


August 6, 2024




Ms. Colleen Sasdelli
Director of Special Education
Harford County Public Schools
102 S. Hickory Avenue
Bel Air, Maryland 21014

RE: 
Reference # 24-265

Dear Parties:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Early Intervention Special Education Services, has completed the investigation of the complaint regarding special education services for the above-referenced student. This correspondence is the report of the final results of the investigation.

ALLEGATIONS:

On June 10, 2024, MSDE received a complaint from , hereafter, “the complainant,” on behalf of the above-referenced student. In that correspondence, the complainant alleged that the Harford County Public Schools (PGCPS) violated certain provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) with respect to the above-referenced student.

MSDE investigated the following allegations:

1. The HCPS has not ensured that both parents participated in IEP team meetings for the student since January 2024, in accordance with 34 CFR § 300.322.
2. The HCPS has not ensured that the IEP team considered the concerns of the parents during IEP team meetings since January 2024, in accordance with 34 CFR § 300.324.
3. The HCPS did not provide the parents with a copy of each assessment, report, data chart, draft Individualized Education Program (IEP), or other document the IEP team planned to discuss at that meeting, at least 5 business days before the scheduled meeting, since January 2024, in accordance with COMAR 13A.05.01.07.
4. The HCPS has not ensured that the IEP team has considered the student’s eligibility for, and determined appropriate extended school year (ESY) services for the student to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE), since March 2024, in accordance with 34 CFR § 300.106.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

On July 10, 2024, MSDE received notification from the Office of Administrative Hearings that the parties had reached an agreement in this case that addresses allegations included in this State Complaint. Accordingly, the case was closed with regard to allegations #2 and #4.

On July 29, 2024, MSDE received communication from the HCPS acknowledging violations regarding allegations #1 and #3. The HCPS has provided appropriate school-based and student-specific corrective actions in response to these violations.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS AND TIMELINES:

The IDEA requires that State complaint procedures include those for effective implementation of the decisions made as a result of a State complaint investigation, including technical assistance activities, negotiations, and corrective actions to achieve compliance (34 CFR § 300.152).

Accordingly, MSDE requires the public agency to provide documentation of the completion of the corrective actions listed below. MSDE has established reasonable time frames below to ensure that noncompliance is corrected in a timely manner. This office will follow up with the public agency to ensure that it completes the required actions consistent with MSDE Special Education State Complaint Resolution Procedures.

If the public agency anticipates that any of the time frames below may not be met, or if either party seeks technical assistance, they should contact Ms. Nicole Green, Compliance Specialist, Family Support and Dispute Resolution Branch, MSDE, to ensure the effective implementation of the action. Ms. Green can be reached at (410) 767-7770 or by email at nicole.green@maryland.gov.

Student-Specific

By June 1, 2025, HCPS must provide MSDE with documentation that both parents have received notification of all IEP team meetings for the student and have received all documents to be discussed at the upcoming IEP team meetings at least five business days prior to the meeting, in accordance with COMAR 13A.05.01.07.

School-Based

By December 1, 2024, HCPS must provide documentation that staff at [REDACTED] have received training regarding the requirements of COMAR 13A.05.01.07.

As of the date of this correspondence, this Letter of Findings is considered final. This office will not reconsider the conclusions reached in this Letter of Findings unless new, previously unavailable documentation is submitted and received by this office within fifteen (15) days of the date of this correspondence. The new documentation must support a written request for reconsideration, and the written request must include a compelling reason for why the documentation was not made available during the investigation. Pending this office's decision on a request for reconsideration, the public agency must implement any corrective actions within the timelines reported in this Letter of Findings.

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The parties maintain the right to request mediation or to file a due process complaint, if they disagree with the identification, evaluation, placement, or provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for the student, including issues subject to this State complaint investigation, consistent with the IDEA. MSDE recommends that this Letter of Findings be included with any request for mediation or a due process complaint.

Sincerely,

Antoine L. Hickman, Ed.D.
Assistant State Superintendent
Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services

c: Sean Bulson, Superintendent, HCPS
Alison Barmat, Branch Chief, Family Support and Dispute Resolution, MSDE
Tracy Givens, Section Chief, Dispute Resolution, MSDE
Dr. Paige Bradford, Section Chief, Performance Support and Technical Assistance, MSDE
Nicol Elliott, Section Chief, Monitoring and Accountability, MSDE
Nicole Green, Compliance Specialist, MSDE