



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

**NOV 22, 2017**

Honorable Michael W. Kirst  
President  
California State Board of Education  
1430 N Street, Suite 5111  
Sacramento, California 95814-5901

Honorable Tom Torlakson  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
California Department of Education  
1430 N Street, Suite 5602  
Sacramento, California 95814-5901

Dear President Kirst and Superintendent Torlakson:

The purpose of this correspondence is to provide a summary of the monitoring and support activities conducted by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) for the California Department of Education (CDE) during the period of October 2016 through September 2017. In 2016, OSEP began providing differentiated monitoring and support (DMS) to States as part of its Results Driven Accountability (RDA) framework. Under RDA, OSEP made a shift from monitoring based solely on compliance to monitoring and support focused on both compliance and improving results for students with disabilities. OSEP differentiates its approach for each State based on the State's unique strengths, progress, challenges, and needs.

With the DMS process, OSEP conducts an organizational assessment (OA) of risk factors to identify States' progress in meeting performance standards and compliance with the legal requirements of Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Education Department General Administrative Regulations and the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. OSEP uses the information from the OA and an Engagement Decision Tree to make designations of universal, targeted, or intensive monitoring and support (DMS) for the fiscal year. The 2016 DMS areas were: 1) results; 2) compliance; 3) State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP); 4) correctional education; and 5) fiscal.

On October 19, 2016, OSEP sent Kristin Wright, Director of Special Education, the DMS notice for California. That notice provided a designation of universal, targeted, or intensive engagement in each of five areas: results, compliance, SSIP, correctional education, and fiscal. The information in the notice was based on FFY 2014 data in the five areas, along with information about the factors contributing to elevated needs, the support your State has accessed, your State's capacity to improve results and compliance, and additional contextual information. We have attached a copy of the DMS notice for your convenience.

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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.

As part of the engagement, OSEP discussed issues related to each of the five areas. Attached is a summary of the fiscal engagement provided by OSEP during the monitoring and support activity. Although OSEP also engaged with CDE staff regarding results, compliance, SSIP, and correctional education, these were more informal discussions, and we are not including a written summary of these discussions. As indicated on the fiscal enclosure, OSEP did not identify noncompliance with IDEA requirements as a result of the monitoring activity.

We appreciate your efforts to improve results for students with disabilities, and the full cooperation of CDE staff in our engagement around the identified areas. If you have any questions, please contact Susan Murray, your OSEP State Lead, at 202-245-8247.

Sincerely,

/s/

Ruth E. Ryder

Acting Director

Office of Special Education Programs

cc: Kristin Wright, State Director of Special Education

Attachments