

Rhode Island Department of Education  
Office of Special Populations

School Support System Report and Support Plan for the  
Beacon Charter School for the Arts  
December 2007

# **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.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. School Improvement /Family Engagement
2. Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
3. Evaluation/ Individual Education Plan (IEP)
4. Transition

Beacon Charter School for the Arts  
School Support System Review  
December 2007

Team A: Susan Wood, Jane Keane, Rhode Island Department of Education, Office for Diverse Learners

1. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT / FAMILY ENGAGEMENT					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	<p>The mission of the Beacon Charter High School for the Arts is to “prepare young artists for advancement through secondary and post-secondary education while immersing each student in the art discipline of their choice and providing them with the practical business experience they need to be successful in the life-long practice of their art.”</p> <p>The School Improvement Team focus areas for the 2007-2008 school year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Examining data (NWEA, PSAT, SAT, NECAP, Common Writing tasks, etc.) to find areas of need so curricular adjustments can be made</li> <li>-Integrating mathematics throughout the curriculum (i.e. excel graphs of scatter plots imported to MLA papers are a common expectation)</li> <li>-Implementing an recently refined reading program during DEAR time</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		
Performance	2	<p>The district strategic plan serves as our current School Improvement Plan. The SIT team is continuing to revise the draft pan for the current school year.</p>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		
Performance	3	<p>As an art school, classes integrate the arts into their lessons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-This means that students are given the chance to display their knowledge in different ways such as drawing, painting, acting and demonstration.</li> <li>-Most classes are limited to 17 students (i.e., 68 9th graders and 4 cohorts)</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		

Performance	4	<p>The school day is based on a block schedule with only four blocks a day. Students only have three “academic” classes a day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-This cuts down on homework, the mass of material to be learned, and stress brought on by too many academic classes.</li> <li>-As many of the students with IEPs struggle with organization. The schedule helps the students to be successful in the general education setting.</li> </ul> <p>The school’s overall grading policies are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Common grading policy that includes hands-on projects that are valued and are worth as much as tests (30% each).</li> <li>-No child will fail a class simply because they are not good at test taking.</li> <li>-Students know that homework and class participation counts for 10% of their grade</li> <li>-This helps keeps students on track and their parents knowledgeable about their grades and how they are computed.</li> </ul>	Presentation Document Review Interviews		
Performance	5	<p>School-wide rubrics used in all content areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Students are taught how to write an MLA paper in their English classes and this format is used throughout the program of study.</li> <li>-All classes support this effort by having students write an MLA paper.</li> </ul> <p>By using school-wide standardized rubrics for assessment, students are clear about expectations and requirements to meet proficiency.</p>	Presentation Document Review Interviews		

Performance	6	<p>Beacon embraces interdisciplinary teaching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Teachers are able to deliver lessons that are connected to multiple content areas to facilitate deeper understanding and lasting knowledge of selected topics.</li> <li>-For students with IEPs , this is particularly helpful. The same theme and subject matter are taught in several content areas.</li> <li>-Often times math and science are interwoven, and other subject areas join in as able.</li> <li>-Interdisciplinary lessons facilitate activating prior knowledge, helping to scaffold new information.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		
Performance	7	<p>Beacon is technology oriented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Full computer lab- all 9th graders take a technology class to give them basic skills required in all of their other classes.</li> <li>-LCD projects and smart boards in several classrooms. This helps to assist visual learners.</li> <li>-Laptops available for student use. If there is a need, a student will be provided with a laptop for their own individual use.</li> <li>Arts portfolio is also digital. Students have access to digital cameras, scanners and color printers.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		
Performance	8	<p>Beacon Charter School requires 10 hours of community service a year is a graduation requirement per year. This can be both school-based on outside of school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-We encourage the students to be active participants in the community and arrange for many opportunities for them.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Recently, students volunteered at Autumn fest and participated in a well received cook off.</li> <li>-Culinary students cooked a meal for the Woonsocket Rotary's Annual Dinner. This type of regular activity is encouraged in the Beacon community.</li> <li>-Shelter Walk raised money for homeless shelter.</li> <li>-These opportunities are becoming so numerous they challenge the school's ability to meet the needs of our friends and neighbors.</li> </ul>			
Performance	10	<p>Every student is tested twice a year using Northwest Evaluation Associates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Testing in reading, mathematics, and language usage.</li> <li>-The assessment adjust to student ability, accurately measuring what a student knows and needs to learn.</li> <li>-MAP tests measure academic growth over time, independent of grade level or age and are designed to provide educators with the most accurate measurement of student achievement.</li> <li>-Immediate scoring helps drive instruction.</li> <li>-Data pinpoints specific skills that need to be addressed. <a href="http://www.nwea.org">www.nwea.org</a> for alignment to Rhode Island and NECAP standards</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		
Performance	11	<p>Beacon has an established Advisory Program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Advisors stay with students for four years as advocates.</li> <li>-Students participate in the "GO" and College Board's</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		

		<p>“My Road” Program</p> <p>-Advisors can help students who may be having difficulty with a subject or discipline issue.</p> <p>-The guidance counselor and Health teacher visit the advisories and talk about preparing for college. The school based coordinator comes in to speak about job shadowing opportunities and other community related events that students can participate in.</p>			
Performance	12	<p>Every student completes an Individual Graduation Plan (ILP) This plan focuses on academics, career and personal social areas. Beacon Charter School also prepares students for entry level jobs. Students explore areas of interest, prepare a resume, look at learning styles, and chart their grades.</p>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		
Performance	13	<p>There are many after school programs available to students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Jewelry making</li> <li>-Theater class</li> <li>-Art studio</li> <li>-Ceramics</li> <li>-Literary club</li> <li>-Robotics</li> <li>-School newspaper</li> <li>-Cheerleading</li> <li>-Dance</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		
Performance	14	<p>Beacon offers a myriad of professional development including but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-PBGR /NECAP related training</li> <li>-Literacy (Adolescent Literacy Collaboratory in conjunction with the Educational Alliance)</li> <li>-Rtl (Response to Intervention)</li> <li>-Dunn Institute (organization skills/homework and learning styles)</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Common Planning Time</li> <li>-Advisories</li> <li>-Transition</li> <li>-Understanding Learning Disabilities</li> <li>-The staff meets every Monday and Wednesday for an hour after school</li> </ul> <p>Special education professional development includes but is not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transition Advisory Committee</li> <li>School improvement Team</li> <li>Rtl (response to intervention)</li> <li>Digication Workshop</li> <li>School Support System participation</li> </ul>			
Performance	15	<p>Teacher Support Team/ Response to Intervention (TST/Rtl). These meetings occur on a monthly basis and the Rtl team has begun to use data to structure interventions. Staff are in the process of receiving professional development in Rtl and this should be fully integrated and implemented by the following school year.</p>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		
Performance	16	<p>Implementing a recently refined and tweaked DEAR program (1.5 hours per week) that targets students motivation and interests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Allows teachers to choose one of their passions for reading and develop a book club around that passion.</li> <li>-Students can choose which teacher's book club they wish to join based on interest.</li> <li>-Hoping to instill in students the joy of reading for pleasure.</li> <li>-Many special needs students do not enjoy reading, and we are hoping that this will engage many of those</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		

		<p>students.</p> <p>-Interventions in math, reading and writing tied to RTI provided during DEAR time</p>			
Performance	17	<p>The current Beacon Charter School's Special Education Administrative and Teaching Structure.</p> <p>There is a Special Education Director who works 4 hours per week as a consultant. Her main role as the LEA is preparing for and supervising IEP meetings. She works an additional 6 hours per week as a special educator providing case management services to 15 students and pull out, small group's instruction in mathematics. There is a part-time special education service provider who works one day a week. There is also a full-time special education service provider who provides day-to-day structure, support and services as needed. Teachers and students reported feeling very supported by her and comfortable in seeking her out for assistance.</p>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		
Performance	18	<p>Family /Community Relations include but are not limited to the following:</p> <p>Beacon Charter School has a relationship with the Blackstone Tourism Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Polar Express Train Christmas Play</li> <li>-Dynamite Cook off</li> <li>-Rotary Club dinner for 60</li> <li>-Autumfest –students worked at the Vintage Restaurant booth which led to employment for two students.</li> <li>-Woonsocket Senior Center. Beacon students serve dinner there throughout the course of the year</li> <li>-Many local connections arise through our School Based Coordinator such as 'Tools of the Trade" exhibit where local business demonstrated their programs.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		

Performance	19	<p>Beacon has a legal and Regent's authorized sponsorship with Johnson and Wales University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-They provide us with curriculum support</li> <li>-The president and other top officials sit on our Board of Trustees (VP of Academic Affairs and the Deans of three Colleges).</li> <li>-Close relationship with the Stadium Theater. Our students volunteer as technical helpers and perform other entry level jobs such as usher and their theater is our lab.</li> <li>-Connection with the arts studio Rivers Edge. Students are able to intern at the studio and gain valuable work experience.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		
Performance	20	<p>Beacon has strong parent involvement which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Parents sit on and chair the Board of Trustees</li> <li>-Active Parent Association – Beacon Men and Women (BMW's)</li> <li>-Parents actively engaged on the SIT team.</li> <li>-Local Advisory committee which is presenting a series of workshops by the Dunn Institute.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		
Performance	21	<p>There is a Dean of Students who also serves as the school's guidance counselor. This individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Monitors students' behaviors and discipline's as needed. Provides positive behavioral interventions and supports, and is a social/emotional support.</li> <li>-Meets and counsels all students as needed.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		

		<p>-Provides guidance counseling (social/emotional, academic and career/college guidance)</p> <p>-Administers COPS system survey (9<sup>th</sup> graders) identifying students' area of interest and ASVAB testing (10th-12th graders). See also Transition section; item #1.</p>			
Performance		Each Monday is staff meeting lead by the school's Director. Each Wednesday is common planning time (CPT)- this is just with the staff/faculty and they set the agenda and have structured discussion on instructional topics.	Interviews Presentation		

<b>2. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (FAPE/LRE)</b>					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	<p>The charter school has approximately 168 and 46 have IEPs. The program continuum includes:</p> <p>-Full inclusion—all students receive all their classes in the general education setting.</p> <p>-Students and teachers receive support in the general education classroom by a special education teacher.</p> <p>-Resource is provided for about 20% of the special needs students and on an as needed basis per the IEP.</p> <p>-Students participate in general education classes and receive instructional support in the resource setting and support in general education classes.</p> <p>-Beacon has several students who have been provided with one-on-one instruction from a certified tutor for a block.</p>	<p>Presentation</p> <p>Document</p> <p>Review</p> <p>Interviews</p>		

		<p>-Specialized virtual learning program for a student in danger of dropping out.</p> <p>-There are no self-contained classes</p> <p>Other service provision:</p> <p>-Counseling provided through Plaza Psychiatrists and availability for FBAs and education evaluations.</p> <p>-2 availability of a speech therapist who works at the Northern RI Collaborative</p>			
Performance	2	<p>There is literacy support embedded throughout the school which involve three tiers of interventions</p> <p>-Tier one school wide supports</p> <p>-Tier two targeted interventions in the classroom</p> <p>-Tier three, pull out services provided by Reading Specialist twice a week (all Tier 3 students receive 30 minutes of small group instruction and one block on inclusive services)</p> <p>-The Saturday Academy meets weekly for two hours for additional reading support</p> <p>-Certified Reading Specialist (support for the student) and .4 Literacy Coach (support for the teacher) for the faculty.</p> <p>-Ample diagnostic opportunities: NECAP, NSRE (2007 only), NWEA and Stanford 9.</p>	<p>Presentation Document Review Interviews</p>		

3. EVALUATION/ INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	Records of approximately XXX students were reviewed by the visiting team. These were selected through a stratified random sampling technique to allow the team to consider a representative variety of students. Additional students came to the attention of the team during the review. Students' records were accessible and generally well organized. The Beacon Charter School IEPs were complete and well written.	Record Reviews		
Performance	2	Each fall all teachers receive an IEP summary sheet with goals and accommodations. Each teacher also gets a copy of the complete IEP . Both are kept in a locked space in each teacher's room.	Interviews		

4. TRANSITION					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	The school counselor is the one who administers and reviews the vocational assessment with all 9 <sup>th</sup> graders and continues with other assessments 10 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> graders. Copies of these assessment sis shared with the special education service providers and is sued in planning the transition page with students.	Presentation Document Review Interviews		
Performance	2	There is a transition unit taught to all 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> grade students. This involves:  -an intensive two-week unit focusing on careers, post-secondary options, independent living and community	Presentation Document Review Interviews		

		<p>participation is presented in the Technology class to 9th graders.</p> <p>-a follow-up unit is presented in the Business class to 10th graders.</p>			
Performance	3	The school's guidance counselor is available after school and into the evenings (until 7:30pm) to meet with students and families to review college applications and financial aide.	Presentation Document Review Interviews		
Performance	4	The full-time special education service provider attends the Transition Advisory Committee (TAC) to the school community.	Presentation Document Review Interviews		
Performance	5	There is a school-based coordinator whose focus is applied learning. She arranges job shadowing opportunities. She also put son a Career Fair on a annual basis.	Presentation Document Review Interviews		