

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

**Receiving School:** Montgomery Academy      **County:** Morris

**Monitoring Dates:** May 1 and 2, 2006

**Monitoring Team:** Tammy Miller, Zola Mills and Mark Lanzi

**Background Information:**

During the 2004–2005 school year, Montgomery Academy conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided Montgomery Academy 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. Montgomery Academy 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 Montgomery Academy 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 and related service personnel.

**School Strengths:**

Montgomery Academy is commended for its extensive social skills learning environment which is infused throughout academic and nonacademic activities. All staff members eat with the students on a daily basis and address social/emotional goals and objectives during this time. The school also employs three social workers to further enhance the social/emotional development of the student body.

In order to build a socially connected environment, Montgomery Academy offers several after school activities throughout the school year. These events promote socialization skills and foster friendships among the students.

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**Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:**

**General Provisions, FAPE, Staff Requirements, Facility Requirements, Discipline, and Student Records** were determined to be areas of compliance by Montgomery Academy during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

**Section V: Individualized Education Program (IEP)/Annual Review**

**Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, Montgomery Academy 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, as appropriate, signatures of participants present on IEPs, 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, implementation of IEP components and informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives.

During the self-assessment process, Montgomery Academy identified concerns in the areas regarding communication to sending district regarding missing IEP components and opportunities for students to participate in activities with their nondisabled peers. The receiving school's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas of need. 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 these areas.

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

**Section VII: Programs and Services**

**Summary of Findings:**

During self-assessment, Montgomery Academy accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding class size and age range, exceptions for 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 CCCS, collaboration for home instruction, dispensing medication, nursing services, policies and procedures relating to school functions and service and medical exams for sports teams.

During the self-assessment process, Montgomery Academy identified concerns in the area regarding teachers instructing in CCCS. The receiving school's improvement plan is sufficient to address this area of need. 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 this area.

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 Montgomery Academy on May 1 and 2, 2006. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the Montgomery Academy's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review the Montgomery Academy's improvement plan.

The receiving school is commended for the exceptionally comprehensive review conducted during the self-assessment process. As a result of this review the receiving school was able to identify all areas of need and develop an improvement plan that will address areas of noncompliance. The receiving school is further commended for the prompt implementation of corrective action to address the areas of need identified during the self-assessment process. As a result, many of those identified areas were corrected prior to the on-site visit. Additionally, the receiving school is commended for the many areas that were determined by the receiving school and verified by the Department of Education as compliant with federal and state statutes and regulations.

**General Provisions, FAPE, Staff Requirements, Facility Requirements, Discipline, and Student Records** were determined to be areas of compliance by Montgomery Academy during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Additional areas identified as consistently compliant by Montgomery Academy during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP conducted with required receiving school participants, IEP conducted with age appropriate students, signatures of participants present on IEPs, 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, implementation of IEP components, informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives, class size and age range, exceptions for 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 CCCS, collaboration for home instruction, dispensing medication, nursing services, policies and procedures relating to school functions and service and medical exams for sports teams.

During the self-assessment process, Montgomery Academy identified and corrected areas of need regarding communication to sending district regarding missing IEP components, opportunities for students to participate in activities with their nondisabled peers and teachers instructing in CCCS.

The school is not required to revise their improvement plan since all areas of need have been identified and corrected by the school.