



## **Executive Summary Of the Compliance Monitoring Review of the Northside Urban Pathways CS**

### **PART I SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

#### **A. Review Process**

Prior to the Bureau's monitoring the week of December 4, 2007 the Northside Urban Pathways CS was formally notified of the dates the onsite review would be conducted. Notice and invitation to comment was also provided to the Local Task Force on Right-to-Education. The Charter School was informed of its responsibility to compile various reports, written policies, and procedures to document compliance with requirements.

While onsite, the monitoring team employed a variety of techniques to gain an in depth understanding of the charter school's program operations. These techniques included:

- Interviews of administrative and instructional staff
- Review of policies, notices, plans, special education forms and formats, and data reports used and compiled by the charter school (Facilitated Self-Assessment)
- Comprehensive case studies of students (including interviews of regular and special education staff, interviews of parents, and student file reviews).

#### **B. General Findings**

In reaching compliance determinations, Bureau of Special Education monitoring teams apply criteria contained in federal and state special education regulations. Specifically, these are:

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004
- 22 Pa. Code Chapter 711 (Charter School Services and Programs for Children with Disabilities)
- 34 CFR Part 300

#### **Commendations**

In addition to reporting the status of compliance the Bureau of Special Education wishes to recognize the Northside Urban Pathways CS for the following:

- The Charter School is commended for its Learning Partnership meetings at which time parents receive their child's report card.
- The Charter School is commended for its excellent and extensive preparation for the monitoring.

- The Charter School is commended for its high graduation rates and high college acceptance rates.
- The Charter School is commended for the high quality of its IEPs.
- The Charter School is commended for the high morale of its students and staff.

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. FACILITATED SELF-ASSESSMENT**

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

<b>FSA</b>	<b>In Compliance</b>	<b>Out of Compliance</b>
Assistive Technology and Services; Hearing Aids	2	0
Child Find (Annual Public Notice and General Dissemination Materials)	1	0
Confidentiality	1	0
Exclusions: Suspensions and Expulsions (Policies and Procedures)	1	0
Independent Education Evaluation	1	0
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)	3	0
Parent Training	0	1
Surrogate Parents (Students Requiring)	1	0
Training	1	0
Intensive Interagency Approach	1	0

<b>IMPROVEMENT PLAN REQUIRED</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Dispute Resolution	0	1
Graduation Rates	0	1
Drop Out Rates	0	1
Suspensions (Rates)	0	1
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) (SPP)	0	1
Participation in PSSA and PASA	0	1
Public School Enrollment	0	1

**2. FILE REVIEW** (Student case studies)

The education records of randomly selected students participating in special education programs were studied to determine whether the Charter School complied with essential requirements.

The status of compliance of the Northside Urban Pathways CS is as follows:

<b>Sections of the FILE REVIEW</b>	<b>In Compliance</b>	<b>Out of Compliance</b>	<b>NA</b>
Essential Student Documents Are Present and Were Prepared Within Timelines	55	6	19
Evaluation/Reevaluation: Process and Content	142	19	259
Individualized Education Program: Process and Content	297	12	81
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>359</b>

**3. TEACHER AND PARENT INTERVIEWS**

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

	<b># Yes Responses</b>	<b># No Responses</b>	<b># of Other Responses</b>
Program Implementation: Regular Ed Teacher Interviews	63	0	0
Program Implementation: Special Ed Teacher Interviews	151	0	19
Program Implementation: Parent Interviews	48	0	7
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>

**4. STUDENT INTERVIEWS**

Results of the student interviews are reflected on the Corrective Action Verification and Improvement Planning document.

**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 compliance monitoring instrument, i.e. FSA, File Review, and Parent and Teacher Interviews. The detailed report of findings in the Appendix includes:

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

Upon receipt of this report, the Charter School should review the corrective actions and improvement planning required. The Report is formatted so that findings from all components of the 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 Charter School to Charter School. For example, if the finding is that the Charter School lacks a specific required policy, it is

reasonable to have the BSE prescribe a standardized remedy and timeline for correcting this deficiency. However, the majority of corrective action activities will be individually designed by the Charter School based on their own unique circumstances and goals. The Single Point of Contact (SPOC) will schedule an on-site visit with the Charter School within 60 days following issuance of the monitoring report. The SPOC, Charter School, and PaTTAN staff will develop a Charter School Compliance Plan for corrective action. The Charter School will recommend a corrective action strategy and timeline. All corrective action for findings of non-compliance must be accomplished within one year of the date of the monitoring report. PaTTAN and IU CSPD staff is available to assist the Charter School. The Charter School proposes corrective action activities and the SPOC and Charter School mutually agree upon the Compliance Plan for Corrective Action. With respect to the File Review, because students were selected at random, findings are generalized to the entire population of students with disabilities. During the corrective action review, the SPOC will select students at random and not focus on those students in the original sample. Consequently, the Charter School should approach corrective action on a systemic basis. Exceptions are found in the Special Education Teacher Interview, item #64, and Parent Interview, item #39. If there has been a finding of noncompliance regarding the appropriateness or implementation of an individual student's program, the individual students are identified by student number and, because of the significance of the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to these students, the Charter School must take immediate, individual corrective action.

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