



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

School Support System Report and Support Plan

**Mount Pleasant Academy
Non-public School
October 2018**

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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**Nonpublic School
School Support System Review**

Team Member

Team A – Susan Wood and Sandra Cambio Gregoire

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	<p>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.</p>	
Result	2	<p>Program Overview - Mount Pleasant Academy was established in October 2001, as part of the program continuum of Family Service of Rhode Island. The intent of this program is to provide an educational day treatment facility for children with significant social/emotional and or psychiatric disorders, as well as those with learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, all of which have an impact on the student's education within a public-school setting. Mount Pleasant Academy provides a clinically based psychoeducational program as well as comprehensive educational services for students in grades PK-8.</p> <p>The mission of Mount Pleasant Academy (MPA) is to provide an integrated educational environment with the structure and services necessary to facilitate learning, while at the same time decrease the cognitive and emotional impediments to learning. The goal is to provide students and families with a fully integrated team of educators, occupational therapists, speech/language therapists and mental health clinicians, working towards re-integration into less restrictive educational settings.</p> <p>The school environment is one that fosters self-esteem, creativity, and self-expression in a safe, structured setting with clear and consistent limits, expectations and positive reinforcement. Through the program MPA assists students in becoming:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Effective communicators</u> who develop interpersonal and expressive skills to confidently share their ideas and feelings with others 2. <u>Community contributors</u> who desire to share their time to improve the quality of life for others 3. <u>Critical thinkers</u> who can use information to assess and solve the problems and challenges they may face currently or in the future 4. <u>Willing cooperators</u> who will use their skills to appropriately interact with peers, adults and others in the community by being able to initiate, maintain and properly terminate relationships. 	

		<p>Students at Mount Pleasant Academy participate in classrooms of 6-7 students with a 2:1 student to staff ratio. There are usually two certified teachers in each of the classrooms, one general education and always one special educator. Mount Pleasant Academy also has a part-time art teacher, as well as a full-time physical education/APE/health teacher. In addition to the teaching staff, related service staff include a part time certified occupational therapy assistant, speech/language pathologist, psychiatrist and four clinicians. Additionally, three behavior technicians are available to support students and staff daily. Staffing ratio allows us to create individualized programs for each child to best meet their unique strengths and needs.</p>	
Result	3	<p>Student Support and Intervention Clinical Supports and Services- to provide students with the maximum amount of support while enrolled at MPA, the following clinical services and supports are offered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychiatric services • Medication management • Nursing services • Individual therapy on site for all students • Group therapy 3 times a week • Family therapy, on site or referral for out- patient or home-based services • Psychological testing • Case management services for students and their families • Facility wide behavior management program, as well as individualized behavior programs • 60-day Psychoeducational diagnostic program • 24/7 emergency response service <p>Services and outcomes are reviewed in weekly clinical supervision, but also more formally every 60 days via “clinical dashboard”, whereby students’ behaviors and progress each trimester are presented visually for parents to easily understand and then summarized and explained with text.</p> <p>The clinicians also serve as the program’s support person for the child’s family. The school psychiatrist sees all MPA students during their first 60 days at MPA with their parents for a full evaluation. For those students who maintain placement at MPA after their 60 days, about 60% continue to see the school psychiatrist with their parents for medication management. Paraprofessional behavior specialists round out the program by helping to implement and support the behavioral plans that have been put in place for each student. An MPA clinician is always “on call” for MPA families to contact as needed if their child is experiencing a mental health crisis at home during evenings, weekends or school vacations.</p>	

		<p>Mount Pleasant Academy has built a strong professional relationship with William James University (formerly the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology) and MPA has been a full-year internship site for 2-3 doctoral students annually for the past 4 years. Doctoral interns provide another layer of clinical support for the students, co-leading group therapy and assisting in the milieu as needed.</p> <p>Social Emotional Learning MPA was initially designed to cater to the needs of children on the autism spectrum, therefore, social emotional learning has been its core since opening in 2001. The skills are introduced in group therapy to all students (three times weekly), and not only reinforced in weekly individual therapy, but also in the classroom and school milieu all day every day. In order to accomplish this, all staff members have been trained in the Zones of Regulation, an evidence-based program to foster self-control and emotional regulation in children, as well as GoZen (an evidence-based anxiety relief program), GoStrengths (an evidence-based resiliency program), GoHackify (an evidence-based treatment for OCD) and GoToTheNow (an evidence-based mindfulness training). The language of these programs is shared with all MPA staff so that they can reinforce the skills and use common language to social coach the children in real time. Parents are invited to learn about both social/emotional programs by frequent posts on the school's Facebook page and school website.</p> <p>School Removals/Disciplinary Policies Disciplinary policies and practices are clearly defined through the student/parent handbook. Mount Pleasant Academy considers suspension an intervention of last resort. Other than ensuring the safety of the child or others in certain situations suspension does little to alter behavior and essentially keeps the child apart from the services he/she needs to address his/her behavioral and emotional needs. As per IDEA regulations regarding school removal for children with disabilities, the School Director may suspend a child from Mount Pleasant Academy for 10 school days cumulative during a school year. Prior to the 10th day, a Manifestation Determination Meeting will occur with members of the IEP Team. During the 10 days, the school may, at its discretion, provide educational services to the child. If cumulative suspension exceeds 10 days in a school year, a functional behavior assessment and a behavior intervention plan is developed with the IEP Team. Upon return from suspension, the child's parent or guardian must meet with the School Director to discuss the suspension and to develop a plan of action to avoid a similar incident in the future.</p>	
Result	4	<p>Program Continuum</p> <p>Mount Pleasant academy services students with Learning Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Other Health Impairments and Emotional Disturbance. The student population capacity is 38 students, with a classroom ratio of 2 teachers to approximately 6 students. There are 6 classrooms in the building. Additional classroom supports</p>	

		<p>include 3 behavior specialists, as well as 4 clinicians who are responsible for case management of assigned students. Mount Pleasant Academy also participates in providing internships to a number of clinicians each year, adding additional availability of staff.</p> <p>As part of providing mental health supports and social emotional learning opportunities to provide student with access to general curriculum, clinicians meet with students 1x/week for individual therapy and 3x/week for group counseling.</p> <p>The academic program at Mount Pleasant Academy includes all components of English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, Math, Physical Education, Health and weekly Art classes. The lower elementary grades focus on readiness to learn, as well as early reading, writing and math skills. Computer and technology skills are integrated into the daily academic activities of all students. Staff follow the requirements of Common Core Standards for Mathematics, English Language Arts and Literacy, as well as the Next Generation Science Standards. Mount Pleasant Academy has invested in the purchase of standards-based materials and resources including the Journeys Reading and ELA curriculum, Go Math and most recently Envisions Science, which is based on the NGSS. All the materials have online access for teachers and students to address the different learning styles and abilities of students. With digital access and smart boards in each classroom, teachers have the ability to teach and enhance the learning of all students.</p> <p>Students participate in two periods each week of ELA/Math intervention, which is dedicated to both skill development and enrichment. During these times students focus on areas of need to close any gaps or work on progress monitoring using Aimsweb, ReadTheory, EasyCBM, and Journey’s Cold Read. Students who are at or above level are challenged during these periods with enrichment activities such as real world math projects.</p> <p>During the past 2 years, staff have been provided professional development in the areas of STEM, data collection and analysis, understanding how to use data to inform instruction, differentiating instruction, and Trauma Informed Yoga. The focus of this year’s Professional development will be on Practical Strategies for Teaching Writing, and Reading Comprehension including interpretation of Aimsweb Data to inform instruction and develop goals. Staff will also participate in learning about the Research Based practice of Conscious Discipline.; which focuses on helping professionals to become conscious of their behavioral patterns, so they can teach students how to learn and listen to their internal guidance system.</p>	
Result	5	<p>Adaptive Physical Education (APE)</p> <p>Adaptive Physical Education (APE) is available to those students who qualify for this service, as determined through evaluation and the Individual Education Plan developed by the referring</p>	

		<p>school district. If during a placement at Mount Pleasant Academy, a student requires an APE Evaluation as part of initial eligibility for service, three-year re-evaluation or exit from service, the fulltime Physical Education Teacher is also a certified APE teacher. Students are provided this service either individually or in small group based on need. Evaluation tools used as part of referral include the Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency and the Test of Gross Motor Development.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis</p>	
Result	6	<p>Extended School Year (ESY)</p> <p>Eligibility for Extended School Year Services are determined through the IEP Process and agreement that the student is eligible based on having met the criteria established by the R.I. Department of Education. The focus of extended school year is to provide the students with continuing services, as determined by their IEP goals, in the areas of academic, social/emotional, behavior, speech/language, occupational therapy and adaptive physical education. The summer program includes many recreational activities and community outings where students have opportunities to incorporate skills and strategies learned during the school year. Extended school year begins immediately following the end of the school year, with a one-week break during the first week of July and one week prior to the opening of the new school year. The summer program offers the students the structure, routine and social/ emotional supports required by many of MPA's population.</p> <p>Student learning opportunities are enhanced with a focus on electives that address and expose students to different types of activities and interests. Last summer, students participated in cooking, yoga, construction/building, crafts, jewelry making, drama and hiking.</p> <p>The extended school year program is made available to LEAs needing a more intense summer placement for students requiring more intense services.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews</p>	
Result	7	<p>Parent Engagement</p> <p>Parents are involved beginning on the first day of consideration for placement at Mount Pleasant Academy. Once a referral packet is received from a school district, a tour of the school is scheduled with the parent, followed by a brief meeting with one of the clinicians to answer any questions from the family. When all parties agree this is an appropriate placement, an intake meeting is scheduled with the parent(s). During this</p>	

	<p>meeting parents are provided with detailed information about the school, the program and the school policies. Parents participate in an interview with the purpose of gathering as much information as possible regarding the child and the family. At this time, parents are asked to sign consent forms, release of information and other authorizations as needed.</p> <p>A clinician is assigned to each student and is the main contact between the school and home. Clinicians initiate and encourage frequent communication with the home, to update them on student progress or provide support during challenging behavioral times. Parents can take advantage of 24- hour emergency crisis intervention, as well as arrange appointments with the school psychiatrist for medication management. Parents receive daily point cards indicating the child's level of success on their individually designed behavior plan.</p> <p>Parents have the opportunity to meet with staff at any time during the year. Other opportunities to participate include a scheduled Open House, the Annual Spring Science Fair and a Graduation Ceremony to celebrate the success of the outgoing 8th grade student population. Parents are also invited to the culminating performance when there are musical artists-in-residence.</p> <p>Since 2011, one of the most engaging family interventions has been the use of MPA's Facebook page. Updated several times each week, the page allows parents to see pictures of their children in real-time learning activities at school, participating in field trips, social activities, celebrations or just some candid in and around school. Parents' response to the school's Facebook page is tremendous, and as of this writing MPA has over 275 followers. Parents also have access to the school website, where they are provided weekly updates, including class-by class pages on school events, as well as homework assignments.</p> <p>Engagements continues as staff at MPA are part of several charitable events to assist families in need at the holidays. Donations are collected in order to provide MPAs students families with Thanksgiving Baskets. In addition, staff participate in the Holiday Giving Tree, which offers an opportunity to sponsor an MPA child and family with gifts for the Holiday Season.</p>	
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2. EVALUATION / INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

Indicator	Findings	Support Plan
Result	1 Student Accommodations and Modifications	

	<p>Accommodations and modifications are made for each student based on the needs identified in the Individual Education Plan or 504 Plan. For those students entering Mount Pleasant Academy for a Diagnostic Placement, assessment and implementation of strategies and tools is part of the gathering of information process to help guide and plan for student success.</p> <p>Teachers, clinicians and related service personnel have access to all relevant documents in the students' personal file, which are found in a locked storage unit. Prior to a new student start date, those assigned to work with the child review the IEP and evaluations provided by the LEA. The Director of Education meets with the classroom teaching team, as well as related service staff to further discuss the child's IEP, strengths, needs, services and required accommodations/modifications needed to access general curriculum. Clinicians hold a case presentation of the new student which provides a detailed history of the child, and other information related to social, emotional and behavioral needs.</p> <p>Frequently used accommodations include access to sensory tools, movement breaks, opportunity to voluntarily take space, access to computers, Chromebook, extended time and a number of other accommodations which directly relate to academic progress.</p> <p><u>Documentation</u>: Data Analysis; Interviews; Document Reviews</p>	
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3. IDEA TRANSITION

Indicator	Findings	Support Plan
Result	<p>1 IDEA Transition Planning</p> <p>Mount Pleasant Academy services students PK-Grade 8. When it is determined a student will be turning 14 during the year of the Annual IEP, staff begin implementation of the Secondary Transition IEP. With a focus on future planning and initial post-secondary discussions, students are asked to complete both a Career Interest Inventory, as well as a Personal Learning Style Inventory. Results of these informal assessments are presented at the Annual IEP Meeting and incorporated into the IEP. Students are also invited into their IEP meeting to discuss their interests and future goals as they relate to education, independent living and employment.</p> <p>A future goal of MPA is to start informal Transition Assessments in Grade 6 focusing on the child's view of himself, as well as personal strengths. In Grade 7 the assessment will also involve discussion of child's strengths, interests and preferences for future living, learning and working. A component of self-advocacy will also be incorporated into both Grade 7 and Grade 8 assessments, as well as more formal interest, study skills and transition surveys.</p>	

		<u>Documentation:</u> Data Analysis; Interviews; Record Reviews	
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>Not applicable as Mount Pleasant Academy services students Grade PK-8</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>Not applicable as Mount Pleasant Academy services students PK-8.</p> <p><u>Documentation:</u> Interviews; Document Review</p>	