

Rhode Island Department of Education  
Office of Special Needs

School Support System Report and Support Plan for the  
Sargent Rehabilitation Center  
March 10 & 11, 2003

## SCHOOL SUPPORT SYSTEM

### 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 disabilities. The School Support System model is designed to promote the involvement of the whole school district, regular educators as well as special educators and parents. It is designed to learn if the district meets the minimum regulations and what effects the program and services have on student performance. 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 visit 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 disabilities 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 disabilities. The RIDE staff compiles a preliminary summary of their analyses of this data.
- Presentation by the LEA and School Site Review The 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, visits 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 disabilities.
  - 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 twelve categories, from school improvement to 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 ways that RIDE will assist the district to improve programs and services.

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Sargent Rehabilitation Center  
School Support System Review  
March 10 & 11, 2003

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1. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	The Sargent Rehabilitation Center is a community-based rehabilitation outpatient center which has operated in Rhode Island since 1917. The Center provides services through the following programs: diagnostics, outpatient therapy, specialty programs, a special education school, neuro-rehabilitation institute, hearing center, consulting group and link to learning.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		
Performance	2	The Sargent Center school is a 230-day program which provides special education services and supports for students from age three to twenty-one. Sargent provides a full array of assessment and program services to students with a variety of disabilities with the exceptions of emotional disturbance and deaf/blind.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		
	3	The Sargent Center has a current strategic plan and is in the process of a new strategic planning process for 2003-2008. The Center's current mission statement is "to move people with disabilities toward achieving a maximum level of community functioning by providing integrated medical, educational and vocational outpatient rehabilitation programs.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		
Performance	4	The Center currently has a total of forty-four (44) students spread among six (6) classrooms pre-K through secondary. The program currently provides special education services to students with traumatic brain injury, autism spectrum disorder, non-verbal language disorders and multi-disability.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		
Performance	5	The Center has a Quality Committee which functions much like a School Improvement Team. The committee is comprised of professional staff. The Center does have a Board of Directors which is involved in the strategic planning process and is made up of volunteers from a variety of community businesses, organizations and parent members.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		

2. SCHOOL CLIMATE					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	The Sargent Center has a number of extensive policy and procedure manuals on a variety of topics such as an Employee Handbook and Health and Safety. They also have a number of informative brochures describing the center's comprehensive programs and services.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		
Performance	2	The six classes in the school program have between six and ten students assigned. Each class has a teacher and two or three full-time teacher teacher assistants. There are three full-time occupational therapists, social workers and speech/language therapists and one APE resource teacher and physical therapist in the school program. These specialists, along with the teaching staff, make up the multidisciplinary teams which provide integrated programs and services. Formal team planning is provided on a weekly basis and informal planning among staff is ongoing.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		
Performance	3	Students are provided with a wide variety of community experiences including community based work experiences for secondary students. These community living activities are designed to provide students with integrated opportunities with non-disabled peers, as well as student development in communication, social and vocational skills. The Center also has on-going affiliations with a number of school departments, rehabilitation organizations, area hospitals and a variety of other community organizations.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		
Performance	4	The Center designates a specific staff member as head teacher for each level in the school program. One of the responsibilities of this person is to provide mentoring to new staff. New staff report feeling supported and having directions provided through the Center's Mentor Program.	Administrative and Staff Interviews		

### 3. TEACHING PRACTICES

Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	The Pre-K and Primary Programs provide highly structured, low stimulus classrooms in which staff utilize work stations, visual and verbal prompts, sensory integration and language based instruction. The Pre-K Programs provide integration opportunities for students through the YMCA and weekly playgroups.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		
Performance	2	The Middle and High School Programs have reorganized from a self-contained structure to a departmentalized model. Student's have homerooms then move from class to class for each subject area to more closely simulate public school organization and to help facilitate student transitions from Sargent back to less restrictive LEA Programs. Through this model, students earn credits toward graduation. Secondary students also are provided with functional programs through activities of daily living, community living experiences and vocational assessment and training and work experience opportunities. The upper school has a lunch program in which they prepare and sell meals to staff and has a grant to develop a horticultural program in which students will grow plants in their greenhouse and sell the plants to people from the community.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		
Performance	3	The Center has established a new school library and has a number of grants providing services from an art therapist, performing arts activities and a program in graphic arts with the Rhode Island School of Design.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		
Performance	4	The Center provides classroom and home consultation services in the areas of pediatrics, clinical psychology, behavioral psychology, speech/language, occupational therapy and physical therapy. Consultants help develop home/school programs for students which help maximize carry over and consistency.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		
Performance	5	There was evidence of standard's based instruction and use of rubrics throughout the Center's school programs.	Administrative and Staff Interviews		

		Curriculums used by the Center have been aligned to standards and diversified instruction strategies are utilized.	Document Review Observation		
Performance	6	There is a formal process in place for assessing students' needs for assistive technological devices. Students requiring such devices are provided the devices through their LEA based on assessment and IEP recommendation. Computers are available for student use throughout the school program classrooms. The Center recently received two grants to establish a Technology Evaluation Center.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		

4. LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	Students are provided a variety of program options through the Center's community living activities which expose students to experiences with their non-disabled peers. The Pre-K classes provided integrated educational experiences through the YMCA and weekly play groups. Students at the secondary level also are integrated with their non-disabled peers through vocational training and work experiences opportunities.	Administrative and Staff Interview Observation	The Center has recently re-established a redesigned Community Living Program which is tied to students' IEP goals and objectives. The Center also has plans to implement a peer mentor program pairing non-disabled peers with students with disabilities for the summer.	

5. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE)					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	While the focus of the Center is to provide intensive special educational and related services to students with moderate/severe disabilities, the Center also places emphasis on providing students with the necessary skills to allow them to make successful transitions back to public school settings and programs. Extensive planning and transition activities in conjunction with students' LEAs has resulted in approximately one half (6-10) of the students in the pre-K/elementary programs successfully transitioning back to LEA programs in the past	Administrative and Staff Interview		

		two years. While the number of transitions is less at the secondary level (3 of 15), program organization and curriculum are designed to provide students with a parallel public school experience.			
Performance	2	Physical escort and restraint are utilized only in extreme situations and after all non-physical interventions have been attempted. Center staff are trained in safe and appropriate restraint methods and RIDE policies and procedures with respect to physical restraint are followed.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review		

6. FACILITIES					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	The facilities at Sargent Center are fully accessible, bright, warm, well kept and spacious. Both classroom and related service space are appropriate and adequate.	Administrative and Staff Interview Observation		
Performance	2	Evacuation plans are posted throughout the school and staff are familiar with the emergency exit process and individual plans for those students with mobility impairments.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review Observation		

7. EVALUATION					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	It is the responsibility of the LEA to ensure that students receive a free and appropriate public education. The contracted agency/nonpublic school is an active collaborative partner in ensuring that FAPE is received and the RI Regulations adhered to.			
Performance	2	The Sargent Center has a fully staffed Evaluation Team which provides comprehensive diagnostic evaluations for students.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review		

8. INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	Sargent Center developed IEPs are generally well written and thorough. Staff have been and continue to be trained in IEP development. There were, however, some IEPs which reflected compliance issues.	Administrative and Staff Interviews Document Review		
Compliance	2	LEA representative signature was not the same as the LEA representative who attended the meeting. (JD4)	Document Review	The Center will provide additional IEP training for staff focusing on present levels of performance and annual goals. The Center has established an administrative IEP review process to ensure that IEP's are correctly completed.	
Compliance	3	The present levels of performance were not written in objective and measurable terms. (JD2, JD8)	Document Review	The Center will provide additional IEP training for staff focusing on present levels of performance and annual goals. The Center has established an administrative IEP review process to ensure that IEP's are correctly completed.	
Compliance	4	Annual goals were not individualized. (JD7)	Document Review	The Center will provide additional IEP training for staff focusing on present levels of performance and annual goals. The Center has established an administrative IEP review process to ensure that IEP's are correctly completed.	
Compliance	5	Annual goals were not measurable. (JD2, JD4, JD5, JD7,	Document Review	The Center will provide	

		JD8)		additional IEP training for staff focusing on present levels of performance and annual goals. The Center has established an administrative IEP review process to ensure that IEP's are correctly completed.	
Compliance	6	No documentation of discussion of need for extended school year services. (JD2, JD3, JD4, JD6, JD8)	Document Review	The Center will provide additional IEP training for staff focusing on present levels of performance and annual goals. The Center has established an administrative IEP review process to ensure that IEP's are correctly completed.	
Compliance	7	No determination of time and extent of participation in general education and special education. (JD1, JD3)	Document Review	The Center will provide additional IEP training for staff focusing on present levels of performance and annual goals. The Center has established an administrative IEP review process to ensure that IEP's are correctly completed.	
Compliance	8	Accommodations for student on statewide or district assessments of student achievement not listed by specific assessment. (JD5)	Document Review	The Center will provide additional IEP training for staff focusing on present levels of performance and annual goals. The Center has established an administrative IEP review process to ensure that IEP's are correctly completed.	
Compliance	9	Alternate assessment eligibility checklist not documented. (JD2)	Document Review	The Center will provide additional IEP training for staff	

				focusing on present levels of performance and annual goals. The Center has established an administrative IEP review process to ensure that IEP's are correctly completed.	
Compliance	10	For a student who will turn 17 during the time frame of this IEP, no indication that she/he has been informed of his/her rights and received a copy of Procedural Safeguards. (JD8)	Document Review	The Center will provide additional IEP training for staff focusing on present levels of performance and annual goals. The Center has established an administrative IEP review process to ensure that IEP's are correctly completed.	
Compliance	11	No indication of dissemination of procedural safeguards. (JD1, JD2, JD3, JD4)	Document Review	The Center will provide additional IEP training for staff focusing on present levels of performance and annual goals. The Center has established an administrative IEP review process to ensure that IEP's are correctly completed.	

9. TRANSITION					
Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	The Sargent Center provides a formal transition process for students transitioning from pre-K to the elementary program, between grades, at the secondary level and from Sargent back to the students LEAs.	Administrative and Staff Interview Document Review		
Performance	2	Staff meet formally to discuss students transitioning from pre-K to K and between grades. Work samples, behavior plans and any other pertinent material regarding the student is shared and discussed. Students meet with the receiving teacher and visit the class to which they will be transitioning.	Administrative and Staff Interview Document Review		
Performance	3	At the secondary level beginning at age 14, students are provided with a comprehensive formal vocational assessment. This assessment includes situational assessments. The vocational assessment process continues throughout the student's secondary program reflecting changing student interest and work experience performances.	Administrative and Staff Interview Document Review		
Performance	4	Beginning at age 14, a formal transition plan for each student is developed. This plan is reviewed and revised as needed on an annual basis. As students get older, guardianship is discussed and agencies such as vocational rehabilitation, developmental disabilities and the Office of Rehabilitation Services in partnership with the student's LEA discuss and plan for the student's transition from school to adulthood. IEP transition goals are developed for those transition areas requiring them.	Administrative and Staff Interview Document Review		
Performance	5	The school social worker, along with families and students, when appropriate, facilitate all transition activities.	Administrative and Staff Interview Parent Interview		

**10. PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	The Sargent Center provides extensive and comprehensive parent outreach services. Families reported a high degree of satisfaction with their child's program and level of school parent outreach and workshop programs. Parents especially noted satisfaction with the IEP process which features a pre-IEP meeting where extensive planning discussions occur.	Administrative and Staff Interview Parent Interview Document Review		
Performance	2	The Center provides a parent to parent network, home/school therapy programs, home consultation services and family and sibling support groups. Teachers and parents reported utilizing daily communication notebooks, classroom visits, phone calls and IEP progress reports help to enhance home/school communications.	Administrative and Staff Interview Parent Interview Document Review		
Performance	3	The Sargent Center provides an extensive parent workshop series called Links to Learning. A series of eight workshops are provided annually. Workshop topics such as sensory integration, understanding Asperger's Syndrome, stress management for parents and theme learning are just a few examples which help provide parents with information and skills to more effectively parent their child with disabilities.	Administrative and Staff Interview Parent Interview Document Review		

**11. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Indicator		Findings	Documentation	Support Plan	Follow-up Findings
Performance	1	The Sargent Center provides a comprehensive professional development program. Sixty-five (65) in-house trainings are offered covering a wide variety of topics. The Center's Continuing Education Committee surveys staff interests and needs and recommend professional development activities. The Center, through affiliations with various organizations such as RIDE and the Speech/Language Association, ASHA, has been able to provide staff with continuing education credits towards maintaining their certification for successful completion of specific professional development offerings.	Administrative and Staff Interview Document Review		
Performance	2	Staff report that in addition to the in-house professional development offerings, the Center approves and pays the cost of outside professional development workshops pertinent to staff job responsibilities.	Administrative and Staff Interview		

