

GPS Preschool Space And Historical Growth



Photos retrieved from greenwichtime.com



Preschool is Federally Mandated

Early Childhood Special Education

services mandated
by law

Overview

Special education and related services are required by federal and state law. The laws are intended to ensure that young children with disabilities are provided a free and appropriate public education in accordance with their individual needs. Early childhood special education as defined by the federal law known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is for 3-, 4- and 5-year-old children with disabilities who require special education. In Connecticut, special education and related services are available to eligible children by age 3 and are provided by local and regional school districts.

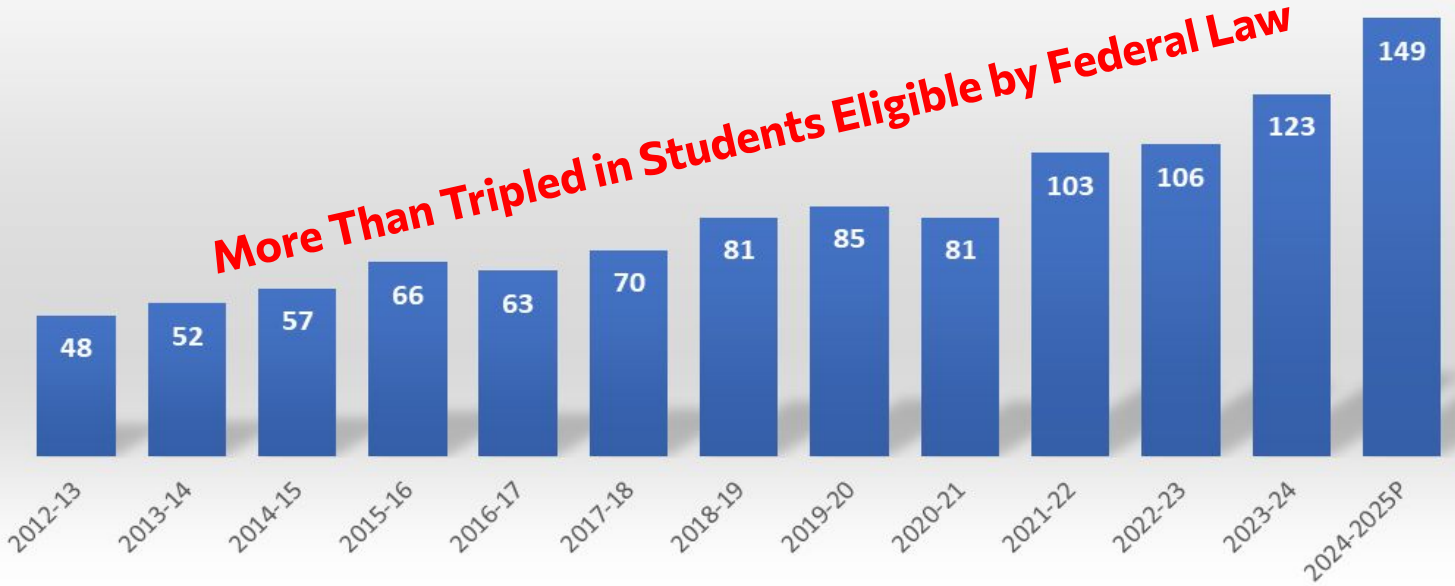
Connecticut State Department of Education, Retrieved 2/10/2025



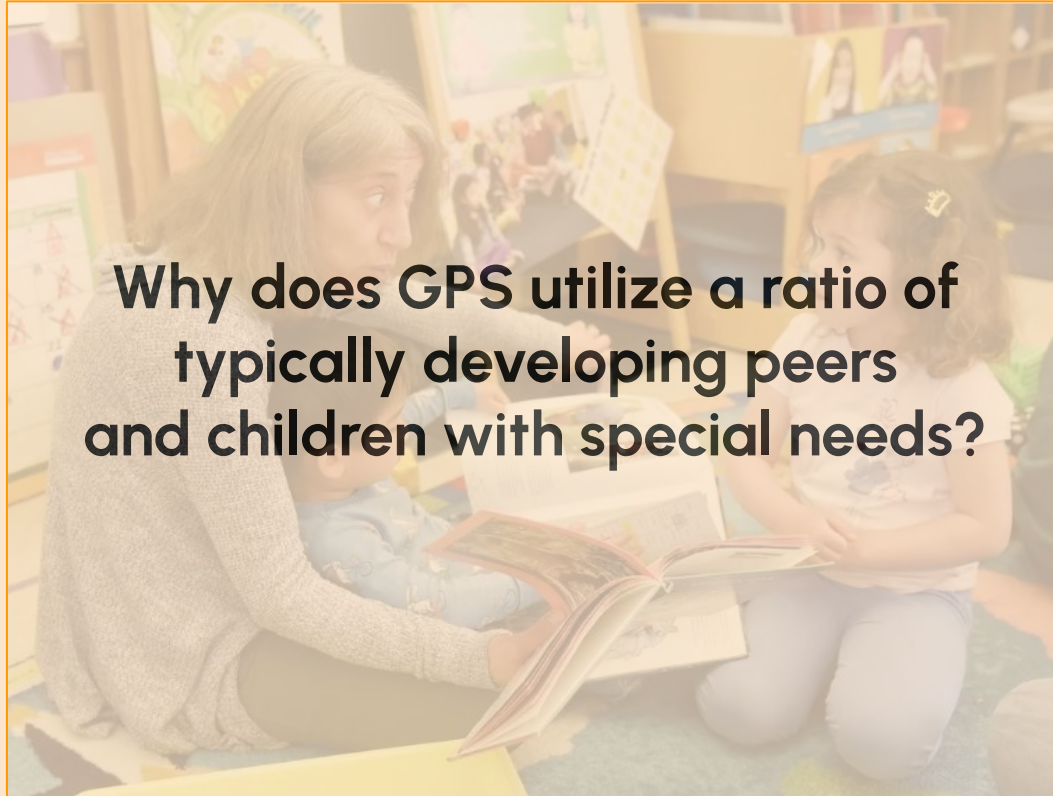
Preschool Growth

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Students Identified Through Child Find for Special Needs Preschool



Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)



Why does GPS utilize a ratio of typically developing peers and children with special needs?

Photo retrieved from greenwichtime.com



IDEA LRE Requirements

Each public agency must ensure that:

- To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public and private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and
- Special classes, separate schooling, or other **removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only** if the nature or severity of the disability is such that **education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and service cannot be achieved satisfactorily.**



Content of the IEP

- An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class and in the activities described;
- **The Department states that “regular class” includes a preschool setting with typically developing peers**



FY25 GPS Preschool Ratio



Photo retrieved from [greenwichtime.com](https://www.greenwichtime.com)



Why the Ratio Matters to Mitigate Growth

Example: 5 Classrooms

Each classroom has 4 children with special needs: 20 students

Each classroom has 6 children with special needs: 30 students



Balancing Student Needs with Efficient Operations

15 Students

- 2018-2019: 14 Classrooms (11 peers, 4 special needs) *Added 3 classes during the year
- 2019-2020: 14 Classrooms (11 peers, 4 special needs) *No additions

Changed the Ratio of Peers to Special Needs

- 2020-2021: 13 Classrooms (9 peers, 6 special needs)
- 2021-2022: 13.5 Classrooms (14 in February)
- 2022-2023: 14.5 Classrooms (15 in February)
- 2023-2024: 15.5 Classrooms (16 in February)
- 2024-2025: 17 Classrooms (budgeted at 16.5)



**Current 2024-2025 ratio is running high due to
space constraints and age change impacts**

9 Peers to 7-8 Special Needs



GPS PreK Space Challenge Considerations

- GPS Elementary Classrooms Available for PreK
- Safety - Particularly Fire Code Considerations
- Child Development



**Greenwich Public Schools
Elementary Building Utilization
FY 2024-2025**

School	Standard Rooms	Less Specials***	Less PreK****	Adjusted Totals	K-5 Capacity*	K-5 Enroll**	Building Utilization
Cos Cob	28	9	2	17	326	319	98%
IS at Dundee	20	3	0	17	326	342	105%
Glenville	27	6	0	21	403	411	102%
Hamilton Ave	30	12	5	13	250	235	94%
Julian Curtiss	22	8	2	12	230	206	89%
New Lebanon	25	5	3	17	326	330	101%
North Mianus	29	7	0	22	422	423	100%
North Street	31	9	3	19	365	372	102%
Old Greenwich	31	10	2	19	365	359	98%
Parkway	25	11	0	14	269	249	93%
Riverside	28	5	0	23	442	440	100%
District	296	85	17	194	3,725	3,686	99%

* Capacity is based on average class size of 19.2 which is the SY24-25 average.

** October 1, 2024 enrollment

*** See following page for details

**** Location of PreK sections is subject to change based on shifts in K-5 enrollment.

[https://go.boarddocs.com/ct/greenwich/Board.nsf/files/DA9RSP6F6C8D/\\$file/102424%20Enrollment%20Update%20wCS.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/ct/greenwich/Board.nsf/files/DA9RSP6F6C8D/$file/102424%20Enrollment%20Update%20wCS.pdf)



**Greenwich Public Schools
Elementary Building Utilization
FY 2024-2025**

School	Art/ Music	ALP	SPED	FLES	Lit/ Math	Maker/ Science	ESOL	Total Standard	Other	Total Other
Cos Cob	2	1	3	1	2			9		0
IS at Dundee	2	1						3		0
Glenville	3	0.5	1	0.5		1		6		0
Hamilton Ave	3	2	4		2	1		12		0
Julian Curtiss	2		4	1	1			8		0
New Lebanon	3				1		1	5		0
North Mianus	2	1	2		1		1	7	1	1
North Street	3	2	3		1			9		0
Old Greenwich	3	2	3		2			10		0
Parkway	3	2	2	1	2	1		11	1	1
Riverside	2	2		1				5		0
District	28	13.5	22	4.5	12	3	2	85	2	2

As of 01/07/2025



Space Challenges Safety Considerations

- PreK must be located on the bottom floor for easy vacating in case of an emergency

Why?



National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Model Code Sprinklers, Safe Egress, Fire Alarms

- 1958 Fire Tragedy at Our Lady of Angels School in Chicago
- 1910 Era Building
- 92 children and 3 adults lost their lives

This event impacted fire safety requirements in schools for the past 67 years



Classrooms for younger children must be on or closer to the ground floor to make evacuation easier

- Classrooms for preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade students must be located on the level of exit discharge.
- Classrooms for second-grade students can be located no more than one floor above the level of exit discharge.

- The National Fire Protection Association Code



GPS Buildings with Single Egress (one Level building) or Multi-Level Access to Level Ground Exit

All Classrooms have a Direct Exit to Ground Level

New Lebanon: 2 level egress

Glenville: 1 level

Parkway: 1 level

North Street: 1 Level

The other seven elementary schools are limited to the lower floor classrooms for Pre-K use due to multi-story construction.



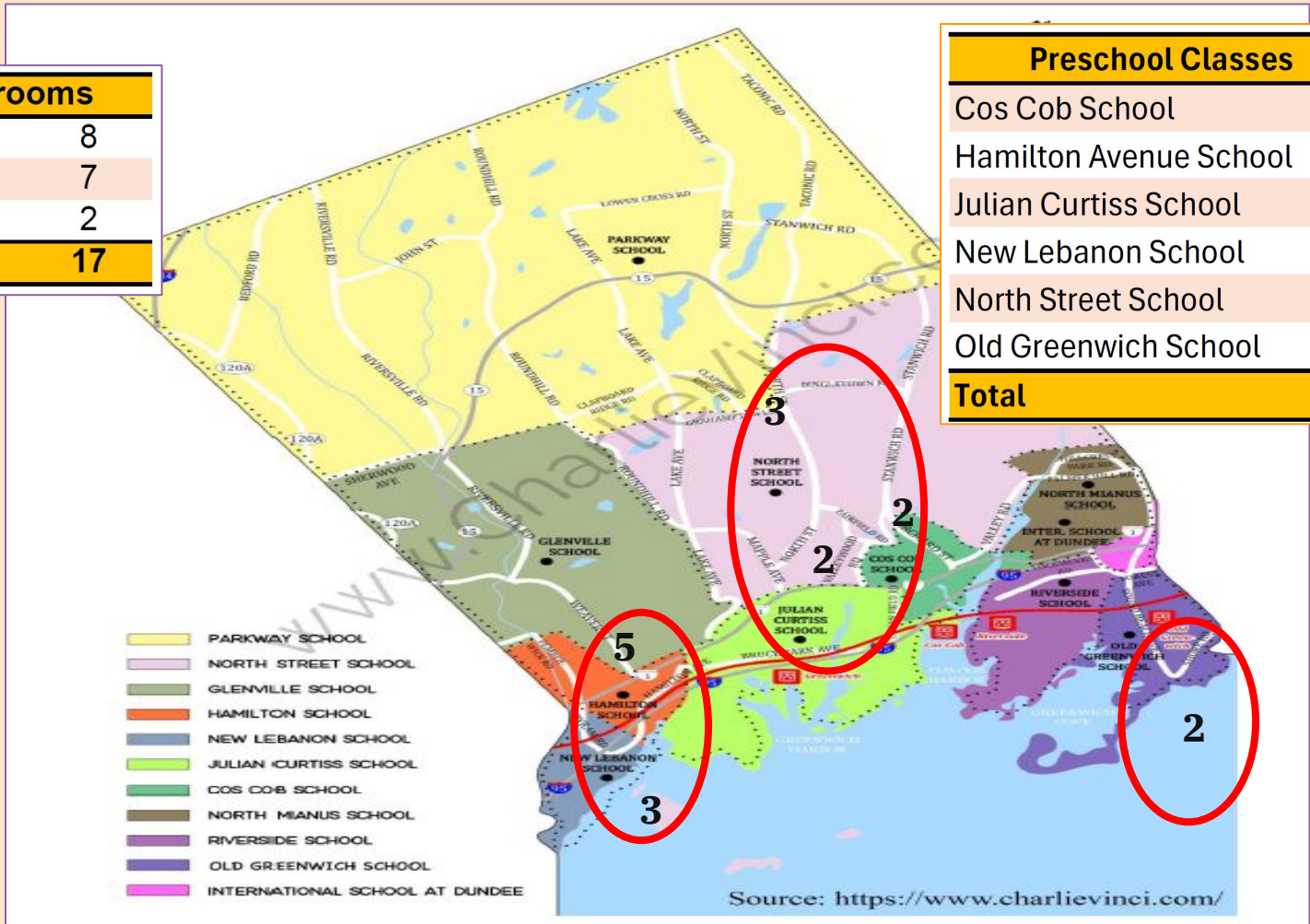
Current Pre-K Locations

Located predominantly
on the west and central portions
of the district



Classrooms	
Westside	8
Central	7
Eastside	2
Total	17

Preschool Classes	
Cos Cob School	2
Hamilton Avenue School	5
Julian Curtiss School	2
New Lebanon School	3
North Street School	3
Old Greenwich School	2
Total	17



Preschool Operations Future Expansion Where?

1. Riverside Ed Spec (adds 2 PreK)
2. Julian Curtiss (approved Ed Spec right now)
3. Rent Space
4. Change class size
5. Change the ratio again
6. Displace Programs to Capture Space
7. Build a new early childhood building

