



NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT MEMORANDUM

TO: Esther Evikana, President
Members of the Board

THROUGH: David Vadiveloo, Superintendent *DSVadiveloo*

FROM: Michael Hautala, Director of Student Services MH
MH

DATE: November 10, 2025

SUBJECT: Alaska DEED Special Education Audit

Memo No. SB26-064
(Information Item)

NSBSD Strategic Plan Summary:

Student Social & Emotional Wellbeing

Goal 5: Facilitate & maintain culturally, emotionally, and physically safe learning environments

Issue Summary:

This report summarizes the results of the scheduled four-year special education audit conducted by the State of Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (**DEED**). We are pleased to report that the audit noted only **minor findings** overall, indicating a generally compliant and effective special education program within our district. The audit looked at ten random students with differing disability categories taken from many of our school sites. These numbers represent approximately five percent of our special education population. Using this data, we are able to target training needs for our staff and processes. While the corrective action process is ongoing many are in process or complete.

Audit Overview and Key Takeaway

The audit is a routine compliance check mandated every four years to ensure our special education practices align with the requirements of the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** and Alaska's state regulations.

- **Overall Finding:** Minor non-compliance issues were identified in documentation and procedural areas.
- **Significance:** The findings do not point to systemic failures in service provision but highlight a need for increased attention to detail in paperwork and documentation procedures. The required corrective actions will be administrative in nature.

Areas of Minor Non-Compliance

The following specific areas of concern were noted in the audit, all relating to required documentation and processes:

Area of Concern Specific Finding

IDEA/Regulatory Implication



Area of Concern	Specific Finding	IDEA/Regulatory Implication
Signatures on Forms	Missing signatures or incomplete on signature pages from all required IEP team members (e.g., parent, administrator, teacher).	Failure to properly document required team member participation and consensus on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) .
Prior Written Notice (PWN)	Missing PWN for all required actions (e.g., initial evaluation, change in placement, refusal to act on a parent request).	Failure to provide parents with the required written notice detailing the action the district is proposing or refusing, and the reasons for it. A core procedural safeguard .
Eligibility Reviews (ESERs)	Two Eligibility Summary and Evaluation Reports (ESERs) lacked necessary data to fully determine a student's eligibility for services.	Documentation was insufficient to support the eligibility determination, potentially compromising the basis for the student's services.
Present Levels of Performance	A student's IEP lacked current data in the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) section, or only included old test data.	PLAAFPs must be based on current data to accurately measure student progress and establish meaningful, measurable annual goals .
Consent for Evaluation	Consents for evaluation were missing for signatures, or evaluations listed on the signed consent form were not conducted.	Lack of documented parent consent invalidates the process; failure to conduct approved evaluations compromises the completeness of the eligibility determination.
IEP Service Page	A service page on one IEP did not include Speech listed as a related service, despite the student receiving this service.	Service delivery must be accurately documented on the IEP to ensure services are legally offered and delivered as agreed upon by the IEP team.

Recommended Corrective Action Plan

The following steps are recommended to address these minor findings and ensure full compliance moving forward.

1. **Mandatory Training:** Implement **mandatory, annual refresher training** for all special education staff (teachers, related service providers, administrators) focusing specifically on:
 - o **Procedural Safeguards:** Detailed review of Prior Written Notice (PWN) requirements.
 - o **Documentation:** Review of all required signature pages, consent forms, and service pages to ensure 100% completion and accuracy.
2. **IEP Review Checklist:** Develop and implement a **finalized IEP documentation checklist** for every IEP team leader. No IEP or ESER should be submitted or implemented without this checklist being fully completed and signed off by the administrator.





3. **Data Integrity Protocol:** Establish a clear protocol for the **timely collection and integration of current data** into all PLAAFP statements and ESERs, ensuring eligibility and IEP goals are always data-driven and current.
4. **Administrative Review:** Conduct a targeted **internal file review** of new and recently conducted evaluations and IEPs over the next quarter to ensure the corrective actions have been successfully implemented and sustained.

These actions will solidify our compliance foundation, minimizing the risk of similar findings in future audits, and, most importantly, ensure all procedural safeguards are consistently met for our students and families.

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