Department of Education
Office of Inspector General – Internal Audit
18-Month Status Report on: Differentiated Accountability
Report # A-1314-016   Issued: June 4, 2015
Status as of December 4, 2016

Finding	Recommendation(s)	Previous Management Response	Management Response as of December 4, 2016	Anticipated Completion Date & Contact
BSI did not adequately monitor turnaround option plan (TOP) implementation.	We recommend BSI develop TOP monitoring procedures to ensure school districts implement turnaround options in compliance with state regulations. The procedures should include centralized processes and monitoring templates to document appropriate monitoring has occurred.	**Response as of June 4, 2015:** In September of 2014, the BSI implemented an online tracking system via Survey Monkey, which includes a mechanism for DA team members to log quantitative information regarding TOP monitoring visits. Additionally, BSI has worked with the regional teams to develop a rubric which can be used both as a needs assessment tool for the development of turnaround plans, and as a means of measuring the quality of the district's implementation of the plan in the identified school(s). The rubrics are completed collaboratively between the district leadership team and the RED. The rubric was piloted this spring in 15 districts with schools in turnaround, six districts on a voluntary basis, and nine districts as part of the required review of SIG 1003(g) implementation. The pilot was successful, and the REDs have agreed to expand the use of the rubrics to all districts with schools in turnaround for the 15-16 school year. **Response as of December 4, 2015:** On November 13, 2015, the BSI Director emailed the REDs with the rubric tools to be used in all districts implementing turnaround plans in 2015-16, and requesting documentation of the monitoring process to be returned to BSI by April 30, 2016. *Anticipated Completion: May 15, 2016*	Turnaround option plans were an agenda item on the July, August and September meetings of the State Board of Education. Conversations with Board members, superintendents, and FDOE leadership during these meetings led the Bureau of School Improvement to further refine its turnaround monitoring process to be more intensive in the 2016-17 school year for any district implementing a Cycle 2 TOP (i.e., those required to select a new turnaround option as a consequence of not improving to a C after two years of district-managed turnaround). These districts are required to submit monthly reports and participate in a quarterly DataCom process in addition to the other monitoring procedures already in place.	*June 30, 2017* *Melissa Ramsey*

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		Response as of June 3, 2016: Each region allowed their TOP-implementing districts to complete a self-assessment using the rubric and then met to discuss and finalize. Completed rubrics have been received in BSI for all implementing districts. *Anticipated Completion: June 9, 2016*		
State-led initiative outcomes were not met.	We recommend BSI establish reasonable and measurable performance goals for reading, math, and science and monitor performance in the targeted PLA schools to ensure accountability and continued school improvement.	**Response as of June 4, 2015:** "Targeted PLA" schools are no longer an identified group, as the RTTT grant ends in June 30, 2015. BSI will work to establish new targets after the new assessment cut scores are known. **Response as of December 4, 2015:** Commissioner Stewart has recommended assessment cut scores which are slated to be adopted by the State Board at the January meeting. We expect 2014-15 school grades to be released shortly thereafter, which will give us baseline information to inform conversations with leadership regarding new performance goals. *Anticipated Completion: August 1, 2016* **Response as of June 3, 2016:** FDOE leadership is working on the state plan for implementing the ESSA. New performance goals will be established through this process *Anticipated Completion: August 1, 2017*	FDOE leadership is working on the state plan for implementing the ESSA. New performance goals will be established through this process.	*August 1, 2017* *Melissa Ramsey*

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BSI did not make all required visits to monitor the fidelity of School Improvement Plan implementation.	We recommend BSI continue to improve monitoring efforts to ensure implementation fidelity and compliance with the Florida Administrative Code. This should include enhancing procedures to develop centralized processes and monitoring templates to demonstrate appropriate monitoring has occurred.	**Response as of June 4, 2015:** In September 2014, BSI implemented an online tracking system via Survey Monkey to capture quantitative information regarding SIP monitoring visits. Additionally, DA schools are required to submit a mid-year reflection on progress toward goals and plan implementation for RED review, which is documented in CIMS. The BSI has additional plans to enhance the means of documentation in CIMS, including more options for recording qualitative feedback, and tracking and uploading deliverables, pending funding availability. **Response as of December 4, 2015:** On October 21, BSI presented to the REDs a year-end summary of 2014-15 school and district support, which was based on the field team logs submitted via Survey Monkey. The analysis was used as a conversation starter about the types of information being collected, and how collection methods can be refined to obtain more consistent data in 2015-16. The mid-year reflection process will begin in January and end by April 1, 2016. We are working to make minor tweaks to the tracking system for the mid-year process so that we can record qualitative feedback in addition to quantitative records of the reviews.	The 2016-17 SIP opened in CIMS on May 9, 2016. The deadline for DA schools to submit their draft plans for review by their regional executive director was August 31, 2016; the deadline for the REDs to provide feedback was September 30, 2016; the final publication deadline was October 31, 2016. The regional teams have provided ongoing support to districts and schools during the development of these plans. As of October 31, 2016, over 95% of the required 468 SIPs had been reviewed by the REDs; however, only 40% had been published by the districts. *Note: due to late additions to the DA list after school grade appeals, nine districts received extensions to the publication deadline for those SIPs until December 15.* For those districts that were overdue, BSI staff began making	*June 30, 2017* *Melissa Ramsey*

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		However, we are uncertain whether current resources will support the changes (i.e., whether they are complex and considered new development or can be paid for out of our maintenance budget). *Anticipated Completion: April 1, 2016* **Response as of June 3, 2016:** Between August 15, 2015, and April 15, 2016, all traditional priority schools received at least one onsite support visit (according to the DA logs), with an average of five visits logged per priority school. Onsite support is differentiated by need in consultation with the district office. BSI was able to modify the Reflection module in CIMS to capture additional qualitative and better quantitative data from the mid-year reviews. As of April 1, 92% of 492 schools required to complete a mid-year reflection had done so, and 99% of completed reflections were reviewed by the respective RED. *Anticipated Completion: April 1, 2016*	calls on October 31 to district contacts to provide technical assistance in completing the last steps for publication. As of November 14, 2016, 98% of required SIPs have been reviewed by the RED and 89% have been published. Monitoring of SIP implementation will occur throughout the school year during monthly meetings with districts and site visits for priority schools (documented via the DA logs), and will be formally reviewed and recorded in CIMS during the mid-year reflection process in February-March of 2017.	
BSI did not adequately track and monitor	We recommend BSI capture vacancy dates and retain historical staff vacancy data to	**Response as of June 4, 2015:** A new vacancy tracking system was implemented in April 2015, which ensures we retain all historical staff vacancy data. The 2015-16 DAP grant includes	BSI is using the vacancy tracking system as intended. As of November 14, 2016, there are two vacancies on the DAP grant, both	*Ongoing* *Shannon* *Houston*

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staff vacancy dates.	ensure the performance of the fiscal agents is in alignment with the scope of work dictated by the grants. We additionally recommend BSI strengthen the grant agreements to specify a timeframe to fill staff vacancies.	approximately 21.5 FTE slots, which is substantially smaller than the RTTT grant. This will mitigate the risk of having multiple vacancies simultaneously. The vacancy lengths are a by-product of multiple decision points made on a case-by-case basis, and cannot be determined ahead of time in the grant agreement. 1) When a vacancy occurs, the RED determines whether it is appropriate timing to post the vacancy (e.g., time of year candidates are likely to apply, whether the team has the bandwidth to engage in the hiring process, etc.). 2) Once a decision is made to post the position, the RED has to review the candidate pool to determine whether it is strong enough to complete an interview process and make a recommendation for hire. The RED has the discretion to determine the needs of the team as a whole and whether it is preferable to maintain a vacancy while recruiting more suitable candidates than those in the currently in the applicant pool. **Response as of December 4, 2015:** On August 1, 2015, BSI implemented its new tracking system to monitor staff vacancies on a monthly basis and record the length of time each vacancy occurs.	in the Southeast region. One of these vacancies has a candidate moving through the hiring process and expected to start in December. For the 2016-17 DAP, there have been a total of 7 vacancies occurring, with an average time to fill of 101 days. The time to fill vacancies has been slowed by a new hiring process implementing this summer and a transition of staff managing the DAP grant at the University of South Florida.	

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		We have had two vacancies occur on the 2015-16 DAP grant. An administrative specialist was vacant 47 days, and a school improvement specialist was vacant 122 days. Both positions have been filled. *Anticipated Completion: Ongoing* **Response as of June 3, 2016:** As of May 1, we had one vacancy on the DAP grant. A school improvement specialist position in Region 1 was vacant for 90 days. After interviews, an offer was made in early April. However, the candidate was not able to begin work until May 2. *Anticipated Completion: Ongoing*		
BSI did not effectively monitor the performance of the fiscal agents for compliance with grant terms.	We recommend BSI contract managers obtain appropriate training for grant monitoring and develop procedures to ensure fiscal agent performance is appropriately monitored for compliance with grant requirements.	**Response as of June 4, 2015:** There are multiple resources available to provide training and technical assistance to BSI staff in the development and implementation of monitoring procedures. These include but are not limited to • Training available through the Departments of Financial Services and Management services relative to contract and grants management • Direct support and assistance available from the DOE's Office of Audit Resolution and Monitoring • Other DOE staff who have successfully	The DAP grant manager in BSI successfully completed the Certified Contract Manager course in July 2016. In 2016-17, administration of the DA grant was consolidated to one fiscal agent, the University of South Florida. This, coupled with more detailed deliverables and expectations for the fiscal agent, will allow for more focused	*Ongoing Christine Evans*

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		developed and implemented effective monitoring procedures. BSI staff has reached out to the Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Finance and Operations, who will coordinate with BSI to access the necessary resources and collaborate on the development and implementation of recommended centralized monitoring processes and templates. **Response as of December 4, 2015:** The BSI team is collaborating with the Office of Grants Management to develop the 2016-17 RFA for Differentiated Accountability, and is working to include more explicit expectations, deliverables, and monitoring protocols for the awarded fiscal agents. *Anticipated Completion: June 30, 2016* **Response as of June 3, 2016:** The 2016-17 RFA has been approved with a new set of fiscal agent deliverables to allow for more effective monitoring of performance. Christine Evans is registered to take the Certified Contract Manager course and will complete the training by mid-July. *Anticipated Completion: July 31, 2016*	monitoring going forward.	