

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

School: Galloway Community Charter School

County: Atlantic

Monitoring Dates: February 22 & 23, 2006

Monitoring Team: Jane Marano and Cheryl Merical

Background Information:

During the 2004-2005 school year, the Galloway Community Charter School conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the Galloway Community Charter School 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 Galloway Community Charter School 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) monitoring team reviewed charter school documents, including policies and procedures, student count information, master student lists, class lists, schedules of students, teachers and related service personnel and other relevant information. A representative sample of student records was also reviewed. Interviews were conducted with the charter school's special education administrator, general education and special education teachers, speech-language specialist and child study team social worker.

Data Summary:

A review of the charter school's data for students with disabilities indicates that during the 2005-2006 school year, the charter school educated 34 of 35 students with disabilities (97%) in the general education setting for more than 80% of the school day. However, the charter school indicated in their self-assessment that placement decisions are not based on the individual needs of the students. Interviews with parents indicated satisfaction with the school's programs and services. The charter school's classification rate was 6.44% (excluding students eligible for speech-language services) for the 2005-2006 school year, which was below the state average of 14.85% for that year.

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Sections Demonstrating Compliance with All Standards

The self-assessment process required the charter 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 visit involved verification that the sections and areas identified as compliant by the charter school in their self-assessment were compliant with regulations. These sections were identified by the charter school during self-assessment and the NJDOE during the monitoring process as compliant:

- General Provisions
- Statewide Assessment

Sections and Areas Not Reviewed

The following sections and/or areas could not be reviewed by the NJDOE during the on-site monitoring because the charter school does not serve a population of students to whom these regulations apply:

- Transition to Preschool
- Transition to Adult Life (beginning at age 16)
- Graduation
- Reevaluation by June 30 of last year in preschool

Areas Demonstrating Compliance

The following areas, within the remaining sections reviewed, were identified by the charter school's self-assessment committee and by the NJDOE 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"> ▪ Oversight of IEP implementation ▪ Extended school year ▪ Provision of programs
Procedural Safeguards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consent ▪ Implementation without undue delay ▪ Provision of notice of meeting ▪ Content of notice of meeting ▪ Content of written notice ▪ Notices in native language ▪ Interpreters at meetings ▪ Independent evaluations
Location, Referral and Identification (LRI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct referrals ▪ Identification meeting participants
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multi-disciplinary evaluations ▪ Educational impact statement (ESLS) ▪ Standardized assessments ▪ Bilingual evaluations ▪ Written reports prepared by evaluators

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Section	Areas Demonstrating Compliance
Reevaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reevaluation when change of eligibility is considered ▪ Planning meeting participants ▪ Procedures when parental consent cannot be obtained ▪ Documentation of efforts to obtain parental consent
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting participants ▪ Eligibility criteria ▪ Statement of eligibility (Specific Learning Disability) ▪ Signature of agreement and/or disagreement and rationale
Individualized Education Program (IEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IEP meeting participants ▪ IEP required considerations and components ▪ Implementation dates ▪ Teachers informed of their responsibilities (knowledge of and/or access to IEPs)
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documentation of LRE decisions ▪ Notification of and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities for students educated outside of the district ▪ Opportunity for all students with disabilities to access all general education programs ▪ Continuum of programs
Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 determinations
Programs and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Class size ▪ Age range ▪ Group size

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Areas of Noncompliance – Improvement Plan Review

The following areas were identified by the charter school's self-assessment committee as noncompliant. The improvement plan submitted by the charter school was found to be insufficient. The table includes improvement activities that must be completed within six months of receipt of this report to correct noncompliance.

Section	Area	Improvement Activity
FAPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="422 470 820 695">▪ Provision of related services – The charter school is not able to hire and retain therapy providers and contracted services are not provided in a timely manner. <li data-bbox="422 800 820 1031">▪ Provision of related services – Goals and objectives for related services (counseling, physical therapy, and occupational therapy) are not included in the IEP. <li data-bbox="422 1167 820 1528">▪ Transfer procedures – The charter school does not have procedures to conduct a child study team review of IEP and evaluation information, immediate implementation of program and services, and development of an interim IEP, when appropriate. 	<p data-bbox="847 470 1396 764">The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that sufficient staff members are employed to provide related services and/or that contracted services are delivered in accordance with IEPs. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p> <p data-bbox="847 800 1396 1129">The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that goals and objectives are developed and documented in the IEP and that related services are provided in accordance with those goals and objectives. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p> <p data-bbox="847 1167 1396 1434">The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that transfer students receive appropriate programs and services in a timely manner. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p>
Procedural Safeguards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="422 1541 820 1671">▪ Meetings – The charter school does not schedule meetings at a mutually agreeable time. 	<p data-bbox="847 1541 1396 1835">The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that meetings are arranged to allow parents to participate in the decision-making process. Parents may participate by phone if they cannot attend in person. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p>

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Section	Area	Improvement Activity
Procedural Safeguards (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of written notice – The charter school does not provide written notice to parents within 15 days of meetings. 	<p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that notice is provided within 15 days following meetings to ensure that parents are informed of the actions the team is proposing. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p>
LRI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Find - The charter school does not have written procedures for Child Find and does not disseminate information to the charter school population. ▪ Pre-referral interventions – Interventions in general education are not sufficient in scope and timelines are not established to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions ▪ Health summary and Hearing and Vision screenings – The charter school does not consistently obtain a health summary from the school nurse and hearing and vision screenings are not conducted prior to the child study team identification meeting. ▪ Identification meeting timelines – The charter school does not conduct identification meetings within 20 days of the referral. 	<p>On-site monitoring verified that improvement plan activity has been implemented and the charter school has demonstrated compliance.</p> <p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that students are afforded the opportunity to receive intervention services within the general education environment before being referred to the child study team for an evaluation. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p> <p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that identification team members have the necessary information to identify suspected areas of disability and to determine the assessments needed to make an appropriate eligibility determination. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p> <p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that a meeting is conducted within 20 days of receipt of a referral in order for staff and parents to have the opportunity to discuss available information and determine if an evaluation is warranted. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p>

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Section	Area	Improvement Activity
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Functional assessment – The charter school does not conduct functional assessments as part of the evaluation process. 	<p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that all components of a functional assessment are completed as part of each initial evaluation. Results of all components must be included in written reports. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p>
Reevaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Timelines – The charter school does not consistently conduct reevaluations within the required timelines. 	<p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that a reevaluation planning meeting is conducted as required to determine continued eligibility as well as the need for any revisions to the program or services. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p>
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of evaluation reports to parents – The charter school does not consistently provide copies of evaluation reports to parents 10 days prior to the eligibility conference. 	<p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that copies of reports are sent to parents 10 days prior to the eligibility meeting to provide the opportunity to review evaluation results in preparation for the eligibility meeting. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p>
IEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP provided to parents prior to implementation – The charter school does not consistently provide parents with a copy of the IEP prior to implementation (especially if the IEP is developed during the summer). 	<p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that parents are provided with a copy of the IEP prior to implementation so that parents are aware of the programs and services their child will receive, as agreed to by the IEP team. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p>

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Section	Area	Improvement Activity
IEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings held annually, or more often if necessary and Annual Reviews completed by June 30 – The charter school does not conduct meetings annually to review and/or revise the IEP, conduct IEP meetings when there is a change in placement (such as home instruction) and annual reviews are not completed by June 30 for students transitioning from elementary to secondary programs. • 90-day timelines – The charter school does not consistently complete initial evaluations, determine eligibility and, if eligible, develop and implement the IEP within the required 90 days. 	<p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that every student with a disability has a valid IEP and receives the program and services required by the IEP. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p> <p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that within 90 days of receipt of parental consent, evaluations are conducted eligibility is determined and, if eligible, initial IEPs are implemented. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p>
LRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placement decisions based on individual needs of students – The IEP team at the charter school often determines placement based solely upon parent request. 	<p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities, to include in-service training, to ensure that placement decisions are based upon the student’s individualized education program. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p>
Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of removal forwarded to case manager – The charter school does not notify the child study team case manager when a student with disabilities is suspended. 	<p>The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that the case manager is informed of suspensions to accurately track removals and thus to ensure students are provided educational services. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.</p>

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Section	Area	Improvement Activity
Programs and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common planning time – The charter school does not provide an opportunity for resource teachers to meet and collaboratively plan instruction with general education teachers. 	The charter school is directed to implement improvement activities to ensure that resource teachers and general education teachers are afforded the opportunity to meet to plan lessons and identify strategies and techniques that will afford students with disabilities the opportunity to participate successfully in general education programs. The charter school must also implement an oversight mechanism to ensure correction and ongoing compliance.

Additional Areas of Need

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

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Summary

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Galloway Charter School on February 22 and February 23, 2006. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the charter school's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review the charter school's improvement plan. The charter school is acknowledged for the comprehensive review conducted during the self-assessment process. As a result of that review, the charter school was able to identify all areas of need and develop an improvement plan that with some revisions will bring about compliance.

A review of the charter school's data for students with disabilities indicates that during the 2005-2006 school year, the charter school educated 34 of 35 students with disabilities (97%) in the general education setting for more than 80% of the school day. However, the charter school indicated in their self-assessment that placement decisions are not based on the individual needs of the students. Interviews with parents indicated satisfaction with the school's programs and services. The charter school's classification rate was 6.44% (excluding students eligible for speech-language services) for the 2005-2006 school year, which was below the state average of 14.85% for that same year.

During interviews conducted with parents by phone, parents expressed their satisfaction with the district's programs and services and staff.

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

- General Provisions
- Statewide Assessment

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

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Oversight of IEP Implementation▪ Extended school year▪ Consent▪ Implementation without undue delay▪ Provision of notice of meeting▪ Content of notice of meeting▪ Content of written notice▪ Notices in native language▪ Interpreters at meetings▪ Independent evaluations▪ Direct referrals▪ Identification meeting participants▪ Multi-disciplinary evaluations▪ Educational impact statement (ESLS)▪ Standardized assessments▪ Bilingual evaluations▪ Written reports prepared by evaluators▪ Reevaluation when change of eligibility is considered | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Planning meeting participants▪ Procedures when parental consent cannot be obtained▪ Documentation of efforts to obtain parental consent▪ Eligibility meeting participants▪ Eligibility criteria▪ Statement of eligibility (Specific Learning Disability)▪ Signature of agreement and/or disagreement and rationale▪ IEP meeting participants▪ IEP required considerations and components▪ Implementation dates▪ Teachers informed of their responsibilities (knowledge of and/or access to IEPs)▪ Documentation of LRE decisions▪ Notification of and participation in non-academic and extracurricular |
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| <p>activities for students educated outside of the district</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Opportunity for all students with disabilities to access all general education programs▪ Continuum of programs▪ 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 | <p>development of behavior intervention plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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 determinations▪ Class size▪ Age range▪ Group size |
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One area, Childfind, was originally identified by the charter school as noncompliant but verified as corrected during the on-site monitoring visit by the NJDOE.

During the self-assessment process, the district identified areas of need for which improvement activities must be conducted. These areas included:

- Provision of related services
- Transfer procedures
- Meetings
- Provision of written notice
- Pre-referral interventions
- Referral process
- Health summary
- Hearing and vision screening
- Identification meeting timelines
- Functional assessment
- Students assessed in all areas of suspected disability (ESLS)
- Reevaluation timelines
- Copy of evaluation reports to parents
- IEP provided to parents prior to implementation
- IEP meetings held annually, or more often if necessary, to review and/or revise the IEP
- Annual review conducted by June 30
- 90-day timeline
- Placement decisions based on students' individual needs
- Discipline notification of removal forwarded to case manager
- Common planning time

No additional areas of need were identified as noncompliant by the NJDOE during the on-site monitoring. The improvement plan submitted to the OSEP has been reviewed and approved. The charter school is expected to implement the improvement activities described in the monitoring report to achieve compliance in all of the areas of need identified during the self-assessment within six months of the date of this report. Verification of compliance will be conducted by the County Office of Education.