

# Wallenpaupack Area School District Planned Course Curriculum Guide

## Department Fine Arts/Special Education Departments General Creative Communications

**Course Description:** This specialized class is designed to help students with significant social challenges develop essential skills for successful social experiences and a fulfilling social life. Through sensory-friendly activities and assistive technology, students will learn how to communicate effectively.

**Initial Creation Date (if applicable) and Revision Dates:** April 29, 2025

<b>Wallenpaupack Area School District Curriculum</b>	
<b>COURSE:</b> General Creative Communications	<b>GRADE/S:</b> 9-12+
<b>UNIT 1:</b> How I Feel	<b>TIMEFRAME:</b> ~ 15 classes

**PA COMMON CORE/NATIONAL STANDARDS:**

- 9.1.8.A (create works)
- 9.1.8.B (interpreting role/improvisation)
- 9.4.8.C (aesthetic response)

**UNIT OBJECTIVES (SWBATS):**

Students will improve their ability to convey their feelings effectively and appropriately.

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES/ACTIVITIES:**

- Practice identifying emotions (ex: picture matching, social stories)
  - Emotion Flashcards: Using flashcards with faces showing different emotions have students match their own feelings or identify emotions in peers
  - Emotion Charades: Act out different emotions and have students guess/match the emotion being portrayed (can be done nonverbally through facial expressions and body language)
  - Textures and Feelings: Put together a box of materials with different textures to help identify emotions that “feel” like the textures they are touching (ex: sandpaper for frustration, cotton balls might for love)
  - Colors and feelings: Pair feelings with colors (ex: Inside Out movie, paint chip emotions activity)
  - Experience Books – Photograph experiences students have throughout the school year/on trips, then print those pictures out with short sentences that help to recall and describe the experience and identify objects and emotions they may not experience daily but can recall and are familiar with.
- Learn strategies for expressing emotions and preferences
  - Start with just positive and negative (ex: happy vs. sad)
  - Identify current feelings on a visual chart
- Engage in sensory self-expression (ex: play dough, finger painting, etc.)

**ASSESSMENTS (Diagnostic/Benchmark/Formative/Summative):**

- Participation in class activities

**DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION (Acceleration/Enrichment):**

- Paraprofessional support
- Speech/language therapist support
- Allow/Account for verbal and nonverbal communication
- Allow for varied response options/task complexity (ex: point to the emotion I say vs. name the emotion on the card)

**RESOURCES (Technology Based Resources, Text Resources, etc.):**

- Social stories ([Social Stories For School | Free Library - Autism Little Learners](#), [Social Stories - ABA Resources - Autism ABA Free Resources](#))
- Communication boards

**KEY VOCABULARY:** feelings, happy, sad, mad, worried, “I feel...”

<b>Wallenpaupack Area School District Curriculum</b>	
<b>COURSE:</b> General Creative Communications	<b>GRADE/S:</b> 9-12+
<b>UNIT 2:</b> How I Act (Calming & Coping)	<b>TIMEFRAME:</b> ~15 classes

<p><b>PA COMMON CORE/NATIONAL STANDARDS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9.1.8.A (create works)</li> <li>• 9.1.8.B (interpreting role/improvisation)</li> <li>• 9.4.8.C (aesthetic response)</li> </ul>
<p><b>UNIT OBJECTIVES (SWBATS):</b></p> <p>Students will improve their ability to use appropriate coping/calming strategies.</p>
<p><b>INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES/ACTIVITIES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies for effectively communicating requests and refusals (Ex: I feel/I need board, ALS videos, picture cards, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Start with giving simple choices (ex: would you rather do ___ or ___?)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Identify appropriate calming/coping techniques (Ex: create individual calming choice boards) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Have each student make a book of coping techniques for each emotion for them to choose from (ex: “When I’m feeling mad, I can color, listen to music or take a walk...”</li> <li>○ Causal situations (ex: If I have a schedule change, I might feel ___. )</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Trial various calming/coping techniques (Ex: deep breathing, coloring, music, nature, etc.); Keep a tracking sheet of what works for them (Ex: checking off 😊 or 😞 for each strategy)</li> <li>• Sharing ailments and injuries by identifying how someone might feel situation (Ex: A photo of someone holding their leg --&gt; their leg hurts)</li> </ul>
<p><b>ASSESSMENTS (Diagnostic/Benchmark/Formative/Summative):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in class activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION (Acceleration/Enrichment):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paraprofessional support</li> <li>• Speech/language therapist support</li> <li>• Allow/Account for verbal and nonverbal communication</li> </ul>
<p><b>RESOURCES (Technology Based Resources, Text Resources, etc.):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social stories (<a href="#">Social Stories For School   Free Library - Autism Little Learners</a>, <a href="#">Social Stories - ABA Resources - Autism ABA Free Resources</a>)</li> <li>• Communication boards</li> </ul>
<p><b>KEY VOCABULARY:</b> “I need...”, “I want...”, calm, breathe</p>

**Wallenpaupack Area School District Curriculum**

**COURSE:** General Creative Communications

**GRADE/S:** 9-12+

**UNIT 3:** How I Get Along with Others

**TIMEFRAME:** ~12

**PA COMMON CORE/NATIONAL STANDARDS:**

- 9.1.8.A (create works)
- 9.1.8.B (interpreting role/improvisation)
- 9.4.8.C (aesthetic response)

**UNIT OBJECTIVES (SWBATS):**

Students will improve their ability to communicate with others effectively and appropriately.

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES/ACTIVITIES:**

- Practice identifying peers and staff (ex: picture matching; “Show me Ms. DeCola” or “\*given a picture of Ms. DeCola\* Who is this?”)
- Practice appropriate greetings and farewells
  - Visual Greeting Cards: Create cards with pictures and symbols for different greetings (e.g., "Hello," "Goodbye") that students can use to greet peers and teachers
  - Puppets: Use puppets or dolls to practice greeting scenarios. This helps students understand social cues and responses.
- Strategies for gaining attention (ex: using appropriate gestures, addressing by name vs. Inappropriate strategies like grabbing, yelling)
- Practice following directions and turn taking (ex: group games)
  - Turn-Taking Games: Simple games like passing a ball or taking turns in a board game
  - Sharing Activities: Use toys or classroom materials to practice sharing with visual supports to help students understand when it's their turn to share
  - Charades
- Build on skills needed for effective communication (ex: sorting, matching, classifying, etc.)
  - Play Same and Different (game board, worksheets, etc.)
  - Color sorting (matching colored objects to the corresponding colors of various bins, mats, or containers of your choice)
  - Use blocks to model verbal language specific to prepositions (in, on, above, below, behind, between, etc.), numbers, colors, and more. (For example, “I put a block *on top* of the tower.)
- Storytelling
  - Interactive Storytelling: Use storybooks with interactive elements (e.g., flaps, textures) to encourage engagement and communication
    - Discuss using adjectives (Ex: “How do you think the dog feels? Is it fuzzy or bumpy?”)

- Social Stories: Create stories that outline common social problems and appropriate responses (to be read aloud or presented with pictures)

**ASSESSMENTS (Diagnostic/Benchmark/Formative/Summative):**

- Participation in class activities

**DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION (Acceleration/Enrichment):**

- Paraprofessional support
  - Speech/language therapist support
- Allow/Account for verbal and nonverbal communication

**RESOURCES (Technology Based Resources, Text Resources, etc.):**

- Social stories ([Social Stories For School | Free Library - Autism Little Learners](#), [Social Stories - ABA Resources - Autism ABA Free Resources](#))
- Communication boards
- Board games (ex: Candy Land)

**KEY VOCABULARY:** peer, friend, staff, greeting, closing, hi, bye, turn, game