

Coventry Public Schools
Todd Giansanti, Director of Pupil and Staff Support Services
Goal Achievement: 2016-2017

1. Identify, define, and measure the critical skills and attributes that are required for success and align systems to continuously improve student performance and achievement.

- *In collaboration with district stakeholders, disaggregate multiple data sources to inform interventions, as well as, drive effective Individual Education Plans*

As we continuously focus on student performance and achievement, the task of disaggregating multiple data sources to inform and drive each Individual Education Program is multifaceted and requires an ongoing approach. In collaboration with district stakeholders, I have reviewed current district systems in place for identifying student need for services, frequency of services, and measurement instruments for determining student success and program effectiveness.

In partnership with the Superintendent, Director of Teaching and Learning and our building administrators, district focus groups were developed to examine data from district assessments, student intervention progress and state testing which was used and continues to be utilized in program development. We conducted a districtwide inventory of reading and math tiered intervention programs, surveyed surrounding school districts and examined the effectiveness of those programs. I further supported this initiative by recruiting a neuropsychologist, who provided insight in identifying interventions specific to student cognitive profiles as well as provide professional development to staff. In partnership with the Director of Educational Technology, we have identified curriculum related apps and resources to compliment the intervention and service delivery model. Apps were trialed with identified students and teachers and monitored for effectiveness.

To prepare for the addition of identified research based interventions, I have collaborated with the Director of Teaching and Learning and building administrators to support the development of an inclusive schedule, combining interventionists and special education teachers in service delivery. With this restructuring, professional development can be streamlined to foster a collaborative learning environment that spans beyond our special education teachers. Special education teachers, interventionists, general education teachers, administrators, support service staff and para-educators participated in specific and shared learning opportunities that not only fosters increased dialogue, but ensures continuity.

Professional development is strategic and aligned with district goals. In accordance with this goal, our educators participated in a wide variety of learning activities, including a training I arranged with The State Education Resource Center of CT, titled “Writing Effective IEP’s”. This training focused on the further development of writing IEP goals and objectives and assessing student progress.

- *Work with key stakeholders and support staff to develop a multi-year plan to review, evaluate and enhance the continuum of services districtwide. Continuing with the district's autism program, as well as, ensuring consistent transition programming across all settings in order to meet individualized student needs.*

In accordance with the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Least Restrictive Environment, LRE requires each public agency to ensure that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled. I strive to foster an atmosphere of open communication with all stakeholders; staff, students and parents/guardians demonstrated by regular scheduled staff meetings, response to student and parent inquiry as well as site visits. By ensuring open communication, and reviewing student performance, I was able to evaluate current programming and make refinements to ensure that Coventry Public Schools continues to provide a wide range of services to our students and families.

Continuing our work with the district's autism program, I worked with district leadership and EASTCONN consultants to conduct a site visit to an out of district autism program, developed strategic planning guides and facilitated ongoing focus group meetings to prioritize district needs in order to ensure program enhancement. I worked closely with EASTCONN consultants to ensure weekly common planning time with our ABA program teachers and para-educators, and further expanded learning opportunities during scheduled professional development days to all K-5 teachers and district support service staff.

In order to support a continuum of services for students, a multiyear planning document was created in collaboration with district stakeholders to address facilities, curriculum and staffing needs. Multiple site visits have been conducted at George Hershey Robertson School to ensure building facilities meet programming needs upon the start of the 2017-2018 school year.

This year I have also reviewed out of district contracted services with a focus on reducing out of district costs, while enhancing service to students and families. Three areas I focused on is with contracting additional BCBA services, Assistive Technology and Neuropsychological evaluations. In collaboration with EASTCONN's consulting BCBA's, I have facilitated a districtwide procedure in how we utilize our district Behavior Analyst in order to support consultation time for staff, students and families. This time has led to the development and utilization of consistent functional behavior assessments, behavior planning documents and staff development. In lieu of seeking outside consultation services for assistive technology needs, I have worked with the Director of Educational Technology and her team to support the utilization of in-district assistive technology resources; accommodating immediate student need to access the learning environment, reserving out of district consult for needs beyond the scope of district expertise. I have secured a district neuropsychologist to provide consultation services, specifically in reviewing student cognitive profiles and developing alternative intervention strategies to ensure continuous student progress. The neuropsychologist not only conducts advanced psychological testing, but also has provided training to our district psychologists to expand their repertoire of evaluations. This has led to a decrease in out of district evaluations,

but has also immediately met our student and family needs. For instance, the average wait for an outside evaluation is 3 to 6 months, whereas our neuropsychologist is available on a weekly basis and is available for continued case consultation.

Working with our school counselors, special education teachers and PSSS secretary, we have revised district tutoring paperwork and procedures to ensure parent participation as well as further fostering communication between tutors and building case-managers. Homebound tutoring paperwork is reviewed systematically with all stakeholders and in collaboration with outside service providers to ensure student access to the school environment when able and approved by a treating physician. I have provided guidance to our support service staff in developing accommodation plans and in identifying resources to ensure students have equal access to the educational environment.

- *Collaborate with various stakeholders involved in the preschool program to develop curriculum in alignment with the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.*

In collaboration with the Director of Teaching and Learning, Coventry Grammar School Principal and Preschool Coordinator, we convened regular meetings to review progress of the CT ELDS curriculum and alignment. Our preschool coordinator and teachers continue to work on the development of Units of Study and enhancement of Learning Experience Plans. The items listed below reflect the work and progress that has been completed in order to support curriculum alignment and best practice.

- Teachers used the CT ELDS documents to identify continuum of skills as an aid to differentiation of instruction.
- Adapted Coventry Public Schools K-2 curriculum writing documents to be suitable for Preschool students.
- PK-K Vertical Team Meetings were held in February and April consisting of preschool teachers, kindergarten teachers, support service staff and administrators. Objectives focused on articulation and sequencing of skill development in literacy and in social and emotional development.
- The preschool Child Profile was revised to be more user friendly to families and a parent support document was developed to guide families in interpreting their child's progress.
- Our preschool teachers are participating in the Connecticut Documentation & Observation for Teaching System (CT DOTS) pilot program to develop assessment materials and observational tools to align with CT ELDS standards.
- Professional development opportunities were provided to ensure continued progress.

In addition to curriculum alignment, I met regularly with our preschool coordinator to evaluate current practices and procedures. One of the areas we refined was our birth to three process. We conduct home visits/student observations in conjunction with parent meetings in order to gain additional insight in student development. This not only ensures appropriate referrals to special education, but enables us to meet the immediate needs of our students.

- *Collaborate with our Preschool Coordinator and support staff to review, evaluate and address current practice and procedures related to the NAEYC reaccreditation process.*

In accordance with the NAEYC reaccreditation process, focus groups were established to ensure NAEYC standards and program requirements continue to be met with fidelity. Administration and teacher leaders adopted standards based on individual expertise and an action plan as depicted below was developed and completed.

Action	Completed
Maintained and recruited staff who meet Qualified Staff Member (QSM) requirements for School Readiness and Smart Start grants.	Coventry's Early Childhood Professional Registry meets staff guidelines to July 1, 2020
Secured administrator who meets the licensing and NAEYC supervisory and educational qualifications	Coventry's Early Childhood Professional Registry meets staff guidelines to July 1, 2020
Ensured staff / student ratios are met	Continued review of class size/program description to maintain staffing ratios of 1:10 for licensing. Program is currently 1:6.
Provided Professional Development to meet NAEYC Standard 6 focus areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of ethical conduct • Health & safety guidelines • Curriculum • Knowledge of specific ages taught • Special Education • Child abuse and neglect/mandated report training
Participated on the Core Committee and the Leadership & Management Sub-Committee	Focused on NAEYC Accreditation Sources of Evidence collection: Observable, Portfolios, Family & Staff Survey to prepare for reaccreditation February 2018
Thrive Grant Application	Preschool awarded grant through the Office of Early Childhood to receive NAEYC accreditation support from Eastconn's Early Childhood Specialist. Monthly on-site visits and AQIS (Accreditation Quality Improvement Support) meetings held for leadership team. Work involves streamlining NAEYC systems for standard consolidation and review of Revised Guidance & Criteria
Participated on the School Readiness Council	Collaborated with committee members as the McKinney-Vento Liaison. Committee action plan implemented to focus on state and program requirements

- *Work with the Superintendent and preschool staff to explore and recommend program enhancements in order to provide services to students when school is not in session as dictated by the Smart Start Grant guidelines.*

In accordance with the Smart Start Grant guidelines, Pupil Services implemented a preschool service expansion plan, which focuses on providing extended program offerings to families when school is not in session. Programming was offered during both December and April vacations and summer programming

has been extended from four weeks to eight weeks. The action plan below depicts the program progression.

Action	
Summer 2016 Summer 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016: 7/5-29th (Mon – Fri 7:00 a.m. to 5 p.m.) • 2017: 7/5-8/25th (Mon – Fri 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
Leadership Support	Secured 092 staff for summer programs
Parent Communication Brochure Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff worked with School Readiness & Smart Start Liaison to develop brochure to include financial assistance information and program description
Special Education Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing inclusion model and increasing time with peers
Collaboration with facilities at CNHMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for gym access to support preschool gross motor activities
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determined staffing needs based on enrollment. Staff qualifications must meet program licensing requirements
Student Enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer enrollment available to students PK-K eligible
Registration/Tuition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial assistance available for qualifying families
School Calendar Vacation Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter Wonderland open for December break • Spring Fling open for April break • Exploring additional services for ½ day professional development to accommodate families
Community Partnerships	
Parks & Rec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with Coventry Parks and Recreation.
Lutz Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lutz Museum provided programming for 4 weeks in 2016 • Revised schedule to expand programming for 8 weeks in 2017
Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborated with Booth & Dimock library to visit preschool multiple days per week for literacy activities

2. Maintain and promote a positive and respectful learning community.

- *Collaborate with community agencies and key stakeholders to develop and provide resources to support students with disabilities and their families as they transition within the PK-12 structure, as well as, plan for post-secondary opportunities.*

In order to further promote open communication with our families, to understand and to identify additional needs, I continued to facilitate the Autism Committee meetings. Meetings were comprised of parents/families, staff and community members. We were able to discuss the district’s continuum of services for students on the autism spectrum as well as identify future progressive projects.

To foster collaborative relationships with surrounding school districts, I attend monthly meetings with special education supervisors and directors in order to share knowledge and resources as well as ensure best practice. These relationships have yielded opportunities for our district to observe various student programs that service students’ academic, social/emotional and vocational needs, share action plans for meeting state mandates and problem solve.

I continue to provide leadership in supporting student transition to and from Coventry Public Schools by working directly with our special educators, support service staff, general education teachers and administrators in identifying appropriate programming needs for a variety of learners. We work closely with sending school districts and agencies, families and state appointed surrogates to offer a variety of service options in order to ensure students are educated in the least restrictive environment.

In order to further support our students and families as they transition from school to school, I have worked with our building administrators and service staff so that receiving school teacher representation attend PPTs and are able to immediately address parent questions and concerns.

I have supported our transition service providers in way of professional development in order to provide students and families accurate and timely information regarding available post-secondary services. We have attended State and Regional forums and worked to bring professional learning opportunities in district. Working with our transition coordinator and leadership team, we have supported students, families, staff and community agencies in offering an informational seminar presented by the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), as well as, promote individual support for students and families requiring assistance in completing appropriate paperwork for available community and state services.

For students requiring post-secondary services, our school psychologists and consulting neuropsychologist support students and families by providing additional updated evaluations and work directly with transition coordinators to ensure State and local documentation is completed upon graduation.

- *Collaborate with local law enforcement personnel to continue to support families through community initiatives related to our special needs population.*

Continued to foster a positive working relationship with the Coventry Police Department in order to support the “Project Safe Return” initiative. The department has been represented at community events such as our family transition night and Autism Committee meetings. Parents were able to meet with a member of the Coventry Police Department in order to gain additional information regarding program details and register for programming.

- *Collaborate with community agencies to identify appropriate support services to ensure Coventry Public Schools has an active role in interdistrict initiatives to support families.*

I have supported the participation of Coventry Public Schools support service staff in serving on the Youth Advisory Board, Coventry Council for the Prevention of Drug & Alcohol Abuse, Juvenile Review Board and Eastern Highlands Health District. Participation in these committees and workgroups ensure that our professionals continue to gain up to date information on available community resources and public health concerns so that they can better serve our parents, students and teachers.

3. Recruit, retain and develop high quality staff at every level.

- *Provide customized professional development and learning opportunities to ensure that special education and support service staff are trained in best practices, as well as, informed of state mandates and requirements to increase district capacity to meet diverse needs of our learners.*

Work has been conducted to ensure professional development opportunities are coherent with district goals as well as pertinent to staff and student needs. I have coordinated and facilitated district-wide special education and related service professional development plans in collaboration with administrators, service providers and experienced staff members. Our teachers have attended State and community led workshops, guest presenters were recruited to present in district, increasing staff participation while reducing costs, and our teachers and support personnel have facilitated workgroup activities. I have also promoted ongoing and embedded professional learning by utilizing a neuropsychologist to work with our staff on a regular basis. The items below reflect the professional development topics conducted this school year.

Professional Development Plan PK - 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preschool staff orientation training included code of ethics, review of staff handbook, program philosophy, policies and procedures. • OEC Staff Certification - Provided training for preschool staff to meet medical certification for state licensing requirements • NAEYC Accreditation - Professional development support for preschool from Eastconn’s Early Childhood Specialist. • CT ELDS – Preschool Coordinator providing ongoing curriculum development embedded during the school day as well as during scheduled professional development days. • Social Emotional Interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Planning document development. ○ Function Based Problem Solving ○ Verbal De-escalation Strategies ○ Physical and Psychological Management Training: 2 District Trainers and strategic plan for continued staff training. ○ Mindfulness in the Classroom: Tools to Improve Self-Regulation, Learning and Classroom Climate. • Ongoing training in IEP Development, process and procedures. • SPLA Required Courses for CEUs - Speech and Language Pathologists participated in web based learning opportunities, IEP development and screening and assessment procedures. • Dyslexia-Special Education Teachers and Interventionists attended multiple workshops. • Dyslexia-Presented to our Curriculum Committee Members. • DCF Mandated Reporter Training • Neuropsychologist Consultation - Ongoing training with school psychologists in evaluation, programming and presentation. • Legal Updates in Special Education and Section 504 presented by Shipman & Goodwin • Writing Effective Individual Education Plan (IEP’s) presented by the State Education Resource Center (SERC) • ABA Program Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing weekly consultation ○ Student Progress Monitoring ○ Evaluation ○ IEP Goal Development and Implementation • Centralized Section 504 Documentation to new computerized platform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Workgroups participated in webinar ○ Additional Administrator led trainings and ongoing technical support

- *Engage in ongoing discussions with the University of Saint Joseph to explore the opportunity of Coventry Public Schools becoming an internship site for both counselors, as well as, Board Certified Behavior Analyst candidates.*

Initiated communication with the University of Saint Joseph Counseling Applied Behavioral Studies Department to discuss potential practicum/internship opportunities for graduate students.

Supported district BCBA in exploring site supervisor requirements in order to support potential graduate students studying Applied Behavior Analysis.