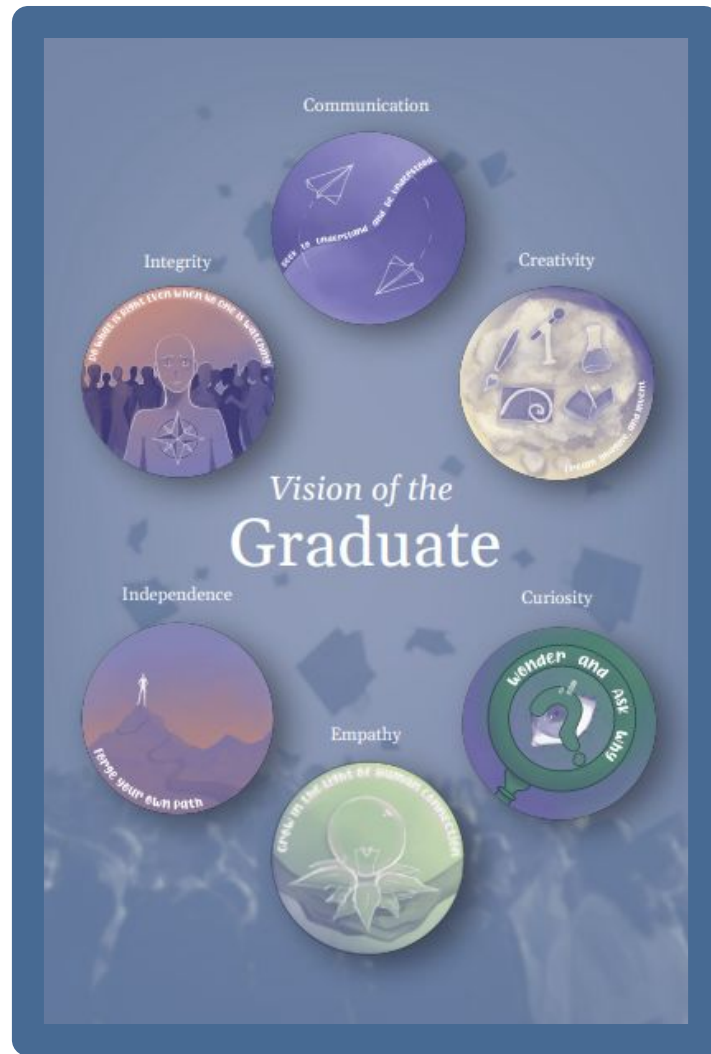




FY27 Budget Presentation

Special Education and Student Services

Darien Board of Education
January 20, 2026



Provide excellence
in teaching and
learning



Implement
research-based
professional
development that is
aligned with the
Strategic Plan



Ensure continual
instructional
program
improvement



Ensure breadth and
depth of academic
and extracurricular
programming

Maintain BOE class
size guidelines

Provide safe,
healthy, energy
efficient learning
environments and
explore the
innovative use of
space



Ensure efficient
deployment of
resources and
personnel

Provide the
programmatic and
financial support
necessary to
achieve District
goals



Ensure a fiscally
responsible budget
that provides long
term financial
stability



Provide timely,
relevant
communication



Special Education and Student Services

RC-24

2025-2026 Areas of Focus

- Strengthen K-5 comprehensive specialized reading instruction through Orton-Gillingham Associate Level professional learning and practicum.
- Collaboration with MTSS district-level and building-based teams toward addressing elementary identification trends.
- Partner with Curriculum and Instruction Department toward building system-wide understanding of the Understanding by Design (UbD) curriculum framework
- Increase clinicians' capacity to employ consultation frameworks to address intensive behaviors in classrooms.

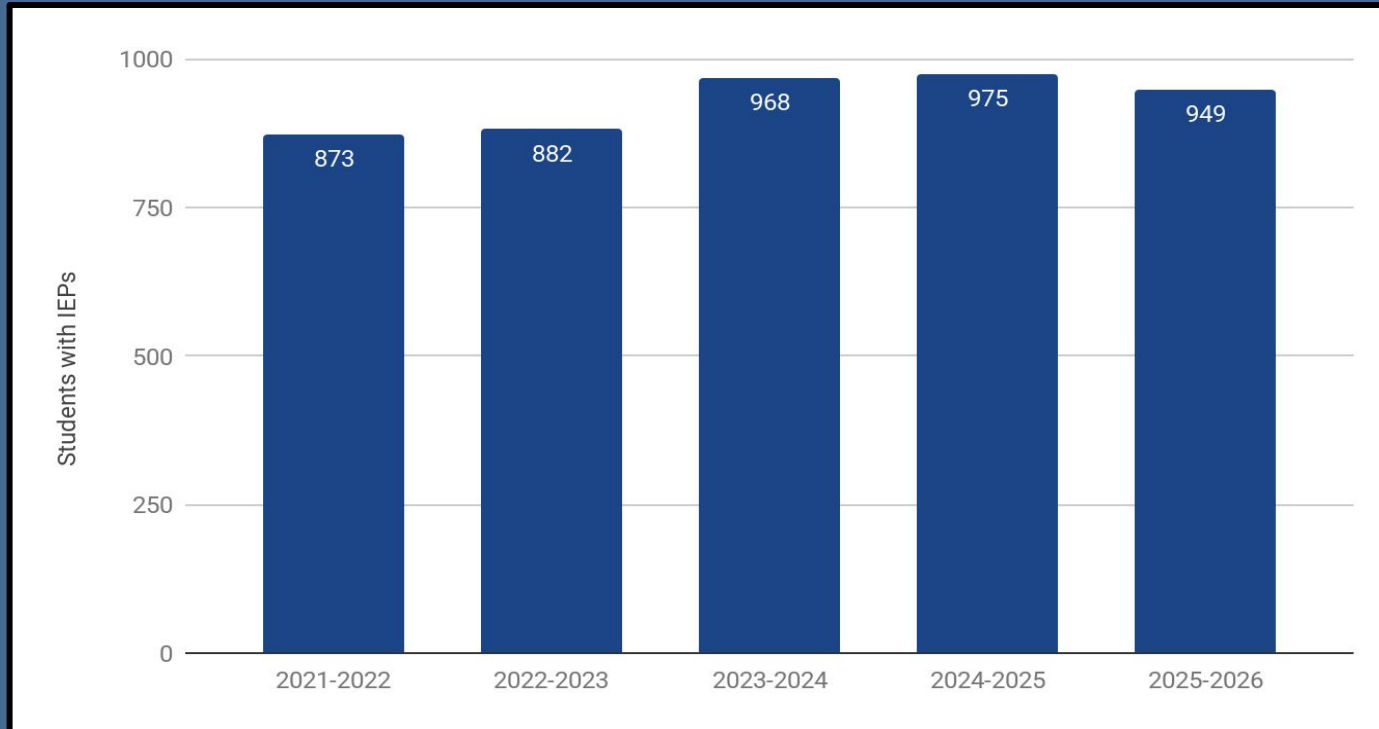
2025-2026 Areas of Focus

(continued)

- Improve secondary transition planning, assessment, and postsecondary opportunity planning.
- Implement play-based learning initiative in ELP and kindergarten.
- Establish local district consortium (Darien, New Canaan, and Wilton) toward development of opportunities for shared programming and resources.
- Create district Speech and Language Community of Practice leveraging expertise of district-level position.

Special Education and Student Services

Enrollment Trends



Note: Figures based on Oct. 1 SEDAC Report

Programming Overview

In-District Continuum of Services

General Education

General Education with Speech Therapy as a Special Education Service

- ELP Itinerant Services
- K-12 Students Receiving Speech Services Only

General Education with Special Education Teacher Supplemental Services

- ELP Integrated Program (19 and 24 Hour Service Models)
- K-12 SET Services in General Education Classroom
- Grades 6-12 Co-taught Classes

Special Education Teacher (SET) Supplemental Services

- K-12 Resource Room / Learning Center
- Grade 6-12 Direct Reading Instruction
- Grade 6-8 AIM Program
- Grade 9-12 CORE Program

Modified Content Classes

- Grade 6-8 Comprehensive Classes
- Grade 9-12 Comprehensive Classes

Specialized Programs

- K-5 Developmental Learning Centers (4 Classrooms)
- Grades 6-8 Alternative Learning Center
- Grades 9-12+ Excel Program

Programming Overview

Out-of-District Continuum

State-approved Specialized or Transition Day Public or Private Programs

- Cooperative Educational Services (public)
 - Reaching Independence through Supported Education (RISE) Program (public)
 - Pinnacle School (private)
 - Hubbard Day (private)
-

State-approved Therapeutic Day Programs

- Spire School
 - Cedarhurst
-

State-approved Therapeutic or Transition Residential Programs

- Grove School
 - Archbridge/Wellspring
 - Devereux Glenholme School
 - Chapel Haven
-

Out-of-State Approved Therapeutic or Transition Residential Programs

- Perkins School for the Blind (approved by MA Dept. of Education)
 - Riverview School (approved by MA Dept. of Education)
-

2026-2027 Areas of Focus

- Continue to strengthen K-5 comprehensive specialized reading instruction through Orton-Gillingham Associate Level professional learning and practicum.
- Collaborate on the implementation of MTSS screening and intervention processes.
- Continue developing clinicians' capacity to employ consultation frameworks to address intensive behaviors in classrooms.
- Formalize local district consortium shared goals and action items.
- Continue evaluating secondary transition planning, assessment, and postsecondary planning needs.

2026-2027 Areas of Focus

(continued)

- Partner with Curriculum and Instruction Department toward building system-wide understanding of the Understanding by Design (UbD) curriculum framework.
- Continue professional learning and implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Calibrate and implement processes for allocations of paraeducators and structures for data collection.

FY27 Expenditure Highlights RC- 24 SESS

- Consultant Services - \$3,557
- Contracted Occupational Therapy - \$20,500
- Pupil Evaluation - \$100,000
- Tuition Non-Public Schools -\$ 976,372

FY27 Expenditure Highlights

RC-24 (SESS Dept.)

● Contracted Speech	\$100
● Professional Learning	\$10,000
● Transportation Drivers	\$106,793
● ESY Program and PPTs	\$88,744
● Tuition Public Schools	\$176,125
● MMS Special Education Teacher	\$79,250
● Dues and Memberships	\$2,000
● Excess Cost Reimbursement	\$68,554

Early Learning Program (ELP) RC-26

Early Learning Program (ELP; RC-26)

Continuum of Services - Five-day Program

Referrals to ELP are made through the Connecticut Birth-to-Three System, by parents, and by pediatricians. The Darien ELP team evaluates the child in the area of suspected disability and develops an IEP if determined eligible. ELP classrooms are located at Ox Ridge.

Itinerant Services (Standalone)

Speech (and OT, PT if applicable) for students attending community pre-schools

19-Hour Program

(Integrated, School-Based Program 9:30am-1:30pm M-Th., 9:30am-12:30pm F)

24-Hour Program

(School-Based Program 8:30am-1:30pm M-Th., 8:30am-12:30pm F)

RELATED SERVICES & ACCOMMODATIONS

(Speech and Language Therapy, Counseling, OT, PT, ToHI, TVI, etc.)

FY27 Expenditure Highlights RC- 26

Early Learning Program- ELP

- Psychologist 0.2 FTE \$24,450
- Professional Development \$778
- ELP Tuition -\$72,421

FY27 Budget: Next Steps

January 13, 2026 	Regular Board of Education January Meeting: Presentation/Discussion of Schools and Curriculum & Instruction Public Comment
January 20, 2026 (Special Meeting) 	Special Board of Education Meeting: Presentation/Discussion of Special Education and Athletics Public Comment
January 27, 2026	Regular Board of Education Meeting: Presentation/Discussion of Operations Public Comment Discussion on Questions/Comments/Feedback from Boards
February 3, 2026 (Special Meeting)	Special Board of Education Meeting: BOE Public Hearing on Superintendent's Budget Recommendation
February 5, 2026 (Special Meeting)	Special Board of Education Meeting: BOE Vote on Proposed Budget

FY27 Budget Comments

Board of Education	darienboardofeducation@darienps.org
Dr. Eric Byrne	ebyrne@darienps.org
Mr. Richard Rudl	rrudl@darienps.org
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QUESTIONS?





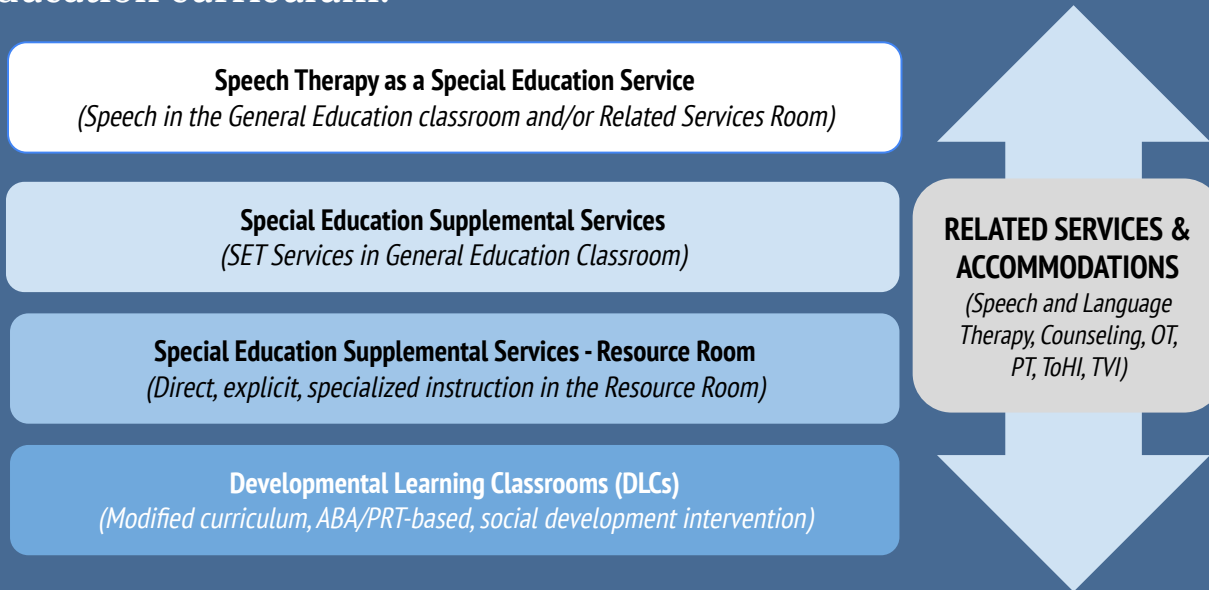
Appendix

Appendix A: Glossary of Acronym

Acronym	Definition	Acronym	Definition	Acronym	Definition	
AAC	Alternative/Augmentative Communication	DTT	Discrete Trial Training/Teaching	PROMPT	Prompts for Restructuring Oral Muscular Phonetic Targets	
ABA	Applied Behavior Analysis	ELP	Early Learning Program		PRT	Pivotal Response Training
ACE	Autism Curriculum Encyclopedia	FAPE	Free and Appropriate Public Education		RDI	Relationship Development Intervention
ADL	Activities of Daily Living	GET	General Education Teacher		SDI	Specially Designed Instruction
AIM	Academic and Individual Management	IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act		SESS	Special Education and Student Services
ALC	Alternative Learning Center	IEP	Individualized Education Program		SET	Special Education Teacher
AT	Assistive Technology	LRE	Least Restrictive Environment		SLP	Speech/Language Pathologist
BCBA	Board Certified Behavior Analyst	OT	Occupational Therapist		ToHI	Teacher of the Hearing Impaired
CORE	Creating Opportunities for Restructuring Education	PECS	Picture Exchange Communication System		TVI	Teacher of the Visually Impaired
CT ELDS	Connecticut Early Learning & Development Standards	PT	Physical Therapist		UDL	Universal Design for Learning
DBT	Dialectical Behavior Therapy	PMT	Psychological/Physical Management Training			
DLC	Developmental Learning Center	PPT	Planning & Placement Team			

Appendix B: Elementary (K-5) Continuum of Services

Specialized instruction at the Elementary Schools is delivered in Grades K - 5. Students access several program options within a continuum of services designed to meet their individual needs. Planning and Placement Teams (PPTs) develop Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) with goals/objectives developed to ensure students access and progress in the general education curriculum.



Appendix C: Middlesex Middle School Continuum of Services

Specialized instruction at Middlesex Middle School is delivered across grades 6-8. Sixteen special education teachers, three speech and language pathologists, three school psychologists, and one social worker support students along with assistive technology, behavior analysts, vision and hearing supports.

Co-taught Classrooms (English Language Arts/Math)
(General Education Classroom)

Resource Room Instruction
(Specially Designed Instruction Aligned to IEP Goals and Objectives)

Academic and Individual Management (AIM)
(DBT-Aligned Emotional Support Program)

Comprehensive Classes
(Modified Content - Aligned to Grade-level Curriculum)

Academic Learning Center (ALC)
(Modified Content and Vocational/Living Skills Curriculum)

**RELATED SERVICES &
ACCOMMODATIONS**
*(Speech and Language Therapy,
Counseling, OT, PT, ToHI, TVI)*

Appendix D: Darien High School Continuum of Services

Specialized instruction at Darien High School is delivered grades 9-12+. Twenty special education teachers, three speech and language pathologists, five school psychologists, and 1 social worker support students along with assistive technology, behavior analysts, vision and hearing supports.

