

OFFICE OF INSTRUCTIONAL ENHANCEMENT AND INTERNAL OPERATIONS
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
February 20-21, 2014

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

21. Report on the Follow-up Monitoring Evaluation for students with disabilities in the Jackson Public School District's Exceptional Education Program

Executive Summary

A team of independent evaluators and staff from the Office of Special Education conducted a follow-up visit in the District on December 4-6, 2013, in order to assess the status of the District's correction of all findings of noncompliance as noted in the Findings and Decision dated November 22, 2010, and all subsequent follow-up visit reports.

The Follow-up Monitoring Evaluation Report addressed all remaining areas of noncompliance identified during the May 2013 follow-up visit.

No Action: Discussion Only

Back-up material attached



Mississippi Department of Education

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February 12, 2014

Dr. Cedrick Gray, Superintendent
Jackson Public School District (2520)
P.O. Box 2338
Jackson, MS 39225-2338

Via Hand-Delivery

Dear Dr. Gray:

A team of independent evaluators and staff from the Office of Special Education (OSE) conducted a follow-up visit in the District on December 4 - 6, 2013, in order to assess the status of the District's correction of all findings of noncompliance as noted in the Findings and Decision dated November 22, 2010, and all subsequent follow-up visit reports for the follow-up visits completed on: November 15 – 16, 2011, April 18 – 20, 2012, October 16 – 19, 2012, and May 14 – 17, 2013. The OSE evaluation team also reviewed and analyzed updated data/information submitted by the District following the completion of the December 2013 follow-up visit to provide needed clarification and documentation of the District's correction of noncompliance.

The Follow-Up Monitoring Evaluation Report on Services for Students with Disabilities issued on June 11, 2013, addressed all remaining areas of noncompliance identified during the May 2013 follow-up visit. In order to verify correction of noncompliance, OSEP Memo 09-02 requires that states must:

- Verify that each individual case of noncompliance is corrected (Prong 1); and
- Determine that the District is correctly implementing specific regulatory requirements. This must be based on the State's review of updated data (Prong 2).

The attached Follow-Up Monitoring Evaluation Report reflects and summarizes the OSE evaluation team's on-site activities, including an extensive review of twenty-one (21) student files, data and documentation both during and following the on-site visit, and an analysis of information obtained through detailed discussions with District staff and personnel, and consultants who have been working intensively with the District. The Follow-Up Monitoring Evaluation Report also addresses the development of a District Sustainability Plan.

Dr. Cedrick Gray, Superintendent
Jackson Public School District (2520)
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We recognize that improvement strategies often require extraordinary measures to ensure compliance and to produce improved outcomes for children with disabilities and their families. A significant amount of time, effort and hard work has been devoted to addressing all areas of previously identified noncompliance and great attention has been focused on the twenty-one (21) student files by teams of District staff and external consultants. The extraordinary measures taken by the District's high-level of focused attention on these twenty-one (21) student files resulted in the District's correction of noncompliance in these twenty-one (21) student files reviewed.

The OSE has verified the correction of noncompliance in all previously identified areas. This verification was based on a review of twenty-one (21) student files and data and documentation reviewed during and after the December 2013 on-site visit.

Moving forward, it is imperative the District develop and implement a comprehensive District Sustainability Plan; one that is powerful in action and powerful in effect to ensure continued improvement and systemic change for ALL students with disabilities enrolled in the District. The OSE will continue to closely and intensely monitor and provide oversight as we transition to the implementation of the District's Sustainability Plan.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Velva Haynes or me at 601-359-3498.

Sincerely,

Tanya Bradley, Bureau Director
Office of Special Education

Enclosures

c: Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
Kim S. Benton, Ed.D.
Therrell Myers, Ed.D.
Paula Vanderford, Ph.D.