



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

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February 15, 2017

Dr. Jack R. Smith
Superintendent
Montgomery County Public Schools
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850

*Jack's
Congratulations!*

Dear Dr. Smith:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (DSE/EIS) is required to make determinations annually on the performance of each local school system using one of the following four determination categories: “Meets Requirements,” “Needs Assistance,” “Needs Intervention,” or “Needs Substantial Intervention” [34 CFR §§300.600 and 300.604]. The MSDE, DSE/EIS uses a results-based rubric for specific indicators to evaluate each local school system’s performance in meeting the State’s targets for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2015 (2015-2016 school year). Attached please find the FFY 2015 Determination Overview that identifies the Part B Indicators used to assign a local determination, the FFY 2015 Local Determination Scoring Criteria, and the Graduation Results-Driven Accountability Plan. The attached FFY 2015 Annual Data Table on SPP/APR Part B Indicators provides a three-year data analysis and required actions for the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). Based on the FFY 2015 data, as well as information obtained through monitoring and complaint investigations, the MCPS has achieved the determination status of “Meets Requirements.”

In correspondence sent to your attention on March 19, 2014 you were informed that beginning with the FFY 2013 local determinations, the DSE/EIS would implement a six-year graduated results-driven accountability plan. Critical to the balanced focus on results and compliance is the collaborative work between general and specialized education leaders to narrow the school readiness and achievement gaps. To prepare for using student outcomes on Statewide assessments, graduation, dropout, and post-school outcomes to assign future local determination status, the DSE/EIS examined the process indicators that will directly impact student progress, growth, and achievement. The process indicators used to measure performance included:

- Indicator 1, Graduation Rate;
- Indicator 2, Drop-out Rate;
- Indicator 4A, Rate of suspensions and expulsions greater than 10 days in a school year;
- Indicator 5, Provision of services in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE);
- Indicator 8, Parent involvement; and
- Indicator 14, Post-School Outcomes.

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The shift to a more balanced accountability approach does not relieve the DSE/EIS from ensuring compliance, correction of identified noncompliance, and the receipt of timely and accurate data. As a result of the accountability shift to an increased emphasis on results, a local school system's determination status may be impacted in the future.

Local school systems are strongly encouraged to work closely with their local Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee (SECAC) to perform an analysis of local data and infrastructure. The analysis should guide the development of strategies for data-informed decision-making, increased parent partnerships, strategic collaboration, and the use of evidence-based practices to improve the results for children and youth with disabilities and their families.

Thank you for your hard work and commitment to excellence, equity, and efficiency. The MSDE is committed to supporting the efforts of the MCPS to improve results for students with disabilities and their families. If you have any questions or wish to request technical assistance, please do not hesitate to call me at 410-767-0238.

Sincerely,



Marcella E. Franczkowski, M.S.
Assistant State Superintendent
Division of Special Education/
Early Intervention Services

MF/AM/cc

Attachments

c: Karen B. Salmon
Carol A. Williamson
Phillip Lynch
Branch Chiefs