



**Executive Summary
of the
Gifted Education Compliance Monitoring Review
of the
State College Area School District**

**PART I
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

A. Review Process

Prior to the Bureau's monitoring the week of April 14, 2014, the State College Area School District was formally notified of the dates the on-site review would be conducted. The LEA was informed of its responsibility to compile various reports, written policies, and procedures to document compliance with requirements.

While on-site, the monitoring team employed a variety of techniques to gain an in-depth understanding of the LEA's gifted program operations. These techniques included:

- Interviews of LEA administrative and clinical staff.
- Review of policies, notices, plans, gifted education forms, and data reports used and compiled by the LEA (Gifted Facilitated Self-Assessment.)
- Comprehensive case studies (including interviews of gifted education staff, parents and students, and student file reviews).

B. General Findings

In reaching compliance determinations, Bureau of Special Education (BSE) monitoring teams apply criteria contained in state gifted education regulations. Specifically, these are:

- 22 Pa. Code Chapter 16 (State Board of Education Gifted Education Regulations)

This report focuses on compliance with requirements and also contains some descriptive information (such as interview results) which is intended to provide feedback to assist in program planning.

C. Overall Findings of the Three Major Sections of the Compliance Monitoring Instrument

1. GIFTED FACILITATED SELF-ASSESSMENT (GFSA)

The team reviewed the FSA submitted by the LEA and conducted on-site verification activities of the information submitted in the GFSA. The on-site verification activities included review of policies, notices, procedures, and school file reviews.

FSA	In Compliance	Out of Compliance
Strategic Plan and Policy		X
Personnel	X	
Special Education/Dual Exceptionalities	N/A	
Screening and Evaluation Process		X
Gifted Education Placement		X
Gifted Procedural Safeguards	X	
Student Record Review		X

2. FILE REVIEW (Student case studies)

The gifted education records of randomly selected students participating in gifted education programs were studied to determine whether the LEA complied with essential requirements in five areas.

The status of compliance of the LEA is as follows:

Sections of the FILE REVIEW	In Compliance	Out of Compliance	N/A
Essential Student Documents Are Present and Were Prepared Within Timelines	*	*	*
Evaluation/Reevaluation: Process and Content	*	*	*
Gifted Individualized Education Program (GIEP): Process and Content	*	*	*
TOTALS	*	*	*

3. TEACHER, PARENT AND STUDENT INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted with parents and teachers of students and students selected by the BSE for the sample group. The goal is to determine if the LEA involves parents, students and professionals in required processes (e.g., Evaluation, GIEP development...), whether programs and services are being provided, and whether the LEA provides training to enhance knowledge. Parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the gifted education program is also generally assessed.

	# Yes Responses	# No Responses	N/A
Program Implementation: Teacher Interviews	*	*	*
Program Implementation: Parent Interviews	*	*	*
Program Implementation: Student Interview	*	*	*
TOTALS	*	*	*

4. COMMENDATIONS

- The district is commended for the concept and implementation of the Learning Enrichment Program, though it does not meet the requirements of Chapter 16, it is potentially an exemplary example of the main charge as educators to provide a high quality differentiated curriculum as outlined in Chapter 4 of the PA School Code.
§ 4.1. Purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to establish rigorous academic standards and assessments to facilitate the improvement of student achievement and to provide parents and communities a measure by which school performance can be determined.
§ 4.4. General Policies. “It is the policy of the Board that local school entities have the greatest possible flexibility in curriculum planning consistent with providing quality education and in compliance with the School Code, including requirements for courses to be taught (24 P. S. § 15-1501 and 16-1605); subjects to be taught in the English language (24 P. S. § 15-1511); courses adapted to the age, development and needs of the pupils (24 P. S. § 15-1512); “
§ 4.11. Purpose of public education.
(b) Public education prepares students for adult life by attending to their intellectual and developmental needs and challenging them to achieve at their highest level possible. In conjunction with families and other community institutions, public education prepares students to become self-directed, life-long learners and responsible, involved citizens.
- Documentation, record keeping, and scheduling in preparation for this peer monitoring. The PDE team wishes to express appreciation to Jeanne Knouse, especially, as she has maintained constant contact with the team and provided access to all of the schools, meeting, documentation, classrooms, and students that we requested.
- Willingness on the part of the administration and staff to meet the child’s needs wherever they may be without a formal identification at any level.
- Commitment to all students to provide differentiated curricula through the partnership with University of Virginia (i.e. development of K-U-D, purposeful and planned differentiated instruction, etc.)
- Structures in place to allow for grade level or subject level acceleration, as well as early graduation.
- Regular meeting structure at the high school to consider unique cases of all students, especially those whose giftedness and talents have led them to experiences outside of the traditional school day. Your team at the high school is very willing to consider how best to support those students.
- While not required, your commitment to the arts and the talents students bring to the arts is to be commended. Chapter 16 does not prohibit this endeavor; the district is not bound to the same procedures and documentation that is required for meeting the needs of district’s academically gifted students.
- Development of strong partnerships with the community and Penn State University to enhance the learning of all students.
- Commitment to developing the multiple intelligences in all students.
- The online course for LE/GS teachers, admin, and General Education teachers around the policies and procedures for Chapter 16.

Recommendations/Needs
Refine and articulate a screening and an evaluation process that meets the requirements set forth in § 16.21. General.
Learning Enrichment needs to be separate from Gifted Support and clearly defined as general education. As part of the Gifted Education Plan, provide a description of the continuum of services for gifted education. While this is present in the documentation, it often is presented with the Learning Enrichment Services and can be confusing to know where one ends and another begins.
Board Policy 114 reviewed for clarity.
Consider Acceleration options other than Grade and Subject level acceleration and early graduation.
PLEPs need to provide Instructional level. When included in the GWR, it should lead to clearly stated recommendations (to include grade level and whether it is enrichment, acceleration, or a combination).
Goals need to be responsive to those documented instructional levels and based on the standards.
Short Term learning Outcomes need to break down the goal and clearly define the objective criteria, assessment procedures, and timelines for goal attainment.
All Specially Designed Instruction needs to be documented in the GIEP. It is what the school/teacher will provide.
All Support Services need to be documented in the GIEP (i.e. transportation, support for organization or social emotional concerns in order to attain goal)
Specially Designed Instruction needs to be provided during the course of the student's instructional Day. In addition, if there are general education requirements that are missed due to receipt of gifted services, there should be a pre-approved plan as to how the student can either make those up during the school day or be exempt from them. After discussing this with the team, it appears to be a matter of consistency.

PART II CORRECTIVE ACTION PROCESS

PART I of this report presented an overall summary of findings in each major area reviewed by the team. In the Appendix to the report, we have provided you with detailed findings for each of the criteria of the 3 major sections of the gifted compliance monitoring instrument, i.e. GFSA, File Review, and Parent, Student and Teacher Interviews. The detailed report of findings in the Appendix includes:

- Criteria Number
- Statements of all requirements
- Whether each requirement was met or was not met
- Statements of corrective action required for those criteria not met

Upon receipt of this report, the LEA should review the corrective actions required. The Report is formatted so that findings from all components of the gifted monitoring are consolidated by topical area. The Report lists the finding, and whether corrective action is required. For certain types of findings, corrective action will be prescribed, and will not vary from LEA to LEA. For example, if the finding is that the LEA lacks a specific required policy, it is reasonable to have the BSE prescribe a standardized remedy and timeline for correcting this deficiency. However, some of the corrective action activities may be individually designed by the LEA based on their own unique circumstances and goals.

The BSE Adviser will schedule an on-site visit with the LEA within 60 days following issuance of the gifted monitoring report. The Adviser and LEA staff will develop a LEA Compliance and Improvement Plan for corrective action plan. The LEA will recommend a corrective action or Improvement Plan strategy and timeline. The LEA proposes corrective action activities and the BSE Adviser and LEA mutually agree upon the Plan for Corrective Action. The BSE Adviser will confirm and submit a PDE approved LEA correction action plan.

With respect to the File Review, because students were selected at random, findings are generalized to the entire population of gifted students. During the corrective action review, the BSE Adviser will select students at random and not focus on those students in the original sample. Consequently, the LEA should

approach corrective action on a systemic basis. If there has been a finding of non-compliance regarding the appropriateness or implementation of an individual student's program the LEA must take immediate, individual corrective action.

Upon conclusion of the corrective action process, the LEA will be notified of its successful completion of the gifted monitoring process.