

**Utah Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS)
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT
Tooele County School District
July 9, 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 Tooele County School District on February 24-25, 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

- The Tooele County School District has a yearly file review schedule for all teachers. Teachers are able to choose the files to be reviewed and are aware of when the reviews will take place.
- State reports were complete, accurate, and submitted in a timely manner.
- Special education staff participated in 30 hours of professional development provided by the district regarding changes to State Special Education Rules.
- Teachers and school administrators participated in district-wide professional development regarding district referral and Child Find process.
- Student special education files were organized in a consistent system district wide.
- School administrators are supportive and help facilitate collaboration between general and special education teachers.
- Student special education files were contained in locking filing cabinets with an Access Authorization list posted.
- All reviewed student files contained a Record of Access form.
- Initial evaluations were conducted within 45 school days of receiving parent consent.
- Student files include current eligibility determination documentation and evaluation summary reports.
- There is a high level of collaboration between special education and regular education teachers, as reported by parents and school staff.

Parent Involvement

- Teachers keep parents involved and informed about their children's progress.
- Parents participate in IEP meetings.
- Parent survey results show that parents are generally pleased with Tooele County School District special education services.
- Procedural safeguards were provided and explained to parents as reported by parents during the parent focus group.
- Parents reported that the school personnel are willing to listen and consider their input.

- Tooele County School District is responsive to concerns from parents as reported by parents during the parent focus group.
- Tooele County School District provides frequent communication to parents regarding student's daily activities and fliers go home to all parents regarding upcoming school activities.
- Parents reported that schools provide flexible times and scheduling for IEP meetings.
- Parents are provided with written prior notice of initial evaluations, initial and continuing eligibility, IEP implementation, and initial and continuing placement.
- Parents are provided with a copy of the IEP.
- Parental input was used to determine eligibility and to gather relevant functional/developmental and other information related to student involvement and progress in the general curriculum.
- If the student's placement was changed, written prior notice was provided to parents.

Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

- Tooele County School District practices inclusion and a majority of students are placed at their neighborhood schools.
- Peer tutoring programs exist in most secondary schools.
- Many classes in the secondary schools are co-taught by special and general education teachers.
- Tooele County School District has developed a continuum of classes, including classrooms for students with severe disabilities, behavior problems, and students with autism.
- Teachers are knowledgeable about and follow U-PASS procedures and accommodations.
- Peer programs provided by some schools support students with disabilities in the general curriculum.
- LEA representatives participate in IEP meetings and are aware of the needs of students with disabilities.
- Paraeducators cover classes during school time to facilitate attendance of general education teachers at IEP meetings.
- Special education teachers are knowledgeable regarding behavior and discipline procedures, including the use and implementation of behavior intervention plans and manifestation determinations.
- Student special education files include a current IEP.
- Initial IEPs are developed within 30 calendar days following eligibility determination.
- IEP documents participation of parents, special education provider and an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation process by signature, title, and date.
- Secondary transition-age students are invited to participate in their IEPs.
- For students participating in Utah's Alternate Assessment (UAA), IEPs contain a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives.
- IEPs contain 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 contain a statement of specific special education and related services.

Transitions

- Special education students participate in Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes.
- Eligibility was determined and IEPs implemented on or before the child's 3rd birthday in 100% of applicable reviewed files.
- Student attendance at eligibility determination and IEP meetings were documented by signatures on IEPs.
- Students reported being aware of the rights that transfer to them at age of majority.
- Students indicated an awareness of who invited them to the IEP and who attended the IEP meetings, including the principal.
- Students also reported being asked for, and providing input into, the IEP development, and reflected understanding of the IEP.
- Transition plans included independent living goals, where appropriate.
- IEPs contain annual IEP goals that will reasonably enable the student to meet the post-secondary goals.

- IEPs contain transition services focused on improving the academic achievement of the student to facilitate movement from school to post-school in all applicable areas.
- Transition plans contain a course of study aligned with the student's post-secondary goals and designed to improve the student's academic and functional achievement of post-secondary goals.

Disproportionality

- Tooele County School District has no identified areas in which disproportionality exists. The district is servicing an average number of students identified for special education within both the State and federal guidelines.
- Student's primary home language is documented in student special education files.

Areas of Systemic Noncompliance*

- Reevaluation timelines were not met in 28% of applicable reviewed files.
- Review of existing evaluation data was not documented in 7% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation of special education teacher involvement in review of existing evaluation data missing in 3% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation of LEA representative involvement in review of existing evaluation data missing in 7% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation of participation of an individual who can interpret instructional implications of student's disability in the evaluation process missing in 3% of applicable reviewed files.
- Evaluation was not sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the student's special education and related service needs in 11% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation that a variety of assessment tools and strategies were used in determining eligibility missing in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation that lack of instruction in reading or math is not the primary factor in determining eligibility missing in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation that limited English proficiency is not the primary factor in determining eligibility missing in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Evaluation procedures were not followed in 14% of applicable reviewed files:
 - Multiple Disabilities
 - Consideration of the use of augmented and assistive communication and motor systems was not documented in 50% of applicable reviewed files.
 - Specific Learning Disabilities
 - No discrepancy data were included in 7% of applicable reviewed files.
 - Observation of the student's academic performance and behavior missing in 14% of applicable reviewed files.
 - Documentation of student's relevant behavior noted during the observation missing in 14% of applicable reviewed files.
 - Statement that the student does not achieve adequately for age or grade-level standards missing in 7% of applicable reviewed files.
 - Statement that student does not make sufficient progress or demonstrates a significant discrepancy between achievement and ability missing in 7% of applicable reviewed files.
 - Documentation of the team's determination concerning the effects of a visual, hearing, or motor disability; intellectual disability; emotional disturbance; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited English proficiency missing in 7% of applicable reviewed files.

- Parent participation in, and adequate parent notice for, eligibility determination was not documented in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Regular education teacher participation in eligibility determination was not documented in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Special education teacher participation in eligibility determination was not documented in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Participation of a person who can interpret instructional implications in eligibility determination was not documented in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Consent for evaluation/reevaluation was missing in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Consent for initial placement was missing in 7% of applicable reviewed files.
- Notice of meeting did not include eligibility as a purpose in 7% of applicable reviewed files.
- Notice of meeting did not include IEP development as a purpose in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Notice of meeting did not include placement as a purpose in 7% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation that parents were given a copy of the evaluation summary report missing in 5% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation that parents were given a copy of eligibility determination missing in 5% of applicable reviewed files.
- IEP timelines were not met in 24% of applicable reviewed files.
- No documentation that placement was determined at least annually in 14% of applicable reviewed files.
- Participation of the regular education teacher in the IEP meeting was not documented in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Participation of the LEA representative in the IEP meeting was not documented in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements did not contain baseline data in 5% of applicable reviewed files.
- PLAAFP statements did not contain how the student's disability affects involvement/progress in the general curriculum in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- The IEP did not contain measurable goals in 14% of applicable reviewed files.
- IEP goals did not address areas of need as identified in the PLAAFP statement in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- IEPs did not contain a statement of any individual appropriate accommodations that are necessary to measure academic achievement and functional performance on State and district-wide assessments in 23% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation that initial services began as soon as possible following the development of the IEP and as close as possible to the student's home missing in 7% of applicable reviewed files.
- Documentation that the placement decision was appropriately made missing in 2% of applicable reviewed files.
- Transition plans did not contain measurable postsecondary goals for education/training in 40% of applicable reviewed files.
- Transition plans did not contain measurable postsecondary goals for employment in 20% of applicable reviewed files.
- Transition plans did not document that measurable postsecondary goals were based on age-appropriate transition assessments in 20% of applicable reviewed files.
- One year prior to the student's 18th birthday, the student and parent were not notified of rights that transfer to the student at age of majority 20% of applicable reviewed files.

- At least 30 days before graduation student and parents were not provided written prior notice indicating that the student will graduate from high school with a regular diploma and that graduation with a diploma terminates eligibility for special education and related services in 100% of applicable reviewed 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.*