

Greenwich Public Schools



Special Education Action Plan 2021-2024

(updated August 2024)

Creating a Culture of Together, We Can!

From Recommendation to Implementation



Executive Summary

The Greenwich Public School District is committed to enhancing academic success for all students, access to programs, protocols, practices, and compliance across PK-12+. High quality instruction is the cornerstone of success for all students, including universally designed lessons focused on high expectations and foundational mastery of standards for all students.

The goal of the Office of the GPS Special Education Action Plan is to ensure:

- All students should receive high quality instruction focused on individualized needs in the regular education setting, unless a student has a significant disability which requires a unique setting and instructions for success;
- The eligibility process must be transparent, easily understood, and collaborative between the school district and families;
- For all students found eligible for Special Education services and supports, they must receive an individualized education plan which is focused on the highest quality instruction, goals, and objectives;
- Procedures and systems are in place to facilitate the process when a student is ready to reintegrate to a less restrictive environment or exit from Special Education in accordance with the IEP process.

During the 2020-2021 school year, Greenwich Public Schools worked with the Public Consulting Group (PCG) to conduct a wholesale audit of Special Education from the lens of programs, organizational structure, financial competence, and overall services and supports provided to students with disabilities. From the recommendations provided, an Action Plan was put in place to move recommendations to the implementation phase in order to create positive change in culture, climate, process, instruction, and compliance. The Action Plan was based on the 28 priority recommendations from PCG, as follows:

Domains	Recommendations
 <p>Learning Environment and Specialized Services</p> <p>Delivering instruction and interventions within an inclusionary framework and with IEP fidelity, leading to increased access and progress in grade-level learning standards and reducing disproportionality</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Multi-Tiered System of Supports 2. Universal Design for Learning 3. Identification Practices and Disproportionality Monitoring 4. IEP Development 5. Inclusive Practices Planning, Guidance, and Implementation 6. General Education Classroom Composition, Collaborative Teaching, and Co-Teaching 7. Redesign and Rebrand Academic Labs 8. Redesign and Rebrand Comprehensive Program Models 9. Equity and Access to Advanced Placement for Students with Disabilities 10. Twice Exceptional 11. Special Education Transportation 12. Assistive Technology 13. Out of District Placements
 <p>Leadership</p> <p>Supporting students with disabilities (including increased collaboration and ownership of school administrators and staff) and coordinating efforts with community organizations to improve results</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Inclusive Education Vision and Planning 15. PPS Organizational Structure 16. Cross-Departmental Collaboration
 <p>High Expectations</p> <p>Increasing expectations of students with disabilities by presuming competence and incorporating culturally relevant, growth-oriented practices</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Academic Optimism and Growth Mindset 18. Elevate Rigor 19. Measure Instructional Beliefs and Practices
 <p>Human Capital</p> <p>Investing in people from recruitment to retirement to ensure highly qualified and effective staff have the skills/training needed to provide services and support to promote the success of diverse learners</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20. Professional Development

Domains	Recommendations
 <p>Systems and Structures</p> <p>Defining expectations for service delivery, resource allocation, and data management infrastructure to guide data-driven decisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Special Education Policy and Procedure Manual 22. Transparent Staffing Allocation Model 23. Out of District Placement Student Data and Financial Monitoring
 <p>Family and Community Engagements</p> <p>Embracing partnerships to make informed decisions and provide equitable opportunities for all students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24. Enact Report Recommendations 25. Family Friendly Guides 26. Website 27. Parent Trainings 28. Family Engagement Vision

Acronym Glossary

This glossary of acronyms has been designed to help you navigate through this action plan easier.

Acronym	Meaning	Definition
2E	Twice Exceptional	Gifted students who have some form of disability. These students are considered exceptional both because of their giftedness and because they are disabled.
AAC	Augmentative and Alternative Communication	Encompasses the communication methods used to supplement or replace speech or writing for those with impairments in the production or comprehension of spoken or written language.
ALP	Accelerated Learning Program	The purpose is to provide appropriate learning experiences and intellectual challenges that result in continuous academic growth.
AP	Advanced Placement	A program in the United States created by the College Board which offers college-level curricula and examinations to high school students.
AT	Assistive Technology	A term for assistive, adaptive, and rehabilitative devices for people with disabilities or the elderly population. People with disabilities often have difficulty performing activities of daily living independently, or even with assistance.
CSDE	Connecticut State Department of Education	The administrative arm of the Connecticut State Board of Education.
CTAA	Connecticut Alternate Assessment	Students with significant cognitive disabilities are identified for participation in the Alternate Assessment System when the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) determines the student meets eligibility criteria. Trained teachers administer the Alternate Assessments individually to eligible students.
ELL	English Language Learners	A term used to describe a person who is learning the English language and has a native language that is not English.
GPS	Greenwich Public Schools	Making learning personal in Greenwich, CT, driving student academic, personal, and interpersonal growth. PK-12+. More than 8,500 amazing students!
IEP	Individualized Education Program	A legal document under United States law that is developed for each public school child in the U.S. who needs Special Education. It is created through a team of the child's parent and district personnel who are knowledgeable about the child's needs.

Acronym	Meaning	Definition
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment	A student who has a disability should have the opportunity to be educated with non-disabled peers, to the greatest extent appropriate.
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Supports	A systemic, continuous-improvement framework in which data-based problem solving and decision-making is practiced across all levels of the educational system for supporting students.
OOD	Out of District	Special Education programs in private facilities with Connecticut State Board of Education approval as private Special Education programs
PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports	Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a set of ideas and tools that schools use to improve the behavior of students.
PCG	Public Consulting Group	Consulting group that helps primarily public sector health, education, and human services organizations make measurable improvements to their performance and processes.
PD	Professional Development	A way for individuals and teams to expand and/or deepen their skills as educators.
PLC	Professional Learning Community	A method to foster collaborative learning among colleagues and as a way to organize teachers into working groups of practice-based professional learning
PPS	Pupil Personnel Services	A team effort consisting of school guidance counselors, nurses, classroom teachers, psychologists, speech and language therapists, Special Education teachers, social workers, and related service providers.
PPT	Planning and Placement Team	Responsible for processing referrals to Special Education, designing and reviewing initial evaluations and reevaluations, determining a student’s eligibility for Special Education, developing, reviewing, and revising a student’s IEP.
PTAC	Parent Teacher Association Council	The umbrella organization formed by the 15 PTAs of the Greenwich Public Schools.
SEAC	Special Education Advisory Council	The purpose is to build full, equal and equitable partnerships between families, the school District and community partners, on a council that gives advisory opinions to the Board of Education on matters pertaining to the education and safety of students with disabilities.
SEL	Social Emotional Learning	An education practice that integrates social and emotional skills into school curriculum.
SERC	State Education Resource Center	A quasi-public agency established under statute to serve the CT State Board of Education in supporting educational equity and excellence.

Acronym	Meaning	Definition
SESS	Office of Special Education and Student Services	The department within Greenwich Public Schools that provides education to students ages 3-22 eligible under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) through a continuum of district services and supports. Students are educated with their non-disabled peers in general education classes, Special Education classes and related services.
SWD	Students with Disabilities	A person who has been evaluated according to the individuals with disabilities education act and these rules, and is determined by an individualized education program team, an individualized family service plan team, or an administrative law judge to have 1 or more of the impairments specified in this part that necessitates Special Education or related services, or both, who is not more than 25 years of age as of September 1 of the school year of enrollment, and who has not graduated from high school.
UDL	Universal Design for Learning	An educational framework that guides the development of flexible learning environments and learning spaces that can accommodate individual learning differences

Implementation Levels

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1- Beginning. Just beginning to discuss this practice, strategy, or activity. There is a definite interest and organizational activities have begun.
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2 - Emerging. Concerted efforts are being made to fully implement this practice, strategy, or activity.
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3 - Partially Implemented. There is evidence of partial implementation of this practice, strategy, or activity.
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4 - Consistent. Implementation is district-wide and available. This practice, strategy, or activity is consistently implemented. Most or all students and families benefit or participate.
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5 - Fully Implemented, Consistent, and Data Driven. Data from this practice, strategy, or activity is used to make decisions about needed services, changes in programs, plans and strategies, and is utilized in the district's emerging, short-term and long-range planning efforts, changes to board policy, procedures, practices, or professional learning opportunities.

1. Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Objectives

Greenwich Public Schools will ensure that all PK-12+ schools build on the RTI and PBIS systemic approach and process to create a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Framework to respond to the academic achievement, positive behavior, and social emotional growth (including enrichment) for all students. The implementation of this objective will include the following actions:

- Expand District-wide MTSS awareness among all stakeholders by creating guides to explain how the models, such as RTI, PBIS, etc. complement one another in Greenwich
- Develop a districtwide leadership team focused on cross-departmental representatives from educational unit, meeting regularly to monitor the fidelity of MTSS.
- Implement a strong MTSS system, which families and staff believe, provides high quality interventions for students and communicates effectively where a student is currently functioning within the system of support.
- Set clear expectations for intervention timelines and framework

Target

100% of PreK-12+ schools will utilize a Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Conduct needs assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deputy Superintendent 	2020-2021 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Establish district-wide MTSS leadership team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coordinator of ELA K-8 ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Stakeholder input across grade level teams to inform guidance document development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coordinator of ELA K-8 ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Determine what expectations will be required district-wide and which will be school based.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coordinator of ELA K-8 ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion focus on MTSS practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coordinator of ELA K-8 ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create inventory of GPS endorsement to support students across all grade levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coordinator of ELA K-8 ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Draft MTSS manual for school-based teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coordinator of ELA K-8 ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Expectations- protocols/meeting frequency/data to be discussed/questions to be discussed in meeting/etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinator of ELA K-8 Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Universal Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinator of ELA K-8 Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Finalize MTSS manual for school-based teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinator of ELA K-8 Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Develop two-year professional learning implementations plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinator of ELA K-8 Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Continue the development of LinkIt!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Manager 	Ongoing

MTSS HANDBOOK

Greenwich

Public Schools

Education is not preparation for life;
Education is life itself.
-John Dewey



2. Universal Design for Learning

Objective

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is being implemented in all Greenwich Public Schools classrooms.

Target

During a walkthrough, there is observable evidence that UDL was embedded in lesson planning and is being consistently implemented in instructional practices.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Conduct UDL professional learning for GPS administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct UDL professional learning for GPS administrators and school staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	November 2021 January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Implement select UDL practices from training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers Building Administrators 	February 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Rewrite K-8 ELA and SS curriculum from UDL perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Department Special Education Teachers & Administrators 	2021-2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Develop a UDL implementation and coaching framework for UDL practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinator of ELA K-8 Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	2022-2023 CONSISTENT
Merge UDL and MTSS implementation plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinator of ELA K-8 Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	2022-2023 CONSISTENT



Young students in their classroom learning from general and special education teachers.

3. Identification Practices & Disproportionality Monitoring

Objective

Ensure GPS staff are aware and implement culturally relevant assessment tools and practices when evaluating students.

Target

Ensure GPS staff are aware and implement culturally relevant assessment tools/practices when evaluating students.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Identify a multidisciplinary district team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Participate in CSDE training session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multidisciplinary Team 	October 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Analyze the processes evaluation teams implement eligibility for Special Education and related services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation Teams Coordinators 	December 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct a file review of students as meeting eligibility criteria for ID and students found eligible who identify as Hispanic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation Teams 	December 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Participate in CSDE training and coaching opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports CSDE Multidisciplinary Team 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED



Students take a movement break to prepare for the next lesson.

4. Individualized Education Program Development

Objectives

- All GPS Special Education staff can draft a legally defensible Individualized Education Program (IEP) and are able to discuss the IEP development and execution with accuracy during a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting.
- Building administrators demonstrate proficiency in discussing IEP development and execution with accuracy during a PPT meeting.

Target

All GPS Special Education staff and building administrators participate in the CSDE IEP training.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
CSDE IEP training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● CSDE 	Starting January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Attend SERC “ED benefit” trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SERC ● Special Education Coordinators 	NA - SERC Canceled Training
Systemic, onboarding plan for new hire, building administrators and Special Education staff to receive CSDE training/GPS expectations for IEP development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Human Resources 	January 2023 PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct “ED benefit” reviews Adjusted to Coordinators meet with building Admin and School Based Staff to review Complex Student Cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Special Education Coordinators ● School-Based Staff & Administrator 	2022-2023 School Year CONSISTENT
Participation in CT SEDS Quality IEP training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Special Education Coordinators ● Available to all Staff 	2022-2023 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED

5. Inclusive Practices Planning, Guidance, and Implementation

Objective

To meet the individual needs of each student with a disability in general education with varying levels of support.

Target

Continuum of support in general education classrooms for students with disabilities (SWD).

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Audit middle school and high school classes and schedules to confirm that no more than 50% of students enrolled have been identified as having a disability (students with 504 and IEPs) (based upon CT state guidelines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Audited schedules are updated by the first day of school to reflect new guidance and being implemented across all middle schools and high school in GPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Include coaching for GPS staff focused on putting into practice the updated inclusive philosophy in three-year professional learning plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinator 	October 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Determine the philosophy of inclusion for GPS (terminology, PD, materials, etc.) through an ongoing workgroup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports GPS Stakeholders 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Develop guide for GPS that outlines the continuum of supports available by school and by program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinators 	June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED

6. General Education Classroom Composition, Collaborative Teaching, & Co-Teaching

Objectives

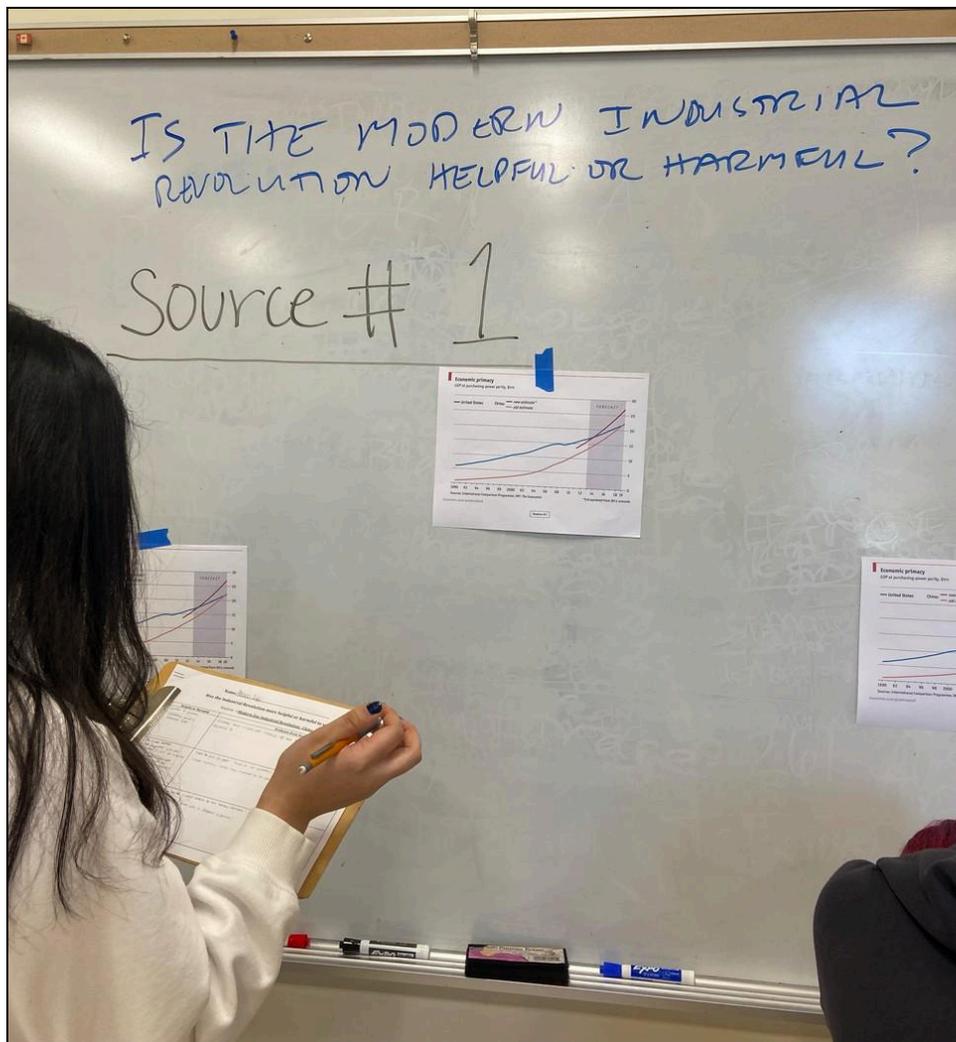
- To create a range of service delivery options, including collaborative and co-teaching models, for students with disabilities prioritizing an equitable distribution of students with and without disabilities in general education classrooms.
- Staff have the tools and support necessary to meet the needs of all students with disabilities in their general education classroom.

Target

GPS will offer a range of service delivery options, including a co-teaching model, that is available to students with disabilities across the district.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Ensure that middle and high school classes are no more than 50% SWD's or the class size has been adjusted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Middle & High School Principals 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Add sections of co-teaching at the high school in English and Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Middle & High School Principals 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Partner with a consultant to coach co-teaching teams on effective co-teaching practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Middle & High School Principals 	October 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Evaluate for collaborative and co-teaching opportunities at the elementary school level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Elementary School Principals 	December 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Provide coaching guidance to coordinators responsible for supporting principals in implementing co-teaching practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Special Education Coordinators 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Continuously monitor balance of middle and high school classes throughout the school year with a particular focus on semester start/end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle & High School Principals 	2021-2022 2022-2023 School Years FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Build capacity of principals through Ongoing coaching to create a staffing model focus on effective collaborative and co-teaching practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • All Principals 	2021-2022 2022-2023 School Years FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Implement a model-to-scale co-teaching teams throughout GPS school buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • All Principals 	2021-2022 2022-2023 School Years FULLY IMPLEMENTED

Auditing classes to ensure that high school students participate in most rigorous courses possible by balancing Master Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● High School Principal 	2022-2023 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
IEPs are written for students to have access to and support in more rigorous courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Middle & High School Principals 	2022-2023 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create a range of service delivery options to support students with disabilities having access to courses of varying rigor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Middle & High School Principals ● Middle and High School Special Education Coordinators 	2022-2023 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED



A variety of co-teaching classes are offered at Greenwich High School.

7. Redesign & Rebrand Academic Labs

Objectives

- Redesign the Academic Labs course to support collaboration in planning and teaching with other high school staff for students with disabilities.
- Create Academic Labs, with appropriate scheduling, to maximize specialized instruction opportunities.

Target

Ensure that student's IEP goals can be adequately met within the Academic Lab setting.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Auditing what is written in body of IEP/goals linked to be implemented in Academic Lab- understanding service/goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Meet to discuss Academic Lab data analysis to discuss how to restructure? Ask, "What is an Academic Lab?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● High School Special Education Coordinator 	October 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Meet with high school Special Education teachers that are currently teaching Academic Lab to identify barriers to collaborating with other high school educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● High School Special Education Coordinator ● High School Administration 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create a syllabus of various Academic Labs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● High School Special Education Coordinator ● Special Education Teachers 	Spring 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create various Academic Labs within the Master Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● High School Special Education Coordinator ● High School Administration 	Spring 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Trial Executive Functioning "SMARTS" program to support teaching of EF skills in Academic Lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High School Administration 	2023-2024 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED

8. Redesign & Rebrand Comprehensive Programs Models

Objectives

- Students with complex or significant disabilities have an IEP that reflects a program that addresses their individual needs.

Target

Understand the differences between services added to IEP vs programming for students with special needs.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Identify alternate, standards-based curriculum for students on the CTAA and make recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Special Education Teachers 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Develop systematic and ongoing training program for paraprofessionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	December 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Establish stipend opportunities for paraprofessionals contingent upon training completion and job duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Human Resources 	December 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Partner with paraprofessional Bargaining Unit to create new job descriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Human Resources 	December 2022 PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED
Design varied training programs that include initial and job-embedded training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	December 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED/CONSISTENT
Develop training for general educators to understand the functional differences between inclusion in the class and how to support robust inclusive programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	December 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED/CONSISTENT
Develop training for special educators in building robust IEP programming for students with more significant or complex needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports • Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	December 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Develop ongoing training on the implementation of the IEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	December 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Establish job-embedded training opportunities for general and special educators to support inclusive programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development ● GPS Principals 	December 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED



Middle school professional learning community participates in walk-throughs, observing classes.

9. Equity & Access to Advanced Placement for Students with Disabilities

Objective

Increase access to, and success in, advanced placement and honors courses.

Target

Increase the number of students with disabilities participating in advanced placement and honors courses and ensure supportive strategies are being implemented for increased participation.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Meet with Coordinator of Guidance to discuss ways to leverage counselors in the AP recommendation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Coordinator of School Counseling 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Evaluate the sophomore AP English/ AP Social Studies double up requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Deputy Superintendent 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Add section on AP and students with disabilities in High School Course guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Coordinator of School Counseling 	Spring 2022 PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED
Add section on AP in the 2E manual to reflect equity and access for students with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Coordinator of School Counseling 	June 2022 PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED
Provide Ongoing support through regular meetings for Counselors to become more fluent in how students with disabilities can receive specialized instruction, accommodations, and/or modifications in an AP course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Coordinator of School Counseling ● High School Special Education Coordinator 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Audit AP classes to ensure that high school students participate in most rigorous courses possible by balancing Master Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● High School Principal 	2022-2023 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED

10. Twice Exceptional

Objective

Staff and parents are knowledgeable of the characteristics of 2E students and the data to support students' identification. 2E students will receive appropriate programming options.

Target

All school psychologists will demonstrate an understanding of appropriate identification practices as measured by case file reviews. Staff understand when to refer a student in ALP for a Special Education evaluation.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Meet with ALP Coordinator to discuss identification process, specifically 2E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ALP Facilitator 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Prepare document of what psychologists can look for when testing that might indicate 2E and make referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ALP Facilitator 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Train Psychologists in identification of 2E profiles (including guidance around testing windows/expectations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ALP Facilitator 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Train ALP teachers in child find and identification in 2E students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ALP Facilitator 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create advisory group to start manual development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ALP Facilitator 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create a twice exceptional manual (including guidance around testing windows/expectations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ALP Facilitator 	June 2022 PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED
Create additional information on the website about identification of 2e/FAQs, created in collaboration with 2e parent group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ALP Facilitator 	June 2022 PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED
Include 2E information in monthly Special Education office newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	September 2022 PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED
Training for ALP teachers and Special Education teachers on delivery of 2E services (striking balance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ALP Facilitator 	2022-2023 School Year PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED

11. Special Education Transportation

Objective

Develop protocols to provide clear delineation and communication between the transportation office and the Office of Special Education and Student Supports.

Target

Students, who are initially qualified for specialized transportation on their IEP, receive services on or before their IEP implementation date and any change resulting in a transportation request will be processed within five number of days.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Revise existing transportation request process to streamline and automate data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Transportation Manager 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Revise transportation request form to reflect new process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Transportation Manager 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Launch revised process with the goal to streamline how forms are being received and who is receiving them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Transportation Manager 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Message to GPS staff updated process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Transportation Manager 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED



The GPS Transportation Department works hard to ensure safety for all students.

12. Assistive Technology

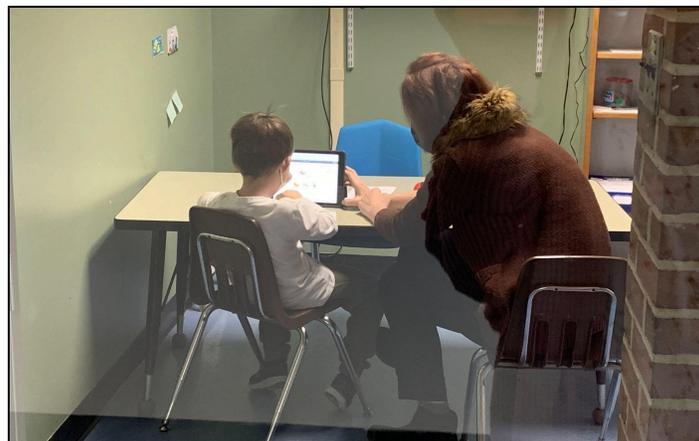
Objective

To meet the needs of all students through assistive technology (AT) and ensuring they have equitable access to curriculum, resources, etc.

Target

Every GPS IEP developed includes evidence of assistive technology that was reviewed.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Conduct existing AT contract review to determine if there is alignment with work and role needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Calendar of AT training dates (elementary, Middle, High)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assistive Technology Specialist ● Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Review for potential AT Specialist role in GPS to include SWD, ELL or RAEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create and implement professional learning for GPS educators to understand the foundations of AT, how to utilize in classroom, and how AT can be leveraged to promote SWD accessing grade level curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Assistive Technology Specialist 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Middle School and High School universal AT tools (snap & read)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assistive Technology Specialist ● High School and Middle School Special Education Coordinators 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED



Speech and language pathologists works with students on the use of assistive technology for communication.

13. Out of District Placements

Objective

To ensure that a continuum of options is available to GPS students, including those with more significant learning and behavioral needs.

Target

Expansion of the LRE continuum available to students and an increase in the number of parents choosing to return to GPS schools from an OOD placement.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Reorganization of supervision of Out of District (OOD) placements; K-8 and 9-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Schedule and conduct weekly meetings to discuss opportunities for students in OOD placements to return to GPS and review those looking to move into OOD placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Supervisors of OOD Placements 	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Identify commonalities for students in various OOD placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Supervisors of OOD Placements 	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Determine whether student needs in OOD placements can be met in a GPS setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Supervisors of OOD Placements 	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Establish a decision-matrix for determining programmatic needs and a timeline for implementing new programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Supervisors of OOD Placements 	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Identify areas of program development for GPS from OOD placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Supervisors of OOD Placements ● Special Education Coordinators 	FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct site visits to OOD placements in the State of Connecticut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supervisors of OOD Placements 	September 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED

14. Inclusive Education Vision and Planning

Objective

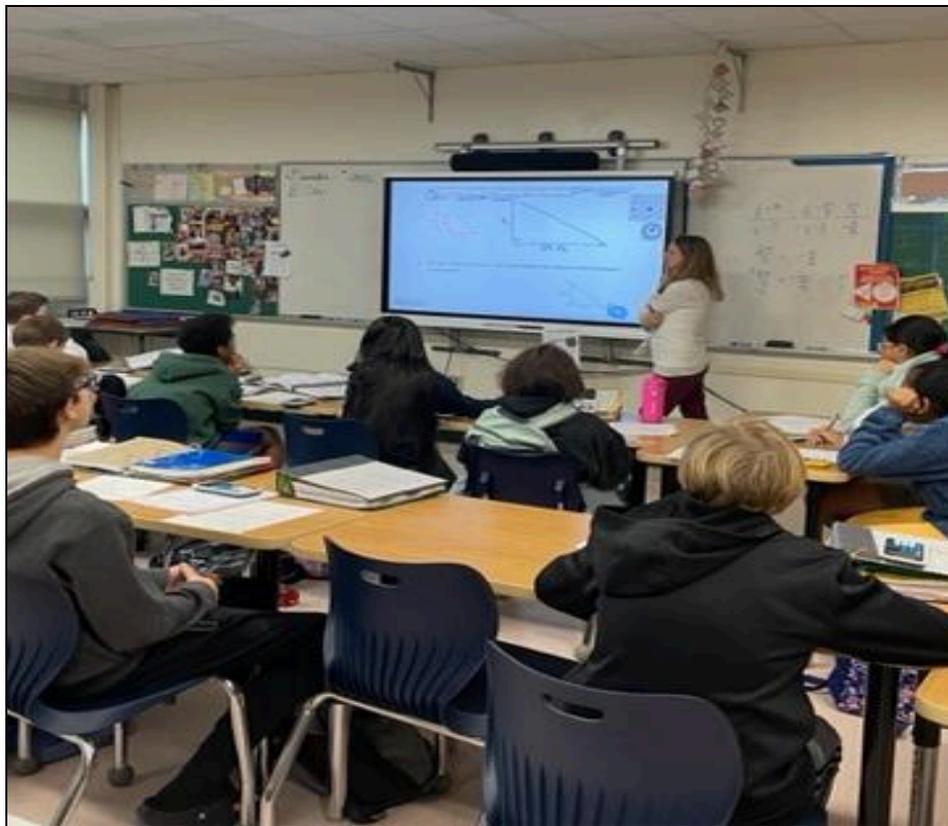
To assume competence of students with disabilities and intentionally plan for participation in grade level curriculum and to ensure that relationships with families are trusting and collaborative.

Target

Implement a structured framework of best practices for inclusive education including specially designed instruction and related services.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Conduct coaching for GPS staff focused on putting into practice the updated inclusive philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinators 	October 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct UDL professional learning for GPS administrators and school staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	November 2021 & January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Meet with each GPS school campus to conduct an inclusive education, best practices walkthrough and develop school specific implementation plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Building Administrators 	June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Establish planning protocol for GPS staff to utilize when supporting students with more complex or significant manifestations of their disability in the general education classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Coordinators of Special Education Building Assistant Principals 	June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct SERC training to clarify expectations of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and the practical implementation of supporting a robust LRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SERC Staff 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct training with elementary special educators on service delivery models within the general education classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary Administrators Special Education Coordinators 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Professional learning to internalize the practices of inclusive education beyond access to general education setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	2022-2023 School Year CONSISTENT

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Begin the implementation of a comprehensive, three-year professional learning plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	2022-2023 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Training GPS staff in the implementation of planning protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Coordinators of Special Education ● Building Assistant Principals 	2022-2023 School Year CONSISTENT
Establish a quarterly PLC for Related Service Providers to discuss implementation inclusive education successes and barriers within and across schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coordinators of Special Education 	2022-2023 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED



Middle schools offer co-teaching classes in select mathematics sections.

15. PPS Organizational Structure

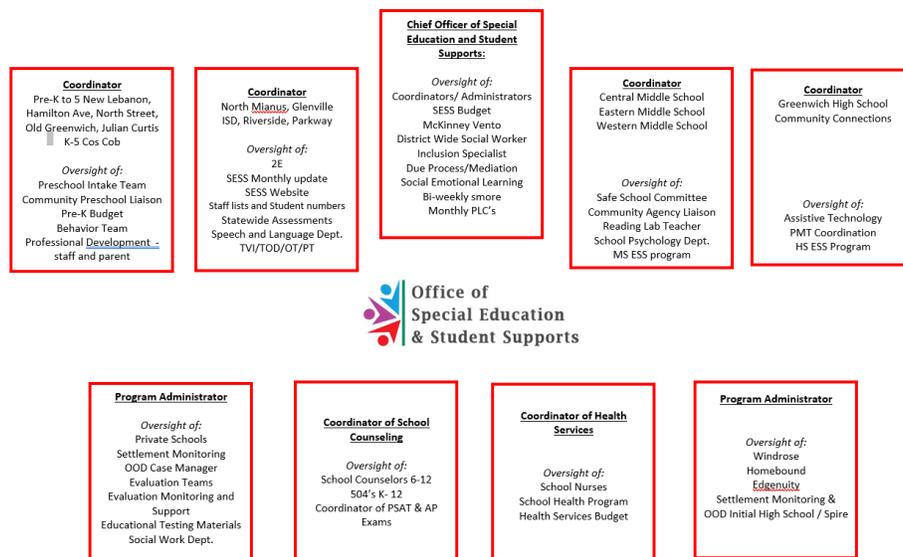
Objective

To utilize district-level Special Education staff to address the school-based needs of students with disabilities and those who require additional support.

Target

To create a new organizational structure and corresponding chart.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Audit existing positions re: how to provide in-school support for teachers and problem solve specific cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Develop organization chart for Special Education division and subsequent roles/responsibilities description and supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Return Coordinator role to high school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Pay structure for additional evaluation work outside of contract hours and payment to evaluators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Revise PPS office title (Office of Special Education and Student Supports)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Superintendent of Schools Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED



16. Cross-Departmental Collaboration

Objective

To have clear and Ongoing communication across GPS departments.

Target

Maintain a current list of Special Education staff and an updated Special Education budget, including projections.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Revise job descriptions for the “purchasing” position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Human Resources ● Finance 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Update list of staff within Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Human Resources 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Meet with finance department to clarify budget processes, including encumbering funds and forecasting large expenditures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Finance 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Clarify working norms between HR, Finance, and Office of Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Human Resources ● Finance 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Special Education Coordinators to work with Curriculum Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Director of Curriculum and Leadership K-8 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED

17. Academic Optimism & Growth Mindset

Objective

To assume competence of students with disabilities and intentionally plan for participation in grade level curriculum.

Target

During a walkthrough, there is observable evidence that teachers are demonstrating high expectations of SWD.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Analyze the different levels of classrooms, including practical courses, and plan for SWD to participate in the next higher-level class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School Administrators High School Coordinator Coordinator for School Counseling Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	Spring 2022 in alignment with development of high school course catalog FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Audit process for course selection/assignment for SWD at the MS and HS levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Middle & High School Administrators Middle & High School Coordinator Coordinator for School Counseling Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	Spring 2022 in alignment with development of high school course catalog PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct training on use of assistive technology to promote participation of SWD in grade level curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistive Technology Specialist 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct training on implementation of UDL to promote participation of SWD in grade level curriculum across all grade levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Consulting Group Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct training with elementary special educators on service delivery models within the general education classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary Administrators Special Education Coordinators 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Address mindset shifts to better understand the participation barriers for SWD in higher level courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Middle & High School Administrators Middle & High School Special Education Coordinator Coordinator for School Counseling Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	2022-2023 School Year PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED

18. Elevate Rigor

Objective

To assume competence of students with disabilities and intentionally plan for participation in grade level curriculum.

Target

During a walkthrough, there is observable evidence that teachers are demonstrating high expectations of SWD.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Conduct training on implementation of UDL for general educators to promote participation of SWD in grade level curriculum across all grade levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Consulting Group Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Develop a walkthrough protocol that looks for evidence of high expectations. Specifically citing that SWD are being provided grade level content and/or appropriate accommodations are being implemented to access grade level content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	February 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Train administrators and coordinators on the walkthrough protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	Spring 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Train special educators providing accommodations and modifications in the general education setting to access classroom instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	December 2022 CONSISTENT
Develop systematic and ongoing training program for paraprofessionals, including a focus on paraprofessionals engaging students with presented content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	December 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Audit AP classes to ensure that high school students participate in most rigorous courses possible by balancing Master Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports High School Principals High School Special Education Coordinator 	2022-2023 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED

19. Measure Instructional Beliefs & Practices

Objective

To assume competence of students with disabilities and intentionally plan for participation in grade level curriculum.

Target

During a walkthrough, there is observable evidence that teachers are demonstrating high expectations of SWD.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Develop a walkthrough protocol that looks for evidence of high expectations. Specifically citing that Students with Disabilities (SWD's) are being provided grade level content and/or appropriate accommodations are being implemented to access grade level content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	February 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Train administrators and coordinators on the walkthrough protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	Spring 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Coordination with Special Education office and principals to complete walkthrough protocols in all GPS elementary, middle, and high schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Building Administrators ● Special Education Coordinators ● Curriculum Coordinators ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	Spring 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Meet with school-based administrators to draft action plan for staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Building Administrators ● Special Education Coordinators ● Curriculum Coordinators ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	Summer 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Implement action plan for staff at all GPS schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Building Administrators ● Special Education Coordinators ● Curriculum Coordinators ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	2022-2023 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED

20. Professional Development

Objective

Develop a three-year professional development plan that is differentiated by role, experience, and needs.

Target

Implement a three-year professional development plan that is differentiated by role, experience, and needs.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Develop a three-year PD Plan that is differentiated by role, experience, and needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create an inventory of 2021-2022SY professional development offerings that serve as the foundation for the three-year PD plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	December 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct professional learning on UDL for administrators and teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 November 2021 January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
DBT for Middle School Psychologist, Social Workers and Counselors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	2021-2022 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Orton Gillingham (OG) training for all new Special Education teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	2021-22 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct professional learning on the utility and implementation of UDL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistive Technology Specialist 	2021-22 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct professional learning on social emotional learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavior Support Team Social Workers 	2021-22 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED

21. Special Education Procedures and Practices Manual

Objective

Greenwich Public Schools will revise the existing Red Book into an interactive, web-based GPS Special Education procedures and practices manual to support user-friendly and transparent access to procedures/practices relevant to the management and operations of Special Education and to which school staff can be held accountable for implementing.

Target

GPS will review the manual once yearly, and make revisions as needed to ensure alignment with CSDE and IDEA procedures and practices.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Convene GPS leadership to review existing procedures manuals, in addition to CSDE procedures and practices manual template to identify any unique areas that need to be included in the new manual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Identify Key Stakeholders to participate in procedures and practices manual update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Work with SERC to identify dates in which stakeholder committees can work on reviewing CSDE Special Education Procedures and Practices manual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Reach out to stakeholders to schedule review dates and provide chapters to review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create draft manual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Send complete manual to GPS focus group and stakeholders for feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	October 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Finalize recommendations and publish new Procedures and Practices Manual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create asynchronous training modules for GPS staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinators 	December 2021 CONSISTENT
Launch asynchronous training modules and arrange for follow-up with GPS staff, as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinators 	January 2022 CONSISTENT

22. Transparent Staffing Allocation Model

Objective

To develop a transparent Special Education staffing model that meets the needs of staff and students with disabilities.

Target

To implement new Special Education staffing models for the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Determine the "home school" for students who are enrolled in non-public and OOD placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Out of District Administrators 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct caseload analysis by school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinators 	October 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Determine caseload allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinators 	April 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Conduct information sessions on new staffing allocation processes for school-based staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinators 	April 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Meet with human resources to discuss staffing based upon caseload allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Superintendent of Schools Chief Human Resources Officer 	April 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Identify students who are: 1) outside of general education for more than 50% of their day, 2) enrolled in non-public and out of district placements, and 3) private or settlement placements outside of GPS as a precursor to LRE continuum expansion work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinators 	June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Assign a base allocation of number of staff for specialized programs (self-contained classrooms, specialized reading programs, co-teaching, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinators 	June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Assign paraprofessional by base allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinators 	June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Determine additional allocation for paraprofessionals based upon student needs (IEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinators 	August 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED

23. Out of District Placement Student Data & Finances Monitoring

Objective

To maximize the efficiency of the Out of District (OOD) placement process and ensuring that only students whose needs cannot be met within existing GPS Special Education programming are granted an OOD placement.

Target

Monthly list of OOD placement costs shared with Finance via Google docs to monitor student data and accurately project finances.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Institute weekly meetings to review current OOD placements and pending requests for an OOD placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports OOD elementary & Secondary Program Administrators 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Realign Special Education office personnel duties to have coordinated case management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Seek parental input to gather information on why they sought an OOD placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Meet with finance team to confirm protocols and timelines for sharing updates re: OOD placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Secretary 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Evaluate trends of placements, and where placements occur, to assess gaps in GPS programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	October 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create a monthly list of OOD placements to share with finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Secretary 	October 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
For students identified with an OOD placement, finances are encumbered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Secretary 	Identified by August 1 Finances Encumbered by December 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED

24. Enact Report Recommendations

Objective

Demonstrate on-going progress on the enactment of report recommendations.

Target

Implement 100% of recommendations.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Present updates from GPS and PCG regarding action planning for report recommendations at July 27 Board meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	July 27, 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Present updates from GPS and PCG regarding action planning for report recommendations at September 9 Board meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	September 9, 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Present updates from GPS and PCG regarding action planning for report recommendations at February 3 Board meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	February 3, 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Present updates from GPS and PCG regarding action planning for report recommendations at June 2 Board meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	June 2, 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Provide update to Board of Education three times per school year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	2022-2023 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Provide update to Board of Education three times per school year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	2023-2024 School Year FULLY IMPLEMENTED

25. Family Friendly Guides

Objective

GPS taking a leadership role when engaging families, including families with diverse linguistic needs and/or require ADA accommodations; building a sustainable, consistent vision for family engagement around Special Education initiatives across all GPS schools; meetings that have a positive, thoughtful outcome when working with parents.

Target

GPS will review the family friendly guides once yearly to ensure families have updated and current information on Special Education resources.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Upload revised technical and procedural documents to website to ensure easy access for parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Gather feedback from SEAC and PTAC re: topics GPS parents would like covered in upcoming trainings (possibly literacy, Ross Green, supporting SEL at home, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports District-Wide Social Worker Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Gather feedback from SEAC and PTAC re: method of training delivery (likely virtual), timing, length of training, childcare needs, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports District-Wide Social Worker 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Audit existing resources located on the GPS Special Education website to determine accuracy and relevance of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	December 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Establish quarterly parent training schedule lead/prepared by GPS staff, including general and Special Education leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports District-Wide Social Worker Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Gather feedback from SEAC committee, specifically re: resources for parents and determining which resources should be available in other languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	Spring 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Create plan for on-going parent trainings focused on a variety of topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development ● Parent stakeholder groups 	<p style="text-align: center;">June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED</p>

TOGETHER WE CAN

June 10, 2024



Office of Special Education & Student Supports

Can you believe that there are just a few more days of school left and that this is the last newsletter of the 2023-2024 school year? As we approach the end of another school year, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for your ongoing support and partnership. This year has presented a unique set of challenges, but together, we have navigated through them with resilience, adaptability, and a shared commitment to our students' success.

As we look forward to the well-deserved break ahead, I want to extend my best wishes to you and your families for a safe, relaxing, and enjoyable summer. May this time be filled with cherished moments and opportunities to rejuvenate before we embark on another exciting academic journey in the fall.

Thank you once again for your continued partnership and support. Together, we have made this school year a success, and I am confident that we will continue to achieve great things in the future.

26. Website

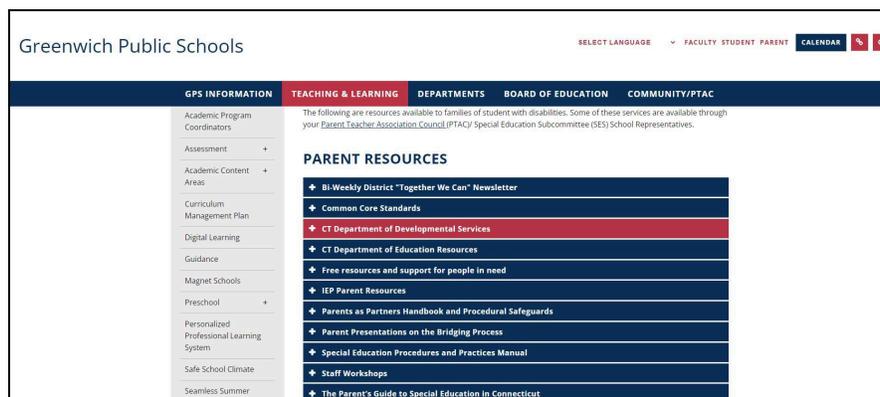
Objective

To host an accessible and technically accurate GPS Special Education website to provide staff, parents, and community stakeholders as a resource to gather information. This content on the site includes information that can be interpreted as well as utilizes language that is accessible.

Target

Update the GPS Special Education website to reflect accurate information in an accessible way.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Meet with communications department to discuss specifications and design of GPS Special Education website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Upload revised technical and procedural documents to website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Confirm document translation when accessing from website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Department 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Audit existing documents, contents, and structure of GPS Special Education site to determine accuracy and relevance of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	December 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Gather feedback from SEAC committee, specifically regarding resources for parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports 	Spring 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Construct draft website design that has embedded accessibility, utility, alignment with GPS site, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Department 	Spring 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Launch new GPS Special Education website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Department 	Spring 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED



27. Parent Training

Objective

GPS takes a leadership role when engaging families by providing parent training to implement a sustainable, consistent vision for family engagement around Special Education.

Target

GPS will provide at least three trainings annually targeted to parents of students with disabilities in conjunction with SEAC and PTAC.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Clarify organizational structure that Special Education Coordinator/Administrator is responsible for planning and execution of parent trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	August 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Gather feedback from SEAC and PTAC re: topics GPS parents would like covered in upcoming trainings (possibly literacy, Ross Green, supporting SEL at home, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports District-Wide Social Worker Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Gather feedback from SEAC and PTAC re: method of training delivery (likely virtual), timing, length of training, childcare needs, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports District-Wide Social Worker Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Establish trimester parent training schedule lead/prepared by GPS staff, including general and Special Education leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports District-Wide Social Worker Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Create plan for on-going parent trainings focused on a variety of topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Engage school-based leadership to facilitate parents receiving information on parent trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School-Based Leadership in GPS 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Create and implement plan to ensure that parents receive training on individual student services, such as AAC devices, AT, behavior plans, etc., when needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Program Associates ● Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	<p style="text-align: center;">June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED</p>
Create and implement a plan for staff to be trained on when to offer parent trainings for individual student needs, such as AAC, AT, behavior plans, when needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● Program Associates ● Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	<p style="text-align: center;">June 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED</p>



Families actively participate in mindfulness parent workshops.

28. Family Engagement Vision

Objective

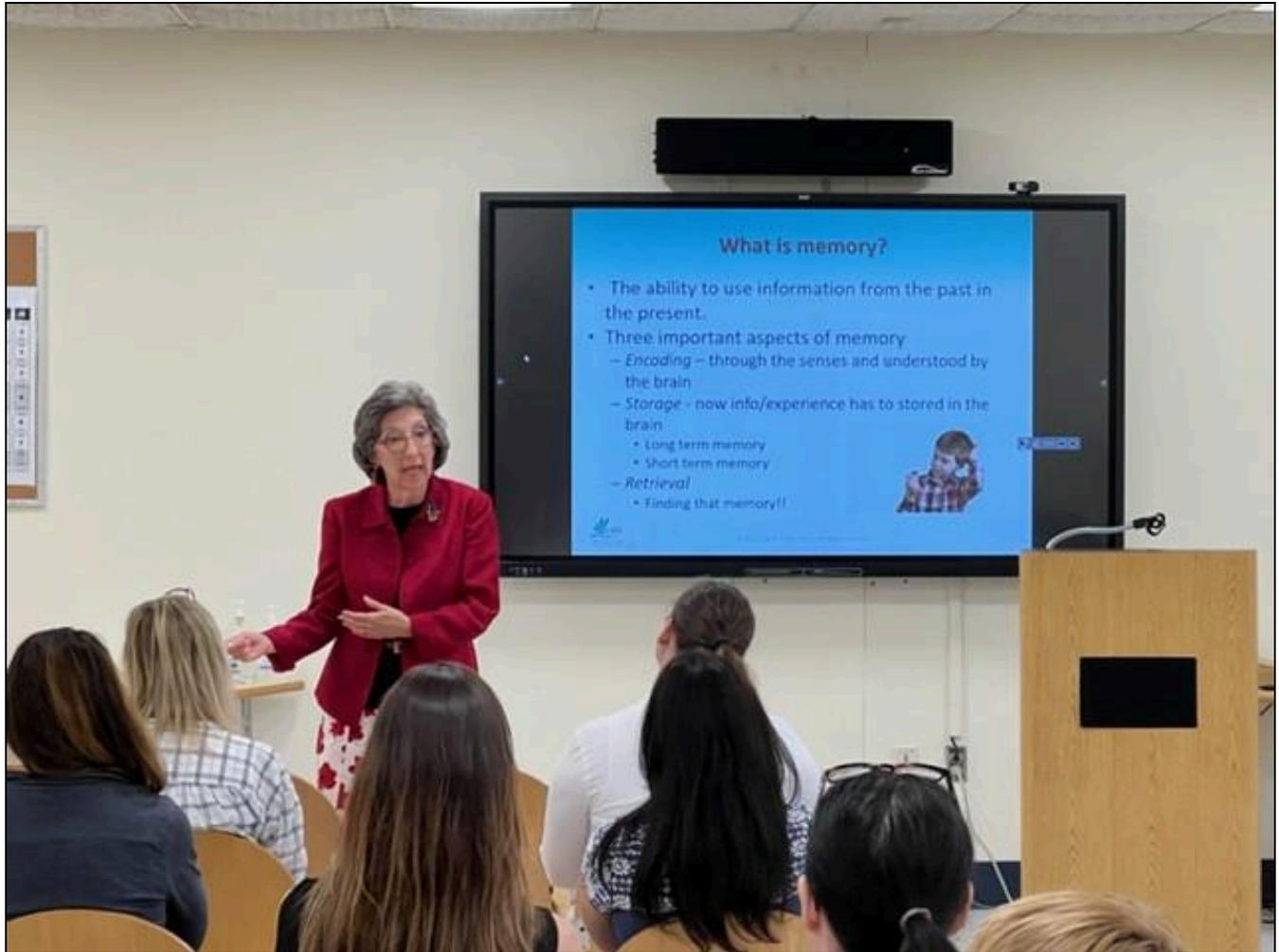
The Office of Special Education and Support staff take a leadership role when engaging families, including families with diverse linguistic needs and/or require ADA accommodations; build a sustainable, consistent vision for family engagement around Special Education initiatives across all GPS schools; meetings that have a positive, thoughtful outcome when working with parents.

Target

Create a belief statement between parents of students with disabilities, Office of Special Education and Support staff, and community members.

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Prioritize creating a process/expectation that each parent will receive a call from their student's case manager with "good news" during the first month of school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPS Special Education Case Managers 	September 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Prioritize creating a process/expectation that each parent will receive a call from their student's related service provider/case manager with "thoughtful progress update" by Thanksgiving vacation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPS Related Service Providers 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Gather feedback from SEAC and PTAC regarding topics GPS parents would like covered in upcoming trainings (possibly literacy, Ross Green, supporting SEL at home, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports District-Wide Social Worker Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Gather feedback from SEAC and PTAC regarding method of training delivery (likely virtual), timing, length of training, childcare needs, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports District-Wide Social Worker Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	November 2021 FULLY IMPLEMENTED
Establish trimester parent training schedule lead/prepared by GPS staff, including general and Special Education leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	January 2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED

Action Steps	Responsible Staff	Timeline
Understand the cultural mind shifts of GPS staff to promote culture of "yes, we can!" and build genuine collaboration with parents to support students with special needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Officer of Special Education & Student Supports ● District-Wide Social Worker ● Special Education Coordinator/Administrator supporting Professional Development 	<p style="text-align: center;">2021-2022 FULLY IMPLEMENTED</p>



SEAC hosted Dr. Lydia Soifer at a parent workshop for executive functioning.

Developed in 2020, the purpose of the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) is to build full, equal and equitable partnerships between families, the school district and community partners, on a council that gives advisory opinions to the Board of Education on matters pertaining to the education and safety of students with disabilities. Each Spring, SEAC provides recommendations to the Board of Education. Please see those recommendations below and how the SESS Department is responding to further develop the partnership and better supports for staff and students.

Greenwich Special Education Advisory Council Annual Report 2023-2024

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a staffing model that is clear and consistent for all Special Education staff: teachers, related service providers, and paraprofessionals. This model must consider the level of needs of each student, direct and indirect service hours each student requires and sufficient planning time.

For the 2024-2025 school year, the District has developed a model based off of the [workload/caseload model](#), developed by the Minnesota Department of Education. This model accounts for direct and indirect hours for students as well as factors in time for conducting evaluations and PPT meetings. The formula addresses the needs for both Special Education teachers as well as related service providers. This formula looks at the student need against the instructional minutes teachers have available during the week, accounting for their non-instructional wrap around time, lunch and preparation times.

Paraprofessionals are allocated based on the needs of the students as identified in the IEP under direct services, accommodations and/or indirect services.

2. Involve staff meaningfully

Starting in the 2022-2023 school year, the SESS department and GEA held monthly meetings to discuss issues and concerns throughout the district. This committee was originally an outgrowth of GEA and district bargaining during the formal process. Unfortunately, due to the structure of the committee and composite of the group not having enough Special Education representation, the committee was not meeting the needs of the district. As such, in March of 2024, the committee was reconstituted through the Human Resources Department. Now, instead of one single committee, the committee has been divided into an elementary and secondary committee. Each committee includes Special Education teachers, related service providers and district and school administrators.

The HR department offers an exit interview to all staff who are leaving as part of the separation protocol.

3. Provide direction from district leadership to schools through a unifying message and definitive stance on inclusion.

In the 2022-2023 School year, the district created an inclusion specialist position. This position supports a) students who are on an alternative standards track and are working on their modified curriculum in the general education setting, and b) co-teaching at the elementary, middle and high school level. In addition, the inclusion specialist also provides professional development to parents and certified and non-certified staff.

Also in 2022, the district partnered with NYU PINE to provide UDL resources and support to all 11 elementary schools. Each school has a PINE leadership team, that includes school administration, district administration, inclusion specialist as well as Special Education and general education teachers, that has identified school specific goals that align to further development of UDL in alignment with their School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Each month “Inclusion Corner” is included in the SESS newsletter, *Together We Can*, that is shared with all GPS staff and families.

4. Establish clear protocols to optimize the implementation and consistency of inclusive approaches through a collaboration of the Curriculum and SESS departments with school administration.

The Special Education and Curriculum coordinators collaborate to determine how to include the Special Education teachers in any general education curriculum training. In addition, they work in collaboration to facilitate co-planning between the Special Education and general education teachers with the introduction of new curricular units.

When developing new curriculum, Special Education teachers are invited to apply/participate in the curriculum development process. In addition, curriculum coordinators use a UDL lens when working on development and implementation of any new general education curriculum or program.

All elementary staff have access to PINE resources to assist in UDL implementation in the classroom. Each school has developed an individualized support plan in how to help their staff access these materials.

In the spring of 2024, Dr. Jones and Mr. D’Amico met with all of the elementary school principals to review scheduling guidelines parameters for all classrooms, specials and support services.

Greenwich Special Education Advisory Council Annual Report 2022-2023

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There is a significant amount of variability in classroom environments across the district ranging from trauma-informed to authoritarian. To help the current multi-tiered approach to problem behaviors in the classroom become more equitable,

In 2021-22, a MTSS committee was formed to develop a MTSS manual, including protocols. The roll out to schools began in the 2022-23 school year. Each tier, with specific examples, were identified including resources teachers can use. The District also contracted with Dr. Gabriel to help develop the MTSS manual and roll out in each school. This is a multi year process.

2. Adopt trauma-informed, neuroscience-aligned, developmentally appropriate and neurodiversity-affirming training for all staff across all grade levels, with follow through, coaching, accountability and team trainers.

There have been several training to support staff in supporting our students' mental health needs. In addition to shorter, more targeted, professional development trainings during district PD days, specific trauma informed care trainings include:

- August 2021, middle school counselors, social workers and school psychologists participated in DBT training
- 2022-2023 high school Special Education teachers participated in year-long Trauma Informed Care Training
- 2023-2024 school social workers, school counselors, and building administration on the Safe School Committee participated in the CES trauma informed care training

4. Staff report that they are unable to meet the demands of their caseloads, and that lack of transparency with the staffing model is driving poor morale and high levels of burn out. The Subcommittee recommends the development of a transparent staffing formula for Special Education teachers, mental health professionals, and related service providers, that incorporates IEP service hours and complexity of student need, as well as unscheduled factors (eg. planning, communication with families, drop-in support, meetings with team members and paraprofessionals, general education student support or assessments, PPT prep time, etc.). If needed, perform a time study to see how many hours are going above and beyond IEP service hours.

Currently, caseloads are developed based on the number of students to set guidelines of 15 for elementary, 18 for middle school, and 23 for high school, not inclusive of special programs. However, to provide a better understanding of the staffing model, the district is in process of developing a model to account for direct and indirect hours for students as well as factors in time for conducting evaluations and PPT meetings. The formula will address the needs for both Special Education teachers as well as related service providers. This formula will look at the student need against the instructional minutes teachers have available during the week, accounting for their non instructional wrap around time, lunch and preparation times.

5. Consider a “Schedule C” (stipend position) learning facilitator in each school. These facilitators should have a broad set of skills, well informed in UDL, trauma-informed approaches, coaching, flexibility, and should meet with others in the district to ensure consistency. These positions would help support behavior at each tier (in the classroom as well as individual plans), monitor plans, ensure implementation and fidelity, provide coaching and support, and respond to crises. Financially, this might be more attainable in the short term than added staff.

This would be something to be reviewed for feasibility during the budget cycle.

6. Find moments to provide “microbreaks”, which have been proven to have a significant impact on stress reduction.

Building administrators are constantly looking at their school climate and ways to support the social emotional needs of their staff. In addition, there are instances in which classroom teachers are provided breaks when social emotional or mindfulness lessons are being provided by support staff.

7. The district has made public statements that it does not engage in the practice of seclusion. Incorporate it into written district policy that seclusion will not be used in any circumstance to reflect these statements.

The district follows all state guidelines regarding restraint and seclusions. In the previous five years, there have been no reported seclusions.

8. Clarify what constitutes emergencies when it comes to the use of restraints. Follow up with monitoring and observation to make sure state mandated restraint policies are adhered to and that reporting is accurate.

The district follows all state guidelines regarding restraint and seclusions. The district ensures that any staff who participate in a restraint have been PMT trained, which include deescalation strategies, and understand in what instance a restraint should be used.

9. Mental health and behavioral concerns continue to be at the forefront for all stakeholders. All staff require training in order to proactively address any and all circumstances.

We continue to provide training and support to staff to address the social emotional and behavioral needs of our students. There is a district behavior team who works with schools who have students who have need for additional support beyond their school psychologist and social worker.

10. The district needs to keep a master inventory of staff training and certifications. Resources, programs, and materials should be made readily available in each individual building. An administrator must continuously be overseeing this data and providing additional trainings per building as needed. This should not be the responsibility of buildings.

The SESS office keeps an updated list of trainings that staff participate in. For certain trainings in which the district has made a commitment that all staff be trained in, new staff are enrolled in those specific training once hired.

11. Every building needs designated sensory spaces as well as Special Education spaces. Special Education students must no longer be taught in hallways, cafeterias, or adult office spaces. District level Special Education administrators should review this twice a year.

All Special Education staff have an identified space within each building to provide services to students. While some buildings do have sensory rooms, all schools have sensory spaces to address the needs of their specific students.

12. Continuum of services need to be evaluated by district level Special Education administrators. Students should not be told, "We do not do that here" when bridging, under any circumstance. Students' needs must be met at every level.

A continuum of services continues to be developed and adjusted to meet the needs of students. In addition to specific programs, like Unique Learner and Co-Teaching, the district has created an inclusion specialist and reading lab teacher to assist in addressing the needs of students who do not require a specialized program, but more specific and unique programming within the general education environment.

13. Building administrators should be able to make recommendations for their students rising to the next level. At present, middle school guidance counselors cannot recommend their rising eighth graders to a MTSS program. For example, if a middle school guidance counselor feels a student should be referred to the STARS program, they cannot do so, which unfortunately sets the student up on a trajectory to fail prior to a recommendation being made.

Based on feedback and concern regarding these practices, this process has been updated and incoming ninth grade students are now able to be referred for the STARS program.

14. Successful programs (ie AVID) should be evaluated and look to see if there can be growth in this program to other schools.

AVID at Western Middle School and Greenwich High School are managed by a single administrator in collaboration with Greenwich Alliance for Education.

15. Each year, several students are forced to leave their neighboring school to be educated at another GPS school. In this new environment, we witness these flourish and grow where previously challenging behaviors were present. We would like each of these situations investigated by a district administrator to evaluate the cause of the removal and how we can avoid this situation again.

When a family requests to change schools, the request goes through the superintendent's office and each matter is looked into and addressed accordingly.

16. Staff and parents should be educated on the district staffing model. Staffing decisions must be made on the needs of each individual student and not use the number of students and/or hours as caseload minimum and maximum.

Currently caseloads are developed based on the number of students to set guidelines of 15 for elementary, 18 for middle school and 23 for high school, not inclusive of special programs. However, to provide a better understanding of the staffing model, the district is in process of developing a model to account for direct and indirect hours for students as well as factors in

time for conducting evaluations and PPT meetings. The formula will address the needs for both Special Education teachers as well as related service providers. This formula will look at the student need against the instructional minutes teachers have available during the week, accounting for their non instructional wrap around time, lunch and preparation times.

17. Each building keeps drastically different building procedures, records keeping and data collection. There should be a district-wide policy and oversight for this. Staff shared there used to be district wide coaching who helped provide consistency with district policies. Now, often it depends on which staff is asked as to what answer is provided.

The district is building toward a more consistent data collection system. This is being done in collaboration between the Special Education and curriculum departments. In addition, some data collection is specific to students' individualized IEP goals and objectives.

18. Communication is drastically different per school. Some families receive paperwork before PPT meetings, some receive no paperwork. Some schools work with families to exit students from Special Education, while others exit a student without parent input. District level policies & procedures are in place to prevent this from occurring, however, it still requires considerable oversight and a system established at the district level and adhered to across all district schools.

The district has specific expectations in regards to what documents are sent prior to the PPT meeting and all staff and administrators are aware of these expectations. In some instances, there are different documents that are sent prior to the PPT meeting depending on if the meeting is an annual, three year re-evaluation or review/revise.

19. In order to maintain consistency, the same administrator in each building should oversee similar processes, (e.g. initial referrals, meetings with advocates/lawyers, students with more significant needs, etc) in order to become experts and communicate procedures. Additionally, this person should participate in targeted training for this and have a Special Education background and considerable knowledge on the foundation of IDEA.

In the 2021-2022 school year, building administrators have participated in the CSDE/SERC 10 day PPT process training to ensure that all administrators have a consistent understanding. In the 2022-2023 school year, with the roll out of CT SEDS, assistant principals participated in IEP quality training to ensure that they become experts in the procedures in the new system.

20. Our district needs to utilize the data we have to evaluate our processes. We should evaluate which school building has had State complaints, outplacements, and adversarial relationships with Special Education families. Was this due to variations in staff training, and or programming? Were there any consistencies? How can we use this data to improve our program? Furthermore, district level administrators should actively monitor schools' environment and culture.

The district is constantly looking at multiple data points to evaluate our process. We look at student achievement, as well as state performance reports that look at Special Education data points. In addition, we look for anecdotal feedback from staff and families to help guide the process and next steps. SESS is also using the Action Plan as a guiding plan for steps to address the concerns identified in the 2021 PCG Special Education Review.

Greenwich Special Education Advisory Council Annual Report 2021-2022

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. GPS Staff should not delay or refuse a referral for evaluation due to backlog and/or without data to support refusal.

From date of referral to implementation of IEP, the district is in 98% compliance with meeting the 45 day timeline. All staff know to move forward with PPT1 when a referral is made

2. When students score in the bottom percentiles on standardized assessments, they should be assessed and/or referred for Special Education eligibility testing.

School teams look at multiple factors when making a referral to Special Education. Testing is one measure that is considered. Standardized testing, outside of other indicators, would not be an automatic trigger as is not always indicative of a disability.

3. Reconsider how district and state assessment testing is being both (1) used to exclude students from RTI/MTSS services when students score high, and (2) ignored and not acted upon when students score in the bottom percentiles.

The MTSS committee has been looking at the role state and district assessments are being used in the MTSS process.

4. Dr. Heilighenthaler has increased oversight with MTSS to ensure kids are not lingering/languishing in MTSS for years and is presently producing a MTSS manual for staff and parents. We recommend that the new manual be circulated to staff and parents and that the Office of Special Education and Student Supports strive to educate staff and parents on the new policies and procedures. Staff and parents must have a good understanding of MTSS to ensure meaningful collaboration and best outcomes for our students.

There is collaboration between the SPED and MTSS. Recently the MTSS manual was shared with PTAC for feedback from a parent perspective.

5. Involve the student's teachers in discussions regarding evaluations to have a holistic view of the student.

Yes, a student's general education teachers are involved in providing input into areas of concern when developing an evaluation plan. We have developed an inventory of all the assessments the district owns and what can be used when looking at different eligibilities. We are working to make sure each evaluation is individualized and not a "cookie cutter" evaluation plan

6. Centralized oversight and accountability is needed in schools with complaints and or documented concerns in regards to Special Education execution and/or staff.

Any complaints or ongoing concerns are managed out of the SESS department, typically by Dr. Heilighenthaler.

7. Update the Handbook to clarify GPS Staff role in Child Find.

The practices and procedures manual language on child find was developed and written by the state of CT. Specific training around child find has been provided to staff and administrators

8. Evaluations: There is an inconsistent approach in writing an evaluation summary.

Training on writing evaluations, including adding recommendations to reports has been provided to staff. Most recently, Dr. Regan from Fairfield University provided a training to school psychologists on determining evaluations and report writing

9. Determine whether GPS can more effectively promote greater quality and consistency of PPT and 504 meetings through utilizing a centralized facilitator, or through additional training of the Assistant Principals (“APs”), to achieve a more level playing field across schools. The Subcommittee is unanimous in its belief that the students’ own classroom and Special Education teachers should continue to remain a part of the PPT team.

The number of PPT meetings within GPS is prohibitive of having a centralized facilitator (we have almost 1,300 students eligible for Special Education. With initials and triennials, there are close to 3,000 PPT’s per year. As such, the focus has been on training AP’s for quality and consistency across schools. The monthly PLC’s have been instrumental in this ongoing training and support.

10. Conduct routine audits of current IEP and 504 plans to determine if training sessions are having a positive impact on the quality of these documents. Ensure that new APs receive appropriate supports, such as training and coaching) and reach defined baseline competencies prior to facilitating PPT meetings.

Again, the PLC’s support this training for AP’s. Most recently, the department did peer reviews with Special Education teachers when providing training on present levels of performance. There has been an increase in quality, however, with CT SEDS, there have been some technical barriers that have made documenting some things more difficult. We are also reviewing and auditing evaluation reports to provide feedback

11. Once Covid restrictions are lifted, adopt a policy that contains allowances for team members to attend PPT and 504 meetings virtually (as opposed to in person), and that clearly defines the circumstances under which a team member may attend via remote participation.

Parents have the option of either virtual or in person. The team convenes in the manner based on the parents preference.

12. Consider implementing additional options to recruit, train, and retain high quality paraprofessionals. In the past, the district utilized a paraprofessional academy program that might serve as a helpful framework.

We have been doing a lot of para training. At the beginning of the year, Dr. Soifer did a training for all paras on executive functioning. At PreK and K-5, we have been utilizing PINE training modules. Middle and high school have been doing the Council for Exceptional Children Best practices training. In addition, our inclusion specialist has been running workshops at the

schools for paras. The paras have given positive feedback on all of the training. In addition we utilize rethink, an online training for ABA.

13. Adopt a staffing model that allows schools to take a proactive approach in anticipating the needs of their incoming classes. Notify teachers in advance if they will be receiving a student who requires specialized behavioral supports and provide sufficient training so that the teachers are ready to respond to those needs from Day 1. Allow those students who require a greater continuity of support to work with an assigned paraprofessional that will follow them as they advance grade levels.

Yes, we have been working with buildings on developing transition plans for students as they move grade levels or schools for a consistency of services and supports.

14. Ensure that the new staffing model considers more data points than just student population, and that it is designed to be an accurate reflection of the current needs of the individual students. The staffing model should not be reactive, as there are limitations in recruiting experienced, quality staff mid-school year. Any staffing model that assigns maximum caseloads to teachers and staff on Day 1 is contrary to the delivery of quality services and unsustainable.

Staffing is based on projections of a caseload/workload in April. As such, we do not start the year at maximum capacity, but with room to grow as new students are qualified for services.

15. Some related service providers have advised that their schools do not track service hours provided to students in excess of their IEP allotment. Require all schools to track the actual number of service hours provided to students. Some schools have achieved this by requiring their related service providers to complete a schedule/ diary at the end of each day. This data is also placed into the individual student files, so that the school can track if a student requires additional support.

All service should be tracked. Staff should be keeping track in order to report out on MTSS, 504, or PPT to determine effectiveness of recommendation versus what is occurring. In addition, tracking services allows for a referral to MTSS, 504 or Special Education

16. Investigate and identify improvements to our school buildings that can help promote greater equity. Look into grants to help increase access to building supports such as sensory rooms.

Grants are being used for additional building supports. Examples are Cos Cob School and Western Middle School each started a sensory room this year. Hamilton Avenue School is developing one next year. The middle schools are utilizing grants for programming for students with behavior needs. Community Connections is remodeling to add kitchen/ADL room.

17. Increase availability of transition counseling services within the Wellness Center to assist with transition to post-secondary and to allow for adequate planning/scheduling and coordination of these services.

For Special Education students in the Wellness Center, transition support is provided through the transition counselor as well as their own school counselor. Each student has a transition plan with goals. The school counseling coordinator has also brought in additional post secondary resources for students and staff to use

18. Document clear eligibility criteria and an exit plan from the Wellness Center to transition the student into the General Student Body.

This is in process in collaboration with the high school building administration.

Plan Overview and Indicators

Action Plan Measures of Success

The goal of the Office of Special Education and Student Supports is to ensure that through the enacting of the PCG report recommendations, that there will be an increase in positive outcomes for our students with disabilities. To that end, the following six goals set out to increase outcomes for students in the areas of identification, timely identification of services, student achievement, program options to meet student need, access to high level coursework, and collaboration between Greenwich Public Schools and families. It is the belief that by setting out to meet these goals, there is a demonstration of the commitment to following the PCG recommendations and creating a system of partnership between the Office of Special Education and Student Supports staff, parents and students. Together We Can!

Measure of Success	PCG Recommendations	Domain	Key Measure	Baseline	Target
1. GPS will meet state targets for State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicators 9 and 10 related to identification and disproportionality.	3. Identification Practices and Disproportionality Monitoring	Learning Environment and Specialized Services	Number of areas found disproportionate. Indicator 9: Disproportionate representation in Special Education Indicator 10: Disproportionate representation by Disability	No areas of disproportionality for Indicator 9. Two areas of disproportionality for Indicator 10: Hispanic students found eligible under the disability classification, "Intellectual Disability."- 3.48 RR Hispanic students found eligible under the disability classification, "Speech and Language Impairment"- 2.29 RR	By September 2024: ● Indicator 9: 0 Areas ● Indicator 10: 0 Areas
2. Students with IEPs will demonstrate growth towards standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics	5. Inclusive Practices Planning, Guidance, and Implementation 6. General Education Classroom Composition, Collaborative Teaching, and Co-teaching 7. Redesign and Rebrand Academic Labs 14. Inclusive Education Vision 17. Academic Optimism and Growth Mindset 18. Elevate Rigor	Learning Environment and Specialized Services Leadership High Expectations	Percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments based upon the Connecticut State Department of Education Annual Performance Report Scores.	Percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments based upon the SY 2018-2019 CSDE Annual Performance Report scores. ● Grades 3-8 ELA: 36.09% ● Grades 3-8 Math: 28.95% ● Grade 11 ELA: 43.04% ● Grade 11 Math: 15.19	By September 2024: ● Grades 3-8 ELA: 44.09% ● Grades 3-8 Math: 33.95% ● Grade 11 ELA: 48.04% ● Grade 11 Math: 20.19

Measure of Success	PCG Recommendations	Domain	Key Measure	Baseline	Target
3. Initial referrals for Special Education will be complete within the 45-day timeline.	3. Identification Practices and Disproportionality Monitoring 4. IEP Development 20. Professional Development 21. Special Education Policy and Procedure Manual	Learning Environment and Specialized Services	Baseline for initial completion based upon referral from June 22, 2021 to October 15, 2021.	71% of meetings meet the 45-day timeline from referral to implementation.	By September 2024: 100% of meetings meet the 45-day timeline from referral to implementation.
4. GPS will offer a continuum of program options for students with disabilities.	8. Redesign and Rebrand Comprehensive Program Models 13. Out of District Placements 23. Out of District Placement Student Data and Finances Monitoring	Learning Environment and Specialized Services	Baseline for the number of students in Out of District placements based upon data gathered in October 2021.	86 students with disabilities (7%) in out of district placements in SY 2021-2022. SY 2019-2020: 95 SY 2020-2021: 79	By September 2024: 5% of students with disabilities will be in Out of District placements.
5. GPS will increase the access of students with disabilities participating in advanced placement or honors courses or identified as “twice exceptional.”	9. Equity and Access to Advanced Placement for Students with Disabilities 10. Twice Exceptional 20. Professional Development	Learning Environment and Specialized Services	Baseline for students with IEPs participating in Advanced Placement or Honors courses.	41% of student with IEPs are taking at least 1 Advanced Placement or Honors course 80% of general education students are taking at least 1 Advanced Placement or Honors course	By September 2024: 50% of students with IEPs will take at least 1 Advanced Placement or Honors course
6. GPS will increase effective parent communication.	24. Enact Report Recommendations 28. Family Engagement Vision	Family and Community Engagement	Parent satisfaction survey.	Average of school and central office effective parent communication metrics from PCG report (65.5%)	By September 2024: 80% of parents will report effective communication on a satisfaction survey.

September 2024 Goal Update

Goal 1 - GPS will meet state targets for State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicators 9 and 10 related to identification and disproportionality.

By September 2024: **MET**

- **Indicator 9:** 0 Areas
- **Indicator 10:** 0 Areas

Goal 2 - Students with IEPs will demonstrate growth towards standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics.

By September 2024: **DATA NOT YET AVAILABLE**

- **Grades 3-8 ELA:** 44.09%
- **Grades 3-8 Math:** 33.95%

- **Grade 11 ELA:** 48.04%
- **Grade 11 Math:** 20.19

Goal 3 - Initial referrals for Special Education will be complete within the 45-day timeline.

By September 2024: **Significant Progress 97.8%**

100% of meetings meet the 45-day timeline from referral to implementation.

Goal 4 - GPS will offer a continuum of program options for students with disabilities.

By September 2024: **MET**

5% of students with disabilities will be in Out of District placements.

starting the 2024-25 School year, there are 33 students placed in Out of District placements which is 2.5%

Goal 5 - GPS will increase the access of students with disabilities participating in advanced placement or honors courses or identified as “twice exceptional.”

By September 2024: DATA NOT YET AVAILABLE

50% of students with IEPs will take at least 1 Advanced Placement or Honors course

Goal 5 - GPS will increase effective parent communication.

By September 2024: DATA NOT YET AVAILABLE

80% of parents will report effective communication on a satisfaction survey.