FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Eric J. Smith
Commissioner of Education

June 20, 2008

Mr. Adrian Cline, Superintendent
DeSoto County School District
P.O. Drawer 2000
Arcadia, Florida 34265-2000

Dear Mr. Cline:

The Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services is in receipt of your district's response to the preliminary findings of its Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Compliance Self-Assessment. This letter and the attached document(s) comprise the final report for DeSoto County School District's 2007-08 ESE monitoring.

The self-assessment system is designed to address the major areas of compliance related to the State Performance Plan (SPP). SPP Indicator 15, Timely Correction of Noncompliance, requires that the state identify and correct noncompliance **as soon as possible, but no later than one year from identification**.

As indicated in prior communication with district ESE staff, it was anticipated that there might be an increase in the number of findings of noncompliance over previous monitoring activities due to the design of the self-assessment protocols and sampling system. While any incident of noncompliance is of concern, it is important to note that, in accordance with the language in SPP Indicator 15, the Bureau's current monitoring system considers the timeliness of correction of noncompliance to be of greatest significance.

On February 22, 2008, the preliminary report of findings from the self-assessment process was released to the district. The preliminary report detailed student-specific incidents of noncompliance that required immediate correction, and identified any standards for which the noncompliance was considered systemic (i.e., evident in $\geq$ 25% of the records reviewed). In the event that there were systemic findings, a corrective action plan (CAP) was required. In addition,

BAMBI J. LOCKMAN
Chief
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

the district participated in a validation review to ensure the accuracy of the self-assessment data. As a result of the validation review, additional incidents or findings of noncompliance requiring correction were identified.

In accordance with guidance from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), U.S. Department of Education, a finding of noncompliance is identified by the standard (i.e., regulation or requirement) that is violated, not by the number of times the standard is violated. While each *incident* of noncompliance must be corrected for the individual student affected, multiple incidents of noncompliance regarding a given standard that occur within a school district are reported as a single *finding* of noncompliance for that district. These results are included in the Bureau's annual reporting to OSEP.

Districts were required to correct all student-specific noncompliance no later than April 25, 2008, and to provide evidence to the Bureau no later than April 30, 2008. We are pleased to report that DeSoto County School District completed the required corrective actions and submitted the verifying documentation and CAP within the established timeline.

DeSoto County was required to assess 84 standards. One or more incidents of noncompliance were identified on 17 of those standards (20%). The following is a summary of DeSoto County School District's correction of student-specific incidents of noncompliance:

Correction of Noncompliance by Student

	Number	**Percentage**
Records Reviewed/Protocols Completed	26	–
Total Items Assessed	728	–
Noncompliant	50	6%
Timely Corrected	50	100%

The *DeSoto District Summary Report: Findings of Noncompliance by Standard* (Attachment 1) contains a summary of the findings reported by the individual standard or regulation assessed. These data include revisions to the preliminary report that resulted from the validation review. Systemic findings are designated by shaded cells in the table. As noted in this attachment, one or more findings of noncompliance were determined to be systemic in nature and the district was required to develop a CAP to address the identified standards. DeSoto County School District's CAP was submitted to the Bureau for review and approval, and is provided in Attachment 2. Please note that a timeline for implementation, evaluation, and reporting of results on the part of the district is included in the CAP. Your district's adherence to this schedule is required in order to ensure correction of systemic noncompliance within a year as required by OSEP and Florida's SPP.

The results of district self-assessments conducted during 2007-08 will be used to inform future monitoring activities, including the selection of districts for on-site monitoring, and in the local educational agency (LEA) determinations required under section 300.603, Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, which result in districts being identified as "meets requirements," "needs assistance," "needs intervention," or "needs substantial intervention."

We understand that the implementation of this self-assessment required a significant commitment of resources, and appreciate the time and attention your staff has devoted to the process thus far. We look forward to receiving the district's report on the results of its corrective action plan, due to the Bureau no later than **December 22, 2008**. If you have questions regarding this process, please contact your assigned district liaison for monitoring or Dr. Kim C. Komisar, Administrator, at kim.komisar@fldoe.org or via phone at (850) 245-0476.

Sincerely,

Bambi J. Lockman, Chief
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Attachments

cc: Roosevelt Johnson
Frances Haithcock
Kim C. Komisar
Laura Harrison
Sheila Gritz
Elise Lynch

Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

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DeSoto District Summary Report: Findings of Noncompliance by Standard

This report provides a summary of the district's results and must be used when developing a corrective action plan. Results are reported by standard, with systemic noncompliance (occurrence in ≥ 25% of possible incidents) indicated as appropriate. See the *Student Report: Incidents of Noncompliance* for student-specific findings. Results are based on the following:

Number of A protocols completed: 12
Number of standards per A: 23
Number of EX protocols completed: 12
Number of standards per EX: 33
Number of STB protocols completed: 2
Number of standards per STB: 28

Total number of protocols: 26Total number of standards: 728
Total number of incidents of noncompliance (NC): 50
Overall % incidents of noncompliance: 6%

Percent of noncompliance is calculated as the # of incidents of noncompliance for a given standard divided by the # of protocols reviewed for that standard, multiplied by 100.

* Correctable for the student(s): A finding for which immediate action can be taken to correct the noncompliance.

** Individual CAP: For a finding which cannot be corrected for an individual student, a corrective action plan (CAP) is required to address how the district will ensure future compliance; this plan will be limited in scope, based on the nature of the finding.

*** Systemic CAP: For a finding of noncompliance on a given standard that occurs in ≥ 25% of possible incidents, a corrective action plan (CAP) is required to ensure future compliance; this plan must address the systemic nature of the finding and will be broader in scope than an individual CAP.

Note: In the event that there is a systemic finding of noncompliance on a standard that requires an individual CAP, only a systemic CAP is required.

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DeSoto District Summary Report: Findings of Noncompliance by Standard

Noncompliance (NC)		*Correctable for the Student(s)	**Individual CAP	# NC	% NC	***Systemic CAP
EX-1	The appropriate team members were present at the IEP meeting. (34 CFR 300.321(a)-(b))	X		1	8.3%	
EX-2	The IEP for a school-age student includes a statement of present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum, as well as a statement of the remediation needed to achieve a passing score on the general statewide assessment. For a prekindergarten student, the IEP contains a statement of how the disability affects the student's participation in the appropriate activities. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(1); Rule 6A-6.03028(7)(a), FAC.)	X		9	75.0%	X
EX-3	The IEP includes measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, and short-term objectives or benchmarks, designed to meet the student's needs that result from the disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum and meet the student's other needs that result from the disability. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(2))	X		6	50.0%	X
EX-10	The IEP contains a statement of appropriate accommodations necessary to measure academic achievement and functional performance on state or district-wide assessments. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(6)(i))	X		1	8.3%	
EX-12	The IEP contains an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the general education class. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(5))	X		1	8.3%	
EX-24	If a student has had at least five unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences or absences for which the reason is unknown, within a 90-calendar-day period, the student's primary teacher must report that the student may be exhibiting a pattern	X		6	50.0%	X

Noncompliance (NC)		*Correctable for the Student(s)	**Individual CAP	# NC	% NC	***Systemic CAP
	of nonattendance. Unless there is clear evidence otherwise, the student must be referred to the school's child study team. If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, interventions must be implemented. (S. 1003.26(1), F.S.)					
STB-9	There is a measurable postsecondary goal or goals in the designated areas (i.e., education/training and employment; where appropriate, independent living). (34 CFR 300.320(b)(1))	X		2	100.0%	X
STB-10	The measurable postsecondary goals were based on age-appropriate transition assessment(s). (34 CFR 300.320(b)(1))	X		1	50.0%	X
STB-11	There is/are annual goal(s) or short-term objectives or benchmarks that reasonably enable the student to meet the postsecondary goals. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(2))	X		1	50.0%	X
STB-12	There are transition services on the IEP that focus on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student to facilitate the student's articulation to post-school. (34 CFR 300.320(b)(2))	X		1	50.0%	X
STB-16	The IEP includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition service that will reasonably enable the student to meet the postsecondary goals. (34 CFR 300.320(b))	X		2	100.0%	X
A-1	The appropriate team members were present at the IEP meeting. (34 CFR 300.321(a)-(b))	X		1	8.3%	
A-2	The IEP for a school-age student includes a statement of present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum, as well as a statement of the remediation needed to achieve a passing score on the general statewide assessment. For a prekindergarten student, the IEP contains a statement of how the disability affects the student's participation in the appropriate activities. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(1); Rule 6A-6.03028(7)(a), FAC.)	X		9	75.0%	X

Noncompliance (NC)		*Correctable for the Student(s)	**Individual CAP	# NC	% NC	***Systemic CAP
A-3	The IEP includes measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, and short-term objectives or benchmarks, designed to meet the student's needs that result from the disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum and meet the student's other needs that result from the disability. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(2))	X		6	50.0%	X
A-9	The IEP contains a statement of appropriate accommodations necessary to measure academic achievement and functional performance on state or district-wide assessments. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(6)(i))	X		1	8.3%	
A-12	There is alignment among the present level of academic and functional performance statement, the annual goals and short term objectives/benchmarks, and the services identified on the IEP. (34 CFR 300.320(a))	X		1	8.3%	
A-14	The IEP team considered the strengths of the student; the academic, developmental and functional needs of the student; the results of the initial evaluation or most recent evaluation; and the results of the student's performance on any state-or district-wide assessment. (34 CFR 300.324(a)(1))	X		1	8.3%	

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DeSoto County School District Corrective Action Plan

#	Findings of Noncompliance	Activities	Timelines	Resources	Results/Status
EX-2	The IEP for a school-age student includes a statement of present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum, as well as a statement of the remediation needed to achieve a passing score on the general statewide assessment. For a prekindergarten student, the IEP contains a statement of how the disability affects the student's participation in the appropriate activities. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(1); Rule 6A-6.03028(7)(a), FAC.)	District and school level briefings held with all district ESE staff and ESE teachers to review present level statements and goal writing to check for compliance components when reviewing IEP's. District Level Administrators and the Superintendent were provided with a copy of the District report and the Self Assessment Monitoring Manual during a cabinet and given a general overview of how the self assessment was conducted and the areas that needed to be addressed in a corrective action plan District review of at least 10 student records to measure intervention effectiveness	3/11/08, 3/12/08, 3/13/08,3/14/2008 3/12/2008 11/30/08	None Manuals Ordered from Clearinghouse District ESE Staff FDLRS	
EX-3	The IEP includes measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, and short-term objectives or benchmarks, designed to meet the student's needs that result from the disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum and meet the student's other needs that result from the disability. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(2))	Summer Institute of Writing Quality IEP's to be offered which will include a refresher overview of measurable annual goals. This workshop will be provided in conjuction with FDLRS Heartland. District review of at least 10 student records to measure intervention effectiveness	June 2008 and/ or August 2008 during Pre-school planning week (12^{th}-15^{th}) 11/30/08	Participants will receive a stipend for attendance as funds are available District ESE Staff FDLRS	
EX-24	If a student has had at least five	Reviewed attendance/absentee reporting	3/20/08 DMS	None	

#	Findings of Noncompliance	Activities	Timelines	Resources	Results/Status
	unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences or absences for which the reason is unknown, within a 90-calendar-day period, the student's primary teacher must report that the student may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. Unless there is clear evidence otherwise, the student must be referred to the school's child study team. If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, interventions must be implemented. (S. 1003.26(1), F.S.)	for ESE students with secondary school administrators. ESE student attendance to be monitored closer at each school following the guidelines stipulated in (S.1003.26 (1) F.S) District review of at least 10 student records to measure intervention effectiveness	3/25/08 DHS 3/26/08 DAC 11/30/08	 District ESE Staff	
STB-9	There is a measurable postsecondary goal or goals in the designated areas (i.e., education/training and employment; where appropriate, independent living). (34 CFR 300.320(b)(1))	See EX-3 District review of at least 10 student records to measure intervention effectiveness	June 2008 and/or Aug.2008 during pre-school planning week 11/30/08	Participants will receive a stipend for attendance as funds are available District ESE Staff FDLRS	
STB-10	The measurable postsecondary goals were based on age-appropriate transition assessment(s). (34 CFR 300.320(b)(1))	See EX-3 District review of at least 10 student records to measure intervention effectiveness	 11/30/08	 District ESE Staff FDLRS	
STB-16	The IEP includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition service that will reasonably enable the student to meet the postsecondary goals. (34 CFR 300.320(b))	See EX-3 District review of at least 10 student records to measure intervention effectiveness	 11/30/08	 District ESE Staff FDLRS	
A-2	The IEP for a school-age student includes a statement of present levels of academic achievement and functional	See Ex 2 activity District review of at least 10 student	 11/30/08	 District ESE Staff	

#	Findings of Noncompliance	Activities	Timelines	Resources	Results/Status
	performance, including how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum, as well as a statement of the remediation needed to achieve a passing score on the general statewide assessment. For a prekindergarten student, the IEP contains a statement of how the disability affects the student's participation in the appropriate activities. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(1); Rule 6A-6.03028(7)(a), FAC.)	records to measure intervention effectiveness		FDLRS	
A-3	The IEP includes measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, and short-term objectives or benchmarks, designed to meet the student's needs that result from the disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum and meet the student's other needs that result from the disability. (34 CFR 300.320(a)(2))	See EX 3 activity District review of at least 10 student records to measure intervention effectiveness	11/30/08	District ESE Staff FDLRS	