

November 4, 2004

**Memorandum**

To: Intermediate School District Superintendents and Directors of Special Education

From: Jacquelyn J. Thompson, Ph.D., Director  
Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services

Subject: Special Education Monitoring  
(Distribute to Local District and Public School Academy Directors of Special Education)

The 2004-05 school year is bringing with it changes in the way in which the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS) will be implementing its federal obligation to ensure monitoring of activities within the Local Educational Agencies (LEAs). The United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has expanded its focus in monitoring states from closed end procedural compliance to a broader focus on a continuous improvement and focused monitoring system.

During the 2004-05 school year the OSE/EIS is piloting a continuous improvement monitoring system in six (6) local school districts that are voluntarily participating. At the October meeting of the State Board of Education, Superintendent Tom Watkins reported his approval of changes to the Michigan Monitoring Model (Attachment).

Monitoring Activities for FY 2004-2005

The following monitoring activities will be expected of intermediate school districts (ISDs), local school districts (LEAs) and public school academies (PSAs) during school year 2004-2005:

- Closeout must be completed for all ISDs/LEAs/PSAs not in full compliance from the monitoring year of 2003-04, or previous state monitoring
- Awareness of the new system through involvement in new Special Education Self-Review (SESR) activities lead by ISD special education staff
- Identification and correction of all student level non-compliance items identified in the activities of the 2004-05 SESR
- Leadership from the ISDs in providing guidance to LEAs/PSAs in understanding the value of SESR and focused monitoring activities.

OSE/EIS-04-20

### Responsibilities of ISD Directors of Special Education

The ISD Directors are responsible for attendance of all pertinent leadership roles at trainings provided by the OSE/EIS. These include Directors, Monitors, Transition Coordinators, and others as indicated by the OSE/EIS. The ISD Directors are responsible for communicating all information regarding the new monitoring activities to ISD and LEA Superintendents and local Directors of Special Education. The OSE/EIS will provide formal notice as appropriate; however, discussion and ongoing communication with LEA and PSA administrators are the obligation of the ISD.

In communicating with your LEA/PSA Superintendents, the following clarification points may be helpful:

- There are federal requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA) for the State Educational Agency (SEA) to monitor for compliance (34 CFR §300.125, 300.128, 300.556).
- There are system benefits with the SESR to identify areas that support, maintain or inhibit the performance of students with disabilities. This will be useful in addressing improvements in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Students with Disabilities under No Child Left Behind (NCLB).
- The SESR brings benefits to school improvement planning and improving outcomes for students with disabilities.
- Monitoring activities implemented in the previous cyclic monitoring have been suspended for 2004-05 with the exception of close outs.

### Submission Dates for Assurance of Monitoring Activities

Specific dates for submission of required monitoring activities for this year are:

- **March 18, 2005:** Assurance of receipt of student corrective action plans related to SESR having been received and reviewed at the ISD
- **June 30, 2005:** Assurance of receipt and approval of all required student corrective actions related to SESR

### Resources and Technical Assistance

All ISD monitors have received training for initial implementation of the SESR. Continued training will be provided throughout the year to continue to build the skills and knowledge necessary for the shift in these monitoring activities. Additional learning opportunities for local and ISD staff will be made available.

ISD Superintendents and Directors of Special Education  
Page 3  
November 4, 2004

Technical assistance will be available to ISD staff through the Quality Assurance Unit, OSE/EIS. PowerPoint presentations, talking points, and training materials will progressively be posted on a website specific to CIMS. The anticipated launching of this site is January 3, 2005. The website will be hosted through Center for Educational Networking (CEN).

Should you have any questions, comments or concerns please contact Kathy Barker, Coordinator of Monitoring, at (517) 373-7169, or by email at [barkerk@mi.gov](mailto:barkerk@mi.gov).

Attachment

## MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Thomas D. Watkins, Jr.

DATE: September 27, 2004

SUBJECT: Report on Modifications to the Michigan Monitoring Model for Special Education Programs and Services

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that states ensure that the requirements of the IDEA are met through a monitoring process. The Administrative Rules for Special Education (Rules), at R340.1839, require that the Michigan Department of Education (Department) establish monitoring procedures, criteria and other activities to ensure that all public agencies meet minimum monitoring standards. To meet these purposes, the Department has established the Michigan Monitoring Model (MMM), last revised in 2003.

Over the past three years, Michigan has been involved in monitoring under the U. S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), beginning with a self-assessment completed in 2001, and a plan for continuous improvement in outcomes for students with disabilities. While the federal monitoring model continues to include standards for minimum compliance, the model has been expanded to include the evaluation of student progress and indicators for results, such as improvement in state and local assessments, increased graduation rates and reduced drop-out rates.

The Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS) has worked with a broad group of stakeholders to develop a Continuous Improvement and Monitoring System (CIMS) for local and intermediate school districts to parallel the federal model of continuous improvement in results for students with disabilities. This model will be piloted during the 2004-2005 school year in six selected school districts which have agreed to participate in a state review. All intermediate school districts will be trained in conducting their own self-review this school year.

This requires that the previously approved MMM be suspended for this school year. However, the existing MMM will continue to be implemented relative to outstanding corrective action and proof of compliance that has been reported to school districts that were monitored in previous school years. In addition, any compliance issues identified in the 2004-2005 school year during the piloted model will require corrective action.

I have approved the request from the OSE/EIS to suspend the MMM for the 2004-2005 school year, while conducting the required follow-up activities with previously monitored school districts and those districts that participate in the 2004-2005 pilot model.

Following the pilot implementation of the CIMS the OSE/EIS will propose a revised Monitoring system for public comment and review. This proposal is anticipated in April of 2005.