

MEMORANDUM

November 6, 2013

TO: Members of the Mid-Valley Executive Advisory Board

FROM: Carla Cumblad, Executive Director

RE: Summer Projects

Before the snow flies, I thought I would update the Board on the curriculum activities that transpired in the summer of 2013. As you know, because our staff are located in so many different districts with different calendars, it is difficult to bring staff together during the school year for program improvement activities. Instead, the coordinators host committees and departments over the summer to plan these improvements.

The following are some of the activities:

New Pathways Curriculum Committee:

Sarah McCafferty, New Pathways Elementary teacher; Paulette Ollie, New Pathways Early Childhood teacher; Melissa Jackson, Program Coordinator

The New Pathways Curriculum Committee met once during the summer to lay the groundwork for curriculum recommendations for New Pathways, particularly for core reading curriculum options. Additional work will be completed during the 2013-2014 school year.

Highlights:

- Reviewed current reading instruction options available across the New Pathways classrooms
- Discussed two types of instructional approaches to reading that would meet the needs of most students in New Pathways, and identified them as sight-word based approaches or phonetic/skill-based approaches. Discussed current academic and functional levels of students placed in New Pathways and broke it down into 4 subgroups to target reading curriculum.
- Placed the current instructional materials available into one of the two categories, in each ability subgroup that was appropriate.
- Identified targeted areas where the committee will research additional materials needed. The committee also identified possible additional members for the committee, based on specific expertise and interest.

Report Card Committee:

Nicole Claeson, Vocational Specialist; Mackenzie Hack, ELS Intermediate teacher; Mindy Kaplan, Speech-Language Pathologist-New Pathways; Josie Wallace, ELS High School teacher; Jill Wilder, SAIL-Shelby teacher; Melissa Jackson, Program Coordinator

The Report Card Committee met throughout the course of the 12-13 school year; we met once during the summer.

Highlights:

- Sought input and discussed what types of information parents would find most useful in a report card to accompany IEP goal updates
- Reviewed examples of existing report cards for designed for students with significant disabilities
- Reviewed examples of standards-based report cards, including standards-based report cards for students with cognitive disabilities
- Reviewed and discussed criterion-referenced checklists and instruments to select exemplars for a draft report card for the ABLE Program
- Draft report card for ABLE Program designed and shared with leadership team
- ABLE Program report card to be piloted during the 2013-2014 school year

Adapted Physical Education Committee:

Linda Koch, Coordinator; Mike Glabinski, APE Teacher; Carla Cumblad, Executive Director

The committee met several times over the summer and created the following changes to the criteria for APE:

Adapted Physical Education services are provided as part of our educational program for all of our Mid Valley Special Education Cooperative students in the New Pathways, ABLE and ELS programs. This means that each student in these programs participate in a specialized instructional physical education class taught by an adaptive physical education teacher.

Participation within this program does not require our students to have specific individualized goals written into their IEPs, however they would have APE designated as a service provided. Yet, some students may require more specific and direct interventions provided by the APE teacher. If that is the case, then the IEP team would establish goals/benchmarks for the student and assign specific minutes as a direct service.

The APE teacher is a direct service provider, not a related service provider, because physical education for children with disabilities is a federally mandated component of special education services [U.S.C.A. 1402 (25)]. This means that physical education needs to be provided to the student with a disability as part of the special education services that child and family receive. This is contrasted with physical therapy and occupational therapy, which are related services. These therapies are provided to the child with disabilities only if he/she needs them to benefit from instruction.

Eligibility Criteria:

The criteria to consider in determining if a student requires specific APE goals would include:

- Type and severity of child's disability
- Level of support required

- Need for significant modifications and adaptations that would be required to allow for student participation
- The IEP team must consider all these factors prior to recommending specific goals for the child.

PE Standards:

The Specialized Instructional Physical Education class is a diversified program of physical education having the same goals and objectives as regular physical education, but modified when necessary to meet the unique need of each individual. This class is taught by a fully certified Adapted Physical Education Teacher.

Standards that are addressed:

- Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
- Demonstrates understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics as they apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.
- Participates regularly in physical activity.
- Achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.
- Values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and /or social interaction.
-

Transition Plan:

During this upcoming school year, our IEP teams will consider the level of need of each individual student and determine at their IEP meeting if APE is required as a related service or the Specialized Instructional Physical Education class would provide the correct support to continue to address the child's needs and the standards above.

Quarterly, the APE teacher will send home a brief report on what skills and activities were addressed during that quarter and how the student performed. If parents have questions, they can email the teacher or case manager.

SAIL Summer Curriculum Projects (Two Projects)

Program Development Project

This project involved the development of new program options for S.A.I.L.

Project Goals:

- to increase the individualization of student schedules
- to increase the availability of authentic experiences in the areas of social groups, recreation/leisure, volunteerism, and vocational skill development.

Outcome:

S.A.I.L. programming now includes a new Choices component. Choices provides each student with the opportunity to choose a weekly activity. Students recruit other students for the activity, and the small group then plans and schedules the activity. Activities are chosen from a list of options which are intended to provide opportunities for the generalization of independent living

skills in authentic community settings. Activities include volunteering, visits to libraries, laundromats, parks, potential employment sites and snack shops.

Career Explorations Class Development

This project involved the refinement of the S.A.I.L. Career Explorations class.

Project Goals:

- to increase the standardization of topics and class format
- to correlate instructional topics to field experiences
- to identify specific student projects, with timelines, to be completed within the S.A.I.L. program.

Outcome:

Topics and units to be covered within the Career Explorations Classes were established. These topics are reinforced through community activities such as job shadows and opportunities to obtain, complete and submit employment applications. Appropriate communication with prospective employers is emphasized. Students have opportunities to practice interviewing skills. Students develop and update personal resumes throughout the program. Adult service agency lists were also updated.

New Directions Character Education Committee:

Participants were: Paige McNulty, Jen Traub, Jeanne Schultz, Holly Heinrich, Carissa Mingo, Ellen Vasquez

The committee developed a scope and sequence for the year for each grade to be able to deliver the social emotional curriculum without duplication. The committee researched tools that could be used in classrooms for lessons and prepared a schedule for the staff to follow for the year. In addition, we looked at how to capture what we're doing through data. A tool was developed to use for the year to help us look at how students are progressing in their social development.

New Directions Curriculum Committee:

Participants were: Paige McNulty, Sandy Gearheart, Carissa Mingo, Meg Bingham, Ginger Rhode, Steve Haughen, Holly Heinrich

The committee researched what our member districts are using for middle school curriculum, assessed our current needs and also visited the Fermilab to see what resources were available. After much discussion, Science and English materials were chosen for the upcoming school year.

School Social Workers:

Participants: Natalie Assell, Linda Palmissano, Mary Knishka, Maryann Domaracki, Reesa Kezior.

Parent participation and communication goals:

- Setting up systems for greater parent support and exploring what that might look like.
- Created communication logs, welcome letters,
- Drafted action items to increase parent involvement throughout the year including information on Respite providers for the webpage.
- Began work on a directory of resources in the community, and
- Established the goal to create information for all parents about the PUNS list and work with AID/Day One to provide info and enrollment opportunities for all our parents.