

February 19, 2010

SYSYEM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REVIEW REPORT

Stewart County Schools

Sophronia Thompkins 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).

Stewart County was originally Focused Monitored December 6-8, 2005 in the area of reading. Stewart County was selected to participate in the STAR process on January 12-13, 2010. The monitoring team consisted of:

Kachelle White, Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports, GaDOE Alice Murphy, Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports, GaDOE Ann Threadgill-Cross, Special Education Director, Gordon County Schools Diann Kelly, 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	28.1%	16.7%	18.4%
RELA	21.9%	39.0%	20.5%

School Improvement Plan
STAR Self- Assessment
Professional Learning Activities
Supplement Programs
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 16 teachers
Interviewed 4 administrators/special education director
Interviewed 7 parents, parent mentor and parent coordinator
Interviewed 3 paraprofessionals
Interviewed Math Coach
Conducted 11 observations
Reviewed Individual Education Programs (IEPs)

AREA	SUMMARY
	An asterisk (*) indicates that the topic was previously discussed as an area of concern/compliance issue in the original Focused Monitoring Report.
INSTRUCTION	According to teacher interviews, Stewart County teachers need additional Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) training and follow-up coaching. Specifically, special education teachers need to increase their knowledge of the content area they are currently teaching, which will allow them to strengthen coteaching and address the students with disabilities academic needs.
	Teachers also indicated the need for comprehensive differentiated instruction training. Some classroom observations did not consistently show differentiation with students actively engaged in instruction. *
	All teachers expressed that co-teaching has a positive impact on the achievement of students with disabilities. However, interviews also indicated the need for additional training in order to implement co-teaching more effectively. Some co-teachers only utilize one approach; one teach/one observe, when many different approaches are available. Teachers were concerned that some students with disabilities need more support to address their weaknesses. Planning for co-teachers is needed to develop lesson plans and clarify the teachers' individual roles during the classroom lesson. According to the small amount of responses from the professional survey, 67% responded that co-taught instruction is "somewhat effective" in increasing the performance of students with disabilities.
	Some interviews indicated a belief of low expectations for students with disabilities. Responses suggested that the students are performing at the highest level possible and that is all to be expected.
	RECOMMENDATIONS
	Provide GPS training for all teachers that have not received training in the subject area they are currently teaching. In addition, provide follow-up "re-fresher" training for teachers that have received training in the past.
	Differentiated instruction training to include how to differentiate by content, instruction, materials, learning activities, products and assessments.
	Teachers should have detailed coaching, modeling and follow-up to increase the effectiveness of coteaching teams.
	All teachers should be reminded that special education students are capable of meeting standards and should be held to high expectations.
	DOCUMENTATION
	Stewart County will submit sample copies of completed co-teaching classroom observation feedback forms.
	Stewart County will provide documentation of GPS training for all teachers that have not received training in the subject area they are currently teaching. In addition, provide follow-up "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.
	<u>RESOURCES</u>
	GLRS professional learning support
PROGRESS MONITORING	There is currently a plan to benchmark students in order to monitor progress. However, all teachers need continued support in utilizing progress monitoring data to adjust instruction in daily/weekly lessons according to the results. Specifically, special education teachers should become equal partners with the general education teachers in monitoring and analyzing the data.
	RECOMMENDATIONS
	Professional learning is needed to ensure all teachers (including special education) are aware of the system expectations for monitoring progress/benchmarking and that special education students are held to high expectations. Special education teachers should have a comprehensive understanding of progress monitoring requirements and should be included in the data analysis process that will drive instruction

for students with disabilities.

DOCUMENTATION

Stewart County will submit documentation on the use of progress monitoring and how the staff will use data to drive instructional practices.

Stewart County will submit sample progress monitoring data for students with disabilities to demonstrate how the data is used to drive instruction.

RESOURCES

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

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Stewart County has utilized RESA for some professional learning opportunities and is strongly encouraged to continue to do so. The GLRS should be utilized for specific trainings related to special education and related topics.

According to the professional survey, 33% responded they "always" 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 with an in-depth understanding of:

- Content knowledge of GPS
- Differentiated instruction
- Co-teaching follow-up, modeling, lesson planning as a team and on-going support
- Progress monitoring expectations and ensuring data drives instruction
- Paraprofessionals need additional training to better understand the needs of students with various disabilities and how to assist the classroom teacher with their instruction
- Teachers need assistance in identifying the most productive way to utilize paraprofessionals in the classroom setting
- Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA)
- Assistive technology (compliance)
- Transition Plans (compliance)
- Determining the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for students with disabilities (compliance)
- Writing Effective IEPs, including but not limited to detailed Present Levels of Academic Achievement Functional Performance and appropriate goals and objectives (compliance)

DOCUMENTATION

Stewart County will provide a revised school improvement plan imbedded with the above mentioned professional learning topics.

RESOURCES

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

Thinkfinity

Learning Village

GLRS

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

COMPLIANCE/ON-SITE		
FINDINGS: APPLICABLE		REQUIRED EVIDENCE OF CORRECTION BY
FEDERAL/STATE	SUPPORTING EVIDENCE	02/19/2011
REGULATIONS		
C.F.R. 300.105*	"(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. The majority of IEPs reviewed contained the same assistive technology for each student and do not appear to be individualized. Tools that are available to all students do not necessarily need to be documented in the IEP. 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. Responses from interviews indicate a need for additional professional development on how to consider AT for students with disabilities.	Stewart County will submit documentation of staff training on AT including information on the consideration process for determining the need for AT. Stewart County will submit a list of students using AT, including the student's disability and the specific tools being used.
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 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.	Stewart County will submit a list of students who are receiving ESY services to include disability area and the services provided by the specific deficits and the services provided as indicated in the IEP. Stewart 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 and the amount of time the services will be provided.

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 Stewart County. A full continuum should be considered and available for each student.

Due to the size of the system, scheduling can be difficult; however placement decisions cannot be based on the availability of services and scheduling preferences. Placement is determined by the individual need of the learner and some students 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 Instruction and document the plan for services in the IEP.

Interviews indicated that some students with disabilities need additional academic support that they are currently not receiving.

Stewart 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.

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

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 it was

Stewart 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.

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

Stewart County will submit a sample of IEPs documenting measureable IEP goals that are written to 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

determined that Transition Plans did not have the required components.

(a)(1) A statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including - (i) How the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled children).

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. In addition, some IEPs contained identical or almost identical information from one year to the next.

C.F.R. 300.305

Additional Requirements for Evaluations and Reevaluations (a)Review of existing evaluation data

It was determined through a review of Stewart County's reevaluation process that there is not a thorough decision making process that is documented on how a child continues to meet eligibility for special education and. related services

C.F.R. 300.306

Determination of Eligibility

(c) (1) (ii) Ensure that information obtained from all sources is documented and carefully considered.

Eligibility reports that were reviewed did not contain all of the required data to substantiate the determination of eligibility.

Some eligibility reports did not include a complete summary of interventions provided prior to evaluation and/or a summary of progress monitoring. These two

Stewart County will submit current reevaluations that contain the appropriate review of evaluation data and documented decision making process.

Stewart County will submit eligibility reports that contain all of the required components.

components of the eligibility report are essential in determining if a child has a disability and needs special education and related services.	

Resources

The following resources are available on the Georgia Department of Education website and Stewart 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

Stewart County

Date Due: April 15, 2010

Area of Instruction #1: GPS Training for all teachers.

Actions/Strategies/ Interventions	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) Month/Day/Year	Means of Evaluation (Person responsible; what is used evaluate the action, strategy, intervention or program?)	Documentation of CAP activities due to the DES with dates	Evidence of Impact (Student Learning Data)
Classroom Observation tool will be revised to include: Co-teaching Differentiation Classroom observation Assistive Technology	Training on the classroom observation instrument used: Co-teaching Teachers will be trained to differentiate by content, instruction, materials, learning activities, products, and assessments Assistive Technology Class Keys	Principals Design Team SpEd Director Coaches	Principals SpEd. Director Coaches	4/14/10	Principals Special Ed. Director School Improvement Specialist	GPS Training Schedule Agendas Training Sign-in Logs Clsrm Obs Summaries May 25, 2010 (5) Sept. 17, 2010 (5) January 14, 2011 (5)	Increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding reading and/or math standards on statewide assessments Pre and Post Test Benchmark Assessment CRCT

Actions/Strategies/ Interventions	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) Month/Day/Year	Means of Evaluation (Person responsible; what is 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 deliver Standards Based Instruction in the content area they teach	Initial GPS Training for teachers not trained in the subject area/s they teach. Refresher GPS Training for teachers previously trained	GPS materials in each subject area: GPS Manual GAPSS Obs Instr	Sch Improv Specialist Principals Coaches	6/15/10	Principal SpEd Coordinator	GPS Training Agendas GPS Training Sign-in Logs GAPSS Obs Instrument May 25, 2010 (5) Sept. 15, 2010 (5) January 8, 2011(5)	Increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding reading and/or math standards on statewide assessments
IEPs will be written to include: • Individual student needs in the PLAAF: • Reading • Math	Teachers will be trained to develop appropriate statements regarding individual student deficits in reading and/or math.	Revised IEP Samples GLRS SpEd Director Revised Sample IEPs GLRS SpEd Director No Cost	Sp. Ed. Director	4/1/2010	Sp. Ed. Director	IEPs: May 12, 2010 (5) Sept. 1, 2010 (5) Dec. 1, 2010 (5)	Increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding reading and/or math standards on statewide assessments
Measurable Goals:	Teachers will be trained to write measurable goals in reading and/or math.		Sp. Ed. Director	April, 2009	Sp. Ed. Director Review of IEP goals	May 12, 2010 (5) Sept. 1, 2010 (5) Dec. 1, 2010 (5)	Increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding reading and/or math standards on statewide assessments

Stewart County

Date Due: April 15, 2010

Actions/Strategies/ Interventions		Resources or Materials Needed (Include funding source, personnel and cost)	Person or Position Responsible for Supervision of Implementation	Timeline for Implementation (Specific Dates) Month/Day/Year	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible and 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)
Teachers will identify SWD needing assistive technology using the consideration checklist Take inventory of AT in schools Compile/distribu te a list of AT devices Inform staff of AT committee members	PL for all teachers in the area of assistive technology in the classroom • "What is Assistive Technology?" • Procedures for Identification and Referral for AT services	GPAT staff Chattahoochee Flint RESA manual GLRS Procedures for identification evaluation and assessment of AT manual for staff members No Cost	Sp.Ed. Director Principals Coaches AT Specialist AT Committee Members	4/10/2010	Principals Sp.Ed. Director Revised classroom Instrument Co-Teaching Differentiation Technology Assessments	Agendas Sign-In Logs AT Consideration Checklist List of Students using AT Student's disability Specific tools used Focus Walks Summaries (5) Dates for Submission: June 1, 2010 (5) Sept. 1, 2010 (5) Dec. 1, 2010 (5)	Increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding reading and/or math standards on statewide assessments Formative Assessments STEEP DIBELS Benchmarks Unit Tests Quizzes ALEKS How do these relate to AT?

Stewart County

Date Due: April 15, 2010

Area of noncompliance #2: The Stewart County School System will ensure that a free appropriate education (FAPE) is provided to all student with Disabilities.

Extended School Year will be considered and provided to assist students accessing the general curriculum.

Actions/Strategies/ Interventions or Programs	Professional Learning (Include Funding source and cost)	Resources or Materials Needed (Include funding source, personnel and cost)	Person or Position Responsible for Supervision of Implementation	Timeline for Implementation (Specific Dates) Month/Day/Year	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible and 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)
Teachers will use all appropriate criteria when considering ESY. Develop an ESY consideration checklist	Teachers will be trained to identify and use appropriate criteria when considering ESY	GaDOE Criteria for ESY No cost	Sp.Ed. Director	04/16/2010	Sp. Ed. Director Principals Sp. Ed. Teachers Formative Assessments Extended day signin -logs	Sample IEPs List of students receiving ESY to include: Disability Area Service Location Hours per week IEP Annual Goals May 12, 2010 (5) Sept. 7, 2010 (5) Dec. 10, 2010 (5)	Increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding reading and/or math standards on statewide assessments Formative Assessments

Stewart County

Date Due: April 15, 2010

Area of noncompliance #3: The Stewart County School System will make provisions for supplementary services for all SWD. The following activities have been planned in a logical order to correct the cited noncompliance and effect continuous improvement:

Actions/Strategies/ Interventions	Professional Learning (Including funding source, personnel and cost)	Resources or Materials Needed (Include funding source, personnel and cost)	Person or Position Responsible for Supervision of Implementation	Timeline for Implementation (Specific Dates)Month/Day /Year	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible and 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)
Supplementary services in reading and/or math will be reflected in the service delivery area of the IEP.	PL in analyzing student's data and IEP goals in selecting students needing additional instruction in math and reading Refresher PL Training for teachers previously trained PL on how to properly document supplementary services reflected in reading and math in the IEP	IEP Team Sp.Ed. Director Coaches Teachers ALEKS (Computer Based) STEEP Progress Monitoring DIBELS USA TestPrep Tutorials	Sp.Ed. Director Principals GaDOE School Improvement Specialist	4/18/2010 On-going	Sp.Ed. Director GaDOE School Improvement Specialist Checklist/Log IEP's Supplementary Services sign-in-log	IEP's documenting reading and/or math supplementary services May 12, 1010 (5) Sept. 7, 2010 (5) Dec. 10, 2010 (5)	Increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding reading and/or math standards on statewide assessments & local assessments

Stewart County

Date Due: April 15, 2010

Area of noncompliance #4: The Stewart County School System will ensure that all required components are addressed in the Transition Plan. The following activities have been planned in a logical order to correct the cited noncompliance and effect continuous improvement:

Actions/Strategies/ Interventions	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) Month/Day/Year	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible and 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)
Teachers will write appropriate transition plans.	Initial training for teachers not trained on how to write appropriate transition plans Refresher transition training for teachers \$ 700.00	Transition materials in each area of the plan Transition manual Elluminate session on transition GLRS Consultant	Sp.Ed. Director GaDOE School Improvement Specialist Principals	4/10/2010	Sp.Ed. Director Principals Sp. Ed. Teachers GLRS Consultant IEP's/Transition Plans Follow-up-Interviews with students Surveys	Transition Training Agendas Sign-In Logs IEPs: May 20, 2010 (5) Sept. 20, 2010 (5) Jan. 10, 2010 (5)	Increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding reading and/or math standards on statewide assessments

Stewart County

Date Due: April 15, 2010

Area of noncompliance #5: The Stewart County School System will implement a thorough process for determining that a child continues to meet eligibility by documenting data and recording on the newest eligibility form.

Actions/Strategies/ Interventions	Professional Learning (Including funding source, personnel and cost)	Resources or Materials Needed (Include funding source, personnel and cost)	Person or Position Responsible for Supervision of Implementation	Timeline for Implementation (Specific Dates) Month/Day/Year	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible and 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)
Teachers will use appropriate data in order to determine whether or not a student continues to qualify for SpEd services.	 PL to include: Initial Evaluation Training Re-evaluations Training Decision making process Refresher Training Evaluations and Reevaluations for previously trained teachers Initial training for teachers not trained on how to determine the continuation of Sp.Ed. and related services 	Sp.Ed. Director RESA Personnel GLRS Personnel	Sp. Ed. Director School Psychologist GaDOE School Improvement Specialist	6/15/2010	Sp.Ed. Director GaDOE School Improvement Specialist Sp. Ed. Teachers Eligibility Reports	Re-evaluation Reports: May 15, 2010 (5) Sept. 15, 2010 (5) Jan. 8, 2011 (5)	Increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding reading and/or math standards on statewide assessments

Stewart County

Date Due: April 15, 2010

Area of noncompliance #6: The Stewart County School System will ensure that the appropriate interventions and/or progress monitoring are provided prior to evaluation. The following activities have been planned in a logical order to correct the cited noncompliance and effect continuous improvement:

Actions/Strategies/ Interventions	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) Month/Day/Year	Means of Evaluation (Who is responsible and 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)
Teachers will write Eligibility Reports that contain interventions prior to evaluation for SpEd. and summary of progress monitoring	PL to include: • Eligibility training with detailed summary of interventions provided prior to evaluation	Sp.Ed. Director RESA Personnel GLRS Personnel No Cost	Sp.Ed. Director School Psychologist GaDOE School Improvement Specialist	6/15/2010	Sp.Ed. Director GaDOE School Improvement Specialist Sp. Ed. Teachers Intervention Data Review of Eligibility Data	Eligibility Reports: May 15, 2010 (5) Sept. 15, 2010 (5) Jan. 8, 2011 (5)	Increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding reading and/or math standards on statewide assessments Formative Assessments
GenEd and Sped Teachers will become equal partners in analyzing data for progress monitoring.	GenEd and SpEd teachers working as teams to analyze progress monitoring data to drive instruction	Progress Monitoring Data 504/SST Coord RTI/SST Manual Video/PowerPoint Presentation Pyramid of Interventions (POI)	Gen. Ed and Sp. Ed teachers Design Team Members	June 1, 2010 Sept. 1, 2010 Dec. 1, 2010	Design Team Study Group Grade Level Team Meeting	Progress Monitoring Data May 15, 2010 (5) Sept. 15, 2010 (5) Jan. 8, 2011 (5)	As Above