

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

**District:** Morris County Vocational School District

**County:** Morris

**Monitoring Dates:** September 20, 2005 & October 3, 2005

**Monitoring Team:** Nicole Buten and Vanessa Leonard

***Background Information:***

During the 2004–2005 school year, the **Morris County Vocational School District** conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services, and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the **Morris County Vocational 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 Morris County Vocational 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.

During the on-site visit, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) monitor 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. A representative sample of student records was also reviewed. Interviews were conducted with the district's special education administrators, building principal and child study team members. While parents of students with disabilities were phoned on several occasions, no contact was made.

**Data Summary:**

A review of the district's data for students with disabilities indicates that the district is in its first full year of accepting full-time special education students. Currently, all 21 full-time special education students, ranging in grades nine through eleven, participate in general education for more than 80% of the school day.

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### Sections Demonstrating Compliance with All Standards

The self-assessment process required the school 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 process involved verification of the results of the district's self-assessment relative to the 15 sections. The following sections were identified by the district during self-assessment and the New Jersey Department of Education during the monitoring process as compliant:

**Procedural Safeguards, Location, Referral, Identification, Evaluation, Eligibility Individualized Education Program, Least Restrictive Environment, Transition, Discipline, Statewide Assessments, Programs and Services and Graduation Requirements.**

### Areas Demonstrating Compliance

The following areas were identified by the district's self-assessment committee and by the Department of Education as compliant.

Section	Areas Demonstrating Compliance
General Provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parent Training</li> </ul>
Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oversight of individualized education program (IEP) implementation</li> <li>▪ Extended school year</li> <li>▪ Provision of programs</li> <li>▪ Provision of related services</li> </ul>
Reevaluation- For students who may be ESLS or ESERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reevaluation when change of eligibility is considered</li> <li>▪ Planning meeting participants</li> <li>▪ Procedures when parental consent cannot be obtained</li> <li>▪ Documentation of efforts to obtain parental consent</li> </ul>

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**Areas of Noncompliance – Improvement Plan Review**

The following areas were identified by the district’s self-assessment committee as noncompliant. The district must revise the improvement plan for any area where there is an ‘X’ in the ‘Needs Revision’ column.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Plan Is Sufficient</b>	<b>Plan Needs Revision</b>	<b>Implemented and the district has demonstrated compliance</b>
FAPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transfer students- District personnel are unable to ensure timely implementation of IEPs of transfer students due to difficulty obtaining records.</li> </ul>	X		
Reevaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Three-year timelines- Reevaluations may not be conducted within three years due to a lack of a sufficient database.</li> </ul>	X		

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### ***Summary***

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Morris County Vocational School District on September 30 and October 3, 2005. 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 comprehensive review conducted during the self-assessment process. As a result of that review, the district was able to identify all areas of need and develop an improvement plan that will bring about systemic change. The district is further commended for the many areas determined by the district and verified by the OSEP as compliant with federal and state statutes and regulations.

A review of the district's data for students with disabilities indicates that the district is in its first full year of accepting full-time special education students in programs. Currently, all 21 full-time special education students, ranging in grades nine through eleven, participate in general education for more than 80% of the school day.

In order to obtain parent input, a monitor made several attempts to contact parents of students with disabilities within the district; however parents could not be reached.

Standards identified as consistently compliant by the district during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included Procedural Safeguards, Location, Referral, Identification, Evaluation, Eligibility, Individualized Education Program, Least Restrictive Environment, Transition, Discipline, Statewide Assessments, Graduation Requirements, and Programs and Services.

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the district during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included parent training, oversight of individualized education program (IEP) implementation, extended school year, provision of programs, provision of related services, reevaluation when change of eligibility is considered, planning meeting participants, procedures when parental consent cannot be obtained and documentation of efforts to obtain parental consent.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified areas of need regarding transfer students and three-year timelines.

No additional areas of need were identified during the monitoring process.

No revisions to the district's improvement plan are required. As a result, the improvement plan submitted to the OSEP will be reviewed for final approval. Verification of the implementation of the remaining activities in the improvement plan will be conducted by the Morris County Office of Education.