



TORCHLIGHT ACADEMY

92L

RESPONSE TO

NCDPI EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN'S DIVISION:

October 7, 2021, EC MONITORING REPORT

Date Submitted:

October 18, 2021

Submitted By:

**Torchlight Academy
3211 Bramer Drive
Raleigh, NC 27604**

**Dr. Cynthia McQueen
Superintendent/Senior Principal**

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Executive Summary

During the month of September 2021, it was brought to the attention of senior management and the board of directors of Torchlight Academy that the school's exceptional children's program was not correctly using the ECATS system, and the school was in noncompliance with certain aspects of its exceptional children's program. In September 2021, a team from the N.C. Department of Public Instruction, Exceptional Children's Division and the Office of Charter School appeared at the school for a surprise visit and subsequently requested copies of documents. The report requested certain corrective action and certain document be provided to the Exceptional Children's Division by October 18, 2021 (Document requested a provided separately from this Response to the October 7, 2021, EC Division Report).

Torchlight Academy's senior leadership team and management group, after preliminary review of the Exceptional Children's Report, immediately established a Task Force on Comprehensive Review and Reform of all aspects of the school's exceptional children's program. The school has already added multiple new staff members to provide additional expertise and capacity. The Senior Principal appointed Dustin Squibb as the school's new Executive Director of Exceptional Children. Mr. Squibb is an experienced exceptional children's administrator with experience helping schools bring their exceptional children's program into compliance with federal and state program regulations and requirements. Mr. Squibb currently supports multiple North Carolina public charter schools. Mr. Squibb holds North Carolina Professional Educator's Licenses in School Administration, Exceptional Children's Program Administrator, and Exceptional Children: Adapted Curriculum (K-12). He has completed a multitude of training, including but not limited to NCEES EC Process and ECATS Courses: 16779, 16780, 16781, 16782, 16789, 16743, 16784, 16785, 16786, 16787, and 16788. Mr. Squibb brings increased capacity to Torchlight Academy to eliminate any seemingly systemic noncompliance and helps Torchlight Academy plan, organize, and implement a comprehensive reform of the school's exceptional children's program. The school also hired April Broadway who has 17 years of federal compliance experience, specializing in special education. Ms. Broadway possesses a Master of Education and a bachelor's degree in Speech and Language Disorders. She has worked with the Office of Charter Schools and multiple charter schools in the areas of federal compliance. Both Mr. Squibb and Ms. Broadway's resumes are in the provided Google Folders.

The school's top priority is to ensure that all exceptional children have been identified by the school and are receiving exceptional children's services in accordance with their individual education plans. The Task Force is tasked with review and reform of exceptional children's policies and procedures, ensuring that all students are receiving correct services, and if any students did not receive correct services, receive compensatory services immediately. Also to ensure that the school implements a comprehensive system of correct documentation of the services it performs under the school's Exceptional children's Program.

The school's preliminary investigation identified noncompliance that requires change in various aspect of the operations. The Task Force is working diligently to address noncompliance identified by the Exceptional Children's Division and to identify existing problems to establish comprehensive corrective action plans with a reasonable timeline for completion.

Background/Introduction

Torchlight Academy is a North Carolina public charter school that has been in continuous operation since 1999. The school serves grades kindergarten to 8th grade. The school is located in Raleigh, North Carolina and operates its elementary school program at 3211 Bramer Drive and its middle school program at 4400 Old Poole Road. The school's student enrollment exceeds 600 grades K-8 students. The school is managed by Torchlight Academy Schools, LLC. In the 2015-2016 school year, Torchlight Academy, under the leadership and guidance of Torchlight Academy Schools, LLC, achieved the highest academic growth of all public charter schools in the State of North Carolina. Torchlight's academic growth was in the top one percentile of all public schools (including Traditional Public Schools) in North Carolina. Since that time, Torchlight has consistently exceeded academic growth. All subgroups served at Torchlight Academy from 2015-2016 through 2018-2019 outperformed the local school district and the State of North Carolina, with the exception of our "students with disabilities" subgroup. As of 2018-2019, Torchlight's students with disabilities subgroup are in TSI-CU status for the students with disabilities subgroup. Official public school test data is not available after the 2018-2019 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the 2020 Charter School Performance Framework Torchlight was compliant in EC (See attached)

In the 2019 Charter School Performance Frame Work Torchlight was compliant in EC (see Attached)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) requires the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to monitor and enforce implementation of the Act by local educational agencies (LEAs) in the state. The primary focus of NCDPI's monitoring activities is on improving educational results and functional outcomes for students with disabilities while ensuring the requirements of the IDEA are met. NCDPI assessed Torchlight Academy during the annual Performance Framework Monitoring and deemed the school EC Compliant for the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years. Additionally, evidence of submission for Torchlight was received by the EC Division, and student placement determined within 90 days for the past several years. Systemic data for Torchlight Indicator 11 is represented below and in exhibits at the end of the document:

100% Compliant 2014-2015

100% Compliant 2015-2016

100% Compliant 2016-2017

100% Compliant 2017-2018

On February 26, 2020, Torchlight Academy participated in a routine five-year program compliance review conducted by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction's Exceptional Children's Division. The school was subsequently found noncompliant in two areas including (1) Student Records Review, and (2) Student Service Verification. Less than one month later, on March 13, 2020, the North Carolina Governor announced a statewide state of emergency and all North Carolina public schools, including public charter schools, were required to discontinue face-to-face instruction and convert to remote instruction. Torchlight Academy worked diligently to make the transition to remote instruction and experienced many challenges including how to effectively serve its students with disabilities population.

During this turbulent period, Torchlight Academy staff did not timely correct the noncompliance identified in the February 26, 2020, program compliance review. The NCDPI Exceptional Children's Division notes in its October 7, 2021, EC Monitoring Report that on March 12, 2020, the EC Division sent an "Email-sent deficiency summary and reminder of missing documentation." The school received notice of its noncompliance just one day before the Governor's declaration of state of emergency. The report notes the EC Division received "No response." The Report notes a "Second reminder" was sent on March 18, 2020. Just five days into the transition to remote instruction.

Torchlight Academy received an EC Monitoring Report dated October 7, 2021, which

suggests that the school has unresolved EC Program noncompliance, and the report characterizes the noncompliance as “systemic.” The report questions the school’s capacity to resolve the findings of noncompliance. Torchlight Academy officials and the school’s managers immediately formed an *Exceptional Children’s Program Comprehensive Reform Task Force* to address any “systemic” noncompliance. In addition, the school appointed Mr. Dustin Squibb as its new Exceptional Children’s Program Executive Director and April Broadway as its compliance support specialist who will serve as the Senior Principal’s designee in overseeing proper reforms. The school is working diligently to correct all areas of Exceptional Children’s Program noncompliance and now has substantial resources and staff to plan, organize, and implement comprehensive reforms of the school exceptional children’s program.

All Torchlight Academy’s exceptional children’s program staff have completed the ECATS training modules in NCEES and Mr. Squibb has scheduled extensive professional development for the school’s EC and general education staff as part of the reform effort. The school has just hired additional EC staff to ensure a timely and effective reform of the school’s exceptional children’s program.

Exceptional Children’s Program Comprehensive Reform Task Force

The school’s exceptional children’s program is undergoing a comprehensive reform and restructuring. The areas of reform and restructuring include, but are not limited to, Policy Development, Child Find, Intake and Evaluation, Prior Written Notice compliance, EC service delivery, related services delivery, ECATS administration and security, financial compliance, program documentation, professional development, and other areas of need. The TaskForce has already begun its work. The following is the designated Exceptional Children’s Program Comprehensive Reform Task Force members as of this date.

EC Program Comprehensive Reform Task Force as of 10/18/2021

<u>Employee Name</u>	<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Licensure Status</u>	<u>Duties & Assignments</u>
Dustin Squibb	EC Executive Director	HQ98 – 0012 HQ84 – 8099 HQ87 - 8082	Task Force Team Leader, EC Director duties, PD and compliance support
Shawntrice Andrews	Case Manager/EC Teacher	HQ87-88091 (18 Years)	Case management and EC educational services.
Phyllis Wallace	EC Teacher	HQ88-88091	EC educational services.
Alice Singley	EC Teacher	HQ87-88091	EC educational services.
Doris Williams	EC Teacher	HQ89-88091	EC educational services.
April Broadway	Compliance Consultant		Compliance support and Senior Principal designee
Dr. Melvin Wallace	Instructional Leader/Middle School LEA Rep.	HQ87-88081; 82-88091; 82-88092; 82-88100; 82-88200; 82-88300; 82-88400	General oversight and support.
Dee Tendell Hired October 18, 2021 Start date Oct. 21, 2021	EC Teacher	Holds a valid EC license	EC educational services
Teresa Martin Hired Oct. 18, 2021 Start date Oct. 21, 2021	EC Teacher	Holds a valid EC license	EC educational services

Dr. Adonis Blue	Instructional Leader/Elementary School LEA Rep.		General oversight and support.
Dr. Cynthia McQueen	Senior Principal		General oversight and support.
Don McQueen	Executive Director/CFO		EC Program Financial Compliance

Staff Supervision and Job Descriptions

The Task Force identified the need to establish clear and comprehensive job descriptions for all exceptional children's staff positions that identify lines of supervision, reporting, and other tasks. The Task Force determined that a clear and comprehensive job description for the exceptional children's director is the most important element of the comprehensive reform of the exceptional children's executive program. The exceptional children's executive director job duties include oversight of the entire exceptional children's program including, but not limited to, staff professional development, staff credentialing, recommendations and implementation of policies and procedures, operations of the EC instructional program, implementation of related services, eligibility determinations, meeting requirements for prior written notice documentation, establishing schedules for services and revaluations, completion of all indicator reports in a timely fashion, correct testing accommodations, correct child counts, proper implementation of “child find,” oversight of the federal grant application process, supervision of exceptional children budgeting process, and supervision of planning maintenance of effort.

The exceptional children's executive director sets the tone and example for all staff in the operation of the exceptional children's program at the school. The school’s Senior Principal and designees shall regularly monitor the progress and implementation of duties of the exceptional children's program director. Such monitoring shall include review of monthly reports provided by the exceptional children's director and other systems of feedback to be established by the Senior Principal and EC Director within the next 30 days.

The Senior Principal and exceptional children's director shall create a monthly tasks checklist to facilitate tracking of tasks performance. The Task Force shall meet on a regular basis with instructional leadership of the school and shall engage in vigorous planning as a team to ensure that exceptional children's program is carried out with fidelity.

Professional Development & Staff Evaluation

The Senior Principal and exceptional children's executive director have developed an annual comprehensive professional development schedule to ensure that all exceptional children personnel receive proper training to enable the effective performance of their job duties. This initial comprehensive professional development schedule starts this month and provides for training through the end of May of this school year and will be updated each year in May for implementation in the following school year. The professional development plan shall take into account professional licensing requirements for continuing education, program requirements set for the school, and expansion of Professional qualifications. Each exceptional children's teacher and instructional staff persons shall be monitored and evaluated by the exceptional children's executive director, school principal, or the designated school instructional leader. This monitoring and evaluation shall occur at least four times during the school year to ensure that exceptional children's teachers and instructional staff are effectively performing their duties and providing high-quality educational services to exceptional children enrolled in the school and correctly documenting the same.

The Senior Principal will strictly monitor implementation of the exceptional children's teacher and staff professional development plan and staff evaluation policy procedures implementation. The Senior Principal shall report to the board of directors each quarter on the school's progress and implementation of the professional development plan and staff evaluation process. The staff evaluation process shall include monitoring of student academic progress. Student academic progress shall be considered disproportionately as a factor in determining whether the staff is effectively performing their duties. Staff progress monitoring shall include the quality of staff interactions with parents, staff use of data-driven instructional methods, staff adherence to instructional services schedules, the extent to which the staff members properly maintain their paperwork and documentation of services, and their compliance with effectively documenting in ECATS, if applicable.

EC Policies and Procedures Review & Update

The EC Task Force determined that the school has the need to review and update

exceptional children's policies and procedures. The exceptional children's Task Force has begun the process of reviewing and updating exceptional children's policies and procedures that govern operations of the exceptional children program at the school. This process includes all policies and procedures that relate to the initial identification and determination of exceptional children status, review of eligibility determination policies and procedures, review and update of policies to determine the extent to which the school remains in compliance with prior written notice requirements, policies and procedures that relate to revaluations and updated individual education programs, implementation of related services including schedules and qualifications of related service providers, preparation and filing of indicator reports, proper completion of child counts, proper documentation and implementation of testing accommodations, proper maintenance of exceptional children's records in both ECATS and the physical records maintained in the secure filing cabinets, Exceptional children's budgeting and maintenance of effort planning, exceptional children's financial policies and procedures, and other policies that may be required for exceptional children's programming under state and federal law.

All updated policies and procedures will include a process for compliance monitoring and designation of who is responsible for oversight. The Task Force's work is designed to develop policies and procedures which provide clear guidance to staff on implementation of the program, effective monitoring of compliance, ensure the integrity of implementation, and provide for accountability. The school's exceptional children deserve a high-quality program that is meticulously thought out, executed with fidelity, and provides a high level of accountability.

Exceptional Children Program Budgeting & Financial Policies and Procedures

The Task Force has reviewed existing budget planning and financial policies and procedures of the school as it relates to the school's exceptions children's program. The Task Force recommends that new comprehensive policies and procedures be adopted and implemented forthwith. Exceptional children's budget planning is extremely important to ensure the proper financial resources are budgeted and in place to provide for a robust and comprehensive exceptional children's program of high quality. Policy reform is also needed to ensure that the school meets its maintenance of effort requirements and that all exceptional children's expenses are properly coded and identified to ensure the integrity of accounting for the school's exceptional children's program. The school's accounting department shall use proper uniform chart of account codes to account for all exceptional children's expenditures. The school shall process exceptional

children's payroll and other expenses within the LINQ accounting software. This will enable the school to properly track, by account code, all state and local expenditures to the maintenance of effort process.

The school shall complete an exceptional children's budget and maintenance of effort plan by the end of May each year for the upcoming school year. The budget plan shall take into account the December and April headcounts and estimate the amount of exceptional children's funding from both federal and state funds. This is crucial to comprehensively plan exceptional children's program and the use of exceptional children's funding. The school shall take into account the special needs of exceptional children and the schools current TSI-CU status. The school shall target resources to address the exceptional children subgroup's past underperformance including providing for special instructional support including tutors, special technology resources, additional professional development for staff, and other resources as may be needed.

The school's finance department shall upgrade its professional training in the use of LINQ, BAAS, and other budget planning tools within the next 30 days. The school's finance department shall upgrade professional development regarding the use of the uniform account code system and shall work directly with the exceptional children director and Senior Principal to ensure that all documentation for monitoring and compliance processes required to be generated by the finance department are timely and properly completed.

All budget, accounting, internal controls, and fiscal policies and procedures shall be comprehensively reviewed and upgraded within the next 30 days.

Implementation of Use of ECATS System

All exceptional children's staff recently completed all training requirements for use and access of the ECATS system. The exceptional children's executive director shall implement and maintain a schedule and list of required trainings for all new exceptional children's staff with timelines for completion to maintain current knowledge an effective use of the ECATS system.

The exceptional children's executive director shall serve as the ECATS administrator for the school and will have the rights to suspend staff accounts that have not completed required trainings. The exceptional children's director shall monitor use of the ECATS system to assure that all user access and usage is in compliance with all program requirements.

The exceptional children's executive director shall ensure that ECATS electronic files and physical program files are current and up to date. The following individuals shall have the

identified ECATS access levels.

ECATS Access Level Assignments

<u>Staff Name</u>	<u>Job Title</u>	<u>ECATS Access Level</u>
Dustin Squibb	EC Executive Director	LEA Administrator 4
April Broadway	Compliance Consultant	LEA Administrator 1
Shawntrice Andrews	Case Manager/EC Teacher	School Administrator 2

Exceptional Children’s TSI School Improvement Plan

The school is in school improvement status for the subgroup exceptional children under the requirements established by the Title I program. The Senior Principal shall upgrade the existing school improvement team to place a greater emphasis on improving the academic progress of exceptional children within the school. Within the next 30 days, the school improvement team will set new goals for academic performance for the school's exceptional children's population, new goals for exceptional children's staff professional development, and new goals and target dates to move the school out of school improvement status by using data-driven instruction with effective monitoring and support by designated instructional leaders designated to focus on the exceptional children's population.

The school’s instructional leaders, in addition to the regular exceptional children's program, shall transition into use of a response to intervention multi-tiered system of support to ensure identification of exceptional children in school, as well as other students, who's measured academic progress indicates they are not on target for grade level performance by the end of the school year. Use of RTI/MTSS will be introduced after all staff trainings are completed for said purpose. Academic progress of exceptional children will be separately reported in a special report to the Senior Principal each month and reported, in the aggregate, to the board of directors. The instructional leadership team shall develop strategic plans, in conjunction with teachers and parents, set specific goals, targets, tasks and strategies to ensure that exceptional children are able to make significant academic progress and move the school out of the TSI-CU status.

The school shall invest additional resources into digital instructional tools such as I-Ready for Reading and Math, NWEA MAPs Assessments, digital reference materials, and student instructional computers. The school’s instructional team will work more closely with the

exceptional children's staff to ensure that the best interest of exceptional children is served. The school's instructional team will meet regularly with exceptional children's staff to facilitate planning and academic support for exceptional children at the school.

A new TSI School Improvement Plan will be written and begin implementation within the next 30 days.

Exceptional Children's Program Regular Services Program

The school's exceptional children's program will continue to provide services in accordance with students' individual education plans including regular education classroom push-in services, pull-out resource services, homebound services, diagnostic services, case management, tutoring, and other approved services formats. In addition, the school will continue to provide students with related services to be provided by contractors, including speech pathology and audiology services, occupational therapy services, physical therapy services, and psychological services. Other services will be contracted or provided as may be required.

The exceptional children's executive director will establish service schedules for all exceptional children's staff and track the provision of services to ensure that all individual education plans are carried out with integrity and that all services are properly documented.

Exceptional Children's Program Related Services

The exceptional children's program executive director will work with the Senior Principal to negotiate all final contracts with related services providers, including speech pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, school psychologists, and any other related service provider needed to meet the requirements of students' current individual education plans. The exceptional children's program director shall ensure that all contracts for related services include the required state language for charter school contracts, provides a clear description of the costs for services, addresses whether the service may be covered by Medicaid, and requires the service providers to establish written schedules in conjunction with the school. The exceptional children's director shall also maintain a file of the current licensure status of all related service providers, a copy of the current background checks, and other documents that may be required by the Individual Disabilities Education Improvement Act and by State law. The exceptional children's executive director shall establish a reporting process and procedure whereby related service providers report on the progress of students who are receiving related services.

The Senior Principal and exceptional children's executive director have designated a dedicated space in the school facilities for the storage of exceptional children's records related to the related services program and all other exceptional children's program files.

School Website and Parent Communications

The school website shall prominently display a copy of the North Carolina exceptional children's program handbook for parents and a copy of the North Carolina exceptional children's policies and procedures for easy access by parents. The school's website shall also include an exceptional children's program "child find" poster and information to facilitate parent access to participation in the program for their students. The school shall also post child find posters on bulletin boards within the school, provide teachers professional development on child find and how to refer students that may be candidates for participation in the exceptional children's program, and otherwise communicate with parents regarding the availability of the school's exceptional children's program.

Compensatory Services

On or before October 30, 2021, the exceptional children's directors will have identified exceptional students who may have not been identified. Any students who did not receive proper services in accordance with their individual education plan will be offered compensatory services. The exceptional children's executive director will establish a compensatory services schedule by November 15, 2021. The compensatory services schedule shall not interfere with exceptional children's regular schedules. Compensatory services shall be staffed separately and funded separately from the current regular operational exceptional children's services program being operated at the school. The school has identified a highly qualified vendor to provide compensatory services, if needed.

Summary

Torchlight Academy and its managers reviewed the NCDPI Exceptional Children's Division's October 7, 2021, EC Monitoring Report and have taken immediate action to eliminate any seemingly "systemic" noncompliance found by the EC Division. The school has implemented leadership and supervision changes, including the appointment of a new highly qualified EC Executive director and by the establishment of a Comprehensive EC Program Reform Task Force, to ensure the school's capacity to eliminate EC Program noncompliance.

Exhibits

2019 Charter School Performance Framework Report

SCHOOL NAME: Torchlight Academy

LEA CODE: 92L

GRADE SPAN:KG:01:02:03:04

A. Operational Annual Monitoring Criteria

MEASURE	CRITERIA	STATUS
A1	The overall School Performance Score and Letter Grade are prominently displayed on the school's website and schools with D/F have sent letter to notify parents.	Compliant
A2	The school has an assigned administrator in the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS).	Compliant
A3	The school meets the required number of instructional hours or days in accordance with State law.	Compliant
A4	The school adheres to all testing and accountability policies for state assessments.	Compliant
A5	The school implements mandated programming as a result of state or federal requirements.	Compliant
	Title I N/A	
	Title II Compliant	
	EC Compliant	
	School Nutrition Compliant	
A6	The school follows student admissions and lottery requirements as stated in North Carolina General Statute, State Board of Education Policy, and the most recent charter agreement.	Compliant
A7	The school's official funded ADM is within 10% of the projected ADM.	Compliant
A8	The non-profit board has a current grievance policy for parents and employees.	Compliant
A9	The non-profit board has a current conflict of interest policy that complies with G.S. 115C-218.15 and the most recent charter agreement.	Compliant
A10	The non-profit board has a current nepotism policy.	Compliant
A11	A quorum of the non-profit board of directors meets no less than 8 times a year (including annual meeting).	Compliant
A12	The majority of the non-profit board members and 50% or greater of the board officers have primary residence in NC.	Compliant
A13	There is evidence of current fire inspections and related records.	Compliant

2020 Charter School Performance Framework

SCHOOL NAME: Torchlight Academy

LEA CODE: 92L

GRADE SPAN: KG:01:02:03:04

A. Operational Annual Monitoring Criteria

MEASURE	CRITERIA	STATUS
A1	The overall School Performance Score and Letter Grade are prominently displayed on the school's website and schools with D/F have sent letter to notify parents.	Compliant
A2	The school has an assigned administrator in the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS).	Compliant
A3	The school meets the required number of instructional hours or days in accordance with State law.	Compliant
A4	The school adheres to all testing and accountability policies for state assessments.	Compliant
A5	The school implements mandated programming as a result of state or federal requirements.	Compliant
	Title I Compliant	
	Title II Compliant	
	EC Compliant	
	School Nutrition Compliant	
A6	The school follows student admissions and lottery requirements as stated in North Carolina General Statute, State Board of Education Policy, and the most recent charter agreement.	Compliant
A7	The school's official funded ADM is within 10% of the projected ADM.	Not Compliant
A8	The non-profit board has a current grievance policy for parents and employees.	Compliant
A9	The non-profit board has a current conflict of interest policy that complies with G.S. 115C-218.15 and the most recent charter agreement.	Compliant
A10	The non-profit board has a current nepotism policy.	Compliant
A11	A quorum of the non-profit board of directors meets no less than 8 times a year (including annual meeting).	Compliant
A12	The majority of the non-profit board members and 50% or greater of the board officers have primary residence in NC.	Compliant
A13	There is evidence of current fire inspections and related records.	Compliant



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

WWW.NCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG

April 18, 2016

Dr. Cynthia McQueen, Principal
Torchlight Academy
3211 Bramer Drive
Raleigh, NC 27604

Reference: 2014-2015 Indicator 11

Dear Dr. McQueen:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) requires the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to monitor and enforce implementation of the Act by local educational agencies (LEAs) in the state. The primary focus of NCDPI's monitoring activities is on improving educational results and functional outcomes for students with disabilities while ensuring the requirements of the IDEA are met. The Exceptional Children (EC) Division is responsible for conducting all monitoring activities.

The 2014-2015 **Indicator 11** data submission for your LEA has been received. Your LEA had a compliance rate of 100% and met the federal target. Staff in your LEA is to be commended for ensuring that the referrals received were processed in a timely manner.

Indicator 11	The percent of students for whom a referral was received and placement determined within 90 days
Compliance Rate Percentage	100%
Federal Target	100%
LEA STATUS FFY2015 (SY 14-15)	Compliance

Thank you for your continued efforts on behalf of students with disabilities and their families. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Whetzel, Monitoring Consultant for Policy, Monitoring and Audit, at (919) 807-3294.

Sincerely,

William J. Hussey, Director
Exceptional Children Division

WJH/jaw: cp

- c Shawntrice McQueen, Exceptional Children Programs: Coordinator
- Julie Whetzel, NCDPI: ECD Monitoring Consultant
- Kevin Allen, NCDPI: ECD Regional Consultant

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN DIVISION

William J. Hussey, Director

6356 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6356 | (919) 807-3969 | Fax (919) 807-3243

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Mark Johnson, Superintendent of Public Instruction

WWW.NCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG

June 1, 2019

Dr. Cynthia McQueen, Head Administrator
Torchlight Academy
3211 Bramer Drive
Raleigh, NC 27604

**Reference: Indicator 11: Child Find
Data Reporting Period SY 2017-2018**

Dear Dr. McQueen:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) requires the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to monitor and enforce implementation of the Act by local educational agencies (LEAs) in the state. The primary focus of NCDPI's monitoring activities is on improving educational results and functional outcomes for students with disabilities while ensuring the requirements of the IDEA are met. The Exceptional Children (EC) Division is responsible for conducting all monitoring activities.

The 2017-2018 Indicator 11 data submission for your LEA has been received. Indicator 11 reflects the percentage of students for whom a referral was received, and placement determined within 90 days. Systemic data for your district is represented in the chart below:

Indicator 11 Systemic Data			
Indicator 11 Federal Target	LEA Percentage 2015-2016	LEA Percentage 2016-2017	LEA Percentage 2017-2018
100%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
LEA STATUS	Compliant		

If noncompliance is identified, your assigned monitor will work with your EC director/coordinator to complete any corrective action required. Additionally, districts which demonstrate three consecutive years of compliance rates of less than 90% will be required to participate in a targeted systemic compliance activity.

As with all findings of noncompliance, the EC Division determines an appropriate course of action at both the student level and the systemic level. If necessary, additional corrective action for Indicator 11 will be issued at any point the level of noncompliance requires immediate intervention and/or at the conclusion of the Targeted Monitoring activity conducted after a three-year data cycle of noncompliance.

The LEAs are encouraged to continue reviewing the impact of untimely placement on student outcomes and determine an appropriate response on a case-by-case basis at the local level. As a reminder, timely placement remains an issue that can be investigated through a state complaint or raised through a Due

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN DIVISION

Sherry H. Thomas, Director | sherry.thomas@dpi.nc.gov

6356 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6356 | (919) 807-3969 | Fax (919) 807-3896

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Process Petition. In these instances, corrective action may also be ordered outside or in addition to the three-year data cycle.

Thank you for your continued efforts on behalf of students with disabilities and their families. If you have any questions regarding the integrity of the data, please contact Kelley Blas, Part B Data Manager, at 919-807-3967 or Dr. Nancy T. Johnson, NCDPI State Performance Plan Coordinator, at 704-576-2760. For other questions or submissions, please contact your assigned Indicator 11 Consultant Patti Cox, Monitoring Consultant for Policy, Monitoring, and Audit, at patti.cox@dpi.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



Sherry H. Thomas, Director
Exceptional Children Division



Carol Ann M. Hudgens, Section Chief
Policy, Monitoring, and Audit
Exceptional Children Division

SHT/PEC: ds

- c Shawntrice Andrews, Exceptional Children Program Coordinator
- Nancy T. Johnson, NCDPI: State Performance Plan Coordinator
- Kelley Blas, NCDPI: Part B Data Manager
- Dave Machado, Director, Office of Charter Schools
- Ashley Baquero, J.D., Consultant, Office of Charter Schools
- Rob McOuat, NCDPI: EC Division Regional Consultant
- Patti Cox, NCDPI: EC Division Monitoring Consultant