



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO Box 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

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Governor
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Commissioner

April 14, 2016

Mr. Ali Riza Gurcanli, School Lead
Paterson Charter School of Science and Technology
196 W. Railroad Avenue
Paterson, NJ 07503

Dear Mr. Gurcanli:

The New Jersey Department of Education has completed a review of funds received and disbursed from one or more federal programs by the **Paterson Charter School for Science and Technology**. 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 November 30, 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 <http://www.state.nj.us/education/compliance/monitor/>.

Utilizing the process outlined in the attached "Procedures for Charter Schools Response, Corrective Action Plan and Appeal Process," the Paterson Charter School for Science and Technology Board of Trustees 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 school'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 Steven Hoffmann at (973) 621-2750.

Sincerely,

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

RJC/SH/dk:Paterson Charter School for Science and Technology Cover Letter/consolidated monitoring
Enclosures

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500**

PATERSON CHARTER SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
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New Jersey K-12 Education

**CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT
APRIL 2016**

District: Paterson Charter School for Science and Technology
County: Passaic
Dates On-Site: December 15 and 16, 2015
Case #: CM-034-15

FUNDING SOURCES

Program	Funding Award
Title I, Part A	\$704,204
IDEA Basic	211,744
IDEA Preschool	2,831
Title II, Part A	19,280
Title III	8,997
Total Funds	<hr/> <u>\$ 947,056</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 require that 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 school for their intended purpose and achieving the overall objectives of the funding initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

The NJDOE visited the Paterson Charter School for Science and Technology to monitor the school's use of federal funds and the related program plans, where applicable, to determine whether the school'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); Title III; and IDEA Basic and Preschool for the period July 1, 2014 through November 30, 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 school 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 reviewed included Title I, Title II, Title III, and IDEA Basic and Preschool from July 1, 2014 through November 30, 2015. A sampling of purchase orders and/or salaries was taken from each program reviewed.

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GENERAL DISTRICT OVERVIEW OF USES OF TITLE I AND IDEA FUNDS

Title I Projects

The school is operating a Title I Schoolwide program. Primarily, the FY 2015-2016 Title I funds are being used for management fees, salaries, benefits, purchased services, and supplies and materials.

IDEA Projects

The school utilized the FY 2014-2015 and FY 2015-2016 IDEA Basic funds for the provision of related services such as occupational, physical and speech therapies to students with disabilities.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Title I

Finding 1: The school did not provide evidence that its parental involvement policy and the school-parent compact were developed in conjunction with Title I parents/guardians. The exclusion of Title I parents/guardians in the development of these documents did not offer them the opportunity for full participation in their child's/children's educational program.

Citation: ESEA §1118(a)(2): *Parental Involvement (Local Educational Agency Policy)*; ESEA §1118(d): *Parental Involvement (Shared Responsibilities for High Student Academic Achievement)*.

Required Action: The school must provide evidence that parents/guardians and other associated stakeholder groups are included in the development and annual review of the parental involvement policy and school-parent compact. The school must provide the NJDOE evidence (e.g., meeting announcements, meeting minutes, meeting agendas, and sign in sheets) of the development and annual review of these documents with parent/guardian input.

Finding 2: The school failed to provide evidence of a parental involvement program that met the requirements of the Title I legislation.

Citation: ESEA §1118(e), *Parental Involvement (Building Capacity for Involvement)*.

Required Action: The school must provide the NJDOE with a written parental involvement plan that lists all planned activities for the 2015-2016 school year.

Finding 3: Although the school convened its annual Title I parent meeting, no evidence was provided to confirm that the Title I legislation and associated requirements were included in the meeting discussion. In a Title I schoolwide program, all parents/guardians must be informed

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about the school's Title I program, legislative requirements, and how they can become actively engaged in helping their child/children succeed academically.

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

Required Action: The school must provide evidence that the 2015-2016 school year annual parent meeting was held by providing current documentation (e.g., invitational letter/flyer, agenda, detailed meeting minutes, and sign in sheets) of such to the NJDOE for review. In addition, the school must ensure that future Title I parent meetings are held no later than mid-October each year.

Finding 4: The school did not provide consistent evidence that it conducted the required Schoolwide Stakeholder Committee meetings. In addition, the school reported having four meetings on the same day, rather than the required quarterly stakeholder engagement meetings.

Citation: ESEA §1114(b): *Schoolwide Programs (Components of a Schoolwide Program)*.

Required Action: The school must provide the NJDOE with copies of the supporting documentation for all Schoolwide Stakeholder Committee meetings held during the 2015-2016 school year, including letters of invitation, agenda, detailed minutes, and sign in sheets with each member's title/affiliation. Going forward, the school must conduct the required quarterly meetings and documentation.

Finding 5: The school acknowledged the presence of five spoken languages in the homes of its students; however, the school did not provide evidence to confirm issuing the parental notification documents in a language other than English. This did not afford the parents of English Language Learners opportunities for participation in their child's/children's education. The school is required to provide notification documents in a language and format that is understandable to all parents.

Citation: ESEA §1111(h)(6) *Reports (Parents Right To Know)*; ESEA §1118: Parental Involvement.

Required Action: All parental notification documents must be translated in the languages of the majority of the student population, and presented to the NJDOE for review. The school must attest to the NJDOE that this practice will continue in the future.

Title II

A review of the expenditures charged to the Title II grant yielded no findings.

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Title III

A review of the expenditures charged to the Title III grant yielded no findings.

IDEA (Special Education)

Finding 6: The school did not conduct meetings within 20 calendar days of receipt of a written request for a child study evaluation or a speech-language evaluation to determine if an evaluation was warranted.

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

Required Action: The school must ensure a meeting is conducted within 20 calendar days of receipt of a written request for evaluation to determine if an evaluation is warranted. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the school 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 citation listed above. A monitor from the NJDOE will conduct an on-site visit to interview staff, review documentation from identification meetings conducted between September 2016 and December 2016, and to review the oversight procedures.

Finding 7: The school did not consistently convene meetings with required participants for students referred and/or eligible for special education.

Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.3(k)1-2; 20 U.S.C. §1414(d)(1)(B); and 34 CFR §300.321(a).

Required Action: The school must ensure meetings are conducted with required participants and documentation of participation is maintained in students' records. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the school must conduct training for child study team members 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 meeting documentation, including the sign in sheets, for meetings conducted between September 2016 and December 2016, and to review the oversight procedures.

Finding 8: The school did not conduct multidisciplinary evaluations as a component of initial evaluations for students referred for speech-language services by obtaining an educational impact statement from the classroom teacher.

Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.5(b)6 and 3.6(b).

Required Action: The school must ensure that a multidisciplinary evaluation is conducted for students referred for speech-language services by obtaining a statement from the general education teacher that details the educational impact of the speech problem on the student's progress in general education. In order to demonstrate

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correction of noncompliance, the school 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 evaluation reports for students evaluated between September 2016 and December 2016, and to review the oversight procedures.

Finding 9: The school did not consistently document in the IEPs of students removed from the general education setting for more than 20 percent of the school day consideration of placement in the least restrictive environment. Specifically, IEPs did not consistently include:

- an explanation of why the supplementary aids and services were rejected; and
- the potentially beneficial or harmful effects which a placement in general education may have on the students with disabilities or other students in the class.

Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.2 (a)8,(I and iii).

Required Action: The school must ensure when determining the educational placement of a child with a disability, the IEP team considers the general education class first and that all required decisions regarding the placement are documented in the IEP for each student removed from general education for more than 20 percent of the school day. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the school must conduct training for child study team members and develop an oversight mechanism to ensure compliance with the requirements in the citation listed above. To demonstrate that the school has corrected the individual instances of noncompliance, the school must conduct annual review meetings and revise the IEPs for specific students with IEPs that 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 September 2016 and December 2016, and to review the oversight procedures. The names of the students whose IEPs were identified as noncompliant will be provided to the school by the monitor.

Finding 10: The school did not consistently include required considerations and statements in each IEP for students eligible for speech-language services. Specifically, IEPs did not contain:

- strengths of the student;
- results of most recent evaluations;
- measurable annual goals;
- statement of how progress towards annual goals will be measured; and
- statement of how parents will be informed of student progress towards annual goals.

Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.7(c)1 and 6A:14-3.7 (e)2,3,15, and 16; and 20 U.S.C. §1414(d)(3)(A)(B); and 34 CFR §300.324(a)(1)(2).

Required Action: The school must ensure each IEP contains the required considerations and statements. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the school must

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conduct training for speech-language specialists and develop an oversight mechanism to ensure compliance with the requirements in the citations listed above. To demonstrate that the school has corrected the individual instances of noncompliance, the school must conduct annual review meetings and revise the IEPs for specific students with IEPs that 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 IEPs developed between September 2016 and December 2016, and to review the oversight procedures. The names of the students whose IEPs were identified as noncompliant will be provided to the school by the monitor.

Finding 11: The school did not consistently conduct reevaluations within three years of the previous classification date for students eligible for speech-language services.

Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A: 14-3.8(a) and 20 U.S.C. §1414(a)(2)(B)(ii) and (d); and 34 CFR §300.324(b)1.

Required Action: The school must ensure that reevaluation meetings are conducted within required timelines with required participants in attendance. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the school 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 documentation of eligibility meetings held as part of the reevaluation process between September 2016 and December 2016, and to review the oversight procedures.

Finding 12: The school did not consistently provide to students beginning at age 14, written invitations to meetings where post-school transition was being discussed.

Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.3(k)2x and 3.7(e)13, 3.7(h); 20 U.S.C. §1414 (d)(1)(A)(i)(1)(VIII); and 34 CFR §300.322.b(2).

Required Action: The school must ensure each student with an IEP age 14 or above is provided with a written invitation to any IEP meeting where transition to adult life will be discussed. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the school must conduct training for child study team members 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 copies of invitations to IEPs meetings to students age 14 and above for meetings conducted between September 2016 and December 2016, and to review the oversight procedures.

Finding 13: The school did not consistently provide to students eligible for special education and related services written notice of graduation containing all required components within required timelines.

Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.11(b).

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Required Action: The school must ensure that parents or adult students are provided with written notice of graduation prior to graduation. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the school must conduct training for child study team members and develop an oversight mechanism to ensure compliance with the requirements in the citation listed above. A monitor from the NJDOE will conduct an on-site visit to interview staff, review written notice of graduation for students with disabilities who will graduate at the conclusion of the 2016-2017 school year, and to review the oversight procedures.

Finding 14: The school did not consistently provide to students eligible for special education and related services a summary of academic achievement and functional performance prior to graduating and/or aging out.

Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.11(b)4; 20 U.S.C. §1414(c); and 34 CFR §300.305(e)(3).

Required Action: The school must ensure students are provided with a summary of academic achievement and functional performance prior to graduation. In order to demonstrate correction of noncompliance, the school must conduct training for child study team members 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 the summary of academic achievement and functional performance provided to eligible students at the conclusion of the 2016-2017 school year, and to review the oversight procedures.

Administrative

Finding 15: On several occasions, the school failed to issue a purchase order prior to goods being purchased or services being rendered (confirming order). School policy and state regulations require that a properly executed purchase order be issued prior to the purchase of goods or the rendering of services.

Citation: Uniform Grant Guidance 2 C.F.R. 200.302; N.J.S.A. 18A:18A(2)(v) Public School Contracts Law.

Required Action: Purchase orders should be issued to all vendors prior to goods or services being provided.

Finding 16: The school charged several expenditures to the incorrect general ledger accounts. For example, an asset purchased in excess of \$2,000 was charged to supplies rather than equipment.

Citation: *Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts (Handbook 2R2.)*

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Required Action: The school should ensure that expenditures are charged to the appropriate general ledger account in accordance with the Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts.

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 Steven Hoffmann via phone at (973) 621-2750 or via email at steven.hoffmann@doe.state.nj.us.