



# Chisago Lakes Education Center

## SOAR Program Skillbuilding Opportunities for Academic Resiliency

Through child-centered supports, our mission is to provide a safe, engaging, supportive, and structured learning environment that increases independence and enhances quality of life.

### What is the SOAR Program?

SOAR is a federal setting IV program that serves students with behavioral needs and functional communication deficits that are significantly interfering with his/her educational progress, and whose least restrictive environment is a setting separate from the mainstream, general education building. Through child-centered supports, our mission is to provide a safe, engaging, supportive, and structured learning environment that increases independence and enhances quality of life.



### Educational Supports

The SOAR program has been intentionally designed to support students with functional communication needs and challenging behavior. Because of our student's unique needs, we incorporate a comprehensive "package" of supports to ensure our students become independent learners. We pride ourselves on creating a student-centered, structured environment that fosters the development of functional communication and self-regulation skills. Each student's program is tailored to their individual needs using strategies and supports including:

- **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports:** Each student has an individualized behavior support plan (BSP) with the goal of reducing challenging or "target" behaviors and increasing the use of functionally-equivalent replacement behaviors, to help students get what they want and need more appropriately. Each BSP includes evidence-based strategies for preventing challenging behavior, teaching and reinforcing the use of replacement behaviors, and responding to target behaviors.
- **Functional Communication Training:** We use a range of techniques and technologies to build language skills so students have a means of independently communicating their wants and needs. All SOAR students have access to services provided by a Speech and Language Pathologist as outlined in their IEP.
- **Visual Supports:** We use a variety of visual supports to help promote flexibility, predictability, and independence. Students have access to individual work spaces, visual work systems, visual schedules, color coded items, and more.
- **Related Services:** SOAR students have access to a full range of related services including speech/language therapy, consultation from occupational therapists, assistive technology, group instruction from a school psychologist, developmental adaptive physical education (DAPE), and recreation/leisure/play instruction, as outlined in their IEP.





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**Reset Rooms:** Our program space includes two small individual student rooms designed to foster self-regulation. These “reset rooms” allow students a space to separate from the stimulation of the classroom (under full adult supervision) and calm their bodies to become ready to learn. Student use of these rooms is based on individual need.



**Sensory Rooms:** Our students may need to utilize sensory techniques to help them become ready to learn, and we make all efforts to accommodate these unique needs. All SOAR students have access to two sensory rooms which include a variety of tools including an array of fidgets, trampoline, swing, stability balls, calming music, bean bags, and more. Each student’s IEP and behavior support plan will drive what supports the students need and when they use them.

### Instruction

Educational instruction provided in the SOAR program is based on each student’s individual needs, and may be implemented as group instruction, paired instruction, or individual instruction. SOAR staff engage students in learning through the use of:

- **Functional Routines** include all routines necessary to be independent. These may include using the bathroom, washing hands, getting lunch, putting a backpack away, following a schedule, moving about the building. All staff interactions with students are purposefully planned to promote participation and independence in these routines.
- **Functional Academics** are addressed throughout the school day. They are taught formally and incidentally, and include basic math, writing, and reading skills necessary to independently navigate the world. Examples include reading a schedule, telling time, counting money, and stating personal information.
- **Independent work-box systems** teach students through visual structure, to independently complete tasks within their skillset. This system prepares students for future supported employment.

### Meet our team!

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