



## **New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Monitoring**

The district is further commended for the development of a “Technology and Problem Solving” mathematics curriculum designed to stimulate real world problems. Students create solutions to problems such as designing, financing and building a bridge, given basic tools needed to construct a solution.

The district provides a full-time itinerant teacher of the hearing impaired to address the needs of in-district students. The teacher provides direct supplemental educational services to students, conducts in-service training to staff and monitors the specialized equipment utilized by students.

The district also supports a Special Services Advisory Council (SSAC) to provide information and support to parents of students receiving special education. The SSAC provides information on the nature of specific disabilities, instructional methodology, and resources for further research. The group also conducts parent meetings on a variety of topics throughout the school year.

### ***Data Summary:***

For the past three years, the Glen Rock School District's classification rate of students requiring special education programming and services (excluding eligible for speech and language services) has been slightly below the state average. Furthermore, for students age 6 to 21, the district's trend over the past 3 years has been to place 58.8% of the special education students in the general educational setting for more than 80% of the day. This is above the state average of 41.6%. The district has plans to expand its pre-school programs to include programs for students with autism. At this time the district has identified the need to increase the placement of preschool students with disabilities in general education settings with supplementary aids and services.

### **Section I: General Provisions**

#### **Summary of Findings:**

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

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the areas of staff and parent training. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address this area of concern.

No additional areas of need were identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit.

### **Section II: Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**

#### **Summary of Findings:**

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

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During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the areas of changes in programs and transfer students. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas.

No additional areas of need were identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit.

### **Section III: Procedural Safeguards**

#### **Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, the district accurately identified compliance in the areas of notices in native language and interpreters at meetings.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the areas of surrogate parents, consent and independent evaluations. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas. The district further identified concerns regarding notice of meetings and written notice. **No improvement plan was submitted. The district will revise its improvement plan to address these areas of need.**

An additional area of need was identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit regarding meeting participants.

#### **Area(s) of Need:**

**Participants at Identification Meetings, Reevaluation Meetings, Eligibility Meetings and IEP Meetings-** During the on-site visit, record review and interviews indicated that the required participants are not always present at meetings.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to include activities to ensure that all required participants attend meetings. Implementation of these activities will ensure that parents can ask questions of the professional staff and understand how their child's needs impact educational performance. Implementation will also ensure that special and general education teachers are afforded the opportunity to more fully participate in special education process. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of these activities.**

### **Section IV: Location, Referral and Identification**

#### **Summary of Findings:**

During the self-assessment, the district accurately identified compliance in the areas of Child Find, direct referrals by staff, summer referrals, health summary and vision and hearing screenings.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns regarding the referral process, pre-referral interventions and identification meeting timelines.

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An additional area of need was identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit regarding identification meeting participants. (See Section III)

### ***Section V: Protection in Evaluation and Evaluation Procedures***

#### **Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, the district accurately identified compliance in the areas of multi-disciplinary evaluations, functional assessments, standardized assessments, written reports and bilingual evaluations.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the area of acceptance and or rejection of outside reports. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas.

Additional areas of need were identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit regarding the availability of assessment or testing tools and the conducting of evaluations delineated in evaluation plans.

#### **Area(s) of Need:**

**Conducting evaluations-** During the on-site visit, record review indicated that evaluation plans indicated that specific assessments would be conducted. Record review indicated that these evaluations were either not conducted or, if conducted, were documented in evaluation reports.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to include activities to ensure that all evaluations are conducted as indicated in evaluation plans. Implementation of these activities will ensure that student evaluations are sufficient in scope and comprehensive. Further, implementation will ensure that student needs will be identified and that students will derive educational benefit from an appropriate special education program and related services. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the implementation of these activities.**

### ***Section VI: Reevaluation***

#### **Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, the district accurately identified compliance in the areas planning meetings and reevaluations completed by June 30<sup>th</sup> of students' last year in preschool.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the areas of 3 year reevaluation timelines, determining need for additional assessments and review of existing data. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas.

An additional area of need was identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit regarding reevaluation planning meeting participants. (See Section III)

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### **Section VII: Eligibility**

#### **Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, the district accurately identified compliance in the area of meetings.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the areas of criteria, signatures of agreement and or disagreement and providing a copy of evaluation reports to parents ten days prior to a meeting. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas.

Additional areas of need were identified during the on-site visit regarding participants at eligibility meetings (See Section III) and statement of eligibility for students with a specific learning disability.

#### **Area(s) of Need:**

**Statement of Eligibility-** During the on-site visit, record review indicated that the district did not include the required components in the eligibility statement when determining eligibility for special education services for students with a specific learning disability.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that all required statements and considerations are included when determining eligibility for students with a specific learning disability. Implementation of these activities will ensure that eligibility is not the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, general cognitive deficits, emotional disturbance or environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of these activities.**

### **Section VIII: Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

#### **Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, the district accurately identified compliance in the areas of Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, age of majority, present level of educational performance, and goals and objectives aligned with core curriculum content standards.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the areas of provision of a copy of the IEP prior to implementation, implementation dates, annual review and ninety day timelines, and teacher access and responsibility. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas.

An additional area of need was identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit regarding IEP meeting participants. (See Section III)

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### **Section IX: Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**

#### **Summary of Findings:**

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the areas of the decision-making process, least restrictive environment documentation, consideration of supplemental aids and services, regular education access and notification of and participation of out of district students in nonacademic and extracurricular activities. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas. The district also identified concern regarding continuum of programs. **The district's improvement plan is insufficient as it does not address programs in the Middle or High School. The district will revise its improvement plan to include Middle and High School program needs.**

No additional areas of need were identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit.

### **Section X: Transition to Post-School**

#### **Summary of Findings:**

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the areas of age 14 transition service needs, preferences and interests, survey and assessments, and agency involvement and age 16 needed transition services. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas.

No additional areas of need were identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit.

### **Section X: Transition to Pre-School**

During the self-assessment, the district accurately identified compliance in the area of participation in transition planning conference.

An additional area of need was identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit regarding early intervention to pre-school disabled by age three.

#### **Area(s) of Need:**

**Transition to Pre-school by Age 3-** During the on-site visit, it was determined through record review that preschool students with disabilities were not consistently placed in program by age 3.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to include activities that ensure that students who are identified by early intervention are placed and require special education programming are placed in the appropriate program by age 3. Implementation of these activities will ensure a smooth transition from early intervention as well as an uninterrupted educational program for those students and families. The plan must include an**

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**administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of these activities.**

**Section XI: Discipline**

**Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, the district accurately identified compliance in the areas of procedural safeguards, suspension tracking, notification to case manager, manifestation determination, and interim alternative educational setting.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the areas of functional behavioral assessment and behavior intervention plans. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas.

No additional areas of need were identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit.

**Section XII: Statewide Assessment**

During self-assessment, the district accurately identified compliance in the areas of participation, approved accommodations and modifications and IEP documentation.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the areas of alternate proficiency assessment. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address this area.

No additional areas of need were identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit.

**Section XIII: Graduation Requirements**

**Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, the district accurately identified compliance in the areas of IEP requirements of attendance, credit hours, HSPA, local requirements, and out of district participation.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns in the area of written notice of graduation. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address this area.

No additional areas of need were identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit.

**Section XIV: Programs and Services**

**Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, the district accurately identified compliance in the areas of class size and waivers, age range and waivers, group sizes for speech therapy, and home instruction.

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During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns regarding consultation time and sufficient staff for case management. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas.

No additional areas of need were identified during the focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit.

### ***Section XV: Student Records***

#### **Summary of Findings:**

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

During the self-assessment process, the district identified concerns regarding documentation of other locations. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address this area.



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### Summary

Special education monitoring was completed in the **Glen Rock School District** on February 3 and 4, 2005. The purpose of this phase of the monitoring process 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 its exceptionally comprehensive review conducted as part of the self-assessment activities. As a result of that review, the district was able to identify nearly all areas of need and develop an improvement plan that, with some revision, will bring about systemic change. The district is further commended for the many areas identified as compliant by the district during self-assessment and verified by the Office of Special Education Programs.

A review of data indicated the district has maintained a classification rate of students requiring special educational programming and services (excluding eligible for speech and language services) below the state average. Further, for students ages 6 to 21, the district's trend over the past three years has been to place a significant percentage of special education students in the general educational setting for more than 80% of the day. This has provided these students with opportunities to learn the general education with their peers while receiving the supports they need. Furthermore, the district has developed an improvement plan to expand the preschool disabilities program to include students with autism. Additionally, the district has developed a plan to expand the consideration of general education preschool for students with disabilities.

At a public focus group meeting attended by approximately thirty-five parents, parents expressed their satisfaction with many of the district's programs and services. Additionally, members of Glen Rock's parent support group were interviewed. Many of the concerns raised by the parents during the focus meeting and interview were identified by the district during the self-assessment process. A number of parents raised concerns regarding transition to pre-school, transition to adult life and access to general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment. Further interviews indicated that parents were concerned about the delay in receiving IEPs and the need for more professional, para-professional and parent in-service training. Parents commented positively on the administrative plans proposed by the district for the expansion of programs to address these needs.

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the district during self-assessment and verified during the focus group meeting, additional parent and staff interviews and comprehensive desk audit included policies and procedures, dissemination of IDEA information, extended school year, provision of related services, length of day and year, facilities, certifications, notices in native language, interpreters at meetings, Child Find, direct referrals, summer referrals, health summary, vision and hearing screenings, multi-disciplinary evaluations, functional assessments, standardized assessments, written reports, bilingual evaluations, reevaluation planning meetings, reevaluations completed by June 30<sup>th</sup> of students' last year in preschool, eligibility meetings, IEP meetings, age of majority, present level of educational performance, goals and objectives aligned with core curriculum content standards, transition planning conference, procedural safeguards, suspension tracking, notification to case manager, manifestation determination, interim alternative educational setting, participation in statewide assessment, approved accommodations and modifications, IEP documentation, graduation requirements, out of district participation, class size and

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waivers, age range and waivers, group sizes for speech therapy, home instruction access requests for records, access sheets, maintenance and destruction of records.

During the self-assessment process the district identified areas of need regarding staff and parent training, changes in programs, transfer students, surrogate parents, consent, independent evaluations, notice of meetings, written notice, referral process, pre-referral interventions, identification meeting timelines, acceptance or rejection of outside reports, three year timelines, determining need for additional assessments, review of data, criteria, signatures of agreement or disagreement, providing a copy of evaluation reports to parents ten days prior to meetings, provision of a copy of the IEP prior to implementation, implementation dates, annual review and ninety day timelines, teacher access and responsibility, decision making process, least restrictive environment documentation, consideration of supplemental aids and services, regular education access , notification of and participation of out of district students in nonacademic and extracurricular activities, age fourteen transition service needs, preferences and interests, survey and assessments, agency involvement, age sixteen needed transition services, functional behavioral assessment, behavior intervention plans, alternate proficiency assessment, written notice of graduation, consultation time, sufficient staff for case management and documentation of other locations.

The focus group meeting, additional parent interviews and comprehensive desk audit identified additional areas of need within the various standards, regarding participants at identification, reevaluation, eligibility and IEP meetings, evaluations not conducted as per evaluation plans, statement of eligibility for specific learning disability and transition to pre-school by age three.

Within forty-five days of receipt of the monitoring report, the Glen Rock School District will revise and resubmit the improvement plan to the Office of Special Education Programs to address those areas that require revisions.