

**New Hampshire Department of Education**  
**Bureau of Special Education**  
**Special Education Program Approval and Improvement Process**

*The Mission of Special Education Program Approval is:*  
*To improve educational results for all learners.*

**2011-2012 Year End Summary Report**  
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June 2012 marked more than 24 years of partnership between the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) and the Southeastern Regional Education Service Center (SERESC) in the oversight and coordination of the Special Education Program Approval and Improvement Process. As outlined in the objectives in the RFP, the Program Approval Team has been charged with monitoring compliance of state special education rules and regulations in selected LEAs and private special education schools with the primary focus being improving educational results and functional outcomes for students with disabilities. The NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education has been intentional in the design of monitoring activities to ensure emphasis upon review of procedural compliance, with strong consideration given to how the requirements impact student learning outcomes. In order to fulfill IDEA's requirements, the NHDOE and SERESC have designed a balanced approach to monitoring through the review and assessment of both compliance and program effectiveness in special education programming in schools throughout the state. The report that follows summarizes the work of the NHDOE Program Approval and Improvement Process and accomplishments for the FY 2012. As outlined in the report, the monitoring work conducted by the NHDOE and SERESC provides a differentiated system of technical assistance and support for each LEA/private special education school and is intentional in engaging district personnel in the critical components of program approval activities. SERESC is pleased to work in partnership with the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education in fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor LEAs/private special education schools. This report is submitted to meet the obligation of the contract.

**I. Services to be Provided:**

Conduct Program Approval of all new special education programs and revisions to existing programs in accordance with New Hampshire Rules for the Education of Children with Disabilities Ed 1126.

- Collaborate with the Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education to review and update program approval application, instructions and forms as needed.
- Provide a Program Approval Technical Assistant (TA) that will communicate with applicant(s) regarding the program approval application and process.
- Review program approval application and documentation for compliance with NH Rules for the Education of Children with Disabilities Ed 1126.
- Provide written documentation to the Bureau of Special Education regarding recommendation to approve or not approve new programs or revisions to existing programs.
- Utilize their experience with school improvement models.

SERESC worked in collaboration with the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education in the revision, distribution and review of completed NHDOE Special Education Program Approval New and /or Change Applications. In the addendum are the application materials provided to LEAs and Private Special Education Schools. A list of the private special education schools and districts who received the applications is in the appendix. Each site was assigned technical assistants to work with the staff and administration in the completion of the materials. The technical assistant was responsible for review of the materials and providing a summary report to the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education. All of the completed application materials have been reviewed, summarized and provided to the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education.

**II. Service to be provided:**

**Monitor Public School Special Education Programs (including early childhood special education programs) using the Focused Monitoring process based on key indicator, as well as, compliance review.**

- Collaborate with the Bureau of Special Education to review the NH Focused Monitoring Process Manual annually and update as needed.
- Convene a representative stakeholder group to review and select a new Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for selection of districts to participate in focus monitoring, if requested by the Bureau of Special Education.
- Conduct Focused Monitoring which is a two (2) year process for selected districts. District selection and notification for Focused Monitoring is the responsibility of the Department.

Year one includes, but not limited to, a year-long program monitoring and compliance review with action planning and corrective action planning activities. Year two includes, but is not limited to, technical assistance to districts for their corrective action plan, monitoring of their corrective action plan and verification of correction of noncompliance.

**Year 1 (approximately seven (7) districts each year):**

**Schedule and conduct with the Department the initial information session with selected districts:**

- Distribute to each district the Focused Monitoring Compliance Application approved by the Department.
- Collect and review the Focused Monitoring Compliance Application materials in conjunction with the Department.

- **Submit the school district's personnel rosters submitted with their Focused Monitoring Compliance Application to the Department for verification of appropriate personnel credentialing.**
- **Schedule, train, and conduct the Focus Monitoring IEP Compliance Review, a component of the Department Focused Monitoring Process.**
- **Under the direction and supervision of the Department, collect records and track the data collected during the Focus Monitoring IEP Compliance Review for the purposes of identifying noncompliance.**
- **Develop the draft of the IEP Compliance Review Summary for Department review and approval. When approved by the Department, send the district the approved IEP Compliance Review Summary and a validation form in order for the district to respond to any factual error prior to the document being finalized. The district returns the validation form to the vendor.**
- **Within the IEP Compliance Review Summary, the district is notified that they are required to correct noncompliance as soon as possible, but in no case more than one year from receipt of IEP Compliance Review Summary. If noncompliance is found regardless of the specific level, the Department considers the IEP Compliance Review Summary the written notification of noncompliance.**
- **The Department will approve any revisions of the IEP Compliance Review Summary prior to the final approved summary being sent to the district.**
- **Assign team leader to facilitate focused monitoring process with each selected district.**
- **Work with each selected district to establish a focused monitoring team representative of administration and educators.**
- **Monitor special education programs in selected districts in accordance with NH Rules for the Education of Children with Disabilities Ed 1126.**
- **Work onsite with selected districts to determine Focused Monitoring data collection activities under weekly supervision of the Department.**
- **Assist selected districts' team with data collection and analysis in regards to key indicator and other general supervision areas.**
- **Conduct onsite visits (1-3 day visits) using trained educator and parent volunteers to monitor program through review of records, conduct interviews, and classroom observations.**

- Send the Department approved Focused Monitoring Correction Action Plan for noncompliance template to the district with deadline for submission.
- Assist districts in development of corrective action plan based on visit system and child specific findings of non-compliance during visit. Under the supervision of the Department, collect and review the Focused Monitoring Corrective Action Plan submitted by the districts. Offer technical assistance with the Department to the Focused Monitoring districts based on the needs identified in the Corrective Action Plan. The Department approves all correction action plans. Schedule follow-up visits with the focused monitoring districts within one year to verify the correction of noncompliance. Verify the correction of noncompliance in conjunction with the Department.
- Identify and provide written documentation to the Bureau of Special Education of findings of non-compliance and child specific non-compliance. Child specific findings of non-compliance must be corrected and verified within 45 days.
- Provide to the Bureau of Special Education each districts final report of findings for the review, approval and dissemination within 60 days of the onsite visit.

**Year 2 (approximately seven (7) districts each year):**

- Assigned Team leader returns to provide technical assistance and support to district in implementing their program approval corrective action plan.
- Monitor correction of findings of non-compliance within outlined timelines.
- Verify the correction or the lack of correction of noncompliance within 150 days of the date of the district's final report.
- Provide the Bureau of Special Education with written correspondence regarding a district's correction or the lack correction of noncompliance. Once noncompliance is verified as corrected by the vendor, the Department will send a written closeout letter to the district indicating that the noncompliance has been verified as corrected.

A consultant team of nine highly skilled and experienced early childhood/special education and general education professionals provided the oversight and monitoring of public special education programs through the implementation of Focused Monitoring. As part of the scope of work the FM Manual was updated and provided to the NHDOE and upon request, to the LEAs. At minimum, monthly meetings were conducted with leadership and achievement teams for those districts participating in year I of the FM Process, and quarterly meetings held with

**Year II Focused Monitoring Districts.** In addition, the program approval team prepares internal quarterly reports as a means of maintaining an open line of communication, sharing of data and best practices.

Within each of the Year I Focused Monitoring Districts, IEP Compliance Reviews were conducted and reports written and subsequently reviewed by the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education. All of the reports and supporting documentation have been completed and delivered to the NHDOE. The template for the quarterly reports is included in the appendix of this report. For the Year II Focused Monitoring Districts, follow up corrective action visits were conducted, summary reports written and are on file at the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education. The corrective action template is included in the appendix. Listed below are the 2011-2012 Focused Monitoring Districts Year I and II and assigned technical assistants.

**Year I**

**SAU12 Londonderry, Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu and Edward Hendry**

**SAU89 Mason, Jennifer Dolloff and Robert Andrews**

**SAU31 Newmarket, Robert Andrews and Jennifer Dolloff**

**SAU38 Pelham, Kathryn Skoglund and Robert Greenleaf**

**SAU21 Seabrook, Maryclare Heffernan and Colleen Bovi**

**SAU42 Nashua, Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu**

**Year II**

**SAU83 Fremont, Robert Andrews and Jennifer Dolloff**

**SAU20 Gorham, Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu**

**SAU4 Newfound Area, Kathryn Skoglund and Mary Anne Byrne**

**SAU52 Portsmouth, Robert Andrews and Jennifer Dolloff**

**SAU57 Salem, Maryclare Heffernan and Colleen Bovi**

**SAU42 Nashua, Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu**

### **III. Service to be provided:**

**Monitor Private Special Education Programs on a cyclical basis using the yearlong case study compliance review process with follow-up to the corrective action the following year.**

- **Collaborate with the Bureau of Special Education to review the Monitoring of Private Special Education Programs Process Manual annually and update as needed.**
- **Collaborate with the Bureau of Special Education to review and update case study forms and instruction as needed.**
- **Monitor selected private special education programs in accordance with the New Hampshire Rules for the Education of Children with Disabilities Ed 1126, as well as, private special education programs who also are requesting nonpublic “school” approval based on Ed 400:**
  - **Assign team leader to facilitate yearlong case study process with each selected private special education program as selected based on a cyclical process. Approximately 15 each year plus follow-up corrective action the next year.**
  - **Conduct onsite visit (1-3 days) at each of the selected private special education programs using trained educator and parent volunteers to gather evidence related to three focus areas through a collaborative case study review process. The focus areas presently are: Access to general curriculum, transition, behavior strategies and discipline. This process includes providing a corrective action template, conducting interviews, classroom observations, and review of records.**
  - **Assist private special education programs in development of corrective action plan based on findings of non-compliance as well as child specific findings of non-compliance.**
  - **Identify and provide written documentation to Bureau of Special Education of findings of non-compliance and child specific non-compliance. Both the private special education program and the district of liability must be informed of child specific findings. Child specific findings of non-compliance must be corrected and verified within 45 days.**
  - **Provide to the Bureau of Special Education each private special education program final report of findings for the review, approval and dissemination within 60 days of the onsite visit.**

- Assigned Team leader returns to the private special education program within one year to verify correction of findings of non-compliance within outlined timelines:
  - Develop written onsite compliance review report to be submitted to the Bureau of Special Education within 60 days of the onsite visit.
  - Verify the correction or the lack of correction of noncompliance within 150 days of the date of the private special education program’s final report.
  - Provide the Bureau of Special Education with written correspondence regarding a private special education program’s correction or the lack of correction of non-compliance.

A consultant team of nine highly skilled and experienced early childhood/special education and general education professionals provided the oversight and monitoring of private special education schools. Each private school was assigned technical assistance to facilitate and oversee all aspects of the Case Study Compliance Review Process. Included in this process were training and support to the private school, review of all application materials and supporting documentation, and writing a draft summary report for review and approval by the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education. Included in the process was tracking and reporting of all findings of noncompliance and the review of the corrective action plan. All of the reports and supporting back up documentation have been completed and delivered to the NHDOE. Application templates are included in the appendix.

**2011-2012 Private School Case Study**

**Birchtree Center, Colleen Bovi**

**Clearway High School, Jennifer Dolloff**

**NFI – Bradford School, Maryclare Heffernan and Mary Anne Byrne**

**NFI – Contoocook School, Maryclare Heffernan and Mary Anne Byrne**

**NFI – Davenport School, Maryclare Heffernan and Mary Anne Byrne**

**NFI – Midway Shelter, Maryclare Heffernan and Mary Anne Byrne**

**NFI – North Country Shelter, Maryclare Heffernan and Mary Anne Byrne**

Pine Haven Boys Center, Colleen Bovi

RSEC Academy, Kathryn Skoglund

RSEC Summit School, Kathryn Skoglund

RSEC Sunrise Children's Center, Kathryn Skoglund

RSEC Longview School, Kathryn Skoglund

Second Start Alternative High School, Kathryn Skoglund

Seacoast Learning Collaborative, Robert Andrews

Wediko Children's Services, Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu

**2011-2012 Corrective Action Follow Up to Private Schools:**

Easter Seals, Robert Jolicoeur School

Learning Skills Academy

Monarch School of New England

Wolfeboro Area Children's Center

Granite State High School

Enriched Learning Center

**IV. Services to be provided:**

Perform overall management activities of the monitoring of districts for special education and approval for Private Special Education Schools project:

- Hire a Project Manager to organize and oversee all aspects of the project.
- The Project Manager will communicate either by teleconference, written updates and/or in person weekly with the Administrator, Bureau of Special Education or designee to communicate on all program approval matters including, but not limited to, status of budget, maintenance of visit schedule, status of corrective action activities, correction of

child specific noncompliance, updating of new programs seeking approval, and progress of schools requiring corrective action.

- Assign a project director who will meet monthly with the Focused Monitoring team and the Department project director to ensure all activities and responsibilities outlined in the RFP are being completed and to discuss and find solutions for any issues that may arise.
- Hire or contract with staff to support the project knowledgeable in and familiar with early childhood special education, special education, regular education, promising practice and current research, the federal regulations and State rules governing special education and the structure of the public schools and non-public special education approved schools in New Hampshire. In addition, staff should also be knowledgeable and/or familiar with rules for school approval and Charter Schools as they relate to special education program approval.
- Establish a pool of volunteers knowledgeable about early childhood special education, regular education and special education to serve on school visits and as resources for schools in the monitoring process; technical assistance visits and improvement processes.
- Align early childhood components of the monitoring process with preschool special education and early intervention initiatives.
- Hire support staff able to support the project in a clerical manner with reports, mailings, note-taking, maintaining data bases, setting up and making meeting arrangements, tracking visits and follow-up required for monitoring, improvement, and corrective action processes.
- Implement monitoring and program approval for special education programs as well as timely correction of non-compliance (including early childhood special education). Recruit, prepare information packets, and train volunteers to be team members for the Focused Monitoring IEP Compliance Review. Information packets and training materials must be approved by the Department prior to distribution to districts.
- Collaborate with NHDOE to design, implement and provide professional development workshops about/related to the program approval process; orientation, facilitation, and networking sessions. Provide Professional Development certificates to the district staff participation in the Focused Monitoring Process.
- Gather feedback from constituents participating in the monitoring process.
- Write informative compliance reports, final reports that must be completed within 60 days of the school visit, and correspondence for and to the field, including but not limited

to, monitoring process, timely correction of noncompliance and child specific noncompliance.

- **Maintain databases to yield statewide data obtained through the special education monitoring and program approval project on school, district and/or SAUs incidences of systemic and student specific noncompliance and status of corrective actions.**
- **Assist in updating and creating new forms, applications, and procedures for New Hampshire's Focused Monitoring System and Case Studies for private special education programs as required for the approval process.**
- **Effectively collaborate and communicate with other individuals, agencies, and/or organization to enhance the success of the project.**
- **Design and implement training for onsite team members (internal and external to the process) and parents who will be involved in the monitoring process.**
- **Be a positive spokesperson for the New Hampshire Department of Education.**
- **Provide a strategy for evaluation of the project's success in achieving the stated priorities and in meeting and promoting the stated General Requirements.**

The project director is responsible for oversight and supervision of the Program Approval Technical Assistance Team and for maintaining ongoing e-mail, telephone and correspondence with all stakeholders. Monthly meetings were conducted with the team, as well as regularly scheduled meetings with individual team members. Agendas for monthly meetings are included in the appendix. Weekly meetings/phone conferences were conducted with the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education to keep them updated on project activities and maintain an open line of communication. The project director was also responsible for oversight and monitoring of compliance timelines (new programs, report timelines, follow up corrective actions, findings of noncompliance etc.). Monthly updates on all compliance data was submitted electronically to the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education. The project director was also responsible for ensuring that all required training sessions were designed and implemented, including but not limited to: Private School Case Study Orientation, School District Focused Monitoring Orientation, and Focused Monitoring Symposiums. Copies of the agendas for these events are included in the appendix.

**V. Service to be provided:**

**Provide the following invoicing and reporting requirements for the monitoring of districts for Special Education and Approval for Private Special Education Schools project:**

- **Provide data for and otherwise participate in evaluation activities related to this program.**
- **Participate in dissemination activities related to their project.**
- **Provide monthly invoices with a summary of activities conducted during the month towards the accomplishment of Services to be Provided outlined in section 2.0 of the RFP.**
- **Write reports and progress updates to NH Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education as requested.**
- **Submit a final year-end report to the NH Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education including any information requested.**
- **Seek written approval from the Administrator, Bureau of Special Education, prior to presenting the monitoring process to other organizations/agencies unless the presentation is to districts and/or special education programs involved in the Focused Monitoring or the Private Special Education Program yearlong case study process.**
- **Clearly note on any and all documents of the project, that it is being funded by the New Hampshire Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education.**

**Monthly data is submitted to the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education as requested.**

**Monthly invoices with summary of activities and supporting documentation have been submitted to the NHDOE as required by reporting requirements in the grant.**

**All documents produced and distributed are noted as funded by the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education.**

**Feedback from the field regarding the effectiveness of NHDOE Program Approval Events and Activities are reviewed each month by SERESC and the NHDOE and are available on request.**

**A final year-end report is submitted annually to the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education.**

**Summary:**

During the 2011-2012 school year the NHDOE Bureau of Special Education and SERESC have worked closely with stakeholders to implement a monitoring system that is a balanced, results-driven approach. New Hampshire is targeting not only compliance requirements but also looking closely at the academic performance of students with disabilities and the achievement gap that exists between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. SERESC continues to enjoy the strong working relationship with the NHDOE, specifically in the area of special education accountability. In order to reduce duplication, Focused Monitoring and the Case Study Review process has been intentionally designed to align with, and complement other NHDOE education reform initiatives. IDEA requires that the focus of monitoring be on improving education results as well as meeting compliance requirements; this brief summary report provides documentation and demonstration of how New Hampshire provides LEAs and private schools the supports they need to focus upon both compliance and improved learning results for children and youth with disabilities.

**Appendix:**

1. Management Team Contact List
2. Visitor Orientation Manual
3. IEP Review Data Collection Forms
4. Quarterly Report Template
5. Corrective Action Plan Template (Private and SAU)
6. New/Change Applications (4: Preschool Private, Preschool SAU, Private, SAU)
7. Case Study Application
8. Focused Monitoring Application
9. New/Change Application Spreadsheet
10. Focused Monitoring Symposia Planning Session and Event Agendas (4)
11. Case Study and Focused Monitoring Orientation Planning Session and Event Agendas (4)
12. Case Study and Focused Monitoring Orientation Session Feedback (PCI) (2)
13. Management Team Meeting Agendas (12)