

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

Receiving School: Coastal Learning Centers: Howell, Morganville, Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses

Counties: Monmouth and Ocean Counties

Monitoring Dates: Howell Campus- April 17 and 18, 2002
Morganville Campus- April 19, 2002
Tuckerton Campus- June 4, 5, 6, 7
Little Egg Harbor Campus- June 5, 6, 7, 2002

Monitoring Team: Carmen Fanucci, Roberta Friedman, Denise Wilkens, Elaine Lerner, Judyth Vazquez, Cecelia Downey

Background Information

During the 2001 – 2002 school year, the Coastal Learning Centers: Howell, Morganville, Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses conducted a self-assessment of special education policies, procedures, programs, services, and student outcomes. This self-assessment component of the monitoring process provided the Coastal Learning Centers with an opportunity to evaluate its strengths and areas of need with regard to:

- the provision of a free and appropriate public education for students with disabilities;
- 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 Coastal Learning Centers developed an improvement plan to address identified areas of need.

The Department of Education conducted an on-site monitoring to verify the self-assessment findings, determine the appropriateness of the improvement plan, and determine the progress made in implementing the plan.

Prior to the on-site visit, the monitoring team reviewed school documents, including receiving school policies and procedures, classroom schedules, related services schedules, individual student schedules, master student lists, class lists, school calendars and teacher schedules.

During the on-site visit, the monitoring team reviewed a representative sample of student records, criminal history checks, certifications, fire drill logs, suspension logs and therapy logs. The monitoring team conducted on-site observations of the school's special education programs. Interviews were conducted with Coastal Learning Center's principals, special education teachers, physical education teachers, disciplinary staff, related services staff and classroom assistants.

New Jersey Department of Education

Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

Schools Strengths:

All Coastal Learning Center sites are commended for the efforts they have made with regard to communication to parents on student progress. Through staff interviews and record reviews, it was determined that staff members communicate student progress to parents on a weekly basis.

The Morganville Campus should be commended for the school-wide behavioral management system where points are earned for identified behaviors. In addition to providing counseling reflected in the IEP, counselors have an open door policy that allows proactive intervention with students.

The Howell Campus should be commended for efforts taken to facilitate implementation of statewide testing for students attending the school. Members of the monitoring team observed a meeting with the receiving school's testing coordinator and classroom teacher to discuss plans and strategies to test a student using the Alternate Proficiency Assessment.

Also commendable are the practical arts and prevocational programs offered at both the Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses. These include such activities as cooking, horticulture, crafts and therapeutic activities that support the development of self-esteem, and promotion of appropriate behavior.

Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:

Staff Requirements was determined to be an area of compliance by the **Morganville Campus** and by the Department of Education during the on-site visit.

General Provisions, Facility Requirements and Student Records were determined to be areas of compliance by the **Howell Campus** and by the Department of Education during the on-site visit.

FAPE, Staff Requirements, Discipline, Programs and Services and Student Records were determined to be areas of compliance by the **Tuckerton Campus** and by the Department of Education during the on-site visit.

Staff Requirements, Discipline, Programs and Services and Student Records were determined to be areas of compliance by the **Little Egg Campus** and by the Department of Education during the on-site visit.

SECTION I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

During self-assessment, the **Morganville, Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of annual reports, amendments and provision of programs in nonsectarian settings.

During the self-assessment process, the **Morganville Campus** identified concerns regarding policies and procedures and staff development. The school's improvement plan is sufficient to address these areas of need.

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

During the self-assessment process, the **Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses** identified concerns regarding policies and procedures relating to joint training of parents and school staff. The school has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address this area of need.

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

SECTION II. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE)

Coastal Learning Center Morganville Campus

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the **Morganville Campus** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of length of school day and year, physical education, services provided at no cost to the parents, provision of extended school year programs and observation of programs.

During the self-assessment process, the **Morganville Campus** identified concerns regarding the provision of services in accordance with IEPs. The school has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address this area of need.

No additional areas of need were identified during the **Morganville Campus'** on-site visit.

Coastal Learning Center Howell Campus

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the **Howell Campus** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of length of school day and year, physical education, and the provision of services at no cost to parents.

During the self-assessment progress, the **Howell Campus** identified concerns regarding extended school year (ESY) programs and observation of programs. The school has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address these areas of need.

An additional area of need was identified during the **Howell Campus'** on-site visit regarding the provision of services in accordance with IEPs.

Area of Need:

Provision of Services- During the **Howell** on-site, through record review and staff interviews it was determined that related services are not provided in accordance with IEPs. Further, students were not receiving counseling services, as indicated in their IEPs because the school has not replaced the school social worker responsible for providing the related service of counseling.

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure it provides related services, in accordance with IEPs. The plan must further address how districts will be notified that the required related services have not been provided and the arrangements made to provide compensatory services. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

Coastal Learning Center Little Egg Campus

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the **Little Egg Campus** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of length of school day and year, physical education, provision of services at no cost to the parents, extended school year, observation of programs, and provision of services as per IEP.

An area of need was identified during the **Little Egg Campus'** on-site visit regarding the notification to districts regarding maintenance of hearing aids.

Area of Need:

Notification to districts regarding hearing aids- During the on-site, through staff interviews it was determined that staff members notify parents instead of following procedures that require notification to districts.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include staff training and an administrative oversight component to ensure implementation of approved procedures regarding hearing aids.**

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

SECTION III. STAFF REQUIREMENTS

Coastal Learning Center Howell Campus

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the **Howell Campus** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of dual employment, job descriptions for classroom aides, criminal history verification and having an approved professional development plan.

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding certification.

Area of Need:

Certification - During the on-site visit, it was determined through staff interviews and certification reviews that an individual does not possess appropriate certification for instruction in computers. It was determined that the teacher holds only an elementary

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

endorsement, but is responsible for instructing both elementary and secondary students in computer operation.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that all staff members are appropriately certified for the subject and level in which they are instructing. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

SECTION IV. FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Summary of Findings:

Coastal Learning Center Morganville Campus

During self-assessment, the **Morganville Campus** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of certificate of occupancy and inspections.

During the self-assessment process, the **Morganville Campus** identified concerns with regard to fire drills. The school has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address this area of need.

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

Area of Need:

Nurses' Station- During the on-site visit, staff interviews and a tour of the school building confirmed that this area serves a dual purpose, as an occasional time out room and a nurse's station. In addition to the inappropriateness of dual usage, the square footage of the room is inadequate to provide the required rest area. The room also lacks a locked file cabinet for pupil records and for the secure maintenance of prescribed medications.

- **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.**

Coastal Learning Center- Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses

During self-assessment, the **Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of certificates and inspections and fire drills.

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding the nurses' station at the **Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses**.

Area of Need:

Nurses' Station- During the on-site visit, staff interviews and a tour of the school building confirmed that these areas are inadequate to provide the required private rest area and bathroom facilities at the Tuckerton Campus.

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

- **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.**

SECTION V. IEP/ANNUAL REVIEW

Summary of Findings:

Coastal Learning Center Morganville Campus

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the **Morganville Campus** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of staff attendance at IEP meetings, accessibility to IEPs, staff knowledge of accommodations and modifications, observations of proposed placement, areas related to participation in statewide assessments and progress reports.

During the self assessment process, the school identified concerns with IEP meetings conducted at least annually, current IEPs, communication with sending districts and implementation of IEP components. The school developed an improvement plan that does not sufficiently address these areas of need because it lacks staff in-service training on new procedures to ensure the consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures. The plan must be revised to include this component.

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

Coastal Learning Center Howell Campus

Summary of Findings:

During the self-assessment process, the **Howell Campus** accurately identified themselves compliance in the areas of IEPs conducted at least annually, communication with sending districts, accessibility to IEPs, staff knowledge of accommodations and modifications, staff attendance at IEP meetings, timely implementation of IEPs, observations of proposed placement and areas related to participation in statewide assessments.

During the self-assessment process, the school identified concerns with regard to current IEPs. The school developed an improvement plan that does not sufficiently address this area of need because it lacks appropriate activities, timelines and administrative oversight to ensure implementation of the procedures. The plan must be revised to include these components

An area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding appropriate participants at IEP meetings.

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

Area of Need:

IEP participants- During the on-site visit, staff interviews and record reviews indicated that the appropriate related services personnel are not consistently attending IEP meetings. It was determined that a speech therapist is attending IEP meetings for students not receiving speech therapy but receiving counseling services.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that IEP teams include all required participants. The improvement plan must include in-service and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures**

Coastal Learning Center Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses

Summary of Findings

During self-assessment, **Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of IEPs conducted at least annually, accessibility to IEPs, staff knowledge of accommodations and modifications, no delay in IEP implementation, staff attendance at IEP meetings, timely implementation of IEPs, observations of proposed placement, areas related to participation in statewide assessments and progress reports.

During the self-assessment process, the **Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses** identified concerns with regard to current IEPs and communication to sending districts regarding missing IEP components. The schools have developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address these areas of need. Implementation of the improvement plan was verified through record reviews during the on-site visit.

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

SECTION VI. DISCIPLINE

Coastal Learning Center Morganville Campus

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the **Morganville Campus** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of changes to program or placement, removal of student, tracking of suspensions, and interim alternative educational settings and termination of student.

An area of need was identified regarding standard disciplinary procedures.

Area of Need:

Standard disciplinary procedures: During the on-site, interviews and record reviews indicate that behavioral intervention plans (BIPS) do not reflect the school's behavior management system.

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

The school will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that the school's behavior management system is referenced in the student's IEP. If the school's behavior management program is not appropriate or needs modification for an individual student, an IEP meeting must be conducted to develop an appropriate BIP or modify the school's behavior management system. The plan must include in-service of staff and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures.

Coastal Learning Center Howell Campus

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the **Howell Campus** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of standard disciplinary procedures, changes to program/placement, removal of student, tracking of suspensions, and interim alternative educational settings.

During the self-assessment process, the **Howell Campus** identified concerns regarding procedures for use of time-out rooms, aversive therapy and restraints. The school has developed an improvement plan that is not sufficient to address these areas. The improvement plan must include procedures that ensure the use of time-out rooms is addressed in individual behavior intervention plans (BIPs), in-service of staff and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures.

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

SECTION VII. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Coastal Learning Center Morganville Campus

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the **Morganville Campus** accurately identified themselves as compliant in the areas of class sizes and age ranges, special class programs, home instruction, and medical exams for sports teams.

During the self-assessment process, the school identified concerns with regard to the instruction in core curriculum content standards (CCCSs), including core curriculum content standards for students with severe disabilities (CCCSsSDs) The school has developed an improvement plan that is not sufficient to address this area of need. The school will revise its improvement plan to ensure that programs offer instruction in the CCCSs. The improvement plan must include procedures that ensure that IEP goals and objectives are aligned with the CCCSs, in-service of staff and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures. The school also identified concerns with regard to the provision of medication and nursing services. The school has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address this area of need.

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

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

Coastal Learning Center Howell Campus

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the **Howell Campus** accurately identified themselves as compliant in the areas of class sizes and age ranges, special class programs, home instruction, medication/nursing services and medical examinations for sports teams.

During the self-assessment process, the **Howell Campus** identified concerns with regard to the core curriculum content standards (CCCSs), including core curriculum content standards for students with severe disabilities (CCCSSDs). The school has developed an improvement plan that is sufficient to address this area of need.

Additional areas of need were identified during the on-site visit regarding instruction in the CCCSs and the evaluation of enrolled students by the speech-language pathologist without referral to the child study team of the responsible school district.

Areas of Need:

Instruction in CCCSs- During the on-site, interviews and record reviews indicate that IEP goals and objectives provided by private school are not aligned to the CCCSs.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to ensure that programs shall offer instruction in the CCCSs. The improvement plan must include procedures that ensure that IEP goals and objectives are aligned with the CCCSs, in-service of staff and an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures.**

Evaluation without referral- During the on-site visit, it was determined that the speech therapist conducts evaluations for students in attendance at the school without making a referral to the child study team of the sending district. When the receiving school believes that an enrolled student may benefit from related services not assigned in the IEP, regulations require a referral to the child study team of the sending district. The IEP team determines whether or not an evaluation is warranted and if the related service should be added to the IEP.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to ensure that when the school believes that an enrolled student may benefit from a related services not assigned in the IEP, a referral must be made to the child study team of the sending district. The improvement plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

SECTION VIII. STUDENT RECORDS

Coastal Learning Center Morganville Campus

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the **Morganville Campus** accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas of returning records, access to records, access sheets, location of records, daily attendance and written notification to the Department of Education within 10 calendar days of the student's first day of attendance.

During the self-assessment process, the **Morganville Campus** identified concerns regarding student health records. The school has developed an improvement plan that sufficiently addresses this area of need.

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding conformance to pupil record code.

Areas of Need:

Conformance to pupil record code- During the on-site visit, through interview and observation, it was determined that the school was violating the confidentiality requirements of pupil record code in that they posted pupil's names and a record of alleged behavioral infractions on the wall in the main corridor.

- **The school will revise the improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that the school meets the confidentiality requirements of pupil records code. The improvement plan must include in-service training for staff and an administrative oversight.**

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

Summary

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Coastal Learning Center **Morganville and Howell Campuses** on April 17, 18 and 19, 2002 and the **Tuckerton and Little Egg Campuses** on June 4, 5, 6, 7, 2002. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the schools' report of findings resulting from their self-assessments and to review the schools' improvement plan. As a result of this review, the schools were able to identify many areas of need and develop improvement plans that, with some revision, will be sufficient to bring about systemic change. The schools are commended for the many areas that were determined by the school and verified by the Department of Education as compliant with federal and state statutes and regulations

Coastal Learning Center Morganville Campus

During parent interviews, many parents commented positively on Coastal Learning Center **Morganville Campus'** program and the commitment to the students by school staff members.

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the **Morganville Campus** during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included annual reports, amendments, provision of programs in nonsectarian settings, length of day and year, physical education, services at no cost to parents, extended school year programs and observation of programs, certified/licensed staff, dual employment, job descriptions, criminal history verification and approved professional development plan, certificates of occupancy and inspections, staff attendance at IEP meetings, accessibility of IEPs, staff knowledge of accommodations and modifications, timely implementation of IEP, observation of proposed placement, progress reports, areas related to statewide tests, changes to program or placement, tracking of suspensions and interim alternative educational setting, class sizes and age ranges, exceptions, special class programs, home instruction, medical examinations for sport teams, return of records, access and location of records, daily attendance and written notification to the Department of Education within 10 calendar days of the student's first day of attendance..

During the self-assessment process, **Morganville Campus** identified areas of need regarding policies and procedures, staff development, provision of services as per IEP, fire drills, annual IEP meetings, current IEPs, communication to sending district regarding IEP components implementation of IEP components, medication/nursing services and student health records.

The on-site visit identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding the programs provided in approved facilities, standard disciplinary procedures, and conformance to pupil record code.

New Jersey Department of Education

Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

Coastal Learning Center Howell Campus

During parent interviews, many parents commented positively on the **Howell Campus'** program and the commitment to the students by the school staff members.

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the **Howell Campus** during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included policies and procedures, staff development, annual reports, amendments, provision of programs in nonsectarian settings, length of day/year, physical education, services at no cost to parents, dual employment, job descriptions, criminal history verification and approved professional development plan, approved facility, communication with sending districts, accessibility of IEPs, staff knowledge of accommodations and modifications, timely implementation of IEP, observation of proposed placement, areas related to statewide tests, progress reports, changes to program/placement, tracking of suspensions and interim alternative educational setting, class sizes and age ranges, exceptions, special class programs, home instruction, nursing and medical services, pupil record code, return of records, access and location of records, daily attendance, written notification to the DOE and health records.

During the self-assessment process, the **Howell Campus** identified areas of need regarding extended school year, observation of programs, current IEP, the use of time-out rooms, aversive therapies and restraints and staff knowledge of CCCSs.

The on-site visit identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding the provision of services as per IEP, staff certification, IEP participants and instruction in the CCCSs.

Coastal Learning Center Tuckerton Campus

Areas identified as consistently compliant by **Tuckerton Campus** during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included annual reports, amendments, provision of programs in nonsectarian settings, length of day/year, physical education, services at no cost to parents, extended school year, observation of programs, provision of services as per IEP, related services, certified/ licensed staff, dual employment, employment/ job descriptions, criminal history verification, approved professional development plan, certificates of occupancy and inspections, fire drills, IEPs conducted at least annually, with appropriate participants, communication with sending districts, accessibility of IEPs, inform teachers/providers of IEP responsibilities, staff knowledge of accommodations and modifications, timely implementation of IEP, observation of proposed placement, areas related to statewide tests, IEP implementation, progress reports, standard disciplinary procedures, procedures for time out rooms, removal of students, changes to program/placement, tracking of suspensions, interim alternative educational setting, termination of students, class sizes and age ranges, exceptions, special class programs, core curriculum content standards, home instruction, nursing and medical services, pupil record code, return of records, access and location of records, daily attendance, absences/ tardiness written notification to the DOE and health records.

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

During the self-assessment process, the **Tuckerton Campus** identified areas of need regarding policies and procedures related to staff development and current IEPs.

The on-site visit to the **Tuckerton Campus** identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding appropriate nursing facilities.

Coastal Learning Center Little Egg Campus

Areas identified as consistently compliant by the **Little Egg Campus** during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included annual reports, amendments, provision of programs in nonsectarian settings, length of day/year, physical education, services at no cost to parents, extended school year, observation of programs, provision of services as per IEP, related services, certified/ licensed staff, dual employment, employment/ job descriptions, criminal history verification, approved professional development plan, certificates of occupancy and inspections, fire drills, IEPs conducted at least annually, with appropriate participants, communication with sending districts, accessibility of IEPs, inform teachers/providers of IEP responsibilities, staff knowledge of accommodations and modifications, timely implementation of IEP, observation of proposed placement, areas related to statewide tests, IEP implementation, progress reports, standard disciplinary procedures, procedures for time out rooms, removal of students, changes to program/placement, tracking of suspensions, interim alternative educational setting, termination of students, class size and age range, exceptions, special class programs, core curriculum content standards, home instruction, nursing and medical services, pupil record code, return of records, access and location of records, daily attendance, absences/ tardiness written notification to the DOE and health records.

During the self-assessment process, the **Little Egg Campus** identified areas of need regarding policies and procedures related to staff development and current IEPs.

The on-site visit to **Little Egg Campus** identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding communication to sending districts when hearing aids are not functioning properly and appropriate nursing facilities.

Within forty-five days of receipt of the monitoring report, the schools will revise and resubmit their improvement plans to the Office of Special Education Programs to address the areas of need identified during the on-site visit and those areas that require revisions to the improvement plans.