

District Strengths:

The district should be commended for developing a spirit of collegiality and professionalism among staff. In addition, the district holds a variety of events that allow the middle school students to interact with the elementary age students. An example of this activity is the district science fair.

Area Demonstrating Compliance with All Standards:

Reevaluation, Eligibility, Preschool Transition, Discipline and Statewide Assessment were determined to be areas of compliance by the district during self-assessment and by the Office of Special Education Programs during the on-site visit.

Section I: General Provisions

Summary of Findings:

During the self-assessment, the district accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of policies and procedures and dissemination of IDEA information.

During the self-assessment, the district identified concern regarding professional/parent skills development. The district has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address these areas of need.

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

Section II: F.A.P.E.

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the district accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of extended school year, provision of related services, length of day/year, facilities and certifications.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns regarding transfer students. The district has developed an improvement plan that is insufficient to address this area of need because it lacks an administrative oversight component. The district will revise its improvement plan to include this component.

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

Section III: Procedural Safeguards

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the district accurately identified themselves compliant in the area of consent, notices of meetings, written notice and native language.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns regarding surrogate parents, meetings and maintaining a list of independent evaluators. The district has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address these areas of need.

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

Section IV: Location, Referral & Identification

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the district accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of referral process, direct and summer referrals, vision and hearing screenings and identification meeting timelines and participants.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns regarding Child Find and health summary. The district has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address these areas of need.

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

Section V: Evaluation

Summary of Findings:

During the self-assessment the district accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of multi-disciplinary evaluation, standardized assessment, functional assessment, bilingual evaluations and acceptance/rejection of reports.

During the on-site visit an area of need was identified regarding written reports.

Area of Need:

Written Reports - A review of records indicated that speech therapy evaluations include eligibility statements in the body of the written report. These statements included recommendations for specific therapy times and goals.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that eligibility statements are not included in written evaluation reports. The improvement plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure these procedures are implemented.**

Section VIII: Individual Education Program

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the district accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of participants, considerations and required statements, alignment of

goals/objectives with the core curriculum standards (CCCS), implementation dates, annual review timelines, ninety-day timelines and teacher knowledge and access.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns regarding the reporting of progress to parents. The district has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address these areas of need.

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

Section IX: Least Restrictive Environment

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the district accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of individualized decision-making, considerations and documentation, regular education access and continuum.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified a concern regarding nonacademic/extracurricular participation for out-of-district students. The district has developed an improvement plan that is insufficient to address this area of need because it lacks procedures and an administrative oversight component to ensure that all in-district nonacademic and extracurricular activities are made available to out-of-district students. The district will revise its improvement plan to include these elements.

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

Section X: Transition

Transition from School to Post-School

Summary of Findings:

During the self-assessment process, the district accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of agency involvement and transition service needs.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns regarding student invitations. The district has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address this area of need.

No additional area of need was identified during the on-site monitoring visit.

Section XIV: Programs and Services

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the district accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of class sizes, age ranges, group sizes for speech and home instruction.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified a concern regarding special class descriptions. The district did not submit an improvement plan to bring this area into compliance. The district will revise its improvement to include procedures to ensure special class descriptions are written and submitted to the county office as needed.

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

Section XV: Student Records

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the district accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of parent/adult student access to records, access sheets, maintenance and destruction of records.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified a concern regarding staff knowledge of student records policy and procedures. The district has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address this area of need.

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding documentation of locations of other records maintained by the district.

Area of Need:

Documentation of Locations – A review of records indicated that the central files do not identify the location of other records maintained by the district.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that central files identify the locations of other student records maintained by the district as required by N.J.A.C. 6:3.**

Summary

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Alpine School District on December 3, 2001. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the district's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review the district's improvement plan. The district is commended for the thorough and comprehensive review conducted during the self-assessment process. As a result of this review the district was able to self-identify almost all areas of need and develop an improvement plan that with some revision, will be sufficient to bring about systemic change. The district is further commended for the many areas that were determined by the district and verified by the Office of Special Education Programs as compliant with federal and state statutes and regulations.

At a focus group meeting held prior to the monitoring visit, parents expressed their satisfaction with many of the district's programs and services. One issue raised by the parents was that of professional/ parent knowledge of specific disabilities. Other issues raised by parents were specific to their individual children and were not systemic issues. The district had already identified during the self-assessment process the concerns that were raised by the parents during the focus group meeting.

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the district during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included policies and procedures, dissemination of IDEA information, extended school year, provision of related services, length of day/year, facilities, certifications, consent, notices of meeting, written notice, native language, referral process, direct referrals, summer referrals, vision and hearing screenings, identification meeting timelines and participants, multi-disciplinary evaluation, standardized assessment, functional assessments, bilingual evaluations, acceptance/rejection of reports, reevaluation, eligibility, IEP participants, considerations/required statements, alignment of goals/objectives to the CCCS, implementation dates, annual review timelines, ninety-day timelines, teacher knowledge/access to IEPs, individualized decision making, considerations and documentation, Oberti factors, supplementary aids and services, access to regular education, continuum of programs, transition to preschool, age fourteen transition service needs, preferences/interests, courses, discipline, statewide assessment, class size, age range, group size for speech, home instruction, parent/adult student record access, access sheets, student record maintenance and destruction of records.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified areas of need regarding professional/parent development, transfer students, surrogate parents, meetings, independent evaluations, Child Find, health summary, IEP related progress reporting, nonacademic/extracurricular participation for out of district students, student invite, special class descriptions and staff knowledge of student records policy and procedures.

The on-site visit identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding written reports and documentation of locations.

Within forty-five days of receipt of the monitoring report, the district will revise and resubmit the improvement plan to the Office of Special Education Programs to address the areas of need identified during the on-site visit and those areas that require revisions to the improvement plan.

