



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education

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August 26, 2005

James R. Culkeen, Superintendent
Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School
1050 Westminster Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420-4696

Re: Onsite Follow-up Monitoring Report: Coordinated Program Review Corrective Action Plan Verification and Special Education Mid-cycle Review

Dear Superintendent Culkeen:

Enclosed is the Department's Coordinated Program Review Follow-up Monitoring Report together with findings regarding your district's Coordinated Program Review Mid-cycle Review. This report contains the Department's findings based on the onsite activities conducted in your school district to verify the implementation status and effectiveness of corrective steps taken in response to your Coordinated Program Review Report issued on September 26, 2002.

While the Department of Education found certain noncompliance issues to be resolved, others were partially corrected, not addressed at all and/or new issues were identified by the Department's onsite team. As the Department previously informed you, in cases where a district fails to fully and effectively implement a Corrective Action Plan, which was proposed by your district and approved by the Department, the Department must then prepare a Corrective Action Plan for the district, which must be implemented without further delay. You will find these requirements for corrective action and further progress reporting included in the attached report together with any steps that must be taken by the district to fully implement new special education requirements.

Please provide the Department with your written assurance that the Department's requirements for corrective action will be implemented by your school district within the timelines specified. Your statement of assurance must be submitted to the Department's Onsite Chairperson by **September 9, 2005**.

Your staff's cooperation throughout these Follow-up Monitoring activities is appreciated. Should you require additional clarification of information included in our report, please do not hesitate to contact the Onsite Team Chairperson at 781-338-3731.

Sincerely,

Donna Feinberg, Coordinated Program Review Follow-up Chairperson
Program Quality Assurance Services

John D. Stager, Administrator
Program Quality Assurance Services

c: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education
Mr. Mark Louney, School Committee Chairperson
Denise O'Loughlin and Linda Rice, District Program Review Follow-up Coordinators

Encl.: Follow-up Monitoring Report

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
COORDINATED PROGRAM REVIEW**

Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District

**ONSITE VERIFICATION OF CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
AND/OR IDENTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL FINDINGS REQUIRING CORRECTIVE ACTION**

Action Plan Submitted on September 25, 2002

Progress Reports Submitted on 1/8/03, 5/23/03, 11/12/03, 5/21/04, 11/23/04

Onsite Visit Conducted on June 6-7, 2005

Date of this Report – August 26, 2005

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Special Education Requirements						
SE 1/SE 2 Assessments	Partial	Student Records Interviews Documents	IEP Teams use information from observations, students' current teachers, parents and formal assessments to determine the best services and placement for eligible students in the least restrictive environment	Partial	Regular education teacher and vocational teacher assessments do not always include specific and sufficient information regarding the student's current performance level, progress and presenting issues.	Submit evidence of training provided to regular education and vocational technical staff system-wide regarding the appropriate completion of the teacher assessment forms. Provide a description of the monitoring process regarding the completion of the teacher assessment

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						<p>Above due by November 12, 2005.</p> <p>Submit the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Twelve sets of completed teacher assessment forms, include the regular education and vocational technical education teachers' assessment in each set. 2. Results of an administrative review of the appropriate completion of Teacher Assessments. Indicate the # of records reviewed, the # of records with the above completed assessment forms and indicate any further steps taken by the district to address incomplete record information. Above due by April 15, 2006. <p>On-site student record review will be scheduled for August 2006.</p>
SE 3	√	Student Records	Documentation and student records showed			

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Special Requirements for Determination of Specific Learning Disabilities		Documents	that the IEP Teams complete the required observation and provide a written statement to document the Team's determination regarding the existence of a specific learning disability.			
SE 4 Reports of Assessment Results	Partial	Student Records	Assessments target the student's presenting issues and suspected area(s) of disability. Completed assessments are available to parents at least two days in advance of the Team meeting.	Partial	The review of completed assessment reports showed that there is not always sufficient information regarding the student's area of suspected disability. The completed reports do not always include educationally relevant findings and recommendations.	The district must provide a training to personnel that evaluate students for initial and re-evaluations regarding the inclusion of the following required information in assessment reports: Procedures employed, the results, the diagnostic impressions, student's behavior, student's educational/therapeutic needs and educationally relevant findings and recommendations. Submit evidence of the training, handout materials and signed attendance sheet by November 12, 2005. Submit a review of a sample of student records, drawn from initial and reevaluations, regarding the inclusion of educationally relevant

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						findings and recommendations in assessment reports (indicate the # of records reviewed from each quadrant, the # of records with appropriately completed assessments, and indicate any further steps taken by the district to address assessment information, by April 15, 2006. On-site student record review will be scheduled for August 2006 .

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SE 6 Determination of Transition Services <i>(Emphasis on practices in determining needed transition planning and services and consideration of courses of study related to needed transition)</i>	√	Student Records Documents Interviews	The district has a wide range of program options available to promote awareness, exploration and direct involvement in occupational and vocational pursuits that are based upon the individual student's needs and interests. IEP Teams incorporate transition planning into the development of the IEP, including information on how the student's IEP services are linked to the individual's post-school goals, including but not limited to post-secondary education, vocational training and employment options. IEP Teams implement Chapter 688 referrals for students, when appropriate.			
SE 7	√	Student	The district implements			

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Age of Majority		Records Documents	the requirements regarding the transfer of parental rights at the age of majority and the securing of student consent to determine person(s) who have decision-making authority.			

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SE 8 Evaluation Team Composition	√	Student Records	<p>IEP Team meetings include the required Team members, with a representative of the district present to commit the district's resources. Regular education teachers/ vocational teachers regularly attend IEP Team meetings.</p> <p>Students attend and participate at Team meetings and are involved in the IEP process. There is a high level of participation of parents at IEP meetings.</p>			
SE 9 Eligibility Determination	√	Student Records Documents	The district regularly adheres to the mandated 45-day timeline for the conducting of evaluations, and the convening of Team meetings.			

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<p>SE 12 Re-evaluations</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>Student Records Documents</p>	<p>The district conducts full three-year re-evaluations and implements re-evaluation procedures for students who are potentially no longer eligible for special education services.</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>The review of the tracking log indicated that the district, in several cases, exceeded the three-year timeline for the conducting of three-year reevaluations.</p>	<p>Submit a list of students to be re-evaluated in the 2005-06 school year and the date of the student's last re-evaluation. If the re-evaluation is occurring beyond the three year timeline, indicate the reason and what steps the district is taking to ensure that the student's current IEP does not exceed its duration date.</p> <p>Above due by November 12, 2005.</p>
<p>SE 13 Progress Reports and Content</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>Student Records</p>	<p>In most cases, progress reports are documented in the student records and sent to parents/guardians consistent with the report card cycle.</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>The progress reports do not always address the student's individual IEP goals and benchmarks. In some cases, the progress reports do not contain specific information regarding the student's progress or lack of progress on all the IEP goal areas from one progress reporting period to another within the school year. Further, when the student is not making progress towards</p>	<p>The district must provide training to special education personnel on the content of progress reports, to ensure greater consistency in addressing student's IEP goals and benchmarks. Submit the agenda and signed attendance sheets from the training, by November 4, 2005</p> <p>Submit an administrative review of students whose progress reports indicated a lack of progress towards IEP goals and /or in the general curriculum, for the 2005-06 SY. Indicate the actions taken by the district to address each of the above student's</p>

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					<p>the annual goals and/or in the general curriculum, there is a lack of documentation in the student records that Teams reconvened to review, revise or develop a new IEP, or refer the student for re-evaluation to address the lack of progress.</p>	<p>lack of progress towards annual IEP goals. Submit the an administrative review of progress reports for appropriate content (indicate the # of records, the # of records with appropriate reporting of content and indicate any further steps taken by the district to address progress reports lacking appropriate content) Above due by April 15, 2006.</p> <p>On-site student record review will be scheduled for August 2006 .</p>

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SE 14 Annual Review	√	Student Records Documents	The district conducts annual review meetings on or before the anniversary date of the implementation of the current consented to IEP.			
SE 15 Outreach by the School District (Child Find)	√	Documents	There are ongoing outreach efforts, to recruit middle school students from the 18 cities and towns in the district, throughout the school year, and in-district efforts to identify students who may be in need of special education.			
SE 18A IEP Development and Content	Partial	Student Records Interviews	The district implements the mandated IEP procedures system-wide regarding the development of the IEP, and considers all areas on the current IEP format.	Partial	Goals and objectives on IEPs, are not always written in measurable terms, specific to the student's disability and need for specialized instruction. The IEPs do not always contain goals and accommodations for the vocational component of the student's program, when	Submit the agendas, handout material and signed attendance sheets from staff training regarding the development of measurable annual IEP goals and the nonparticipation justification Above due November 12, 2005.

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					<p>necessary and appropriate. In addition, the IEP goals do not always focus on the student's particular area of need for specialized instruction, such as reading, writing or math, rather the goal would address all the areas under the heading of "academic" or "academic achievement". In many cases, the "academic" goals address the regular education curricular requirements, rather than the need for specialized instruction in a particular skill area. The IEP Team does not always fully describe the reasons why the student is being removed from the general education program.</p>	<p>Provide an administrative review of proposed IEPs, (indicate the # of IEPs reviewed, the # of IEPs with annual measurable goals, specific to the student's academic/vocational need for specialized instruction, and # of IEPs with detailed nonparticipation justifications and # of IEPs with appropriate accommodations for general education classroom and/or the vocational technical shops.) Indicate any further steps taken by the district to address incomplete development of goals and insufficient nonparticipation justification for the 2005-06 school year. Above due by April 15, 2006. On-site student record review will be scheduled for August 2006.</p>

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<p>SE 18B Determination of Placement; Immediate Provision of IEP to Parent</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>Student Records</p>	<p>The district implements the required procedures to determine placement at initial/reevaluations and annual review meetings.</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>The student record review indicated that the duration of services to be delivered by an inclusion aide was for 30 minutes whereas the class schedule indicated that instructional periods were thirty-nine minutes in length. In addition, the schedule showed that there were nine instructional periods in a day. However, the aide was not always designated to deliver direct services for all the instructional periods and there was no information in the IEP as to which class periods and/or which week(A or B) the aide was to deliver instructional assistance.</p>	<p>The district must review the current IEPs and service delivery grids for students receiving direct services from an aide. The IEPs need to be amended to indicate the instructional periods and the weeks that the aide will be delivering services to the student. In addition, the duration of the services needs to align with the class schedule for A and B weeks. Submit the names of the students receiving direct services from an aide for the 2005-06 SY. Provide a copy of each student's revised service delivery grid with an indication during which instructional periods the aide is delivering direct services, by November 12, 2005.</p>

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SE 20 Least Restrictive Program Selected	√	Student Records Interviews Documents	The district considers the least restrictive environment and opportunities for inclusion for students through Team discussions at IEP meetings.			

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<p>SE 21 Extended School Day /Year</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>Student Records Interviews Documents</p>	<p>During the Team process, IEP Teams consider whether a student needs an extended year program.</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>There are limited options available for students on IEPs, who are not progressing in the general curriculum and are failing courses, to receive specialized instruction in their area of educational need through an extended year program. IEP Teams are not always considering whether the reason for failing is due to the disability and failure to meet the IEP goals, which would result in the student needing an amended IEP and increased specialized instruction, rather than a summer program that focuses on regular education curricular requirements. In addition, the summer school program does not always have special education staff available to provide instruction, if necessary.</p>	<p>The district must develop a plan to address, through the IEP process, the educational needs of students on IEPs, who are failing courses and continue to need specialized instruction during the summer. Submit the plan and provide evidence that the plan has been disseminated to all staff that participate on IEP Teams. Above due by November 12, 2005.</p> <p>Provide a list of extended year programs and services available for students on IEPs for the summer of 2006. Submit a list of students recommended for extended year programming and the programs and services that are identified for each student. Above due by April 15, 2006.</p> <p>On-site student record review will be scheduled for August 2006 .</p>

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SE 22 IEP Implementation and Availability (<i>Emphasis on provision of IEP services without delay; provision of the IEP at the beginning of the school year; and, alternative methods of service delivery where there is a lack of space and/or personnel</i>)	√	Student Records Interviews	The district has a system in place to ensure the implementation of a student's services and program upon receipt of written parental consent. The special education liaison is responsible for the oversight of the provision of the services and programs for a designated group of students. The district has developed a system to notify all teachers regarding their responsibilities for students on IEPs and Section 504 plans at the beginning of the school year. Binders are distributed to shop instructors and academic teachers with "student summaries" which are updated annually in August and throughout the school year, as			

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			necessary.			

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SE 23 Confidentiality	√	Student Records Documents	Logs of access were documented in student records.			
SE 24 Notice to Parent /Guardian	√	Student Records Documents	The district provides the mandated written notices to parents regarding the district's proposal or refusal to act in regards to the identification, evaluation or educational services/ placement of the child.			
SE 26 Parent Participation in Meetings <i>(Emphasis on district's attempts to ensure parent participation at IEP Team</i>	√	Student Records Documents	The district has a high level of participation of parents at IEP meetings. The Team meeting invitations are typically sent out to parents/guardians in sufficient time to provide parents with the opportunity to attend.			

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<i>meetings)</i>			The personnel re-schedule meetings to accommodate parents in order to encourage parents'/guardians' attendance at the Team meetings.			

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SE 28 Parent Provided the IEP or Notice of No Eligibility together with Notification of Procedural Safeguards and parents' rights	Partial	Student Records Interviews	The district provides the finding of no eligibility within the mandated timeline. In addition, parents/guardians are provided with notification of procedural safeguards and parents' rights.	Partial	The district does not always adhere to the 45-day timeline for the provision of the proposed IEP and placement to the parent/guardian., following the Team meeting.	Submit a plan to ensure system-wide adherence to the provision of the proposed IEP to the parents in accordance with 603 CMR 28.05(1). Above due by November 12, 2005 . Submit a log to track adherence to the 45-day timeline for the provision of the proposed IEP to the parents/guardians from October 2005-March 2006. Include the following in the log: the date of the referral request for the evaluation, the date of the Team meeting and the date of the provision of the proposed IEP or finding of no eligibility to the parents/guardians. If the proposed IEP was not provided to the parents at the conclusion of the Team meeting, indicate what documentation was given to the parents. The special education administration must review the above log and indicate the steps taken to address any systemic issues regarding adherence to the 45-day timeline.

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<p>SE 29 Communications are in English and Primary Language of Home</p> <p>MOA 7 Information translated into Languages other than English</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>Student Records</p> <p>Documents</p>	<p>The district, in some cases, provides interpreters and translated materials relevant to the IEP process and procedures when requested and necessary for parents/guardians whose primary language is other than English. The district's efforts are documented in the student records.</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>Based upon student record reviews, the district demonstrates inconsistency regarding the translation of the mandated IEP documents throughout the evaluation and IEP process into the native language of the parent/guardian. There is no documentation as to whether a parent/guardian needs language assistance or the type of assistance that is necessary to ensure access to the full IEP process. The district does not have a formal mechanism in place to document and update the primary language of the home and make a determination each school year as to the type of language assistance that parents whose language is other than English require for the purposes of written and oral communications.</p>	<p>Submit the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A plan for documenting and updating the primary language of the home for parents/guardians who require or request language assistance and the type of language assistance needed. 2. A list of families that need translation services and the type of services requested for the 2005-06 SY. <p>Indicate key personnel responsible for the oversight and monitoring of the process and procedures. Above due by November 12, 2005.</p> <p>Submit a list of parents/guardians who received interpretation and /or translated documents. Include the native language of the parents/guardians and a sampling of translated documents. Above due by April 15, 2006</p>

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SE 32 Parent Advisory Council for Special Education	√	Documents Interviews	The district has recently established a Parent Advisory Council. Contact information regarding the co-chairpersons, the by-laws, a 2004-05 meeting schedule and the PAC's representation at School Committee meetings was submitted.			Submit for the 2005-06 SY meeting schedule for the Parent Advisory Council, by November 12, 2005 . Submit agendas and handout materials for PAC meetings conducted in the 2005-06 SY from September 2005-March 2006, by April 15, 2006 .
SE 33 Involvement in the General Curriculum	√	Student Record Review	The review of students' schedules, report cards and progress reports indicated full student participation in the general and the vocational technical curriculum.			

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SE 34 Continuum of Alternative Services SE 36 IEP Implementation SE 48 Free Appropriate Public Education	√	Student Record Review Documents Interviews	Since 2003-04 SY, the district has implemented an action plan focused on expanding the provision of inclusion support to students on IEPs in their academic and vocational classes, in order to increase the spectrum of inclusionary opportunities. General education and vocational personnel are informed of their IEP responsibilities by the student's special education liaison and through a binder system at the beginning of each school year.			
SE 40 Class Size	√	Documents Interviews	The district adheres to the class size requirements within the instructional groupings.			

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SE 43 Behavioral Interventions	√	Documents Interviews Student Records	The student record review showed that the IEP Teams consider the individual student's need for behavioral and/or social-emotional interventions in the development of IEPs through the provision of counseling and the goals targeting the student's areas of therapeutic need.			
SE 49A Special Transportation	√	Student Records Documents	IEP Teams consider and address the student's need for special transportation services in accordance with the state regulation			
SE 50 Responsibility of the School Principal and Administrator of Special Education	Partial	Student Records Documents Interviews	The district submitted a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) dated August 2004. The DCAP included a listing of the support services available through the regular	Partial	The DCAP and the student record review did not show evidence that the district has an instructional support intervention process and procedures in place to address the diverse needs of the student population in the	The district must develop an instructional support intervention process for the general education and vocational programs. Include in the plan how the building-based team will receive referrals from general education and vocational personnel, the composition of the

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			education program.		general education and vocational programs.	<p>team and the scheduling of the team’s meetings and the documenting of the efforts of the team , the interventions recommended by the team and the review of students referred to the team. Submit the procedures and documentation for the instructional support intervention team process by November 12, 2005.</p> <p>Submit the results of the district’s review of the implementation of the instructional support intervention procedures for the 05-06 SY, and a description of any changes that resulted from the evaluation, by April 15, 2006.</p>

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SE 53 Use of Paraprofessionals	√	Documents Interviews	The district submitted evidence of monthly meetings and trainings with inclusion aides (paraprofessional staff) throughout the 2004-05 SY. In addition, the district provided a paraprofessional training regarding roles and responsibilities.			
SE 54 Professional Development regarding Special Education		Documents		√	The district did not submit the staff training needs assessments, training agendas and other documentation of special education related staff development activities for <u>paraprofessional</u> staff and <u>regular</u> and <u>special education</u> teachers for the 2004-05 SY as delineated in the Mid-Cycle Information Package 2005.	Submit the professional development training opportunities provided to all staff in the 2004-05 SY. In addition, provide the proposed schedule of professional development activities in the area of special education to be offered in the 2005-06 SY. Above due by November 12, 2005 .

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SE 56 Special Education Programs and Services are Evaluated	Partial	Document s	The district submitted a list of the areas reviewed during the special education program evaluation for the 2004-05 SY, which focused upon transition services.	Partial	The district did not submit documentation to report upon the findings of the evaluation and any changes to the program and services for the 2005-06 SY that resulted from the evaluation.	Submit the program evaluation reports from 2004-05 SY and describe any changes to programming and services that resulted from the evaluation for the 2005-06 SY. Indicate what areas are to be evaluated in the special education program and services for the 2005-06 SY and the process to be implemented regarding the evaluation. Above due by November 12, 2005.
Other Requirements						
MOA 2 Program Modifications And support services for limited-English proficient students				√	The district does not currently have an ELE program in place for students that provides language assistance to LEP students in a sheltered English immersion classroom either in general education or in the vocational program. There is also not a formal	Submit a description of the ELE program to be implemented for the 2005-06 SY and the professional development plan and schedule for training of general education/vocational personnel in Sheltered English Immersion for the 2005-06 school year. Submit the list of LEP students receiving instruction and supports for the 05-06 school year. For each of the above students indicate the type of instruction and supports being provided

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ELE 5 Program Placement and Structure ELE 13 Follow-up Support ELE 15 Professional Development Requirements	√				process in place to track and monitor students re-designated as Formerly English Proficient when the students exit from LEP status to full participation in the general education classroom.	to the student and the name(s) and qualifications of the personnel providing the instruction and supports. Above due by November 12, 2005 . Submit copies of agendas, sign-in sheets and handouts from staff training conducted in the 2005-06 school year. Submit the name and qualifications of the personnel who are trained in Sheltered English Immersion, the # hrs. of training received by each teacher. Above due by April 15, 2006 .
MOA 3 Access to a full range of education programs MOA 5 Placement of disabled students in	√	Interviews Student Records Documents	Interviews indicated that IEP Teams consider the needs of individual students with disabilities, who are enrolled in the vocational school, regarding accessibility to programs and to classroom and shop spaces, to inclusion aide support, if necessary, and the implementation of the			

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occupational / vocational programs			appropriate accommodations to ensure access to the full complement of the school's program and services.			

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MOA 10A Notification of School District Staff and the General Public MOA 11A Designation of Liaison/ Coordinators Grievance Procedures	Partial	Documents	Grievance procedures under Section 504 and Title IX are included in a handbook titled <u>Non-Discrimination Notice and Civil Rights and Safety Information for School Personnel, Parents and Students.</u> Personnel, parents and students are directed to the Superintendent-Director's Office to contact the designated coordinator regarding Title IX and Section 504 issues.	Partial	The district did not provide evidence that the <u>Non-Discrimination Notice and Civil Rights and Safety Information for School Personnel, Parents and Students</u> has been translated for parents/guardians and students whose primary language is other than English.	Submit copies of the notice that has been translated into the major languages of the district for the 2005-06 SY by November 12, 2005.
MOA 25 Institutional Self-Evaluation	Partial	Documents	The district conducted a comprehensive in-service for school personnel regarding the federal, state and local regulations, in September 2004. School personnel attending the in-service submitted an evaluation of	Partial	The district did not submit an administrative review of the civil rights policies and programs for the 2004-05 SY or the results of the review of the school's policies and procedures and the review of the school personnel's evaluation.	Submit copies of any policies and procedures that were revised and/or remedied as a result of the review Submit the schedule for the annual review of the district's programs, academic and vocational, in regards to ensuring equal access for all students to all programs for the

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			the in-service. The district also submitted the current admission policy dated January 30, 2004 and the current Freshman Vocational Placement Policy that was written to ensure consistency in the freshman placement process.		.	2005-06 SY Above due by November 12, 2005 .

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<p>ELE 17</p> <p>DOE Data Submission Requirements and Program Evaluation</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Student Records</p> <p>Documents</p>		<p>√</p>	<p>Interviews indicated that there is not a mechanism in place to monitor the tracking of LEP students and to evaluate the ELE program. Interviews indicated that a high number of students were reported to the Department as LEP, who were not LEP as indicated by the test and evaluation information or who were no LEP. There were no firm criteria documented in the student record to establish the accurate status of LEP students.</p>	<p>Develop and submit a plan to track and monitor the accurate submission of designated LEP and FLEP students to the Department.</p> <p>Develop and submit a plan to evaluate the ELE programs and activities across the curriculum. Above due by November 12, 2005.</p> <p>Submit the status regarding the implementation of the evaluation plan by April 15, 2006.</p>

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ELE 18 Records of LEP Students	Student Records			√	The student records do not always contain the following required elements: Copies of progress reports and report cards, exiting information, initial assessment information, parent notification letters, and evidence of follow-up monitoring and individual success plans for students who have failed MCAS , if the district is required to complete the plans for non-LEP students	Conduct a review of all ELE student records regarding the inclusion of the required information. Submit the results of the review and the changes made to ensure that all ELE student records will contain the required information. Indicate the personnel responsible for monitoring the documentation of the required information in the ELE student records and the plan for the monitoring. Submit evidence that the responsible personnel have been informed of the monitoring procedures. Above due by November 12, 2005. On-site student record review will be scheduled for August 2006.