



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

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

DAVID C. HESPE
Acting Commissioner

March 13, 2014

Mr. Michael Nitti, Superintendent
Ewing Township Public Schools
2099 Pennington Road
Ewing, NJ 08618

Dear Mr. Nitti:

The New Jersey Department of Education has completed a review of funds received and disbursed from one or more federal programs by the **Ewing Township Board of Education**. 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, 2012 through June 28, 2013. 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/finance/jobs/monitor/consolidated>.

Utilizing the process outlined in the attached "Procedures for LEA/Agency Response, Corrective Action Plan and Appeal Process," the Ewing Township Board of Education 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 Lori Ramella at (609) 984--0937.

Sincerely,

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

RJC/LR/dk:Ewing Township Cover Letter/consolidated monitoring
Enclosures

Distribution List

Peter Shulman
David Corso
Justin Barra
Susan Martz
Michael Yapple
Marie Barry
Karen Campbell
Robert Ortley
Peggy McDonald
Kimberly Murray
Lori Ramella
Laura Morana
Stephen M. Eells

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO BOX 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500**

EWING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
2099 PENNINGTON ROAD
EWING, NJ 08618
PHONE: (609) 538-9800



New Jersey K-12 Education

**CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT
MARCH 2014**

District: Ewing Township School District
County: Mercer
Dates On-Site: June 26, 27 and 28, 2013
Case #: CM-026-12

FUNDING SOURCES

Program	Funding Award
Title I, Part A	\$ 449,431
IDEA Basic	1,063,707
IDEA Preschool	39,858
Title II, Part A	79,928
Title III	22,460
Carl D. Perkins	19,784
Race to the Top	35,869
Total Funds	<u>\$ 1,711,037</u>

**EWING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT
MARCH 2014**

BACKGROUND

The Elementary & 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, IDEA, Race to the Top and Carl D. Perkins). 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 district for their intended purpose and achieving the overall objectives of the funding initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

The NJDOE visited the Ewing 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); Title III; IDEA; Carl D. Perkins; and Race to the Top for the period July 1, 2012 through June 28, 2013.

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 district 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; Title III; IDEA; Carl D. Perkins; and Race to the Top from July 1, 2012 through June 28, 2013. A sampling of purchase orders was taken from the entire population and later identified as to the grant that was charged.

**EWING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT
MARCH 2014**

**GENERAL DISTRICT OVERVIEW OF USES OF TITLE I, TITLE II, TITLE III, IDEA,
RACE TO THE TOP AND CARL D. PERKINS FUNDS**

Title I

The district operates targeted assistance programs at its three Title I funded schools: Parkway Elementary School, W. L. Antheil Elementary School, and Gilmore J. Fisher Middle School. As its priority problems, the district identified Closing the Achievement Gap, English Language Arts, and Mathematics for students in the following subgroups: economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient and racial/ethnic minorities.

Title II

Title II funds were used for professional development and class-size reduction.

Title III

Title III funds were expended on technology, English as a Second Language supplies, extended year and extended day programs and summer programs.

IDEA (Special Education)

The majority of the IDEA Basic and Preschool funds were used to reduce district tuition expenditures to support out-of-district placements for students who have educational needs that cannot be currently addressed within the existing district programs. In addition, some IDEA funds were used to purchase materials and iPads for speech programs.

Race to the Top

Race to the Top funds were expended on teacher evaluation tools, such as Teachscape for walkthroughs.

Carl D. Perkins

Carl D. Perkins grant funds were used to update support activities in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Title I

Finding 1: The notification letters sent to the parents/guardians of identified Title I students did not include clearly defined entrance and exit criteria. The parents/guardians of identified Title I students must be informed of the multiple educationally-related criteria used to identify their child/children for Title I services.

**EWING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT
MARCH 2014**

Citation: ESEA §1115(B): *Targeted Assistance Programs (Eligible Children from Eligible Population)*.

Required Action: The district must include clearly defined entrance and exit criteria in its Title I parental notification letter. The district must provide a copy of its revised FY 2013-2014 parental notification letter to the NJDOE for review.

Finding 2: The district could not provide evidence of when its Title I written parental involvement policy was distributed. Per the legislative requirement, parents/guardians of Title I students have a right to be involved in the development of the written parental involvement policy, as well as be informed of ways they can further engage themselves in the academic performance and achievement of their children.

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

Required Action: For FY 2013-2014, the district must ensure all of its funded Title I schools distribute a written parental involvement policy to parents/guardians of the Title I students. The district must submit a copy of the written policy to the NJDOE for review.

Finding 3: The district could not provide evidence of convening the annual Title I parent meeting for its funded schools. The parents/guardians of identified Title I students are entitled to be informed about the school's participation in Title I, Part A programs, legislative requirements, and ways in which they can be involved in helping their child/children succeed academically.

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

Required Action: The district must convene an annual Title I parent meeting for the parents/guardians of its identified Title I students. The district must provide documentation of convening the meeting (e.g., invitational letter/flyer, agenda, meeting notes, sign in sheets) to the NJDOE for review.

Finding 4: The district could not provide evidence of consulting with nonpublic schools that enroll resident students to inform them of the opportunity to participate in the district's Title I program. Per the legislative requirement, the district must consult with the nonpublic school officials to ensure that eligible students from its attendance areas receive appropriate Title I services. During the consultation process the district must discuss the collection of student poverty data, identification of eligible students, and services for students, their families and their teachers.

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

Required Action: For FY 2013-2014, the district must formalize its nonpublic consultation process. The district must retain signed/certified receipts of its correspondence to nonpublic schools, copies of signed Affirmation of Consultation forms

**EWING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT
MARCH 2014**

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 5: In its FY 2012-2013 ESEA Consolidated Application in the Electronic Web Enabled Grant System (EWEG), the district reserved \$2,500 for its homeless student population; however, at the time of the monitoring visit the district could not provide evidence of the services provided to its homeless student population. Students experiencing homelessness are at significant risk of academic failure, regardless of their previous academic standing.

Citation: 20 USC §6312(b)(1)(E)(ii), 2001: *Title I Part A Coordination with McKinney-Vento*.

Required Action: The district must provide documented evidence to the NJDOE that they were able to identify and address the needs of their homeless students.

Title II

Finding 6: The district failed to maintain copies of appropriate certificates or credentials for their certificated staff. Teachers identified in the *Fall Report & State Code Combined Certification Report* did not hold certificates appropriate to the assignment resulting in the inability to demonstrate Highly Qualified Teacher status for the assignment.

Citation: ESEA §1119. *Qualifications for Teachers and Paraprofessionals*; ESEA §2123(A)(5)(B) *Local Use of Funds*; N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3 *Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders*.

Required Action: The district must update the certificated staff report and personnel records to include teacher certificates, transcripts, Highly Qualified Teacher ID Forms, test scores, etc. The NJDOE will conduct an on-site visit to review the highly qualified portions of the personnel records and the updated teacher schedules for the 2013-2014 school year.

Finding 7: Teachers holding the Teacher of the Handicapped Endorsement issued prior to September 1, 2008 may teach students with disabilities in grades preschool through 12 if they can demonstrate to the district knowledge appropriate to the content and the level to be taught.

A review of teacher credentials indicates that one teacher holds the Teacher of the Handicapped Certificate and teaches mathematics in the high school. This teacher is ineligible under the New Jersey High Objective Uniform Standard of Evaluation (HOUSE) because the Content Knowledge Matrix "Form F" does not have documentation supporting four or more credits in credit bearing mathematics courses. However, there is a note stating that a second transcript is coming from another college.

Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A:9-9.1(a)(4): Authorizations – general.

**EWING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT
MARCH 2014**

Required Action: The district must secure the missing transcript and attach it to Form F of the HOUSE Matrix. In addition, the district must submit a copy of the missing transcript to the NJDOE for review. This teacher is ineligible to teach mathematics without the transcript supporting four or more credit bearing mathematics courses.

Finding 8: The district did not notify the parents of students attending Title I schools whether the teacher providing instruction met the highly qualified designation. Title I schools must give each parent timely notice when their child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks, by a teacher who is not highly qualified. [Section 1111(h)(6)(B)(ii), ESEA.] The term “highly qualified” for this purpose is defined in section 200.56 of the Title I regulations (67 Fed. Reg. 71730, December 2, 2002), this information is available at: <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2002-4/120202a.html>.

Citation: ESEA Part A – Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies; ESEA §1111(h)(6)(B)(ii) Parents’ Right to Know letter; ESEA §1119(a)(1): *Qualifications for Teachers and Paraprofessionals*, ESEA §2123: *Local Use of Funds*.

Required Action: The district must notify parents of students being taught by teachers that are not highly qualified with the required Right to Know letter. The district must also provide copies of the Parents’ Right to Know letter for the parents of the students who were taught by the uncertified bilingual teacher.

Finding 9: In multiple incidents the reviewer was unable to determine highly qualified status for teacher assignments and certification status based on the documentation provided.

Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A:9 Professional Licensure and Standards.

Required Action: HQTID forms must be reviewed for completeness upon hire and steps must be taken to ensure certifications, Praxis II Test Score Reports and transcripts provide backup information and are filed in the individual’s personnel file. Many districts find it helpful to have a subfolder containing only the HQTID forms and documentation within the personnel file. Personnel files should be maintained in the board of education office.

Title III

Finding 10: The parental notification was available, but missing the following required elements for Title III: method of instruction that will be used to serve the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students; the notification of how the program will meet the specific needs of the child in attaining English and meeting standards; and the expected rate of transition into a classroom not tailored for LEP students.

Citation: ESEA Section 3302 *Parental Notification*.

**EWING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT
MARCH 2014**

Required Action: The district's Title III parental notification letter needs to outline the specific requirements for Title III. The district must revise its FY 2013-2014 parental notification letter and send a copy to the NJDOE for review. A sample of this letter is at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/bilingual/title3/accountability/notification/title3par.htm>.

Carl D. Perkins

Finding 11: The following expenditure, with a cost greater than \$750, was not itemized in the approved Perkins application or in an amendment to the approved application:

- Accounting Software, Cengage Learning, PO # 303614, \$2,630.10

Citation: EDGAR §80.20; Perkins One-Year Grant Application Guidelines July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013, Section D.

Required Action: The district must provide justification for purchasing items that were not approved in either the original application or amendment to the application.

Finding 12: The district did not consult with the appropriate Workforce Investment Board(s) (WIB) and forward a copy of the completed one year funding application for review and comment.

Citation: Perkins Act §134(b)(5), Perkins One-Year Grant Application Guidelines, July 1, 2012 – June 20, 2013, page 19.

Required Action: The district must provide the WIB a copy of the grant application and spending plan for review/comment for each Perkins grant application.

Finding 13: Advisory minutes, agendas, and sign in sheets were missing for the CTE program.

Citation: N.J.A.C. 6A: 19-3.1 Development, Approval, and Delivery of Career and Technical Education; Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 section 134(b)(5).

Required Action: The district must hold two advisory board meetings per academic year.

Race to the Top

A review of the expenditures charged to the Race to the Top grant yielded no findings.

**EWING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT
MARCH 2014**

IDEA (Special Education)

Finding 14: The district used federal funds to pay invoices from Catapult Learning LLC (Catapult), the service provider, which did not have the necessary supporting documents. In particular, the monthly invoices reflected amounts for “Services,” “Administrative Fee,” or “Materials” without adequate records detailing how the figures were derived and/or listings of dates, times, specific services and students served. Additionally, the charge of administrative fees was not agreed upon under the terms of the district’s contract with Catapult.

Citation: 34 CFR §80.20; 34 CFR 80.36; N.J.S.A. 18A:19-2.

Required Action: The district must refund all charges to the federal grant that were beyond the scope of the contract. With regard to any remaining charges, the district must refund all unsubstantiated charges or submit to the NJDOE for review detailed documentation supporting these charges. In addition, the district should conduct a comprehensive review of its nonpublic service providers and its contractual obligations with them, as well as establish policies and procedures to ensure that accurate records are maintained and they provide evidence of student attendance. The procedures should require attendance data in future nonpublic service provider contracts and align payment authorization with the submission of appropriate documentation. This matter will be referred to the Office of Fiscal Accountability and Compliance for further review.

Finding 15: The district appears to be charging the grant for instructional equipment, materials, and software and for related training/implementation that are being used in other district programs, rather than for the sole benefit of students with disabilities. As an illustration, the district spent preschool grant funds on licenses for two different instructional software programs for its elementary schools. The district upgraded both licenses to network versions to permit unlimited access to each program, one of which was a mathematics program for kindergarten through second grade students. Expenditures charged to the grant must be incurred for costs in excess of providing special education and related services to children with disabilities.

Citation: 2 CFR §A-87 Attachment A § (C) (1); 34 CFR § 80.20; 34 CFR § 300.202 (a).

Required Action: The district must refund the disallowed costs and provide evidence to the NJDOE for review.

Finding 16: The district improperly issued contracts to third-party providers after the receipt of invoices for services (confirming orders).

Citation: 34 CFR § 80.20; 34 CFR §80.36; N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-2v.

Required Action: The district must strengthen its internal controls to adequately address procurement procedures, commencing with the request for goods/services, through the issuance of contracts/purchase order and payment.

**EWING TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT
MARCH 2014**

Finding 17: The district posted a number of non-salary expenditures to incorrect general ledger account numbers. Specifically, numerous purchase orders for instructional services were miscoded as support services (function code 100 versus 200).

Citation: 34 CFR §80.20; N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.

Required Action: The district must ensure expenditures are charged the appropriate general ledger 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 Lori Ramella via phone at (609) 984-0937 or via email at lori.ramella@doe.state.nj.us.