Ute V. Perkins ES

Request for Information Response

Nevada Department of Education as Provided by

SB 515, Section 23

Social worker or other licensed mental health professional

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To:

Victoria Blakeney
Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment
Nevada Department of Education
700 E. Fifth St.
Carson City, NV 89701
(775) 687-9130
vblakeney@doe.nv.gov

Dr. Tammy Malich
Assistant Superintendent
Education Services Division

CCSD Contact:
Brian Adams, Coordinator
Office of Student Adjudication
Education Services Division
(702)799-0761

SECTION II
NARRATIVE

Ute V. Perkins Elementary School

Ute V. Perkins Elementary School is located in a small and rural area with a strong population of Native American students and Hispanic students as well those living in poverty. All of the students travel to the school from unincorporated areas such as Warm Springs, Moapa Valley Paiute Tribal Reservation, Glendale, Lytle Ranch and Meadow Valley Farms.

Many of our students come from homes of poverty where there is a high incidence of substance abuse such as alcohol and drug abuse. The students also come from broken homes where they are raised by relatives other than their parents. As a result, the families in this area are in need of mental and emotional support that is lacking due to the lack of funding and to being in a rural setting.

The nearby Moapa Paiute Indian Reservation has previously provided a social worker/mental health professional that assisted the Native American families with the same supports listed in the following paragraph but the funding for this position has ended. There is a strong need to reinstate that support for the families not only for the Native American population but for the students and families in this area. After consulting with members of the Moapa Paiute Indian Reservation, the following results is a consensus a results of the findings:

- The students feel a lack of support from schools.
- There is a huge disrespect and lack of appreciate for education and educators in many Native families.
- Many students have personal problems that stem from alcohol and drug abuse in the home.
- Child abuse and neglect is prevalent throughout the reservation.
- Many parents lack the ability to discipline and provide guidance for their children.
- Many parents do not enforce school attendance for their child. Many are truant and there is lack of enforcement from the police not having access to tribe and the school fails to enforce the truancy laws.
- Several students are homeless. They have been kicked out of HUD housing for drug use.
- Financial issues due to families living only on per capital check $600 monthly.

- Students and families feel discrimination or lack of cultural sensitivity is a factor for the disconnect between the students and the school.
- Cultural differences such as fear of big institutions, quietness in class and unfamiliarity with the white community are an issue for the students.
- The students have the highest drop rates of demographics. The Tribe allows the students to work on the reservation such as the Solar Project or Travel Plaza-Smoke Shop without high school diplomas.
- Receiving an education for the students is not a priority.

The social worker/mental health professional will provide support to students, staff, parents, and community members at Ute V. Perkins Elementary School. Specific services for students include assisting students in understanding and accepting self and others, developing intervention strategies to increase academic success, helping students develop appropriate social interaction skills, providing crisis intervention, and teaching conflict resolution and anger management. Specific services for parents/families include alleviating family stress to enable their child to function more effectively in school and community, assisting parents in accessing and utilizing school and community resources, providing parents access to programs available to children with special needs, and working with parents to facilitate their support in their child's adjustment to school. Specific services for school personnel include assessing students with mental health concerns, assisting teachers with behavior management, developing staff training programs, educating staff with essential information to better understand factors (cultural, societal, economic, familial, health, etc.) affecting a student's performance and behavior, and providing direct support to staff. Specific services to promote community involvement include advocating for new and improved community/school services to meet the needs of students and families and assisting schools to receive adequate support from social and mental health agencies, helping the system respond effectively to each student's needs, and obtaining and coordinating community resources to meet students' needs. Specific services to promote district initiatives include assisting in development and implementation of programs for identified children with behavioral, social, and/or emotional needs; developing and training on alternative programs and strategies for drop-outs, truants, delinquents, and excessively disruptive students; identification and monitoring of students who are victims of child abuse and/or neglect; providing case management for students and families requiring multiple resources; and providing consultation regarding related Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS), mental health standards, and district/school policies and procedures.

The proposed social worker/mental health professional at Ute V. Perkins Elementary School will assist with all aforementioned initiatives, as well as

work alongside the counselor, attend and participate in staff meetings, professional development sessions and training. The person selected for this position will conduct home visits and meet with families regularly, contribute knowledge, skills, and techniques in the areas of mental health and human behavior to parents and school team members. This position will provide assistance to school administration with ensuring compliance with Senate Bill 504 by counseling students involved in bullying allegations, both the targets as well as the bullies, as well as providing guidance and training on positive school climate strategies. It will be expected that he/she will develop and facilitate weekly support groups and provide students with strategies to cope with and overcome difficulties impacting school performance, academic and behavioral. He/she will develop and implement parent support groups and activities that promote parent involvement/engagement. Identify challenges in a child's living situation (home, school, and community) that may affect the child's adjustment, performance, and attendance in the educational setting. Identify, mobilize, and coordinate school and community resources to enable students to learn as effectively as possible in the educational setting. Plan, conduct, and participate in educational workshops and presentations while serving as a member of school teams and provide information related to planning for the educational needs of children.