

**New Jersey Department of Education
Special Education Receiving School Monitoring**

Receiving School: Archbishop Bishop Damiano School

County: Gloucester

Monitoring Dates: March 11, 12, 13, 2003

Monitoring Team: Mary Heade, Catherine Thomas, Elaine Lerner, Deborah Magee

Background Information:

During the 2001 – 2002 school year, the Archbishop Damiano School conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services, and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the Archbishop Damiano School with an opportunity to evaluate its strengths and areas of need with regard to:

- The provision of a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment;
- The development and implementation of policies and procedures resulting in procedural compliance; and
- The organization and delivery of programs and services to meet the needs of the students with disabilities.

The self-assessment was designed to identify areas of strength, promising practices, areas that need improvement and areas that may be noncompliant with state and federal requirements. The Archbishop Damiano School developed an improvement plan to address identified areas of need.

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) conducted an on-site monitoring to verify the self-assessment findings, to assess the appropriateness of the improvement plan, and to determine the progress in implementing the plan.

During the monitoring process, the monitoring team reviewed the Archbishop Damiano School's documents such as policies and procedures, student records from sending districts, lesson plans, services as indicated in IEPs, staff evaluations, student count information, master student lists, class lists, schedules of students/teachers/related service personnel, and other relevant information. Interviews were conducted with the Archbishop Damiano School's special education administrators, building principals, special education teachers and related service personnel.

School Strengths:

The Archbishop Damiano School is commended for developing volunteer and employment programs within its organization that include former students to assist in hospitality functions and to provide assistance to the school's students, serving as positive role models. In addition, the Archbishop Damiano School provides family and sibling support groups, a Parents and Friends Association, and parent training programs to assist in developing advocacy and self-advocacy skills. The school also provides varied and age appropriate social and recreational activities for middle and high school students, such as special graduation activities and a senior prom.

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The Archbishop Damiano School also provides a planned community-based instruction program, starting at the elementary level, which provides life skills instruction directly in the setting where the skills will be required.

Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:

General Provisions and Student Records were determined to be areas of compliance by the Archbishop Damiano School during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Section II: Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the Archbishop Damiano School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding length of school day and year, maintenance of hearing aids, services at no cost to parents, extended school year programs and services provided in accordance with IEPs, program open to observation by LEA and DOE, provision of services as per IEP, provision of occupational therapy (OT) services as per IEP, provision of physical therapy (PT) services as per IEP and provision of counseling services as per IEP .

During the self-assessment process, the Archbishop Damiano School identified concerns in the areas regarding the provision of physical education and the provision of speech language services as per IEP. The receiving school's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas of need. During the on-site visit, a review of records and staff interviews indicated that the receiving school has appropriately implemented specific activities to bring about correction in these areas.

No additional areas of need were identified during the on site visit.

Section III: Staff Requirements

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the Archbishop Damiano School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding appropriate supervision of physical therapy assistants (PTA) and certified occupational therapy assistants (COTA), private school dual employment, supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at county office, criminal history verification, and having an approved professional development plan.

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit in the area regarding certified/licensed staff.

Area of Need:

Certified/licensed Staff - During the on-site visit though record reviews it was determined that the school nurses do not hold appropriate educational certification.

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- **The Archbishop Damiano School will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that at least one school certified nurse is employed to provide those activities required through N.J.A.C. 6A:16. The plan will provide administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of the procedures.**

Section IV: Facility Requirements

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the Archbishop Damiano School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding programs provided in approved facilities and certificates of occupancy and inspections.

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding fire drills.

Area of Need:

Fire Drills - During the on-site visit, staff interviews and a review of records indicated that the school did not routinely conduct fire drills twice monthly.

- **The Archbishop Damiano School will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that fire drills are conducted at least two times a month. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of the procedures.**

Section V: Individualized Education Plan/Annual Review

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the Archbishop Damiano School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP conducted with required receiving school participants, IEP conducted with students age 14 and older, as appropriate, signatures of participants present on IEPs, current IEP prior to service delivery, IEP accessibility to teachers and providers, informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing relating to administration, statewide testing for support and assistance, implementation of IEP components, informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives.

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding communication to sending districts regarding missing IEP components.

Area of Need:

Communication With Sending Districts Regarding Missing IEP Components - During the on-site visit, staff interviews and a review of records indicated that at the middle school and secondary level, districts were not consistently contacted when IEP components were missing.

- **The Archbishop Damiano School will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that the school communicates with**

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sending districts when IEP components are missing. The plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures.

Section VI: Discipline

Summary of Finding:

During self-assessment the Archbishop Damiano School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding procedures for time out rooms, restraints and aversives, removal of student pending mediation and due process, changes to program/placement pending mediation and due process, removal of student to interim alternative educational setting, and procedures for termination of student.

During the self-assessment process, the Archbishop Damiano School identified concerns in the areas regarding standard disciplinary procedures and notification to sending districts regarding suspensions. The receiving school's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas. During the on-site visit, a review of records and staff interviews indicated that the receiving school has appropriately implemented specific activities to bring about correction in these areas.

No additional areas of need were identified during the on site visit.

Section VII: Programs and Services

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the Archbishop Damiano School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding special class program descriptions maintained at county office, certifications for specialized populations, special classes serving students with similar educational needs, teachers trained and instructing in core curriculum content standards (CCCSs), collaboration for home instruction, dispensing medication, nursing services.

During the self-assessment process, the Archbishop Damiano School identified concerns in the areas regarding exceptions for class age range and policies and procedures relating to school functions and services. The receiving school's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas of need. During the on-site visit, a review of records and staff interviews indicated that the receiving school has appropriately implemented specific activities to bring about correction in these areas.

No additional areas of need were identified during the on site visit.

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Summary

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Archbishop Damiano School on March 11, 12, 13, 2003. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the Archbishop Damiano School's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review the Archbishop Damiano School's improvement plan.

The receiving school is commended for the exceptionally comprehensive review conducted during the self-assessment process. As a result of that review the receiving school was able to identify nearly all areas of need and develop an improvement plan that with some revision will bring about systemic change. The receiving school is further commended for the many areas determined by the receiving school and verified by the Department of Education as compliant with federal and state statutes and regulations.

General Provisions and Student Records were determined to be areas of compliance by the Archbishop Damiano School during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the Archbishop Damiano School during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included length of school day and year, maintenance of hearing aids, services at no cost to parents, extended school year programs and services provided in accordance with IEPs, program open to observation by LEA and DOE, provision of services as per IEP, provision of occupational therapy (OT) services as per IEP, provision of physical therapy (PT) services as per IEP, provision of counseling services as per IEP, appropriate supervision of physical therapy assistants (PTA) and certified occupational therapy assistants (COTA), private school dual employment, supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at county office, criminal history verification, having an approved professional development plan, providing programs in approved facilities, certificates of occupancy and inspections, IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP conducted with required receiving school participants, IEP conducted with students age 14 and older, as appropriate, signatures of participants present on IEPs, current IEP prior to service delivery, IEP accessibility to teachers and providers, informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing relating to administration, statewide testing for support and assistance, implementation of IEP components, informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives, procedures for time out rooms, restraints and aversives, removal of student pending mediation and due process, changes to program/placement pending mediation and due process, removal of student to interim alternative educational setting, procedures for termination of student, special class program descriptions maintained at county office, certifications for specialized populations, special classes serving students with similar educational needs, teachers trained and instructing in CCCSs collaboration for home instruction, dispensing medication, and nursing services.

During the self-assessment process, the Archbishop Damiano School identified areas of need regarding the provision of physical education, the provision of speech language services as per IEP, standard disciplinary procedures, notification to sending districts regarding suspensions, exceptions for class age range, and policies and procedures relating to school functions and services.

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The on-site visit identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding certified/licensed staff, fire drills and communication to sending districts regarding missing IEP components.

Within forty-five days of receipt of the monitoring report, the Archbishop Damiano School will revise and resubmit the improvement plan to the Office of Special Education Programs and to the county office of education to address those areas that require revisions.