



MEMO

To: State Board of Education
From: Becky Bowman
Date: October 3, 2012
Re: Update -- Accountability for the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Indiana School for the Deaf

House Enrolled Act 1367 requires the state board of education, by October 1, to “make recommendations to the legislative council (in electronic format under IC 5-14-6) and to the budget committee concerning the unique and appropriate methods of evaluation and accountability that should be applied to the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Indiana School for the Deaf [and to] . . . include in its recommendation any proposed statutory changes or rule changes that the state board believes to be appropriate.”

Accountability

- Under current law, the A-F metrics apply only to public schools and voluntarily accredited nonpublic schools. The consequences for continued failure apply only to traditional public schools. Neither the metrics nor the consequences apply to ISB and ISD.
- For informational purposes only, the A-F metrics historically have been applied to ISB and ISD with the following results:

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12 ¹
ISB	F	F	N/A	F	C	F
ISD	D	F	N/A	F	C	F

- ISB and ISD are not unique in having a student population comprised entirely of students with disabilities. The Damar Charter Academy is a charter school in which all of the students are students with disabilities and is subject to the same accountability metrics as any other public school.
- While the individual student data is factored into each placing school corporation’s accountability determination,² the same student data can be used for determining an A-F designation for ISB and ISD.

¹ These are preliminary grades subject to change upon successful appeal.

² As noted in the August 20th memo, due to the lack of a data collection field, student data for students placed at the ISB and ISD historically has not been reported back to the placing school corporation. However, the data collection issue has been resolved, and the Department’s Chief Accountability Officer has advised: “It has been the expectation for all and practice for some schools and programs to send the data back to the home school/corporation, but many struggled with how to facilitate that process, so we built another field in the Real Time collection that makes it easy. The new field, called “School of Accountability” allows the servicing school/program to report the data on the students they are educating while also allowing them to indicate who the legal owner of the student may be (accountable school). On our data end this makes it easy to hold the right schools accountable for students.”

Recommendations

The Department asks that the Board make the following recommendations regarding evaluation and accountability for ISB and ISD:

- ISB and ISD should be equally accountable for student achievement.
- All student data, including test scores, which are factored into the accountability determinations for public, charter, and accredited nonpublic schools should be used in the accountability determinations for ISB and ISD.
- In the event that alternate metrics are developed and approved for schools with unique populations similar to ISB and ISD (students with disabilities), ISB and ISD should be subject to such alternate accountability metrics.
- ISB and ISD should be subject to PL 221 accountability determinations for informational purposes, and the results provided annually to the General Assembly. Because ISB and ISD are legislatively established independent state entities, the General Assembly should determine the consequences for unacceptable performance.
- In order to impose the accountability determinations for informational purposes, Indiana Code 20-31-8-4 should be amended as follows:

IC 20-31-8-4

Placement of school in category or designation of school improvement

Sec. 4. (a) The state board shall place each school in a category or designation of school improvement based on the department's findings from the assessment of the improvement of each school under section 2 of this chapter. The state board must place those schools that do not show improvement and in which less than ninety percent (90%) of the students meet academic standards in the lowest category or designation.

(b) **The state board shall place each of the following in a category or designation of school improvement as described in subsection (a):**

(1) **The Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.**

(2) **The Indiana School for the Deaf.**

(c) **Before November 1 each year, the state board shall report to the general assembly (in electronic format under IC 5-14-6) the category or designation of school improvement of the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Indiana School for the Deaf.**