

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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April 1, 2011

Mr. Wally P. Cox, Superintendent
Highlands County School District
426 School Street
Sebring, Florida 33870

Dear Superintendent Cox:

The Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services is in receipt of your district's response to the preliminary findings of its 2010-11 Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Compliance Self-Assessment. This letter and the attached document comprise the final report for Highlands County School District's 2010-11 Level 1 and Fall Cycle Level 2 self-assessment monitoring process.

The self-assessment system is designed to address the major areas of compliance related to the State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR) required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). SPP Indicator 15, Timely Correction of Noncompliance, requires that the state identify and correct noncompliance **as soon as possible, but in no case later than one year from identification**. While any incident of noncompliance is of concern, 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.

The results of district self-assessments are included in the State's APR and are used to inform oversight activities, including the selection of districts for on-site monitoring, and 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."

On January 5, 2011, the preliminary report of findings from the 2010-11 Level 1 and Fall Cycle Level 2 self-assessment process was released to your district's ESE Director. The preliminary report detailed student-specific incidents of noncompliance that required immediate correction. Districts were required to correct all student-specific noncompliance and to provide evidence to the Bureau no later than March 7, 2011. In addition, districts are required to demonstrate that they are now correctly implementing each of the standards identified as noncompliant (i.e., 100 percent compliance).

BAMBI J. LOCKMAN
Chief

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Superintendent Cox
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In its 2010-11 Level 1 and Fall Cycle Level 2 self-assessment, Highlands County School District assessed 122 standards. One or more incidents of noncompliance were identified on 13 of those standards (10.7%). The following is a summary of the district's timely correction of student-specific incidents of noncompliance:

Correction of Noncompliance by Student

	Number	Percentage
Records Reviewed/Protocols Completed	30	-
Total Items Assessed	732	-
Noncompliant	14	1.9%
Timely Corrected	14	100%

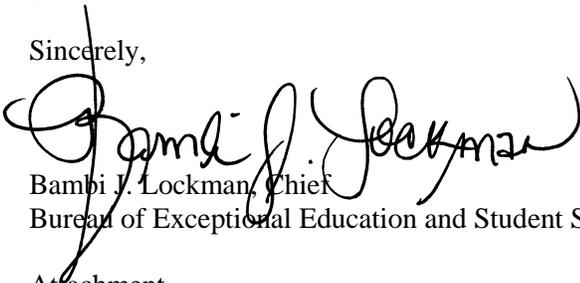
The attached *Highlands County District Summary Report: Findings of Noncompliance by Standard* contains a summary of the findings reported by the individual standard or regulation assessed. In addition, a Matrix of Services review was required. Highlands County School District reviewed six matrixes for students reported at the 254 or 255 cost factors for weighted funding through the Florida Education Finance Program. No discrepancies were identified.

In addition to the individual correction(s) reported above, the district was required to demonstrate 100 percent compliance for each standard that was identified as noncompliant through review of a random sample of student records. Your district has opted to develop a corrective action plan (CAP) for standards A-10, S/E-1, S/E-2, S/E-3, S/E-4, S/E-5, S/E-6, S/E-7, S/E-8, S/E-9, S/E-10, S/E-11, and T16-5, detailing the activities, resources, and timelines the district will employ to ensure the compliance target of 100 percent.

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.

If you have questions regarding this process, please contact your assigned district liaison for monitoring or Patricia Howell, Program Director, at (850) 245-0476 or via electronic mail at patricia.howell@fldoe.org.

Sincerely,



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

Attachment

cc: Pat Landress
Frances Haithcock
Mary Jane Tappen
Kim C. Komisar
Patricia Howell
Brenda Fisher
Sheila Gritz
Heather Diamond

Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

2010 – 2011 Self-Assessment
Level 1 and Fall Cycle Level 2
Highlands County District Summary Report: Findings of Noncompliance by Standard

This report provides a summary of the district's results and must be used when developing corrective actions. See the *Student Report: Incidents of Noncompliance* for student-specific findings. Results are reported by standard, and are based on the following:

Number of A protocols completed: 6
Number of standards per A: 23
Number of IEP protocols completed: 6
Number of standards per IEP: 37
Number of LRE protocols completed: 6
Number of standards per LRE: 28
Number of S/E protocols completed: 6
Number of standards per S/E: 18
Number of T16 protocols completed: 6
Number of standards per T16: 16

Total number of protocols: 30
Total number of standards: 732
Total number of incidents of noncompliance (NC): 14
Overall % incidents of noncompliance: 1.9%

Total number of different standards assessed: 122
Total number of different standards for which noncompliance was identified: 13
% of different standards for which noncompliance was identified: 10.7%

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 which requires immediate action(s) to correct the noncompliance

** **Ensure future compliance:** For findings which cannot be corrected for individual students, corrective actions are required to address how the district will ensure future compliance

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services**

**2010 – 2011 Self-Assessment
Level 1 and Fall Cycle Level 2
Highlands County District Summary Report: Findings of Noncompliance by Standard**

Noncompliance (NC)		*Correctable for the Student(s)	**Ensure Future Compliance	# NC	% NC
A-10	The parent provided consent for the student to receive instructional accommodations not permitted on statewide assessments and acknowledged the implications of such accommodations. (section 1008.22(3)(c)6, F.S.; Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(h), F.A.C.)	X		1	16.7%
S/E-1	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 education curriculum. For a prekindergarten student, the IEP contains a statement of how the disability affects the student's participation in appropriate activities. (34 CFR §300.320(a)(1))	X		1	16.7%
S/E-2	The IEP includes measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, 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 education curriculum and meet the student's other needs that result from the disability. Benchmarks or short-term objectives should be included for students with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards or any other student with a disability as determined by the IEP team. (34 CFR §300.320(a)(2))	X		1	16.7%
S/E-3	The IEP contains a statement of special education services/specially designed instruction, including location as well as initiation, duration, and frequency. (34 CFR §300.320(a)(4) and (7))	X		1	16.7%
S/E-4	The IEP contains a statement of related services, including location and anticipated initiation, duration, and frequency. (34 CFR §300.320(a)(4) and (7))	X		1	16.7%
S/E-5	The IEP contains a statement of supplementary aids and services, including location and	X		1	16.7%

Noncompliance (NC)		*Correctable for the Student(s)	**Ensure Future Compliance	# NC	% NC
	anticipated initiation, duration, and frequency. (34 CFR §300.320(a)(4) and (7))				
S/E-6	The IEP contains a statement of program modifications or classroom accommodations, including location and anticipated initiation, duration, and frequency. (34 CFR §300.320(a)(4) and (7))	X		1	16.7%
S/E-7	The IEP contains a statement of supports for school personnel. (34 CFR §300.320 (a)(4))	X		1	16.7%
S/E-8	The services identified on the IEP are based on the present level of academic and functional performance statement(s) and the annual goals (and short-term objectives/benchmarks, if applicable). (34 CFR §300.320(a))	X		1	16.7%
S/E-9	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		2	33.3%
S/E-10	The IEP contains descriptions of how progress toward annual goals will be measured, including how often parents will be regularly informed of their child's progress. (34 CFR §300.320(a)(3))	X		1	16.7%
S/E-11	Within ten days of any decision to change the placement of a student with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the district conducted a manifestation determination. (34 CFR §300.530(e))		X	1	16.7%
T16-5	In order to ensure quality transition planning and services, IEP teams shall begin the process of identifying transition services needs of students with disabilities, to include consideration of the student's need for instruction or the provision of information in the area of self-determination to assist the student to be able to actively and effectively participate in IEP team meetings and self-advocate, beginning no later than age fourteen (14), so that needed postsecondary goals may be identified and in place by age sixteen (16). (Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(h)9, F.A.C.)	X		1	16.7%