



**MEMO**

To: State Board of Education  
From: Becky Bowman  
Date: August 20, 2012  
Re: 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.”

**Background information**

- ISB and ISD are established by the General Assembly as “educational resource center[s]” to provide residential and day school, outreach, and consultative services. Each is governed by a board whose members are appointed by the Governor.
- Pursuant to state definitions, neither is a school corporation or a public school.
- The General Assembly appropriates separate funding for each facility. Neither receives state tuition support funds.
- Students may not independently or unilaterally enroll in ISB or ISD. Students are placed at ISB and ISD by the student’s school corporation pursuant to a determination by the school corporation and the student’s parents that such placement is appropriate.
- All students at ISB and ISD are classified as students with disabilities and receive some level of special education and related services. The school corporation and the parent determine the type and amount of services the student receives and whether the student will be assessed with ISTEP, IMAST or ISTAR.
- The student’s school corporation is responsible for ensuring that the student receives a free appropriate public education at ISB and ISD as required by federal and state special education laws.

## 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
ISB	F	F	N/A	F	C
ISD	D	F	N/A	F	C

- Student data for students placed at ISB and ISD have not been used in the accountability determinations for the placing school corporation, despite the school corporation's ultimate responsibility for the student's educational gains and achievement.
- 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. Unless and until alternate accountability metrics are developed for public schools with a unique population, the current A-F metrics apply to all schools.

## Recommendations

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

- Both the sending school corporation and ISB/ISD should be accountable for student achievement.
- All student data, including test scores, should be factored into the accountability determination for the student's sending school corporation. IC 20-35-8-1 should be amended as follows to clarify that student data for any student placed by the school corporation must be included in the accountability determination for that corporation.

### **Indiana Code 20-35-8-1**

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b), if a student with legal settlement in a school corporation is transferred to attend school in another school corporation because of a disability or multiple disabilities, the transferor corporation shall:

(1) either:

(A) provide; or

(B) pay for, in the amount determined under section 2 of this chapter;

any transportation that is necessary or feasible, as determined under section 2 of this chapter and the rules adopted by the state board; and

(2) pay transfer tuition for the student to the transferee corporation in accordance with IC 20-26-11.

(b) If the student attends a school operated through:

(1) a joint school service and supply program; or

(2) another cooperative program:

involving the school corporation of the student's legal settlement, transportation and other costs shall be made in amounts and at the times provided in the agreement or other arrangement made between the participating school corporations.

(c) Student data, including ~~ISTEP program testing scores~~ **the results of all statewide assessments**, academic progress, grade level, and graduation date, for a student described in subsections (a) **and (b)** shall be included in the **accountability** determinations **made pursuant to IC 20-31-8** for the school corporation in which the student has legal settlement.

**(d) Student data, as described in subsection (c), for students placed at the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired or the Indiana School for the Deaf shall be included in the respective accountability determinations for:**

**(1) the school corporation that placed the student; and**

**(2) the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired or Indiana School for the Deaf as applicable.**

- 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. 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.**