

## PLANNING AND PLACEMENT TEAM

A Planning and Placement Team (PPT) is responsible for determining whether a child is eligible for special education services, and for planning an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for that child. PPT membership consists of a school administrator, a regular education teacher, a special education teacher, a Pupil Personnel Services representative, other appropriate staff, parents, and the student (depending on age). Parents may invite other individuals who they believe can contribute to the decision-making process.

All children who receive special services must have a written IEP which describes their program. All IEPs are reviewed at least annually at a Planning and Placement Team meeting.

## INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

A parent or guardian can request an independent educational evaluation (IEE) at the district's expense. If the district declines to pay for the evaluation, the district must ask for a due process hearing without delay. At the hearing, the district must show that its evaluation was appropriate or that the evaluation obtained by the parent did not meet the district's standards. If the hearing officer determines that the district's evaluation was appropriate, the district does not have to pay for the evaluation requested/obtained by the parent. Whether paid for by the school or the parent, the district must consider the findings of an IEE.

## INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

An Individualized Educational Program (IEP) is a written plan, developed by a Planning and Placement Team (PPT), which describes the educational program for special education services. All IEPs are reviewed annually. The IEP includes: the child's current levels of educational performance; special education and related services planned for the child; annual educational goals; short-term instructional objectives; any modifications of the regular program which may be necessary; the amount of time to be scheduled for each part of the program; the date on which the program will begin/end; the criteria to determine if the

goals are being achieved; and the exit criteria, which will determine when the special program is no longer appropriate.

## PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

Parents of a child who requires or may require special education or related services are guaranteed specific rights in accordance with State and Federal laws and regulations. Regional School District #18 can provide a detailed information brochure for parents upon request.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**—In compliance with Regional District #18 Board of Education policy and State and Federal regulations, the Lyme-Old Lyme Public Schools system strictly adheres to maintaining confidentiality of student records. Parents who wish to inspect their child's records are invited to contact the Director of Special Services.

## FAMILY RESOURCES

CT State Dept. of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
[www.ct.gov](http://www.ct.gov)  
1-860-713-6910

Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center  
[www.cpacinc.org](http://www.cpacinc.org)  
1-800-445-CPAC

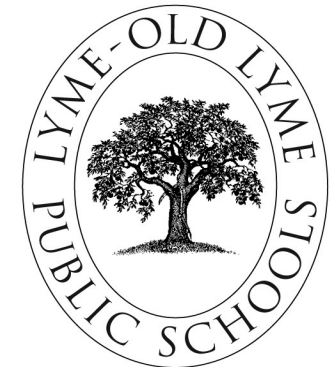
Lymes' Youth Service Bureau (LYSB)  
[www.lysb.org](http://www.lysb.org)  
860-434-7208

*The Regional School District 18 Board of Education prohibits harassment and discrimination in educational programs, services, or employment on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, military or veteran status, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, or past or present physical or mental disability in accordance with Titles VI, and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1973, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1991, and appropriate state laws.*



Regional School District #18

# SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES IN THE LYME-OLD LYME PUBLIC SCHOOLS



[www.region18.org](http://www.region18.org)

## INTRODUCTION

Every child has a right to a free, appropriate public education. Some children are exceptional and have disabilities which make it difficult for them to learn in the regular public school program without special education services. The Department of Special Services assures that all children with special needs between the ages of 3 and 21 will have the appropriate programs of instruction and related services designed to meet their individual needs.

When recommended by a Planning and Placement Team, special education instruction and related services are provided to Lyme-Old Lyme students, at all grade levels, by certified and/or licensed professionals. Programs for special needs students are designed to encourage participation in the regular school program, wherever possible.

## WHAT IS SPECIAL EDUCATION?

Connecticut State Statutes define special education as “special classes, programs, or services designed to meet needs of exceptional children.” Exceptional children are those children who deviate either intellectually, physically, socially, or emotionally so markedly from normally expected growth and development patterns that they are or will be unable to progress effectively in a regular school program.

Special education is available to eligible children from age 3 until graduation or age 21. If a special education student turns 21 during the school year, special education will continue until the end of the school year.

Preschool children requiring special education and related services are entitled to a free, appropriate public education on and after their 3rd birthday. Eligibility for special education is determined by a Planning and Placement Team evaluation. The type and degree of exceptionality must be such that, without special education, it is unlikely that the child will be able to make satisfactory educational progress when reaching school age.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Lyme-Old Lyme Public Schools provide a continuum of services and programs for students with disabilities,

based on their specifically identified needs. Programs may be provided in a range of settings—from self-contained classes, where students receive instruction in basic academic coursework from certified special education teachers; to resource rooms, where students receive instruction designed to supplement or reinforce the regular classroom curriculum; to the regular classroom, where academic support is provided by both regular education and special education professionals. Special education and regular education teachers collaborate to determine the appropriate accommodations and modifications to allow for the successful inclusion of students in the regular classroom. Programs are provided in the least restrictive environment, with a goal of maximum inclusion in the regular classroom.

Related services are provided to support students’ special education programs as needed. They include: speech and language therapy, counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, evaluation, school health services, and homebound instruction.

## CHILD STUDY TEAMS

Whenever possible, students’ needs are met through regular education. Students are referred for assessment and possible special education services only after regular education intervention services and strategies have been tried. The Child Study Team meets to review student concerns, plan strategies to assist students in the regular classroom, monitor student progress and, if necessary, refer for assessment of eligibility for special education. Concerns regarding individual students may be directed to the Child Study Team by parents or staff members.

## THE REFERRAL PROCESS

Referrals usually come from a child’s teacher, parent, or the Child Study Team. Referrals can, however, be made from other sources such as a family physician. If there is evidence that special education may be needed, a referral is made to a designated Planning and Placement Team (PPT). Before the PPT can proceed to gather information, evaluate the child, and recommend an appropriate program, parents must be

informed that their child is being considered for special education, and the parent must give their written consent before evaluation can begin. Information is obtained only with the knowledge and consent of the parents, and is available to the parents. Parents will be provided with written notice and an invitation to a PPT meeting at least five school days prior to the scheduled meeting date.

Parents may refuse to give consent for the evaluation and placement. Parents may also revoke consent if it has already been given. Regulations governing special education provide specific time schedules during which the evaluation and placement procedures must be completed. Placement of a student into a special program in the school district must take place within 45 school days from the date of the referral. Generally, placements out of the school district must occur within 60 school days from the date of the referral. These placement time limits do not include the time required to obtain written parental consent.

## LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Connecticut General Statutes define a least restrictive environment as one which meets the needs of a child requiring special education—to the maximum extent possible—but which fully serves children not requiring any special education or related services. Lyme-Old Lyme Public Schools is committed to this concept, and to the importance of collaboration between staff and parents in order to maintain and enhance this type of environment.

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