

Rhode Island Department of Education
Office of Special Populations

School Support System Report and Support Plan for the
Compass Charter School
December 2006

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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Compass Charter School
School Support System Review
December 2006

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1. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT / FAMILY ENGAGEMENT					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	<p>As outlined in the charter application the mission statement of the Compass School is as follows:</p> <p>The Compass School is a small learning community in which all children will excel. With developmentally appropriate practices, we offer children a multi-age, multi-year educational experience. The project-based curriculum integrates academic discipline through the “lenses” of environmental sustainability and social responsibility and provides the foundation to develop each individual as a cognitive, physical, social, emotional , and reflective being. Students will graduate knowing they are members of a global community, having developed and exercised their personal, social and ecological reasonability through reciprocal relationships among members of the learning community.</p> <p>There is a governing Council that is comprised of parents, community members, and teacher representatives from each of the Steps. All teachers and parents could attend if desired and the Director attends all meeting. A subgroup of the Council is the Learning Committee that focuses on teaching and learning aspects of the school. The Development Committee focuses on raising monies for the school.</p>	<p>Document Review Data analysis meeting Interviews</p>		
Compliance	2	<p>One of the current agenda items of the Learning Committee is the development of a special education local advisory council.</p>	<p>Interviews</p>	<p>Implementation of a special education local advisory council will be reviewed and designed to best meet the need of Compass Charter School.</p> <p>Timeline: Immediately and ongoing. Progress check. May 2007.</p>	<p>In the past, the Learning Committee (which meets once a month) has been serving as an inclusive advisory council. It is chaired by a general</p>

					<p>education teacher, who is also a member of the school council. Members include parents (special education, 504, and general education), as well as special education and general education teachers. Generally, we discuss such topics as curriculum, discipline, professional development, etc. Last year (2007-2008), I talked to just the special education parents concerning a separate advisory council. They informed me that they only wanted to participate in the Learning Committee since they felt their needs and concerns were better addressed in this inclusive type setting. This year (2008-2009), I talked to parents and again explained that a separate committee</p>
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					was mandatory in order to follow the federal and state regulations. I did find more parents that seemed interested in participating compared to the prior year. During the summer , a committee was developed composed of special education parents and staff. We meet on the last Wednesday of each month..
Performance		<p>Compass is in the process of renewing their charter application with RIDE. Recently they contracted to procure assistance in the development of the 3-5 year Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Their current charter application further states that “The Compass School was founded on the belief that optimal learning for children occurs when the educational practices are developmentally appropriate. Education is viewed from a constructivist perspective which informs us that children must be actively engaged in meaningful, concrete experiences in order for learning to take place, that learning is a process of invention where children construct their own knowledge, and that children are intrinsically motivated to learn.”</p> <p>The School Goals include the following areas: Community Goals Family Goals Staff and Administrative Goals</p>	Document Review Data analysis meeting Interviews		

		<p>Student Goals Physical Goals Social Goals Emotional Gals Reflective Goals</p> <p>Each of the goal areas have a series of specifics goals that student and staff will work towards achieving.</p>			
Performance	3	<p>The Compass School is committed to supporting children in relating their individual educational potential. To achieve this, there must be an administrative and instructional environment that is sensitive to the learning needs for each child and capable of responding quickly to maximize the learning potential of each child.</p> <p>The School is comprised of three Steps. Explorers (grades K-1) Investigators 1 (grades 2-3) Investigators 2 (grades 4-6) Navigators (grades 7-8)</p> <p>The steps are divided into multi-age homerooms with a primary teacher providing stability throughout the student's 3-year cycle. Teaching staff will form significant relationships with children of this multi-year structure. The teaching team delivers curriculum in center-based classroom via project-based work. Students moving through the centers will complete developmentally appropriate activities that integrate cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and reflective goals. In addition, flexible groupings.</p>	<p>Document Review Data analysis meeting Interviews</p>		
Performance	4	<p>There is parent group called Frogs that supports the school They plan the school's annual Harvest Festival. The Frogs also provide teachers with parent assistance (copying for</p>	<p>Interviews</p>		

		the classroom etc.) as well as fund raising for specific materials or class needs.			
Performance	5	<p>Professional development is provided both via in-school and out-of-school opportunities. These have included but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -project-based learning -middle school conference -math/science workshops -individual choices as approved by the Director -follow up on working with math GLEs and national standards -multi-age education -Wilson reading training -Constructivism approach to education 	<p>Document Review Data analysis meeting Interviews</p>		
Performance	6	<p>Teachers have common planning time 3 hours per week and often meet after school on their own time to continue co-planning their curriculum. Co-teachers were very appreciative of their colleagues and their co-planning opportunities.</p> <p>There is a staff meeting twice once a month where all staff meet to discuss issues/concerns and teaching /learning issues.</p>	<p>Interviews</p>		
Performance	7	<p>There is a formalized Teacher Support Team process in place. The Response to Intervention process is in the beginning stages of discussion and implementation.</p>	<p>Interviews</p>		
Performance	8	<p>The overall atmosphere of the school is very student centered and supportive. Staff voiced their strong support of both the special education teacher and the consulting Special Education Director.</p>	<p>Interviews Observation</p>		

2. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (FAPE/LRE)					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	<p>There are approx. 140 and there are 17 have IEPs.</p> <p>Full inclusion is the predominate norm at Compass. A small number of students (5) are pulled out for Wilson reading or other work for approx. 30 minutes twice a week. All other special education services are provided in the classroom. Speech and the occupational therapist are contracted and com twice a week to provide services per the IEP.</p> <p>There is a part-time consulting psychologist that conducts evaluations as appropriate. He also consults to the classroom teacher and the special education teacher regarding behavioral interventions and supports for any students with behavioral health needs in addition to working with staff on functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plans. He is also the liaison to outside mental health providers is also part of his role.</p> <p>There is a summer school program offered at Compass. This is for both students with IEPs and those without but may need some additional supports in order to prevent regression of skills. Approximately 8-10 students attend and receive academic instruction as well as special education and related services per their IEPs.</p>	<p>Document Review</p> <p>Data analysis meeting</p> <p>Interviews</p>		
Performance	2	<p>Students with IEPs who also have PLPs are monitored by both the special educator and their general education teachers.</p>	<p>Interviews</p>		

3. EVALUATION/ INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings

Performance	1	The records were well organized and written to meet compliance standards.	Record Reviews		

4. TRANSITION					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	There is a day called "Camp Day" that occurs on a trimester basis. Students are mixed into different classes and get to work with other teachers and participate in a variety of activities.	Interviews		
Performance	2	Compass School goes up to the 8th grade. There have not been students with IEPs who were 14 years of age or older during their tenure at the school. Plans are being developed for a vocational assessment process if/when that situation occurs.	Interviews		
Performance	3	<p>Students who are graduating and moving to the high school experience participate in a graduation ceremony.</p> <p>For students with IEPs the receiving school is notified in January of the incoming 9th grade student. Compass then makes plans to bring the student to the new school for a tour and to meet folks. An IEP meeting is then scheduled so that Compass attends and assists in the development of the student's program. In addition to students with IEPs who are graduating this process also taken place for any student with an IEP that is exiting Compass. If a student is moving to another state the meeting takes place via a conference call.</p>	Interviews		

