

## **The Access Center: Enhancing Educational Outcomes for Students with Disabilities**

The Access Center is a national technical assistance (TA) center focused on providing services primarily for students with disabilities in grades K through 8. Funded by the U.S. Education Department's Office of Special Education Programs, the center's primary directive is to build the capacity of TA systems, states, districts, and schools, so they can help students with disabilities learn from the general education curriculum. To accomplish this directive, The Access Center has concentrated its efforts on

- increasing awareness of research-based programs, practices, and tools;
- strengthening the ability of educators to be informed consumers of programs, practices, and tools ; and
- assisting educators with implementing and evaluating programs, practices, and tools.

Housed within the American Institutes for Research in Washington, D.C., The Access Center can be found online at <http://www.k8accesscenter.org>. The Web site contains interactive Web-based seminars and discussion rooms, information about Universal Design for Learning, and a large database of resources that includes curriculum guides, educational videotapes, strategies, Individualized Education Program (IEP) guides, and useful Web links. In addition, results from a survey conducted in 2005 yielded a database comprised of responses from many states about what they are doing to enhance access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities in such areas as standards-based IEPs and assessment.

