

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

Receiving School: Woodcliff Academy

County: Monmouth

Monitoring Dates: December 5-7, 2005

Monitoring Team: Karen Frumen, Carmen Fanucci, Cecelia Downey and Elaine Lerner

Background Information:

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

Noncompliant items reflected in this report may result in nonallowable costs imposed by the Division of Finance in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23-4.1 through 4.16.

Areas Demonstrating Compliance With All Standards:

General Provisions, Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), Facility Requirements and Programs and Services were determined to be areas of compliance by the Woodcliff Academy during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

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

Section III: Staff Requirements

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Woodcliff Academy accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding private school dual employment, supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at county office, criminal history verification and having an approved professional development plan.

An area of need was identified during the onsite visit regarding certified/licensed staff.

Areas of Need:

Certified/Licensed Staff- During the on-site visit, through record review and staff interviews, it was determined that Spanish was not provided by a certified Spanish teacher. Additionally, it was determined that many Learning/Language Disability (L/LD) and Behavior Disabilities (BD) classes were not instructed by a certified teacher of student with disabilities.

- **The school will immediately revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that a certified Spanish Teacher provides instruction in Spanish and Teacher of Students with Disabilities provide instruction for Learning/Language Disabilities and Behavior Disabilities classes. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent, compliant implementation of the procedures.**

Section V: Individualized Education Program/Annual Review

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Woodcliff Academy accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP meeting conducted with required receiving school participants, IEP meeting conducted with students as appropriate, signatures of participants present on IEPs, 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, the Woodcliff Academy identified concerns in the area regarding current IEP prior to service delivery. 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.

An additional area of need was identified during the on-site visit regarding communication to sending districts regarding missing IEP components.

Areas of Need:

Communication to Sending Districts Regarding Missing IEP Components- During the on-site visit, through record reviews and staff interviews, it was determined that the school does not consistently communicate to sending districts when IEP components such as present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, counseling goals and objectives, behavior

New Jersey Department of Education Special Education Receiving School Monitoring

intervention plan goals and objectives, statewide assessment, program page and location of related services are missing.

- **The school will revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that the school communicates with sending districts when IEP components such as Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance, counseling goals and objectives, Behavioral Intervention Plan goals and objectives, statewide assessment, program page and location of related services are missing. The plan must include an administrative oversight component to ensure the consistent implementation of the procedures.**

Section VI: Discipline

During self-assessment, the Woodcliff Academy accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding standard disciplinary procedures, procedures for time out rooms, restraints and aversive therapies, removal of student pending mediation and due process, changes to program/placement pending mediation and due process, notification to sending districts regarding suspensions and removal of student to interim alternative educational setting.

An area of need was identified subsequent to the on-site visit regarding termination of student placement.

Area of Need:

Termination of Placement - Subsequent to the on-site visit, through parent and district communication, it was determined that the school unilaterally terminates student's placement without appropriate communication with sending districts in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-7.6 and 7.7.

- **The school will immediately revise its improvement plan to include procedures to ensure that the school communicates with sending districts when considering the termination of student placement. The plan must ensure compliance with the code citations above. The plan must also include an administrative oversight component to ensure consistent implementation of the procedures.**

Section VIII: Student Records

Summary of Findings:

During self-assessment, the Woodcliff Academy accurately identified themselves compliant in the areas regarding conformance to pupil record code, return of records upon termination of student placement, access to records is limited to authorized persons, access sheets, location of other records specified in central file, daily attendance available to LEAs, written communication to LEAs regarding five days of tardiness/absences and maintenance of student health records.

During the self-assessment process, the Woodcliff Academy identified a concern regarding written notice of placement to the county office. 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.

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

Summary

On-site special education monitoring was conducted in the Woodcliff Academy on December 5, 6, and 7, 2005. The purpose of the monitoring visit was to verify the Woodcliff Academy'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 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 revisions, will bring about systemic change. The receiving school is also commended for the implementation of corrective action to address the areas of need identified during the self-assessment process.

General Provisions, FAPE, Facility Requirements and Programs and Services were determined to be areas of compliance by the Woodcliff Academy during self-assessment and by the NJDOE during the on-site visit.

Additional areas identified as consistently compliant by the Woodcliff Academy during self-assessment and verified during the on-site monitoring visit included private school dual employment, supervision of paraprofessionals, job descriptions of paraprofessionals maintained at county office, criminal history verification, having an approved professional development plan, IEP meeting conducted at least annually, IEP meeting conducted with required receiving school participants, IEP meeting conducted with students as appropriate, signatures of participants present on IEPs, 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, standard disciplinary procedures, procedures for time out rooms, restraints and aversive therapies, removal of student pending mediation and due process, changes to program/placement pending mediation and due process, notification to sending districts regarding suspensions and removal of student to interim alternative educational setting.

During the self-assessment process, the Woodcliff Academy identified areas of need regarding current IEP and notification of placement to the county office.

The on-site visit identified additional areas of need within the various standards regarding certified/licensed staff and communication to sending districts regarding missing IEP components. An additional area of need was identified subsequent to the on-site visit in the area regarding termination of student placement.

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