

SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATE



**The School District of
South Orange-Maplewood**
Date November 24, 2014

Contents

- *Special Education Staffing*
- *Consolidated Monitoring*
- *Communication with IEP and 504*
- *DMC Summary*

Special Education Staffing

Preschool

- *Districts are required to provide special education services beginning at age 3 under 6A:14-3.5 (c)*
- *Currently 50 preschool disabled students*
- *2 half day programs, 2 full-day programs for preschool disabled students*
- *2 half day programs for inclusion pre-k*
- *4 teachers special education and P-3 certified*
- *10 paraprofessionals*

Elementary Special Education

School	Clinton	Jefferson	Marshall	Seth Boyden	South Mountain	Tuscan
Grades	K-5	3-5	K-2	K-5	K-5	K-56
ICR*	54	38	24	36	37	42
Self-Contained	6	26	19	0	0	0
Sp. Ed. Teachers in classrooms	7.5	7	7	5.5	5.5	3.75

Elementary Reading Intervention

School	Clinton	Jefferson	Marshall	Seth Boyden	South Mountain	Tuscan
Sp.Ed. Reading*	1.5	2	2	1.5	1.5	3.25
Academic Interv.**	2.5	1	1	2.5	1	1
Students	88	91	76	178	91	119

Secondary Special Education

School	Maplewood Middle	South Orange	Columbia
ICR Students	111	108	187
Self-Contained	0	10	14
Staff	13	14	23.4

Out of District

School	Grade	Autistic	E.D.	M.D.	SLD	Total
	1	1	3	2	0	6
	2	1	2	1		4
	3	5	3	1		9
	4	1	4		1	6
	5	2	4	5	2	13
	6	1	6	2	2	11
	7	3	2	2	2	9
	8	3	3		2	8
	9		3	1	4	8
	10	4	11	3	1	19
	11	1	4	8		13
19	12	4	9	8	2	23
Total		26	52	35	16	129

CONSOLIDATED MONITORING

CONSOLIDATED MONITORING

- Completed a review of funds received and disbursed from federal programs for the period of July 1, 2011 through February 28, 2013. The programs reviewed included Title I, Part A; Title II, Part A; Title III, IDEA Basic and Preschool; and the Carl D. Perkins grant.
- The monitoring took place in March 2013. Findings for this monitoring were received by the District on August 12, 2013.

CONSOLIDATED MONITORING (cont'd.)

- The scope of the consolidated monitoring 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.

CONSOLIDATED MONITORING (cont'd.)

- The Consolidated Monitoring Report identified 28 Findings across all of the programs reviewed. A Corrective Action Plan was created by the district for these findings.
- Currently, two of the twenty-eight items remain open in the area of special education. The first open item is, wording within the IEP document in the area of Least Restrictive Environment. The second open item is insufficient documentation of the consistent provision of interventions in general education settings to students exhibiting academic and/or behavioral difficulties prior to referring the student for an evaluation to include the description, frequency, duration and effectiveness of the interventions provided.
- The State will join us in a training (December 5, 2014) of building administrators and staff on the I&RS process and to conduct a review of our current least restrictive documents.

Communication on IEPs and 504s

Communication on IEPs

- At the beginning of each school year all teachers who have students with IEPs are given a document (IEP at a Glance) listing the accommodations, modifications and instructional strategies for each student.
- In the secondary school, roster teachers (special education teachers) are assigned a group of special education students. The roster teacher's responsibility is to gather pertinent data related to the student on her roster and to ensure every teacher who has the student has seen the IEP
- Whenever there is a change to an IEP or to a student's schedule on the secondary level, the roster teacher is responsible for following up with the teachers.

Communication on IEPs (cont'd.)

- In the elementary buildings the case manager assures that each teacher has signed off on viewing the IEPs of students in their classes and that they receive *IEP at a Glance*. This is true for all general education and special education teachers who have IEP students in their class.
- Google docs are also used to track all IEP services and are available to all teachers. Case managers and special education teachers reviewed IEPs with the general education staff in September.
- IEPs that are changed or updated throughout the school year will be reviewed with the special education teacher and the general education teacher(s) in real time.
- Special Education Supervisors for both elementary and secondary have met with building staff to review Least Restrictive Environments, and the differentiated classroom to both general and special education teachers.
- General education and special education teachers received additional training on differentiated instruction this October. Training, along with building visits occur each year to ensure both general education and special education teachers are familiar with accommodations and modifications of students' IEPs

Communication on 504s

- 504 services are provided and managed on the building level. Each building may have a slightly different process but all schools ensure teachers, both general and special education, are aware of a student's 504 plan and any changes that may occur during the school year..
- CHS divides the responsibilities of overseeing the 504 team and process among the assistant principals and the Director of Guidance. Both CHS and MMS use scanning to ensure teachers have access to all 504s.
- The district is working toward have all 504 plans scanned so that each teacher who has a student requiring a 504 has access to his or her plan, with the most current information.

DMC

Project	Deliverable	Status
<p>Help implement the core reading program and refine the reading intervention program at the elementary level and develop strong remediation and intervention supports for students at the secondary level.</p>	<p>Consistent implementation of core reading instruction.</p>	<p>DMC strengthened SOMSD's existing commitment to and work towards a strong core reading program. Some inconsistencies of implementation between buildings remain, and more intensive teacher training is needed.</p>
	<p>Additional time for struggling readers with content expert teachers, with and without an IEP.</p>	<p>K-2 Reading intervention implemented successfully across all schools. 3-5 reading intervention implementation is not as effective.</p>
	<p>Systematic and proactive use of data from common formative assessments.</p>	<p>Incomplete because SOMSD was unable to provide the needed data.</p>
	<p>Training in the use of data for administrators and in helping administrators manage data review session with teaching staff.</p>	<p>Incomplete because SOMSD was unable to provide the needed data.</p>

DMC (cont'd.)

Project	Deliverable	Status
Review and refine the district's model for supporting students with disabilities in general education settings.	Facilitate planning sessions to outline areas of strength and improvement in current strategies.	DMC facilitated meetings with administrators to assess current model and identify opportunities for improvement.
	Detailed data collection of present efforts, school by school, including student outcomes, staffing, and pedagogical approaches.	Incomplete because SOMSD was unable to provide the needed data.
	Help create a strategic action plan formalizing the district's new approach to supporting students in inclusion settings.	After meetings with multiple stakeholder groups and a review of best practices, DMC presented a report of SOMSD's current inclusion practices and proposing recommendations for refinements and for effective implementation of proposed changes.
	School by school analysis of staffing and program implications of formalized approach.	DMC collected detailed staff schedules using DMC's proprietary web-based tool, and subsequently generated recommendations around staffing guidelines and workload expectations.

DMC (cont'd.)

Project	Deliverable	Status
Create a special education financial management system	Identifying data and other information required to thoughtfully budget and manage special education. Creating a system to easily and timely collect the required information.	DMC mapped current process of budgeting in special education to identify strengths and weaknesses. DMC reviewed documents on related services and tuition contracts, interviewed staff, and developed a number of options for managing SOMSD use of paraprofessionals more effectively and efficiently.
	Providing technology tools to analyze the required data such that decision making is more data driven, child centered, and transparent.	
	Helping the district develop and document district-wide vision for special education criteria for staffing and workload based on the district's service delivery model.	DMC recommended new organizational structures for managing key aspects of special education. DMC provided recommendations for inter-departmental responsibilities for special education budgeting.
	Developing special education financial reports and forecasting tools.	

DMC (cont'd.)

Project	Deliverable	Status
<p>Provide project management for the creation of a special needs school at district owned property.</p>	<p>Identifying which student needs can best be met through new programming.</p>	<p>DMC consulted with SOMSD staff about populations of students who could be successfully brought back to district, use of the building, and community impact of the program. DMC provided support and guidance at a macro level. Due to program postponements, however, the implementation will be managed by SOMSD staff rather than DMC.</p>
	<p>Providing guidance in program development.</p>	
	<p>Providing guidance on space requirements.</p>	
	<p>Managing the implementation for September 2013 opening.</p>	

DMC (cont'd.)

Some areas we still need to work on are:

- We are working to ensure all teachers are providing reading instruction and have appropriate training.
- We are working to educate more special needs students in district.
- We are continuing to work on schedules that allow more time for support.
- We are continuing to identify struggling students not receiving support.
- If, in retrospect , we could have managed everyone's expectations better and shared our concerns earlier in the process we could have gotten more out of this partnership.
- If we had asked DMC to spend more time in classrooms, more time talking to staff and more time talking to parents and less time trying to work through data problems we could have gotten more out of this partnership.
- However, at the end of this partnership we are supporting more struggling students than when we began. More struggling elementary students have more intensive services than when we began this process. More secondary struggling students have more time with content experts than when we began this process.