

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

Receiving School: University Behavioral HealthCare (UBHC)
University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ (UMDNJ)

County: Middlesex

Monitoring Dates: December 1 and 2, 2003

Monitoring Team: Denise Wilkens and Paul Bilik

Background Information:

During the 2002–2003 school year, the University Behavioral HealthCare/University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ (UBHC/UMDNJ) conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services, and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the UBHC/UMDNJ 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 UBHC/UMDNJ 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, related service personnel and parents.

School Strengths:

The UBHC/UMDNJ is commended for the extensive collaboration among all staff to support the academic and behavioral success of students enrolled in the program. Professional staff meet daily both formally and informally to discuss the individual needs and progress of all students. Staff members function as therapeutic case managers, communicating on behalf of students and their families with an established network of community agencies and resources.

The school staff assists students who are returning to their home school by visiting the school with the student. In addition, staff members are available to confer with sending district staff to ensure a smooth transition.

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

In addition to the academic core content areas and specialized reading programs such as Orton Gillingham and Stevenson, the school also provides students with instruction in the culinary arts and woodshop. As part of its extended school year program, UBHC/UMDNJ provides twice weekly field trips which are linked to classroom activities.

Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:

Facility Requirements, IEP/Annual Review, and Discipline were determined to be areas of compliance by the UBHC/UMDNJ during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Section I: General Provisions

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the UBHC/UMDNJ accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding policies and procedures, annual reports, amendments and programs provided in nonsectarian settings.

During the self-assessment process, the UBHC/UMDNJ identified a concern regarding the joint training of parents with staff members. The receiving school's improvement plan is sufficient to address this area 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 II: Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the UBHC/UMDNJ 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 LEA and DOE, provision of services as per IEP, provision of physical therapy (PT) services as per IEP, provision of speech language services as per IEP and provision of counseling services as per IEP.

During the self-assessment process, the UBHC/UMDNJ identified a concern regarding the provision of occupational therapy services. The receiving school's improvement plan is sufficient to address this area 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.

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site visit in the area regarding policy and procedures for maintenance of hearing aids.

Area of Need:

During the on site visit, through interviews and a review of documentation of the UBHC/UMDNJ's current policies and procedures, it was determined that the school does not have a policy and procedure for the maintenance of hearing aids.

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

- **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.**

Section III: Staff Requirements

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the UBHC/UMDNJ accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas concerning certified/licensed staff, appropriate supervision of physical therapy assistants (PTA) and certified occupational therapy assistants (COTA), supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at county office and having an approved professional development plan.

During the self-assessment process, the UBHC/UMDNJ identified concerns in the areas regarding criminal history checks. The receiving school's improvement plan is sufficient to address this area 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 this area.

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

Section VII: Programs/Services

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the UBHC/UMDNJ 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 specialized populations, special classes serving students with similar educational needs, teachers instructing in core curriculum content standards, collaboration for home instruction, dispensing medication, nursing services, policies and procedures relating to school functions and services and medical exams for sport teams.

During the self-assessment process, the UBHC/UMDNJ identified concerns in the area regarding the implementation of goals and objectives that are linked to the core curriculum content standards through the general education curriculum as indicated in the IEP. The receiving school's improvement plan is sufficient to address this area 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 this area.

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

Section VIII: Student Records

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the UBHC/UMDNJ accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding conformance to pupil record code, return of records upon termination, access to records is limited to authorized persons, access sheets, location of other records specified in central file, daily attendance available to LEAs, written communication to LEAs regarding 5 days of tardiness /absences and maintenance of student health records.

During the self-assessment process, the UBHC/UMDNJ identified concerns in the area regarding written notification of attendance to the county office. The receiving school's

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

improvement plan is sufficient to address this area 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 this area.

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

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

Summary

On-site special education monitoring was conducted at the University Behavioral HealthCare/University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ (UBHC/UMDNJ) on December 1 and 2, 2003. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the UBHC/UMDNJ'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 exceptionally comprehensive review conducted during the self-assessment process. As a result of this review, the receiving school was able to identify all but one area of need and develop an improvement plan that will be sufficient to 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, many 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.

Facility Requirements, IEP/Annual Review and **Discipline** were determined to be areas of compliance by the UBHC/UMDNJ during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Additional areas identified as consistently compliant by the UBHC/UMDNJ during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included policies and procedures, annual reports, amendments, programs provided in nonsectarian settings, 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 LEA and DOE, provision of services as per IEP, provision of physical therapy (PT) services as per IEP, provision of speech language services as per IEP, provision of counseling services as per IEP certified/licensed staff, appropriate supervision of physical therapy assistants (PTA) and certified occupational therapy assistants (COTA), supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at county office, having an approved professional development plan, 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 instructing in core curriculum content standards, collaboration for home instruction, dispensing medication, nursing services, policies and procedures relating to school functions and services and medical exams for sport teams.

During the self-assessment process, the UBHC/UMDNJ identified areas of need regarding provision of joint training of parents, provision of occupational therapy services per students' IEPs, verification of criminal history checks, training of teachers in the core curriculum content standards, and written notice of attendance to the county office of education.

The on-site visit identified an additional area of need within the various standards regarding maintenance of hearing aids.

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