EANES ISD SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

PROGRAM REVIEW

ACTION PLAN

2/2020

Periodic Benchmark Review

8/2019

11/2020

In the spring of 2019, the Eanes ISD Board of Trustees engaged the services of Stetson & Associates to perform a review of the Special Education Department. This review/audit resulted in a report outlining recommendations both for continued practices and for new or improved processes and procedures. The following action plan was developed based on five themes identified in the report and includes Stetson's recommendations along with stakeholder feedback surrounding those themes. Feedback from special education staff was collected during professional learning in the summer of 2019. Parents were given opportunities to provide feedback during two parent symposiums that were held as well as in an online survey in the fall of 2019. Additionally, the special education administrative team and the Special Education Parent Working Group provided additional feedback during the fall of 2019 and spring 2020.

The action plan, which is aligned with the five themes outlined in the report, includes short-term and long-term goals under each theme. Short-term goals are expected to take from 3 months to 2 years to be accomplished while long-terms goals are expected to take from 2 – 4 years to be accomplished.

This action plan should be considered a living document. National or state mandates may impact activities or rates of progress. Additionally, other priorities identified by the state, district, department, School Board or community may also have an impact on the activities.

Depending on the activity, more detail may be provided regarding specific timelines, resources, and people assigned. Periodic updates regarding progress will be made to the Board of Trustees and communicated out to the community.

THEME 1: COMMON VISION

Short-Term

- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL): Create "Early Adopters" on each campus to collaborate, research and share exemplars. Provide learning opportunities and professional development for Educational Partners and campus administration**

  8/2019

  All professional and paraprofessional staff attended a session on UDL at the district Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Conference. UDL was one of the four main foundational topics at the conference.   This was the culmination of two years of work developing a plan for the introduction of UDL to the whole faculty by the UDL implementation team. On-going activities and additional professional learning are planned for full implementation in three to five years.

  11/2020

  Fall 2019 - Early Adopter teams established on all campuses. Various activities designed by campus teams. Continuing professional learning through Educational Partners; Principal/EP meetings with Bright Spots from campus EA teams and additional professional development; Book studies with EPs and Principals

  Summer 2020 - Advanced UDL training provided by CAST for Early Adopter Team members; Modules provided to special education staff at Summer Sped Academy

  August 2020 - UDL 101 training developed by Matt Zemo and Allison Eicke provided to all new EISD Teachers. Educational Partners, Campus Administration, and Director of Special Education developed UDL lesson design and instructional strategies rotation at the PLC conference.

- **Consider adding language to District Improvement Plan (DIP) to be more inclusive**

  11/2020

  Language around the district approved DEI committee will be added to both the DIP and Campus Improvement Plans (CIP)

- **Develop more systematic ways of communicating resources to parents**

  11/2020

  Inclusive Culture Committee sub-group developed a list of resources posted on website; continued with parent training opportunities in-person, posted on website & virtual; At-A-Glance parent training; Eanes Family PD around technology

- **Ensure roles and responsibilities of special education staff are emphasized during campus Open Houses, Back to School Nights, etc.**

Long-Term/On-going

- **UDL: Continue 3-5 year implementation plan**

  11/2020

  Work is continuing. UDL is becoming a common term in Eanes ISD. COVID actually helped spread the framework of UDL in terms of online platforms and assessment.

- **Update Special Education Website/resource material with most current information and communicate how to access information**

  8/2019

  All campus websites now have a link to the District Special Education Page. https://www.eanesisd.net/dept/sped

  We switched all of our internal websites to the new Google Sites to help staff access the sites more easily and make better use of this resource.

  11/2020

  Inclusive Culture Committee posted updated resources

  Region 18 Legal Framework updated with Special Education Operating Procedures

- **Review policies, practices and trainings around use of language for students with disabilities and inclusive practices to ensure consistency**

  8/2019

  As a department, we focused on language specifically dealing with labels, placement and programming over the summer. We acknowledged the need to bring more education/information to our general education counter-parts. This language and explanation of special education services was the focus of one of the break-out sessions at the New Teacher Institute.

A new rotation was added to the New Teacher Institute focusing on inclusive schools practices. This session was presented by Molly May and Linda Rawlings. The focus was not only on students with disabilities and information brought forth from the Inclusive Culture Committee; but, we also shared information on a broader view of inclusion from discussions from the Community Forum. This session was well received and allowed us to address the culture of inclusion for the first time with this group of stakeholders.

11/2020

Continued rotation at New Teacher Institute. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee formed - ability/disability will be included in future work; Department training (HCMS) on inclusion based on Stetson Program Review

- **Enhance an inclusive culture by becoming a Unified Champion School and establish Best Buddies chapters at the High School and Middle School level**

  11/2020

  WHS Best Buddies was honored as named Best New Chapter in Spring 2020; held a few fundraising events in 2019 - 2020; second year kick-off party fall 2020.

  Current 2020-2021 Best Buddies Chapter has 57 members.

  WHS became a Unified Champion School. Held a Unified Pep Rally; toured another program. Had several events planned for Spring 2020 that were canceled due to COVID.

  Completed application to continue as UCS for 2020- 21school year; planning committee re-gathering in fall 2020

- **Develop processes/procedures to allow for student voice in IEP process and educational programming in general**

  11/2020

  Continuing Rubric for IEP Participation, SPIN document

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THEME 2: COLLABORATIVE INSTRUCTION

Short-Term

- **Develop collaborative teaching "model team"/ district trainer of trainers**

  8/2019

  During the day of teacher in-service where special education teachers with job-alike responsibilities gathered, we held a session on collaborative teaching strategies with those serving as collaborative teachers this year. We realize that without the general education teachers, the training is not nearly as effective. However, we were able to present consistent information to our special education teachers K – 12.

  Also during "job-alike day," specific training was provided to our modified/resource teachers with a focus on progress monitoring to help close some of the academic gaps between typically developing peers and students with disabilities. This training again helps with fidelity of implementation across campuses.

  11/2020

  A group of 6 teachers (one elementary teaching pair and two middle school teaching pairs) committed to the Collaborative Teaching Cohort. All attended a virtual webinar with Dr. Marilyn Friend in July around "Co-Teaching in Uncertain Times".

  The committee met three times between Spring 2020 and Fall 2020. However, the committee was put on hold in Fall 2020 with the commitment to regroup in Spring 2021.

- **Enhance activities to show recognition and support for teaching assistants**

  11/2020

  Provided training modules during Spring 2020 through SafeSchools; several campuses recognized TAs for Eanespiration Awards (often as a whole team)

  Provided advanced zoom tools training to TAs only during August 2020 back to school activities

- **Continue training in research and evidenced based practices regarding progress monitoring (Assessments such as: GRADE, GMADE, DIBELS)**

  11/2020

  Continued use of GRADE and GMADE as well as DIBELS. Online training videos were created and accessible to teachers.

Adoption of Vizzle in which progress monitoring may be aligned with student IEP goals and automated data collection occurs

Renewed and increased Read Live licenses and provided virtual and recorded training on progress monitoring.

Received a grant to train staff in Visualizing and Verbalizing reading comprehension program from Lindamood-Bell.

- **Enhance systemization and communication around student information and "Purple Folders"**

  11/2020

  Spring of 2020, reviewed purple folders during campus visits.

  Moved to online accommodation sharing systems through skyward to provide easy access to information for all teachers

Long-Term/On-going

- **Continue annual training on collaborative teaching models**

- **Review student levels of support to consider other "in-class support" models**

  11/2020

  Trained teachers on in-class support models and how to determine the amount of collaborative support based on levels of need.

- **Review Teacher Growth and Appraisal Program (TGAP) and Administrator Growth and Appraisal Program (AGAP) for potential indicators around implementing inclusive practices**
- **Consider Master Scheduling Training**

  8/2019

  As master schedules were developed over the summer, to the extent practicable, campus and special education leadership worked to develop common planning times for collaborative pairs.

THEME 3: PARENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

Short-Term

- **Present Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) 101 Training (scheduled for Fall 2019 w/online option)**

  11/2020

  September 10th, ARD 101 was provided via zoom. ARD 101 Training is uploaded to the district special education website, as are all the other parent trainings.

  Developed monthly semester at a glance for Fall 2020 parent training options including: Remote Learning Strategies, ARD 101 Training, Behavior Management 101, Satori Alternatives for Managing Aggression for Parents and Transition 101 for Parents.

- **Research/begin developing post-Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting survey**

  11/2020

  Fall/spring 2020 - Gathered examples from other districts

- **Gather additional information on school clubs and events and student participation**

  11/2020

  Inclusive Culture Subcommittee developed and presented recommendations for supporting inclusive practices within student organizations at WHS; gathered current information on how clubs work and communication; proposed new ways to market clubs (Target was for Fall 2020 - COVID has delayed much of the implementation)

- **Develop more consistent communication logs/forms/web-based program for regular communication, especially for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities**

  11/2020

  Seesaw became the adopted platform for Life Skills teacher ECSE - 12 to communicate with parents and students.

  A committee of teachers are working on Year-at-a-Glance and Scope and Sequence documents for Life Skills / Modified classrooms for grade K-12 in all subject areas. Projected completion of documents for 2021-22 school year.

- **Provide training on parent communication and conflict resolution strategies for special and general education teachers and parents**

- **Enhance programming to empower students to become self-advocates**

- **Develop systems for explicit communication to students and parents around accommodations**

  11/2020

  Strengths, Preferences, Interests and Needs Document

- **Provide additional parent training on communicating information about their child and general communication strategies**

THEME 4: USE OF PERSONNEL

Short-Term

- **Provide more cross-training for special education teachers in special education positions**

  8/2019

  During the "job-alike day," all life skills staff, teachers and paraprofessionals were introduced to a new metric for evaluating quality indicators of a life skills program/classroom. Mechanisms for support and a schedule for observations and team discussions were established. This helps not only with ensuring consistency among campuses, but it also reinforces research-based practices. One practical implication would be to make sure staff are being utilized to the fullest extent possible since this program is very staff intensive.

  Also, during this day, all behavior support staff, teachers and paraprofessionals, were trained or re-trained on a behavior matrix used to help make individual student driven decisions on levels of support. Again, this enhances alignment among the campuses.

A guidance document and subsequent analysis documents were also developed over the summer around the use of 1:1 teaching assistants, and this was shared with all staff. These documents combined research around the use of 1:1 staff and the positive and negative implications of having a 1:1 staff assigned to a student. There is now a set procedure with information that must be gathered as a team and timelines for making a request.

- **Provide more training for general education teachers in best instructional practices for students with disabilities**

   11/2020

   Conducted a survey and had professional learning for all elementary specials teachers on working with students with disabilities in PE, Art and Music

   Campus training at HCMS in November 2019 for all special education and general education staff regarding Inclusive Practices. The themes came directly from staff responses to the Stetson Survey.

   August 2020 - UDL 101 training developed by Matt Zemo and Allison Eicke and provided to all new EISD Teachers during the New Teacher Institute.

   August 2020 - UDL Anywhere/Everywhere Training developed by Educational Partners, Campus Administration, and Director of Special Education and delivered strategies UDL lesson design and instructional strategies during rotation at the PLC conference.

- **Increase communication with general education staff on special education staffing procedures**

- **Monitor the new service delivery model at WHS for students needing minimal supports to determine efficacy at other levels**

   11/2020

   We have continued to increase parent, student and adult student awareness and understanding of the Level 1 service delivery model. Case managers share the model with ARD committees and in preARDs when they have students who meet the Level 1 criteria. Case managers also discuss the benefits and how, if the programming is appropriate it fits into the students transition plan, ie. trialing having less support, determining accommodations that are most useful and can possibly continue in the college or workplace setting, self- advocacy, increase in independence.

- **Explore possibility of allowing parents (who wish to participate) to utilize private insurance to help defray costs for district and promote access to more trained staff**

Long-Term/On-going

- **Increase capacity in Tier 1 and Tier 2 for behavioral intervention in terms instructional practices and staffing (ie. Emergent Tree Pilot)**

  11/2020

  CCE completed its first year pilot with Tier 3 Solid Roots program. The district brought in a Tier 3 program for all elementary schools for the 2020- 21 school year. Summer professional development provided along with embedded PD throughout the year. Some of the strategies are being incorporated into Tier 2 interventions.

- **Develop rubrics/schedules to determine actual amount of time a student needs support in general education**

  11/2020

  Continue to look at levels of support and gathering data

- **Consider training on organization and time management skills for staff**

  11/2020

  Developed a Command Center tool for case management; provided extensive training this summer on use of technology tools

THEME 5: Compliance

Short-Term

- **Expand new teacher ARD process training**

  11/2020

  Summer 2020 - trained during New Teacher Institute; provide 1:1 training sessions with coordinators and Educational Partners; created ARD Process timeline guide; model ARD facilitation before running their first ARD

- **Enforce compliance components on staff signatures and schedule page minutes in IEP**

8/2019

A large component of the Special Education Academy in summer 2019 was focused on four main compliance issues identified in the report. Following Stetson's recommendations and working with our software company, we instituted a new way to document time in special education versus general education on the IEP schedule page to make it easier to interpret and more accurately reflect a student's schedule. We did not change any student's instructional arrangements, but going forward, the way time is documented should be easier for parents or other school districts to understand.

Also at Special Education Academy, we trained on the documentation required for the signature page to again bring alignment across the district. Also, we reviewed best practices for writing Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFPs) and goals and objectives.

11/2020

Developed remote signing process and training during COVID

- **Monitor systems of documentation for accommodations**

8/2019

At Special Education Academy: discussed the importance of not only knowing student's accommodations and modifications, which was a strength in the report, but having systematic documentation. We trained on this element and provided several systems for teachers to use to provide this documentation. We informed the staff there would be follow-up in all compliance areas.

11/2020

During campus progression meetings in spring 2020, compliance checks were done on accommodations tracking

Developed a case manager command center resource for tracking and monitoring case manager responsibilities

- **Systematize data exchange for progression years (Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) -K; 5th - 6th; 8th - 9th; 12th – Adult Transition Services (ATS)**

11/2020

Implemented system for uploading accommodations through Skyward

- **Enhance data and progress monitoring techniques and communication regarding IEP progress**

11/2020

Developed a case manager command center resource for tracking and monitoring case manager responsibilities

Long-Term/On-going

- **Evaluate State Performance Plan (SPP) and Results Driven Accountability (RDA) data for campus trends – formerly Performance-Based Monitoring and Analysis System (PBMAS)**

- **Continue to update Special Education Operating Guidelines (Google site)**

  11/2020

  Special Education Operating Procedures in the categories of Child Find, Evaluation and FAPE were updated and uploaded to the Region 18 Framework page.

  Continuing to update google site for staff with resources

- **Conduct annual review of audit folders for compliance**

  11/2020

  Met with Region 13 staff for a pre-audit check-in to discuss audit folder compliance