

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

FOCUSED MONITORING REVIEW: SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

SCHOOL DISTRICT/AGENCY

New Lima Public School District

COUNTY:

Seminole

TEAM MEMBERS:

Tammy Lawson

Keisha King

John Smith

Christa Knight

Coordinator, OSDE-SES

Coordinator, OSDE-SES

Coordinator, OSDE-SES

Monitoring Project Coordinator, OSDE-SES

DATE OF REVIEW:

March 25-26, 2010

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 March 25-26, 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 New Lima Public School District was selected to be monitored in the priority area of Parent Involvement (Indicator 8).

The OSDE-SES looked specifically at the percentage of parent surveys returned to the OSDE-SES and the percentage of parents of students with disabilities who reported that LEAs facilitated parent involvement to improve services and results. The New Lima Public School District’s FY2009 District Data Profile documented that 0% of parent surveys were returned. The State target for the percentage of parents of students with disabilities who reported that schools facilitated parent involvement to improve services and results is 88.50%.

Sites visited within the New Lima Public School District consist of the following: New Lima Elementary and New Lima High School. The OSDE-SES conducted interviews and student file reviews. Two administrators and one special education teacher were interviewed; 32 student files were reviewed.

A Focused Monitoring Parent Forum meeting was held on March 25, 2010, for parents of students with disabilities. These parents shared concerns and answered questions presented by the OSDE-SES staff regarding the area of Parent Involvement.

II. FOCUSED MONITORING PRIORITY AREA:

Performance Goals and Indicators

34 CFR § 300.157 Performance goals and indicators.

The State must--

(a) 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 Sec. 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 dropout rates, 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 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 performance indicator, the following efforts and/or initiatives have been implemented by the New Lima Public School District. These activities have been recognized as effective components in the LEA's system for improving parental involvement:

- Parent interviews revealed that special education teachers and general education teachers include parents in the decision making process regarding their child's education;
- Parent interviews revealed that there is open communication and good rapport between parents, teachers and principals within the district;
- Parent interviews revealed that parent information, such as resources and upcoming events, is posted in multiple locations in the school for easy accessibility; and
- Staff interviews revealed that delivery of parent surveys is being fully implemented by the special education teacher.

III. FINDINGS:

Supporting Evidence:

During the on-site visit, the OSDE-SES staff reviewed files, received feedback from parents, and conducted personnel interviews with staff at New Lima Elementary and New Lima High School. The following data was collected:

Based on four of 32 files reviewed, there was lack of documentation to support the fact that parent surveys were provided to parents;

Parent interviews revealed that school personnel need to become more familiar with the content of the parent survey;

Staff and parent interviews revealed there is a need for more training on the importance of the parent survey being returned; and

Staff and parent interviews revealed there is a need for more training on how the OSDE-SES uses the information collected from the parent survey.

Improvements Required:

The New Lima Public School District will develop, implement, and submit a written plan on how the district ensures that parents of students with disabilities have adequate involvement in improving services and results for children with disabilities. This plan shall include the internal procedures necessary to ensure that the district is providing parents the parent survey, annually, and informing the parents of the importance of the survey.

In addition, each LEA selected to receive an on-site focused monitoring review for Indicator 8 (Parent Involvement) will be required to attend a videoconference fall of 2010. This videoconference will provide the LEA instruction and guidance regarding the parent survey. The OSDE-SES will notify the LEA concerning the specific details of the videoconference. The New Lima 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 New Lima 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.