

From the Franklin West SU:

The analysis of our special education program was **an invaluable assessment of the current state of special education in our district**. It created a baseline, based on research, as to how students in our schools were being served.

The cost savings will not be immediate. We have always looked at the implementation of the suggested changes as a three-year plan. **We are currently finishing year one, and so far have recouped our initial funding for the study.**

In our largest elementary school, we have made many changes based on the report, including adding reading specialists and decreasing 1:1 para educator time.

We are consciously moving away from para educators explicitly teaching reading, which was a recommendation within the report.

We are moving to a stronger centralized management of special education services for FWSU. **During our budgeting process we were able to save portions of FTE's looking at the system as a whole - not just as individual districts.**

We are moving to larger student to teacher group sizes next year across FWSU. This will lead to more savings in next year's budgeting process. But as the report states over and over, the savings should be reinvested into reading and math specialists. That is still our plan.

The report has made us think differently; a mind shift if you will. That has been REALLY hard for many of our staff who prefer business as usual.

From Chittenden South SU:

The analysis of our special education program supported and gave us invaluable input into the ongoing work in CSSU toward realizing a more effective and efficient service delivery model. The recommendations outlined help give us context and direction in our action planning.

Four of five of our schools have taken concrete steps to reduce the use of paras and reallocate professional resources.

There will be cost savings upon full implementation of the recommendations. We won't realize those savings immediately, and in most cases we are looking at reallocating rather than reducing. But **there will be savings, and eventually they could be significant.**

The report helps support and reinforce our ongoing work. We have developed a three-year implementation plan and will be presenting to the board at our retreat this year.