



Committed to Best Practices in Special Education

Q & A

1. How many Walled Lake Consolidated School District students have IEPs?

WLCSD has 1,870 students with unique IEPs across the district, or 12.5% of our birth to 26-year-old student population. The District seeks to be responsive to the needs of our families and their children. It is one reason why so many families want their children in a Walled Lake school.

2. How often is an inclusive education provided as part of the IEP?

Always -- Walled Lake Schools practices inclusion with its K-12 students in its 19 schools across the District. For our birth to four-year-olds, WLCSD has special programs at the Twin Sun Center; and for those students 18-26, Walled Lake offers the comprehensive Transitions Program where its students learn a host of daily living and work skills.

3. How much of the school day are WLCSD students with IEPs really included in general education?

Students with IEPs in Walled Lake Schools spend more than 80 percent of their school day included in general education programs --- this is a school district that believes and practices inclusion. Most importantly, all of our students in the District's 19 schools have access to general education programs -- even if a student is in a specialized program, they have access to general education.

4. What is an Individual Education Program (IEP) and who develops it?

The *Individualized Educational Program* (IEP) Team is made up of the parents of the child, teachers, psychologists, and building leaders, all working together to achieve educational success for the student and their individualized needs. The group creates a data-driven educational plan that identifies the specific behaviors and focus areas needed for long term achievement. The experts on the IEP Team work diligently using their experience and training to make data-driven decisions that fit with the unique circumstances found in each child's case.

5. Why do students with IEPs leave their neighborhood schools for another school in the District?

WLCSD provides a full continuum of educational programs to ensure the long term success of students within the classroom and within society, **however, every program is not at every school**. Please see the list below in question # 8. Walled Lake Schools has 187 (10 percent) students leave their home school to go to other schools in the District. Students are challenged to reach their potential academically, athletically and in the arts.

WLCSD provides specific educational services in varied locations across our District. Students attend the school best suited to meet their specific needs. This approach in providing educational services is a reality in most districts not only in Michigan, but across our country.

In many cases, parents recognize that this is important and they appreciate the opportunity that is provided for their child to receive specialized assistance. In other cases, parents may disagree and the District will seek to find collaborative solutions that ensure an education of excellence for both the individual student and the other students in the classroom.

It is important to note that this occurs for both special needs students and students desiring specialized approaches to education. Across the United States, specialty opportunities exist for students to attend non-neighborhood schools. Sometimes these schools focus on specialized interests, such as schools that have arisen around foreign languages, science, zoology, aviation, and so forth. In other cases, students may attend non-neighborhood schools for behavioral, vocational, or disability reasons. In all of these cases, districts across the country are providing an education of excellence in surroundings best suited to meet the educational needs of the children involved.

6. How many students leave WLCSD to receive special services in other districts?

Of the 1,870 students with IEPs, only 21(1.1 percent) leave WLCSD to go to other districts for special services. Notably, Walled Lake Schools brought back the Severe Multiple Impairments, SXI, program so those students could attend WLCSD at Hickory Woods Elementary and Walled Lake Central High School.



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7. Do WLCSD students with IEPs have any recent awards?

Recently, two of the Walled Lake Schools Special Olympics basketball teams, the WL Miracles and WL Mustangs, were recognized by the Board of Education for winning the Division 8 Special Olympics championship basketball games. Also, Walled Lake Schools is the only district in Oakland County who has cultivated a unique partnership with Oakland Community College for our high school students with IEPs.

8. What Special Services Programs does WLCSD offer for its students with IEPs and where are they located?

Walled Lake Schools has the following programs at the schools listed below:

Early Intervention Services:

- Birth to three year's old at the Twin Sun Center

Elementary Special Services Programs:

- Resource Rooms at all 12 Elementary Schools.
- Emotionally Impaired/Severely Emotionally Impaired - EI/SEI – Loon Lake
- Early Childhood Special Education, ECSE – Twin Sun, Dublin, Walled Lake & Wixom
- Autism Spectrum Disorder, ASD – Oakley Park, Hickory Woods & Keith
- Cognitive Impairment/Moderate Cognitive Impairment, CI/MOCI - Walled Lake & Meadowbrook
- Severe Multiple Impairment, SXI – Hickory Woods

Middle School Special Services Programs:

- Resource Rooms at all four Middle Schools.
- Emotionally Impaired/Severely Emotionally Impaired - EI/SEI – Banks
- Autism Spectrum Disorder, ASD – Walnut Creek
- Cognitive Impairment/Moderate Cognitive Impairment, CI/MOCI – Clifford Smart

High School Special Services Programs:

- Resource Rooms at all three High Schools.
- Emotionally Impaired/Severely Emotionally Impaired - EI/SEI – WL Western
- Autism Spectrum Disorder, ASD – WL Northern
- Cognitive Impairment/Moderate Cognitive Impairment, CI/MOCI – WL Central
- Severe Multiple Impairment, SXI – WL Central

Postsecondary Special Services:

- Three tiers Young Adults ages 18-26 based on the IEP – Community Education Center

9. What does WLCSD do when they have disagreements about child placements?

Walled Lake Schools rarely has disagreements about child placements, but when we do, we bring all our resources to bear together, to collaborate on the best educational plan possible. Walled Lake Schools' Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) teams include: principals, the director of Special Services, teachers, social workers, psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech pathologists and other experts all focused on the individual plan for each individual child. Walled Lake Schools addressed over 1,870 IEPs this school year. These are collaboratively developed by our staff to assist each child to reach his/her fullest potential.

10. Have there been prior IEP decisions challenged by families and IEP recommendations reversed given the family challenge?

Yes. When parents have questions and concerns about recommendations made by the IEP Team, WLCSD goes the second and third mile to work with all involved to identify the best possible solution for the educational success of the child.

There are times when an objective review identifies unique variables that were overlooked and there is a change in the initial IEP recommendations. This is a good thing when it happens because it demonstrates, not that an educational system failed, but that the system worked and corrections were able to be made.