



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

ROCHELLE R. HENDRICKS
Acting Commissioner

November 17, 2010

Dr. Anthony Cavanna, Superintendent
West Orange School District
179 Eagle Rock Avenue
West Orange, NJ 07052-5007

Dear Dr. Cavanna:

RE: Transition to Adult Life – Targeted Review

The following is a report of findings based on a targeted review of the West Orange School District's compliance with state and federal regulations regarding transition from school to adult life conducted on June 16, 2010. The monitor assigned to your district was Samuel Jordan.

Background Information:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) requires each state to develop and implement a State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Report (APR) evaluating the state's implementation of Part B and describing how the state will improve such implementation. One of the SPP indicators, **Indicator 13: Secondary Transition**, requires the state to report: the percent of youth with IEPs, aged 16 and above, with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. There must also be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority [SPP, United States Office of Special Education Programs (USOSEP)].

The USOSEP requires the state to report annually, in its SPP/APR, on compliance with federal and state transition requirements in a sample of school districts and charter schools. All school districts and charter schools must be represented in the sample at least once during the SPP period – FY 2006 through FY 2011.

The **West Orange School District** was among the districts randomly selected for the transition targeted review during the 2009-2010 school year. As a result, a desk audit of a sample of student records was conducted by the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special

Education Programs (NJOSEP), to determine if the district's age 16 transition planning procedures were compliant with the IDEA 2004 and the New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C.) 6A:14.

Summary of Findings:

<p>Areas Demonstrating Compliance – The West Orange School District demonstrated compliance with the following requirements in the files reviewed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postsecondary goal(s) are updated annually; • Courses of study that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goal(s) are included in IEPs; • Annual IEP goal(s) are related to the student's transition service needs; • The student was invited to the IEP meeting where transition services were discussed; and • If appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority.
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<p>Areas of Noncompliance – The West Orange School District demonstrated noncompliance with the requirements listed below. Corrective actions must be completed by the date listed in the table.</p>		
Area	Corrective Action Plan	Documentation Required to Demonstrate Compliance and Due Date
<p>1. A review of student records indicated that transition services in IEPs, that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goal(s), were not individualized.</p> <p>Noncompliance was due to lack of implementation of district procedures.</p>	<p>The district is directed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct training for child study team members regarding district procedures for ensuring that IEPs contain individualized; 2. Conduct IEP review meetings for the students whose IEPs were identified by the NJOSEP monitors as noncompliant and revise the IEPs to include required components. (The names of the students will be provided to the Director of Special Services); 3. At the next annual review of IEPs of all students, ages 16 and above, ensure that they contain all required components related to transition to adult life and are based on the individual needs of each student; and 4. Conduct oversight activities to ensure correction and ongoing compliance. 	<p>The district is required to submit:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copies of the training agenda and sign in sheets; 2. Copies of the revised IEPs for the students whose IEPs were determined to be noncompliant; and 3. Three current IEPs of students, age 16 or above, completed or revised after the date of this report.

<p>2. A review of student records indicated that postsecondary goals in IEPs were not consistently based on age appropriate transition assessment(s).</p> <p>Noncompliance was due to lack of implementation of district procedures.</p>	<p>The district is directed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct training for child study team members regarding district procedures for completing transition assessment(s). 2. Prior to the next IEP annual review for each of the students for whom transition assessment was not conducted, the district will conduct the appropriate assessments. 3. Conduct oversight activities to ensure correction and ongoing compliance. Oversight must include file review. 	<p>The district is required to submit:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copies of the training agenda and sign in sheets; 2. Copies of transition assessment activities conducted for the students for whom transition assessment was not conducted; and 3. Copies of assessment activities for three students, age 16 or above, conducted after the date of this report.
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Verification of Corrective Action:

As a result of this review and the findings, the district is required to conduct the activities indicated in the corrective action plan and submit documentation of their implementation by **January 14, 2011** to Samuel Jordan at the following address:

New Jersey Department of Education
501 River Street
Paterson, NJ 07524

Once the required documentation is received and reviewed, the NJOSEP will determine if the noncompliance has been corrected. Results of the review will be forwarded to the district in writing. All noncompliance must be corrected within one year of the date of this report. Thank you for your cooperation during this process.

Sincerely,



Barbara Gantwerk, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Student Services

BG/PM/SJ

- c: Andrew Smarick
- Office of Field Services
- Peggy McDonald
- Samuel Jordan
- Lawrence S. Feinsod
- Mark Lanzi
- Elizabeth Maddalena