

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

The computer class includes a two-week introduction and ends with students dismantling and reassembling the computers in the class. The students practice correct typing techniques using a typing program. The class continues with an introduction to the Windows operating system and instruction on the programs in Microsoft Office 2000. The students have an opportunity to create a business and are required to use the software available including Excel for their budgets and Publisher for their flyers, brochures and business cards. Advanced students are introduced to FrontPage which converts documents for the school's internet website. The student must create a PowerPoint slide show for their business as well as a 16-slide show based on a topic of their choice. The show is presented to the class on television and may include such requirements as multimedia clips, video clips, background music, motion or sound effects. The class ends with the Internet Scavenger Hunt which is a collection of questions that the students must answer and is designed to teach the students how to use the internet.

Areas Demonstrating Compliance with All Standards:

General Provisions, Staff Requirements, Facility Requirements, and Discipline were determined to be areas of compliance by the Titusville Academy 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 Titusville Academy accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding services at no cost to parents and program open to observation by LEA and DOE.

Areas of need were identified during the on-site visit regarding length of school day and year, physical education, hearing aids and provision of services.

Areas of Need:

Length of School Day and Year- During the on-site visit through a review of the school calendar, the master schedule and staff interviews it was determined that the school does not provide a minimum of four hours of instruction during scheduled half days. The school calendar identifies every Wednesday as a half-day, in session from 8:00-12:20, in order to facilitate staff trainings. However, the master schedule indicates that instruction is provided from 8:15-12:00, which does not meet the required minimum four hours. The calendar also indicates that on all other half days school is in session from 8:00-12:20. Conversely, the master schedule shows that instruction is provided from 8:17-12:10. A review of the calendar indicates that of the 180 instructional days, 70 days do not meet the four-hour minimum standard.

- **The school will increase the scheduled hours of instruction on half-days to ensure that students receive a minimum of four hours of instruction per day for a minimum of 180 per school days per year as required.**

Health/Physical Education- During the on-site visit, a review of classroom schedules and student schedules indicated that the elementary programs are not provided the minimum of 150 minutes of health/physical education.

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- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure the school provides a minimum of 150 minutes of health/physical education. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

Policies and Procedures for Maintenance of Hearing Aids- During the on-site visit through interviews and a review of documentation of the Titusville Academy'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 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 Related Services – During the on-site visit, through a review of pupil records, service logs and staff interviews, it was determined the speech and language specialists do not consistently document the frequency and duration of speech and language services provided.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that delivery of speech and language services required by the IEP are documented in service provider logs. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

Section V: Individualized Education Plan/Annual Review

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Titusville Academy 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, IEP accessibility to teachers and providers, informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing, implementation of IEP components and informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives.

During the self-assessment process, the Titusville Academy identified concerns in the areas regarding receipt of a current IEP prior to service delivery and communication to sending district regarding missing IEP components. **The receiving school's improvement plan is insufficient to address these areas because it lacks procedures and an administrative oversight component to ensure that the school communications with sending districts when IEP components including goals and objectives for counseling are missing. The improvement plan must be revised to include these components.**

An additional area of need was identified during the onsite visit in the area regarding extended school year (ESY) programs.

Area of Need

ESY Programs – During the on-site visit, a review of records indicated that some IEPs stated that ESY would be provided at the school. However, Titusville Academy does not have approval to provide an ESY program. An ESY program is provided by CZ and Associates, a

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clinic/agency affiliated with the school. Regulations prohibit approved clinics and agencies from providing school programs such as ESY.

- **The school must immediately request approval to provide an ESY program or notify districts that the school is approved to provide a ten-month program only.**

Section VII: Programs and Services

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the Titusville Academy accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding, class size and age range, exceptions for class size and age range, description of special classes implementing IEPs, certifications, instruction in CCCSs, collaboration for home instruction and medical exams for sport teams.

Areas of need were identified during the on-site visit regarding dispensing medication, nursing facilities and employment of a certified school nurse.

Areas of Need:

Dispensing Medication- During the on-site visit through staff interviews it was determined that teachers dispense medication during field trips and during the nurse's absence.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that only authorized individuals dispense medication in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

Nursing Facilities- During the on-site visit, staff interviews and a tour of the school building confirmed that the nurse's station lacked a private rest area and bathroom facility.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include activities to ensure that the nurse's station is equipped with a private rest area and bathroom facility. Activities should include final approval from the county superintendent's office.**

Certified School Nurse- During the on-site visit through staff interviews it was determined that the school does not employ a certified school nurse according to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.1(e).

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include activities to ensure that a certified school nurse is employed.**

Section VIII: Student Records

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Titusville Academy accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding conformance to pupil record code, return of records upon termination, access to records limited to authorized persons, access sheets, location of other records specified in central file, daily attendance available to LEAs, written communication to LEAs regarding five days of tardiness/absences, written notice of placement submitted to the county office and maintenance of student health records.

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

Area of Need:

Access to Records- During the on-site visit through staff interviews and observations it was determined that access to pupil records was not limited to authorized persons according to N.J.A.C. 6:3-6.4 (b).

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include procedures that ensure that access to pupil records is limited to certified staff with educational responsibility. The plan should include an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of the procedures.**

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Summary

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Titusville Academy on March 8 and 9, 2004. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the Titusville Academy's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review the receiving school's improvement plan.

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the Titusville Academy during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included **General Provisions, Staff Requirements Facility Requirements** and **Discipline**.

Additional areas of compliance included services at no cost to parent, observation of programs, IEP 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, IEP accessibility to teachers and providers, informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing, implementation of IEP components and informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives, class size and age range, exceptions for class size and age range, description of special classes implementing IEPs, certifications, instruction in CCCSs, collaboration for home instruction and medical exams for sport teams.

During the self-assessment process, the Titusville Academy identified areas of need regarding current IEP and communication to sending district regarding missing components.

The on-site visit identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding length of day/year, physical education, hearing aids, ESY, dispensing medication/nursing services, and access to records. The report identifies an area of need that requires immediate action on the part of the school.

Within forty-five days of receipt of the monitoring report, the Titusville Academy will revise and resubmit the improvement plan to the Office of Special Education Programs and the Mercer County Office of Education to address those areas that require revisions.