



**Niagara Falls City School District**  
Learning For All...Whatever It Takes

## **DISTRICT PLAN FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

**School Year 2025-2026 and 2026-2027**

**Updated January 2026**



**Mr. Mark Laurrie**  
**Superintendent of Schools**

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## 1. Introduction

The Niagara Falls City School District is committed to ensuring that all students with disabilities receive high-quality, equitable educational opportunities that prepare them for success in school, work, and life. This two-year District Plan for Students with Disabilities outlines the programs, services, data, and goals that guide special education programming in alignment with New York State Education Law, NYSED Part 200 Regulations, and the NYSED Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities.

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## 2. District Mission, Vision, and Philosophy

### Philosophy

Learning for All...Whatever It Takes

### Vision

The vision of the Niagara Falls City School District is to be a world-class quality organization educating all students for life.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Niagara Falls Board of Education is to guarantee educational excellence by creating strategic goals that are monitored, analyzed, assessed, and evaluated using a quality process that ensures customer satisfaction.

## **District Strategic Goals**

- Exceed and continuously improve learner outcomes against academic standards
  - Achieve the highest level of employee cooperation, trust, and empowerment
  - Effectively control financial costs while maintaining quality education
  - Build strong partnerships with the community
  - Integrate and promote technology across all facets of the organization
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## **3. NYSED Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities**

NYSED Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities

Guiding principles include:

- Student self-advocacy and involvement in educational planning
  - Meaningful parent and family engagement
  - Research-based instructional practices
  - Access to the general education curriculum
  - Multi-tiered systems of academic and behavioral support
  - High-quality inclusive programs
  - Career development and work-based learning opportunities
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## **4. Nature and Scope of Special Education Programs and Services**

### **Classification Process**

The district adheres to NYSED Part 200 Regulations governing referral, evaluation, IEP development, placement, and review. NYS Part 200 Regulations can be found here: [NYSED Part 200](#)

Placement decisions consider:

- Academic achievement and learning rate

Students are grouped based on similar academic and instructional needs. Placement decisions are informed by data from repeated assessments, progress monitoring of academic intervention plans, and review of standardized psychological and educational evaluations.

- Social development

Each student's capacity to develop and maintain appropriate relationships, regulate emotional functioning, and achieve academic goals within the least restrictive environment is considered. The level of emotional support required to ensure educational success is also reviewed; however, social needs alone shall not determine placement.

- Physical development

Consideration is given to a student's ability to function independently within the learning environment with minimal support.

- Management needs

Consideration is given to modifications and accommodations within the least restrictive environment. Management needs reflect the supports required for students to achieve educational goals, including, when appropriate, the use of Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans within the general education setting.

- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

In determining special education programming, consideration is given to providing services in the least restrictive environment, to the maximum extent appropriate, alongside nondisabled peers and in close proximity to the student's home.

## **NYSED Disability Classifications**

Autism; Deafness; Deaf-Blindness; Emotional Disability; Hearing Impairment; Learning Disability; Intellectual Disability; Multiple Disabilities; Orthopedic Impairment; Other Health Impairment; Speech or Language Impairment; Traumatic Brain Injury; Visual Impairment

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## **Continuum of Services – School-Age Students**

The Niagara Falls City School District offers a full continuum of special education programs and related services for students with disabilities, ensuring access to the general education curriculum and alignment with the New York State Learning Standards. Programs are designed to support each student's progress toward IEP goals and to promote high expectations and meaningful outcomes. Students are educated with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate, based on individualized needs and readiness.

### **Available Programs:**

- Declassification Support Services
- Related Services
- Consultant Teacher Services
- Resource Room
- Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT)
- Special Class Instruction
- Out-of-District Placements
- Home Instruction

### **Declassification Support Services**

Temporary supports (up to one year) to assist students transitioning to full-time general education. These supports may include, but are not limited to, safety nets for assessments and testing accommodations

### **Related Services**

Related services are supports a student requires to access their educational program and achieve IEP goals. These may include speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, hearing and vision services, and other appropriate services based on data. The IEP specifies the type, frequency, duration, and location of each related service. Group services may include no more than five students. A student may receive multiple related services as needed, either as standalone supports in general education or in conjunction with special education programs.

### **Consultant Teacher Services**

Consultant teacher services provide direct and/or indirect support to students with disabilities who attend general education classes. Direct services involve specially designed instruction delivered within the general education setting to help students access the curriculum. Indirect services involve consultation by a special education teacher to general education staff to adjust the learning environment and instructional strategies to meet the student's individual needs.

The consultant teacher program ensures that:

1. No consultant teacher is assigned more than 20 students with disabilities.
2. Each student requiring consultant teacher services receives a minimum of two hours of direct and/or indirect support per week, consistent with their IEP.

### **Resource Room Program**

The resource room program provides supplemental instruction to students with disabilities.

Key program requirements:

1. Students must receive at least three hours of instruction per week, either in resource room or in conjunction with consultant teacher services.
2. Students may not spend more than 50% of the school day in the resource room.
3. Instructional groups may not exceed five students per teacher.
4. Group composition is based on similar student needs.
5. A resource room teacher may be assigned no more than 25 students.
6. Instruction focuses on pre-teaching and reteaching curriculum aligned to the student's IEP goals.

### Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT)

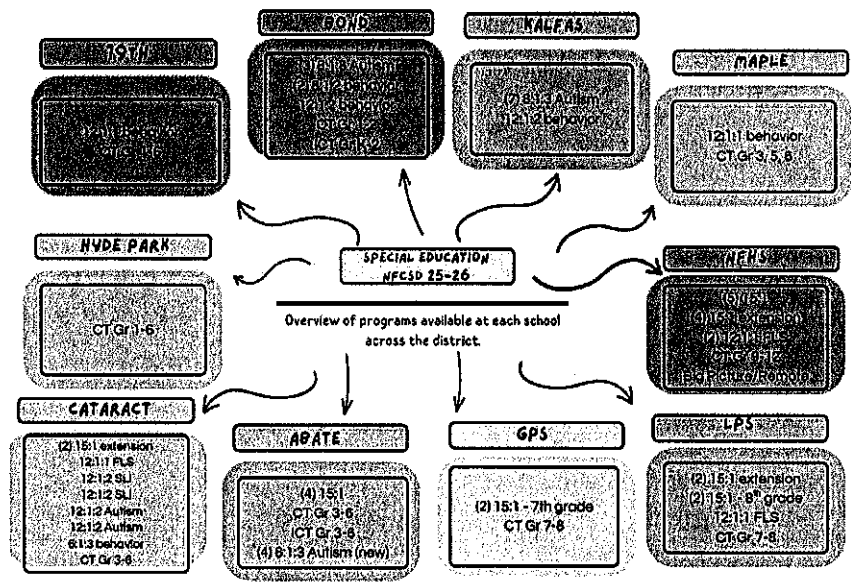
General and special education teachers jointly provide specially designed instruction in general education classrooms (maximum 12 students with disabilities).

### Special Class Instruction

The special class program provides intensive instructional services, supervision, and support in a small, structured setting for students with disabilities who require a higher level of specialized instruction. The program is designed to address individualized needs and facilitate a transition to less restrictive settings when appropriate.

To meet the needs of students with significant speech/language impairments, Autism, and behavioral challenges, the district offers multiple special class ratios, including 15:1, 15:1 Extension, 12:1:1, 12:1:2, 8:1:2, 8:1:3, and 6:1:3 (see chart below for classroom locations as of December 2025).

**NOTE:** This chart shows classrooms and locations for the 2025-2026 school year only. Programming is reviewed annually, with class offerings and locations being subject to change depending on enrollment, student need and space availability.



Class size and composition are determined by the similarity of students' needs. For special classes serving students under 16, the age range may not exceed 36 months. If additional students enroll after September, a middle/secondary special class may exceed class-size limits by up to 20% with parental notification and written notice to the Commissioner.

### **Out-of-District Placements**

When a student's needs cannot be met within district programs, the Committee on Special Education (CSE) may recommend an out-of-district placement. These placements may include BOCES programs or approved private day schools with smaller class ratios. The CSE prepares and submits the placement referral and supporting documentation, but final admission is determined by the out-of-district provider.

The district currently contracts with the following private day schools: The Summit Center, Stanley Falk Schools, ASPIRE of WNY, Beyond Learning Center, Baker Victory Services, Buffalo Hearing and Speech Center, The ARC of Erie County, New Directions/Wyndham Lawn, Gateway-Longview Day School, Center for Handicapped Children, St. Mary's School for the Deaf, Batavia School for the Blind, and Randolph Academy.

### **Home Instruction**

Students with disabilities may be recommended for home teaching by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) when instruction and related services are needed outside the school setting. Services are provided in the student's home or an alternate location, including online, as agreed upon with the family. Home teaching may be used as the least restrictive interim placement while an appropriate out-of-district program is sought and is reviewed regularly to ensure continued appropriateness.

Home teaching is provided at a minimum of:

1. 10 hours per week at the elementary level (preferably two hours daily), or
2. 15 hours per week at the secondary level (preferably three hours daily).

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### **Preschool Special Education (CPSE)**

The committee accepts and reviews referrals for students ages 3–5. It evaluates parent and teacher concerns and determines the required assessments. Parents select an evaluator from a list of Niagara County–approved agencies to conduct the educational evaluation.

The Committee on Preschool Special Education reviews completed evaluations within an Initial Eligibility Determination Meeting. The Committee must determine if the student meets criteria for classification as a Preschooler with a Disability.

To be classified as a Preschooler with a Disability, a student must demonstrate a significant delay or disorder in one or more functional areas—cognitive, language/communication, adaptive, socio-emotional, or motor development—that adversely affects learning. This delay must be documented through a comprehensive evaluation, including structured observation, parent interview, and individualized assessment procedures. When compared to accepted developmental milestones, the evaluation must show one of the following:

- A 12-month delay in one functional area;
- A 33% delay in one functional area or a 25% delay in two functional areas; or
- A standardized score of 2.0 standard deviations below the mean in one functional area, or 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two functional areas (when appropriate standardized instruments are used).

**Preschool Service Options:**

- Related Services Only
- Special Education Itinerant Services (SEIS)
- Integrated Preschool Programs
- Special Class Preschool Programs (4410)

## 5. Special Education Data

### School-Age Child Count (October 1, 2025 Snapshot)

A report of school-age students with disabilities for whom the school district has CSE responsibility as of the snapshot date of October 1, 2025, grouped by disability and age.

Line Number	Disability (As of Snapshot Date)	Age as of October 1, 2025						
		Total Ages 4-5	Total Ages 6-11	Total Ages 12-13	Total Ages 14-17	Total Ages 18-21	Grand Total for 2025-26	Grand Total for 2024-25
01	Autism	26	113	19	27	8	193	161
02	Emotional Disability	1	37	17	34	1	90	78
03	Learning Disability	0	171	136	224	14	545	543

Line Number	Disability (As of Snapshot Date)	Age as of October 1, 2025						
		Total Ages 4-5	Total Ages 6-11	Total Ages 12-13	Total Ages 14-17	Total Ages 18-21	Grand Total for 2025-26	Grand Total for 2024-25
04	Intellectual Disability	0	11	11	22	8	52	60
05	Deafness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
06	Hearing Impairment	0	0	1	1	0	2	3
07	Speech or Language Impairment	106	345	19	4	0	474	462
08	Visual Impairment (Includes Blindness)	1	3	1	0	0	5	6
09	Orthopedic Impairment	1	1	0	1	0	3	4
10	Other Health Impairment	11	120	61	106	4	302	287
11	Multiple Disabilities	2	15	6	12	8	43	47
12	Deaf-Blindness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	Traumatic Brain Injury	0	1	0	1	0	2	2
14	Total (Lines 1-13)	148	817	271	432	43	1711	1653

School-Age Students by Educational Environment (October 1, 2025 Snapshot)

A report of school-age students (ages 4 – 21) with disabilities for whom the school district has Committee on Special Education (CSE) responsibility by Educational Environment as of the snapshot date of October 1, 2025.

Line Number	Educational Environment for School Aged Students Ages 4-21 Age 4 as of BEDS Day and Eligible to Attend Kindergarten, Age 5 as of BEDS Day and Eligible to Attend Kindergarten but NOT Attending Kindergarten and Age 5 who are in Kindergarten through 21	Age Range	
		Ages 4-5	Ages 5-21
1	Parentally placed in a nonpublic elementary school and receiving majority of hours of special education and related services in the regular classroom.	0	
2	Parentally placed in a nonpublic elementary school and receiving majority of hours of special education and related services in some other location.	0	
3	Parentally placed in a nonpublic elementary school and NOT receiving publicly funded special education and related services	0	
4	Attending a regular early childhood program for 10 or more hours a week and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program. Or, 4-year-old attending Kindergarten for 10 or more hours a week and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in the Kindergarten. <b>Does not include students age 5 attending Kindergarten.</b>	1	
5	Attending a regular early childhood program for 10 or more hours a week and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in some other location. Or, 4-year-old attending Kindergarten for 10 or more hours a week and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in some location. <b>Does not include students age 5 attending Kindergarten.</b>	18	
6	Attending a regular early childhood program for less than 10 hours a week and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related in the regular early childhood program. Or, 4-year-old attending Kindergarten for less than 10 hours a week and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in the Kindergarten. <b>Does not include students age 5 attending Kindergarten.</b>	0	
7	Attending a regular early childhood program for less than 10 hours a week and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in some other location. Or, 4-year-old attending Kindergarten for less than 10 hours a week and receiving the majority	0	

Line Number	Educational Environment for School Aged Students Ages 4-21 Age 4 as of BEDS Day and Eligible to Attend Kindergarten, Age 5 as of BEDS Day and Eligible to Attend Kindergarten but NOT Attending Kindergarten and Age 5 who are in Kindergarten through 21	Age Range	
		Ages 4-5	Ages 5-21
	of hours of special education and related services in some other location. <b>Does not include students age 5 attending Kindergarten.</b>		
8	Separate Class	<u>0</u>	
9	Separate School	<u>3</u>	
10	Residential Facility	<u>0</u>	
11	Home	<u>0</u>	
12	Service Provider Location or some other location that is not in any other code	<u>0</u>	
13	Inside Regular Classrooms for 80% or More of the School Day		<u>925</u>
14	Inside Regular Classroom for 40 to 79% of the School Day		<u>145</u>
15	Inside Regular Classroom for Less than 40% of the School Day		<u>391</u>
16	Separate School		<u>178</u>
17	Residential Facility		<u>4</u>
18	Hospital (In-Patient)		<u>0</u>
19	Home (Placement by the CSE)		<u>22</u>
20	Incarcerated in the County Correctional Facilities		<u>0</u>
21	Home Schooled by Parental Choice		<u>8</u>
22	Parentally Placed in Nonpublic School-Receiving Special Education		<u>13</u>
23	Parentally Placed in Nonpublic School-Not Receiving Publicly Funded Special Education Services		<u>3</u>

## Preschool LRE Settings (October 2025 Snapshot)

A report of preschool children with disabilities for whom the school district has Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) responsibility grouped by least restrictive environment (LRE) setting, enrolled as of October 1, 2025.

Educational Environment		A	B	C	D
		Age 3	Age 4	Total October 1, 2025	Total October 2, 2024
Attending a regular early childhood program for <b>10 or more hours</b> a week	and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>12</u>
	and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in some other location.	<u>25</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>85</u>
Attending a regular early childhood program for <b>less than 10 hours</b> a week	and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in some other location.	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Separate Class		<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>19</u>
Separate School		<u>15</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>33</u>
Residential Facility		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Home		<u>14</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>
Service Providers Location		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total</b>		<u>57</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>139</u>	<u>165</u>

## **6. Instructional Materials and Alternate Formats**

The district ensures students with disabilities have access to instructional materials in alternative formats concurrently with non-disabled peers.

### **Supports Include:**

- Bookshare subscription
  - Braille production equipment
  - Screen readers and Optional Character Recognition (OCR) software
  - Digital textbooks
  - District-issued iPads
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## 7. Space Availability

Special education classrooms are housed across 11 district schools, totaling **115 classrooms**.

School	Special Education Classrooms
Niagara Falls High School	27
Gaskill Prep School	6
LaSalle Prep School	9
Abate	18
Hyde Park	10
Kalfas	8
Mann	0
Maple	4
Bond	10
Cataract	14
79 <sup>th</sup>	9

The district is committed to ensuring that appropriate space will be available to meet the needs of resident students with disabilities who attend special education programs provided by the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). As of the December 2025, 66 district students attend six sites within Orleans-Niagara BOCES (see chart below), with additional attendance at one site within Erie 1 BOCES.

District	Building Location	Program	Count
Niagara Falls	GLC	6:1:1	12
		6:1:3	3
		12:1:1	3
		12:1(3:1)	10
		<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>
	Niagara Academy	6:1:1	13
		6:1:3	
		12:1:1	
		12:1(3:1)	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	
	Niagara Wheatfield Learning Center	6:1:1	4
		6:1:3	
		12:1:1	
12:1(3:1)			
<b>Total</b>		<b>4</b>	
North Tonawanda Learning Center	6:1:1	1	
	6:1:3	9	
	12:1:1		
	12:1(3:1)		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>		
Orleans Learning Center	6:1:1	7	
	6:1:3		
	12:1:1		
	12:1(3:1)		
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>		
Roy-Hart Learning Center	6:1:1	3	
	6:1:3	7	
	12:1:1		
	12:1(3:1)	1	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	

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## 8. Estimated Special Education Budget

**Total Estimated Cost: \$42,770,602** (Benefits not included)

Budget categories include instructional staff, related services, BOCES placements, private placements, charter school costs, supplies, transportation, and outside services.

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## 9. Program Evaluation and State Performance Plan Indicators

The Niagara Falls City School District evaluates performance in accordance with the State's six-year plan to improve results for students with disabilities in indicator areas including:

- Graduation
- Drop-out rate
- State assessment results
- Suspension
- Least Restrictive Environment
- Child Find
- Transition planning
- Preschool outcomes
- Post-secondary outcomes
- Disproportionality
- Parental involvement
- Due process
- Compliance with Federal and State special education requirements
- Data collection and reporting

This district is accountable to collect and report data annually to demonstrate compliance or to create a district corrective action plan to change practices to ensure improved results, as directed by NYSED.

State Performance Plan Previous Indicators:

2020-21	Secondary Transition and Post-School Outcomes	Indicator #13 & 14
2021-22	None	N/A

2022-23	Preschool Outcomes	Indicator #7
2023-24	Parent Involvement	Indicator #8
2024-25	Child Find-Timely Evaluations & Eligibility	Indicator #11

During this two-year plan the following SPP indicators will be completed with a review at the conclusion of this school year:

SY 2025-26 Indicator 12 – Early Childhood Transition

SY 2026-27 Indicator 13 & 14 – Secondary Transition and Post-Secondary Outcomes

Along with the State and Federal indicators, as a District, programs are evaluated using the following methods:

- Student Performance Data, including IEP Goal Attainment
- Standardized Assessments
- Formative and Summative Assessments.

Additionally, Program Implementation Monitoring will occur through:

- Service delivery logs
- IEP service delivery review and monitoring

Other modes of evaluation include: Stakeholder feedback (student, family, and staff surveys) and individual student data reports (within IEP and other district based universal screening data).

## 10. Program Goals (2025–2027)

The NFCSD Central CSE Team has identified the following program goals based on performance as measured by State Performance Plan Indicators and with support from the Regional Partnership.

### 1. Transition Goals (Niagara Falls High School)

Systems Goal: Improve transition practices from 22/57 to 41/57 by June 1, 2026.

Practice Goal: Ensure all transition-age students' IEPs include age-appropriate transition assessments, reaching 100% by June 1, 2026.

Student Goal: 100% of students with disabilities (SWD) of transition age will have transition assessment results explicitly connected to post-secondary goals in their PLPs by June 1, 2026.

Key Actions:

- Data collection and coaching for transition components in IEPs (Jan 2026–June 2026).

- Professional development training for staff (Aug 28, 2025).
- Monthly coaching for teachers/administrators (Oct 2025–June 2026).
- Family engagement through guides and meetings (Jan–Mar 2026).

## **2. Behavior/FBA BIP Goals (Districtwide)**

Systems Goal: Increase district capacity to implement FBA/BIP systems from 21% to 47% by June 1, 2026.

Practice Goal: Formalize FBA/BIP practices, aiming for a 62% score on the district checklist by June 1, 2026.

Key Actions:

- Quarterly resource sharing at SEPTA meetings (Oct 2025–June 2026).
- Training for administration and psychologists on FBA/BIP Toolkit (Oct 3–31, 2025).
- Coaching teams to revise assessment tools, create templates, and standardize data collection (Oct 2025–June 2026).
- Implementation planning and fidelity checks (Jan–June 2026).

## **3. Explicit Instruction Goals (Harry F Abate Elementary School)**

Systems Goal: Admin will collect data on explicit instruction in classrooms, measured by RESET rubric and coaching notes (June 1, 2026).

Practice Goal: Special education teachers will meet rubric benchmarks for explicit instruction (June 1, 2026).

Student Goal: Students with disabilities in grades 5 and 6 will show significant growth on i-Ready ELA diagnostics (Spring 2026).

Key Actions:

- Regular BIT meetings to monitor progress (Oct 2025–June 2026).
- Training and coaching for cohort teachers (Oct 2025–June 2026).
- Data collection and coaching on explicit instruction implementation (Oct 2025–June 2026).
- Family engagement through SEPTA meetings and resource sharing (Oct 2025–June 2026).

## **4. Additional District Goals**

- Fully implement a new curriculum for students in the 8:1:3 and 12:1:1 classes grades K – 12.
- Increase the number of trainings offered to Special Education paraprofessionals by 80%.

Efforts to achieve these goals will be led by members of the Central CSE Office, including two instructional coaches dedicated to the Special Education department, and in conjunction with the District's Curriculum and Assessment Offices. Progress toward these goals will be reviewed

quarterly by members of the Central CSE Team with support from the Regional Partnership. The District's progress will be assessed annually as part of the State Performance Plan Indicators.

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## 11. Board of Education Policies

Key policies include (but are not limited to):

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Policy Title</b>
7222	Credential Options for Students with Disabilities
7314	Students Presumed to Have a Disability for Discipline Purposes
7610	Special Education: District Plan
7611	Children with Disabilities
7612	Grouping by Similarity of Needs
7613	The Role of the Board in Implementing a Student's Individualized Education Program
7614	Preschool Special Education Program
7615	Least Restrictive Environment
7616	Prereferral Intervention Strategies in General Education (Prior to a Referral for Special Education)
7617	Declassification of Students with Disabilities
7618	Use of Time Out Rooms
7620	Students with Disabilities Participating in School District Programs
7631	Appointment and Training of Committee on Special Education (CSE)/Subcommittee on Special Education Members
7632	Appointment and Training of Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) Members
7640	Student Individualized Education Program (IEP): Development and Provision
7641	Transition Services
7642	Extended School Year (July/August) Services and/or Programs
7643	Transfer Students with Disabilities
7650	Identification and Register of Children with Disabilities (Child Find)
7660	Parent Involvement for Children with Disabilities
7670	Due Process Complaints; Selection and Board Appointment of Impartial Hearing Officers
7690	Special Education Mediation
8120	Request for Part 100 Variance or Part 200 Innovative Program Waiver from Commissioner's Regulations

All policies are available on the NFBOE website.

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## 12. Resources for Students, Families, and Staff

For more information, please refer to Special Education Topics

A. CPSE Committee on Preschool Education (CPSE): The New York State Education Department (SED) Office of Special Education oversees a statewide preschool special education program with school districts, municipalities, approved providers and parents (and/or guardians). Evaluations and specially (designed) planned individual or group instructional services or programs are provided to eligible children who have a disability that affects their learning. For more information, please refer to: <https://www.nysed.gov/specialeducation/committee-special-education-csecommittee-preschool-special-educationcpse-process>

B. Extended School Year Extended School Year (ESY): Students who receive special education services may be eligible for extended school year services. The Committee on Special Education (CSE) must determine whether a student requires extended school year special education services in order to prevent substantial regression. Substantial regression would be indicated by a student's inability to maintain developmental levels due to a loss of skill, set of skill competencies or knowledge during the months of July and August. For more information, please refer to Extended School Year Programs and Services

### C. Parent Resources

Parents' Guide to Special Education

<https://www.nysed.gov/special-education/parents-guide-special-education>

Procedural Safeguards

<https://www.nysed.gov/special-education/procedural-safeguards-notice-rights-parents-children-disabilities>

Parent Guide to the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA)

<https://www.nysed.gov/state-assessment/nysaa-parent-resources>

Other Resources: Parent Network of Western New York <https://parentnetworkwny.org/>

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## 13. Glossary of Terms

### ACCES/VR

Adult Career and Continuing Education Services–Vocational Rehabilitation is part of the New York State Education Department and assists individuals with disabilities to achieve and maintain employment and support independent living through training, education, rehabilitation,

and career development. It supports a seamless transition to the workplace and independent, self-directed lives.

### **Academic Intervention Services (AIS)**

Remedial instruction within the areas of reading, written expression, and/or math delivered to disabled and non-disabled students.

### **Adapted Physical Education**

A specially designed program of developmental activities, games, sports, and rhythms suited to the interests, capacities, and limitations of students with disabilities who may not safely or successfully engage in unrestricted participation in the activities of the regular physical education program.

### **Aging Out**

The closure and transition from preschool special education students who will be turning 5 years of age by December 1st or students who will be 21 years of age by the end of the academic year and leaving secondary level education programs.

### **Annual Review**

An evaluation, conducted at least annually by the Committee on Special Education, of the status of each student with a disability and each student thought to have a disability who resides within the school district for the purpose of recommending the continuation, modification, or termination of the provision of special education programs and services for the student to the Board of Education.

### **Assistive Technology Device**

Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a student with a disability. Such term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such a device.

### **Assistive Technology Service**

Any service that directly assists a student with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. The term includes:

1. The evaluation of the needs of a student with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the student in the student's customary environment;
2. Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by students with disabilities;

3. Selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing assistive technology devices;
4. Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;
5. Training or technical assistance for a student with a disability or, if appropriate, that student's family; and
6. Training or other technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education or rehabilitation services), employers, or other individuals who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of that student.

### **Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP)**

A plan that is based on the results of a functional behavioral assessment and, at a minimum, includes a description of the problem behavior, global and specific hypotheses as to why the problem behavior occurs, and intervention strategies that include positive behavioral supports and services to address the behavior.

### **Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS)**

Students may earn a NYS Career Development and Occupational Studies Credential (CDOS). This credential recognizes each student's preparation and skills for post-school employment.

### **Case Management**

Facilitating communication and service provision among multiple service providers for students with special needs.

### **Change in Program (Review of Program - ROP)**

A change in any one of the components of the individualized education program of a student as described in section 200.4(d)(2) of this Part.

### **Class Size**

The maximum number of students who can receive instruction together in a special class or resource room program and the number of teachers and supplementary school personnel assigned to the class.

### **Co-Teaching in an Integrated Setting (ICT)**

This service offers a learning environment that includes a general education teacher working collaboratively with a special education teacher to deliver the curriculum in the general education setting in a team-teaching situation.

### **Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE)**

A multidisciplinary team established in accordance with the provisions of section 4410 of the Education Law.

### **Committee on Special Education (CSE)**

A multidisciplinary team established in accordance with the provisions of section 4402 of the Education Law.

### **Compliance**

Acting in accordance with state/federal regulations and law.

### **Consultant Teacher Services (CT)**

Direct and/or indirect services, as defined in this subdivision, provided to a student with a disability in the student's regular education classes and/or to such student's regular education teachers.

### **Continuum of Services**

An array of settings and services that may be used individually or in combination from least restrictive to most restrictive. Refer to Part 200 Regulations of the Commissioner of Education (200.6).

### **Declassification Support Services**

Services provided by persons appropriately certified or licensed pursuant to Part 80 of this Title in the appropriate area of service, to a student or such student's teacher(s) to aid in such student's transition from special education to full-time regular education, including:

1. For the student: psychological services, social work services, speech and language services, counseling (other than career counseling), and other appropriate support services; and
2. For the student's teacher(s): the assistance of supplementary school personnel, and consultation with appropriate personnel.

### **Due Process**

Procedures to ensure parent/student rights. Refer to Part 200 Regulations of the Commissioner of Education (200.5).

### **Front Door**

Person-centered approach to planning supports for people with developmental disabilities. The Front Door guides people through the steps involved in finding out if they are eligible for services with OPWDD.

### **Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)**

The process of determining why a student engages in behaviors that impede learning and how the student's behavior relates to the environment. The functional behavioral assessment shall be developed consistent with the requirements in section 200.22(a) of this Part and shall include, but is not limited to, the identification of the problem behavior, the definition of the behavior in observable and measurable terms, the identification of the contextual factors that contribute to the behavior (including cognitive and affective factors), and the formulation of a hypothesis regarding the general conditions under which a behavior usually occurs and probable consequences that serve to maintain it.

### **Goals**

Desired results towards which instruction is directed as indicated on Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

### **Home and Hospital Instruction**

Special education provided on an individual basis for a student with a disability confined to the home, hospital, or other institution because of a disability.

### **Inclusion**

Refers to a student with special needs placed within an age-appropriate general education program primarily for social/emotional exposure, whose disability requires significant modification and/or adaptation of the general class curriculum related to cognitive, social/emotional, physical, and management needs.

### **Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

A written statement developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with section 200.4 of this Part, which includes the components specified in section 200.4(d)(2) of this Part to be provided to meet the unique educational needs of a student with a disability.

### **Individual Psychological Evaluation**

A process by which a NYS certified school psychologist or licensed psychologist uses a variety of psychological and educational techniques and examinations in the student's native language (to the extent possible) to study and describe a student's developmental, learning, behavioral, and other personality characteristics.

## **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**

Placement of students with disabilities in special classes, separate schools, or other removal from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that even with supplementary aids and services, education cannot be satisfactorily achieved. The placement must:

1. Provide the special education needed by the student;
2. Provide education to the maximum extent appropriate with nondisabled peers; and
3. Be as close as possible to the student's home.

## **Manifestation Determination**

A process that determines the relationship between a student's behavior and his or her disability when subject to disciplinary action. It considers whether the IEP is appropriate and implemented, the student's ability to understand consequences, and the student's ability to control behavior.

## **Modification**

Adaptation or change made to the learning environment, instructional delivery, and/or performance expectations to allow students with disabilities opportunities to demonstrate acquisition of information/skills.

## **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)**

A framework that provides differentiated support to students based on academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs. It is a collaborative, data-driven approach focused on high-quality instruction and interventions to help all students achieve academic and life success. MTSS is not a program, but a framework that can be implemented in various ways.

## **Native Language**

- (1) For individuals of limited English proficiency, the language normally used by the individual, or for a student, the language normally used by the parents. In all direct contact with a student, native language means the language normally used by the student in the home or learning environment.
- (2) For individuals with deafness or blindness, or no written language, the mode of communication normally used by the individual (e.g., sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

## **New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA)**

See parent resources for more information.

## **Occupational Therapy**

The functional evaluation of the student and the planning and use of a program of purposeful activities to develop or maintain adaptive skills, designed to achieve maximal physical and mental functioning in daily life tasks.

### **Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)**

A NYS agency responsible for coordinating supports and services for people with developmental disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorders, and other neurological impairments. The agency determines eligibility for OPWDD-funded services. The referral process, "Front Door," enables families to begin acquiring support services upon exiting or graduating from high school.

### **Preschool Student with a Disability**

A preschool child as defined in section 4410(1)(i) of Education Law who is eligible to receive preschool programs and services, is not entitled to attend the public schools of the school district of residence pursuant to section 3202 of the Education Law, and who, because of mental, physical, or emotional reasons, has been identified as having a disability and can receive appropriate educational opportunities from special programs and services approved by the department. Eligibility is based on an individual evaluation provided in the student's native language, not dependent on a single procedure, and administered by a multidisciplinary team in accordance with section 200.4(b)(1)–(5).

### **Physical Therapy**

Service addressing identified needs in one or more areas: range of motion, strength, muscle tone, posture, gait, balance, reflex integration, gross motor coordination as they affect educational performance.

### **Pull Out (Non-Integrated)**

Educational service delivery model provided outside the classroom on an individual or small group basis.

### **Push In (Integrated)**

Educational service delivery model provided within the classroom.

### **Reevaluation**

(Formerly "Triennial evaluation") A reevaluation is an opportunity to thoroughly assess a student's individual needs and the continued appropriateness of special education services. A reevaluation must be conducted if conditions warrant, if requested by the parent or teacher, or at least once every 3 years (unless the parent agrees in writing that testing is not required).

## **Regular Education Teacher (General Education Teacher)**

(1) For a school-age student, a teacher qualified to serve nondisabled students who is providing regular education instruction to the student. If the student is not receiving instruction from one or more regular education teachers, a teacher qualified to provide regular education in the type of program in which the student may be placed may serve as the student's regular education teacher.

(2) For a preschool child, a regular education teacher is qualified to provide regular education services to nondisabled preschool or elementary-level students. If the student is not receiving instruction from one or more regular education teachers, a teacher qualified to provide regular education in the type of program in which the student may be placed may serve as the preschool student's regular education teacher.

## **Related Services**

Developmental, corrective, and other supportive services required to assist a student with a disability, including speech-language pathology, audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling services (including rehabilitation counseling), orientation and mobility services, medical services, parent counseling and training, school health services, school nurse services, school social work, assistive technology services, appropriate access to recreation, and other appropriate developmental or corrective support services. Includes early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in students.

## **Resource Room Program**

A special education program for a student with a disability registered in either a special class or regular class who needs specialized supplementary instruction in an individual or small group setting for a portion of the school day.

## **Response to Intervention (RTI)**

A general education initiative that supports a systematic approach to instruction and intervention, guided by research-based methods and continuous progress monitoring of students' needs.

## **Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973)**

No individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance.

## **Section 504 Plan**

An identified need of a general education student who is not eligible for special education services through an IEP, but may receive modifications and accommodations.

## **Skills Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC)**

For students with severe disabilities who are eligible to take the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) upon completion of at least twelve years of school.

## **Social Work Services**

A process that a NYS certified school social worker uses for educational planning and interventions to remove barriers to learning from familial, environmental, or interpersonal problems; mobilization of school and community resources to enable the student to benefit from their educational program. Services may include consultation and direct interventions such as counseling, support groups, and development of behavior management programs.

## **Special Class (Non-Integrated)**

A daily service provided to students with disabilities who are grouped based on similar educational needs for the purpose of receiving a special education program. These classes vary by student number and supporting service providers, with class sizes ranging from 15 students with one teacher to as few as six students with a teacher and aide.

## **Special Education**

Specially designed individualized or group instruction or special services or programs, and special transportation, provided at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities.

## **Speech-Language Therapy**

A service that identifies, evaluates, and treats communication disorders such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment, or voice impairment that adversely affects educational performance.

## **Student with a Disability**

A student who has not attained the age of 22 and is entitled to attend public schools under section 3202, and who, because of mental, physical, or emotional reasons, has been identified as having a disability and requires special services and programs approved by the department. The term includes:

1. **Autism** – A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3, that adversely affects educational performance. May include repetitive activities, resistance to change, and unusual sensory responses.
2. **Deafness** – A hearing impairment so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification.

3. **Deaf-Blindness** – Concomitant hearing and visual impairments causing severe communication and developmental needs that cannot be accommodated in programs for deafness or blindness alone.
4. **Emotional Disability** – A condition exhibiting one or more of the following over a long period and to a marked degree that adversely affects educational performance:
  - (i) inability to learn not explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;
  - (ii) inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships;
  - (iii) inappropriate behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;
  - (iv) pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or
  - (v) tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. Includes schizophrenia. Does not apply to socially maladjusted students unless they have an emotional disability.
5. **Hearing Impairment** – An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects educational performance but is not deafness.
6. **Learning Disability** – A disorder in one or more basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, resulting in difficulties with listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, or math. Includes perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. Does not include learning problems primarily due to visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.
7. **Intellectual Disability** – Significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, with deficits in adaptive behavior, manifested during the developmental period, adversely affecting educational performance.
8. **Multiple Disabilities** – Concomitant impairments (e.g., intellectual disability-blindness) causing severe educational needs that cannot be accommodated in a program for one impairment alone. Does not include deaf-blindness.
9. **Orthopedic Impairment** – Severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects educational performance, including congenital anomalies, disease-related impairments, and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy).
10. **Other Health Impairment** – Limited strength, vitality, or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, ADHD, Tourette syndrome), resulting in limited alertness in the educational environment and adversely affecting educational performance.
11. **Speech or Language Impairment** – A communication disorder (e.g., stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment, or voice impairment) that adversely affects educational performance.
12. **Traumatic Brain Injury** – An acquired injury to the brain caused by external physical force or certain medical conditions, resulting in impairments that adversely affect educational performance. Includes open or closed head injuries and certain medical conditions, but does not include congenital or birth trauma injuries.
13. **Visual Impairment Including Blindness** – An impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects educational performance, including partial sight and blindness.

### **Substantial Regression**

A student's inability to maintain developmental levels due to a loss of skill or knowledge during July and August of such severity as to require an inordinate period of review at the beginning of the school year to reestablish and maintain IEP goals and objectives mastered at the end of the previous school year.

### **Supplemental Aids and Services**

Aides, services, and other supports provided in general education classes or other education-related settings to enable students with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate in accordance with the least restrictive environment.

### **Transition Services**

A coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability, designed within a results-oriented process, focused on improving academic and functional achievement to facilitate movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities must be based on the student's strengths, preferences, and interests and include:

1. Instruction
2. Related services
3. Community experiences
4. Development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives
5. When appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and a functional vocational evaluation

<b>NFCSD Special Education Two-Year Plan Additional Data</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b># Students Exiting Speech 24/25</b>	<b># Students Exiting Speech 25/26</b>
K	6	2
1	8	5
2	13	6
3	20	6
4	20	7
5	25	10
6	45	6
7	12	17