



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

CHRISTOPHER D. CERF
Acting Commissioner

October 5, 2011

Dr. Patrick McAleer, Superintendent
Pitman Public Schools
400 Hudson Avenue
Pitman, NJ 08071-1092

Dear Dr. McAleer:

Subject: Special Education Monitoring Report – Pitman Public 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 Pitman Public 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, in the Pitman Public School District to determine compliance with federal and state special education requirements. The members of the monitoring team were Patricia Fair, Caryl Carthew and Kenneth Richards.

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

Monitoring Results

The enclosed Table of Findings details findings of noncompliance resulting from the onsite monitoring. Of the 46 requirements in the district's self-assessment that were reviewed by NJOSE, the district demonstrated noncompliance with ten (10) requirements. All findings of noncompliance 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, Patricia Fair, will contact Mr. Frank Fragale 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:

Ms. Patricia Fair
New Jersey Department of Education
Office of Special Education
1 Executive Campus, 3rd Floor
Route 70 West
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002

Questions regarding the enclosed monitoring report should be directed to Dr. Peggy McDonald at 609-292-0147. The NJOSE appreciates the cooperation of district staff members during the self-assessment/monitoring process.

Sincerely,

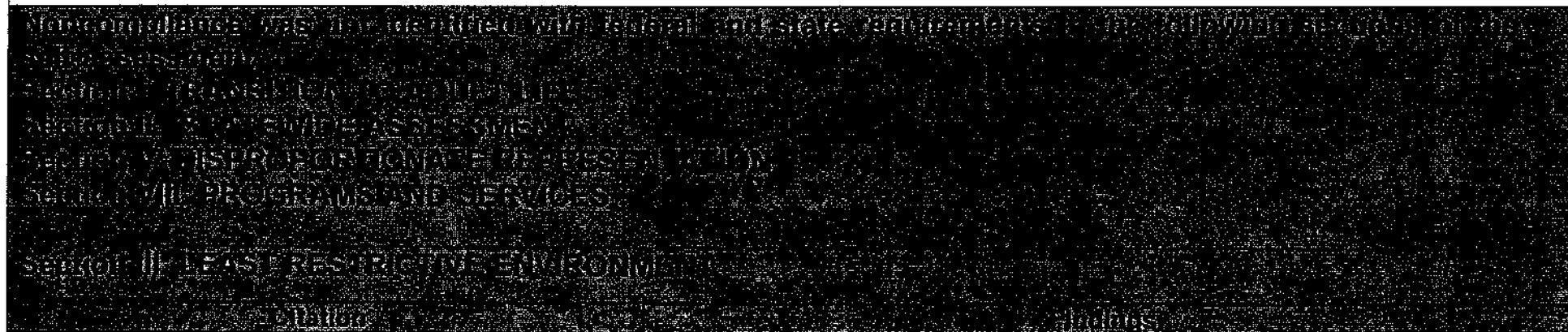


Peggy McDonald, Interim Director
Office of Special Education

PM/pf
Enclosure

c: Barbara Gantwerk
Patricia Fair
Robert Bumpus
County Supervisor of Special Services
Frank Fragale

TABLE OF FINDINGS
Special Education Monitoring Results
IDEA 2004 and New Jersey Administrative Code Requirements
Pitman Public School District



Title	Findings
1) To the maximum extent appropriate, the child is educated with children who are not disabled. [20 U.S.C. §1412(a)(5)(A); 34 CFR §300.114(a)]	Review of records and interviews with staff members indicated that IEPs did not include a statement of the supplementary aids and services considered and the reasons they were rejected due to lack of implementation of district procedures.
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)]	Review of records and interviews with staff members indicated that IEPs did not consistently identify the potential beneficial or harmful effects that a placement in general education which may have on the student or other students. Noncompliance was due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.
<p>Corrective Action for Areas 1 and 5 above: The district is required to conduct training with child study team members regarding district procedures for determining educational placements for students removed from general education more than 20 percent of the school day and documenting those decisions in IEPs. The district may refer to the state sample IEP on the Department of Education web site at www.state.nj.us/education.</p> <p>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 students whose IEPs were found to be noncompliant by the monitors will be provided to the Director of Special Education by NJOSE.</p> <p>The district must review the IEPs of all students with disabilities removed from general education settings for greater than 20 percent of the school day. For any IEP where an explanation of the extent to which the student will be educated with nondisabled peers is not correctly addressed, a meeting of the IEP team must be convened to review and revise the IEP.</p>	

TABLE OF FINDINGS
Special Education Monitoring Results
IDEA 2004 and New Jersey Administrative Code Requirements
Pitman Public School District

Section VI - PARENT INVOLVEMENT	
Requirement	Finding
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 members indicated that written notice did not consistently inform parents that they may invite others with expertise to a meeting. Noncompliance was due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.
Section VII - EVALUATIONS AND REEVALUATION	
Requirement	Finding
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).	Review of records and interviews with staff members indicated that identification meetings were not consistently held within 20 calendar days of receipt of written request for an evaluation. Noncompliance was due to a lack of implementation of district procedures.
8) Evaluations shall be conducted by a multi-disciplinary team, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.5(b)6 and 3.6(b).	Review of records and interviews with staff members indicated that evaluations for students referred for speech and language services were not consistently multi-disciplinary. The statement from the teacher describing the impact of the speech problem on the student's performance in the classroom was not completed. Noncompliance was due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.
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 members indicated that all sections of the functional assessment, including an observation in other than a testing setting, were not conducted as part of the initial evaluation of students referred for speech and language services. Noncompliance was 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).	Review of records and interviews with staff indicated that reevaluations for students were not consistently completed within three years of previous classification. Noncompliance was due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.
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	Review of records and interviews with staff indicted the parents were not provided a copy of the evaluation reports at least 10 days prior to the eligibility meeting. Noncompliance was due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.

TABLE OF FINDINGS
Special Education Monitoring Results
IDEA 2004 and New Jersey Administrative Code Requirements
Pitman Public School District

accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.5(a); 20 U.S.C. §1414(b)(4); and 34 CFR §300.306(a).

2) IEPs shall include required considerations and statements, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.7(c)1-11, (e) 1-17, and (f); 20 U.S.C. §1414(d)(3)(A)(B); and 34 CFR §300.324(a)(1)(2).

Review of records and interviews with staff members indicated that IEP goals and objectives did not consistently include evaluative criteria. In addition IEPs did not specify how related services will be delivered, individually or in a group, and for students receiving speech and language services, consideration for the need for extended school year was not consistently documented in IEPs. Noncompliance was due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.

3) IEP meetings shall be conducted annually, or more often if necessary, to review and/or revise the IEP and determine placement, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.7(i); 20 U.S.C. §1414(d); and 34 CFR §300.324(b)(1).

Review of records and interviews with staff members indicated that meetings were not consistently conducted annually to review the IEP and determine placement. Noncompliance was due to inconsistent implementation of district procedures.

Corrective Action for Area 2 above: The district is required to conduct training with child study team members regarding district procedures for ensuring that IEP goals and objectives include evaluative criteria.

The district is required to conduct training with child study team members regarding district procedures for ensuring that IEPs specify how related services will be delivered, individually or in a group, and for students receiving speech and language services, documenting the consideration for the need for extended school year.

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 NJDOE.

The district must review the IEPs of all students with disabilities to ensure that IEP goals and objectives include evaluative criteria; that the IEP documents how related services will be delivered; and that the IEP documents the consideration of extended year services. For any IEP where goals and objective does not include evaluative criteria, a meeting of the IEP team must be convened to review and revise the IEP. For any IEP which does not document how related services will be delivered, a meeting of the IEP team must be convened to review and revise the IEP. For

TABLE OF FINDINGS
Special Education Monitoring Results
IDEA 2004 and New Jersey Administrative Code Requirements
Pitman Public School District

any IEP which does not document the consideration for the need for extended school year, a meeting of the IEP team must be convened to review and revise the IEP.

Corrective Action for Area 3 above: The district is required to train staff to implement procedures regarding completion of IEPs in compliance with approved timelines. Further, the district is required to provide an oversight mechanism to ensure ongoing compliance. The NJOSE monitor will provide the director of Special Education directions for submitting documentation to demonstrate compliance. 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. Names of students with IEPs that were found to be noncompliant will be provided to the Director of Special Education by NJOSE.

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

Ms. Patricia Fair
New Jersey Department of Education
Office of Special Education
1 Executive Campus 3rd Floor
Route 70 West
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002