

Utah Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

Tintic School District

September 21, 2009

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 Tintic School District on April 16, 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

- Teachers seem generally pleased with the collaboration between the general education and the special education teachers.
- Teachers reported that students received individualized support.
- Tintic School District is developing a system in order to create more organized special education files which are completed in a timelier manner.
- Files were contained in locking filing cabinets and contained record of access forms.
- Initial Evaluations were conducted within 45 school days of receiving parent consent.
- The district superintendent and administrators provide support to the special education department as reported by district staff during interviews.
- Special Education Director provides support and positive leadership as reported by district staff during interviews.
- Low teacher-student ratio provides more opportunities for more individualized instruction.
- Schools provide after-school tutoring programs to assist struggling students.
- Peer mentoring program is implemented at the secondary level.
- Evaluations were sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the student's special education and related service needs.
- Student special education files contained current eligibility determination documentation.
- A group of qualified professionals and parents determined eligibility of students after completion of evaluation procedures.

Parent Involvement

- Overall, parents feel that their students are benefiting from special education programs.
- Parents are pleased that their children with disabilities are able to participate in all extra-curricular activities.
- Parental input was used in determining eligibility as documented by signatures on forms.
- Parents are provided with copies of evaluation summary reports and IEPs.
- During the parent focus group parents reported they were given opportunities to provide input during the evaluation and IEP process and that the input was considered and valued.

- Parents reported that special education staff showed genuine care for their students.
- Meetings were scheduled at mutually agreeable times as reported by parents during the parent focus group.
- Parents reported that they had opportunities to discuss student needs other than at IEP meetings.
- Progress notes were included in student special education files.
- Parents are provided with written prior notice of initial eligibility, continuing eligibility, IEP implementation, initial placement, and maintaining placement.
- Student special education files contain consent for initial placement.

Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

- All students with disabilities attend their neighborhood school and participate in all school related activities of their choice.
- Current IEPs are included in student special education files.
- General education teachers participated in IEP meetings as documented by signatures on forms and as reported by parents.
- Initial IEPs were developed within 30 days following eligibility determination.
- Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements include baseline or current data.
- IEPs contain a statement of measurable annual goals.
- A description of benchmarks or short-term objectives is included in IEPs for students participating in Utah's Alternate Assessment (UAA).
- IEPs contained a description on how progress toward annual goals will be measured and a statement when periodic progress will be provided to parents.
- IEPs contain a statement of specific special education and related services.
- IEPs contain supplementary aides and services to be provided to or on behalf of students.
- Initial placement began as soon as possible following the development of the IEP and as close as possible to the student's home.

Transitions

- Age 3-5 programs are being provided through the district preschool programs.
- The preschool actively coordinates with the Central Utah Public Health Department for transition of children age 3.
- Utah Preschool Outcomes Data (UPOD) forms are included and complete in 100% of applicable reviewed files.
- Applicable student special education files included transition plans.
- West Desert special education teacher has developed a comprehensive transition process.
- Transition plans included evidence of post-secondary training or education goals, employment goals, and independent living goals.
- IEPs contain annual goals that will reasonably enable students to reach their post-secondary goals.
- IEPs contain transition services focused on improving the academic achievement of the student to facilitate the movement from school to post-school.
- Transition plans contain a course of study.

Disproportionality

- Tintic School District does not have any disability categories or race/ethnicity categories that are disproportionately represented.

Areas of Systemic Noncompliance*

- Review of Existing Evaluation Data report missing in 40% of applicable reviewed files.
- Evaluation timelines were exceeded in 33% of applicable reviewed files.

- Evaluation Summary Report was missing or did not include data in 20% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation that a variety of assessment tools and strategies were used to determine eligibility missing in 20% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation that a lack of instruction in reading or math is not the primary factor in determining eligibility missing in 20% of applicable reviewed files.
- Evaluation procedures were not followed in 20% of applicable reviewed files.
 - Specific Learning Disability – Documentation that the team determined that the student has an SLD in one or more area missing in 100% of applicable reviewed files.
- Consent for evaluation/reevaluation is missing in 14% of applicable reviewed files.
- Evidence of Written Prior Notice of evaluation/reevaluation missing in 43% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation of Written Prior Notice for change of placement missing in 14% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation of written prior notice of Extended School Year (ESY) services missing in 14% of applicable reviewed files.
- Notice of Meeting for eligibility determination missing in 20% of applicable reviewed files.
- Notice of Meeting for IEP missing in 14% of applicable reviewed files.
- Notice of Meeting for annual review of placement missing in 14% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation that parents were provided with copies of eligibility determination documentation missing in 20% of applicable reviewed files.
- Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements do not include how disability affects involvement in the general curriculum in 29% of applicable reviewed files.
- Areas of need addressed in IEP goals are not included in the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements in 14% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation of the IEP teams determination regarding Extended School Year (ESY) services missing in 14% of applicable reviewed files.
- IEPs are not reviewed or revised periodically, not less than annually in 20% of applicable reviewed files.
- Placement determinations not made at least annually in 20% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation that the placement decision was appropriately made missing in 29% of applicable reviewed files.
- No documentation that post-secondary goals were based on age appropriate transition assessments in 50% of applicable reviewed files.
- Age of Majority Rights was completed after the student's 17th birthday in 100% of applicable reviewed files.
- No documentation that transition age student was invited to the IEP meeting in 17% of applicable files.

**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.*