

**NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MODIFIED SPECIAL EDUCATION
PROGRAM APPROVAL VISITATION**

**SAU 42
SUMMARY REPORT**

Nashua School District

**Christopher Hottel, Acting Superintendent of Schools
Eric Schroeder, Director of Special Education**

Chairpersons, Visiting Team:
Dr. Richard Ayers, Ed.D
Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu, M.Ed.
Education Consultants

Site Visit Conducted on December 4-5, 2006
Report Date, February 9, 2007
Revised March 19, 2007

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I. TEAM MEMBERS

Visiting Team Members:

| NAME | PROFESSIONAL ROLE |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Chairpersons: Dr. Richard Ayers | Education Consultant |
| Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu | Education Consultant |
| Joan Campo | Assistant Special Education Director |
| Deanna Carson | Special Education Coordinator |
| Cari Coates | Assistant Special Education Director |
| Sherry Corbett | Special Education Coordinator |
| Jane Cummings | Special Education Department Head |
| Kenneth Duesing | Assistant Special Education Director |
| Karen Gallagher | Assistant Special Education Director |
| Paulette Hoeflich | Special Education Director |
| Janet Reed | Special Education School Director |
| Christopher Kellan | Special Education Director |

Building Level Team Members:

| NAME | PROFESSIONAL ROLE | NAME | PROFESSIONAL ROLE |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Chris Breen | Assistant Principal | Ed Moses | Case Manager |
| Deb Migneault | Assistant Principal | Angela Derusha | Case Manager |
| Fredye Sherr | Teacher | Lauren Linscott | Case Manager |
| Mary Ellen Poulin | Teacher | Charles Reynolds | Case Manager |
| Pilar Peigh | Assistant Principal | Tina Benhardt | Case Manager |
| Hilda Caragulian | Case Manager | Cynthia Dudley | Case Manager |
| Erica Gabriel | Case Manager | Dave Barlow | Case Manager |
| Jeanette Ellis | Case Manager | Mary O'Doherty | Case Manager |
| Tracie Casssady | Case Manager | S. Bakaian | Case Manager |
| Lisa Frenette | Case Manager | Nancy Greene | Case Manager |
| Dierdre Smith | Case Manager | Jason Longergan | Case Manager |
| Bill Murphy | Case Manager | Cathy Comes | Case Manager |
| Jim Pugliano | Case Manager | James Gaj | Case Manager |
| Patty Peasley | Case Manager | Ann Young-Gendreau | Case Manager |
| Roger Sussault | Case Manager | Callie Marandos | Case Manager |
| Art Kobs | Case Manager | Martha Kissel | Case Manager |
| Guili Maira | Case Manager | Dennis Hamilton | Case Manager |

II. INTRODUCTION

SAU 42 is comprised of the Nashua School District, which is the second largest school district in New Hampshire. Nashua is also the second largest city in the state, located 45 minutes from Boston, MA on Route 3, and has been called the Gate City. Nashua is a very diverse city, endowed with many urban amenities, and it proudly serves a total of 12,983 students, of which 2,036 (approximately 16%) are identified as having an educational disability. The mission statement for the Nashua School District is:

“The Nashua School District, in partnership with the community, is committed to providing a quality education to all students in a safe, nurturing, and motivating environment and is dedicated to helping students become lifelong learners and responsible, productive members of a rapidly changing society”

District wide goals, approved by the board of education on 2/3/05, are as follows:

- To Improve Academic Achievement for All Students
- To Improve Instruction and Programming for All Students
- To Continue to Attract and Maintain Quality Staff
- To Improve Communications at All Levels
- To Ensure Fiscal Responsibility by Remaining Prudent with Allocation of Resources

It is important to note that during the December 2006 Modified NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit to SAU#42, the school district administration and board of education were in process of beginning discussions regarding goal setting and the review of the existing goals currently in place for the school district.

| District Enrollment Data | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Total Student Enrollment (ages 6-21) (as of Oct 1) | 13,225 | 12,983 | 12,728 |
| Expenditure Per Pupil | \$7,936.46 | N/A | |
| Cumulative Drop-Out % (grades 9-12) students with disabilities | 1.3% | 1.3% | |
| Cumulative Drop-Out % (grades 9-12) non-disabled students | 3.4% | 2.5% | N/A |
| Free/Reduced Lunch % | 27.43% | 29.32% | 30.73% |
| Title I % | N/A | 4.65% | 3.92% |
| LEP % | 3.64% | 6.27% | 7.05% |
| Special Education Program Data | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
| # of Identified Students Ages 3-5 (as of Oct. 1) | 170 | 146 | 80 |
| # of Identified Students Ages 6-21 (as of Oct. 1) | 2138 | 2004 | 1956 |
| % Identified Ages 6-21 (as of Oct. 1) | 17.4% | 16.5% | 15.9% |
| # Out of District | 100 | 117 | 120 |
| % Out of District | 4.6% | 5.8% | 6.1% |
| # of Students Out of Compliance (as of Oct. 1) | | | 314 * |
| Special Programs Total Expenditure | \$15,114,816.02 | \$17,246,498.48 | |
| Average Caseload (as of Oct. 1) | 20.6 | 18.7 | 15.6 |
| # Identified Students Suspended One Or More Times | | 333 | |
| # of students with disabilities who are being provided home instruction (as of Dec.1) | | 19 | 0 |
| # of students with disabilities who have been placed on a “shortened school day” (as of Dec. 1) | | 1 | 0 |
| Special Education Staffing: (report in FTEs) | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
| # of Special Educators | | | 123 |
| # of Related Service Providers | | | 45.6 |
| # of Paraprofessionals | | | 301 |

* The District reports that this number is not accurate as they were late in the input of SPEDIS information

III. PURPOSE AND DESIGN OF THE NHDOE MODIFIED SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL VISIT

The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) conducted a Modified Special Education Program Approval Visit to SAU42 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 Modified NHDOE Special Education Visit, IEPs and related documents were reviewed in the following schools:

- Pennichuck Middle School
- Fairgrounds Middle School
- Elm Street Middle School
- Nashua High School North
- Nashua High School South
- The Academy of Learning and Technology (grades 6-10)

The New Hampshire Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education, typically conducts program approval visits using a Case Study Model. However, during the 2006-07 school year, because the NHDOE is transitioning to a new monitoring model, four SAUs in New Hampshire were selected to participate in a Modified Special Education Program Approval Process. This process blends some of the elements of the Case Study Compliance Review with a more traditional review of student IEPs. These IEPs were randomly selected for the purpose of verifying compliance with state and federal special education rules and regulations, and to determine student status as related to successful outcomes. In order to accomplish this Modified Program Approval Process, visits were conducted to selected schools and a combination of quantitative and qualitative data were reviewed. These include student IEPs and feedback from leadership, parents, students and staff, along with review of data submitted with the program approval application. Activities related to this NHDOE Case Study Compliance 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
- ♦ Any new special education programs seeking approval from the NHDOE

The New Hampshire Department of Education provided a visiting team of professional educators to work collaboratively with staff in each of the schools in this Modified Special Education Program Approval visit and the related data collection activities. The Modified NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Process provided the opportunity for the visiting and building level team members to review student IEPs of a representative sampling of the special education student population at the both the middle and high school levels.

Evidence of the work conducted in-district and results related to student IEPs was gathered throughout the process, guided by the materials and templates provided by the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education. Input was gathered from key constituents, including feedback with professional staff, parents, administrators, and in some cases the students. The chairpersons of the team summarized the collective data that resulted from the IEP presentations. This summary is included in the report that follows, and includes identified areas of strength, areas needing improvement and citations of noncompliance that must be corrected within one year of the date of this report.

Throughout the entire review process, the visiting team worked in collaboration with the staff of SAU 42. 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 February 2002 NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Report and 2002 corrective action plan written by SAU42, the following citations of noncompliance were identified:

ED 1109.01

There was no evidence that state assessments or alternative assessments were being administered for out of district students.

Status 2003: Upon a return corrective action visit to SAU42, it was determined that this citation had been resolved.

V. RESULTS OF THE DECEMBER 2006 MODIFIED NHDOE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL VISIT

In SAU42, the NHDOE worked with administration in the random selection of student IEPs to ensure that there was a representative sampling of data collected from the pre-selected programs and schools located within the middle and high school special education programs. In order to monitor whether or not special education programs are in compliance, it was essential that each IEP team be prepared to present the IEP, demonstrate evidence that the document is in compliance, and provide documentation of successful student outcomes.

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' IEP 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 IEP presentations; and secondly, all parents of students with disabilities are surveyed and encouraged to reply.

Below is a summary of the results of the SAU#42 parent survey, along with a summary of the comments/feedback provided to the visiting team during the December 2006 Modified NHDOE Special Education Program Approval visit. Worthy of note was the intention of SAU 42 staff and administration to have all schools participate in the survey for parents of students with disabilities. The information gained from the comprehensive survey, although only required at the middle and high school levels, will enable the district to draw some conclusions along with identification of areas in which further data on parental attitudes and participation in their children's education will be useful to improvement activities. Tables 1-3 below show the number of surveys that each school within the SAU sent out and the number and percentage returned, for an overall SAU return rate of 13%. In tables 4-19, SAU 42 has listed each of the 16 survey questions, divided into the 3 categories of Access, Transition and Behavior, and the responses collected from each school. Responses are further broken down by the scale of 1 (lowest level of satisfaction) to 5 (highest level of satisfaction).

The SAU 42 schools and their abbreviations are:

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|----------------------------------|-----|
| Amherst St Elementary | AM | New Searles Elementary | NS |
| Birch Hill Elementary | BH | Sunset Heights Elementary | SH |
| Bicentennial Elementary | BI | Elm Street Middle | ELM |
| Broad St Elementary | BR | Fairgrounds Middle | FMS |
| Charlotte Ave Elementary | CH | Pennichuck Middle | PMS |
| Dr. Norman Crisp Elementary | DC | Academy of Learning & Technology | ALT |
| Fairgrounds Elementary | FG | Nashua High North | NHN |
| Ledge Street Elementary | LD | Nashua High South | NHS |
| Main Dunstable Elementary | MD | Out of District | OOD |
| Mt. Pleasant Elementary | MP | | |

Tables 1 - 3

| Surveys Sent Out | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| School | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PMS | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| | 39 | 52 | 90 | 76 | 56 | 47 | 65 | 66 | 55 | 36 | 69 | 65 | 227 | 141 | 125 | 18 | 313 | 355 | 120 | 2015 |
| Surveys Returned | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PMS | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| | 8 | 12 | 22 | 20 | 16 | 8 | 19 | 8 | 19 | 11 | 5 | 26 | 22 | 18 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 32 | 5 | 270 |
| Percent Returned | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PMS | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| | 21 | 23 | 24 | 26 | 29 | 17 | 29 | 12 | 34 | 30 | 7 | 40 | 10 | 13 | 2 | 17 | 4 | 32 | 4 | 13 |

Tables 4 - 11

| Access to the General Curriculum | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Q1 | I am satisfied with my child's program and the supports that he/she receives. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 5 | | 7 |
| 2 | | | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 2 | | | 3 | 2 | | 11 |
| 3 | | | | 1 | | 2 | 5 | 1 | | 1 | 2 | | 2 | 2 | | | 1 | 3 | | 20 |
| 4 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 5 | | 10 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 1 | 77 |
| 5 | 6 | 8 | 14 | 15 | 12 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 12 | 5 | 3 | 15 | 13 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 12 | 3 | 149 |
| Totals | 8 | 12 | 22 | 19 | 16 | 8 | 16 | 8 | 19 | 11 | 5 | 25 | 22 | 18 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 32 | 4 | 264 |
| Q2 | My child has opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers on a regular basis. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | 2 | | 5 |
| 3 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | | 2 | 2 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 5 | | 25 |
| 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 4 | | 2 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | 2 | | 10 | 1 | 52 |
| 5 | 7 | 11 | 20 | 14 | 12 | 6 | 12 | 5 | 14 | 9 | 3 | 18 | 12 | 7 | 3 | | 8 | 14 | 2 | 177 |
| Totals | 8 | 12 | 22 | 19 | 16 | 8 | 18 | 8 | 17 | 11 | 5 | 25 | 20 | 18 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 31 | 3 | 260 |
| Q3 | I am adequately informed about my child's progress. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | | | | 3 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | 5 |
| 2 | | | 2 | 2 | | | 2 | | 1 | | | | | 3 | | | | 4 | | 14 |
| 3 | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | | 2 | 3 | | 19 |
| 4 | 1 | 5 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | | 9 | 8 | 7 | | | 3 | 13 | 2 | 79 |
| 5 | 7 | 7 | 10 | 14 | 11 | 4 | 11 | 5 | 14 | 6 | 4 | 15 | 11 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 11 | 2 | 151 |
| Totals | | 12 | 22 | 20 | 16 | 8 | 19 | 8 | 19 | 10 | 5 | 26 | 22 | 18 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 32 | 4 | 260 |
| Q4 | My child is informed about and encouraged to participate in school activities outside of the school day, and is offered necessary supports. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | 1 | | 3 | 1 | 1 | | 2 | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | 3 | 1 | | 14 |
| 2 | | | 4 | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | 1 | 4 | | 21 |
| 3 | | 2 | 2 | | 4 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 4 | | | 1 | 3 | 1 | 39 |
| 4 | | 3 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 8 | | 2 | 3 | 13 | 1 | 80 |
| 5 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 10 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 11 | 2 | 109 |
| Totals | 8 | 12 | 22 | 19 | 16 | 8 | 19 | 7 | 17 | 11 | 5 | 26 | 21 | 18 | 2 | 3 | 13 | 32 | 4 | 263 |

| Q5 | My child feels safe and secure in school and welcomed by staff and students. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals |
|---------------|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | | 8 |
| 2 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | | 15 |
| 3 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | 3 | | | | 2 | 3 | 1 | | | 2 | 6 | | 20 |
| 4 | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | | 2 | | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 33 |
| 5 | 8 | 11 | 16 | 18 | 15 | 5 | 12 | 4 | 17 | 11 | 3 | 23 | 14 | 11 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 188 |
| Totals | 8 | 12 | 22 | 19 | 16 | 8 | 18 | 8 | 19 | 11 | 5 | 26 | 22 | 18 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 29 | 4 | 264 |

| Q6 | A variety of information (observations, test scores, school work, parent input) was used in developing my child's IEP. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals |
|---------------|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | | 3 |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | 2 | 2 | | 6 |
| 3 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 3 | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | 3 | | 10 |
| 4 | 2 | | 4 | 1 | | 4 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 7 | | 2 | 4 | 11 | 1 | 55 |
| 5 | 6 | 11 | 18 | 19 | 15 | 4 | 12 | 7 | 15 | 10 | 3 | 24 | 15 | 8 | 3 | | 6 | 13 | 3 | 192 |
| Totals | 8 | 12 | 22 | 20 | 16 | 8 | 19 | 8 | 18 | 11 | 5 | 26 | 22 | 17 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 31 | 4 | 266 |

| Q7 | I am satisfied with the progress my child is making toward his/her IEP goals. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals |
|---------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | 2 | 2 | | 7 |
| 2 | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | 2 | | | 1 | | | 8 |
| 3 | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | 3 | | | 3 | 1 | 3 | | 2 | | 1 | 1 | 3 | | 22 |
| 4 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 4 | | 3 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 74 |
| 5 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 14 | 11 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 13 | 4 | 4 | 18 | 12 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 18 | 2 | 146 |
| Totals | 7 | 12 | 20 | 20 | 15 | 7 | 16 | 7 | 19 | 11 | 5 | 25 | 22 | 16 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 32 | 4 | 257 |

| Q8 | My child earns credits toward a regular high school diploma in all of his/her classes. (High School Only) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals |
|---------------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 4 | | 6 |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | 3 | | 6 |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | 23 | 1 | 30 |
| Totals | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 12 | 30 | 1 | 43 |

Tables 12 - 14
Transition

| Q9 | I am satisfied with the planning and support provided for the moves my child has made from grade to grade and school to school. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals |
|---------------|---|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----|-----|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | 1 | 2 | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | | 9 |
| 2 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | 3 | 2 | | | 3 | 3 | | 13 |
| 3 | | 1 | 3 | | | | 3 | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | 2 | 5 | | 16 |
| 4 | | | 7 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 5 | | 5 | 5 | 3 | | | 1 | 8 | 1 | 54 |
| 5 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 13 | 12 | 4 | | | 7 | 11 | 2 | 114 |
| Totals | 4 | 7 | 19 | 13 | 11 | 7 | 16 | 5 | 15 | 8 | 5 | 19 | 21 | 9 | | | 13 | 31 | 3 | 206 |

| Q10 | All of the people who are important to my child's transition were part of the planning. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals |
|---------------|---|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | 4 |
| 2 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 2 | | | | | 4 | | 7 |
| 3 | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | | | 1 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 5 | 4 | | 21 |
| 4 | | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 4 | | 1 | | 6 | 1 | 41 |
| 5 | 3 | 4 | 16 | 11 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 11 | 4 | 4 | 13 | 13 | 4 | | | 7 | 16 | 2 | 131 |
| Totals | 3 | 6 | 19 | 14 | 11 | 8 | 15 | 5 | 13 | 8 | 5 | 19 | 20 | 9 | | 2 | 13 | 31 | 3 | 204 |

| Q11 | I am satisfied with the written secondary transition plan that is in my child's IEP. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals |
|---------------|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----------|-----|----|-----|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | | 3 |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | | 3 |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 4 | 1 | 7 |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 4 | 7 | 1 | 13 |
| Totals | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 9 | 16 | 2 | 28 |

Tables 15 - 17

Behavior Strategies and Discipline

| Q12 | My child's classroom behaviors affect his/her ability to learn. Yes or No | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals |
|---------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| Yes | 3 | 8 | 6 | 14 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 11 | 10 | 8 | | 3 | 4 | 14 | 2 | 120 |
| No | 4 | 4 | 12 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 9 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 9 | 16 | 1 | 112 |
| Totals | 7 | 12 | 18 | 18 | 15 | 8 | 15 | 5 | 17 | 10 | 3 | 16 | 19 | 17 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 30 | 3 | 232 |

| Q13 | I have been involved in the development of behavior interventions, strategies and supports for my child. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals |
|---------------|--|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----|----------|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| 2 | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 5 |
| 3 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 8 |
| 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | 2 | 2 | | | 2 | | 5 | 2 | 3 | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 28 |
| 5 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 11 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 3 | | | | 10 | 1 | 74 |
| Totals | 3 | 8 | 6 | 14 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 11 | 9 | 8 | | 3 | 3 | 14 | 2 | 117 |

| Q14 | I am satisfied with the way the school is supporting my child's behavioral, social and developmental needs. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals |
|---------------|---|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----|----------|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 3 | | 4 |
| 2 | | | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | 7 |
| 3 | | 2 | | | | 2 | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 8 |
| 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | | | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | | 5 | 1 | 4 | | 2 | 1 | 5 | | 33 |
| 5 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 11 | 7 | 1 | 3 | | 7 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 3 | | | | 5 | 2 | 66 |
| Totals | 3 | 8 | 6 | 14 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 11 | 9 | 8 | | 3 | 4 | 14 | 2 | 118 |

Tables 18 - 19

| Other | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|--|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Q15 | I fully participate in special education decisions regarding my child. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals | |
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| 3 | | | | 1 | | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | | 1 | 3 | 1 | | | | | | 10 |
| 4 | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 34 |
| 5 | 7 | 10 | 6 | 17 | 12 | 5 | 12 | 5 | 18 | 9 | 3 | 19 | 14 | 14 | 3 | 2 | 10 | 27 | 2 | 195 |
| Totals | 7 | 11 | 8 | 19 | 15 | 8 | 16 | 7 | 19 | 10 | 5 | 25 | 19 | 18 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 31 | 3 | 240 |

| Q16 | I have been provided with a copy of the procedural safeguards (parental rights) at least once a year. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Totals | |
|---------------|---|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Scale | AM | BH | BI | BR | CH | DC | FG | LD | MD | MP | NS | SH | ELM | FMS | PM | ALT | NHN | NHS | OOD | Totals |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| 3 | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | | | 2 | | 6 |
| 4 | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | | | 1 | 3 | 4 | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 17 |
| 5 | 7 | 11 | 7 | 19 | 14 | 6 | 14 | 5 | 18 | 9 | 4 | 22 | 14 | 16 | 3 | 2 | 12 | 29 | 3 | 215 |
| Totals | 7 | 11 | 8 | 19 | 15 | 8 | 16 | 7 | 18 | 10 | 5 | 25 | 19 | 18 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 32 | 3 | 240 |

As indicated in Table 3, the overall rate of return is 13%, which is regarded as a minimal percent of return from which any reliable indication of overall satisfaction can be gleaned. Accordingly, the information obtained from Ledge Street, New Searles, Elm Street Middle, Pennichuck Middle, Nashua High North and the Out of District returns (in the highlighted columns above) is not sufficient for determining the degree of parental satisfaction.

Based upon the sampling of responses to the K-12 parent surveys from schools other than those noted above, the following strengths and concerns were identified:

Strengths (as indicated by percent agreement at level 4 and 5):

- Parents are satisfied with their child’s program and the supports that he/she receives (86% agreement)
- Students with disabilities have opportunities for interactions with non-disabled peers (88% agreement)
- Parents feel adequately informed about their child’s progress (88% agreement)
- Parents feel their children are safe and secure in the school environment (84% agreement)
- Parents are pleased with the progress their children are making in meeting IEP goals (87% agreement)
- Staff uses a variety of information to develop IEPs (93% agreement)
- Parents feel that all of the people important to their child’s transition were part of the planning (84% agreement)
- Parents feel involved in developing behavioral interventions for students (86% agreement)
- Parents report that they are satisfied with the manner in which staff supports children with behavioral issues (86% agreement)
- Parents feel they fully participate in special education decisions regarding their child (95% agreement)

Concerns (as indicated by percent agreement at level 4 and 5)::

- Parents desire more involvement of students with disabilities in extracurricular activities (72% satisfied with current participation levels)
- Parents expect well articulated and written secondary transition plans (71% satisfied with current planning)

OVERALL COMMENDATIONS

The commendations listed below are those identified by the visiting team, and apply to the middle and high schools.

- Within each of the middle and high schools there are skilled and dedicated staff
- The willingness of the staff and administration to take an active role in the Modified NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit was impressive
- The cooperation and involvement of the IEP Teams in the Modified NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit was commendable
- The transition processes for students with disabilities leaving elementary school to enter middle school are strong
- Within the SAU, professional development is valued and encouraged
- Within each of the middle and high schools, staff and administration demonstrate a strong sense of caring for students with disabilities
- The careful preparation, planning and attention from the Director of Special Education and the Assistant Director for the Modified NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit was evident and resulted in a positive and productive visit
- Special education staff work hard to establish frequent and consistent communication between home and school
- Among the special educators in each middle and high school, there is a sense of teamwork, support and cooperation
- The central office staff is commended for establishment of an open line of communication with administrators and special education staff at the building level
- Staff/student/parent relationships appear to be positive
- Based on the survey results, parents report general satisfaction with the special education programs and services made available to students

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 goal of the Modified NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit is to ensure compliance with federal and state special education rules, resulting in improved outcomes for students with disabilities. The aim of the modified visit was to focus upon the Individual Education Plans (IEPs) developed for students with disabilities at the middle and high school levels. As a result of reviewing 18 IEPs at the Nashua middle and high schools, along with reviewing student records for those individual placed out of district, the visiting team was able to provide a “snapshot” of how well the programs were working, and conversely able to identify those areas in which programming needs further attention. At the conclusion of the December 2006 visit to SAU#42, it was the responsibility of the visiting team to work with the staff at each of the middle and high schools to draw conclusions identifying program strengths and weaknesses, as well as citations of noncompliance. The modified visit required dialogue and discussion on the part of the visitors and the IEP teams who were responsible for the IEP presentations. These discussions resulted in the identification of system wide issues of significance, challenges, dilemmas and citations of noncompliance at the middle and high school levels that will warrant further attention, all of which are listed below.

ED 1119.03 CFR 300.26 Full Access To The District’s Curriculum

ED 1115.01 Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment

ED 1115.06 Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Over the past several years SAU42 has worked hard to review and align curriculum. Several administrators have been assigned to oversee curriculum alignment and development. Noteworthy is the fact that the visiting team recognized the emphasis being placed on curriculum, instruction and assessment for all students, as well as the collection of data to document student progress over time.

As a result of the December 2006 Modified NHDOE Special Education visit to SAU42, the visiting team did, however, raise significant concerns related to students with disabilities having full access to the general education curriculum, as well equal educational opportunities. A recurring theme identified by the visiting team was the impact that the leveling system, currently in place at the middle and high schools, was having upon students with disabilities. Specifically, the visiting team raised questions surrounding the process and criteria used to determine enrollment within the 3 leveled courses, Honors, Extensions and Fundamentals at the middle school and the 4 leveled courses at the high school; Advanced Placement, Honors, Extension and Foundations. It appeared that the middle and high schools lacked data as to why many students with disabilities in the middle and high schools are predominantly in lower level classes, the length of time they remain in such levels, and what the entrance and exit criteria for specific levels are. Without data to support such questions, it is difficult to determine whether students with disabilities do in fact have equal educational opportunities, or full access to general education curriculum.

Closely related to the above concerns is the fact that there are several self contained special education programs at the middle and high school levels that lack a clearly defined curriculum, and students enrolled in these programs may not have full access to the general curriculum or equal educational opportunities. While the SAU describes itself as a fully inclusive educational setting, the current system, structure and design at the middle and high schools does not ensure that students in the predominantly self contained programs have full access and equal educational opportunities. Inclusive education is not about being present in school; it is full participation in school, with a range of strategies within the educational community that ensure all children are provided with FAPE. Accessibility and participation are critical issues that need to be reviewed within the self contained and lower level courses offered to students with disabilities in the SAU42 middle and high schools.

ED 1119.03 Curricula

Upon visiting each of the self-contained special needs programs within the middle and high schools, it was evident that no written curriculum exists for students enrolled in what was defined as “Life Skills” programs. While the special education teachers are doing an admirable job in educating the students enrolled, there is no clear definition of how such programs differ from grade level to grade level, as no written curriculum exists to present a scope and sequence for instruction and assessment of students. Instruction within such programs is highly individualized, guided by the IEP, and grounded in the instruction of basic life skills. No link exists to the general curriculum. As a result of the December 2006 Modified NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit, it became apparent that curriculum development is needed for the self contained life skills programs, and the IEPs being developed need to be linked and aligned with a curriculum that includes both academic and functional skills relevant to the student population being served.

ED 1119.04 Equipment, Materials and Assistive Technology

During the December 2006 visit, concerns were raised regarding resource allocations and the availability of supplies, resources, material, staffing and programming in areas such and speech and language, literacy development, guidance, behavioral intervention and adequate space for special education programs. For example, one middle school life skills science class was observed being taught by a special education teacher, and within the classroom there were no science texts, no instructional materials, no technology, no AV equipment and no access to water, sinks, or science lab equipment, all of which are typically found in a middle school science class. In addition, there is insufficient space for instructional activities that enable hands-on learning experiences for students. Upon review of student IEPs it was apparent that services are lacking in related service areas such as speech and language, occupational therapy, and support for students with emotional and behavioral challenges. The lack of such resources sets up a false premise in addressing the needs for all students.

ED 1119.08 Diplomas

Upon review of the SAU#42 Special Education Policy and Procedures Manual, it became clear that the school district does not have a written policy or procedure that defines system wide criteria for earning high school credits for students with disabilities that lead to qualifying for a high school diploma. In addition, the visiting team raised significant concerns with the current high school credit system for SAU 42, which is based upon accumulation of 27 credits, rather than emphasizing competencies and related measures of achievement.

ED 1119.11 Disciplinary Procedures for Children With Disabilities

In SAU 42 there has been no recent revision to written disciplinary policy and procedures that adhere to IDEA 2004 guidelines, including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion, and manifestation determination for students with

disabilities. In addition, there is insufficient documentation that all staff administering the Crisis Prevention Interventions (CPI) are fully trained and certified. While it is recognized that the administration is currently in process of reviewing all disciplinary policies and that the district is awaiting revisions to NH State Special Education Rules, the NHDOE requires that all special education policies and procedures be updated to meet compliance with IDEA 2004.

ED 1115.04 Continuum of alternative Placements

While SAU 42 is commended for the wide array of special education programs and services, the visiting team raised significant concern regarding the number of middle and high school students who are being placed out of district due to IEP team determinations that educational needs cannot be met within the home school. As a result of this visit, it is apparent that the District would benefit from a system wide examination of scope and delivery of alternative learning opportunities within the middle and high schools, to include exploring ways in which alternative learning options may become available to all students in the District. Challenges related to this include the number of credits required to graduate, programming for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities, programming for the deaf and hard of hearing, increased availability of vocational programming for students with disabilities, and emphasis upon alternative instruction and assessment of students in the general education setting.

ED 1106.01 Special Education Process and Sequence

As a result of the December 2006 Modified NHDOE Special Education Visit to SAU 42, the visiting team found a need to update and refine the existing special education policies and procedures. It quickly became evident that the special education policy manual has not been updated to meet compliance with IDEA 2004.

ED 1129.02 Criteria for Approval of Public and Non-Public Programs

During the December 2006 visit to SAU42, two new special education programs were identified as operational without approval from the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education: A new Life Skills Program at Elm Street Middle School, and special education services provided at the Academy of Learning and Technology.

ED 1109.01 Elements of An IEP

ED 1109.09 IEP Accountability

ED 1109.10 Monitoring and Annual Evaluation of IEP

IEPs reviewed by the visiting team were missing various components: measurable annual goals, goals and objectives that align to the general curriculum, documented procedures for measuring progress, clarification on individuals responsible for measuring progress and the use of data to demonstrate student outcomes.

ED 1109.01 Elements of an IEP

CFR 347 Content of IEP: Transition Services

IEPs reviewed by the visiting team for students 16 years of age and older lacked required components. Specifically, measurable transition goals, data to measure success of the transition goals and objectives, statement of interagency responsibilities, transfer of rights, etc. In addition, the visiting team raised significant concern regarding the degree of transition planning and adherence to procedures and supports for students with disabilities who transition from the middle to the high school.

ED 1107.01 Evaluation and Determination of Educational Disabilities

At the time of the December 2006 Modified NHDOE Special Education Visit, the NHDOE identified at least 160 students as out of compliance due to special education evaluations that had not met required timelines.

ED 1103.01 (c) 1, 2 Child Find, Responsibilities of the Local Education Agency

At the time of the December 2006 Modified NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit, SAU #42 did not have a preschool coordinator to ensure that established child find procedures were being implemented for the preschool and early intervention population.

NEW PROGRAMS SEEKING APPROVAL FROM THE NHDOE, BUREAU OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Nashua Academy of Learning and Technology (ALT)

At the time of the December 2006 Modified NHDOE Special visit to SAU #42, the district submitted a program approval application for the Nashua Academy of Learning and Technology. This is an alternative off site school that was approved by the NHDOE as a public middle school, grades 6-8, in July 2002, with an expanded high school program, grade 9, in July 2004. The Academy of Learning and Technology has never been visited by the NHDOE Bureau of Special Education for the purpose of approving the special education services being provided to students with educational disabilities. As such, the Academy of Learning and Technology was visited during the December 2006 Modified NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit to ensure that students with disabilities enrolled at the school are being provided with FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), full access to equal educational learning opportunities and full access to the general curriculum.

Based on the brief visit to the Academy of Learning and Technology, the visiting team was impressed with the dedication of the staff and the enthusiastic atmosphere for supporting a very challenging student population. This has translated into a learning environment that could be described as child centered, with an emphasis placed on a community of learners where students feel safe and appreciated.

Despite the many reported successes shared by staff during the December 2006 Modified NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit to the Academy of Learning and Technology, several issues of noncompliance surfaced related specifically to this program. As the visiting team carried out their varied duties at ALT, some areas of significant concern were identified, including several problems with the overall operation and oversight of special education services. Listed below are the citations identified by the team:

ED 1119.03 CFR 300.26 Full Access To The District's Curriculum

There is insufficient evidence that all middle and high school students with educational disabilities enrolled within the ALT have full access and equal educational opportunities as outlined in the NH Minimum State Standards for School Approval. At the time of the visit it was not evident how students access library media services, family and consumer science, technology education (industrial arts), open electives, world languages, business education, health and physical education. While some of these content areas may be available to students, during this visit it was not possible to determine the full extent to which these curriculum offerings were available, and if educators certified in these content areas are providing regular instruction.

ED 1119.03 Curricula

At the time of the December 2006 NHDOE Special Education site visit to the Academy of Learning and Technology, there was not sufficient time to review or discuss the curriculum, course offerings, course descriptions, etc. Concerns were raised by the visiting team as to whether the SAU42 curriculum is fully implemented in this setting. It was also evident that in some content areas, e.g. middle school social studies, the ALT offers an alternative curriculum, designed for at risk students. It was not clear what specific topics the alternative curriculum covers, and how it differs from grade to grade. In regard to the high school curriculum, the visiting team was provided with a list of grade 9 and 10 courses; however, additional information is needed, including course descriptions and evidence that such descriptions are in alignment to the viable and rigorous curriculum described in the handbook. A return visit to the ALT will be necessary in order to review the curriculum and alignment of curriculum to course offerings. Also, evidence needs to be presented on how the curriculum connects to the special education services and IEPs that are being implemented.

ED 1106.01 Special Education Process and Sequence

A significant concern that surfaced during the December 2006 visit to the Academy of Learning and Technology was the overlying responsibility for the supervision and oversight of special education programming and services; specifically, who is responsible for the day to day oversight and operation of special education programs and compliance. What the team identified during the visit was a lack of policy and procedure, including, but not limited to, IEPs not being implemented as written, related services not being provided as outlined in IEPs, and IEPs out of compliance. In addition, significant concern was raised regarding the implementation of the special education process within the building, to include special education record keeping, and evidence that required paperwork documentation is in compliance. Without immediate attention to this issue, there could be serious implications for the SAU.

ED 1129.02 Criteria for Approval of Public and Non-Public Programs

At the time of December 2006 visit to SAU 42, the NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Application for approval of the special education services within the Nashua Academy of Learning and Technology was being completed for submission. This application process will need to be completed, and further clarification provided on how students with disabilities enrolled at the Academy are being entered into the SPEDIS system.

ED 1109.01 Elements of An IEP

The two IEPs reviewed during the December 2006 visit lacked annual measurable goals, and services outlined in the IEPs were not being provided.

In summary, the visiting team raised significant concern regarding the systems in place for the provision of services to students with disabilities who are currently enrolled at the Nashua Academy of Learning and Technology.

Communication between the ALT, the sending schools and the central office appears to have a systemic breakdown; the program appears to be isolated, with limited connections to the school district. In addition, little emphasis is placed upon data that could demonstrate individual student success over time. There did not appear to be evidence that the school has a shared educational philosophy with SAU42, nor does it appear to share a set of common educational beliefs consistent with the district goals, which include the use of data aimed at improving student learning.

CITATIONS OF NONCOMPLIANCE IDENTIFIED AS A RESULT OF THE MODIFIED NHDOE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL VISIT TO SAU 42

Citations of noncompliance are defined as deficiencies that have been identified through the NHDOE Special Education Program Approval 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, IEP team 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 NHDOE Modified Special Education Program Approval Visit, the following citations of non-compliance were identified within the middle and high schools levels in SAU#42. 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.

1.) ED 1119.03 CFR 300.26 Full Access To The District's Curriculum

ED 1115.01 Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment

ED 1115.06 Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

SAU 42 must ensure that all students with disabilities have full access to the general curriculum, equal educational opportunities and the opportunity for services in the least restrictive environment.

2.) ED 1119.04 Equipment, Materials and Assistive Technology

All programs providing services to students with disabilities must have adequate supplies, resources and materials to implement IEPs and to ensure full access to the general education curriculum

3.) ED 1119.03 Curricula

Self-contained special education programs must have a curriculum that is aligned to the general education curriculum

4.) ED 1119.08 Diplomas

Policy needs be developed outlining procedures related to students with disabilities and earning high school credits leading toward a regular high school diploma.

5.) ED 1119.11 Disciplinary Procedures for Children With Disabilities

Development of disciplinary policy and procedures relating to students with disabilities is needed in order to adhere to IDEA 2004. This includes, but is not limited to, suspension, expulsion, and manifestation determination for review for

children with disabilities. In addition, there must be documentation that all staff administering the Crisis Prevention Interventions (CPI) are fully trained and certified.

6.) ED 1115.04 Continuum of Alternative Placements

SAU 42 needs to ensure that there is a full continuum of alternative placements within the SAU, enabling students with disabilities to be placed in the least restrictive environment, not placed out of district.

7.) ED 1106.01 Special Education Process and Sequence

Special education policy manual must be updated to meet compliance with IDEA 2004. In addition, there will need to be evidence that staff and administration are provided with ongoing professional development in the implementation and oversight of revised policy and procedure.

8.) ED 1129.02 Criteria for Approval of Public and Non-Public Programs

SAU 42 must ensure that all new special education programs complete all required NHDOE Special Education Application Materials and demonstrate full compliance for approval.

9.) ED 1109.01 Elements of An IEP

ED 1109.09 IEP Accountability

ED 1109.10 Monitoring and Annual Evaluation of IEP

All IEPs must have all required components, including, but not limited to, annual measurable goals, progress monitoring and alignment to the general education curriculum.

10.) ED 1109.01 Elements of an IEP

CFR 347 Content of IEP: Transition Services

All transition plans in IEPs must meet full compliance and have evidence of all required components.

11.) ED 1107.01 Evaluation and Determination of Educational Disabilities

All timelines related to the evaluation and determination of students with disabilities must be adhered to.

12.) ED 1103.01 (c) 1, 2 Child Find, Responsibilities of the Local Education Agency

The Nashua School District must ensure that all child find responsibilities as outlined in state and federal special education regulations are adhered to and that there is an individual responsible for the oversight of such responsibilities.

13.) ED 1109.01 CFR 300.344 IEP Team Composition

All three Out of District and James O. IEPs reviewed lacked documentation of appropriately composed IEP teams

14.) ED 1109.01 CFR 300.347 (b) (2) Transition Planning

One IEP, for a student who was in a court ordered placement, lacked documentation of a statement of transition planning, measurable goals

15.) ED 1107.04 (c) Evaluation Team Meeting

One student record, for a child placed out of district, lacked evidence that evaluation team meetings had been conducted

16.) ED 1123.05 CFR 300.572 Annual Notification of Parental Rights

One student record, for a child placed out of district, lacked evidence that parent had been provided with rights

**CITATIONS OF NONCOMPLIANCE IDENTIFIED AS A RESULT OF THE
NHDOE MODIFIED SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL VISIT TO
THE ACADEMY OF LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY**

As a result of the NHDOE Modified Special Education Program Approval visit, the following citations of non-compliance were identified at the ALT Program. 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 1119.03 CFR 300.26 Full Access To The District's Curriculum

The Academy of Learning and Technology must demonstrate evidence that students with disabilities enrolled at the school have full access and equal educational opportunities as outlined in the NH Standards for School Approval.

ED 1119.03 Curricula

The Academy of Learning and Technology needs to demonstrate evidence of curriculum offerings for both middle and high school that include required course work as outlined in the NH Standards for School Approval.

ED 1109.01 Elements of An IEP

All IEPs for students with disabilities enrolled at The Academy of Learning and Technology must be in compliance.

ED 1106.01 Special Education Process and Sequence

The Academy of Learning and Technology needs to develop policy and procedure regarding the oversight of the special education process, and ensure that all required paperwork documentation is in compliance. In addition, there must be evidence that the students are receiving all services as outlined in IEPs.

ED 1129.02 Criteria for Approval of Public and Non-Public Programs

The Academy of Learning and Technology must ensure that requirements are met for approval of special education services being provided to students with disabilities.

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.**

1. The Nashua School District would benefit from a system wide review of special education policies and programming that relate to the delivery of services, access to the general education curriculum and instruction as well as services provided to students with unique challenges in the learning process. Such a system wide review might begin to address the concerns raised with the leveling system at the middle and high schools. The existing system of ability levels does not appear to align with the district's current mission, beliefs, or district wide goals.
2. SAU 42 is strongly encouraged to look critically at professional development to ensure a coordinated, district wide focus upon prime pedagogical issues related to integrated and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners, reflective practice and personalized learning.
3. Continued professional development is also suggested on the use of data as related to special education. Specifically on the writing of IEPs, measuring of student progress, determining current levels of performance and the design of overall programming throughout the SAU.
4. The SAU may want to take a critical look at the role, responsibilities and supervision of paraprofessionals.
5. It is strongly suggested that the Nashua School District conduct discussions regarding supervision of special education personnel at the building level. Because of the significant issues of noncompliance raised during the

December 2006 visit to SAU 42, it may be beneficial to consider additional administrative support at the building level to provide informed oversight of special education programming.

6. While the visiting team recognized the value of the SAU 42 mentor program, further support for novice special educators upon entering the school district may be warranted. Special educators new to the system need clear direction on district expectations, support and guidance in the special education process. This includes referral process, preferred instructional strategies, paperwork compliance, behavior management strategies, and the implementation of state and federal special education rules and regulations.
7. It is strongly suggested that SAU 42 consider a review of existing programming currently available to students with disabilities at the middle and high school levels to determine the need for and value of expanding the continuum of learning options. This might decrease the number of students who are being placed out of district due to lack of available supports and services.
8. SAU 42 needs to take a critical look at the available data related to the number of students with disabilities being placed out of district, and begin to look at the root cause of placements away from their home schools.
9. There needs to be consistent monitoring of SPEDIS data. Based on the data provided by the NHDOE during the December 2006 Modified Special Education Program Approval Visit, a significant number of students are out of compliance. It is difficult to determine if this is a result of lapses in data entry, or if, in fact, significant issues exist in the special education process and compliance requirements.
10. Staff and administration are strongly encouraged to explore expanded vocational programming needs of students with educational disabilities.
11. As noted in this report, the parent survey results from Ledge Street School, New Searles Elementary, Elm Street Middle, Pennichuck Middle, Nashua High North and out of district students were of marginal value for determining trends or overall parent satisfaction with the services afforded their child. Consequently it is suggested that a survey be conducted again with oversight to enable district and building administration and staff reliable data from which to measure the level of parental involvement and satisfaction.

ADDENDUM

Out-of-District and James O. File Review

SAU #42

Dates: November 20, 23 & 29, 2006

Reviewers: Jane Bergeron-Beaulieu, Janice Arcaro, Jan Martin

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| ADDENDUM Out-of-District File Review and James O Monitoring |
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SAU 42

Number of Files Reviewed: 3

COMMENDATIONS

- The administration recognizes that there are a significant number of students who are being placed out of district, and a task force has been formed to begin to look at this issue
- The district has recently filled the vacant position of out of district coordinator
- Despite the vacancy in the out of district coordinator position, existing staff made every effort to try and ensure that there was oversight of the special education process

CITATIONS OF NONCOMPLIANCE

ED 1109.01 CFR 300.344 IEP Team Composition

All three IEPs reviewed lacked documentation of appropriately composed IEP teams

ED 1109.01 CFR 300.347 (a) (3) Annual Measurable IEP Goals

All three IEPs reviewed lacked measurable annual goals

ED 1109.01 CFR 300.347 (b) (2) Transition Planning

One IEP lacked documentation of a statement of transition planning, measurable goals

ED 1107.04 (c) Evaluation Team Meeting

One student record lacked evidence that evaluation team meetings had been conducted.

ED 1123.05 CFR 300.572 Annual Notification of Parental Rights

One student record lacked evidence that parent had been provided with rights