

Parent
Handbook for
Special
Education
Somers CSD

Dear Special Education Families,

Navigating the world of special education can sometimes feel like embarking on an uncharted path. However, please know that you are not alone. Alongside the very supportive Special Education Parent Teacher Association (SEPTA), our dedicated team of educators, specialists, and administrators are here to provide support and guidance every step of the way.

In the following pages, you will find our Special Education Parent Handbook. This comprehensive resource has been created to serve as a roadmap, offering valuable insights, resources, and information to help you advocate for your child and navigate the special education system with confidence.

In this handbook, you'll discover an overview of our special education programs, details about Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), tips for effective communication with educators, and a listing of support services available to you and your family.

Beyond this handbook's contents, please remember that our commitment to you extends beyond the written word. We are here to listen, to understand, and to collaborate with you in creating an educational experience that meets the unique needs of your child.

Please reach out whenever you have questions or concerns. Your voice matters, and your insights are invaluable in shaping your child's education.

In closing, please accept my heartfelt gratitude for entrusting us with the privilege of educating and supporting your child. We will work together to ensure that every child thrives, grows, and reaches their fullest potential.

With warm regards,

Stacey Elconin

Director of Special Services

[Contents](#)

Program Overview	4
Primrose School	8
Somers Intermediate School	9
Somers Middle School	10
Somers High School	12
Specialized Supports	15
Related Services	16
Behavioral Supports	17
Communication	18
Somers Special Education PTA	20
Educational Acronyms	21

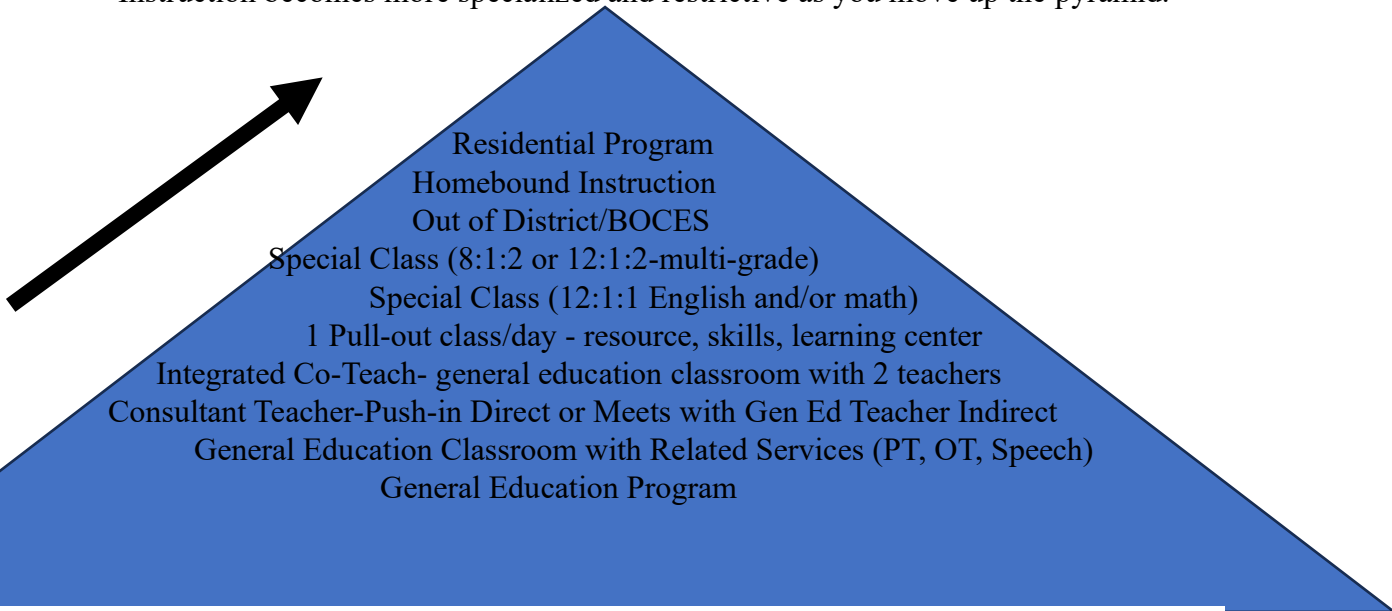
Program Overview

For every Individualized Education Plan (IEP) we create with families, we consider educating the child in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This allows us to provide support for students only in the areas needed and for students to spend as much time as possible and as appropriate with their general education peers and with the general education curriculum. This philosophy is known as our LIFE Initiative. LIFE stands for Learning Inclusively For Everyone. As you will see on the following pages, even students who need the most intensive support spend time with their general education peers daily.

The pyramid below represents the programs we offer. The bottom represents the least restrictive environment and the most time spent with general education peers and curriculum. The top represents the most restrictive environment and the least time spent with general education peers and curriculum.

Continuum of Special Education Services

Instruction becomes more specialized and restrictive as you move up the pyramid.



Extended School Year

Extended School Year (ESY) Services refer to special education and/or related services provided for 6 weeks during the Summer. These services and programs are at no cost to the family. ESY services are only necessary when the child with a disability's educational gains during the regular school year show significant regression and longer than typical skill reacquisition after breaks. This regression is documented throughout the school year and the need and justification for ESY is discussed at the students' Annual Review meeting.

Special Education Office and Building Staff – Please note-all staff are subject to change based on yearly needs.

The Special Education office is located in Somers Middle School.

Phone # 914-277-3777

Office Staff and email:

Stacey Elconin, Director of Special Services - selconin@somersschools.org

Meghan Febbie, Assistant Director of Special Services - mfebbie@somersschools.org

Kim Morrissey, CSE/CPSE Chairperson - kmorrissey@somersschools.org

Vanessa Arturi, Administrative Assistant/ Assistant to Director - varturi@somersschools.org

Anne-Marie Annunziato, CPSE Senior Office Assistant - aannunziato@somersschools.org

Alison Sprague – Elementary Senior Office Assistant - asprague@somersschools.org

Dawn Della Camera, Secondary Senior Office assistant - ddellacamera@somersschools.org

School Psychologists

School	Name	Contact Info
PES	Dr. Emma Duran (UPK, K) Ms. Ilana Webster(1, 2)	eduran@somersschools.org iwebster@somersschools.org
SIS	Dr. Danielle Perrotto (3,4) Mr. Sean Kennelly(5)	dperrotto@somersschools.org skenelly@somersschools.org
SMS	Mr. Sean Kennelly (6) Dr. Samantha Morrison (7,8)	skenelly@somersschools.org smorrison@somersschools.org
SHS	Ms. Stefanie Candido (9,10) Ms. Jaclyn Conlin-Osoria (11,12)	scandido@somersschools.org jconlinosoria@somersschools.org

Social Workers

School	Name	Contact Info
PES/SIS/SMS /SHS	Ms. Kristen Rigaglia Ms. Shannon Scavelli Ms. Jenna Knudsen	krigaglia@somersschools.org sscavelli@somersschools.org jknudsen@somersschools.org

Occupational Therapy

School	Name	Contact Info
PES/SHS	Ms. DeAnne Chin, OT Ms. Christa Porter, COTA	dchin@somersschools.org cporter@somersschools.org
SIS/SMS	Ms. Allison Quincoses OT Ms. Danielle Tagliaferro COTA	aquincoses@somersschools.org dtagliaferro@somersschools.org

Physical Therapy

School	Name	Contact Info
PES/SHS	Ms. Jacqueline Brunell	jbrunell@somersschools.org
SIS/SMS	Ms. Caroline Ringle	cringle@somersschools.org

Speech and Language Therapy

School	Name	Contact Info
PES	Ms. Karen Dovi Ms. Elizabeth Joline Ms. Danielle Paglia Ms. Sarah Drohan	kdovi@somersschools.org ejoline@somersschools.org dpaglia@somersschools.org sdrohan@somersschools.org
SIS	Ms. Francesca Annunziata Mejia Ms. Lindsay Merchant Ms. Jessica Hazel .5	fannunziatamejia@somersschools.org lmerchant@somersschools.org jhazel@somersschools.org
SMS	Ms. Ashley Terilli	aterilli@somersschools.org
SHS	Ms. Jacqueline Calka Ms. Jessica Hazel .5	jcalka@somersschools.org jhazel@somersschools.org

Physical Therapy

School	Name	Contact Info
PES/SHS	Ms. Jacqueline Brunell	jbrunell@somersschools.org
SIS/SMS	Ms. Caroline Ringle	cringle@somersschools.org

Special Education Teachers

School	Name	Type of Class	Contact Info
PES	Ms. Crystle Regulbuto Ms. Jenna Dwyer Ms. Constance Ryan Ms. Kathy Kane Ms. Therese Marshall Ms. Lauren Humen Ms. Eileen Cass Ms. Spyridoula Adanuncio	8:1:2 mixed grade 12:1:3 mixed grade 12:1:3 mixed grade K co-teach 1 st 12:1:1 ELA Math 1 st co-teach 2 nd 12:1:1 ELA Math 2 nd co-teach	cregulbuto@somersschools.org jdwyer@somersschools.org cryan@somersschools.org kkane@somersschools.org tmarshall@somersschools.org lhumen@somersschools.org ecass@somersschools.org sadanuncio@somersschools.org
SIS	Ms. Stephanie Duffy Ms. Amy Carroll Ms. Laurie Spinosa Ms. Lauren Rosolen Ms. Jennifer Mojica Ms. Caitlin Stapleton Ms. Lauren Brelesky Ms. Melissa Mamarella Ms. Ellen Mallon Ms. Randi Pepe Ms. Felicia Salamone	12:1:2 mixed grade 3 rd 12:1:1 ELA Math 3 rd co-teach 3 rd co-teach 4 th 12:1:1 ELA Math 4 th 12:1:1 ELA Math 4 th co-teach 4 th co-teach 4 th co-teach 5 th 12:1:1 ELA Math 5 th co-teach 5 th co-teach	sduffy@somersschools.org acarroll@somersschools.org lspinosa@somersschools.org lrosolen@somersschools.org jmojica@somersschools.org cstapleton@somersschools.org lbrelesky@somersschools.org mmamarella@somersschools.org emallon@somersschools.org rpepe@somersschools.org fsalamone@somersschools.org
SMS- Most teach a skills or Learn. Center class, too	Ms. Julia Mohl Mr. Jake Graham Ms. Janna Salce Ms. Jackie Dolan Ms. Dawn Reimer Ms. Andrea Hayden Ms. Kim Gordon Ms. Danyelle Giloth Mr. Bryan Muller Ms. Leanne Willie Ms. Cathy Jelinek Ms. Kim Gordon Ms. Marianna Breglio Ms. Darlene Esposito Ms. Agustina Almonte	8:1:1 mixed grade 6 th co-teach & 12:1:1 ELA 6 th co-teach & 12:1:1 Math 6 th co-teach Social Studies 6 th co-teach Science 7 th co-teach ELA 7 th 12:1:1 ELA PAF Wilson 7 th co-teach & 12:1:1 math 7 th co-teach Social Studies 7 th co-teach Science 8 th co-teach ELA 8 th 12:1:1 ELA PAF Wilson 8 th co-teach & 12:1:1 Math 8 th co-teach Social Studies 8 th co-teach Science	jmohl@somersschools.org jgraham@somersschools.org jsalce@somersschools.org jdoaln@somersschools.org dreimer@somersschools.org ahayden@somersschools.org kgordon@somersschools.org dgiloth@somersschools.org bmuller@somersschools.org lwillie@somersschools.org cjelinek@somersschools.org kgordon@somersschools.org mbreglio@somersschools.org desposito@somersschools.org aalmonte@somersschools.org
SHS Most teach a skills	Ms. Melissa Carino Ms. Annie McGuire Ms. Doreen Stoecker Mr. Jed Varricchio Ms. Tammar Merav Mr. James Ruth	8:1:2 mixed grade 9-12 GOAL Work Based L 9-12 GOAL, WBL, Transition 9 th co-teach English/Global 10 th co-teach English 11 th and 12 th 12:1:1 English	mcarino@somersschools.org amcguire@somersschools.org dstoecker@somersschools.org jvarricchio@somersschools.org tmerav@somersschools.org jruth@somersschools.org

or Learn. Center class, too	Ms. Chrissy Martin Ms. Karin Brill Ms. Barbara Bird Mr. Kevin Claesgens Ms. Laura Vegliante Ms. Joan Cass Ms. Colleen DeRenzis Mr. Matt Ridgeway Ms. Sara Norton	9 th and 10 th 12:1:1 English Co-teach Biology Co-teach Earth Science Co-teach Algebra & Geometry 9 th -12 th 12:1:1 Math Co-teach Global10 11 th and 12 th Learning Center Co-teach US History & Alt Sc Co-teach English 11 & Alt Sc	cmartin@somersschools.org kbrill@somersschools.org bbird@somersschools.org kclaesgens@somersschools.org lvegliante@somersschools.org jcass@somersschools.org cderenzis@somersschools.org mridgeway@somersschools.org snorton@somersschools.org
---	--	---	--

Primrose School

Katie Winter, Principal - kwinter@somersschools.org

Meg Benedetto, Assistant Principal - mcbenedetto@somersschools.org

School main office phone number: 914-248-8888

Primrose is our Kindergarten, first, and second grade school. There are also several Universal Pre-K (UPK) classes running through the YMCA and students with special needs in pre-school are supported through our Committee on Pre-School Special Education (CPSE).

Programs Available (listed from least to most restrictive)

ICT- Integrated Co-teach is a program where students receive special education services in a general education classroom for Language Arts and Math. There is a general education teacher, a special education teacher and a teaching assistant who assist students in meeting IEP goals. The three adults in the classroom plan for and assist all students in the class whether they have an IEP or not. (Provided in grades K, 1, and 2)

Special Class 12:1:1. Students receive direct instruction in reading, writing, and/or math in a 12:1:1 ratio (no more than 12 students to 1 teacher and 1 teaching assistant). This instruction occurs in a separate classroom for just the ELA and Math blocks in the day. For the remainder of the child's school day, they are with their general education peers (homeroom/morning meeting, snack, science, social studies, lunch/recess, and specials). These students also receive consultant teacher support for science and social studies within the general education classroom. The special education teacher and teaching assistant who support the students during the ELA block take turns pushing-into the general education classroom during science and social studies. Students in special class math use Big Ideas as their math grade level curriculum rather than Everyday Math. (Provided in grades 1 and 2)

Special Class 8:1:2 or 12:1:3. These are more specialized mixed grade classrooms where programs are tailored to students' individual needs throughout the entire school day. All students spend snack, lunch and recess with their general education peers and any additional time that is socially and/or academically appropriate for the individual student. These classrooms are aligned with grade level general education classrooms. Students may receive both academic and social emotional supports as needed to meet their needs. As the ratios suggest, classrooms have up to either 8 or 12 students with 1 Special Education Teacher and 2 or 3 Teaching Assistants. While these classrooms are the "home-base" for students, they do have access to their general education

homeroom. Instructional programs are tailored to meet individual's needs for both curriculum and the environment in which curriculum is delivered*:

- general education curriculum in the general education classroom
- general education curriculum in the special education classroom
- modified / alternate curriculum in the special education classroom. (Provided in grades

K, 1, and 2)

*Alternate curriculum may be utilized in order for students to make progress, particularly if they are not showing growth using the general education curriculum. For example, students in special classes for math may use Big Ideas, Touch Math, or modified Everyday Math as well as IXL supports in order to increase their math understanding and get closer to grade level expectations. Students who need additional reading support for decoding and encoding may receive PAF, Wilson, and/or Orton Gillingham programs. Use of any of these programs is determined with the family and is based on standardized testing and response to general education curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Somers Intermediate School

Linda Belger, Principal - lbelger@somersschools.org

Kyle Grogan, Assistant Principal - kgrogan@somersschools.org

Main office phone number: 914-277-4344

Somers Intermediate School or “SIS” is our third, fourth, and fifth grade school. Children are gradually given more independence with tasks and move from learning to read to reading to learn.

Programs Available (listed from least to most restrictive)

Resource Room is a program where students get extra support in ELA, Math, and/or organizational skills by a special education teacher for 40 minutes per day either in an integrated or non-integrated setting. This program is provided in a 5:1 ratio which means up to 5 students with one special education teacher. (Provided as a single or mixed grade program in grades 3-5 depending on overall student needs in the building).

ICT- Integrated Co-teach is a program where students receive special education services in a general education classroom for Language Arts and Math. There is a general education teacher, a special education teacher and a teaching assistant who assist students in meeting IEP goals. The three adults in the classroom plan for and assist all students in the class whether they have an IEP or not. (Provided in grades 3, 4, and 5)

Special Class 12:1:1. Students receive direct instruction in reading, writing, and/or math in a 12:1:1 ratio (no more than 12 students to 1 teacher and 1 teaching assistant). This instruction occurs in a separate classroom for just the ELA and Math blocks in the day. For the remainder of the child’s school day, they are with their general education peers (homeroom/morning meeting, snack, science, social studies, lunch/recess, and specials). These students also receive consultant teacher support for science and social studies within the general education classroom. The special education teacher and teaching assistant who support the students during the ELA block take turns pushing-into the general education classroom during science and social studies. (Provided in grades 3, 4, and 5)

Special Class 12:1:2. This is a more specialized mixed grade classroom where programs are tailored to students' individual needs throughout the entire school day. All students spend snack, lunch and recess with their general education peers and any additional time that is socially and/or academically appropriate for the individual student. The students are partnered with grade level general education classrooms. Students may receive both academic and social emotional supports as needed to meet their needs. The class has up to 12 students with 1 Special Education Teacher and 2 Teaching Assistants. While this classroom is the "home-base" for students, they do have access to their general education partner homeroom. Instructional programs are tailored to meet individual's needs for both curriculum and the environment in which curriculum is delivered*:

- general education curriculum in the general education classroom
- general education curriculum in the special education classroom
- modified / alternate curriculum in the special education classroom. (Provided in grades

3, 4, and 5)

*Alternate curriculum may be utilized in order for students to make progress, particularly if they are not showing growth using the general education curriculum. For example, students in special classes for math may use Big Ideas, Touch Math, or modified Everyday Math as well as IXL supports in order to increase their math understanding and get closer to grade level expectations. Students who need additional reading support for decoding and encoding may receive PAF, Wilson, and/or Orton Gillingham programs. Use of any of these programs is determined with the family and is based on standardized testing and response to general education curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Somers Middle School

Jennifer Mangone, Principal - jmangone@somersschools.org

Kristen Mucciacciaro, Assistant Principal - kmucciacciaro@somersschools.org

Main office phone number: 914-277-3399

Somers Middle School or "SMS" is our sixth, seventh, and eighth grade building. This is the first time children no longer have a homeroom with one teacher. Students change classes for all subjects and they have a different teacher for each class. Students also have lockers to store their belongings and they have new classes such as health, family and career science, world language and technology. Students may have several special education teachers, one of whom will be their case manager. The case manager acts as the main point of communication between the student's family and all of their teachers. The case manager also makes sure that all of the teachers know about a student's IEP accommodations and modifications, and they write the IEP for the following year.

Programs Available (listed from least to most restrictive)

ICT- Integrated Co-teach is a program where students receive special education services in a general education classroom for Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. There is a general education teacher and a special education teacher who assist students in meeting IEP goals. The two adults in the classroom plan for and assist all students in the class whether they have an IEP or not. (Provided in grades 6, 7, and 8)

Special Class 12:1:1. Students receive direct instruction in reading, writing, and/or math in a 12:1:1 ratio (no more than 12 students to 1 teacher and 1 teaching assistant). This instruction occurs during the ELA and Math periods in the day. For the remainder of the child's school day, they are with their general education peers (science, social studies, lunch/recess, and triads). These students may also receive consultant teacher or co-teach support for science and social studies within the general education classroom. (Provided in grades 6, 7, and 8)

Special Class 8:1:1 This is a more specialized mixed grade classroom where programs are tailored to students' individual needs throughout the entire school day. All students spend lunch and recess with their general education peers and any additional time that is socially and/or academically appropriate for the individual student. Students may receive both academic and social emotional supports as needed to meet their needs. The class has up to 8 students with 1 Special Education Teacher and 1 Teaching Assistant. While this classroom is the "home-base" for students, they do have access to general education classes and subjects as appropriate. Instructional programs are tailored to meet individual's needs for both curriculum and the environment in which curriculum is delivered*:

- general education curriculum in the general education classroom
- general education curriculum in the special education classroom
- modified / alternate curriculum in the special education classroom. (Provided in grades

6, 7, and 8)

*Alternate curriculum may be utilized in order for students to make progress, particularly if they are not showing growth using the general education curriculum. For example, students in special classes for math may use Big Ideas, Touch Math, or modified Everyday Math as well as IXL supports in order to increase their math understanding and get closer to grade level expectations. Students who need additional reading support for decoding and encoding may receive PAF, Wilson, and/or Orton Gillingham programs. Use of any of these programs is determined with the family and is based on standardized testing and response to general education curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Support Periods. Since the academic and organizational demands of middle school increase, students are often given a support period (or 2) in addition to the classes outlined above. These support classes are called Learning Center and Skills Class.

Learning Center meets in a 12:1 ratio (this means up to 12 students with one special education teacher. The primary focus of this support period is executive functioning (organizational skills) and study skills. The class meets every other day in the student's schedule.

Skills Class meets in a 12:1:1 ratio (this means up to 12 students with one special education teacher and one teaching assistant. This smaller student to teacher ratio allows students to get support in executive functioning (organizational skills), study skills and preview, review, and re-teaching of content. This class meets daily in the student's schedule.

Language Other Than English: Middle School students can take Spanish, Italian, or French for their 3 years of middle school which culminates in taking an exam to earn 1 High School credit toward graduation in World Language. For students who have a combination of significant deficits in reading, writing, language, and/or cognitive abilities a Language Other Than English Exemption (LOTE), will be considered. Students with a LOTE exemption still graduate with 22+ high school credits and earn the same regents diploma as their peers without disabilities.

More information can be found at this site:

<https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/world-languages/lote-faq.pdf>

Somers High School

Peter Rodrigues, Principal – prodrigues@somersschools.org

Brian Carroll, Assistant Principal – bcarroll@somersschools.org

Jessica Anderson, Assistant Principal - janderson@somersschools.org

Main office phone number: 914-248-8585

Somers High School or SHS serves our 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders and students needing special education services through the age of 21. Due to high school requirements and multiple course selections, each grade level provides differing programs, with some courses not providing any support in the classroom. While some courses are not offered with special education services, there is support in place at the high school to meet the needs of all learners. Such building level services accessible by all students are teacher office hours for extra help, the testing center, transition services, the writing center, and the academic support center (ASC). Due to the varied special education programs offered by grade level, descriptions of programs will include grade level and subjects served by each program. Programs are arranged from least to most restrictive. Building level supports, available to all grades and all students, will be listed separately.

Please note that several courses are offered with embedded honors (EH) distinction. Embedded honors are an opportunity for all students to pursue either the mandatory level of assessment or honors level. Students can float in or out of honors coursework depending on interest, however, to obtain honors status on their academic record, students must complete a minimum number of honors assessments. Additionally, students who chose to take Humanities must opt out of recommended SS and/or English special education placements. Humanities content is supported through skills, learning center, and/or ASC services.

As part of student special education services at the high school, all students with IEPs are assigned to case managers. At times, because of the nature of a high school schedule combined with students' multiple course offerings, the students' case managers may not be teachers who will see the student in classes. However, all case managers monitor student grades and gather feedback from the students' teachers. Case managers also check in with the students, write their IEPs and attend their CSE meetings.

Programs Available (listed from least to most restrictive)

Consultant Teacher Indirect

- Consultant Teacher Indirect (CT-I) is a program for students as they begin to transition out of special education services. Assigned case managers monitor student grades, communicate with teachers and parents to ensure students are accessing their accommodations and succeeding in classes, and provide guidance for additional building level supports students can, and perhaps should, access. Students receiving CT-I services

typically have no or very few goals as they have exhibited the skills needed for academic independence. *Available to all grade levels.*

Consultant Teacher Direct/Indirect

Consultant Teacher Direct/Indirect is a program for students that do not require Co-Taught services yet need direct support in some areas. Typically, these students are members of the GOAL (see below) program. A Special Education Teacher and Teaching Assistants are utilized to support students directly within the classroom. *Available at all grade levels.*

Integrated Co-Teach

- Global 9EH, Global 10EH, English 9EH, English 10EH, English 11EH, Algebra 9, Algebra 10, Earth Science, Biology
- Integrated Co-Teach is taught daily by a content area teacher and special education teacher. The team of teachers work together to plan differentiated lessons and materials that support a wide range of needs.

Co-Teach Algebra 1.5

- Algebra 9A/9B/10A
- Algebra 1.5 is taught over a 1.5-year period to provide students with the additional time needed to have a deeper understanding of algebraic concepts prior to taking the Regents exam in January of their second year.
- Depending on how student perform on the Regents in January, they may spend more time reviewing for a second attempt in June or they may move on to some pre-requisite math topics to prepare them as they make choices for a math class for their Junior year.

Learning Center 12:1

- All grades
- Learning Center meets 6 times over an 8-day schedule. Learning Center supports student executive functioning skills and organization.

Skills 12:1:1

- Grades 9,10,11
- Skills meets 6 times over an 8-day schedule. Skills is a more supportive environment that supports student executive functioning, organization, and academic support through review, pre-teaching, and/or assessment preparation. Additionally, academic support for short- and long-term assignments is provided.

Special Class 12:1:1

- Math 9, 10, 11 English 9, 10, 11,12
- Special Class allows for materials to be taught at a slower pace with accommodations to further differentiate the learning process and deepen student understanding.

Growth Oriented Accessible Learning (GOAL)

- This program identifies the students at Somers High School who need more intensive support through special education services. It has been identified that these students most often need more than one skills support class in their day to help them access the general education curriculum. This program embeds assistive technology, motor intervention, speech services, psychological and behavioral support, and transition services within their school day to assure they can access their education independently. A vital part of this program is the collaboration between the special education teachers, related service providers and the general education teachers within the school and community. Using a team approach, this program focuses on each student's specific needs and goals, which are the program's driving force. The most important part of this program is the inclusivity with general education peers. It is vital that these students are educated with their general education peers within the classroom setting but also in social situations. *Accessible for students up to age 21.*

Special Class 8:1:2

- All grades up to age 21
- This is a highly supportive class structure designed to support students with academics, daily living skills, communication skills, and individualized support for each student.

Work-Based Learning (WBL)

The Somers High School Work-Based Learning programs (WBL) assists students with understanding the linkages among school, work, community, and postsecondary education. WBL allows students to explore and learn about a variety of career options, through exploration of various careers as well as entry level jobs available to teenagers and young adults. This program can be extremely beneficial to students by helping them clarify career interests, identifying soft skills (positive traits and behaviors that you need for any job), participating in activities within the school and surrounding communities as well as explore postsecondary education options. With the completion of the Work-Based Learning program students will receive the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) credential along with their high school diploma.

The purpose of the Somers High School Work-based Learning Program is to help students apply academic and technical skills in real world, hands-on situations. All students, including those with disabilities, must be provided with access to and can benefit from work-based learning. Work-based learning takes place in both the workplace and the classroom. The students in this program are unpaid. The focus of the program is to provide experience in a variety of vocations. The end goal for our students after these experiences is for them to be prepared to become paid employees.

Testing Center

The Testing Center's purpose is to provide an alternate location and access to IEP accommodations in a quiet, supported environment. Students must make appointments for the testing center. Students must scan a QR code which is posted in classrooms and hallways or [click here](#) to create an appointment.

Academic Support Center (ASC)

The Academic Support Center is a place where students can receive academic and organizational support from SHS staff throughout the school day. All students may access the ASC when struggling to master a specific content topic or academic skill. Students may drop in during lunch, a free period, skills, learning center, or study hall. ASC offers support in English, Social Studies, Math, World Language, Science and study/organizational skills at various times throughout the day.

Writing Center

Consulting with a writing coach helps students advocate for themselves and use available resources to their advantage. The writing center will help students:

- Approach all kinds of writing tasks including but not limited to short answer responses, essays, reflections and more
- Improve general writing skills and areas of frustration/resistance regarding the writing process
- Review exemplars before an in-class writing assessment to review the expectations for specific writing tasks, such as literary analysis, thematic essays, Document Based Question essays, etc.

All students may access the Writing Center, but appointments are necessary to access the writing center. For more information or to schedule an appointment [click here](#).

Transitional Support Services

All classified high school students have transition needs documented in their IEP's annually, but some require more intensive transition planning services. The purpose of the additional transition services is to spend some time with students and their families to help guide them toward the student's (and family's) hopes and dreams for the future. Often, these are difficult topics as students and families may not be ready to think about the future and can be anxious about what's next. When we meet regarding transition, all areas of a student's life are addressed: living, social, academic, vocational. We help families identify their hopes and dreams for the future and see what supports and programs need to be put into place at each step for them to reach these goals.

Specialized Supports

Building level supports are called such because all students have access to them whether they have an IEP or not. Students in grades K-12 may need academic or social emotional support at any time in their career.

Academics Each building has academic support periods and providers for reading and math. As students get to Middle and High School, these supports become more subject based and specialized. In Middle School, any student can see any of their subject area teachers or their special education teacher during their What I Need (WIN) period. In high school any student can see a subject area teacher by accessing the Academic Support Center (ASC). The ASC can be by

drop in appointment or it is sometimes placed into a student's individual schedule regularly through the guidance department.

Social Emotional Each building has several members of the wellness team ready to support students with any social emotional need. These can range from peer interactions, changing family dynamics, school stress, or anything else a student may want to discuss with a trusted adult in the school. Any student can see a school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker at any time. Students in grades K-8 may be asked if they wish to participate in a lunch bunch or lunch group (both require parent permission). These lunch groups allow students to participate in sessions with one of our providers to build coping skills and to support positive peer interactions.

Reading Supports

If a child's Special Education Re-evaluation testing or building level assessment shows below average decoding (reading words) or encoding (spelling words) scores, a child may receive specialized multi-sensory reading support (OG, PAF, Wilson). These programs are building level services.

Math Supports

If a child's Special Education Re-evaluation testing or building level assessment shows below average scores in calculation, problem solving and/or numeric operations, a child may receive small group pull out services at the building level to gain extra practice and supports in these concepts.

Physical Education

Adaptive Physical Education-Adaptive Physical Education (APE-does require an IEP) focuses on providing tailored physical activities and exercises that accommodate the abilities, limitations, and learning styles of each student. The goal of APE is to promote physical fitness, motor skills development, social interaction, and overall well-being for individuals who may require modifications or accommodations to participate fully in traditional physical education settings. This service can be: integrated into a general education PE class, provided as a separate support period, provided as a separate smaller PE class, or provided as a combination of these.

Related Services

Related services are those that assist a student in benefiting from other special education services or assist the student in accessing the general education curriculum. Related services mean developmental, corrective, and other supportive services that are required to assist a student with a disability. Related services include but are not limited to speech-language therapy, audiology services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling, parent counseling and training, school nurse services, and assistive technology services.

These services are accessed through evaluation and eligibility determination at a CSE meeting. The services can take place as a push in (integrated) or a pull-out (non-integrated) support. The services can be provided directly to the student or indirectly as a consultation where the provider supports the child's teachers in accommodating their needs within the classroom setting.

Speech-Language Therapy: Speech-language therapy helps children improve their communication skills, including speaking, listening, understanding, and using language. It also addresses difficulties with swallowing or feeding.

Audiology Services: Audiology services focus on hearing-related issues. Audiologists assess hearing abilities, provide interventions for hearing loss, and offer strategies to improve auditory skills.

Physical Therapy: Physical therapy assists children in developing, improving, or maintaining their physical abilities and mobility. It addresses issues such as strength, balance, coordination, and gross motor skills.

Occupational Therapy: Occupational therapy helps children develop the skills needed for daily activities, such as self-care, play, and school tasks. It addresses fine motor skills, sensory processing, and activities of daily living.

Counseling: Counseling provides emotional and behavioral support to children. It helps them cope with challenges, manage emotions, develop social skills, and improve self-esteem.

Parent Counseling and Training: Parent counseling and training offer guidance and support to parents or caregivers. It helps them understand their child's needs, learn effective strategies for supporting their child's development, and navigate the special education system.

School Nurse Services: School nurse services focus on promoting health and wellness within the school setting. Nurses provide medical care, administer medications, manage health conditions, and offer health education.

Assistive Technology Services: Assistive technology services involve the use of tools and devices to support children with disabilities in their learning and daily activities. This can include specialized software, communication devices, adapted equipment, and other assistive technologies tailored to individual needs.

Teacher of the Hearing Impaired, Teacher of the Visually Impaired, and/or Feeding Therapy can also be provided if applicable to a particular student.

Behavioral Supports

Students in Somers Central School District are ongoing learners. We recognize that when students develop appropriate learning behaviors, they can better academically and socially progress. When considering behavior supports as described below, the student's team will look at their specific self-regulation, executive functioning and social skills. As a district we provide learning opportunities throughout a child's educational career so that they can become more independent in these skills.

Some students may require a positive reinforcement plan or classroom behavior chart. These are created with the guidance of the school psychologist with input from the family and teacher. The focus is on promoting positive behavior and/or diminishing a negative behavior by finding what is most motivating to a student to achieve that goal.

Some students may require a more intensive support for behavior. When this occurs, we contract with two agencies (Program For Little Learners and Vital Behaviors) in order to get the support of a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). These professionals work with our school team and families to address more significant behavioral concerns. Because applied behavior analysis (ABA) is largely based on behavior and its consequences, techniques generally involve teaching individuals more effective ways of behaving through positive reinforcement and working to change the social consequences of existing behavior. Treatment approaches based on ABA have been empirically shown to be effective in a wide variety of areas. The BCBA will come observe the student and then ask the school team to take data on the behavior(s) in order to write up a Functional Behavior Analysis (FBA) and then a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).

- Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)

A tool that collects data to identify the cause or function of a behavior. FBAs can help determine why a behavior is occurring, and in what conditions it happens. Different tools can be used for FBAs, and the best ones are selected on a case-by-case basis for each student.

- Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

A written plan that's based on the information gathered in the FBA. BIPs specify actions that can be taken to improve or replace a behavior, and guide educators and other staff on how to support students. BIPs are positive and focus on giving students the skills they need to interact successfully in school. They're part of a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and are legally binding and valid, just like other special education documents.

The District's Code of conduct can be found here: <https://www.somersschools.org/board-of-education/code-of-conduct>

Part 201 of NYS Commissioner's Regulations on discipline for students with disabilities can be found here (click the tab under the elephant once you get to the page): <https://www.nysed.gov/special-education/part-201-regulations-commissioner>

Communication

Communication is an integral part of student success. Depending on a student's needs, communication may be more frequent. Communication can vary from teacher to teacher; however, communication is a priority and on-going on an individualized basis depending on the needs of students and their families. It is always best to speak with your child's teacher(s) about specific communication needs.

Responses to parent communication can be expected within 24 hours, unless communication is sent after school on Fridays or the afternoon prior to extended breaks.

Teacher Pairings - Students in our 8:1:1 and 8:1:2 programs will have their primary special education teacher as their main point of contact. Students in our 12:1:2, 12:1:3, and co-teach classes will also have a general education teacher (or at the secondary level, several general education teachers). These pairs of teachers meet weekly to plan for time when the special education students will be included in the general education setting and how they will be supported. Support can be in the form of an adult from the smaller class going to the general

education class with the student and/or in modified materials so that the student may more fully participate in the general classroom lesson. Co-teach partnerships have the same daily prep period and plan together for the whole class. While the special education teacher is always the main point of contact, communications home will often be from both teachers and emails from parents should be addressed to both the special education and general education teacher(s) so everyone has the same information and is “on the same page.”

At the elementary level, students in the 12:1:2 and 12:1:3 settings will have desks and backpack hooks in both their special education and general education classrooms. They will be on both class lists and will be included in all classroom celebrations and birthday parties that occur in the general education homeroom. During Back to school night, a separate half hour is allotted to meet the special education teacher and see that classroom space. Then, families join the general education homeroom for that presentation.

The secondary schedules are period based, so parents have times allotted where they visit every classroom their child attends throughout the day during back to school night. Secondary students do not have homerooms, but every student is given a locker for their belongings.

Elementary

Primrose School uses Parent Square to communicate with students and families by email. Often, teachers will send paper flyers and newsletters home as well.

Somers Intermediate School uses Microsoft Teams to communicate with students and families. Planners are distributed to students in Grades 3-6 and can be used for brief communication with your child’s teacher(s) as well.

Secondary

At the secondary level, Grades 6-12 and for students up to age 21(22), students change classes and have multiple teachers throughout their day. At the start of the school year, your child’s case manager will reach out to introduce themselves. It is recommended that the case manager be included in all communications. Additionally, for students in co-taught classes, please email both their general education teacher and special education teacher/case manager. If students have TA support, the TA can be included on the email to your child’s teacher(s). However, it is important to know that TAs are not expected to answer emails but will communicate information to your child’s teachers.

Homework, grades, teacher updates and other information is accessible through Schoology. Students can utilize Schoology messenger to contact their teachers.

Students not in 8:1:2 or 12:1:2 classroom settings, should be encouraged to communicate with teachers independently through Schoology if the communication can be supported without parental involvement. This will develop independence, executive function and communication skills necessary for success as students move towards upper grades and graduation.

At the start of each school year, we recommend checking your contact information in Infinite Campus to ensure your phone number and email are up to date. If changes need to be made, please contact the main office of your child's school to update your information.

At times, our emails are sent to your clutter or spam folders. At the start of the year, please check these folders in case communication from teachers has been sent to those folders by mistake. Emails from you may also go to a teacher's clutter or spam folder. If you send a communication and do not get a response within 2 days, please try to email again or contact the school to pass a message along to the teacher so they can look for your email and return your email.

Schoology will display missing work and grades for students and families to access daily. It is encouraged that Schoology be visited consistently for updates and to monitor your child's progress. Assignment details, due dates, materials, notes and/or resources can be accessed through Schoology as well.

District and building level communication is distributed through Parent Square.

Technology

All students are provided with a 1:1 a device and are expected to charge their devices overnight so they can use them throughout the day without needing to plug in the device. Please know access to plugs and charging cords is limited. If your child is having any difficulties with their device, each school building has a gear shack that can help trouble shoot.

Somers Special Education PTA

Somers Special Education Parent Teacher Association (SEPTA) is a district-wide PTA whose primary role is to provide resources and support to parents, teachers, and children who receive special education services and/or related services through an IEP or 504 Plan and for students who are twice exceptional or gifted. SEPTA strives to enhance the lives of students with special needs through:

- Social, Recreational, and Educational Programs
- Parent Education and Resources
- Professional Development and Grants
- Student Project Grants
- Recognition of Outstanding Practices and Achievements in Special Education for both faculty and students

SEPTA invites parents, teachers, and community members with an interest in improving the educational, social-emotional, and recreational opportunities of children with special needs to join our membership. Anyone is welcome to join SEPTA. Each building will have a SEPTA representative that will be available by email and/ or phone to assist families with specific building level questions or concerns.

2024-2025 BUILDING SEPTA REPS

Building	Septa Rep	Contact Information
Primrose	Lisa Joseph	lisaanderic317@gmail.com
SIS	Rebecca Ivicic Kira Markowitz	rebecca.ivicic@gmail.com kira.markowitz@gmail.com
SMS	Shari Silk	shariannsilk@gmail.com
SHS	Amanda Kandel Diana Tomasulo	aegkandel@gmail.com dltomasulo@gmail.com

2024-2025 SEPTA Executive Board

Tara Tierney Diana Tomasulo	Co-Presidents	tara92279@gmail.com dltomasulo@gmail.com
Lori McQuade	Vice President	lorimcquade@gmail.com
Gina Provenzano	Recording Secretary	ginammasi@yahoo.com
Amanda Kandel	Treasurer	aegkandel@gmail.com
Lynn Stangarone	Corresponding Secretary	lynnmw523@gmail.com

Educational Acronyms

IEP	Individual Educational Program
IFSP/IESP	Individualized Family Service Plan/Individualized Education Services Program
ESY	Extended School Year
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
FBA	Functional Behavior Assessment

BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
OT	Occupational Therapy
SLP	Speech Language Pathologist
PT	Physical Therapist
SWD	Student with a Disability
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
BCBA	Board Certified Behavior Analyst
ABA	Applied Behavior Analysis
2E	Twice Exceptional
AAC	Augmentative and Alternative Communication
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorders
ADA	American Disabilities Act
ADHD	Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit with Hyperactivity Disorder
APD	Auditory Processing Disorder
ASL	American Sign Language
APE	Adaptive Physical Education
OI	Orthopedic Impaired
CAPD	Central Auditory Processing Disorder
ID	Intellectual Disability
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
LEP	Limited English Proficient
HI	Hearing Impairment
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Supports
VI	Visually Impaired
LD	Learning Disabled

OHI	Other Health Impaired
SLI	Speech Language Impairment
PBIS	Positive Behavior Intervention System
S/L	Speech/ Language
SPD	Sensory Processing Disorder
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
SPED	Special Education
CSE	Committee Special Education
CPSE	Committee Preschool Special Education
ED	Emotional Disability
AT	Assistive Technology
PWN	Prior Written Notice
RS	Related Services
RtI	Response to Intervention
LOTE	Language Other Than English