
Pennsylvania Department of Education



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Student Services Report
Friday, March 06, 2009
(Last approved Wednesday, November 26, 2008)

Entity: Pottstown SD
Address: 230 Beech St
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Pottstown, PA 19464-5502

Educational Community

The Pottstown Community was founded in 1752 by John Potts, colonial iron master. It is located along the Schuylkill River in Western Montgomery County. The estimated population is 22,000.

Pottstown, in past years, was a thriving industrial town with many employment opportunities. Through the years, there was a shift away from industry in the Borough creating hard economic times. However, Pottstown's rural, small town atmosphere has drawn new small businesses as well as many new professionals.

The Pottstown School District serves Pottstown's student population of 2,800 with quality learning opportunities. The District is comprised of nine buildings. The main Administration Building is located in close proximity to the downtown area. There is also an Administrative Annex in the north end of town. There are five elementary buildings, each serving Grades Pre-K to 5: Barth, Edgewood, Franklin, Lincoln and Rupert. A central campus with athletic playing fields and a stadium houses the two secondary schools: one, a traditional, but newly renovated Middle School (Grades 6-8) and the other, a comprehensive Senior High School (Grades 9-12) with updated academic and vocational facilities.

Mission

The Pottstown School District inspires students to become responsible citizens in a dynamic and diverse world through quality teaching, family involvement, community partnerships, and responsible fiscal management.

Vision

Prepare every student by name for success at the next level.

Shared Values

In the book, Failure is Not an Option, Blankstein highlights the following 6 Principles of High Performing School Districts:

1. Common mission, vision, values and goals
2. Ensuring achievement for ALL students: systems of prevention and intervention
3. Collaborative teaming focused on teaching and learning
4. Using data to guide decision-making and continuous improvement.
5. Gaining active engagement from family and community.
6. Building Sustainable Leadership Capacity

It is these 6 principles that guide the Pottstown School District toward the development of a more engaged and systemic educational process. Through the collaboration of the Strategic Plan process, the District identified four design elements. Throughout this plan, all professional development, goal setting, and action planning will directly connect to one of the following design elements:

1. Rigorous & Relevant Curriculum and Instruction
2. Proactive Supports
3. Culture of Continuous Learning
4. Quality Leadership

The following "vital signs" will be measured to monitor progress toward the District's vision

statement:

1. Student attitude, attendance and emotional/physical wellness
2. Proficiency in the core subjects and growth in all subjects
3. Close the 'achievement gap' and accelerate learning among student groups
4. Student participation in the arts, cultural and co-curricular activities
5. Student acquisition of 21st Century vital life-skills
6. Successful student transition from grade-to-grade and from PreK-to-elementary-to-middle-to-high school-to-postsecondary

Strategic Planning Process

Building on the tradition of Pottstown School District as a progressive learning institution, willing to risk, to send staff to numerous workshops, and to pilot numerous programs; the District has improved in meeting student needs over the past number of years. The District is competitive with other districts with similar demographic and economic conditions; however, leaders know that greater improvement is necessary to prepare each student to succeed in a competitive global economy.

With federal and state mandates; with various funding streams; with local political interests possibly changing the focus of a district every 4 years; and with the hesitancy of educational professionals to promote accountability programs and measures that instill faith from parents and taxpayers; it is difficult to maintain the energy and commitment that leads to sustainable long-term growth patterns.

The District is blessed with committed and hard-working teachers and support staff. However, as funding for district initiatives by necessity emerged from a number of state and federal grants, the grant guidelines did not assist the staff in developing a streamlined process; but in part lead to a fractured and disjointed approach in a number of ways.

Leaders continued to yearn for and to investigate processes that would lead to greater focus in the district, to the implementation of a more systems approach to education. Staff members, administrators, and Board members attempted to develop this system by visiting a number of Districts, and attending various workshops and Governor's Institutes. It was however, the involvement with the HOPE Foundation and the book, Failure is Not an Option that led to the processes that will hopefully build to the tipping point that will benefit all students.

From an early workshop hosted by Bethlehem School District, the designated model for building a standard's based system, administrators were taken with their philosophy that the focus should be on quality systematic instruction and that PSSA will take care of itself. As one administrator stated, "We don't concern ourselves with PSSA (we ignore PSSA), we use data from the New Standards Reference Exam; we use data to guide our instruction."

Teachers and administrators participated in walkthrough's hosted by Palisades School District, and followed up by instituting a number of formal and informal walkthroughs in each school. Great ideas were also garnered from the Colonial School District and others as they presented at PASC and other conferences. Curriculum documents are being developed to reflect big ideas and essential questions, and to include various options for remediation and acceleration.

A number of individuals visited local, regional, as well as Miami, Fla. early childhood programs. From this research, the District worked with various partners in the development of Pottstown Early Action for Kindergarten Readiness (PEAK). This "initiative was created in an effort to coordinate quality early childhood education and related services and make them more available to children and their families. The PEAK initiative is funded through the Pennsylvania-Pre-K

Counts grant and focuses on building partnerships with the early learning programs in the Pottstown community.”

For additional information, see the PEAK website:

<http://www.peakonline.org/about.asp>

Administrators brainstormed with administrators and faculty in the Norristown School District around the topic of “benchmarking progress” in language arts, math, and science. Pottstown chose to chunk content and measure only what was taught; however, as predicted, the District is proceeding with 4Sight assessments in reading and math.

Administrators and others heard Willard Daggett on more than one occasion decry the numerous standards promoted by Pennsylvania (One of the highest number of any states in the US). The mere quantity of state mandated anchors, if used to guide curriculum and instruction can promote width vs. depth of instruction. Priorities must be established.

Leaders took to heart the message shared by Katie Haycock of the Education Trust as she presented data documenting high performing schools that had more significant demographic and economic challenges than Pottstown. Thus a number of administrators and leaders renewed their conviction “If they can do it, so can we!”

The District hired Performance Fact, Inc. to facilitate the development of the Strategic Plan. The process promoted by their facilitation team provided additional tools to focus the improvement process in the District and to align various initiatives with this data-driven plan.

Using data to guide instruction, the District also made a strategic decision to hire Step by Step Learning to institute an RTI model in PK-1 literacy. By following a researched based model, Step by Step coaches have outlined a process that not only will improve reading results in the early grades, but will provide a model for more data-driven instruction at other grade levels.

For more information see Step by Step website:

<http://www.stepbysteplearning.com/>

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6. Building Sustainable Leadership Capacity

It is these 6 principles that guide the Pottstown School District toward the development of a more engaged and systemic educational process. It was with the encouragement and support of the HOPE Foundation that the District sponsored an after school “ice cream social” to introduce the Foundation and the book, Failure is Not an Option to the faculty and staff.

For more information, see the Hope Foundation website:

<http://www.hopefoundation.org/hope/index.php>

Facing consistent criticism and changing expectations, there is no “one road map for success” in the area of public education. However, the synergy brought about by the confluence of a number of initiatives and the resulting systemic process will hopefully lead the Pottstown School District to the tipping point of sustaining high achievement for all students.

To complete the Strategic Plan, Performance Fact and District Administrators facilitated the following process:

- Representatives from Performance Fact met with the District’s Cabinet (principals/assistant principals/supervisors) as the Core Planning Team to conduct a data analysis and draft a goal and vital signs.
- Representatives from Performance Fact conducted a similar data analysis meeting with an expanded team. Building principals and instructional coaches were included in the expanded team. This group worked to create their own list of vital signs.
- Representatives from Performance Fact continued the process with the District faculty on an in-service day. After reviewing the data, the teachers created a list of vital signs.
- All of the vital signs were compiled into a single list. This list was presented to the School Board for revision. As the District faculty, we identified 8 vital signs. The School Board and community had the opportunity to narrow this list down to 5 vital signs.
- Various Strategic Planning groups meet to address the goals and strategies for each of the components of the plan- Act 48/ Induction for Professional Education; Instructional Leadership Council for Curriculum & Instruction; Special Education.
- Professional Education Committee met 3 times to review data and made recommendations for Act 48 & new teacher induction plan. Various revisions were emailed for committee input.
- Special Education committee met to draft plan.
- Cabinet, instructional coaches, and district content area committees were used as sounding boards in the development of the Chapter 4 plan.

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Angela Tuck	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent
Dan Wilchek	Pottstown SD	Other	Superintendent
David Krem	Pottstown SD	Administrator	School Board
Diane Meck	Pottstown SD	Other	Superintendent
Gail Cooper	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent
Jeff Sparagana	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent
John Armato	Pottstown SD	Other	Superintendent
Julie Vicente	Performance Fact	Other	Administration
Laurie Kolka	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Taffy Wolfe
Linda Adams	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent
Loretta Hoch	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent

Matthew Moyer	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent
Mia DiPaolo	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent
Pam Bateson	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent
Reed Lindley	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent
Rita Cohen	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent
Robert Giering	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent
Stephen Rodriguez	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent
Taffy Wolfe	Pottstown SD	Administrator	Superintendent

Current Student Services

Service/Resource	Description
504 Service Plans	Identified students are provided services and accommodations within general education programming.
Behavior support	Psychologists and consultants work with building teams to conduct FBAs and develop individual behavior plans.
Gifted Education	Teachers provide pull-out and push-in programming for identified gifted and talented students.
Guidance Counselors	Provide instruction, counseling, and consultation; serve on building teams to provide comprehensive system of support to students.
Homebound Instruction	Instruction is provided to students who are unable to attend school for medical reasons.
Intervention Specialists	Teachers and support staff who help to provide Tier II instruction and progress monitoring, in collaboration with classroom teachers.
Out-of-District Placement Coordinator	LEA representative who handles student transitions to out-of-district placements, for students who require more intensive or specialized programming.
Psychologists	Work in school buildings to provide interventions, counseling, and evaluations.
Related Services	Speech, occupational, and physical therapists provide services to students through push-in and pull-out models.
School Nurses	Fulfill all required duties for health screening and attending to students' medical needs.
Social Worker	Assistance is provided to families in need of financial, medical, or mental health resources.
Special Education	A full continuum of programming and supports is provided to identified students.

Needs Assessment

Reflections

There are currently no reflections selected for this section.

Student Services in the Pottstown School District cover a wide array of supports and programs to benefit students and their families. Through staffing and training, administrators oversee

numerous professionals who serve to promote wellness, academic success, and important links to community resources. All of the school buildings are staffed with guidance counselors, full-time psychologists, full-time speech therapists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists. Differentiated instruction, to meet a broad spectrum of needs, is facilitated through collaboration and co-teaching. Special lessons and programs are provided by guidance counselors, speech therapists, social work, gifted/talented programming, and other resources. Community partnerships and interagency relationships help to provide supports to: individual students and families; successful transitions to kindergarten, between elementary and secondary, and to post-secondary education; opportunities for co-curricular programs and activities, and; on-going staff training and development. Over the past few years, the District has committed a great deal of time, energy, and resources to developing pro-active and effective curricular programs for academic improvement, through RTI, inclusion, coaching, and intensive staff development.

The Pottstown School District continues to meet daunting challenges, posed by the community demographics, including high levels of transiency and poverty. Growing numbers of students are identified for special education each school year, and in all school buildings, there are increased numbers issues that need to be addressed through behavioral and mental health services. Despite the growth in staffing, training, and community partnerships, building administrators and staff continue to seek additional support, to enhance and extend current programs, and to provide additional resources to address student and family needs. The Student Services Department has identified needs for which action plans are being developed:

1. Elementary Student Assistance Team - continued training and development
2. School-Based Partial Program - new classroom for primary grade levels
3. School-Wide Positive Behavior Support - training for expansion to all elementary school buildings
4. Response to Intervention - development of research-based, effective instruction, interventions, and progress monitoring
5. Inclusion, co-teaching, and push-in models - for collaboration, modeling, and pro-active supports in the classroom

Action Plan

Goal: PROACTIVE SUPPORTS

Description: The goal of PROACTIVE SUPPORTS focuses on the mobilization of all District employees, as well as community and business partners around high levels of learning for all students. It addresses the need to design learning systems that support students; this includes support within the classroom, for the classroom (technology, food services, business office, clerical and maintenance staff), and for the school (parents, agencies, businesses).

This goal reinforces the collaboration necessary to sustain public commitment to quality schools for all students. It recognizes that teachers and schools cannot do it alone!

Strategy: Elementary SAP program

Description: Develop and align SAP procedures in the elementary schools, to align with Core Team and RTI strategies and process.

Activity: SAP training

Description: Provide training to new and existing staff to reinstate SAP programming, and to align strategies with CORE team and RTI processes, in all 5 elementary buildings.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Pamela Bateson Start: 1/1/2009 -
Finish: Ongoing

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Inclusion Plan (LRE Improvement Plan)

Description: The District developed a mandated LRE Improvement Plan in 2007-08. Dr. Richard Villa addressed the entire staff of the District. It was evident that the District could meet PDE goal mandates without completing the mandated plan since there was a commitment to RTI, to standards based curriculum, to including intervention steps in all revised curriculum documents, and with a commitment to professional learning communities, a commitment to becoming a high performing school district and leaving no child behind.

However, the staff did commit to the creation of a quality LRE plan that includes a greater emphasis on co-teaching, improving the IEP development process, and a greater commitment to supplementary aids and services in the general education setting. The district recognizes that a more inclusive setting is a benefit to all students.

Activity: Co-teaching and push-in models

Description: Through training and commitment of resources, promote collaboration, co-teaching, and push-in delivery of services, to support inclusion and staff development.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Pamela Bateson Start: 1/1/2009 -
Finish: Ongoing

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: School-based Partial Program

Description: In partnership with Creative Health Services, the District will seek to open and develop a school-based partial program, to provide more accessibility for young students to mental health services, and to provide support for successful transitions back into an academic setting.

Activity: Proposal for new program

Description: Team will be coordinated to develop proposal, seek approval, staff the program, and provide training for the classroom and building.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Pamela Bateson Start: 1/1/2009 -
Finish: Ongoing

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: School-Wide Positive Behavior Support

Description: Further develop model in all elementary schools to provide effective and proactive responses to address behavioral needs of students.

Activity: PBS training and implementation

Description: Extend and continue staff development, to support and provide positive school climates, with an effective tiered approach to addressing needs for behavior support.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Pamela Bateson Start: 1/1/2009 -
Finish: Ongoing

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Goal: READING

Description: At least 63% of all students will be proficient in Reading, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments.

Strategy: RTI

Description: Employ Step by Step Learning to facilitate the RTI process in Grades PK-1; they will instruct, coach, and monitor this implementation. They will provide DIBELS training, and work with building teams and with individual teachers to improve the staff's capacity in the areas of assessment, data analysis, intervention planning and will model research based instructional strategies in the classroom.

The District Literacy Team, including instructional coaches, is responsible to implement an RTI process in Grades 2-5.

Activity: Coordination of Research-Based Interventions

Description: Provisions of resources, training, and support for comprehensive RTI approach, coordinated by the District Literacy Team, collaboration with consultants (Step by Step, Institute for Literacy and Learning, Lehigh University, MCIU, PaTTAN), and building level Core teams.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Pamela Bateson Start: 1/1/2009 -
Finish: Ongoing

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Narratives

Developmental Services

The Pottstown School District offers an extensive array of services to address developmental needs of students, in efforts to promote kindergarten readiness, more effective interventions, successful transitions leading to graduation, and healthy lifestyles for students and their families.

The District works in partnership with community childcare programs, Head Start, and part-day preschool programs in Pottstown through the initiative known as PEAK (Pottstown Early Action for Kindergarten Readiness.) PEAK focuses its work in five inter-related areas of community outreach, family engagement, quality improvement, health and wellness, and transition to kindergarten. PEAK assists pre-school programs to improve instruction and curriculum through coaching and professional development. Family involvement is supported through participation in workshops, take-home resources, referrals, and printed materials. Cross-classroom visits take place between pre-school and kindergarten teachers, and a system of partner schools has been developed pairing community programs with elementary schools. These "buddy schools" plan joint transition activities to prepare children and their families for kindergarten. Students' preschool assessment information and portfolios are shared with the receiving school. The PEAK partnership benefits the District by supporting higher quality instruction programs, aligning

expectations, promoting professional development in the field of early childhood education, engaging families, providing screenings, and supporting kindergarten transition.

In addition to following procedures for transitioning students identified and served through Early Intervention, the District is also proactive in addressing the needs of other at-risk incoming kindergartners. Through collaboration with the Preschool Intervention Program in Norristown and Creative Health Services, incoming kindergartners who may require extra help in making the transition and being successful in school are identified, and appropriate steps are taken to ensure communication between the parents and school staff, with consideration of special education evaluations and/or 504 Service Plans as options.

The District has now embarked on its first year of RTI implementation, to address developmental needs through proactive, tiered levels of intervention. In adopting an RTI approach, the goals include research-based instructional programs, effective "early intervening," collaborative and focused team approaches to problem-solving, and a reduction of referrals for and identification of special education students. At the elementary level, each building is staffed by a full-time psychologist, a full-time instructional coach, and a team of intervention specialists to help provide classrooms with support for data analysis, progress monitoring, and delivery of small-group instruction. In addition, for pre-K, kindergarten, and first-grade classes, the District has contracted with consultants for training in effective and differentiated instruction, along with management of multiple assessments for screening, progress monitoring, and data analysis. At the middle school, instructional coaching and Title I services augment classroom instruction to address learning needs. At the high school, a block scheduling structure is utilized to further expand course offerings, and to provide additional opportunities for remediation and preparation for graduation.

At all levels, programs are provided to address developmental needs through: social skills lessons and groups which are run by psychologists and guidance counselors; co-curricular activities and programs, and; training and consultation for school staff. Behavioral needs are addressed through school wide positive behavior support programs, with more intensive needs being addressed through the provision of functional behavior assessments, individual behavior plans, and interagency supports. Formal School Wide Positive Behavior Support was implemented last year at Lincoln Elementary School through funding and training from Devereux Institute. A team, including the principal, social worker, guidance counselor, school psychologist, intervention specialist, and teachers, meets regularly to address individual needs and to disseminate and coordinate the entire school program. Parents are included in the training and encouraged to maintain involvement with the incentive and reinforcement process. Additionally, this programming involves motivational assemblies, visual reinforcers and descriptors throughout the building, tangible acknowledgement of student successes, teacher lesson plans, and faculty updates based on data collection. This year, Rupert Elementary School has begun implementation of PBS with additional services from Devereux. As Lincoln Elementary School experienced last year, the process began in May 2008 at Rupert, with staff surveys and the collection of data, the formation of a leadership team, and plans for rolling out the framework of lessons, rules, and rewards. It is planned to include all five elementary buildings in PBS implementation in the future.

In addition, at the secondary level, staff has been trained in Restorative Practices, which is utilized to build community and cooperation, in addressing disciplinary issues in a proactive and corrective manner. At the middle school, Restorative Circles are conducted in class every Monday morning, with topics provided as options to the teachers. The "restorative questions" have been laminated on posters for every classroom, to remind and reinforce this approach. For each student who is sent out of class, the teacher must conduct a restorative conference and maintain copies of the "worksheets" and documented parent contacts. This process is enforced as a precursor to referrals for SAP, IST, or FBAs. At both the high school and middle school, teachers are expected to utilize the Restorative Questions and Circles, with feedback from

administrators to further enhance skills. Data is to be collected in June 2009, to determine the effectiveness of the strategies. Currently, teachers have been identified for "train the trainer" opportunities, to increase the level of expertise and confidence in the use of Restorative Practices at the building level.

Transition planning is ongoing, to develop more comprehensive and effective means to assist students as they move into school-age programming, from one level to the next, and through graduation. As students approach kindergarten age, parents are invited to orientation programs and prior to the first day of school, there are open houses scheduled to introduce students to the principal, their teachers, and other staff, and to help them gain familiarity with the classroom and building. Fifth-graders are provided orientation to the middle school through visits and in-class programs delivered by middle school guidance counselors. Similarly, eighth-graders are familiarized with the expectations and systems at the high school level. Built into both of these in-district transitions are opportunities for collaboration and planning between teachers and staff members in the sending and receiving schools.

In addition to transition planning that is provided to special education students through their IEPs, the high school has developed four components for its Post-Secondary Transition Plan for all students: College Access, Career Planning, Graduation Projects, and Community Outreach. These components are supported by academic support, goal setting, shadowing, mentoring, internships, and curriculum. Career planning tools, such as Bridges at the middle school and My Road at the high school, assist students in developing electronic portfolios. In seventh and eighth grades, students use the Bridges program throughout the year as a class activity in Computer Science class. Skills and interests are identified and aligned with available career choices, at least three of which are required to be investigated, reported on, and included in their respective portfolios. Parents are able to access this information on a website through students' passwords. Similarly, the My Road program at the high school follows through with further career investigation and exploration. Students complete "learning plans" to identify social, community, and academic resources. Grants, such as Project 720, Classrooms for the Future, and 21st Century, along with Upward Bound partnerships and financial support from Vanguard, have helped to promote the development of post-secondary transition programming.

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program. Families with children attending in the District can apply for free or reduced priced lunch or breakfast by filling out the application which is provided to every child upon registration and at the beginning of the school year, and may be eligible for a low cost meal if the household income is within the reduced priced limits of the Federal Income Chart. Application for free/reduced lunch is also available on-line.

At each of the five elementary schools, the District participates in a Healthy Snack Program. In each of these buildings, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, a different fruit or vegetable is supplied with servings provided to every student in every class. This program is designed to introduce students to fresh fruits and vegetables as a healthy snack, to increase children's intake of fresh fruits and vegetables, and to encourage healthy eating.

The Pottstown School District strives to provide a comprehensive School Health Program to all students in the District. This program serves all seven public schools, one parochial school, and one private school, who receive Pennsylvania mandated services. Yearly screenings and assessments include heights, weights, and BMI indices, which are recorded, with parents being notified of results by letter, which they are encouraged to share with their physician. Yearly vision screenings are conducted with all school-aged children, grades 4K through 12. Hearing screenings are provided to students grades 4k through 3, and grades 7 and 11. Yearly physical and dental exams are offered through the services of a school physician and dentists contracted by the District, for grade levels as mandated by the State. Partnerships are also maintained help address needs such as updating immunizations and support for teen parents. The District provides an after-school program, Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) during which

students receive an hour of structured physical activity with certified physical education staff, along with nutrition education provided by school nurses. This program is offered at six different sites and services approximately 200 children. The District wellness coordinator works with the head nurse to coordinate further enrichment activities targeting health and wellness, ensuring collaboration with community health programs and consistency with the Wellness Policy. Finally, within the high school's career and technology curricula, students are offered training in the Health Assistance program, which promotes future health care stability in the community.

Diagnostic, Intervention and Referral Services

Pottstown School District employs school psychologists who work closely in their buildings on teams with the principal, guidance counselors, teachers, and other staff, to address students' needs as they are identified. They, along with reading specialists and instructional coaches, monitor assessment data and provide support for implementing interventions through push-in and pull-out sessions. Progress monitoring is conducted to ensure the effectiveness of instruction, and to provide additional data for the team's problem-solving and decision making. The schools' Core Teams assist in identifying students for whom formal evaluations should be conducted. Psychological testing, as well as evaluations for speech, occupational therapy, and physical therapy are conducted to determine eligibility for special education or 504 service plans, whereby services and consultation would be provided. For purposes assisting the team in addressing intensive behavioral, emotional, or developmental issues, students and families are referred to outside agencies for psychiatric, medical, and mental health services.

Teams at every building have been trained in Crisis Intervention, to handle acute and chronic episodes of aggressive behavior, as well as medical and other emergencies. Personnel have also been trained through the CPI Institute in de-escalation and passive restraint techniques. Occasionally, referrals are made to Children and Youth Services, the police or District Attorney, for intervention in cases of suspected abuse, truancy, or illegal activity.

Consultation and Coordination Services

District psychologists and contracted consultants provide a wide array of opportunities to access expertise and support for students experiencing serious and chronic problems. The school psychologists and contracted behavior specialists offer help in conducting functional behavior assessments and developing individualized behavior support plans. For students who receive wraparound programs from outside agencies, interagency meetings are held on a regular basis to coordinate efforts and to consult regarding treatment plans. Similarly, agencies are contracted to consult, train, and provide ABA services for students with autism who require more intensive programming to address behavioral and communication skills. Assistive technology consultation is provided through the Cost Plan with the Intermediate Unit. Occasionally, referrals are made to contracted psychiatrists for evaluations, diagnoses, and recommendations. Finally, a part-time consultant provides support for increased inclusion and co-teaching across the District.

At the secondary level, Restorative Practices, behavior contracts, student and parent conferences, and disciplinary action (detentions) are utilized to address behavioral concerns. If these building level activities prove to be insufficient in correcting disruptive and/or noncompliant behavior, and administrative hearing is held to determine whether the student should be placed in alternative education.

Students who may require more self-contained and intensive programming and support are referred to the alternative education program run by the District [description from Bob], to the Lincoln Academy in partnership with the District, and to Progressions School. This helps to provide focused and therapeutic interventions in smaller, more controlled settings. Students are also referred to partial programs for intervention periods, to address the most severe mental

health issues. Building administrators, psychologists, guidance counselors, the social worker, the special education liaison, and special education supervisors are all involved in coordination of services through in-district assignments and outside agency contact and referral.

Additional consultation and coordination for students at every level include partnerships with the following organizations, with various staff members serving as liaisons between the District and community:

- Creative Health Services
- Progressions (alternative school)
- Peer mediation programs
- Family Services (annual youth leadership conference)
- Peer mentoring
- School-to-work programs
- Victims Services Center of Montgomery County
- Children and Youth Services

Student Assistance Program

At the high school and middle school, the Student Assistance Program is conducted by the guidance office. Referrals can be made by teachers or students, and anonymous referral forms are available to be placed in locked boxes in the guidance and nurse's offices. Guidance counselors collect the referrals on a daily basis and bring them to the SAP team meetings, which are held once every 6-day cycle. Objective information is gathered at the school for consideration by the team, with input sought from everyone who has contact with the student. For legitimate referrals, as determined by the team, parents are contacted, and with their permission, further information is collected from students' teachers. For each student identified, one of the SAP team members is assigned to the case and is responsible for completing paperwork and, in conjunction with team decision-making, following up with referrals for follow-up care. A plan is developed and implemented, incorporating strategies to remove learning barriers and to promote the student's academic and personal success. Follow-up includes monitoring, mentoring, and motivating for academic success.

At the elementary level, SAP activities are conducted by each building's Core Team, which includes the principal, psychologist, instructional coach, and intervention specialists. Similar to the secondary format, information is collected and shared with the parents, and referrals are made to the appropriate agencies for help in addressing problems with substance abuse. As RTI is developed, it is planned to incorporate further training in SAP and behavioral interventions into the systematic, tiered approach.

Communication

1. Information about educational opportunities is provided to students and parents/guardians through multiple means. The District maintains and regularly updates its own website with comprehensive information about on-going activities and programs. Information is also shared with the community through newspaper articles and regular programs on the local TV and radio stations. Handbooks are sent home with each child, additional flyers and notices are sent home, and contact is made through email and

- phone calls. Various events are held, to which the community is invited, to spotlight academic and co-curricular programs.
2. Career information and assessments are shared with parents at the middle school and high school levels through similar means. Additionally, individual parent conferences are held twice a year, during which information about a student's activities and progress pertaining to his/her career portfolio is shared. Students are made aware of the many opportunities for engagement in the high school's comprehensive Career and Technology program through eighth grade orientation programs, and overview career exploration courses are required, beginning in ninth grade. Guidance assessments are embedded in the curriculum, and yearly guidance sessions are scheduled with the student and parents, using learning and career planning documents. Regular Career and Technology presentations are made to the entire student body. Beyond what is offered by the district, arrangements are frequently made for dual enrollment at the local community college, attendance at a vocational school, and work-study programs, to assist students in preparing for post-secondary transition.
 3. Health needs, as they are identified, are handled by each building's school nurse, in collaboration with the building principal. Communication is made with the parent through team meetings, as well as phone calls and information that is sent home. Assistance is provided by the District's social worker, for obtaining medical insurance, locating medical providers, and scheduling appointments. Should parents require help with transportation, arrangements are made either in the district or through interagency collaboration, to help transport the family members for medical appointments.
 4. The District has not used surveys. However, if surveys were to be used, parents and students would be informed about the surveys and their right to opt out of part or all of the survey.
 5. Through collaboration between departments in the District and coordination by team leaders, information is shared inside and outside the District. The website and other public media are utilized to convey emergency information, as well as subject matter of interest to many stakeholders in the community. Support and input are sought in all arenas for the continued development and success of ventures such as the current literacy plan, math plan, assessment plan, professional development plan, RTI, and inclusion/co-teaching. All of the District goals address "success for all students" and, as such, coordination between District departments, building level teams, families, and community members is considered to be vital.
 6. Depending on the type of communication, contact is made either yearly, monthly, weekly, or daily. Handbooks, procedures, course selection guides, and the school calendar are sent home annually. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year. Information from buildings and departments is handled through mailings or flyers/notices sent home, as the need arises. Newsletters are sent home monthly, and TV/radio broadcasts are made monthly. Contact from classroom teachers, building administrators, and other staff is made more frequently through phone calls, email, and communication in homework books. The website is updated on a continual basis, with information pertaining to educational, co-curricular, and extracurricular programs.

Assurance for the Collection, Maintenance, and Dissemination of Student Records

- By checking each of the boxes below, the local education agency assures compliance with the requirements of 22 Pa. Code Chapter 12 and with the policies and procedures of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE will specify, in writing, policies and procedures to be followed. Requests for any deviations from these regulations, policies, and procedures must be made in writing to PDE (electronic mail may be directed to ra-chapter12@state.pa.us).

The Local Education Agency (LEA) assures the following:

- The LEA has a local plan, including policies and procedures, in place for the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of student records in compliance with § 12.31(a) and § 12.32
- The plan shall be maintained in compliance with § 12.31(b) and made available to PDE in compliance with § 12.31(c)

Assurance for the Operation of Student Services and Programs

- By checking each of the boxes below, the local education agency assures compliance with the requirements of 22 Pa. Code Chapter 12 and with the policies and procedures of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE will specify, in writing, policies and procedures to be followed. Requests for any deviations from these regulations, policies, and procedures must be made in writing to PDE (electronic mail may be directed to ra-chapter12@state.pa.us).

The Local Education Agency (LEA) assures that there are local policies and procedures in place that address:

- Free Education and Attendance (in compliance with § 12.1)
- School Rules (in compliance with § 12.3)
- Discrimination (in compliance with § 12.4)
- Corporal Punishment (in compliance with § 12.5)
- Exclusion from School, Classes, Hearings (in compliance with § 12.6, § 12.7, § 12.8)
- Freedom of Expression (in compliance with § 12.9)
- Flag Salute and Pledge of Allegiance (in compliance with § 12.10)
- Hair and Dress (in compliance with § 12.11)
- Confidential Communications (in compliance with § 12.12)
- Searches (in compliance with § 12.14)
- Emergency Care and Administration of Medication and Treatment (in compliance with 35 P.S. § § 780-101—780-144)
- The LEA acknowledges that the above policies shall be maintained locally and be made available to the public upon request. The policies are not to be submitted to the Commonwealth except upon specific request by PDE.

In addition, the LEA assures the following:

- The Student Services Report complies with § 12.41(b), § 12.41(c), and § 12.42 (consistent with the Early Intervention Services System Act (11 P.S. § § 875-101—875-503))

- Consistent with § 445 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C.A. § 1232h), parents or guardians are informed regarding individual survey student assessments and provided a process for refusal to participate (in compliance with § 12.41(d))
- Persons delivering student services shall be specifically licensed or certified as required by statute or regulation (in compliance with § 12.41(e))

Supporting Documents

Supporting Documents - Attachments

- Developmental Services
- Assurance for Operation of Student Services and Programs