

**NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION
FOCUSED MONITORING 2007 - 2008**

**Manchester School District
SUMMARY REPORT**



**Henry Aliberti, Jr., Ed.D. , Acting Superintendent of Schools
Karen Burkush, Assistant Superintendent**

Technical Assistants:

Colleen Bovi, Education Consultant
Maryclare Heffernan, Education Consultant
Richard Lates, Education Consultant

Report Date: July 10, 2008
Final Revision July 23, 2008

The summary report for the Focused Monitoring sites is intended to serve as a record of the work of the Achievement Team during the 2007 - 2008 school year. The document is intended to be a “snapshot” of what the Achievement Team has accomplished, which supports an improvement plan with clear goals, research-based interventions and action steps to achieve the goals in narrowing the achievement gap between students with and without disabilities. The report itself should consist of three sections, the first being the summary of the work of the Achievement Team. The second section will be the Improvement Plan. The third section will fulfill the requirements of the NHDOE Focused Monitoring Grant Application.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	
• Background and District Profile	6
• District Mission and Beliefs	7
• Achievement Team Membership	7
• Focused Monitoring Priorities	10
• Focused Monitoring Process	14
Data Inquiry and Analysis	
• Abstract	17
• Data Collection Process/Activities	18
• Data Analysis	19
IEP Process / Compliance Component	
• Introduction	21
• Data Collection Activities	22
• Summary of Findings	22
• Building/District Summary of IEP Process	23
• Patterns and Trends	23
• Out-of-District File Review/Monitoring James O.	25
• Citations of Non-Compliance	25
• District Wide Commendations	25
• Students Attending Charter Schools	26
• Preschool Program Review	26
• Conclusions	30
The Improvement/Action Plan	33
Completion of the Focused Monitoring Process	35

Section I

Executive Summary

This Executive Summary will capture the purpose and elements of the Focused Monitoring work accomplished in the Manchester School District in the 2007-2008 school-year, as well as the goals for Focused Monitoring during the 2008-2009 school year.

Demographics and Historical Perspective

In 2007 the Manchester School District did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the fourth year and entered Corrective Action status in both Reading and Math based on the results of the New Hampshire 2006 New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP). Nineteen of the twenty-one Manchester K-12 Schools were also identified as a School in Need of Improvement (SINI) at that time.

In addition, in May of 2007 The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) Bureau of Special Education identified the Manchester School District as one of seven Focused Monitoring Districts in the state, based on the achievement gap in NECAP results between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. It was determined by the Bureau of Special Education that the Focused Monitoring (FM) Process would make a two year commitment of technical assistance to the Manchester School District. The NHDOE requested that the FM Technical Assistants assume responsibility for both the SINI and FM processes and support the district in conducting Root Cause Analysis processes, developing new school improvement plans and creating an FM Report, including an Action Plan.

In the summer of 2007 the district applied to participate in the NHDOE's Follow the Child Initiative and a district team attended the NHDOE's Literacy Institute.

In June 2008 the NHDOE announced the new AYP results based on the fall 2007 NECAP. The Manchester School District did not make AYP for the fifth year and will remain in Corrective Action status for the 2008-2009 school year.

The Manchester School District is the largest district in the state with approximately 17,250 students who are educated in twenty-two schools, including a developmental preschool (ages 3 to 5), fourteen elementary schools (grades Kindergarten to 5), four middle schools (grades 6 to 8), three high schools (grades 9 to 12), and a regional School of Technology (grades 10 to 12). Eight of the district's elementary schools are identified as Title I Schoolwide Schools.

The city's demographics identify 23.35% of the students as non-white/non-Hispanic, compared to the state average of 7.48%, and include the largest population of English Language Learners (ELL), providing English as a Second Language (ESOL) services to more than 1,500 students who are either immigrants or refugees. Approximately 36.3% of the city's public school students apply and qualify for free and reduced lunch, compared to the state average of 19.4%, and 22.9% of the elementary students receive Title I services. The district is governed by a Board of School Committee (BOSC) that includes 15 elected members with the city's Mayor serving as chairperson.

Central Office Turnover

The Manchester School District has undergone a number of changes and challenges in leadership in recent years. At the end of the 2007 school year the Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education left to assume a position elsewhere, and that vacancy has not been filled to date. The district's Superintendent resigned in November 2007 and the district has been under the supervision of an Acting Superintendent since then, who was previously the Assistant Superintendent responsible for Elementary Education. This individual is leaving the district to accept the post of Superintendent in another district.

The Manchester School District has appointed a new superintendent who will assume duties July 1, 2008, and he, along with the remaining Assistant Superintendent in charge of student services, will be responsible for oversight of all district programs and personnel (which currently number over 1,700). The position of Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education will not be filled at this time, based on a recent budgetary decision by the BOSC. The district is facing budget cuts and the central office administrators are working to try and preserve instructional staff as well as programs and supports.

Focused Monitoring Process and Activities

The Manchester School District's administrators requested that the Focused Monitoring technical assistance focus on the four middle and four high schools in the district, and replicate the Data Teams and the data driven improvement work that began at the elementary schools during the 2006-2007 school year.

The Focused Monitoring Process technical assistants worked closely with a newly formed district Focused Monitoring Leadership Team to determine the activities and monitor and evaluate the progress throughout the year. The Leadership team included both central office and school based members. The Focused Monitoring Leadership Team established Data Teams comprised of ten to twelve educators from each of the eight schools. The Year I Focused Monitoring work included four large group training and information sessions for the middle and high school teams, as well as several school based team meetings at each school to conduct a Root Cause Analysis of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, System Processes, Culture and Climate and Leadership. The Data Teams further analyzed a range of student outcome information including NECAP results, grades, attendance, retention and program levels. The large group trainings also included district administrators and parents, along with professional development and curriculum specialists, totaling about 120 active team members. In addition, 23 IEP Reviews were conducted by teams of general and special educators and administrators in each of the districts' schools.

Initial Findings and Recommendations

Building Level –

The Year I Focused Monitoring Process work with the building level Data Teams resulted in the establishment of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) in each school. These PLC Data Teams used a facilitated process and common tools, such as the Data Driven Dialogue to analyze student assessment data, attendance, grades, surveys and other relevant student outcome information. Each Data Team conducted a Root Cause Analysis (RCA) for their school and determined priority areas of improvement. They agreed to establish a common goal of 10% improvement in both Reading and Mathematics district wide on the NECAP assessment annually through 2010, to ensure Adequate Yearly Progress. The PLC Data Teams are highly professional, hard working, engaged and committed to improvement.

Building level activities in year 2 of the Focused Monitoring process will include:

- The design and implementation of consistent curriculum, instruction and assessments for all of the district's students
- Ongoing and embedded professional development for all educators (e.g. IEP Development, Professional Learning Communities, curriculum based measures, partnership with parents, students and families)
- Increased engagement of parents, students and families to ensure improved student learning
- Other areas as specified by School Improvement Plans

District Wide –

The larger district themes that were identified through the Focused Monitoring Process were seen as significant and urgent and include the following recommendations:

- District Leadership and Organization – Conduct an outside review of the district's infrastructure to identify system needs for long range improvement and to maximize existing human resources.
- District Improvement Plans – Create a strategy to coordinate the improvement plans and activities to ensure improved student achievement results through district wide consistency in all practices, specifically the delivery of curriculum, instruction and assessment.
- District Communication and Consistency - Development of an authentic and interpersonal communication process that serves to ensure understanding and build collective ownership in the system among staff, parents, students and community members.
- District Governance – The Board of School Committee and district administration should recognize the opportunity for system change to reorganize, reenergize and redesign the District. In doing so there is a need to define the role of the BOS and the district administration so that the Board's work is directed primarily at policy development and the district administration's role is focused on policy implementation and district management.
- As of June 6, 2008 the Manchester School District advances to year four as a DINI, in both Reading and Math, based on the results of the 2007 NECAP assessments, and will remain in Corrective Action. In addition, twenty of the twenty one Manchester schools did not make AYP and are identified as SINIs. One of the district's eight Schoolwide Title I elementary schools has not made AYP for year four in Reading and year 3 in Math, which places them in a Restructuring phase.

Year II of Focused Monitoring

The Focused Monitoring Process technical assistants will continue to work with the PLC Data Teams at the middle and high school levels through 2008-2009. Goals for the upcoming school year will be to:

- Expand building level capacity through continued work with the middle and high school PLC Data Teams.
- Support the implementation of SINI Action Plans in the middle and high schools
- Reinforce the development of improved IEPs, specifically in the area of Measurable IEP goals
- Support the alignment of improvement efforts district wide by linking the elementary middle and high school initiatives to ensure consistency in curriculum, instruction and assessment leading to improved student achievement.



I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background and District Profile:

The Manchester School District is the state's largest and oldest school system. The District is governed by a fifteen member committee that is elected every two years. The Mayor serves as chairperson of the Board.

The District is comprised of fifteen elementary schools, including a developmental preschool, four middle schools, three fully accredited high schools, a regional vocational/technical school, and a program of adult education. The District serves more than 17,250 students and employs 1,700 faculty and staff.

Middle and high schools offer extensive music and art programs, competitive athletics, clubs, and community service organizations. All schools provide opportunities for parents to participate at school or from home through parent associations and volunteer groups. Partnerships with the business community are highly valued. Most schools enjoy one or more business/education partnerships.

As a community with an increasingly diverse population, the District offers a wide range of programs and initiatives. The English as a Second Language program serves more than 1,500 students who, as immigrants or refugees, are non-English proficient. The ESOL program provides English language instruction and offers students assistance with cultural assimilation. The Program Alternative to Secondary School (PASS), is geared for students who require an alternative approach for completing high school requirements.

The Manchester School District and the City of Manchester are united in their desire to provide students with quality education in wholesome environments. Determining the quality of the educational services provided, as well as completing a comprehensive assessment of school buildings, has been a major undertaking.

An Audit of Educational Effectiveness was conducted during the 1999-2000 school year. Funded by the business community through the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, the audit was performed by SchoolMatch, a nationally recognized firm which specializes in evaluating the quality of educational services provided by school districts. Key components of the audit include strong instructional leadership, clear learning objectives, regular monitoring and measurement of student achievement, high expectations, and a supportive school climate. Upon completion of the audit, the Manchester School District received several commendations as well as specific recommendations for improvement. The District has made significant progress in meeting the audit's recommendations.

In association with the New England School Development Council, the District completed a ten year enrollment forecast which outlined community demographics, operating capacity, and projected space needs. This was followed by a facilities audit conducted by Parsons Brinckerhoff. The facilities audit consisted of an engineering evaluation of the physical condition of existing school buildings, a programmatic assessment of capacities and needs, and an evaluation of alternatives to meet projected needs. Currently, District and City officials are studying the recommendations for funding options.

Providing an exceptional education for its children heads the list of Manchester's priorities. Together, working with students, parents, educators, school administrators, elected officials, and the community at-large, Manchester's education system is proactive and visionary.

B. District Mission and Beliefs:

To provide safe, healthy, nurturing and respectful environments in which all students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to become life-long learners as well as positive and productive citizens. The success of our schools can only be achieved through collaboration and interdependence with the community. The District is committed to utilizing all resources towards this exciting challenge.

C. Achievement Team Membership:

Include the names, titles, and positions of team members, and the constituency each member represents.

First Name	Last Name	School
Henry	Aliberti	Manchester School District
Kenneth	Duesing	Manchester School District
Karen	Burkush	Manchester School District
Ann	Cormier	Manchester School District
Jean	Howard	Manchester School District
Deb	Bois	Manchester School District
Sheila	Brisson	Manchester School District
Jonathan	Higgins	Manchester School District
Lori	Collins	Manchester School District
Kelly	O'Reilly	Manchester School District
Heidi	Boyle	Manchester School District
Tina	Proulx	Manchester School District
John	Rist	Central High
Carol Ann	Gregorious	Central High
Selma	Naccach-Hoff	Central High
Lesley	Fallu	Central High
Val	Cunningham	Central High
Kathy	Mirable	Central High
Andrea	Merrill	Central High

First Name	Last Name	School
Adrienne	Baum	Central High
Diane	Spaulding	Central High
Bonnie	Morgan	Central High
Suzanne	Depietro	Central High
Ronald	Mailhot	Central High
June	Rojas-Tumblin	Central High
Barbara	Naeger	Central High
Joan	Noga	Central High
Eileen	Longo	Central High
Karen	White	Manchester School of Technology
Jim	Schubert	Manchester School of Technology
Crystal	Bissonnette	Manchester School of Technology
Collette	Coulon	Manchester School of Technology
Cindy	Thibeault	Manchester School of Technology
Bryan	Halley	Manchester School of Technology
Paula	Newton-Lorry	Manchester School of Technology
Ilene	Banks	Manchester School of Technology
Kevin	McDonnell	Manchester School of Technology
Joan	Howard	Manchester School of Technology
Arthur	Adamakos	Memorial High
Mary-Jo	Bourque	Memorial High
Mary Ann	Wood	Memorial High
Marc	Tessier	Memorial High
Pat	Molan	Memorial High
Linda	Allen	Memorial High
Tim	Otis	Memorial High
Brenda	McMahon	Memorial High
Kevin	Sheehan	Memorial High
Kyle	McDonough	Memorial High
Kathy	Jaskolka	Memorial High
Keith	Bike	Memorial High
Ellen	Philbrook	Memorial High
Erika	Barnes	Memorial High
Linda	Giantisis	Memorial High
Susan	Robinson	Memorial High
Mary Ellen	McGorry	West High
Gary	Dempsey	West High
Jessica	Weiss	West High
Steve	Houle	West High
Sue	Robinson	West High

First Name	Last Name	School
Joe	Morris	West High
Eva	Barger	West High
Karen	Hedrick	West High
Christina	Colantuoni	West High
Brad	Morse	West High
Kevin	Maes	West High
Val	Lovell	West High
Diane	Moreau	West High
Peter	Sorrentino	West High
Deb	Stratton	West High
Mark	Willis	Southside Middle
Marilyn	Azevedo	Southside Middle
Kelly	Benjamin	Southside Middle
Mary Ann	Evans	Southside Middle
Jen	Tanguay	Southside Middle
Joanne	Sacco	Southside Middle
Nate	Ware	Southside Middle
Jeff	Jarvis	Southside Middle
Gina	LeBrun	Southside Middle
Carol	Croteau	Southside Middle
Bonnie	Amlaw	Southside Middle
Dawn	Pirog	Middle School at Parkside
Matt	Benson	Middle School at Parkside
Amy	Anderson	Middle School at Parkside
Doreen	Gagne	Middle School at Parkside
Maureen	Haas	Middle School at Parkside
Kim	Clark	Middle School at Parkside
Joan	Flurey	Middle School at Parkside
Diane	Connors	Middle School at Parkside
David	Howard	Middle School at Parkside
Nick	Coler	Middle School at Parkside
Donna	Belville	Middle School at Parkside
Sue	Sweed	Middle School at Parkside
Robin	Tafe	Middle School at Parkside
Kerry	Tripp	Middle School at Parkside
Georgia	Melas	Middle School at Parkside
Barry	Albert	McLaughlin Middle
Jacquie	McLaughlin	McLaughlin Middle
Susan	Foster	McLaughlin Middle
Barbara	Ballard	McLaughlin Middle

First Name	Last Name	School
Robin	Galez	McLaughlin Middle
Christine	Gilbert	McLaughlin Middle
Katherine	Morrison	McLaughlin Middle
Rick	Heuslein	McLaughlin Middle
Debbie	Frisella	McLaughlin Middle
Bill	Krantz	McLaughlin Middle
Collette	Rousseau	McLaughlin Middle
David	Hedge	McLaughlin Middle
Stephen	Donohue	Hillside Middle
Anne	McQuade	McLaughlin Middle
Nina	Teague	McLaughlin Middle
Steve	Soucy	Hillside Middle
Michelle	Bradley	Hillside Middle
Nancy	Sliwerski	Hillside Middle
Sue Ellen	Hanna	Hillside Middle
Meaghan	Moriarty	Hillside Middle
Deborah	McCullough	Hillside Middle
Sylvia	Moriarty	Hillside Middle
Barbara	King	Hillside Middle
Kelly	MacDonald	Hillside Middle
Barbara	Kuljo	Hillside Middle

D. Focused Monitoring Priorities:

Include a summary of the information the Achievement Teams have gathered through examining district practice within the areas of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, District Processes, Leadership, Culture, and Climate, and how the priority areas are integrated into the SINI, DINI and/or FM processes, if applicable.

i) Summary of information gathered:

(1) Curriculum

- The District Readiness survey results and anecdotal comments acknowledge that recent and current efforts to align the Manchester curriculum are seen as the most effective initiatives district-wide.
- FM/DINI teams have identified that not all core content areas have completed a comprehensive curriculum mapping and alignment.
- There is a lack of identification and understanding of the curriculum essentials by teachers and administrators.
- There is a need for Curriculum Coordinator(s) for the district to ensure consistency district wide.
- Delivery of curriculum needs to be monitored at the classroom level.

(2) Instruction

- The Manchester School District lacks a process for monitoring and ensuring consistent instructional practices and delivery of curriculum essentials.
- Teams indicate that instruction could be further differentiated to meet the wide range of learning needs.
- There is acknowledgement that consistent and effective instructional strategies will drive improved student outcomes.
- Concern has been expressed that teachers will not be allowed to use their own instructional approach/style. There is some worry that the expectation for consistency will restrict teacher creativity and innovation.
- Reading interventions and supports are needed at each school at the high school level, such as Read 180.
- Schedule needs to provide for larger blocks of instructional time. A double block is needed for literacy instruction to provide time for immediate interventions and supports.

(3) Assessment

- The district has begun to implement district-wide assessments (middle school math assessment and writing prompts) but the teams agree that the lack of common district-wide assessments in reading is/has been a challenge.
- There is a lack of formative assessments used to measure progress/mastery at the middle and high school levels.
- Incentives are needed to motivate students to engage with state assessment and perform at their best.
- Consistent district wide approach to identifying assessment accommodations is needed, along with ensuring that they are provided.

(4) System Processes

- There is a need for up-to-date technology (hardware and software) for both teachers and students at the middle and high school levels.
- Teachers report being unable to use technology for instruction and for communication purposes within the school, throughout the district and to communicate with parents.
- The lack of technology is identified as a critical issue for the district.
- Communication issues district wide are identified as a challenge and a concern. Staff members identify a lack of a consistent and reliable process for communication. They would like a process for a two way dialogue.
- Decision making - Staff members indicate that they are unclear about how decisions are made and, at times, what the decisions mean for them. They believe that educational decisions are top down and driven by the budget rather than by individual student needs and the potential for improved results.
- Staff state that many initiatives are started within the district but there is no system of accountability for implementation and no measure of the impact made by new initiatives. This results in a lack of trust that new initiatives will make a difference and will be supported by school and district leadership. They feel that there is no accountability for the “value” of initiatives.
- Lack of funding to sustain initiatives is also cited as a challenge.

- Staff members consistently identify a lack of “time” (for planning, collaboration, data analysis, curriculum mapping, professional development, and professional reflection) as a critical area of need due to the school calendar and schedule limitations. Teachers report that the Manchester teacher contract limits the number of after school faculty meetings.
- Need to align and monitor the implementation of the Improvement Plans among the three levels (elementary, middle and high school) so that a consistent approach to district systems (curriculum, assessment and instructional models) by a core team of Manchester educators is ensured.

(5) Culture & Climate

- Professional development is seen as an area of district-wide improvement in recent years.
- Professional development (PD) should be available to staff through a central communication system that describes PD offerings and provides details regarding those PD sessions.
- Staff express frustration with the preparation for early release day PD sessions, indicating that plans are often made at the last minute and may not be related to topics meaningful to staff.

(6) Leadership

- Staff members see a need for strong leadership from the district’s superintendent. They see the selection of a new superintendent as an opportunity for the district.
- Staff members express satisfaction in improved communication with the interim superintendent.
- There is a lack of district wide leadership infrastructure that is sufficient to meet the challenges of this 17,250 student school district. District needs to focus on the development of teacher leadership. The ability to work effectively in teams to address ongoing curriculum, instruction and assessment challenges is needed. The ongoing support for the development of professional learning communities is encouraged.
- There is a consensus that the Board of School Committee should be well aware of district initiatives and should become partners in looking ahead to an effective school district. They would like the support of the Board of School Committee and would like a less political atmosphere.

ii) Summary of Improvement Priority Areas as Developed through the Root Cause Analysis Process

Middle Schools

<u>Parkside</u>	Curriculum alignment
<u>Southside</u>	Curriculum alignment/ curriculum mapping High Standards Consistency in special education programming and supports

Hillside Identify specific low performing students and develop individual learning plans specifying interventions

McLaughlin Curriculum mapping and redesigning plan books
Literacy period for remediation and enrichment (CRISS)

High Schools

Central Curriculum alignment
Literacy and numeracy

West Literacy and numeracy
Test preparation and test remediation
Freshman Academy – motivation

Memorial Curriculum alignment
Test preparation

Manchester School of Technology
Literacy
Move concentrators (1 yr) to completers (2 yrs)

District Goal:

Improve literacy and numeracy achievement by 10% per year through alignment of curriculum to GLEs and GSEs.



E. Focused Monitoring Process:

Include a description of FM process such as aligning initiatives, focus forums, interviews, professional development opportunities and other activities conducted during the year.

Alignment of Initiatives and Efforts

The Manchester School District was identified in June 2007 by the New Hampshire Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education as a Focused Monitoring site, as a result of the achievement gap between students with educational disabilities and their non-disabled peers.

In August 2007 the Manchester School District did not make AYP for the fourth year, based on the 2006 NECAP results, and began their third year as a District in Need of Improvement, moving the district into Corrective Action status. In June 2008 the district did not make AYP for the fifth year, based on the 2007 NECAP results, and entered their fourth year as a District in Need of Improvement and remains in Corrective Action.

In August 2007 all but 2 of the district's elementary, middle and high schools were designated as Schools in Need of Improvement. In June 2008, based on the 2007 NECAP results, 20 of the Manchester schools were designated as Schools in Need of Improvement.

The Manchester School District, in partnership with the New Hampshire Department of Education and the Bureau of Special Education's Focused Monitoring Process, have begun a plan of district wide improvement that ensures alignment of state and district initiatives and provides resource support via technical assistance and professional development to the individual schools within the district.

The Manchester School District plan to date includes the following components:

- **DINI** – The Manchester School District has a District in Need of Improvement Plan that includes the Follow the Child Literacy Initiative. Progress on the DINI plan is being monitored and will be reported to the NHDOE.
- **SINI** – Plans have been developed for each of the SINI designated schools. Progress monitoring of the SINI plans is underway and will be reported to the NHDOE.
- **Follow The Child** (FTC) Literacy Initiative – The FTC Literacy Initiative was developed during the summer 2007 FTC Institute. The FTC plan was embedded in the DINI plan.
- **School Improvement Plans** –
 - Elementary Schools - In the 2006-2007 school year the Manchester School District's administrative team worked with the 14 elementary schools in the development of the School Improvement Plans that included a literacy initiative for each school. In addition they identified a two person data team at each elementary school. In the 2007-2008 school year the district's elementary schools will fully implement their literacy plans as part of the individual schools' School Improvement Plans.
 - Middle/High Schools - In the 2007-2008 school year the 4 middle schools and 4 high schools (including the Manchester School of Technology) participated in a school improvement process that resulted in the development of School Improvement Plans and may include a literacy plan for each school.

- **Focused Monitoring** – The Manchester School District was identified as the district within their cohort group having the greatest achievement gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers.

Resources identified to support the Manchester School District:

- DINI – The Education Alliance at Brown University conducts external evaluation
- SINI – Development of individual school improvement plans
- FTC – Summer institutes, facilitated process, literacy and school improvement materials, resources
- Focused Monitoring (FM) – Technical Assistance, School Improvement Model (WestEd), ongoing school and district support for two years
- CEIL – Professional development, access to graduate credit via Plymouth State University, technical assistance, resource support for school Data Team trainings.

FM Activities in Manchester School District 2007-2008

DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
07/23 to 07/26/07	Follow the Child Institute	Strengthen the critical leadership role of professional educators and administrators; NH Literacy Action Plan.
08/21/07	FM Networking Session	Review of FM Process; technology; assessment of systems readiness
09/17/07	Leadership Team	Overview of FM; identify goals for the year; aligning initiatives; draft plan for the year
09/25/07	Administrative Team Meeting	Overview of FM, planning for the year, identifying team members, PSU course
09/28/07	Leadership Team	Review of SINI plans/progress reports; planning for training teams
10/04/07	Leadership Team	Status report and identify next steps; alignment of initiatives and effort
10/23/07	FM Networking Session	Alignment of FM, SINI, DINI; parent involvement
10/29/07	Training at SERESC - High School Data Teams	Full day training: align district initiatives – SINI, DINI, FM; identify factors that impact student achievement; assess district’s readiness for change.
10/31/07	Training at SERESC - Middle School Data Teams	Full day training: align district initiatives – SINI, DINI, FM; identify factors that impact student achievement; assess district’s readiness for change.
11/16/07	Leadership Team	Updates (Brown, school visits, IEPs); Review of October training; FM Grant
11/30/07	Leadership Team	Updates (Brown University, Readiness Survey, SINI Goals); Planning for December trainings; IEP Compliance Review
12/11/07	Performance Pathways Training - Memorial	High school administrative training on accessing and analyzing data



12/18/07	Training at SERESC - High School Data Teams	Full day training - Understanding FM; intro to RCA; examining and analyzing data
01/11/08	Training at SERESC (rescheduled from Dec.) - Middle School Data Teams	Full day training - Understanding FM; intro to RCA; examining and analyzing data
01/18/08	Leadership Team	Preparation for final round of training
01/23/08	FM Networking Session	FM Alignment, reporting, IEP compliance
01/29/08	Training at SERESC – Middle School Data Teams	Determine root cause of achievement gap; review 2007 NECAP and district data
01/31/08	Training at SERESC - High School Data Teams	Determine root cause of achievement gap; review 2007 NECAP and district data
02/5/08	Manchester School of Technology	Half-day visits to the middle and high schools to work with the data teams and to complete the root cause analysis
02/5/08	Manchester Central High School	
02/7/08	Hillside Middle School/Southside Middle School	
02/8/08	Henry J. McLaughlin Jr. Middle School	
02/8/08	Manchester High School West	
02/11/08	Middle School at Parkside	
02/20/08	Manchester Memorial High School	
03/11/08	Manchester School of Technology	Individual school teams identified two essential priority needs and began to identify strategies to address each priority. Immediate goals were developed and a two-year goal was generated.
03/12/08	Manchester West High School	
03/13/08	IEP Facilitator Training	Full day training with representatives from Manchester’s twenty-two schools. Individuals gained knowledge of external review of special education data linked to compliance with state and federal special education rules and regulations.
03/18/08	FM Networking Session	Participants gained an understanding of the importance of the role of parents and other stakeholders in the Focused Monitoring Process and the sustainability of the work of the Achievement Team.



03/26/08	Manchester Central High School	}	Individual school teams identified two essential priority needs and began to identify strategies to address each priority. Immediate goals were developed and a two-year goal was generated.
04/03/08	Southside Middle School		
04/07/08	Hillside Middle School		
04/28/08 to 05/02/08	IEP Compliance Reviews		An in-depth review of Manchester's IEPs to ensure compliance, improved communication among general and special educators, parents and students and to review alignment of special education programming with curriculum, instruction and assessment within the district.
04/28/08	Leadership Team Meeting		Leadership Team met to investigate a plan for connecting the schools district-wide; to discuss plans to update the NHDOE; to review the latest Brown University report; and to discuss transition of this process with the new superintendent.
05/06/08	Representatives from each middle and high school data team met at SERESC to plan the final training sessions.		Technical assistants met with representatives from the middle and high schools to develop the agenda for the last training sessions.
05/08/08	Training at SERESC – Middle School Data Teams		Identify School in Need of Improvement (SINI) goals; complete the framework for the SINI plans; and develop a plan for rollout of SINI plans school community.
05/16/08	Meeting with district's elementary school principals		Reviewed the outcomes of the IEP compliance visits. District themes were shared and suggestions for improvement were discussed.
05/30/08	Training at SERESC - High School Data Teams		Complete the framework for the schools' SINI Plans; develop a plan to roll-out the plans to their respective school community; understand the scope of core competencies and performance assessments.
06/09/08	Meeting with the NHDOE and Leadership Team		Met to review the FM initial findings and recommendations
06/17/08	DINI Meeting		Review progress made on the DINI Plan and draft PD Plan.
06/18/08	Leadership Team Meeting		Continue work on the FM Final Report
06/23/08	NHDOE Meeting		Meeting to review resources and plans for the 2008-2009 school year.
06/24/08	CEIL Advisory Meeting		To determine how the CEIL Project will support the Manchester School District's action plan

II. DATA INQUIRY AND ANALYSIS

This section should contain documentation of what data were reviewed and analyzed as part of the Focused Monitoring/District in Need of Improvement Processes.

A. Abstract

(Insert the DINI Abstract, if applicable): Include an overview of the underlying or “root cause” issues most likely affecting student achievement. This information will help provide the rationale for the activities to be implemented.

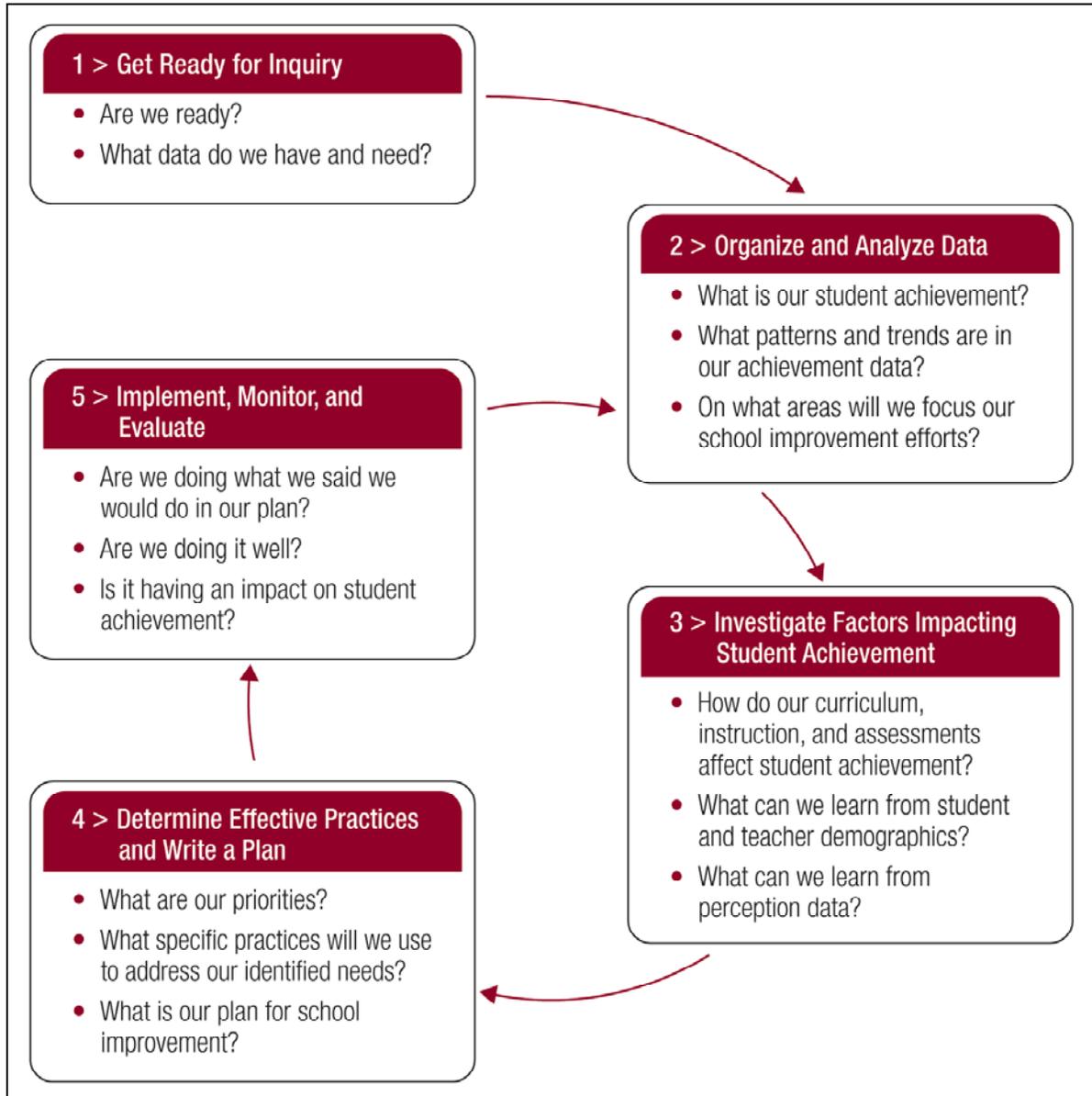
District data analysis identified a wide achievement gap between students with disabilities and non-disabled peers. After conducting a root cause analysis the following areas were identified:

- Lack of aligned curriculums to drive instruction
- Lack of common benchmark assessments to assess student progress
- Lack of professional development to increase professional knowledge & skills
- Lack of common vision, goals, ownership and communication

B. Data Collection Process/Activities:

Describe the data collection activities that the achievement team engaged in, and describe the various methods that were used to examine the data. What existing data sources were identified and used to answer the essential question(s)? In addition to the baseline data, what additional data were needed and how was it gathered? What was the timeline for these activities?

Refer to the flow chart and descriptions below from the West Ed Model of School Improvement.



- **Step 1 Get Ready for Inquiry (September/October)**

As a first step, the team will assess its readiness to undertake a systems change process and examine the district's decision-making process. It will engage in a "Data Dialogue" to analyze the readiness data. The team will then inventory its available student performance data and its current district initiatives. It will then determine what additional data it will need to gather in order to answer the essential question.

- **Step 2 Organize and Analyze Data (November/December)**

During step 2, the team will focus on determining the nature of the achievement gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers, by content area and level. The team may decide to conduct perception surveys of parents, students and teachers to provide it with additional student performance data. It will **triangulate** (use multiple data sources), **aggregate** (summarize to determine patterns, connections, discrepancies), **disaggregate** (determine performance of subgroups) and **communicate** (display data) the performance data that has been gathered.

- **Step 3 Investigate Factors Impacting Student Achievement (Jan/Feb)**

Next the team will determine the root causes of underperformance and identify the significant challenges and needs of the district. It will need to seek answers to the essential question from a holistic system perspective, and examine curriculum, instruction and assessment issues that impact all students in both general and special education settings. The team will then prepare a set of findings from its data analysis. The findings will provide the foundation for its system improvement plan.

- **Step 4 Determine Effective Practices and Write a Plan (March/April)**

The team is now ready to convert district challenges/needs into priority goals for its action plan that will address the root causes of the achievement gap. The team will establish and examine a set of alternative system changes to determine their basis in research and their effectiveness. At this point in the inquiry process, the team may decide to conduct perception surveys of students, parents and teachers with regard to strategies being considered. The team will prepare a final report on the year's study which includes the action plan and an application for an implementation grant to assist the team in carrying out its action plan.

- **Step 5 Implement, Monitor and Evaluate (September 09 – May 10)**

Year 2 of the Focused Monitoring process will be the implementation year for the district's action plan. At the end of year 2, the team will be asked to evaluate the implementation of the action plan.

C. Data Analysis:

What were the findings from the data collected? Analyze, disaggregate and summarize data as appropriate and indicate trends or patterns that answer the essential question.

(a) Initial Findings and Recommendations Derived from the Focused Monitoring Process

1. District Leadership Organization:

The Manchester School District, serving 17,250 students, currently lacks adequate system infrastructure to respond effectively to the significant change that is called for by its corrective action status.

Recommendations:

(1) We suggest that the district consider contracting with an independent agency, such as the New Hampshire School Administrators Association (NHSAA), to review its system infrastructure (organizational chart, leadership structure, policies and procedures, staffing levels and governance infrastructure) and submit reorganization recommendations for long-range improvement.

(2) We suggest that the organizational chart be revised to address curriculum, instruction and assessment supervision and coordination, as a greater balance is needed in these areas between centralized and site-based authority. The areas of transportation, professional development and building administration should also be included in the organizational chart.

(3) Because of fiscal restraints and personnel reductions, and the unmet need for direction in the development of curriculum and instruction, the system needs to develop a reorganization plan that maximizes existing human resources.

2. District Improvement Plans:

The district's major challenge has been to align its improvement plans, and to convert its improvement plans into practice. We think that Manchester has found itself at this same juncture previously, but, confronted with year two of Corrective Action and Focused Monitoring, the district must now decisively convert plans into action.

Recommendation:

In addition to adhering to the DINI and SINI reporting timelines, the Manchester School District plans to set in place a strategy to connect and coordinate the improvement plans and activities of its three levels (elementary, middle and high school). The district DINI September 2008 progress report should reflect an action plan which would support clear alignment among the three levels, between academic disciplines and between feeder school systems in order to create a district-wide curriculum, instruction and assessment team. This dialogue would result in greater consistency in practice across the district.

3. District Communication and Consistency:

The Manchester School District, as a result of its size and system infrastructure needs, has acknowledged the need to improve its communication systems between central office and buildings, between departments and between individual schools so that district staff have a clearer idea of what policy decisions are made, how these decisions are made, the impact of those decisions, and the long-term status of district initiatives and improvement efforts. An improved communication system will result in greater transparency in the decision-making process and improved coordination and staff participation in district improvement efforts.

Recommendations:

(1) The development of a new communication system needs to be an authentic process embedded in the culture that serves the purpose of building ownership. An example of this can be seen in the current data teams that have been working across grade and building levels. Strong communication assumes a level of interpersonal discourse beyond traditional methods such as memos and emails.

- (2) The district should increase its investment in technology hardware, software and training in order to increase communication efficiency and capacity across the district.
- (3) The district needs to provide more opportunities for staff input into the adoption and implementation of district initiatives, curriculum changes and adoption of new policies and procedures. In order to increase teacher leadership and teamwork at the building level, the district should encourage and support the development of forums for teacher input, teacher book studies, and action research projects.
- (4) The district needs to establish a regular and ongoing method of communicating progress in the focused Monitoring and DINI Processes to the Board of School Committee and the NH Department of Education.

4. District Governance:

There is an urgent need for the development of a new leadership team synergy and spirit between the BOSC and the district administration in the district's decision-making process. The selection of a new superintendent has provided the district with an opportunity for a shift to a new direction for the district, and a fundamental change in educational opportunities offered to Manchester students. To date, our conversations with staff members indicate a strong desire for long-term leadership stability from the central office and shared leadership with district personnel at all levels.

Recommendations:

- (1) The Board of School Committee and district administration should recognize their opportunity for system change and seize this chance to reorganize, reenergize and redesign the district. We urge the district to define the roles of the BOSC and district administration more clearly so that the Board's work is directed primarily at policy development while the district administration's role is focused on policy implementation and district management. To accomplish this, we recommend that the BOSC and district administration plan a facilitated leadership retreat to clarify roles and responsibilities.
- (2) The BOSC should be represented in the Leadership Meetings that oversee the Focused Monitoring and DINI processes.

5. Parent and Student Involvement:

Parent and student representation should be considered as integral components to district-wide planning teams. Initial work with parent representatives to the DINI/FM teams resulted in recommendations for gathering input from parents and engaging students in improvement planning in the district.

III. IEP REVIEW PROCESS/COMPLIANCE COMPONENT

A. Introduction:

The compliance component of the NHDOE Focused Monitoring Process includes both an internal and external review of Special Education data directly linked to compliance with state and federal Special Education rules and regulations. Data gathered through the various compliance activities is reported back to the school's Achievement Team, as well as the NHDOE, Bureau of Special

Education. This is for the purpose of informing both the district and the NHDOE of the status of the district's Special Education processes, programming, progress of students with disabilities, alignment of Special Education programming with the curriculum, instruction and assessment systems within the school district.

B. Data Collection Activities:

As part of the NHDOE Focused Monitoring Process a Special Education compliance review was conducted in the Manchester School District on April 29 - May 2, 2008. Listed below is the data that was reviewed as part of the compliance review, all of which are summarized in this report.

- Review of random IEPs
- 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 programming
- James O Compliance Review
- Review of Out of District Files
- When appropriate, review of student records for students with disabilities who are attending Charter Schools
- Review of preschool programming
- Review of parent feedback collected through the focused monitoring data collection activities
- When appropriate, review of requests for approval of new programs, and/or changes to existing programs (No new programs reviews were requested for Manchester.)

LEA Focused Monitoring Compliance Application

As part of the Focused Monitoring data collection activities, the LEA Plan, which includes Special Education procedures, was reviewed. In addition, personnel rosters were submitted to verify that staff providing services outlined in IEPs are qualified for the positions they hold. Also, program descriptions were reviewed and verified, along with follow up and review of any newly developed programs or changes to existing approved Special Education programs.

C. Summary of Findings

1. IEP Review Process: Conducted on April 29 – May 2, 2008

As part of the compliance component of Focused Monitoring, the NHDOE worked in collaboration with the Manchester 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.

2. As required by the IEP review process, general and special educators in the Manchester School District were provided with a collaborative opportunity to review 23 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 (formative and summative) information 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 who will gather assessment data, where/when it will be gathered and how data is recorded
- 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 IEP Review Process is not only to ensure compliance, but to also develop a plan for improved communication and collaboration between general and special educators, parents and students in the development, implementation and monitoring of IEPs.

D. Building/District Summary of IEP Review Process

Number of IEPs Reviewed: 23

	Yes	No
Is there a relationship between the student’s needs resulting from his/her disability and the goals?	22	1
Are the annual goals measurable (i.e., contain criteria for measurable and achievable progress)?	2	21
Is there evidence the student is making progress? (Measuring Progress, #3)	17	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)	14	1 N/A 6 No

E. Patterns and Trends Identified Through IEP Review Process

- **How has this process informed future plans for improving the writing of student IEPs?**
 1. Provides more data for the team to review and compare to other measures to develop the IEP.
 2. Clarifies documentation that is necessary and identifies mistakes made in the IEP writing process.
- **Describe how individual student performance information is conveyed from grade to grade/school to school:**
 1. Each teacher is given a copy of the IEP, invited to meetings or will provide input.
 2. Transitions to high school involve contact with case managers, tours of the receiving school and/or MST, team meetings, students’ contact with new case manager.
 3. Teachers and staff communicate at the end of the year and plan for class grouping.

4. 5th grade transition includes a step-up day
5. Regular education teachers write summaries and meet with receiving teachers.
6. Narratives placed in file for new teacher.
7. Information sheet for both teacher and paraprofessional placed in file

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

1. Talk to the student about the effort on the assessment and involve the student more in the process.
2. Practice and preparation
3. Address test-taking strategies
4. Parent/Teacher Breakfasts
5. Schedule school-wide events prior to state-wide assessment (NECAP Week)
6. Item analysis of NECAP results

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

Strengths:

- Collaboration between general and special education
- Behavior contracts
- True advocacy for students
- Well-qualified professionals
- Respect for each other
- Transition planning
- Student focused team
- Sensitivity to needs of child
- Strong awareness of deaf education
- Parent education and communication
- Formative assessments
- Access to curriculum standards
- RtI Model
- After school programs
- Use of SST to provide interventions prior to special education
- IEP Process is data-driven
- Weekly PLC collaborative meetings
- Special education team is open to ideas, is cooperative and staff care about students.

Suggestions:

- District-wide conformity on eligibility and writing of IEPs
- Review counseling supports for EH program
- Provide professional development for writing measurable and functional goals and benchmarks
- Increase personnel to meet the diversity of needs
- Discuss report cards and progress reports and how to consistently use them within the school
- Clarify roles, job descriptions

- Need for data collection system and training
- Identify appropriate caseload numbers based on severity of disability and level of services
- In-service for general education teachers relative to critical needs of deaf students and curriculum adjustments
- Find ways to get more parent involvement
- IEPs need to be more parent-friendly
- PD for special education staff regarding regular education expectations, assessments, etc.
- District implementation of RtI
- Use growth targets for individual students
- Contact area agencies early in transition planning process
- Involve unified arts teachers in IEP meetings for students in self-contained programs
- Include medical information in student profile
- Simplify progress reports for parent understanding
- Math texts should match curriculum
- Review accommodations vs. modification distinctions

F. Out of District File Review and Monitoring of James O Consent Decree

Based on the random review of 4 student files for children with disabilities placed out of district, and/or court ordered, there was one citation of Non-Compliance:

Ed 1107.04 Evaluation not completed in 45 days.

Commendations: James O and out-of-district files reviewed were complete, well organized and carefully monitored for compliance.

G. Citations of Non-Compliance Identified as a Result of the IEP Review Visit:

As a result of the IEPs that were reviewed on April 29-May 2, 2008 the following citations of non-compliance were identified:

CRF # 300.320 Content of IEP, ED 1109.01 Elements of an IEP

The IEPs reviewed lacked measurable annual goals.

ED 1107.04 Evaluation not completed in 45 days (James O/Out of district file).

Please Note: *These citations of non-compliance will need to be addressed in a corrective action plan and met within one year of the date of the report; a template is located at the end of this summary.*

H. District Wide Commendations:

- Staff, administration and parents work hard to develop IEPs to meet the varied needs of the student population.

- The Manchester School District educators are dedicated and skilled and open to professional development that will result in improved outcomes for students.
- The Special Education Plan - Policy and Procedures manual has been updated and meets compliance.

I. Students with Disabilities Attending Charter Schools:

The Manchester School District has one student with an educational disability attending the Strong Foundations Charter School, located in Pembroke, NH. As part of the FM Process, a review of the student's placement was conducted.

Access to the General Curriculum-

- The student's IEP includes goals written in measurable terms
- The student's IEP and schedule indicate that the student is being provided with access to the general curriculum
- The student has participated in state and school-wide assessments
- The student has the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities

Transition-

- Parents are included in all aspects of transition planning
- Transition requirements do not apply at this point. Student is not age 16.

Behavior Strategies and Discipline-

- Student has not experienced any behavior that would cause him to be suspended from school
- Student does not present with behavior needs that require a behavior plan

Summary-

There were no areas of non-compliance noted and therefore no citations indicated. The student's IEP is well designed and complete with a comprehensive description of student needs. The district has been vigilant in providing the appropriate supports to the student while in the Charter School placement.

Suggestions-

- Clarify the benchmarks for the 2008-2009 school year, including dates each benchmark is to be met.
- Continue to review the school's curriculum to ensure that the curriculum provides the student with access to a curriculum that is aligned with the GLS's for each grade.
- Review the student's results of the state assessment as an additional check on student progress.

The district is commended for their oversight and appropriate documentation of the student's progress while attending the Charter School.

J. Preschool Program Review

School District: Manchester	SAU#: 37	Date: April 28, 2008
Team Chair: Pat Storm, Principal	Kim Gillis, Preschool Outreach	
Team Members: Pam Agate, Asst. Principal	Judy O'Brien, Child Find Facilitator	
Tiffany Chadwick, SLP	Andrea O'Neill, Preschool Teacher	
Anne Farley, Preschool Teacher	Andrea Therrien, Family Support	
Sharon Fenton, OTR	Colleen Bovi, Technical Assistant	

Access to Appropriate Preschool Activities

Ed. 1109.01 Elements of an IEP CFR 300.320 Content of IEP

Ed. 1109.05. Implementation of IEP 20 U.S.C. 1414 (d)

Ed. 1115.07, Ed 1119.01(f) Provision of Non-Academic Services/Settings CFR 300.320(a) CFR 300.34 Ed. 1119.03, Full Access to District's Curricula

Ed. 1107.04 (d) Qualified Examiner

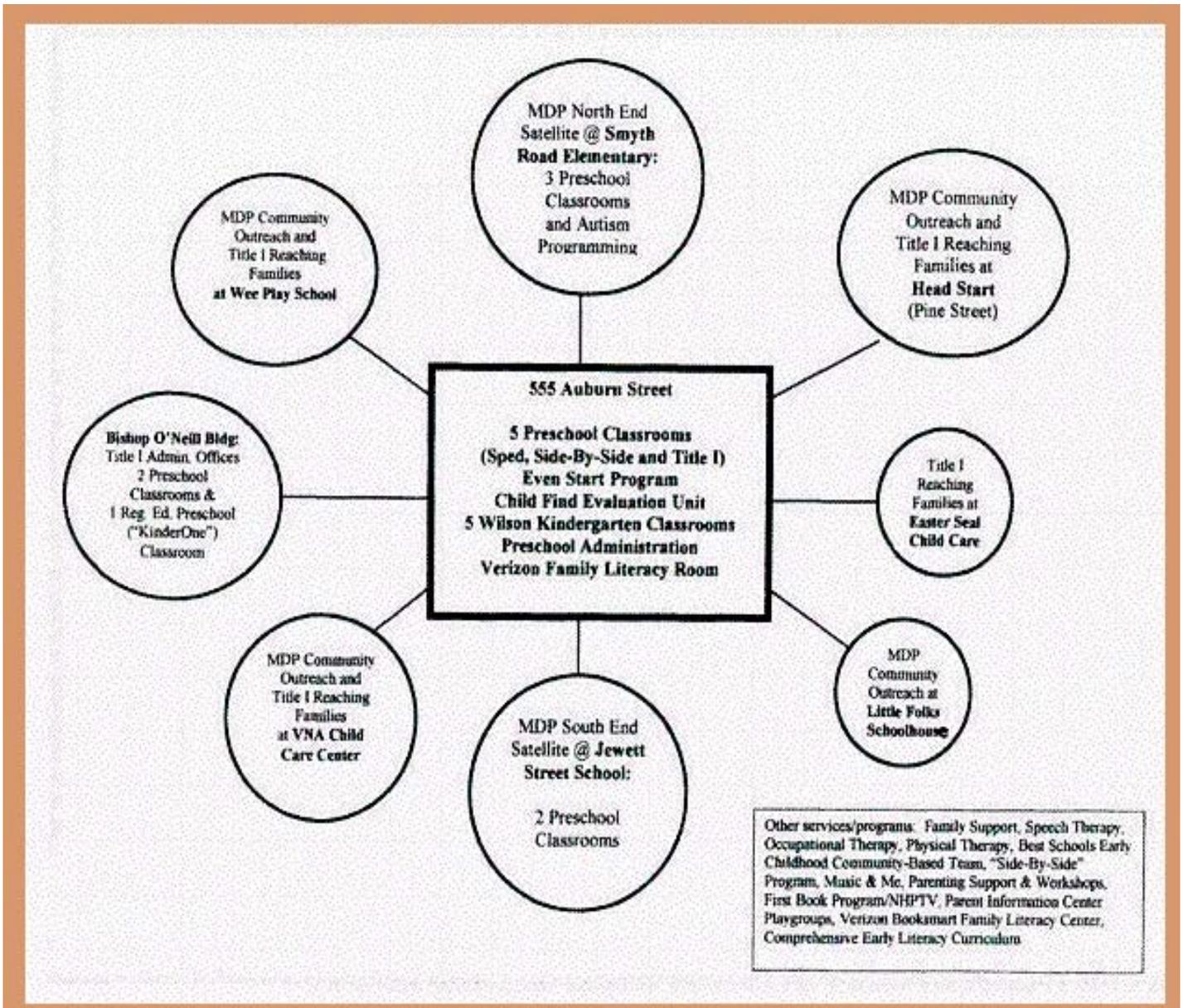
Ed. 1133.05 (c)(h)(k) CFR 300.320 Program Requirements

Ed. 1133.20 Protections Afforded to Children with Disabilities

CFR 300.320(a)(1)(ii) “. . .for preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child’s participation in appropriate activities:)”

An impressive continuum of supports and services is available to approximately 330 preschool children in the city of Manchester. The Selma Deitch Early Learning Program is a school that supports nine center-based and community-based programs and a variety of other services for children and their families, including Family Support, Home Programs, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Best Schools Early Childhood Community-Based Team, "Side by Side" Program, Music and Me, Parenting Support and Workshops, First Book Program/NHPTV, Parent Information Center Playgroups, Verizon Booksmart Family Literacy Center and a Comprehensive Early Literacy Curriculum. Students supported through the SDELP represent a diverse group of children ages three to five that come from many different cultures speaking different languages and having a wide range of skills and abilities. Approximately 70 students are English language learners. The program’s philosophy is child-centered and the comprehensive curriculum addresses the needs of the whole child and is attentive to all aspects of early childhood education. There is a written curriculum guide that serves as a “road map” and describes the skills children need to make their transition to kindergarten. Parents are supported and participate in their children’s programs in a variety of ways. There is a family outreach component, weekly newsletters, family nights, Circle of Parents Program and home visits.

A flowchart representing the many options is included below:



Transition

Ed. 1107.02 (h) Process; Provision of FAPE CFR 300.124 Part C Transition

Ed. 1109.01 Elements of an IEP (Transition Services)

Ed. 1109.03, IEP Team CFR 300.321 and 300.321(f)

CFR 300.322 (b) Parent Participation

This includes movement from (a) Early Supports and Services (ESS) to preschool, and b) pre-school to elementary school.

The SDELP has a good relationship with the Early Supports and Services Program. There is a signed Memorandum of Agreement with Easter Seals regarding transitions to preschool. The SDELP's main office is located in the same building as Easter Seals, which allows for frequent communication. The district has a Child Find Coordinator who maintains a calendar and schedule for children turning three. Once notified, the

district follows the referral process to ensure that IEPs are fully developed and signed by the student’s third birthday.

There is a comprehensive process for transitioning to kindergarten. Principal to principal contact commences in March. Parents visit schools and conferences are held. Transitions begin in April with the city’s daycare partners. Parent information nights are scheduled. The preschool teams administer the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for Preschool and use this data as baseline for the proposed IEP. IEPs are typically written in June with team members from receiving schools participating.

Behavior Strategies and Discipline

<u>Ed. 1109.02 Program</u>	<u>CFR 300.324</u>
<u>Ed. 1119.11 Disciplinary Procedures</u>	<u>CFR 300.530-300.536</u>
<u>Ed. 1133.07 (a) (b) (c) (d) (e)</u>	<u>CFR 300.530-300.536</u>
<u>20 U.S.C. 1415 (K)</u>	
<u>Child Management – Private Schools</u>	<u>RSA 169-C Child Protection Act</u>

The SDELP utilizes a variety of behavioral interventions, strategies and supports in the various preschool settings. The preschool has the services of an ABA specialist and a school psychologist on a weekly basis. Functional Behavioral Assessments are utilized to identify behaviors and to assist teams in developing plans. Visual support systems are implemented for children on the autism spectrum and with other students as appropriate. Parents receive training to help with the identified behaviors in the home and schedules and visuals supports are provided to ensure carryover. The teams use data to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and to assist with the modification of programs. Staff receive training on early release days and have formed Professional Learning Communities.

Assessment

<u>Ed. 1109.02 Program</u>	<u>CFR 300.324</u>
<u>Ed. 1119.11 Disciplinary Procedures</u>	<u>CFR 300.530-300.536</u>
<u>Ed. 1133.07 (a) (b) (c) (d) (e)</u>	<u>CFR 300.530-300.536</u>
<u>20 U.S.C. 1415 (K)</u>	
<u>Child Management – Private Schools</u>	<u>RSA 169-C Child Protection Act</u>

Assessment is viewed as an integral part of instruction at the SDELP and is used to inform instruction, evaluate progress and determine program effectiveness. The district selected The Creative Curriculum® Developmental Continuum Assessment for Ages 3-5 to meet the Preschool Special Education Outcomes requirement. The Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Preschool version and individual student portfolios are other tools used to collect additional data. The students’ portfolios may consist of anecdotes describing the child’s activities and observed behaviors in class related to developing positive social relationships, acquiring and using knowledge and skills and taking appropriate actions to meet their needs. Work samples, photographs, video clips and inventories provide evidence of progress. Time is a factor in data collection but the team members believe data are used in productive ways to improve student outcomes. Data are used to evaluate overall program effectiveness for continuous improvement.

The SDELP has an active and ongoing Child Find team and process. It is not unusual to process 500 referrals from a variety of sources. The teams conduct screenings utilizing the Brigance Inventory of Early Development or the Learning Accomplishment Profile and identify those students who may be eligible for

referral to special education services or who may qualify for services under Title I. There are 106 preschool slots for Response to Intervention through Title I services. English language proficiency is a consideration and the teams are able to conduct assessments in the student's native language.

Strengths and Suggestions for Preschool

The Selma Deitch Early Learning Program offers an impressive continuum of supports and services in both center-based and community-based programs. The staff are highly trained and are commended for their cohesive team approach and their commitment to young children and their families. Transitions are carefully planned both from Early Supports and Services and to Manchester's public kindergarten programs. The Child Find Evaluation Team is effective to identifying children in need of early education and tracking the many referrals that are processed. The administration and staff are committed to ensuring that every preschool child has the opportunity to participate in quality programs in order to build a strong early education foundation. There is a commitment to collaborate with families in a variety of ways. Classroom teachers and therapists work together to plan activities that develop and reinforce the goals outlined on each IEP, following a developmentally appropriate curriculum. The program is commended for its creative use of volunteers (grandparents, foster grandparents) and interns from local institutions of higher education.

The district may want to review and evaluate the current facilities that house the various preschool programs to determine the effectiveness of these learning environments (size, location, number of children and staff). The district is encouraged to review its current staffing patterns for administration, direct instruction and related service personnel and to develop a long-range plan to meet the needs of its growing preschool population.

K. Conclusions - IEP Compliance Review:

The IEP Review Process that was conducted in the Manchester School District from April 29 through May 2, 2008 was intended to assist staff and administration in the review of IEPs to determine the extent to which IEPs were in compliance, and to bring general and special educators together to identify factors that are impacting student achievement.

A total of 23 IEPs were reviewed, representing the range of grades, programs, and disabilities. The IEP Review teams at each school included general and special educators, related service members and administrators. The IEP Review Process included an in-depth analysis of the current IEP and a two year look back at previous IEPs to determine the students' progress over time.

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. Manchester School District educators are dedicated and skilled and open to professional development that will result in improved outcomes for students.

The following themes were identified by the IEP Review teams. A complete IEP Review Compliance Report is in process and will be disseminated when completed.

District Themes:

- ✓ **Communication across the district**
 - There is a need for a consistent and reliable system of communication within the district so that information regarding ongoing changes in federal, state and local policies and procedures are regularly updated, reviewed and understood by all staff.
 - There is a need to systematize models of communication that are both horizontal and vertical so curriculum, instruction, assessment and other knowledge and information is shared district wide among grade levels, departments, specialists, administrators, itinerant staff, etc. This will support consistency in educational practices from school to school as well as smooth transitions for students.
 - Sharing ideas will expand information, build capacity and support professional learning communities.
 - The significant transiency among students within the district requires consistency in key areas (e.g. procedures, common language)
 - Communication models for parent and student information should also be consistent throughout the school district

- ✓ **Measurable IEP Goals**
 - Writing clearly measurable IEP goals will ensure a method for measuring student progress and/or identifying a need to change strategies or interventions if a student is not making progress
 - Professional development for all staff in the development of clearly measurable IEP Goals should be ongoing and embedded
 - Align IEP goals to the general education classroom whenever possible
 - Align IEP goal assessment measures to assessment already taking place in the classroom whenever possible
 - Development of relevant academic and functional goals that are targeted and few in number will serve as indicators of student gains

- ✓ **Measuring Progress**
 - There is a need to measure student progress on all IEP goals in a clearly measurable way that is understandable and evident to the student, parent and other educators.

- ✓ **Collaboration among general and special educators**
 - Providing time for general and special educators to meet and collaborate is a need at all levels within the district
 - School schedules are a challenge and will need to be considered when providing time for collaboration

- ✓ **Consistency district wide**
 - Build processes for sharing effective practices district wide to build capacity and spread knowledge and information
 - Response to Intervention (RtI) models are at varying stages throughout the district. There is an excellent opportunity for school to school sharing in the design and implementation stages of intervention models.

- ✓ **Eligibility**
 - Review the processes for identifying students with educational disabilities that are currently utilized within the district to ensure consistency in criteria and determination factors.
- ✓ **Modifications and Accommodations**
 - Clarify the distinction between the two and provide professional development to all staff in providing and evaluating modifications and accommodations in the development of IEPs and in the area of state, district and classroom assessments.
- ✓ **Transiency**
 - The high rate of student transiency within the school district requires a consistency in curriculum, instruction and assessment models as well as an accessible (e.g. electronic) record keeping system to ensure that all students who are moving within the school district, often multiple times throughout their school career, are provided the same equal educational opportunity from school to school.
- ✓ **Student involvement in goal setting**
 - Include students in their own goal setting and in measuring their progress toward their goals to increase their engagement in their own learning.
- ✓ **Parent and community involvement**
 - Consider how to increase the involvement, participation and support of parents and community members in the school district so that a common goal of improved student achievement is acknowledged and shared by all.



Section II

THE IMPROVEMENT/ACTION PLAN

This section of the report will supplement the DINI Plan, if applicable, and will answer the essential question. What conclusions did the Achievement Team make as a result of the inquiry and analysis process? Which of the conclusions were determined to be priorities, and what goals were developed as a result of the conclusions? The action plan will include the names, titles, and positions of team members, and the constituency each member represents; the process and timeline the team has established for monitoring implementation and effectiveness of the proposed activities; and the process and timeline established for communicating the plan's goals and strategies for improvement with parents and the community so as to inform and encourage community members to participate in district improvement efforts. If any citations are identified as a result of the compliance review, these citations should be addressed in the improvement plan.

I. IEP Improvement

As a follow up to the Focused Monitoring Process this year, it has been determined that professional development with regard to writing measurable goals and objectives is required. The District is able to secure an individual who can provide the necessary training to staff via a "Train the Trainer" model. This individual proposes a half -day overview followed up by 3-4 full day training sessions.

Implementing the training process:

July 25, 2008 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Overview of the training to include the Central Office Special Education Administration and Technical Assistants from SERESC/NHDOE.

Building Level Principal

1 Special Education BLIC from each middle and high school

1 Special Education representative from MST

1 Special Education Representative from each elementary school (includes pre K)

1 Regular Educator from the Data Team at each school

November, December, January

Three to four day long trainings over these three months, with the following individuals participating:

1 Special Education BLIC from each middle and high school

1 Special Education representative from each elementary school (includes pre K)

1 Special Education representative from MST

1 Regular Educator from the Data Team at each school

II. Professional Development

- Elementary: Everyday math
- Middle School: Curriculum Mapping, alignment with GLEs
- High School: Develop and implement core competencies
- District-Wide: Professional Learning Community Training
Classroom Management Strategie

III. Narrow the Achievement Gap

- Expand building level capacity through continued work with the middle and high school PLC Data Teams.
- Support the implementation of SINI Action Plans in the middle and high schools
- Reinforce the development of improved IEPs, specifically in the area of Measurable IEP goals
- Support the alignment of improvement efforts district wide by linking the elementary middle and high school initiatives to ensure consistency in curriculum, instruction and assessment leading to improved student achievement

Individual school improvement plans are available upon request.

Section III

COMPLETION OF THE FOCUSED MONITORING PROCESS

The Focused Monitoring Process is intended to further the district's defined strategies for 'continuous improvement' in meeting the academic and developmental needs of all students. As such, the completed Action Plan will include short and long-range objectives intended to supplement current district strategic planning goals and initiatives. To support the sustainability of the Focused Monitoring Action Plan, the NHDOE consultants will provide limited support and guidance to the district surrounding the implementation of the recommended strategies and objectives established in this process.

Grant application for the \$10,000 funding of follow-up activities should reflect the intentions of the district to advance the priorities and related strategies presented in the culminating Action Plan.

INITIAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Building Level –

The 2007-2008 Year I Focused Monitoring Process work with the building level Data Teams resulted in the establishment of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) in each school. These PLC Data Teams used a facilitated process and common tools, such as the Data Driven Dialogue to analyze student assessment data, attendance, grades, surveys and other relevant student outcome information. Each Data Team conducted a Root Cause Analysis (RCA) for their school and determined priority areas of improvement. They agreed to establish a common goal of 10% improvement in both Reading and Mathematics district wide on the NECAP assessment annually through 2010, to ensure Adequate Yearly Progress. The PLC Data Teams are highly professional, hard working, engaged and committed to improvement.

Building level activities during 2008-2009 Year 2 of the Focused Monitoring process will include:

- The design and implementation of consistent curriculum, instruction and assessments for all of the district's students
- Ongoing and embedded professional development for all educators (e.g. IEP development, Professional Learning Communities, curriculum based measures, partnership with parents, students and families)
- Increased engagement of parents, students and families to ensure improved student learning
- Other areas as specified by School Improvement Plans

District Wide –

The larger district themes that were identified through the Focused Monitoring Process (see pp. 15-17 of this report) were seen as significant and urgent and include the following recommendations:

- District Leadership and Organization – Conduct an outside review of the district's infrastructure to identify system needs for long range improvement and to maximize existing human resources.

- District Improvement Plans – Create a strategy to coordinate the improvement plans and activities to ensure improved student achievement results through district wide consistency in all practices, specifically the delivery of curriculum, instruction and assessment.
- District Communication and Consistency – Develop an authentic and interpersonal communication process that serves to ensure understanding and build collective ownership in the system among staff, parents, students and community members.
- District Governance – The BOSC and district administration should recognize the opportunity for system change to reorganize, reenergize and redesign the district. In doing so there is a need to define the role of the BOSC and the district administration so that the Board’s work is directed primarily at policy development and the district administration’s role is focused on policy implementation and district management.

As of June 6, 2008 the Manchester School District advances to year four as a DINI, in both Reading and Math, based on the results of the 2007 NECAP assessments, and will remain in Corrective Action. In addition, twenty of the Manchester schools did not make AYP and are identified as SINIs. One of the district’s eight Schoolwide Title I elementary schools has not made AYP for year four in Reading and year 3 in Math, which places them in a Restructuring phase.

Year II of Focused Monitoring

The Focused Monitoring Process Technical Assistants will continue to work with the PLC Data Teams at the middle and high school levels through 2008-2009. Goals for the upcoming school year will be to:

- Expand building level capacity through continued work with the middle and high school PLC Data Teams.
- Support the implementation of SINI Action Plans in the middle and high schools
- Reinforce the development of improved IEPs, specifically in the area of Measurable IEP goals
- Support the alignment of improvement efforts district wide by linking the elementary middle and high school initiatives to ensure consistency in curriculum, instruction and assessment leading to improved student achievement.