

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

**Receiving School:** Midland School

**County:** Somerset

**Monitoring Date:** November 12-13, 2003

**Monitoring Team:** Paul Bilik, Elaine Lerner

**Background Information:**

During the 2002–2003 school year, the Midland School conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services, and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the Midland 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 Midland 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 Midland School documents such as policies and procedures, student records from sending districts, lesson plans, services as indicated in 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 Midland School's special education administrator, special education teachers and related service personnel.

**School Strengths:**

The Midland School is commended for the consistency it has achieved in maintaining its staff for a significant number of years, which provides considerable instructional and therapeutic continuity for their students. Several staff members reported that they have been with the school for more than 20 years.

The Midland School should be recognized for their school to work transition program. Starting at age 18, Midland students participate in job experiences in the community that are individualized to student's interests and abilities. Some examples of work settings include a grocery store, dry cleaner, assisted living center, day care center, fitness center and hotel housekeeping. Job coaches support the student's placement by

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

serving as a liaison between the employer and student. In addition, the transition supervisor attempts to secure jobs for students after graduation.

The Midland School is also commended for providing exceptional parent and staff communication. The Midland School is also commended for providing support for students who participate in academic and extra curricular programs back at their sending districts.

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

**General Provisions, Staff Requirements, Facility Requirements** and **Discipline** were determined to be areas of compliance by the Midland School during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

### **Section II: FAPE**

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

During self-assessment, the Midland School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding length of day/year, physical education, hearing aids, services at no cost to parents, extended school year and observation of programs.

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding the provision of services as per IEP.

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

During the on-site visit, through record reviews and interviews it was determined that the school is providing services that are inconsistent with IEPs related to location, frequency, and duration of related services of counseling, speech and occupational therapy.

- **The school must revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that related services are delivered in accordance with IEPs. In addition, the plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

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

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

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

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

Areas of need were identified during the on-site visit in the areas of communication to sending districts regarding missing IEP components and IEP implementation.

### **Areas of Need:**

**Communication to Sending Districts Regarding Missing IEP Components and IEP Implementation-** During the on-site visit, through record review and staff interviews it was determined that the school does not consistently notify sending districts when IEP components are missing. Areas consistently missing include signatures of staff present at IEP meetings, related services' frequency, duration and location, transition services for new students, goals and objectives for subject areas and adaptive physical education. Consequently, the program provided at the Midland school was not developed by an appropriately configured IEP team.

- **The school must revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that the school communicates with sending districts in order to develop a complete IEP when components such as signatures of staff present at IEP meetings, related services' frequency, duration and location, transition services for new students, goals and objectives for subject areas and adaptive physical education are missing. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

### **Section VII: Programs and Services**

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

During self-assessment, the Midland School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding class size and age range, special class program descriptions maintained at county office, certifications for specialized populations, special classes serving students with similar educational needs, teachers trained in core curriculum content standards (CCCSs), collaboration for home instruction and dispensing medication.

During the self-assessment process, the Midland School identified concerns in the areas regarding exceptions for class size and age range, nursing services and policies and procedures relating to school functions and services. The school has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address the areas regarding class size and age range. During the on-site visit, a review of records and staff interviews indicated that the receiving school has appropriately implemented specific activities to bring about correction in the area of exceptions for class size and age range. **The improvement plan does not sufficiently address the area of employment of a certified school nurse because it lacks activities related to this component. The plan does not sufficiently address the area of school functions and services because it lacks staff training and procedures to ensure that the school is correctly implementing those procedures in accordance with 6A:16. The plan must be revised to include these components.**

An additional area of need was identified during the on site visit in the area of teachers instructing in CCCSs.

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

**Area of Need:**

**Teachers Instructing in CCCSs** - During the on-site visit through record reviews and staff interviews it was determined that the school does not consistently document the alignment of the core curriculum content standards with classroom instruction.

- **The school must revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that instruction in CCCSs is documented. The plan must include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of the procedures.**

**Section VIII: Student Records**

**Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, the Midland School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding return of records upon termination of placement, access sheets, location of other records specified in central file, daily attendance available to LEAs, written communication to LEAs regarding five days of tardiness/absences, written notice of placement to county office and maintenance of student health records.

Areas of need were identified during the on-site visit in the areas regarding conformance to pupil record code relating to access to records and security of records.

**Areas of Need:**

**Access to Records-** During the on-site visit through staff interviews it was determined that the school does not refer requests to access student records to the sending district.

- **The school must revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that all requests for student records are referred to the sending district. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

**Security of Records-** During the on-site visit through interviews and classroom observation it was determined that IEPs maintained in the classroom are not kept in a secure location.

- **The school must revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that all records are maintained in a secure location. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

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

**Summary**

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Midland School on November 12- 13, 2003. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the Midland School's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review the Midland School's improvement plan.

**General Provisions, Staff Requirements, Facility Requirements and Discipline** were determined to be areas of compliance by the Midland School during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Additional areas identified as consistently compliant by the Midland School during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included length of day/year, physical education, hearing aids, services at no cost to parents, extended school year, observation of programs, IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP conducted with required receiving school participants, IEP conducted with age students age 14 or older, as appropriate, signatures of participants present on IEPs, receipt of current IEP prior to service delivery, IEP accessibility to teachers and providers, informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing, informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives, class size and age range, special class program descriptions maintained at county office, certifications for specialized populations, special classes serving students with similar educational needs, teachers trained in core curriculum content standards (CCCSs), collaboration for home instruction and dispensing medication, return of records upon termination of placement, access sheets, location of other records specified in central file, daily attendance available to LEAs, written communication to LEAs regarding five days of tardiness/absences, written notice of placement to county office, and maintenance of student health records.

During the self-assessment process, the Midland School identified areas of need regarding exceptions for class size and age range, nursing services and policies and procedures relating to school functions and services.

The on-site visit identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding provision of services as per IEP, communication to sending districts regarding missing IEP components and IEP implementation, teachers instructing in CCCSs, access to records and security of records.

Within forty-five days of receipt of the monitoring report, the Midland 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.