

# ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

COORDINATED PROGRAM REVIEW (CPR)

CPR ONSITE YEAR 2016-2017

PROGRAM AREA: SPECIAL EDUCATION

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATION**

**SEPTEMBER 14, 2017**

# COORDINATED PROGRAM REVIEW

- Conducted every six years by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Program Quality Assurance Services
- Covers Civil Rights, English Language Education, & Special Education
- Combination of self-assessment and internal record review (Jan – May 2016) and on-site visit (Nov 2016)
- Self-assessment includes review of policies and procedures for 57 criteria
- Internal record review of 30 student records based on DESE selection criteria
- Onsite visit includes additional record review, facilities inspections/classroom observations, staff interview (gen ed, special ed, admin, t.a.s,) and parent survey & interviews

# CPR REPORT TIMELINE

- A draft report was released in April 2017 in which the District had 10 days to respond to the findings
- In June 2017 a final report was released publicly and the District had 20 days to create a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) and submit to the DESE for approval
- At the beginning of July 2017 the CAP was approved by the DESE
- Mandatory One-Year Compliance Date issued for June 5, 2018
- Progress reporting periods occur Nov 1, 2017 & March 12, 2018

# CPR FINDINGS

**Commendable:** Any requirement or aspect of a requirement implemented in an exemplary manner significantly beyond the requirements of law or regulation.

**Implemented:** The requirement is substantially met in all important aspects.

**Implementation in Progress:** This rating is used for criteria containing new or updated legal requirements and means that the district has implemented any old requirements contained in the criterion and is training staff or beginning to implement the new requirements in such a way that the onsite team anticipates that the new requirements will be implemented by the end of the school year.

**Partially Implemented:** The requirement, in one or several important aspects, is not entirely met.

**Not Implemented:** The requirement is totally or substantially not met.

**Not Applicable:** The requirement does not apply to the school district

# APS FINDINGS

- We had 13 areas of non-compliance each of these areas were found to be “Partially Implemented”
- Findings in the areas of:
  - (SE6) Determination of transition services
  - (SE7) Transfer of parental rights at age of majority and student participation and consent at the age of majority
  - (SE8) IEP Team composition and attendance
  - (SE13) Progress Reports and content
  - (SE14) Review and revision of IEPs
  - (SE18) Determination of placement; provision of IEP to parent
  - (SE20) Least restrictive program selected
  - (SE21) School day and school year requirements
  - (SE22) IEP implementation and availability
  - (SE24) Notice to parent regarding proposal or refusal to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the student or the provision of FAPE
  - (SE54) Professional development
  - (SE55) Special education facilities and classrooms
  - (SE56) Special education programs and services are evaluated

# **APS FINDINGS**

For a full description of the Coordinated Program Review (CPR) process and complete copies of the Final Report and Corrective Action Plan

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa/review/cpr/>

# SE 6 DETERMINATION OF TRANSITION SERVICES

***Finding:** A review of student records indicated that the district does not consistently invite students aged 14 and older to attend part or all of Team meetings at which transition services are discussed or proposed.*

**Requirement:** During the IEP period in which the student will turn 14 years old, they are required to be invited to any meeting in which transition services are to be discussed.

# SE 6 DETERMINATION OF TRANSITION SERVICES

## What WE are doing to correct this:

- Training all secondary (middle, high school, and out-of-district) special education staff including special education teachers, Team Chairpersons, and special education Coordinators on the need to invite students who are 14 years and older to attend part of all of their Team meetings. *Status: completed*
- Implementing a quarterly review process by special education administrators in which a sampling of applicable records is selected to check for compliance. *Status: on-going*



# SE 7 AGE OF MAJORITY

***Finding:** A review of student records and staff interviews indicated that the district does not consistently inform students and parents at least one year prior to the student reaching age 18 of the rights that will transfer from the parent to the student upon the student's 18th birthday. Record review and staff interviews also indicated that upon the student reaching age 18, the district does not consistently obtain consent from the adult student with sole or shared decision-making authority to continue his or her special education program.*

**Requirement:** During the IEP period in which the student is turning 17 years old they must be notified that upon their 18 birthday that all rights afforded to parents under special education law will transfer from the parent/guardian to the student.

Once the student turns 18, the school district has to obtain the adult student's consent to continue his or her special education program (i.e. the student must sign their IEP.)

# SE 7 AGE OF MAJORITY

## What WE are doing to correct this:

- Training all high school, and out-of-district special education staff including special education teachers, Team Chairpersons, and Special Education Coordinators on the need to explain the transfer of rights during the IEP period in which the student turns 17. *Status:* completed
- Creating and monitoring a list of students who are turning 18 this school year and developing a notification system to have student sign his/her own IEPs. *Status:* on-going
- Implementing a quarterly review process by special education administrators in which a sampling of applicable records is selected to check for compliance. *Status:* on-going

# SE 8 TEAM COMPOSITION & ATTENDANCE

***Finding:** A review of student records indicated that when required Team members do not attend a Team meeting, the district does not consistently obtain the parent's agreement in writing to excuse the Team member's participation, and the absent member does not consistently provide written input into the development of the IEP to the parent and the IEP Team prior to the meeting.*

**Requirement:** Members of the Team attend Team meetings unless:

- the parent and district agree to use alternative means, such as a video conference or a conference call, for any Team meeting OR
- the district and the parent agree, in writing, that the attendance of the Team member is not necessary because the member's area of the curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed OR
- the district and the parent agree, in writing, to excuse a required Team member's participation and the excused member provides written input into the development of the IEP to the parent and the IEP Team prior to the meeting.

# SE 8 TEAM COMPOSITION & ATTENDANCE

## What WE are doing to correct this:

- Training all special education staff including special education teachers (liaisons for annual reviews) and Team Chairpersons on procedures for excusing a Team member from an IEP mtg. *Status:* completed
- Sharing a template for written input when required team member is absent. *Status:* completed
- Implementing a quarterly review process by special education administrators and team chairpersons in which a sampling of applicable records is selected to check for compliance. *Status:* on-going

# SE 13 PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONTENT

*Finding:* A review of student records and parent interviews indicated that although progress reports are provided to parents at least as often as parents are informed of the progress of non-disabled students, the progress reports do not consistently include specific written information on the student's progress toward the annual goals in the IEP.

**Requirement:** Parents must receive reports on the student's progress toward IEP goals at least as often as parents are informed of the progress of non-disabled students (i.e. as frequently as report cards go out)

Progress reports must answer the following TWO questions for each goal:

- (1) What is the student's progress toward the annual goal?
- (2) Is the progress sufficient to enable the student to achieve the annual goal by the end of the IEP period?

# SE 13 PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONTENT

## What WE are doing to correct this:

- Training all special education staff, including special education teachers, related service providers, and Team Chairpersons on writing progress reports that provide written information on the student's progress toward each IEP goal. *Status:* completed
- Implementing a review process at each reporting period in which Team Chairpersons check for compliance prior to sending progress reports. *Status:* on-going
- Implementing a review process by special education administrators in which a random sampling of records will be pulled at each level to check for compliance during each reporting period. *Status:* on-going

# SE 14 REVIEW AND REVISIONS OF IEPs

***Finding:** A review of student records and parent interviews indicated that Team meetings are not consistently held on or before the anniversary date of the IEP, to consider the student's progress and to review, revise, or develop a new IEP or refer the student for a re-evaluation, as appropriate. In addition, record review and parent interviews indicated that IEP Teams do not consistently convene to review and revise the IEP to address any lack of expected progress towards the annual goals and in the general curriculum*

**Requirement:** At least annually, on or before the anniversary date of the IEP, a Team meeting is held to consider the student's progress and to review, revise, or develop a new IEP or refer the student for a re-evaluation, as appropriate.

The IEP Team reviews and revises the IEP to address any lack of expected progress towards the annual goals and in the general curriculum.

# SE 14 REVIEW AND REVISIONS OF IEPS

## What WE are doing to correct this:

- Revising the district's procedures to ensure that annual Team meetings are scheduled sufficiently in advance to allow for rescheduling proposed meeting date/time before the one-year anniversary and for clearly documenting in the student record that the Team meeting has been re-scheduled after the IEP's anniversary date at the parent's request. *Status:* completed
- Training all special education staff on this procedure and documenting parent requests to hold meetings after the anniversary date in our Meeting Invitations (N3). *Status:* completed
- Developing an internal oversight and tracking system for ensuring that when annual IEP Team meetings are scheduled beyond the anniversary date of the IEP at the parent's request, this request is clearly documented in the student record. *Status:* on-going



# SE 18B DETERMINATION OF PLACEMENT; PROVISION OF IEP TO PARENT

***Finding:** A review of student records and staff and parent interviews indicated that parents leave with summary notes at the conclusion of the IEP Team meeting, which include a completed IEP service delivery grid describing the types and amounts of special education and related services proposed by the district and a statement of the major goal areas associated with these services. Although the district provides the parent with two (2) copies of the proposed IEP and proposed placement along with the required notice, the IEP and placement are not consistently sent within two calendar weeks of the Team meeting.*

**Requirement:** Immediately following the development of the IEP, the district provides the parent with two (2) copies of the proposed IEP and proposed placement along with the required notice

# SE 18B DETERMINATION OF PLACEMENT; PROVISION OF IEP TO PARENT

## What WE are doing to correct this:

- Creating an updated timeline for paperwork submission following an IEP mtg. *Status: Completed*
- Team Chairpersons will monitor compliance with submissions and notify administrators if they require assistance. *Status: On-going*
- Building administrators and special education coordinators will review this data monthly to identify additional staff member training and/or supervisory follow-up *Status: On-going*
- Implementing an annual review process by special education administrators in which a random sampling of records will be pulled at each level to check for compliance. *Status: on-going*

# SE20 LEAST RESTRICTIVE PROGRAM SELECTED

***Finding:** A review of student records indicated that the district does not consistently state why removal from the general education classroom is considered critical to the student's program and the basis for its conclusion that education in the least restrictive environment, with the use of supplementary aids and services, could not be achieved satisfactorily.*

**Requirement:** If the student is removed from the general education classroom at any time, the Team states why the removal is considered critical to the student's program and the basis for its conclusion that education of the student in a less restrictive environment, with the use of supplementary aids and services, could not be achieved satisfactorily.

The district does not remove an eligible student from the general education classroom solely because of needed modification in the curriculum.

# SE20 LEAST RESTRICTIVE PROGRAM SELECTED

## What WE are doing to correct this:

- Training all special education staff including special education teachers, related service providers, and Team Chairpersons on writing *Non-participation Justification* statements. *Status:* on-going
- Implementing a quarterly review process by special education administrators in which a random sampling of records will be pulled at each level to check for compliance. *Status:* on-going

# SE 21 SCHOOL DAY AND SCHOOL YEAR REQUIREMENTS

***Finding:** A review of student records indicated that IEP Teams do not consistently consider extended year programming when the student has demonstrated or is likely to demonstrate substantial regression in his or her learning skills and/or substantial difficulty in relearning such skills if an extended program is not provided.*

**Requirement:** The Team routinely considers the need for an educational program that is less than or more than the regular school day or school year, including extended day, or year, and/or residential services, and indicates on the IEP why the shorter or longer program is necessary.

An extended day or year program is identified if the student has demonstrated or is likely to demonstrate substantial regression in his or her learning skills and/or substantial difficulty in relearning such skills if an extended program is not provided.

# SE 21 SCHOOL DAY AND SCHOOL YEAR REQUIREMENTS

## What WE are doing to correct this?

- Training all special education teachers and Team Chairpersons on the need for Teams to consider extended year programming at the time of the IEP meeting and criteria for consideration. *Status: completed*
- Implementing a quarterly review process in which a random sampling of records will be pulled at each level to check for compliance. *Status: on-going*

# SE 22 IMPLEMENTATION AND AVAILABILITY

***Finding:** A review of student records, staff and parent interviews, and parent surveys indicated that when the IEP of the student in need of special education has been accepted in whole or in part by the student's parent, the school district does not consistently provide the mutually agreed upon services without delay. Specifically, due to the late hiring of related service providers, speech and language services were not fully implemented at Dallin Elementary School for the start of the 2016-2017 school year until December 2016, and physical therapy services were not provided at Brackett Elementary School until the beginning of October 2016. Record review and staff and parent interviews indicated that, unless specifically requested by the parent, the district does not immediately inform parents in writing of any delayed services, reasons for delay, actions that the school district is taking to address the lack of space or personnel and does not offer alternative methods to meet the goals on the accepted IEP*

# SE 22 IMPLEMENTATION AND AVAILABILITY

**Requirement:** The District immediately informs parents in writing of any delayed services, reasons for delay, actions that the school district is taking to address the lack of space or personnel and offers alternative methods to meet the goals on the accepted IEP. Upon agreement of the parents, the school district implements alternative methods immediately until the lack of space or personnel issues are resolved.

## **What WE are doing to correct this:**

- Several students have already completed compensatory services. District will be reviewing and notifying impacted families who have not been previously contacted to discuss a compensatory service plan. *Status:* on-going



# SE 24 NOTICE OF PROPOSED SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

***Finding:** A review of student records indicated that information included in the narrative description of the Notice of Proposed School District Action (NI) does not contain sufficient detail of the district's proposed actions, specifically a description of each evaluation procedure, test, record, or report the agency used as a basis for the proposed or refused action.*

## **Requirement:**

Describe one or more of the following actions: Initial Evaluation, Reevaluation, Emergency Evaluation, Extended Evaluation Period, IEP, IEP Amendment, Placement (include the specific placement location and transportation requirements, if any), Graduation or any other proposal used to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, educational placement or the provision of special education services by answering the following questions:

What action is the school district proposing to take?

Why is the school district proposing to act?

What rejected options were considered and why was each option rejected?

What evaluation procedure, test, record or report was used as a basis for the proposed action?

What other factors were relevant to the school district's decision

What next steps, if any, are recommended?

# SE 24 NOTICE OF PROPOSED SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

## What WE are doing to correct this:

- Training Team Chairpersons to note with sufficient detail in the “N1” the type of assessments/categories of testing they considered, in addition to the other information (ex. report cards, progress reports, student report, classroom observation.) *Status: completed*
- Changing the default setting in our IEP software. *Status: completed*
- Implementing a quarterly review process by special education administrators in which a random sampling of records will be pulled at each level to check for compliance. *Status: on-going*

# SE 54 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

***Finding:** A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that the district ensures that all staff, including both special education and general education staff, are trained on analyzing and accommodating diverse learning styles of all students in order to achieve an objective of inclusion in the general education classroom of students with diverse learning styles. However, document review and staff interviews indicated that the district does not ensure that all general education teachers are trained in methods of collaboration among teachers, paraprofessionals and teacher assistants to accommodate diverse learning styles of all students in the general education classroom and on state and federal special education requirements and related local special education policies and procedures.*

# SE 54 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Requirement:** The district ensures that all staff, including both special education and general education staff, are trained on:

- state and federal special education requirements and related local special education policies and procedures;
- methods of collaboration among teachers, paraprofessionals and teacher assistants to accommodate diverse learning styles of all students in the general education classroom;

**What WE are doing to correct this:**

- Working with the school principals and the Assistant Superintendent to include in the annual training methods collaboration among teachers and teachers assistants to accommodate diverse learning styles in the general education classroom and state, federal, and local special education policies. *Status:* completed

# SE 55 SPECIAL EDUCATION FACILITIES & CLASSROOMS

***Finding:** A review of facilities indicated that high school students are required to walk through another special education classroom or the school's social worker's office to access speech and language services, therefore compromising students' confidentiality.*

**Requirement:** The school district provides facilities and classrooms for eligible students that: (5) are not identified by signs or other means that stigmatize such students.

## **What WE are doing to correct this:**

- Relocating the identified office space to a new location that meets the criteria specified in the regulations. *Status:* complete

# SE 56 SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ARE EVALUATED

***Finding:** A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that the district has not conducted a formal evaluation of its special education programs and services in the last two years.*

**Requirement:** Special education programs and services are regularly evaluated.

## **What WE are doing to correct this:**

Engaging an independent evaluator/agency to conduct a formal evaluation of our special education program and services. *Status:* on-going