Sustainability Report

Performance Period October 2002-March 2003

April 2003

STATE OF HAWAII
Department of Education
Department of Health
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division
Early Intervention Section

Introduction

This is the second Quarterly Report submitted by the State of Hawaii pursuant to the September 10, 2002 court order in the Felix Consent Decree. It covers two quarters, October 2002-December 2002, and January 2003-March 2003. The previous Sustainability Report covered one quarter, and changes have been made to meet the agreements made at the March 7, 2003 Status Conference in order to afford the most recent data available in order to make performance determinations.

The Departments of Education and Health produce this report, written after the September 10, 2002 finding that the State had achieved substantial compliance in the Felix Consent Decree, subsequent court orders, and the appointment of a new Court Monitor. It provides information necessary to verify the maintenance of the infrastructure developed and procedures implemented to maintainsubstantial compliance with the Felix Consent Decree. Information contained in this quarterly report is consistent with the Sustainability Plan submitted to court and agreed upon in discussions with the Court Master and Court Monitor and reflects the commitment of both Departments to the use of regular performance monitoring to maintain and improve the delivery of educational and mental health services to those children and youth in need of such services to benefit from their educational opportunities.

The first Quarterly Report was drafted based on agreements between the Parties and reviewed performance four (4) months previous (i.e., the period July-September was reported in February). The Court Master and Court Monitor requested Quarterly Status Reports be based on information no older than 30 days. This is the second report to implementing that request. Generating this report required both Departments to access different data sources. The reader will notice some differences but the report still continues to address overall status of the implementation, compliance with benchmarks, progress toward overall compliance, and recommended actions.

> "(133) A sustainable system of education for children with special needs must include the following four components:
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> > (134) The system must continue to hire and retain qualified teachers and other therapeutic personnel necessary to educate and serve children consistently
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> > (135) The system must be able to continue to purchase the necessary services to provide for the treatment of children appropriate to the individual needs of the child.
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> > (136) The system must be able to monitor itself through a continuous quality management process. The process must detect performance problems at local schools, family guidance centers, and local service provider agencies. Management must demonstrate that it is able to

> synthesize the information regarding system performance and results achieved for students that are derived from the process and use the findings to make ongoing improvements and, when necessary, hold individuals accountable for poor performance.
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> (137) The system must be able to ensure teachers, therapists, and other support staff to continue their professional development and improve their skills and knowledge of effective educational and therapeutic methods and techniques."
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> (Revised Felix Consent Decree, July 31, 2000, page 20)

During this report period a number of events have transpired.

- A new Court Monitor, Juanita Iwamoto has been appointed.
- The election and swearing in of a new governor has led to the appointment of a new Department of Health (DOH) Director, Dr. Chiyome L. Fukino.
- Ongoing concerns regarding the adequacy of staffing for Department of Education (DOE) School Based Behavioral Health (SBBH) necessitated an investigation of to the adequacy of those services by the Court Monitor.
- The State Auditor investigated the DOE ISPED system.

Summary of Overall Performance

During this time of transition the Departments continued to provide supports and services to students in need of such services in accordance with applicable Federal and State laws, rules, and regulations and Federal Court Orders. Planning and targeted responses to specific individual or systems concerns ameliorated the impact of uncertainty created by the aforementioned major events

In short, the Departments continue to have the following:

- Adequate numbers of qualified professionals adequately distributed to meet student needs and capacity development statewide,
- A comprehensive array of supports and services necessary to identify and provide individual specific supports and services,
- Adequate funding to implement necessary programs and maintain infrastructure and capacity,
- Information management systems to assist administrators at all levels identify and respond to system performance issues, and
- Internal monitoring activities implemented statewide that assess system performance.

Significant improvements in the delivery of services to students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and the currency and quality of Coordinated Service Plans are evident. Overall, key indicators of system performance continue to improve and/or demonstrate consistent infrastructure and delivery of services.

System performance monitoring is sufficiently sensitive to bring to light areas for focused attention. Namely, monitoring entails identifying performance issues related to the speed with which changes in procedures and processes designed to improve system

performance are implemented, and services to students requiring highly structured individualized services are made available.

The Departments continue to work to improve access to the system, the quality of services delivered, and student outcomes. Several areas have been identified that require further analysis and explanation. Most notably are services to students requiring highly structured and individualized interventions transitioning between the Departments and a further standardization of the Peer Review and Quality Assurance procedures.

System Response

In order to demonstrate sustainability of results and further strengthen the service delivery system, the Departments must address a number of fundamental areas. Briefly outlined below are the areas and their impact on the system.

Quality Assurance (QA) and Peer Review (PR) Process

The QA/PR process fulfills two critical functions, student specific service reviews and managing system performance improvements. These activities commence at the field level and inform managers in the system of obstacles to sustained system performance. Standardization of the essential components, timing, participation, and information, is critical.

Detailed information regarding the QA/PR statewide framework, including details regarding purpose and expected products, is ready for dissemination. In order to assure proper implementation it will be necessary to clearly define roles and activity timelines. It will be important to address implementation barriers that may be caused by a fragmented approach due to compartmentalized functions between and within the Departments. The responsibility for implementation and oversight for local level quality assurance and peer review, including integration with the Internal Reviews and other aspects of continuous quality monitoring and improvement has yet to be fully clarified. This impacts the ability of the field to implement consistent and thorough practices at the line level.

Internal Review Process

Internal Reviews access system performance data from a variety of sources to supplement student specific case based reviews to ascertain an overall picture of the functioning of the system. The rigor and integrity of the process is essential to ensuring accurate findings and meaningful improvement plans. This includes the quality of documentation, report generation, and state level feedback regarding the process and findings.

The Internal Reviews have shown tremendous promise as a vehicle to monitor system performance during the first year of statewide implementation. However, factors that may threaten the integrity of the process must be addressed prior to the next school year. Complexes need further direction and clarity regarding the review and action process in order to assure corrective actions have the intended impact on performance. The Departments will need to take steps to clarify any misunderstandings related to the Internal Student Services Reviews, Reports, Corrective Action Plans, and State Feedback before the beginning of the new school year. Steps that will be taken to bolster the Internal Review process are detailed in that section.

Highly Structured and Individualized Services for Students with Intensive Mental Health Needs

An increasing number of students are receiving educational and related services in highly restrictive environments not usually associated with high levels of support (i.e., the home). Whether a dynamic QA/PR process would have provided earlier warning of this trend or highlighted the reasons is unknown. However, now that both Departments have identified this development, it is incumbent upon them to identify and ameliorate the problem. This issue has been part of the agenda of interagency quality assurance at the State level where the data are being examined.

Proactive Management

The SBBH Program Coordinators response to staffing shortages during this period demonstrated the benefit of proactive management, early problem identification and sustained focused effort. If the Departments are going to realize sustained performance in the areas of program evaluation, program coordination, ISPED utilization, and satisfactory individualized education plan development and implementation, a greater degree of proactive management at mid and upper levels will need to be evident. The generation of detailed plans, timelines, and clear accountability and reporting needs to be evident.

Report Format

Following this brief introductory overview, the report format is as follows. The second section presents information specific to the DOE. This section has two major sections: Infrastructure and Performance.

The third section contains information specific to the Department of Health (DOH). Within this section are reports from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division and Early Intervention.

The fourth section reports on the results of Integrated Performance Monitoring conducted by the DOE and DOH during the quarter. Complex and Family Guidance Centers conduct this performance evaluation through data and record reviews and individual case studies.

Within each of the sections, primarily in the summary, the Departments include their specific commitments to address issues that are identified. For issues related to Integrated Performance Monitoring, both Departments make the improvement commitments jointly.