



**child
development
services**

State Intermediate Educational Unit-146 State House Station, Augusta, ME
04333 Telephone (207) 624-6660-Fax (207) 624-6661-TTY-1- 888-577-
6690

June 25, 2008

Mary Guerrette
Aroostook County Board of Directors Chairperson
SAD # 1 Special Education Director
PO Box 1118
Presque Isle, ME 04769

Dear Ms. Guerrette

First I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the site director, the staff and providers for the effort that was extended to accommodate this process. The involvement of staff in this process is beneficial to all. Please express my gratitude to all of the staff for helping with the review, taking part in the interview process and answering our paperwork questions.

As I shared with the site director and staff during the on-site visit, this process is designed to promote continuous improvement in compliance and in service provision to children in your service area.

1. The Process:

On May 22nd and May 23rd 2008 program monitoring was conducted by an on-site visit to assess the Aroostook County CDS site's current status in meeting regulatory requirements. This letter will outline the base line data gathered during this review.

The collection of base line data and information regarding the provision of special education services at the Aroostook County CDS site was based on the following activities:

- Review of State Entitlement plan
- Review of monthly Unmet Needs Data
- Review of parent questionnaires
- Review of:
 - 7 Part C files
 - 14 Part B files

The on-site visit to the Aroostook site was scheduled in conjunction with a parent and provider training presented by myself, Debra Hannigan, CDS State Director and Sarah Forster, Assistant Attorney General. The presentation and the monitoring visit were scheduled very quickly due to availability of staff to complete the on-site monitoring and training. A decision was made to forgo the internal auditing process and interviews until the on-site monitoring was complete. The results of the audit were shared with the site director and a mutual determination was made that the findings of the audit accurately reflected the sites current compliance performance therefore the internal audit was

deemed unnecessary. Interviews with staff, providers and the Board of Directors will be conducted in the second year of monitoring to be completed by June of 2009.

2. Review of Unmet Needs

* In review of the unmet needs data reported to the Child Development Services Office at the Department of Education the following chart outlines the unmet needs of children B-5 at the Aroostook County CDS site from December 2007 to April 2008

Specific service	Total Number of Unmet Services					
	December 2007		January 2008		February 2008	
	B-2	3-5	B-2	3-5	B-2	3-5
Occupational Therapy	0	0	0	0	0	2
Physical Therapy	0	0	0	0	0	0
Speech Language Therapy	1	1	1	1	2	1
Development Therapy	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	1	1	0	0	0
TOTAL percentage of Unmet needs	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%

Specific service	Total Number of Unmet Services					
	March 2008		April 2008			
	B-2	3-5	B-2	3-5		
Occupational Therapy	0	1	0	1		
Physical Therapy	0	1	0	1		
Speech Language Therapy	3	3	3	4		
Development Therapy	0	0	0	0		
Other	2	0	2	1		
TOTAL percentage of Unmet needs	6%	2%	12%	5%		

In order to meet compliance in this area, the Aroostook County CDS must submit a goal within the corrective action plan to meet 100% compliance in the timeliness of the provision of services for children ages Birth through 5 years of age.

3. Record Audit:

An integral part of this process involved the participation of the Aroostook County site staff in the auditing of children's records. Thank you for the effort and time extended to allow for this participation.

During our on site visit, the program monitoring team examined the following areas of both Part C and Part B:

- Referral, screening procedures and timelines;
- Parent notices and consents;
- Procedures involving evaluations IFSP and IEP team meetings;
- Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP) and Individual Education Plans (IEP);
- Extended School Year Services
- Communication with Parents

These areas were reviewed in a comprehensive audit of the children's records.

Attached are the compiled results of the record audit. Any section receiving a "Needs Corrective Action" rate of compliance is identified as an area of concern. Identified areas of concern on the record audit are followed by comments as to why the item did not meet the regulation standard.

In reviewing 7 files on-site (a minimum of 10% of the part C files based on child-count) the following areas in Part C did not meet compliance:

- Completion of evaluations and IFSP team meeting within 45 days from the receipt of referral.
 - Transition planning and a Transition conference for children transitioning from Part C to Part B services must be held no later than 90 days before the child's third birthday.
 - Copy of the IFSP provided to the parent within 21 days of the meeting
 - Early intervention Services provided within the child's natural environment and Justification documentation
 - Listing the specific setting for the supports and services to take place for the family and children
-
- **All 44 remaining areas monitored on the Child Record Audit Form for Part C Met Compliance Standards.**

In reviewing 14 files on-site (a minimum of 10% of the part B files based on child-count) the following areas in Part B did not meet compliance:

- Documentation of the receipt of consent for initial evaluation and subsequent evaluations.
 - Completion of evaluations and IEP team meeting to determine eligibility within 60 days from the receipt of consent to evaluate.
 - Use of an observation process during the initial evaluation process
 - Listing the specific setting for the supports and services to take place for the family and children
 - Completion of Section 8 of the IEP, Supplementary Aides and services
-
- **All 42 remaining areas monitored on the Child Record Audit Form for Part B Met Compliance Standards.**

5. Corrective Action Plan Development:

In summary:

- 1.) **The Site will have one year from the date of this report to correct the findings of non-compliance found in Need of Corrective Action during the record audit which were noted in Section 4. A corrective action plan must be submitted to the**

Department of Education, Child Development Services Department within 45 days of the receipt of this report.

- 2.) **The Site should include a goal in their Corrective Action Plan to address the finding of non-compliance in the provision of services in both Part C and Part B.**

The Department of Education conducted a survey of parents of children with disabilities within your region. The results of this survey are attached. As CDS sites continue to improve services for all children, parent input is critical. These results can serve as additional information to be used in the planning and evaluation of services and programs for children and are used during the annual State Performance Plan to the federal government.

In accordance with the Freedom of Access Act, all letters related to the Special Education Program Monitoring are public record and shall be made available to parents and other members of the public upon request.

On behalf of CDS, I would like to thank you, the site Director, the staff and all other persons that took part in this review, for the thoughtful courtesy extended to me and the flexibility and cooperation afforded me during the visit.

Sincerely,

Erica Thompson, Distinguished Educator
Child Development Services Program Monitoring and Technical Assistance

Copies sent to:

Susan A Gendron, Commissioner
David Noble Stockford, Policy and Team Leader
Dawn Schillinger McPherson, Aroostook County Child Development Services Director
Debra Hannigan, State Director Child Development Services

Enclosures:

Part C Child Record Audit Form Summary
Part B Child Record Audit Form Summary
CDS Aroostook County Part Survey Results