

Special Education in the Nashua School District





Objectives

- Have a better understanding of the special education process according to the timelines
- Have a better understanding of what the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) means
- Have a better understanding of what Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) means
- Have a better understanding of the different special education programs that are within the Nashua School District



What is Special Education?

- Special education is governed by federal law under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- IDEA grants children with disabilities the right to receive a “Free and Appropriate Public Education.” (FAPE)
- It is defined as specially designed instruction, provided at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability including adapting content, teaching methodology and delivery of instruction to meet the appropriate needs of each child.
- The range of special education support will vary based on a student’s need.



Disability Categories

ABI – Acquired Brain Injury -1

AUT – Autism-295

DD – Developmental Delay-506

DF – Deafness-6

ED – Emotional Disturbance-131

HI – Hearing Impairment-5

ID – Intellectual Disability-66

MD – Multiple Disabilities-15

OHI – Other Health Impaired-339

ORT – Orthopedic Impairment-2

SLD – Specific Learning Disability-714

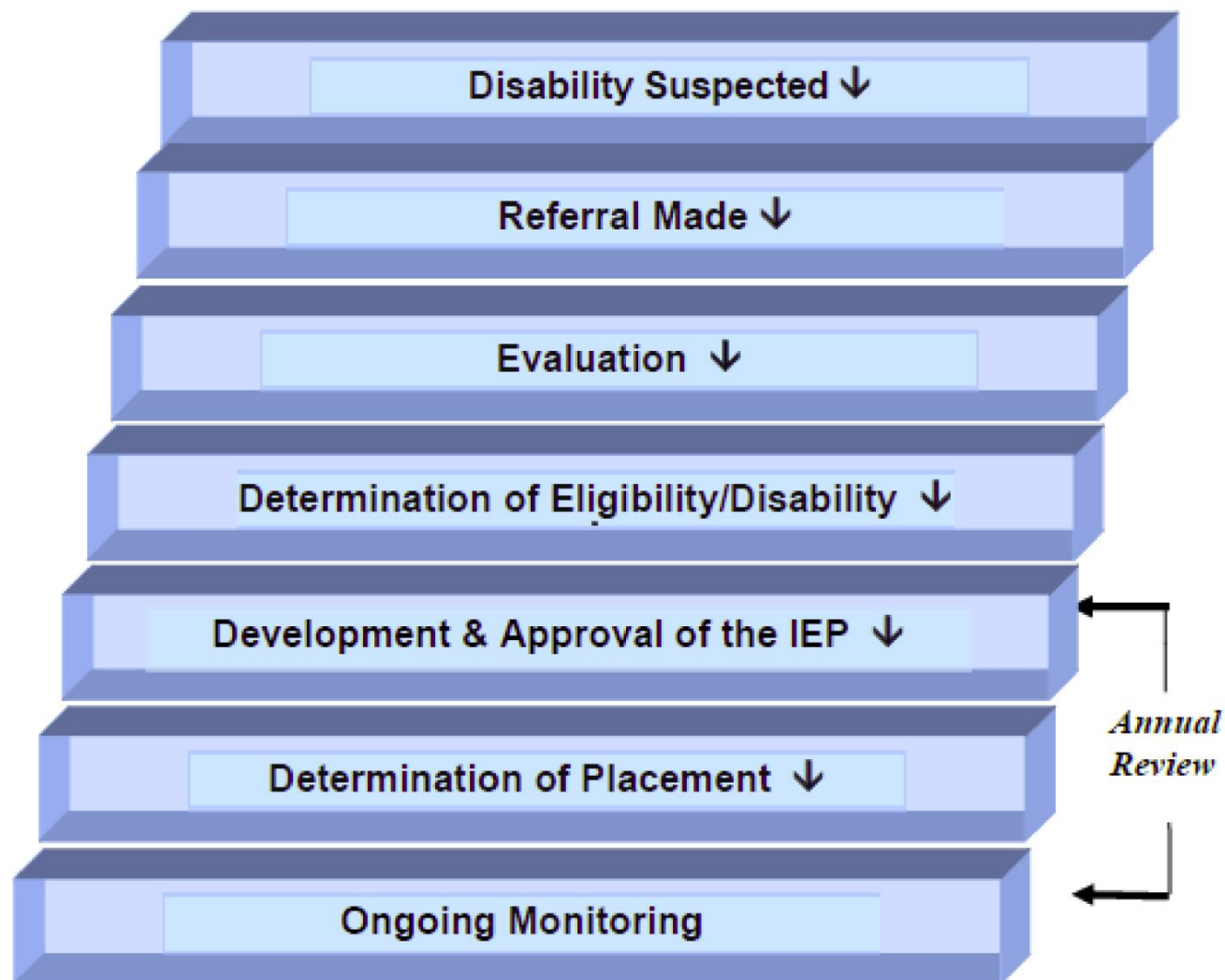
SLI – Speech/Language

Impairment-110

TBI – Traumatic Brain Injury-3

VI – Visually Impaired-8

Total Number of SpEd Students Pre-K-12= 2201





The Special Education Process

Referral Received – District has 15 business days to meet with the parent(s) to determine suspected area(s) of disability

Permission to Evaluate – District has 60 calendar days to evaluate and meet with parent(s) to review results

Student found Eligible – District has 30 calendar days to develop an IEP and meet with parent(s) to review

IEP agreed upon – District must propose placement (determined based on Least Restrictive Environment)

School vacations, weather cancellations, etc. do not interrupt the timelines



Least Restrictive Environment

LRE-stands for **Least Restrictive Environment**. It is a principle under the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**, which ensures that students with disabilities are educated in settings that are as close as possible to those for students without disabilities.

The LRE principle requires that:

1. **Students with disabilities should be educated with their non-disabled peers** to the maximum extent appropriate. This means that children with disabilities should not be unnecessarily segregated or placed in separate classrooms if they can succeed in a regular education environment with the right support.
2. **Inclusion and Integration:** Students with disabilities should be provided with opportunities for inclusion, social interaction, and participation in activities with peers without disabilities. This might include providing accommodations, modifications, or support services to help the student participate fully in general education settings.
3. **Continuum of Services:** LRE recognizes that some students may require specialized settings or services, so there is a range of educational placements available, from full inclusion in regular classrooms to more specialized settings, such as special education classrooms, or even specialized schools or other placements. The goal is to choose the least restrictive and most supportive setting that allows the student to make educational progress.

In short, LRE aims to balance the need for appropriate education with the goal of keeping students with disabilities integrated with their peers in the least restrictive environment possible.



Free and Appropriate Public Education

FAPE-stands for **Free Appropriate Public Education**. It is a key principle of the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**, a U.S. law that ensures students with disabilities receive an education that is tailored to their individual needs.

The definition of FAPE includes several components:

1. **Free:** The education must be provided at no cost to the families, ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent access to education.
2. **Appropriate:** The education must be suited to the student's specific needs, offering services and support that enable them to make progress. This often involves individualized plans like an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** or **504 Plan**.
3. **Public:** The education must take place in a public school setting, although private schools or other facilities may be involved under certain circumstances.
4. **Education:** The services provided must include special education and related services, such as speech therapy, counseling, or occupational therapy, to address the student's needs.

Overall, FAPE ensures that students with disabilities have access to the same educational opportunities as their peers, with the necessary supports to succeed



Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- The What, Where and How of the student's educational program.
- It is a map that lays out the program of special education instruction, supports and services students need to make progress in school.
- With an IEP, a student receives individualized or specially designed instruction that focuses on improving specific skills to meet their needs
- Specially Designed Instruction – refers to the teaching strategies and methods used by teachers to instruct students with disabilities.
- It can also provide accommodations and modifications for classroom instruction and assessments.



Intensive Needs Programing

Small Class Size

- Lower student-to-teacher ratio for more individualized attention.

Highly Specialized Staff

- Includes special education teachers, behavioral specialists, speech therapists, and more.

Tailored Instruction

- Lessons adapted using assistive technology, visual aids, hands-on learning, and sensory activities.

Support for Severe Disabilities

- For students with autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, and other complex disabilities.

Focus on Life Skills

- Emphasis on communication, hygiene, social skills, and daily living activities.

Behavioral & Social Support

- Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) for managing challenging behaviors.

Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

- Tailored to each student's specific needs, goals, and services.



Programing Offered by Nashua

- Inclusionary Preschool and Early Intervention (Franklin St School)
- Inclusion/Pull Out Service
- Signs of Learning-Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program (New Searles Elementary, McCarthy Middle, South High School)
- Project Achievement/Behavioral Programming(Broad St, Birch Hill, McCarthy Middle)
- Intensive Needs (Amherst St Elem, Bicentennial, Broad St, Charlotte Ave, New Searles, Sunset Heights, McCarthy Middle, North and South High)
- Brentwood Academy

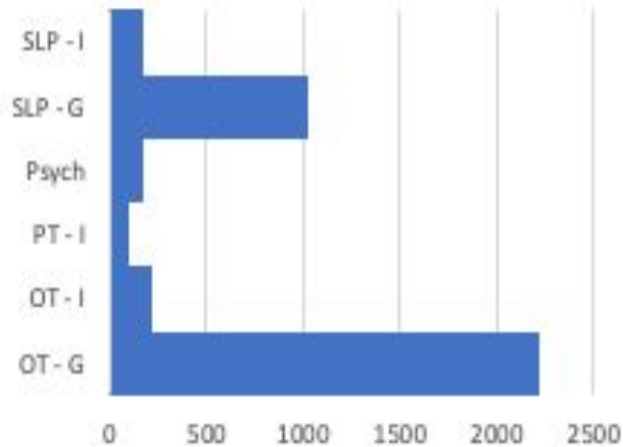


Accommodations Versus Modifications

- **Accommodations** allow students with a disability to learn, have access to and be tested on the same curriculum as students without disabilities.
- **Accommodations** do not change what the students are expected to learn but rather **how** the student learns the curriculum.
- **Examples of Accommodations** – read aloud, small group setting, or extended time
- **Modifications** are changes in **what** the student is expected to learn that is different from the general education curriculum.
- With **modifications**, the curriculum is adjusted or the achievement standard is lowered.
- **Examples of Modifications** – complete fewer or different classwork/homework assignments, or modified grading.

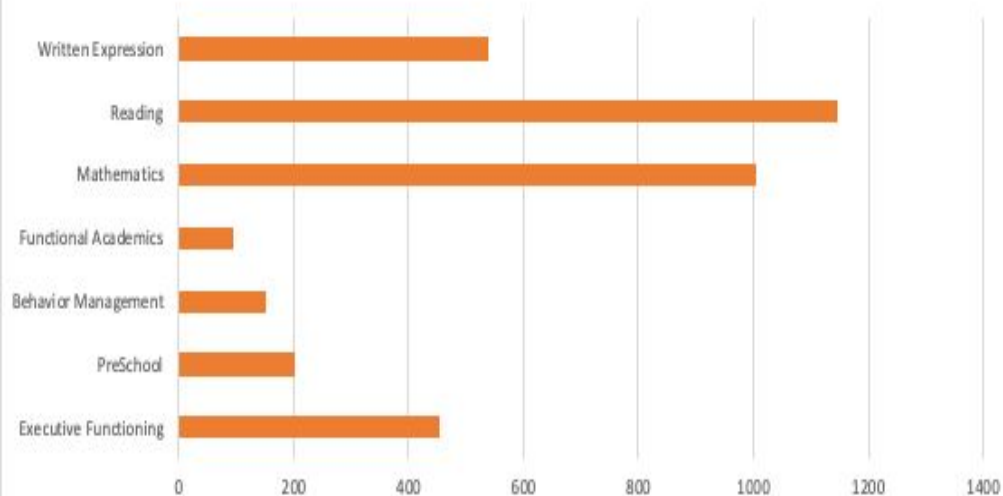
Special Ed and Related Services

Related Services - Sessions Per Month



	OT - G	OT - I	PT - I	Psych	SLP - G	SLP - I
■ Sessions Per Month	2226	216	98	166	1018	169

Specially Designed Instruction - Sessions Per Month



	Executive Functioning	PreSchool	Behavior Management	Functional Academics	Mathematics	Reading	Written Expression
■ # Sessions	453	202	153	95	1004	1147	540



Progressing through the Continuum of LRE in Nashua

- Team meeting to discuss student needs
- File review
- Student/Classroom Observations
- Further Evaluations/Functional Behavior Assessment if Appropriate
- Data to support needs (interventions/accommodations in LRE attempted)



Intensive Needs Teacher Professional Development

2 Years- Monthly Cohort Meetings from a veteran teacher

Crisis Prevention Intervention(CPI)

Dr Ross Greene

- Lives in the Balance

Dr Alison Roy- Trauma Informed Practices

- Trust Teams-8 School by end of school year 24/25
- Parent Info Nights

Para Management

Special Ed. Documentation



Project Achievement

The Project Achievement Program services elementary and middle school students district-wide, who have been identified as having social, emotional, and behavioral challenges, and/or attentional issues.

The focus of the program is aimed at providing a structured and supportive classroom environment, which ensures physical and psychological safety. Such a learning environment allows students to have positive academic experiences, to practice social skills, improve self-esteem, develop better coping and problem-solving strategies, assume more responsibility for inappropriate behavior, and to become more productive class members. The primary goal of the program is to equip students with the skills necessary for success in the regular education classroom setting. This goal is accomplished by providing supports in the mainstream classroom. The program is geared toward modifying each student's behaviors with reinforcement of a daily behavior plan and supports from the program. Students learn to recognize and deal with their respective issues that have prevented a successful school experience. There is ongoing monitoring and support by the Project Achievement staff.



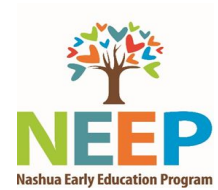
Brentwood Academy

- Special Education therapeutic high school
- Enrollment : 28 students
- Trauma-informed and therapeutic approach
- Focus on the entire student
- In district and out of district students
- Specialized instruction
- High school graduation requirements (competency based)
- Success beyond high school (transition planning)
- 2024-2025 Graduation (anticipated): 5 students





Nashua Early Education Program



- Developmental learning environment for children aged 3 to 5
- Integrated learning approach focusing on
 - Communication skills
 - Cognitive skills
 - Social-emotional development
 - Self-help skills
 - Motor ability
- Related Services Provided: Speech, Occupational, Physical, Hearing and Vision Therapy



Restraint and Seclusion

Nashua School Board Policy

[Use of Restraints and Seclusions](#)

[NH Technical Advisory on Restraint and Seclusion](#)

All Restraint and Seclusion Forms are reviewed by the by the building Principal and Superintendent

Monthly meeting to review R&S forms and feedback/training provided as needed