

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

Receiving School: Children's Center of Monmouth County

County: Monmouth

Monitoring Dates: October 18-19, 2005

Monitoring Team: Karen Frumen and Carmen Fanucci

Background Information:

During the 2004–2005 school year, the Children's Center of Monmouth County, (CCMC), conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services, and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the CCMC 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 CCMC 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 educational programs (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.

Non-compliant items reflected in this report may result in non-allowable costs in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23-4.1 through 4.16.

School Strengths:

The Children's Center of Monmouth County is commended for providing an array of extracurricular activities as well as an extensive community integration program to foster the development of life skills. These activities range according to students' ages. For example, the youngest students, ages three to eleven participate in four community trips per year to facilitate generalization of skills.

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

Students between the ages of eleven and fourteen participate in a Recreation Access Program. The "Rec-Access" program comprises nine introductory community sessions including recreation sites, dining out, and other community settings. Children, ages eleven through thirteen, participate in the Salad Bar Program which affords students the opportunity to learn kitchen activities, responsibility and teamwork. Kitchen safety, awareness and proper use of various utensils and the stove are emphasized. The program offers a complete sequence of the necessary steps (purchasing, preparing, setting up and cleaning up) needed for food preparation.

Students, ages fourteen and older, participate in a series of 7-10 community sessions that also develop competency in independent living skills. Children, age fourteen and above, have the opportunity to participate in a class business. Class businesses are one piece of the vocational training program in which the goal is for students to gain experience in a variety of job roles related to small business.

The Children's Center provides all students the opportunity to participate in an on-campus recreational swimming program. In addition, home training is provided to assist parents in implementing strategies at home that are utilized in the classroom.

Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:

General Provisions, Programs and Services and **Student Records** were determined to be areas of compliance by the CCMC during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Section II: Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the CCMC accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding length of school day and year, provision of physical education, services at no cost to parents, extended school year programs and services provided in accordance with IEPs, provision of services as per IEP, provision of occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), provision of speech language therapy and counseling services as per IEP.

During the self-assessment process, the CCMC identified concerns in the areas regarding maintenance of hearing aids and program open to observation by LEA and DOE. 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 III: Staff Requirements

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the CCMC accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

maintained at county office, criminal history verification and having an approved professional development plan.

During the self-assessment process, the CCMC identified concerns in the areas regarding appropriate supervision of physical therapy assistants (PTA) and certified occupational therapy assistants (COTA) and private school dual employment. 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.

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding certified/licensed staff.

Area of Need:

Certified Licensed Staff- During the on-site visit it was determined through staff interviews and record reviews that the physical education teacher was not appropriately certified for the position held.

- **The school must immediately review its current staff list to ensure that all staff members are appropriately certified for the positions they hold. In addition, the school must revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that staff members will not be hired unless they hold the appropriate certification. 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 CCMC accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding programs provided in approved facilities and certificates of occupancy.

During the self-assessment process, the CCMC identified concerns in the areas regarding fire drills. 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.

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding health inspections.

Area of Need:

Certificate of Health Inspection- During the on-site visit, through a record review and staff interviews it was determined that the school does not have a current health inspection.

- **The school must immediately make arrangements for a health inspection to be conducted. In addition, the school must revise its improvement plan to**

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

include procedures to ensure that a health inspection is conducted on an annual basis. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.

Section V: Individualized Education Program/Annual Review

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the CCMC 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, current IEP prior to service delivery, communication to sending district regarding missing IEP components, IEP accessibility to teachers and providers, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing and informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives.

During the self-assessment process, the CCMC identified concerns in the areas regarding informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities and implementation of IEP components relating to inclusive preschool settings reflected in IEPs. 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 VI: Discipline

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the CCMC 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 placement.

During the self-assessment process, the CCMC identified concerns in the areas regarding standard disciplinary procedures communicated to parents and local school districts. 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.

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

Summary

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Children's Center of Monmouth County (CCMC), on October 18 and 19, 2005. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the CCMC's report of findings resulting from their self-assessment and to review the receiving school's improvement plan.

The receiving school is commended for the comprehensive review conducted during the self-assessment process. As a result of this review the receiving school was able to identify most areas of need and develop an improvement plan that is sufficient to bring about systemic change. 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 all identified areas were corrected prior to the on-site visit. Additionally, 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, Programs and Services and **Student Records** were determined to be areas of compliance by the CCMC during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Additional areas identified as consistently compliant by the CCMC during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included length of school day and year, provision of physical education, services at no cost to parents, extended school year programs and services provided in accordance with IEPs, provision of services as per IEP, provision of occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), speech language therapy and counseling services as per IEP, supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at county office, criminal history verification, having an approved professional development plan, programs provided in approved facilities, certificates of occupancy, 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, current IEP prior to service delivery, communication to sending district regarding missing IEP components, IEP accessibility to teachers and providers, timely implementation of IEPs, observation of proposed placement, statewide testing, informing parents of progress toward goals and objectives, 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 placement,.

During the self-assessment process, the CCMC identified areas of need regarding maintenance of hearing aids, program open to observation by LEA and DOE, appropriate supervision of physical therapy assistants (PTA)/and certified occupational therapy assistants (COTA), private school dual employment, fire drills, informing teachers and providers of IEP responsibilities, implementation of IEP components relating to inclusive preschool settings reflected in IEPs and standard disciplinary procedures.

The on-site visit identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding certified licensed staff and annual health inspection.

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

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