

## New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Monitoring

**District:** Hampton Township School District

**County:** Sussex

**Monitoring Dates:** November 25 and 26, 2002

**Monitoring Team:** Zola Mills and Janet Wright

### ***Background Information:***

During the 2001–2002 school year, the Hampton Township 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 Township School District 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 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 Township School District developed an improvement plan to address identified areas of need.

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) 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.

As the first step in the on-site monitoring process, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) held a focus group meeting for parents and community members at the Hampton Township School on November 18, 2002. Information obtained from that meeting was used to direct the focus of the monitoring visit.

During the on-site visit, the NJDOE team reviewed district documents, including district policies and procedures, student count information, master student lists, class lists, schedules of students, teachers, related service personnel, and other relevant information, including a representative sample of student records. Interviews were conducted with the district's special education administrators, building principals, general education and special education teachers, speech therapists and child study team members.

### **District Strengths:**

The district is commended for enhancing their parent information library with a variety of videos on topics of interest to parents of students with disabilities. Many parents are unable to attend workshops at the school but are able to borrow and view the videos.

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The district is also commended for its many awards including a best practice award in social studies for a program entitled, "Spinning a Better World with Clay." This was a result of a teacher's Fulbright study in Japan. Similarly, last year's award for best practice in mathematics entitled, "Math in a Japanese Garden" also grew out of an educator's Fulbright study. The tangible result is a beautifully designed and constructed Japanese Garden the whole student body can enjoy.

The district also provides programs to build friendships in the after-school Science Friendship Club and sport activities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to ask a peer to participate with them in structured activities that foster friendship and teach social skills and sportsmanship through enjoyable activities. An aide assists the teacher so that every student is able to fully participate.

In addition to displaying current student art work, each fifth grade student makes a ceramic tile that is permanently displayed in the halls. Former students and family members visiting the school make a special detour to view their tile.

Finally, the district is commended for providing programs and services to students with disabilities in a manner that is fully compliant with federal and state statutes.

### **Summary of Findings:**

During the self-assessment process the district indicated they were fully compliant with every indicator contained within the fifteen standards of the self-assessment/monitoring document. These findings were verified by the Office of Special Education Programs during the on-site monitoring visit. These fully compliant standards included: **General Provisions, FAPE, Procedural Safeguards, Location Referral and Identification, Evaluation, Reevaluation, Eligibility, IEP, Least Restrictive Environment, Transition, Discipline, Statewide Assessment, Programs and Services and Student Records**

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**Summary**

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Hampton Township School District on November 25 and 26, 2002. 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 outstanding accomplishment of being compliant with all areas of special education. This accomplishment is a testament to the commitment on the part of the district's administrators, school staff and families of students with disabilities.

At a focus group meeting held prior to the monitoring visit, parents expressed their satisfaction with the district's programs and services.

The district was determined to be fully compliant in each of the fifteen standards contained in the monitoring document. These standards include: **General Provisions, FAPE, Procedural Safeguards, Location, Referral and Identification, Protection in Evaluation and Evaluation Procedures, Reevaluation, Eligibility, IEP, Least Restrictive Environment, Transition, Discipline, Statewide Assessment, Programs and Services and Student Records.**