

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Monitoring

District: Hampton School District

County: Hunterdon

Monitoring Dates: October 11, 2005

Monitoring Team: Deborah Masarsky, Barbara Tucker, Robert Schweitzer

Background Information:

During the 2004–2005 school year, the **Hampton School District** conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the **Hampton School District** with an opportunity to evaluate 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 protection of procedural safeguards for students and their families;
- The development and implementation of policies and procedures resulting in procedural compliance; and
- The organization and delivery of programs and services resulting in positive student outcomes.

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 **Hampton School District** developed an improvement plan to address identified areas of need.

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) monitoring team reviewed parent surveys; conducted phone interviews with a sampling of parents of special education students; conducted a comprehensive review of student files and district's policies and procedures; and interviewed the supervisor of special services, child study team members, and speech therapists. The purpose was to verify the self-assessment findings, to assess the appropriateness of the improvement plan and to determine the district's progress in implementing the plan. Based on these activities, a determination was made by staff from the Office of Special Education Programs that the district had conducted a thorough review during the self-assessment process and developed a plan that will appropriately address all areas of need identified during that process.

Data Summary: The data report indicates that for the 2004-2005 school year the district's classification rate was 24.5% (46 classified out of a total of 188 students). The report further indicated that during that year 71% of students with disabilities ages 6-21 were included with general education students for more than 80% of the school day and only 5% of the district's students with disabilities were being educated in out-of-district settings. Additionally, all preschool students with disabilities were educated in an inclusive program with their non-disabled peers during the 2004-2005 (five students) and 2005-2006 (two students) school years.

Sections Demonstrating Compliance with All Standards

The self-assessment process required the district to review implementation of federal and state regulations categorized into 15 sections. Within each section, a number of

areas were reviewed. The on-site monitoring visit involved verification that the sections and areas identified as compliant by the district in their self-assessment were compliant with regulations. Within the sections entitled ***Statewide Assessment and Programs and Services***, all areas were identified by the district during self-assessment and the NJDOE during the monitoring process as compliant.

Areas Demonstrating Compliance

The following areas, within the 15 sections reviewed, were identified by the district’s self-assessment committee and by the Department of Education as compliant. These areas were reviewed for students eligible for special education and related services (ESERS) and students eligible for speech and language services (ESLS). Areas compliant for only one group of students are noted.

Section	Areas Demonstrating Compliance
Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended School Year • Provision of programs • Transfer procedures
Procedural Safeguards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent • Implementation without undue delay • Content/Provision of Notice of a meeting • Meetings • Notices in native language • Interpreters at meetings • Independent evaluations
Location, Referral and Identification (LRI) For ESLS or ESERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral process • Direct referrals • Identification meeting participants
Evaluation For ESLS or ESERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-disciplinary evaluations • <i>Educational Impact Statement</i> from the classroom teacher • Standardized Assessments • Bilingual evaluations • Written reports prepared by evaluators
Reevaluation – For ESLS or ESERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning meeting with required participants • Procedures when parental consent cannot be obtained • Reevaluations prior to age 5 • Documentation of efforts to obtain parental consent
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with required participants • Eligibility Criteria for students eligible for speech and language services (ESLS)
Individualized Education Program (IEP) For ESLS or ESERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting participants • Implementation dates • Meetings held annually, or more often if necessary, to review and/or revise the IEP for students eligible for special education and related services (ESERS) • Annual reviews completed by June 30

Section	Areas Demonstrating Compliance
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for all students with disabilities to access all general education programs • Continuum of Programs • Placement decisions based on students' individual needs
Transition to Preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEPs for preschool students with disabilities implemented no later than age 3

Areas of Noncompliance - Improvement Plan Review

The following areas were identified by the district's self-assessment committee as noncompliant and the accompanying improvement plan was determined by the Office of Special Education Programs to be sufficient.

Section	Area of Non-Compliance
General Provisions	Parent training - Sufficient training has not been provided to address parents' needs regarding knowledge of the special education process.
Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)	Provision of Related Services - Counseling and physical therapy services have not been consistently provided to students as prescribed in IEPs.
Location, Referral and Identification (LRI)	Child Find - Activities are not sufficient to reach migrant and/or homeless students.
	Health summary and vision and hearing screenings – The school nurse does not consistently complete health summaries, nor conduct vision and hearing screening for students eligible for special education and related services or speech and language services.
	Pre-referral interventions - The classroom teacher does not document interventions attempted prior to referral to the child study team for evaluation.
	Identification Meeting timelines - Meetings are not consistently convened within 20 days of the initial referral.
Reevaluation	Reevaluation timelines – Reevaluation meetings are not consistently conducted within three years of the previous reevaluation or when a change in eligibility is considered.
Eligibility	Eligibility criteria – Criteria for specific learning disability (SLD) have not been established (ESERS).
	Copies of evaluation reports - Parents are not consistently provided copies of evaluation reports at least 10 day prior to the eligibility determination conference.
IEP	Teacher knowledge and responsibility to implement IEPs- Procedures to inform teachers of their responsibilities to implement students' IEPs have not been developed and implemented.
	90-day timelines - Initial IEPs are not implemented within 90 days of obtaining parental consent to evaluate.

Section	Area of Non-Compliance
	IEPs provided to parents - Copies of IEP are not provided to parent(s) prior to implementation.
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)	Notification to out-of-district students – Notification is not provided to out-of-district students of non-academic and extracurricular activities available within the district.

Additional Areas of Need

The following areas were originally identified by the district’s self-assessment committee as compliant but were found to be noncompliant by the New Jersey Department of Education during the on-site monitoring:

Section	Area	Activity
FAPE	Oversight of IEP implementation - The district does not conduct sufficient oversight activities to ensure the implementation of programs required by students’ IEPs.	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include administrative oversight activities to ensure consistent implementation of programs and services required by students’ IEPs. The district’s plan must include staff training and a mechanism to determine the consistent implementation of the activities.
Procedural Safeguards	Content and Provision of <i>Written Notice - Parental Notice of Eligibility</i> does not contain the required components, nor is this notice of a meeting consistently provided to parents following eligibility determination conferences.	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that child study team members and speech-language specialists utilize the revised <i>Parental Notice of Eligibility</i> that contains the required components for ESLS and ESERS. The district’s plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation.
Evaluation	Functional Assessment - The required components of the functional assessment are not consistently included in initial evaluation reports.	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that the components of the functional assessment required by N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.4(d)2 are included within initial evaluation reports for students who are ESERS and ESLS. The district’s plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.

Section	Area	Activity
Eligibility	Signatures of agreement or disagreement – At eligibility determination conferences, participating child study team members who conducted evaluations do not consistently document agreement or disagreement (including a written rationale) with eligibility.	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that following the determination of eligibility, the district obtains signatures of agreement and/or disagreement (including rationale) and place this documentation in student files. The district’s plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.
Eligibility	The <i>Statement of Eligibility for Specific Learning Disability (SLD)</i> does not include components required by N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.5(11) i and ii.	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that the <i>Statement of Eligibility for Specific Learning Disability</i> documents the area(s) of discrepancy, as well as the fact that <i>the term does not apply to students who have learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, general cognitive deficits, emotional disturbance or environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.</i> The plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of the procedures.
IEPs	IEP required statements and considerations - The district’s IEPs for students ESERS and ESLS do not consistently contain all required components.	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that IEPs provide documentation to sufficiently describe students’ required programs and services within the required statements and considerations. The district’s plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.
	Annual Reviews for students eligible for speech- language services – Meetings are not consistently convened annually, or more often, if necessary, to review and/or revise the IEP to address the current needs of the student.	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that IEP meetings are convened annually, or more often if necessary, to review and/or revise the IEP to address the current needs of each student. The district’s plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)	Documentation of LRE decisions - For those students who are removed from general education classes for more than 20% of the school day, specific supplementary aids and services that are considered and reasons for rejection, are not documented in the IEP.	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that specific supplementary aids and services that are considered and, if rejected, the reasons for rejection are documented in the IEP when the student is removed from general education for more than 20% of the school day. The district’s plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures

Section	Area	Activity
Transition to Preschool	Child study team (CST) members participation in transition planning conference - CST members are not consistently invited to preschool transition planning conferences.	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that the preschool child study team members contact Early Intervention Programs (EIPs) in order to be invited to preschool transition conferences convened by the EIP personnel. The district's plan must include a method to document attendance at the meeting and an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.
Transition to Adult Life	The <i>Transition Service Needs</i> statement – Students' interests and preferences are not documented in the <i>Transition Service Needs</i> statement beginning at age 14 and/or when the student is transitioning into high school.	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include activities to ensure that the <i>Transition Service Needs</i> statement is appropriately completed beginning at age 14 and/or when students are transitioning from eighth grade into high school and that guidance counselors share all relevant information with the case manager. The district's plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component.
Transition to Adult Life	Student and Agency IEP Invitations - Beginning at age 14 and/or when students are transitioning from eighth grade into high school, students and agencies that may be responsible for paying or providing transition services are not invited to IEP meetings.	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include activities to ensure that beginning at age 14 and/or when students are transitioning from eighth grade into high school, students and appropriate agencies are invited to IEP meetings. The district's plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of procedures.
Discipline	Discipline - The district has not developed and/or implemented discipline procedures that reflect regulatory requirements that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notification of removal forwarded to case manager; • suspension tracking system; • IEP team meeting for first removal beyond ten days; • procedures for determination of change 	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include activities to ensure that discipline procedures are developed and utilized to reflect all code requirements. The district's plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of the procedures and activities.

Section	Area	Activity
	<p>in placement;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • procedures for conducting functional behavioral assessment and development of behavior intervention plan; • short-term removals resulting in a change of placement; • short-term removals that are not a change in placement to have school personnel determining the extent of services to be provided; • interim alternative educational setting; • manifestation determinations; and • procedural safeguard rights for potentially disabled students. 	
Graduation Requirements	Documentation in IEPs – Graduation requirements are not documented in the IEPs of students transitioning from eighth grade into high school who are 14 years of age	The district is directed to revise the improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that graduation requirements based on individual student needs are documented in IEPs for students transitioning from eighth grade into high school who are age 14. The district’s plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of the procedures.

Summary

Special education monitoring was conducted in the **Hampton School District** on October 11, 2005. The purpose 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 conducted a comprehensive review during the self-assessment process. As a result of that review, the district was able to identify many areas of need and develop an improvement plan that when implemented will bring about systemic change.

Special education data from the district indicates that for the 2004-2005 school year, the district's classification rate was 24.5% (46 students classified out of a total of 188) . The report further indicated that during that year 71% of students with disabilities ages 6-21 were included with general education students for more than 80% of the school day and only 5% of the district's students with disabilities were being educated in out-of-district settings. Additionally, all preschool students with disabilities were educated in an inclusive program during the 2004-2005 (five students) and 2005-2006 (two students) school years with their non-disabled peers.

Of the parents who participated in phone interviews, most expressed their satisfaction with the district's programs and services and communication between themselves and staff. However, some parents expressed a concern with the administrations' lack of oversight of the consistent implementation by general education teachers of accommodations, modifications, and teaching strategies required by students' IEPs.

Statewide Assessment and Programs and Services were identified by the district during self-assessment and the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education Program during the monitoring process as completely compliant sections.

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the district during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included:

- Extended school year
- Provision of programs
- Transfer procedures
- Consent
- Implementation without undue delay
- Provision of notice of a meeting
- Content of a notice of a meeting
- Meetings
- Notices in native language
- Interpreters at meetings
- Independent evaluations
- Referral process
- Direct referrals
- Identification meeting participants
- Multi-disciplinary evaluations
- Educational impact statement (ESLS)
- Standardized assessments
- Bilingual evaluations
- Written reports prepared by evaluators
- Reevaluation planning meeting with required participants
- Procedures when parental consent cannot be obtained
- Documentation of efforts to obtain parental consent
- Reevaluations prior to age 5
- Eligibility meeting with required participants
- Eligibility criteria for ESLS
- IEP meeting participants

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- Meetings held annually or more often if necessary to review and/or revise the IEP (ESERS)
- Implementation dates
- Annual reviews completed by June 30th
- Opportunity for all students with disabilities to access all general education programs
- Continuum of programs
- Placement decisions based on students' individual needs for preschool students with disabilities
- IEPs for preschool students with disabilities implemented no later than age 3

During the self-assessment process, the district identified areas of need regarding:

- Parent training
- Provision of related services
- Child Find Ages 3-21
- Pre-referral interventions
- Health summary
- Vision and hearing screenings
- Identification meeting timelines
- Reevaluation timelines
- Reevaluation when a change of eligibility is considered
- Eligibility Criteria for ESERS-SLD
- Copy of evaluation reports to parents
- Teacher knowledge and responsibility to implement IEPs
- IEP provided to parent prior to implementation
- 90-day timelines
- Notification of and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities for students educated outside the district

During the on-site visit additional areas of need were identified within the various standards regarding:

- Oversight of individualized education program (IEP) implementation
- Provision of written notice
- Content of written notice
- Functional assessment
- Signatures of agreement and/or disagreement and rationale
- Statement of eligibility for *Specific Learning Disability (SLD)*
- IEP required considerations and components
- Meetings held annually, or more often if necessary, to review and/or revise the IEP for ESLS
- Documentation of LRE decisions
- Child study team participation in post-school transition planning conference
- Beginning at age 14, IEP statement of "transition service needs"
- Student and agency invitation to transition meeting
- Written notification to the case manager when student is suspended
- Suspension tracking system
- Discipline procedures employed equitably for all students
- IEP team meeting for first removal beyond 10 days
- Procedures for determination of change in placement
- Procedures for conducting functional behavioral assessment and development of behavior intervention plan
- Short-term removals resulting in a change of placement
- Short-term removals that are not a change in placement—school

- personnel determining the extent of services to be provided
- Interim Alternative Educational Settings
- Manifestation determination meeting
- IEP documentation of graduation requirements

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

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