



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PO Box 500

TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRIS CHRISTIE  
*Governor*

KIM GUADAGNO  
*Lt. Governor*

CHRISTOPHER D. CERF  
*Acting Commissioner*

February 1, 2012

Dr. Scott Oswald, Chief School Administrator  
Collingswood Public Schools  
200 Lees Avenue  
Collingswood, NJ 08108

Dear Dr. Oswald:

The New Jersey Department of Education has completed a review of funds received and disbursed from one or more federal programs by the **Collingswood Board of Education**. The funding sources reviewed include titled programs for the Education Jobs Act of 2010 (Ed Jobs) in particular, and/or Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The review covered the period July 1, 2010 through November 30, 2011. The resulting report is enclosed. Please provide a copy of the report to each board member. All issued Ed Jobs monitoring reports will be posted on the department's website at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/finance/jobs/monitor/>.

Utilizing the process outlined in the attached "Procedures for LEA/Agency Response, Corrective Action Plan and Appeal Process," the Collingswood 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 Anthony Hearn at (609) 633-2492.

Sincerely,

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

RJC/AH/dk:Collingswood BOE Cover Letter/ Ed Jobs  
Enclosures

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PO BOX 500  
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COLLINGSWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT  
200 LEES AVENUE  
COLLINGSWOOD, NJ 08108  
PHONE: (856) 962-5700



**Education Jobs Fund Program**  
*New Jersey K-12 Education*

EDUCATION JOBS CONSOLIDATED MONITORING REPORT  
FEBRUARY 2012

**District:** Collingswood School District  
**County:** Camden  
**Dates On-Site:** December 12 and 13, 2011  
**Case #:** Ed Jobs-015-11

**FUNDING SOURCES**

Program	Funding Award
Ed Jobs	\$ 363,276
Title I	366,346
IDEA Basic	447,992
IDEA Preschool	11,452
Title IIA	60,372
Title III Immigrant	6,759
Total Funds	<u>\$ 1,256,197</u>

**COLLINGSWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT  
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**BACKGROUND**

The *Education Jobs Act of 2010 (Ed Jobs)* 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 and Ed Jobs). 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 Collingswood School District to monitor the district's use of *Ed Jobs* 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: Ed Jobs, Title I; Title IIA; Title III; IDEA for the period July 1, 2010 through November 30, 2011.

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, student record review, classroom visitations and interviews with instructional staff to verify implementation of IEPs, review of student class and related service schedules, interview child study team members and the speech-language specialist, and interview the program administrator regarding IDEA grant and 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 Education Jobs Act, Title I, Title IIA, Title III, and IDEA from July 1, 2010 through November 30, 2011. A sampling of purchase orders was taken from the entire population and later identified as to the grant that was charged.

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**GENERAL DISTRICT OVERVIEW OF USES OF TITLE I AND IDEA FUNDS**

**Title I Projects**

The district is using its FY 2011-2012 Title I, Part A funds to implement targeted assistance programs in the district. Primarily, the district provides tutoring services through in-class support and a mathematics lab. The district is refocusing their grant into the middle school through an amendment and will increase services to the school that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress.

**IDEA Projects (Special Education)**

The majority of the FY 2011-2012 IDEA Basic funds is being used to reduce district tuition expenditures for students receiving special educational services in public school programs in other districts and approved private schools for the disabled. Funds are also being used to purchase supplies and materials for a greenhouse that will enable the district to expand the vocational programs for students with disabilities aged 14-21. Additionally, computers were purchased for use with students for the provision of special education and related services. IDEA Preschool funding is used to purchase technology and software that will benefit preschool age students. The district has implemented the Creative Curriculum in the preschool program and IDEA Preschool funds are being used to purchase books and supplies to supplement the existing preschool curricula. Nonpublic funding will support a part time instructional assistant for four students attending a nonpublic school located in the district.

**DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Ed Jobs Act Funding**

**Finding 1:** The district funded staff from Ed Jobs funding, but did not include them in the TPAF/FICA reimbursement report for the 2010-2011 school year.

**Citation:** N.J.S.A. 18A:66-90.

**Required Action:** The district must amend its TPAF/FICA Report to include all grant funded staff and submit a copy to the NJDOE for review and payment.

**Title I**

**Finding 2:** The district is supplanting state/local funds to support the program for low-performing students in its Title I elementary schools. The district offers a program for low-performing students in all its elementary schools; therefore, students in the Title I schools are not receiving a program that is supplemental to the program offered in the district's non-Title I schools.

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

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**Required Actions:** The district's Title I schools must develop and implement a program to provide services to its Title I students that are above and beyond the services to students in its non-Title I schools. The district has submitted a revised plan which indicates that it will no longer use Title I funds to support the elementary schools. The district will now exclusively fund its middle school.

**Finding 3:** The district did not inform parents of its Title I program selection criteria, why the child met the selection criteria and the course of action that the school has determined to remediate the child. All of these elements must be included in the notification letter to parents about their child's participation in the Title I program.

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

**Required Action:** The district must include in its parent notification letters the multiple measures used to identify the students and the reason for identification as well as clearly defined exit criteria. The district notification letters must be updated for FY 2012-13 to include more specificity regarding entrance and exit criteria. The district submitted a revised letter that was acceptable and must verify the distribution method of the letter.

**Finding 4:** For the FY 2011-2012 school year, there is no evidence the district's written parent involvement policy was distributed or board adopted. The board adoption date was not accurately reflected in the FY 2011-2012 NCLB Consolidated Application on Electronic Web Enabled Grant (EWEG).

**Citation:** ESEA §1118 (a)(2) and (b)(1): *Parental Involvement (Local Educational Agency Policy)*.

**Required Action:** The district must obtain board approval for its current district parent involvement policy and distribute it to parents of Title I students. The board adoption date of the parent involvement policy must be consistent with the date reflected in the FY 2011-2012 NCLB Application on EWEG.

**Finding 5:** The letter to parents of eligible Supplemental Educational Services (SES) students does not meet the regulatory requirements. Parents were not given adequate time to respond to the district. The federal SES non-regulatory guidance advises districts that parents should have a response window of at least two weeks. The district's letter is dated September 26, 2011 with a response due date of October 7, 2011. (The NJDOE does recognize that the district continued to accept applications after this date and made follow-up phone calls to families that did not respond).

**Citation:** ESEA §1116(e): *Academic Assessment and Local Educational Agency and School Improvement (Supplemental Educational Services)*.

**Required Action:** The district must ensure that the SES notification letter will be revised to meet the statutory and regulatory requirements. The district submitted a

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revised letter to the NJDOE. Also, the district's web page must be updated to include the required SES information including the link to the SES available providers.

**Finding 6:** The district's letter to parents of students to the school in need improvement (SINI) does not meet the legislative guidelines by not having comparative data.

**Citation:** ESEA §1116(b)(6): *Academic Assessment and Local Educational Agency and School Improvement.*

**Required Action:** The district must revise its parental notification letter to indicate how its SINI compares academically to other schools in the state, the district's and state's actions to address the problems, parent's actions to help address the problems and parental options such as school choice and/or SES. The district revised the letter and mailed the letter to parents prior to issuance of this report. No further action is required.

**Finding 7:** The district did not include nonpublic enrollment numbers on the FY 2011-2012 NCLB Application in Step One of the Title I, Part A eligibility tab.

**Citation:** ESEA §1120 *Participation of Children Enrolled In Private School.*

**Required Action:** For FY 2012-2013, the district's EWEG application must reflect the accurate number of nonpublic resident students in its attendance area.

**Finding 8:** The district does not have the required supporting documents to verify the activity of Title I staff as required by federal law.

**Citation:** OMB Circular A-87, Attachment B, Section 8(h): *Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments (Compensation for personal services).*

**Required Action:** The district must verify the time and activity of staff charged to the grant. The district must submit a list of FY 2012 Title I funded staff, salaries, funding percentages and time sheets to date to the NJDOE for review (including administrative staffing).

**Finding 9:** The district did not have a mechanism to track mandatory reserves such as SINI professional development and parental involvement in its accounting system to ensure accuracy of final reports.

**Citation:** EDGAR, PART 80--*Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments*, Section 20, Standards for financial management systems.

**Required Action:** The district must track its restricted reserves to ensure and verify spending of restricted amounts. The district must submit a list of account numbers being used for this purpose with a description of the accounts to the NJDOE for review.

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**Finding 10:** The district does not have a comprehensive equipment inventory for items purchased with Title I and IDEA funds.

**Citation:** EDGAR, PART 80--*Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments*, Section 32, Equipment.

**Required Action:** The district must develop a system to track equipment purchased with federal grants. Although the state threshold for reporting equipment is \$2,000 in the EWEG system, the district may have its own lower threshold. The school must track any amount that is less expensive to track than it is to replace. All inventoried items should include tag number, cost, location, date of purchase, grant that funded the purchase and item description. The school must submit a comprehensive inventory of all equipment purchased to the NJDOE for review.

**Title IIA**

There were no findings in Title IIA.

**IDEA (Special Education)**

There were no findings in IDEA.

**Administrative**

**Recommendation 1:** Under the New Jersey's Public District Contracts Law (PSCL), districts are not required to advertise for bids or competitively contract the provision of goods and services by vendors on the state contract list. In accordance with the PSCL [N.J.S.A. 18A:18A:10(a)], a board of education may place its order with a vendor offering the lowest price, including delivery charges, that best meets the requirements of the board of education. However, for all federal funds, districts need to review 34 CFR Part 80.36 on procurement requirements. The federal procurement regulations under this section do not include all the exemptions allowed under the PSCL and therefore, it is our understanding these federal regulations require districts to competitively contract or bid all goods and services over the bid threshold, whether exempt under PSCL or not. The federal rules do include provisions for procurement by "noncompetitive proposals," but only under certain circumstances.

The NJDOE has requested clarification from the federal government regarding vendors on the state contract list and we are still waiting for a definitive response. It is the department's position and recommendation to the federal government that such contracts do not need any additional documentation beyond the statutory requirement under N.J.S.A. 18A:18A:10(c) that prior to placing orders, the board of education shall document with specificity that the goods and services selected best meet the requirements of the board of education. See LFN 2010-3 issued January 15, 2010 for more information on competitive contracting for districts and professional development services.

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**Citation:** EDGAR, PART 80--*Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments*, Section 36, Procurement.

**Recommended Action:** The district should review 34 CFR Part 80.36 and use open and competitive procedures where at all possible. The district should also analyze and include documentation in its files that demonstrates the district ensured the costs were reasonable.

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 Anthony Hearn via phone at (609) 633-2492 or via email at [anthony.hearn@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:anthony.hearn@doe.state.nj.us).