



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

School Support System Report and Support Plan

**DCYF Alternative Education Program
June 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 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 timelines to improve programs and services.

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**DCYF Alternative Education Program (AEP)
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Record Review Team Leaders

Team A – Susan Wood, 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 |
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| Result 1 | <p>Least Restrictive Environment Data (State Performance Plan Indicator #5)</p> <p>Based on the FY July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 State Performance Plan information on DCYF Alternative Education Program Placement is as follows:</p> <p>The percentage of students educated 80 to 100% of the time in general education settings is 100% (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 0% (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 100%.</p> <p>C. Proficiency rate for children with IEPs against grade level, modified and alternate academic achievements standards 100% [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 (Na).] Note: Did not meet the State minimum “n” size for public reporting</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>The RTI initiative at the DCYF Alternative Education Program consists of weekly academic collaboration meetings made up of general education teachers, special education teachers, itinerants, and teacher assistants where the academic performance of all youth in each group is discussed. The AEP offers high school core academic classes, GED instruction, and pursuit of post-secondary options. During these weekly team meetings, youth academic outcomes are discussed, and current interventions are</p> | |

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| | | <p>reviewed to ensure they are effective and allow youth to progress academically. If a youth has consistently demonstrated that a higher level of intervention may be warranted, the referral intervention process begins. During this process, the current level of academic performance is documented, academic goals are identified, and intervention strategies are put into place. Often, these intervention plans are a collaborative effort between the academic professionals, medical professionals, and professionals working in the units. It is truly an institutional wide collaboration of all stakeholders in the facility. Appropriate data is collected on an ongoing basis to ensure that targeted objectives are being or will be met.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</p> | |
| Result | 4 | <p>SPP Disproportionate Representation (State Performance Plan Indicator #9 and #10)</p> <p>DCYF Alternative Education Program is not disproportionate.</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 DCYF Alternative Education Program as no students with IEPs were suspended for greater than 10 days.</p> <p>State Performance Plan Indicator #4b NA 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. This was not applicable for the DCYF Alternative Education Program.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</p> | |

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| Result | 6 | <p><u>Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)/Social Emotional Supports/Social Emotional Resources/Positive Behavioral Support</u></p> <p>The DCYF Alternative Education Program provides social and emotional supports to the youth using a collaborative approach that includes all aspects of the institutional program. The AEP has a fulltime clinical director who oversees unit social workers who supply direct social emotional support to all youth residing in their respective mod. This support takes the form of weekly meetings with each youth and participation in therapeutic groups led by contracted professionals. A child psychiatrist is also employed who works directly with any youth who has a medical diagnosis or history of mental illness and/or trauma. The child psychiatrist is invaluable to the school and provides support and guidance to the school staff when creating behavior and academic plans, as well as documentation to be presented at IEP meetings. Along with the Unit social workers and the child psychologist, the AEP employs a school social worker who is available to all youth in order to assist them with navigating the school program and to ensure that their social emotional needs are being supported in the school environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All youth of the AEP are part of a point and level system in the greater facility, where a youth's academic performance and behavior in the school program accounts for one third of the weekly points a youth can earn in total and in all areas of the facility. Levels have value to youth of the AEP as they relate to privileges they earn. • Staff of the AEP have been trained on de-escalation techniques, victimization, and the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) which trains all staff to be able to identify the signs of sexual victimization. • The classrooms at the AEP average 5 youth per class and are always staffed by at least one teacher and one Juvenile Program Worker (JPW) to ensure safety and security for both youth and staff. <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><i>Documentation: Data Analysis, Interviews</i></p> | |
| Result | 7 | <p>Program Continuum Middle Level</p> <p>There are 7 students attending the DCYF Alternative Education Program, 2 are students with IEPs'. The special education program continuum is as follows:</p> <p>At the DCYF Alternative Education Program, students are educated according to service delivery frequencies. Most special education services are provided through an inclusion model with the special education teacher coteaching in the least restrictive</p> | |

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| | | <p>class environment. Limited services are provided on a “pullout” basis according to significant intervention goals.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; Observations</i></p> | |
| Result | 10 | <p>Program Continuum High School Level</p> <p>At the DCYF Alternative Education Program there are approx. 294 youth and 90 have IEPs. The program continuum is as follows: At the DCYF Alternative Education Program, students are educated according to service delivery frequencies. Most special education services are provided through an inclusion model with the special education teacher coteaching in the least restrictive class environment. Limited services are provided on a “pullout” basis according to significant intervention goals.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; Observation</i></p> | |
| Result | 11 | <p>Adaptive Physical Education (APE)</p> <p>Adapted Physical Education is physical education which has been adapted or modified, so that it is as appropriate for the person with a disability as it is for a person without a disability. The DCYF Alternative Education Program currently employs 1 PE/APE certified teacher. Services provided by the PE teacher include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning services • Assessment of Individuals/Ecosystems • Prescription/Placement: The IEP • Teaching/Counseling/Coaching • Evaluation of Services • Coordination of Resources and Consulting • Advocacy <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; Observation</i></p> | |
| Result | 12 | <p>Extended School Year (ESY)</p> <p>At the DCYF Alternative Education Program, the 5th term runs from the first school day after the Fourth of July, to the third week in August and employs eight certified instructors, including one Special Education teacher. Teachers instruct classes for credit attainment in core academic areas, credit recovery, and academic intervention during the morning periods. Career exploration, life skills, and Expanded Learning Opportunities are offered in the afternoon periods and are facilitated by AEP community partners.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews</i></p> | |

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| Result | 16 | <p>Drop Out / Graduation Rate (State Performance Plan Indicator #1 and #2)</p> <p>As a temporary transitional education program and a limited LEA, The DCYF Alternative Education Program does not issue high school diplomas. While the AEP does engage in the academic preparations for all youth as they advance towards completion of their high school diploma, GED, or post-secondary option by providing all necessary curricula and course options needed to align with various PBGR's of individual school districts across the State, high school diplomas are the responsibility of the student's LEA and or specific endorsed program upon completion of their high school requirements. LEAs for purposes of preparing a youth to meet PBGR's while they are enrolled with us, are determined by the student's last enrollment or through an official Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Determination. Data from school year 2017-2018 for those youth under the program's supervision for high school graduation and advancement is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 High School Diploma • 7 GED <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; State Performance Plan</i></p> | |
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2. EVALUATION / INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

| Indicator | | Findings | Support Plan |
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| Result | 1 | <p>Records of approximately four students were reviewed prior to the on-site review by the team leaders. Students' records were very accessible and well organized. The record review process did not have any outstanding compliance items.</p> <p><i>(RI Regulations Subpart D Evaluations, Eligibility Determinations, Individualized Education Programs and Educational Placements)</i></p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; Observation</i></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: No outstanding compliance items.</p> |
| Result | 4 | <p>Student Accommodations and Modifications</p> <p>After a student is identified as receiving special education services within the File Review Meeting and the case is discussed as a team, the special education teacher reviews the file again the next day. A binder, titled Student Accommodation and Modifications, was created with the names of each academic group and the academic school year. Within the binder, students with IEPs and 504 Plans are organized by their academic group, and a copy of the referral sheet as well as the accommodation/ modification pages from the IEP and 504 Plan are included.</p> | |

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| | | <p>The special education teacher works directly with academic teachers during weekly RTI meetings to identify if students are struggling with behavior and/or academics, and review best practices in the classroom, which include the students' accommodations and modifications such as; preferential seating, frequent checks for comprehension, tasks broken down into parts/chunking larger/more involved tasks, prompting with encouragement, repeating directions, access to a computer for extensive writing activities, graphic organizers/specific study strategies, and access to support staff when necessary, to name a few. Mid-Term Progress Reports and Bi-Monthly Teacher Feedback Sheets are utilized to show if students are failing or are having difficulty.</p> <p>When students have more intensive accommodations and/or modifications, the special education teacher will bring them up in the weekly RTI meeting and meet with teachers individually to discuss how to modify lessons, tests, and/or projects. The special education teacher also provides supplemental assignments, self-designed thematic units, as well as creative, artistic, and cultural projects for students with reading and writing goals. The special education teacher checks in with students on a weekly basis to do teacher/student conferencing, monitor progress, and establish short- and long-term academic goals.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; Document Reviews</i></p> | |
| Result | 5 | <p>Specific Learning Disabilities Determination (SLD)</p> <p>The DCYF Alternative Education Program follows the Rhode Island Regulations Governing the Education of Students with Disabilities which requires all LEAs to use the State criteria when considering and/or determining whether or not a student is eligible for special education services under the SLD category, in addition to LEAs adhering to all other state regulations governing the referral process through disability determination.</p> <p>Within the education program, the special education teacher conducts the WJIV testing, and at times, the Clinical Team becomes involved with additional educational testing, such as the WISC-V. Some additional testing can be ordered from the courts as well, to have a more comprehensive approach to evaluate the student. The STAR Reading and Math Assessments are completed when a student enrolls and serves as a baseline; benchmark testing is conducted at the end of each academic quarter. Ultimately, data is gathered, the Evaluation Team reviews the case, then an eligibility meeting is held to determine if the LEA, parent, and educational team agree that the empirical evidence provided meets the criteria to be identified as having a Specific Learning Disability.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Interviews; Record Review</i></p> | |

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

| Indicator | | Findings | Support Plan |
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| Result | 1 | <p>Part C to Part B Transition (Indicator #12)</p> <p>The DCYF Alternative Education Program does not service pre-school or early intervention students.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; State Performance Plan</i></p> | |
| Result | 2 | <p>IDEA Transition Planning at the Middle Level</p> <p>The DCYF Alternative Education Program's school social worker has assumed the duties of assessing career interest with students while using a variety of tools for transition planning, including interest inventories and career exploration. At times, the school social worker and the special education teacher have collaborated and researched career interest tools such as but not limited to, the Casey Life Skills Assessment, the RIASEC Test, and Career Cruising, and the school continues to research new and improved interest inventories to better assist students with transition planning in the future. An important aspect of the transition planning includes a "Student Interview," that is conducted by the special education teacher, as well as on-going teacher/student interviews. It is in these one-on-one conversations that the student shares their genuine interests/passions and their overall educational experiences.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis; Interviews; Record Reviews</i></p> | |
| Result | 3 | <p>IDEA Transition Planning at the High School Level</p> <p>The DCYF Alternative Education gives three transition assessments that are considered age and need appropriate: the Casey Life Skills Assessment, the RIASEC Test, and</p> | |

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| | | <p>Career Cruising. An important aspect of the transition planning includes a Student Interview that is conducted by the special education teacher, as well as on-going teacher/student interviews. It is in these one-on-one conversations that the student shares their genuine interests/passions, as well as their overall educational experiences and employment endeavors. The student's attainable goals are listed under the "Post-School Goal" section in the IEP.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Data Analysis, Interview, Record Reviews</i></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>The DCYF Alternative Education Program team members who deal directly with ORS include the principal/special education director, the school social worker, and the special education teacher. The team makes several referrals throughout the academic year and has initiated contact this year with affiliated contacts of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services Office of Rehabilitation Services, to brainstorm ways to start a pilot program where students can get early exposure to services, job training, and/or workforce learning modules. The special education teacher has coordinated with one specific contact to have her directly involved in a senior's final IEP meeting and is scheduling upcoming Microsoft Team Meetings for three other students who are interested in being referred for these services and/or would like to get more information about options in ORS.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Interviews; Document Review</i></p> | |
| Result | 5 | <p>Summary of Performance (SOP) is facilitated by the case managers as appropriate. The student Summary of Performance documents are completed in the spring of the student's senior year, prior to the student's graduation date, in accordance with state guidelines. The special education teacher meets with the senior students with IEPs to review the entire report together with the purpose of accurately identifying where their strengths and needs are, what transition plans are solidified, which next steps need to be established with specific timelines, creating a list of community resources, and providing specific information about career interests, pre-apprenticeship opportunities, and ideas on how to improve their Executive Functioning Skills.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Interviews; Document Review</i></p> | |

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| 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 DCYF Alternative Education Program is 100% compliant with the requirements. (State Performance Plan Indicator #13)</p> <p><i>Documentation: Interviews; Document Review</i></p> | |
| Result | 7 | <p>N/A 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). Note: The N size is too small to report.</p> <p><i>Documentation: Interviews; Document Review</i></p> | |