



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

Honorable Michael P. Flanagan  
Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Michigan Department of Education  
John A. Hannah Building  
608 West Allegan Street (P.O. Box 30008)  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

JUN 27 2012

Dear Superintendent Flanagan:

Thank you for the timely submission of Michigan's Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2010 Annual Performance Report (APR) and revised State Performance Plan (SPP) under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The Department has determined that, under IDEA section 616(d)(2)(A)(ii), Michigan needs assistance in implementing the requirements of Part B of IDEA. The Department's determination is based on the totality of the State's data and information including the State's FFY 2010 APR and revised SPP, other State-reported data, information obtained through continuous improvement visits, and other publicly available information. See the enclosure entitled "How the Department Made Determinations under Section 616(d) of the IDEA in 2012: Part B" for further details.

The specific factor affecting the Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP's) determination of needs assistance for Michigan was that the Michigan's FFY 2010 data for Indicator 15, which measures the timely correction of findings of noncompliance, reflect 88% compliance. For this reason, we are unable to determine that Michigan met requirements for FFY 2010 under IDEA section 616(d).

OSEP notes other areas that reflect a high level of performance, including that the State reported valid and reliable data for all indicators and a high level of compliance for Indicators 4B (3.3%), 9 (0.2%), 10 (0.7%), 11 (99.4%), 12 (98.6%), 13 (99.2%), 16 (99.3%), and 20 (100%). We hope that Michigan will be able to demonstrate that it meets requirements in its FFY 2011 APR.

The enclosed table provides OSEP's analysis of the State's FFY 2010 APR and revised SPP and identifies, by indicator, OSEP's review of any revisions made by the State to its targets, improvement activities (timelines and resources) and baseline data in the State's SPP. The table also identifies, by indicator: (1) the State's reported FFY 2010 data; (2) whether such data met the State's FFY 2010 targets and reflect progress or slippage from the prior year's data; (3) if applicable, that the State's data are not valid and reliable; and (4) whether the State corrected findings of noncompliance.

The State's determination for FFY 2009 was also needs assistance. In accordance with section 616(e)(1) of the IDEA and 34 CFR §300.604(a), if a State is determined to need assistance for two consecutive years, the Secretary must take one or more of the following actions: (1) advise the State of available sources of technical assistance that may help the State address the areas in which the State needs assistance; (2) direct the use of State-level funds on the area or areas in which the State needs assistance; or (3) identify the State as a high-risk grantee and impose Special Conditions on the State's Part B grant award.

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*The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.*

Pursuant to these requirements, the Secretary is advising the State of available sources of technical assistance related to Indicator 15, timely correction of findings of noncompliance. A list of sources of technical assistance related to the SPP/APR indicators is available by clicking on the “Technical Assistance Related to Determinations” box on the opening page of “The Right IDEA” Web site at: <http://therightidea.tadnet.org/technicalassistance>. You will be directed to a list of indicators. Click on specific indicators for a list of centers, documents, Web seminars and other sources of relevant technical assistance for that indicator. For the indicator(s) listed above, your State must report with its FFY 2011 APR submission, due February 1, 2013, on: (1) the technical assistance sources from which the State received assistance; and (2) the actions the State took as a result of that technical assistance. The extent to which your State takes advantage of available technical assistance for these indicators may affect the actions OSEP takes under section 616 should your State not be determined to meet requirements next year. We encourage Michigan to take advantage of available sources of technical assistance in other areas as well, particularly if the State is reporting low compliance data for an indicator.

As required by section 616(e)(7) of the IDEA and 34 CFR §300.606, the State must notify the public within the State that the Secretary of Education has taken the above enforcement action, including, at a minimum, by posting a public notice on the agency’s Web site and distributing the notice to the media and through public agencies.

As you know, pursuant to IDEA section 616(b)(2)(C)(ii)(I) and 34 CFR §300.602(b)(1)(i)(A), your State must report annually to the public on the performance of each local educational agency (LEA) located in the State on the targets in the SPP as soon as practicable, but no later than June 1, 2012. In addition, your State must: (1) review LEA performance against targets in the State’s SPP; (2) determine if each LEA “meets requirements” of Part B, or “needs assistance,” “needs intervention,” or “needs substantial intervention” in implementing Part B of the IDEA; (3) take appropriate enforcement action; and (4) inform each LEA of its determination. 34 CFR §300.600(a)(2) and (3). For further information regarding these requirements, see “The Right IDEA” Web site at: <http://therightidea.tadnet.org/determinations>. Finally, please ensure that your updated SPP is posted on the State educational agency’s Web site and made available to the public, consistent with 34 CFR §300.602(b)(1)(i)(B).

OSEP is committed to supporting Michigan’s efforts to improve results for children and youth with disabilities and looks forward to working with your State over the next year. If you have any questions, would like to discuss this further, or want to request technical assistance, please contact Daniel Schreier, your OSEP State Contact, at 202-245-6552.

Sincerely,



Melody Musgrove, Ed.D.

Director

Office of Special Education Programs

Enclosures

cc: State Director of Special Education

## **How the Department Made Determinations under Section 616(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 2012: Part B**

In making our determination for each State under section 616(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), we considered the totality of the information we have about a State. This includes the State's FFY 2010 Annual Performance Report (APR)/State Performance Plan (SPP); information from monitoring, including verification visit findings; and other public information, such as the State's performance under any existing special conditions on its FFY 2011 grant or a compliance agreement, longstanding unresolved audit findings, and other State compliance with the IDEA.

### FFY 2010 APR/SPP and Other Information

In reviewing a State's FFY 2010 APR/SPP, we considered both the submission of valid and reliable data and the level of compliance, including correction of noncompliance, as described below, as included in the State's final APR/SPP. We also reviewed other information (described below) that reflects the State's compliance with IDEA requirements.

With respect to data, for Indicators 1 through 5, and 7 through 19, we examined whether the State provided valid and reliable FFY 2010 data (*i.e.*, the State provided all the required data, the data were for the correct year and were consistent with the required measurement and/or the approved SPP, and we did not have other information (such as verification visit findings or inconsistent data within the APR) demonstrating that the data were not valid and reliable or the State indicated that the data were not valid and reliable).

With respect to compliance, we examined Indicators 4B, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, and 20 and looked for evidence that the State demonstrated substantial compliance through reporting FFY 2010 data that reflected a very high level of compliance. (For Indicators 4B, 9, and 10 a very high level of compliance is generally at or below 5%. For Indicators 11, 12, 13, 16, 17 and 20 a very high level of compliance is generally at or above 95%.) In addition, for Indicators 11, 12, and 13, a State could demonstrate substantial compliance if the State's FFY 2010 compliance data were 75% or above and the State reported that it had fully corrected FFY 2009 findings of noncompliance made under those respective indicators. For Indicators 4B, 9, and 10, a State could demonstrate substantial compliance if the State's FFY 2010 compliance data were 25% or below and the State reported that it had fully corrected FFY 2009 findings of noncompliance made under those respective indicators. As indicated in OSEP Memorandum 09-02, dated October 17, 2008 (OSEP Memo 09-02), beginning with the Department's determinations in 2010, for Indicators 9, 10, 11 and 12, and beginning with the Department's determinations in 2012 for Indicators 4B and 13, we considered a State to have demonstrated correction of previously identified noncompliance for any findings identified in FFY 2007, FFY 2008, and FFY 2009 if the State verified correction of those findings consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. In addition, we did not consider a State to be in substantial compliance for a compliance indicator based on correction of FFY 2009 findings of noncompliance if its reported FFY 2010 data were low (generally below 75%, or, for Indicators 4B, 9 and 10, above 25%), consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02.

Indicator 15 evaluates the "timely" correction of FFY 2009 findings, so for this indicator we specifically examined whether the State reported a very high level of compliance (generally 95% or better) in timely correcting FFY 2009 findings of noncompliance, and that the State reported that it verified the correction of its FFY 2009 findings of noncompliance consistent with OSEP Memo 09-02. We did not consider Indicators 16 and 17 if the State reported less than 100% compliance, but

fewer than 10 complaints or 10 fully adjudicated hearings, in recognition of the inequities in basing decisions regarding dispute resolution indicators on small numbers.

Generally, and absent any other issues (see below), we considered a State to “meet requirements” if the State: (1) Provided valid and reliable FFY 2010 data, as described above, for all indicators; and (2) Demonstrated substantial compliance, as described above, for compliance Indicators 4B, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, and 20. If a State did not meet the standards for substantial compliance for only one compliance indicator and there were no other factors (see below), we considered the State to “meet requirements” if the compliance level for that indicator was high (generally at or above 90%, or, for Indicators 4B, 9 and 10, at or below 10%). In no case, however, did we consider a State to “meet requirements” if it failed to provide valid and reliable FFY 2010 data (as defined above) for Indicators 1 through 5 and 7 through 19. We also considered whether the State, when it reported under Indicator 4A: (1) Made clear that, if it identified any districts as having significant discrepancies in the discipline of children with disabilities, it reviewed the districts’ policies, procedures, and practices related to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards, as required in section 612(a)(22)(B); and (2) If the State identified any noncompliance in policies, procedures or practices in these areas as a result of this review, it corrected the noncompliance.

Generally, and absent any other issues (see below), we considered a State to be “in need of intervention” for one of three reasons that are explained further in this paragraph: very low compliance data, failure to provide valid and reliable data for a compliance indicator, or longstanding noncompliance that was the subject of Departmental enforcement for a key IDEA requirement. First, we identified a State as “in need of intervention” if the State’s FFY 2010 compliance data demonstrated: (1) Very low performance for Indicators 4B, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16 or 17 (generally below 50%, or in the case of Indicators 4B, 9, and 10, above 50%), regardless of whether it reported correction of previously identified findings of noncompliance; or (2) Very low performance for Indicator 15 (generally below 50%). Second, we identified a State as “in need of intervention” if it did not provide valid and reliable (as defined above) FFY 2010 compliance data for Indicators 4B, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16 or 17. Finally, we also identified a State as “in need of intervention” if the State has been subject to Departmental enforcement for multiple years for failing to comply with key IDEA requirements, the noncompliance has been long-standing, and the State’s data in response to the Department’s enforcement actions demonstrate continued noncompliance.

We would identify a State as “in need of substantial intervention” if its substantial failure to comply significantly affected the core requirements of the program, such as the delivery of services to children with disabilities or the State’s exercise of general supervision, or if the State informed the Department that it was unwilling to comply with an IDEA requirement. In making this determination, we would consider the impact of any longstanding unresolved issues on the State’s current implementation of the program. We would also consider identifying a State “in need of substantial intervention” for failing to submit its APR/SPP.

Absent any other issues (see below), we determined that States that did not “meet requirements” and were not “in need of intervention” or “in need of substantial intervention” were “in need of assistance.”

#### Monitoring Data and Other Public Information

We also considered other public information available to the Department, including information from monitoring including verification visits, and other public information, such as the State’s

performance under any existing special conditions on its FFY 2011 grant or a compliance agreement, longstanding unresolved audit findings, and other State compliance data under the IDEA. We did not consider a State to “meet requirements” if the State had unresolved special conditions that were imposed as a result of the State being designated as a “high risk” grantee, outstanding OSEP monitoring findings (including verification visit findings) that affected the State’s data under APR indicators, longstanding audit issues, or a compliance agreement. We also did not determine a State to “meet requirements” if we had documentation that the State had not complied with the requirement in section 612(a)(18)(A) to maintain State financial support for special education and related services. The Department receives this documentation and requests for waivers of this requirement at various times, often well beyond the end of the fiscal year in which the State failed to maintain effort. The Department considers information related to a State’s compliance with the requirement in section 612(a)(18)(A) in making determinations when it has final information from the State on its noncompliance and waiver request, if any.

In determining whether the State should be identified as “in need of assistance,” “in need of intervention,” or “in need of substantial intervention,” we considered the length of time the problem had existed, the magnitude of the problem, and the State’s response to the problem, including progress the State had made to correct the problem.

#### Possible Changes to Determination Factors in the Future

As a part of our efforts to focus attention more on the results of State’s implementation of Parts B and C of the IDEA, OSEP is reexamining its process for making determinations under section 616 of the IDEA. We are considering how we can include State performance on results indicators in addition to those factors (described previously) that are currently considered. We will provide further details regarding our plans in the near future.