

**NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION
PROGRAM APPROVAL VISITATION
CASE STUDY COMPLIANCE REVIEW**

**SAU 52
SUMMARY REPORT**

PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Robert Lister, Superintendent of Schools
Paulette Hoeflich, Director of Special Education**

Chairperson, Visiting Team: Maryclare Heffernan
Education Consultant, SERESC

Visit Conducted on April 17 & 18, 2007
Report Date, June 15, 2007
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I. TEAM MEMBERS

Visiting Team Members:

NAME	PROFESSIONAL ROLE
Chairperson: Maryclare Heffernan	Education Consultant
Nancy D'Agostino	Education Consultant
Mary Lane	NHDOE Bureau of Special Education Consultant
Beth Rincon	Special Education Coordinator
Forrest Dampier	Teacher/Consultant for ASD Students
Karen Davis	Consultant for ASD Students
Lisa Retelle	Intensive Needs Teacher

Building Level Team Members:

NAME	PROFESSIONAL ROLE
Beth Setear	Preschool / Elementary Special Education Teacher
Betsy Humphreys	Special Educator
Marla Hikey	Speech-Language Pathologist
Lynn DiElsi	Occupational Therapist
Lisa Chapman	Outreach Therapist
Linda Carter	Paraprofessional
Jill LeMay	Principal
Helene Rafferty	Classroom Teacher
Janice Fortunato	Special Educator
Maria Seraphim	Speech-Language Pathologist
John Stokel	Principal
Donna Blessing	Special Education Coordinator
Jeff Martel	Case Manager
Ben Utter	Counselor / Guidance / Psychology
Deb Dyer	Paraprofessional
Ruth Larkin	Math
Laurie Murphy	Speech-Language Pathologist
Jeff Collins	Principal
Kathleen Metterville	Assistant Principal
Shawn Donovan	Assistant Principal
B J Fyles	Special Education Administrator
Laurie Melanson	Special Education Administrator
Amy McKinniss	Case Coordinator
Jamie Garneau	Guidance
Erika Nelson	Biology Teacher
Kathy Stroup	Speech-Language Pathologist
Paulette Hoeflich	Student Services Director

II. INTRODUCTION

SAU 52 is comprised of the Portsmouth School Districts and located on the New Hampshire seacoast with easy access to major highways leading to neighboring states and major points of interest on the northeast seacoast. The city of Portsmouth, with a population of approximately 21,000, has experienced a shift in demographics in recent years as a result of new development and growth in business and residential construction. The Portsmouth area has attracted a changing population of families who are seeking second homes or retirement in a location that offers a wide range of cultural and outdoor activities. Many of the newer residents represent retirees and older families who may not have students in the school system.

The present school enrollment for students ages 6 to 21 is 2,636 with an additional preschool population of 41 students. The district provides special education services to approximately 380 students in preschool through grade 12, representing 13% of the student population. The district has three elementary schools, a middle school and a high school. Preschool programming is provided for students with disabilities in the Community Campus, a community center that houses local social service agencies. Students from neighboring SAU 50 (Rye, Greenland, Newington, and New Castle) attend Portsmouth High School and represent one-third of the high school population.

The district's changing and varied socioeconomic profile is reflected in the numbers of students' eligible for free and reduced lunch (32.7% at New Franklin and 20.5% at Dondero). At the time of the NHDOE Program Approval visit, the New Franklin Elementary School had been designated as a Title I school-wide school for several years. Mary C. Dondero Elementary and Little Harbour Elementary are Targeted Title I schools.

The Portsmouth School District, recently identified as a District In Need of Improvement (DINI), has developed an Improvement Plan to address the root causes for students' not scoring proficient in the NH State Assessment program, as measured by the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP). The DINI designation is, in part, a result of the NECAP results for students with educational disabilities. The district's plan to focus their work to improve outcomes for all students, including students with disabilities, is important and timely work to be done. Their plan is in part to implement a comprehensive data warehouse system to allow staff to access current assessment data so that application of that information can be utilized in instructional planning. In doing so the plan states they will further the district's commitment to provide a personalized education that will enhance the district's "follow the child" philosophy.

The district has recently completed a major renovation and expansion to the Portsmouth High School, however the district will need to address ongoing facility improvement needs, most specifically at the aging Portsmouth Middle School.

Mission

"The purpose of the Portsmouth schools is to educate all students by challenging them to become thinking, responsible, contributing citizens who continue to learn throughout their lives."

Special Education Vision Statement

We, the Portsmouth Student Services Team, are committed to providing student services in a model in which all students' individual educational needs are addressed and supported in all aspects of their education, by the educators, working collaboratively.

DISTRICT ENROLLMENT DATA	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Total Student Enrollment (ages 6-21) (as of Oct 1)	2599	2529	2636
Cumulative Drop-Out % (grades 9-12) students with disabilities	2.7%	1.9	
Cumulative Drop-Out % (grades 9-12) non-disabled students	Included in above	Included in above	
Free/Reduced Lunch %	20%	20%	21%
Title I %	14%	13%	13%
LEP %	2%	2%	2%

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM DATA	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
# of Identified Students Ages 3-5 (as of Oct. 1)	44	43	41
# of Identified Students Ages 6-21 (as of Oct. 1)	348	355	329
% Identified Ages 6-21 (as of Oct. 1)	14%	14%	13%
# Out of District	22	22	19
% Out of District	1%	1%	1%
# of Students Out of Compliance (as of Oct. 1)			0
Special Programs Total Expenditure	8,624,159	8,531,960	
Average Caseload (as of Oct. 1)	17	16.5	16.5
# Identified Students Suspended One Or More Times		68	
# of students with disabilities who are being provided home instruction (as of Dec.1)		0	1
# of students with disabilities who have been placed on a "shortened school day" (as of Dec. 1)		2	2
Special Education Staffing: (report in FTEs)	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
# of Special Educators			38
# of Related Service Providers			11
# of Paraprofessionals			71

III. PURPOSE AND DESIGN OF THE CASE STUDY COMPLIANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) conducted a Special Education Program Approval Visit to SAU 52 on April 17 & 18, 2007 for the purpose of reviewing the present status of programs and services made available to children and youth with educational disabilities. As part of the NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit, Case Study Compliance Reviews were conducted at selected schools in SAU 52. This program approval visit was specifically designed as part of the district's NHDOE Bureau of Special Education's Year Long Improvement Process that was designed to study and gain insight into the present programming and services offered to student on the Autism Spectrum Disorder continuum. The Year Long Team has completed a number of activities to research this topic, including identifying best practices, conducting a survey of all district staff and administrators, and completing a map of the district's programs and services. A visiting team of professional educators with specific skill in the area of ASD programming was requested for this NHDOE Program Approval visit.

The schools visited during the IEP review include:

- Portsmouth Preschool Program at the Community Campus
- Dondero Elementary School
- Portsmouth Middle School
- Portsmouth High School.

The New Hampshire Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education conducts program approval visits using an IEP Review Model that is a focused review. This focused review permits the NHDOE to leverage its impact for change and improvement within school districts statewide, by focusing the attention of all educators on the following three areas of critical importance in the provision of FAPE for students with disabilities.

- Access to the General Curriculum
- Transition
- Behavior Strategies and Discipline

Activities related to this NHDOE Program Approval and IEP Compliance Review Visit included the review of:

- ♦ All application materials submitted

- ♦ Status of corrective actions since the last NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit
- ♦ Personnel credentials for special education staff (verified by NHDOE)
- ♦ Program descriptions and SPEDIS verification reports
- ♦ All data collected during the visit

Evidence of the work conducted in-district and results related to student outcomes was gathered throughout the process, guided by the materials and templates provided by the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education. Examples of evidence included student individual education plans (IEPs), progress reports, samples of student work, grades, extracurricular involvement, permanent records, curriculum, etc. Input was gathered from key constituents, including interviews with professional staff, parents, administrators, and in some cases the students. In addition, classroom observations were conducted for each of the case studies being reviewed. The collective data were summarized by the visiting and building level teams. The summaries, included in the report that follows, outline identified areas of strength and areas needing improvement for each school reviewed.

Throughout the entire review process, the visiting team worked in collaboration with the staff of SAU 52. Their professionalism, active involvement in the process and cooperation were greatly appreciated and well recognized.

IV. STATUS OF PREVIOUS NHDOE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL REPORT AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Based on review of the March 12 and 13, 2002 NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Report, no areas of non-compliance were identified for the Portsmouth School District at that time

V. APRIL 17 & 18, 2007 CASE STUDY COMPLIANCE REVIEW RESULTS

Data collection is an important part of the NHDOE Special Education Case Study Compliance Review Process. In SAU 52, the NHDOE worked with staff and administration in the random selection of IEP's to ensure that there was a representative sampling of data collected from the various programs and schools located within the school district. The Portsmouth School District team members reviewed IEPs specific to the ASD study so that the information identified would be particularly relevant to the NHDOE Year Long Improvement Process.

In order to monitor whether or not special education programs are in compliance in the three focus areas, and determine any root causes of problems that may be identified through the IEP Review process, it is essential that each IEP review team dig deeply into the data and collaboratively identify areas that are effective and areas in need of improvement. This process takes time, and the team working with the IEP reviewed must be involved in collecting and analyzing the information, as well as presenting and summarizing the data with the visiting team. As such, the NHDOE works with educational communities to determine the number and types of IEP case studies to be prepared and presented, to ensure that building teams are not inundated with much more data than they can possibly analyze, allowing them to reflect upon and generalize their newly found knowledge of their programs, practices, policies and procedures.

The Portsmouth School District conducted an IEP Review Process that included a random selection of students on the ASD continuum. The review process included a total of 4 student IEPs, representing the key transition points of preschool, elementary, middle and high school. Students in the Portsmouth School District are offered inclusion in the general education setting whenever possible. The specific programs offered within the district include programming for students with emotional disabilities, with opportunities for separate instruction if needed as well as counseling support. However, the majority of instruction for all students occurs within the general education setting.

The district also includes the PASS Program, an alternative high school program designed for students who have been unsuccessful in the general education classroom setting. There are presently no students with ASD attending the PASS Program.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

One of the defining features of effective schools is strong parent/community relations and open communication. Having parents as an active stakeholder in the NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Process ensures broader perspectives and brings forth new ideas. In addition, including the parent perspective enhances and strengthens the teams' case study presentations, and makes for stronger school/parent relationships. As such, parent participation and input is a required part of the NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Process. In order to ensure parent participation and feedback, the NHDOE Bureau of Special Education involves parents in a variety of aspects of the Special Education Program Approval Process. First, parents are encouraged to be active participants in the case study presentations; second, parents of the children presented in the case study process are formally interviewed; and third, the SAU/school is required to send all parents of students with disabilities a written survey with a request to respond. Below is a summary of the results of the parent survey, along with a summary of the comments/feedback provided to the visiting team during the April 17 & 18, 2007 Case Study Compliance Review in SAU 52.

A total of 456 surveys were sent to all parents of students with disabilities attending the Portsmouth School District programs. Of that 133, or 29%, were completed and returned. While parents indicate general satisfaction with the Portsmouth School District there are both areas of strength and challenge noted. The district is encouraged to consider the survey results and continue to work with parents to respond to the areas identified as partially or not at all satisfied.

From the parents responding, the areas ranking highest in complete satisfaction include:

- 97.7% are completely agree that they have been provided with a copy of procedural safeguards at least once a year.
- 91.7% are completely satisfied that they fully participate in special education decisions regarding their child.
- 89.4% agree completely that their child has opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers on a regular basis.
- 88.7% agree completely that a variety of information was used in developing their child's IEP.

Parents responding also identified several areas of potential concern that include:

- 54% agree that their child is informed about and encouraged to participate in school activities outside of the school day, and is offered necessary supports.
- 58.6% of parents are completely satisfied with the progress their child is making toward their IEP goals.
- 62.4% of parents completely agree that they are satisfied with the planning and support provided for the moves their child has made from grade to grade and school to school.
- 64.6% of parents agree that they are completely informed about their child's progress.

SUMMARY OF PARENT SURVEY DATA - PRESCHOOL

Total number of surveys sent: 25	Total # of completed surveys received: 9	Percent of response: 36%
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Scale 3 = Completely 2 = Partially 1 = Not at all

ACCESS TO THE GENERAL CURRICULUM:	3	2	1	No Answer
I am satisfied with my child's program and the supports that he/she receives.	7	1		1
My child has opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers on a regular basis.	8			1
I am adequately informed about my child's progress.	7		1	1
My child is informed about and encouraged to participate in school activities outside of the school day, and is offered necessary supports.	3	3		3
My child feels safe and secure in school and welcomed by staff and students.	8	1		
A variety of information (observations, test scores, school work, parent input) was used in developing my child's IEP.	9			
I am satisfied with the progress my child is making toward his/her IEP goals.	6	1	1	1

TRANSITION:				
I am satisfied with the planning and support provided for the moves my child has made from grade to grade and school to school.	2	1		6
All of the people who are important to my child's transition were part of the planning.	4			5
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE:				
My child's classroom behaviors affect his/her ability to learn. <i>If yes, please answer the next two questions. If no, skip to OTHER.</i>	YES 1			NO 3
I have been involved in the development of behavior interventions, strategies and supports for my child.	5			4
I am satisfied with the way the school is supporting my child's behavioral, social and developmental needs.	4		1	4
OTHER:				
I fully participate in special education decisions regarding my child.	8	1		
I have been provided with a copy of the procedural safeguards (parental rights) at least once a year.	9			

SUMMARY OF PARENT SURVEY DATA - ELEMENTARY

Total number of surveys sent: 130	Total # of completed surveys received: 36	Percent of response: 27.7%
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Scale 3 = Completely 2 = Partially 1 = Not at all

ACCESS TO THE GENERAL CURRICULUM:	3	2	1	No Answer
I am satisfied with my child's program and the supports that he/she receives.	24	11	1	
My child has opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers on a regular basis.	35	1		
I am adequately informed about my child's progress.	24	8	3	1
My child is informed about and encouraged to participate in school activities outside of the school day, and is offered necessary supports.	18	16	1	1
My child feels safe and secure in school and welcomed by staff and students.	31	5		
A variety of information (observations, test scores, school work, parent input) was used in developing my child's IEP.	31	5		
I am satisfied with the progress my child is making toward his/her IEP goals.	23	11	2	
TRANSITION:				
I am satisfied with the planning and support provided for the moves my child has made from grade to grade and school to school.	2	1		6
All of the people who are important to my child's transition were part of the planning.	4			5
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE:				
My child's classroom behaviors affect his/her ability to learn. <i>If yes, please answer the next two questions. If no, skip to OTHER.</i>	YES 20			NO 12
I have been involved in the development of behavior interventions, strategies and supports for my child.	21	3		12
I am satisfied with the way the school is supporting my child's behavioral, social and developmental needs.	16	8		12
OTHER:				
I fully participate in special education decisions regarding my child.	34	2		
I have been provided with a copy of the procedural safeguards (parental rights) at least once a year.	36			

SUMMARY OF PARENT SURVEY DATA – MIDDLE SCHOOL

Total number of surveys sent: 97	Total # of completed surveys received: 23	Percent of response: 23.7%
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Scale **3** = Completely **2** = Partially **1** = Not at all

ACCESS TO THE GENERAL CURRICULUM:	3	2	1	No Answer
I am satisfied with my child’s program and the supports that he/she receives.	17	4	1	1
My child has opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers on a regular basis.	21		1	1
I am adequately informed about my child’s progress.	17	6		
My child is informed about and encouraged to participate in school activities outside of the school day, and is offered necessary supports.	14	5	2	2
My child feels safe and secure in school and welcomed by staff and students.	18	5		
A variety of information (observations, test scores, school work, parent input) was used in developing my child’s IEP.	22	1		
I am satisfied with the progress my child is making toward his/her IEP goals.	19	3	1	
TRANSITION:				
I am satisfied with the planning and support provided for the moves my child has made from grade to grade and school to school.	19	1	1	2
All of the people who are important to my child’s transition were part of the planning.	16	2	2	3
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE:				
My child’s classroom behaviors affect his/her ability to learn. <i>If yes, please answer the next two questions. If no, skip to OTHER.</i>		YES 12		NO 9
I have been involved in the development of behavior interventions, strategies and supports for my child.	15	1		7
I am satisfied with the way the school is supporting my child’s behavioral, social and developmental needs.	12	3		8
OTHER:				
I fully participate in special education decisions regarding my child.	20	2		1
I have been provided with a copy of the procedural safeguards (parental rights) at least once a year.	22			1

SUMMARY OF PARENT SURVEY DATA – HIGH SCHOOL / PASS

Total number of surveys sent: 204	Total # of completed surveys received: 61	Percent of response: 29.9%
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Scale **3** = Completely **2** = Partially **1** = Not at all

ACCESS TO THE GENERAL CURRICULUM:	3	2	1	No Answer
I am satisfied with my child’s program and the supports that he/she receives.	35	21	4	1
My child has opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers on a regular basis.	52	6	2	1
I am adequately informed about my child’s progress.	36	19	3	3
My child is informed about and encouraged to participate in school activities outside of the school day, and is offered necessary supports.	35	17	8	1
My child feels safe and secure in school and welcomed by staff and students.	43	11	4	3
A variety of information (observations, test scores, school work, parent input) was used in developing my child’s IEP.	52	7	1	1
I am satisfied with the progress my child is making toward his/her IEP goals.	30	27	3	1

FOR PARENTS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS: My child earns credits toward a regular high school diploma in all of his/her classes.	52	3	2	4
TRANSITION:				
I am satisfied with the planning and support provided for the moves my child has made from grade to grade and school to school.	40	16	3	2
All of the people who are important to my child's transition were part of the planning.	45	10	1	5
FOR PARENTS OF STUDENTS AGE 16 OR OLDER: I am satisfied with the written secondary transition plan that is in my child's IEP.	23	8	3	27
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE:				
My child's classroom behaviors affect his/her ability to learn. <i>If yes, please answer the next two questions. If no, skip to OTHER.</i>	YES 26			NO 27
I have been involved in the development of behavior interventions, strategies and supports for my child.	28	8	1	24
I am satisfied with the way the school is supporting my child's behavioral, social and developmental needs.	21	13	3	24
OTHER:				
I fully participate in special education decisions regarding my child.	56	4		1
I have been provided with a copy of the procedural safeguards (parental rights) at least once a year.	59	1		1

SUMMARY OF PARENT SURVEY DATA – GRADE LEVEL NOT IDENTIFIED

Total number of surveys sent:	Total # of completed surveys received: 4	Percent of response:
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Scale 3 = Completely 2 = Partially 1 = Not at all

ACCESS TO THE GENERAL CURRICULUM:	3	2	1	No Answer
I am satisfied with my child's program and the supports that he/she receives.	1	3		
My child has opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers on a regular basis.	3	1		
I am adequately informed about my child's progress.	2	2		
My child is informed about and encouraged to participate in school activities outside of the school day, and is offered necessary supports.	3	1		
My child feels safe and secure in school and welcomed by staff and students.	3	1		
A variety of information (observations, test scores, school work, parent input) was used in developing my child's IEP.		2	2	
I am satisfied with the progress my child is making toward his/her IEP goals.		2	2	
TRANSITION:				
I am satisfied with the planning and support provided for the moves my child has made from grade to grade and school to school.	2	2		
All of the people who are important to my child's transition were part of the planning.	2	2		
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE:				
My child's classroom behaviors affect his/her ability to learn. <i>If yes, please answer the next two questions. If no, skip to OTHER.</i>	YES 1			NO 3
I have been involved in the development of behavior interventions, strategies and supports for my child.	1			3
I am satisfied with the way the school is supporting my child's behavioral, social and developmental needs.	1			3
OTHER:				
I fully participate in special education decisions regarding my child.	4			
I have been provided with a copy of the procedural safeguards (parental rights) at least once a year.	4			

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE THREE FOCUS AREAS OF THE CASE STUDY COMPLIANCE REVIEW

Access To The General Curriculum

Implementation of IEPs

Provision of Non-Academic Services

Full Access to the District's Curriculum

Equal Education Opportunity

The Portsmouth School District is committed to providing all students with access to the general curriculum. The present program models are described as predominantly inclusionary with supports provided at the building level for students with specific educational needs. The district has a well established model for supporting students with emotional disabilities via the Kids Program at the Middle School and the Options Program at the High School.

A specific focus of this 2007 program approval visit was in the review of the effectiveness of programming support for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder who participate in the general education settings within the district. This review identified a need for district wide consistency in programming and supports for students as they move through the school district from grade to grade and school to school, providing professional development to all staff, identifying a district wide team of "experts" who could provide support to individual schools, expanded use of measurable goal setting and increased use of data collection to measure student progress.

Transition

Transition Planning

Process: Provision of FAPE

Transition Services

While the transition planning for students moving from grade to grade and school to school is done in a thoughtful and comprehensive manner the parent survey responses indicate a need for greater parent involvement in planning and support as students move from grade to grade and school to school.

In addition, there is a need to increase the development of comprehensive transition plans required for students beginning at age 16, or sooner if determined by the IEP team. These transition plans need to include all required components of the transition plan, but specifically measurable post-secondary goals and a plan that includes a coordinated set of transition activities.

For a number of years the Portsmouth School District has been a leader in providing community based and specific transition programming and supports for students with significant disabilities who are completing IEP goals and preparing to transition from high school to post school settings.

In addition the district has recently expanded the transition opportunities to students in the alternative PASS Program. PASS students are supported in attending classes at the Stratham Technical School to experience college courses and in some cases, gain college credit prior to high school graduation. This unique program is commended for its foresight in meeting the needs of students with emotional disabilities as they prepare for post secondary settings.

Behavior Strategies and Discipline

The Portsmouth School District works hard to provide a safe and orderly learning environment for all students in the district. Specific services for students who may require counseling and individualized supports are in place and provided as necessary. The students reviewed as part of the IEP Review Process were found to be provided with individualized supports in the area of behavior related to their specific social/emotional and behavioral needs. In addition, the schools visited were found to offer safe, secure settings for the Portsmouth School District students.

COMMENDATIONS

The Portsmouth School District is commended for their commitment to providing quality services for all students district wide. They are a district committed to reviewing present practices and student outcomes to identify areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. The following commendations reflect district wide practices. Specific strengths are listed in the building level summaries below.

1. The District is commended for participation in a year long study of students with ASD to determine what program models are presently working and which program improvements are needed district wide. The ASD team is commended for their commitment to the study as well as for their concern that the district continue to identify and implement best practices district wide.
2. The Portsmouth School District has a professional and committed staff of paraprofessionals, teachers and administrators who take pride in the work they are doing on behalf of their students.
3. The Portsmouth School District is in the process of designing a data management system that will allow for the collection and analysis of data to better measure progress, identify areas of need and to inform decision making. The data system will incorporate special education data with other district data.
4. The parents interviewed during the Program Approval Process indicated satisfaction and strong support for the programming and services that their students have received while in the Portsmouth School District.
5. The District is commended for the continued support of the FRIENDS Project that provides meaningful integrated social opportunities for students with moderate and significant disabilities.
6. The PASS Program is commended for their model program that, among other things, supports students in attending the Stratham Technical College where they become familiar with the college setting and are able to earn college credit at the same time.

ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE

Issues of significance are defined as systemic deficiencies that impact the effective delivery of services to all students, including those with educational disabilities. Examples of such may include system wide issues related to curriculum, instruction and assessment. Other examples might be concerns related to inadequate facilities, ineffective communication systems within the educational community, leadership, shared mission, vision and goals, deficiencies in policies and procedures, staff recruitment and retention, professional development or other important factors related to the learning organization.

The Portsmouth Middle School facility is in need of significant improvements. The aging building is not easily accessible for individuals with mobility challenges, has badly worn stair treads that slope and may interfere with the movement of middle school students and staff from one floor to the next, no bathroom facilities or sinks on the upper floors, and seemingly poor air ventilation and air quality, to name some of the concerns identified by the visiting team. The area designated for special education offices and services should be reviewed to determine the adequacy of the space for students who may require individual attention and need a confidential space to meet with a counselor or take a time out.

The Portsmouth School District is strongly encouraged to continue to develop plans for an accessible and well designed middle school building that provides a healthy and safe learning environment for all students, including students with disabilities.

CITATIONS OF NONCOMPLIANCE IDENTIFIED AS A RESULT OF THE APRIL 17-18, 2007 CASE STUDY COMPLIANCE REVIEW

Citations of noncompliance are defined as deficiencies that have been identified through the Case Study Compliance Review Process, which are in violation of state and federal special education rules and regulations. Citations of non-compliance may result from review of policies and procedures and related application materials, case study presentations, review of student records or any other program approval activity related to the visit. **It is important to note that all citations of non-compliance that are included in this section of the report will need to be addressed in a corrective action plan.**

As a result of the Case Study Compliance Review, the following citations of non-compliance were identified. Each citation listed below must be addressed in a corrective action plan and resolved within one year of this report. A template and instructions for such planning will be provided

ED 1109.01 - Elements of the IEP

The IEPs reviewed lacked measurable annual goals.

ED 1102.28 - IEP Team

There was no documentation in the out-of-district file review that the student has been invited to the IEP meeting.

ED 1107.01 - Evaluation and Determination of Educational Disabilities

In one out-of-district file an evaluation did not include all required documentation (e.g. evaluation summary, list of who participated in the meeting/evaluation decision and the area(s) of identification, parental consent for an evaluation and a parent-signed extension waiving an evaluation completed within 45 days).

ED 1107.06 – Evaluation Requirements for Children with Specific Learning Disabilities

The record reviewed of a student with Specific Learning Disability did not include evidence in the reevaluation that an observation had been conducted or a written statement of the team's determination of the learning disability, including the 7 components.

ED 1109.01 - 34 CFR 300.320(b) and (c) - Transition

The IEPs reviewed did not include all of the required transition components as part of transition planning for students by age 16. Transition plans should include current level of performance and statement of needed transition services as a coordinated set of activities, among other components.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROGRAM-WIDE IMPROVEMENT

Suggestions for improvement, simply stated, are recommendations provided by the visiting team that are intended to strengthen and enhance programs, services, instruction and professional development, and the NHDOE strongly encourages that serious consideration be given to the suggestions. However, discretion may be used in this area; suggestions for improvement are not considered to be required corrective actions and you may determine which suggestions most warrant follow up and address those in your corrective action plan. **System wide suggestions for improvement are listed below. Suggestions for individual programs are included in the Building Level Case Study Data Summary Reports, pp.15-26.** It should be noted that, in the Building Level Data Summary Reports, any suggestion made by a visiting team member that is actually a citation of noncompliance, has an asterisk (*) before it, and it is also listed above with the citations of noncompliance.

1. The NHDOE Program Approval visit provided a focus on the Portsmouth School District's Year Long study of programs for students with ASD. The district staff and visiting team members reviewed the initial questions identified by the ASD team as part of the NHDOE visit. Some of the suggestions related to the ASD study questions include the following:
 - a. Consider the adoption of:

- i. A common district-wide model for providing interventions and supports to students with ASD
 - ii. A formal social skills curriculum to be utilized district-wide
 - b. Provide ongoing, district-wide professional development to all relevant staff district wide in the knowledge of specific disabilities, methodology for providing instruction, interventions and supports, curriculum (e.g. social skills, communication), progress monitoring and other areas identified by the year long process. Such an approach will support consistency district wide.
 - c. Consider the “teach the teacher” approach to build district wide capacity in the adoption of new ASD program models and methods as a way to support and implement new program models
 - d. Consider the organization of a district wide or building level ASD team(s) that would be available to other staff as needed. Utilize the resources already within the district.
2. Develop a plan for providing professional development to all relevant staff members in federal and state regulations as well as process and procedures for the implementation of special education programs. With the reauthorization of IDEA 2004, and the upcoming revision to the NH state rules, there is a particular need to plan for ongoing training in all areas.
 3. Continue to provide professional development and support to both general and special education staff in the collaborative development of IEP measurable goals and Curriculum Based Measures that are relevant to the students’ needs, connected to the general education curriculum and provide an approach to monitoring student progress.
 4. Improve the transition plan process for high school students to more fully describe all aspects of the students’ transition plans that include post school goals.
 5. The Portsmouth Middle School facility is in need of significant improvements. The aging building is not easily accessible, has badly worn stair treads that slope and may interfere with mobility, no bathroom facilities on the upper floors, and seemingly poor air ventilation and air quality, among other concerns. The Portsmouth School District is strongly encouraged to continue to develop plans for an accessible and well designed middle school building for all students, including students with disabilities.

VI. BUILDING LEVEL SUMMARY REPORTS

USING COMPLIANCE DATA FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
 MODIFIED PROGRAM APPROVAL VISIT
 PRESCHOOL IEP REVIEW DATA COLLECTION FORM
 NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
 SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

SAU: 52 | School: Community Preschool

Date: 4/18/07 | Name of Program: PEEP | Number of Cases Reviewed: 1

Collaborative Team Members:		
Name: Beth Setear	Building Level	or Visiting
Name: Betsy Humphreys	Building Level	or Visiting
Name: Marla Hikey	Building Level	or Visiting
Name: Lynn DiElsi	Building Level	or Visiting
Name: Nancy D'Agostino	Building Level	or Visiting
Name: Karen Davis	Building Level	or Visiting
Name: Mary Lane	Building Level	or Visiting
Name: Lisa Retelle	Building Level	or Visiting

Based on data collected from the Data Collection Forms, Interview Forms, Classroom Observations, etc. the following summary is intended to provide a “snapshot” of the quality of services and programs in the school/private facility in the areas of: **Access to the General Curriculum, Transition and Behavior Strategies and Discipline.**

ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE PRESCHOOL ACTIVITIES STATEMENTS					YES	NO	N/A
Is there a written general education curriculum in place for preschoolers?					1		
Does this student have access to appropriate preschool activities?					1		
Was the student's most recent LEA evaluation, including a written summary report and meeting, held within 45 days of parental permission to test? If not, was it due to: (check all that apply)					1		
Extension in Place	Lack of Qualified Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Psychologist <input type="checkbox"/> Educator <input type="checkbox"/> Related Services <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Evaluation Not Completed in Time	Summary Report Not Written in Time	Meeting Not Held in Time	Other		
					YES	NO	N/A
Did the IEP team meet to create the IEP within 30 calendar days of eligibility?					1		
Was an IEP fully developed and signed by the student's third birthday?					1		
Are this student's IEP goals written in measurable terms?						1	
TRANSITION STATEMENTS							
District staff participated in a transition planning conference arranged by ESS and this transition planning conference occurred at least 90 days before the student's third birthday. If not, was it due to: (check all that apply)					1		
Meeting Not Held In Time	Staff Didn't Understand The Process	Communication Breakdown Between School And Early Supports And Services Agency		Student Moved Into The District After This Time Period			
Student Not Referred Prior To 90 Days	Parent / School Communication Breakdown		Other				
					YES	NO	N/A
IEP team involved in transition includes parents.					1		
IEP team involved in transition includes appropriate agencies.					1		
Services agreed on in the IEP began by the time specified in the IEP.					1		
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE STATEMENTS					YES	NO	N/A
Has this student ever been suspended from school?							1
If yes, for how many days?							
If appropriate, a functional behavior assessment has been conducted.							1
A behavior intervention plan has been written to address behaviors.							1

Strengths	Suggestions for Improvement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The district can be commended on the high number of peer models. The ratio of children with and without disabilities in the PEEP Program runs about 12:4. 2. The PEEP program is housed in a building designed specifically to meet the needs of the Multiple Agency occupants. The classrooms are large and filled with natural lighting. Head Start and a community preschool program are also house in the same facility. This provides a range of placement options for preschoolers and their families. 3. The location of the PEEP Program and the preschool team offices in the Community Campus building allows all programs servicing preschoolers easy access to therapists and the special educator. 4. The other occupants of the Community Campus included medical services and other supports for families. 5. The preschool team is experienced and show respect for each other. In addition they meet on a regular basis to collaborate on students. There is little turnover of staff. 6. Paraprofessionals are experienced and well trained. 7. The preschool staff works as a team and they are all on the same page. 8. Families can be offered flexible scheduling for their children due to the available of alternate space. 9. Home / school communication is strong. 10. The staff has a solid understanding of autism. 11. Visual supports are used with all students. 12. The district has a school attorney available to staff as needed. 13. There is a solid foundation at the preschool. 14. The preschool has a vision statement. 15. Transitions to kindergarten are good. The Preschool Coordinator is also the Elementary Coordinator and works with the three schools to ensure smooth transitions. Staff visits the children before the move. 16. Joint professional development is provided. 17. The preschool uses an integrated therapy model. 18. The playground is developmentally appropriate for preschoolers and, during days weather prevents outside time, the preschoolers have access to a large gym/motor room. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The team needs to look at ways of finding the time and space to directly teach specific skills needed, such as responding to others, answering questions immediately, individually or in very small groups. 2. The team is encouraged to look at the total enrollment as it relates to the number in each preschool classroom at a given time. 3. The team is encouraged to continue their efforts to do a better job of documenting progress of preschoolers. The addition of the Creative Curriculum Assessment tool will assist with this goal. 4. * IEP goals need to be written in measurable terms.

* This is a citation

USING COMPLIANCE DATA FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

BUILDING LEVEL CASE STUDY DATA SUMMARY

NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

SAU: 52	School: Dondero Elementary	Date: April 18, 2007
Programs: Modified Regular		Number of Cases Reviewed: 1
Recorder/Summarizer:		

Collaborative Team Members:

Name: Beth Setear	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Lisa Chapman	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Linda Carter	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Jill LeMay	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Helen Rafferty	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Janice Fortunato	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Maria Seraphim	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Nancy D'Agostino	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Karen Davis	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Mary Lane	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Lisa Retelle	Building Level	or	Visiting

Based on data collected from the Data Collection Forms, Interview Forms, Classroom Observations, etc. the following summary is intended to provide a “snapshot” of the quality of services and programs in the school/private facility in the areas of: **Access to the General Curriculum, Transition and Behavior Strategies and Discipline.**

ACCESS TO THE GENERAL CURRICULUM STATEMENTS					YES	NO	N/A	
IEP goals are written in measurable terms.						1		
Student <u>has access to</u> the general curriculum (as outlined by the district, sending district or NH frameworks.)					1			
Student <u>participates</u> appropriately in state, district and school-wide assessments.					1			
Student <u>has opportunities to</u> participate in general extracurricular and other non-academic activities with necessary supports.					1			
Was the student's most recent individual evaluation (initial or reevaluation), including a written summary report and meeting, held within 45 days of parental permission to test? If not, was it due to: (check all that apply)					1			
Extension in Place	Lack of Qualified Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Psychologist <input type="checkbox"/> Educator <input type="checkbox"/> Related Services <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Evaluation Not Completed in Time	Summary Report Not Written in Time	Meeting Not Held in Time	Other			
TRANSITION STATEMENTS						YES	NO	
Collaboration has occurred between general and special education staff in IEP development and in transition planning.						1		
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE STATEMENTS						YES	NO	N/A
Has this student ever been suspended from school?							1	
If yes, for how many days?								
If appropriate, a functional behavior assessment has been conducted.								1
IEP team has addressed behaviors that are impacting student learning.						1		
A behavior intervention plan has been written to address behaviors.								1

Strengths	Suggestions for Improvement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a willingness to accept and do the best for children. 2. The team works well together. 3. There is district support for bringing in consultants when needed. 4. The parent knowledge and support is tremendous for many of our families. 5. Staff is aware and flexible in knowing what might affect children. 6. Teams are aware of the language used in everyday conversations and how it supports children. 7. Some classrooms have an open circle game day to help children with social interactions. 8. The school has very qualified paraprofessional support. 9. An interdisciplinary approach to programming is used. 10. There is collaboration between speech and regular education and between elementary schools. 11. The Tufts Model for reading is used at the school. 12. There is an Outreach Team. 13. There is access to an attorney available for guidance. 14. The Elementary Coordinator works with preschool as well as the elementary schools. 15. There is strong collaboration between elementary principals. They share teachers, para-professionals and resources. 16. Elementary schools act and work as one. They have a common vision shared by all, "Children First". 17. The Dondero team clearly accepts all students and strives to make each one an active member of the community and school. 18. Families are valued team members. They play an active roll in planning their children's IEPs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The district is encouraged to continue to work on professional development. This should include intentional, planned, ongoing, embedded professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals. There needs to be long range planning. 2. The district is encouraged to continue the goal of looking at additional support and resources for families. 3. The SAU is encouraged to look at a district wide model for case management. Currently there are three case managers, each with highly specialized knowledge. There is a need to ensure all schools have access to trained case managers or other staff members with specialization in the areas of need. 4. A restructuring of the playground / recess to meet the needs of all children is encouraged. 5. Additional work / training on the importance of social play is needed for some students to be successful. 6. Community based support for parents of children with disabilities would be beneficial to many. This may be in the form of educational opportunities in areas such as autism and its implications. 7. Currently the teachers, specialists and administrators are acting as lunch monitors. This pulls some from direct services to children and may need to be reviewed. 8. Clerical support for special education staff should be considered. The additional paperwork pulls staff from work with children. 9. * IEP goals need to be written in measurable terms.

* This is a citation

USING COMPLIANCE DATA FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

BUILDING LEVEL CASE STUDY DATA SUMMARY

NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

SAU: 52	School: Portsmouth Middle School	Date: April 18, 2007
Programs: Modified Regular		Number of Cases Reviewed: 1
Recorder/Summarizer:		

Collaborative Team Members:

Name: John Stokel	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Donna Blessing	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Jeff Martel	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Ben Utter	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Deb Dyer	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Ruth Larkin	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Laurie Murphy	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Beth Rincon	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Forrest Dampier	Building Level	or	Visiting

Based on data collected from the Data Collection Forms, Interview Forms, Classroom Observations, etc. the following summary is intended to provide a “snapshot” of the quality of services and programs in the school/private facility in the areas of:

Access to the General Curriculum, Transition and Behavior Strategies and Discipline.

SUMMARY OF BUILDING LEVEL DATA

Filled in with the number of times a statement was marked from all Data Collection Forms:

ACCESS TO THE GENERAL CURRICULUM STATEMENTS					YES	NO	N/A
IEP goals are written in measurable terms.					1		
Student <u>has access to</u> the general curriculum (as outlined by the district, sending district or NH frameworks.)					1		
Student <u>participates</u> appropriately in state, district and school-wide assessments.					1		
Student <u>has opportunities</u> to participate in general extracurricular and other non-academic activities with necessary supports.					1		
Was the student's most recent individual evaluation (initial or reevaluation), including a written summary report and meeting, held within 45 days of parental permission to test? If not, was it due to: (check all that apply)						1	
Extension in Place Expired extension 4/17/06-12/30/06	Lack of Qualified Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> X Psychologist <input type="checkbox"/> Educator <input type="checkbox"/> Related Services <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Evaluation Not Completed in Time Due 4/1/06	Summary Report Not Written in Time No	Meeting Not Held in Time No – Parent phone call 4/14/06	Other Evaluation due – 4/1/06 Extension – 4/17/06 Evaluation in process as of 4/17/07		
TRANSITION STATEMENTS					YES	NO	
IEP team includes parents as part of transition planning.					1		
IEP team and process includes student as part of transition planning.					1		
IEP includes current level of performance related to transition services.							1
There is documentation that the student has been invited to attend IEP meetings.							1
The statement of transition focuses on the student's course of study (e.g. vocational programming, advanced placement).							1
If the student is age 16 or older during the course of the IEP, <u>also</u> answer the following 2 statements:							
Transition plan, including student's <u>measurable</u> post-high school goals, is in place.							NA
Statement of needed transition services is presented as a coordinated set of activities.							NA
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE STATEMENTS					YES	NO	N/A
Has this student ever been suspended from school?						1	
If yes, for how many days?							
If appropriate, a functional behavior assessment has been conducted.							1
IEP team has addressed behaviors that are impacting student learning.							1
A behavior intervention plan has been written to address behaviors.							1

Strengths	Suggestions for Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic IEP goals are written in clear and measurable terms. ▪ It is clear that the student reviewed has been receiving appropriate services and supports at Portsmouth Middle School (PMS). ▪ Access to the general curriculum for students at PMS is maximized. ▪ The Middle School staff members are competent, professional and caring. ▪ The Middle School programs are child centered and are designed to meet individual student needs. ▪ There is a team effort and collaborative approach to instruction and program design at the PMS. ▪ There is a clear climate for learning within the PMS. ▪ The PMS staff members have worked hard to establish good relationships with parents. ▪ The parent interviewed expressed satisfaction with the individualized supports offered to her student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ * The speech and language IEP goals reviewed are not written in measurable terms. In addition, they lack clear application to the classroom, as well as specific pragmatic and social language skills as they relate to the student's disability. ▪ * The goal in the IEP reviewed did not clearly reflect what the student needs require. Concern exists that the goal as written may not be easily translated in a different setting (e.g. high school). Provide professional development to staff in the development of appropriate measurable IEP goals. ▪ There is a need to provide a systemic district-wide training to all relevant staff in understanding and providing programming and instructional strategies to students identified with Autism or on the Autism Spectrum. ▪ * There is a need to provide staff members with professional development in the special education process and procedures required for: timely evaluations, IEP development, including measurable goals, and placement decisions for students with disabilities. ▪ There is a need for a systemic transition process for students moving from PMS to the Portsmouth High School (PHS). ▪ Visit other school districts to observe other middle and high schools to gain information on program development for ASD delivery of services.

* This is a citation

USING COMPLIANCE DATA FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

BUILDING LEVEL CASE STUDY DATA SUMMARY

NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

SAU: 52	School: Portsmouth High School	Date: April 18, 2007
Programs: Modified Regular		Number of Cases Reviewed: 1
Recorder/Summarizer:		

Collaborative Team Members:

Name: Jeff Collins	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Kathleen Metterville	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Shawn Donovan	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: B J Fyles	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Laurie Melanson	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Amy McKinness	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Jamie Garneau	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Erika Nelson	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Kathy Stroup	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Paulette Hoeflich	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Beth Rincon	Building Level	or	Visiting
Name: Forrest Dampier	Building Level	or	Visiting

Based on data collected from the Data Collection Forms, Interview Forms, Classroom Observations, etc. the following summary is intended to provide a “snapshot” of the quality of services and programs in the school/private facility in the areas of:

Access to the General Curriculum, Transition and Behavior Strategies and Discipline.

SUMMARY OF BUILDING LEVEL DATA

Filled in with the number of times a statement was marked from all Data Collection Forms:

ACCESS TO THE GENERAL CURRICULUM STATEMENTS					YES	NO	N/A
IEP goals are written in measurable terms. (Rubric presented)						1	
Student <u>has access to</u> the general curriculum (as outlined by the district, sending district or NH frameworks.)					1		
Student <u>participates</u> appropriately in state, district and school-wide assessments.					1		
Student <u>has opportunities to</u> participate in general extracurricular and other non-academic activities with necessary supports.					1		
Was the student's most recent individual evaluation (initial or reevaluation), including a written summary report and meeting, held within 45 days of parental permission to test? If not, was it due to: (check all that apply)						1	
Extension in Place Yes	Lack of Qualified Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Psychologist <input type="checkbox"/> Educator <input type="checkbox"/> Related Services <input type="checkbox"/> X Other	Evaluation Not Completed in Time Not by compliance date (3/07, 2/07, 1/07)	Summary Report Not Written in Time No	Meeting Not Held in Time Not by 1/07	Other Evaluation extension proposed because of concern for anxiety and stress of the student		
TRANSITION STATEMENTS					YES	NO	
IEP team includes parents as part of transition planning.					1		
IEP team and process includes student as part of transition planning. (Student declined invitation)					1		
IEP includes current level of performance related to transition services.							1
There is documentation that the student has been invited to attend IEP meetings.					1		
The statement of transition focuses on the student's course of study (e.g. vocational programming, advanced placement).							1
If the student is age 16 or older during the course of the IEP, <u>also</u> answer the following 2 statements:							
Transition plan, including student's <u>measurable</u> post-high school goals, is in place.							1
Statement of needed transition services is presented as a coordinated set of activities.							1
BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE STATEMENTS					YES	NO	N/A
Has this student ever been suspended from school?						1	
If yes, for how many days?							
If appropriate, a functional behavior assessment has been conducted.						1	
IEP team has addressed behaviors that are impacting student learning.					1		
A behavior intervention plan has been written to address behaviors.						1	

Strengths	Suggestions for Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Portsmouth High School staff are qualified, professional and committed to their work. ▪ There is good access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities as well as access to school-wide assessments and after school supports. ▪ There is excellent use of all staff to support all students, both with and without disabilities. Special education staff assist non-identified students as well as students with disabilities in the high school Study Center. ▪ There is a good start made to the development of a Response To Interventions (RTI) model at the high school level. ▪ There is a wide range of options available for flexible delivery of services to students with educational disabilities. ▪ There is strong administrative support to the special education programs at the high school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ * Continue to work toward developing measurable IEP goals according to the developed rubrics. ▪ Write targeted IEP goals and objectives specific to the area of disability (e.g. social pragmatic language) for students on the Autism Spectrum to clearly describe their needs to other staff. ▪ There is a strong recommendation not to further decrease the level of staff and resources in order to avoid a negative impact on programming. ▪ Provide professional development to all staff including general and special education teachers, in all aspects of educating students with Autism and on the Autism Spectrum. ▪ Develop social skills groups for students on the Autism Spectrum. ▪ * There is a need to provide updated training to all staff in required special education process and procedures, specifically regarding triennial evaluations, timeliness of evaluations, the correlation of the evaluation results to IEP development and the design of measurable IEP goals. ▪ Implement the use of curriculum based measurement to collect data for progress toward IEP goals. ▪ * Continue to strengthen the transition planning process through transitions from middle school to high school and high school to post school. ▪ Determine how students with disabilities may need additional supports in after school targeted social opportunities.

* This is a citation

**VI. ADDENDUM: OUT OF DISTRICT AND JAMES O SUMMARIES
AND DESCRIPTIONS OF INNOVATIVE PRACTICES**

ADDENDUM Out-of-District File Review

SAU 52

Number of Files Reviewed: 2 files reviewed

COMMENDATIONS

The Portsmouth School District assigns either the Out of District Coordinator or a Case Manager to oversee the placements of students in out of district settings to ensure that the IEP is followed and progress is monitored as appropriate.

The district recognizes that the components of the IEP that are not in compliance will be addressed with the adoption of the NHSES or CASE-e IEP programs.

CITATIONS OF NONCOMPLIANCE

Ed 1109.01 - Elements of the IEP – IEP lacked measurable goals, a statement about how the student will participate with other non-disabled students in extra curricular and other non-academic activities.

Ed 1102.28- IEP Team – There is no documentation that the student has been invited to the IEP meeting.

ADDENDUM
JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM

SAU 52

Number of files reviewed: 2 Files reviewed

COMMENDATIONS:

The Portsmouth School District's Out of District Coordinator is working closely with the private schools to assure that the students who are court placed are receiving access to the general curriculum and making progress toward their IEP goals.

CITATIONS OF NONCOMPLIANCE:

ED 1109.01 - **Elements of IEP** - The IEPs reviewed lacked measurable goals.

ED 1107.06 – **Evaluation Requirements for Children with Specific Learning Disabilities** – The record reviewed of a student with Specific Learning Disability did not include evidence in the reevaluation that an observation had been conducted or a written statement of the team's determination of the learning disability, including the 7 components.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **Mary C. Dondero Elementary School**

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

A multi-sensory approach to teaching letter-sound (sound-symbol) correspondence is used in kindergarten through second grade. Letter-symbol-sound charts are used in all classrooms. Visual cues (mouth-tongue positions), gestures (bite on an apple for /a/), tactile (Wikki Sticks, rug, sand), auditory bombardment and discrimination are used to reinforce learning.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

Students learn letters in a developmental appropriate sequence. Data is collected on each child's progress.

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.

Retention of skills learned is observed as it is carried over into classwork. The DIBELS screening tool is also used.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **Mary C. Dondero Elementary School**

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

The primary spelling inventory from Words Their Way is used to assess the phonetic elements that students have mastered and which elements need to be reviewed. Students are then taught the corresponding lesson(s) in the Learn to Read by Reading (LRR) Word Study Program.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

At the end of each lesson students are asked to write the phonetic element in dictated words and sentences. The use of those elements in classwork is also monitored. The primary spelling inventory is given a second time to document student progress.

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **Mary C. Dondero Elementary School**

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

Open Circle curriculum is grade differentiated. Concepts and skills are presented in developmentally appropriate ways at each grade level, kindergarten through grade 5. The entire format of this program recognizes the critical role that relationships play in the social development and academic success of children. Two areas that Open Circle is organized around are: creating a cooperative classroom environment and building positive relationships and solving people problems.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

Research conducted on Open Circle has demonstrated that students participating in the program show increased social skills, self-assertiveness and self-control, and fewer problem behaviors such as physical fighting. Open Circle has shown to promote classroom teaching and learning time, helps teachers and students get to know one another better, develops student communication, group leadership, and other interpersonal skills.

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.

Although there are no formal evaluations, within the Open Circle curriculum students have the opportunity to complete two student self-evaluation forms.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **Portsmouth Alternative Secondary School**

Components of Innovative Practices: (Indicate one of these three categories for each innovative practice identified)

1. **Classroom/School Environment** (behavior management strategies, culture, communication, celebrations and recognitions, etc.)
2. **Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment** (e.g. engaging all students in learning, integration of technology, diversified instruction, use of data to inform instruction, involving all staff in curriculum decisions, etc.)
3. **Professional Responsibilities** (e.g. professional development, communicating with families, reflecting upon teaching, mentoring, collaboration between general and special education, etc.)

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

Response for Component #2 above:

Our school is developing a relationship with the local community college, NHCTC at Stratham, in an effort to better facilitate our students' pursuit of post-secondary education. The many facets of this new program are meant to give our students the confidence and belief that they are capable of going to college, as well as help to make that a reality by better preparing them academically and behaviorally.

The first aspect of this program is that all willing upperclassmen went to the community college to take the Accuplacer, a reading, writing and mathematics assessment that is used to determine whether incoming students need to take remedial classes. In consultation with the English and math department heads at the college, these results were used to design English and math classes for the students at PASS. The math class is using the same textbook and materials as the remedial math class at the college. The English class is using the same areas of assessment for student writing as the Accuplacer, itself.

The second aspect of this program is to create a culture at PASS that openly discusses and embraces the importance and potential of college. As part of this college-going culture a teacher at PASS was identified as the College-Bound Coordinator in order to act as a liaison between the high school and the college. This staff member met with key faculty and staff at the college in order to better understand the workings of that institution and build a stronger relationship with them. The College-Bound Coordinator also met with individual students about their future aspirations and set up tours and guest speakers to both inspire and inform students about post-secondary opportunities.

The third aspect of this program involves a smaller group of six upperclassmen that are participating in a course at the college. NHCTC, like many colleges, offers a one-credit "College Success" course, INT 101, that helps incoming students connect to the college and improve on their study skills. During the spring semester the College-Bound Coordinator from PASS is teaching a section of INT 101 during regular school hours, allowing these six students to attend as part of their school day. In addition to gaining the skills and knowledge being taught in the class, this opportunity scaffolds the college experience by allowing the students to participate in a new and potentially overwhelming event with a safe and familiar teacher.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

This is the pilot year of this program and data collection has just begun. The data that has and will be collected is discussed in the following section as part of how the program will be evaluated.

The positive impact that is already evident is that students are using statements such as "when I go to college", "I don't know what I will major in", or "First I'm getting a degree in _____, but may go back later and get a degree in

_____”. *These statements are an important change amongst a group of students that have historically been unsuccessful in school settings.*

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.

This program will be evaluated in two major ways. First, we will track how many of our graduates apply to college, are accepted into college programs, attend college, and are successful in college. Historically, very few of our graduates have immediately gone to college. This improvement should be easy to detect and record.

The second method of evaluation will be in the academic areas of math and English. The English class will assess several writing samples, using the same five criteria as the Accuplacer test. By using the original Accuplacer scores as a baseline, these curriculum-based assessments should chronicle the student improvement. This improvement will then be validated against new Accuplacer scores when students repeat the test at the college at the end of the school year. Likewise, the math class will track student scores throughout the semester, which will be compared to the beginning and end of year Accuplacer scores.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **Little Harbour School**

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment:

The literacy model at Little Harbour School is a comprehensive framework designed to meet the needs of all children. This research-based model developed by Tufts University, recognizes and builds upon the connections between reading and writing. The goal of *Learn to Read by Reading* (LRR) is to help all children learn to read and write with a high level of proficiency. In this model there are multiple options so that teachers can tailor the instruction to the needs of the children. During the literacy block there are opportunities for explicit whole group instruction, small strategy groups formed by the needs of the students and individual conferences with the teacher. The model also provides opportunities for special education teachers and reading teachers, as well as tutors, to work with individual and small groups of students. The model is differentiated and assessments both formative and summative are integral components of the model.

Each child is individually administered the Developmental Reading Assessment. Grade level and school wide benchmarks are established. Student progress is monitored and students who are not at the benchmark receive supplemental instruction. Students significantly below the benchmark receive one to one tutorials by a reading specialist or special educator. The supplemental instruction is for *ALL* students.

During the literacy block teachers confer with individual students and monitor individual progress. Conference notes are then used to form small strategy groups that meet individual student needs.

The blend of whole group explicit instruction, small strategy groups, individual instruction and supplemental instruction meets the very needs of Little Harbour Children.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

DRA data is collected and recorded annually. The percentage of students in the school who are meeting the benchmark has increased and the percentage at each grade level has increased. Three years ago the decision was made to raise the grade level benchmarks. Last year in grades four and five the decision was made to transition to the written DRA which is more comprehensive in nature and assesses students written responses as well as reading. These changes were possible because of the increase in student achievement. The percentage of special education students at LHS has decreased by 5% since we have been using this instructional model.

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.

Little Harbour received a 3 year comprehensive school reform grant and, as part of our grant we researched and evaluated literacy models. We have a written evaluation of the model for each of the three years of the grant. In addition to those evaluations, LHS uses a walk through to insure that the tenants of the model are being implemented school wide. Each year school wide and individual goals are established based upon the recommendations of the walk through.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **Portsmouth Middle School**

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

Goal: To enhance relationship building between adults and students and students and students and their peers with the purpose of building a community supported school wide environment

Activities to accomplish this goal:

- **ASPIRATION INITIATIVE:** With homerooms established as a core unit, teachers and students collaborate to provide weekly activities to build team and individual self-awareness with the purpose of working more effectively together in terms of academic and emotional support .
- An after school Homework Club has been established in collaboration with our Community Campus Recreation Program “New Heights” to support academics for one hour each afternoon followed by attending New Heights which provides a social and physical outlet for adolescents.
- An after school Bowling Club is offered for students who do not otherwise have social or physical outlets. This program encourages team building, ownership and self esteem building for students who may not be involved in social activities or who may not have the physical skills to participate in team sports. The students all get a team spirit T Shirt that provides a sense of belonging.
- PMS ‘s philosophy is that we provide “Student Services”...in that we have a team of skilled professional who work together to provide services for all students. We mix and match services, look to out of the box innovative activities to provide opportunities for disenfranchised students with opportunities that will improve school attendance or provide a reason for coming to school. Two examples are: A student, accompanied by a para with a background in art, did a “ walk about” capturing photos on the streets of Portsmouth. Hidden talents were discovered. Her photos were developed in our school and then printed and mounted by a local merchant who donated the time and materials. Her photo art was exhibited and sold in a local restaurant. Another student did a work/study program where he was mentored on a job experience program accompanied by appropriate in school instruction to support the skills required to be effective at his job. The KIDS Program “Kid in Difficult Situations” provides a three tier program in a climate that addresses the emotional, behavioral and academics needs of students in grades 6 to 8. KIDS also take referrals for outside districts.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

- **Aspiration Initiative.** This data is in the process of being collected. The initial survey presented to students asked with whom they had a significant, supportive relationship in school. The goal is to reduce the number of students who state that they do not feel they have a support person to turn to at PMS. A follow up survey will be conducted in the spring of 07.
- **Homework Club:** Data shows that more homework is being completed and participation is active. Homework completion has increased from 56% in 2004 to 63% in 2006. From 2004 overall academic achievement has improved from 61% to 73%. There have also have been some off shoots of HWC in that many content teachers provide individual tutorial time for students in need. Again with the philosophy that our school provides “student services”.
- No hard data has been collected related to this activity. However, more student services students are participating with great personal success.
- In terms of being “Student Services” based, we have experienced the ability to provide programming for students with complicated backgrounds, profiles and needs with success.

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.

- Student Survey
- Number of participants, number of homework assignments completed before and after consistent attendance
- Participation
- Grades, reduced incidences of behavior concerns, attendance, increase amount of time in mainstream classes and students able to return to their sending districts.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **Portsmouth Early Education Program**

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

All special educational preschoolers are in community settings of community school, community child care center, or Headstart. Special education staff serve as resources and support to the early childhood education teachers.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

Anecdotal records, observations, and level of student participation in regular classroom are used to identify positive outcomes for children.

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.

We have had RMC conduct an evaluation of the collaboration after it's first year. Carsey Institute at UNH is currently conducting a study on the collaboration occurring between and among agencies at the campus.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **New Franklin Elementary School**

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

We use the TouchMath and TouchMoney programs at New Franklin for resource room students struggling in math. It's a basic skills program that teaches math concepts from a multi-sensory approach. There are touch points of various values that students "tap out" when counting.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

Our primary evaluation consists of students taking the Math Achievement Predictor (MAP) at the beginning and at the end of the school year. We make note of strategies students use when taking the MAPs. On a regular basis, students learn the TouchPoint system (we watch them "tap out" while adding, for example) and then use it in their daily work and in their math journals (class math workbook) and on assessments (so, they generalize the strategies). They also show an increase in their MAPs scores. We also keep the marks for daily work (i.e., percentage correct on various papers using the TouchPoint strategy).

We have also had students from the resource room go into the regular classroom and teach their peers the strategies. From teacher reports, we have found that students in the regular classroom use the strategies they have been taught. Plus it's a real self-esteem boost for the resource room students.

We have also taught the strategies to a group of younger, accelerated math students in an after school enrichment math program. So, the program is becoming more school-wide than just being used in the resource room.

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **New Franklin Elementary School**

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

In one of the resource rooms we focus on applied math once a week. During that time we have students prepare and learn about healthy snacks. Prior to cooking, students estimate cost, estimate weights of various ingredients, estimate time involved in making/cooking various snacks. Students also read recipes so they have real-life experience reading math and cooking terms. The activity also involves cooperative learning and sharing. After snacks are made, students assist with clean up and then offer the snack to various staff (practicing their pragmatic language in the process). Students are also writing and illustrating a cookbook. We also write about the cooking activity on our New Franklin Resource Room web page.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

At the current time, we are using a portfolio approach that is leading to a cookbook. Students write down the recipe, illustrate, and then make comments about it.

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.

At the beginning of the year, students did not demonstrate the ability to cook, using a recipe. At the end of the year we will give students a recipe and see how well they can demonstrate understanding of cooking terms and utensils. For example, on that assessment, we will ask, "Which cup shows $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup?" We will also give students a simple non-cooking recipe (i.e., a granola recipe) and assess how well they can follow the directions, use the correct measuring cups/spoons, etc.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **New Franklin Elementary School**

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

The implementation of a 5th grade Boy Writer's Group facilitated by a building literacy teacher address all three components of innovative practices.

1. Classroom/School Environment: Based on the work of Ralph Fletcher and Jennifer Allen, the Boy Writer's Club at New Franklin creates an environment where boys are engaged in a learning situation that they are expected to perform at their best. New Franklin classroom teachers have acknowledged the need for boys to have an active environment with an emphasis on doing rather than talking. These young men are given choice and the presence of a strong mentor when working with the Writer's Club. Instruction has been differentiated for this group to provide opportunities for success in writing.

2. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment: These students work with the building literacy specialist in improving their writing skills with a focus on the Units of Study in Writing Curriculum based on the work of Lucy Caulkins of Columbia University. This curriculum is used in all three elementary schools, K-5.

3. Professional Responsibilities: The New Franklin literacy teacher meets weekly with the special education team to update student progress. She also plans to facilitate a professional study group with building staff on Boy Writer's: Reclaiming Their Voices by Ralph Fletcher.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

Data collected which identifies this practice as having a positive impact upon student learning is the following:

- *Increased number of published student pieces*
- *Teacher feedback on student engagement during in-class writer's workshop*
- *Improved attendance of participants on days when the Boy Writer's Club meets*

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.

The Boy Writer's Club is evaluated by the following:

- *Increased student productivity in writing*
- *Increased engagement in the writing process both in and out of the classroom setting*
- *Pieces of writing is evaluated based on teacher created rubrics aligned with NECAP writing scores*

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **Portsmouth High School**

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

Student Academic Services' (SAS) Classrooms are strategically located throughout the school building, at least one within each content area department. This allows for efficient movement of staff and students between the content area classrooms and assisted classrooms. In addition, the location redesign of the study centers has allowed for closer collaboration between general and special educators. A weekly contact system with content area teachers has been established so that Study Centers are aware of current course requirements and students' current academic performance. Students who are behind with their work are directed to a lunch and/or an after-school supervised study where teachers and students collaborate to complete work.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

Students assisted in Study Centers have individual folders with "check-in" sheets that are recorded on daily by the study center teacher. Each student is evaluated on timeliness, organization, assignment completion and on-task behavior.

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.

These data sheets are used in evaluating student's quarterly objectives and to facilitate communication between their teachers and parents. Weekly contact sheets completed by the regular education teachers are collected, reviewed by study center teachers and shared with the students. The contact sheets are then organized into a binder for future reference. Administration reviews the binders on a monthly basis to check for completion and clarity of communication.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Name of School: **Portsmouth High School**

Description of an Innovative Practice in Your Educational Community:

The Options program is designed for students who have significant social/emotional and/or behavioral difficulties. These students have access to a wide range of therapeutic and academic services from the Options program staff. The staff consists of 1 teacher, 2 therapists, and a paraprofessional. The students are provided a positive, supported learning environment within the mainstream school setting. The Options staff offers multiple services to support classroom teachers working with difficult or challenging students. The after-school physical activity-based component to the program provides Option students with a constructive healthy extra curricular alternative.

This portion of the Options Program is in it's first year so data is currently being collected and analyzed in regard to social skill building, self-esteem (better) and physical fitness.

Please provide a brief commentary on data collection that has identified this practice as having a positive impact upon student performance.

Please describe how this innovative practice is evaluated.