

Comprehensive Special Education Program Review Proposal

Billings Public Schools

Purpose

To review special education programs and services provided in the Billings Public Schools to identify:

1. Optimum program design and service delivery models that focus on improving outcomes for students with disabilities
2. Appropriateness and adequacy of resource allocation for special education that includes fiscal, personnel, and material resources
3. Availability and accessibility of clear and transparent district-wide procedures and operating guidelines
4. Impact of proactive, preventive interventions and best practices such as Multi-Tiered System of Supports and Universal Design for Learning on identification of students for special education
5. Impact of English Language Learners on identification for special education
6. Targeted and ongoing support and professional learning for district and school-based personnel
7. Communication and collaboration across departments and schools within the district
8. Communication and collaboration with parents and external stakeholders
9. Legal review of policies and practices under the IDEA and Section 504

Methodology

These procedures will be used to conduct the comprehensive special education program review:

- Staff interviews with key district and school personnel to include paraprofessionals, teachers, related service providers, and school and district administrators
 - Staff at all levels who have both direct as well as indirect responsibility and accountability for students with disabilities will be interviewed using a set of predetermined questions.
 - Parent surveys/interviews
 - Parents of students with disabilities will have an opportunity to provide feedback regarding their involvement in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of their child's individualized education program.
 - Student interviews
 - Students will be interviewed for feedback on the quality and effectiveness of special education programs and services they receive.
 - Classroom observations
 - Classes that serve students with disabilities (General and Special Education) will be visited to observe the instructional process on a representative set of campuses.



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- Data review and analysis
 - District, and school level state and federal data for three to five years for multiple special education indicators such as student achievement, identification, placement, discipline, graduation, and transition will be collected, reviewed and analyzed.
 - Staff certification, professional development, student-teacher ratios, class schedules, staff assignments, state and federal accountability reports, and other relevant information will be reviewed and analyzed for trends and patterns.
- Legal review of compliance with state and federal requirements, and practices under the IDEA and Section 504 to include:
 - Child Find procedures
 - Evaluation and eligibility, including possible disproportionality of native American students
 - FAPE/LRE: procedural FAPE including procedural safeguards and prior written notices; participation of mandatory members and parents in IEP meetings; the presence of required elements in IEP documentation; LRE including IEP meeting discussion, supplementary aids/supports for inclusion, and extent of segregated placements in district, at home, and at other institutions; FAPE implementation including lack of certified teachers or paraprofessionals, and procedures to check and to remediate "material" shortfalls
 - Disciplinary changes in placement including compliance with relevant IDEA regulations and possible disproportionality of native American students
 - Number of requests for due process hearings, state complaints, and OCR complaints in each of past five to ten years.
- Student folder review
 - Student folders will be selected in a targeted manner to review compliance with legal requirements under Section 504 and IDEA.
- Budget review
 - The budgets for the current year and the last two years will be reviewed along with expenditure reports and allocation of staff.
 - Report writing and reporting to administrative team
 - A written draft report will be shared with the district administrative team with an opportunity for district staff to provide input and edits for accuracy, readability, clarity and comprehensiveness of the findings and recommendations.
 - A finalized written report will be provided with findings and recommendations for improvement.



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- Other
 - Additional areas of focus that arise during the evaluation process that may be necessary for a comprehensive report of the status of the special education program will be included.
 - As requested, the findings of the program review will be presented in person to key stakeholders.

Follow-Up Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Based on the results of the Special Education program review, the Billings Public Schools may identify additional support for continuous program improvement planning and coaching/mentoring for targeted staff. The scope for follow-up support is not included in this proposal and can be collaboratively determined after the program review is conducted.

Timelines

Fall 2022-Spring 2023

Reviewers

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Estimated Cost

Based on the current scope the cost is calculated at \$38,000 and may be subject to increase if the scope changes.

