Office of the Independent Monitor
September 29, 2010

Study of the Accuracy of District Data on Placement
in the Least-Restrictive Environment Multiple Disabilities Orthopedic 2008-09

Outcome 7B requires the District to increase to 23% the number of students with multiple disabilities orthopedic (MDO) (Ages 6-18) placed in the general education setting for 40% or more of the instructional day. At the time of the negotiation that created this outcome (2007-2008 school year), the Welligent data reported 10.30% of students with an eligibility of MDO as being placed in the general education classroom for 40% or more of the day. This rate was determined as the baseline for this outcome.

> *Outcome 7B*: *Placement of Students with Disabilities (Ages 6-18) with MDO Eligibility. The District will demonstrate a ratio of not less than 23% of students placed in the combined categories of 0-20% and 21-60%, and not more than 77% of students placed in the 61-100% category utilizing instructional minutes as the methodology. In determining whether the District has achieved this outcome, any fraction percentage of .51 or above shall be rounded up to its nearest whole number.*

This study examines the accuracy of the District's LRE data for making a determination of the District's progress in achieving Outcome 7B. Since the population of students with MDO in the District is relatively small (n=1,169), the study provides an accurate count of students with MDO in the general education setting for more than 40% of the instructional day[1]. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Are there discrepancies between the percent of time in special education calculated from information on the IEP and the percent of time in special education calculated from the number of special education minutes in a student's schedule?
2. Do any discrepancies between the percent of time in special education in Welligent and in the student schedule data have any impact on the overall calculation of percent of time in special education for Outcome 7B?

Methodology

The methodology for this study is similar to the LRE validation study for Outcome 7A. The study validates the accuracy of the Welligent LRE data by comparing the time spent in special education reported by students' schedules.

Sample Design

The sampling for the MDO study included the entire population of students with MDO attending general education campuses[2], and a random sample of students attending special education

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[1] At the time of the negotiation, the Welligent LRE data were not validated.
[2] Of the 76 students attending Pacific Boulevard School, which was formerly a special education center, only students with LRE times indicating some level of integration in the general education setting were included. Students reported as 100% of time in special education were not included.

centers and non-public schools. Since the performance of this outcome is directly related to those students attending general education campuses[3], all students with MDO attending these schools were selected in order to determine the actual number of students placed in the general education setting for more than 40% of the instructional day. This count will establish an accurate view of the District's performance on this outcome based on the entire population of students with MDO as opposed to a sample.

Tables 1 and 2 show the final distributions of the overall MDO LRE analysis sample (N=429) across local school districts and school type. The sample also includes all MDO students attending charters and I-Division schools.

Table 1. Distribution of Students in the MDO LRE Analysis by Local District

Local District	N	%
1	68	15.9
2	80	18.7
3	49	11.4
4	21	4.9
5	44	10.3
6	57	13.3
7	26	6.1
8	46	10.7
Non-Public Schools	9	2.1
R – Charter schools	8	1.9
T – I Division Schools	21	4.9
Total	**429**	**100.0**

Table 2. Distribution of Students in the MDO LRE Analysis by School Level

School Level	N	%
Elementary	141	32.9
Middle	71	16.6
High	63	14.7
Spec Centers	145	33.8
Non-Public Schools	9	2.1
Total	**429**	**100**

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[3] The majority of students attending special education centers do not have an opportunity to integrate into the general education setting since these schools do not have a general education population.

Data Collection and Analyses

Data including student demographic information and the percentage of time in the special education setting were uploaded centrally and placed on an instrument developed by the OIM (Attachment A). The data were verified through a review of a student's most current IEP and the IEP identified at the time of the sampling. Classroom schedules detailing the time spent either in the general or special education setting and a roster of special education teachers also were collected.

Consistent with the methodology of the LRE study, collected data were used to create student files. Each file was expected to contain a report on the number of instructional minutes reported by school staff, a completed data collection instrument and a student's classroom/class or other available schedules. Data from these sources were then analyzed to determine the total number of special education minutes each student received and were transferred to a data summary sheet (Attachment B).

Each student file was reviewed three times by three separate reviewers in order to establish inter-rater reliability and to ensure consistency of LRE data and elements of the profile analysis. This information then was entered into databases created by the OIM and sent to the American Institutes for Research (AIR) for analysis.

Consistent with the LRE study, time spent in the general education setting is maintained within Welligent based on the time spent in special education. Therefore, findings are presented in two categories: students in the special education setting for 60% or less of the day, and those in the special education setting for more than 60% of their day.

Findings

To determine if the LRE data were reliable for determining the District's performance on this outcome, data were analyzed to examine if inaccuracies found between the Welligent System and students' class schedules impacted the number of students in each LRE time category. Since the number of students with MDO attending general education campuses is small (n=335), inaccuracies resulting in a shift into the 40% or less LRE category considerably impacts the District's performance. The analysis was able to establish an accurate count of students with MDO in each LRE category. This count translates into the District's performance toward meeting the outcome's target of 23%.

Table 5 shows the number of students in the sample by both LRE time categories (less than 60% and more than 60%) in the special education setting by data source. At the time of the sample, 159 students with MDO were reported as being in the LRE category of less than 60%. It is important to point out that this table represents the number and percentage of those students in the sample. When compared to the population of students with MDO in the District, 159 students represents 13.6% of the population in the less than 60% category. The LRE time reported on students' class schedules found that only 51 students were in the special education setting for less than 60% of the day. This shows that the LRE data within the Welligent system is overestimating the number and percentage of students being integrated in general education for 40% or more of the day.

Table 5. Number and Percentages of Students in Two Reporting Categories Based on Welligent, IEP, and Schedules

| | Source of Information | | | | | |
| | Welligent | | IEP | | Schedule | |
	N	%	N	%	N	%
60% or Less in Special Education	159	37.1	134	31.2	51	11.9
More than 60% in Special Education	270	62.9	295	68.8	378	88.1
Total N	**429**	**100.0**	**429**	**100.0**	**429**	**100.0**

To better understand the level of integration for students with MDO, LRE data were analyzed by data source and the Federal reporting categories of 0-20%, 21-60% and 61-100%. Table 6 shows that more than half of the students in special education reported by Welligent in the special education setting for less than 20% of the day have schedules that correspond to this level of integration (27 of 55, 49.1%). For students in the 21-60% range, only 24 of the 104 (23.1%) students in the sample had schedules that reflected this level of integration. This means that approximately three out of four students in this category had discrepancies that shifted them to another category, particularly to the most restrictive category of more than 60%. By category, the 21-60% is the largest source of inaccurate LRE data.

Table 6. Number and Percentages of Students in the Federal Reporting Categories Based on Welligent, IEP, and Schedules

| | Source of Information | | | | | |
| | Welligent | | IEP | | Schedule | |
	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-20% in Special Education	55	12.8	56	13.1	27	6.3
21-60% in Special Education	104	24.2	78	18.2	24	5.6
61-100% in Special Education	270	62.9	295	68.8	378	88.1
Total N	**429**	**100.0**	**429**	**100.0**	**429**	**100.0**

To establish the District's performance toward meeting the target of this outcome, the count of students in the less than 60% LRE category were divided by the total population of students with MDO (Table 7). During the 2009-2010 school year, the population of students with MDO consisted of 1,169, with 335 students (28.7%) attending general education campuses. Of these, 51 students (4.4%) had schedules that reflected placement in the special education setting for less than 60%. This percentage is considerably lower than the 10.3% baseline established during the development of the outcome. To meet the 23% target of the outcome, the District will need to integrate an additional 218 students for less than 60% of the day[4].

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[4] This calculation is based on 1,169 students in the population and may vary depending on fluctuations within the population.

Table 7. Number and Percentages of Students in the Two LRE Categories by Population and School Type

| | Students with MDO | | | | | |
| | Population | | General Education Campus | | Special Education Centers and NPS | |
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 60%	51	4.4	51	15.2	0	0.0
More than 60%	1,118	95.6	284	84.8	834	100.0
Total	**1,169**	**100.0**	**335**	**100.0**	**834**	**100.0**

Summary

The results of this study indicate that the Welligent data overestimates the number of students with MDO integrated in the general education setting for more than 40% of the instructional day. The study found data inaccuracies between LRE time reported in the Welligent system and class schedules similar to those observed for Outcome 7A. Unfortunately, due to the small number of students with MDO attending general education campuses, these inaccuracies have a tremendous impact on the District's performance. Based on the findings of the validation study, 51 students (4.4%) have classroom schedules that reflect time in the general education setting of 40% or more of the day. This performance is well below the target of 23%.

For the district to achieve this outcome, the number of students with MDO attending general education campuses will need to increase considerably. Since it is unreasonable to expect all students at general education campuses to be integrated for more than 40% of the instructional day, the District should consider options for programming classes for students with MDO at new schools and newly approved charter schools. In addition, while this outcome only includes students ages 6-18, the District should consider tracking all students ages 3-5 attending general education campuses to ensure that these students successfully transition to a general education program during pre-school or kindergarten.

Least Restrictive Envionment

Student in MDO [1]

Page 1

District ID#	Last Name	First Name		Birthday	Grade	Current IEP Date	IEP Date if different:
					3	2/11/2009	_____

Attend School: BERTRAND EL   Local District: 1

IEP Meeting Location: _____

Page 4

Eligibility: MDO   Eligibility if different: _____

Page 5

	Performance area	Wk	Freq	Total	Month	Freq	Total	Minutes outside Gen Ed
1	_____	☐	___	___	☐	___	___	_____
2	_____	☐	___	___	☐	___	___	_____
3	_____	☐	___	___	☐	___	___	_____
4	_____	☐	___	___	☐	___	___	_____
5	_____	☐	___	___	☐	___	___	_____

Page 8

☐ Page 8 Missing   Welligent Percent of Time: [7]

☐ Gen Ed   ☐ RSP   ☐ SDC   (Minutes per Week): _____   ☐ DIS   ☐ Gen Ed/Inclusion % of time: _____

Page 12

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1. # of Weekly District Policy Total School Minutes [   ]   2. # of Weekly Total School Minutes School Report [   ]

MDO Data Summary Sheet (2009-2010)

Name of Student: _____   Eligibility: _____

☐ *Check if different from instrument*

School: _____   IEP Date: _____

☐ *Check if different from instrument*

Grade: _____
If information is not available, please mark N/A

_____ Total # of Instructional Minutes in LAUSD policy for this student
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Elementary and Pre-K

_____ Total # of SPED Minutes in IEP   Total # p.5   _____
For SDP Total = p. 8 + p.5 DIS   Total # p.8   _____
                                                    Total # p.12   _____

_____ Total # of SPED Minutes from Schedule   Total # SDP Classroom   _____
Total # SPED = SDP Classroom/RSP + DIS   Total # DIS   _____
                                                    Total # RSP   _____

Secondary – Middle and High School

_____ Total # of SPED Minutes in IEP   Total # p.5   _____
For SDP Total = p. 8 + p.5 DIS   Total # p.8   _____
                                                    Total # p.12   _____

_____ Total # of SPED Minutes from Schedule   Length of Period _____
Total # Minutes = [(# Periods x length of period +   # of Sped periods _____
(Total HR min x 5)]   # Mins Hr x 5   _____
                                                        DIS excluding APE   _____

_____ Total # of SPED Minutes in IEP   _____ Total# SPED minutes Schedule

_____ Percent SPED time from IEP   _____ Total % SPED Time Schedule
          (IEP minutes/Policy minutes)   (Schedule minutes/Policy Minutes)

_____ Total % Welligent (Directly from p. 8 of IEP)