

Rhode Island Department of Education
Office of Special Populations

School Support System Report and Support Plan for the
East Greenwich Public Schools
February 2008

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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East Greenwich Public Schools
School Support System Review
February 2008

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1. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT / FAMILY ENGAGEMENT					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	<p>The mission of the East Greenwich Public Schools is to Maximize individual potential in pursuit of personal and academic excellence. "Further, the vision is "... a learning community that models shared leadership, respect for individuals, collaborative Practice and support for research and data driven instruction strategies to improve students achievement. Students actively participate in a nurturing and students-centered environment which fosters open communication, cooperation and collaboration. Our community is collectively responsible for supporting education and serves as a model of excellence for all." Both the mission and vision is supported by a series of strategic goals. These are</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All students will read critically and communicate clearly both orally and in writing in all curriculum areas 2. All members of the learning community will model positive, productive, learning and social behaviors. 3. High School students will connect classroom learning to life experiences through goals setting and self assessment 4. All Students will be able to compute fluently, interpret and analyze information, justify and communicate conclusions and apply learning to new situations. <p>These goals are supported by a series of objectives that outline what students, teachers and administrators will be able to do.</p>	<p>District Presentation Interviews Documents</p>		
Performance	2	<p>Across the district there was evidence of comprehensive school improvement plans aligned to the district strategic</p>	<p>District Presentation</p>		

		plan. Teams are comprised of school administration educators and parents and meets monthly (Due to contract compliance teachers may not currently be participating on the SIT)	Interviews Documents		
Performance	3	All six schools in East Greenwich are high performing and Regents commended schools	District Presentation Interviews Documents		
Performance	4	<p><u>Common Planning Time</u></p> <p>The elementary level teachers have grade level common planning time and special education and related service providers are included. These meetings are structured opportunities to highlight and focus on student work. In addition general education teachers request status review meeting whenever necessary to discuss a particular issue or concern. These are generally held during special education team day.</p> <p>At Cole Middle School Grade level teams meet three times a week to engage in common planning time facilitated by a team leader. This opportunity is structured with focused agendas' and minutes addressing student, family and school wide planning issues and needs. Co-curricula faculty participates at least once a week on a grade level team for common planning opportunities.</p> <p>This year at the high school there is a Freshmen Academy Initiative. There are three freshmen houses and one common planning time. Common planning time was used to review student's needs and explore interdisciplinary options and connections. It occurred the first half of the year, however, due to contract negotiations and contract compliance the Freshmen Academy is not being implemented. All teachers, however, have the availability</p>	Interviews Documents		

		of common planning time but is called common prep time. Meetings are not mandated but the expectation is that teachers will be able to take advantage of this time.			
Performance	5	<p>Recent professional development activities include but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Graduation Based Proficiency Requirements (PBGR) -Proficiency and Sufficiency -Writers Voice -Assessing student Work to inform instruction -Differentiated Instruction -Effective Advisories -Writing Across the Curriculum -The Big 6 -Autism -Response to Intervention (Rtl) <p>There are a myriad of school-based and central office meetings. These include school staff/faculty meetings:, curriculum/department head/grade level meetings, faculty and Superintendent’s meeting. At the elementary level, teachers expressed a need to have more guidance on Medical billing processes.</p>	District Presentation Interviews Documents		
Performance	6	<p>Response to Intervention (Rtl)</p> <p>East Greenwich charged a variety of individuals (teachers, psychologists, social workers, administrators, etc.) to develop district-wide polices on Rtl. They met on a monthly basis and developed a district-wide structure and process including flyers to hand out to parents/families. This is reflected in an Rtl binder that outlines frequently asked questions and district-wide forms. Throughout the district the Rtl initiative has been hampered due to current contract negotiations as adherence to “contract compliance” is ongoing.</p>	District Presentation Interviews Documents		

		<p>Elementary Level-- Rtl is being implemented at the elementary level although the team process has been modified due to contract negotiations. Data on student progress is collected, interventions are in place and the support services each student requires is provided in a systematic individual student need based process</p> <p>Middle Level—Rtl at the Cole Middle School was noted to be active and functioning. Due to contractual compliance at Cole Middle School initiatives beyond classroom instruction have ceased, hence the facilitation of an Rtl/TST and or the implementation of the planned Advisor/Advisee Program have not been implemented as previously structured. Some informal Rtl/TST activities are being facilitated through individual grade level teams with administrative support.</p> <p>At the high school, the team meets every other week and reviews the tiers of intervention services/supports etc. It is chaired by a general education teacher who also has a special education background (some members are standing members and some are pulled in as needed). Thus far, the team has reviewed 19 referrals. Four of the 19 have moved on to special education referrals. Others were addressed via targeted interventions etc.</p>			
Performance	7	District-wide there is a mentoring program that provides mentors to students during school hours. The program also provides after school support in art, music and homework club activities.	District Presentation Interviews Documents		
Performance	8	Throughout the district there was evidence of student centered, teacher facilitated instruction with posted rubrics, word walls, modeling, cooperative learning, student problem solving, posted student work, independent self-selected reading along with examples of 6-trait writing model.	District Presentation Interviews Documents		

Performance	9	<p>Social Emotional Resources/positive behavioral Interventions and supports throughout the district there was evidence of opportunities for students to engage in social emotional learning strategies. Some examples are but not limited to the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior Specialist • Drug and Alcohol Counselor • Anti Bullying Policy and Program Initiative • Strategic Support Program – Student Mentoring • Social Thinking and Language Groups (SLP) • Organizational Skills Group/Problem Solving Group 	District Presentation Interviews Documents		
Performance	10	<p>Use of student assessment and performance data to inform instruction is emerging at Cole Middle School. The School Improvement Team engaged in reviewing NECAP and SALT data to strategically inform the school improvement plan. Then at the middle level, faculty engage in differentiated instruction based on student work, teacher generate assessments along with accommodations and modifications identified by a students IEP.</p>	District Presentation Interviews Documents		
Performance	11	<p>At East Greenwich High School there are three class tracks; general studies, college and career prep and honors. Some of the content areas used different books depending on the track level. There is a waiver system in place for participation in classes that have not been recommended. Parents request other level classes and students can be “waived” into the other classes if space permits.</p> <p>General studies classes are typically offered at the 9th and 10th grade level. General studies classes are not recognized as college preparatory classes by the vast majority of four-year colleges. Students select classes in 8th grade for 9th grade. It is unclear if the potential ramifications of selecting general studies classes are addressed with</p>	Interviews Documents		

		students at that time. The School Counseling Office is involved in post secondary planning as well as college planning. High school students were forthcoming about their <i>perceptions</i> of the lack of rigor in their general studies classes.			
Performance	12	<p>Through out the district there was significant evidence of family engagement activities such as but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Involvement on School Improvement Teams • Active Parents Teacher Groups (PTG's) • School based Web sites and list some • Monthly News letters • Local Advisory Council (LAC) 	Interviews Documents		

2. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (FAPE/LRE)					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	<p>The district has established a FAST team based on a clinical model of review (Family and Students Support Team). District-wide school psychologists and social workers attend regular meetings to discuss current mental health and trends.</p> <p>The related service providers meet on a regular basis with the Assistant Superintendent to review speech issues and trends.</p>	Interviews Documents		
Performance	2	<p>School removals/disciplinary policies</p> <p>Throughout the district there are clear policies and practices that address student behavior within the whole school community. The Student Planner contains behavioral expectations, is updated annually and</p>	Interviews Documents		

		contains a parent / student acknowledgement. Additional resources include but are not limited too: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Resource Officer • In School suspension setting • Truancy Court 			
		<u>Program Continuum</u>			
Performance	3	<p>Preschool</p> <p>At the Preschool level the district provides an array of services for 3-5 years old children with exceptionalities. Students may receive “walk in” services and/or participate in district one half day or full day preschool classes with non-disabled peers based upon their individualized education programs. Although the district program includes non-disabled peers, the numbers currently are less than 50%. The district has two district –based preschool classes and also utilizes Crayons, a private preschool program.</p>	<p>District Presentation Interviews Documents</p>		
Performance	4	<p>Elementary Level</p> <p>Elementary students with disabilities are afforded opportunities for success in least restrictive environments. The full array of special education and related services (inclusive practices; in class supports, teaming resource support, intensive resource supports, self contained as appropriate) are available and decisions are made based upon the needs of each child.</p>	<p>District Presentation Interviews Documents</p>		
Performance	5	<p>Cole Middle School is a seventh and eighth grade school with a total student population of 417. Of that total, 66 students are student with IEP’s (15.8%)</p> <p>Instruction is provided through two teams at each grade level along with a split 7/8th grade level team.</p>	<p>District Presentation Interviews Documents</p>		

	<p>Each grade level team has an assigned special educator along with a teacher assistant. Special education services and supports are provided through a continuum which includes inclusionary practices in the general education setting along with an academic skills class held three to four times a week for students needing a more individualized approach to instruction and remediation.</p> <p>Students are recommended to participate in an Academic Skills class through 6th grade transition recommendations to the 7th grade. This process continues from the 7th to the 8th grade. Students can transition out of the Academic Skills with recommendations of educators and parent approval. Students may additionally have direct reading instruction to support individual student PLP's. If students are participating in both Academic Skills and direct reading instruction students have no option to participate in electives. Parental consent must be obtained. Students participating in one or the other activity are able to participate in one elective.</p> <p>If parents choose not to have their child participate in a reading program to support students PLP's in order to participate in Band and or other electives, parents are requested to have their child's reading support provided outside the school. Resources are identified if needed.</p> <p>A self-contained setting is provided for students with more significant learning challenges needing individualized direct instruction and life skills experiences. Students participate in community activities supporting their life skills curriculum twice quarterly along with whole school activities. When appropriate, students may attend core content area</p>			
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	<p>classes (1 student currently attending science). Currently due to programmatic choices students are limited to one elective class.</p> <p><u>The Behavior Planning Center at Cole Middle School</u> There is an understanding that this program as currently being implemented will no longer be available in the next school year. In the Behavior Planning Center, there was limited evidence of a structured/documented protocol for entrance and or exit criteria, limited evidence of a classroom behavioral management model and no evidence of behavior management strategy, use of functional behavioral assessment or behavioral intervention plans (FBA's/BIP's) to address students progress.</p> <p>There still remains a need to address students experiencing social emotional behavioral and mental health challenges as reflected in the data noted through by a variety of school staff and teachers. Services are in process of being reconfigured for the following academic year to best meet the needs of the student population.</p> <p>A student support team is held weekly to address planning for students at risk academically as well as students having difficulty socially, emotionally and or behaviorally. The team is comprised of school administrators, school counselors, the school psychologist, social worker, school nurse and other faculty as needed including special educators, and service providers. This team addresses and plans for students in crisis in identifying academic, social emotional and or behavioral family, school and community agency supports.</p>			
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Compliance	6	<p>Per a student's IEP requirements (JK1) two trained personnel are required to complete all transfers. Hygiene throughout the school day is inconsistent for student participating at Cole Middle School.</p>	JK1 Record review	Personnel have been rearranged so now it is consistent. Issue resolved.	
Performance/ Compliance	7	<p>Facilities at Cole Middle School</p> <p>The self contained life skills classroom (room 22) is limited in space to accommodate students participating in this setting. Therefore accessibility to physical resources and supports (i.e. sensory diet equipment along with movement breaks, exercise and movement equipment, adaptive and other necessary equipment/materials) is compromised. Two electrical boxes prohibit utilization of three feet of space. Additionally the floor tiles are breaking apart.</p> <p>For a student with significant mobility issues navigation within the school is limited with doors that must be manually opened/closed.</p> <p>Room 10 is utilized as an Academic Skills class which often will have up to 13 students sitting at a large table for instructional and resource support. Students may be working on a number of resource type of activities without the ability to significantly focus.</p> <p>The roof leaks in Room 7 (leaks in the center of the room) and has mouse traps in the closet.</p> <p>A classroom set up for PLP instruction and support (room 19) is limited in space providing 6 computers along with material for instructional support. Each computer has limited space with a chair where students are elbow to elbow. A student with a stander/wheel chair is unable to fit the stander under the computer desk.</p>	Interviews Observation	A referendum is expected in November for new school facilities. Prior to that the self-contained class (room 22) has already been rearranged. Room 22 issues resolved.	

		Though space can be found to facilitate activities requiring confidentiality, the time it takes to identify space limits the time for the typical assessment and instruction to be completed.			
Performance	8	<p>At East Greenwich High School (EGHS) there are approximately 752 students with 81 having IEP's (10.7%). The categories are as follows: The program continuum at the high school includes the following:</p> <p><u>-Study Skills (resource)</u>. Ten sections comprised of approx. 4-8 students. Vocational resource H-period on Tuesday and Thursday from 2-3. This is open to all students with IEP who may need assistance and is scheduled from those who attend the Warwick Career and Technical Center.</p> <p><u>-Behavior Planning Center (resource)</u> -Available to all students/all grades with priority to those with social/emotional diagnoses (the total is typically under 20 students). Some students are scheduled into the class. All students can "drop in" if they are having emotional distress in their general education classes. There are protocols and procedures for entrance and exit requirements.</p> <p><u>-Collaborative Classes</u> General Studies Collaborative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -ELA 9th and 10th Ramp Up*+ -Math 400 and 410 Ramp Up*+ -Western Civilization /US History -Life Science/General Science </p> <p>*Students with IEP's who have a Ramp Up class also have a Ramp Up Lab with a special educator and the reading specialist.</p>	District Presentation Interviews Documents		

	<p>*ELA teachers reported not having student's PLP's nor having known access to their student's PLP's despite the student's reading below grade level.</p> <p>College and Career Prep Collaborative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -ELA 9,10,11 -Algebra 1B, Geometry B, Algebra 2B -Physical Science-grade 9 -Government /Law grade 9 <p><u>-Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) program</u> (13 students overall attend the program). Two of the 13 attend the program for all of their core content classes and the remainder attend part-time, hence, some students may receive some of their classes in a small segregated setting and other classes within the general education program.</p> <p>The school social worker splits time between four schools. Responsibilities include coordinating mental health connections between the school and the community, ET, IEP meetings as needed.</p> <p>Occupational therapy, physical therapy and adaptive physical education, and speech services provided per the IEP</p> <p>The high school life Skills program has an active "Best Buddy" program. This program provides natural social interactions and activities for students with and without exceptionalities. Recent activities include attending a P-Bruins game and a hayride.</p>		<p>ELA teachers will be involved in the PLP process. Training will also be provided. This will be ongoing.</p>	
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3. EVALUATION/ INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	The East Greenwich Public Schools operate the special education program through central administration and Assistant Superintendent. Administrative and instructional staff throughout the district are very knowledgeable about special education procedures and requirements. The district has well documented special education procedures and protocols. Evaluation teams exist in all schools, meet regularly, provide clear documentation of proceedings, and appear fully constituted with the required personnel in attendance. This current special education administrative structure appears effective to ensure a preponderance of compliance with special education requirements.	District Presentation Interviews Documents		
Compliance	2	<p><u>Individual Education Record Reviews</u></p> <p>The visiting team reviewed approximately 20 records as part of the School Support System review. 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. The records were relatively well organized and the majority of compliance issues arose in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Some information on IEP forms was incomplete -Some documentation missing from central office files (consents, vocational assessments). 	Record Reviews Documents	<p>Assurances will be provided to the RI Department of Education, Office of Special Populations that compliance issues are addressed and rectified. <i>This Support Plan is applicable for all compliance findings in this section.</i></p> <p>Timeline: Immediately and ongoing. Progress check: March 2009</p> <p>Note: The development and implement a special education policies and procedures aligned with the requirements of the new regulations will also occur within the next 8 months.</p>	
Performance	3	Parents contacted throughout the visit reported good communication with their child's teachers, received progress reports and generally reported that the district	Interviews		

		was addressing their child's needs.			
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4. TRANSITION					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	<p><u>Early Intervention to Preschool</u></p> <p>Transition process is clearly defined and implemented within regulatory timelines. A thirty month meeting is held in the family home with early intervention providers and school personnel. The second transition meeting occurs at least 3 months prior to child's third birthday. Eligibility determination and when appropriate IEP services are in place by the child's third birthday.</p>	<p>District Presentation Interviews Documents</p>		
Performance	2	<p><u>School to School Transition</u></p> <p>Transition from 3rd grade to 4th grade is clearly defined and implemented. At mid year the 4th grade special education team visits the 3rd grade to discuss student needs and perform classroom observations. The entire 3rd grade class visits the 4th grade intermediate school, tours the building, and meets teachers. At the end of the school year the 4th grade team attends IEP meetings. There is a follow up case conference in the early fall to discuss the transition and to discuss student progress.</p> <p>For students transitioning to the middle school and from the middle school to the high school a variety of school-to-school activities occurs. Educators will meet with receiving student/schools to plan for individualized student's placement. During the month of December and January Cole faculty meet with the elementary schools and the high school to assist in planning for students with IEP's. Transition Sheets describing student's strengths and needs and shared with prospective service providers. Seventh grade special educators will attend receiving students IEP meetings to assure successful transitions to the middle.</p>	<p>District Presentation Interviews Documents</p>		

		For students with IEP's transitioning to the high school similar activities occur along with trips to the high school as well as the local vocational career center. High school faculty meets with middle school faculty to review strengths and needs in determining appropriate placement and special education service delivery.			
Performance/ Compliance	3	<p><u>Vocational Assessment at the Middle Level</u></p> <p>Though the middle school engages in a number of transition/vocational activities, it is unclear how information garnered through this process is aligned with IEP's for students who are 14 years of age and eligible for special education services and supports. All seventh and eighth grade students engage in a career exploration initiative that is computer based (Career Ware). Students identify up to three careers they may be interested in and explore the education requirements, what colleges and or universities offer degrees in the specific field along with the salary base that would be offered. Students then create an exhibit/project with their research findings.</p>	Interviews Documents	<p>Review the overall system transition process that is aligned to the manual development and implementation. Training will be provided to review the systemic process of transition overall as well as incorporate all polices and procedures into the new policy and procedure manual.</p> <p>Timeline: Immediately and ongoing. Progress check: March 2009</p>	
Performance/ Compliance	4	<p><u>Vocational Assessment and Transition Planning at the High School Level</u></p> <p>All 9th graders via the Freshmen Took Kit all students take an interest inventory/career search (Bridges). These are put into the digital portfolio. Students have passwords and can access their portfolio with their case manager as needed. Case managers as can request copies of the vocational assessment from Guidance or have students print out copies of their interest inventory. During the week of the review special education teachers were given their own passwords and now have access to their student's electronic portfolio and their interest inventory. The</p>	Interviews Document	<p>Same support plan as above. Intent of the new manual is to provide consistency throughout the system with regard to transition process and connectively to the IEP.</p> <p>Timeline: Immediately and ongoing. Progress check: March 2009</p>	

		<p>Transition Planning Inventory (TPI) has also been installed on a computer (in one resource room) and teachers may choose or not chose to use it. There was not a systemic process related to vocational assessment for students with IEP's but rather options that teachers may or may not chose to utilize.</p> <p>Case managers typically collect information pertaining to the student's transition needs in binders or in blue file folders. This will vary depending on the student needs but at the minimum the student's interest inventory, assessments, IEP's transcript and transition related career exploration will be reflected in the binder. When a student leaves the summary of Performance (SOP) is added to the binder and the student exits with the binder. Case managers are lead for completing the Summary of Performance.</p>			
Performance	5	<p>The high school has a Transition Coordinator. The responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Facilitating Career and Technical Center School assessments -The coordinator has provided training on the Transition Planning Inventory (TPI) to the teachers. This is a relatively new program to the school. -Coordinates links with Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS), Division of Developmental Services (DDD) and Southern Rhode Island Collaborative (SORICO) -Transition field trips in-school informal meetings -Newsletters, Home mailings, etc. <p>The Transition Coordinator works two days a week and thus is not able to attend the monthly TAC meetings as they fall on days where she is not at work.</p>	District Presentation Interviews Documents		

Performance	6	There is full-time School-to-Career Coordinator and currently there are approximately 36 students involved in internships.	District Presentation Interviews		
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