



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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CHRIS CHRISTIE  
*Governor*

KIM GUADAGNO  
*Lt. Governor*

CHRISTOPHER D. CERF  
*Acting Commissioner*

December 6, 2011

Dr. Scott Oswald, Superintendent  
Collingswood Borough School District  
200 Lees Avenue  
Collingswood, NJ 08108-3106

Dear Dr. Oswald:

Subject: Special Education Monitoring - Correction of Noncompliance – Collingswood  
Borough School District

This correspondence has been sent to inform you of the status of the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education (NJOSE) onsite monitoring regarding the Collingswood Borough School District's implementation of federal and state special education requirements. All findings of noncompliance identified as a result of monitoring were corrected within one year of identification. No further action regarding this monitoring is required by Collingswood Borough School District. Of the 46 requirements reviewed, the district demonstrated noncompliance with eleven requirements. Through ongoing verification activities, the district demonstrated correction of all areas of noncompliance. The district must maintain a system of oversight to ensure continued compliance with federal and state special education requirements.

Questions regarding the monitoring process should be directed to Kim Murray at 609-292-7605.

The NJOSE appreciates the cooperation of district staff members during the monitoring and verification process.

Sincerely,

Peggy McDonald, Interim Director  
Office of Special Education

PM/KR

c: Barbara Gantwerk  
Kenneth Richards  
Peggy Nicolosi  
Catherin Thomas  
Joanne Plescia



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**CHRIS CHRISTIE**  
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*Acting Commissioner*

October 5, 2011

Dr. Scott Oswald, Superintendent  
Collingswood School District  
200 Lees Avenue  
Collingswood, NJ 08108

Dear Dr. Oswald:

**Subject: Special Education Monitoring Report – Collingswood School District**

This correspondence has been sent to inform you of the results of the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education's onsite monitoring regarding the Collingswood School District's implementation of federal and state special education requirements. The New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education (NJOSE), conducted onsite monitoring visits, verification visits and desk audits in the Collingswood School District to determine compliance with federal and state special education requirements. The members of the monitoring team were Kenneth Richards, Patricia Fair and Caryl Carthew.

The special education monitoring system is data driven and aligned with the federally required State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators, including the federal monitoring priorities established by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004). Specifically, the NJOSE monitoring process is focused on improving educational results and functional outcomes for students with disabilities and ensuring compliance with those special education requirements related to positive student outcomes.

The special education self-assessment and monitoring process focused on requirements related to the following areas:

- ***Transition to Adult Life***
- ***State Assessment***
- ***Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment***
- ***Parent Involvement***
- ***Disproportionate Representation of Specific Racial-Ethnic Groups in Special Education***
- ***Evaluation and Reevaluation***
- ***Individualized Education Program***
- ***Programs and Services***

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The Collingswood School District was selected for the self-assessment/monitoring process through random selection.

### Monitoring Results

The enclosed Table of Findings details the findings of noncompliance resulting from the monitoring. Of the 46 requirements in the district's self-assessment that were reviewed by NJOSE, the district demonstrated noncompliance with seventeen (17) requirements. Six (6) of these areas were corrected prior to the release of this report. The remaining findings of noncompliance resulting from the onsite monitoring must be corrected within one year of the date of this report. Corrective action should include, as necessary: development and/or revision of policies and procedures, staff training, implementation of the identified IDEA and N.J.A.C. requirements and implementation of an oversight mechanism to ensure ongoing compliance. The monitoring team leader, Kenneth Richards, will contact Dr. Joanne Plescia to discuss procedures for verification of correction of the findings of noncompliance listed in the Table of Findings. *For any finding of noncompliance related to the development or implementation of IEPs or the delivery of programs and services, corrective action activities have been directed by NJOSE.*

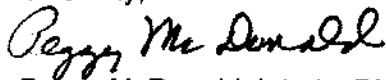
The results of the special education monitoring must be reviewed at the next meeting of the district's board of education. A copy of the minutes from the board of education meeting documenting the review by the board must be submitted to the following address:

Kenneth Richards  
New Jersey Department of Education  
Office of Special Education  
One Executive Campus, 3rd Floor  
Route 70 West  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003

Questions regarding the enclosed monitoring report should be directed to Dr. Peggy McDonald, Interim Director, Office of Special Education, at 609-292-0147.

The NJOSE appreciates the cooperation of district staff members during the self-assessment/monitoring process.

Sincerely,



Peggy McDonald, Interim Director  
Office of Special Education

#### Enclosure

c: Barbara Gantwerk  
Kenneth Richards  
Peggy Nicolosi  
Catherine Thomas  
Joanne Plescia

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**Section II - STATE-WIDE APPLICABLE**  
**THE IDEA V. DISPERSED, INTER-AGENCY SERVICES**  
**Section VII - PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**  
**Section C - TRANSITION SERVICES**

**Areas of Non-Compliance**

Violations	Findings of Noncompliance
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<p>2) Invitation to IEP meetings provided to students and agencies providing or paying for transition services. [N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.3(k)2x and 3.7(e)13, 3.7(h); 20 U.S.C. §1414 (d)(1)(A)(i)(1)(VIII); and 34 CFR §300.322.b(2)]</p>	<p>Noncompliance identified during the monitoring process was verified as corrected during a verification visit conducted on August 3, 2011.</p>
<p>3) IEP requirements for students ages 14 and above, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.7(e) II.</p>	<p>Review of records and interviews with staff indicated that IEPs developed for students age 14 and above did not consistently identify the liaison to post secondary resources due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.</p>
<p>4) A summary of academic achievement and functional performance shall be provided to each student prior to graduation, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.11(b)4; 20 U.S.C. §1414(c)(5)(B); and 34 CFR §300.305(e)(3).</p>	<p>Noncompliance identified during the monitoring process was verified as corrected during a verification visit conducted on August 3, 2011.</p>

<b>Section III - LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT</b>	
Violations	Findings of Noncompliance
<p>4) IEPs shall include a comparison of the benefits provided in the regular class and the benefits provided in the special education class, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.2(a) 8(ii).</p>	<p>Review of records and interviews with staff indicated that IEPs did not consistently compare the benefits provided in both the special education class and regular education class due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.</p>
<p>5) IEPs shall include the potentially beneficial or harmful effects which a placement (general education) may have on the student with disabilities or the other students in the class. [20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(5); 34 CFR §300.116(d)]</p>	<p>Review of records and interviews with staff indicated that IEPs did not consistently document the potentially beneficial or harmful effects the placement in the general education class may have on the student or other students due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.</p>

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6) For students in a separate setting, IEPs shall include activities to transition students to a less restrictive environment, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.2(a) 4.

Review of records and interviews with staff indicated that when developing the IEP, staff did not document activities to transition students to a less restrictive environment due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.

**Corrective Action (4, 5):** The district is required to conduct training with child study team members regarding IEP statements for determining students' educational placements and documenting these decisions in IEPs.

The district is required to conduct a meeting of the IEP team for each student whose IEP was identified as noncompliant by the NJOSE monitors and ensure that each IEP is revised to include the required components. Names of the students whose IEPs were found to be noncompliant by the monitors will be provided to the Director of Special Education by the NJOSE.

The district must review all IEPs of students with disabilities removed from general education settings for greater than 20% of the school day. For any IEP where placement decisions are not appropriately documented, a meeting of the IEP team must be convened to review and revise the IEP.

**Corrective Action (6):** The district is required to conduct training with child study team members regarding procedures to ensure that IEPs for all students placed in separate settings shall include activities to transition students to a less restrictive environment.

The district is required to conduct a meeting of the IEP team for each student whose IEP was identified as non compliant by the NJOSE monitors and ensure that each IEP is revised to include required components. Names of those students whose IEPs were identified as noncompliant by the monitors will be provided to the Director of Special Education by the NJOSE.

The district must review all IEPs of students with disabilities who are placed in separate settings. For any IEP in which the district did not document activities to transition students to a less restrictive environment, a meeting of the IEP team must be convened to review and revise the IEP.

**Section IV: PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

**Areas of Non-Compliance:**

**Citations:**

**Findings of Noncompliance:**

1) Parents shall be given written notice of a meeting containing all the required components, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.3(k) 3, 5; 20 U.S.C. §1414(b)(1); and 34 CFR §300.304(a).

Review of records and interviews with staff indicated for students eligible for special education and related services at the middle and high schools, staff did not consistently identify transition planning as a purpose of the meeting due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.

Review of records and interviews with staff indicated that for students eligible for speech - language services, notice of meeting did not identify meeting participants

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and inform the parent of all possible purposes of the meeting when conducted for more than one purpose. Noncompliance was due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.

2) Written notice, which includes required components, shall be provided to parents following meetings, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.3(f) and 2.3(g) 1-7; 20 U.S.C. §1414(b)(1)(c)(4)(A); 34 CFR §300.304(a)(4); and 34 CFR §300.305(a).

Review of records and interviews with staff indicated that for students eligible for speech-language services, the district did not consistently provide the parent with written notice containing all required components due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.

3) Eligibility meetings shall include required participants in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.3(k) 1(i-vii); 20 U.S.C. §1414(d) (1)(B); and 34 CFR §300.321(a).

Review of records and interviews with staff indicated for students eligible for special education and related services, all required participants did not consistently attend eligibility meetings at the high school due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.

Review of records and interviews with staff indicated for students eligible for speech – language services, all required participants did not consistently attend eligibility meetings due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.

**Section V: EVALUATIONS AND REEVALUATION**

**Findings**

**Details of Noncompliance**

3) The staff of the general education program shall maintain written documentation regarding type, frequency, duration and effectiveness of each intervention used, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.3(c).

Review of records and interviews with staff indicated that general education teachers at the high school did not maintain written documentation of type, frequency, duration and effectiveness of each intervention implemented in the general education classroom due to a lack of implementation of district procedures.

4) Within 20 calendar days of receipt of the written request for an evaluation, the district shall convene a meeting with required participants, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.3(e).

Noncompliance identified during the monitoring process was verified as corrected during a verification visit conducted on August 3, 2011.

5) A vision and audiometric screening shall be conducted for every student referred to the child study team for evaluation. The school nurse shall review and summarize available health and medical information and transmit the summary to the child study team, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.4(j).

Noncompliance identified during the monitoring process was verified as corrected during a verification visit conducted on August 3, 2011.

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9) Each evaluation of a student shall include functional assessment, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.4(f) 4(i-vi); 20 U.S.C. §1414(b)(4) and (5); and 34 CFR §300.306(c)(i).	Review of records and interviews with staff indicated that for students eligible for speech – language services, functional assessments did not consistently document an observation of the student in other than a testing environment due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.
10) Within three years of the previous classification, a multi-disciplinary reevaluation shall be completed, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.8(a) and 20 U.S.C. §1414(a)(2)(B)(ii).	Noncompliance identified during the monitoring process was verified as corrected during a verification visit conducted on August 3, 2011.
14) Each child study team member shall certify in writing whether his or her report reflects his or her conclusion of eligibility of the student, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.4(h)5.	Noncompliance identified during the monitoring process was verified as corrected during a verification visit conducted on August 3, 2011.
15) A copy of the evaluation report(s) and documentation and information that will be used for a determination of eligibility shall be given to the parent or adult student not less than 10 calendar days prior to the eligibility meeting, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.5(a); 20 U.S.C. §1414(b)(4); and 34 CFR §300.306(a).	Review of records and interviews with staff indicated that students were eligible for speech-language services, the district did not provide the parent with copies of evaluation reports not less than ten (10) calendar days prior to the eligibility meeting due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.
<b>Citations</b>	<b>Findings of Noncompliance</b>
1) IEP meetings shall be held with an appropriately configured IEP team, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.3(k) 2(i-x) 1; 20 U.S.C. §1414(d)(1)(B); and 34 CFR §300.321(a).	Review of records and interviews with staff indicated that at the high school, all required participants did not consistently attend IEP meetings due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures,

**All documentation required to demonstrate completion of corrective action activities must be submitted to the following address:**

Mr. Kenneth Richards  
New Jersey Department of Education  
Office of Special Education  
One Executive Campus, 3rd Floor  
Route 70 West  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002