



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

School Support System Report and Support Plan

**Ocean State Academy Learning Center
December 2021**

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 LEA annual 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 30 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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School Support System Review**

Team Members

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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>The RIDE, Office of Students, 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.</p>	
Result	2	<p>Program Overview</p> <p>Ocean State Academy Learning Center (OSALC) serves students aged 5–22 who have been diagnosed with autism or other developmental disorders. Students receive a collaborative, integrated approach across educational disciplines.</p>	

For each student, individualized evidence-based educational programs targeted at the students' particular abilities and aptitudes are created. The program has four components.

The first component, Multidisciplinary Learning, includes students receiving a collaborative, integrated approach across educational disciplines. OSALC incorporates an expansive range of domains and modalities including individualized behavior plans, sensory integration techniques, speech, language, occupational, and physical therapy, ELA, math, and life-skills into every activity, in every environment, throughout the day.

The second component is Individualized Support. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed for each student based on strengths, needs, and goals. The entire support team, from the referring school district to the parents to OSALC's diverse faculty, unites to design a holistic, integrative program model specific to the individual student. The long-term aim is to have each student transition to the least restrictive setting in which they can continue to advance and achieve.

The third component is community-based education. OSALC students learn about their world by experiencing the world around them. OSALC engages students as much as possible, whenever possible, with field trips and outings to various places of interest throughout the region. By exploring the area and the people who populate it, the students see, touch, hear, smell, and connect with their surroundings, bringing the lessons they learn to the classroom and vice versa.

		<p>The fourth and final component is the Skilled and Caring staff. The team includes a Special education director, school principal, program coordinator, board certified behavior analyst (BCBA), social worker, special educators, registered nurse, behavioral support staff as well as teacher’s assistants and related Service providers. It is of the utmost importance to create and maintain deep connections with the families. The staff members are the true leaders in this. OSALC is constantly reaching beyond the walls of the classrooms to provide support to the families, to educate and to empathize with them, and to help them negotiate the multiple systems of care available to them within the state of Rhode Island.</p>	
Result	3	<p>Clinical Supports and Services</p> <p>Clinical Support at OSALC consists of a multi-disciplinary team which includes a variety of Licensed and Certified Professionals. The team consists of the special Education director, program director, board certified behavior analysts (BCBA), licensed clinical social worker, special education teachers, and other related services staff, including speech and language pathologist, physical therapist, occupational therapist, and certified occupational therapy assistants.</p> <p>The clinical staff attend ongoing Team Collaboration Meetings to maintain consistency across disciplines and to ensure that appropriate supports and services have been identified and are being implemented across all settings. The purpose of these collaboration meetings can include but are not limited to classroom clinics to introduce individualized behavior interventions, teach evidence-based skill acquisition strategies, ongoing training regarding the delivery of teaching methodologies and to share the most recent evaluations and supporting data. The clinical staff attend all parent meetings, progress meetings and IEP meetings. Members of the clinical staff provide consultation</p>	

and direct services to each student according to the individualized service delivery plan as written in the most recent IEP.

Social Emotional Learning

OSALC maintains a program that has the ability to address all the needs that are unique to individuals with Autism and other developmental disabilities. These needs are addressed through teaching students to achieve increased independence in areas such as self-awareness of emotions, self-management of behavior and building interpersonal relationships through social-skills training.

A functional behavior assessment (FBA) is conducted to assist in determining a hypothesized function of a behavior that may be interfering with an individual's access to learning. Through the assessment process, a functional relationship between the behavior and the presence of changes in the individual's environment is identified. Record review, parent/teacher interviews, data collection and direct observation contribute to the identification of the variables that may be maintaining problem behavior. Following the completion of an FBA, a behavior intervention plan (BIP) is developed to address teaching appropriate replacement behavior which can often reflect the components of the social emotional learning standards.

		<p>Data is collected daily and is used to make decisions regarding current interventions and programming as well as target skill areas such as activities of daily living (ADLs) social skills, play skills, impulse control and appropriate decision making. Data is also made available to parents/guardians, treating physicians and outside agencies to support SEL and the connection between home and school.</p> <p>School Removals/Disciplinary Policies</p> <p>OSALC staff implements interventions that utilize preventive and responsive strategies. These strategies outline a schedule of reinforcement to either increase or decrease the likelihood that a behavior will occur again in the future. Consistent implementation of these strategies is the most effective way to avoid repeated incidents.</p> <p>All other related disciplinary policies are outlined in the OSALC Policies & Procedures Handbook.</p>	
Result	4	<p>Program Continuum</p> <p>OSALC provides intensive educational and behavioral programming to Special Education Students ages 5 - 22 years old. The school consists of grades K - 12 through the Transition Program. Students who attend OSALC have a primary diagnosis of ASD or other developmental disabilities.</p>	

		<p>The current enrollment is 58 students with classroom sizes at 7-8 students each with a Special Education Teacher and 2 teacher assistants in each classroom. Teachers, teacher assistants and related services providers are all trained in the principles of applied behavior analysis and provide both individual and small group instruction. Student learning focuses on age-appropriate core curriculum content and individualized programming based on the initial intake period and ongoing assessment and evaluation. Within the program, students learn in a variety of settings from 1:1 specialized instruction/Discrete Trial training (DTT) to exploring Activities of Daily Living (ADL) within the school's "apartment" which is an environment created to simulate an individual's home setting.</p> <p>According to the IEP, each student can access physical therapy, speech and language services, occupational therapy and adapted physical education. Transition students begin to learn pre-vocational skills within the building which includes the school store, the library, building maintenance assistance and clerical support. As students progress, they have the opportunity to be matched to trial work experience in the community such as employment in food service, retail or even assisting with delivery with the Meals on Wheels program.</p>	
Result	5	<p>Adaptive Physical Education (APE)</p> <p>At OSALC, Students who have been evaluated for APE via an IEP team recommendation are provided with APE by a certified APE teacher for 100 minutes per week.</p>	

		<p>OSALC'S certified adaptive and physical educator is available to the IEP team for a discussion of evaluation results, determination of Adapted Physical Education eligibility, and recommendation for service. OSALC's physical education/adapted physical education teacher modifies activities to meet each individual student's physical needs. All accommodations are carefully implemented throughout individual and small group physical education activities. OSALC is careful and thoughtful in terms of delivering standards-based physical education and adapted physical education national standards curriculum. OSALC personalizes and selects physical education activities that lend themselves to maximize student engagement. Common adapted physical education and physical education best practices at OSALC include using a different space for the activity; changing grouping; giving instructions in different modalities; changing game rules and using different equipment. Students in adapted physical education develop physical fitness. The components of fitness including cardiovascular endurance, muscle endurance, muscle strength, flexibility, are all addressed. Emphasis is placed on students developing personalized fitness goals for a healthy lifestyle.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis</p>	
Result	6	<p>Extended School Year (ESY)</p> <p>ESY services are provided to students for whom the IEP team identifies as requiring them. ESY is considered another "quarter" of the school year at OSALC. ESY is identical to the Regular School Year in all other respects.</p>	

		<u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews	
Result	7	<p>Parent Engagement</p> <p>At OSALC, establishing and strengthening parental ties is an extremely important component to the program. Parents and students are introduced to the program services through the introductory “intakes”, where families have the opportunity to come, view and learn about the school. Meetings entail an explanation of the program by the “OSALC Intake Team”, which includes the Special Education Director, Program Coordinator/ BCBA, School Nurse and Social Worker. This team provides a well-rounded view of the programming along with a personal tour of the building, classrooms, gymnasium, and Sensory Room.</p> <p>All IEP meetings require contact and authorization through the parents, providing the families and school officials additional time for interaction and conversations. OSALC conducts two separate parent/teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring, providing in-depth conversations and feedback that is vital for continuous growth of the student population.</p> <p>All teacher/teaching assistants must keep and maintain call logs/journals of parent contact and communication. The Social Worker maintains consistent contact with all students within the program as well as providing families with guidance on community-based providers and services as needed. Office Staff constantly maintains communication with families on various levels daily, creating a stronger bond between school and home.</p>	

	<p>The school nurse maintains daily/weekly communication with parents regarding student health, medical history, and medication information.</p> <p>In addition, the OSALC open-door policy enables parents to have the ability to communicate with school personnel via walk-ins or calls at the parents' discretion.</p>	
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2. EVALUATION / INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

Indicator	Findings	Support Plan
Result	<p>1 Student Accommodations and Modifications</p> <p>All IEPs are readily accessible to authorized personnel only. Upon receiving a new student, it is the expectation that the Special Education Director, Program Coordinator, BCBA, Special Education Teacher and Social Worker will conduct a thorough file review and disseminate the information to all professionals (Adaptive Physical Education Teacher, Teaching Assistants, Related Service Providers, etc.) Confidential information is kept private and only given to authorized personnel on a need to know basis.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Document Reviews</p>	

3. IDEA TRANSITION

Indicator		Findings	Support Plan
Result	1	<p>IDEA Transition Planning</p> <p>Transition students begin to learn pre-vocational skills within the building which includes the school store, the library, building maintenance assistance and clerical support. As students progress, they have the opportunity to be matched to trial work experience in the community such as employment in food service, retail or even assisting with delivery with the Meals on Wheels program.</p> <p>In order to provide comprehensive transition opportunities for the students, and wanting to fully prepare them for adulthood, OSALC implements the <i>James Stanfield</i> Transitions Curriculum. This curriculum deals with three areas of social and emotional learning critical to independent living: Personal Management, Career Management, and Life Management. Lessons are filled with motivating and hands-on activities. When participating in this curriculum, students are given the skills they need to make a successful transition from school to work and adulthood. The post-school adjustment and success of students is one of the most important outcomes of the OSALC transition programming.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Record Reviews</p>	
Result	2	The nonpublic special education school works in collaboration with the sending districts in assisting with referrals to the Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS)	

		<p>and to the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals (BHDDH).</p> <p>The special education director and social worker directly oversee the referral process for ORS and BHDDH in conjunction with the program coordinator. Both agencies are invited to transition IEP/CDP meetings with an emphasis on their participation at age 18 and older.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Document Review</p>	
Result	3	<p>Summary of Performance (SOP) is facilitated by the case managers as appropriate.</p> <p>The special education director, special education teacher, program coordinator, BCBA, and social worker are the key staff for SOP. They are responsible for developing, reporting, and assuring parents are afforded an opportunity to attend a meeting early in the school year prior to the student exiting the program. The IEP team is invited to this meeting to include ORS, BHDDH and adult service agency representatives</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Document Review</p>	