



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

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**School Support System Report and Support Plan**

**Viola M. Berard  
April 6, 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:
  - o The district's compliance with the state and federal regulations, relative to the education of students with exceptionalities.
  - o The quality and effectiveness of programs and services provided by the district.
  - o 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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# Nonpublic School School Support System Review

## Team Members

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	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.	
Result	2 <b>Program Overview</b>  Community Care Alliance is a not for profit licensed community health care and comprehensive social services agency recently formed by the merger of Family Resources and Northern Rhode Island Community Services. The Viola M. Berard School is one of the many educational programs offered through this agency and is the focus of the School Support System monitoring process.  Viola M. Berard School is an independent non-public special education certified school that services students ages 6 to 21. These students are referred by the LEA to the program. The typical profile is a student who is experiencing significant behavioral and/or psychiatric challenges which is impacting their ability to access the curriculum in their home school. The Viola M. Berard School offers students and their families a clinical and therapeutic setting to address psychiatric, social and emotional areas of need in order to return to a less restrictive setting.	
Result	3 <b>Instructional Strategies</b>  Curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and is individualized to address each learner's specific needs. A curriculum consultant is available to work with teachers to address specific student needs as well as differentiating instruction. A variety of formative and summative assessment strategies are used by teachers to determine effectiveness of instruction and measure student progress. These include frequent checking for understanding strategies being utilized by the teachers throughout the instructional day. Professional development has been provided to the staff in embedding Marzano's Strategies for Effective Teaching. Portfolios of	<b><u>FOLLOW-UP FINDINGS:</u></b>  Progress Monitoring for academic and behavioral performance will be formalized. Administration is currently looking at implementing the STAR Assessment Program to progress monitor reading, writing and math. SWIS data, functional behavior assessments and behavior intervention plans will be reviewed weekly by staff. Viola M. Berard staff will receive training on the

		<p>student work are maintained to assist with transition to their home school.</p> <p>All Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements (PBGRs) from the sending LEAs are supported by the Viola M. Berard High School program. The classroom teacher works with the sending high school Guidance Department as well as LEA representative to ensure the specific requirements are completed by the student. An educational consultant has been provided to the secondary staff to assist in addressing the PBGRs.</p> <p>A neuropsychologist was recently added as a consultant to work with the staff on a weekly basis to address the academic and social/emotional needs of students with severe emotional/behavioral/psychiatric conditions and the challenges this population presents in the classroom.</p>	<p>use of academic progress monitoring tools and social and emotional data as part of a multi-tiered support system (MTSS).</p> <p><b>Timeline:</b> Ongoing</p> <p><b>Progress Check:</b> October 2015</p>
Result	4	<p><b>Student Support and Intervention</b></p> <p>There is a school wide behavior management system that has natural consequences as well as built in reinforcers. Individual behavior plans are developed for students. All staff are trained in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention through Cornell University. Each class is staffed with a teacher and a behavior interventionist. The therapeutic classroom management strategies and de-escalation skills are embedded in each class and throughout the school program. A hierarchy of behavior management strategies from prompts or cues to time away are utilized by all staff. While not a formal Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions (PBIS) School, the principals of PBIS are utilized throughout the school. Students are encouraged to be positive contributing members of their school and their community.</p> <p><b>Clinical Supports and Services</b></p> <p>There is a full-time social worker available to the students and staff. Individual and group counseling is provided to students. Weekly meetings are held to address specific student needs. A neuropsychologist has been hired to consult on a weekly basis in order to assist the staff in addressing the clinical and academic needs of specific students. A child psychiatrist is available to consult with students, staff and families on an as needed basis. Functional Behavioral Analysis and resulting behavior intervention plans are developed by the child's team, including the parent, and monitored on an ongoing basis. Parents are encouraged and supported by Viola M. Berard staff to seek outside wrap around clinical supports and services that are available through Community Care Alliance.</p>	<p>The use of functional behavioral analysis (FBA) as a therapeutic tool for all students will be added to the program description in the Viola M. Berard handbook. When an FBA is to be used as part of an evaluation or manifestation determination, parental consent will be requested. Parents and the LEA will be invited to the FBA under these conditions.</p> <p><b>Timeline:</b> Ongoing</p> <p><b>Progress Check:</b> October 2015</p>

		<p>The overall goal of Viola M. Berard is to create a therapeutic milieu where the students' social and emotional needs can be addressed. Providing access to high quality and sustainable clinical supports to both the students and families is paramount to the long-term success of each student.</p> <p><b>Social Emotional Learning</b></p> <p>A school-wide positive behavioral management systems that is clearly understood by all students and staff and implemented with fidelity help foster a positive therapeutic culture within the school community. Behavior intervention strategies as well as de-escalation techniques assist students in developing effective coping and problem solving strategies, thus taking ownership for their own behavior, whenever possible. School-wide character education themes (Second Step) help support social and emotional awareness and recognize individual student growth. Opportunity for students to participate in events/activities within the community weekly support and reinforce student social/emotional learning. Programs such as Teens, Crime and the Community, supported by National Crime Prevention Council, have been utilized to support social/emotional learning experiences.</p> <p><b>School Removals/Disciplinary Policies</b></p> <p>Disciplinary policies and practices are clearly defined through the student/parent handbook. School removal is used as a last resort and supported by structured school procedures. No student has ever approached ten days of suspension.</p>	
Result	5	<p><b>Program Continuum</b></p> <p>Viola M. Berard serves 15 students in total with a capacity to serve 20. There are three classes (elementary - grades 2 through 5, middle school - grades 6 through 8, and a high school - grades 9 through 12). A special educator is the teacher of record for each class setting. If a student requires occupational therapy, speech, physical therapy or other related services, it is currently provided by the sending district at Viola M. Berard. Each class is also assigned a behavior interventionist who supports the teacher.</p>	

Result	6	<p><b>Adaptive Physical Education (APE)</b></p> <p>A certified physical education teacher (APE certified) provides physical education to all Viola M. Berard students. If APE was identified as a required service for a student, it would be met by the current service provider.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</p>	
Result	7	<p><b>Extended School Year (ESY)</b></p> <p>ESY is currently not provided by Viola M. Berard School. If determined necessary, it has been provided by the LEA. Individual students have been supported for ESY (social/emotional goals) using Viola M. Berard behavior interventionists at Camp Ker Anna in Cumberland, RI.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews</p>	
Result	8	<p><b>Parent Engagement</b></p> <p>Teachers are in contact with parents on a weekly basis. Parent meetings are scheduled on an as needed basis. Because of the comprehensive nature the Community Care Alliance, during the initial intake process, parents are made aware of the entire array of services and supports the agency can provide to a family and a referral can be made, if the family requests more information, at the time of intake. Viola M. Berard staff help the families establish ongoing communication with the LEA.</p>	<p><b><u>FOLLOW-UP FINDINGS:</u></b></p> <p>Viola M. Berard will explore and identify strategies to involve parents and families as part of the Viola M. Berard Community. A needs assessment for parents will be developed and implemented to assess areas that parents would find useful. Scheduling quarterly meetings for parents around specific topics related to their needs.</p> <p><b>Timeline:</b> Ongoing</p> <p><b>Progress Check:</b> October 2015</p>

## 2. EVALUATION / INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

Indicator		Findings	Support Plan
Result/ Compliance	1	<p>Records of approximately four 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"> <li>• Short term objective / benchmark for language development is not consistently measurable</li> <li>• Post school areas to be and/or being addressed (Employment, Education and Training and Independent living) are left blank for both present levels of functional performance and academic achievement</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• How often student's progress will be measured is not consistently defined throughout the record review process.</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Secondary transition IEP development is not consistently documented or aligned to student interest and involvement or informed by transition assessments.</li> </ul>	<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>IEP Training for Viola M. Berard staff has been scheduled for April 29, 2015 and May 6, 2015.</p> <p><b>Timeline:</b> Immediately and Ongoing</p> <p><b>Progress Check:</b> October 2015</p> <p><b><u>FOLLOW-UP FINDINGS:</u></b></p>

	<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>	
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### 3. IDEA TRANSITION

Indicator		Findings	Support Plan
Result/ Compliance	1	<p><b>IDEA Transition Planning</b></p> <p>Based on the record reviews it was evident that transition is an area for review, refinement and improvement (see also Section 2, item 1). There is currently no scope and sequence for transition assessment/planning at Viola M. Berard. It appears that the staff needs professional development in the area of writing measurable goals as well as a review of what the school will be responsible for as opposed to the sending LEA. Further leaving a student's post school goal (Employment, Education/Training) blank is not an option. (§300.320)</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Record Reviews</p>	<p>Special Education administration in conjunction with school-based administration will develop a transition scope and sequence. Professional development will also be provided to all appropriate staff.</p> <p><b>Timeline:</b> Immediately and Ongoing</p> <p><b>Progress Check:</b> April 2016</p> <p><b><u>FOLLOW-UP FINDINGS:</u></b></p>
Result	2	<p>The nonpublic schools works with the sending districts in assisting with referrals to the Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS) and to the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities &amp; Hospitals (BHDDH).</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Document Review</p>	<p>Viola M. Berard will ensure that the Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS) and the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities &amp; Hospitals (BHDDH) are invited to IEP meetings as appropriate.</p> <p><b>Timeline:</b> Ongoing</p> <p><b>Progress Check:</b> April 2016</p> <p><b><u>FOLLOW-UP FINDINGS:</u></b></p>

Result	3	<b>Summary of Performance (SOP)</b> is facilitated by the case manager as appropriate.  <u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Document Review	
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