

Special Education

Department of School and Family
Supports

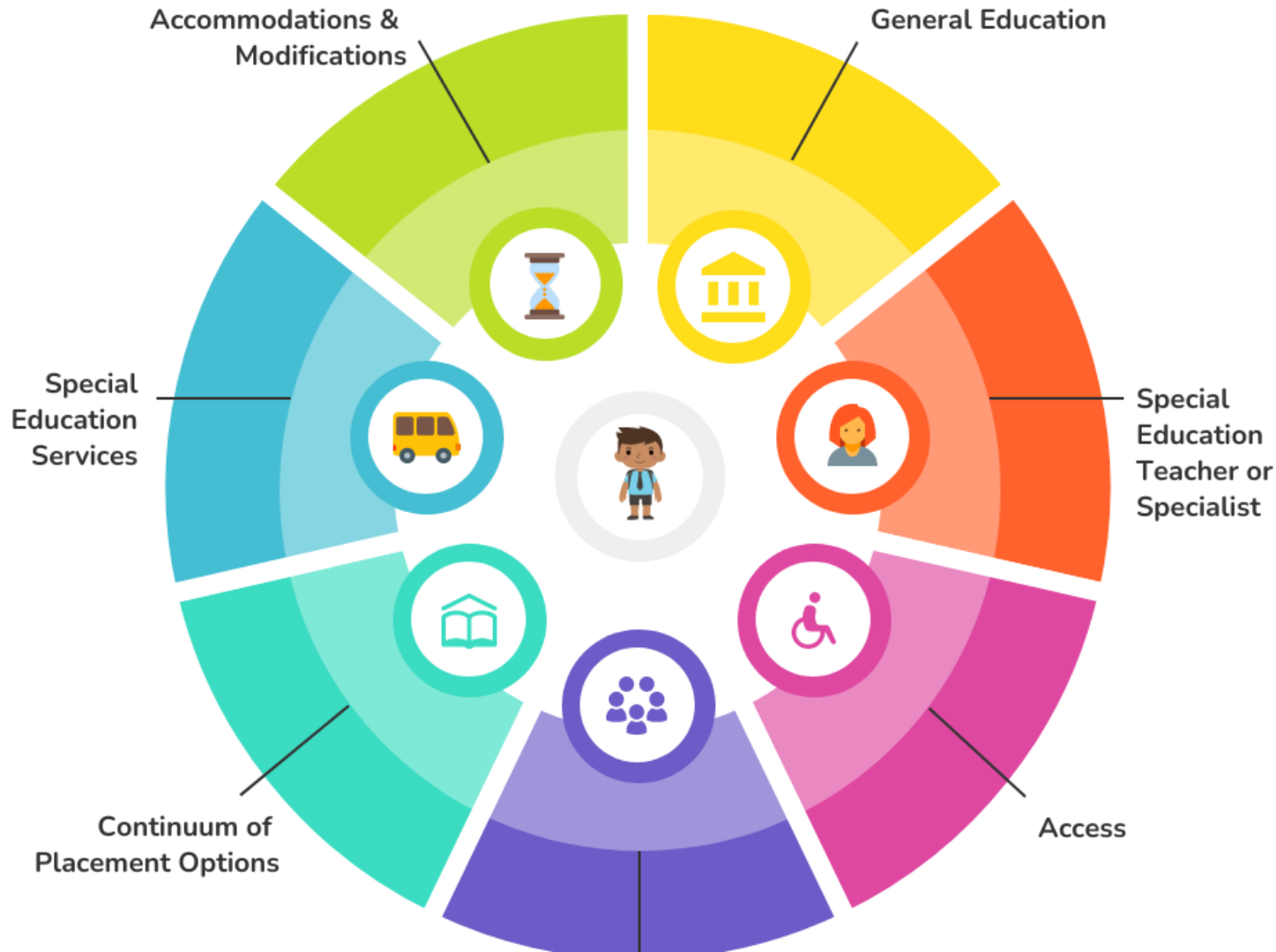


Special Education Administration

- Carrie Rivera – Executive Director of School and Family Support
- Kim Fentress – Supervisor Special Education Elementary
- Carol Paldino – Supervisor of Special Education PreK and Elementary/Bilingual Parent Liaison
- Erin McGuire- Assistant Director of Mental Health Services
- Jennifer Merrit – Supervisor Special Education Secondary (starting in February)



Special Education is a Service, Not a Place



● General Education

The intent of LRE is to make sure that students who receive special education are included in the general education classroom as often as possible.

● Education Specialist Instruction Credential

A special education teacher is able to conduct educational assessments related to student's **access** to the academic core curriculum and progress towards meeting instructional academic goals, provide instruction and, special education support to individuals in the area of specialization on their credentials.

● Access

Federal law says that students with disabilities should be educated alongside their non-disabled peers "to the maximum extent possible." Other types of classrooms or placements should be considered only if the student will not be able to experience success in the general education classroom.

● Peers

Students with disabilities should be with students in general education to the "maximum extent that is appropriate."

● Continuum of Placement Options

Special classes, separate schools, or removal from the general education class should only happen when a student's disability under IDEA—is so severe that supplementary aids and services can't provide the student with an appropriate education.

● Special Education

There is no "one size fits all" approach to special education. It's tailored to meet each student's needs. Special education refers to a range of services that can be provided in different ways and in different settings. Accommodations are a key component of special education and allow more students to access the general curriculum.

Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

- Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the United States Department of Education (USDE).
- Funding for Section 504 comes from General Education.

School	Number of Students (178) (23-24SY: 182)
BDJMMS	25
CB Jennings	26
NHAMS	21
Winthrop	35
NLHS/VPAMP	70





Special Education Staffing

Staffing	Number
Special Education Teachers	48
Para-educators	96
Speech Pathologists(SLP)	4 District Hired (1 part-time) 4 Agency Hired
Speech Pathologist Assistant (SLPA)	4
Occupational Therapists (OT)	2
Occupational Therapist Assistants (COTA)	3
Physical Therapist (PT)	1
Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA)	1
Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)	3
Case Managers for out of district placements	3 (1 agency hired)
Job Coaches	3
Registered Behavior Technician (RBT)	2 (1 vacancy)
Special Ed Secretaries	2
PPT/504 Coordinator	1

Support Staff

School	Psychologists	Social Workers	School Counselors
Jennings	1	1	--
NHAMS	1	2	--
Winthrop	1	2	--
BDJMMC	1	3	5
NLHSMC	2	2	7
District	1 (contracted)	0	0



Special Education Eligibility Areas

Disability Category	Number of Students
Speech and Language Impairment(SLI)	74 (+15)
Specific Learning Disability Dyslexia (SLDD)	19 (+5)
Specific Learning Disability(SLD)	172 (-16)
Other Health Impairment Attention Deficit Disorder (OHI-ADD)	107 (+6)
Other Health Impairment (OHI)	25 (+1)
Multiple Disability (MD)	19 (+3)
Intellectual Disability (ID)	30 (-2)
Health Impairment (HI)	3 (-1)
Emotional Disability (ED)	54 (+14)
Development Delay (DD)	36 (-8)
Autism (ASD)	151 (+26)
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	1 (NC)

Special Education Student Numbers – In District

Total In-District Students	20-21 SY	20-21 SY	21-22 SY	21-22 SY	22-23 SY	22-23 SY	23-24 SY	23-24 SY	24-25 SY	24-25 SY
NLHSMC/VPAMP (1047 enrolled)	194	21%	213	24%	203	24%	192	22%	242	23%
BDJMMS (488 enrolled)	124	17%	126	21%	114	20%	129	23%	102	21%
Jennings (412 enrolled)	50	10%	47	11%	29	8%	64	14%	63	15%
Nathan Hale (446 enrolled)	76	15%	71	16%	69	18%	98	21%	109	24%
Winthrop (447 enrolled)	72	15%	62	14%	71	16%	76	16%	84	19%
BP Learned Mission (78 enrolled)	--	--	32	40%	43	45%	38	49%	44	56%
District (3580 enrolled)	573	17%	585	19%	568	19%	597	17%	644	18%



Dually Identified Students

	Number	Percentage of Enrollment
Nathan Hale	32	7%
Winthrop	27	6%
CB Jennings	22	5%
Middle School	34	6%
High School	73	8%

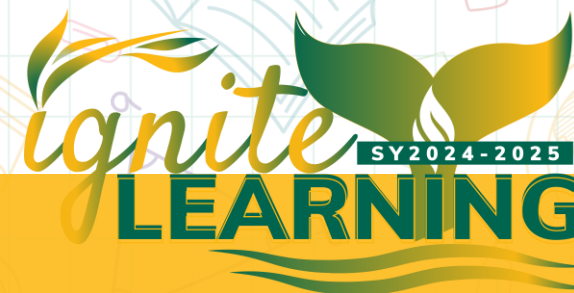
PreK-12 Student Support is monitored by the both the special education and bilingual and world languages departments.



Special Education – Specialized Classes (Specialized Social-Emotional and Behavioral Support)

- New London Public Schools provide a continuum of services for special education students. Our mission is to provide the most equitable access to education in the least restrictive environment. Classrooms provide a multi-disciplinary approach to education with a strong focus on the social, emotional and behavioral needs the student. Students are provided with individualized educational programming with a focus on these strategies utilizing counseling and BCBA services. Students are integrated during the school day in a variety of general education settings. Special education teachers continuously collaborate with the general education teachers and para educators to provide equitable access for all students.

School	New London Students	Out-of-District Students	Total Students
CB Jennings	6	1	7
Nathan Hale	7	0	7
Winthrop	6	0	6
BDJMMS	7	0	7
NLHSMC	19	1	20



Out of District Placement Costs

- Students who require a higher level of support and are not successful in-district schools are placed in private special education programs. Currently, the costs associated with those placements are:
 - 22-23SY: \$2,960,879
 - 23-24SY: \$2,420,080
 - 24-25SY: \$2,997,647



Placement of Students

	Number	Percentage
Out of District	40 (+1)	1%
Homebound	16 (+8)	<1%
Expelled	7 (+3)	<1%
Parentally Placed	137	NA

Preschool Student Services

- **2024-2025 Enrollment** – We currently serve 77 Pre-k students and 47 of those student have IEP's in place.
- Programming at the **Early Childhood BP Preschool** - 4 half day sessions for Neuro-diverse self-contained programming, one full day self-contained program, and 5 full-time general education classrooms that include students with IEPs who receive resource support. Our PreK model is inclusive for all students, which means that all our students who are in self-contained programs, have time with non-disabled peers for role modeling, language development and peer social skills.
- The program has 3 full time Special education teachers, 2-part-time Special Education Resource teachers, 2 Speech and Language teachers, and 1 Speech and language assistant. We have OT, PT, BCBA, and a social worker on staff and school psychologist support for evaluations is provided through a virtual school psychologist and/or other district staff as deemed needed.
- **Preschool Articulation Language Services (PALS).** This is a program in which students are deemed eligible for the services through the PPT process. They are transported from other preschool centers or their home in New London. This is to serve families who prefer to stay in their current preschool or are opting to not enroll their students in PreK. Currently there is 1 student enrolled.
- **Birth To Three Transitions:** - From September 2024 to January 2025 there have been 30 students referred from
- Birth to Three Programs in the region. Students with a DOB after 5/1/25 can stay in B-3 until the start of the next school year.



Transition Services

- Effective July 1, 2021, transition services are required for **each child** requiring special education beginning no later than the first individualized education program (IEP) in effect when the child turns 14.
- Transition-only services are for students with disabilities are provided to students between the ages of 18-22 years old. They must have completed academic credits toward a regular high school diploma or are not working on academic credits toward a regular high school diploma but working solely on secondary transition goals and objectives through an individualized education program (IEP), including functional academics.
- Secondary transition services and related supports are designed to focus on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability. They are meant to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation; and based on the individual child's needs. These services consider the child's strengths, preferences, and interests.
- A student with an IEP has the right to receive transition services provided under both federal and state laws.



Diploma vs Certification

- Currently 31 students are on a Certificate Route

	High school diploma	High school certificate
What it means	A student has met all the requirements for graduation.	A student has completed high school but didn't meet all the requirements for graduation.
What are the graduation requirements	To earn a diploma, a student typically must pass grade-level English, math, social studies, science, and other classes. The number and type of class credits required vary by state.	It depends on the state and school. Unlike a diploma, the requirements are often flexible and can be tied to a student's IEP goals .
Accommodations allowed	Yes	Yes
Curriculum modifications allowed	Maybe. By changing what students learn, modifications can hurt their ability to earn a high school diploma.	Yes
Accepted by colleges	Yes	Maybe. It depends on the college.
Accepted by employers	Yes	Maybe. It depends on the employer and the job qualifications.

ESY- Summer Program

- What is ESY..... Extended School Year
- ESY means special education and related services that are provided to a student with a disability beyond the school district's normal school year, in accordance with the student's individualized education program (IEP), and at no cost to the parent.
- What is the objective of ESY?
- The purpose of ESY services is to assist students in maintaining the skills at risk of regression or for students with severe disabilities to attain the critical skills or self-sufficiency goals essential to the student's continued progress.
- Summer of 2024 we offered ESY to 116 students , including preschool and 18+.



Gifted and Talented

- The identification of gifted and talented children is required under Connecticut special education law. Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Section 10-76d(a)(1), though state law does not require programming.
- Gifted and talented means a child:
 - Possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of very superior intellectual, creative or specific academic capability and
 - Needing differentiated instruction or services beyond those being provided in the regular school program in order to realize their intellectual, creative or specific academic potential.
- The term includes children with outstanding talent in the creative arts.
- Multiple instruments and data are used for identification and the NLPS process is systematic and ongoing
- Current number of students identified Gifted and Talented is currently 28.



Special Education Transportation

- Criteria: If a student with an IEP cannot get to/from school the same way as non-disabled students for a disability-related reason, then the district must provide transportation for the student. This is part of FAPE.
- Total cost
 - 21-22SY Sped \$790,000
 - 22-23SY: \$882,270
 - 23-24SY: \$778,000
 - 24-25SY: \$1,011,135
- Transportation for Homeless Students
 - 21-22SY Homeless \$226,330
 - 22-23SY: \$195,836
 - 23-24SY: \$140,000
 - 24-25SY: \$225,000



Special Education Funding - 2024-2025

School	Amount
IDEA 611 (K-12)	\$1,073,993
IDEA 619 (Prek)	\$34,572.00
Excess Cost	\$1,426,105 (total eligible) at 70% is \$899,820 estimated Excess Cost
Medicaid	\$167,215
ARPA LEAP	\$200,000 (for 2 years)
General Education Budget Percentage	22%



Professional Development Goals for 24-25 SY:

- Ongoing work with CT SEDS
- Behavior strategies and Safety Care
- Neurodiverse programming
- Standards based and effective goal writing
- Paraeducator professional development

Support outside of the IEP....

- **Special Education Annual Event**
 - Collaboration and resource sharing for families
- **Middle School Family Engagement Events for Neurodiverse Families**
 - Monthly meetings with parents to engage and share information
- **DDS night**
 - HS families invited to complete DDS forms
 - Support for families and students in the completion
- **Able Accounts and Financial Supports**
 - Information on creating savings accounts for students
- **Spring 2025 Family Event**
 - Understanding special education and how to read an IEP



Homelessness in NLPS- Definition

- Definition: The term “homeless children and youths” –
 - (A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and
 - (B) includes –
 - (i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;*
 - (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));
 - (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - (iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Identification Process

- Identification Process:
- Students and families self-identify their living situation and provide documentation, if needed, regarding current housing situation.
- A student remains eligible for homeless designation and services, even after finding permanent housing, until the end of the academic school year.
- Students have the right to continue attending their "school of origin" even if they move to a new location while experiencing homelessness.
- The district must enroll homeless student immediately, even if they lack documentation.

Homelessness In NLPS

- McKinney Vento funding is solely used to provide transportation for these students.
- Additional district funds support staff who connect families to community agencies, resources, and food.
- Total number of homeless students:
 - Preschool: 7
 - Elementary: 123
 - Middle: 72
 - High School: 88
 - Total: 290
- Chronic absenteeism rate: 31% (district is 25.1%)
- Special education identified: 59



Thank you!

