

Utah Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS)
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT
Karl Maeser Preparatory Academy
January 21, 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 at Karl G Maeser Preparatory Academy on October 12th and 13th, 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

- A team, which includes parents, reviews existing evaluation data and determines whether additional data are needed for determining continuing eligibility.
- Students with disabilities are included in regular education classes and activities when appropriate.
- Student special education files are maintained in a locking filing cabinet with Access Authorization list posted.
- Student special education files are consistently organized, which facilitated ease during file reviews.
- In-state transfer procedures were followed in reviewed files.
- Students are evaluated at least once every three years, more often if conditions warrant, or if there is a parent or teacher request.
- Student special education files included current eligibility determination documentation and evaluation summary reports.
- A variety of assessment tools and strategies were used to gather relevant information that was used in determining eligibility.
A group of qualified professionals and parents determined eligibility of special education students.

Parent Involvement

- Parents, during a parent focus group, reported that they are comfortable expressing their concerns and that the school staff are responsive to parent concerns.
- Parents, during a parent focus group, reported that school staff demonstrate a caring attitude toward students and understand their individual needs.
- Notice of meeting for eligibility determination and IEP meetings are included in student special education files.
- Parents are provided with copies of eligibility determination documentation, evaluation summary results, and IEPs, as documented in student special education files.

- Parents participated in eligibility meetings and IEPs, as documented by signatures on appropriate forms.
- Consent for evaluation/reevaluation and initial placement was included in all reviewed files.
- Parents, during a parent focus group, reported that IEP meetings are held at mutually agreeable times.
- Parents, during a parent focus group, reported that students are making progress toward their goals.
Parental input is used in determining eligibility for special education and related services, as documented in student special education files.

Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

- Special education supports are provided in the regular education classrooms.
- Student special education files contain current IEPs.
- IEPs are reviewed periodically, not less than annually.
- IEPs document full team participation as documented by signatures on IEP forms.
- Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements include baseline or current data and how the disability affects the student's progress/involvement in the general curriculum.
- IEPs include measurable annual goals which address the areas of need identified in PLAAFP statements.
- IEPs include a description of how the student's progress toward meeting IEP goals will be measured and when periodic reports on progress will be provided to parents.
- IEPs include a statement of specific special education services and related services.

Transitions

- Transition plans include employment and independent living goals.
- Documentation that post-secondary goals were based on age-appropriate transition assessments is included in student transition plans.
- IEPs contain transition services designed to facilitate achievement of post-secondary goals.
- Staff expressed a willingness to improve their knowledge of the transition planning process.
- A transition packet has been developed to be provided to parents and students beginning at age fourteen.

Students are invited to and report attending IEP meetings.

Disproportionality

- Student's race/ethnicity and primary home language are documented in student special education files.

Areas of Systemic Noncompliance*

- Evaluations were not sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the student's special education and related service needs in 33% of applicable reviewed files.
- Evaluation procedures not followed in 33% of reviewed files.
- Speech/Language Impairment (SLI): Documentation that the team considered the potential effect of the speech impairment of phonological processing and phonemic awareness missing in 100% of applicable reviewed files.