

Department of Education
Office of Inspector General – Internal Audit
Six-Month Status Report on: Differentiated Accountability
Report # A-1314-016 Issued: June 4, 2015
Status as of December 4, 2015

Finding	Recommendation(s)	Management Response as of June 4, 2015	Management Response as of December 4, 2015	Anticipated Completion Date & Contact
<p>BSI did not adequately monitor turnaround option plan (TOP) implementation.</p>	<p>We recommend BSI develop TOP monitoring procedures to ensure school districts implement turnaround options in compliance with state regulations. The procedures should include centralized processes and monitoring templates to document appropriate monitoring has occurred.</p>	<p>In September of 2014, the BSI implemented an online tracking system via Survey Monkey which includes a mechanism for DA team members to log quantitative information regarding TOP monitoring visits. Additionally, BSI has worked with the regional teams to develop a rubric which can be used both as a needs assessment tool for the development of turnaround plans, and as a means of measuring the quality of the district’s implementation of the plan in the identified school(s). The rubrics are completed collaboratively between the district leadership team and the RED. The rubric was piloted this spring in 15 districts with schools in turnaround, six districts on a voluntary basis, and nine districts as part of the required review of SIG 1003(g) implementation. The pilot was successful, and the REDs have agreed to expand the use of the rubrics to all districts with schools in turnaround for the 15-16 school year. <i>Anticipated Completion: May 1, 2016</i></p>	<p>On November 13, 2015, the BSI Director emailed the REDs with the rubric tools to be used in all districts implementing turnaround plans in 2015-16, and requesting documentation of the monitoring process to be returned to BSI by April 30, 2016.</p>	<p>May 15, 2016 Shannon Houston</p>
<p>State-led initiative outcomes were not met.</p>	<p>We recommend BSI establish reasonable and measurable performance goals for reading, math, and science and monitor performance in the targeted PLA schools to ensure accountability</p>	<p>“Targeted PLA” schools are no longer an identified group, as the RTTT grant ends in June 30, 2015. BSI will work to establish new targets after the new assessment cut scores are known. <i>Anticipated Completion: August 1, 2016</i></p>	<p>Commissioner Stewart has recommended assessment cut scores which are slated to be adopted by the State Board at the January meeting. We expect 2014-15 school grades to be released shortly thereafter, which will give us baseline</p>	<p>August 1, 2016 Melissa Ramsey</p>

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	and continued school improvement.		information to inform conversations with leadership regarding new performance goals.	
BSI did not make all required visits to monitor the fidelity of School Improvement Plan implementation.	We recommend BSI continue to improve monitoring efforts to ensure implementation fidelity and compliance with the Florida Administrative Code. This should include enhancing procedures to develop centralized processes and monitoring templates to demonstrate appropriate monitoring has occurred.	<p>In September 2014, BSI implemented an online tracking system via Survey Monkey to capture quantitative information regarding SIP monitoring visits. Additionally, DA schools are required to submit a mid-year reflection on progress toward goals and plan implementation for RED review, which is documented in CIMS.</p> <p>The BSI has additional plans to enhance the means of documentation in CIMS, including more options for recording qualitative feedback, and tracking and uploading deliverables, pending funding availability.</p> <p><i>Anticipated Completion: April 1, 2016</i></p>	<p>On October 21, BSI presented to the REDs a year-end summary of 2014-15 school and district support, which was based on the field team logs submitted via Survey Monkey. The analysis was used as a conversation starter about the types of information being collected, and how collection methods can be refined to obtain more consistent data in 2015-16. The mid-year reflection process will begin in January and end by April 1, 2016. We are working to make minor tweaks to the tracking system for the mid-year process so that we can record qualitative feedback in addition to quantitative records of the reviews. However, we are uncertain whether current resources will support the changes (i.e., whether they are complex and considered new development or can be paid for out of our maintenance budget).</p>	<p>April 1, 2016 Janet Capps Shannon Houston</p>

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<p>BSI did not adequately track and monitor staff vacancy dates.</p>	<p>We recommend BSI capture vacancy dates and retain historical staff vacancy data to ensure the performance of the fiscal agents is in alignment with the scope of work dictated by the grants. We additionally recommend BSI strengthen the grant agreements to specify a timeframe to fill staff vacancies.</p>	<p>A new vacancy tracking system was implemented in April 2015, which ensures we retain all historical staff vacancy data. The 2015-16 DAP grant includes approximately 21.5 FTE slots, which is substantially smaller than the RTTT grant. This will mitigate the risk of having multiple vacancies simultaneously. The vacancy lengths are a by-product of multiple decision points made on a case-by-case basis, and cannot be determined ahead of time in the grant agreement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) When a vacancy occurs, the RED determines whether it is appropriate timing to post the vacancy (e.g., time of year candidates are likely to apply, whether the team has the bandwidth to engage in the hiring process, etc.). 2) Once a decision is made to post the position, the RED has to review the candidate pool to determine whether it is strong enough to complete an interview process and make a recommendation for hire. The RED has the discretion to determine the needs of the team as a whole and whether it is preferable to maintain a vacancy while recruiting more suitable candidates than those in the currently in the applicant pool. <p><i>Anticipated Completion: August 31, 2015</i></p>	<p>On August 1, 2015, BSI implemented its new tracking system to monitor staff vacancies on a monthly basis and record the length of time each vacancy occurs.</p> <p>We have had two vacancies occur on the 2015-16 DAP grant. An administrative specialist was vacant 47 days, and a school improvement specialist was vacant 122 days. Both positions have been filled.</p>	<p>Ongoing Sarah Notley</p>

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<p>BSI did not effectively monitor the performance of the fiscal agents for compliance with grant terms.</p>	<p>We recommend BSI contract managers obtain appropriate training for grant monitoring and develop procedures to ensure fiscal agent performance is appropriately monitored for compliance with grant requirements.</p>	<p>There are multiple resources available to provide training and technical assistance to BSI staff in the development and implementation of monitoring procedures. These include but are not limited to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training available through the Departments of Financial Services and Management services relative to contract and grants management • Direct support and assistance available from the DOE’s Office of Audit Resolution and Monitoring • Other DOE staff who have successfully developed and implemented effective monitoring procedures. <p>BSI staff have reached out to the Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Finance and Operations, who will coordinate with BSI to access the necessary resources and collaborate on the development and implementation of recommended centralized monitoring processes and templates. <i>Anticipated Completion: August 31, 2015 for the plan; June 30, 2016 for the first monitoring cycle</i></p>	<p>The BSI team is collaborating with the Office of Grants Management to develop the 2016-17 RFA for Differentiated Accountability, and is working to include more explicit expectations, deliverables, and monitoring protocols for the awarded fiscal agents.</p>	<p>June 30, 2016 Christine Evans</p>