



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education

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June 16, 2006

Dr. Isabelina Rodriguez Babcock
Superintendent of Schools
Northampton Public Schools
212 Main Street
Northampton, MA 01060

Re: Mid-cycle Coordinated Program Review Report

Dear Superintendent Babcock:

Enclosed is the Department of Education's Mid-cycle Coordinated Program Review Report (Mid-Cycle Report). This report contains findings based on onsite monitoring conducted to verify the implementation and effectiveness of corrective action approved by the Department to address findings of noncompliance included in the Northampton Public Schools Coordinated Program Review Report issued on June 18, 2003. The Mid-cycle Report also contains findings based on onsite monitoring of special education compliance criteria that have been newly created or substantially changed in response to IDEA 2004.

As you know, another component of the Department's Mid-cycle Review is the review of your school district or charter school's self-assessment in the area of English learner education (ELE). (In the remainder of this letter, please read "district" as meaning "school district or charter school.") The purpose of this review is to determine whether your district is implementing the significant changes in M.G.L. Chapter 71A, governing the education of limited English proficient students, that were adopted by voters by means of Question 2 in 2002. The Department has reviewed your district's ELE self-assessment documents and, based solely on that self-assessment, is providing you in this report with comments on your ELE program and, where necessary, corrective action to be implemented. Your district is urged to request technical assistance in relation to any of these comments or prescribed corrective action. To secure assistance, you may consult with your Mid-cycle Review Chairperson or call Robyn Dowling-Grant in Program Quality Assurance Services at 781-338-3732. You may also consult with staff in the Department's Office of Language Acquisition and Achievement at 781-338-3534 and obtain additional ELE guidance documents through the Department's web site at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/>.

We are pleased to indicate that the Department of Education has found your district's approved Corrective Action Plan to have been implemented and to have been effective in remedying previously identified noncompliance issues in the areas of Special Education, Methods of Administration/Civil Rights and English Learner Education. The Department has also found your

district to have implemented those special education compliance criteria that were created or substantially changed in response to IDEA 2004. Finally, the Department of Education has found your district to have implemented the revised requirements of M.G.L. c. 71A. The findings of the Department are included in the attached Follow-up Monitoring Report. You and your entire staff are to be congratulated for your success in implementing not only all required corrective action, but also all new special education and ELE requirements.

The Department will notify you of your district's next regularly scheduled Coordinated Program Review several months before it is to occur. At this time we anticipate the Department's next routine monitoring visit to occur sometime during the 2008-2009 school year, unless the Department determines that there is some reason to schedule this visit earlier.

Your staff's cooperation throughout these follow-up monitoring activities is appreciated. Should you like clarification of any part of our report, please do not hesitate to contact the Mid-cycle Review Chairperson at 413-584-4839.

Sincerely,

Linda J. Estes, Mid-cycle Review Chairperson
Program Quality Assurance Services

Darlene A. Lynch, Director
Program Quality Assurance Services

c: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education
Honorable Clare Higgins, Mayor, School Committee Chairperson
Dr. Craig Jurgensen, District Program Review Follow-up Coordinator

Encl.: Mid-cycle Coordinated Program Review Report

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MID-CYCLE COORDINATED PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT**

NORTHAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**ONSITE VERIFICATION OF CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
AND/OR IDENTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL FINDINGS REQUIRING CORRECTIVE ACTION**

Date of Coordinated Program Review (CPR): October 21-25, 2002

Date of Coordinated Program Review Corrective Action Plan Approval: June 3, 2004

Dates of Corrective Action Plan Progress Reports: December 16, 2004

Dates of this Mid-cycle Review Onsite Visit: December 5 & 15, 2005

Date of this Report: June 16, 2006

| Criterion Number and Topic (Refer to full text of 2005-2006 CPR requirements) | Approved Corrective Action Plan Determined to be <u>Substantially Implemented and Effective</u> Or <u>New IDEA Requirements Implemented</u> √ | Method(s) of Verification | Basis of Findings Regarding Corrective Action Plan Activities Or Basis of Findings Regarding Implementation of New IDEA Requirements | Corrective Action Plan Determined <u>Not Fully Implemented</u> Or <u>Additional Issues Have Been Identified</u> √ | Basis of Findings Regarding Incomplete or Ineffective Implementation of Approved Corrective Action Plan Or Basis of Findings of Additional Noncompliance | Required Corrective Action, Timelines for Implementation, and Further Progress Reporting Requirements |
|---|--|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Special Education Requirements (including new IDEA-2004 Requirements) | | | | | | |
| | | Documenta- | IEP Teams meet to determine | | | |

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|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| SE 6 Determination of Transition Services | √ | tion review; Interview | needed transition services for students transitioning from one school building to another and to complete appropriate 688 referrals. | | | |
| SE 8 IEP Team Composition and Attendance | √ | Student record review | TEAM meetings include required members, including a district representative able to commit resources. Students attend and participate when appropriate. | | | |
| SE 12 Frequency of Re-evaluation | √ | Documentation/Student record review | The district conducts full three-year re-evaluations and implements re-evaluation procedures for students. | | | |
| SE 13 Progress Reports and Content | √ | Documentation/Student record review | The district provides parents with progress reports on students' progress toward reaching the IEP goals at least as often as parents are informed of the progress of non-disabled students. | | | |
| SE 14 Review and Revision of IEPs | √ | Student record review | The district conducts annual review meetings on or before the anniversary date of the current IEP. | | | |

| Criterion Number and Topic (Refer to full text of 2005-2006 CPR requirements) | Approved Corrective Action Plan Determined to be <u>Substantially Implemented and Effective</u> Or <u>New IDEA Requirements Implemented</u> ✓ | Method(s) of Verification | Basis of Findings Regarding Corrective Action Plan Activities Or Basis of Findings Regarding Implementation of New IDEA Requirements | Corrective Action Plan Determined <u>Not Fully Implemented</u> Or <u>Additional Issues Have Been Identified</u> ✓ | Basis of Findings Regarding Incomplete or Ineffective Implementation of Approved Corrective Action Plan Or Basis of Findings of Additional Noncompliance | Required Corrective Action, Timelines for Implementation, and Further Progress Reporting Requirements |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| SE 25B Resolution of Disputes | ✓ | Student record review/Interview | Resolution meetings prior to proceeding to the BSEA are being conducted. | | | |
| SE 30 Notice of Procedural Safeguards | ✓ | Documentation review/Interview | The district is providing parents with the current Notice of Procedural Safeguards brochure. | | | |
| SE 46 Procedures for Suspension of Students with Disabilities More than 10 Days | ✓ | Documentation/Student record review | The district has appropriate procedures in place for suspension of students with disabilities more than 10 days. | | | |
| Other Special Education Requirements Originally Cited in CPR Report | | | | | | |
| SE 3 SLD | ✓ | Documentation/Student record review | Statutory requirements for the determination of specific learning disabilities have been revised under the recently reauthorized IDEA 2004. | | | |

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|---|---|----------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| | | | Therefore, until final implementing regulations have been adopted, the Department is not making findings related to school district practices under this criterion. | | | |
| SE 23 Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information | √ | Onsite verification | The district maintains all student records in locked files. | | | |
| SE 32 Parent Advisory Council for Special Education | √ | Documentation review/ Interviews | The district has a functioning PAC with officers and by-laws. | | | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| SE 50 Responsibilities of the Administrator of Special Education | ✓ | Documenta- tion review | The district has a written DCAP in place. | | | |
| SE 55 Special Education Facilities and Classrooms | ✓ | Onsite verification/ In-terview | The district has corrected the two facility problems by relocating the two special education classrooms into appropriate spaces. | | | |
| Civil Rights (MOA) and Other General Education Requirements | | | | | | |
| MOA 7 Information to be Translated into Languages other than English | ✓ | Documenta- tion review/ Interview | The district arranges for the translation of notices and documents where appropriate. | | | |

NORTHAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
English Learning Education (ELE) Requirements

Mid-Cycle Review Advisory Comments Resulting From The Department's Review Of Local Self-Assessment Documents
 (Please refer to full text of 2005-2006 CPR-ELE legal requirements and related implementation guidance at
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa/review/cpr/instrument/chapter71A.doc>)

| ELE Criterion Number and Topic | Advisory Comments Resulting from the Department's Review of Local ELE Self-Assessment Document Submission | Actions to be Implemented in Anticipation of the District's Next Scheduled Coordinated Program Review |
|--|---|--|
| ELE 1 Annual Assessment | The district annually assesses LEP students using the MEPA and MELA-O. | |
| ELE 2 MCAS Participation | LEP students take MCAS and are provided with appropriate accommodations. | |
| ELE 3 Initial Identification | The district has a formal procedure for the initial identification of LEP students, including a home language survey to be completed during the enrollment process. | |
| ELE 4 Waiver Procedures | The district has developed a waiver process in accordance with ELE requirements. | |
| ELE 5 Program Placement and Structure | Documentation indicates substantial compliance is met. | |
| ELE 6 Program Exit | The district has developed appropriate exit criteria. | |

| ELE Criterion Number and Topic | Advisory Comments Resulting from the Department's Review of Local ELE Self-Assessment Document Submission | Actions to be Implemented in Anticipation of the District's Next Scheduled Coordinated Program Review |
|--|--|--|
| and Readiness | | |
| ELE 7 Parent Involvement | The district actively seeks involvement of parents of LEP students into the school culture, and has a mechanism for including them in the educational program. | |
| ELE 8 Declining Entry to a Program | The district has a procedure in place for ensuring that LEP students whose parents have declined entry to a program have their academic needs met and provides meaningful access to the educational program. | |
| ELE 9 Instructional Grouping | The district groups LEP students in age appropriate classrooms. | |
| ELE 10 Parental Notification | The district has a parent notification letter that includes all elements of ELE 10, and it is translated into the language of the home where appropriate. | |
| ELE 11 Equal Access to Academic Programs and Services | All ELE students are provided with equal access to all academic programs and services. | |
| ELE 12 Equal Access to Nonacademic and Extracurricular Programs | All ELE students are provided with equal access to all nonacademic and extracurricular programs and activities. | |
| ELE 13 Follow-up | The district has procedures in place to ensure that former LEP students who have exited the program receive follow-up monitoring for two years, and are provided with necessary | |

| ELE Criterion Number and Topic | Advisory Comments Resulting from the Department's Review of Local ELE Self-Assessment Document Submission | Actions to be Implemented in Anticipation of the District's Next Scheduled Coordinated Program Review |
|--|--|--|
| Support | academic support during that time. | |
| ELE 14 Licensure and Fluency Requirements | Documentation indicates substantial compliance is met. | |
| ELE 15 Professional Development Requirements | Documentation indicates substantial compliance is met. | |
| ELE 16 Equitable Facilities - (To be reviewed during next CPR visit) | A review of the physical facilities and classrooms used for ELE programs will be conducted during the next CPR. | |
| ELE 17 DOE Data Submission Requirements and Program Evaluation | The district has an ongoing evaluation process to ensure the ELE program is effective. | |
| ELE 18 Records of LEP Students- (To be reviewed during next CPR visit.) | A review of LEP student records will be conducted during the next CPR. | |