

**Kentucky School for the Blind**  
**Summary of Report of Findings**  
**June 2016**  
**Kentucky Department of Education**  
**Division of Learning Services**

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Division of Learning Services (DLS) has completed an extensive review of the instructional, intervention, and special education services being implemented at the Kentucky School for the Blind. The review team consisted of staff from the KDE including the DLS Director and Assistant Director, Exceptional Children Consultants, Academic Program Consultants, KDE contract employees with expertise in data, finance, and special education regulations, and Consultants from the Jefferson County Public Schools Cooperative who have expertise in serving students with low incidence disabilities, including visual impairments.

The findings may be broken into two categories: compliance areas required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and a review of evidence-based classroom instructional practices. The review consisted of a three-day onsite visit at the school during which time the team completed classroom walk-throughs, observations, interviews with school staff and administration, and a review of individual student due process files.

Thus, the Report of Findings separated the review into two broad categories:

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) compliance
- Effective teaching and learning practices

In addition to the KDE review, external partners from the University of Louisville and University of Kentucky conducted a review of instructional practices that included classroom observations and interviews with KSB staff. The members of this external review team included Dr. Donna Brostek Lee, Program Coordinator for the Visual Impairments Graduate Program at the University of Kentucky and Dr. Terry Scott, Professor and Distinguished Scholar, Interim Dean of Research for Graduate Studies at the University of Louisville. The findings from the external partner review aligned with the KDE findings.

## **IDEA Findings:**

### **Strengths:**

- Individual Education Programs (IEPs) contained well-written Present Levels of Educational and Functional Performance, appropriate accommodations for district and state assessments, and related service goals.
- Eligibility determinations were completed correctly for visual impairments (VI) and were well documented.
- Parents were provided with notices for IEP meetings.

### **Areas of Noncompliance:**

The KDE identified two areas of noncompliance: student-specific and systemic. Systemic means a specific finding of noncompliance occurs more than once. All findings of noncompliance must be remedied through a corrective action plan within one year.

The student specific noncompliance findings were documented in a table within the Report of Findings for each specific student file and a sealed envelope containing the student names was provided separately to the Director of Special Education to maintain each student's confidentiality.

### **Systemic Findings of Noncompliance:**

- IEP (707 KAR 1:320)
  - Lack of adverse effect statements
  - Annual goals not measurable
  - Present Levels of Performance not including baseline data
  - *Statements of Program Modifications* either not stated for school personnel or incorrectly provided for the student
- Alternate Assessment (707 KAR 1:320 and 703 KAR 5:070)
  - Inappropriate placement of students in Alternate Assessment (For example, students who did not have severe cognitive challenges were placed on Alternate Assessment.)
  - Data not included to support the placement of students in Alternate Assessment
- Conference Summary (707 KAR 1:320, Section 9)
  - Not individualized (appeared to be cut and pasted)
  - No progress data discussed or analyzed
  - Ineligibility determinations appeared as being cut and pasted
- Determination of Eligibility (707 KAR 1:310)
  - Disabilities (besides VI) not determined appropriately
  - Supporting evidence of eligibility missing in many folders
  - Eligibility determination changed without notice (For example, speech needs would change with no documentation; general intelligence improved for one student without any testing.)
- Evaluation/Re-evaluation (707 KAR 1:310)
  - Little or no emphasis on academic goals
  - Baseline data on academic goals not in existence

- K-PREP, district assessments and other assessments not utilized in evaluation/reevaluation decisions
- Functional Vision and Learning Media Assessment (FVLMA)—not completed every 3 years
- Re-evaluations focused on low vision only, no other disabilities or academics included
- Students determined as Mild Mental Disability (MMD) with a partial WISC score, with no triangulation of data; then, students placed on the Alternate Assessment
- Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) (704 KAR 1:290)
  - Rigorous curriculum not apparent for students to be college- and career-ready
  - No college preparatory courses/Advanced Placement (AP)
  - All related service personnel not always invited to Admissions and Release Committee (ARC)
  - Excusal forms not completed if the related service personnel did not attend
- Least Restrictive Environment (707 KAR 1:350)
  - Statements not individualized to the needs of each child
- ARC Membership (707 KAR 1:320, Section 3)
  - No documentation of input from those who could not attend
  - Scheduling conflicts with orientation and mobility (O&M) and occupational therapy (OT) (so they frequently did not attend)
- Progress Monitoring (707 KAR 1:320)
  - Not all goals monitored
  - No data analysis
  - Most academic goals not measurable
  - Safety goals to be 100%
- Related Services (707 KAR 1:320)
  - Transportation— service minutes listed as zero
  - All related service personnel not always invited to Admissions and Release Committee (ARC)
  - Excusal forms not completed if the related service personnel did not attend
- Transition Services (707 KAR 1:320)
  - Rigorous curriculum not apparent for students to be college- and career-ready
  - No college preparatory courses/Advanced Placement (AP)
  - Use of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) not documented or student’s ILP goals not considered in academic planning
  - Independent living goals not consistently addressed

**Effective teaching and learning practices:**

The review examined the components of a highly effective teaching and learning environment including: levels of student attentiveness; use of instructional time; use of resources; implementation of Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) and Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) standards; teacher/student questioning; differentiation; use of assessment to guide instruction; and learning environment/culture.

Strengths:

- Learning Environment and Culture
- Instructional Focus
- Curriculum Planning and Alignment Discussion
- Interventions
- Student Engagement

Areas for Growth:

- Curriculum
- Differentiation
- Instructional Strategies/Instructional Time/Scheduling
- School-Wide Expectations
- Interventions

*Table 1 – Results from the Classroom Observations*

Indicator	Observed
A. Learning targets posted and current to lesson/unit	25%
B. Lessons/Activities grade-level appropriate and aligned to current standards	26%
C. Positively stated rules and expectations posted/followed/taught/reinforced	11%
D. Routines established and followed by teachers and students	11%
E. Teacher-student relationships appear mutually respectful and productive	75%
F. Peer relationships appear respectful and productive	60%
G. Incorporates cultural diversity in classroom discussions and lessons	7%
H. Real-world discussions/applications/activities	26%
I. Differentiates curriculum/instructional methodology/assessment strategies	15%
J. Provides high quality feedback emphasizing effort and progress toward learning goals	11%
K. Focuses/refocuses class discussion by referring back to the learning targets/goals/essential questions	19%
L. Integrates current learning goals with previously taught content/learning to make connections	15%
M. Engages students in discussions related to how mastery will be demonstrated	30%
N. Options for accessing/interacting/expressing learning provided	19%
O. Provided with research-based instructional curricular supports	19%

**Corrective Action Plan (CAP):**

The DLS issued an all-encompassing CAP that must be completed by February 2017.

- Principal did not present the Report of Findings as indicated by the CAP deadline. The principal was directed to reconvene a staff meeting to appropriately share the report with all staff. This was completed on May 20, 2016. DLS staff were present for the meeting.

- KSB is meeting all other timelines of the CAP.
- DLS is attending KSB leadership meetings and working directly with all KSB staff to implement the CAP to work through any questions or obstacles that may arise.
- Data for the CAP is being collected regularly and technical assistance is being provided as necessary by DLS.