

SYSTEM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REVIEW REPORT

Macon County Schools

Nealie Johnson Special Education Director

Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports

1870 Twin Towers East Atlanta, Georgia 30334 404-656-3963 The Division for Special Education Services continuously reviews statewide data for systems that have previously been selected for Focused Monitoring. As a state, there have been some positive changes in performance for students with disabilities, however, if statewide data indicates there are systems that have shown little to no improvement in the performance of students with disabilities in the priority indicator originally selected for monitoring, additional support will be provided. The Division has developed a process of monitoring to incorporate additional support and technical assistance to systems that continue to perform in the lower quartile and continue to show an opportunity for growth. This process is known as the System Technical Assistance Review (STAR).

Macon County was originally Focused Monitored October 9, 2006-October 12, 2006 in the area of reading. Macon County was selected to participate in the STAR process on November 17-November 18, 2009. The monitoring team consisted of:

Kimberly Green, Ed.D, Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports, GaDOE Alice Murphy, Ed.D, Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports, GaDOE Alicia Segursky, Special Education Administrator, Gordon County Schools Terri Goodridge, Parent of a student with a disability

The following data was reviewed prior to the on-site visit:

CRCT Results

SWD % Meets/Exceeds	FY09	FY08	FY07
Math	33.7	32.6	32.2
RELA	33.2	46.0	33.1

School Improvement Plan
STAR Self- Assessment
Professional Learning Activities
Supplement Programs
Individual Education Programs (IEPs)
Professional Survey Results
System Data Profiles
Focused Monitoring Report and Corrective Action Plan
Annual Yearly Progress Data
GLRS Initiatives

During the on-site visit the following activities took place:

Interviewed 12 teachers
Interviewed 9 administrators/support personnel
Interviewed 26 parents
Interviewed 2 paraprofessionals
Interviewed 2 Academic Coaches
Conducted 12 observations

AREA	SUMMARY
INSTRUCTION	According to the interviews conducted, Macon County special education teachers need Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) training in the subject areas they are currently teaching. Continued follow-up, coaching and modeling is needed to ensure that teachers are implementing the GPS with fidelity.
	Classroom observations did not consistently show differentiated instruction, instructional technology integrated into the lesson, student work supporting standards posted, and the language of standards-based teaching and learning. Differentiated instruction training is needed. Teachers expressed receiving professional learning to assist with defining, and developing lesson plans with differentiated instruction, although teachers continue to struggle with implementation. Modeling is needed for co-teaching teams to observe other co teaching teams as they instruct students of varying ability levels.
	According to the interviews conducted, the full continuum of services is not available for students with disabilities. It was reported that students are placed in an educational setting based on the availability of services and scheduling preferences rather than based on the individual need of the learner. In addition, student records reviewed for students with disabilities did not contain rationale and information to support placement and delivery model options.
	There are low expectations for students with disabilities. Interviews with professionals suggested a belief that students with disabilities are achieving to their potential and their potential is limited by virtue of their disabilities. Poor test scores appear to support this belief.
	RECOMMENDATIONS
	Administrator and/or academic coach walk-throughs and observations should incorporate a tool to observe and provide constructive feedback for teachers to include the following; co-teaching strengths and weaknesses, use of differentiated instruction, and GPS implementation (including content specific vocabulary, and instructional rigor).
	Provide GPS training for all teachers that have not received training in the subject area they are currently teaching. In addition, provide a "re-fresher" training for teachers that have received training in the past.
	As evidenced by interviews and surveys, the majority of general education teachers, special education teachers, administrators and support staff need ongoing training for planning, implementing, and participating in co-teaching and/or additional inclusive practices.
	DOCUMENTATION
	Macon County will submit sample copies of completed classroom observation feedback forms.
	Macon County will provide documentation of GPS training for all teachers that have not received training in the subject area they are currently teaching. This documentation is to include any "re-fresher" training for teachers that have received training in the past. Documentation will be submitted to include GPS training schedule, agenda, and sign-in sheets.
	Macon County will submit Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that document a consideration of the full continuum of placement options, and placement decisions based on the individual need of the learners which are supported by the present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, and placement.
	RESOURCES
	GLRS: Online Co-Teaching and Differentiation Course, Coaching Support
PROGRESS MONITORING	A plan of action to address progress monitoring through common assessments and benchmarks has not been developed and implemented systemically. The plan for progress monitoring must be communicated clearly to all teachers. Teachers have limited familiarity with progress monitoring. Teachers need professional learning to include the frequency of progress monitoring and how to use the results to adjust instruction. Some teachers give weekly assessments but they are not implemented consistently across grade levels. According to the professional survey, only 56% responded that they use progress monitoring to adjust instruction weekly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Professional learning is needed on various progress monitoring tools and system expectations related to frequency, record keeping, and analyzing data to adjust instruction based on results. In addition, a systematic process needs to be established to compile student level data to monitor progress.

DOCUMENTATION

Macon County Schools will submit documentation that professional learning has been provided to staff on the use of progress monitoring and how staff will use the data to drive instructional practices. This should include making the determination of when an intervention is needed for a student who may be struggling in a particular content area.

Macon County Schools will submit a systematic plan addressing progress monitoring. All staff should be familiar with the definition of formative and summative assessment, progress monitoring tools, as well as the frequency required of various progress monitoring instruments, and the interventions appropriate for the areas of weakness identified through the data collected in progress monitoring.

RESOURCES

Book: Students With Disabilities Can Make AYP: What Every School Leader Should Know.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Evidence of professional learning was not provided by the system upon request. According to the professional survey, only 40% responded they receive follow-up support and coaching when implementing new classroom practices (i.e. co-teaching, differentiation, GPS, etc.).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish an on-going system to provide teachers and administrators with an in-depth understanding of:

- Content knowledge (GPS)
- Research-based instructional strategies
- Assessment strategies
- Standards-based classrooms
- Differentiated instruction
- Data analysis
- Co-teaching

Professional learning is a continuous need in the following areas:

- GPS
- Differentiated Instruction
- Special Education Teachers Providing support in the General Education Classroom
- Co-teaching and inclusive practices
- Progress Monitoring
- Paraprofessionals need additional support to meet the needs of students with various disabilities, behavior concerns, and identifying the most productive way to support students with disabilities in the classroom setting
- Writing Effective IEPs, including but not limited to Transition Plans, Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance, and Standards Based Goals and/or Objectives

Align professional learning with the school improvement plan by defining specific outcomes for each grade level and content area. Evaluate the impact of professional learning on practices and student learning. Use collaborative planning time to examine student work in order to determine students' understanding of standards and how to adjust instruction.

DOCUMENTATION

Macon County will provide a revised school improvement plan to include the above mentioned professional learning topics.

RESOURCES	

Book: Students With Disabilities Can Make AYP: What Every School Leader Should Know.

Thinkfinity
Learning Village
GLRS: Online Co-Teaching and Differentiation Course, Coaching Support

Elluminate Sessions: LRE, Standards Based IEPs, Transition, Math Strategies, Math Talks Implementation Manual

COMPLIANCE/ON-	SUPPORTING EVIDENCE	REQUIRED EVIDENCE OF CORRECTION BY
SITE FINDING/S APPLICABLE		March 4, 2011
FEDERAL/STATE		
REGULATIONS		
C.F.R. 300.105	Assistive Technology	
	"(a) Each public agency must ensure that assistive technology devices or assistive technology services, or both, are made available to a child with a disability if required" Teachers interviewed stated that Assistive Technology (AT) is not considered and is not part of the IEP process. When interviewed administrators and teachers could not explain how assistive technology was considered and did not know of any student that used assistive technology. Macon County needs to provide additional training on the consideration of AT for students with disabilities. Tools that are available to all students may not necessarily need to be documented in the IEP. In addition, observations and interviews did not indicate the use	Macon County will submit documentation of staff training on AT indicating the consideration process for determining the need for AT. Macon County will submit a list of students using AT, including the student's disability and the specific tools being used.
	of the AT tools in the classroom. If a device is determined to be needed as a tool to assist a student in accessing the curriculum, it should be used consistently in the classroom setting. Observations should include monitoring AT use in the classroom.	
C.F.R. 300.106	Free and Appropriate Public Education: Extended School Year Services (ESY)	
	"(a)General. (1) Each public agency must ensure that extended school	Macon County will submit a list of students who are receiving ESY services to include disability area and the services provided by the

year services are available as necessary to provide FAPE."

In reviewing the IEP and speaking with staff, it was determined that Extended School Year (ESY) is not provided for students with disabilities. Teachers need additional professional learning to understand the full consideration of the need for ESY.

specific deficits and the services provided as indicated in the IEP.

Macon County IEPs will be submitted to GaDOE in order to verify the consideration of ESY and evidence of how the decision was supported. If ESY was provided, documentation should include annual goals that will be continued during ESY services.

C.F.R. 300.114

Least Restrictive Environment

Full Continuum of services for special education students as indicated in the Special Education State Rule [C.F.R. 300.114(2)(i) "To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institution or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled" was not available in Macon County. A full continuum should be considered and available for each student.

According to the professionals interviewed, record reviews and classroom observations, the full continuum of services is not always considered for students with disabilities in Macon County Schools. Several professionals and central office staff stated that the full continuum of services was not offered although some students with disabilities could benefit from receiving services in the pullout setting at the high school level. Also, it was stated that students were not placed appropriately for reading and math.

According to the interviews conducted, co-teaching is not available in their school for students with disabilities to include the full continuum of services. It was reported that students are placed in an educational setting based on the availability of services and scheduling preferences rather than based on the individual need of the learner. In addition, student

Macon County will provide a sample of IEPs that document a consideration of the full continuum of placement options, placement decisions based on the individual needs of the learner, which are supported by the present levels of academic achievement and functional performance.

Macon County will provide school schedules indicating the model of service delivery provided in each building.

Macon County will provide a list of students with disabilities who did not meet expectations in math and/or reading from each school, indicating where (general, special, co-taught, etc...) the student receives their primary math and/or reading instruction.

records reviewed of student with disabilities did not contain rationale and information to support placement and delivery model options.

C.F.R. 300.115

Least Restrictive Environment: Continuum Alternative Placements

Supplementary Instruction for special education students as indicated in the Special Education State Rule [C.F.R. 300.115(B)(1)-(2)] "Make provision for supplementary services (such as resource room or itinerant instruction) to be provided in conjunction with regular class placement" was not available in Macon County. A full continuum should be considered and available for each student.

Due to the size of the system, scheduling can be difficult; however, there was significant indication that Macon has some students who need instructional support in addition to the general education setting. The IEP team needs to consider the individual needs of each child in order to identify students that need Supplementary Services and document the plan for services in the IEPs.

C.F.R. 300.320

Individualized Education Programs: Definition of IEP

[b](1)-(2)"Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills,; and (2) The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals." In reviewing the IEPs and speaking with staff and parents of middle and high school age students it was determined that Transition Plans did not have the required component of measurable post

Macon County will submit sample IEPs for students receiving supplementary services documenting the consideration of the full continuum of educational placements and placement decisions that supplementary services are needed.

Macon County will submit a list of students with disabilities who have been identified as needing additional instruction in conjunction with regular class placement.

Macon County will provide professional development for teachers on writing and planning for appropriate transition plans. Agendas for the training will be submitted, as well as documentation of ongoing monitoring.

Macon County's IEPs will be submitted to GaDOE to verify compliance of transition plans for age and/or grade appropriate students.

Macon County will submit a sample of IEPs documenting measureable IEP goals that are written for the maximum educational benefit of the student that address specific needs and relate to the present levels of academic and functional performance. Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance that address the students' specific deficits in math and/or reading

secondary goals, and did not have annual goals that will enable the student to meet the post secondary goals.

In a review of the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance, it was determined that the students' individual needs were not clearly defined. This section of the IEP should be skill specific to address the areas of difficulty for the student and is essential in determining the goals to be addressed later in the IEP.

APPLICABLE FEDERAL/STATE REGULATIONS

C.F.R. 300.39

Special Education

[b](3) (ii) "To ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children." The Creative Education Institute (CEI) Curriculum is used for remedial courses and/or supplemental services for students and should not be used as primary curriculum, for students with disabilities. CEI is not aligned to GPS and will not provide access to grade level curriculum so that SWDs have the opportunities to meet the educational standards. The CEI is skills based and is a good intervention support but is not appropriate as a stand alone curriculum to support access to grade level standards. According to interviews and observations students with disabilities enrolled in small group classes are not receiving access to the Georgia Performance Standards in all core curriculum areas.

Provide documentation that SWDs enrolled in pull out settings are receiving and have access to the same books and materials as students enrolled in the general education setting for all subject areas.

Provide documentation that Macon County Schools has consulted with RESA Content Specialist and GaDOE Content Specialist as a resource to ensure that instruction and classes for students with disabilities is aligned with GPS.

Professional Concerns

Low expectations for students with disabilities are apparent throughout the district as evidenced by surveys, interviews, observations, and record reviews. It is suggested that the program for exceptional students leadership staff in conjunction with general education leadership staff work with teachers to raise the standard of expectation by setting rigorous targets and goals for academic performance. While working to meet targets, data analysis paired with formative assessments are recommended to coordinate instruction in all educational settings for students with disabilities. Once high expectations are in place and all students with disabilities that have been given access to the general curriculum, with needed accommodations and assistive technology, it is felt that the district will see academic gains in achievement for students with disabilities.

Resources

The following resources are available on the Georgia Department of Education website and Talbot County is strongly encouraged to utilize these supports:

- Elluminate Sessions: LRE, Standards Based IEPs, Transition, Math Strategies, Math Talks
- Implementation Manual
- Testing Accommodations Manual
- Transition Manual
- Transition DVD
- LRE DVD series
- Book: Students With Disabilities Can Make AYP: What Every School Leader Should Know.
- Thinkfinity
- Learning Village
- GLRS: Online Co-Teaching and Differentiation Course, Coaching Support, AT Support
- RESA Content Area Specialist
- Georgia Department of Education Content Area Specialist

Macon County Due Date: April 19, 2010

<u>Area of Improvement/Noncomplicance: GPS</u>

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 (Specific Dates)	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible; what will be used to evaluate the action, strategy, intervention or program?)	Documentation of CAP activities due to the DES with dates	(Student Learning Data)
SPED teachers will deliver grade level GPS for the subject/content areas they teach.	Professional Learning training for GPS, (Site- Based at no cost and PL Funds) Initial/Refresher Trainings (No Cost)	GPS Handouts in subject areas Observation Tools PowerPoints Elluminate Sessions (No Cost for each)	GLISI Break-Out School-Level Team: Principal, Assist Principal, AP Curriculum and Instructions, SPED/General Ed Teachers, Media Specialist SPED Director	April, 2010	Assistant Superintendent	October, 2010 Completed feedback forms addressing GPS Tool of Evaluation Admin Awareness Walks 10/29/10 (5) 1/17/11 (5) 2/18/11 (5) Tool of Evaluation Observations 10/29/10 (5) 1/17/11 (5) 2/18/11 (5)	Increase performance of SWD on the CRCT; formative tests; and benchmark tests

Macon County Due Date: April 19, 2010

Area of Improvement/Noncomplicance: Progress Monitoring

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 (Specific Dates)	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible; what will be used to evaluate the action, strategy, intervention or program?)	Documentation of CAP activities due to the DES with dates	Evidence of Impact (Student Learning Data)
SPED Teachers will use progress monitoring results to guide instructions.	RESA training: to illustrate formative and summative assessments; provide samples and means of implementing progress monitoring tools, and use of data to plan for differentiated instructions to SWD (No Cost)	System/School Based Improvement Plans Students With Disabilities Can Make AYP	GLISI Break-Out School Level Team: Principal, Assist Principal, AP Curriculum and Instructions, Literacy Coaches SPED Director	April, 2010	Assistant Superintendent	Copies of Agenda September 27, 2010 School Level Data Charts September 27, 2010; November 15, 2010; February18, 2011 Administrative Walk-Through 10/29/10 (5); 1/17/11 (5); 2/18/11 (5) Obs Tools for Teachers 10/29/10 (5); 1/17/11 (5); 2/18/11 (5)	Increase in the performance of SWD on the CRCT; formative tests; and benchmark tests

Macon County Due Date: April 19, 2010

Area of Improvement/Noncomplicance: Differentiated Instruction

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 (Specific Dates)	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible; what will be used to evaluate the action, strategy, intervention or program?)	Documentation of CAP activities due to the DES with dates	Evidence of Impact (Student Learning Data)
All teachers will differentiate instruction to meet the individualized needs of SWD	All teachers will participate in school-level trainings for differentiated instructions; periodic refresher trainings	GLRS: Online Co- Teaching and Differentiation Course Thinkfinity Differentiated Instructional Videos; Hand Outs (No Cost for each)	School-Level Curriculum and Instruction Principals	April, 2010 Redelivery: August, 2010	Assistant Principals SPED Director (IEPs and SPED classroom observation check sheets)	Training Agenda/Sign-in Sheets September 27, 2010 Admin walk- through Check sheets 9/27/10 (5) 11/15/10 (5) 2/18/11 (5) Grade Level Lesson Plans; 9/27/10 (5) 11/15/10 (5) 2/18/11 (5)	Increase SWD performance on CRCT, GHSGT, EOCT, formative and benchmark tests

Macon County Due Date: April 19, 2010

<u>Area of Improvement/Noncomplicance: ESY</u>

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 (Specific Dates)	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible; what will be used to evaluate the action, strategy, intervention or program?)	Documentation of CAP activities due to the DES with dates	Evidence of Impact (Student Learning Data)
SPED teachers will consider ESY for all SWD and implement services as required.	Systemic ESY Training (Initial/Refreshers)	Elluminate ESY Manual Hand-Outs (No Cost for each)	SPED Director	January, 2010 Refresher: February, 2011	SPED Director- IEP Reviews	September, 2010 ESY agenda signins; Sample IEPs; ESY Consideration Check Sheets 9/27/10 (5) 11/15/10 (5) 2/18/11 (5) Refresher: February, 2011	Increase SWD performance and data on CRCT, GHSGT, EOCT, formative and benchmark tests due to increased ESY services

Macon County Due Date: April 19, 2010

Area of Improvement/Noncomplicance: Writing Effective IEPs

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 (Specific Dates)	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible; what will be used to evaluate the action, strategy, intervention or program?)	Documentation of CAP activities due to the DES with dates	Evidence of Impact (Student Learning Data)
SPED teachers will develop IEPs to maximize educational benefits for SWD; IEPs goals, transition goals and instructional/testing accommodations will complement present levels of academic and functional performances (PLAFP)	Systemic IEP training: PLAFP, measurable goals/objectives, accommodations, and transition goals, ESY consideration (No Cost) Writing effective IEPs using a computer-based IEP management system (IEPOnline) Funds: IDEA	Elluminate Sessions IDEA/GA State Due Process Manual Transition Manual Standards Based IEPs (No Cost for each) Web-based computer program/software (IDEA)	SPED Director	January, 2010	SPED Director- IEP Reviews	September, 2010 Agenda sign-ins; IEPs 9/27/10 (5) 11/15/10 (5) 2/18/11 (5) Refresher: February, 2011	Increase performance of SWD on the CRCT; formative tests; and benchmark tests

Macon County Due Date: April 19, 2010

Area of Improvement/Noncomplicance: Increasing LRE for SWD

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 (Specific Dates)	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible; what will be used to evaluate the action, strategy, intervention or program?)	Documentation of CAP activities due to the DES with dates	Evidence of Impact (Student Learning Data)
SPED and general education co- teachers will implement Co- Teaching to promote SWD achievement in the LRE	GLRS/GaDOE Consultant training (school leaders): co-teaching scheduling, effective inclusion strategies and co- teaching models School leaders: train co-teaching pairs on effective team collaborations and co-teaching strategies Funds: Professional Learning for each system participant	GLRS: Online Co- Teaching and Differentiation Course GaDOE SPED Support Consultant GaDOE Scheduling Manual Elluminate	APS SPED Director	April, 2010 Redelivery: August, 2010	Building Level Admins SPED Director	Training Agenda/Sign-in Sheets 9/27/10 Completed Tools of Evaluation: 9/27/10 (5) 11/15/10 (5) 2/18/11 (5) Admin Awareness Walks 9/27/10 (5) 11/15/10 (5) 2/18/11 (5) Observations Check sheets 9/27/10 (5) 11/15/10 (5) 2/18/11 (5)	Increase performance of SWD in deficit content areas; CRCT, GHSGT, EOCT; formative tests; and benchmark tests

Macon County Due Date:
Area of Improvement/Noncomplicance: Assistive Technology

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 (Specific Dates)	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible; what will be used to evaluate the action, strategy, intervention or program?)	Documentation of CAP activities due to the DES with dates	(Student Learning Data)
SPED Teachers will consider and implement Assistive Technology (AT) to assist SWD in accessing the curriculum A list of SWD using AT to include type of AT and disability area/s	NA	Assistive Technology Manual Elluminate Session	System AT Team: SPED Director SLP Tech Specialist	January, 2010	SPED Director SPED Director	September, 2010 AT agenda sign-ins IEPs/w AT considerations and implementations 9/27/10 (5) 11/15/10 (5) 2/18/11 (5) Refresher: January, 2011 2/28/11 (5) 4/1/11 (5)	Increase SWD performance and data on CRCT, GHSGT, EOCT, formative and benchmark tests due to AT supplemental tools

COMPLIANCE ACTION PLAN (CAP)	Macon County

The following district stakeholders participated in the development of the CAP. These stakeholders assure that all responsible parties will complete tasks as outlined in order to impact student learning, i.e. "Evidence of Impact" Column 8.

Stakeholder Name	Position
Ms. Nealie L. Johnson	Special Education Director
Mr. Marc Maynor	Assistant Superintendent
Mrs. Gail Smith	Principal-Macon County Elementary
Mr. Issiah Ross, Jr.	Principal-Macon County Middle
Mr. Rickey Edmond	Principal-Macon County High
Mrs. Marguerite Oliver Hay	GLRS Director
Dr. Emily Collins	C-F RESA Student Services Coordinator
Mrs. Martha Harris	Special Education Teacher
Mr. Phillip Stuckey	Technology Specialist/Assistive Technology