



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

JUN 6 2008

Honorable David Borja
Commissioner of Education
CNMI Public School System
P.O. Box 501370 CK
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Commissioner Borja:

Thank you for the timely submission of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' (CNMI) FFY 2006 Annual Performance Report (APR) and revised State Performance Plan (SPP) under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as amended in 2004. We also acknowledge the revisions to CNMI's APR received on April 14, 2008. We appreciate CNMI's efforts in preparing these documents.

The Department has determined that, under IDEA section 616(d), CNMI needs assistance in meeting the requirements of Part B of the IDEA. The Department's determination is based on the totality of CNMI's data and information including CNMI's FFY 2006 APR and revised SPP, other state-reported data, and information obtained through on-site verification and focused monitoring visits, audits, and other publicly available information. See the enclosure entitled "How the Department Made Determinations under Section 616(d) of the IDEA in 2008" for further details.

Specific factors affecting OSEP's determination of need assistance for CNMI included that CNMI: (1) reported 50% compliance under Indicator 15 with progress from 47%, and (2) reported 27% compliance for Indicator 11, did not report correction, but provided updated data as of December 2007 demonstrating 95% compliance for this indicator. For these reasons, we were unable to determine that CNMI met requirements under section 616(d). We hope that CNMI will be able to demonstrate that it meets requirements in its next APR.

The enclosed table provides OSEP's analysis of CNMI's FFY 2006 APR and revised SPP and identifies, by indicator, OSEP's review of any revisions made by CNMI to its targets, improvement activities (timelines and resources) and baseline data in CNMI's SPP. It also identifies, by indicator, CNMI's status in meeting its targets, whether CNMI's data reflect progress or slippage, and whether CNMI corrected noncompliance and provided valid and reliable data.

CNMI may want to consider taking advantage of available sources of technical assistance. A list of sources of technical assistance related to the SPP/APR indicators is available by clicking on the "Technical Assistance Related to Determinations" box on the opening page of the SPP/APR Planning Calendar website at <http://spp-apr-calendar.rfcnetwork.org/>. You will be directed to a list of indicators. Click on specific indicators for a list of centers, documents, web seminars and other sources of relevant technical assistance for that indicator.


400 MARYLAND AVE., S.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202
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Our mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the Nation.

If you included revisions to baseline, targets or improvement activities in your APR submission, and OSEP accepted those revisions, please ensure that you update your SPP accordingly and that the updated SPP is made available to the public.

OSEP is committed to supporting CNMI's efforts to improve results for children with disabilities and looks forward to working with your State over the next year. If you have any questions, would like to discuss this further, or want to request technical assistance, please do not hesitate to call Ms. Lucille Sleger, your OSEP State Contact, at 202-245-7528.

Sincerely,



William W. Knudsen
Acting Director
Office of Special Education Programs

Enclosures

cc: State Director of Special Education