



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

Honorable Brent D. Sherard  
Director and State Health Officer  
Wyoming Department of Health  
401 Hathaway Building  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

FEB 2 - 2011

Dear Dr. Sherard:

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 Wyoming Department of Health during the week of September 25, 2010. As indicated in our letter to you dated July 22, 2010, 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 C and B<sup>1</sup> of the IDEA. Section 616 of the IDEA requires 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 infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.

The purpose of the verification visit is to review the effectiveness of 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. OSEP developed critical elements that were used to guide its evaluation of Wyoming'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. OSEP found noncompliance, and has required corrective action in the following areas: (1) Identification of all instances of noncompliance regardless of the amount of noncompliance, as required by IDEA sections 616, 635(a)(10)(A) and 642 and 34 CFR §§303.500 and 303.501; (2) Verification that the early intervention service (EIS) providers have corrected each individual instance of noncompliance and are appropriately implementing the specific regulatory requirements (i.e., achieved 100% compliance) based on a review of updated data, such as data subsequently collected through on-site monitoring or a State data system, as required by IDEA sections 616, 635(a)(10)(A) and 642, and 34 CFR §§303.500 and 303.501; (3) An interagency agreement between the Wyoming Department of Health as the lead agency for Part C and the Wyoming Department of Education as the State educational agency (SEA) as required under 34 CFR §303.148(c) and a mechanism for settling disputes among agencies to ensure uninterrupted services for eligible infants and toddlers under Part C at 34 CFR §§303.523 and 524; (4) Data collection as it relates to child find under 34 CFR §§303.321(e)(2)(i) and (ii) and 303.322, specific to Neonatal Intensive Care Unit referrals (NICU); and (5) Part C IDEA funds are used for allowable purposes consistent with 20 U.S.C. 1435 and 1438.

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<sup>1</sup> During the week of September 25, 2010, OSEP also conducted its Part B verification visit to the Department of Education.

OSEP would like to recognize several improvement initiatives being implemented in the State that are designed to improve results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. The State has a consistent emphasis on serving infants and toddlers in natural environments. There is consistent community collaboration in identifying, locating and evaluating all infants and toddlers in the State who are eligible for services under Part C IDEA. The State's percentage of infants and toddlers served under Part C is higher than the national average. The State has effectively collected data on child outcomes utilizing the Child Outcomes Summary Form (COSF) and has a consistent process for rating child outcomes and tracking child progress through collection of entry and exit data. In addition, the State has developed a comprehensive training program for EIS providers to measure and improve child functional outcomes. Family survey results show that families understand their needs to assist their children's development and that families also feel that the early interventions are effective. The State has procedures in place for public reporting of each EIS program's data and the EIS programs utilize this annual report card for improvement planning purposes.

OSEP appreciates the cooperation and assistance provided by your State staff and others, including staff from the Wyoming Parent Information Center (WPIC) and parents of infants and toddlers with disabilities, in providing feedback and input on the State's systems for special education. We look forward to collaborating with all stakeholders and actively working with the State to improve results for infants and toddlers 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, Ginger Sheppard, at 202-245-7353.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melody Musgrove", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Melody Musgrove, Ed. D.

Director

Office of Special Education Programs

Enclosure

cc: Christine DeMers  
Part C Coordinator