



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PO Box 500

TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

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*Governor*

KIM GUADAGNO  
*Lt. Governor*

CHRISTOPHER D. CERF  
*Acting Commissioner*

March 7, 2011

Mr. Joseph M. Ferraina, Superintendent  
Long Branch Board of Education  
540 Broadway  
Long Branch, NJ 07740

Dear Mr. Ferraina:

The New Jersey Department of Education has completed a review of funds received and disbursed from one or more federal programs by the **Long Branch Board of Education**. The funding sources reviewed include titled programs for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in particular, and/or No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (Education Stabilization Fund and Government Stabilization Fund). The review covered the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. The resulting report is enclosed. Please provide a copy of the report to each board member. All issued ARRA monitoring reports will be posted on the department's website at <http://www.nj.gov/education/arra/>.

Utilizing the process outlined in the attached "Procedures for LEA/Agency Response, Corrective Action Plan and Appeal Process," the Long Branch Board of Education is required, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.6, to publicly review and discuss the findings in this report at a public board meeting no later than 30 days after receipt of the report. Within 30 days of the public meeting, the board must adopt a resolution certifying that the findings were discussed in a public meeting and approving a corrective action plan which addresses the issues raised in the undisputed findings and/or an appeal of any **monetary** findings in dispute (emphasis added). A copy of the resolution and the approved corrective action plan and/or appeal must be sent to this office within 10 days of adoption by the board. Direct your response to my attention.

Also, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.6(c), you must post the findings of the report and the board's corrective action plan on your school district's website.

By copy of this report, your auditor is requested to comment on all areas of noncompliance and recommendations in the next certified audit submitted to the New Jersey Department of Education. If you have any questions, please contact Ronald Fisher at (609) 777-3723.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Cicchino, Director  
Office of Fiscal Accountability and Compliance

RJC/LDM/tc:Long Branch Board of Education Cover Letter  
Enclosures

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**American Recovery & Reinvestment Act 2009**  
*New Jersey K-12 Education*

**ARRA MONITORING REPORT  
MARCH 2011**

**District:** Long Branch Board of Education  
**County:** Monmouth  
**Dates On-Site:** January 20 and 21, 2011  
**Case #:** ARRA-044-09

**FUNDING SOURCES**

Program	Funding Award
State Fiscal Stabilization Fund - Education Stabilization Fund	\$4,495,265
State Fiscal Stabilization Fund - Government Services Fund	174,018
ARRA-Title I	779,695
ARRA-Title I SIA, Part A	56,682
<b>Total ARRA Funding</b>	<b>\$5,505,660</b>
Title I	\$1,555,680
Title I SIA Part A	105,852
<b>Total Non-ARRA Funding</b>	<b>\$1,661,532</b>
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$7,167,192</b>

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**BACKGROUND**

The *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)* and other federal laws require local education agencies (LEAs) to provide programs and services to their schools based on the requirements specified in each of the authorizing statutes (ESEA, IDEA and ARRA). The laws further require that state education agencies such as the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) monitor the implementation of federal programs by sub recipients and determine whether the funds are being used by the district for their intended purpose and achieving the overall objectives of the funding initiatives.

**INTRODUCTION**

The NJDOE visited the Long Branch Board of Education to monitor the district's use of *ARRA* funds and the related program plans, where applicable, to determine whether the district's programs are meeting the intended purposes and objectives, as specified in the current year applications and authorizing statutes, and to determine whether the funds were spent in accordance with the program requirements, federal and state laws, and applicable regulations. The on-site visit included staff interviews and documentation reviews related to the requirements of the following programs: State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF) including the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF) and Government Services Fund (GSF); Title I; Title I SIA, Part A; ARRA-Title I; and ARRA-Title I SIA, Part A for the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. The monitoring also included a review of the district's most recent ARRA section 1512 and SFSF cash management quarterly reports to determine whether ARRA expenditures, jobs estimates and related information were reported accurately.

The scope of work performed included the review of documentation including grant applications, program plans and needs assessments, grant awards, annual audits, board minutes, payroll records, accounting records, purchase orders and current district policies and procedures. The monitoring team members also conducted interviews with district personnel, reviewed the supporting documentation for a sample of expenditures and conducted internal control reviews.

**EXPENDITURES REVIEWED**

The following dollar amounts of expenditures were reviewed for each program monitored for the period of July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010:

- ESF benefits expenditures totaling \$4,495,265 were reviewed;
- GSF benefits expenditures totaling \$174,018 were reviewed;
- ARRA-Title I expenditures totaling \$210,777 were reviewed;
- ARRA-Title I SIA expenditures totaling \$25,718 were reviewed;
- Title I expenditures totaling \$242,830 were reviewed; and
- Title I SIA expenditures totaling \$86,248 were reviewed.

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**GENERAL DISTRICT OVERVIEW OF USES OF TITLE I AND IDEA FUNDS**

**ARRA-Title I**

The ARRA-Title I funds were utilized to develop and implement additional after-school tutoring programs to increase academic achievement in mathematics and language arts literacy and reading, as well as improve parental involvement. Programs to address these areas included the implementation of supplemental and intervention systems aligned to the existing Reading Edge and Connected Math programs, as well as the incorporation of assessment taking skills and strategies as outlined by Standard Solutions. Students were selected for the after-school programs through the following multiple measures:

- Eight week reading assessments
- Benchmark Assessments
- Findings from CAPA benchmark visits
- NJ ASK cluster data

The district measured the success of the programs through the following measurable goals:

- A 10% increase in proficiency scores for the patterns in the algebra strand for grade six students on the benchmark assessments.
- The number of students demonstrating proficiency in analyzing/critiquing text increased by five percent as measured by district benchmark assessments.

**ARRA-Title I SIA, Part A**

The ARRA-Title I SIA, Part A funds were utilized to provide professional development training in the areas of mathematics and language arts literacy and reading. In addition, the SIA, Part A funds were employed to develop and implement extended day programs, extended year programs, after-school academic programs, and tutoring programs for students who did not make proficiency benchmarks on the state assessments.

Gains in achievement were assessed through multiple measures to include the following: state and local assessments, benchmark assessments, and parent feedback.

**Title I**

The Title I, Part A funds were utilized to provide multiple after-school tutorial programs to enhance the learning experiences for students, as well as improve parental involvement. The main focus of these tutorial programs was to help students increase academic achievement in mathematics and language arts literacy and reading by utilizing multiple data obtained during the sessions to individualize instruction. These tutorial programs were provided three times a week, from 2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Two or more tutors were assigned to each program. Students were identified as candidates for these programs through multiple measures including: state assessment scores in mathematics and language arts literacy and reading, district benchmark

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assessments, classroom assessment, teacher recommendations, student grades, and student interest.

Instruction occurred in small group settings where the analysis of state test results, as well as teacher input, provided the basis for the creation of Personalized Learning Plans for each student. These learning plans guided the academic instruction and were designed based on a differentiated instruction model. On a daily basis, both the tutor and student jointly evaluated the student's progress toward meeting the academic goals and objectives outlined in the plans and, when necessary, revised the plans to meet the student's academic needs. Students received homework assistance and participated in enrichment activities and academic goal specific groups, which focused on supplemental instruction that was connected to the district curriculum. All results were shared with classroom teachers to further support student success. Parents were given opportunities to join in the academic instruction, with the goal that they learn strategies to employ in the home as they assist their children with homework and school-related projects. Parents were invited to attend several academic events, as well as assist with assignments to develop collaboration among staff and parents.

The district assessed gains in achievement through the following multiple measures: state assessments, teacher observations, student work, and classroom and benchmark assessments.

Examples of these after-school tutorial programs include the following:

- **Happy Feet Reading Club** – This academic after-school program provided additional academic assistance to students who showed failing assessment scores in the areas of language arts and writing. The program's focus was to assist students in meeting individual and group reading and language arts goals, while reading health and fitness related content books. Students participated in small reading groups in which they read aloud and participated in group discussions. After reading a few chapters of an assigned book, students worked in pairs to present a synopsis on one of the chapters. The goals for these presentations included increased comprehension, expanded vocabulary, and development of higher level listening and questioning skills, while learning about the importance of healthy eating and physical exercise. During the sessions children kept track of their own progress through a journal log-book, which was shared with the classroom teachers and parents.
- **After School Math Crew** – The Math Crew focused on number and numerical operations, as well as provided homework help. The program included 25 fourth and fifth grade students. Students were selected based on multiple data sources, to include, but not be limited to: the 2009 NJ ASK3 strand data; the 2009 NJ ASK4 strand data; and fall 2009 homework return percentage, facts mastery, and unit test scores. In addition, students who scored below the proficiency level in the Number and Numerical Operations cluster on the 2009 NJ ASK and exhibited poor classroom performance in computation and facts based on tests and unit grades were part of the group. This after-school program was held from 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Students who attended this program in the prior year automatically were invited to attend the program.

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- **Helping Hands Homework Club** – This after-school program was specifically designed to address all students in grades three-five who were at-risk academically due to lack of proficiency on state assessments and who continually demonstrated poor homework performance. Students with working parents, who could not devote time to homework assistance, were provided one on one instruction. Students partnered with one another to complete their daily 20 minutes of reading and completed mathematics facts practice with one another, making the work interactive and shared. Each student also received additional academic instruction in small group settings. Data on performance and participation were shared with parents and classroom teachers.

**Title I SIA, Part A**

The Title I SIA, Part A funds were utilized to provide additional professional development and supporting materials in the following programs: Radical Reform of Algebra I using Discovering Algebra with LL Teach and the Read 180 program. In addition, professional development was provided in order to assist teachers in analyzing assessment data and using this data to change their individual instructional practices. The district measured the success of these professional development services through an increase in the number of students, per grade level, who made adequate yearly progress measures.

**DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**ARRA-Title I**

**Finding 1:**

**Condition:** The district did not consult with nonpublic schools outside the district boundaries attended by district students, as required under ARRA-Title I, Part A.

**Citation:** NCLB §1120: Participation of Children Enrolled in Private School.

**Required Action:** The district must begin immediately the consultation process with those nonpublic schools that enroll students who reside within the boundaries of the district's eligible school attendance areas. The district must submit its Affirmation of Consultation forms and, if necessary, its Nonpublic School Refusal of Funds forms for ARRA-Title I funds to the NJDOE for review. Upon completion of the consultation process, the district must immediately begin providing Title I services to income-eligible at-risk nonpublic school students.

**Finding 2:**

**Condition:** The district did not complete the required Electronic Web Enabled Grant (EWEG) System Program Plan information to describe the use of the ARRA-Title I SIA, Part A funds.

**Citation:** OMB Circular A-87, Attachment B, *Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments*, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Section 1120A(b): *Fiscal Requirements, Federal Funds To Supplement, Not Supplant, Nonfederal Funds*.

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**Required Action:** The district must enter the required Program Plan information (i.e., NCLB Priority Problems, Target Populations, Goals and Indicators, and Performance Targets) in its ARRA-Title I amendment application. The district must submit this information to the NJDOE for review.

**Title I and NCLB**

**Finding 3:**

**Condition:** The combined per pupil amounts in the FY 2010 NCLB Amendment #1 (FY 2010 Title I and ARRA-Title I) for A. A. Anastasia School, with a low-income percentage of 75%, totaled \$520; however, the combined per pupil amounts for Elberon School, with a low-income percentage of 71.19%, totaled \$532. Consequently, the combined school allocations are not calculated correctly, as a school with a higher percentage of low-income students has a lower per pupil allocation within the district, based on low-income poverty percentage ranking requirements.

**Citation:** NCLB §1116(b): *Academic Assessment and Local Educational Agency and School Improvement.*

**Required Action:** The district must submit a second amendment to the FY 2010 NCLB Consolidated Application to revise the per pupil amounts in the Eligibility Step 4 screen. Upon completion of these revisions, the district will submit the amendment for review and approval by the Office of Grants Management (OGM).

**Finding 4:**

**Condition:** The district did not complete the required EWEG System Program Plan information to describe the use of the FY 2010 Title I SIA, Part A funds.

**Citation:** OMB Circular A-87, Attachment B, *Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments*, NCLB Section 1120A(b): *Fiscal Requirements, Federal Funds To Supplement, Not Supplant, Nonfederal Funds.*

**Required Action:** The district must complete and submit a second amendment to the FY 2010 NCLB Consolidated Application with the required Program Plan information (i.e., NCLB Priority Problems, Target Populations, Goals and Indicators, and Performance Targets). Upon completion of these revisions, the district will submit the amendment for review and approval by the OGM.

**Finding 5:**

**Condition:** The district's notification to inform parents of students attending Long Branch High School of the school's designation as a School In Need of Improvement (SINI), with accompanying sanctions, did not meet the legislative guidelines. Specifically, the letter was missing the following required components:



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1. Comparison of the school in terms of academic achievement to others in the district and state;
2. Parents actions to address the difficulties; and
3. Parental options-supplemental educational services.

**Citation:** NCLB §1116(b): *Academic Assessment and Local Educational Agency and School Improvement (School Improvement)*.

**Required Action:** The district must revise its SINI letter to meet the legislative requirements. The revised letter must be distributed to parents and a copy of the letter must be submitted to the NJDOE for review.

**Financial Management and Reporting**

The review in this area yielded no findings or recommendations.

The NJDOE thanks you for your time and cooperation during the monitoring visit and looks forward to a successful resolution of all findings and implementation of all recommendations contained in this report.

If you have any questions, please contact Ronald Fisher at (609) 777-3723 or via email at [ronald.fisher@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:ronald.fisher@doe.state.nj.us).