



March 15, 2010

## **FOCUSED MONITORING REPORT**

### **Alpine-Georgia Network of Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) Program**

Serving: Banks County, Dawson County, Forsyth County, Franklin County, Habersham County, Hall County, Lumpkin County, Rabun County, Stephens County, Towns County, Union County, White County and Gainesville City

Sandy Addis  
Pioneer RESA Director

#### **Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports**

1870 Twin Towers East  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334  
404-656-3963  
Fax: 404-651-6457

## **Introduction and Statutory Authority**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) guarantees a free and appropriate public education to students with disabilities. The IDEA provides federal funds to assist states in carrying out this responsibility and to comply with the associated regulations. 34 CFR Section 300.600 of the IDEA requires that states ensure that local districts and programs comply with federal regulations and meet the state's educational standards as they provide educational programs for students with disabilities. The Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports of the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) provides this general supervision and monitoring of local Districts through a variety of activities identified as Georgia's Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (GCIMP).

GCIMP is composed of multiple means for monitoring the local districts' provision of a compliant and quality education for students with disabilities. These include, but are not limited to, evaluation of timelines for entry into special education, student record review, special education budget review, dispute resolution, district improvement plans, data profiles, and Focused Monitoring. A manual has been distributed to all district special education directors and GNETS directors detailing the components of GCIMP.

The State Advisory Panel for Special Education serves as the stakeholder committee for the GaDOE and advises the state on the development and implementation of the GCIMP including Focused Monitoring. For Focused Monitoring, the stakeholders reviewed the state data on the Performance Goals and Indicators for Students with Disabilities and determined that the state priority indicator for FY10 (2009-2010 school year) would be increasing the performance of students with disabilities on statewide assessments when given appropriate accommodations. Once the priority was identified, the 2009 assessment data for all programs were reviewed and ranked in quartiles. Those programs with the lowest performance of students with disabilities in either reading or mathematics were selected for Focused Monitoring. In addition, systems with high dropout rates were selected to be Focused Monitored for the first time in Georgia. Other specialty programs and/or schools such as Georgia Regional Hospitals, Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) and State Schools were added to Georgia's list of programs to be chosen for the Focused Monitoring process for the year 2009-2010.

### **Focused Monitoring**

Alpine GNETS Program was selected for Focused Monitoring in the area of academic achievement and behavioral support. The purpose of the Focused Monitoring site visit to Alpine was to review their facilities, policies and procedures, instructional programs, student achievement and therapeutic supports.

### **The Monitoring Team**

The GaDOE authorized the following team to conduct on-site monitoring of Alpine on February 2-4, 2010.

Kachelle White, Team Leader, Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports, GaDOE  
MiMi Gudenrath, Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports, GaDOE  
Marianne Weidner, HAVEN- GNETS Director  
Jann James, Special Education Director, Ware County  
April Lee, Parent of a child with a disability  
JoEllen Hancock, Parent of a child with a disability

### **Data Related to Focused Monitoring**

As part of the Focused Monitoring activities, the GCIMP Plan submitted by the program for FY09 was reviewed. The Alpine Program **does** have an Improvement Plan goal that targets improving academic performance. The program will be required to **revise** their goals and set targets for improving academic performance. In addition, Alpine should use the findings contained in this report in its efforts to move forward in improving the services of students with disabilities. Programs that fail to meet compliance criteria within one year may be subject to sanctions from the GaDOE.

Prior to the on-site visit, available and related data were reviewed and considered. Data reviewed included:

- Report card of program accountability FY09
- Alpine CRCT data
- Alpine FY10 proposal document
- Individual school test data and enrollment data
- Program data profiles
- Teacher schedules

### **On-site Process and Activities**

The on-site activities of Focused Monitoring occurred on February 2-4, 2010. During that time the following activities took place:

- Visited 2 center locations and 1 school location
- Reviewed 15 student special education records
- Conducted 16 classroom observations
- Interviewed 4 program coordinators
- Interviewed 2 program administrators
- Interviewed 8 special education directors
- Interviewed 1 support personnel
- Interviewed 13 special education teachers
- Interviewed 12 paraprofessionals
- Reviewed 40 professional survey responses
- Reviewed 80 Parent Surveys

Reviewed the following:

- Program handbook
- Teacher lesson plans
- Time out logs
- Professional learning log
- Data on monitored seclusion, restraints, and time-outs
- Bus schedules
- Policies and procedures
- Professional learning documentation
- Instructional technology information

The monitoring team found noncompliance in the following areas:

- 1. Some students with disabilities are not receiving a free appropriate public education (FAPE).**
- 2. Some students do not receive the required number of instructional hours in a school day.**

#### **Required Evidence of Improvement**

Alpine GNETS Program must set a rigorous target to improve reading achievement on statewide testing. Using the CRCT results from the 2012 testing, the program's progress in meeting the target set for improving achievement will be reviewed. Programs that fail to meet compliance criteria within one year may be subject to sanctions from the GaDOE.

## **ON-SITE FINDING NO. 1**

**Some students with disabilities are not provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE).**

### **Applicable Federal Regulations**

300.101 Definition of IEP/Transition Plans

300.105 Assistive Technology

### **Supporting Evidence**

- 33% of Individual Education Programs (IEPs) reviewed did not address the academic component in the required present levels of academic achievement and functional performance section.
- 60% of the transition plans reviewed did not contain transition assessments, which are required to help IEP teams determine the appropriate courses of study and community/vocational experiences that the student will need to be successful in post-school goals.
- 80% of the transition plans reviewed did not contain measureable post secondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments.
- None of the transition plans reviewed contained measurable annual goals.
- All of the Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) reviewed contained positive behavior strategies and consequences, however, all consisted of identical strategies and consequences which are not individualized.
- All of the IEPs reviewed considered assistive technology; however, none of the IEPs indicated the use of assistive technology which is necessary for students to access the general education curriculum.
- According to the professional survey, only 35% of respondents reported that students “always” receive assistive technology which allows them to access grade level curriculum.
- Based on teacher interviews, additional professional development is needed for teachers to determine appropriate assistive technology devices and services to support instruction.
- Based on interviews, there are inconsistencies in whether or not Alpine students are able to receive the necessary high school academic credits to align with graduation requirements and have an opportunity to earn a regular diploma.

### **Required Evidence of Correction by March 15, 2011**

**Evidence that FAPE is being provided to students by a review of:**

- Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance that include all appropriate components, specifically addressing the academic needs of the student
- Documentation that professional learning has been provided for all professionals on the use and implementation of assistive technology

- IEPs that document assistive technology has been considered and reasons why it is or is not appropriate
- List of all students requiring assistive technology services/devices to include disability area, specific need addressed, and the technology and/or services provided
- Measurable transition plans that contain all the required components; measureable postsecondary goals based on age appropriate transition assessments, and measureable annual goals
- BIPs that are individualized and document specific target behaviors, positive replacement behaviors and positive behavioral interventions and supports
- Documentation of follow-up training on the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) in the content areas teachers are currently teaching
- Documentation that collaboration has taken place with the Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and Alpine regarding students being able to receive course credit and graduate with a Georgia High School diploma while attending any location of the Alpine Program
  - The documentation will include an action plan detailing the steps for implementation where high school students are being served, including documentation that every high school student can be enrolled in classes that will enable them to earn high school credits.

## **ON-SITE FINDING NO. 2**

**Some students do not receive the required number of instructional hours in a school day.**

### **Applicable State Regulations**

160-5-1.02 School Day for Students

### **Supporting Evidence**

- According to the daily teacher schedules, some students are not receiving the required daily instructional time. According to the state rule rest periods, recesses, breaks, class change time, and lunch periods are not considered to be instructional time.
  - Grades 1-3 shall not have less than a daily average of 4 ½ hours of instructional time.
  - Grades 4-5 shall have not less than a daily average of 5 hours of instructional time
  - Grades 6-12 shall have not less than a daily average of 5 ½ hours of instructional time.

### **Required Evidence of Correction by March 15, 2011**

- Teacher schedules that document a full day on instruction
- Bus route arrival and departure time, if needed

## Professional Concerns

The Alpine GNETS Program is strongly encouraged to collaborate with their LEAs and determine what current textbooks and materials should be utilized for the Alpine Program. Interviews with staff expressed a concern about outdated materials, inconsistent materials among grade levels and content areas, and lack of a systematic reading/math program for struggling learners. According to the GNETS Program Assurances, “the LEA will coordinate with the GNETS Director to ensure the necessary provision of textbooks, Georgia Performance Standards curriculum materials and resources, technology and its support, and state and local testing materials. Any materials or services provided through the use of Quality Basic Education (QBE) funds will be responsibility of the LEA.” Alpine has a positive working relationship with the LEAs, however collaboration should be fostered so that the students receiving services in Alpine have all the resources, materials, technology, professional development opportunities for teachers that are available.

According to the Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support program definition and purpose statement, “child specialists (educators, psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, behavior support specialists, or etc,) from a variety of professions collaborate on behalf of the children served”. Currently Alpine does not have social workers or a psychologist on staff. Alpine should collaborate with participating LEAs to ensure that students have access to the therapeutic services that they require.

Based on classroom observations and interviews, professional learning is needed on the following topics:

- Differentiated instruction
- Progress monitoring/benchmarking
- Data management and analysis of behavior utilizing Student Achievement Model (SAM) and School Wide Information System (SWIS)
- Parent engagement opportunities
- GPS follow-up coaching and support in the subject area teachers are currently teaching

According to the professional survey, 32.50% of respondents reported that they “sometimes” receive follow-up support and coaching in implementing new classroom practices, (Ex. Behavior management, GPS, SWIS, Differentiation). Follow-up support and coaching should be provided to ensure fidelity of implementation and to monitor outcomes of implemented interventions.

## CAP Development

With the assistance of their local stakeholders and school administrators, the Alpine GNETS Program must develop a Corrective Action Plan (CAP). The CAP must address the cited compliance items **and** include a long range plan to improve the academic performance of students with disabilities. The improvement activities must be added to the program’s Continuous Improvement Monitoring Plan. The CAP must be completed and submitted to the

Division for Exceptional Students by **April 29, 2010**. In addition to the funds for FY10, Alpine will receive a total of \$10,000 to assist with the implementation of the CAP activities.



CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN (CAP)				ALPINE PROGRAM (GNETS)			
YEAR ONE CLEARANCE DATE: MARCH 15, 2011				FINAL CAP SUBMISSION DATE: MAY 14, 2010			
DRAFT CAP SUBMISSION DATE: May 11, 2010							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Actions/Strategies Interventions or Programs	Professional Learning	Resources or Materials Needed (Include funding source, personnel, and cost	Person or Position Responsible for Supervision of Implementation	Timeline for Implementation	Means of Evaluation (Who ensures that activities in columns 1-5 are completed?)	Documentation of CAP activities due to the DES with dates	Evidence of Impact (Student Learning Data)
Finding No 1: Some students with disabilities (SWD) are not provided FAPE  <b>A) The IEP team will develop the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) to include all appropriate components, specifically addressing the academic needs of the student</b>	IEP Development Training for all Alpine teachers and administrative staff	GA DOE Elluminate Session: 12/15/08- “Developing Standards Based Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for SWDs”   					

		<del>Dr. Marge Habiger</del>	Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover		Pam Kirkpatrick		
		Sample IEPs will be provided to teachers	Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover	May 2010	Pam Kirkpatrick	<i>Copies of Site- Based IEP Committee Minutes</i>	
		Site-based IEP committees will be developed	Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover, Alpine Teachers	May 2010	Pam Kirkpatrick	<i>Copy of Rubric</i>	
		IEP Rubric will be utilized to provide self- directed, IEP committee, and administrative monitoring of IEPs	Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover	<del>August 2010</del> September 2010	Pam Kirkpatrick	<i>Sign-in Sheets</i>	
		Follow-up face- to-face IEP training session (site-based)				<i>Improved PLAAFP in IEPs submitted:</i>	
		Sue White- Gainesville Tammy Foster- Carnesville	Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover	<del>August 2010</del> This training will be provided by Hall County— July 15, 2010	Pam Kirkpatrick	<del>Sept. 1, 2010</del> Sept. 30, 2010 (5) <del>Dec. 1, 2010</del> Dec. 15, 2010 (5) <del>Feb. 1, 2011</del> Feb. 15, 2011 (5)	
	GRASP training for all Alpine teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrative Staff. Use of this	NO COST FOR THE ABOVE ACTIVITIES			Pam Kirkpatrick	<i>Progress Monitoring Data in reading and/or math from the same five students at each submission:</i>	

<p><b>B) Documentation that professional learning has been provided for all professionals on the use and implementation of assistive technology</b></p> <p><b>C) IEPs that document assistive technology has been considered and reasons why it is or is not appropriate</b></p> <p><b>D) List of all students requiring AT services/devices to include disability area, specific need</b></p>	assessment system will allow for data- driven differentiation and for more specific documentation in PLAAFP of student academic needs	Georgia RESA Assessment of Student Progress (GRASP)	Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover	Dates not yet determined	Pam Kirkpatrick	<p>Sept. 1, 2010</p> <p>Sept. 30, 2010 (5)</p> <p>Dec. 1, 2010</p> <p>Dec. 15, 2010 (5)</p> <p>Feb. 1, 2011</p> <p>Feb. 15, 2011 (5)</p>	
	Assistive Technology Training for all teachers and staff to include definitions of AT, guidelines for decision making about AT, and resources for SWD with deficits in Reading, Math, and Written Expression	<p>\$1.00 per student (approximately \$200.00) CAP money</p> <p><del>\$4500 for 3 training sessions CAP money DOE Illuminate Session 3/24/2008- Assistive Technology: Consideration and Documentation</del></p> <p>AT Star training by Gina Gelinas for 5 Alpine teachers</p>	Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover	September 2010	Pam Kirkpatrick	<p>Improved documentation of AT consideration in IEPs submitted</p> <p>Sept. 1, 2010</p> <p>Sept. 30, 2010 (5)</p> <p>Dec. 1, 2010</p> <p>Dec. 15, 2010 (5)</p> <p>Feb. 1, 2011</p> <p>Feb. 15, 2011 (5)</p>	
		GPAT Checklist/rubric to provide self-directed, IEP committee, and administrative	Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover	Following each AT Star session			

<p>addressed, and the technology and/or services provided</p> <p><b>E) Measurable transition plans that contain all the required components; measurable postsecondary goals based on age appropriate transition assessments, and measurable annual goals</b></p>	<p>Training for all appropriate teachers and administrative staff on the development of transition plans</p>	<p>monitoring for consideration of AT for SWD</p> <p><del>Follow-up face-to-face, site-based training sessions on AT by system AT coordinators</del></p> <p>Alpine AT Star staff trainees will re-deliver information to Alpine teachers</p>	<p>Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover</p>	<p>August 2010 September 2010</p>	<p>Pam Kirkpatrick</p>	<p>List sent to DOE February 1, 2011</p>	
		<p>NO COST FOR AT RESOURCES</p>					
		<p>DOE Elluminate Sessions on Transition:</p> <p>9/17/2009- Compliance and Transition</p> <p>2/24/2009-</p>					
			<p>Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover</p>	<p>September, 2010 November, 2010</p>	<p>Pam Kirkpatrick</p>	<p>Sign-in Sheets from Elluminate Sessions</p>	
			<p>Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover</p>	<p>September 2010</p>		<p>Sign-in Sheets from Trainings</p>	
					<p>Pam Kirkpatrick</p>	<p>Transition Plans submitted in IEPs:</p>	
						<p>Sept. 1, 2010</p>	

<b>F) BIPs that are individualized and document specific target behaviors, positive replacement behaviors, and positive behavioral interventions and supports</b>	BIP training for all Alpine teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrative staff	Transition Assessment for Transition Plan Writing  Follow-up training for Transition Plans  Training-by <del>Tammy Hart</del> (Franklin County) <b>GLRS</b>  Transition Committees will be formed at sites to review transition plans, using DOE checklist	Lydia Bennett	November 2010	Pam Kirkpatrick	Sept. 30, 2010 (5) Dec. 1, 2010 Dec. 15, 2010 (5) Feb. 1, 2011 Feb. 15, 2011 (5)	Students return to a less restrictive setting  Increase in scores on statewide assessments
	GPS Professional Learning:  R/LA: Elementary, Middle High  Math: Elementary, Middle, High  Science: Elementary, Middle, High	NO COST FOR TRANSITION RESOURCES         Dr. Michael Blake		August 2010		BIPs submitted in IEPs:  Sept. 1, 2010 Sept. 30, 2010 (5) Dec. 1, 2010 Dec. 15, 2010 (5) Feb. 1, 2011 Feb. 15, 2011 (5)	
	<b>G) Documentation of follow-up training on the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) in the content areas teachers are currently teaching</b>			September 2010 October 2010	Pam Kirkpatrick       Pam Kirkpatrick	Sign-In Sheets from Trainings   Clsrn Obs Forms for Reading or Math GPS with the same 5 teachers at each data submission:  Sept. 1, 2010 Sept. 30, 2010 (5) Dec. 1, 2010	

<b>H) Documentation that collaboration has taken place with the Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and Alpine regarding students being able to receive course credit and graduate with a Georgia High School diploma while attending any location of the Alpine Program: to include an action plan detailing the steps for implementation where high school students are being served, including documentation that every high school student can be enrolled in classes that will enable them to earn high</b>	Social Studies: Elementary, Middle, High	NO COST			Pam Kirkpatrick	Dec. 15, 2010 (5) <del>Feb. 1, 2011</del> Feb. 15, 2011 (5)	
		Purchase SWISS for Carnesville site \$250 From CAP Money					
	Professional Learning for teachers on use of APEX- E20/20	Pioneer RESA personnel to train teachers and provide coaching and walk-thrus	Elaine Caffrey	August 2010 Training through Gainesville City— August, 2010			
		Alpine teachers to visit and observe instruction in general ed. classrooms in Franklin County (Carnesville teachers) and Hall County or Gainesville City (Gainesville Teachers) NO COST	Elaine Caffrey  Elaine Caffrey	August 2010  August 2010		Statements from LEA Special Ed. Directors outlining agreement of how students may earn high school credits while attending the Alpine Program	High school students earn more credits while attending the Alpine Program  Increase in GHSGT and EOCT scores  Increase in graduation rate for students attending Alpine GNETS

school credits					Pam Kirkpatrick		
		System Personnel			Pam Kirkpatrick		
<b>Finding No. 2: Some students do not receive the required number of instructional hours in a school day</b>							
<b>A) Teacher schedules that document a full day of instruction</b>		<p>Five <b>Eight</b> Computers to be purchased for use by high school students</p> <p>Purchase Credit Recovery Program such as APEX <b>E20/20</b> for the Gainesville site</p>	Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett, Stan Stover			<i>Copies of revised teacher schedules:</i>	
<b>B) Bus route arrival and departure time</b>		<p><del>\$5050</del> <b>\$9550</b> from CAP Money</p>	Elaine Caffrey, Lydia Bennett,			<p><i>Submitted on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of school (per site) after students begin and again 30 school days later</i></p>	<i>Improved statewide test scores</i>

		Teachers will revise schedules to reflect appropriate, grade-level instructional time	Stan Stover		Pam Kirkpatrick	<i>Copies of busing schedules:</i>  <i>Submitted on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of school (per site) after students begin and again 30 school days later</i>	
--	--	---	-------------	--	--------------------	--	--



		<p>Site Coordinators to work with referring systems to ensure appropriate arrival and departure times of students</p> <p>System Transportation Directors invited to join Alpine Stakeholder's Committee</p>						
--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	--