

Special
Education
Internal
Program
Review
2011-2012

Internal Program Review Participants:

District Administrator	Dr. David Aderhold
District Administrator	Dr. Deborah R. Batchelor
District Administrator	Ms. Susan DiDonato (<i>*retired</i>)
District Administrator	Ms. Kathryn Mitchell (<i>*retired</i>)
District Administrator	Dr. Erin Falk
Building Assistant Principal	Ms. Donna Gibbs-Nini
General Education Teacher K-5	Ms. Rebecca Totaro
General Education Teacher 4-8	Ms. Faye Airey
Special Education Teacher 6-8	Ms. Samantha Tognela
Special Education Teacher 4-5	Ms. Sue DeForest
Special Education Teacher 9-12	Mr. Todd Robinson
Special Education Teacher PS-3	Ms. Marissa Farber
Special Education Teacher 6-8	Ms. Kimberly Dolin
Guidance	Ms. Nancy Dunne
Gifted and Talented	Dr. Joan Ruddiman
Special Area Teacher	Ms. Cindy Westbrook
Instructional Assistant	Ms. Karen Sorensen
Instructional Technology	Ms. Russell Wray
Child Study Team	Dr. Astrid Bohler-Montforte
Child Study Team	Ms. Carolyn Montoney
Child Study Team	Ms. Cheryl Lowenbraun
Child Study Team	Ms. Karen Kelley

Overview:

The West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District conducted a review of its special education program and services over the course of the past two years. During the 2009-2010 school year the board of education hired an outside consultant, Dr. Stanley Vitello to conduct a needs assessment to determine what would be necessary for the district to conduct the program review. Dr. Vitello conducted a series of focus groups during the Winter 2009 and Spring 2010. Following this extensive needs assessment the district invited requests for proposal (RFP) for interested individuals to submit their information on how they would conduct the special education program review. There were three organizations and individuals that submitted RFP's proposals for the WWP Special Education Program Review. From this list, the WWP board of education selected Dr. Michele Kamens, a Rider University Professor with extensive knowledge and background in Special Education programs and services. Dr. Kamens conducted an external review of the programs and services during the Spring and Fall 2011 year and has submitted her findings separate from this internal program review .

The internal program review committee met during the Spring and Fall of 2011 and Spring 2012 to review the programs and services in the district. These meetings were held after school with the committee members. The committees divided their work amongst the following areas: Curriculum, Student Assessment and Performance, Instruction, Resources, Professional Development, and Special Education Code. Committee members met within smaller groups to research each of these areas. Surveys were conducted in May of 2011 through *google.docs* to help with compiling information that was completed by special education teachers, general education teachers and child study team members to gain further information from staff on regarding curriculum and resources available to staff.

Staffing

The district currently employs the following professional highly qualified staff:

High School Special Education Teachers	41
Middle School Special Education Teachers	32
Upper Elementary Special Education Teachers	18
Elementary Special Education Teachers	24
Total Special Education Teachers	115

The district currently employs instructional assistants that are highly qualified to assist our special education students either on a one to one basis or for the classroom according to special code requirements: We currently have the following staff:

High School Instructional Assistants	31
Middle School Instructional Assistants	17
Upper Elementary Instructional Assistants	21
Elementary Instructional Assistants	60
Total Instructional Assistants	129

Related Services

Staff within the area of related services is currently employed to assist our students in the areas of speech and language services, occupational therapy and physical therapy. Our district has the following staffing:

Speech and Language Therapists	17
Occupational Therapists	5
Physical Therapists	2

The district currently employs child study team members according to code requirements. The district has the following certified staff:

School Psychologists	12
Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultants	13
Social Workers	11

A Full Continuum of Programs Offered Across the District

- In-Class Resource (ICR) available at all schools
- Resource Center (RC) available at all schools
- Language and Learning Disabilities (LLD) available at all K-5 buildings, Community, and High School North
- Multiply Disabled (MD) available at Town Center, Millstone River, Community, and High School North
- Multiply Disabled/Autism available at Dutch Neck, Millstone River, Community, and High School North
- Behavioral Disabilities (BD) available at High School North
- Preschool Disabilities (PSD) available at Maurice Hawk, Wicoff, Village, and Millstone River

Domain: Curriculum

Grades Preschool – 5

Findings: Evidence

- An individual's IEP goals and objectives are based on the student's individualized needs and upon the NJ State Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS). Students that are in In-Class Resource class rooms follow the mainstream curriculum with consideration to individualized goals and objectives as appropriate. The delivery of curriculum within our self-contained (specialized) programs is modified to meet the appropriate developmental needs of each student. Through the modification of curricular expectations, individualized and personalized programs are the result. Various materials and resources are used to supplement and enhance the CCCS as a means by which to effectively instruct the students in these programs (e.g. The Creative Curriculum in the Integrated Preschool Programs). In connection to goals and objectives, exposure to the CCCS occurs across all subject areas in concert with the instruction given at individual skill levels. Teachers engage in self-reflection with lessons to monitor progress in order to assess individual goals. Curriculum-based measurement tools are utilized to assist in this process.
- The district currently utilizes various research based Social Skills resources to assist students in their social skills development.
- In the area of technology, tools utilized for curriculum planning and instruction included: iPads, Internet, Alpha Smarts, overhead projectors, student computers in classroom and computer lab, document camera/laptops on cart, flip video/projectors, and Smart Boards.

Findings: Analysis/Recommendations:

- The district should ensure the accessibility of curricular documents to all stakeholders.
- The district should continue to update current curricular documents within all self-contained programs
- The district needs to continue to refine a preschool through grade 5, Social Skills curriculum in order to address the needs of our students' social and emotional needs.
- Inconsistency exists regarding the availability of technological tools in all buildings for students with special needs, specific to curriculum planning and instruction. An itemized listing of software, hardware, and other technological tools should be compiled for use across district buildings.

Grades 6 – Age 21

Findings: Evidence

- Recent curriculum development was conducted at the middle school level in order to align the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) with essential understanding and skills within the content areas of Language Arts Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Subsequently, an individual's IEP goals and objectives are based upon individualized needs and the NJ (CCCS). Similar to the elementary levels, students that are in middle and high school In-Class Resource settings follow the mainstream curriculum with consideration given to individualized goals and objectives as appropriate. In continuation with the delivery of services provided at the preschool – grade 5 level, curriculum within our self-contained (specialized) middle and high school programs is modified to meet the appropriate developmental needs of each student. Through the modification of curricular expectations, individualized and personalized programs are the result. In connection to goals and objectives, exposure to the CCCS occurs across all subject areas as reflected in lesson planning.
- Currently, job skill sampling and training (on and off site) is available to individual students based on need to assist in their transition to post-secondary programs and services.
- Various materials and resources are used to supplement and enhance the CCCS as a means to effectively instruct the students in replacement programs (e.g. The Wilson Language Program; GEMs Science Kits).
- In the area of technology, tools utilized for curriculum planning and instruction included: iPads, Internet, on-line subscription resources, overhead projectors, student computers in classroom and computer lab, document camera/laptops on cart, flip video/cameras, and Smart Boards.
- As appropriate to individual students, the district currently utilizes various research based Social Skills resources to assist students in their social skills development.

Findings: Analysis/Recommendations:

- The district needs to develop a clearly defined modified curriculum in order to better address the individualized needs in RC and LLD classes at all levels and across content areas.
- The district needs to expand the curriculum within the MD program at all levels.
- Teachers should continue to develop lesson plans, inclusive of assessment tools, that connect to individual goals and objectives thus monitoring the progress of each student.
- Continued dialogue regarding the use of curriculum-based measurement tools in connection with progress monitoring of individualized goals and objectives should be conducted.
- The district needs to continue to refine and write measurable goals and objectives within each content area. Goals should address areas of remediation for the

individual student. These goals should be directly related to the student's disability within the curricular area.

- An itemized listing of software, hardware, and other technological tools should be compiled for use across the district. Inconsistency exists regarding the availability of technological tools in all buildings for students with special needs, specific to curriculum planning and instruction.
- The district should explore and develop additional elective options at the high school level in order to better address functional and pragmatic needs of students in preparation for graduation and post high school transition.
- The district needs to further develop and refine a grade 6 through age 21, Social Skills curriculum in order to address the needs of our students' social and emotional needs.

Domain: Instruction

Grades Preschool – Age 21

Findings: Evidence

- Overall as a district, we offer instruction at all levels and within all programs that is aligned with CCCS and IEP goals/objectives.
- Instruction is differentiated as appropriate for students with special needs in various settings. This instruction is adapted to meet individualized needs as best practices in special education are implemented.
- Replacement programs (MD, BD, LLD, and RC) are available in various subjects and instruction is modified according to IEP goals and objectives.
- In the In-Class Resource settings, teachers implement a Co-teaching Model. This model provides opportunities for collaborative planning time; however, those opportunities vary at each level.
 - It was noted that the most effective teaming partnerships were those who received shared professional development. In addition, established partnerships over time were deemed to have the greatest impact on student achievement as reflected in survey results.
- At the high school level, juniors and seniors may be supported by the Inclusion Consultant model in various subjects as designated by the IEP.
- In survey results, teachers shared that they reference the CCCS and student specific IEP goals and objectives in their lesson planning. It was also noted that individual teachers list accommodations and/or modifications in lesson plans.
- A majority of teachers that were surveyed indicated that both summative and formative assessments were utilized to reflect upon the effectiveness of instruction.
- The development of common assessments across subject areas and grade levels is presently being addressed.
- The recent Post-Secondary Outcomes Survey documented that appropriate opportunities have been provided to our students. These have included students that take college preparatory courses as well as Job Skills Sampling and Training courses.

Findings: Analysis/Recommendations

- The district should develop a consistent format for lesson planning that accommodates the needs of special education teachers and therapists. The format should include student specific goals and objectives that guide instruction, accommodations and modification, and evidence of alignment with the CCCS.
- The district should continue to support differentiation of instruction and provide appropriate professional development to enhance these practices.
- The district should continue to develop its co-teaching model of instruction and provide on-going coaching and support. Consistent opportunities for horizontal and vertical articulation should be provided to enhance teaching partnerships and professional dialogue.

- The district should continue to provide training in writing effective goals and objectives respective to instruction. These should include goals for remediation that address individual student needs.
- The district should continue its efforts in the development of common assessments. These assessments should include appropriate accommodations and modifications for students with special needs. Conversations in departments should include both general and special education teachers.
- Opportunities for post-secondary transition would benefit from expansion
- The district should work to further enhance the current course offerings for Job Skill Training (e.g. Dare to Dream program through the Office of Special Education).

Domain: Assessment and Performance

Grades Preschool -5

Findings: Evidence

- At the beginning of the school year CST members meet with individual and/or groups of teachers and instructional assistants to review the IEP, which includes the performance levels of individual students and their goals for the year. Classroom teachers have access to student grades and individual test scores through the I.E.P., student files, and Infinite Campus.
- If a child is in a mainstream subject area classroom, the student is assessed by the general education teacher following district procedure to assess performance on current content standards. Further, the district administers the In View Test to all second graders, the ERB to all fifth graders and the state mandated NJ ASK tests to students in grades 3-5.
- If a child is placed in special education classes, the following assessment tools are employed:
 - Assessment of progress on goals and objectives for quarterly report card through curriculum based measurements (CBM)
 - Administration of the following standardized tests:
 - Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (Fall & Spring)
 - Key Math (Spring)
 - Slosson Oral Reading Test (Spring)
 - Administration of the following norm reference tools throughout the year:
 - Developmental Reading Assessment
 - Developmental Spelling Assessment -Ganske
 - Collection of data from ABA instruction
 - Informal Inventories for preschool and kindergarten students– administered 3 x/year
 - Observation and informal inventories to determine eligibility for ESY
 - Completion of the APA Proficiency Assessment for those students in special education with an exemption from NJ ASK
- Every three years, each student receiving special education and/or services is re-evaluated as determined by the Evaluation Planning Committee. The re-evaluation process may include one or more of the following: a psychological evaluation, an educational evaluation, a social history that includes an adaptive skills measure, speech and language evaluation, occupational therapy evaluation, physical therapy evaluation, psychiatric evaluation, neurological evaluation, auditory process evaluation, etc.
- At the classroom level, the student performance data is used to measure growth for the school year, to communicate progress to the parents, to develop the I.E.P. and accompanying goals and objectives for the new school year. The teacher may utilize student performance data to reflect on progress made towards CCCS. The teacher

relies on the student assessment to determine the level and pace of instruction and to help group students with similar needs.

- At the building level, student assessment data may be used to place students in the appropriate program and identify needs specific to the building.
- At the district level, student assessment data is used to establish needs for future programs, refine criteria for decision making and reflect on trends that may indicate the need to develop or adjust programs. It is intended that the district will soon implement Performance Matters to provide further analysis of tracking student achievement and district needs.
- The administration and staff review the effectiveness of the current assessment tools during monthly Special Services Meetings. Data is reviewed to detect patterns and identify needs at the classroom, building and district levels. Implementation of Performance Matters may provide further analysis of tracking student achievement and district needs.
- The district is consistent with purpose, method, criteria, reporting and feedback regarding student assessment and performance. The Child Study Team members and teachers are astutely aware of the importance of standardized administration.

Findings: Analysis/Recommendations

- Consistent training to maintain standardization is essential. As tests are revised or added, the district needs to provide the appropriate training necessary to become proficient at administration in order to protect standardization.
- Consistency in assessment procedures across the district is important. Maintain periodic review of assessment procedures through Child Study Team district meetings and monthly Special Services meetings.
- Maintain monthly district learning consultant, psychologist and social worker professional development meetings to enhance skills in assessment tools and procedures.
- Encourage staff attendance at professional workshops to address assessment.
- It is intended that the district will soon implement Performance Matters to provide further analysis of tracking student achievement and district needs.
- In order to comply with Special Education code it is essential to provide consultation time to review test results and students' needs. This is especially important during the beginning the school year and in preparation of annual reviews.
- Additional staffing to help with input of GRADE data in order to have timely response time for teachers to guide their instructional goals for students.
- Increase in Child Study Team staffing in order to continue to meet state mandated assessment timelines and pupil contact time.

Grades 6 - Age 21

Findings: Evidence

- Student performance data is shared at the beginning of the school year. CST members meet with individual and/or groups of teachers and instructional assistants to review the IEP, which includes the performance levels of individual students and their goals for the year. Classroom teachers have access to student grades and individual test scores through the I.E.P., student files, and Infinite Campus.
- At the classroom level, teachers utilize performance based measurements such as observation, oral discussions of content, and anecdotal records. The teacher relies upon information obtained through a variety of assessments to inform instruction at the appropriate level for individual students.
- In addition, teachers regularly use curriculum-based measures and probes such as: “do-now activities,” exit/response cards, anecdotal observation, minute quizzes, rubrics, student centered activities, oral participation in discussions, projects and classwork completion. The data collected from these measure help to guide lesson planning in regards to pacing of instruction, re-teaching of skills and concepts, and small group work/mini lessons as needed per lesson or unit of study. Frequently, curriculum is assessed through paper and pencil tasks or project-based assessments that are modeled after the regular education content assessments and then modified base on student need/disability.
- At the classroom level, the student performance data is used to measure annual growth, to communicate progress to student and parents, and to develop goals and objectives which determines appropriate courses for the new school year.
- Current 6-12 student performance is measured formally through standardized testing: NJASK in grades 6-8 and the ERB writing each Fall (6th-9th grades). Standardized measures at the high school level include HSPA and the End-of-Course Biology test. Individual student performance is measured by way of departmental common assessments and mid-terms/final exams in grades 9-12.
- The Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE) testing is utilized in grades six through twelve as appropriate in Language Arts Literacy courses in the Fall and the Spring to determine progress of skills to drive instruction.
- At the building level, in coordination with a student’s IEP assessment data may be used to place students in the appropriate program and identify needs specific to the building.
- Data is accessible to teachers, CST and administrators through the cumulative file in the guidance department as well as within the special education file held by the case manager.

Findings: Analysis/Recommendations

- The district should continue its efforts to establish consistency and communicate expectations with regard to purpose, method and criteria for assessment.
- Samplings from teacher interviews indicate a need for additional release time in order to review and understand individual student learning profiles.
- The district should provide professional development on the collection, interpretation, and use of data.
- The district should investigate the development of common assessments in curricular areas for students with special needs in RC and LLD settings, training and use of more frequent curriculum based measures and record-keeping of goal and objective progress at the middle and upper levels.
- The district should investigate how the competencies are used as a form of assessment that has a purpose and involves the student as a self-directed learner.
- It is intended that the district will utilize Performance Matters to collect and analyze multiple forms of data across individuals, curricular areas, classes, and many other subdivisions as filtered to determine cross-sections of student performance strengths and weaknesses.

Domain: Resources

Grades Preschool – Age 21

Findings: Evidence

- According to survey results, many teachers stated that they have access to an adequate supply of resources to support instruction, while noting that additional resources within specific content areas, inclusive of transition planning, could be helpful. A majority of staff members reported that resources are shared between grade levels in their respective buildings. All special education teacher respondents reported that they serve as a resource to non-special education teachers about individualized students and their needs.
- Across the grade levels, the majority of responses from teachers stated that they utilize a variety of available resources to enhance instruction. These include, but are not limited to: The Wilson Language Program, Framing Your Thoughts, Touch Math, Reading Milestones, Edmark Reading Program, et al. These programs are predominately used at the preschool through grade eight level.
- In the area of assistive technology, specialized items include: communication devices, assorted Phonak devices, sound field systems, FM Systems, iPads, Alpha Smarts, Rifton chairs, specialized devices for Activities for Daily Living, standers, specialized feeding tools, assorted therapy and sensory tools, et al.

Findings: Analysis/Recommendations

- While there is an abundance of grade level resources, the district should invest in additional print and on-line resources that provide text that is matched to individual student reading and ability levels.
- An overwhelming number of teachers surveyed think that a suggested list of activities/resources for students with special needs in their content area would be helpful. Across the grade levels, needs were noted in the areas of reading/language arts, mathematics, and self-determination in the transition planning and programming process.
- In addition, the district should look to expand upon resources that are matched to student abilities to ensure appropriate access thus supporting the individual assessment of student performance.
- The response to professional development opportunities to effectively and consistently use supplied resources for the instruction of students with special needs seemed to be fragmented throughout the grade levels thereby suggesting that more consistency would be helpful. The district should allow for special education based training in useful programs and technology to meet the individualized needs of students.
- The district should continue to offer consistent opportunities for articulation between grades and levels. Both general and special education teachers should be

provided with adequate time to investigate resources that are appropriate for students with special needs.

- In addition, schools should provide time for teachers and child study team members to discuss student needs with appropriate recommendations reviewed and discussed.

Domain: Professional Development

By and large, it was found that special education teachers and administrators are steadfast in their commitment to students with special needs and developing all students in the areas of instructional and educational achievement. All groups/group leaders agreed that professional development specific to special education is offered sporadically and in pockets for both special education and general education teachers. Professional development offerings vary by individual buildings, grade levels, and department affiliation.

Findings: District Evidence

Special Education teachers and administrators are committed to enhancing all students instructional and educational achievement. The following professional development activities have been utilized in the past:

- On the February 2011 in service day, there was a Traumatic Loss workshop for the psychologists, social workers and guidance counselors.
- There was a Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying workshop for all district child study team members and guidance counselors held in June of 2011 provided by the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association.
- The professional development committee in each of the buildings develops programs related to the Competencies and then followed up with this at the February 2011 in service day for all district staff which consisted of teachers, instructional assistants related services staff, special area teachers so that all staff were exposed to the same background knowledge.
- All PTSA's joined together and invited noted author, Dr. Leonard Sacks who spoke at High School South regarding his book, Boys Adrift, Girls on the Edge.
- Every building has a Professional Development Committee that surveys the staff to determine what needs are specific to each building and then develops subsequent professional development opportunities.
- There have been opportunities for training in utilizing Sharp School for setting up web pages for each teacher, as well as ways to use Infinite Campus.
- The district mandated GCN training for all district staff (e.g. HIB, Section 504, and Blood Borne Pathogens, and Safety Standards). A sampling of optional trainings that have been offered to staff include Handle With Care techniques and CPR.
- The department purchased iPads and distributed them to all district speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, preschool teachers, and teachers within MD and Autism programs. Training is on-going to determine which applications are appropriate to work with students with special needs.
- District-wide CST participated in a workshop for working collaboratively with parents.
- Across the district, CST is in the process of consistently uploading completed student IEPs.
- Training was conducted for the newly developed Goals and Objectives program for all special services child study team members, special services teachers,, and therapists.

Findings: Grades K-8 Evidence

- The district in collaboration with the Columbia Teachers College training program holds on-going workshops at the K-8 level. There is on-going training for both new and experienced staff. Special education teachers participate in this training as well so that there is continuity between all of the staff. In addition, Instructional Assistants participated in two workshops entitled: Supporting Reading and Writing and Supporting a Responsive Classroom in the spring of 2012 to enhance current classroom, building, and district goals.
- There have been assemblies at various schools on topics such as Autism, where speakers from Autism Speaks came to speak to the 4th and 5th graders at an assembly at Millstone River School with teachers attending.
- The district has recently upgraded all of the K/5 computers with MAC books so that the teachers can utilize instructional media in the classroom (i.e.: You tube videos, etc.

Findings: Grades 6 – Age 21 Evidence

- During the spring of 2012, all Instructional Assistants participated in professional development to ensure their understanding of confidentiality, issues related to special education law, and their role in the implementation of IEP's. In addition, The Motivation Breakthrough Secrets to Turning On the Tuned Out Child and Beyond Fat City were shown and discussion points centered upon:
 - Myths and misconceptions about motivation
 - Individual personality is based on the degree to which you are motivated by status, inquisitiveness, affiliation, power, achievement, aggression, gregariousness, and/or autonomy. How can we use these different profiles to see the uniqueness in our students and thus the unique motivators for each?
 - Connecting this information to the six different ways to motivate a student
 - Frustration, Anxiety, Tension—are three all-too-familiar feelings for children with learning disabilities and their families.
 - “I know how you feel...”; the demystification wherein the struggles in school are not the fault of the student
 - Specific guidelines in the areas of discipline and cooperation vs. competition
 - How our school “tools” can be used in restoring a struggling student’s confidence and self-esteem

Findings: Preschool through Grade 5 Analysis/Recommendations

- The special education department has identified a need for more specific training for instructional assistants and how they assist teachers that they work with in the classrooms as well as with individual students. Helping come up with ways to plan together for instructional needs is an area of need. Other specific requests have

been for Columbia training at the K/5 level- specific to how it impacts a special education classroom.

- More training is needed in the area of web based program use such as Infinite Campus, Sharp School etc.
- General education teachers are interested in opportunities for learning about current strategies for meeting the needs of special education students.
- Exploring different strategies and modifications for specific subject areas

Findings: Grades 6 through Age 21 Analysis/Recommendations

- Special education teaching staff have expressed a request for greater articulation time and common planning periods to adjust teaching more specifically and more frequently adapted to student needs. The district must be more intentional about identifying and addressing the needs of professionals who support special education students. Some potential topics include:
 - Understanding Asperger's Syndrome and exploring strategies
 - Understanding and implementing IEP's
 - Writing goals and objectives and the creation of PLAAFP's
 - Gifted Education and the student with special needs
 - Specific strategies/methods based in special education (e.g. Wilson, Framing Your Thoughts, etc.)
 - Content specific core curriculum content standards aligned with accommodations and modifications
 - Working with the ED/BD student
 - Implementing Behavior Improvement Plans
 - Working collaboratively with all stakeholders
- The district should explore consistent opportunities for staff to provide input as to their professional development needs.
- As some training sessions provided limited exposure to topics within specific buildings, it is recommended the district explore sustained professional development to impact instruction.
- It was found that Instructional Assistant professional development needs to be provided with focused training at the 6 -12 levels. Some potential topics include:
 - Defining the roles and responsibilities of the IA as a classroom assistant and as a 1-1 assistant
 - Microsoft office and other software programs
 - Strategies for addressing the behavioral and academic needs of challenging students
 - Assistive Technology
 - Understanding of the eligibility process in special education
- More effective vertical communication should be established between departments, buildings, and central office. This includes the development of a clearly defined vision and supervisory structure for Special Education teachers that provides direct support in the buildings. Additionally, the role of lead teachers should be clearly

defined with all representatives provided with opportunities to articulate on a regular basis.

- The district should explore avenues to provide parents with training specific to special education. For example: the components of an IEP, current topics in special education, etc.

Domain: Special Education Code NJAC 6A:14

Grades Pre-K –Age 21

Findings: Evidence

Monitoring- Compliance Standards

The district has been monitored by the NJ DOE for compliance with regards to federal and state special education code requirements. The last completed monitoring took place in December 2008 with results of that monitoring submitted to the district in September of 2010. Following an extensive district self-assessment the NJOSEP conducted onsite monitoring visits, verification visits and desk audits in WW-P to determine compliance with federal and state special education code. Areas reviewed involved: transition to adult life; state assessment discipline procedures; placement in the least restrictive environment; parent involvement disproportionate representation of specific racial-ethnic groups in special education; evaluation and reevaluation; individualized education program and programs and services. The monitoring results indicated that noncompliance identified by the district during the self- assessment was corrected in all areas, and there were no areas on noncompliance identified during the onsite monitoring. The district meets its obligation to provide FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education) in the LRE (least restrictive environment) to all special education students. A complete review of this monitoring was made to the school board at a public meeting on September 30, 2010 and placed on the district website. *Please see appendix for copies

During the 2009-2010 school year, the district was randomly selected to participate in the federally required survey of parents who have a child with a disability, ages 3-21. The survey was conducted as part of a federal requirement for New Jersey's State Performance Plan for Special Education (SPP), Indicator #8, Parent Involvement. The purpose of the survey was to determine the extent to which schools were supporting parent involvement in their child's educational program. The state target for this indicator was 82.1% for the 2009-2010 school year. Our district reported an 82.9% of parents receiving special education services who reported that our schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities. Please see attached appendix # for a summary of this report.

In January of 2012 our district was cited as having a disproportionate representation of specific racial/ethnic groups in special education as reported from data from NJSMART Special Education submissions for the fall of 2010 and 2011. As a result of this disproportionate representation the district is currently participating in technical assistance sessions as well as self-assessment sessions to identify strategies to achieve

equitable representation of all racial ethnic groups in special education. This process is ongoing at this time.

New/Expanded Programs

Over the course of the past ten years the district has expanded its offering of in district programs to meet the developing needs of its special education students. With the rise of students who were evaluated and classified as autistic, the district saw the need for the development of programs to meet the needs of this specific classification category. To date the district has brought back students from out of district settings and developed their own programs in the Multiple Disabilities/Autistic category. Currently the district has classes for students with multiple disabilities/autism at the following schools:

Dutch Neck School	2 MD/Autistic Preschool - K classes
Millstone River School	1MD/Autistic Class 1-3 grades 1 MD/Autistic Class 4-5 grades
Community Middle School	1MD/Autistic Class 6-8 grades
High School North	1 MD class 9-12 grades

There was also an identified rise in the number of students that were evaluated and classified as preschool disabled. The district developed integrated preschool classes where 16 students would be enrolled. Of these students half of them would be tuition paying general education students and half of them would be identified special education students. With the development of the Preschool Assessment Team that is housed at Millstone River School, the district currently has the following preschool classes offered in district at the following schools:

Millstone River School	1 Preschool Disabilities Class AM 3 year olds ; PM 4 year olds
Wicoff School	1 Integrated Preschool Class (half gen ed/half special ed) AM 3 year olds; PM 4 year olds
Village School	1 integrated Preschool Class (half gen ed/half spec ed) AM 3 year olds ; PM 4 year olds

Maurice Hawk School

1 integrated Preschool Class
(Half gen ed/half spec ed)
AM 3 year olds ; PM 4 year olds

The district is also in the planning stages for developing a Behavior Disabilities class at the Community Middle School with an anticipated opening for the Fall of 2012. This class will house up to 12 students, some of which will come back for the least restrictive environment to the district and be as close to their home school as possible.

Out of District Settings

The district has had students placed in out of district private schools. These schools are approved private schools for students with disabilities, by the NJ Department of Education to provide special education and related services. Students necessitating special education and related services not accessible in their home schools are placed at these schools. Therefore, the district board of education pays tuition to have these students educated in the out of district school, and our district provides transportation to these schools. Over the course of the past ten years, the out of district enrollment numbers have substantially decreased. This is due to the concerted efforts of district case managers and parents who have advocated for inclusion of their children in the least restrictive settings. The number of out of district students has decreased from a high of approximately 170 students to the current 100 students placed out of district in 2011. There is still a need for placement of students in out of district schools which includes such schools as: Bridge Academy; Center School; Collier High School; St. Joseph's School; CPC High Point; Devereux; Douglass Developmental; Eden Institute; Lakeview School; Newgrange; New Hope Academy; New Road School; Princeton Child Development Institute; Rock Brook School; Rugby School; Sister Georgine School; Titusville; UMDNJ; and Mercer County Special Services School District which has the following schools – Cappello, Mercer Elementary Regional Day and Mercer Junior/Senior High Schools.

Classification Rates

In October of 2010, the district had a total of 1005 students Eligible for Special Education and Related Services. The district had an additional 174 students who were classified as Eligible for Speech and Language Services. The following is a breakdown of the students and their eligibility category:

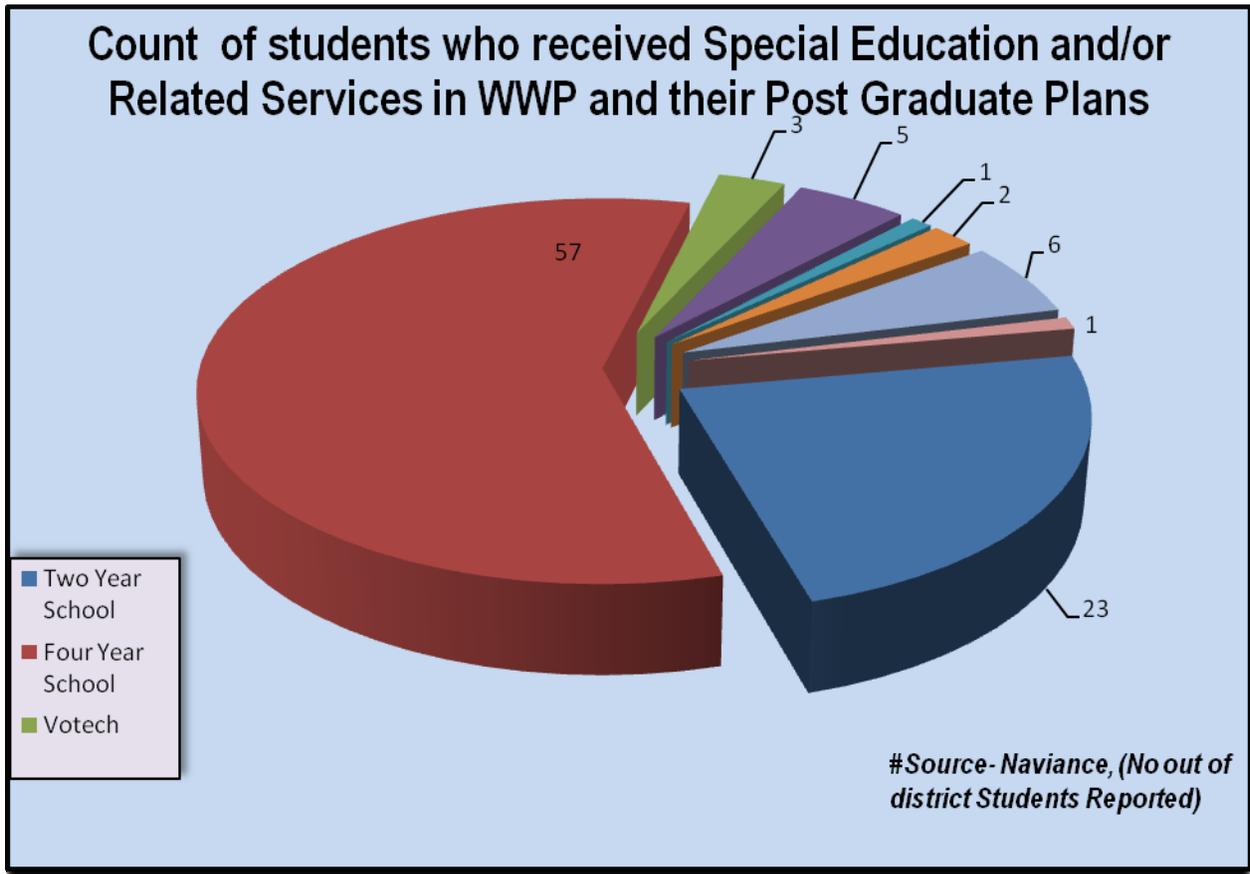
<u>Classification Category</u>	<u>Number of students</u>
Auditorily Impaired	10
Autistic	110

Cognitively Impaired - mild	4
Cognitively impaired – moderate	1
Communication impaired	95
Emotionally disturbed	54
Multiply disabled	181
Orthopedically impaired	2
Other health impaired	143
Preschool child with a disability	78
Specific learning disability	324
Traumatic brain injury	3
Eligible for speech-language services	174
Total	1179

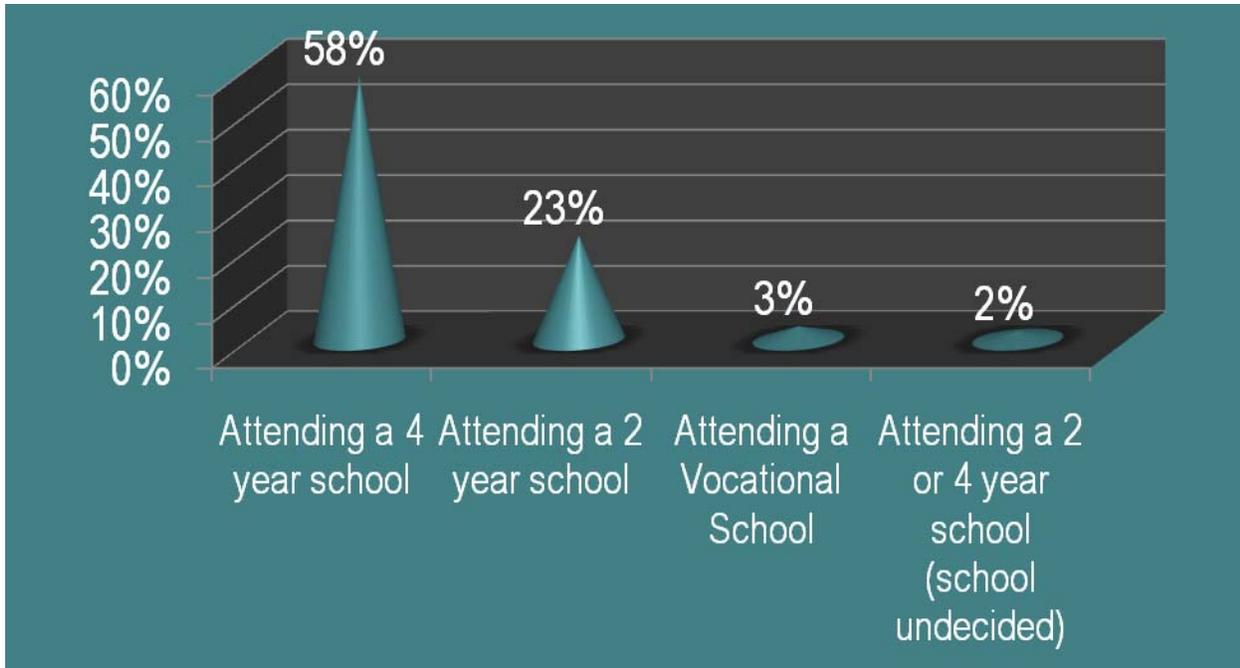
Post-Secondary Transition Outcomes

During 2011, the district participated in the annual survey of students with disabilities who exited high school during the 2009-2010 school year. The purpose of the study was to determine if students with disabilities are engaged in employment and/or postsecondary education one year after they exit high school. The survey is conducted annually as part of a federal requirement for New Jersey’s State Performance Plan (SPP), Indicator #14: Post-Secondary Transition Outcomes. The state target for this indicator is 84% engagement of students with disabilities. Our district had 92 respondents to this survey. The survey results are attached as appendix # to this report.

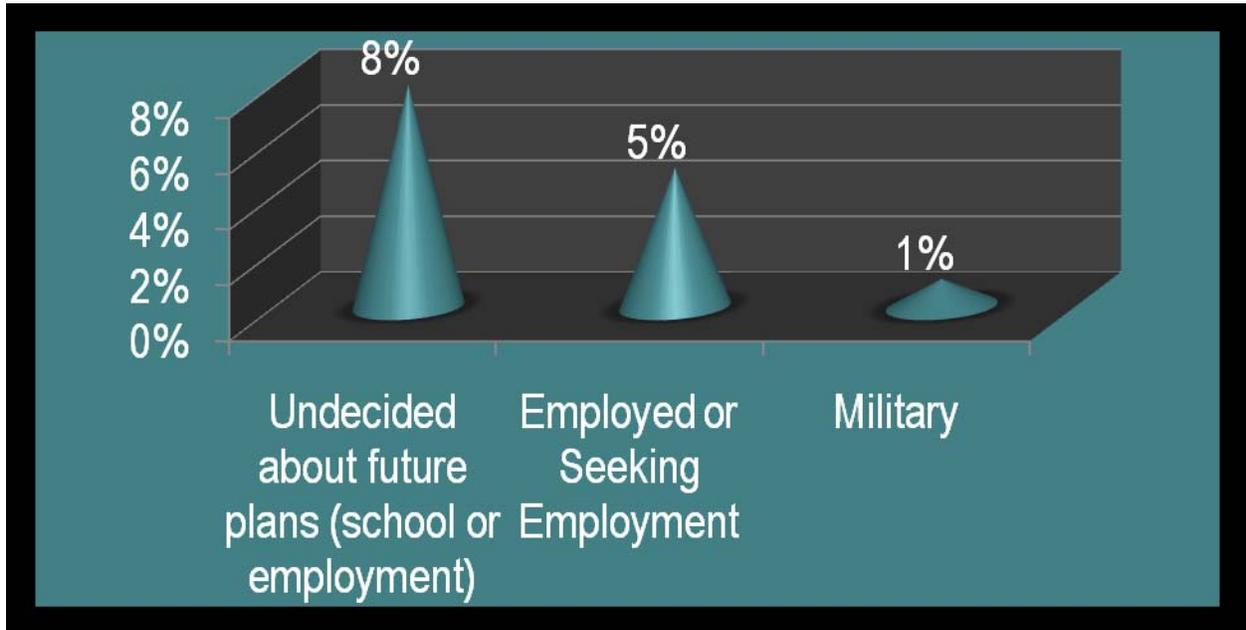
GRADUATION RATES AND POST-GRADUATION PLANS



Percentage of Students who will be receiving a Post Graduate Education



Percentage of Students with Other Plans



6% of students will be employed or serving our country
8% are undecided

Legal Issues

Good faith efforts are made to resolve disagreements between parents and staff regarding the placements of students in the LRE and to provide FAPE for all special education students. There has been a trend toward lowering the number of cases that actually go to mediation/ due process from a high of 21 cases in the 2006-2007 school year to a consistent low of 12 cases in the 2009-2010 school year and the 2010-2011 school year. The current school year (2011-2012) to date there have been 7 cases.

Glossary of Terms

Please note that definitions of terms were obtained from New Jersey Administrative Code Title 6A: Chapter 14 Special Education.

1. Approved Private School for Students with Disabilities- an incorporated entity approved by the Department of Education according to N.J.A.A 6A:14-7.2 or 7.3 to provide special education and related services to students with disabilities placed by the district board of education responsible for providing their education.
2. Autistic- means a pervasive developmental disability which significantly impacts verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction that adversely affects a student's educational performance. Onset is generally evident before age three. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routine, unusual responses to sensory experiences and lack of responsiveness to others. The terms does not apply is the student's adverse educational performance is due to emotional disturbance as defined in (c)5 below. A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three may be classified as autistic if the criteria in this paragraph are met. An assessment by a certified speech-language specialist and an assessment by a physician trained in neurodevelopmental assessment are required.
3. Behavioral Disabilities (BD)- special class programs for students with behavioral disabilities
4. Child Study Team (CST)- members shall include a school psychologist, a learning disabilities-teacher consultant and a school social worker. All child study team members shall be employees of a district board of education, have an identifiable, apportioned time commitment to the local school district and shall be available to provide all needed services during the hours students are in attendance
5. Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM)- an assessment tool characterized by certain attributes to measure progress in academic areas such as math, reading, writing, or spelling (The ABCs of CBM by M. Hosp, J. Hosp, & K. Howell)
6. Extended School Year Services (ESY)- special education and related services that are provided to a student with a disability beyond the normal school year in accordance with the student's IEP at no cost to the parent.
7. Individualized Education Program (IEP)- a written plan which sets forth present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, measureable annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks and describes an integrated, sequential program of individually designed instructional activities and related services necessary to

achieve the stated goals and objectives. This plan shall establish the rationale for the student's educational placement, serve as the basis for program implementation and comply with the mandates set forth in this chapter.

8. Language and/or Learning Disabilities (LLD)- special class programs for students with learning and/or language disabilities
9. Multiply Disabled (MD)- corresponds to "multiply handicapped" and "multiple disabilities," and means the presence of two or more disabling conditions, the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in a program designed solely to address one of the impairments. Multiple disabilities includes cognitively impaired-blindness, cognitively impaired-orthopedic impairment, etc. the existence of two disabling conditions alone shall not serve as a basis for a classification of multiply disabled. Eligibility for speech-language services as defined in this section shall not be one of the disabling conditions for classification based on the definition of "multiply disabled." Multiply disabled does not include deaf-blindness.
10. Preschool Child with a Disability (PSD)- corresponds to preschool handicapped and means a child between the ages of three and five experiencing developmental delay, as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in one or more of the areas below, and requires special education and related services. When utilizing a standardized assessment or criterion-referenced measure to determine eligibility, a developmental delay shall mean a 33 percent delay in one developmental area, or a 25 percent delay in two or more developmental areas:
 - i. Physical, including gross motor, fine motor and sensory (vision and hearing);
 - ii. Cognitive;
 - iii. Communication;
 - iv. Social and emotional; and
 - v. Adaptive
11. Related Services- transportation, and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services (including speech-language pathology, and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, social work services, school nurse services designed to enable a child with a disability to receive a free appropriate public education as described in the individualized education program of the child, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services, except such medical services shall be for diagnostic and evaluation purposes only) as may be required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from

special education, and includes the early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in children.

12. Resource Center (RC)- special class programs offered in content subject areas

13. Transition Services- a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that

- a. Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), and continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- b. Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- c. Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.