



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

School Support System Report and Support Plan

**Highlander Public Charter School
April, 2015**

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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
2. Evaluation/Individual Education Program (IEP)
3. IDEA Transition

**Highlander Public Charter School
School Support System Review**

Record Review Team Leaders

Team A – Susan Wood and Jane Keane

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	<p>1 Least Restrictive Environment Data (State Performance Plan Indicator #5)</p> <p>Based on the FY July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012 State Performance Plan information on Highlander Public Charter School Placement is as follows:</p> <p>The percentage of students educated 80 to 100% of the time in general education settings is 99% (RI District Average is 63.12%)</p> <p>Percentage of students educated for less than 40% of the time in general education settings is 0% (RI District Average is 16.60%)</p> <p>Percentage of students educated in private separate schools, homebound/hospitalized and private residential schools is 1% (RI District Average is 6.76%)</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</p>	
Result	<p>2 Participation and performance of children with IEPs on statewide assessments (State performance Plan Indicator #3):</p> <p>A. The district (disability subgroup that meets the State’s minimum “n” size) did meet the state’s AYP targets for the disability subgroup. Data cannot be reported because the cell size is smaller than the State’s minimum for reporting</p> <p>B. Participation rate for children with IEPs was 100%</p> <p>C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level, modified and alternate academic achievements standards 24.07% [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 (24.07%).]</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</p>	
Result	<p>3 Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Response to Intervention (RTI)/Academics</p> <p>Elementary Level: The response to intervention (Rtl)Team meets monthly to review any referrals. Teachers submit completed Rtl forms via Skyward (the student data management system). The Rtl coordinator invites appropriate staff to Rtl meeting. Strategies that have been tried by classroom teacher is documented, as well as results.</p>	<p>Highlander Administration will review the overall Rtl/ MTSS process to ensure it is a systemic and comprehensive one. Professional development will be provided to staff on the procedures, processes and protocols for Highlander’s Rtl/MTSS process.</p>

	<p>Intervention plans are implemented for 4-6 weeks and reviewed. In addition, math and literacy data meetings are held 3-4 times yearly and students identified during those meetings as below benchmark are referred to RtI.</p> <p>Interventions include: small reading/math group with specialists, on-line practice via Lexia, My Reading Coach, and IXCEL, after-school tutoring, one to one Orton Gillingham tutoring, check-ins with counselor/school psychologist, behavior plan, social skills group, and structured specials.</p> <p>Student progress is monitored in 4 to 6 week increments. If sufficient progress is lacking, students may be moved to the evaluation team process.</p> <p>Middle Level / High School Level:</p> <p>The Secondary RtI team meets monthly to review any referrals. Teachers submit completed RtI forms via Skyward (the student data management system). The RtI coordinator invites appropriate staff to RtI meeting. Strategies that have been tried by classroom teacher is documented, as well as results. Intervention plans are implemented for 4-6 weeks and reviewed. In addition, math and literacy data meetings are held 3-4 times yearly and students identified during those meetings as below benchmark are referred to RtI.</p> <p>Interventions include: additional small reading/math group with specialists, on-line practice via My Reading Coach, Rosetta Stone, and IXCEL, after-school tutoring, Wilson reading tutoring, check-ins with counselor/school psychologist, behavior plan, social skills group, and school day tutoring.</p> <p>Student progress is monitored in 4 to 6 week increments. If sufficient progress is lacking, students may be moved to the evaluation team process.</p> <p>The record review (JK1,3,4, 5,7) indicated that the overall documentation of RTI/MTSS protocols procedures and processes were not systemic nor reflected in the files (see Section 2, item #5 for additional information).</p> <p>Records</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</p>	<p>Timeline: Ongoing.</p> <p>Progress Check: December 2015</p> <p><u>FOLLOW-UP FINDINGS:</u></p>
Result	<p>4</p> <p>SPP Disproportionate Representation (State Performance Plan Indicator #9 and #10)</p> <p>The Highlander Public Charter School's numbers are too small a number for public reporting. A review of policies, procedures and practices conducted onsite and electronically, including individual student record reviews, found no disproportionate</p>	

		<p>representation due to inappropriate identification practices.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</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 applicable for the Highlander Public Charter School 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><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</p>	
Result	6	<p><u>Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)/Social Emotional Supports/Social Emotional Resources/Positive Behavioral Supports</u></p> <p>Elementary Level: The response to intervention team (Rtl) team meets monthly to review any referrals. Teachers submit completed Rtl forms via Skyward (the student data management system). The Rtl coordinator invites appropriate staff to Rtl meeting. Strategies that have been tried by classroom teacher is documented, as well as results. Intervention plans are implemented for 4-6 weeks and reviewed. Interventions for behavioral/social emotional include: check-ins with counselor/school psychologist, behavior plan, social skills group, structured or limited specials, time out with behavior specialists, in school suspension, and out of school suspension.</p> <p>Student progress is monitored in 4 to 6 week increments. If sufficient progress is lacking, students may be moved to the evaluation team process.</p> <p>Middle Level/High School</p> <p>The secondary Rtl Team meets monthly to review any referrals. Teachers submit completed Rtl forms via Skyward (the student data management system). The Rtl coordinator invites appropriate staff to RTI meeting. Strategies that have been tried by classroom teacher is documented, as well as results. Intervention plans are implemented for 4-6 weeks and reviewed. Interventions for behavior/emotional include check-ins with counselor/school psychologist, behavior plan, in school suspension and out of school suspension.</p>	

		<p>Student progress is monitored in 4 to 6 week increments. If sufficient progress is lacking, students may be moved to the evaluation team process.</p> <p>School Removals/Disciplinary Policies. Throughout the district behavioral expectations along with disciplinary action protocols and policies are comprehensively defined in a student handbook.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Handbook</p>	
Result	7	<p>Preschool Continuum</p> <p>The district collects early childhood outcomes data on all children with IEPs as required by the federal Office of Special Education Programs. Teachers collect and enter authentic assessment information into an on-line child portfolio. This assessment information is used to shape and individualize instruction and to demonstrate progress.</p> <p>Indicator #6</p> <p>A. In this district, the percent of preschool children aged 3-4 with IEPs attending a general education early childhood program and receiving the majority of special education services in the general early childhood program was 80%.</p> <p>B. The percent of children aged 3-5 with IEPs attending a separate special education class, separate school or residential facility was 0%</p> <p>State Performance Plan Indicator #7</p> <p>Statement 1. Of the preschool children who entered the preschool program below age expectations, the percentage who demonstrated substantial improvements by the time they turned 6 years of age or exited the program: <i>As the preschool program at Highlander is relatively new there is no data to report as of yet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships); ▪ Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication and early literacy); and ▪ Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs <p>Statement 2. The percent of preschool children who were functioning within age expectations in each Outcome by the time they exited the program were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships); ▪ Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ 	

		<p>communication and early literacy); and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</p>	
Result	8	<p>Program Continuum Elementary Level</p> <p>There are 292 students at the elementary level and approximately 26 have IEPs. The special education program continuum is as follows:</p> <p>All students are educated in an inclusive class setting. Special educators work collaboratively in the classes with general education teachers during reading/writing/math. Students have whole group instruction in literacy with their general education teacher, then small groups with the reading specialist/resource teacher. Some students also have Orton Gillingham tutoring. All students are placed by skill level in a math class and the resource teacher is in the classroom for extra support during the math instruction and will pull small groups with in the classroom to re-teach or assist with practice. In writing, the resource teacher/speech and language pathologist and occupational therapist will provide support in the general education classroom. At times, the speech and language pathologist and occupational therapist will pull small groups to work on skills specific to speech or sensory weaknesses. Social skills groups run by the school psychologist and occupational therapist and individual counseling are outside of the classroom setting.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Observation</p>	
Result	9	<p>Program Continuum Middle Level/High School</p> <p>There are 72 students attending Highlander Middle School, 9 are students with IEPs. The program continuum is as follows:</p> <p>All students are educated in an inclusive class setting. There is a block schedule in the morning and students take either math and science or social studies and English language arts depending on the semester. Resource teachers are in ELA one semester and math the next. Students with IEP's are placed in sections where the resource teachers are co-teaching. Students get support during the 2-hour instructional block from both the general education teacher and the resource teacher. In addition, during the elective blocks in the afternoon, students access Wilson reading instruction or additional math/reading support with resource teachers. Counseling supports are provided on an individual basis and there are also group sessions for some students. After school tutoring is also available for students on IEPs in math and reading. Students receive writing support in class.</p>	

		<u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Observations	
Result	10	<p>Program Continuum High School Level</p> <p>At Highlander High School there are approx. 60 students and 13 have IEPs. The program continuum is as follows: All students are educated in an inclusive class setting. There is a block schedule in the morning and students take either math and science or social studies and English language arts depending on the semester. Resource teachers are in ELA one semester and math the next. Students with IEPs are placed in sections where the resource teachers co-teaching. Students get support during the 2-hour instructional block from both the general education teacher and the resource teacher. In addition, during the elective blocks in the afternoon, students access Wilson reading instruction or additional math/reading support with resource teachers. Counseling supports are provided on an individual basis and there are also group sessions for some students. After school tutoring is also available for students on IEPs in math and reading. Students receive writing support in class.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Observation</p>	
Result	11	<p>Adaptive Physical Education (APE)</p> <p>The middle/high school physical education teacher is also APE certified. The teacher currently spends the morning at the Providence Campus and the afternoon at the Warren campus. One student receives APE services as per their IEPs.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Observation</p>	
Result	12	<p>Extended School Year (ESY)</p> <p>ESY is provided for all students on IEP's if the team agrees that these services will increase progress or decrease summer learning loss. There is a month long summer program that runs for the month of July and is staffed by regular education teachers and special education teachers. In addition, students may continue to receive Orton Gilliam or Wilson tutoring over the summer. If deemed appropriate, students are also out placed at specialty summer camps if they have diagnosis that would indicate this was more appropriate.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews</p>	

Compliance	13	<p>Local Special Education Advisory Committee (LAC)</p> <p>Highlander Public Charter School does not have a local special education advisory committee. The school social worker is working on setting a training for the summer or early fall for the parents who are interested. We have identified parents and a parent leader/chair.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews</p>	<p>A local advisory committee with membership, operation, and scheduled meetings, consistent with Regents' requirements will be established in place and is supported by the district.</p> <p>Timeline: Immediately and ongoing.</p> <p>Progress Check: September 2015</p> <p><u>FOLLOW-UP FINDINGS:</u></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 (2013-2014) is 15.6% 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 14.3%.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</p>	
Result	16	<p>Drop Out / Graduation Rate (State Performance Plan Indicator #1 and #2)</p> <p>Highlander only goes up to the 10th grade at this time so no data is available for this SPP indicator.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</p>	

2. EVALUATION / INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

Indicator	Findings	Support Plan
Result/ Compliance	<p>1</p> <p>Records of approximately seven students were reviewed prior to the on-site review by the team leaders. Students' records were very accessible. The record review process identified by following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evaluation/re-evaluation process and procedures unclear. Limited evidence of meeting notes acknowledging planning. -Present levels of functional performance and academic achievement though detailed are not based on quantitative baseline data that will be used to develop measurable goals in the areas needing specialized instruction. This leads baselines, goals and objectives with limited measurability to confirm progress. -Special Education for presenting goals was not consistently documented as specially designed instruction that will be provided to enable the student to attain his/her IEP goals. -Parental notice of the IEP meeting does not document purpose, who will be in attendance, and if appropriate, the consideration of postsecondary goals and transition service planning. Written prior notice is not consistently documented. -Secondary transition IEP development is not consistently documented or aligned to student interest and involvement or informed by transition assessments. -Random IEP items left blank <p><i>(RI Regulations Subpart D Evaluations, Eligibility Determinations, Individualized Education Programs and Educational Placements)</i></p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Observation</p>	<p>Support Plan</p> <p>Assurances will be provided to the Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Student, Community and Academic Supports, that compliance issues are addressed and rectified. This Support Plan is applicable for all compliance findings in this section.</p> <p>Timeline: Immediately and ongoing.</p> <p>Progress Check: December 2015</p> <p><u>FOLLOW-UP FINDINGS:</u></p>
Result	<p>2</p> <p>Child Outreach</p> <p>As a charter school, Highlander does not do outreach screening. Highlander screens incoming kindergarten students chosen in the lottery in May prior to their enrollment and provides summer programming for students needing to begin the transition to school sooner.</p>	

		<u>Documentation:</u> State Performance Plan; Data Interviews	
Result	3	<p>Child Find (State Performance Plan Indicator #11)</p> <p>Highlander Public Charter School for the 2013-2014 year was at 100% compliance for meeting evaluation timelines for initial referrals. As of 4/20/15 Highlander Public Charter Schools was thus far at 100% compliance for meeting evaluation timelines for initial referrals for the 2014-2015 school year.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> State Performance Plan Data</p>	
Result	4	<p>Student Accommodations and Modifications</p> <p>Throughout the district special educators completed summary sheets that is then sent to the general education teachers. General educators can access student's accommodations by reading their IEP and files.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Document Reviews</p>	
Result / Compliance	5	<p>Specific Learning Disabilities Determination</p> <p>After the RtI team determines that students are to be referred to evaluation team process, documentation is collected on what data exists in terms of assessments and interventions. The team determines what other information is needed in order to determine whether or not a specific learning disability is evidenced. Request for consent for evaluation is issued to parent/guardian and evaluation is assigned to appropriate staff. Once evaluations are completed, parents are invited in to discuss the results and to make an eligibility determination.</p> <p>Record reviews indicated that documentation of an RtI / MTSS process supporting an eligibility determination of SLD was not comprehensive or systemic at either site. JK 4, 5, 6, 7</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Record Review</p>	<p>Professional development will be provided to staff in the area of initial and reevaluation process, procedures and protocols for students with SLD.</p> <p>Timeline: Immediately and ongoing.</p> <p>Progress Check: December 2015</p> <p><u>FOLLOW-UP FINDINGS:</u></p>
Result	6	<p>Due Process Information (State Performance Plan Indicators)</p> <p>Over the past three years Highlander Public Charter School has no (zero) complaints, mediations or hearings</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis, RIDE, Due Process Data Base</p>	

3. IDEA TRANSITION

Indicator	Findings		Support Plan
Result	1	<p>Part C to Part B Transition (Indicator #12)</p> <p>The District manages the transition of children from Part C Early Intervention (EI) to preschool special education. Highlander has no students younger than preschool. Students entering preschool through the lottery have been screened through their home district. If a student comes with a plan, an IEP meeting is held to transition student to services within the Highlander program.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; State Performance Plan</p>	
Result/ Compliance	2	<p>IDEA Transition Planning at the Middle Level</p> <p>All 8th grade students have a transition meeting to discuss high school options. Students and their families discuss goals for the future and the appropriate school placement to meet those goals. Academic and vocational school placements are discussed. Eighth grade students also do a career project in English language arts to research careers, look at high school and college options and facilitate an exhibition of what they have learned. Students also access Way to go RI.</p> <p>Student's central files who were 14 years of age and older, with IEP's, eligible for secondary transition post school planning, did not reflect comprehensive documentation of student meeting invitations, documentation of interest inventories and or assessments and how student directed planning informed the IEP and related goals as appropriate. JK 5, 6, 7</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Record Reviews</p>	<p>Professional development will be provided to staff in the area of transition planning, procedures and protocols for students 14 years of age and older.</p> <p>Timeline: Immediately and ongoing.</p> <p>Progress Check: December 2015</p> <p><u>FOLLOW-UP FINDINGS:</u></p>
Result	3	<p>IDEA Transition Planning at the High School Level</p> <p>Highlander Public Charter School has 9th and 10th grades with 11 grades beginning for the 2015-2016 school year. Thus far, students are using Way to Go RI and the College Board website. Students also have an opportunity to take a career class that focuses on real life skills and opportunities. Students complete Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) each year, working with a community mentor in an area of their interests.</p> <p>The special education team has recently started a dialogue with the Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS) and we are beginning to explore the opportunities they</p>	

		<p>can provide. Also being reviewed is a list of Transition Assessments provided by ORS and the regional Transition Coordinator.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data analysis</p>	
Result	4	<p>At the high school the case manager is the point for referrals to the Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS) and to the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals (BHDDH).</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Document Review</p>	
Result	5	<p>Summary of Performance (SOP) will be facilitated by the case managers as appropriate.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Document Review</p>	
Result	6	<p>Youth with IEPs aged 16 and above that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age appropriate transition assessment, and transition services. (State Performance Plan Indicator #13) Data cannot be reported because the cell size is smaller than the State's minimum for reporting.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Document Review</p>	
Result	7	<p>The data for 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 79% (State Performance Plan Indicator #14) cannot be reported because the cell size is smaller than the State's minimum for reporting.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Document Review</p>	