



**Rhode Island Department of Education
Office of Student, Community and Academic Supports**

School Support System Report and Support Plan

**The Providence Center School
March 2022**

SCHOOL SUPPORT SYSTEM A Collaborative System of Focused Monitoring

Introduction

The purpose of the School Support System (SSS) is to provide a means of accountability for delivery of programs and services for students with exceptionalities. The School Support System model is designed to promote the involvement of the whole school district, general educators as well as special educators and parents. It is designed to learn if the district meets the regulations and what effects programs, and services have on student outcomes. Finally, the SSS develops a school support plan for training and technical assistance.

To accomplish this the SSS includes these components:

- **The Orientation Meeting:** The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) staff meets the Local Education Agency (LEA) to plan the site review and identify issues or initiatives that may influence programs or service delivery.
- **Data Analysis Meeting:** The RIDE staff meets to review LEA demographic information on selected reports including: the LEA annual plan, census information, and information collected through record review, staff questionnaires and parent interviews. To ensure that the child is at the center of the study, all analyses begin with the child. Thus, a sample of approximately 20 students with exceptionalities is selected; the records of these students are reviewed; their parents, teachers and related service providers are interviewed, and their classrooms are observed. The result is an in-depth, unified examination of the actual provision of programs and services for students with exceptionalities. The RIDE staff compiles a preliminary summary of their analyses of this data.
- **Presentation by the LEA and School Site Review:** The on-site review begins with a presentation of programs by teachers and staff. The presentation provides the review team with general and specific information on delivery of programs and services to students. Following this presentation, on-site reviews to all schools are made. The team members interview school administrators and teaching staff. Parents and central office staff are also interviewed. The team gathers sufficient information and works with the LEA personnel to generate a report, covering the following:
 - The district's compliance with the state and federal regulations, relative to the education of students with exceptionalities.
 - The quality and effectiveness of programs and services provided by the district.
 - The need for professional development and technical assistance that will enable the LEA to improve programs and services.
- **The Support Plan:** The Ride team, LEA central office and building administrators meet to review the data and complete a report of results. The group designs a professional development/technical assistance support plan with timelines for implementation. This plan enables the school and district to correct areas of non-compliance and to strengthen promising programs and correct areas of weakness in order to improve services and programs for all students.
- **The SSS Report:** The report summarizes the findings from the various data sources. The format of the report uses four divisions: Indicators, Findings, Documentation, and Support Plan. Indicators describe either performance or compliance. Findings can include a variety of some six categories, from School Improvement to Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment. The documentation section of the report distinguishes the source of the finding. The support plan reflects the response to the described findings. The support plan describes the corrective action by the district as well as resources and time lines to improve programs and services.

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Team Members

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The RIDE, Office of Student, Community & Academic Supports School Support System process was facilitated to provide a means of accountability for delivery of programs and services to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The following pages reflect the findings of that process.

1. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (FAPE/LRE)

Indicator		Findings	Support Plan
Result	1	The RIDE, Office of Students, Community & Academic Supports School Support System process was facilitated to provide a means of accountability for delivery of programs and services to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The following pages reflect the findings of that process.	
Result	2	<p>Program Overview The Providence Center School (TPC) is a unique Special Education School located in Providence for children in grades Pre-K through 12 who are experiencing acute behavioral and emotional symptoms.</p> <p>The curriculum is designed to support students' academic goals and while providing therapeutic services that help build the skills necessary for managing their emotional and behavioral symptoms. Academic and clinical programming is aimed at preparing students to transition back to their local schools, to less restrictive program, or to higher education or the workforce following graduation.</p> <p>TPC School's features support student and family success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An experienced team of certified special education teachers, teaching assistants, clinical therapists ● Access to The Providence Center's child psychiatrist on site ● Specialized therapeutic and behavior management programming ● Extended school year ● Individualized Education Plans ● Family support team <p>Students are referred by special education directors from their local school districts.</p> <p>TPC School is part of The Providence Center, an affiliate of the Care New England Health System. TPC School is located at 520 Hope Street, where</p>	

		<p>several other Providence Center programs and services are available to students and their families, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Anchor Learning Academy ● Early Childhood Institute (Day Treatment, Outpatient, & Home based) ● Healthy Families of America (pregnant to age 3 of child) ● Children’s Emergency Services (QMHP) ● Counseling for Children and Families (Outpatient & Home-based services) ● DCYF funded programs (MST, TLP) ● Adolescent and Teen Programs (Healthy Transition team / Young Adult Health Home) <p>TPC School works closely with all sending districts to ensure appropriate programming for each student and facilitate successful transitions between schools. TPC School staff are in constant communication with district special education directors and/or the appointed LEA liaison.</p>	
Result	3	<p>TPC School is a PBIS School (Positive Behaviors Interventions and Supports), and students are trained to follow a rubric for every setting including behavior in the bathrooms and on the school bus. Students carry a point sheet to all classes and have their points earned and validated by a teacher at the end of each class for Respectful, Responsible and Safe behavior. The points they earn are tallied every day and at the end of each month they earn an average percentage of points that are reflected in the monthly anecdotal reports that are sent home to parents and to their school districts.</p> <p>Teaching Staff, student and family support clinician meet every week to discuss the progress of every student and the school nurse attends this meeting as well as other support providers, including the Behavior Specialist, the Occupational Therapist, the Speech and Language Therapist, the Principal, and the Clinical Director. At these meetings there is close examination of classroom behavior and biopsychosocial factors that may be affecting student functioning in school.</p> <p>At TPC School staff has visual contact with students from the time they arrive at school from the bus and to the time they leave on the bus every day. Staff has eyes on students at all times to support a safe environment and so that students are held accountable for all of their behavior for better or for worse. Bullying is not tolerated at TPC School and the staff to student ratio in this setting helps</p>	

provide more than adequate supervision to intervene promptly when teasing or negative interactions should surface. The staff remind the students on a regular basis that each student is following their own plan, and each are facing unique challenges and standards of expectations are modified for each student. There is a supportive culture that is accepted among the students to a large extent that if a student is having a bad day because they slept poorly or forgot to take their medication or for whatever reason, that if a student is struggling on any given day, there is a sense of patience and forgiveness by the student's collectively because it might have been them and there is no shame or rejection as might be seen by peers in other school settings. TPC Students are a collection of unique individuals who are not only supported by clinical, teaching, and other specialized staff but are supported by a mutual respect and acceptance of each's unique individuality in this close and empathic community.

Clinical Supports and Services

Each student at TPC School is assigned a masters level or licensed clinician to work with the student and the family. This clinician is not restricted to assigned office hours and is available to support the student and communicate with the family on an as needed basis which can be daily and greater contact depending on the circumstances. In addition to office contacts, these clinicians can meet with students in the classroom or in any setting, but also will encounter students weekly in their Character Education classes. The school support counselor, clinician, does not do extensive focused therapy sessions, exploring past traumas and conflict, but is more of a trusted support in the moment to promote more adaptive coping with frustrations so that students can self-regulate their emotions and get back to their classes and participate fully again in the school program.

The student and family support counselor has access to refer families to get psychiatric services and an individual outpatient therapist from the TPC Child and Family Clinic. Student and Family Support counselor has weekly contact with student's assigned Clinical therapist in the clinic. TPC has a well-established psychiatrist in this state with many years of service to community mental health with wide acclaim who is contracted to work with students of TPC School to provide full psychiatric evaluations and to prescribe medications for all pediatric mental health disorders. In addition to his office hours, the psychiatrist meets with the clinical team every week to conference about changes that are being seen by clinicians in the school setting throughout the year. This relationship is also supported by the full-time school nurse who administers

medication to students as needed on a daily basis which improves medication compliance and efficacy of desired results.

The relationship between a student and the school support clinician is supported throughout the school day and any time a student feels that their frustration level is escalating they can request that the teacher contact the counselor for support and this system of students advocating for themselves in this way works quite well and any attempts at work avoidance by these interactions is anticipated and kept to a minimum. Some students will say that they do not trust a therapist but will establish a trusting relationship and be forthcoming about sensitive issues with the student and family support counselor.

If a student has a psychiatrist or therapist outside of the Providence Center system, the school support counselor will get releases and coordinate communication as needed with these mental health providers.

The clinical supports and services at TPC School more than any others set this program apart from most other programs. The caseloads of the clinicians are kept to a manageable level and their availability to meet with students at almost any moment in the day is practically unrestricted. The clinician's access and close contact with parents and students from one day to the next keeps any pertinent issues from stagnating and festering. Clinical supports and services are deep and wide reaching at TPC School and include a broad and coordinated interdisciplinary team that includes a student and family support counselor, a full-time school nurse, a speech and language therapist, an occupational therapist, a senior behavioral therapist, access to outpatient therapy, and access to a psychiatrist who is contracted to work with the school.

Social Emotional Learning

Skilled clinicians teach Social Emotional Learning every week to students in a class called Character Education which also serves as a social skills group. Character Education class may meet only once each week for an hour, but its concepts and practice are exercised every day in every setting, the lunchroom, the classroom or out in the community at PE class or elsewhere.

The Five Competencies: These are taught throughout the school year, including: Self Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-making. Character Education classes offer a

		<p>group setting that is dynamic and evolving through the course of the year, building cohesion and trust among its members in a social learning environment guided by a skilled group worker who challenges their biases and encourages them to think for themselves and practice tolerance, empathy and respect for diverse cultures, religions, disabilities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and racial diversity.</p> <p>School Removals/Disciplinary Policies</p> <p>No student is suspended due to behavior or any disability unless the behavior presents a serious danger to other students or staff. The policy is always to maintain the student in the classroom and school setting to resolve disciplinary issues whenever possible.</p> <p>To ensure a safe learning environment, there is zero tolerance for threats, violence, illegal substances and weapons. Illegal substances and weapons will be confiscated and turned over to The Providence Center security, and the police may be notified. In addition, the student’s parent(s)/guardian and school district will be asked to meet with staff to collaborate in determining appropriate consequences.</p> <p>If a student uses a weapon in a threatening manner, the police will be contacted immediately, and the student will be removed from the school. The parent(s)/guardian and a representative from the school must meet with staff before the student may return (if appropriate) to school.</p> <p>Any student who engages in any of the above behaviors will have in-school restrictions placed on him/her and possibly be subject to periodic searches (turning out pockets, emptying backpacks, removing socks and shoes). Two staff members will conduct searches.</p> <p>Disciplinary policies and practices are clearly defined through the student/parent handbook.</p>	
Result	4	<p>Program Continuum</p> <p>TPCS classes are organized flexibly by grade level clusters, beginning with an early childhood classroom for students in grades K-2. There are two elementary classes: lower elementary is available to serve grades 2-4, and upper elementary serves grades 4-5. Flexibility is built into the organization of classes</p>	

		<p>in order to accommodate the various students that may transition in or out of TPCS throughout the school year.</p> <p>The middle school class serves grades 6-8. The high school program serves grades 9-12 and is organized by the four grade levels for academics. Elective classes, such as art, physical education, and technology, may have students from different grades.</p>	
Result	5	<p>Adaptive Physical Education (APE)</p> <p>TPCS has a fully certified (PE/APE/Health) teacher who works with all of the students. While none of the students currently have APE services in their IEPs, the APE certified teacher is able to modify all activities to meet the needs of each student.</p> <p>To modify PE and accommodate students with mobility issue, the PE teacher works 1 to 1, away from the group to provide more direct instruction, in order to work on the specific skills without pressure from other students. The teacher will gradually include the student with the rest of the class when the student feels comfortable enough to join the group and has acquired the specific skill. The Occupational Therapist attends all classes where students need additional support and collaborates closely with them. The overall goal is that students learn and improve upon the skills taught throughout the year in PE, while working together to help each student learn valuable social and cognitive skills and becoming healthy individuals.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis</p>	
Result	6	<p>Extended School Year (ESY)</p> <p>TPCS is a full year (207 days) school which includes a 5-week summer component for ESY and credit recovery services. Working with each student's district and IEP Team, TPC discusses the need for ESY services at each student's annual IEP meeting. In the event that an annual IEP meeting takes place during the first semester, TPC will often hold an IEP review meeting in the spring to determine whether ESY (or credit recovery) services are needed. IEP Teams use the RIDE "ESY Documentation and Decision Making" form to document the decision for ESY.</p>	

		<p>The Summer Program runs a little differently than the school year program, as it combines academic learning with experiential learning. Students spend more time in the community, practicing the social skills that they are learning as part of the comprehensive program.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews</p>	
Result	7	<p>Parent Engagement</p> <p>Communication: At The Providence Center School parent involvement is considered to be central to a student's progress and success at school on a daily basis. The student and family support counselor introduces parents to the school on their initial visit to TPC School and on from there through the intake process, familiarizing the student and parent to school rules and daily expectations around dress code, bullying, sick day, and other specific policies.</p> <p>Supportive: Parents too often expect that they will only be contacted when there are problems in school. TPC School thinks it is important for parents to be aware of progress, strengths and gains achieved each day so that students are encouraged to continue in a positive direction.</p> <p>Accessible: In some cases, parents prefer daily communication with the student and family support counselor for progress updates, because very often students are reluctant to tell parents anything about their school day. The student and family support counselor is available to go to the home if there are particular barriers to progress (e.g. attendance, etc.) that might be better addressed in a home visit. Parents are also welcomed to come to the school for family meetings and to meet with various staff to address the particular issues at school that require close collaboration. When students do not arrive at school on time there is always a call home by the student and family support counselor to inform the parent.</p> <p>Teacher communication: In addition to frequent and regular communication by the student and family support counselor with parents, parents also have regular contact with teaching staff about the status of student's academic progress throughout the year. In the Fall of each year parents are invited to attend an open house at TPC School where they can meet with the teachers in the classrooms and learn about each syllabus for the year for each grade. Teachers also communicate with parents at the end of each month by sending home an anecdotal report which updates clinical and academic progress and</p>	

	<p>notifies if there is risk of not passing in any classes. These are fairly detailed reports and if a student is at risk of not passing a course then the teacher will make a call to parents to discuss any barriers to progress. TPC School also has a long tradition of having parents and families join this close-knit school community for a picnic gathering each summer to celebrate the diverse, supportive, and vibrant culture that is the hallmark of the school.</p> <p>Empowering: At IEP meetings the IEP is presented in a draft form and there is wide latitude to make any changes that parents, or other IEP team members agree need further attention and the document will be edited before being finalized. Parent involvement and input is strongly encouraged, and every effort is made to explain the process at every turn and to seek their understanding and approval. Parents have IEP meeting experience prior to their child coming to TPC School and very often parents have found the process overwhelming and intimidating. TPC School makes every effort to include and empower parents and to make IEP meetings as accessible and friendly to them as possible and allowing whatever time it takes in the moment so as not to seem rushed. TPC School seeks to have parent's needs met at IEP meetings as much as the needs of the student.</p>	
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2. EVALUATION / INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

Indicator	Findings	Support Plan
Result	<p>1 Student Accommodations and Modifications</p> <p>As part of each student's annual IEP meeting, the IEP Team determines whether the student will need accommodations and/or modifications in their program in order to access their program or achieve their annual goals. Since TPCS is a special education school and has no general education classes, accommodations and modifications are typically in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● assistive technology ● individual assistance ● transportation assistance (seat belt, harness) ● teacher consultation with related service providers (SLP, OT) 	

	<p>Accommodations and modifications for each student are shared by the special educator/case manager with teacher assistants and non-special education staff, such as PE and high school content area teachers.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Document Review</p>	
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3. IDEA TRANSITION

Indicator		Findings	Support Plan
Result	1	<p>IDEA Transition Planning</p> <p>Beginning in 9th grade, all TCPS students participate in an elective course, Vocational Education. Each year, the course builds on previously learned skills, and continues to provide more in-depth activities and experiences that will assist students in their transition from high school. Although the course is called Vocational Education, the course objectives cover all areas of transition. Activities include employment skills, career exploration, daily living skills, college and/or career readiness, travel training, and independent living skills.</p> <p>TPCS employs a full time Vocational Coordinator, who collaborates with teachers and students in the classroom and in the community. The Vocational Coordinator assists in career exploration activities, conducts vocational assessments and coordinates with each student's ORS counselor.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Record Reviews</p>	
Result	2	<p>The nonpublic special education school works with the sending districts in assisting with referrals to the Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS) and to the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals (BHDDH).</p> <p>Working with each student's sending district, the vocational specialist refers students to ORS or BHDDH when they are 16 or going into their junior year of high school. They typically need to have good attendance to demonstrate their interest to participate in ORS services. Students also participate in the</p>	

		<p>prevocational program, where they can work in several types of jobs or volunteer opportunities. Some of these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mathewson Street Soup Kitchen ● Water fire Providence ● Adler's Hardware ● Saver's ● YMCA ● Imagine Daycare ● Groden Greenhouse <p>TPCS is authorized by ORS to complete vocational evaluations. The evaluations take place in the community, as well as in the classroom, using a variety of electronic interest inventories and platforms. Students are assessed over a period of 20 hours at various community sites, and sometimes include technical/trade program or college visits.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Document Review</p>	
Result	3	<p>Summary of Performance (SOP) is facilitated by the case managers as appropriate.</p> <p>A Summary of Performance is completed for each graduating senior by the senior class teacher and special education case manager at the end of the year. Documents such as the most recent IEP and evaluations are reviewed during the last semester of the senior year by the student's IEP Team. These are presented with the SOP report to the student before graduation.</p> <p>Graduating seniors are informed about their rights and the confidentiality of all of their documents on file at TPCS. They are also made aware of the need to self-disclose information regarding their disability and need assistance due to their disability, especially if they will be attending college or a technical/trade school. They understand that the documents they receive with the Summary of Performance can be used to support a request for services after high school. They are also made aware that they are not required to disclose the information if they so choose.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Document Review</p>	