



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

AUG 27 2010

Honorable Tammy Sandoval
Director
Alaska Department of Health and Social Services
323 East 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3553

Dear Director Sandoval:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the results of the Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP's) verification visit to the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (ADIHS) during the week of October 5, 2009. As indicated in the letter to you dated July 2, 2009, OSEP is conducting verification visits to a number of States as part of our Continuous Improvement and Focused Monitoring System (CIFMS) for ensuring compliance with, and improving performance under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). CIFMS is designed to ensure compliance and improve performance with Parts B and C¹ of the IDEA in accordance with 20 U.S.C. 1416 and 1442. Sections 616 and 642 of the IDEA require the Department to monitor States with a focus on: (1) improving early intervention and educational results and functional outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities; and (2) ensuring that States meet the program requirements, particularly those most closely related to improving early intervention and educational results for children with disabilities.

The purpose of the verification visit is to review the State's systems for general supervision, collection of State-reported data, and fiscal management, as well as the State's systems for improving child and family outcomes and protecting child and family rights. During the verification visit, OSEP: (1) analyzed the components of the State's general supervision, data and fiscal systems to determine whether they are reasonably designed to ensure compliance and improve performance; and (2) reviewed the accuracy of the data the State submitted for selected indicators in the State's Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2007 Annual Performance Report (APR)/State Performance Plan (SPP).

As part of the verification visit to Alaska, OSEP staff met with Erin Kinavey, Part C Coordinator, and State personnel responsible for implementing the general supervision, data or fiscal systems, and local agency staff. Prior to and during the visit, OSEP staff reviewed a number of documents, including the following: (1) Alaska's FFY 2007 APR submitted to OSEP in February 2009; (2) Alaska's SPP submitted to OSEP in December 2005 and updated in 2007, 2008 and 2009; (3) Alaska's eligibility document submissions under Part C of the IDEA for FFY 2009; (4) OSEP's verification visit letter to Alaska dated January 21, 2004; (5) Alaska's Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program (EI/ILP) website; and (6) other pertinent

¹ During the week of October 5, 2009, OSEP also conducted its Part B verification visit to the Alaska Department of Education (ADE).

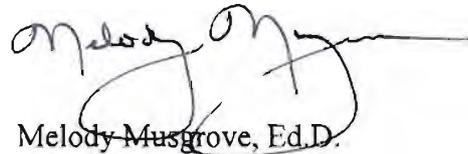
information.² OSEP also collected and reviewed stakeholder input from the State's Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center and the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC).

OSEP developed critical elements that were used to guide its evaluation of Alaska's general supervision, data, and fiscal systems. OSEP's analysis of each critical element and any required actions, if noncompliance was identified during the verification visit, are provided in the Enclosure to this letter. As further detailed in the Enclosure, OSEP found noncompliance and has required corrective action in the following areas:

1. The State has not consistently ensured that all noncompliance is identified as a finding, regardless of the level of compliance. Therefore, the State must provide confirmation in its FFY 2009 APR due to OSEP on February 1, 2011, that the State is continuing to ensure that all noncompliance is identified as a finding to EI/ILPs, regardless of the level of compliance.
2. The State has not demonstrated that it has timely corrected findings of noncompliance. Therefore, the State must provide confirmation in its FFY 2009 APR due to OSEP on February 1, 2011, that the State is continuing to report on correction of findings of noncompliance identified in FFY 2008.

OSEP appreciates the cooperation and assistance provided by PTI staff, SICC members and parents in providing feedback and input on the State's early intervention system. We look forward to collaborating with all stakeholders and actively working with the State to improve results for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities and their families. If you have any questions or wish to request technical assistance, please do not hesitate to call your OSEP State Contact Hillary Tabor at 202-245-7813.

Sincerely,



Melody Musgrove, Ed.D.
Director
Office of Special Education Programs

Enclosure

cc: Erin Kinavey, Part C Coordinator

² Documents reviewed as part of the verification process were not reviewed for legal sufficiency, but rather to inform OSEP's understanding of your State's systems.