



State of New Jersey  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
PO Box 500  
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRIS CHRISTIE  
*Governor*

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*Lt. Governor*

DAVID C. HESPE  
*Commissioner*

January 15, 2016

Mr. Mark Miller, Superintendent  
Dennis Township School District  
601 Hagan Road  
Clermont, NJ 08210

Dear Mr. Miller:

The New Jersey Department of Education has completed a review of funds received and disbursed from one or more federal programs by the **Dennis Township School District**. The funding sources reviewed include titled programs for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The review covered the period July 1, 2014 through December 8, 2015. The resulting report is enclosed. Please provide a copy of the report to each board member. All issued Consolidated Monitoring Reports will be posted on the department's website at [www.state.nj.us/education/finance/jobs/monitor/consolidated](http://www.state.nj.us/education/finance/jobs/monitor/consolidated).

Utilizing the process outlined in the attached "Procedures for LEA/Agency Response, Corrective Action Plan and Appeal Process," the Dennis Township School District is required, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.6, to publicly review and discuss the findings in this report at a public board meeting no later than 30 days after receipt of the report. Within 30 days of the public meeting, the board must adopt a resolution certifying that the findings were discussed in a public meeting and approving a corrective action plan which addresses the issues raised in the undisputed findings and/or an appeal of any **monetary** findings in dispute (emphasis added). A copy of the resolution and the approved corrective action plan and/or appeal must be sent to this office within 10 days of adoption by the board. Direct your response to my attention.

Also, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.6(c), you must post the findings of the report and the board's corrective action plan on your district's website.

By copy of this report, your auditor is requested to comment on all areas of noncompliance and recommendations in the next certified audit submitted to the New Jersey Department of Education. If you have any questions, please contact Carla Spates at (609) 984-5968.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Cicchino, Director  
Office of Fiscal Accountability and Compliance

RJC/CS/dk:Dennis Twp. School District Cover Letter /consolidated monitoring 15-16  
Enclosures

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**DENNIS TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT  
601 HAGAN ROAD  
CLERMONT, NJ 08210  
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*New Jersey K-12 Education*

**CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT  
JANUARY 2016**

**District:** Dennis Township School District  
**County:** Cape May  
**Dates On-Site:** December 7 and 8, 2015  
**Case #:** CM-013-15

**FUNDING SOURCES**

Program	Funding Award
Title I, Part A	\$ 105,919
Title II, Part A	22,322
IDEA Basic	221,188
IDEA Preschool	3,613
Total Funds	<u>\$ 353,042</u>

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**BACKGROUND**

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and other federal laws require local education agencies (LEAs) to provide programs and services to their districts based on the requirements specified in each of the authorizing statutes (ESEA and IDEA). The laws further requires state education agencies such as the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) monitor the implementation of federal programs by sub recipients and determine whether the funds are being used by the district for their intended purpose and achieving the overall objectives of the funding initiatives.

**INTRODUCTION**

The NJDOE visited the Dennis Township School District to monitor the district's use of federal funds and the related program plans, where applicable, to determine whether the district's programs are meeting the intended purposes and objectives, as specified in the current year applications and authorizing statutes, and to determine whether the funds were spent in accordance with the program requirements, federal and state laws, and applicable regulations. The on-site visit included staff interviews and documentation reviews related to the requirements of the following programs: Title I, Part A (Title I); Title II, Part A (Title II); IDEA Basic and Preschool for the period July 1, 2014 through December 8, 2015.

The scope of work performed included the review of documentation including grant applications, program plans and needs assessments, grant awards, annual audits, board minutes, payroll records, accounting records, purchase orders, a review of student records, classroom visitations and interviews with instructional staff to verify implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEP), a review of student class and related service schedules, interviews of child study team members and speech language specialists and an interview of the program administrator regarding the IDEA grant, as well as current district policies and procedures. The monitoring team members also conducted interviews with school personnel, reviewed the supporting documentation for a sample of expenditures and conducted internal control reviews.

**EXPENDITURES REVIEWED**

The grants that were reviewed included Title I, Title II, and IDEA Basic and Preschool from July 1, 2014 through December 8, 2015. A sampling of purchase orders and/or salaries was taken from each program reviewed.

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**GENERAL OVERVIEW FOR USES OF TITLE I, TITLE II AND IDEA FUNDS**

**Title I**

The district is using its FY 2015-2016 Title I funds to implement a targeted assistance program in its elementary school. Primarily, the district provides supplemental instructional opportunities through pullout programs. Prior year funds were spent on similar programs.

**Title II**

The district is using FY 2015-2016 Title II funds for professional development and substitutes to enable teachers to attend workshops.

**IDEA (Special Education)**

The district is using the FY 2015-2016 IDEA Basic and Preschool funds to reduce district tuition expenditures for students receiving special education services in private schools for students with disabilities. The nonpublic proportionate share is being used to provide the services of a supplemental teacher, technology supplies and case management for classified students at Bishop McHugh Regional Catholic School.

**DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Title I**

**Finding 1:** The district's Title I parental notification letter did not include the multiple, educationally related, objective entrance and exit criteria used for Title I student identification, the remediation actions the school is using and the option for parents to opt-out of Title I services. This information is necessary for parents to understand the reasons their child was selected to participate in the Title I program, and what is needed for their child to exit the program.

**Citation:** ESEA §1115: *Targeted Assistance Schools*; and ESEA §1118(c): *Parental Involvement (Policy Involvement)*.

**Required Action:** The district must revise its Title I participation letter to include the multiple, educationally related, objective criteria used to identify students for Title I services, and the criteria used to exit students from the Title I program. The district must provide a copy of its revised FY 2015-2016 Title I participation letter to the NJDOE for review.

**Finding 2:** The district did not provide evidence the established entrance and exit criteria were consistently applied to determine Title I student eligibility. The monitors were unable to verify the process used to select and serve Title I students.

**Citation:** ESEA §1115: *Targeted Assistance Programs*.

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**Required Action:** The district must establish a tracking mechanism for proper Title I student identification. This mechanism must include documentation of the use of multiple, educationally related, objective criteria to identify students for eligibility to receive Title I services.

**Finding 3:** The district was unable to provide evidence the parental involvement policy was reviewed for the current school year. The annual review and board adoption allow parents and other stakeholders to impact the parental involvement process and identify the unique needs of the Title I schools and Title I parents.

**Citation:** ESEA §1118(a)(2): *Parental Involvement (Written Policy)*; and ESEA §1118(b): *Parental Involvement (School Parental Involvement Policy)*.

**Required Action:** The district must submit copies of a board approved district parental involvement policy to the NJDOE for review. The district must also provide evidence of inclusion of the associated stakeholder groups in the development of a 2015-2016 school year parental involvement policy, and evidence of the involvement of parents and families in the development and annual review process. The district must provide evidence to the NJDOE that these documents were developed with the input of the parents/guardians of Title I students.

**Finding 4:** The district was unable to provide school-level Title I parental involvement policies for the elementary school.

**Citation:** ESEA §1118(b): *Parental Involvement (School Parental Involvement Policy)*.

**Required Action:** The district should provide technical assistance to its Title I served school in the development of a school-level parental involvement policy and ensure the school works with their stakeholder groups to develop the policy and review it annually. The district must submit copies of a school-level policy to the NJDOE for review. The district must also submit evidence of engaging parents in the development and review of the policy (meeting agendas, sign in sheets, minutes).

**Finding 5:** The district was unable to provide evidence that its Title I school convened an annual Title I parent meeting. Not conducting an annual meeting to explain the Title I legislation and the district's Title I programs does not allow parents of Title I students to be informed and vested in the Title I process.

**Citation:** ESEA §1118(c)(1) and (2): *Parental Involvement*.

**Required Action:** The district must immediately convene the 2015-2016 school year annual Title I meeting for the parents/guardians of participating Title I students. The district must submit evidence of convening the meeting (e.g., invitational letter/flyer, agenda, meeting minutes, and sign in sheets) to the NJDOE for review.

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**Finding 6:** The district was unable to provide evidence it distributed a school-parent compact for the current school year.

**Citation:** ESEA §1118(c)(1): *Parental Involvement*.

**Required Action:** The district must ensure its Title I school has a school-parent compact that is developed with the input of parents and distributed directly to parents of students participating in the Title I program. The district must submit copies of the 2015-2016 school year school-parent compact and evidence of the involvement of parents and families, of Title I students, in its development to the NJDOE for review.

**Finding 7:** The district provides academic interventions through the use of pullout programs. The removal of students from core courses creates increased gaps in the skills and knowledge of academically at-risk students.

**Citation:** ESEA §1115(c)(1)(C) *Targeted Assistance Programs (Components of a Targeted Assistance Program)*; and USDE Policy letter October 6, 2008.

**Required Action:** The district must give consideration to revising its Title I program to provide services to Title I students in language arts and mathematics that does not remove students from their core courses. Primary consideration should be given to providing extended learning time opportunities, such as before and afterschool, and summer programs.

**Finding 8:** The district was unable to provide evidence of holding consultation meetings with nonpublic schools that enroll resident students. Per the legislative requirement, the district must ensure it performs its due diligence in meeting with the nonpublic school officials to ensure eligible students from its attendance area receive appropriate Title I services. During the consultation meeting, the district must discuss the following items: collection of poverty data, student identification, and services for eligible students, parents, and teachers.

**Citation:** ESEA §1120 (b): *Participation of Children Enrolled in Private Schools*.

**Required Action:** The district has submitted notices of consultation meetings scheduled with nonpublic schools to the NJDOE for review. The district must retain signed/certified receipts of its correspondence to nonpublic schools, copies of Affirmation of Consultation signed by all consulted parties, and Refusal forms. The district must also provide copies of meeting agenda, minutes, and sign in sheets to the NJDOE for review.

**Finding 9:** The district had errors on its TPAF/FICA reimbursement report for FY 2015-2016. Incorrect wages were used on the report.

**Citation:** N.J.S.A. 18A:66-90: *Reimbursement of TPAF/FICA*.

**Required Action:** The district must file an amended report. A copy of the report should be submitted with the Corrective Action Plan.

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**Finding 10:** The district budget did not match the grant budget submitted in the Electronic Web Enabled Grant (EWEG) system. The district must match its EWEG budget to its accounting system to ensure only allowable items are charged to the grant.

**Citation:** 2 CFR §200.302: Financial management.

**Required Action:** The district must amend its district accounting to match the function and object codes reported in the grant and submit evidence to the NJDOE for review.

**Finding 11:** The district remitted funds for nonpublic expenses to another LEA (North Wildwood) for distribution to the nonpublic school. Funds for services must stay in control of the LEA that receives them.

**Citation:** ESEA §1120 (d)(2): *Participation of Children Enrolled in Private Schools, Provision of services*; and 2 CFR §200.302: Financial management.

**Required Action:** The district must either recoup the funds from the other LEA, or not charge the funds to the grant.

**Finding 12:** The district's use of Title I funds for general supplies and items used by the entire school supplanted state/local funds.

**Citation:** ESEA §1120A(b): *Fiscal Requirements (Federal Funds to Supplement, Not Supplant, Non-Federal Funds)*.

**Required Action:** The district must reverse the Title I costs for the general supplies and items used by the entire school. The district must provide evidence of the journal entry to reverse the expenditures to the NJDOE for review.

## **Title II**

**Finding 13:** The district is not in compliance with federal and state requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT). A review of middle school content area teachers' personnel folders found a teacher possessed K-5 certification with content area specialization in mathematics and social studies, but provided no evidence the same teacher currently providing science instruction is highly qualified for that content area. The New Jersey HQT Identification Forms were not completed and content area specialization for science was denied by the Office of Licensing. HQT Identification Forms must be supported by documentation to illustrate the manner in which highly qualified status was obtained. This would include transcripts for eligible coursework, official Praxis II test score reports, or certifications.

**Citation:** ESEA §1111(b): *State Plans (Academic Standards)*; ESEA §1119: *Qualifications for Teachers and Paraprofessionals*; ESEA §2122: *Local Application and Needs Assessment*; ESEA §2123: *Local Use of Funds*; and N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-5: *General Certification Policies*.



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**Required Action:** The district must develop and disseminate a Title I Letter to parents about HQT in February 2016 and submit a copy to the NJDOE for review. A template of the HQT follow-up letter can be found at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/title1/hqs/rtk.htm>. The school must issue the HQT follow-up letter to the parents of any child taught by unqualified staff for four or more consecutive weeks. In addition, the teacher should move towards proper certification by completing the Praxis II before the next school year.

**Finding 14:** The district did not have district-based or school-based professional development plans. All schools and districts in New Jersey are required to create an annual district professional development plan and all schools are required to create a school-level professional development plan. Activities in the school-level plans must be consistent with the district professional development plan. The district-level and school-level plans must align with New Jersey’s definition of Professional Development and Professional Development Standards for Teachers and the New Jersey Standards for Professional Learning.

**Citations:** ESEA §2122: *Local Applications and Needs Assessment*; N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.5: School-Level Professional Development Planning Requirements; and N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.6: District-Level Professional Development Planning Requirements.

**Required Action:** The district must create a professional development plan that is consistent with the schools professional development plan and professional development funded activities created and reviewed by the School Improvement Panel (ScIP) committee of each school. The district must submit the professional development plans for the schools and district to the NJDOE for review with the corrective action plan. Guidance can be found at: <http://www.nj.gov/education/profdev/sdpdp>.

**Finding 15:** The district’s use of Title II funds for district initiatives and instructional materials identified below are unallowable.

Item	Conference Title	PO#	Account Code	Amount
1	Genesis Educational Services Data Based Training	1046-15	20-272-200-300-30	\$ 6,000.00
2	Pearson Customer Support Science Program Activation	1052-15	20-270-200-500-30	3,500.00
3	SRI & ETTC Consortium Participation FY2015-2016 522 students @ \$3.25 each	58-16	20-272-200-500-30	1,696.50
				\$ 11,196.50

**Citation:** ESEA §2123(5)(10)(b): *Local Use of Funds (Supplement, Not Supplant)*; and 2 CFR §200.403: Basic Considerations (Factors affecting allowability of costs).

**Required Action:** The district must reverse the disallowed cost and submit the adjusting entry showing the removal to NJDOE for review. The district must also amend its FY 2015-

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2016 Title II application, use state/local funds to support these programs and repurpose the Title II funds for program(s) that are consistent with approved Title II activities.

**Finding 16:** The district failed to provide adequate documentation to support the district's use of \$4,500.00 (PO# 2111-16) and \$830.75 (PO#1054-15) for the total of \$5,330.75 of Title II funds to pay for 250 credits at SRI & ETTC and Launch Pad Training. Based on the documentation provided, the district's use of these funds for this purpose appeared to supplant not supplement other funding sources. As a result, it could not be determined if the costs were reasonable, necessary or allocable to the federal award.

**Citation:** ESEA §9101(11): *Definitions (Core Academic Subjects)*, ESEA §2123(b): *Local Use of Funds (Supplement Not Supplant)*; 2 CFR §200.403: Basic Guidelines (Factors affecting allowability of costs).

**Required Action:** The district must amend its FY 2015-2016 Title II application, use state/local funds to support these programs and repurpose the Title II funds for program(s) that are consistent with approved Title II activities. The district must also provide the NJDOE adequate documentation supporting these charges, or reverse all unsupported charges and submit the adjusting entry to NJDOE for review.

**IDEA (Special Education)**

**Finding 17:** The district is charging ineligible costs for case management services for the nonpublic school. The district has allocated 13 percent of a district social worker salary for this purpose.

**Citation:** 34 CFR 300.202(a)(2): Use of Funds.

**Required Action:** The district must remove the ineligible costs and submit adjusting entries showing the removal and board approval for the adjustments. If the adjustments exceed 10 percent of the total grant award or if the funds will be utilized for items not previously budgeted, the application must be amended. A detailed listing of all adjusted costs must be submitted to the NJDOE for review.

**Finding 18:** Service Plans (SPs) developed for students attending nonpublic schools did not specify all of the services funded through the IDEA grant.

**Citation:** N.J.A.C. 6A:14-6.2; 20 U.S.C. §1412(a)(10)(A)(vi); 34 CFR §300.130-144; and Chapter 192 & 193 Programs for Nonpublic School Students 2011-2012.

**Required Action:** The district must ensure services provided through the IDEA grant are specified in each SP. The district must revise SPs to ensure they specify the services funded through the IDEA grant. A monitor from the NJDOE will conduct an on-site visit to review SPs developed for the 2016-2017 school year.

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**Finding 19:** Students receiving direct instruction must be taught by a HQT in core subjects. The district is providing a supplemental teacher for the students at Bishop McHugh Regional Catholic School. A review of the teacher's schedule indicates that she is currently providing small group instruction for students in grades 3-8 in the subjects of Language Arts and Mathematics. A review of her certification indicates she holds a certificate for Math K-12 and one for Elementary K-5, but she does not hold a certificate for grades 6-8 in Language Arts.

**Citation:** ESEA §1119: Qualifications for Teachers and Paraprofessionals.

**Required Action:** The district must ensure this teacher meets the HQ designation. The district must submit documentation to the NJDOE that verifies her certification for grades 6-8 Language Arts, or her assigned schedule must be revised to reflect appropriate teaching assignments based on her credentials.

**Finding 20:** The district did not document all required considerations and statements in each IEP. IEPs for students eligible for special education and related services did not consistently include:

- identification of the postsecondary liaison for transition services;
- statement of any needed interagency linkages and responsibilities;
- criteria for determining mastery of goals and objectives;
- methods of evaluating progress on goals and objectives;
- supports for school personnel; and
- statement of how the student's parents will be regularly informed of progress.

IEPs for students eligible for speech-language services did not consistently include methods of evaluating progress of goals and objectives.

**Citation:** N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.7(c)1-11, (e) 1-17, and (f); 20 U.S.C. §1414(d)(3)(A)(B); and 34 CFR §300.324(a)(1)(2).

**Required Action:** The district must ensure each IEP contains the required considerations and statements. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the district must conduct training for child study team members and speech-language specialists and develop an oversight mechanism to ensure compliance with the requirements in the citations listed above. In addition, to demonstrate correction of individual instances of noncompliance, the district must conduct annual review meetings and revise IEPs for the specific students whose IEPs were identified as noncompliant. A monitor from the NJDOE will conduct an on-site visit to interview staff, review the revised IEPs along with a random sample of additional IEPs developed at meetings conducted between April 2016 and September 2016, and to review the oversight procedures. The names of the students whose IEPs were identified as noncompliant will be provided to the district by the monitor. For assistance with correction of noncompliance, the district is referred to the state IEP sample form which is located at: [www.statenj.us/education/specialed/forms](http://www.statenj.us/education/specialed/forms).

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**Finding 21:** The district did not consistently document in the IEPs of students removed from the general education setting for more than 20 percent of the school day, including students placed in separate settings, consideration of placement in the least restrictive environment. Specifically, IEPs did not consistently include:

- the supplementary aids and services considered;
- an explanation of why the supplementary aids and services were rejected;
- a comparison of the benefits provided in general education and the benefits provided in special education;
- the potentially beneficial or harmful effects which a placement (general education) may have on the student with disabilities or the other students in the class; and
- for those students placed in separate settings, activities to transition students to a less restrictive environment.

**Citation:** N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.2 (a)8(i),(ii) and (iii); and N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.2 (a)4.

**Required Action:** The district must ensure when determining the educational placement of a child with a disability, the IEP team considers the general education class first and all required decisions regarding placement are documented in the IEP for each student removed from general education for more than 20 percent of the school day. The district must also ensure for students placed in separate settings, the IEP team identifies activities to transition the student to a less restrictive environment and document them in each IEP. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the district must conduct training for child study team members and develop an oversight mechanism to ensure compliance with the requirements in the citations listed above. To demonstrate the district has corrected the individual instances of noncompliance, the district must conduct annual review meetings and revise the IEPs for the specific students that were identified as noncompliant. A monitor from the NJDOE will conduct an on-site visit to interview staff, review revised IEPs, review a random sample of additional IEPs developed at meetings conducted between April 2016 and September 2016, and to review the oversight procedures. The names of the students whose IEPs were identified as noncompliant will be provided to the district by the monitor.

**Finding 22:** The district did not maintain documentation of the frequency and effectiveness of the interventions provided in the general education setting through the Intervention and Referral Service (I&RS).

**Citation:** N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.3(c).

**Required Action:** The district must ensure when the I&RS team identifies interventions to meet the needs of a struggling learner, the team also identifies and maintains documentation of the nature, description, frequency, and duration of the interventions and measures the effectiveness. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the district must conduct training for administrators and I&RS staff and develop an oversight mechanism to ensure compliance with the requirements in the citations listed above. A monitor from the NJDOE will conduct an on-site visit to interview I&RS team members and teachers, review

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documentation for students who were provided interventions in general education between April 2016 and September 2016, and to review the oversight procedures.

**Finding 23:** The district did not consistently conduct all required sections of the functional assessment as a component of an initial evaluation for students referred for speech-language services.

**Citation:** N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.3(e) and 3.4; N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.4(f)4(i-vi); 20 U.S.C. §1414(b)(1-3); 1412(a)(6)(b); and 34 CFR §300.304(b)(1).

**Required Action:** The district must ensure all components of a functional assessment are conducted as part of the initial evaluation process. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the district must conduct training for speech-language specialists and develop an oversight mechanism to ensure compliance with the requirements in the citations listed above. A monitor from the NJDOE will conduct an on-site visit to interview staff, review initial speech-language evaluations conducted between April 2016 and September 2016, and to review the oversight procedures.

**Administrative**

**Finding 24:** The district did not have the required supporting documents to verify the activity of staff charged to the Title I and IDEA grants. The documentation must reflect what the staff is doing and when (time slots), and must match their funded percentage. This documentation is necessary to ensure that grant funded staff are actually performing grant-related responsibilities. The district had alternative documentation that helped support the funding.

**Citation:** 2 CFR 200.430: Compensation-Personal Services.

**Required Action:** The district must identify staff members whose salaries are supported in whole or in part with Title I and IDEA funds and verify the time and activity of staff charged to the grants. The district must submit sample sheets for FY 2015-2016 to the NJDOE for review.

Prior to this, the district should consult the Department's December 2012 guidance on Time and Effort Reporting for Title I Funded Staff which is located at: <http://education.state.nj.us/broadcasts/2012/DEC/18/8649/Time%20and%20Activity%20Reporting.pdf> as a resource.

The NJDOE thanks you for your time and cooperation during the monitoring visit and looks forward to a successful resolution of all findings and implementation of all recommendations contained in this report.

If you have any questions, please contact Carla Spates via phone at (609) 984-5909 or via email at [carla.spates@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:carla.spates@doe.state.nj.us).

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