**Office of the Independent Monitor**
October 5, 2011

*Study of the Accuracy of District Data on Placement*
*in the Least Restrictive Environment Multiple Disabilities Orthopedic 2010-11*

Outcome 7B requires the District to increase 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. The outcome states:

> *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 Welligent 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=1,115), the study provides an accurate count of students with MDO in the general education setting for more than 40% of the instructional day. 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 impact the 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, and a random sample of students attending special education centers and non-public schools. Since the performance of this outcome is directly related to those students attending general education campuses[1], 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

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[1] 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.

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=340) 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 | 50 | 14.7 |
| 2 | 66 | 19.4 |
| 3 | 40 | 11.8 |
| 4 | 22 | 6.5 |
| 5 | 39 | 11.5 |
| 6 | 43 | 12.7 |
| 7 | 20 | 5.9 |
| 8 | 33 | 9.7 |
| R – Charter schools | 9 | 2.7 |
| T – I Division Schools | 18 | 5.3 |
| **Total** | **340** | **100.0** |

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

| School Level | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Elementary | 141 | 41.5 |
| Middle | 66 | 19.4 |
| High | 71 | 20.9 |
| Special Education Centers | 62 | 18.2 |
| **Total** | **340** | **100** |

*Data Collection and Analysis*

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 schedule. Data from these sources were then analyzed to determine the total number of special education minutes each

student received. The data were then transferred to a data summary sheet (Attachment B). This information then was entered into databases created by the OIM and sent to the American Institutes for Research (AIR) for analysis.

The findings are presented to correspond with the two LRE time categories of the outcome[2]. This includes 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=244), 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. It is important to point out that the top half of the table represents the number and percentage of those students in the sample. At the time of the sample, 184 students with MDO were reported as being in the LRE category of less than 60%. The review found only 63 students with schedules in this time category. This means that approximately two-thirds of the students reported by Welligent with this level of integration had placements in special education settings for 60% or more of the day according to their schedules. It is important to note that the review found 29 students who received services from the Carlson Home Hospital program as being reported within this time category.

Table 5. Number and Percentages of Students in the Sample by Two Reporting Categories Based on Welligent and Schedules

|  | Source of Information | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Welligent | | Schedule | |
|  | N | % | N | % |
| 60% or Less in Special Education | 184 | 54.1 | 63 | 18.5 |
| More than 60% in Special Education | 156 | 45.9 | 277 | 81.5 |
| **Sample Total N** | **340** | **100.0** | **340** | **100.0** |

Table 6 demonstrates the impact of these discrepancies to the overall population. When compared to the population of students (n=1,115) with MDO in the District, 184 students

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[2] For the purpose of the MCD, time in the LRE is for instructional time only. This differs from both federal and state definitions of LRE time which consist of three time categories (0-20%, 21-60% and 61-100%) and include non-instructional time such as recess and lunch.

represent 16.5% of the population in the less than 60% category. However, this performance is much lower when compared to the number of students (n=63) with class schedules in the special education setting for less than 60% of the day, accounting for 5.65% of the population. This shows that the LRE data within the Welligent system is overestimating the number and percentage of students being integrated in special education for 60% or less of the day.

Table 6. Number and Percentages of Students in the Population by Two Reporting Categories Based on Welligent and Schedules

|  | Source of Information | | | |
|  | Welligent | | Schedule | |
|  | N | % | N | % |
| 60% or Less in Special Education | 184 | 16.5 | 63 | 5.65 |
| More than 60% in Special Education | 931 | 83.5 | 1,052 | 94.35 |
| **Population Total N** | **1,115** | **100.0** | **1,115** | **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 7 shows that of the 50 students reported by Welligent in the special education setting for less than 20% of the day, the review found 18 students to have schedules that corresponded to this level of integration. Similarly, of the 134 students in the 21-60% range as reported by Welligent, only 45 students had schedules that reflected this level of integration. This means that approximately two-thirds of students in both of these categories had discrepancies that shifted them to another category, particularly to the most restrictive category of more than 60%. This is evidenced by the considerable increase in the students reported by Welligent to be in a special education setting for 60% or more of the day compared to those with schedules in the same category (156 to 277).

Table 7. Number and Percentages of Students in the Federal Reporting Categories Based on Welligent, IEP, and Schedules

|  | Source of Information | | | |
|  | Welligent | | Schedule | |
|  | N | % | N | % |
| 0-20% in Special Education | 50 | 14.7 | 18 | 5.3 |
| 21-60% in Special Education | 134 | 39.4 | 45 | 13.2 |
| 61-100% in Special Education | 156 | 45.9 | 277 | 81.5 |
| **Total N** | **340** | **100.0** | **340** | **100.0** |

To illustrate the District's potential for meeting the target of this outcome, the table below shows students in both LRE categories by school type (Table 8). To meet the target of 23%, the District must integrate at least 256 students in the general education setting for 40% or more of the day (60% or less in special education). This means that based on the population of students with MDO (1,115), the District must integrate all of the students currently attending general education

campuses (244) and must also transition additional students from special education centers. Based on current and past performances on this outcome, this does not appear to be a realistic possibility.

Table 8. 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% | 63 | 5.66 | 63 | 25.81 | 0 | 0.0 |
| More than 60% | 1,052 | 94.34 | 181 | 74.18 | 871 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **1,115** | **100.0** | **244** | **100.0** | **871** | **100.0** |

**Summary**

The results of this study indicate that the Welligent data over reports the number of students with MDO integrated in the general education setting for more than 40% of the instructional day. The study found inaccuracies in data between LRE time reported in the Welligent system and class schedules similar to those observed for Outcome 7A. The District needs to continue to address the causes of these discrepancies in Welligent, including fixing how students who receive instruction through the Carlson Home Hospital program are reported.

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, 63 students (5.65%) have classroom schedules that reflect time in the general education setting of 40% or more of the day. While this is an increase of 12 students from last year (n=51, 4.4%), this performance is well below the target of 23%.

Despite the limited progress for achieving this outcome, the District must be commended for its effort and commitment to develop programs on general education campuses with the opening of seven new classes. While this effort has been positive, the District reports challenges in transitioning students to general education campuses primarily because of reservations families have in allowing their child to attend these schools. The District reports that of the 95 children identified as potential students to transition, 27 enrolled in these new classes. The District must be commended for the comprehensive approach taken to work with parents and open these classes.

**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: _____

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                              Eligibility:  MDO        Eligibility if different: _____

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

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

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

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

**MDO Data Summary Sheet (2010-2011)**

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 | _____ |

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_____ 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)