

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

**Receiving School:** Bonnie Brae School

**County:** Somerset

**Monitoring Dates:** September 27 and 28, 2005

**Monitoring Team:** Paul Bilik, Denise Wilkens

**Background Information:**

During the 2004–2005 school year, the Bonnie Brae School conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services, and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the Bonnie Brae School with an opportunity to evaluate its 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 development and implementation of policies and procedures resulting in procedural compliance; and
- The organization and delivery of programs and services to meet the needs of the students with disabilities.

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 Bonnie Brae School developed an improvement plan to address identified areas of need.

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) 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 monitoring process, the monitoring team reviewed receiving school documents such as policies and procedures, student records from sending districts, lesson plans, services as indicated in individualized education plans (IEPs), staff evaluations, student count information, master student lists, class lists, schedules of students/teachers/related service personnel, and other relevant information. Interviews were conducted with the receiving school's special education administrators, building principals, special education teachers, parents, and related service personnel.

Noncompliant items reflected in this report may result in nonallowable costs in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23-4.1 through 4.16.

**School Strengths:**

The Bonnie Brae School is commended for the comprehensive clinical therapy program that provides individual, group, and family counseling on an as needed basis. This includes evening and weekend sessions to accommodate working parents/guardians.

The multimedia studio ("Brae Vision") provides students with opportunities in filmmaking and computer generated presentations using the most current technology available. This has afforded students opportunities to work with community leaders in charitable service such as gathering supplies for hurricane victims in the Gulf Coast.

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Bonnie Brae School provides exceptional interdisciplinary team communication. Staff meetings are held weekly to discuss students' progress. All staff members are provided with a full compliment of professional development to support the behavioral and academic success of students.

Bonnie Brae School also offers intramural sports including basketball and volleyball and introduced a flag football program this school year.

### **Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:**

**General Provisions, Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), Staff Requirements, Facility Requirements, Discipline, Programs and Services and Student Records** were determined to be areas of compliance by Bonnie Brae School during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

### **Section V: Individualized Education Plan/Annual Review**

#### **Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, the Bonnie Brae School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP meetings conducted with required receiving school participants, IEP meetings conducted with students age 14 and older, as appropriate, signatures of participants present on IEPs, IEP accessibility to teachers and providers, informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing, implementation of IEP components and informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives.

During the self-assessment process, Bonnie Brae School identified a concern in the area regarding current IEP prior to service delivery. **The receiving school's improvement plan is insufficient to address this area of need because it lacks a consistent procedure to ensure that current IEPs are in place for students prior to admission to the program. The plan must be revised to include this component.**

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding missing IEP components.

#### **Area of Need:**

**Communication to Sending Districts Regarding Missing IEP Components-** During the on-site visit, through record reviews, it was determined that the school does not consistently maintain documentation of attempts to obtain missing IEP components from sending districts. Areas consistently missing include frequency, duration and location of related services.

- **The school must revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that written communication requesting missing IEP components, including information relating to delivery of related services, is included in student IEPs. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

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**Summary**

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in Bonnie Brae School on September 27-28, 2005. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the school's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review their improvement plan.

The receiving school is commended for the exceptionally comprehensive review conducted during the self-assessment process. As a result of that review, the receiving school was able to identify nearly all but one area of need and develop an improvement plan that with some revision will bring about systemic change. The receiving school is further commended for the many areas determined by the receiving school and verified by the Department of Education as compliant with federal and state statutes and regulations.

**General Provisions, Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) Staff Requirements, Facility Requirements, Discipline, Programs and Services and Student Records** were determined to be areas of compliance by Bonnie Brae School during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Additional areas identified as consistently compliant by Bonnie Brae School during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP meeting conducted with required receiving school participants, IEP meeting conducted with students age 14 and older, as appropriate, signatures of participants present on IEPs, IEP accessibility to teachers and providers, informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing, implementation of IEP components and informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives.

The on-site visit identified one additional area of need within the various standards regarding communication to sending district regarding missing IEP components including frequency, location and duration of related services.

Within 45 days of receipt of the monitoring report, Bonnie Brae School will revise and resubmit the improvement plan to the county office of education and to the Office of Special Education Programs to address those areas that require revisions.