

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

Receiving School: Hunterdon County Polytech

County: Hunterdon

Monitoring Dates: March 21 and 22, 2006

Monitoring Team: Paul Bilik, Heather Mills-Pevonis, Dolores Walther, Elaine Lerner

Background Information:

During the 2004–2005 school year, the Hunterdon County Polytech conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services, and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the Hunterdon County Polytech 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 Hunterdon County Polytech 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 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.

School Strengths:

The Hunterdon County Polytech is commended for positive post-school outcomes. Through the employment of a Cooperative Industrial Education coordinator and other staff, seniors at the school are provided with opportunities to work in their areas of vocational preference prior to graduation. Many of their students with disabilities go directly to full-time employment upon graduation. The school is also commended for providing frequent communication to parents and sending districts regarding student's progress.

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Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:

General Provisions, Staff Requirements, Facility Requirements, Programs and Services and Student Records were determined to be areas of compliance by the Hunterdon County Polytech during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Section V: Individualized Education Program/Annual Review

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Hunterdon County Polytech accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP meeting conducted with students 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, implementation of IEP components and informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives.

During the self-assessment process, the receiving school identified concerns in the areas regarding current IEP prior to service delivery and vocational school teachers participating in IEP meetings. The school's improvement plan is sufficient to address the area regarding current IEP prior to service delivery. During the on-site visit, through a review of records and staff interviews, it was determined that the receiving school has appropriately implemented specific activities for correction in this area. **The school's improvement plan is insufficient to address the area regarding vocational school teachers attending IEP meetings because it lacks procedures to ensure arrangements are made with sending districts so that the student's vocational teachers attend IEP meetings in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.7(e)1ii. Participation may be arranged with the sending districts through alternate methods, such as teleconferencing, to ensure attendance at IEP meetings. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site visit in the area regarding goals and objectives for vocational programs when modifications are needed.

Area of Need:

Collaboration with Sending Districts Regarding Goals and Objectives for Vocational Classes- During the on-site visit, through staff interviews and record reviews, it was determined that IEPs lack goals and objectives for vocational programs when curriculum had been modified.

- **The school must revise its improvement plan to provide for collaboration and communication with sending school districts to ensure that goals and objectives for vocational classes are included in IEPs when students are receiving a modified curriculum. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the activities.**

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Section VI: Discipline

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Hunterdon County Polytech accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding standard disciplinary procedures, procedures for time out rooms, restraints and aversives and changes to program/placement pending mediation and due process.

During the self-assessment process, the Hunterdon County Polytech identified concerns in the areas regarding removal of student pending mediation and due process, notification to sending districts regarding suspensions, removal of student to interim alternative educational setting and procedures for termination of student placement. The school's improvement plan was sufficient to address these areas of need. During the on-site visit, through record reviews, it was determined that the school has appropriately implemented specific activities for correction in these areas.

No additional areas of need were identified during the on-site visit.

Section VIII: Student Records

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Hunterdon County Polytech accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding conformance to student records code, access sheets, location of other records specified in central file, daily attendance available to LEAs, written notice of placement to county office and maintenance of student health records.

During the self-assessment process, the Hunterdon County Polytech identified concerns in the areas regarding return of records upon termination of student placement, access to records limited to authorized persons and written communication to LEAs regarding five days of tardiness/absences. The school's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas of need. During the on-site visit, through a review of records, it was determined that the receiving school has appropriately implemented specific activities for correction in these areas.

No additional areas of need were identified during the on-site visit.

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Summary

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Hunterdon County Polytech on March 21-22, 2006. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the Hunterdon County Polytech's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review the receiving school's improvement plan.

General Provisions, Staff Requirements, Facility Requirements, Programs and Services and **Student Records** were determined to be areas of compliance by the Hunterdon County Polytech during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Additional areas identified as consistently compliant by the Hunterdon County Polytech during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP meeting conducted with students, 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, implementation of IEP components, informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives, standard disciplinary procedures, procedures for time out rooms, restraints and aversives, changes to program/placement pending mediation and due process, conformance to student records code, access sheets, location of other records specified in central file, daily attendance available to LEAs, written notice of placement to county office and maintenance of student health records.

During the self-assessment process, the receiving school identified areas of need regarding current IEP prior to service delivery, vocational school teachers participating in IEP meetings, removal of student pending mediation and due process, notification to sending districts regarding suspensions, removal of student to interim alternative educational setting, procedures for termination of student placement, return of records upon termination, access to records limited to authorized persons and written communication to LEAs regarding five days of tardiness/absences.

The on-site visit identified one additional area of need within the various standards regarding goals and objectives for vocational programs when modifications are needed.

Within forty-five days of receipt of the monitoring report, the Hunterdon County Polytech will revise and resubmit the improvement plan to the county office of education and to the Office of Special Education Programs to address the area that requires revisions.