

**OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SANDY GARRETT
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

FOCUSED MONITORING REVIEW: SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

SCHOOL DISTRICT/AGENCY:

Bethany Public School District

COUNTY:

Oklahoma

DATE OF REVIEW:

May 17-18, 2010

TEAM MEMBERS:

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I. INTRODUCTION:

Local educational agencies (LEAs) must adopt policies and procedures consistent with State and federal requirements and are responsible for implementing programs that comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B. General supervision of LEAs is carried out at the State level. The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), Special Education Services (SES), conducted an on-site focused monitoring review May 17-18, 2010.

Focused monitoring is a term described by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) as “A process that purposefully selects priority areas to examine for compliance/results while not specifically examining other areas for compliance to maximize resources, emphasize important variables, and increase the probability of improved results.” This is a process in which LEAs are selected for on-site visits by rankings on their LEA data according to their District Data Profiles, areas of concern, and/or by random selection. The focus is on priority areas selected annually by the Focused Monitoring Stakeholder Group. The focused monitoring system has a direct and positive impact on monitoring effectiveness and improvement of services for students with disabilities throughout Oklahoma.

The Focused Monitoring Stakeholder Group has chosen two priority areas for school year 2009-2010. The areas selected are Preschool Outcomes (Indicator 7) and Parent Involvement (Indicator 8). The Bethany Public School District was selected, according to the LEA’s District Data Profile, to be monitored in the priority area of Preschool Outcomes (Indicator 7).

Beginning July 1, 2006, the OSDE-SES required all LEAs to complete the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF) for all students entering preschool special education services at the LEA and for all students exiting preschool special education services (either by leaving the LEA, returning to regular education, or through the student’s 6th birthday) who have been receiving preschool special education services at the LEA for at least six months. The summary ratings from the COSF are collected annually through the OSDE Special Education Child Count System.

The OSDE-SES conducted an analysis of the Early Childhood Outcome (ECO) data submitted by the Bethany Public School District through the Special Education Child Count System on the OSDE’s School District Reporting Site for the past three school years (2006-2007; 2007-2008; and 2008-2009). The review of this data revealed that the Bethany Public School District has maintained a steady number (an average of 32) of preschool students enrolled within their district. However, in 2008-2009, the district did not report any preschool exit data for students. The Bethany Public School District’s preschool enrollment indicates a population where such data on early childhood outcomes is likely to exist, and therefore, should have been reported by the district.

Sites visited within the Bethany Public School District consist of the following: Bethany Elementary School. The OSDE-SES conducted interviews and student file reviews. Two administrators, one special education teacher, one

general education preschool teacher, and a speech language pathologist were interviewed; 19 student files were reviewed.

A Focused Monitoring Parent Forum meeting was held on May 17, 2010 for parents of students with disabilities. These parents shared support for their school and answered questions presented by the OSDE-SES staff regarding the area of Preschool Outcomes.

II. FOCUSED MONITORING PRIORITY AREA:

Performance Goals and Indicators

34 CFR § 300.157 Performance goals and indicators.

The State must—

Have in effect established goals for the performance of children with disabilities in the State that—

(1) Promote the purposes of this part, as stated in § 300.1;

(2) Are the same as the State's objectives for progress by children in its definition of adequate yearly progress, including the State's objectives for progress by children with disabilities, under section 1111 (b)(2)(C) of the ESEA, 20 U.S.C. 6311;

(3) Address graduation rates and drop-out rate, as well as such other factors as the State may determine; and

(4) Are consistent, to the extent appropriate, with any other goals and academic standards for children established by the State;

(b) Have in effect established performance indicators the State will use to assess progress toward achieving the goals described in paragraph (a) of this section, including measurable annual objectives for progress by children with disabilities under section 1111 (b)(2)(C)(v)(II)(cc) of the ESEA, 20 U.S.C. 6311; and

(c) Annually report to the Secretary and the public on the progress of the State, and of the children with disabilities in the State, toward meeting the goals established under paragraph (a) of this section, which may include elements of the reports required under section 1111 (h) of the ESEA.

34 CFR § 300.601 State performance plans and data collection.

(a) General. Not later than December 3, 2005, each State must have in place a performance plan that evaluates the State's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of Part B of the Act, and describes how the State will improve such implementation.

(1) Each State must submit the State's performance plan to the Secretary for approval in accordance with the approval process described in section 616(c) of the Act.

(2) Each State must review its State performance plan at least once every six years, and submit any amendments to the Secretary.

(3) As part of the State performance plan, each State must establish measurable and rigorous targets for the indicators established by the Secretary under the priority areas described in § 300.600(d).

(b) Data collection. (1) Each State must collect valid and reliable information as needed to report annually to the Secretary on the indicators established by the Secretary for the State performance plans.

(2) If the Secretary permits States to collect data on specific indicators through State monitoring or sampling, and the State collects the data through State monitoring or sampling, the State must collect data on those indicators for each LEA at least once during the period of the State performance plan.

(3) Nothing in Part B of the Act shall be construed to authorize the development of a nationwide database of personally identifiable information on individuals involved in studies or other collections of data under Part B of the Act.

Promising Practices:

In relation to the identified critical compliance indicator, the following efforts and/or initiatives have been implemented by the Bethany Public School District. These activities have been recognized as effective components in the LEA's system for improving student outcomes:

- Parent interviews revealed that the special education director has fostered open communication between the school and parents, therefore, the district has developed a personal rapport with the parents;

- Staff and parent interviews revealed that the special education director and teachers provide a tremendous amount of support and assistance to both staff and parents;
- Staff interviews revealed that parents are supportive and communicate regularly; and
- Staff interviews revealed that formal and informal measurement tools are being utilized appropriately to collect data as recommended by the OSEP.

III. FINDINGS:

Supporting Evidence:

During the on-site visit, the OSDE-SES staff made observations, received feedback from parents, and conducted personnel interviews with staff at Bethany Elementary School. The following data was collected:

Based on two of the 19 files reviewed, the COSF that must be completed for students upon entering and exiting an early childhood special education program could not be located;

Parent interviews revealed that the COSF is not completed during the IEP meeting, however, the information from the COSF is mentioned during the meeting; and

An interview with the special education director revealed that COSF data was entered on the Special Education Automation Software (SEAS), but not on the OSDE's School District Reporting Site. The special education director was unaware that this data did not automatically transfer from SEAS to the OSDE's School District Reporting Site.

Improvements Required:

The Bethany Public School District will develop, implement, and submit a written plan on how the district will ensure that COSFs are being completed for students upon entering an early childhood special education program and upon exiting the program. The district shall also include the internal procedures necessary to ensure that the district reports, annually, the exit dates in the Special Education Child Count System on the OSDE's School District Reporting Site.

In addition, each LEA selected to receive an on-site focused monitoring review for Indicator 7 (Preschool Outcomes) will be required to attend a videoconference fall of 2010. This videoconference will provide the LEA instruction and guidance regarding preschool outcomes and data reporting strategies. The OSDE-SES will notify the LEA concerning the specific details of the videoconference. The Bethany Public School District will submit documentation to verify this action (i.e., memo announcement(s), meeting agenda(s), meeting date(s), verification of attendance [sign-in sheets]).

IV. ASSURANCE STATEMENT:

Assurance Statement with superintendent's signature required.

The Bethany Public School District must provide to this office an assurance statement, signed by the superintendent.

Content: *"This local educational agency (LEA) will be in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B and applicable State and federal laws and regulations and assist in developing strategies to improve results for children and youth with disabilities. Improvements and remedies will include examination of the LEAs existing policies, practices, and procedures to determine what changes (if any) should occur to address parent involvement."*

V. OTHER INFORMATION:

Subsequent monitoring activities may be initiated as necessary to ensure the LEA's compliance is consistent with policies, procedures, and regulations and in accordance with state educational agency's responsibilities required by 34 CFR § 300.149.

Under the Open Records Act, it may be necessary for the LEA or the OSDE to provide access to this public document upon request. In the event that the OSDE receives such a request, it will seek to protect, to the extent provided by law, personally identifiable information, which, if released, could constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy and confidentiality.

In accordance with 34 CFR § 300.212, Public Information, the LEA will make such public documents, relating to the eligibility of the agency under IDEA Part B, available to the parents of children with disabilities and to the general public, as necessary.