

Utah Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS)
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT
City Academy
February 8, 2010

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 development of a Program Improvement Plan. The second phase, On-Site Validation, conducted in City Academy on November 9th and 10th, 2009, included student record reviews and school site visits. Parent surveys were also mailed to a small sample of parents.

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

- Initial evaluations were completed within 45 school days of receiving parent consent.
 - Special education director has weekly meetings with Para-educators to train them in their job responsibilities.
 - Para-educators are included in professional development activities provided by the school.
 - A consistent file organization system is utilized, which facilitated ease in file reviews.
 - The school steering committee has a representative sample of stakeholders and meets monthly to review special education needs.
 - The small school atmosphere facilitates personalized attention for all students. Students with disabilities reported, during a student focus group, that they feel more comfortable making friends and becoming involved in the school.
 - School staff plans for needed supports for students with disabilities for field trips.
 - Special education teacher has implemented a system to manage her caseload and the individual needs of the students.
 - All students meet with a school advisor on a daily basis to talk about their academic and social progress within the school.
 - Full team participation in eligibility determination meetings is documented by signatures on forms.
 - The IEP team which includes the parents reviews existing evaluation data and determines whether additional data are needed for determining continuing eligibility.
 - Reevaluation timelines are met.
 - Files are maintained in a locking filing cabinet with an access authorization list posted and Record of Access forms included in all reviewed student special education files.
 - Student special education files included current eligibility determination documentation.
 - A variety of assessment tools and strategies were used to gather relevant data in determining eligibility.
- Evaluation procedures are followed when determining students eligible for special education and related services.

Parent Involvement

- Parents were invited to attend LEA sponsored bullying training.
- Student special education files include consent for initial placement.
- The school has developed a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) that meets on a monthly basis to ensure increased communication between parents and teachers.
- Parents report having the opportunity to provide input at times other than the IEP, and that their input is listened to.
- Parents report that IEP meetings were scheduled at mutually agreeable times.
- Parents are provided copies with their procedural safeguards, as reported by parents and documented in student special education files.
- Parents report that the special education director encourages them to provide input and ask questions regarding their student's special education program.
- Parents report that the special education director is willing to work with them and solve problems.
- Parents are provided with copies of IEPs, eligibility determination documentation, and evaluation summary reports.
- Notice of Meeting for eligibility determination, IEP, and placement meetings is provided to parents.
- Student special education files included consent for evaluations.
- Parents are given copies of eligibility determination documentation, evaluation summary reports, and IEPs, as documented in student special education files.
IEPs contain a statement for when periodic reports on progress toward IEP goals will be provided to parents.

Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

- General education teachers are provided with an "at-a-glance IEP" copy of needed information, including needed accommodations and modifications, regarding the student's needs.
- Current IEPs are included in student special education files.
- A disciplinary team meets on a weekly basis to review history and determine behavioral trends and needed interventions for students within the classroom.
- IEP timelines were met in 100% of applicable reviewed files.
- Para educators are provided in the general education classrooms to assist students with disabilities in accessing the general curriculum.
- IEPs document the participation of required IEP team members by signature, title, and date.
- Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements include baseline or current data and how the student's disability affects involvement/progress in the general curriculum.
- IEPs address the areas of educational need as identified in the PLAAFP statements.
- IEPs include a statement of how the student's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured.
- General education classrooms are structured to keep distractions at a minimum, which students reported as a help in completing class work.
Students reported being invited to and attending their IEP meetings. Student signatures were also included on IEP forms.

Transitions

- *Transition plans are reviewed at least annually, based on the IEP.*
- Transition plans included evidence of employment goals and independent living goals in 100% of applicable reviewed files.
- Parents and students reported receiving self-advocacy training.
- Post-secondary goals are based on transition assessments.
- Transition plans include a course of study in 100% of applicable reviewed files.
Beginning not later than one year before the 18th birthday the age of Majority Rights was completed for each applicable file reviewed.

Disproportionality

- Student special education files contain documentation of parent's primary home language. Race/Ethnicity are documented in student special education files.

Areas of Systemic Noncompliance*

- IEPs do not contain a statement of specific special education services in 50% of applicable reviewed files.