

Student Services

FY26 Update



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December 8, 2025

Student Services Department Update

1. IDEA and Inclusion Statement
2. Key Questions: Responsibilities, Services and Resources
3. Key Questions: Special Education Trends
4. Student Needs: Mental Health Trends & Support
5. Curriculum and Specialized Program Updates
6. Students with Disabilities Growth in MCAS
7. Extended School Year
8. DESE Mandates and Professional Learning
9. Department Pressures
10. Additional Information
11. SEPAC Survey
12. Questions



Inclusion in Sudbury



FAPE

Free Appropriate
Public Education



LRE

Least Restrictive
Environment



COLLABORATION

Critical expectation of
collaboration between
schools and families.

A landmark law that fundamentally transformed public education,
guaranteeing the right of every child, regardless of disability.



All Means All

Sudbury Public Schools is committed to being an inclusive environment where all students are full members of our school community. We hold to the belief that all individuals should be respected, valued, and included by peers, teachers, parents, and the community at large. We are an inclusive environment where all students feel safe and thrive socially, emotionally, physically and academically.

~SPS Inclusion Statement





Inclusion in Sudbury

- Inclusion is expected.
- All students are general education students.
- Staff and families engage in discussions.
- Our language matters.
- Everyone has responsibility.
- Relationships are most important!

The Purpose of Special Education:



*To **minimize the impact** of disability and to **maximize the opportunities, achievement and independence** of each student in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).*

Key Questions



1. What are the responsibilities of the Student Services Department?
2. What services and resources are supported by the Student Services Department?
3. What are the noticeable trends and updates in the Student Services Department?

Key Question: 1

The Three Big “Responsibility Buckets” of the Student Services Department

- 1) Supporting Students, Families and Staff
- 2) Providing Professional Resources and Structures
- 3) Upholding Legal Mandates



1) Supporting Students, Families and Staff

- Ensuring student learning outcomes
- Communicating with families
- Connecting families with staff expertise and district resources

2) Identify Professional Resources and Department Structures

- Plan professional development opportunities to maintain research-based instructional practices
- Oversee resource allocation
- Develop specialized programs: long and short-term program planning to ensure structural supports

3) Uphold Legal Mandates

- Adhere to legal procedures and timelines
- Provide a continuum of services
- Follow Child Find regulations
- Provide Tiered Focused Monitoring with the State
- Ensure implementation of 504 Accommodation and Individualized Educational Plans

Key Question: 2

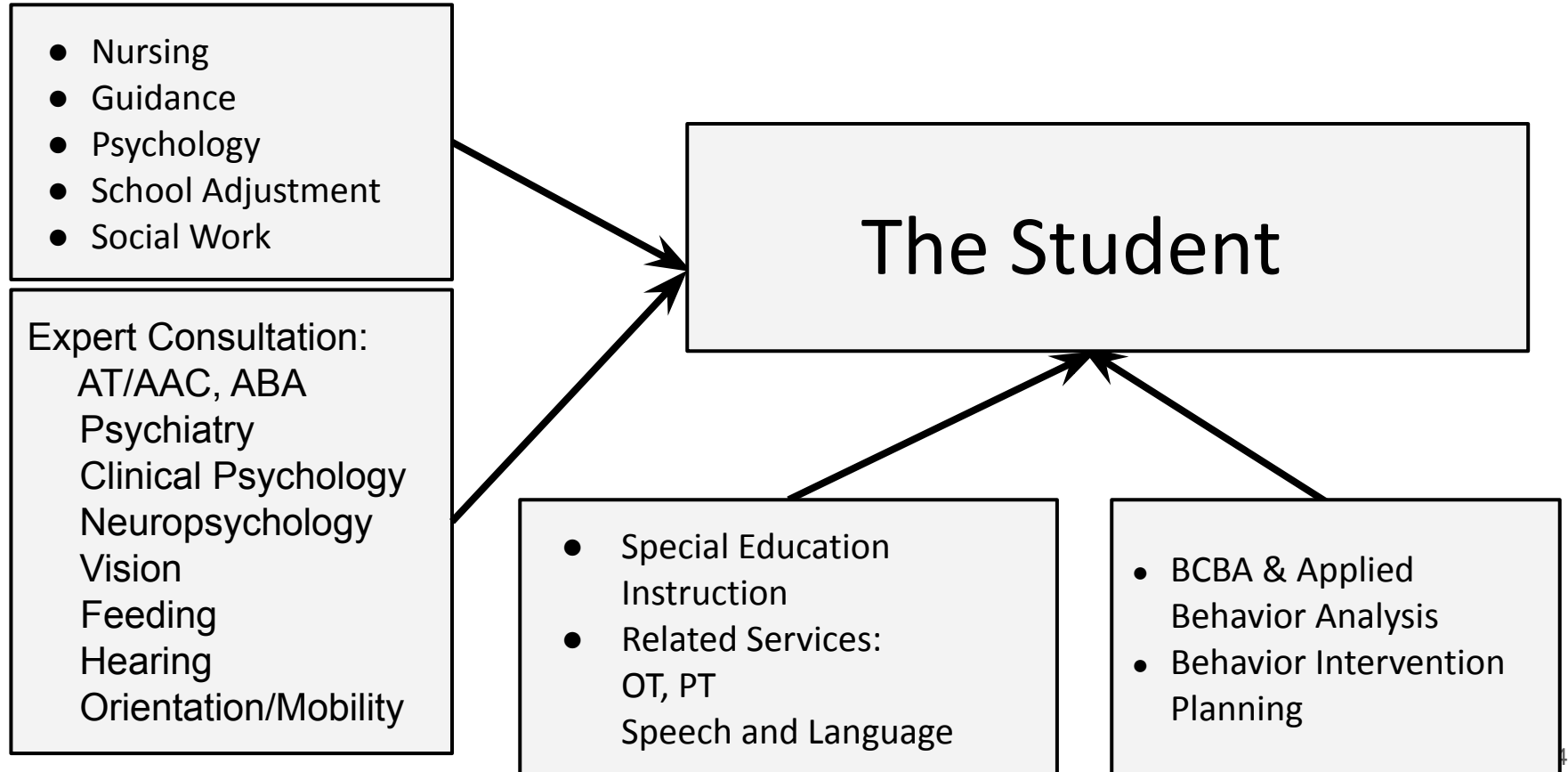
What services and resources are
supported by the
Student Services Department?

Student Services and Resources

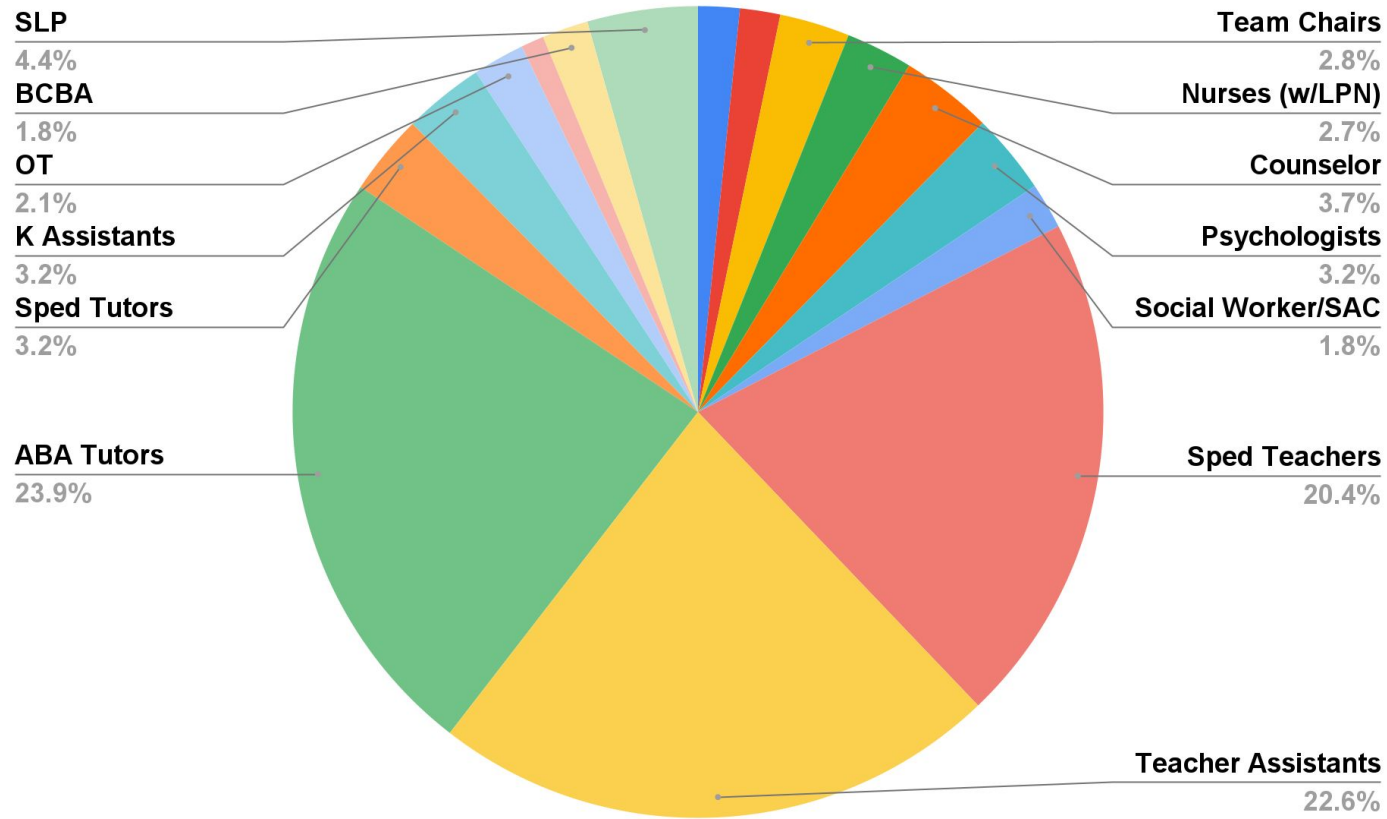
- Personnel with specialized training
- A continuum of intensity of service delivery
- An array of diverse services

**These services impact ALL students.*

District Services



Student Services Staffing FY26



221.3 FTE

FY26

SPS Student Services Department

A Continuum of Service Delivery

- Nursing
- Guidance
- BCBA
- 504 Teams
- Student Records
- Support Staff
- Registration

Universal Design
DCAP: District
Curriculum
Accommodation
Plan

- Special Education Teachers
- Psychologists
- Related Services
- OT, PT, SLP, BCBA
- Support Staff

- ABA
- Wrap Around Therapies
- Consultants

All Students

Students on IEPs

Students in Specialized
Programs

Students
in Out of District Placements

Key Question: 3

What are the noticeable trends
and updates in the
Student Services Department?

Enrollment & Special Education Data Trends



Section 504 Accommodation Plan Demographics

	10/1/2020	10/1/2021	10/1/2022	10/1/2023	10/1/2024	10/1/2025
504s	93	95	94	106	136	154
Enrollment	2,521	2,517	2,535	2,539	2,529	2,535
Prevalence	3.7%	3.8%	3.7%	4.1%	5.4%	6.1%

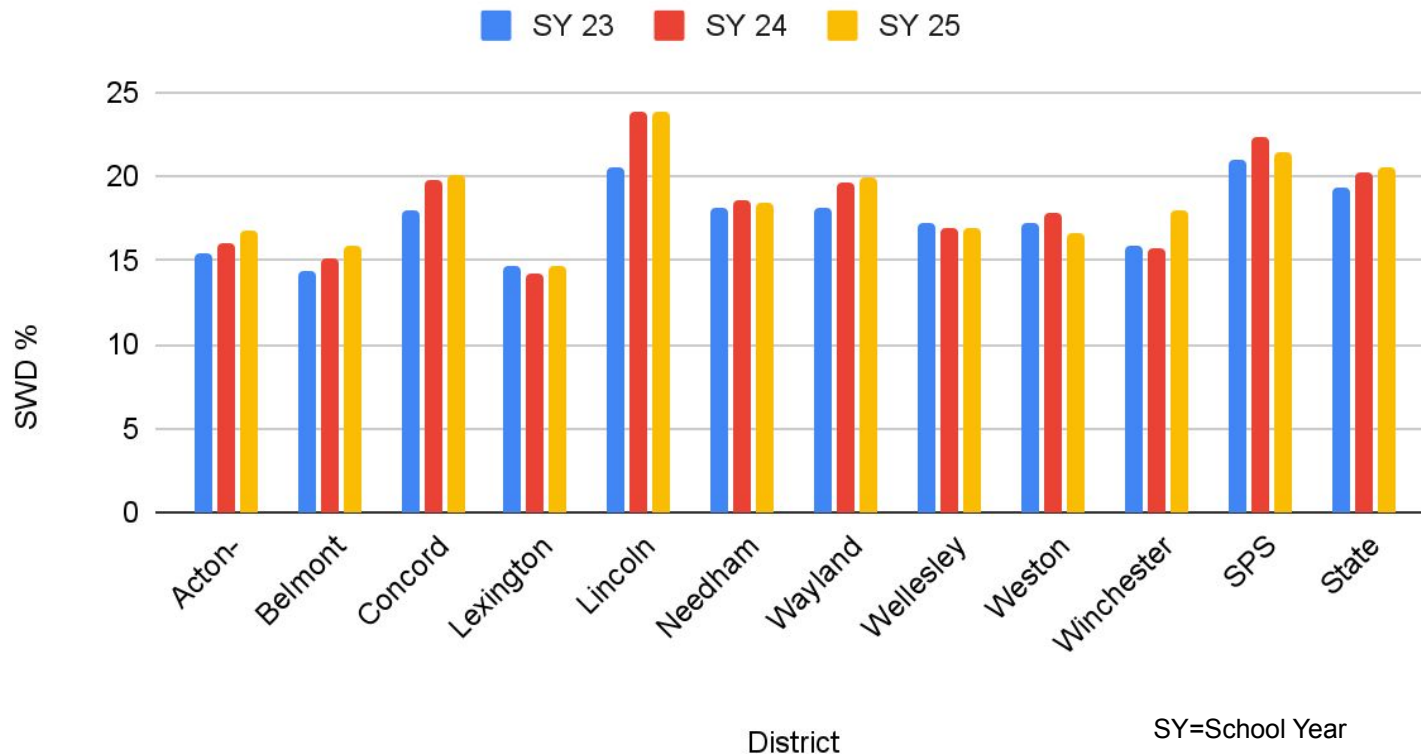
Special Education: Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Demographics

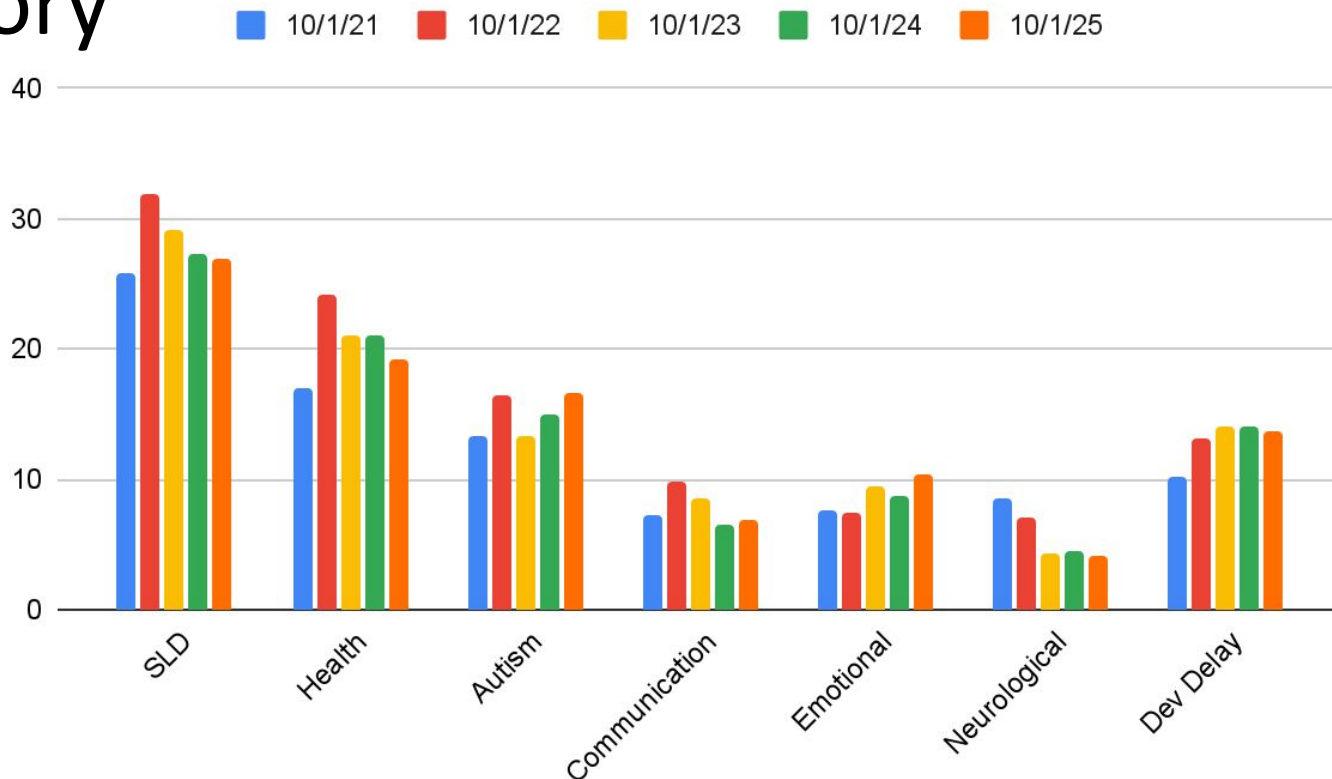
	2020-2021 Oct/June	2021-2022 Oct/June	2022-2023 Oct/June	2023-2024 Oct/June	2024-2025 Oct/June	2025 Oct
IEPs	451 / 525	476 / 577	542 / 587	555 / 588	531/557	518
Enrollment	2,521 /2,542	2,517 /2,550	2,535 / 2572	2539 / 2552	2529/ 2554	2535
Prevalence %	17.9 / 20.7	18.9 / 22.6	21.4 / 22.8	21.9 / 23.0	21.5/21.8	20.4

School Year 2024-2025 State average is 20.6% (increase of .8% SY23)

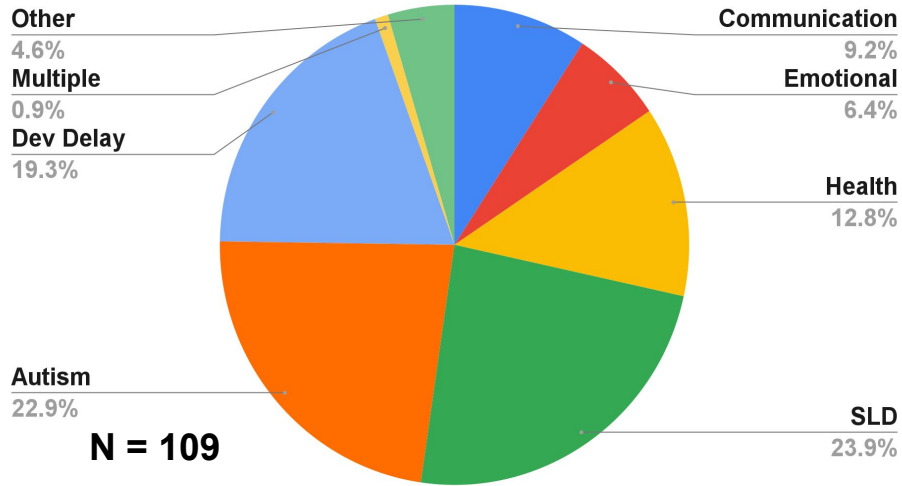
Students with Disabilities (SWD): Prevalence



Percent of Students by Primary Disability Category

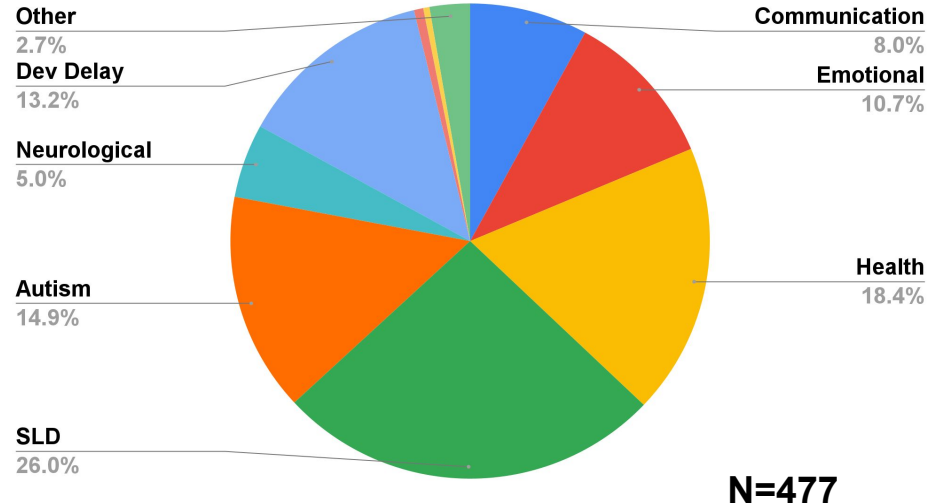


Primary Disability for Non-White Students



FY26 Comparison of Student Disability Category by Race

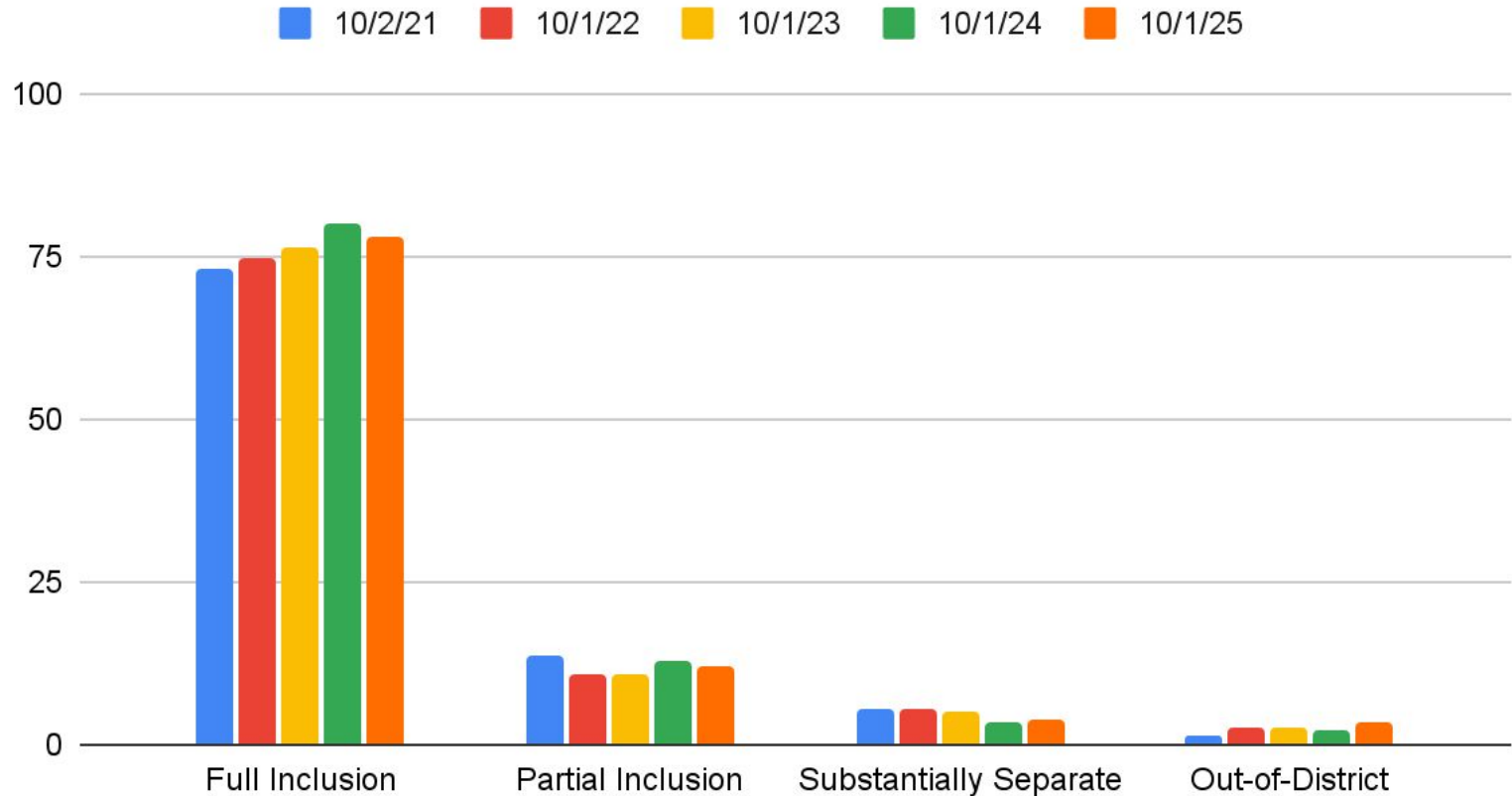
Primary Disability for White Students



**Note: This total N is taken from 11/25/2025 ASPEN data.*

Pink: Physical Disability

% of Students on IEPs by Placement



Student Needs: Mental Health Trends & Support

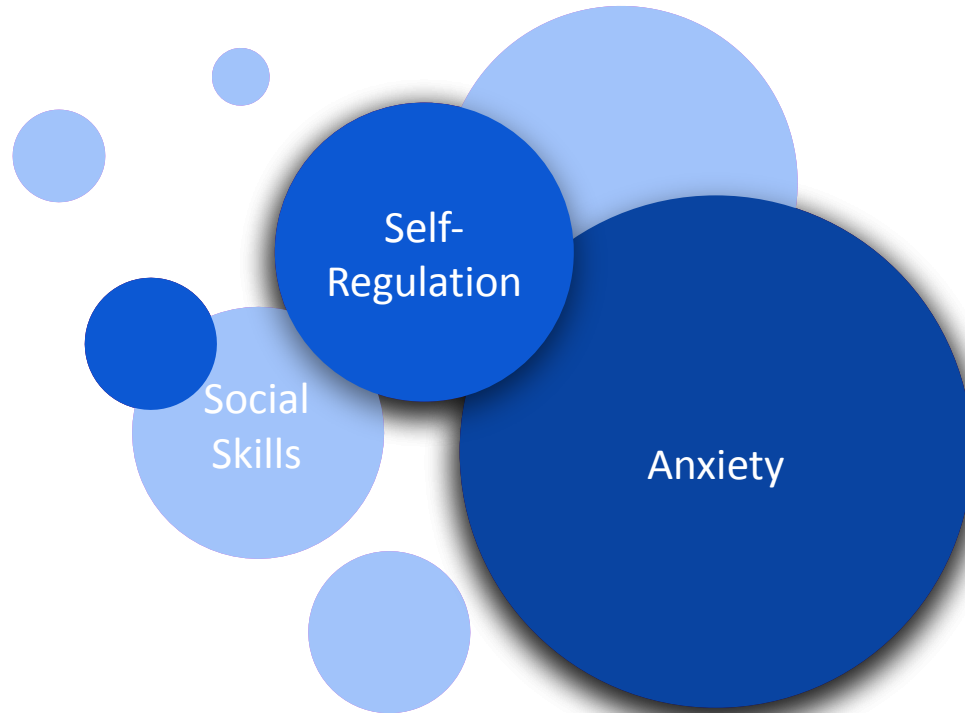


Mental Health Resources and Tiered Interventions

- Coordinated effort of district, elementary and middle clinical teams
 - *Collaboration and professional development*
- Tiered Social Emotional Learning (SEL) supports for students: Tier 1,2,3
 - *Universal screening tools and specialized counseling services*
- Ongoing professional development
- Increased allocation of support: Clinical Team Members/ BCBA
- Two-way support for families: family to school/school to family
- Family resources: [Social Emotional Resources Website](#)
- Town social workers: <https://sudbury.ma.us/socialworker/>
- William James College Interface Referral System



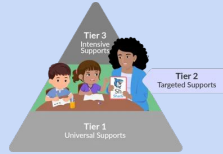
Mental Health & Social Emotional Behavioral Needs Remain a Primary Concern



Clinical Team

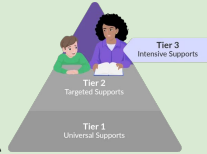
Tier 2 Support

- Small social skills groups
- One-on-one check ins
- Support for self-regulation and behavior
- Collaboration with teachers and families
- Teaching routines and calming strategies
- Social Emotional Learning Teaching Tools



Tier 3 Support

- Individual counseling for high needs
- Crisis and safety support: students/families
- Frequent/daily check-ins
- One-to-one support for school avoidance/big emotions
- Close collaboration with families and teachers



Key Themes

High number of students need support
Challenges around anxiety, self-regulation, and school avoidance
High demand for Tier 2 & 3

Clinical Team Observations

“Predictable routines, morning check-ins, and coping strategies help students regulate emotions and participate in class.”

“Collaboration with families and teachers is essential for supporting students’ social-emotional needs.”

“Many students struggle to manage big feelings and stay on task during the school day.”

“Staff report a need for more time to share strategies, resources, and plan interventions across grade levels.”

“Students are experiencing increased anxiety, school avoidance, and self-regulation challenges.”



Addressing Anxiety and School Avoidance

- Clinical Staff Training/Expert Consultation:

Dr. Alex Hirshberg supporting the development of student coping skills and strategies: District and School-Based Consultation

Dr. Naami Turk teaching trauma informed social emotional practices on specific student cases: District and School-Based Consultation

- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) website for SPS educators on school avoidance
- Family website to support development of coping strategies for school refusal
- Faculty meetings to support the strategy development of all educators

Collaborative Practices Strengthen Student Success

- Strong collaboration among clinicians, teachers, families, and administrators drives student progress
- Predictable routines are key: transitions, behavior plans, communication strategies, and SEL skill-building
- Consistent support builds coping skills, emotional regulation, social skills, and academic engagement
- Collaboration amongst teams increases capacity to problem-solve together

Areas of Student Growth

- Social skills & peer relationships (most frequently reported)
- Coping skills & resilience
- Academic engagement
- Emotional regulation
- Problem-solving & executive functioning
- Growth most evident in students seen individually or in small groups



District Psychological Testing & Mental Health Caseload Trends

	Evaluations	Tier 2	Tier 3
2020-2021	465	60	103
2021-2022	407	162	200
2022-2023	315	252	275
2023-2024	277	247	221
2024-2025	324	124	247
Fall 2025	85 (fall)	185	219

*Psychological testing numbers include reevaluations for academic and mental health referrals.

*Tier 2 cases numbers are variable as services rotate over 6-8 week periods.

*Caseloads do not capture variation in weight/intensity.

Increase in Mental Health/Behavioral Support Staff

School Year	Mental Health/Behavioral Support Staff
2019-2020	2.0 Adjustment Counselors
2020-2021	0.5 BCBA
2021-2022	1.0 Adjustment Counselor
2022-2023	0.5 Psychologist 1.3 Adjustment Counselor 0.2 OT Therapist (Self-Regulation Support) 0.6 BCBA
2023-2024	1.0 Psychologist/Counselor 1.0 BCBA
2024-2025	.2 Psychologist
2025-2026	.2 Nurse/ 1.0 LPN

**This does not include the many Special Education Teachers & Support Staff who support the mental health and wellness of students.*

Mental Health Resources for Families

- Interface Referral Services through William James College 888-244-6843
- 988 - Suicide and Crisis Hotline, available 24 hrs
- The Department of Mental Health: [Behavioral Health Help Line](#) that people can call or text at **833-773-2445**. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week in more than 200 languages.
- Sudbury Social Workers: Nina Lurie and Kirstin Wilcox
 - Website: <https://sudbury.ma.us/socialworker/>
 - Contact: socialworker@sudbury.ma.us or (978) 440 - 5476
- [Social Emotional Resources Website for Families](#)
- Clinical Team Members at every building to support students and families with mental health needs.

Questions? Please email: student_services@sudbury.k12.ma.us

Curriculum and Specialized Program Updates



Highly Specialized Programs

Haynes

Partner
Steps

Learning Centers - Skills
in ALL Schools

Loring

LAB
Bridges

Nixon

Access
Preschool

Noyes

Foundations
LAB
Preschool



ECMS

LAB
Leap
Flex
Access
Partner
Bridges

Brief Program Overview

Learning Center/Resource Rooms/Skills Classes

Serves students grades K-8 of all disabilities, in a wrap around services delivery model that includes in class and/or pull out support for students. Students are taught academic skills for content as well as organization and executive functioning.

Language Achievement and Beyond (LAB) Program

Serves students grades 3-8 with language based learning disabilities. Provides specialized instruction with a systematic and multisensory methodology in either a co-taught or substantially separate structure with both individual and small group instruction.

Steps/Leap Program

Serves students with academic, intellectual, and/or communication disabilities with both sub-separate and small group learning in general education content area classes.

Foundations/Flex Program

Provides highly-specialized instruction and services to students primarily with autism, communication, self-regulation and social/pragmatic language needs in either an integrated or substantially separate structure.

Out of District: A variety of specialized programs to meet individual needs of students.

Partner Program

Serves students (K-8) primarily with Autism Spectrum Disorders as well as other students who require intensive Applied Behavior Analysis programming. A highly structured and individualized program supported by BCBAs from the New England Center for Children (NECC).

Access Program

Serves students primarily with social emotional disabilities in grades K-8. The psychologists/school adjustment counselors provide ongoing therapeutic support and social skill instruction. BCBAs work in consult with all staff.

Bridges

A transitional and/or special education therapeutic program which serves students in both general and special education. Students are supported after a long-term absence, anxiety or social emotional needs while under evaluation.

Sudbury Preschool Program

Integrated classrooms for students with diverse needs supported by general/special education teachers and related services, such as speech, physical, and occupational therapy. A strong continuum of services within the structure of the program.

****Note: These are only are brief overviews of program elements, and our programs evolve to meet the needs of our students.***

Feedback from Special Education Teachers on ELA Curriculum

EL: Expeditionary Learning

	What's Going Well?	What Are We Working On?	What Would Help?
Reading & Writing	• Repeated readings build confidence and accuracy • Targeted phonics instruction in upper grades • Embedded structure and scaffolding to support writing	• Supporting language development • Enhancing student skills in revising and refining their written work	• Time to develop and modify materials and scaffolds for language and writing
Student Access	• Close reading of sentence structure • Opportunities to listen to text for comprehension	• Implementing effective whole-group and explicit instruction models	• Identification of additional materials for special education staff
Scheduling & Implementation	• Skills build progressively from grade to grade • Implementation will improve with familiarity	• Developing a master schedule to eliminate pull-out service conflicts. • Allocating dedicated time for collaborative staff planning and resource development	• More flexibility with the schedule • Learn from other districts that implemented program

Field Trips

An exciting and integral part of the instructional program - a curricular extension outside the classroom to provide real-world experiences that align with curriculum goals and grade-level standards.

ALL students have access to all field trips - regardless of financial circumstance or disability.

ALL trips are selected to align to curriculum and program goals.

ALL students are provided equal opportunity to participate.



SPS remains committed to ensuring that all field trips are accessible and inclusive.

Collaborative Co-Teaching

SPS General & Special Educators partner to support students by:

Consulting and planning with each other
Sharing ideas and resources to support students
Setting goals and assessing student progress
Collaborating with shared expertise in partnership with English Language teachers, interventionists and related services



Co-Teaching Models

One Teach, One Observe (data collection)
One Teach, One Assist
Parallel Teaching
Station Teaching
Alternative Teaching
Team Teaching

Structural and Professional Supports Needed for Formal Co-teaching Models:

Clarity on Mission and Model
An Appropriate Cohort of Students
Dedicated Planning Time/Strategic Scheduling and Assignment
Adequate Financial Resources
Leadership Initiative
Program Evaluation
Professional Development with High Level of Consultation



Early Childhood: A Solid Foundation in SPS Preschool



A child's drawing of a pumpkin on a blue background. The pumpkin is orange with black lines for seeds and a green stem with a green leaf. Various parts are labeled with paper strips: "WINES" (green), "STEM" (green), "LEAVES" (pink), "SKIN" (green), "GUT" (green), "STRANDS" (orange), "SKIN" (pink), "STRAND" (orange), "SEED" (pink), "GUTS" (pink), and "STRANDS" (orange).



- Robust curriculum that blends early academics with purposeful play
- Developmentally responsive instruction supporting the whole child

- Instructional partnership that values shared expertise
- Consistent planning, reflection and communication across classrooms

A Solid Foundation Continued

New Progress Monitoring Tool in Early Literacy and Math

- Universal tool providing clear, actionable data

Inclusive Opportunities for All Students

- Embedded supports within the general classrooms
- Access to peers, materials, and activities that promotes belonging

Consistent, Transparent Communication

- Ongoing partnerships between families, educators and administration
- Regular updates that foster trust and shared goals



Early Childhood: Historical Enrollment

Year	FY23 Oct/June	FY24 Oct/June	FY25 Oct/June	FY26 Oct 1/Nov 21
Itinerant	14/16	5/5	1/6	6/6
IEP	17/35	37/43	20/48	29/32
Tuition	41/44	35/45	44/53	52/53
Total Enrollment	58/79	72/88	74/83	68/77
% IEP Prevalence	29%/44%	51%/49%	43%/57%	43%/42%

Early Childhood: Special Education



Preschool	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
# Early Intervention Referrals	21	25	30	25	6 (As of 11/21)
Community Screening Referrals	37	33	28	32	14 (As of 11/21)
Total Preschool Evaluations	56	58	50	60	4 (As of 11/21) (14 upcoming)



Year 2: Disability Awareness Curriculum

Learning About Disabilities

Elementary Schools

Objectives:

- Students will develop a foundational understanding of various disabilities, encouraging respectful interactions and supportive attitudes toward individuals of all abilities.
- Students will learn how to create a more inclusive environment by identifying and practicing ways to make their actions, language, and spaces more accessible and inviting for everyone.
- This is a Year 2 of a Tier 1, powerful initiative.

Class Brainstorm: *What do you know about disabilities?*



Student Feedback: Key Takeaways

"Everyone needs different things to be successful."

"Focus on what people can do, not what they can't do."

"Ask if they want help before you try to help with something."

"I can support others by being patient and letting others do things their own way."

"I can include others at recess by asking if they want to play and explaining the game if they don't understand."

Middle School Highlights: Program Updates

- Specialized curriculum and consultation for specialized programs
- Hybridizing of programming
- Inclusive Opportunities:
 - Community Outings with curricular focus
 - After school activity participation
 - Unified PE Program: Wellness Team
 - Unified Games
 - Unified Clubs



Unified Games: Basketball & Bocce

- Fee-based to support the sustainability of program
- Community building throughout the school and town

Unified Basketball:

- Third year of the program

Unified Bocce:

- Successful pilot program last year



Unified Field Day

- June 3, 2025
- Students were divided into seven different groups
- Students rotated through teamwork-focused activity stations



Feedback From Peer Partners

"I gained the strength of working with others. It was a really great experience! I am so appreciative that I got to do this."

"After doing Unified PE, I learned the value of friendship and working together. I also learned that practice can help a lot during the real game. "

"That it is important to come together and have fun with people we might not know so well."

"I gained knowledge of other sports and enjoyed playing games with my partners."

"I gained the ability to teach others and lead!"

Unified Cougars Club

- Started last December
- The club meets during lunch once per cycle for each grade
- There are approximately 43 members
- The club is an opportunity for students to get to know others and develop connections with one another
- In the Spring, the Unified Cougars Club will help run a school-wide initiative on inclusion



Student Growth in MCAS for Students with Disabilities



MCAS: Students with Disabilities

Following MCAS Slides from School Committee Meeting on 11/24/2025

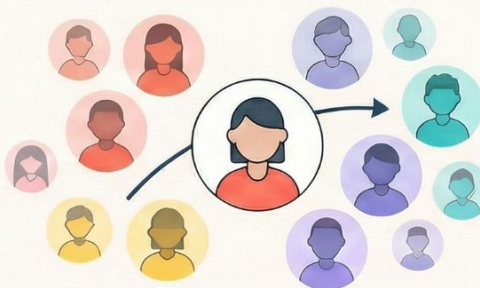
By Lauren Egizio and Karen Wolfson

- SPS Students with disabilities have high achievement compared to comparable districts in both ELA and Math.
- ELA and Math achievement gaps remain the greatest for students with disabilities.
- Students with disabilities show strong Student Growth Percentiles (SGP).
- Grades 4, 7, and 8 ELA growth exceeded expectations for this subgroup.



More Than a Score: A Guide to Student Growth Percentiles (SGP)

Measures Growth, Not Just Achievement



Academic Peers:
Students statewide with a similar history of MCAS test scores.

SGP tracks a student's progress from one year to the next.



SGPs Range from 1 to 99



A higher number indicates more growth compared to academic peers.

How to Interpret SGP

Two Students, Same Score, Different Growth



Henry

MCAS Score:
Met Expectations
SGP: 25
(Low Growth)



Simone

MCAS Score:
Met Expectations
SGP: 72
(High Growth)

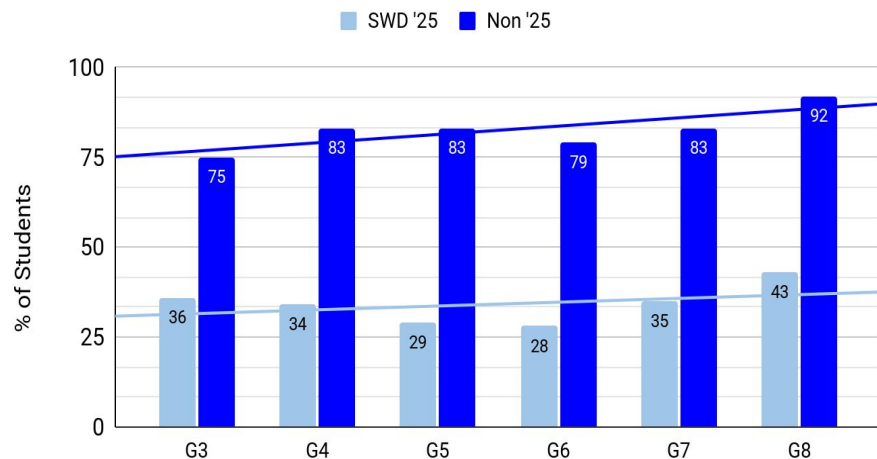


Any Student Can Show High Growth

Growth is possible regardless of a student's achievement level (e.g., Meeting Expectations).

ELA Results: SWD Cohort

Meets/Exceeds by Subgroup (SWD) 2025



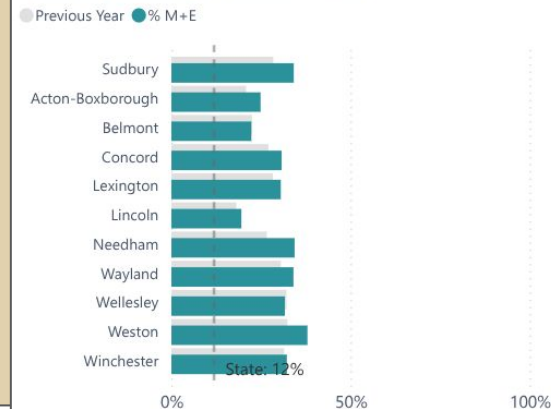
This group shows a pattern of decreased achievement through elementary school then increased achievement through middle school.

By cohort, all groups improved their overall achievement since last year. One cohort (current G7) is recovering from a large decrease when they were in grade 5.

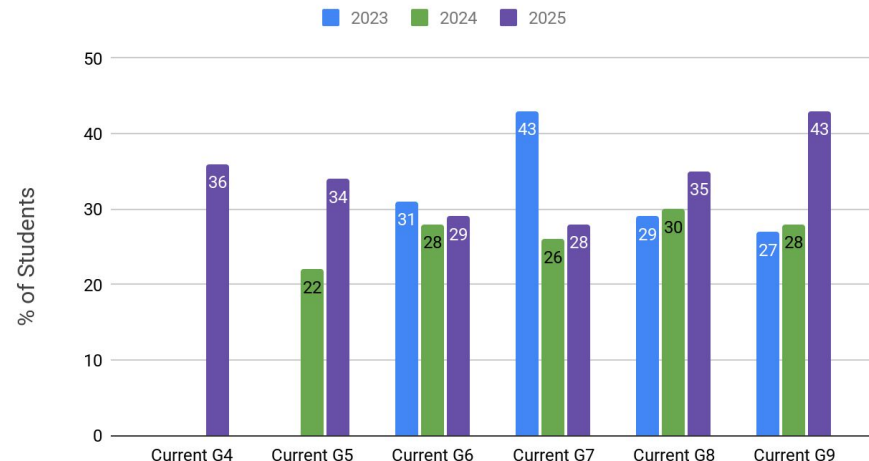
SC 11/24/2025

In Sudbury, students with disabilities have the 2nd highest achievement level out of 11 comparable districts.

% Meet/Exceed by District - ELA

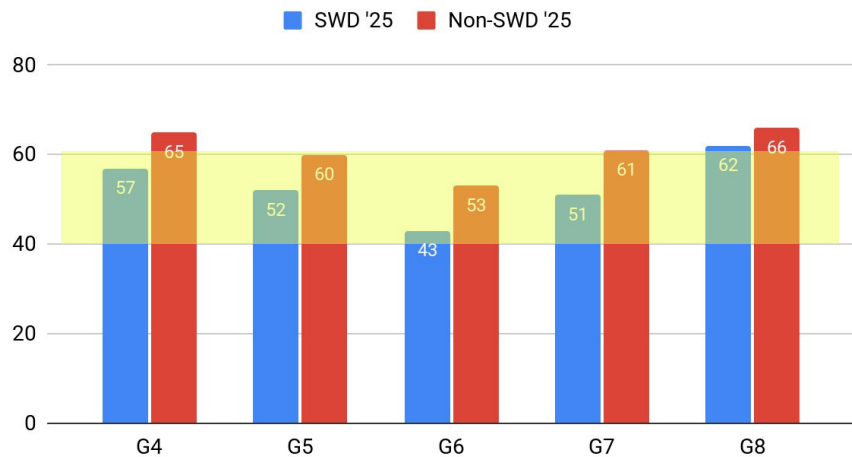


Meets/Exceeds by Cohort: SWD



ELA SGP: SWD Cohort

SGP Comparison for SWD

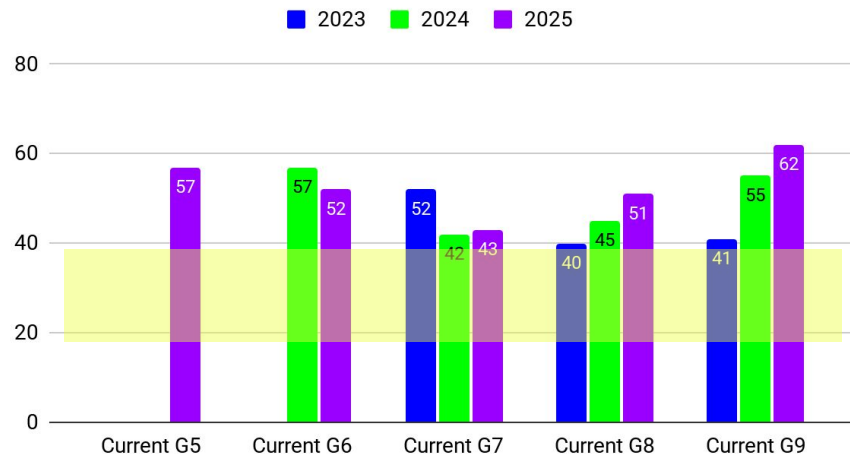


Students with disabilities show a similar growth pattern as their peers. Grades 5 & 6 are within the expected growth range, and grades 4, 7, and 8 exceed growth expectations.

By cohort, all but our current 6th graders increased their SGP from the previous year,

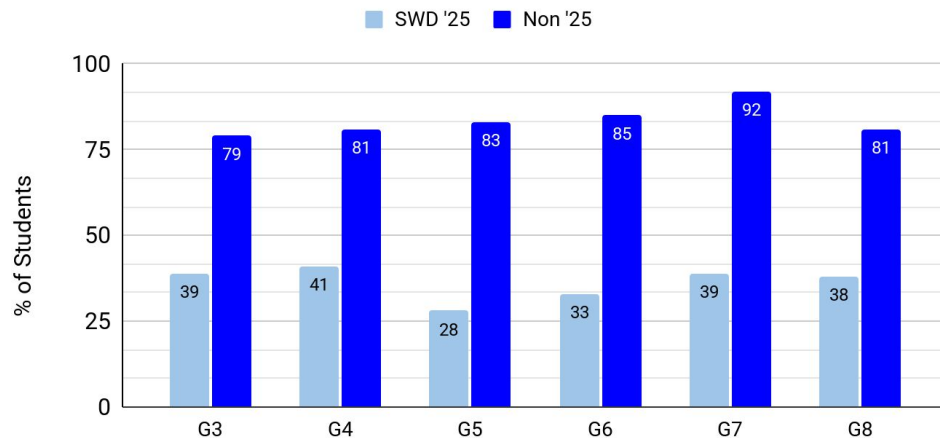
SC 11/24/2025

SGP By SWD Cohort



Math Results by Subgroup: SWD

Meets/Exceeds by Subgroup (SWD) 2025

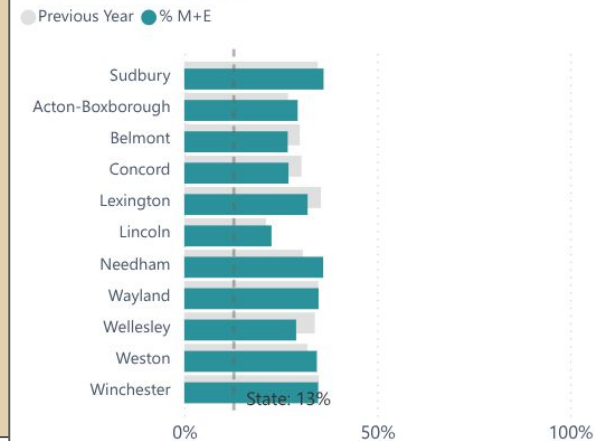


Achievement levels within this subgroup have remained fairly stable throughout the grade levels, with the exception of the decrease between grade 4 and 5.

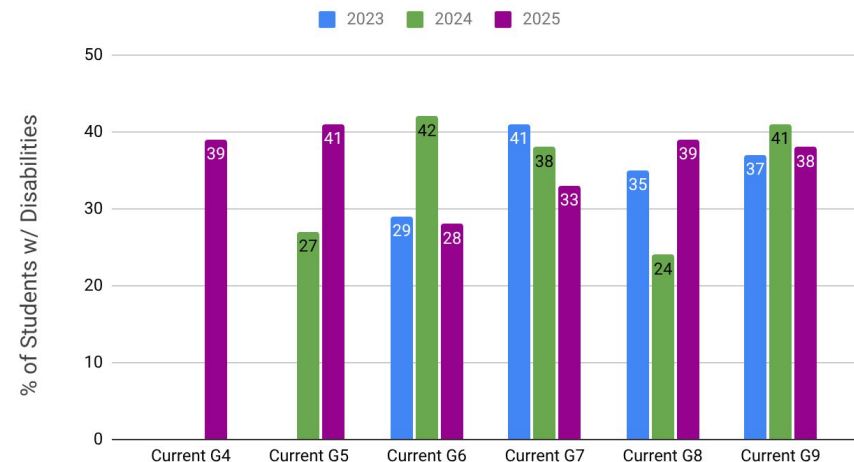
By cohort, all groups have shown inconsistent achievement scores. We have not seen a pattern within their scores.

In Sudbury, students with disabilities have the highest achievement level out of 11 comparable districts, tied with Needham.

% Meet/Exceed by District - Math

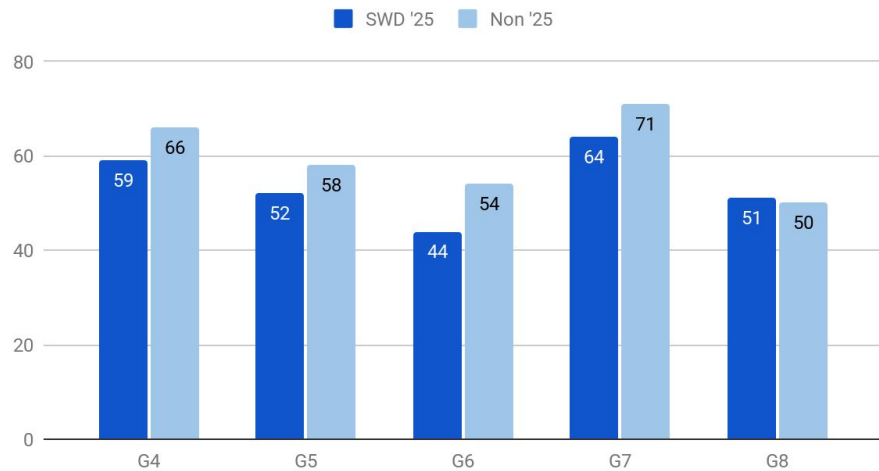


Meets/Exceeds by Cohort: SWD



Math SGP by Subgroup: SWD

SGP for Students: SWD in 2025

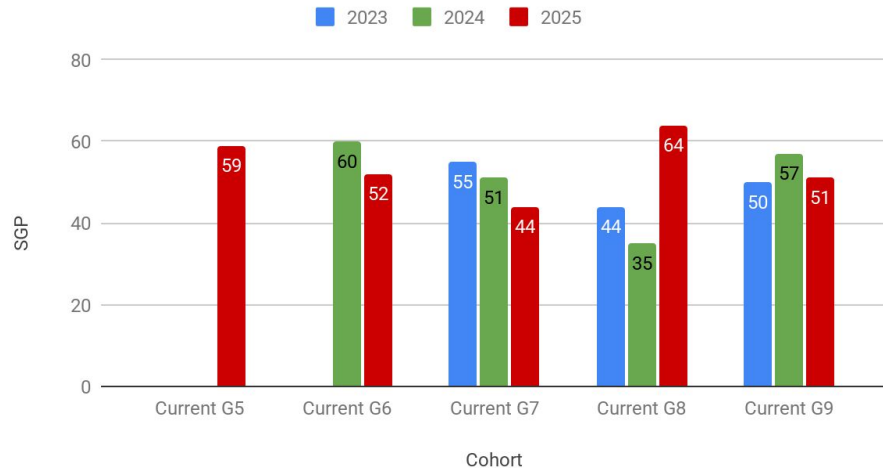


Students with disabilities show a similar growth pattern as their peers. Grades 4, 5, 6, and 8 are within the expected growth range of 40-60. Grade 7 exceeded growth expectations, with an average SGP of 64. In Grade 8, the average SGP for the SWD subgroup was higher than the average growth for those students who are not in the subgroup.

By cohort, our current 8th graders increased their SGP from the previous year, with a 29 point jump.

SC 11/24/2025

SWD SGP Cohort Data



Extended School Year (ESY)



Extended School Year - with SMILE & Explore

- Promoted inclusion opportunities
- Access to Explore programs
- Kindergarten transition program
- Ongoing program development



Extended School Year (ESY) Determination

ESY is:

- a team decision that is reviewed annually.
- provided to mitigate summer regression of specific skills.
- based on data demonstrating a regression in a specific skill area after previous time off from learning.
- determined in isolation from the SMILE program.

DESE Mandates and Professional Learning



The “New IEP” is “THE IEP”: Timeline

SY 2023-2024

LSRHS & LPS ILAP & trainings
District trainings with LSRHS & LPS
Administrators & general education teachers
Family communication
Team Chair training
Summer District trainings with
LSRHS & LPS

SY 2024 - 2025

New IEP rollout
Family forum
Ongoing training

SY 2025 - 2026

Student Services
Refinement/Enhancements
Proposed & Active IEPs made available to families via Aspen Parent Portal
Parent Engagement Workshop with Elise Wulff: How to Involve Your Child in the IEP Process

FY26 Student Services Professional Development



- IEP Training
- De-escalation training/strategies for all
- Safety-Care/CALM Training
- EL Literacy Training
- Language-Based Learning Training with Landmark
- Say Something: Clinical Team
- IEP Meeting and Goal Writing Training
- Dyslexia Screening Training
- Keys to Literacy: Writing
- Mental Health/Trauma & Medical Consultation, Dr. Turk
- Psychologist Specific Workshops

- Seeing Stars Literacy Training
- Visualizing Verbalizing Literacy Training
- Just Words, Wilson Reading System, OG
- Inclusive Practices and Neurodiversity with Elise Wulff from MGH
- Developing Student Coping Skills with Dr. Hirshberg
- Autism- MGH Medical Team
- Nurse Specific Training
- Related Service Specific Training for OT/PT/SLP/BCBA
- Culturally Responsive Training
- Orton-Gillingham
- Medicaid Reimbursement and Billing

New Mandates and Professional Learning

Changes to Medication Delegation (Law 105 CMR 210)



- New regulations 8/15/2025
- Amendment expands regulation to “all regular activities” (Field trips, sports, etc.)
- Specific Training for unlicensed designated personnel by approved DPH program
- Unlicensed personnel with training can travel and substitute a nurse

Changes to Time-Out Practices (603 CMR 46.02)



- New regulations 8/17/2026
- Behavioral support strategy for calming techniques
- Phased implementation: training, parental notification, space development
- Definitions of “seclusion” and “time-out” updated
- DESE to issue guidance, training, and funding opportunities

Medicaid Reimbursement Program

District Medicaid Reimbursement Program for Student Services:

- Began process in January 2019
- Medicaid Expansion Program: not just students with IEPs: ALL Students
- Reimbursements for all screenings/nursing services
- Administrative and Direct Service Claims: Related Service Providers and Professional Support Staff
- Training of Staff Participation
- Quarterly reporting and returns after 6-8 months

Department Pressures



Department Pressures

- New Curriculum
- Unexpected student needs
- Anxiety from community
- Timelines
- **Staffing:** Unfilled Allocated Positions/Contracted Services
- **Transportation:** Fulfilling Transportation Needs
- **Rising Costs:** Specialized Services, Transportation and Out of District Schools

Additional Information





IEP Transition Information Dates

8th to 9th Grade IEP Transition Information Evening: (L-S, LPS, SPS)

- January 14, 7:00-8:30 pm Virtual
- March date TBD: In person Visitation for 8th graders

Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Information Evening:

- January 28, 7:00-8:30 Virtual
- Kindergarten Orientation: June 4

5th to 6th Grade IEP Transition Information Evening:

- February 26: 6:00-8:00pm In Person

**Note: These sessions are for parents/guardians, not students.*





Thank you for Supporting Student Services!



We are grateful for the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC), who support our mission!

Sudbury SEPAC Survey 2025



Who is Sudbury SEPAC?



Sudbury SEPAC Mission

The Sudbury SEPAC's mission is to advocate for the education and safety of all Sudbury students with disabilities in grades Pre-K to 8. We seek to achieve this mission by:

- Building understanding, acceptance, connection, and inclusion;
- Providing information about community and district resources;
- Creating family networking and support opportunities;
- Offering community and special education workshops and events; and
- Collaborating with the school committee and the administration to continuously improve student outcomes and well-being.

Survey Purpose & Collaborative Process



Purpose

- 1) Fulfill the SEPAC's regulatory responsibility, which includes but is not limited to **"advising the school committee** on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities" and **"meeting regularly with school officials** to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school committee's special education programs." *See M.G.L. c. 71B sec. 3; See also 603 CMR 28.07(4); and MA DESE Guidance for Special Education Advisory Councils (2010)(stating that Chapter 71B "assigns both an **advisory and participatory** function to the PAC" and "information gathered from a needs assessment can be used to fulfill the PAC's responsibility to 'participate in the planning, development, and evaluation' of the district's special education programs.)*
- 2) Follow up on the opportunities for growth highlighted in our presentation last year.
- 3) Identify new areas of need and set priorities for the year(s) to come.

Collaborative Process

September 2025: Created the survey and gathered feedback from the directors of Student Services before finalizing.

October 2025: Launched survey - SEPAC Newsletter, Facebook, emails from SEPAC and Student Services, and other media. Accepted responses until November 10, 2025.

November 2025: Reviewed/Analyzed the results, shared a summary with the directors of Student Services, and discussed themes arising from the data with the SEPAC Board and Student Services.

December 2025: Prepared slide deck and reviewed with Board and directors of Student Services.

December 8, 2024: Presented slides to the Sudbury School Committee.

Survey Focus Areas



1. Educator Changes

2. Inclusion

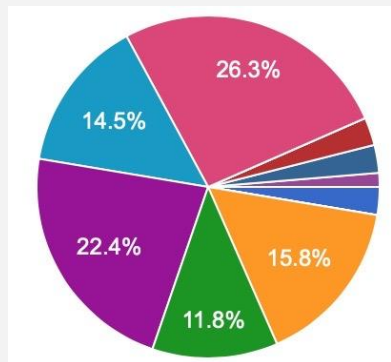
3. Educator & Student Training

4. SEPAC Outreach & Resources

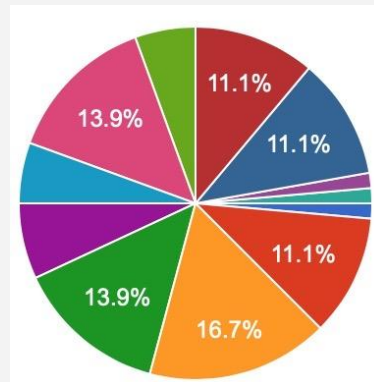


Who Responded to the Survey ?

76 Respondents



- Integrated Preschool at Peter Noyes...
- Integrated Preschool at Nixon Elemen...
- General John Nixon Elementary School
- Israel Loring Elementary School
- Josiah Haynes Elementary School
- Peter Noyes Elementary School
- Ephraim Curtis Middle School
- Homeschool



- PK
- K
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- I have a child in 1st grade and a child in 3rd grade
- 9

- Relative number of respondents among **schools**; Curtis marginally higher than others.

- Noticeably higher number of respondents in **grades K-2**.

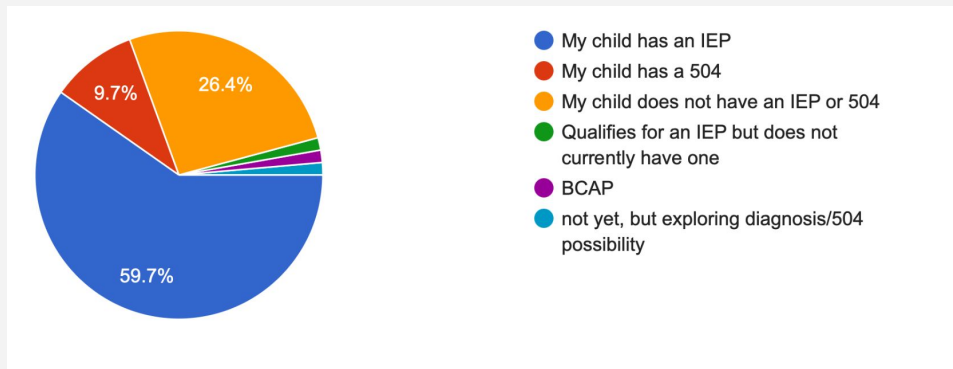


Who Responded to the Survey? (cont.)

IEP Eligibility Categories Covered:

- ADHD/Executive Functioning
- Autism
- Communication
- Developmental Delay
- Dyslexia
- Other Specific Learning Disorders
- Emotional
- Health
- Neurological

IEP, 504 Plan, Other...



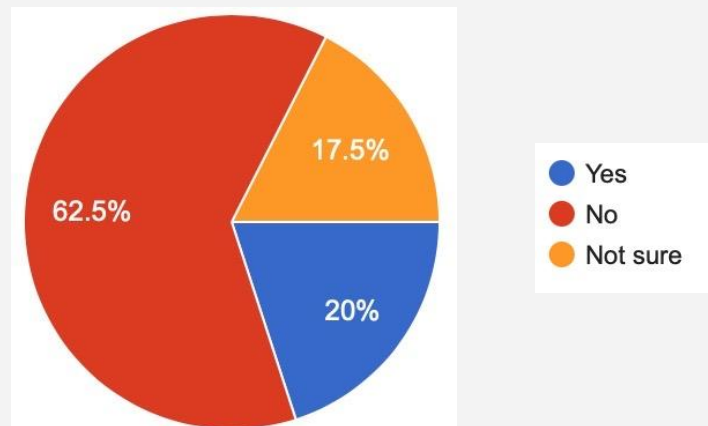
* Breakdown by category available by request.

Educator Changes & Communication



Survey Question:

Did any of your child's educators change within the same role during the 2024-25 school year?



*40 responses

Summary of Relevant Comments:

- Most changes reported related to educator leaves of absence or start of the school year transition
- Delayed communication was the primary challenge
- Desire for proactive communication



"We found out from our child first ..."

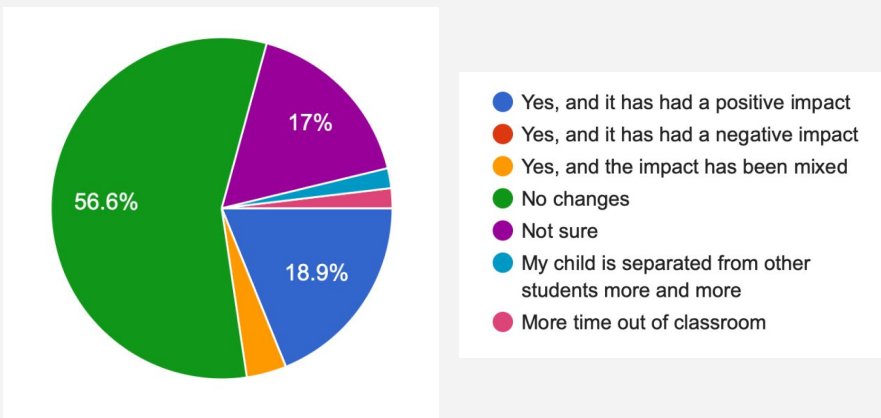
"We were not upset with the change... Found out randomly. Same thing happened this year as well"

Inclusion



Survey Question:

Have you observed any changes in your child's schedule or placement that increased time in the general education setting since fall 2024?



*53 responses - 79.2% of these respondents also reported their child is educated in the general education setting **all or most of the school day**.

Summary of Relevant Comments:

- Push-in services and inclusive teaching models and practices
- Consistent implementation of accommodations, previewing material, and scaffolded instruction
- Social belonging supports



"Push in support has worked the best. My child feels supported but not isolated or stigmatized."

"Prep work & set up before school starts... has had a fabulous impact on his wellbeing & confidence."

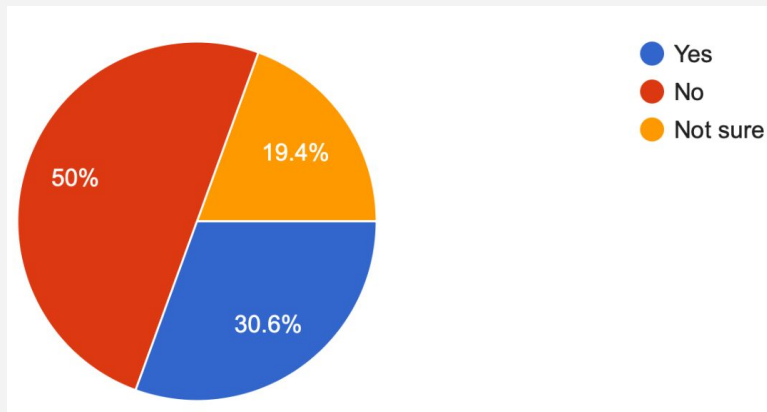
*"One practice we all liked was that our child could bring a friend to the **small social groups**... an excellent way to build friendships."*

Educator & Student Training



Survey Question:

Are you aware of any new curriculum or training implemented by the district for students to learn about types of disabilities and foster greater inclusion since fall 2024?



*72 responses

Summary of Relevant Comments:

- Growing awareness of new disability-related curriculum and training
- Positive student impact
- Desire for broader and more integrated disability education for students and educators



"I think we got an email about it, I don't remember much about it."

*"My daughter has learned more about various disabilities in the new curriculum. We've had **positive discussions** about disabilities at the dinner table after the trainings."*

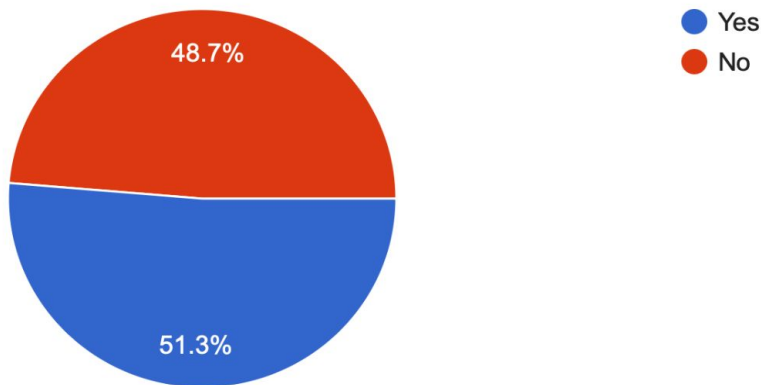
*"It seems this type of curriculum should be **expanded across all grades.**"*

SEPAC Outreach & Resources



Survey Question:

Have you ever attended a Sudbury SEPAC meeting, event, or connections group?



*76 responses

Summary of Relevant Comments:

- Parent Education and Advocacy Support
- Community and Emotional Support
- Communication and Transparency
- Referral Lists - Outside Resources & Services



*"Have a SEPAC representative at School Committee meetings to **advise from the student and family viewpoint** when a topic touches special education."*

*"Larger meetings with **updates on special education trainings...**"*

*"I'd love to learn more about the law and the rights of children in the school system... and **how best to advocate for my child.**"*

SEPAC 2025 Goal & Action Plan



Goal: Continue to Enhance Inclusion

- Continue to **enhance meaningful inclusion** so that students with disabilities are supported in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and have **equitable opportunities** to learn, **build friendships**, and **engage in school-wide events and extracurricular activities** alongside their peers.

Action Plan:

- Continue collaborating with SPS and L-S SEPAC to host events that raise awareness and provide information and resources for families, with an **emphasis on inclusion and belonging**.
- Partner with PTOs and School Administration to ensure events, clubs, music, theater, sports, and after-school programs are **accessible to all students**.
- Explore **new instructional models** and the potential positive impact on inclusion (i.e., impact of new EL curriculum).
- Enhance **family and community engagement and support** (i.e., parent connection groups, listening sessions, safety presentation by Chief Nix, meet the school committee candidates panel).



Recommended Focus Areas For SC & SPS

Continue to Enhance Inclusion

- **Add inclusion and belonging to the SPS Equity Statement** (currently on Student Services page only).
- Continue to **keep inclusion at the forefront of all discussions and decision-making** from the IEP table to School Committee meetings.
- Consider forming a working group to explore opportunities to **implement or expand inclusive teaching models and practices**.
- Provide teachers with **sufficient and effective planning and team consultation time** and targeted professional development while continuously asking, "How can we better support our students and educators?"
- Consider **expanding the disability awareness curriculum to grades K-2 and 6-8**, with an emphasis on bullying prevention in middle school. See 603 CMR 28.03(a)(1-3).



Student Services Department Web Page

If you have any questions related to special education or student services, please see the district webpage under the Student Services tab at <https://www.sudbury.k12.ma.us>, or contact us at:

student_services@sudbury.k12.ma.us

(978) 639-3202



Questions

