

Disability Commission Requested External Review Focusing on:

- DSB outcomes for communities & consumers;
- Number, type, and effectiveness of DSB local staff;
- Efficacy using funds for local staff vs. seed grants;
- DSB collaboration with CSBs & local agencies;
- Use of RSIF funds related to identified needs/regional distribution;
- Continuation of grant activities post-RSIF funds; and
- DSB Number/location relation to PDCs (consolidation?)

DRS Commissioner Requests

- DSB Program Manager (Richard Kriner, MS, LCP, CRC) to work in concert with a private disability services consultant (Janet W. Hill, M.S.Ed.) to conduct review...
 - Hill = over 30 years experience working in Virginia's human service systems.

Process of review

- Focused only on operations following the major funding cuts of 2002;
- Reviewed numerous lengthy, narrative reports from each DSB;
- Worked to convert narrative reporting system to more concise, quantitative outcome reports (annual and quarterly);
- DSBs cooperated rapidly, shifting to new outcome reporting during the summer of 2007 for Disability Commission report.

Immediately apparent...

- To maximize reduced funding over the last 4 years, DRS Commissioner increased:
 - oversight and technical assistance through dedicated program manager;
 - cross-DSB communication (virtual & face meetings);
 - plan to step up schedule of fiscal audits;
 - training on needs assessment process;
 - quantitative (less narrative) reporting (this year).

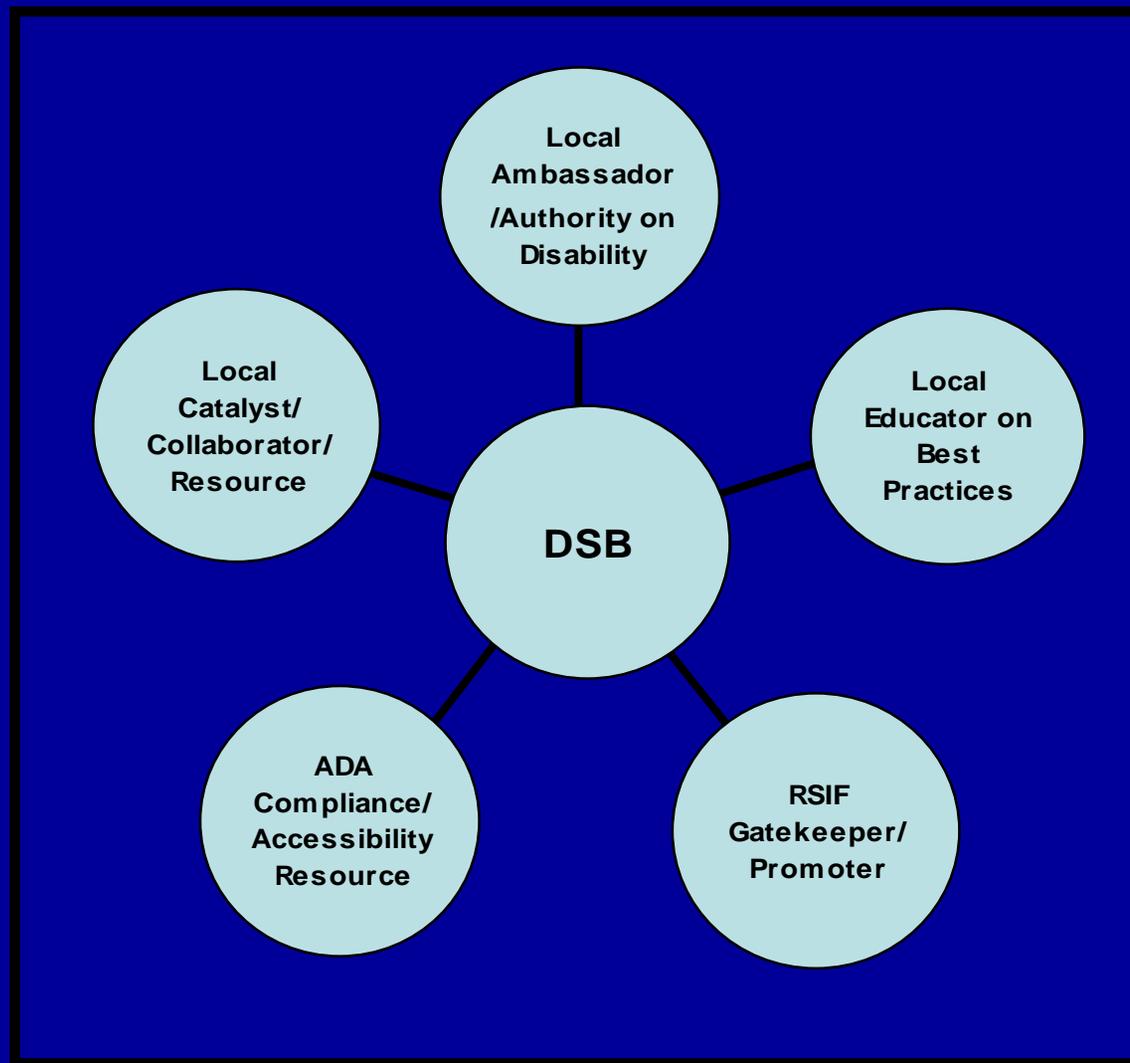
Another immediate finding

- The annual investment of the state in each individual DSB is relatively minimal...
 - Average annual allocation of state funds to any DSB is only \$12,363
 - Yet list of annual DSB activities and achievements at local level are vast

New outcome reporting system and the improved accountabilities put in place this year reveal:

- **An unacknowledged body of activities and achievements at the local level that are accomplished by DSBs on a day-to-day basis showing ...**
 - **DSB Multi-Dimensional Efforts fueled by volunteerism and community collaboration→**

Multi-Dimensional Efforts



Communities Maximize Limited State Dollars through:

- Strategic placement of the state funded, part-time staff (e.g., at PDCs, local county manager's office)
- Much volunteerism from members, civic groups, public at large; and
- Much local interagency collaboration.

DSBs as Local Authorities/Arbitrators on Needs

- All active (36) DSBs conducted community-wide disability needs assessments & made 6-year projections of local service needs/priorities.
- Each used multiple (& legitimate) data collection methods including:
 - focus groups used by 23% of DSBs,
 - census data used by 68%,
 - consumer surveys used by 82%,
 - business surveys used by 79%,
 - group consensus building used by 79%.
 - All have shared needs with state and local government entities at least once.

DSBs as Authorities on Disability

- Staff or members serve as the “DSB representative” on hundreds of work groups, councils and boards
- For example, Arlington DSB is the disability representative on the Public Space Master Plan Committee
- See Table I for more examples of DSB representation on state and local work groups.

Local Educators

- DSBs provide 68 different speeches/presentations to the community on the DSB efforts last year alone (averaging about 2 speeches per reporting DSB)
- Nearly 2000 training sessions Best Practices in disability services by DSBs last year but three DSBs provided the great majority of those (i.e., Alexandria, Chesterfield, and Fairfax); 188 were provided by 27 DSBs or about 7 trainings per DSB per year;
- DSBs produced 70 major educational marketing products last year regarding the work of their individual DSBs or an average of 2 products per DSB (e.g., Websites, Resource guides, Brochures, Tote bags w/ logos, etc.);

Local ADA Experts

- DSBs were involved in 452 ADA actions last year alone or an average of 15 actions per DSB.
- Key examples include providing home visits to individuals on accessibility issues, making recreational facilities accessible, and playing an integral role in improving the accessibility of some of Virginia's many historic buildings.

Great Example of Effective DSB ADA Actions

Fauquier Co. DSB was instrumental in renovation of John Barton Payne Building, one of oldest buildings in one of VA's most historic, small towns.

- DSB hosted a program for all local officials, architects, and builders on renovations that can be made to old and/or historic buildings and places with an architect specialist from Colonial Williamsburg.
- They hired a company to film this program and shared this DVD with DRS, their Board of Supervisors and citizens in community and the architect-presenter, Wayne Buhl (See Table IV-examples).

Local Catalysts

- Clear evidence also exists that DSBs are serving as catalysts/supporters for community services and resource development through collaborative projects.
- Many important community projects likely could not have been initiated without DSB support and collaboration this year.
- For example, the Peninsula Board has helped with accessible transportation issues for the Jamestown events, Waynesboro has co-developed an accessible fishing pier with a local business, a home-bound meal program for persons under 60 yrs old, and expanded transportation programs with local government.

Other Examples of Local Collaboration

- Participated in and/or organized 115 community events last year, often on a voluntary basis (averaging about 4 events each per year);
- Reported 72 collaborative meetings with other agencies last year (about 2 per);
- About 40% were actively involved in efforts using other (non-RSIF) grants or donations (e.g., Rap Regional DSB received a \$5000 housing study grant).
- Nearly, all DSBs engaged in 1 or 2 collaborative projects with other local agencies such as CSBs, boards, or work groups (e.g., Rap Regional DSB sponsors monthly collaboration/info sharing meetings (RADN)).
- $\frac{1}{4}$ of DSBs received additional local cash funds (ranging from \$3000 in Lenowisco to \$46.460 in Fairfax) for additional special disability projects.
- Two localities (Middle Penninsula and Piedmont Regional) received local funds to replicate their own local RSIF program.

RSIF Gatekeeper and Promoter

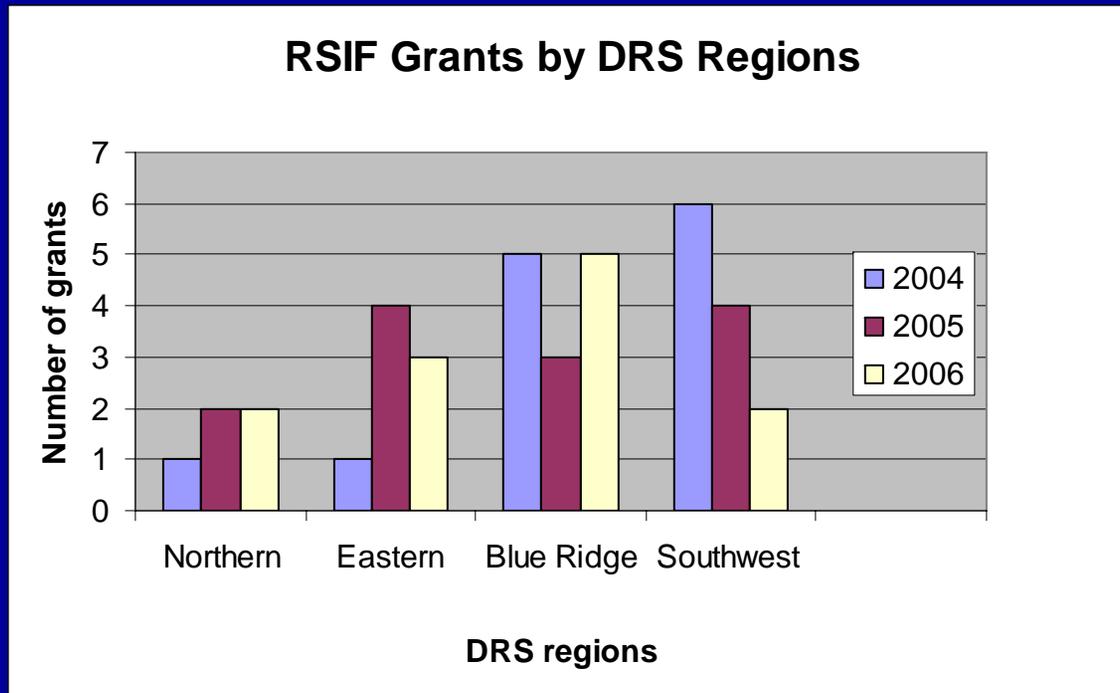
- Each year between 13 & 16 DSBs work closely with local RSIF applicants.
- About 61% of boards (23 out of 38 DSBs) successfully applied for and received one or more RSIF grants over the last 3 years.
- Thousands of persons w/ physical & sensory disabilities have been impacted by these grants.

Great example: Peninsula DSB's work with the Denbigh House to offer community based services to area Veterans with brain injury returning from Iraq. More examples in App. III.

Regional Distribution of RSIF Funds

- Seven (7) DSBs received 2 grants out of the 3 year study period (Buchanan, Fifth Planning, Goochland-Powhatan, Mt. Rogers, Prince Wm., Southside, Tazewell) and 4 DSBs received 3 grants each year for 3 years (Middle Peninsula, Rappahannock-Rapidan, Rockbridge, and Russell).
- Examining regional distributions of RSIF grants over 3 year period shows that DSBs from all regions (urban, rural, and suburban) have been successful in encouraging and developing grantees.

Awards by Region



Significant New Finding

- Majority of RSIF grant programs have been continued post-RSIF funds with DSB help in negotiating local collaborations or alternative funding from business or civic groups.
- This fact demonstrates the ability of many DSBs to use the RSIF program to leverage long term, continuing funding for innovative model programs in their localities.

Conclusions

- With limited resources DSBs are clearly meeting the requirements of the Code of VA and serving as gatekeepers and promoters for innovations using the RSIF funds.
- With a relatively limited investment, the Commonwealth of VA has built statewide local expertise and collaboration to expand knowledge of disability needs and best practices as well as a strong local ADA resource.

Quality Improvement Recommendations

- Continue 15 year investment in DSB system
- Continue strong technical assistance and support from the state office.
- Provide technical assistance & feedback on new data collection requirements.
- Develop opportunities for successful DSBs to mentor less productive DSBs.
- Continue and expand support for the part-time staff role which appears to be indispensable to DSB operations— Strategic placement w/ PDC or gov't entity.
- Consider consolidation of smaller and/or inactive DSBs with successful DSBs.
- Seek to increase RSIF program to original or increased level.
- Assist localities in finding alternative funds if RSIF are not awarded.
- Help to improve validity and credibility of the DSB Needs Assessments process (ensure that data to be collected is not already available from PDC or other; ensure that DSBs do not take on more than their resources can support).
- Increase cross-DSB communication especially video conferencing

Consolidation Possibilities

- Three DSBs have not been active since the funding cuts.
- Six did not respond to most recent data request –all six did not have part time staff position in place or were in staff change transition.
- All 31 DSBs that did respond to the data request showed some significant activities that are benefiting their communities.
- DSC should consider some consolidations of inactive or low activity DSBs to allow more funds to be distributed to each DSB—increasing staff time.