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Modified Consent Decree
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August 8, 2011

Sharyn Howell
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Re: Approval of Amended Targeted Strategy Plan for Outcome 4

Dear Mrs. Howell, Mr. Myers and Ms. Blakemore:

On June 27, 2011 the District submitted a proposed revised Targeted Strategy Plan (TSP) for MCD Outcome 4. Outcome 4 pertains to increasing the percentage of students with disabilities (SWD) who complete school with a diploma or certificate of completion or age out and do not dropout. On July 11, 2011 the Parent's Council provided questions and comments on the TSP to the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Plaintiffs' Counsel. The Plaintiffs submitted objections to the proposed amended TSP on July 18, 2011. The District responded to the Plaintiffs objections on July 26, 2011. On the same day the OIM met with the District to discuss the TSP.

The Plaintiffs recommended that the strategies proposed by the District be extended to all secondary SWD not just those in targeted schools. The District disagreed citing the intent of TSPs to focus resources where the greatest gain can be achieved. The Independent Monitor (IM) concurs with the District's position and further notes that the mentoring strategy, while a research based practice, has not previously been implemented and thus should not be used throughout the District until there is sufficient evidence of its value. The Plaintiffs raised questions pertaining to individuals who would be serving as mentors. The questions related to

the qualifications and whether there would be sufficient numbers. The mentors are qualified transition teachers and the functions of mentoring are consistent with their training and position descriptions. The District contends that there are sufficient numbers of transition teachers to implement the proposed TSP and that it will not adversely impact their current duties. The IM concurs with the District's view of the qualifications of the mentors. The OIM will monitor the implementation of the strategy to ensure that there are sufficient mentors.

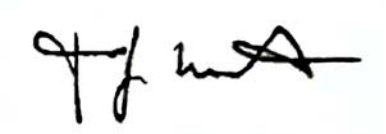
The proposed TSP focuses on two issues, improving the percentage of SWD who complete school and improving the District's data on graduates and dropouts. The IM's *Report on the Progress and Effectiveness of the Los Angeles Unified School District's Implementation of the Modified Consent Decree during the 2009-2010 School Year – Part II* describes in detail the progress and problems the District has in regard to both issues. The IM believes that the proposed strategy 4-1 is a reasonable approach to making progress on increasing school completion. The IM is skeptical as to the level of commitment the District is making to solve the data problems. In the above mentioned Report the IM directed the District to decide whether it wants to improve the accuracy of its system for graduation and dropout data for all students or just SWD. The District chose the former. That decision is reflected in strategy 4-2. The District is advised that this is the last year to correct the problems, after which the IM will require alternatives.

Determination

The IM approves the proposed revised TSP for Outcome 4 with the following stipulations:

1. The District may revise the criteria for selecting the schools that will implement Strategy 4-1. The District shall provide the OIM with a list of the target schools no later then August 31, 2011. The District shall provide the OIM, by target school, the number of students who will be mentored and the number of mentors that will be assigned no later then October 31, 2011.
2. The District shall conduct a study to assess the effectiveness of the mentor program. The study shall be designed jointly with the OIM and be completed no later then July 31, 2012.
3. The District shall report to the OIM quarterly, beginning October 31, 2011, on the progress it is making in implementing Strategy 4-2.
4. The District shall provide the OIM and the Plaintiffs with a copy of the approved TSP by August 31, 2011.

Respectfully Submitted,



Frederick J. Weintraub

c: Diane Pappas, Esq.
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