

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

**District:** Jersey City

**County:** Hudson

**Monitoring Dates:** May 14 – 18, 2001

**Monitoring Team:** Caryl Carthew, Stephen Coplin; Mae Dailey, Stephanie DeBruyne, Patricia Fair, Jane Marano, Deborah Marsarsky, Arlene Popovici, Kenneth Richards, Barbara Tucker, and Janet Wright

**Background Information**

During the 2000 - 2001 school year, the Jersey City Public Schools conducted a self-assessment to determine whether the district's practices regarding the provision of special education programs and services meet federal and state requirements. A steering committee comprised of administrators, educators and parents was established to gather and review all information collected in order to evaluate it for the purpose of completing the district's self-assessment.

During the 1999-2000 school year, parents and staff were invited to attend a public focus group meeting as the first step in the self-assessment process. Information was collected from additional sources within the district. Information collected by the district was the basis for its self-assessment document that cites strengths and areas of need. The district developed activities for compliance and/or improvement in the areas identified by the district during this process.

A second public focus group meeting was held in the district on May 1, 2001 prior to the monitoring visit. The monitoring team from the New Jersey State Department of Education facilitated this focus group, which included three parents and district representatives.

**District Strengths**

The district has established a summer reading intervention program, Project RAISE, for students with learning disabilities.

The district supports a number of activities throughout the district during Special Education Week.

An art therapy program for students with disabilities has been established within the district. This program resulted from collaboration between the NJ Department of Visual Arts and the district's Department of Special Services.

The district's Department of Special Services has established a newsletter for families to provide them with information regarding special education programs and services within the district.

The district's Department of Special Services has established a post-school transition programming committee. Activities have included an annual Transition Expo Resource Fair; a job coaching program; a six-week summer program called P.A.C.E. (Projects and Career Exploration Program) that is designed to provide workplace readiness skills; and the implementation of a student preferences and interest inventory (COIN Inventory) that is conducted when students reach the age of 12.

One of the district's schools has been selected to participate in the Inclusion Institute sponsored by the NJ Department of Education. This is a yearlong project designed to foster and increase inclusion opportunities for students with disabilities.

## **Section 1: General Provisions**

### **Summary of Findings:**

The district has submitted Policies and Procedures to the Department of Education. Revisions to the procedures are in process and will be submitted to the Department of Education in June 2001.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified that staff and parent professional development were areas of need. Improvement plan activities will sufficiently address these areas.

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

## **Section II: FAPE**

### **Summary of Findings:**

During the self-assessment process the district identified the need to ensure that personnel are appropriately certified and/or licensed and that an immediate review of records of transfer students must be completed. Furthermore, the district identified that regular, modified or adaptive physical education and non-academic and extra-curricular activities needed to be made available to students with disabilities. The district has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address these areas.

The district also determined that there were concerns regarding the consideration, documentation, and provision of extended school year services. The district's improvement plan will not sufficiently address this area.

After the self-assessment document was submitted, the district identified the need to increase the number of speech/language specialists to provide services as required by students' IEPs. The district has not developed an improvement plan to address this area of need.

Additional areas of need were identified during the on-site monitoring visit regarding facilities and the provision of personal aides.

### **Areas of Need:**

**Extended School Year** – During the self-assessment process, the district identified the need to make individual determinations for students with disabilities regarding their need for extended school year programs. Interviews with parents indicated that extended school year services were not consistently discussed at IEP meetings.

The district's improvement plan indicates the district's policy regarding extended school year programs will be reviewed with child study team members at least once a year. The plan also indicates that a list of students who require extended school year programming as identified in their IEPs will be developed and maintained. These activities are insufficient to address this area of need.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that extended school year services are discussed for all classified students and documented in each IEP. The plan will include an administrative oversight component to ensure full implementation of these activities.**

**Speech/Language Specialists** - After the self-assessment was submitted, the district identified the need to hire speech/language specialists in sufficient numbers to provide services as required by students' IEPs. As such, no improvement plan activities were developed to address this area of need.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure the district has sufficient staff to provide the speech/language services identified in IEPs.**

**Facilities** - Site visits to schools #8, 37, 38, and Dickinson High School indicated a number of facilities-related issues. This information has been provided to the county office of education for further action.

**Personal Aides** - During the on-site monitoring visit it was determined through interviews that due to a hiring freeze, child study teams have been instructed not to consider the option of assigning personal aides to newly identified students who require this support. In addition, staff reported that if a position were vacated, the student would not have that aide replaced even if it is required by the IEP.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that the consideration and provision of personal aides is based on the identified need of the student and not on budget and/or staff availability. The plan must include a component to ensure each student who currently requires a personal aide is provided with that service. The plan must also include an administrative oversight component to ensure full implementation of these activities.**

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

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

The district accurately assessed compliance regarding independent evaluations, obtaining consent prior to conducting initial evaluations, initial implementation of IEPs, and release of records.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified areas of need regarding procedures for obtaining and training surrogate parents and the components of written notice. The district has developed an improvement plan that sufficiently addresses these issues.

Additional areas of need were identified during the on-site monitoring regarding consent for reevaluation, native language, timelines for the provision of written notice, and provision of required procedural safeguards.

#### **Areas of Need:**

**Consent (Reevaluation)** - During the on-site visit, interviews with school personnel indicated that case managers document their attempts to obtain consent from parents for additional assessments at the time of reevaluation. However, interviews also indicated that procedures for maintaining this documentation as part of the student's main CST file varies from one case manager to the next. A review of student records indicated documentation of attempts to obtain consent for additional assessments was not consistently maintained in files.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedures it will follow to ensure that documentation of attempts to obtain parental consent for additional assessments as part of the reevaluation process are maintained in student files.**

**Native Language** - During the on-site monitoring, interviews with school personnel indicated that translators are made available for parent meetings. However, a review of signature pages failed to identify the person who functions as the interpreter at these meetings. Additionally, though school personnel indicated that the district has translated district forms into Spanish, a review of student files indicated that invitations to meetings and written notice are not consistently provided in Spanish. Furthermore, interviews and a review of records indicated that the district forms are not available in any other language other than Spanish, even when feasible.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedures it will follow to ensure that signature pages clearly identify the individual who served as the translator at the meeting and that the page is maintained in the student's file.**
- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedures it will follow to ensure that written notice and notice of a meeting are provided in the native language of the parent, when feasible.**

**Timelines for Written Notice** - During the on-site monitoring, interviews with school personnel and review of records indicated that the district mails written notice to parents following meetings under a cover letter entitled "receipt of documents notice." This notice provides a check-off format to identify which documents are enclosed in each mailing. Because this notice form is not dated, it could not be verified that written notice is provided within 15 days of a meeting. Additionally, because this form was not consistently maintained in student files, it could not be documented that written notice is even provided to parents.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedures it will follow to ensure that written notice is provided within 15 days of a meeting and that documentation of this provision as well as the date of this provision is maintained in student files.**

**Provision of Procedural Safeguards** - During the on-site monitoring, the district submitted copies of code documents (N.J.A.C. 6A: 14, N.J.A.C. 1:6A, and PRISE) for review by the monitoring team members. Based on that review it was determined the district is not providing the most recent version of PRISE, and the PRISE booklet is the only document that is provided in a language (Spanish) other than English.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedure it will follow to ensure that the most recent version of PRISE is provided to parents.**
- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedure it will follow to ensure documents that afford parents information regarding their procedural safeguards are provided in the native language of the parent, when feasible.**

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

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

During the self-assessment process the district identified the need to provide interventions in general education programs, maintain documentation of those interventions, determine the effectiveness of intervention strategies, address the over-representation of minority students who are referred for evaluation and the 20-day timeline for the identification meeting. The district has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address these areas of need.

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site monitoring visit regarding direct referrals from staff and parents.

##### **Areas of Need:**

**Direct Referral** - During the on-site monitoring visit it was determined through interviews that a number of principals do not permit a direct referral from staff members or parents and that in most cases, the request is forwarded to the Pupil Assistance Committee.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that staff and parents have the ability to directly refer a student to the child study team and to participate in a meeting when they believe the nature of the student's problem is such that an evaluation is warranted without delay. At that meeting, a decision may be made that an evaluation is not warranted and that the student needs to be referred to the PAC. At no time may a building administrator prevent the direct referral. The improvement plan must include a mechanism to establish criteria that identifies the type of documentation that would support a staff request for a direct referral. The plan must further include an administrative oversight component to ensure building administrators comply with the full implementation of these activities. It is recommended that the district provide staff development training regarding the direct referral process.**

## Section V: Protection in Evaluation and Evaluation Procedures

### Summary of Findings:

During the self-assessment process the district identified the need to include informal measures as a component of a functional assessment. The district has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address this area of need.

Additional areas of need were identified during the on-site monitoring visit regarding functional assessments, multi-disciplinary evaluations for students eligible for speech-language services, written reports and acceptance/rejection of reports.

### Areas of Need:

**Functional Assessments** - During the on-site monitoring visit it was determined through record review that functional assessments for students determined eligible for special education and related services did not contain all required components.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that all components of the functional assessment are included for students determined to be eligible for special education and related services. The improvement plan must include an administrative oversight component.**

**Multi-Disciplinary Speech-Language Evaluation/ Written Reports** - During the on-site monitoring visit it was determined through a review of speech reports that the district does not consistently include documentation of the educational impact of the speech problem. A further review indicated that written reports prepared by child study team members and speech-language therapists were not dated.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that speech-language evaluation reports identify the educational impact of the speech problem.**
- **The district will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that all written reports are dated.**

**Acceptance/Rejection of Reports** - During the on-site monitoring visit it was determined through record review that the district does not document the acceptance/rejection of reports from other public education agencies, approved clinics or agencies or professionals in private practice.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure documentation is maintained in student files of the acceptance or rejection of reports from other public education agencies, approved clinics or agencies of professional in private practice.**

## **Section VI: Reevaluation**

### **Summary of Findings:**

During the self-assessment process, the district did not identify any areas of need regarding reevaluation. However, an area of need was identified during the on-site monitoring visit regarding three-year timelines.

### **Area of Need:**

**Re-evaluation Timelines** - During the on-site monitoring visit, it was determined through record review that re-evaluations for students classified eligible for special education and related services are not conducted every three years.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that re-evaluations are conducted every three years or sooner, if conditions warrant. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of these procedures.**

## **Section VII. Eligibility**

### **Summary of Findings:**

During the self-assessment process, the district did not identify any areas of need regarding eligibility. However, an area of need was identified during the on-site monitoring visit regarding documentation of the provision of evaluation reports to parents.

### **Area of Need:**

**Documentation of Evaluation Reports to Parents** - During the on-site monitoring visit, it was determined through record review that the district does not document the provision of evaluation reports to parents.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure documentation of the provision of copies of evaluation reports is maintained in students' files.**



## Section VIII: IEP

### **Summary of Findings:**

During the self-assessment process, the district identified areas of need regarding the opportunity for parents to observe proposed placements prior to implementation of the IEP; alignment of goals and objectives in the IEP to the core curriculum content standards; conducting annual reviews of IEPs by June 30<sup>th</sup> for elementary students transitioning to secondary schools; review of IEPs within 12 months of the previous IEP; and participants at transition IEP meetings. The district's improvement plan sufficiently addresses these areas of need.

Additional areas of need were identified during the on-site monitoring including participants at IEP meetings (for other than transition IEP meetings); the statement of the transfer of rights at the age of majority; development of IEPs with all required considerations and statements; the 90-day timeline; and provision of IEPs to parents.

### **Areas of Need:**

#### **Required Considerations and Statements: Support for School Personnel –**

A review of student records and interviews indicated the district's IEP does not contain all required statements and considerations.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure the IEP includes all of the appropriate considerations and required statements identified in the state model IEP. It is recommended the district adopt the state's model IEP format.**

**Age of Majority** – During the on-site monitoring, a review of records indicated that the statement regarding the transfer of rights at the age of majority is not in the IEP or in a separate letter. As such, parents and students are not being notified of the transfer of these rights at least three years before the student reaches the age of 18.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure parents and students are informed of the transfer of rights at least three years before the student reaches the age of 18.**

**Participants at an IEP Meeting** – During the on-site monitoring visit it was determined through interviews with teachers, child study team members, principals, and parents that regular education and special education teachers do not participate at IEP meetings on a consistent basis because building principals fail to arrange for classroom coverage. Teachers and child study team members also reported that teachers are asked to sign the IEP participation page even though they did not attend the meeting.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that teachers attend IEP meetings. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure building principals or their designees arrange for classroom coverage.**

**Ninety-Day Timeline** - During the on-site monitoring, interviews with district personnel and a review of student records indicated that after parental consent for the initial evaluation is obtained, implementation of the IEP is not completed within 90 calendar days. Administrators and child study team members reported a sixty percent increase in the number of initial referrals during the 2000-2001 school year and indicated that this increase has contributed to this area of need.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that within 90 calendar days of obtaining parental consent for the initial evaluation, an IEP is implemented for each eligible student. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the district has sufficient staff to address the increasing needs of the district.**

**Provision of IEP to Parents** – Interviews with district staff indicated that IEPs are implemented as soon as possible following the IEP meeting. Special education teachers indicated that they receive copies of the IEP in a timely manner. However, interviews with parents indicated that they do not receive a copy of the IEP prior to its implementation. Additional interviews with child study team members indicated that the provision of the IEP to the parent is impacted by the availability of a copier at the meeting site. In the event teams may not access a building copier, IEPs are sent to the administration office for copying and mailing.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that parents are provided with a copy of the IEP prior to its implementation.**

## **Section IX: Least Restrictive Environment**

### **Summary of Findings:**

During the self-assessment process, the district identified areas of need regarding the decision-making process for removal of students with disabilities from regular education classes; participation of out-of-district students in nonacademic and extracurricular activities; and the need for a continuum of placements options. The district's improvement plan does not sufficiently address these areas of need.

## **Areas of Need:**

**Individualized Consideration of Supports and Services** – During self-assessment the district indicated it does not consistently consider supplementary aids and services to address the needs of students who could be educated in general education settings. A review of IEPs during the on-site indicated generic statements regarding the supports, such as “accommodations, supplementary aids and supports in the regular education program were considered and are not sufficient as the sole means of providing services because the curriculum is mismatched to the IEP and the class size is too large.”

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure appropriate consideration is given to the use of supports and services in general education settings to afford students the opportunity to receive educational services with their non-disabled peers. It is recommended that district staff participate in trainings offered by the Office of Special Education Programs regarding this decision-making process.**

**Individualized Decision-Making for Placement/ Continuum of Placement Options** - During the self-assessment process, the district identified a need to increase the existing continuum of placement options. Staff indicated that only a few of the schools offer in-class support programs. Interviews with staff and parents indicated the district’s lack of a full continuum of placement options directly impacts on the individual decision-making process because placement decisions are based on what is available in the school and not on the individual educational needs of the student.

A review of data and interviews with district staff during the on-site visit indicated that access to regular education programs by students with disabilities varies from building to building. While in-class support classes have been developed in some schools, several schools offer self-contained classes, only. For example, the special education programs that are housed in School #1 are comprised of bilingual classes and self-contained classes. Because there are no resource center classes or opportunities for in-class support, these special education students have no opportunities for academic integration with non-disabled students during the school day if supports are required to effect that integration.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure teams have the ability to consider a full continuum of placement options. The plan will include the method by which the district will identify, develop, and provide these options on a district-wide basis.**
- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that placement decisions are based upon individual student needs and that students with disabilities have opportunities to access services in regular education settings with required supports and services. These**

**activities must be linked to the development of the district-wide continuum of program options.**

**Participation in nonacademic and extracurricular activities** – During the self-assessment process, the district identified that students placed in out-of-district programs needed to have access to nonacademic and extracurricular activities with their non-disabled peers. Interviews with district staff and parents indicated that parents do not receive any notices regarding school activities.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that students placed in out-of-district programs have the opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities with their nondisabled peers. The plan must include a mechanism that will ensure parents are provided with information regarding these activities.**

## **Section X: Transition**

### **A. Transition to Preschool**

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

During the self-assessment process, the district did not identify any areas of need regarding transition to preschool. However, an area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding program implementation by age three.

#### **Areas of Need:**

**Transition to Preschool by Age 3** – During the on-site monitoring, a review of records indicated that although children are identified at least 120-days before their third birthday, IEP meetings and the implementation of IEPs does not occur by the student's third birthday.

- **The district will revise the improvement plan to ensure that preschoolers with disabilities have their IEPs implemented by their third birthday.**

### **B. Transition from School to Post-School**

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

The district's self-assessment identified areas of need regarding student and agency invitations, agency involvement in transition, and the identification of a person responsible to act as a liaison to post-secondary resources. The district's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas of need.

Additional areas of need were identified during the on-site visit regarding the documentation of the statement of transition service needs including courses and preferences and interests and the statement of needed transition services.

**Areas of Need:**

**Documentation within IEPs of transition planning and services** – During the on-site visit, a review of records determined that IEPs do not consistently include the statement of transition service needs for students age 14 (including courses and preferences and interests) and/or the statement of needed transition services for students age 16.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure the statement of transition service needs and the statement of needed transition services are appropriately included in each student’s IEP.**

**Section XI: Discipline**

**Summary of Findings:**

The district accurately assessed compliance regarding implementation of the same disciplinary procedures for disabled and non-disabled students, conducting functional behavioral assessments, and procedures for providing interim alternative education settings.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified areas of need regarding notification of removals to case managers and development of behavior intervention plans. The district developed an improvement plan that sufficiently addresses the development of behavior intervention plans. The improvement plan does not address the notification issue.

Additional areas of need were identified during the on-site visit regarding suspension tracking, convening an IEP meeting when required, consultation with special education teachers, procedures for reviewing behavior intervention plans subsequent to the initial removal, and manifestation determinations.

**Areas of Need:**

**Notification to Case Managers** - The district identified an area of need regarding notification to case managers. Current district procedures require school administrators to copy case managers on suspension notices. However, based on record reviews and staff interviews, it was indicated this is not done on a consistent basis.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedures it will follow to ensure case managers are notified when students are removed for disciplinary reasons. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure building level implementation of these procedures.**

**IEP Meetings** - A review of suspension data and pupil records indicated that because case managers are not consistently notified when a student is removed beyond ten days, IEP meetings are not convened.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedures it will follow to ensure IEP meetings are convened when required.**

**Suspension Tracking** - During the on-site monitoring, interviews with district personnel indicated that the responsibility for tracking suspensions varies from building to building. In some instances, team members are tracking suspensions; in other instances, vice-principals and/or teachers maintain suspension data. Though disciplinarians report suspension data on all students to central office, interviews with staff indicated this data is not shared with special education personnel. As a result, in some cases, disciplinary actions are taken without affording parents and students their procedural safeguards.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedures it will follow to ensure suspension information is provided to school personnel to enable personnel to implement activities required by federal and state discipline regulations. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure full and consistent implementation of these procedures at the building level.**

**Consultation Regarding Provision of FAPE** - During the on-site monitoring, a review of records and interviews with school personnel indicated that the district does not consult with special education teachers regarding the level of services required by an individual student to enable that student to progress in the IEP goals and objectives.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedures it will follow to ensure that school personnel consult with special education teachers regarding the level of services required by the student when the removal exceeds the tenth day.**

**Review of Behavior Intervention Plans** - During the on-site monitoring, interviews with district personnel and reviews of student discipline files indicated that when a student is removed beyond the initial 10 days, the IEP team members do not consistently review the behavior intervention plan.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedures it will follow to ensure IEP team members review the behavior intervention plans subsequent to removals that occur beyond the initial 10 days. In the event any member believes revisions are necessary, the district will further ensure an IEP meeting is convened.**

**Manifestation Determinations** - During the on-site monitoring, a review of student files and interviews with district personnel indicated that when meetings are convened to conduct manifestation determinations, regular and special education teachers are not invited. Additionally, the district does not maintain documentation of the written invitation to the parent.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to identify the procedures it will follow to ensure that all the required participants, including regular and special education teachers and parents, are in attendance at manifestation determination meetings. The plan must include a mechanism to document the provision of these notices of a meeting.**

## **Section XII: Statewide Assessment**

### **Summary of Findings:**

During the self-assessment process, the district did not identify any areas of need regarding statewide assessment. However, areas of need were identified during the on-site monitoring visit regarding the provision of accommodations and modifications and alternate assessments.

### **Areas of Need:**

**Provision of accommodations and modifications** - During the on-site monitoring visit, a review of IEPs determined that though the IEP contains an area that indicates accommodations and modifications are required it does not identify the specific accommodations and modifications that are required by the students. Because district staff are unaware of the specific testing modifications and accommodations required by students, they are not provided.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that IEPs document the specific accommodations and modifications needed by students when they participate in state and district-wide assessments. The plan will address how district staff will be informed of these required accommodations and modifications.**

**Alternate assessments** – During the on-site visit, a review of student records indicated an alternate assessment was not identified for those students who were exempt from participating in statewide assessments.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure the district identifies those students who will participate in the alternate assessment.**

### **Section XIII: Graduation**

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

During the self-assessment process, the district identified an area of need regarding informing students of upcoming graduation ceremonies. The improvement plan sufficiently addresses this area of need.

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding documentation of graduation requirements.

#### **Areas of Need:**

**Documentation of Graduation Requirements** – During the on-site monitoring visit, a review of student records determined that graduation requirements are not documented in IEPs on a consistent basis.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure documentation of graduation requirements in IEPs.**

### **Section XIV: Programs and Services**

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

During the self-assessment process the district identified the need to apportion time for case management responsibilities, provide supplementary instruction individually or in groups as per the IEP and submit a description of the team teaching program to the County Office of Education. The district has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address these areas of need.

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site monitoring visit regarding class size.

#### **Areas of Need:**

**Class Size** - During the on-site monitoring visit it was determined through record review and interviews that class sizes exceed those allowed by code in resource programs and self-contained classes. Furthermore, interviews indicated that many principals routinely remove classroom aides from their assignment so that



they can cover classes in the absence of teachers.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that group sizes for all resource and self-contained programs do not exceed the numbers specified in N.J.A.C. 6A:14. Furthermore, the plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure that classroom aides are not assigned by building principals to serve as substitute teachers.**

## **Section XV: Student Records**

### **Summary of Findings:**

During the self-assessment process, the district did not identify any areas of need regarding student records. However, an area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding documentation of the location of other student records.

### **Areas of Need:**

**Documentation of Location of Student Records** – During the on-site visit, a review of central files maintained in school buildings indicated an inconsistency in documentation indicating the location of additional student records.

- **The district will revise its improvement plan to ensure that all central files indicate where additional student records are located.**

## Summary

The on-site monitoring visit was conducted in the Jersey City State-Operated School district from May 14 - 18, 2001 after a public focus group meeting. The purpose of the monitoring was to verify the district's report of findings and improvement plan resulting from self-assessment. The district is commended for self-identifying most areas of need and for developing an improvement plan that with some minor revisions should serve to bring about systemic change.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified areas of need regarding staff development; extended school year; processing transfer students; provision of speech language services; staff certifications; adaptive physical education; surrogate parents; components of notices and written notices; meeting timelines; functional assessments; goals and objectives related to the core content standards; annual review timelines; parent observations of proposed placements; individualized decision-making processes; nonacademic and extracurricular participation; continuum of program options; post-school transition agency involvement; and behavior intervention plans.

The on-site team identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding facilities; provision of personal aides; documentation of attempts to obtain consent for additional assessments; native language issues; procedural safeguard documents; referral process; report issues; reevaluation timelines; provision of reports and IEPs to parents; meeting participants; IEP format; 90-day timelines; access to regular education; suspension notification and tracking issues; provision of accommodations and modifications; and class size issues.

Within forty-five (45) days of receipt of this monitoring report, the district will revise and resubmit its improvement plan to the Office of Special Education Programs.