

Utah Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS)
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT
BEAVER SCHOOL DISTRICT
March 26, 2007

The attached report contains the results of the first two phases (Self-Assessment Process and On-Site Validation Visit) of the Utah Special Education Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS). This Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process is conducted by the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) Special Education Services (SES), as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B. The process is designed to focus resources on improving results for students with disabilities through enhanced partnerships between charter school and district programs, USOE-SES, the Utah Personnel Development Center, parents, and advocates.

The first phase of this process included the completion of the Self-Assessment and the development of a Program Improvement Plan. The second phase, On-Site Validation, conducted in Beaver School District on March 7-8, 2007, included student record reviews, interviews with school administrators, teachers, students, and parents, and classroom observations. Parent surveys were also mailed to a small sample of parents. Information from these data sources was shared in an exit meeting attended by staff from Beaver School District.

This report contains a more complete description of the process utilized to collect data and to determine strengths, areas out of compliance with the requirements of IDEA, and recommendations for improvement in each of the core IDEA areas.

Areas of Strength

The validation team found the following:

General Supervision

- The Special Education team, including all special education teachers and administrators, has made a special effort to become trained in file organization and review.
- Special education files have been organized so that teachers know where to look for specific documentation.
- Continual progress review monitoring is taking place in an effort to get IEP files corrected.
- Staff development and training meetings are held monthly to strengthen special education staff knowledge and effectiveness in making the special education program work for all students with disabilities.
- Strong paraeducator support in general education classrooms with 26 special education paraeducators placed in 5 schools.
- Child find notification is advertised annually in the Beaver newspaper, as well as announced during Interagency Council and SUU Early Intervention meetings.
- Files are organized in a consistent manner across most of the district.
- All forms used currently meet compliance requirements as determined by the USOE.
- Files contained referral forms that were complete.
- Special education files generally contained current Eligibility Determinations which listed assessment results.
- IEP Pro Demographic page was included in each special education file and documented student's race/ethnicity and primary home language.
- Special education teachers receive ongoing professional development from SEDC, USOE, and UPDC trainings, as well as having opportunities to participate in statewide conferences and trainings.
- A variety of assessment tools are used and documented during evaluations and reevaluations.
- A monthly special education meeting is held to disseminate statewide information.
- Students with disabilities are included in general education classrooms in each school, as per IEP team decisions.
- School staff demonstrated a collaborative and collegial manner towards each other. This includes paraprofessionals, general education teachers, and special education teachers.
- School staff and parents expressed appreciation for the ongoing support from SEDC staff and district administration.
- Parents described and appreciated special education services being provided by well-trained paraprofessionals throughout the school district.
- Beaver School District CRT scores show strong upward trend lines in both language arts and math for both students with disabilities and their general education peers.

Parent Involvement

- Comments from parent focus groups and individual parent surveys were positive regarding special education programs and services in Beaver School District.
- Parents state that they are involved in the IEP process and have input in the goals and accommodations that are set for their students.
- The survey results from all involved indicated that there is involvement from parents, special education teachers, regular education teachers, students and administrators in the IEP process and the special education programs.
- Parents seemed to be pleased with most aspects of the special education program.
- Consent for initial placement forms were signed by parents and included in special education files.
- Parent signatures were consistently documented on IEPs, Eligibility Determinations, and Consent for Evaluations.
- Notice of Meetings for Eligibility, IEP, and Placement were included in most special education files.
- Parents receive Procedural Safeguards, as documented by their signatures.
- Written Prior Notice statements are embedded in all required forms, ensuring that parents receive notification of actions proposed by Beaver SD.
- Parents received copies of completed Eligibility Determinations and IEPs, as documented by parent signatures and statements during the parent focus group.
- Parents feel that there have been opportunities for them to provide input and voice concerns regarding their student's special education program. They also stated that there has been great improvement in the Beaver SD special education program in the last few years.
- Progress reports on IEP goals were documented within special education files.

Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

- IEP teams focus on including students with disabilities in the general education classroom and with their nondisabled peers whenever possible.
- General education teachers work cooperatively with special education teachers and paraeducators to ensure progress toward IEP goals.
- Students with disabilities are making progress in the general education curriculum as a result of the collaboration and communication between all school staff.
- Related services are provided in all schools to assist students with disabilities.
- Paraeducators receive specific training to help better serve students with severe disabilities.
- Current IEPs included in most special education files.
- IEPs listed classroom accommodations that were consistent with U-PASS accommodations.
- Students with disabilities are provided with multiple opportunities to access the general curriculum and general classroom environment, as per their IEP. Students are provided with necessary accommodations in their general education classroom and during extracurricular activities.
- All required team members attend and sign IEPs in elementary and secondary school settings.
- Extended school year (ESY) decisions were documented on IEPs. If the team determined the student would participate in ESY, goals, services, and amount of time was included.
- Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements addressed how the student's disability affected their involvement and progress in the general education curriculum and classroom.
- Initial IEPs were developed within 30 days of initial eligibility determination.
- IEPs addressed special factors and supplementary aids and services for each student with disabilities.
- During a preschool observation, a correlation between IEP goals and services and instruction provided was evident.

Transitions

- Transition meetings are also held when students transition from preschool to kindergarten and during transition from elementary to high school.
- School to Post-School Transition meetings are held with high school students, and include job sampling, as well as job placement for older students.
- Preschool collaborates with Part C personnel to provide a smooth transition from Early Intervention to Preschool.

- An Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) was included in the special education file, allowing for its consideration during IEP planning.
- Transition plans were included in files for students by their 16th birthday.
- Transition plans contained evidence of consideration of student preferences and interests during development of post-school outcome statements.
- Students were aware of transition planning and post-school outcomes, as stated during student focus groups.
- Students described receiving notification of Age of Majority.

Disproportionality

- English language proficiency assessments were included in the special education files of students whose primary home language is not English.

Areas of Systemic Noncompliance*

- ✓ Pre-referral Interventions: Pre-referral interventions implementation prior to referral not documented; Pre-referral intervention success or failure, with supporting data, not documented.
- ✓ Evaluation Timelines: Initial evaluations not completed within 60 days of receipt of parent consent; Reevaluation timelines exceeded.
- ✓ Evaluation & Eligibility: Reevaluations did not document Review of Existing Data; Students were not assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability and sufficiently comprehensive to identify needs; Students do not meet the eligibility criteria of one of the disability categories (AU, DD, SLD); SLD Eligibility did not document the description of the instructional environment in which the observation took place.
- ✓ IEP Content: IEPs did not contain complete PLAAFP statements which included baseline data; IEP did not contain measurable goals; IEP did not contain goals which address all areas of need as identified in the PLAAFP; IEP did not contain specific special education services; IEP did not address how the student will participate in statewide assessment.
- ✓ Timelines: IEPs not reviewed and revised at least annually; Placement not reviewed annually.
- ✓ School to Post School Transition: Age appropriate transition assessments not documented; PLAAFP statements did not address transition strengths and needs; Course of study not individualized to student's long-range post-secondary outcomes.
- ✓ 3 to 3 Transition: Eligibility not determined and IEP not implemented by 3rd birthday.

*These areas represent items where the visiting team could not locate appropriate documentation of requirements of IDEA 2004 and Utah State Special Education Rules in student records or other data sources.