

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

School Support System Report and Support Plan

The Valley Schools

May 2013

# 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 with 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 required by the district as well as resources and time lines to improve programs and services.

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*THE Valley Schools*

*SCHOOL SUPPORT SYSTEM REVIEW*

*TEAM*

*Team* – Susan Wood and Jane Keane

| 1. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (FAPE/LRE) |   |   |   |              |                    |
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| Indicator  |   | Findings  | Documentation   | Support Plan | Follow-up Findings |
|  | 1 | 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.  | IDEA Overview<br>Data Analysis<br>Observation<br>Interviews |              |                    |
| Result   | 2 | <p><b>Program Overview</b><br/>The Valley Community School (VSC) was founded in 1985 and is administered by the Community Counseling Center, a Gateway Healthcare provider that is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, Inc. The program provides a comprehensive interdisciplinary team approach, offering specialized treatment focusing on assisting students with social, emotional and behavior learning opportunities in conjunction with individual academic instruction in all major subjects.</p> <p>The VCS mission statement is to guide students in developing a desire and commitment to improve skills necessary to return them to their neighborhood schools through a well-designed program utilizing educational goals and technology and behavior management.</p>   | IDEA Overview<br>Data Analysis<br>Interviews                |              |                    |
| Result   | 3 | <p><b>Intake, Assessment and Evaluation Planning</b><br/>Sending LEA's are responsible for assuring evaluations and or reevaluations are facilitated and completed.</p> <p>Typical assessments include initial intake evaluations, behavioral evaluations, clinical, psychological and psychiatric evaluations, speech and language, educational and vocational evaluations, social histories and medical examinations.</p> <p><b>Exit Planning</b><br/>When a student reaches and maintains Level 5 in relation to his/her behavioral program, discussions occur with the student and family to engage in a more formalized exit planning strategy. A transition contract is created with the student, family, vocational coordinator if appropriate, teacher, social worker and the special director. When appropriate for the transition to be facilitated an IEP meeting is held and appropriate services and supports are planned.</p> | IDEA Overview<br>Data Analysis<br>Interviews                |              |                    |

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|        |   | <p><b>Curriculum and Instructional Strategies</b><br/> School administration and staff are engaged in analyzing student data such as Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation (GRADE), <b>Group Mathematics Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (Gmade)</b>, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), School Wide Information System (SWISS), NECAP skill cards (common core aligned) teacher generated assessments, student work and performance, behavior management system along with class observations to discuss individual student needs academic and/or behavior.</p> <p>Throughout Valley there was evidence of a range of standards based instructional practices, student mentoring, student problem solving and student work. The use of technology (smart boards, LCD projectors, computer labs, computers) was also evident throughout the classes. It should be noted that Valley has been committed to ongoing improvement of its curriculum and instruction since the last review and that work is evident throughout the classes.</p> <p>Once a month, educators meet with the education coordinator in continuing to review and refine the implementation of common core standards and instructional strategies. In addition, there a variety of meetings and communication points as part of the Valley milieu.</p> <p>Quality assurance - This meeting is held monthly to address student data regarding restraint and seclusion (three per program/per site) to address trends and opportunities to inform the overall social emotional behavioral management program/system.</p> <p>Administrative meetings – Each VCS/VDP site facilitates an administrative meeting to address operations, facility, program and service development and opportunities and student needs.</p> <p>Team meetings – Team meetings are facilitated twice a week. Teachers, teacher assistants, counselors, behavior specialist and other by site and available attend this meeting to address student academic, vocational and social emotional and behavioral needs.</p> |  |  |  |
| Result | 4 | <p><b>Student Support and Intervention</b></p> <p>There is reading specialist who works with all students who are below grade level in reading. She facilitates personal literacy plans (PLPs) as appropriate.</p>  | <p>IDEA Overview<br/> Data Analysis<br/> Observation<br/> Interviews</p> |  |  |

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|  | <p>Teachers reported using and liking the common core skills cards to pinpoint baseline and inform instruction for all students.</p> <p><b>Social Emotional Resources and Supports</b><br/> The primary goal of the Valley Community Schools/ Valley Day Program (VCS/VDP) is to guide students in developing a desire and commitment to improve the skills necessary to ensure a successful transition to a less restrictive educational or vocational program. The major component to achieve this goal is the behavior management system, which includes a token economy, a level system and necessary individual behavior plans. The behavior management system's token economy is based on providing predictable and logical rewards and consequences for behavior. Students earn points on a daily basis for his/her positive behavioral interactions. The behavior management program guides students through a five tier level system while they learn to make better behavioral decisions. Once a student achieves and maintains level five a discussion regarding transition planning to his/her home school is facilitated.</p> <p>The behavior specialists(elementary and middle level) manages the overall behavioral program. Some of the responsibilities include oversight of the level system, coverage as needed, mentoring of teacher assistants and the staff rotate weekly, overseeing the student screening upon entering the building, and the coordination and implementation of the exploratory program supporting students achieving successful behavioral levels.</p> <p>Students may take "reflection time" out of the classes if they request one or their behavior warrants one. A behavior specialist manages these reflection times. All staff are trained in therapeutic crisis intervention (TCI) and all staff receive recertification training in this approximately every six months. The components of TCI include the following: 1.) Prevent and or deescalate the potential crisis<br/> 2.) Safely and therapeutically manage the crisis situation, 3.) Process with the student to help improve his/her coping strategies (i.e., life space interview) and 4.) Provide research-based guidelines to implement strategies to reduce the need for high risk interventions.</p> <p><b>Clinical Supports and Services</b><br/> There are three school social worker positions at the Pawtucket Valley Day Program and two at the Pawtucket Valley Community School site and three at the Cranston site. These individuals provide counseling support as appropriate per the IEP, make community support communication, facilitate groups, communicate with families and overall crises intervention.</p> |  |  |  |
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| Result | 5 | <p><b>The Valley Schools Continuum</b></p> <p>There are approximately 42 Kindergarten through eighth grade students at the Valley Day Program (Pawtucket) and 31 middle/high school students at the Valley Community Schools (Pawtucket ) and 60 students attending at the Valley Cranston site. Seven high school students attend the Gateway Technical Academy (Pawtucket).</p> <p>The program continuum at Valley Community Schools includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Valley Day Program (VDP), located in Pawtucket and Cranston follows a traditional 180-day school year schedule with a summer program that typically involves 50 days of programming. Children/youth receive individual therapy and psychiatric evaluations with medication monitoring, as needed.</li> </ul> <p>The VDP program in Pawtucket has a specialized classroom option for students who need more intensive behavioral interventions. An IEP meeting is convened (including the parents) and behavioral goals are established.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Valley Community School, located in Pawtucket and Cranston (ages 6-21), follows a traditional 180-day school year schedule. A year-round commitment to student growth extends into the summer months when counselors and students meet weekly to ensure consistency in goals.</li> <li>-There is also a Valley Day Program class located in one of the Pawtucket elementary schools that serves students from Pawtucket within the district setting.</li> <li>-For students at the secondary level, a career/vocational exploration program is available. Students are placed at approved and appropriate work sites. Up to four placements are identified to support a student's individualized career plan within a school year. Additionally students receive a monetary stipend for their experience (\$5.00 per hour).</li> <li>-The Gateway Technical Academy (GTA) is a developing program designed to provide technology and trade training to high school students, ages 14-21, in an alternate learning environment. Trade experiences includes: electrical, plumbing and carpentry. Incoming students are assigned technical exploration experiences on a rotating schedule, allowing the students to gain hands-on experience in all of the trade areas. Instruction runs on a two-week rotating schedule with a total of 5 days of academics and 5 days of trade experiences.</li> </ul> <p>Students at VCS/VDP/GTA can participate in extracurricular activities offered by their</p> | <p>IDEA Overview<br/>Data Analysis<br/>Observation<br/>Interviews<br/>Record Review</p> |  |  |
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|        |   | <p>sending schools by talking to their program coordinator and or their social worker. Weekly staff meeting provide an opportunity for teachers, teacher assistants, behavior specialists, counselors along with other staff as appropriate to have discussions regarding student centered issues academically, behaviorally as well as clinically to develop strategies that enhance overall student success</p>  |   |  |  |
| Result | 6 | <p><b>Physical Education</b> is provided two times per week for the VCS and GTA students in addition to a health class one period per/ week. For students in VDP program they participate in physical education once per week.</p>   | <p>IDEA Overview<br/>Data Analysis<br/>Observation<br/>Interviews<br/>Record Review</p> |  |  |
| Result | 7 | <p><b>Extended School Year (ESY)</b>. ESY is provided per the IEP as appropriate</p>   | <p>IDEA Overview<br/>Data Analysis<br/>Record Review</p>                                |  |  |
| Result | 8 | <p><b>Parent Engagement</b></p> <p>Counselors assist and coordinate all services and supports for and with families. They transport, attend related meetings along with students and their families. In addition they provide support and assist parents in understanding the IEP process. Valley has a standard policy that the school's social workers are the primary point of contact with all families. In addition, the schools parent teacher conferences are held four times per year to review homework and classroom activities. If parents can not attend, report cards and progress reports are mailed home.</p> | <p>IDEA Overview<br/>Data Analysis<br/>Observation<br/>Interviews</p>                   |  |  |

| 2. EVALUATION/ INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) |   |  |   |  |  |
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| Indicator   |   | Findings   | Documentation   | Support Plan   | Follow-up Findings   |
| Result/<br>Compliance                             | 1 | <p>Records of approximately nine students were reviewed prior to the on-site review by the team leaders. The records were well organized and had the following trends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The need to add the consideration of post secondary goals to the meeting invitation.</li> <li>-Present levels of functional performance not always measurable or based on quantifiable baseline data</li> <li>-Baseline data describe what the student cannot do rather than what the student can do</li> <li>-Measurability of short-term objectives and goals need to be specific quantifiable and measurable</li> </ul> <p>(RI Regulations Subpart D Evaluations, Eligibility Determinations, Individualized Education Programs and Educational Placements) (RI Regulations Subpart D Evaluations, Eligibility Determinations, Individualized Education Programs and Educational Placements)</p> | <p>IDEA Overview<br/>Data Analysis<br/>Interviews<br/>Record Review</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. Progress check: June 2014</p> | <p>Professional development / technical assistance was provided to all special educators on the overall IEP writing process including measurability and transition planning. This will be an ongoing endeavor.</p> |
| Result  | 2 | All accommodations and modifications are implemented per the students IEP.   | <p>IDEA Overview<br/>Data Analysis<br/>Interviews</p>                   |  |  |

| 3. IDEA TRANSITION |   |   |   |              |                    |
|--------------------|---|---|---|--------------|--------------------|
| Indicator          |   | Findings  | Documentation   | Support Plan | Follow-up Findings |
| Result             | 1 | <p><b>IDEA Transition Planning</b></p> <p>Case managers are responsible for facilitating the vocational assessment and transition planning with their respective students. Teachers reported using the transition Planning inventory (TPI), Casey Life Skills, Way to Go RI, as the primary vocational assessment tool.</p> | <p>IDEA Overview<br/>Data Analysis<br/>Interviews</p>                   |              |                    |
| Result             | 2 | <p>At the high school level the counselors are the point for the Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS) referrals at the school.</p>   | <p>IDEA Overview<br/>Data Analysis<br/>Interviews<br/>Record Review</p> |              |                    |
| Result             | 3 | <p>Summary of Performance (SOP) is facilitated by the social workers in conjunction with the case managers as appropriate.</p>  | <p>IDEA Overview<br/>Data Analysis<br/>Interviews<br/>Record Review</p> |              |                    |