

Darien Public Schools

Special Education and Student Services Program Overview & Initiatives 2021-2022

December 14, 2021

Shirley K. Klein, Assistant Superintendent, SESS

Laura Straiton, Program Director, ELP
Kristin O'Reilly, Program Director, Elementary SESS
Scott McCarthy, Ph.D., Program Director, Secondary SESS

Department Structure

Shirley K. Klein
Assistant Superintendent
Special Education and Student Services (SESS)
Grades PK - 12+

Laura Straiton
Program Director
Early Learning Program (PK)

School Psychologists
Special Education Teachers
Speech/Language Pathologists
Paraprofessionals

Kristin O'Reilly
Program Director
SESS Grades K - 5

Leslie Davis
SESS AP - Hindley

Kathleen Brunswick
SESS AP - Tokeneke

Victoria McVie
SESS AP - Royle

Lindsay Sulzycki
SESS AP - Ox Ridge

Anmarie Galgano
SESS AP - Holmes

Scott McCarthy
Program Director
SESS Grades 6 - 12+

Theresa Fox
Department Chair - MMS

Cristina Brás Taylor
Department Chair - DHS

Program Overview - Continuum of Services



General Education

General Education with Speech Therapy as a Special Education Service

- ELP Itinerant Services
 - K-12 Students Receiving Speech Services Only
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General Education with Special Education Teacher Supplemental Services

- ELP Integrated Program (16, 20, and 22.5 Hour Services)
 - K-12 SET Services in General Education Classroom
 - Grades 6-12 Co-taught Classes
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Special Education Teacher (SET) Supplemental Services

- K-12 Resource Room / Learning Center
 - Grade 6-12 Direct Reading Instruction
 - Grade 6-8 AIM Program
 - Grade 9-12 CORE Program
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Modified Content Classes

- Grade 6-8 Alternative Learning Center (ALC-2)
 - Grade 9-12 Comprehensive Classes
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Specialized Programs

- K-5 Developmental Learning Centers (DLC)
- Grades 6-8 Alternative Learning Center (ALC-1)
- Grades 9-12+ Excel Program

Early Learning Program - Program Overview

The Darien Early Learning Program (ELP) is an integrated preschool for children ages three to five, in which children with learning differences and children with typically developing skills learn from each other in a nurturing environment. Play-based and project-based learning provides opportunities for children to be purposeful, creative, inquisitive, flexible, and reflective.

Itinerant Services (Standalone)

Speech (OT, PT if applicable) for students attending community pre-schools

16-Hour Program

Integrated, School-Based Program 9:30am-1:30pm Monday - Thursday

20-Hour Program

Integrated, School-Based Program 8:30am-1:30pm Monday - Thursday

22.5-Hour Program

*Integrated, School-Based Program 8:30am-1:30pm Monday - Thursday
Friday 8:30am-11:00am IEP students only*

RELATED SERVICES & ACCOMMODATIONS

*Speech and Language Therapy,
Counseling, Parent Training, OT, PT,
ToHI, TVI,*

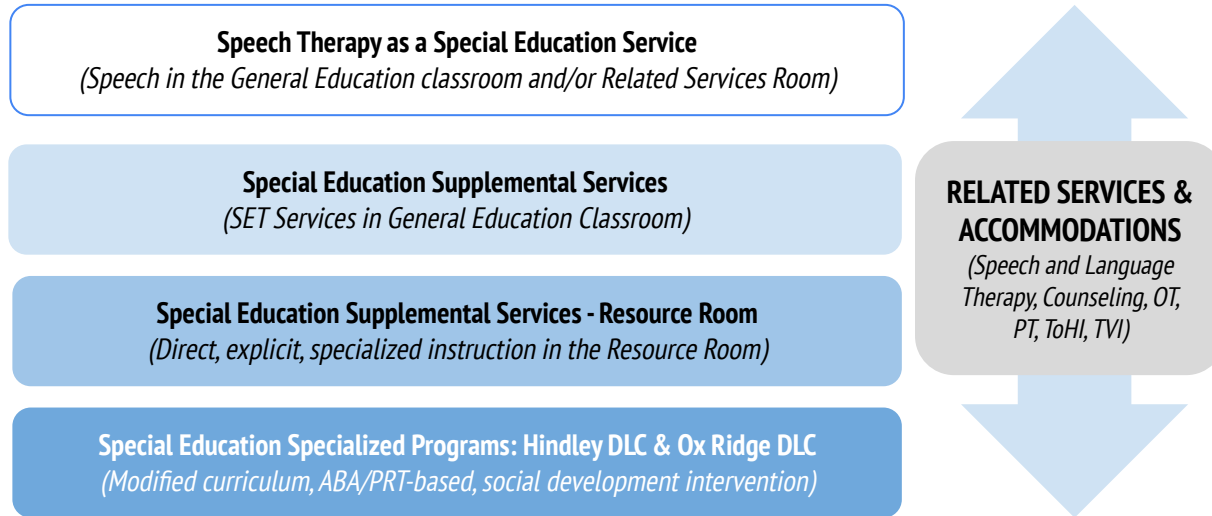
Early Learning Program - Program Highlights

- **Literacy:** Dr. Margie Gillis and Literacyhow specialists, developing early reading and literacy skills of young learners using the coaching method (building teachers' tool boxes, methods and strategies), Heggerty daily explicit and systematic phonological and phonemic awareness lessons, and Handwriting without Tears
- **Mathematics:** Everyday Math
- **Social/Emotional/Behavioral:** Zones of Regulation, Responsive Classroom, Social Thinking- Michelle Garcia Winner, Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) training for professional staff, Physical / Psychological Management Training (PMT)
- **Instructional Technology:** Autism Curriculum Encyclopedia (ACE), Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP), Proloquo2go
- **Best Practice:** Progress Monitoring using the CT-DOTS, IEP Direct

Elementary Schools - Program Overview

Specialized instruction at the Elementary Schools is delivered in Grades K - 5. Students access several program options within a continuum of services designed to meet their individual needs. Planning and Placement Teams (PPTs) develop Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) with goals/objectives developed to ensure students access and progress in the general education curriculum.

IEPs are designed to align to Common Core standards, ensure attainable goals and meaningful progress, provide services responsive to students' evidenced needs, and promote independence across domains.



Elementary Schools - Program Highlights

- **Literacy:** Orton-Gillingham, Wilson Reading Systems, SPIRE Reading Program, Visualizing & Verbalizing, Seeing Stars, Writing Support, Structured Literacy, Heggerty, LLI
- **Mathematics:** Do the Math, Math in Focus, Touch Math, Bridge the Gap
- **Language & Communication:** PROMPT Approach, Beckman Oral Motor Protocol, Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC), Picture Exchange Communication (PECS)
- **Social/Emotional/Behavioral:** Executive Functioning, Physical & Psychological Management Training (PMT), Responsive Classroom, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), RULER
- **Assessment Training:** School psychologists and special education teachers (WIAT-4, WRAML, ADOS-2)
- **Self Study:** Specially designed instruction and special education models across all settings with Dr. Marilyn Friend, SDI session with Elementary SETs, Observation of push-in and pull-out models across all five schools
- **Parent Coffee Series:** Overview of DBT/validation, mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotional regulation, improving my relationships, ELP-to-DLC, DLC-to-MMS program and transition planning, and CT SEDS
- **SESS Elementary School Assistant Principals:** Professional development and implementation of SDI, PPT and IEP procedures and compliance, leading Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), supervision and evaluation of staff to ensure best practices in SDI and progress monitoring, parent communication and workshops

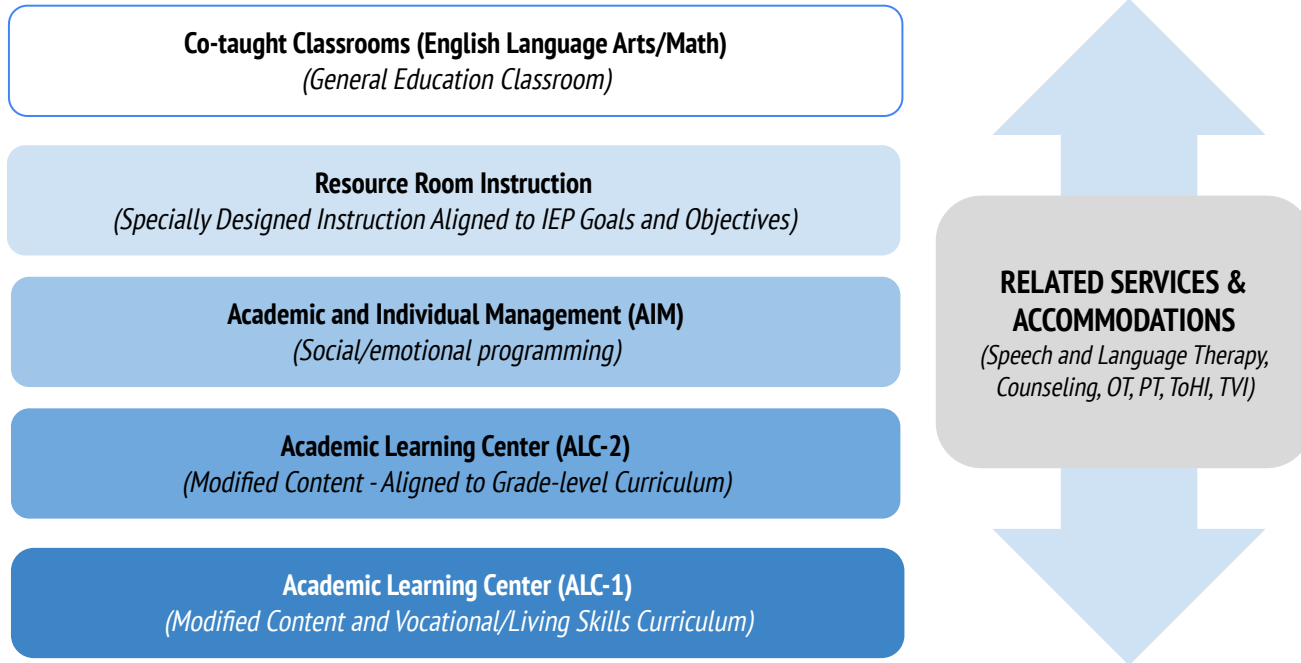
Ox Ridge Elementary School 2022-2023

- Planning for the 2022-2023 Ox Ridge Special Education Programs
- Maintaining the current two sections of ELP for the 2022-2023 school year
- Planning for furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE) for the 2022-2023 school
- Information sessions in the spring for faculty and staff regarding the move, transition to the new building, and instructional opportunities in the new space



Middlesex Middle School - Program Overview

Specialized instruction at Middlesex Middle School is delivered across grades 6-8. Seventeen special education teachers, 3 speech and language pathologists, 3 school psychologists, and 1 social worker support students along with assistive technology, behavior analysts, vision and hearing supports.



Middlesex Middle School- Program Highlights

- **Literacy:** Orton-Gillingham, Wilson Reading Systems (Introductory and Level 1 Certifications), SPIRE Reading Program, Visualizing & Verbalizing, and Seeing Stars
- **Mathematics:** Do the Math, Math in Focus, Touch Math, Number Worlds, and Equals Math
- **Language & Communication:** PROMPT Approach, Beckman Oral Motor Protocol, Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC), Picture Exchange Communication (PECS), and Tobii Eye Tracking Communication System
- **Social/Emotional/Behavioral:** Executive Functioning, Physical & Psychological Management Training (PMT), Responsive Classroom, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), and RULER Year 1 Implementation
- **Assessment Training:** WIAT-4, WRAML, and ADOS-2
- **Instructional Focuses:** Ongoing refining to co-teaching implementation, continued focus on mini-lessons aligned to posted lesson objectives and grade-level curriculum content, creative approximation of “community outings” and vocational programming in ALC classrooms (e.g., Dragon Delight Cafe)
- **Parent Coffee Series:** IEP Bootcamp, New CT IEP Review, SRBI/RTI/MTSS Structures of Support and Recovery Services/Structures, Social/Emotional Learning, Summer Planning, and 5-6 Articulation Preparation

Darien High School - Program Overview

Specialized instruction at Darien High School is delivered grades 9-12+. Sixteen special education teachers, 2 speech and language pathologists, 5 school psychologists (1 psychologist at Fitch Academy), and 1 social worker support students along with assistive technology, behavior analysts, vision and hearing supports.



Co-taught Classes (English Language Arts/Math)
(General Education Classroom)

Learning Center Instruction
(Specially Designed Instruction Aligned to IEP Goals and Objectives)

Creating Opportunities for Restructuring Education (CORE)
(Social/emotional programming)

Comprehensive Classes
(Modified Content, Aligned to 300-level Curriculum)

Excel
(Modified Content and Vocational/Living Skill Curriculum)

Darien High School - Program Highlights

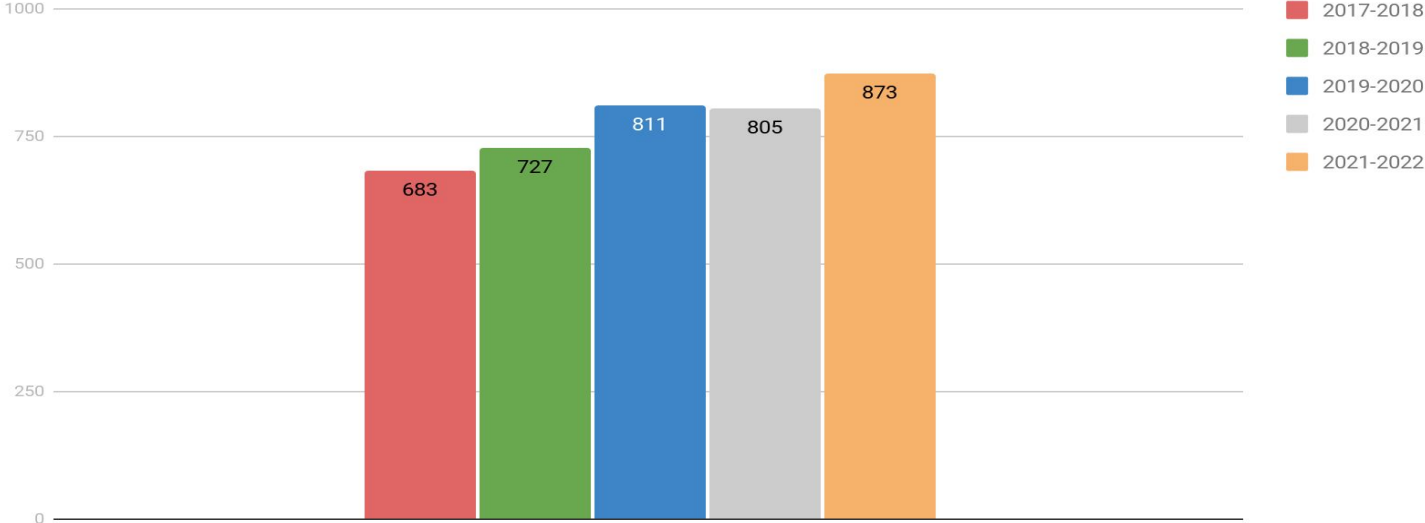
- **Literacy:** Orton-Gillingham, Wilson Reading Systems (Introductory and Level 1 Certifications), Curriculum-aligned Comprehension Reading Instruction Class, SPIRE Reading Program, Visualizing & Verbalizing, and Seeing Stars
- **Mathematics:** Do the Math, Math in Focus, Touch Math, and Equals Math
- **Language & Communication:** PROMPT Approach, Beckman Oral Motor Protocol, Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC), and Picture Exchange Communication (PECS)
- **Social/Emotional/Behavioral:** Executive Functioning, Physical & Psychological Management Training (PMT), Responsive Classroom, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), and RULER Year 1 Implementation
- **Assessment Training:** WIAT-4, WRAML, and ADOS-2
- **Instructional Focus:** Ongoing refining to co-teaching implementation, creative approximation of “community outings” and vocational programming in the Excel classroom (e.g., Excel Cafe), and Health Relationships Curriculum (in collaboration with Abilis)
- **Parent Coffee Series:** Did You Know?, New CT IEP Review, SRBI/RTI/MTSS Structures of Support and Recovery Services/Structures, Social/Emotional Learning, and 8-9 Articulation Preparation, and Transition Services Panel
- **Extracurricular Activities:** Unified Sports (3 seasons), Best Buddies

Connecticut Special Education Data System (CT-SEDS)

- Implementation: July 1, 2022
- Staff IEP Quality Training January 2022- March 2022 (8, 90-minute sessions)
- District Parent Presentation May 2022: *Transition to the New IEP and new Data system, Parent Recorded module: Guide to the IEP for Parents/Families, and a recording on how to access the Parent Portal*
- New IEP template and link to additional information will be posted in the State Resources Section on the District Special Education Webpage in the spring

District Data - Students with IEPs (PK-12+)

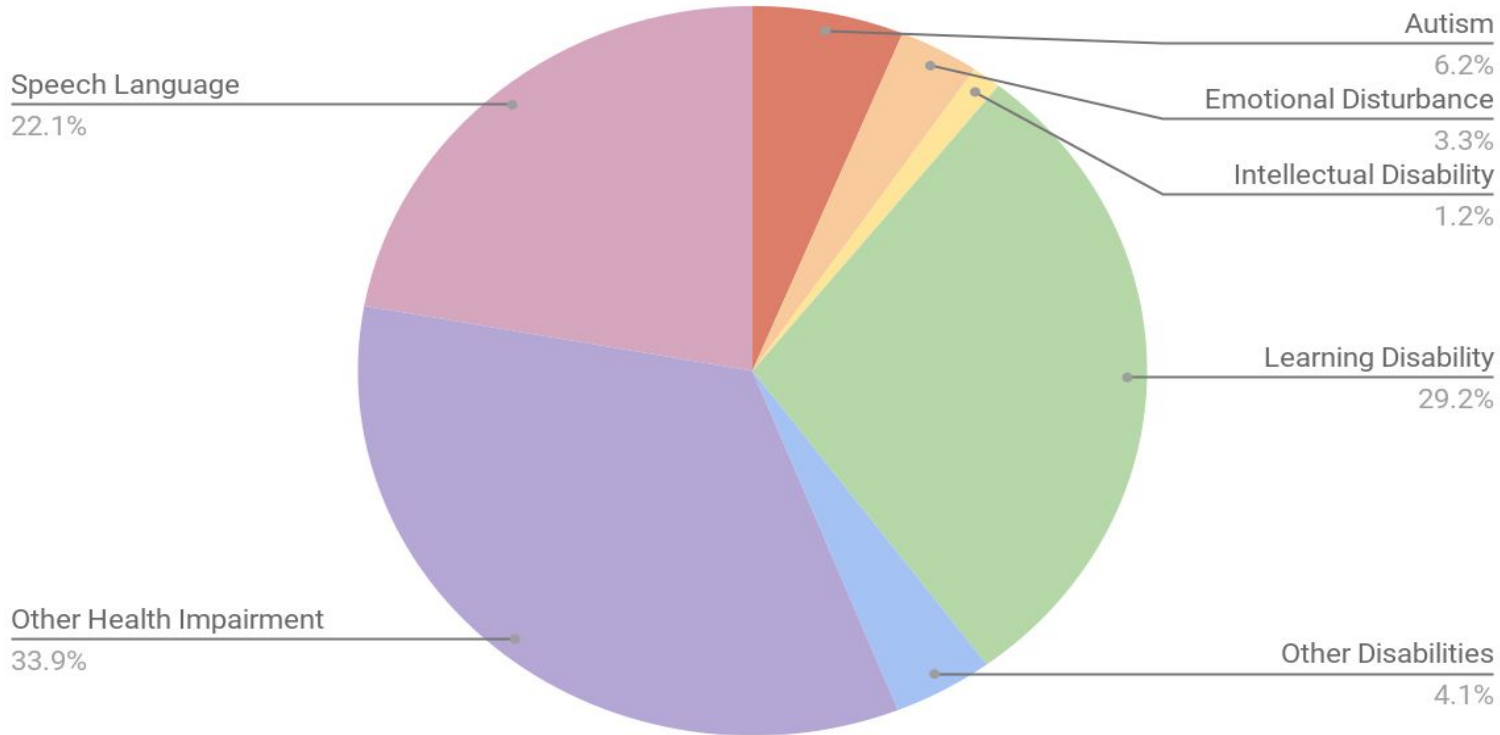
Year-to-Year Change in Population of Students with IEPs



*Note: 2021-2022 data has not yet been officially released

District Data - Educational Classifications

Darien Public Schools - Prevalence within Special Education



Glossary of Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
AAC	Alternative/Augmentative Communication
ABA	Applied Behavior Analysis
ACE	Autism Curriculum Encyclopedia
ADL	Activities of Daily Living
AIM	Academic and Individual Management
ALC	Alternative Learning Center
AT	Assistive Technology
BCBA	Board Certified Behavior Analyst
CORE	Creating Opportunities for Restructuring Education
CT ELDS	Connecticut Early Learning & Development Standards
DBT	Dialectical Behavior Therapy
DLC	Developmental Learning Center

Acronym	Definition
DTT	Discrete Trial Training/Teaching
ELP	Early Learning Program
FAPE	Free and Appropriate Public Education
GET	General Education Teacher
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
OT	Occupational Therapist
PECS	Picture Exchange Communication System
PT	Physical Therapist
PMT	Psychological/Physical Management Training
PPT	Planning & Placement Team

Acronym	Definition
PROMPT	Prompts for Restructuring Oral Muscular Phonetic Targets
PRT	Pivotal Response Training
RDI	Relationship Development Intervention
SDI	Specially Designed Instruction
SESS	Special Education and Student Services
SET	Special Education Teacher
SLP	Speech/Language Pathologist
ToHI	Teacher of the Hearing Impaired
TVI	Teacher of the Visually Impaired

— Questions —
