

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

Receiving School: Search Day School

County: Monmouth

Monitoring Dates: September 28 and 29, 2004

Monitoring Team: Karen Frumen, Carmen Fanucci, Elaine Lerner,
Deborah Magee

Background Information:

During the 2003–2004 school year, the Search Day School conducted a self-assessment of policies, procedures, programs, services, and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the Search Day 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 Search Day 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 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 Search Day School is commended for preparing both students and families for transition to adult day programs and supported employment. The majority of students who graduate go on to supported employment, independent employment or a college education.

The Search Day School is further commended for providing students with regular opportunities to integrate learned skills into the community via community based instructional opportunities. This allows for follow-through of objectives and affords

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students the opportunity to experience new places and transfer skills from familiar to novel settings.

The Search Day School is also 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.

Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:

IEP and Annual Review, Discipline, Programs and Services and Student Records were determined to be areas of compliance by the Search Day School during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Section I: General Provisions

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Search Day School 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 Search Day School identified a concern in the area regarding staff development. 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.

Section II: Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Search Day School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding length of school day and year, provision of physical education, maintenance of hearing aids, 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 and counseling services as per IEP.

During the self-assessment process, the Search Day School identified a concern in the area regarding program open to observation by LEA and DOE. 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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Section III: Staff Requirements

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Search Day School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding certified licensed staff, private school dual employment, supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at county office, and criminal history verification.

During the self-assessment process, the Search Day School identified a concern in the area regarding procedures for the evaluation of staff. 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.

Section IV: Facility Requirements

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Search Day School accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding certificates of occupancy, inspections and fire drills.

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding the nurse's station at both school sites.

Area of Need:

Nurses' Station- During the on-site visit, a tour of the school building confirmed that the nurse's stations, located at both buildings, are inadequate to provide the required private rest areas and bathroom facilities.

- **The school will immediately contact the county office of education for a facility review of both buildings. In addition, the school will revise its improvement plan to include activities to identify appropriate locations for the provision of nursing services, with final facility approval from the county office of education.**

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Summary

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Search Day School on September 28 and 29, 2004. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the Search Day School'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 exceptionally comprehensive review conducted during the self-assessment process. As a result of that review the receiving school was able to identify nearly all but one area 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. Please be advised that one activity requires immediate attention on the part of the school.

IEP and Annual Review, Discipline, Programs and Services and Student Records were determined to be areas of compliance by the Search Day School during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the Search Day School during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included policies and procedures, annual reports, amendments, programs provided in nonsectarian settings, length of school day and year, provision of physical education, maintenance of hearing aids, 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 and counseling services as per IEP, certified/licensed staff, private school dual employment, supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at county office, criminal history verification, certificates of occupancy, inspections and fire drills.

During the self-assessment process, the Search Day School identified areas of need regarding staff development, observation of programs and staff evaluations.

The on-site visit identified an additional area of need within the various standards regarding nursing facilities.

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