

**Wallkill Central School District
Special Education 2-Year Plan
2024-2025 and 2025-2026**

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SPECIAL EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY & GOALS

The Wallkill Central School District subscribes to the concept that all students must be provided with quality instruction and opportunities for academic achievement; this addresses the following:

- To the extent dictated by the child's disability, the student will be educated within the local school wherever possible.
- The district is committed to the concept of the least restrictive environment which allows for maximum contact and participation with non-disabled peers.
- Where special education services are provided within or out of district, the services will be limited to those specifically dictated by the nature and need of the disability.
- The goal of special education is to provide each child with an Individual Education Program (IEP) which will allow the student to compensate for his or her disability, to overcome the disability where possible, and to maximize the student's functioning toward realization of full potential.
- Students with disabilities will be seen by the general education staff as having particular obstacles to overcome and shall be helped accordingly.
- We are committed to help develop constructive attitudes, respect and understanding towards individuals with disabilities to promote independence of functioning to the greatest possible degree.
- In recognition of the necessity for parental support and involvement in the education of each child with a disability, total, open, and fully available communication with parents is seen as desirable and essential.

As a school district, we recognize that an essential aspect of a successful special education program is faculty orientation and in-service training.

Professional development is provided to our staff on an on-going basis.

District Initiative for 2024-2025 SY

The district will continue to expand intervention services with the addition of a School Psychologist. The increase of a School Psychologist will assess students for intervention needs, respond to crises, launch school wide initiatives, and provide additional support in the school building where needed.

In collaboration with the Educational Services Department, professional development in specialized reading instruction and integrated co-teaching will continue including Special Education teachers and General Education teachers. The after-school intervention programs will continue as added pre-referral intervention strategies to identify students needing academic support before classification.

Finally, the district has formed a committee to review and improve MTSS (Multi-Tiered Support Systems) procedures and systems. The MTTSS is a framework that defines tiered supports provided to students who are struggling to meet academic standards and/or address behavioral and/or mental health concerns. The district has continued to expand training and has formed a committee to develop a Tier One Intervention Bank along with Progress Monitoring Tools. The MTSS continues to be rolled out in each elementary school and the middle school.

The Estimated Budget to Support the Plan

Considering all aspects of the Special Education Program the estimated budget for the 2024-2025 SY is \$17,516,620. This budget encompasses teacher salaries, transportation, supplies, non-instructional salaries, textbooks, assistive technology, out of district placements, handicap supplies, professional development, and IDEA Grant funds. The 2024-2025 SY budget will encompass the same categories as the 2023-2024 SY budget. Once the 2025-2026 budget is proposed the estimated budget will be made available to the public.

Allocation of Appropriate space for Students with Disabilities

The Wallkill Central School District recognizes the existence of individual differences in the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of children attending school in the District. In recognizing these differences, the Board supports a system of services for students with disabilities which includes allocation of space within the District for special education programs that meets the needs of students with disabilities. The District will ensure that appropriate space will be continually available to meet the needs of resident students and preschool students with disabilities who attend in-district programs as well as out of district programs in either a BOCES setting and/or a private setting.

PROCEDURES OF THE COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION (CSE)

Referral

In accordance with New York Education Law Section 4402 and Part 200.2, 200.4 and 200.5 of the Commissioner's Regulations, the CSE is responsible for evaluating all school-age students suspected of having a disability, identifying a disability or determining that no disability exists, and recommending placement and type of special education programs and/or services within sixty (60) days of the date of receipt of consent for evaluation. Referrals can be made at any time during the twelve-month year and need to be in writing and dated.

A student suspected of having a disability shall be referred in writing to the Chairperson of the Committee on Special Education or to the building administrator of the school which the student attends or is eligible to attend for an individual evaluation and determination of eligibility for special education programs or services. A referral may be made by:

- a student's parent, guardian, or person in parental relationship, including an individual designated who is acting in the place of a birth or adoptive parent including a grandparent, stepparent, or other individual with whom the child resides;
- a professional staff member of the school district or the public or private school the student legally attends;
- a licensed physician;
- a judicial officer;
- the commissioner or designee of a public agency with responsibility for the welfare, health, or education of children; or
- The student himself/herself, if the student is eighteen (18) years old or older, or an emancipated minor eligible to attend the district's public schools.

Except for self-referrals and referrals by parents or judicial officers, the referral must state the reasons for the referral and include any test results, records or reports upon which the referral is based. It must also describe efforts made by school and parent to resolve the difficulties leading to referral or to meet the needs of the student in the general classroom setting, including intervention services, programs or instructional methodologies used to remediate the student's performance prior to the referral. If a referral is received by the building administrator, it must be forwarded to the CSE Chairperson immediately. If a referral is received by the CSE Chairperson, a copy will be forwarded to the building administrator within five business days of its receipt.

The Committee will notify the parent or persons in parental relationship to the student that a referral for an evaluation has been received and will request consent for the evaluation. The parent will be provided with information regarding the evaluation, the procedural safeguards notice which includes a listing of free or low-cost legal and other relevant services in the area, sources to obtain assistance in understanding the referral and evaluation process, and a copy of *A Parent's Guide to Special Education*. Translations are provided to assist parents as needed.

Withdrawal of Referral

Within ten (10) business days following receipt of CSE referral or copy of a referral, the building principal may decide to meet with the teachers, parent/guardian and/or student to discuss educational services presently being offered and to determine whether the student would benefit from additional general education support services as an alternate to special education, including the provision of Educationally Related Support Services, Speech/Language Services, Remedial Instruction, and Academic Intervention Services. The professional staff member who made the referral should also attend this meeting. If at the meeting, the parent or person in parental relationship and the building administrator agree in writing that, with the provision of additional general education support services, the referral is unwarranted, the referral shall be deemed withdrawn, and the building administrator shall provide the chairperson of the Committee on

Special Education, the person who made the referral if a professional staff member of the district, the parent or person in parental relationship to the student, and the student, if appropriate, with copies of the agreement. All such agreements about withdrawal of a CSE referral must be in writing and must specify the alternative services to resolve the identified learning difficulty of the student and provide the opportunity for a follow-up conference within an agreed period of time to review the student's progress. A copy of the agreement becomes a part of the student's cumulative educational record. A copy of the agreement must be in the native language of the parent or person in parental relationship.

If the referral to the CSE is not withdrawn by agreement, and the parent/guardian does not consent to the evaluation within thirty (30) days of the date of receipt of referral, the Chairperson of the CSE shall document attempts made by the Chairperson or other representatives of the committee to obtain parental consent and shall notify the Board of Education that they may utilize the due process procedures to permit the district to conduct an evaluation of the student without the consent of the parent.

Evaluation and Recommendation

The initial evaluation will consist of procedures to determine whether a student is a student with a disability and to determine the educational needs of such a student. The screening of a student by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation shall not be considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education. The evaluation will include a variety of assessment tools and strategies, including information provided by the parent to gather relevant functional, developmental and academic information about the student that may assist in determining whether the student is a student with a disability and the content of the student's individualized education program, including information related to enabling the student to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.

The individual evaluation of the referred student must include, at no cost to the parent, at least:

- a physical examination;
- an individual psychological examination, except when a school psychologist determines after an assessment of a school age student that further evaluation is unnecessary. Whenever a psychologist determines that a psychological evaluation is unnecessary, the psychologist will prepare a written report of such assessment, including a statement of the reasons the evaluation is unnecessary, which shall be reviewed by the committee;
- an observation of the student in the current educational setting;
- a social history;
- other appropriate assessment or evaluations, including a functional behavioral assessment for a student whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, as necessary to ascertain the physical, mental, behavioral and emotional factors which contribute to the

suspected disabilities.

The district will ensure that:

- assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a student:
 - (a) are provided and administered in the student's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the student knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer;
 - (b) are used for purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable;
 - (c) are administered by trained personnel in accordance with the instruction provided by those who developed such assessments; and
 - (d) are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;
- tests and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those which are designed to provide a general intelligence quotient;
- tests are selected and administered to ensure that, when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, except where those skills are factors which the test purports to measure;
- materials and procedures used to assess a student with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) be selected and administered to ensure that they measure the extent to which the student has a disability or needs special education, rather than measure the student's English language skills;
- no single measure or assessment is used as the sole criterion for determining whether a student is a student with a disability or for determining an appropriate educational program for a student;
- the evaluation is made by a multidisciplinary team or group of persons, including at least one teacher or the specialist with certification or knowledge in the area of the suspected disability;
- the evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the student's special education needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the student has been identified;

- technically sound instruments are used that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors;
- assessment tools and strategies are used that provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the student;
- the student is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, where appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, vocational skills, communicative status and motor abilities;
- students age twelve (12) and those referred to special education for the first time who are age twelve (12) and over, shall receive an assessment that includes a review of school records and total assessments, and parent and student interview to determine vocational skills, aptitude and interests;
- the results of the evaluation are provided to parents or persons in parental relationships in their native language or mode of communication unless it is clearly not feasible to do so;
- assessments of students with disabilities who transfer from one school district in the same academic year are coordinated with the student's prior and subsequent schools, as necessary, and as expeditiously as possible to ensure prompt completion of full evaluations; and
- no student shall be required to obtain a prescription for a drug or other substance as a condition of receiving an evaluation.

Existing evaluation data on the student will be reviewed, including evaluations and information provided by the child's parents, current classroom-based assessments, local or State assessments, classroom-based observations, and teacher and related service provider's observation.

The CSE will arrange for specialized evaluations, where necessary, using appropriate resources outside of the district. The CSE shall maintain a list of appropriate resources and certified professionals for this purpose.

When an evaluation is completed, a CSE meeting is scheduled. Reasonable measures will be taken to ensure that the parent attends the meeting. This means:

Prior Written Notice - A written notice will be sent to parents at least five days prior advising them of the purpose, date, time and location of the meeting and the name and title of those persons who will be in attendance at the meeting.

- At least one additional attempt will be made to notify the parents. This may mean additional written notice or a telephone call.
- The parent and the school district may agree to use alternative means of meeting

participation, such as conference telephone calls.

Eligibility Determination

When an evaluation is completed, the committee, including the parent and, if appropriate, the student, meets to review the evaluation information to determine eligibility for special education and, if appropriate, develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The CSE will consider evaluation information including evaluations provided by the parent. The CSE must ensure that all general education resources including educationally related support services and academic intervention services have been considered prior to determining that the student should receive special education services. In making a determination of eligibility for special education and related services, a student shall not be identified as a child with a disability if the determinant factor is lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills) and reading comprehension strategies, lack of instruction in math or limited English proficiency. In determining whether a student has a Learning Disability, the district may use a process that determines if the student responds to scientific, research-based intervention as part of the evaluation procedures. The district is not required to consider whether a student has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability in oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skill, reading comprehension, mathematical calculation, or mathematical reasoning. A student with a disability remains eligible to receive special education services even if the student is advancing from grade to grade.

The CSE will ensure that parents receive and understand all evaluation reports and documentation of eligibility, including the results of required evaluations when the student is determined no longer to be eligible for special education. Whenever feasible, the evaluation results are shared with the parents before any meeting to discuss the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the student. Consensus is the preferred decision-making process.

When evaluations are conducted for the purpose of determining a student's eligibility or continuing eligibility for special education, the CSE must give a copy of the evaluation report and the documentation of the determination of eligibility to the student's parent.

If the committee determines that the student is **ineligible** for special education:

- The committee will provide notice to the parent of the recommendation. The parent will receive procedural safeguards, a copy of the evaluation report and the documentation of determination for ineligibility.
- The committee will provide a copy of the recommendation and appropriate evaluation information to the building administrator for consideration of educationally related support services to address student's needs.
- The committee will provide the recommendation to the Board of Education.

If the student has been receiving special education services, but it is determined by the Committee on Special Education that the student **no longer needs special education** services and can be placed in a regular education program on a full-time basis, the recommendation shall:

- Identify the declassification support services as identified in Section 100.1(q), if any, to be provided to the student, and/or the student's teachers; and
- Indicate the projected date of initiation of the services, the frequency of provision of the services, provided that these services shall not continue for more than one year after the student enters the full-time regular education program.

If the committee determines that the student is **eligible** for special education:

- The committee will develop a written recommendation (IEP).
- The committee will document least restrictive environment considerations.
- The committee will document special considerations for students whose behavior impedes learning, students who are deaf or hard of hearing, students who are blind or visually impaired, students with limited English proficiency and students who need assistive technology devices or services.

The committee will provide written notice to parents, which includes:

- A recommendation including options considered and a rationale for rejecting the options not selected;
- A copy of the evaluation report and the documentation of determination of eligibility;
- Procedural safeguards notice; and
- Request parental consent for initial placement in special education

The committee will also provide notice to the Board of Education.

Annual Review, Reevaluation and Declassification

The individualized education program (IEP) of each student with a disability shall be reviewed, and if appropriate, revised periodically, but not less than annually to determine if the annual goals for the student are being achieved. Parents are notified by mail of the meeting; reasonable measures are taken to ensure that the parent attends the meeting. This review is conducted to determine the child's present levels of performance and educational needs, continued eligibility and need for special education service, and whether any modifications or additions to the special

education and related service program are needed to enable the child to meet the measurable annual goals of the IEP.

The annual review will consider: the strengths of the student; the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child; the results of the most recent evaluations including, as appropriate, the results of any general State or district-wide assessments; the student's academic, developmental and functional needs; and the educational progress and achievement of the student and the student's ability to participate in instructional programs in regular education and in the least restrictive environment.

The CSE must obtain informed parental consent prior to conducting any new test or assessment as part of a reevaluation of a student with a disability, except that informed parent consent need not be obtained if the district can demonstrate that it took reasonable measures to obtain such consent and the student's parent failed to respond. Reasonable measures will be defined as at least one telephone contact attempted and one additional note sent home either via mail or with the student. If the parent refuses consent, the district must resolve the matter through a mediation agreement or an impartial hearing before conducting the new test or assessment as part of the reevaluation.

As part of any reevaluation, a review of existing evaluation data, including evaluations and information provided by the student's parents, current classroom-based assessments, local or State assessments, classroom-based observations, and teacher and related service provider's observations, is conducted to determine what additional data, if any, is needed. This review shall not constitute a CPSE/CSE meeting. If no additional data is needed to determine whether the student continues to be a student with a disability, the parents are notified of the determination and the reasons for it. The parent is notified of the right to request an assessment and that the district is not required to conduct such an assessment unless requested by the student's parents.

The Committee on Special Education will arrange for an appropriate reevaluation of each student with a disability if the district determines that the educational or related service needs, including improved academic achievement and functional performance of the student warrant a reevaluation, or if the student's parent or teacher requests a reevaluation, but not more frequently than once a year, unless that parent and representative of the school district appointed to the CSE agree otherwise. A reevaluation shall take place at least once every three years and will be conducted by a multidisciplinary team or group of persons, including at least one teacher or other specialists with knowledge in the area of the student's disability. The triennial evaluation shall be sufficient to determine the student's individual needs, educational progress and achievement, the student's ability to participate in instructional programs in regular education and the student's continuing eligibility for special education. The results of any reevaluations must be addressed by the committee on special education in a meeting to review and, as appropriate, revise the student's IEP. To the extent possible, the school district shall encourage the consolidation of reevaluation meetings and other committee on special education meetings for the student. When evaluations are conducted to determine continuing eligibility for special education, the CSE will provide a copy of the evaluation report and the documentation of the eligibility to the student's parent.

Amendments to an IEP made after annual review by the CSE may be made by rewriting the

IEP or by developing a written document to amend or modify the student's current IEP. The parents shall receive prior written notice of any changes to the IEP as well a copy of the document that amends or modifies the IEP. Upon request, that parent will be provided with a revised copy of the entire IEP with the amendments incorporated.

Before determining that a student is no longer eligible to receive special education services, an evaluation needs to be conducted. When the CSE determines that a student no longer requires special education services, the Committee may recommend declassification support services to the student for no more than the first year in regular education. Such services may include psychological, social work, speech and language services, non-career counseling, or the assistance of an aide or consultant to the classroom teacher. Continuation of test modifications upon declassification is not automatic. The student may be referred to a Section 504 team regarding eligibility and appropriate recommendations including test accommodations. The school district is not required to conduct a reevaluation of a student before the termination of a student's eligibility due to graduation with a local high school or Regent's diploma or exceeding the age eligibility for a free appropriate public education, but is required to provide the student with a summary of his or her academic achievement and functional performance, which includes recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting his or her post-secondary goals.

RECORDS OF PUPILS WITH DISABILITIES

The Office of Pupil Personnel Services maintains a database with the following information on each pupil in the IEP Direct database:

- (a) student's name, address, and birthdate;
- (b) student's parents' names, address(es), and the dominant language of the pupil's home;
- (c) student's suspected disability;
- (d) dates of referral, evaluations, recommendations of the Committee on Preschool Special Education and Committee on Special Education, actual placement, and annual program reviews;
- (e) site where the pupil is currently receiving an educational program;
- (f) other student information as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and federal regulations, including but not limited to the student's race, ethnicity, limited English proficiency status, gender and disability category; and
- (g) if the pupil is not receiving an appropriate education, the reason shall be described.

The above information is gathered from the following respective sites:

- (a) registration form
- (b) referral form and social history form
- (c) CSE recommendation
- (d) student's confidential folder
- (e) CSE minutes to Board of Education
- (f) CPSE minutes to Board of Education

This information is maintained within the computer-based database which is part of an information management system called Frontline IEP. This system can generate all the information in the required registry.

SCHOOL-AGED SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Wallkill Central School District operates a variety of programs and services for students who possess disabilities. These services are provided to district residents at no cost and in the least restrictive environment upon the recommendation of the Wallkill Committee on Special Education and with the approval of the Wallkill Board of Education.

These services are available to students with disabilities through the school year during which their 21st birthday occurs, or until a regular high school diploma has been attained, whichever shall occur first.

The Wallkill Central School District reviews student's needs at individual Committee of Special Education (CSE) meetings and discusses learning modalities for students. The committee will ensure that the students will have access to instructional materials that will meet the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard set forth under federal regulation.

A description of each of the Special Education Program options prioritized from least restrictive to more restrictive follows.

TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Special Education, this service may be provided to a pupil with a disability who is making the transition into a mainstreamed program. Its goal is to support a student who no longer needs special education services while monitoring the student's progress during the transitional period. This support may be provided to the student's regular education teacher as the child makes the transition to a mainstreamed program. Each student is assigned to a certified special education teacher for this purpose. period. The student's progress is reviewed regularly, usually at the end of each marking period. It is a temporary service which, when successful, leads to the declassification of the student. A student is eligible for this service at any age or grade level.

INTEGRATED CO-TEACHING (ICT) SERVICES

The Wallkill Central School District provides an integrated program for our students in the regular education classes. Such services are recommended by the Committee on Special Education to meet the needs of the individual student and this will be included in the student's individual education program (IEP). This service shall be provided in accordance with the following provisions:

- (1) The total number of students with disabilities assigned in a co-taught setting shall not exceed twelve (12).
- (2) The co-taught setting shall include one general education teacher and one special education teacher.

CONSULTANT TEACHER SERVICES

Consultant teacher services shall be for providing direct and/or indirect services to students with

disabilities enrolled full-time in regular education classes. Such services shall be recommended by the Committee on Special Education to meet specific needs of such students and shall be included in the student's individualized educational program (IEP). Consultant teacher services shall be provided in accordance with the following provisions:

- (1) The total number of students with disabilities assigned to a consultant teacher shall not exceed twenty (20).
- (2) Each student with a disability requiring consultant teacher services shall receive direct and/or indirect services consistent with the student's IEP for a minimum of two (2) hours each week.

RELATED SERVICES

Related services means developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a student with a disability and includes speech-language pathology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling services, medical services as defined by regulation, parent counseling and training, school health services, school social work, assistive technology services, appropriate access to recreation, including therapeutic recreation, other appropriate developmental or corrective support services, and other appropriate support services. The CSE will recommend any related service that is appropriate to a student's individual needs.

Related services currently provided include psychological services, speech and language therapy, counseling, deaf and hearing-impaired services, physical and occupational therapy, and parent counseling and training. If a student with a disability is deemed to need itinerant service for the vision impaired, this service will also be provided.

The district employs four (4) psychologists, four (4) school social workers, six (6) speech and language pathologists, one (1) Teacher of the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, one (1) full-time occupational therapist, two (2) full-time occupational therapy assistants, and one (1) full-time physical therapist to provide their respective services. Due to the low incidence of pupils with disabilities that require other related services, the district contracts with BOCES and/or private agencies when other services are needed.

SPEECH and LANGUAGE THERAPY

The goal of speech and language therapy is early identification of communication disorders and therapeutic remediation of articulation deficits, stuttering, voice disorders, and receptive and expressive language problems, which adversely affect a student's educational performance.

This is a district-wide program with services provided by six (60 full-time certified speech and language pathologists. Services are rendered either individually or in small groups of two to five students. The services are provided on a push-in or pull-out basis and the location of the service is indicated on each student's IEP. The extent and duration of the services are prescribed by the

Committee on Special Education and reviewed at least annually.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

The following major areas of responsibility are assigned to school psychologists: assessment; observation; test administration and interpretation; participation in the Committee on Special Education (CSE), referral, evaluation, and placement; monitoring of student progress; pre-referral intervention; consultation with teachers; student and parent counseling; and liaison activities with community agencies and other professionals. Counseling as a related service is provided to those students whose psycho-social needs interfere with their benefiting from education. The focus of school-based counseling must be on the school-related difficulties of the student with a disability and is designed to assist the student in overcoming social, emotional, or learning difficulties that interfere with the educational process. Counseling services improve communication and interaction between the student and school personnel to enable the student to be more productive. Counseling also addresses those social skills students need to function appropriately. Additional functions relating to special education students include assisting teachers in the development of interventions to help students in achieving of Individualized Education Programs (IEP) goals; performing Functional Behavioral Assessments and developing, monitoring, and updating Behavior Intervention Plans; conducting triennial evaluations; and exploring out-of-district educational alternatives when necessary.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

Within the Department of Special Education, the social worker provides mandated individual and group counseling to students, assisting them in the development of self-esteem, coping and self-advocacy skills, and appropriate social skills. The following services are also provided: monitoring students' progress; attending CSE and school-based team meetings for students, providing support services to students moving into programs that are less restrictive, providing parent education; intervening during crisis, and serving as general liaison between school and home. Counseling as a related service is provided to those students whose psycho-social needs interfere with their benefiting from education. The focus of school-based counseling must be on the school-related difficulties of the student with a disability and is designed to assist the student in overcoming social, emotional, or learning difficulties that interfere with the educational process. Counseling services improve communication and interaction between the student and school personnel to enable the student to be more productive. Counseling also addresses those social skills students need to function appropriately. Additional functions relating to special education students include: performing Functional Behavioral Assessments and developing, monitoring, and updating Behavior Intervention Plans.

**Counseling services are provided district-wide by the school social workers and school psychologists as per IEP recommendation. The extent and duration of the services are prescribed by the Committee on Special Education and are reviewed at least once annually.

PHYSICAL and OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Physical Therapy as a related service is directed towards developing and maintaining the student's physical potential for independence in all education-related activities. A major focus of physical therapy is to develop the student's ability to safely negotiate the school environment.

The district employs one (1) full-time licensed physical therapist. The Physical Therapist evaluates students and provides therapeutic services. In addition, the therapist consults with the special education teachers and is available for CSE meetings and IEP conferences.

Occupational Therapy focuses on how the student receives and interprets the sensory information used in coordination with the motor control needed to meet the environment's demands. It is concerned with the impact a student's disability has on his or her learning performance and ability to execute the functional tasks required in the school environment. Occupational therapy may be provided individually, in a small group, or a consult to the classroom teacher, based on the recommendation of the CSE.

The district employs one (1) full time occupational therapist and two (2) occupational therapy assistants. The occupational therapist evaluates students and provides therapeutic services. In addition, the therapist consults with the special education teachers and is available for CSE meetings and IEP conferences.

ITINERANT SERVICE FOR STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

Vision itinerant services are designed to provide direct, specialized instruction to students, ages five (5) to twenty-one (21) years of age, with visual impairments who are enrolled in a general or special education program by a teacher of the visually impaired. The itinerant teacher meets individually with the student and trains them in the use of residual vision and the listening, organizational and tactual skills specific to the student's individual situation. This service includes direct instruction in various optical aids, large print books, worksheets, orientation and mobility services, tactile and recorded material, and current technology. Teachers may also assist students in acclimating themselves to new instructional environments and may assist other teachers in meeting the student's educational needs.

Due to the low incidence of students with visual impairments, the district generally contracts with Ulster County BOCES to provide this service, when needed.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

Hearing services are designed to provide direct specialized instruction to students, ages five (5) to twenty-one (21) years old, with hearing impairments enrolled in a general or special education program. Specialized instruction to address the students' individual needs is provided by a deaf and hard of hearing teacher. These services are necessary for students to benefit from their primary educational program.

These services are provided by either a district employee who is certified as a Teacher of the

Deaf and Hearing Impaired or as a contracted service through Ulster County BOCES.

RESOURCE ROOM PROGRAMS

The resource room program is supplemental in nature and is designed to assist students in remediation of skill deficits and in dealing more effectively with assignments from their general education classes. The program consists of identification and diagnostic assessment, small group and/or individualized instruction in basic academic skills, oral and written language, study and organizational skills. Encouragement and emotional support are provided. Consulting with general education classroom teachers is integral to this program in meeting educational needs and to help students develop basic skills and competency in content areas.

The instructional group in each resource room period does not exceed five (5) students, who are grouped according to their similarity of need. Each resource room period is instructed by a special education teacher. Students shall spend a minimum of three (3) hours per week receiving resource room services and shall not spend more than fifty (50) percent of their time during the day in the resource room program.

NON-INTEGRATED/SPECIAL CLASSES

Four of our five buildings have classes that are non-integrated and serve students who are classified as having a disability by the Committee on Special Education. Students are grouped according to similarity of need and as per the four grouping criteria - levels of academic achievement, social development, physical development, and management needs - defined in 8 NYCRR200.6(a)(3). Classes are capped at six, eight, twelve or fifteen students, depending on needs. The age span between the youngest and oldest student is less than or equal to thirty-six (36) months. Each full-time class is staffed by a certified special education teacher.

As the district wholeheartedly supports the concept of the least restrictive environment, our students may be assigned to a regular class on his or her grade level where he or she may attend mainstream core academic classes, as appropriate. The special education students may attend the mainstream art, music, library, and physical education classes, as well as eat lunch in the typical setting as appropriate.

Each student has a special education teacher assigned as his or her case manager. This teacher is personally responsible for the student's integration into the school. This teacher, through ongoing communication with the mainstream teachers, the student's parents, and the other special education department members, provides a source of support for the student.

READING

Specially designed reading instruction is individualized or group instruction, or a special service or program provided to meet the student's needs in the area of reading as recommended in the individualized education program (IEP). A certified reading teacher or a special education teacher is authorized to provide specially designed reading instruction. This instruction may be provided in the classroom or in another educational setting structured to meet the needs of the individual student.

Effective programs also provide instruction that allows students to develop skills and strategies that support reading and writing. Skills should be taught explicitly, and students should apply these skills in functional reading and writing activities. These skills and strategies include:

- Reading words
- Fluency
- Comprehension
- Writing and spelling
- Monitoring for understanding

Such reading instruction would be provided only when the student's reading difficulties cannot be met through general education reading programs.

The district continues to facilitate Orton-Gillingham (OG) training for teacher Kindergarten through eighth (8th) grade teachers. For the 2024-2053 school year, the training will continue to include self-contained special education teachers and all teaching assistants. Newly hired ICT and reading teachers will be trained and some related service providers.

IDENTIFICATION OF NUMBER OF PUPILS SERVED LISTED BY TYPE OF DISABILITY AS OF 2024 ANNUAL PD DATA SYSTEM REPORT

SCHOOL-AGE STUDENTS BY DISABILITY	# OF STUDENTS
Autism	66
Emotional Disturbance	6
Learning Disability	171
Intellectual Disability	3
Deafness	1
Hearing Impaired	1
Speech or Language Impairment	72
Visual Impairment (includes Blindness)	0
Orthopedic Impairment	0
Other Health Impairment	105
Multiple Disabilities	27
Deaf-Blindness	0
Traumatic Brain Injury	1
TOTAL	453

GENERAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The long-range goals of our district operated Special Education Programs are:

To provide an appropriate education for each child in the least restrictive environment.

To meet each child's unique individual needs

To remediate weaknesses

To bring each child as close to meeting the state education standards as possible

To aim toward fulfilling each child's potential

The program goals are reviewed annually to make effective administrative decisions, areas that are examined include but are not limited to:

- overall number of special education students
- placements of students
- effectiveness of new programs
- number of students graduating, declassified
- review of parent correspondence, input

The short-term goals for each student varies according to their needs and are specified clearly within their IEP (Individual Education Plan).

Building principals and/or the Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Education Coordinator evaluate the teachers of Special Education and the related service providers as per teacher contracts. Administrators confer with each individual teacher regarding observations and recommendations.

Each of our BOCES and Private Day students are closely monitored, to determine the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and appropriateness of their individual programming.

AVAILABILITY OF COPIES OF THIS PLAN

The District Special Education Plan is on file for review in the Office of Superintendent of Schools, the Special Education Office, and each of the district's public-school buildings. A parent may request and receive a copy of the plan from the school district at any time. Requests should be made through the Special Education Office.

The Plan regarding special education records will be reviewed and revised, if necessary, every two years as part of the District's Two-Year Plan for Special Education.