



**Rhode Island Department of Education
Office of Student, Community and Academic Supports**

School Support System Report and Support Plan

**Blackstone Academy Charter School
May 2020**

SCHOOL SUPPORT SYSTEM

A Collaborative System of Focused Monitoring

Introduction

The purpose of the School Support System (SSS) is to provide a means of accountability for delivery of programs and services for students with exceptionalities. The School Support System model is designed to promote the involvement of the whole school district, general educators as well as special educators and parents. It is designed to learn if the district meets the regulations and what effects programs and services have on student outcomes. Finally, the SSS develops a school support plan for training and technical assistance.

To accomplish this the SSS includes these components:

- **The Orientation Meeting:** The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) staff meets the Local Education Agency (LEA) to plan the site review and identify issues or initiatives that may influence programs or service delivery.

- **Data Analysis Meeting:** The RIDE staff meets to review LEA demographic information on selected reports including: the state performance plan, census information, and information collected through record review, staff questionnaires and parent interviews. To ensure that the child is at the center of the study, all analyses begin with the child. Thus, a sample of approximately 20 students with exceptionalities is selected; the records of these students are reviewed; their parents, teachers and related service providers are interviewed, and their classrooms are observed. The result is an in-depth, unified examination of the actual provision of programs and services for students with exceptionalities. The RIDE staff compiles a preliminary summary of their analyses of this data.

- **Presentation by the LEA and School Site Review:** The on-site review begins with a presentation of programs by teachers and staff. The presentation provides the review team with general and specific information on delivery of programs and services to students. Following this presentation, on-site reviews to all schools are made. The team members interview school administrators and teaching staff. Parents and central office staff are also interviewed. The team gathers sufficient information and works with the LEA personnel to generate a report, covering the following:
 - The district's compliance with the state and federal regulations, relative to the education of students with exceptionalities.
 - The quality and effectiveness of programs and services provided by the district.
 - The need for professional development and technical assistance that will enable the LEA to improve programs and services.

- **The Support Plan:** The Ride team, LEA central office and building administrators meet to review the data and complete a report of results. The group designs a professional development/technical assistance support plan with timelines for implementation. This plan enables the school and district to correct areas of non-compliance and to strengthen promising programs and correct areas of weakness in order to improve services and programs for all students.

- **The SSS Report:** The report summarizes the findings from the various data sources. The format of the report uses four divisions: Indicators, Findings, Documentation, and Support Plan. Indicators describe either performance or compliance. Findings can include a variety of some six categories, from School Improvement to Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment. The documentation section of the report distinguishes the source of

the finding. The support plan reflects the response to the described findings. The support plan describes the corrective action by the district as well as resources and time lines to improve programs and services.

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**Blackstone Academy Charter School
School Support System Review**

Record Review Team Leaders

Team A – Susan Wood and Sandra Cambio Gregoire

The RIDE, Office of Student, Community & Academic Supports School Support System process was facilitated to provide a means of accountability for delivery of programs and services to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The following pages reflect the findings of that process.

1. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (FAPE/LRE)

Indicator		Findings	Support Plan
Result	1	<p>Least Restrictive Environment Data (State Performance Plan Indicator #5)</p> <p>Based on the FY July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018 State Performance Plan information on B Public Schools Placement is as follows:</p> <p>The percentage of students educated 80 to 100% of the time in general education settings is 98.47% (RI District Average is 71.05%)</p> <p>Percentage of students educated for less than 40% of the time in general education settings is 0% (RI District Average is 12.5%)</p> <p>Percentage of students educated in private separate schools, homebound/hospitalized and private residential schools is 1.53% (RI District Average is 5.11%)</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis State Performance Plan</i></p>	
Result	2	<p>Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments (State performance Plan Indicator #3):</p> <p>B. Participation rate for children with IEPs 93.33%</p> <p>C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level, modified and alternate academic achievements standards 36.71% [Note: State has individual grade and content area targets (28%). State target is average target across grades and content areas. District target is average percent of students proficient across content areas (36.71%).].</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</i></p>	

Result	3	<p>Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Response to Intervention (RTI)/Academics</p> <p>Over the past several years, Blackstone has updated their MTSS/RTI approach significantly. MTSS/ RTI is now coordinated by the grade specific Deans and much of their time in grade specific team meetings is spent identifying students for RTI and monitoring students in RTI. The Deans and other members of the Teaching and Student Support Team utilize forms and approaches from the RTI Network.. Grade specific team meetings are held weekly for grades 9/10 and monthly for grades 11/12. Progress reports and end of quarter grades along with NWEA MAP tests and other interim assessments are used in order to monitor progress.</p> <p>Interventions may include accommodations for all classes or certain classes and/or new services such as participation in an enrichment class, extra reading or math class, a one-on-one writing program, extra organizational help with a staff member etc. The Dean or other assigned staff member conducts parent interviews, student interview and a review of past testing and academic performance.</p> <p>The Rhode Island Instructional Support System Dashboard (RIDEMap) is a helpful tool consulted for all students under RTI as is their paper file in order to understand past performance and interventions. Students come to Blackstone from 3 cities but have attended 20 + public and private schools throughout those districts so understanding all student's school history is paramount.</p> <p>The Deans and grade specific teams formulate the plans, their monitoring/evaluating benchmarks and schedules individually. This documentation is then presented should the need for formal evaluation occur.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</i></p>	
Result	4	<p>SPP Disproportionate Representation (State Performance Plan Indicator #9 and #10)</p> <p>Blackstone Academy is not disproportionate.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</i></p>	
Result	5	<p>Suspension (State Performance Plan Indicator #4a): Significant discrepancy in the rate of suspensions (for students with IEPs) greater than 10 days as compared to the rate of suspensions (for students without IEPs) greater than 10 days. This was not</p>	

		<p>applicable for the Blackstone Academy Charter as no students with IEPs were suspended for greater than 10 days.</p> <p>State Performance Plan Indicator #4b 0% had: (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and procedural safeguards.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</i></p>	
Result	6	<p><u>Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)/Social Emotional Supports/Social Emotional Resources/Positive Behavioral Supports</u></p> <p>Blackstone facilitates a Student Support Team meeting weekly to address student's academic, social-emotional/ behavioral health and health challenges. The Student Support Team meets weekly on Tuesday mornings and is attended by the Special Education Director, Student Support Counselors/Social Workers, Behavior Specialists the clinical psychologist, and interns from the Rhode Island College, School of Social Work. As needed, teachers or advisors of specific students are invited and one of the administrators often sits in. A school social worker coordinates the agenda which includes weekly case review on students as information gathering, training and support on school-wide strategies that promote healthy well-being of all learners.</p> <p>Each grade has a member of the counseling staff assigned to them and they communicate at least weekly with their Deans while monitoring the social-emotional well being of students. Action plans for students are created as appropriate as are internal and external referrals for counseling, support groups, and activities.</p> <p>The use of support and skill-building groups that meet weekly with students to assist them with coping and strategy skills has been expanded as a strategy for assisting students. For instance, a "Stress Less" group was developed for seniors to address the particular stressors that come with making big life transitions.</p>	

		<p>Students at Blackstone Academy are assigned an advisor who follows them during their four years at the school. In addition to helping the students with advisory tasks (portfolios, job shadow, course selection, etc.) the advisor meets daily with the students and they also discuss social issues, feelings and topics geared toward teenagers/young adults.</p> <p>Behavioral expectations along with disciplinary action protocols and policies are comprehensively defined in a student handbook. All staff members are trained in the principles and practices of “Discipline With Dignity” and positive behavioral supports. Teachers and staff members have all had training in restorative practices and approaches and over the past two years, school-wide detention is nearly extinct as a practice. Out of school suspensions only occur when students are deemed a safety risk in the building. Students continue to receive educational services if they are out of school suspended.</p> <p>Blackstone has always utilized a preventative, community- building approach to positive school-wide culture. Advisories meet daily and coordinated activities are utilized to build strong working groups. School-wide teach-ins and facilitated conversations which address wellness as well as equity issues occur multiple times per year.</p> <p>The use of facilitated Circles in classes and advisory meetings has greatly increased over the last three years and they are often used as a strategy to build collaboration and cohesiveness amongst a group, not just as a “restorative justice” activity. Nearly all teachers and staff members have received some training in restorative practices, some have received intensive training. Approximately 20 students have received intensive training in the facilitation of restorative circles.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis</i></p>	
Result	7	<p>Preschool Continuum</p> <p>Blackstone Academy Charter School serves youth in grades 9-12; thus, preschool is not applicable (NA).</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</i></p>	

Result	8	<p>Program Continuum Elementary Level</p> <p>Blackstone Academy Charter School serves youth in grades 9-12; thus, elementary level is not applicable (NA).</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; Observation</i></p>	
Result	9	<p>Program Continuum Middle Level</p> <p>Blackstone Academy Charter School serves youth in grades 9-12; thus, middle level is not applicable (NA).</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; Observations</i></p>	
Result	10	<p>Program Continuum High School Level</p> <p>There are approximately 353 students and 65 have IEPs (18.4% of the population). The program continuum is as follows:</p> <p>Currently, all students receiving educational services at the school are fully included. That one student is placed out of district. . Resource teachers (known as academic enrichment teachers) work in content area classes along with the general education teacher. Additionally, they facilitate Academic Enrichment classes for those students who benefit from individual or small group instruction outside of the general education setting. There are academic services available to students in the morning prior to the official beginning of the school day and students can stay for the Homework Club on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays after school. The staff members at Blackstone are very flexible and meet with students at other times as needed.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; Observation</i></p>	

Result	11	<p>Adaptive Physical Education (APE)</p> <p>Blackstone Academy has a full time physical education teacher on staff who is APE certified and will provide those services when the need arises.</p> <p><i><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Observation</i></p>	
Result	12	<p>Extended School Year (ESY)</p> <p>Blackstone has provided ESY services in the area of reading support and intervention and math for students in the past. If deemed necessary by the IEP Team, ESY services are provided to students. The school runs a number of summer educational enrichment and academic programs and has no problem getting support for students who need it.</p> <p><i><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews</i></p>	
Result	13	<p>Local Special Education Advisory Committee (LAC)</p> <p>The LAC meets four times annually and is comprised of parents, teachers, special education personnel and administrators. Topics discussed come from the parents' request for more information on a certain issue. LAC meetings are chaired by the Special Education Director along with the parent chair. Parents are asked at the first meeting what topics they would like discussed and Blackstone works with parents to develop opportunities. At the first meeting, parents are introduced to all the special educators and the programs and experiences available to students are discussed. Opportunities for external learning and higher education exploration including those things unique to Blackstone are covered. The parents are alerted to the programs available after school and tutoring available before, during, and after school. Questions from parents are encouraged and welcomed.</p> <p><i><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews</i></p>	

Result	14	<p>School Efforts to Partner with Parents (State Performance Plan Indicator #8)</p> <p>The public school district's rate of parent participation in the annual Special Education Statewide Parent Survey (2018-2019) is 11% of parents whose children have IEPs.</p> <p>Of parents with a child receiving special education services who participated in the last survey, the percent that reported that their school's efforts to involve parents as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities are at or above the state standard is 100%.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</i></p>	
Result	16	<p>Drop Out / Graduation Rate (State Performance Plan Indicator #1 and #2)</p> <p>The graduating class of 2018 data shows that Blackstone Academy Charter School 's Four year graduation rate was 95.1% for all students and 69.2% for students with disabilities. These rates approximate the state average rates of 88% for all students and 62.4% for students with disabilities.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</i></p>	

2. EVALUATION / INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

Indicator		Findings	Support Plan
Result	1	<p>Child Outreach</p> <p>Blackstone Academy Charter School serves youth in grades 9-12; thus, child outreach is not applicable (NA).</p>	
Result	2	<p>Child Find (State Performance Plan Indicator #11)</p> <p>Blackstone Academy Charter School for the 2018-2019 year was at 100% compliance for meeting evaluation timelines for initial referrals. As of 5/28/20 Blackstone Academy was thus far at 100% compliance for meeting evaluation timelines for initial referrals.</p>	

		<u>Documentation: State Performance Plan Data</u>	
Result	4	<p>Student Accommodations and Modifications</p> <p>Prior to the beginning of each school year the Special Education Director reviews every Accommodation/Modification page of each student's IEP and prepares a summary chart of accommodations and modifications by grade level and disseminates it to the appropriate teachers and school personnel. This is completed for all 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders. Special educators assist general education teachers in modifying work, tests and quizzes for those students who require it. Special educators are always available to assist the general education teachers for the preparation/modification of work/assignments. A Senior Seminar class conducted by a special education teacher has also been developed to help those seniors who need additional assistance with their senior projects, papers and portfolios. If new students are referred and found eligible for special education services, meetings and written communication occur with a students' teachers indicating the accommodations and modifications needed for that student. The student's advisors and special education teachers assist with clarifying accommodations and modifications. The IEPs are shared electronically (PowerSchool Special Education) with the teachers and staff members who need to view them. Other files are kept in the Special Education Office.</p> <p><u>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; Document Reviews</u></p>	
Result	5	<p>Specific Learning Disabilities Determination (SLD)</p> <p>Blackstone Academy has been using the specific learning disabilities form that is supported by the RTI Network. Teachers have received professional development regarding the referral process and the documentation needed regarding interventions and progress. The Deans from all grade levels have received extensive training and as described in #3 of this report, the evidence gathered during the interventions are documented and the best practices provided via the RTI network are utilized when formal evaluations are necessary.</p> <p><u>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; Document Reviews</u></p>	

Result	6	<p>Due Process Information (State Performance Plan Indicators)</p> <p>Over the past three years Blackstone Academy has no (zero) complaints, mediations or hearings</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis, RIDE, Due Process Data Base</p>	
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3. IDEA TRANSITION

Indicator		Findings	Support Plan
Result	1	<p>Part C to Part B Transition (Indicator #12)</p> <p>Blackstone Academy Charter School serves youth in grades 9-12; thus, Part B to Part C transition is not applicable (NA).</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; State Performance Plan</p>	
Result	2	<p>IDEA Transition Planning at the Middle Level</p> <p>Blackstone Academy Charter School serves youth in grades 9-12; thus, transition planning at the middle level is not applicable (NA).</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews</p>	
Result	3	<p>IDEA Transition Planning at the High School Level</p> <p>Blackstone has annual “advisory tasks” for all students at each grade level which help guide them incrementally through a series of tasks and activities to assist them in planning their transition from high school. Recently, the district purchased Xello web-based program so that all of the students can utilize high quality career, learning style and interest assessments that help them work with their advisor to understand and build</p>	

		<p>their annual ILP inclusive of “transition -planning tools. Moving forward, parents and all teachers/staff members can log-in to view student planning as they move annually. Graduation requirements for Blackstone include annual portfolio presentations and all students highlight external learning experiences as part of their presentations. For instance, ninth graders reflect on the results of their career, learning style and interest assessments and use them to guide some of their external learning experiences. In grade ten, all students participate in at least one job shadow and/or similar career exploration experience and document substantial volunteer, job and extra-curricular activities, grade 11 brings a service learning project, as well as documentation of skills gained from extensive volunteer experiences, internships and jobs. Senior year means an independent project connected to the outside world and formal higher ed/vocational planning much of which is facilitated for all students.</p> <p>The above transition planning needs little adaptation for most students with disabilities but the advisors and appropriate team members adapt these requirements as needed and appropriate.</p> <p>A part time staff member assists with placing students in external learning experiences who need more assistance in this area and that staff member works with the full time career coordinator to access appropriate sites and help students to gain access.</p> <p>Students can participate in the ORS program and in Access Point RI (a program affiliated with CVS and training in the various positions one might hold at CVS). With distance learning, all students have participated in virtual visits to higher education and virtual external learning experiences.</p> <p>Twelfth grade transition meetings always include a review with students and family members which focus on the modification and accommodations they received in high school with the intention of having students embrace their need for and right for accommodations that they are able to meaningfully describe them and advocated for themselves as they enter higher education.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis, Document Review</i></p>	
Result	4	<p>Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS) and the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals (BHDDH).</p> <p>One of the Student Support Counselors is the point person for referrals to the Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS) and to the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals (BHDDH). The counselor schedules appointments when necessary and contacts parents for permission for sharing</p>	

		<p>information. Students also have the opportunity to receive training through the Access Point RI program which is affiliated with CVS. Students are involved in an 8 week program where they train in a setting at Davies Vocational which is set up like a CVS store. They receive training in customer service, shelf stocking, cashiering, pharmacy...every aspect of working at a CVS. After the training they are placed in a CVS store for a 2 week externship, where they demonstrate the skills learned. This externship can lead to employment at CVS.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Interviews; Document Review</i></p>	
Result	5	<p>Summary of Performance (SOP) is facilitated by the case managers as appropriate for all graduating seniors; and they are given to the students upon graduation. Also see above comments on transition planning.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Interviews; Document Review</i></p>	
Result	6	<p>Youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, and transition services. The Blackstone Academy Charter School is compliant with the requirements although the “n” size is too small to publicly report. (State Performance Plan Indicator #13)</p> <p><i>Documentation: Interviews; Document Review</i></p>	
Result	7	<p>The Blackstone Academy Charter School is compliant with the requirements although the “n” size is too small to publicly report. NA% of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and who have been employed, enrolled in postsecondary school, or both within 1 year of leaving high school. The state average was 74% (State Performance Plan Indicator #14).</p> <p><i>Documentation: Interviews; Document Review</i></p>	