



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Acting Commissioner

October 20, 2011

Dr. Roy Montesano, Superintendent
Ramsey School District
266 East Main Street
Ramsey, NJ 07446-1927

Dear Dr. Montesano:

Subject: Special Education Monitoring Report – Ramsey 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 (NJOSE) onsite monitoring regarding the Ramsey School District's implementation of federal and state special education requirements. The NJOSE conducted onsite monitoring visits, verification visits and desk audits in the Ramsey School District to determine compliance with federal and state special education requirements. The members of the monitoring team were Samuel Jordan, Linda Chavez and Bergen County Supervisor of Child Study, Steven Pasternak.

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

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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Monitoring Results

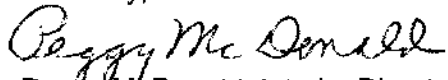
The enclosed Table of Findings details findings of noncompliance resulting from the monitoring. Of the 46 requirements in the district's self-assessment that were reviewed by NJOSE, the district demonstrated noncompliance with nine (9) requirements. Findings resulting from the onsite monitoring must 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, Ms. Jenifer Spear, will contact Ms. Fredericka Shpetner 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 the 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. Jenifer Spear
New Jersey Department of Education
Office of Special Education
501 River Street
Paterson, NJ 07524

The district is expected to provide and sustain administrative oversight, as well as provide ongoing training and technical assistance as needed to ensure identification and correction of any noncompliance with IDEA 2004 and positive educational outcomes for students with disabilities. Please contact me at 609-292-0147 if you have questions regarding special education monitoring. 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
Andrew Smarick
Jenifer Spear
County Superintendent
Steven Pasternak
Fredericka Shpetner

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5) IEPs shall included 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)]

A review of records and interviews with staff indicated that IEPs for students with disabilities did not include a statement of 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 due to a lack of district procedures.

10) LEA ensures that student participates with nondisabled children in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities to the maximum extent appropriate, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.2(b)1.

A review of records and interviews with staff indicated that IEPs for students with disabilities did not include an individualized statement of the extent of participation with nondisabled children in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities due to a lack of implementation of district procedures.

Corrective Action for Citations 5 and 10 above: The district is required to develop compliant procedures and conduct training with child study team members regarding individualized decision-making and IEP documentation. The NJOSE monitor will provide the director of special education with directions for submitting documentation to demonstrate compliance.

The district is required to convene an appropriately configured IEP team meeting to review and/or revise the IEP for each student where there was a finding of noncompliance. Names of students whose IEPs were found to be noncompliant will be provided to the director of special education by the NJOSE.

The district is required to implement an oversight mechanism to ensure ongoing compliance at the next IEP meeting for each student removed from general education for greater than 20% of the school day.

Section IV: PARENT INVOLVEMENT

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Citations	Findings of Non-compliance and/or Status of Compliance
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).	A review of records and interviews with staff indicated that written notices of meetings did not consistently contain all required components, including a statement of the purpose(s) of the meeting. This was due to a lack of 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).	A review of records and interviews with staff indicated that written notices following meetings did not consistently contain all required components, including a statement of any options considered and rejected. This was due to a lack of implementation of district procedures.
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).	A review of records and interviews with staff indicated that the district staff did not maintain written documentation of type, frequency, duration and effectiveness of each intervention implemented in the general education program 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).	A review of records and interviews with staff indicated that the district did not consistently convene a meeting with required participants within 20 calendar days of receipt of the written request for an evaluation due to a lack of implementation of district procedures.
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).	A review of records and interviews with staff indicated that the district did not consistently ensure that a vision and audiometric screening was conducted for every student referred to the child study team for evaluation due to a lack of 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).	A review of records and interviews with staff members indicated that multi-disciplinary reevaluations were not consistently completed within three years of the previous classification date due to a lack of 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	A review of records and interviews with staff members indicated that copies of evaluation reports and documentation and information that would be used for a determination of eligibility were not consistently given to the parents or adult student at least 10 calendar days prior to the eligibility meeting due to a lack of implementation of

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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).

district procedures.

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

Ms. Jenifer Spear
New Jersey Department of Education
Office of Special Education Programs
501 River Street
Paterson, NJ 07524