

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

Receiving School: The Felician School

County: Bergen

Monitoring Dates: January 24-25, 2006

Monitoring Team: Ann Marie Bruder, Mark Lanzi and Gregory Margolis

Background Information:

During the 2004–2005 school year, the Felician School conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services, and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the Felician 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 Felician 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 receiving school's special education administrators, building principals, special education teachers, parents and related service personnel.

Noncompliant items reflected in this report may result in nonallowable costs in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23-4.1 through 4.16.

School Strengths:

The Felician School staff is commended for utilizing a multi-disciplinary team approach to address student needs. The staff, including the administration, related service providers, teachers, and instructional aides, meet each morning and afternoon to discuss policies, procedures, student achievement, discipline and the generalization of skills within various environments.

To address students' transition needs, all classes include job readiness activities such as independent living skills, personal/family life skills and appropriate behavior in the work place. Older students participate in competitive job assignments or attend classes

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that familiarize them with simulated work experiences. The Felician School also provides on-the job training for students in employment opportunities at Felician College Child Care Center, Felician College Cafeteria or Dining Room, Immaculate Conception High School, Kmart, CVS, and a local pizzeria.

The Felician School also provides a structured behavior management program for their students. Students are rewarded for appropriate behavior and academic efforts. The students earn various privileges which promotes a positive learning environment. The school also has a variety of recreational activities for the students. The school has thematic school wide events in the Fall and Spring, science fairs and various community outings to reinforce independent living skills and functional academics. The school staff also collaborates with the families on skills and attainment of goals and objectives.

Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), Staff Requirements, Facility Requirements, and Student Records were determined to be areas of compliance by the Felician School during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Section I: General Provisions

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Felician School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding annual reports.

During the self-assessment process, the Felician School identified concerns in the areas regarding policies and procedures, staff development and amendments. The school's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas of need. During the on-site visit a review of records and interviews indicated that the receiving school has developed appropriate policies and procedures and a professional development plan for all certified staff. Therefore, the school has appropriately implemented specific activities to bring about correction in these areas.

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding programs provided in nonsectarian settings.

Area of Need:

Programs Provided in Nonsectarian Settings – During a tour of the school's instructional areas, it was determined that religious symbols were extensively displayed in the areas where students are being instructed. Although the Felician School is located on the grounds of a private, religious college and serves as the living facilities for the nun's; religious symbols cannot be present in areas where students receive instruction (N.J.A.C. 18A:69-1). An on-site visit was conducted on February 22, 2006. Religious symbols and statues have been removed and the school is now compliant in this area. Administrative staff should conduct regular tours of the school building to ensure continued compliance in this area.

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Section V: Individualized Education Program/Annual Review

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Felician School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP meeting conducted with required receiving school participants, IEP meeting conducted with students, as appropriate, signatures of participants present on IEPs, current IEP prior to service delivery, communication to sending districts regarding missing IEP components, 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.

During the self-assessment process, the Felician School identified concerns in the areas regarding implementation of IEP components relating to behavior intervention plans and measurable goals and objectives included in IEPs. During the on-site visit, a review of records indicated that the school communicates with the sending districts to develop behavior intervention plans when needed and the school reviews annual goals and objectives to determine that they are written in specific measurable terms. Therefore, the 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 VI: Discipline

Summary of Finding:

During self-assessment, the Felician 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 placement.

During the self-assessment process, the Felician School identified concerns in the areas regarding standard disciplinary procedures and notification to sending districts regarding suspensions. The school's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas of need. During the on-site visit, a review of records and interviews indicated that the receiving school has developed a manual that included disciplinary procedures and has communicated those procedures to parents and staff. Therefore, the school has 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 Felician School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding class size and age range, exceptions for class size and age range, special class program descriptions maintained at county office, certifications for

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specialized populations, special classes serving students with similar educational needs, teachers trained and instructing in CCCSs, collaboration for home instruction, dispensing medication, policies and procedures relating to school functions and services and medical exams for sport teams.

During the self-assessment process, the Felician School identified concerns in the areas regarding health care policies and procedures. The school's improvement plan is sufficient to address this area of need. During the on-site visit, a review of records and interviews indicated that the receiving school has developed a policy and procedures manual for health care issues that are communicated with parents and staff. Therefore, the school has implemented specific activities to bring about correction in this area.

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 Felician School on January 24-25, 2006. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the Felician School's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review the receiving 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 nearly all areas of need and develop an improvement plan that will bring about systemic change. The receiving school is further commended for the prompt implementation of corrective action to address the areas of need identified during the self-assessment process. As a result, all of those identified areas were corrected prior to the on-site visit. Additionally, the receiving school is commended for the many areas that were determined by the receiving school and verified by the Department of Education as compliant with federal and state statutes and regulations.

FAPE, Staff Requirements, Facility Requirements and Student Records were determined to be areas of compliance by the Felician School during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Additional areas identified as consistently compliant by the Felician School during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included annual reports, IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP meeting conducted with required receiving school participants, IEP meeting conducted with students, as appropriate, signatures of participants present on IEPs, current IEP prior to service delivery, communication to sending district regarding missing IEP components, accessibility to teachers and providers, informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing, 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 placement, class size and age range, exceptions for class size and age range, 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, policies and procedures relating to school functions and services and medical exams for sport teams.

During the self-assessment process, the Felician School identified areas of need regarding policies and procedures, staff development, amendments, behavior intervention plans, measurable goals and objectives, standard disciplinary procedures, notification of suspensions, and health care policies and procedures. The on-site visit identified one additional area of need within the various standards regarding programs provided in nonsectarian settings.

The Felician School is not required to submit revisions to their improvement plan since all areas of noncompliance have been identified and corrected by the school.