment	3.2	4.2
 <b>B. Average of knowledge, skills and commitment by role groups</b>		
Board of education members	2.6	3.5
Administrative/supervisory personnel	3.7	4.7
Counselors	3.9	4.8
Teachers	3.8	4.2
Community members/parents	2.5	4.1
Students	2.8	4.1
Average by role group	3.2	4.2
	(n=11)	(n=6)
 <b>C. Degree to which school districts have achieved compliance with Title IX</b>		
	2.7	4.2

exists, too, when averages are tallied for the knowledge, skills and commitment of each role group. The difference is smallest (1.0) in skills (2.6 to 3.6) and commitment (3.2 to 4.2), and greatest (1.5) in overall compliance (2.7 to 4.2).

Responding to the area of greatest change in Title IX compliance and sex equity since passage of Title IX, SDAC Directors mentioned greater opportunities for women in physical education and athletics. They were partially supported by OCR Directors whose responses emphasized the area of athletics as undergoing the greatest change. Vocational education and career education and awareness of the issues were also noted frequently by SDAC Directors.

Future Directions for Title IV Technical Assistance and Training - In responding to listed options concerning the most appropriate role that federally funded technical assistance should take in the 80s, eight of the 11 SDAC Directors preferred to continue the current program of separate DACs for race, sex and national origin. Some of the reasons Directors offered included:

- Separate centers should continue because of the urgent needs of the particular populations they serve. Where common issues exist there should be funds to implement coordination.
- Sex equity won't get the attention it deserves without separate centers. It requires different solutions to problems that are different.
- All three thrusts are covered without one becoming a major thrust over another when combined.
- Separate programs ensure survival.

No OCR Directors marked the option of continuing separate centers.

Five of the six responding preferred combining race, sex and national origin

DACs, returning to the concept of the general assistance centers (GAC) that existed prior to 1978. Here are some reasons they gave:

- GACs enable school districts to build a relationship with one organization that can provide assistance in all civil rights areas.
- Combining all civil rights issues into a GAC is more in line with OCR's system of technical assistance and prevents program fragmentation or inference that sex equity or race equity or disability equity is more important or less important than the other issues concerning civil rights in education.
- GACs enable school districts to build a relationship with one organization that can provide assistance in all civil rights areas.

Two SDACs concurred with the OCR preferences for combining race, sex and national origin centers. They gave the following reasons:

- Equity will have a broader base of political support if issues are combined. Resources would go much further. However, combining centers would require training and supervision, and all DACs are not ready for this.
- The splintering of centers provides less opportunity and incentive to coordinate services of race, sex and national origin in a single district.

One SDAC Director and one OCR Director marked the option of continuing to fund SDACs but with a different mission and scope of work. In explaining that answer, the OCR Director expressed a desire to continue the current program, but assign it to the OCR regional offices. In describing the different mission and scope of work, the SDAC Director cited the need to explore strategies to impact and service more citizens and school personnel, including the use of media development and dissemination and computer related activities as examples.

No OCR or SDAC Directors selected any of the other options listed on the questionnaire.

In responding to how SDACs could be more effective, the majority of SDAC Directors mentioned resources, such as money and staff. They also listed additional support including continuation funding, a coherent direction and purpose from the U.S. Department of Education and more assistance from OCR, SEAs, and the Department of Justice in disseminating information about SDAC services.

OCR Directors' responses to how SDACs could be more effective included upgrading the number of SDAC staff available to assist school districts; coordinating with OCR in planning and implementing programs; and combining race, sex and national origin centers into general assistance centers which provide a broader range of services.

In responding to the question "What difference would it make in your region if no funds were available for SDACs?" all 11 SDAC Directors concurred that elimination of Title IV funding would have a negative impact on efforts to achieve Title IX compliance and sex equity in their region. However, they varied in their assessment of the impact. Consider the following responses:

- Six or seven school districts are so committed that equity efforts would continue. In other districts activities would cease without prodding.
- A message would be sent to reluctant chief executives and others that little or no effort to achieve sex equity is needed.
- There would be an incalculable loss.

OCR Directors made the following observations:

- There would be a 75 percent cut in the compliance status of districts cited by OCR.
- Greater emphasis would be placed on OCR, SEA, and LEA technical assistance resources.
- Because of the termination of SDAC services and the cutbacks in OCR travel funds, LEAs would be denied technical assistance and training.

## Discussion

Certain key findings emerge repeatedly in responses to various items on the questionnaire. These include differing perceptions of SDAC and OCR Directors, the importance of coordination with other organizations in the delivery of services, SDAC evaluation and accountability, factors inhibiting the provision of optimally effective service and achievements in Title IX compliance and sex equity.

Differing SDAC and OCR perceptions - The SDAC and OCR Directors differed in their perceptions of how SDACs function, how they think they should function and the status of Title IX compliance in the region. For example:

- SDAC Directors saw their mission primarily as helping LEAs achieve Title IX compliance, sex equity and quality education while the OCR Directors saw it primarily as compliance.
- OCR Directors thought that SDACs should provide combined services (race, national origin and sex), whereas the majority of SDAC Directors thought the centers should remain separate.
- The OCR Directors gave consistently higher ratings to school/community personnels' knowledge, skills and commitment to implementing Title IX/sex equity in their service regions as well as the service region's overall level of compliance.

These different perceptions may be a function of an "enforcement" vs. a "technical assistance" approach to the issue of Title IX compliance and sex equity. Since SDAC personnel usually have far more contact with school personnel than do OCR representatives, they may also have more first hand information on which to base their assessment of schools' overall compliance. Moreover, seeing their mission as broader than compliance, they may have higher expectations for schools than do the OCR personnel.

Despite differing perceptions concerning the mission of SDACs and the assessment of school/community knowledge, skill, commitment and compliance, it would be erroneous to conclude that there is an adversarial or antagonistic relationship between SDAC and OCR Directors. In fact, the contrary is probably more accurate - that SDAC and OCR Directors prefer a cooperative relationship. Throughout the responses of both groups there were many comments concerning the need for greater communication and cooperation.

Coordination - The importance of SDACs operating as part of a Title IX/sex equity network of agencies emerged repeatedly in SDAC Directors' responses. They stressed that working closely with SEA personnel, other Title IV activities such as the race and national origin desegregation assistance centers, WEEA projects, women's commissions and similar organizations enhanced the amount as well as the effectiveness of services. In several instances SDAC Directors cited coordination as the facilitating factor in providing certain services or providing services in a particular geographic area. In other instances they cited lack of coordination as an inhibiting factor to providing effective technical assistance and training. Thus, an underlying assumption of quality SDAC service is that greater coordination and cooperation with other organizations enables the SDAC to provide more extensive and more effective service.

Evaluation and Accountability - SDACs evaluation efforts are comprised largely of record keeping activities concerning who receives what service. Beyond that there is some attempt to assess how recipients feel about the service provided and what they see as its strengths and weaknesses. Only a few SDACs reported attempting to measure short-term

or long-term effects of their services in school districts, and none talked about gathering data on changes in such factors as enrollment patterns of female and male students or at improvement in student achievement. Although SDAC Directors know that changes have occurred in districts since the passage of Title IX, they appear not to have data to support that and/or to show the role the SDAC has played in bringing about those changes.

On the other hand, gathering the more substantive types of data occur only over time and entails a long-term relationship with clients. The conditions under which centers operate - 75 staff members serving 16,000 school districts and uncertain funding from year to year - make providing and assessing the type of service needed very difficult. In fact, centers keeping records of the services provided will most likely remain the predominant method of evaluation under the current funding status. However, this lack of comprehensive evaluation data makes it difficult to accurately determine sex equity needs and to develop the best service

Factors Inhibiting Effective Services - Both SDAC and OCR Directors expressed frustration with existing barriers and obstacles. Those reflected most consistently in the data were lack of adequate resources - primarily the money and staff to provide the needed level of service.

SDAC Directors noted repeatedly the lack of continuity and stability in the administration, purpose and funding levels of SDACs at the federal level. Moreover, some of the answers to the questions on mission, services, greatest achievement and disappointment and barriers reflected the need at the federal level for a well-developed conceptual framework for providing technical assistance and training.



In talking about the need for greater direction, support and stability in the administration of Title IV programs from the U.S. Department of Education, a few Directors mentioned the beginnings of direction and assistance from the Office of Equal Educational Opportunity in 1980-81 under the leadership of Dr. Shirley McCune. They cited her conceptual model of goals for race, sex and national origin desegregation programs and how useful that has been and could be in helping SDACs conceptualize their role and function. However, this model has not been put forth as a guide by the U.S. Department of Education subsequent to her departure. It appears that the need for a "more explicit federal mission," one of the recommendations of the 1976 Rand Report, remains unfulfilled.<sup>4</sup>

The frustration was greatest in the SDAC Directors responses to what would happen in their regions if no funds were available for SDAC services. Comments such as "Great slippage would occur in the gains our Center has helped bring about" and "There would be an incalculable loss" reflect their concerns. That frustration is reinforced when viewed in light of the gains and achievements made since passage of Title IX regulatory requirements. While not all sex equity achievements can be directly linked to SDAC's programming, the information and training they have provided has had an impact.

Achievements in Title IX Compliance and Sex Equity - Many of the SDAC and OCR Directors' comments regarding areas in which change has occurred - athletics, vocational education, access to courses, greater awareness of Title IX and sex equity - are cited in Title IX: The Half Full, Half Empty Glass, a recent report on the implementation of Title IX. In reviewing changes that have occurred in the nation's schools,

the report mentions the following:

- Enrollment changes such as an increase in the proportion of females enrolling in predominantly male vocational courses.
- Greater opportunities for females and males to participate in club and school activities with students being exposed to a wide range of career and life options. For example, 20 percent of the members of Future Farmers of America are now young women.
- From 1971-1981 the number of female athletes increasing by 527 percent. .
- A reduction in discipline problems through the "more natural coeducational settings."<sup>5</sup>

The report goes on to cite changes in career counseling as well as the numbers of women enrolling in and completing bachelors, masters, doctoral and professional degrees. For example, from 1971-72 to 1979-80, the percentage of Ph.D. degrees earned by women rose from 16 percent to 30 percent and the percentage of those earning a professional degree increased from 6 percent to 25 percent.<sup>6</sup>

SDACs themselves reported additional achievements such as establishing model sex equity districts throughout the service region and developing a Title IX assessment process that enables LEAs to determine areas of compliance and non-compliance and take any necessary corrective or remedial action. Others cited their work in promoting and supporting the number of female administrators and wide dissemination of materials on Title IX and sex equity, e.g., more than 50,000 copies of a brochure on the cost of sex bias in schools to both boys and girls was distributed by one SDAC. Again, although establishing a direct cause/effect relationship is difficult, SDAC and OCR Directors overwhelmingly affirmed the value and worth of SDACs.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

As a result of this preliminary study, the following recommendations are put forward for consideration:

(1) Continuation of SDAC services. While great strides have been made in achieving Title IX compliance and sex equity, the knowledge, skills and commitment of school personnel, community members and students are not yet at a level adequate to ensure consistent quality education. There is a particularly great need for servicing and communicating with those persons in policymaking positions, e.g., board of education members.

(2) Development and implementation of a well-defined federal policy covering the SDAC role and function as well as a consistent funding structure. SDAC Directors repeatedly noted that lack of clear direction and stability in the administration of Title IV programs at the federal level inhibited their providing the most effective technical assistance and training services possible. Direction and guidance emerging from the U.S. Department of Education in 1980-81 should be continued and expanded. Until problems regarding federal policy and funding are resolved, SDACs will be limited in their ability to serve the needs of local school districts.

(3) Coordination between SDACs and other organizations in the equity network. Since coordination appears to be one of the most effective means of ensuring that LEAs receive the high quality technical assistance and training services that they need, coordination should be inherent in the mission and purpose of DACs. Groups advocating and supporting sex equity, as well as other forms of equity, can assist one another, thereby giving greater visibility to equity issues and broadening

resources available to LEAs. SEAs are a key link in effective coordination efforts.

(4) Greater cooperation and coordination between the SDACs and the OCR regional offices. Inherent in the responses of both SDAC and OCR Directors were the need and desire for greater contact and coordination. Structures should be established that encourage both OCR regional offices and SDACs' understanding of each other's role and function and their working together in a complementary manner.

(5) Conducting a comprehensive, long-term evaluation of SDACs. This investigation clearly points out the need for an in-depth and comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of SDACs. One aspect of such an evaluation should be an examination of the configuration (e.g., a separate center for sex desegregation services versus a center providing services in more than one area of equity) that ensures the highest quality service. Furthermore, new configurations for the most effective implementation of sex equity services should be explored.

This paper is a preliminary investigation of an area that has not yet been studied. Given the length of time SDACs have been in existence, their scope of work, funding level and position of actual and potential impact on LEAs, it is surprising that no study has yet looked at their role, function and effectiveness as well as the need for sex desegregation assistance services. Moreover, in this era of declining resources, the SDACs' relationship with race and national origin desegregation assistance centers and with other Title IV activities is a key area for future study. This study has identified areas of concern and has documented the need for a comprehensive evaluation of Title IV activities. Such an evaluation would help clarify the role and function and increase the effectiveness of technical assistance and training services.

END NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: A Review of Program Operations (Prepared for the U. S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare), (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand, 1976), pp. v-x.

<sup>2</sup>"Civil Rights Technical Assistance and Training Programs," Federal Register, Vol. 43, No. 144, July 26, 1978, Sec. 180.14.

<sup>3</sup>Shirley McCune, adapter, "Technical Assistance and Training in Training Notebook (Washington, D. C.: The American University), p. IV-9.

<sup>4</sup>Rand, p. x.

<sup>5</sup>Title IX: The Half Full, Half Empty Glass (Washington, D. C.: National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs; 1981), pp. 10, 13, 41 and 14.

<sup>6</sup>Title IX, pp. 28-31.

APPENDIX A

ASSESSING SEX DESEGREGATION ASSISTANCE CENTERS (SDACs)

BACKGROUND DATA FOR SDAC DIRECTORS

1. What is the total number of students in your SDAC service area? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How long has the director held his/her position ? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many fulltime equivalent staff (including administrators but excluding support/ clerical staff) does the SDAC have this year? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Would you provide the following information about the SDAC program staff (including administrators but excluding support/clerical staff)?

Position	Highest Degree Earned	Sex		Race			Areas of Expertise
		M	F	Cau. NA	His. AA	Bl. Other*	
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							

\* Cau. - Caucasian      NA - Native American  
 His. - Hispanic      AA - Asian American  
 - Black

ASSESSING SEX DESEGREGATION ASSISTANCE CENTERS (SDACs)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SDAC DIRECTORS

1. In your opinion, what is the mission or purpose of your SDAC? (If you have this in written form, in a brochure, for example, please just attach here.)

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2. The following is a matrix of technical assistance and training services provided by SDACs. The first column lists areas of service for SDACs as designated in the Title IV regulations (1978). The other column describes major methods of delivering service. One additional element, whether the level of service is awareness or skill development, is also included.

In completing the matrix, first determine if your SDAC provides technical assistance and training services in the areas listed. Then you should determine the methods of delivery. Finally, indicate whether the level of service is at the awareness level (increasing information, knowledge and understanding) or at the skills development level (developing specific abilities, techniques and behaviors). Write "A" for awareness or "SD" for skill development in the appropriate column.

For example, if your center provides materials that are designed to broaden understanding of Title IX, then you would record an "A" under the "1" column next to "Implementation of Title IX..." e.g.,

	(1) Materials
Implementation of Title IX...	A

(see matrix on next page)

Assisting clients in:	(1) Materials	(2) Telephone Letter	(3) In Person	(4) Conferences Workshops	(5) Other
Implementation of Title IX and state laws prohibiting sex discrimination					
Understanding the nature of sex bias and ways to avoid it in school policies and practices					
Recruiting and employing women and men in areas where they have been traditionally underrepresented					
Identifying and developing nonsexist management policies and practices					
Developing nonsexist counseling materials and techniques					
Creating nonsexist curriculum materials					
Increasing parent, student and community understanding of and support for Title IX					
Identifying Federal, state and other resources to assist in achieving their sex desegregation goals					
Other (please identify)					

Key to columns:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 - Providing materials                              | 3 - Technical assistance provided in person |
| 2 - Technical assistance through telephone or letter | 4 - Conferences, workshops or training      |
|  | 5 - Other, please specify                   |



3. What do you see as your SDAC's greatest achievement? You may describe a specific event or an on-going area of service. If you select an event, describe when and where it occurred, what it was and what its impact was. If you choose an on-going area of service, describe that service as well as its impact. Be as specific as possible.

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4. What do you see as a major shortcoming or disappointment of your SDAC? Again, you may describe a specific event or an on-going area of service. Be as specific as possible regarding the incident or service area and its impact.

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5. What are the major problems or obstacles to providing technical assistance and training services that you've encountered? Where do these obstacles come from? How do they block your provision of effective technical assistance and training services? Again, try to be as specific as possible in describing problems and/or obstacles.

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6. Do you evaluate all your SDAC's services? If so, briefly describe what procedure(s) you use. Be as specific as possible.

Providing materials

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Technical assistance  
through telephone or letter

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Technical assistance  
provided in person

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Conferences, workshops or training

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Other (please specify)

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7. Indicate the frequency of contact that your SDAC has with the following groups in providing technical assistance and training services. Use "F" for frequently, "S" for sometimes and "R" for rarely.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Board of education members
- \_\_\_\_\_ Administrative and supervisory personnel (including Title IX Coordinator)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Teachers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Counselors
- \_\_\_\_\_ Parents/community members
- \_\_\_\_\_ Students
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)

8. What resources (organizations, materials or people) have you found most helpful in achieving your SDAC goals?

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9. Part A: Rate the degree of effectiveness of each of the following strategies for gaining entry to a school district.

Directly contacting the district to request providing services	Ineffective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Highly Effective
Being referred to a district by a compliance agency such as the Office for Civil Rights	Ineffective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Highly Effective
Sponsoring multi-district workshops to serve the needs of districts and/or to interest districts in long-term or in-depth service	Ineffective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Highly Effective
<u>Conducting minimum outreach; responding only to requests that come in</u>	Ineffective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Highly Effective

Part B: Check the above strategy that your SDAC uses most frequently.

10. How could your SDAC be more effective? Be as specific as possible.

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11. How would you rate the following groups in your service region?

A. Knowledge of sex bias and discrimination in education.

	Low			High			
Board of education members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Administrative/supervisory personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Counselors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Community members/parents	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

B. Skills in eliminating sex bias and discrimination in education.

	Low			High			
Board of education members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Administrative/supervisory personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Counselors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Community members/parents	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students							

C. Commitment to equal opportunity for female and males in education.

	Low			High			
Board of education members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Administrative/supervisor personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Counselors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Parents/community members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

D. In your opinion, to what degree have school districts in your region achieved compliance with Title IX?

Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 High

E. Since passage of Title IX, what do you see as the area of greatest change in the school districts in your region?

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12. Part A: Check which of the following most accurately describes the role that you believe the Federal government should take in technical assistance and training.

\_\_\_\_\_ Continue the current program of sponsoring separate DACs for race, sex and national origin

\_\_\_\_\_ Combine race, sex and national origin DACs, returning to the concept of the general assistance centers that existed prior to 1978

\_\_\_\_\_ Continue funding SDACs but with a different mission and scope of work (please indicate what changes you envision) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Eliminate funding for technical assistance and training services in sex desegregation at the national level, providing categorical funding to state education agencies and local school districts

\_\_\_\_\_ Eliminate funding for technical assistance and training services in sex desegregation at the national level, providing funding through block grants for state education agencies and local school districts to use or not use for sex desegregation as they see fit

\_\_\_\_\_ Eliminate any funding for technical assistance and training services for sex desegregation at the national, state and local level

\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Part B: Please provide a reason for your choice \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. What difference would it make in your region if no funds were available for SDACs?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. Open comment: Is there anything you would like to say related to technical assistance and training that we haven't asked for?

\_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B

ASSESSING SEX DESEGREGATION ASSISTANCE CENTERS (SDACs)

BACKGROUND DATA FOR OCR REGIONAL DIRECTORS

1. How long has the director held his or her position? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which of the following statements best describes the relationship between your regional OCR office and the SDAC serving your area?

\_\_\_\_\_ I don't know which SDAC serves our region.

\_\_\_\_\_ I know which SDAC serves our region, but we've had little or no contact with the organization.

\_\_\_\_\_ On occasion, we've coordinated with SDACs in our region.

\_\_\_\_\_ We have worked closely, as appropriate, with our SDAC.

If you check either of the first two items, you do not need to complete the questionnaire. Simply return it to us in the envelope provided by

ASSESSING SEX DESEGREGATION ASSISTANCE CENTERS (SDACs)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR OCR REGIONAL DIRECTORS

1. In your opinion, what is the mission or purpose of the SDAC serving your area?

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2. The following is a matrix of technical assistance and training services provided by SDACs. The first column lists areas of service for SDACs as designated in the regulations provided by the U.S. Department of Education. The other column describes major methods of delivering service (refer to key). Based on your experience with your SDAC, which of the following services does it provide? Use "Yes," "No" or "Don't know." Please complete the total matrix.

(see matrix on next page)

Assisting clients in:	(1) Materials	(2) Telephone Letter	(3) In Person	(4) Conferences Workshops	(5) Other
Implementation of Title IX and state laws prohibiting sex discrimination					
Understanding the nature of sex bias and ways to avoid it in school policies and practices					
Recruiting and employing women and men in areas where they have been traditionally underrepresented					
Identifying and developing nonsexist management policies and practices					
Developing nonsexist counseling materials and techniques					
Creating nonsexist curriculum materials					
Increasing parent, student and community understanding of and support for Title IX					
Identifying Federal, state and other resources to assist in achieving their sex desegregation goals					
Other (please identify)					

Key to columns:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 - Providing materials                              | 3 - Technical assistance provided in person |
| 2 - Technical assistance through telephone or letter | 4 - Conferences, workshops or training      |
|  | 5 - Other, please specify                   |



3. What do you see as the SDAC's greatest achievement? You may describe a specific event or an on-going area of service. If you select an event, describe when and where it occurred, what it was and what its impact was. If you choose an on-going area of service, describe that service as well as its impact. Be as specific as possible.

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4. What do you see as a major shortcoming or disappointment of the SDAC? Again, you may describe a specific event or an on-going area of service. Be as specific as possible regarding the incident or service area and its impact.

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5. What are the major problems or obstacles to providing technical assistance and training that you believe the SDAC faces: Where do these obstacles come from? How do they block the provision of effective service? Again, try to be as specific as possible in describing problems and/or obstacles.

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6. Do you assess specific SDAC's services? If so, briefly describe what procedure(s) you use. Be as specific as possible.

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7. Based on your experience with your SDAC, indicate the frequency of contact that your center has with the following groups in providing technical assistance and training services. Use "F" for frequently, "S" for sometimes and "R" for rarely. If you don't know, write "DK."

- \_\_\_\_\_ Board of education members
- \_\_\_\_\_ Administrative and supervisor personnel
- \_\_\_\_\_ Teachers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Counselors
- \_\_\_\_\_ Parents/community members
- \_\_\_\_\_ Students
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)



8. How could the SDAC be more effective? Be as specific as possible.

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9. How would you rate the following groups in your service region?

A. Knowledge of sex bias and discrimination in education.

	Low					High	
Board of education members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Administrative/supervisory personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Counselors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Community members/parents	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

B. Skills in eliminating sex bias and discrimination in education.

	Low					High	
Board of education members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Administrative/supervisory personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Counselors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Community members/parents	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

C. Commitment to equal opportunity for female and males in education.

	Low					High	
Board of education members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Administrative/supervisory personnel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Counselors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Community members/parents	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

D. In your opinion, to what degree have school districts in your region achieved compliance with Title IX?

	Low					High	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

E. Since passage of Title IX, what do you see as the area of greatest change in the school districts in your region?

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10. Part A: Check which of the following most accurately describes the role that you believe the Federal government should take in technical assistance and training.

- Continue the current program of sponsoring separate DACs for race, sex and national origin.
- Combine race, sex and national origin DACs, returning to the concept of the general assistance centers that existed prior to 1978
- Continue funding SDACs but with a different mission and scope of work (please indicate what changes you envision)

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- Eliminate funding for technical assistance and training services in sex desegregation at the national level, providing categorical funding to state education agencies and local school districts
- Eliminate funding for technical assistance and training services in sex desegregation at the national level, providing funding through block grants for state education agencies and local school districts to use or not use for sex desegregation as they see fit
- Eliminate any funding for technical assistance and training services for sex desegregation at the national, state and local level

Other \_\_\_\_\_

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Part B: Please provide a reason for your response \_\_\_\_\_

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11. What difference would it make in your region if no funds were available for SDACs?

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12. Open comment: Is there anything you would like to say related to technical assistance and training that we haven't asked for?

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