

**NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION
FOCUSED MONITORING
PROGRAM APPROVAL AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESS**

**BERLIN SCHOOL DISTRICT
SUMMARY REPORT**

Essential Question: What are the factors that contribute to the achievement gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers and how may the gap be narrowed?

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Submitted by Berlin Achievement Team

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SECTION II: Introduction OVERVIEW OF FOCUSED MONITORING

The Berlin School District has several schools designated as 'School in Need of Improvement (SINI)': These include the following: Brown School - Mathematics, Hillside Elementary School - Reading, Berlin Junior High School - Reading, and Berlin High School - Reading and Math. These designations and years involved are listed below in the District Profile.

This year ('08-'09), the Berlin School District was designated a District in Need of Improvement (DINI) in the area of Reading. Also this year, the Berlin School District was selected for the Focused Monitoring Special Education Program Monitoring.

The FM Steering Team made the decision to write a DINI plan and an FM Plan, both focused on narrowing the achievement gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. This decision was made to keep the district spotlight on improving instruction for all students being educated in the Berlin Schools.

ACHIEVEMENT GAP DATA: This information is contained in section IV page 7 & 8.

DISTRICT PROFILE

The Berlin School District is organized into six schools. The schools and student populations are configured as follows:

(F & R Lunch data as of October 1, 2008: SWD data as of May 26, 2009)

- Marston School—Kindergarten: 88 students, 17% students with disabilities, (F&RL NA)
- Bartlett School—Grades 1-3: 118 students, 17% students with disabilities, 55% F&RL
- Brown School—Grades 1-3: 178 students, 24% with disabilities, 56% F&RL (SINI - Math [yr 1])
- Hillside Elementary School—Grades 4-6: 301 students 23% students with disabilities, 49% F&RL (SINI - Reading [yr 1]),
- Berlin Junior High School—Grades 7 & 8: 227 students 20% with disabilities, 46% F&RL (SINI - Reading [yr 4]),
- Berlin High School—Grades 9-12: 534 students 18% students with disabilities, 32% F&RL (SINI - Reading [yr 4] and Math [yr 3]),]

In-District Total Students with Disabilities: 20%

In-District Total F&RL (not including K): 43%

DISTRICT MISSION AND BELIEFS

“The Berlin Public Schools are committed to the belief that all students must be given appropriate opportunities to achieve clearly defined, meaningful, and rigorous standards which include those outlined in the New Hampshire curriculum Frameworks. We further believe that the learner is the focus of all of our efforts and that the evolution of our programs will be guided by data that reflect what each learner knows and is able to accomplish.

Each of the programs in the Berlin Public Schools will emphasize depth of understanding and the active participation of students in the learning process. We will capitalize on the power of technology as a motivational information source and as a problem-solving tool by integrating appropriate technologies within each program area.

“Our vision cannot be attained if the Berlin Public Schools must act alone. We and our students are part of a larger learning community. Parents and the community at large must share in the responsibility to educate our youth. The community must provide the resources necessary to support the schools and must also help students value learning in all its contexts - within school and outside of the formal educational setting. Community members can best help students see that the process of becoming a competent member of the local and global communities is one of continuous progress that lasts a lifetime.”

STEERING & ACHIEVEMENT TEAM MEMBERSHIP

Dorothy Watson - Parent/Family;
Liza Aldrich [Brown School]
Pamela Carrier [Hillside Elementary School]
Julie King [BHS]
Donald Picard [BJHS]
Karen Turgeon [Bartlett School]
Roland Pinette [Director - Berlin Career and Technical Center]
Ken Proulx [Director of Guidance] (Steering & Achievement)
Georgia Caron/Director of Special Services [District] (Steering and Achievement)
Beverly Dupont/Principal [Hillside Elementary School and BJHS] (Steering & Achievement)
Corinne Cascadden/Principal [Brown, Bartlett, Marston Schools] (Steering & Achievement)
Gary Bisson/Principal [BHS] (Steering & Achievement)
John Moulis/Superintendent of Schools [District] (Steering & Achievement)
Tim Forestall/Asst. Principal [BHS] (Steering & Achievement)
Jane Provencher/Director-Title I [District] (Steering & Achievement)

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

What are the factors that contribute to the achievement gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers and how may the gap be narrowed?

SECTION III: GET READY FOR INQUIRY

The Berlin District's Focused Monitoring Process for the 2008-09 school year addressed two (2) distinct issues; enhanced Professional Development and system wide Communication. These two points of focus will allow the district to fully integrate the professional development strands which are essential to advancing informed instruction in Literacy. At the same time, this will construct a framework which ensures informed communication throughout the district and greater community surrounding this integrated approach to advance student learning and performance in literacy concepts and skills. The focus on communication is particularly relevant for the district at this time as the DINI plan will be purposefully matched with the SINI plans for the Brown and Hillside Elementary Schools, Berlin's Junior and Senior High Schools and the Focused Monitoring (FM) process which aims to address the achievement gap between students with identified needs and their non-disabled peers. The established structure for the FM process, which defines the role and responsibilities of the District Steering and Achievement Teams, served as the planning and decision-making entity for the DINI process during the 2008-09 school year. The Steering team was composed of representatives of building administration from each of the Berlin schools and the directors of Title I, Guidance, Career and Technical Education, Special Education and the Superintendent of Schools. The District Achievement Team included all members of the Steering Team, a parent representative, and special education/regular education teachers at the following levels: K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-12.

The DINI and FM teams examined the following information when preparing to embark on this yearlong process:

- The cataloguing of: all current school and district Literacy initiatives surrounding Literacy instruction and curriculum development relative to concepts and skills in literacy.
- The acquisition of:
 - Student performance data through Performance Pathways and district-based assessments
 - Establishment of protocol for defining trends and patterns in curriculum and instruction
 - Related student performance at all levels of schooling in the district.
- The defining of:
 - 'Critical elements' in the literacy continuum which require district wide focused support and intervention
 - Assessment of the compatibility of current school and district initiatives with the defined needs.
 - The collaborative development of professional growth initiatives in literacy and integration particularly as related to the Junior and Senior High School level.
- Establish an instrument or instruments to assess the relative degree of 'effectiveness' of current school and district wide efforts to communicate with faculty and staff, students, parents and the community at large. This assessment may include the 'My Voice' survey but will be considerate of the current district efforts through PBIS and the NEASC on-site review currently in progress.

- Establish a process for review and synthesis of data surrounding communication in and among the Berlin schools as well as to parents and the greater community.
- Craft the structure for an ‘action plan’ to address the key factors gleaned from the acquired data and information as noted above.
- The Berlin DINI plan was the primary focus of the district’s Focused Monitoring Steering and Achievement team meetings early in the process with the purpose of more fully exploring and describing the specific strategies and implementation plan for the objectives noted above and as required for Phase 2 of the DINI process.

The Berlin District FM Achievement Team defined several areas to be examined over the course of the 2008-2009 school year to help guide the district’s DINI and FM planning.

- An in-depth review of the factors that impact the overall achievement of students and, in particular, the achievement gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. The factors include the following:
 1. K-12 curriculum alignment
 2. Alignment of district and individual school goals
 3. Alignment of literacy curriculum and instruction
 4. Assessment of effectiveness of district-wide strategies for internal and external communications
 5. The role and consistent protocols for the building level data teams and the use of data to direct decisions on curriculum, instructional methodologies and assessments of student performance
 6. The processes for transitioning students from grade to grade and school to school
 7. The scope of parent and community involvement in Berlin schools and the district in general
- A Data Driven Dialog using the FM Readiness Survey was administered to all district faculty and staff; the results generated a series of observations or ‘hunches’ about the root causes of the district-wide staffs’ ratings on the factors characteristic of a school district’s receptiveness to systems change. The items identified in the survey were consistent with the factors noted above and connected directly to the Assessment Continuum of Schoolwide Improvement Outcomes published by the NE Comprehensive Assistance Center and widely used in the DINI process.
- The Achievement Team met and defined three specific areas to be investigated by the following designated committees:

Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment;

Parent/Family/Student Engagement;

Data Inquiry and Analysis.

SECTION IV: ORGANIZE AND ANALYZE DATA

Understanding district data

A gap analysis of the NECAP proficiency percentages from the Berlin Schools IEP students (including Milan, Dummer, [and Errol] at the 7&8 grades and [9-12] respectively), compared to all regular education students showed a 54.8% gap in 2006 Reading percentages and 42.1% in 2006 Math percentages. The 2007 scores showed gaps of 45.8% and 40.9%, respectively.

	Reading (% Proficient)				Math (% Proficient)			
	IEP		All Other		IEP		All Other	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
Berlin	12.8%	25.5%	67.6%	71.3%	18.3%	18.7%	60.4%	59.6%
State	26.0%	31.1%	78.7%	79.6%	25.8%	28.4%	71.8%	72.4%

	2006	2007			2006	2007
Berlin GAP (Reg. Ed. Vs. IEP)	54.8%	45.8%			42.1%	40.9%
State GAP (Reg. Ed. Vs. IEP)	52.7%	48.5%			46.0%	44.0%

Formation of subcommittees

Based on the District System Readiness Tool (disseminated on 8/26/2009), the FM Steering Committee identified three areas of need and appointed sub-committees to address these areas:

- Data – Don Picard (Chair), Georgia Caron, Ken Proulx, John Moulis, Corinne Cascadden, Tim Forestall
- Parent/Family/Student Engagement – Roland Pinette (Chair), Liza Aldrich, Jane

Provencher, Dottie Watson, Bev Dupont

- Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment – Julie King (Chair), Pam Carrier, Karen Brodeur-Turgeon, Christine Lindsey, Gary Bisson

Data Sub-Committee Hypothesis, Findings and Recommendations:

Hypothesis: Examination of student achievement data across the district using a common data tool should advance student achievement and thereby narrow the achievement gap between special education students and their non-special education peers.

Status of Grade Level Data Teams in place as of 09/02/2008

Evaluation of Current Data Used in the District

K-3	DIBELS, Rigby, Mid Year and End of Year Reading and Math, NECAP, Stanford Reading First
4-6	Fountas & Pinnell, NECAP, Mid Year and End of Year Reading and Math
7-8	NECAP, NWEA for Reading, Writing, Math
9-12	NECAP, PBIS
K-2	Grade level data teams meet every 6 weeks, reading interventions in place
4-6	Data teams for reading meet 3X each year, reading interventions in place Data teams for math meet 2X each year

Findings

- NECAPs are the only source of data consistent across district
- Data teams do not exist at all grade levels

Recommendations

- All district teachers will receive training using Performance Tracker
- Formation of data teams at each level to analyze student achievement data in reading and math.

Parent/Student/Staff Engagement Sub-Committee:
Hypothesis, Findings, and Recommendations

Hypothesis: Improved communication with parents will have a positive impact on student achievement.

Findings: Evaluation of Current Communication in the District

- Parent Survey (20% of parents randomly selected responded to survey questions)
 1. Parents value opportunities to communicate with teachers about their child.
 2. Preferred methods of contact:
 - a. Telephone
 - b. Face to Face

- Teacher/Para-educators Survey
 1. 50% of staff “communicate with parents about their child’s progress”.
 2. 62% feel “recognized for good work”.

Recommendations:

- Teachers have access to MMS (parent contact info)
- Staff log all telephone contacts
- Expand existing phone system
- Explore creation of Parent/Teacher conferences
- Develop a planned strategy for communicating with parents, staff, students and community at large regarding the direction of the district in addressing strategic goals
- Explore strategies to recognize accomplishments of school personnel

Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Sub-Committee:

Discussion of current district practices revealed the following information:

Strengths

- Dedicated, caring, hard-working staff that conscientiously utilizes the district’s limited resources.

- Administration open to improvement changes

- Teaming model at BJHS

- Differentiated reading programs

- Co-teaching at BHS

- RTI in place in lower grades

Concerns

- Resource room interventions with a large ratio of identified students to teacher
- Lack of adequate intervention resources that tie directly to regular education curriculum
- Lack of adequate and consistent training/staffing/resources for teaching multiple subjects to large groups with mixed abilities

CIA Hypotheses, Findings, and Recommendations

Hypothesis #1: Effective district-wide implementation of the co-teaching model in classrooms with a high number of identified students will narrow the achievement gap.

Findings: Evaluation of Current Co-teaching Model Used at BHS

	<u>Failure Rates</u>	
Subject	Before Co-teaching (2003-2005)	With Co-teaching (2006-2007)
Math	23%	8%
English	21%	17%

Recommendations:

- District-wide implementation by 2010-2011
 - priority - classes with highest number of identified students
 - Content areas of math, reading & writing
- Assure adequate staffing & scheduling
- Professional development for all staff
 - What is co-teaching?
 - Different models
 - Interpersonal skills necessary
- Create and following a process for selecting and sustaining co-teachers and pairings
- On-going, in-depth Professional Development provided to those involved in co-teaching

- Create and follow a process for determining the effectiveness of the model and teacher pairings

Hypothesis #2: More formal orientations before para-educators begin their jobs, more interactive evaluations, and more professional development based on para-educators needs would narrow the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers.

Findings and Recommendations:

District Administrators’ Survey Results

- All para-educators in Grades K-6 meet NCLB requirements
- 100% reported having written job descriptions (Para-educators Contract)
- Evaluations vary administrator to administrator
- 20% reported having consistent formal orientations prior to para-educators beginning work
- 100% reported not having formal para-educators workshops consistently on professional development days

Para-educators Survey Results

<u>Findings</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>
9% have never been evaluated 78% are evaluated 1-2 X per year 7% are evaluated 3 or more times per year 70% of paraeducators are satisfied with HOW they are evaluated	Uniform # of evaluations by fall of 2009 Review/Develop standard evaluation during 09-10 Para-educators orientation of new evaluation procedures introduced in fall 2010

Para-educators Qualifications & Job Description

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73% of para-educators meet NCLB requirements • 91% of para-educators know their role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All para-educators meet NCLB by Fall of 2014 ▪ Review job descriptions by 1/ 2010

- 68% of para-educators feel teachers know para-educator's role
- 74% of para-educators feel administrators know para-educator's role
- Have written descriptions for all by fall of 2010

Orientation & Professional Development

Findings

- 45% Did Not receive any job orientation
- 29% of those having an orientation were satisfied with it
- 52% of para-educators are satisfied with the professional development they have received

Recommendations

- Standardized orientation format by building by Spring 2010
- Orientation for all para-educators Fall of 2010 and new hires after that
- Para-educators specific workshops in place by fall of 2010

Hypothesis #3: The district-wide practice of differentiating instruction will improve student achievement and narrow the achievement gap.

Findings:

Evaluation of District Differentiated Instruction (Para-educators/Teacher Survey)

- 10% of teachers and 18% of para-educators report little to no knowledge of DI
- 26% of teachers and 36% of para-educators report receiving no previous training in DI

Differentiated Instruction Recommendations

- All teachers must have participated in DI training by the end of 2009-2010 school year
- A qualified presenter travels to each teacher's room and models
- Presenter returns and observes teacher doing the DI in class
- Teachers meet by level/subjects to discuss DI, work on planning units, and share resources

SECTION V: DETERMINE EFFECTIVE PRACTICES AND WRITE A PLAN

Priorities from Subcommittee Recommendations:

1. By June of 2010, all teachers K-12 will be trained in Performance Tracker.
2. Math/Reading data teams will be created at each building by 12/31/09.
3. All staff will have access to MMS by 6/2010.
4. The district will develop an electronic log for teachers to track parent contacts. Teachers will be expected to contact parents 2x per year.
5. Phones need to be available for teachers for private conversations with parents – further study necessary.
6. Restructure parent conferences so they are conducted during the school day. Include students, to be implemented in 2010 school year.
7. Professional development will be provided for all teachers, K-12, in DI – further study necessary.
8. Clarification of para-educators' roles and responsibilities, as well as consistent orientations, evaluations, and relevant professional development. A para-educators' study committee will be developed by 12/2010 to further investigate these areas in the future.
9. Implementation of K-12 Co-Teaching Model – tabled for further discussion in July.

Berlin School District - IEP Compliance Review April 13, 2009

The compliance component of the NHDOE Focused Monitoring Process in the Berlin School District included both an internal and external review of Special Education data linked to the criteria for compliance with state and federal special education rules and regulations. Data gathered through the compliance activities was shared with the District's Achievement Team and the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education for the purpose of informing both of the status of the district's special education processes. Specifically, the report describes the status of special education programs programming, and alignment of IEPs with the general education curriculum, instruction and assessment systems within the school district.

Data Collection Activities:

As part of the NHDOE Focused Monitoring Process, the IEP Compliance Review was conducted in the Berlin School District on April 13, 2009. Listed below is the data that was reviewed as part of the compliance review, all of which are summarized in this section of the Focused Monitoring Report.

- Review of randomly selected IEPs, Preschool through grade 12.
- Review of LEA Focused Monitoring Compliance Application including:
 - Special Education Policy and Procedures
 - Special education staff qualifications
 - Program descriptions
- Review of all district special education program descriptions
- Review of Out of District Files
- When appropriate, review of student records for students with disabilities who are attending charter schools
- Review of parent feedback collected through the Focused Monitoring data collection activities
- Review of requests for approval of new programs, and/or changes to existing programs

Summary of Findings:

IEP Review Process Conducted on April 13, 2009 (Grades K-12)

Preschool Programming Conducted on March 18, 2009

As part of the compliance component of Focused Monitoring, the NHDOE worked in collaboration with the Berlin School District to conduct reviews of student IEPs. The IEP Review Process has been designed by the NHDOE to assist teams in examining the IEP for educational benefit, as well as compliance with state and federal special education rules and regulations. The review is based on the fact that the IEP is the foundation of the special education process.

As required by the IEP review process, general and special educators in the Berlin School District were provided with a collaborative opportunity to review 8 IEPs that were randomly selected to determine if the documents included the following information:

- Student's present level of performance
- Measurable annual goals related to specific student needs
- Instructional strategies, interventions, and supports identified and implemented to support progress toward measurable goals
- Assessment information (formative and summative) gathered to develop annual goals and to measure progress toward annual goals
- Accommodations and/or modifications determined to support student access to the general curriculum instruction and assessment
- Identification of assessment data, where/when data will be gathered, how data is recorded and who will be responsible
- The revision of goals and/or objectives/benchmarks to the general education curriculum, instruction and assessment practices when students are not demonstrating success, when appropriate
- Three-year look back at the student's progress toward key IEP goals and the documented evidence of student gains

The intended outcome of the Focused Monitoring IEP Review Process was not only to ensure compliance, but also to measure the effectiveness of special education programming, and its alignment infusion into the general education setting.

Below is the summary of key district level findings that resulted from the IEP Review Process conducted in the Berlin School District:

Number of IEPs Reviewed: 6 (k-12)
(PRESCHOOL RESULTS REPORTED IN SEPARATE SECTION)

	Yes	No
Is there a relationship between the student's needs resulting from his/her disability and the goals?	6	
Are the annual goals measurable (i.e., contain criteria for measurable and achievable progress)?	6	
Is there evidence the student is making progress? (Measuring Progress, #3)	6	
Does this year's goal reflect last year's progress? e.g., more complex goal(s), address needs commensurate with the progress and present levels of performance.) (Longitudinal IEP Review, #4)	6	

CONCLUSIONS/PATTERNS/TRENDS IDENTIFIED THROUGH THE IEP REVIEW PROCESS

System Wide Commendations:

- The skill level, tenure and dedication of staff are recognized.
- The culture and climate in each of the Berlin Schools is child centered and dedicated toward improved student achievement.
- The hospitality extended to the visiting IEP facilitators was genuine and greatly appreciated.
- The staff at all levels is receptive to professional development and utilized the IEP review process as a vehicle to strengthen the programming and services provided to students with disabilities.
- During the IEP Review Process, the staff and administration were most receptive to constructive suggestions and discussion that occurred during the IEP reviews.

System Wide Issues of Significance Identified Through the IEP Review Process:

1. The role and responsibilities of paraprofessionals should be clearly defined and incorporated into the process and criteria for supervision and evaluation of paraprofessionals. Attention should be given to insure this is consistently applied district wide.
2. The school district must have clearly defined policy and procedures regarding behavior management. Specifically, procedures for managing students with disabilities who exhibit aggressive behaviors must be supported by policy and procedures that include a clear agenda for training and professional development for faculty, staff and administration.
3. As the district moves toward implementation of inclusionary practices at the Bartlett School, the need for a well-defined plan for ongoing professional development is critical.
4. When considering programmatic decisions for students with disabilities, it is critical that a well-defined decision-making process be in place that includes all constituents and

insures decisions are based on data. For example, at the time of the Focused Monitoring IEP Review Process the decision to implement an inclusionary model at the Bartlett School had not been shared with parents, student IEPs did not reflect the change, and staff reported they were not a part of the decision-making process. Based on limited information, it appears that decisions were made based on facility limitations rather than programmatic needs directly related to the program requirements outlined in student IEPs.

5. All of the special education program descriptions for the Berlin School District need to be updated and refined to reflect the service delivery models that are currently employed in each school.
6. Throughout the school district there is a need to update job descriptions and specifically, for those individuals who provide services to students with disabilities. There seem to be differing interpretations of the role of special education teacher, special needs teacher, case manager, etc.
7. All of the special education staff and school administrators would benefit from ongoing professional development in the new requirements in both state and special education rules and regulations.
8. If special education programming is to be fully infused and integrated into the general education setting, it will be critical that the principals begin to take an active role in the supervision and evaluation of special education staff and monitor the special education programs within the buildings.
9. The special education policy and procedures for the Berlin School District need to be revised to reflect current requirements on both the state and federal levels. Once revised, the policy manual will need to be reviewed and approval by the school board.

How did the IEP Review Process inform future plans for improving the writing of student IEPs?

- Student profiles in IEPs will benefit from more comprehensive descriptions of student performance and include data that is connected to the present levels of performance and the general education curriculum.
- In writing annual goals in IEPs, state and district assessment data could be utilized more fully to ensure that IEPs are aligned to the general education curriculum.
- Written transition planning in IEPs for junior high school students must be strengthened to insure the students successful introduction to High School.

Describe how individual student performance information is conveyed from grade to grade/school to school:

- There are informal processes in place where teachers work with one another and meet with students and parents.
- At the junior high school level transition planning for students with disabilities happens in a variety of ways and is informal in nature.
- Transitions systems, while informal, appear to be effective. However, there will be a benefit to documenting practices, as well as ensuring that processes are consistently used by all staff.

How will the district further explore the factors that have impacted poor scores for individual students on state assessments?

- Continue to ensure that appropriate accommodations are provided to students for test taking.
- Consider planning pre-conference with child/parents to stress the importance of assessments and connections to learning.
- Consider administering assessments in smaller groups, in shorter time frames, with improved proctoring from staff.

Strengths and suggestions identified related to IEP development/progress monitoring and services:

Strengths:

- At all grade levels general educators work well together and take an active role in IEP development, implementation and monitoring.
- Based on the IEPs reviewed, parents at all levels participated in IEP development and their suggestions were well received and respected.
- The culture and climate in each of the schools is clearly child centered; all students have full access to the general education curriculum and IEPs are written with the intent of alignment with the general education curriculum.

Suggestion for Improvements:

1. Data could be more fully utilized in the writing of IEPs. (Consider increased use of district assessments, curriculum based assessments, etc.)
2. Present levels of performance should be based on data and linked to annual measurable goals.

RESULTS OF PRESCHOOL COMPONENT OF IEP FOCUSED MONITORING COMPLIANCE REVIEW PROCESS

Name of School/District: Berlin School District	Number of IEPs Reviewed: 2 Preschool Reviews	Dates of Reviews: March 18, 2009	
		Yes	No
1. Is there a relationship between the student's needs resulting from his/her disability and the goals? (Goals, #1)		1	1
2. Are the annual goals measurable (i.e., contain criteria for measurable and achievable progress)? (Goals, #2; Preschool, p. 4, #15)		1	1
3. Is there evidence the student is making progress? (Measuring Progress, #3; Preschool, p. 3, #s 3, 5 & 7)		2	
4. Does this year's goal reflect last year's progress? e.g., more complex goal(s), address needs commensurate with the progress and present levels of performance. (Longitudinal IEP Review, #4)		2	
<p>5. Consider the narrative responses on page 11, # 2 (Future plans for IEP), #3 (Improving future performance on state assessment) & #4 (Process for communicating student information from grade-to-grade/school-to-school) and the strengths and suggestions from the individual IEP Reviews, and summarize the patterns and trends in the building/district:</p> <p>6. How do you plan to use this IEP Review Process to improve IEP development and implementation in your district?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All service providers will have access to early childhood and kindergarten curriculum and frameworks. <p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Speech/Language Pathologists collect data and utilize these data to inform their instruction. ○ There is frequent and ongoing supervision of the Speech/Language Assistants by the SLPs. ○ Identified preschool children are totally integrated in community preschool settings. ○ Transition to kindergarten is planned in conjunction with the building principals. ○ The files of the preschool children are well organized and IEPs are well written. <p><u>Suggestions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A written general education curriculum must be developed and professional development regarding this curriculum should be provided to all staff providing services to identified children. ○ Technical Assistance from the NHDOE regarding the Preschool Outcome Measurement requirement is strongly suggested. ○ It is suggested that consistent practices be developed for the identification and provision of speech/language therapy services. ○ The Berlin School District is encouraged to review the continuum of supports and services for identified preschool children and to enhance partnerships with community settings to ensure the facilities where children are placed meet the required standards. ○ The service providers will collaborate on writing measurable annual goals. ○ The district is encouraged to investigate options for the monitoring and oversight of preschool special education services. ○ Results of the Preschool Parent Survey should be reviewed and plans made to enhance parent communication. 			

Citations of Non-Compliance Identified as a Result of the Focused Monitoring Compliance Review:

As a result of the 8 IEPs that were reviewed on April 13, 2009, as well as the Focused Monitoring Compliance Application materials that were provided by the Berlin School District, the following citations of non-compliance were identified:

ED 1104 Special Education Process Sequence

ED 1105 Child Find CFR 34 300.111(c)

ED 1113 Requirements for the Development and Operation of Programs for Children with Disabilities Administered by Local Education Agencies

The Berlin School District must provide updated special education policy and procedures that demonstrate compliance with the Special Education Process to include Child Find requirements and the requirements outlined in state and federal special education rules and regulations. This includes but is not limited to; establishment of programs, behavioral interventions, facilities and location, qualifications of staff, curricula, administration of medication, confidentiality, provision of FAPE, diplomas, and compliance for those students who are court ordered, placed out of district or enrolled in charter schools. The school board must approve the resultant policies and procedures. Once special education policy and procedures are updated and adopted, it will be necessary that staff and administration be provided with ongoing professional development in the implementation of the revised policies and procedures.

ED 1113.08 Curricula

34 CFR 300.320 (a) (4) (d)

For all students who are enrolled in Life Skills Programming in the Berlin School District, each school must ensure that there is a curriculum that is provided for students, and that the curriculum is aligned with the district curriculum. Currently the teachers assigned to the Life Skills Programs are utilizing their own individualized instruction for the development of IEPs, and there is no connection to a curriculum. As outlined in ED 1113.08, a child's IEP cannot be considered a complete or total curriculum for that child.

ED 1109.01 Elements of IEP

CRF 300.320 Content of IEP

One preschool IEP reviewed lacked measurable annual goals. All IEP's must be written to reflect consistent evidence that annual goals are measurable and written using baseline data to indicate child's present levels of performance (e.g. preschool outcome data, curriculum based measures etc.)

ED# 1102.04 Staff Qualifications

CRF 300.156 Personnel Qualifications

ED # 1113.12 (a) Personnel Standards

The life skills program at Berlin High School provides direct instruction in a variety of content areas for which the special educators are not certified in accordance with NHDOE regulations for Highly Qualified Teacher certification. The students enrolled are earning credits toward a regular high school diploma and therefore must be provided by teachers who are HQT in the content area, or hold certification in the content being taught. At the high school level, the special education teacher for the Life Skills Program is providing instruction in content areas, yet holds no certification or HQT status as required by 34 CRF 300.18 and 34 CRF 300.156. The Berlin School District must ensure that personnel providing services to students with disabilities be certified and highly qualified as required by state and federal law.

LEA Focused Monitoring Compliance Application:

As part of the Focused Monitoring data collection activities, the LEA Plan, which includes Special Education policy and procedures, was required for submission. Also, personnel rosters were requested to verify that staff providing services outlined in IEPs are qualified for the positions they hold. Program descriptions were reviewed and verified as was the review of newly developed programs or changes to existing approved Special Education programs. Upon review of all the data and supporting documentation provided, it was determined that significant revisions and updates are needed to ensure compliance with all state and federal special education rules and regulations.

Out of District File Review:

An Out of District File Review was conducted consistent with the NHDOE Focused Monitoring Compliance Process on for a Berlin student attending Cedarcrest (NHSEIS # 607126). The file review acknowledged that all measures of compliance were met in accordance with the stipulations in NHDOE regulations.

Students with Disabilities Attending Charter Schools:

At the time of the April 2009 IEP Review Process conducted in the Berlin School District no student with an IEP was attending a charter school.

Requests for Approval of New Programs and/or Changes to Existing Programs:

As part of the Focused Monitoring Compliance Component, the NHDOE reviews all requests for new programs in the district, and/or requests for changes to existing programs. At the time of the Focused Monitoring IEP Review visit, the Berlin School District was in process of designing changes in the service delivery model of special education at several grade levels. In addition, it had been determined that as of June 30, 2009 one of the elementary schools would be closing. As such, all program descriptions need to be revised and included in the submission of revised policy and procedures. All changes in special education programming require approval from the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education. The Berlin School District will need to work with SERESC to obtain application materials seeking approval for all changes.

Conclusions:

The IEP Review Process that was conducted in the Berlin School District was intended to assist staff and administration in the review of IEPs and to determine the extent to which IEPs were in compliance. The process also allowed for general and special educators to determine the critical factors that are impacting student achievement. As a result of the IEP review process, it was clear that staff, administration and parents work hard to develop IEPs to meet the varied needs of the student population. Staff is dedicated and skilled and open to professional development. Based on the IEP reviews, and the supporting documentation it was clear that there is strong support for special education services, that staff are dedicated to meeting the needs of all learners and that within the district there is a culture that promotes full access to the general curriculum and provide the necessary supports to ensure successful learning experiences for all students. Given the recent transition in leadership for Special

Education programs and services in the district there is a degree of understanding for the absence of current policies and procedures which govern services to students with disabilities. Never the less, the district must give timely and deliberate attention to the development and implementation of policies and procedures which meet current state and federal expectations.

Berlin School District NHDOE Focused Monitoring Process 2008-2009

Committee/Subcommittee: BERLIN - CIA - 44 of 55 para-educators surveys were returned or 80%				
DATE: 5/7/09				
Hypothesis: More formal orientations before para-educators begin their jobs, more interactive evaluations, and more professional development based on para-educators needs would narrow the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers.				
Area	What is the Practice?	Resources	Person Responsible	Time Line
PARA-EDUCATORS PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS 73% of para-educators meet NCLB requirements	Para-educators in grades K-12 are required to meet the requirements of NCLB legislation in order to receive Title 1 funds. Grades K-6 para-educators currently meet the NCLB requirements. Establish policy and procedure for full compliance K-12.	Provide the opportunity (program and funds) for those currently employed to obtain the requirements within a 5-year period.	Superintendent, Central Office Staff & A-Team	All para-educators meet NCLB by Fall of 2014
JOB DESCRIPTIONS 91% of para-educators felt they know their role 68% felt the teachers they work with know the para-educators role	Currently there are job descriptions for: - Reading First Assistants - T-1 Assistants - Special Education Assistants	Job descriptions needed for: Para-educators, Media Para-educators, 504 paras Separate para-educators into: Para-educators, Speech/language Para-educators, Special	Superintendent, Administrators, Office Staff, Others...	Review job descriptions from other places by Jan. 2010 Have written job descriptions for all by Fall of 2010

<p>74% felt their administrators know the para-educators roles</p>		<p>Education Para-educators, Emotionally Disabled Review & Update Current descriptions</p>		
<p>SUPERVISION/ EVALUATION</p> <p>9% have never been evaluated 39% are evaluated once per year 39% are evaluated twice per year 7% are evaluated 3 or more times per year</p> <p>70% of para-educators are satisfied with How they are evaluated 10% are not 20% did not answer the question</p>	<p>The type of evaluation, who evaluates them, and the number of times evaluated per year varies from para-educators to para-educators. Para-educators noted that they would like to provide more input (self-evaluation), have input from the teacher they work directly under, and be provided sit down time to discuss the evaluation with the evaluator.</p>	<p>Standardize the number of times para-educators are evaluated.</p> <p>Provide a means for the evaluations to include self-evaluation and evaluation from the teacher they are working directly under (rather than a supervisor)</p>	<p>Superintendent, Administrators, Achievement Team</p>	<p>Number of times evaluated should be put in writing and uniform across the district by Fall of 2009</p> <p>Review of types of evaluations and development of standard evaluations by a committee during 2009-10 school year.</p> <p>Orientation of evaluation procedure for para-educators in Fall of 2010.</p>
<p>PARA- EDUCATORS GENERAL ORIENTATION</p> <p>45% of para-educators reported they did not receive any orientation before beginning work</p> <p>29% of those WHO DID receive</p>	<p>Currently approximately 62% of para-educators reported receiving any type of orientation before beginning work.</p> <p>Those receiving an orientation expressed a need for the orientation to include: Complete 3-yr plans Better explanations</p>	<p>Provide orientations for all para-educators before they begin their positions.</p> <p>Standardize what is covered in an orientation for all administrators to follow AND leave time to discuss job specifics</p>	<p>Superintendent, Administrators, Achievement Team, others</p>	<p>Standardized orientation format by Spring of 2010.</p> <p>Orientation for all para-educators Fall of 2010 and then for new hires after that</p>

an orientation were satisfied with it	of job descriptions How to work with teachers How to work with students Supervising large groups(lunch/recess)			
<p>GENERAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PARA-EDUCATORS</p> <p>52% of para-educators are satisfied with the professional development they have received.</p> <p>44% are not satisfied</p> <p>4% didn't answer the question</p>	<p>Para-educators would like professional development opportunities geared specifically to their work. They requested more training in many areas, including, but not limited to:</p> <p>Technology – 46% Disabilities – 34% Conflict Resolution – 32% Large Group Supervision – 26% How they are evaluated – 23% District/Building Goals – 23%</p>	<p>Prioritize needs/wants of para-educators.</p> <p>Identify resources/people within the district to provide workshops.</p> <p>Schedule para-educators workshops based on para-educators needs/wants</p>	<p>Superintendent, Administrators, Achievement Team, Staff Outside presenters (NCES, etc.)</p>	<p>Have para-educators specific workshops for half days and professional days in place by Fall of 2010</p>

Committee/Subcommittee: ACHIEVEMENT TEAM / CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT SUB-COMMITTEE				
Present: Co-Teaching Model currently being implemented at BHS				
Hypothesis: EFFECTIVE DISTRICT-WIDE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CO-TEACHING MODEL IN CLASSROOMS WITH A HIGH NUMBER OF IDENTIFIED STUDENTS SHOULD NARROW THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP.				
Area	What is the Desired Practice?	Materials	Person Responsible	Time Line

Preparing for the implementation of the co-teaching model district-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate co-teaching model into the schedules • Determine the classrooms that will use the model (highest # of Sped students, priority content areas of math, reading, writing) • Assure adequate staffing • Schedule common planning time for co-teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and class schedules from each building • List of possible co-teachers from each bldg. • Adequate staffing 	Superintendent, Building Administrators, Department / Team Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHS continue current practice in 2009 -10 • Visitations, Research, and Further study for implications at each level- Fall/Winter, 2009-2010 • Summary and Recommendation in Spring of 2010 • Seek funding for Job embedded PD
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Committee/Subcommittee: ACHIEVEMENT TEAM / CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT SUB-COMMITTEE – Differentiated Instruction				
Present: Teachers have a basic understanding of differentiated instruction				
Hypothesis: The use of differentiated instruction will improve student achievement and narrow the achievement gap.				
Area	What is the Practice?	Materials/Resources	Person Responsible	Time Line
Advanced Training in DI	Advanced training in DI geared to subjects taught and grade levels	Qualified presenters for each subject/grade level Money	Administration	All teachers must have participated in training by the end of 2009-2010 school year
Modeling of DI in the classroom	A qualified presenter goes to each teacher's room and models	Qualified presenters for each grade/subject level	Administration	2 days per grade level or per subject level at higher levels at the beginning of the 2009 school year* *Dependent on training

Follow-up for modeling of DI	Presenter returns and observes teacher doing the DI in class	Qualified presenters for each grade/subject level	Administration	By the end of 2009-2010 school year all teachers will have had a follow-up meeting
Professional Learning Communities	Teachers meet by level/subjects questions about DI, work on planning units, and share resources	Teachers Stipend	Teams of teachers Administration	2010-2011 On going meetings-at least twice quarterly throughout the year after school, w/stipends if necessary

Committee/Subcommittee: PARENT STUDENT STAFF ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE				
Present: Separate School Communication methodologies employed throughout the district				
Hypothesis: Improved communication with parents will have a positive impact on student achievement.				
Area	What is the Practice?	Materials	Person Responsible	Time Line
Provide student contact information to staff	Each teacher will be able to access MMS to obtain parent information for students to which they provide instruction	Professional Development related to the MMS system. Access to technology and setup PD	Teachers Building Administrator	June 2010
Create a standardized telephone log to increase communication with parents.	Electronic implementation of the standardized form.	Access to technology Electronic telephone log	Teachers Building Administrators	Prepare for Fall of 2009

Expand present phone system to provide a telephone in every classroom.	Ensure availability of a phone in a private area for teachers. Eventually have a phone in each classroom.	Phones	Superintendent	June 2011
Explore the feasibility of a Parent/Teacher/Student Conference day	Building level Parent/Teacher/Student Conference day Consult SAU20 for set up and logistics	School Calendar	Administration Berlin School Board	2010-2011 school year

Committee/Subcommittee: DATA TEAM				
Present: Individual School data examined sporadically using different methodologies/strategies/tools.				
Hypothesis: Examination of student achievement data across the district using a common data tool should advance student achievement and thereby narrow the achievement gap.				
Area	What is the Practice?	Materials	Person Responsible	Time Line
All teachers need training using Performance Tracker	Teachers to collaborate at grade level and cross grade level discussion about student achievement data using Performance Tracker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding for current hardware - Time for training 	Administrators, AT	May 22, 2009 Two 2.5 hour sessions (maximum 12 teachers per session) in BJHS computer lab 9:00am to 11:30 and 12:30 to 3:00 schedule Rebecca Gagnon for the October in-service
Formation of data teams: Brown K-2 and Hillside 3-6 by grade level BJHS 7-8 by discipline BHS 9-12 by discipline	Data teams examine student achievement data. Team discussion is around planning effective instruction for all students.	Time to meet. Funding for substitutes. Common planning when possible.	Building level administrators Department chairs Program Directors (Title I, Special Education, Vocational)	Data teams in place at all levels by January, 2010

SECTION VI. STEPS WE WILL TAKE TO IMPLEMENT, MONITOR, AND EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE 2008-2009 FM PROCESS RESULTS AND ACTION PLAN

1. The FM Achievement Team will meet for two days in July at a designated site to take part in a FM Achievement Institute. The purpose of this 2 day retreat will be to discuss the following items further:

- How to communicate the purpose, both internally and externally, of the process as it was undertaken this past school year.
- Communicating-How Often? The Processes? The Timelines? The vehicles of communication; The Content
- Develop a Communication Template
- How do we measure data?
- What is our baseline data?
- What are we going to do about it once we've compiled the information?
- Develop protocol of how we will use the data we currently have.
- What measurement tools should be explored to utilize in the future?
- What are we looking to find out? Ultimate results? Measurable Goals?

2. The FM Achievement Team will meet 10 times (monthly) during the '09-'10 school year to evaluate the progress of individual sub-committees and the progress towards completion of the action plan recommendations.

3. Each subcommittee or study group will determine the means of documentation of progress towards the goals of the recommendations.

4. The results of the NECAPs will be used to provide evidence of improved student achievement in the 2009-10 school year.

5. Building level data teams will regularly review NECAP data via Performance Tracker as well as other curriculum based assessments as applicable on an ongoing basis.