

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

Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:

FAPE and **Student Records** were determined to be areas of compliance by the Githens Center during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Section I: General Provisions

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the Githens Center accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding policies and procedures, annual reports, amendments and programs provided in nonsectarian settings.

During the self-assessment process, the Githens Center identified concerns in the area regarding staff development. The receiving school's improvement plan is sufficient to address this area of need.

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

Section III: Staff Requirements

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the Githens Center accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding, certified/licensed staff, appropriate supervision of physical therapy assistants (PTA)/and certified occupational therapy assistants (COTA), private school dual employment, supervision of paraprofessionals, criminal history verification and having an approved professional development plan.

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at county office.

Areas of Need:

Job Descriptions of Paraprofessionals Maintained at County Office- During the on-site visit through record review and staff interviews it was determined that job descriptions for classroom aides have not been submitted to their office on an annual basis.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that job descriptions for classroom aides are updated and submitted to the county office of education on an annual basis. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

Section IV: Facility Requirements

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the Githens Center accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding certificates of occupancy and inspections and fire drills.

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During the self-assessment process, the Githens Center identified concerns in the areas regarding sufficient space for existing educational needs and vocational exploration services. During the on-site visit it was determined that the school lacks adequate physical space. Through staff interviews and a tour of the school building it was confirmed that there is inadequate space for existing educational needs. During the on-site visit it was determined that the school lacks adequate space to accommodate wheelchairs and other required specialized equipment, creating the potential for an unsafe school environment. **The school's improvement plan is insufficient to address these areas of need because it lacks short-term activities to ensure immediate and on-going safety of students. The school is further directed to contact the Department of Education through the county office of education to ensure compliance with regulations.**

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding the lack of a nurse's station.

Area of Need:

Nurses Station- During the on-site visit through staff interviews and a tour of the school building it was determined that the area that the school nurse utilizes is a small designated corner of the multipurpose room. This area is inadequate to provide the required private rest area and bathroom facilities.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include activities to identify an appropriate location for the provision of nursing services, with final facility approval from the county office of education. The plan must include administrative oversight component to ensure that activities are implemented in a timely manner.**

Section V: Individualized Education Plan/Annual Review

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the Githens Center accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP conducted with required receiving school participants, participation of students at IEP meetings, signatures of participants present on IEPs, possession of a current IEP prior to service delivery, communication to sending district regarding missing IEP components, IEP accessibility to teachers and providers, informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, administration of statewide tests and informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives.

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding implementation of IEP components relating to the duration of the related services of speech and physical therapy (PT).

Area of Need:

Implementation of IEP Components- During the on-site visit a review of records and service logs indicated that the duration of service in the areas of speech and PT could not be verified.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that Githens Center documents duration of related service delivery. The plan must**

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include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.

Section VI: Discipline

Summary of Finding:

During self-assessment the Githens Center accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding procedures for time out rooms, restraints and aversives, removal of student pending mediation and due process, changes to program/placement 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.

During the self-assessment process, the Githens Center identified concerns in the areas regarding standard disciplinary procedures. **The schools improvement plan is insufficient to address this area of need because it lacks activities to provide training to staff and parents regarding the new procedures. The plan must be revised to include these components.**

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

Section VII: Programs and Services

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment the Githens Center 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 core curriculum content standards (CCCSs), teachers instructing in CCCSs, collaboration for home instruction, dispensing medication and policies and procedures relating to school functions and services.

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding nursing and medical services.

Area of Need:

Nursing/Medical Services- During the on-site visit through staff interviews it was determined that the school does not employ a certified school nurse. Although the school has adopted the Guidelines Regarding Programs to Support Student Development, staff interviews indicate that staff is not knowledgeable concerning regulations.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include in-service training, a mechanism to determine the effectiveness of the training and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures.**

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Summary

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Githens Center on November 19-21, 2003. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the Githens Center's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review the receiving school's improvement plan.

The Githens Center is commended for the comprehensive review conducted during the self-assessment process. As a result of that review the receiving school was able to identify areas 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.

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the Githens Center during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included policies and procedures, annual reports, amendments, provision of nonsectarian programs and services, length of school day/year, physical education, hearing aids, services at no cost to parents, extended school year, observation of programs, provision of services as per IEP, related services, certified/licensed staff, criminal history, professional development, certificates of occupancy and inspections, fire drills, IEP meetings conducted at least annually, IEP conducted with appropriate participants, signatures present on IEPs, current IEP, communication with sending districts regarding missing components, IEP accessibility, inform teachers/providers of IEP responsibilities, no delay in implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing, progress reports, procedures for time out rooms, restraints, and aversives, removal of students, changes to programs, placement, suspensions, interim alternative educational setting, termination of students, class size/age range, exceptions, description of special class programs, certifications, special classes implementing IEP, CCCSs, home instruction, dispensing medication, medical exams for sport teams, preschool programs, conformance to pupil record code, return of records, access to records, access sheets, location of records, daily attendance, tardiness/absences, written notice of attendance, and student health records.

During the self-assessment process, the Githens Center identified areas of need regarding staff development, standard disciplinary procedures and facilities.

The on-site visit identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding job descriptions for classroom aides maintained on file in the county office, facility, nurse's station and documentation of the duration of speech and PT and nursing services.

Please note that the Facility Requirements section of the report identify areas of need that require immediate attention on the part of the school.

Within forty-five days of receipt of the monitoring report, the Githens Center will revise and resubmit the improvement plan to the county office of education and the Office of Special Education Programs to address those areas that require revisions.