
Supplemental Educational Services
Monitoring Report:
Step Ahead Tutors, Inc.

December 2006



Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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Overview

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has oversight and monitoring responsibilities to review compliance within the federal requirements of approved supplemental educational services (SES) providers under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

Monitoring Process

The compliance monitoring process will be conducted each year with selected providers. All monitoring visits will include both a document review and on-site observations of the provider’s instruction of students. Teams of DPI staff will conduct the monitoring visit; and district representatives may be invited to attend. Providers to be monitored are selected with consideration given to the number of students served, provider type (i.e., for profit, non-profit, online, etc.), and results of satisfaction surveys or other feedback. Providers will receive notification, logistical information and preparation materials at least four weeks in advance of the monitoring visit.

The monitoring visits will cover federal requirements of SES providers; and verify compliance with items included within the application narratives and assurances. The monitoring visits will focus on the following indicators:

- 1) Parent Communication
- 2) Communication and Consistency with Schools and State Education Agency
- 3) Compliance with Health, Safety and Civil Rights Laws and Regulations
- 4) Curriculum Content
- 5) District Agreements
- 6) Online Provider Requirements (when applicable)

Report/Results

Preliminary findings from the monitoring visit will be presented to providers at the end of the visit. A formal written report will be sent to the provider within four weeks after the visit. The report will include strengths, recommendations, findings, and any necessary corrective action. An abridged report of the monitoring visit results will be published on the DPI website, in compliance with federal regulations.

DPI Contacts

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Monitoring Visit Details

Provider Name: Step Ahead Tutors, Inc.
Date of Review: December 6, 2006
Department Reviewers: Shelly Greller and Soumary Vongrassamy
District Representative(s): Sandy Schroeder and Mary Ellen Ruzga
Provider Representative(s): Justin Lubin, Educational Director

Provider Monitoring

1. Parent Communication

SES providers must give parents of children receiving supplemental educational services and the child's school district, information on the progress of the student in increasing achievement, in a format that is understandable and uniform in a language that parents can understand. [34CFR200.47(b)(2)(i)]

Required evidence:

- Copies of progress reports provided to parents, which include benchmark data that is consistent with students' individualized academic plans
- Copies of written policies and/or procedures that describe the frequency and content of communication with parents
- Copies of written policies and/or procedures for communication with non-English speaking and/or illiterate parents

Possible evidence:

- Copies of correspondence sent to parents regarding student progress
- Achievement records shared with parents (e.g., student's progress, how progress was measured and a plan for improvement)
- Logs of phone calls and/or other communication made with parents

Status of Requirement 1:

Acceptable

Incomplete

Provider Monitoring

2. Communication and Consistency with the School District and State Education Agency

SES providers must ensure that instruction provided and content used by the provider are consistent with the instruction provided and content used by the school district and state, and are aligned with the State student academic achievement standards. [34CFR200.47(b)(2)(ii)(A) and (B)]

Required evidence:

- Sample copies of instructional materials used and their alignment with the district curriculum
- For tutoring in math—sample copies of the instructional materials used and their alignment with Wisconsin’s Model Academic Standards (WMAS) for Mathematics (see Appendix A for WMAS for Mathematics)
- For tutoring in reading—sample copies of the instructional materials used and their alignment with WMAS for English/Language Arts (see Appendix B for WMAS for English/Language Arts)
- Copies of written policies and/or procedures that describe the frequency and content of communication with students’ teachers
- Copies of progress reports provided to teachers

Possible evidence:

- Logs of phone calls and/or other communication made with the district to learn about the district curriculum
- Logs of phone calls and/or other communication made with teachers addressing specific achievement goals for the student, a description of how the student’s progress was measured, and a timetable for improving achievement
- Site directors’ and/or tutors’ familiarity with curriculum (on-site observation)
- Samples of the students’ work (on-site observation)

Status of Requirement 2:

Acceptable

Incomplete

Provider Monitoring

3. Compliance with Health, Safety, and Civil Rights Laws and Regulations

SES providers must meet all applicable federal, state and local health, safety and civil rights laws. [34CFR200.47(b)(2)(iii)]

(See Appendix C for specific laws)

Required evidence:

- Copies of Department of Justice criminal background checks completed on all employees working with students
- Copies of written policies and/or procedures on administration of students' medications
- Copies of written policies and/or procedures on student conduct and discipline
- Copies of written policies and/or procedures on emergency evacuation procedures
- Students' emergency contact information that is readily available
- Site directors' and tutors' knowledge of emergency evacuation procedures (on-site observation)

Possible evidence:

- Employee handbooks that include written policies and/or procedures on:
 - protecting student privacy,
 - hiring practices, and
 - pupil discrimination
- Postings promoting good safety practices
- Documented safety drills
- Posted evacuation instructions in response to fire or other emergency situations (on-site observation)
- Students' knowledge of emergency evacuation procedures (on-site observation)
- Tutors' understanding of provider's current discipline policies and/or procedures (on-site observation)
- Students display appropriate classroom behaviors (on-site observation)
- Tutors provide appropriate feedback to students (e.g., verbal praise for good behaviors, and consistency in correcting behaviors that adversely effect the learning environment) (on-site observation)

Status of Requirement 3:

Acceptable

Incomplete

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

One corrective action to note is that SAT does not have in place written policies and/or procedures regarding emergency evacuations. This is especially applicable for when tutoring is conducted outside the home, which will usually take place in public facilities such as libraries and schools.

Corrective Action Requirements Completed

Provider Monitoring

4. Curriculum Content

SES providers must ensure that instruction and content provided are secular, neutral, non-ideological [34CFR200.47(b)(2)(ii)(C)], and research-based [34CFR200.45(a)(3)].

Required evidence:

- Sample copies of curriculum materials
- Copies of written policies and/or procedures that prohibit the use of non-secular or ideological materials
- Documentation and descriptions of research supporting instructional strategies
- Documentation that curriculum and instruction is of high quality and research-based
- Tutors' understanding of the curriculum (on-site observation)
- Consistency with information provided on the application regarding:
(on-site observation)
 - proposed curriculum,
 - student:tutor ratio,
 - grade levels of student receiving tutoring, and
 - mode of instructional delivery (i.e., group, individual, etc.)

Possible evidence:

- Class time includes combinations of: (on-site observation)
 - direct instruction such as lecture and explanation of concepts,
 - guided instruction such as tutor-directed practice of concepts, and
 - independent practice for students
- Sample copies of lesson plans to ensure secular and research-based instruction is taking place (on-site observation)
- Tutors knowledge of the learning goals for each student (on-site observation)
- Opportunities for students to ask questions (on-site observation)
- Tutors' appropriate verbal and written feedback to students to reinforce learning (on-site observation)
- Students' engagement in the presented learning opportunities (on-site observation)

Status of Requirement 4:

Acceptable

Incomplete

Provider Monitoring

5. District Agreements

The SES provider shall enter into an agreement with the school district to provide supplemental educational services to students [34CFR200.46(b)].

Required evidence:

- Copies of current district/provider agreements
- Documentation that the provider is in good standing with the school district, and is meeting all provisions of the district/provider agreement

Possible evidence:

- Examples of achievement goals for students, services to be provided, and a timetable for improving achievement
- Notes resulting from consultation with parents and teachers of students to be served
- Copies of written policies and/or procedures for staff on assessing student academic needs, and the development of individualized achievement plans
- Records of services provided (i.e., number of students served, attendance records, student-tutor ratios, etc.)

Status of Requirement 5:

Acceptable

Incomplete

Provider Monitoring

6. Online Providers Requirements

Additional requirements for providers who have indicated on their SES application that they provide services online.

Required evidence:

- If using the Internet, copies of written policies and/or procedures prohibiting the transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation or school board policy, including—but not limited to—copyrighted, threatening, or obscene material
- If students use a school computer to access information from the provider, evidence that the provider complies with all school and/or district policies and procedures regarding computer and/or Internet use
- Documentation of parental consent for e-mail and/or Internet communication with students under age 13 (in compliance with Title XIII—*Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act* of 1998)

Status of Requirement 6: <input type="checkbox"/> Acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete

Comments:

Not applicable.

**Those who wish to read the entire report, complete with comments and recommendations,
may contact the Department of Public Instruction.**
