

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

**Receiving School:** The Calais School

**County:** Morris

**Monitoring Dates:** December 8 and 9, 2003

**Monitoring Team:** Janet Wright, Jennifer DeSaye, Susan Smahl and  
Ann Marie Bruder

**Background Information:**

During the 2002– 2003 school year, The Calais School conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services, and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided The Calais 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 Calais 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 receiving school 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 Calais School's special education administrators, building principals, special education teachers, related service personnel and parents.

**School Strengths:**

The Calais School is commended the transition services it provides. In addition to workplace readiness skills, the school provides a cooperative work education program to enhance the school to work program. It is in conjunction with local businesses and industries. It provides supervision for students in internship roles and job shadowing experiences. The Calais School Transition Coordinator was honored by the Daily Record as Teacher of the Year.

The Calais School also provides a variety of clubs for their students such as the Environmental club. This club not only explores the environment with field trips to local woodlands, but also sponsors local and state environmental experts who provide presentations at the school.

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The Calais School Visual and Performing Arts Committee researches and plans appropriate in-school and field trip experiences for the students. Students have participated and won awards in the Gingerbread Contest sponsored by the Morris County Arboretum. Field trips have included the Paper Mill Playhouse, various museums and sporting events.

Students are recognized for both academic and behavioral achievement through the Calais School Honor Roll Program.

### **Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:**

**General Provisions, Discipline and Programs/Services** were determined to be areas of compliance by The Calais 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 Calais School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding length of school day and year, provision of physical education, services at no cost to parents, extended school year, programs and services provided in accordance with IEPs, program open to observation by lead education agency and department of education, provision of services as per IEP and provision of speech language services as per IEP.

Areas of need were identified during the on-site monitoring visit regarding maintenance of hearing aids and provision of individual counseling services as a related service.

#### **Areas of Need:**

**Policy and Procedure for Maintenance of Hearing Aids** - During the on site visit, through interviews and a review of documentation of Calais School's current policies and procedures, it was determined that the school does not have a policy and procedure for the maintenance of hearing aids.

- **The receiving school will develop a policy and procedure to ensure that hearing aids are functioning properly and will provide staff training when students who use hearing aids are enrolled in the school**

**Provision of Individual Counseling Services** – During the on-site visit, staff interviews and record reviews indicated the IEP related individual counseling was not being delivered as per the IEP. Individual counseling is considered by the Calais school as an integrated part of the overall program and not a related service.

- **The receiving school will revise their improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that the related service of individual counseling is provided in accordance with IEPs. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of the procedures.**

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**Section III: Staff Requirements**

**Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment the Calais School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of private school dual employment, supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at county office, and having an approved professional development plan.

Areas of need were identified during the on-site monitoring visit regarding certified/licensed staff and criminal history verification.

**Areas of Need:**

**Certified/licensed Staff** – During the on-site visit interviews and record reviews indicated that Calais School employs a music therapist which is an unrecognized job title with no Department of Education certification.

- **Within 45 days the receiving school will employ only staff members who have recognized job titles unless they obtain approval from the county office of education. In addition the school will revise their improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that all staff members employed by the school have recognized job titles. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of the procedures.**

**Criminal History Verification** – During the on-site visit, staff interviews and a review of records indicates that not all staff members have criminal history clearance to be working in the school program. According to the director, applications have been filed and are in process. However, emergent hiring forms were never completed and filed with the county office.

- **The receiving school must immediately ensure that all staff members have authorization for emergent hiring from the county superintendent prior to employment. In addition, the receiving school must revise their improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that all staff members who require them are fingerprinted. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures.**

**Section IV: Facility Requirements**

**Summary of Findings:**

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

During the self-assessment process, the Calais School identified concerns in the area of fire drills. **The receiving school's improvement plan is insufficient to address this area of need because it lacks procedures and appropriate timelines to ensure at**

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**least two fire drills are held per month. The plan must ensure immediate implementation of the procedures and an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures.**

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

**Section V: Individualized Education Plan/Annual Review**

**Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment The Calais 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 age appropriate students, 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 and informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives.

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

**Area of Need:**

**Communication to the Sending District Regarding Missing IEP Components –**

During the on-site visit, staff interviews and a review of records indicated that the school does not communicate to sending districts when IEP components are missing. Areas consistently missing include measurable goals and objectives, extended school year statement, statewide testing and graduation requirements.

- **The receiving school will revise its improvement plan to include activities and procedures to ensure that they communicate with sending districts when any IEP components including measurable goals and objectives, extended school year statement, statewide testing and graduation requirements are missing or incomplete. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent, complaint implementation of the procedures.**

**Section VIII: Student Records**

**Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment The Calais School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding conformance to pupil record code, return of records upon termination, access sheets, location of other records specified in central file, daily attendance available to lead education agencies, written communication to lead education agencies regarding five days of tardiness and absences, written notice of placement to county office and maintenance of student health records.

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding access to records.

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**Area of Need:**

**Access to records** – During the on-site visit interviews and record review indicated that not all appropriate authorized staff members have access to the student records. Currently the school's procedure indicates that teachers must request permission from the supervising Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant to gain access to their student's main records. The school's procedure restricts teachers from reviewing certain educationally relevant information about their students.

- **The receiving school will revise the improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that certified staff members with educational responsibility have access to their student's records. The plan must include in-service training, a mechanism to determine the effectiveness of the training and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures.**

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## **Summary**

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Calais School on December 8 and 9, 2003. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the Calais School's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review The Calais School's improvement plan.

The receiving school is commended for the comprehensive review conducted during the self-assessment process. As a result of that review, the receiving school was able to identify 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. Please note that some areas of need require immediate attention on the part of the school.

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the Calais School during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included policies and procedures, staff development, annual reports, amendments, programs provided in nonsectarian settings, length of day and year, provision of physical education, provision of services at no cost to parents, extended school year, programs and services provided in accordance with the IEP, program open to observation, provision of speech and language programs, private school dual employment, supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at the county office, approved professional development plan, facilities, certificates of occupancy and inspections, conducting annual IEPs, appropriate participants at IEPs, signatures on IEPs, current IEPs, IEP accessibility to teachers and providers, informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing, progress reports, disciplinary procedures, suspensions, changes to program and placements, interim alternative educational setting, termination of students, class sizes, age ranges, description of special class programs, certifications, core curriculum content standards, home instruction, nursing services, medical exams, conformance to pupil records code, return of records upon termination, access sheets, location of other records, daily attendance records, written communication to lead education agencies regarding absences, written notice of placement to the county office and maintenance of student health records.

During the self-assessment process, the Calais School identified areas of need regarding fire drills.

The on-site visit identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding maintenance of hearing aids, provision of counseling services, certified and licensed staff, criminal history verification, communication to sending districts regarding missing IEP components and access to student records.

Within forty-five days of receipt of the monitoring report, the Calais 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.