

Yap State Special Education Annual Verification Monitoring Report

December 4-6, 2013

Introduction

The Federated States of Micronesia, Department of Education receives funding under Part B the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) through the U.S. Department of Education. This funding is designed to supplement the provision of special education and related services for eligible children with disabilities within each State of the FSM and to improve and expand programs and services for children with disabilities. The special education and related services supported by IDEA are consistent with the approved FSM Special Education Handbook and P.L. 14-08.

Under the requirements of the IDEA grant, the National FSM Government has assured through the provisions of Public Law 14-08, that all children with disabilities will receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) consistent with the requirements of IDEA. The FSM Special Education Program, operated through the Department of Education, contains specific requirements and provisions for funding special education program within each State. In receiving funding under IDEA, each state must assure that the provisions of Public Law 14-08 and the requirements of IDEA, Part B are being fulfilled. Additionally, to be eligible for IDEA funding, each State must annually submit a Special Education LEA Application that includes specific Assurances for the delivery of special education and related services, a Local Performance Plan (LPP) and a detailed budget for the coming school year.

For FY 2014, the National Special Education Program will conduct comprehensive reviews; review of for each State Program with major focuses on each State Program's previous Findings of Non Compliances to ensure that the requirements

of IDEA, FSM, State, and Local are being fully implemented and previous findings of non compliances were corrected and strategies or approaches used to correct these findings of non compliances are workable and continues to be implemented to avoid repetitions of the same issues. The major focus areas for Yap Special Education Program for Program Year 2013-14 are referral procedures, and Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) at Yap High School.

The Monitoring Team conducted the Yap State Special Education Annual Verification Monitoring Site Visit from December 4-6, 2013. The members of the Monitoring Team included; Mr. Marbe Martin, Coordinator for Kosrae Special Education Program, Mrs. Cynthia Saimon, Coordinator for Early Childhood Service Education (ECSE) for FSM Special Education Program; Ms. Anseliter Fredrick, Acting Fiscal Officer for FSM Special Education Program, and Ethel James, Compliance Monitor and Evaluator for FSM Special Education Program.

This Monitoring Report presents findings based on the evidence collected by the Monitoring Team. The report details Findings of non-compliance with IDEA and specific corrective actions that must be completed within one year of the date of this report.

Monitoring Process

The Monitoring process represents a continuing partnership between the National Department of Education and each State Department of Education to improve and expand high quality special education programs and services. The Monitoring Team first met with the Yap State Special Education Coordinator to provide a briefing on the purpose of the monitoring visit and to confirm schedules for the visit. An entrance meeting was conducted with Mr. Vincent Parren, Director of Education and an exit briefing session was conducted at the end of the monitoring visit.

The Monitoring Team followed a process of meeting with central office staff to review records and conduct interviews related to the LEA Monitoring Checklist, meeting with parents, health services and Early Childhood Education (ECE) representatives, and

school site visits. The Agenda for the Monitoring activities and a Summary of Findings of Non Compliance and Corrective Actions are attached to this report.

Program Status

The Monitoring Team met with the Yap Department of Education (YDOE) Special Education staff to review the current status of the special education program. The team, although recognizing areas that need improvement in the program, was pleased to note that the special education program continues to be administered in a manner that ensures students in need of special education are identified, referred, assessed, and placed within appropriate special education programs and services.

education programs and services.

The total enrollment in Yap public and private schools at the end of School Year (SY) 2012-13 was 2,786. For the beginning of SY13-14, the enrollment is 3,051. The increase is a result of count for the beginning of the school year, not counting drop outs, suspensions or transferred outs from the education system in Yap.

In special education programs, there were 215 students served at the end of SY12-13 and students 227 at the beginning of SY 13-14. This represents an increase of 12 students compared to the previous year. The percentage of students served in special education program for SY 12-13 was 7.7% and for SY 13-14 the percentage was 7%. The slight decrease in the percentage is a result of the beginning of the school year count for SY2013-2014 within the overall education system in Yap.

Data and Case Management

The Monitoring Team reviewed 21 student records to determine consistency of the implementation of the program's procedural manual and Student Information Tracking System (SITS) database. All 21 records were found to be implemented consistently with intake to placement procedures, and data shown on all 21 office records reviewed were consistent with SITS. There were also no overdue cases found on SITS during the visit. IEPs were found to be implemented and followed through accordingly and within the 30 and 60 days timelines. Interviews with parents also indicated to the team that parent consent procedures were also implemented accordingly. Parents

understood their parental rights and were aware of the special education services being provided to their children. A total of 16 parents showed up for Parent meetings at the schools visited.

School Site and Homebound Visits

The Monitoring Team conducted school visits to verify consistency of school records to office records and implementation of services. The Monitoring Team reviewed 21 Central Office IEPs and visited 1 high school, 2 elementary schools, 2 ECE centers and 1 home of a homebound to review special education practices. The Monitoring Team visited Yap High School, Bael and Maap Elementary Schools, Kolonia B and Rumuu ECE Centers, and a home of a homebound. At Yap High School, there were 47 IEP and 7 special education teachers, Bael Elementary School, 3 IEPs and 1 special education teacher, Maap Elementary School, 8 IEPs and 1 teacher. There were 6 ECE IEPs, 2 IEPs at Kolonia B Center, 1 Rumuu ECE Center and 3 homebounds. 7 IEPs were selected for review from Yap High School, 2 from Bael Elementary School, 7 from Maap Elementary School, 5 of the 6 ECE IEPs.

Before school and home visits, local level monitoring reports, schedules, related service assistant logs, and outcomes of school visits with Yap High School were reviewed. Review of these documentations indicated to the Monitoring Team that Yap Special Education Program continues to improve in ensuring that Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and appropriate special education services were being provided at the schools and homes of homebounds. Evidence provided indicated to the monitoring team that the FAPE finding identified in the previous year was corrected. The 7 IEPs reviewed at Yap High School indicated to the Monitoring Team that students were preregistered and now taking the courses of their field interests. During the school and home visits, record reviews, and interviews with principals, special education teachers, and parents reflected the evidence provided to the Monitoring Team at the central office. Reviewing the 21 IEPs and teacher schedules and observation of service delivery verified to the Monitoring Team that special education services are provided and implemented consistent with IEPs. The 7 IEPs selected for Yap High School were also taking courses of their field interests. The 16 parents interviewed also indicated to the Monitoring Team

that appropriate special education services being provided to eligible children with disabilities within the Yap Department of Education system.

Fiscal Management

Fiscal records were reviewed during the annual verification monitoring visit for Yap Special Education Program to determine compliance and consistency of implementation of fiscal practices to the fiscal management procedure. Fiscal record reviewing was conducted on Yap Special Education Program's FY2013 Budget and in the areas of Personnel, Travel, Other Consumable Expenses (OCE), Contractual Services, and Fixed Assets. Review results indicated to the Monitoring Team that although there continued to be improvement in fiscal practices, there is still areas that need improvement.

FY2013 Budget

Yap Special Education Program applied for funding and was given a total of \$676,735 to utilize for the overall expenditures for FY2013. 67% of the above total will be used for Personnel, 20% Travel, 2% Contractual, 9% OCE and 2% Fixed Assets. As of the monitoring visit dates, Yap Special Education was found to have expended about 81% of its FY2013 approved budget. About 61% had been spent on Personnel, 14% Travel, 1% Contractual, 6% OCE and \$1,000.00 sum in Fixed Assets.

Personnel

Yap Special Education Program has 57 employees on board. The Coordinator for Yap Special Education Program, 1 data manager, 1 data clerk, 1 fiscal officer, 2 monitor/support staffs, 10 related service assistants, 2 related service providers, 2 assessment specialists, 1 screener specialist, 1 child find coordinator, 7 secondary consulting resource teachers, 24 primary consulting resource teachers, and 4 support staffs . The Monitoring Team reviewed 10 Personnel Actions to determine consistency of data to Yap Special Education's updated Personnel and Payroll listings. A review of the 10 Personnel Actions and Payroll Listing indicated to the team that employees of the 10 Personnel

Actions selected for review were receiving the biweekly salaries they are supposed to be getting. Social security numbers and names were also consistent.

Travel

The Monitoring Team reviewed 10 Travel fiscal record samples and found these 10 Travel Authorizations (TAs) without question cost. TA activities were related to special education services and activities. TA participants were also special education employees.

OCE

The Monitoring Team reviewed 10 Other Consumable Expenditure (OCE) samples, and found that Yap Special Education Program did not follow fiscal management procedures for bidding. Review of these 10 sample OCE records showed that the program is only collecting competitive price quotations from 1 vendor. There was no documentation to show that price quotations were also being collected from the other 2 vendors. This indicated to the Monitoring Team that Yap Special Education Program did not follow fiscal management procedure in soliciting 3 written bids from vendors for procurement of program consumable goods.

Contractual Service and Fixed Assets

The Monitoring Team reviewed 1 (PO) Purchase Order for fixed asset on 4 ipads, and 1(MS) Miscellaneous for Contractual on school railing for Gaanelay Elementary School and found procedures being implemented accordingly to the fiscal management procedure.

Commendations

- Special Education Program Coordinator and staff are to be commended for having corrected May 2013 findings of non compliances. Yap Special Education Program submitted on July 23, 2013 documentation for the correction of Y12.01-General Supervision/Referral. NDOE determined and provided feedback to YDOE as needing additional information for Y12.01-General Supervision/referral, and documentation for Y12.02-FAPE. In November of 2013, Yap Special Education Program informally notified NDOE that Y12.02-FAPE had been corrected. On December 4, 2013 documentations were provided

to NDOE monitoring team for review. As a result, these 2 findings of non-compliances in the areas of General Supervision and FAPE were determined and verified as corrected within the one year timeline.

- Special Education Program staffs are to be commended for the support shown to the Monitoring Team. Due to the staff's support, the Monitoring Team accomplished the objectives of the annual verification monitoring visit.
- Program Monitor and Support staffs are to be commended for showing interest and participation during meetings and school visits.
- Program Monitor and Support staffs and Related Service Assistants (RSAs) are to be commended for ensuring appropriate services were provided and implemented for IEP students.
- Special Education Program staffs are to be commended for ensuring that parents understood their rights and the special education services that are being provided to their children. 16 parents, guardians and 4 regular education teachers showed up for parent meetings at the schools (Yap High School, Maap and Bael Elementary Schools, Kolonia B, and Rumuu ECE centers and the home of the homebound visited), and all 16 parents understood their rights and the special education and related services being provided to their children.
- Special Education Program RSA responsible for the homebound visited is to be commended for providing the appropriate services. The relationship observed between the RSA and the homebound during the home visit was impressive. This RSA was also observed to be assistive in helping the parents create locally made walking devices for the homebound visited.
- Special Education teachers at Maap and Bael Elementary Schools visited are to be commended for implementing the appropriate services to eligible children with disabilities.

Recommendations

- Yap Special Education Program needs to ensure continuity of completion of student records and forms, especially on initial IEPs.
- For fixed assets such as computers, ipads and air-conditions, Yap Special Education Program needs to ensure that any of these sent to any school with IEP students will be logged. FSM Special Education Program will provide the State Programs sending and receiving forms for the States to use, and the special

education program in Yap needs to ensure that these forms are used when sending fixed assets to receiving schools.

- It was found during the monitoring visit that the Advisory Council (AC) is not active. Yap Special Education Program is in the process of collaborating with health services to revise AC members and combine Interagency Council (IAC) with AC. To attend to the coordination of other important special education program activities, Yap Special Education Program needs to ensure that Yap Special Education Program Coordinator will not be voted as chairman for the to be revised/renewed/combined AC or IAC.
- Yap Special Education Program needs to ensure that Early Childhood Education (ECE) staff and Yap Special Education program staff responsible for the administration of the FSM ID and MID used for screening to identify suspected children with disabilities are consistent.

Finding of Non Compliance

1. **Y13.01-Fiscal Management/Soliciting Written Bids 12.06.13** - The Monitoring Team reviewed 10 Other Consumable Expenditure (OCE) samples, and found that Yap Special Education Program did not follow fiscal management procedures for bidding. Review of these 10 sample OCE records showed that the program is only collecting competitive price quotations from 1 vendor. There was no documentation to show that price quotations were also being collected from the other 2 vendors. This indicated to the Monitoring Team that Yap Special Education Program did not follow fiscal management procedure in soliciting 3 written bids from vendors for procurement of program consumable goods.

Recommended Corrective Actions- YDOE needs to ensure procedures for collecting price quotations are followed accordingly. Accordingly to the Fiscal Management Regulation (FMR), fiscal officer needs to ensure soliciting of 3 written bids from vendors and quality of office materials, supplies and equipments to be procured, potential vendors submit written signed and stamped price quotations for specified office program supplies or equipments, selection of lowest bid with justification on selected vendor, completes a purchase requisition form and attached the 3 written price quotations with the recommended vendor. For correction of this finding of non compliance, Yap Special Education Program needs to submit 3-5 samples or evidence if there is any to show that Yap Special Education Program has implemented procedures for price competitive quotations accordingly in their next quarterly progress reports.

Conclusion

During the monitoring visit, the Monitoring Team although noted there continued to be improvement in meeting IDEA and FSM regulation in some areas, the team noted that Yap Special Education Program needs to improve in the area of fiscal management. Yap Special Education Program needs to ensure that fiscal management procedures are implemented accordingly. There were issues relating to collection of 3 competitive price quotations from vendors. The new finding of non compliance in the area of fiscal management and corrective actions identified in this report will help to significantly improve the quality of special education programs in Yap State. The Monitoring Team also looks forward to working with the special education staff to address the 1 newly finding of non-compliance in a manner that will support improved services for children with disabilities and their families.