Highland Central School District



Special Education District Plan

Updated September 2025

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

The Governing Board of Education of the Highland Central School District as a part of a long-standing commitment to excellence in education for all students, supports the provision of special education and related services for students with disabilities under the auspices of the Committee on Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education.

In full support of State and Federal laws pertaining to students with disabilities, it is the intent of this Board of Education to assure that the educational needs of Special Education students are met. To this end, and in full compliance with the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, the Board has reviewed this District Plan for Special Education.

By action of the Board of Education in a regularly scheduled meeting, the Board has adopted the Special Education District Plan.

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Mission Statement

In a safe and caring learning environment, we inspire students to make connections, think critically, and become productive global citizens who create legacies that make our community proud.



Highland Central School District

Special Education District Plan

Introduction

A District Plan shall be developed and updated every two years describing the Special Education program in the Highland Central School District. The District plan shall include the following:

a) A description of the nature and scope of special education programs and services currently available to students and preschool students residing in the District, including but not limited to descriptions of the District's resource room programs and each special class program provided by the District in terms of group size and composition.
b) Identification of the number and age span of students (school age and preschool) to be served by type of disability and recommended setting.
c) The method to be used to evaluate the extent to which the objectives of the program have been achieved.
d) A description of the policies and practices of the Board of Education to ensure the allocation of appropriate space within the District for special education programs that meet the needs of students and preschool children with disabilities.
e) The estimated budget to support such a plan.
f) The date on which such a plan was adopted by the Board of Education.

The District Plan, with personally identifiable student information deleted, shall be filed and available for public inspection and review by the Commissioner.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The Highland Central School District is committed to the development and implementation of an appropriate education for students with disabilities who reside in the district in accordance with following policies and practices:

1. To provide a free appropriate education in the least restrictive environment for resident students between the ages three and twenty-one or until a regular high school diploma has been achieved by the student, whichever shall occur first.

2. To ensure that students with disabilities have the opportunity to participate in school district programs, to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of each student, including access to general education curriculum, extracurricular programs and activities that are available to other students enrolled in the public schools of the district.

3. To establish a Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE), a Committee on Special Education (CSE) and appropriate Subcommittees on Special Education for evaluating students suspected of having disabilities and for placement of students with disabilities in appropriate programs.

4. To ensure effective communication and collaboration between the CPSE, CSE, school staff and school district administrators, parents and community.

5. To ensure that parents are advised of their due process rights and to establish procedures in this regard.

6. To ensure that each preschool student with a disability residing in the district has the opportunity to participate in an appropriate preschool program or services.

7. To provide for the establishment of administrative practices and procedures to ensure that parents have received and understand the request for consent for evaluation of a preschool or school age student.

8. To ensure the establishment of administrative policies, practices and procedures to implement the provisions of Section 200.6(a) of the Commissioner's Regulations and to provide special services or programs, to the extent appropriate to the needs of the student, to enable the student to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum.

9. To provide human and material resources necessary for the implementation of a full continuum or programs and services to meet the academic, social, physical and management needs of students with disabilities.

10. To provide to the greatest extent appropriate adaptation and/or modification of instruction and materials to enable students with disabilities to benefit from instruction within the general education setting, whenever appropriate.

11. To ensure that students with disabilities have access to the full range of general education programs and services to the extent appropriate to their individual needs and to provide them appropriate opportunities to earn a high school diploma in accordance with Section 100.5 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

12. To ensure that a discipline code for student behavior is in place while protecting the rights of students and enabling the continuity of appropriate education for students with disabilities.

13. To ensure the confidentiality of personally identifiable data, information or records pertaining to students with disabilities. Such personally identifiable information will not be disclosed except in accordance with the Regulations.

14. To ensure that adequate and appropriate space is made available to meet the needs of preschool and school age students with disabilities.

15. To provide professional development for all personnel who work with students with disabilities in order to assure that they have the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the unique needs of these students.

16. To ensure the establishment of plans and policies for the appropriate declassification of students with disabilities.

17. To ensure that students attending school within the district receive the protection of all other applicable State and Federal regulations.

General Staff Development

The Board of Education is committed to hiring, training, and retaining highly qualified personnel responsible for carrying out all of the mandates of IDEA and the Commissioner's Regulations regarding students with disabilities. Accordingly, it is the Board's policy to recruit, hire, and train appropriately qualified special education personnel to provide special education programs and services, including members and chairpersons of the Committee on Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education.

All special education personal shall be appropriately qualified to carry out their duties regarding students with disabilities, and shall possess the training, licensing, and certification required by New York State Law.

At the beginning of each school year, all teachers working with students who have an IEP will be able to access, review and meet with special education teachers for clarification and guidance at their request. All designated teachers and paraprofessionals need to be aware of each student's area of disability, testing modifications, special needs with regard to specialized equipment (e.g. enlarged print, taped textbooks, use of a calculator, etc.) and any other special accommodations as stipulated in the IEP. IEPs are available electronically through the student management system.

Committee on Special Education (CSE) and Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE)

To implement its commitment to the education of students with disabilities, the Board of Education annually appoints a Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) and a Committee on Special Education (CSE). The Committees are appointed in accordance with the provisions of New York Education Law, Sections 4402 and 4410 and Section 200.3 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. Section 4410 of the Education Law which established the Committee on Preschool Special Education was signed into Law on July 5, 1989, and the CPSE established for the first time during the 1989/90 school year. Major functions of the CPSE and CSE include:

- Identifying, evaluating, and recommending placement for students with disabilities.
- Assuring that appropriate due process safeguards are provided for each student.
- Maintaining an annually revised register of all students with disabilities who reside in the District and who are eligible to attend preschool or public school during the coming school year.
- Establishing a network for communication and sharing of resources with other educational and community service agencies.

CPSE

The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) is responsible for arranging for evaluation of any student who is suspected of having a disability, who meets the age eligibility requirements specified in the Regulations, and is a resident of the school district.

The evaluation process begins when a written request for evaluation is made by either:

- the student's parent or person in parental relationship
- a Building Principal
- a staff member of a preschool program approved pursuant to Section 4410
- a staff member of an approved program providing special instruction to students ages birth to 3
- a staff member of a program serving infants and toddlers or preschool students
- a representative of a public agency with responsibility for the welfare, care or education of students

The referral can be made at any time during the school year. It should specify the extent to which the preschool student has received any services prior to referral. When the CPSE receives a referral, the chairperson will write to the parent, describing the evaluation procedures and requesting parental consent for the evaluation. A list of County approved evaluation sites will be included. Translations will be provided as needed. In the event that consent is not provided, the Committee shall implement the district's practices for ensuring that the parents have received and understood the request for consent.

EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION

The individual evaluation of a preschool child shall include relevant functional and developmental information regarding the child's abilities and needs related to participation in age-appropriate activities.

This evaluation will include the following, at no cost to the parent:

- a physical examination;
- an individual psychological examination, except when a school psychologist determines after an assessment that further evaluation is unnecessary;
- an observation;
- a social history; and
- other appropriate assessments or evaluations as necessary to ascertain the physical, mental and emotional factors which contribute to the suspected disabilities.

The evaluator will use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors. Test will be administered in the student's dominant language or other mode of communication, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. The tests will be validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel. Tests will be administered so as not to be racially or culturally

discriminatory and to ensure that they measure the extent to which the student has a disability and needs special education, rather than measure the student's English language skills.

The CPSE will arrange for specialized evaluations when necessary. These assessments may include, but are not limited to, bilingual evaluations, psychiatric and neurological examinations, audiological evaluations, visual evaluations, and assistive technology assessments. Specialized evaluations are not limited to the initial evaluation process; they may be indicated at any time.

When completed, the evaluation reports will be submitted to the CPSE and a CPSE meeting will be scheduled. The parents will be provided with a copy of the evaluation and summary statement prior to the meeting. The results of the evaluation will be provided to the parent in their dominant language or other mode of communication. Reasonable measures will be made to ensure the parent attends the meeting. This means:

- A written notice is sent to the parent at least five days prior advising them of the meeting. Prior notice means written statements developed in accordance with section 200.5(a) of the Part, and provided to the parents of a student with a disability a reasonable time before the school district proposes to or refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the student or the provision of a free appropriate public education to the student.
- At least one additional attempt is made to notify the parents. This may mean additional written notice or a telephone call.
- Additionally, under 34 CFR §300.503(a), the school district must provide a written notice (information received in writing), whenever the school district: (1) Proposes to begin or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of your child or the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to your child; or (2) Refuses to begin or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of your child or the provision of FAPE to your child. The required content under 34 CFR §300.503(b) is listed below in this model form. The school district must provide the notice in understandable language (34 CFR §300.503(c)).

If the Committee determines that a student has a disability, an IEP (Individualized Education Program) is prepared which indicates the classification of the disability, the student's present levels of functioning including how the disability affects the student's participation in appropriate activities, measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short term objectives, and the type of special education program and/or services recommended. The CPSE will seek, in every case, to recommend placement in the least restrictive environment consistent with the needs of the student. If, for any reasons, the recommendation of the Committee differs from the preference of the parent, the report shall include the reasons for the Committee's recommendations. The notices will also indicate that, in the event that the parent does not provide consent for placement, no further action will be taken by the CPSE until such consent is obtained.

PLACEMENT

If the Board of Education agrees with the Committee's recommendation, the Board will arrange for the student to receive appropriate special programs and services. Services will not be provided without parental consent, but if the parent disagrees with the recommendation of the Board, he/she may request special education mediation or an impartial hearing review and may appeal the decision to the

Commissioner of Education. Review of placement decisions will be conducted in accordance with the same rules of procedural due process applicable to the placement of school-aged students. Placement in an approved program will take place as soon as possible following Board approval. If the Board of Education disagrees with the Committee's recommendation, it may remand the recommendation to the Committee for further review.

ANNUAL REVIEW

An annual review is conducted for every preschool student who has been classified as having a disability. Parents are notified by mail of the meeting; reasonable measures will be taken to ensure that the parent attends the meeting. This review is conducted to consider continued eligibility for services and to determine whether the annual goals for the student are being achieved. The IEP is revised, as needed, to address any lack of expected progress towards annual goals, the results of any reevaluation, information about the student provided to, or by, the parents and the student's anticipated needs. A new IEP is prepared at the meeting.

Written consent of the parent or guardian is required to conduct an initial evaluation for a student who has not previously been identified as having a disability. In the event that parental permission is withheld, such parent shall be given the opportunity to attend an informal conference with designated professionals most familiar with the proposed evaluation. If at this meeting a decision is made that the referral is not warranted at this time, the referral shall be withdrawn.

Continuum of Services – CPSE

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

The CPSE must consider the appropriateness of services to meet the student's needs in the least restrictive environment in the following order:

- related services only
- special education itinerant services only
- related services in combination with special education itinerant services
- an integrated special education preschool program
- a half-day preschool program
- a full-day preschool program
- If the CPSE determines that a student needs a single service that service must be provided only as a related service or only as a special education itinerant service.

The Committee shall first consider providing special education services in a setting where age-appropriate peers without disabilities are found.

1. RELATED SERVICES:

Services defined in Section 4401 of Education Law, including speech pathology, audiology, psychological services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, medical services as defined by regulation,

parent counseling and training, school health services, school social work, other appropriate developmental or corrective support services, appropriate access to recreation and other appropriate support services.

Related Services are provided at a site including, but not limited to:

- An approved or licensed pre-kindergarten or Head Start Program
- The work site of the provider
- The student's home
- A hospital
- A state facility
- A child care location as defined in section 4410

The initial location for the delivery of one or more related services must be stated on the IEP.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ITINERANT SERVICES:

Provided by a certified special education teacher of an approved program on an itinerant basis at a site determined by the BOE, including, but not limited to:

- An approved or licensed pre-kindergarten or Head Start program
- A student's home
- A hospital
- A state facility
- A student care location

The purpose of Special Education Itinerant Services is to provide:

- Direct Service: Specialized individual or group instruction to a preschool student to aid such student in benefiting from the early Childhood program.
- Indirect Services: Consultations provided by a certified special education teacher to assist the student's teacher in adjusting the learning environment and/or modifying instructional methods to meet the individual needs of a preschool student with a disability who attends an early Childhood program.

Special Education Itinerant Services are not less than two hours per week, and total number of students with disabilities assigned to the special education teacher should not exceed twenty (20). Related services shall be provided in addition to SEIT services in accordance with the student's IEP.

2. INTEGRATED SPECIAL CLASS:

No more than 12 preschool students staffed by at least one special education teacher and one paraprofessional. This class may be provided:

- In a class of no more than 12 preschool students which includes both students without disabilities and students with disabilities.
- In a class of no more than 12 preschool students with disabilities which is housed in the same space as a preschool class with non-disabled students taught by another teacher.

3. SPECIAL CLASS (Half or Full Day)

A special class is defined as a class consisting of students with the same disabilities or with differing disabilities who have been grouped together because of similar individual needs for the purpose of being provided a special education program in a special class.

- Chronological age range shall not exceed 36 months.
- Maximum class size shall not exceed 12 preschool students with at least one teacher and one paraprofessional.
- Services are provided not less than 2-1/2 hours per day, 2 days per week.

5. RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES:

This program is a minimum of five hours per day, five days a week, for twelve months. Placements in residential programs must be approved by the Commissioner in accordance with 200.6 (I) of the Commissioner's Regulations.

COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION (CSE)

At its yearly reorganization meeting, the Board of Education shall appoint a Committee on Special Education comprised of at least the following mandated members:

- the parents or persons in parental relationship to the student;
- the general education teacher of the student if the student is, or may be, participating in the general education environment;
- the special education teacher or special education service provider of the student;
- a school psychologist;
- the CSE chairperson who is a representative of the district qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially-designed instruction to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities, who is knowledgeable about the general curriculum and about the availability of the resources of the local educational agency;
- an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the team selected from the general or special education teacher or provider or district representative described above;
- the school physician, if specifically requested in writing by the parent or by a members of the school at least 72 hours prior to the meeting;
- an additional parent member of a student with a disability residing in the school district or a neighboring school district, provided that the additional parent member may be the parent of a student who has been declassified within a period not to exceed five years or the parent of a student who has graduated within a period not to exceed five years, if specifically requested in writing by the parent of the student, the student or by a member of the committee at least 72 hours prior to the meeting; other persons having knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate, as the school district or the parents shall designate. The determination of knowledge or special expertise of that person shall be made by the party who invited the individual to be a member of the CSE.
- whenever appropriate, the child with a disability;

A Parent can request 72 hours prior to a scheduled CSE meeting that a Parent Member be invited. A parent member is a parent of a student who resides in the district or a neighboring school district, provided that such parent is not a required member if the parent(s) of the student request that the additional parent member not participate in the meeting; parents of students who have already graduated and/or have been declassified for a period not to extend beyond five years from these instances;
Consensus is the preferred decision-making process. Parents of the student being reviewed and other knowledgeable persons are encouraged to share information, outside evaluations and reports with the Committee. If consensus cannot be met, the Chairperson of the CSE will make the final decision.

Prior Written Notice of meetings is provided to the parents at least five days in advance of the meeting date.

CSE PROCEDURES

INITIAL REFERRAL

In accordance with the New York Education Law Section 4402 and Part 200.2, 200.4 and 200.5 of the Commissioner's Regulations, the CSE is responsible for evaluating all school-age students thought to be disabled, identifying a disabling condition (or determining that no disabling condition exists), and recommending a type of placement. Referrals can be made at any time during the school year. Within 60 calendar days of receipt of consent, the school district must complete the initial evaluation to determine if the student is a student with a disability. A referral for an initial evaluation may be made by:

- student's parent or person in parental relationship;
- a Building Principal
- the commissioner, or designee, of a public agency with responsibility for the education of the student;
- a designee of an education program affiliated with a child care institution with committee on special education responsibility pursuant to section 4002(3) of the Education Law.

A request for referral for an initial evaluation may be made by:

- a professional staff member of the school district in which the student resides, or the public or private school the student legally attends or is eligible to attend;
- a licensed physician;
- a judicial officer;
- a professional staff member of a public agency with responsibility for welfare, health or education of children; or
- a student who is 18 years of age or older, or an emancipated minor, who is eligible to attend the public schools of the district.

All new entrants to the district are screened at the time of enrollment and such screening, if it indicates a possible disability condition, can lead to a CSE referral. All referrals are made to the building principal or the Chairperson of the Committee. The referral must be written and dated.

A written request for referral made by persons other than the student or a judicial officer must:

- state the reason(s) for referral and include any test results, records or reports upon which the referral is based;
- describe attempts to remediate the student's performance prior to referral, including any supplementary aids or support services provided for this purpose, or state the reason why no such attempts were made;
- describe the extent of parental contact or involvement prior to the referral.

Upon receipt of a referral, the Chairperson of the Committee or a building representative of the public school will contact the parent or guardian and request consent for evaluation. A copy of A Parent's Guide to Special Education and Due Process Rights are given to the parent at this time. Translations are provided to assist parents as needed.

Referrals may be withdrawn under the following circumstances:

- The parent and the person submitting the referral agree to the withdrawal in writing.
- The building administrator, upon receipt of a referral or copy of a referral, may request a meeting with the parent or person in parental relationship to the student, and the student, if appropriate, to

determine whether the student would benefit from additional general education support services as an alternative to special education, including the provision of educationally related support services, speech and language improvement services, and academic intervention services. If the person making the referral is a professional staff member of the school district in which the student resides, that person shall attend such meeting. The building administrator shall ensure that the parent understands the proceedings of the meeting and shall arrange for the presence of an interpreter, if necessary. Any other person making a referral shall have the opportunity to attend such meeting. If at the meeting the parent or person in parental relationship and the building administrator agree in writing that, with the provision of additional general education support services, the referral is unwarranted, the referral shall be deemed withdrawn, and the building administrator shall provide the Chairperson of the Committee on Special Education, the person who made the referral if a professional staff member of the school district, the parent or person in parental relationship shall be in the native language of such person. Such agreement shall contain a description of the additional general education support services to be provided, instructional strategies to be used and student centered data to be collection, and the proposed duration of such program. A copy of the agreement shall also be placed in the student's cumulative education record file. The meeting:

(i) shall be conducted within 10 school days of the building administrator's receipt of the referral; and

(ii) shall not impede a Committee on Special Education from continuing its duties and functions under this Part.

- If the parent does not consent to the initial evaluation within thirty (30) days, the Chairperson will offer the parent an opportunity for an informal meeting with the person who made the referral, professionals most familiar with the proposed evaluation and counsel or an advisor of the parent's choice. The reasons for the referral will be discussed and if both the parent and the person submitting the referral agree in writing, the referral will be withdrawn. If the referral is not withdrawn and the parent continues to withhold consent, the chairperson shall document attempts made by the chairperson or other representatives of the committee to obtain parental consent may recommend that the Board appoint an impartial hearing officer to hear evidence and testimony on the need for evaluation.
- In all circumstances, the withdrawal agreement will be in writing and will be placed in the student's cumulative educational file, with copies given to all parties involved. The agreement will specify in writing any alternative methods suggested to resolve the student's difficulty and an opportunity for a follow-up conference within an agreed period of time to review the student's progress.

EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION

The initial evaluation will consist of procedures to determine whether a student is a student with a disability and to determine the educational needs of such a student. The evaluation will include a variety of assessment tools and strategies including information provided by the parent to gather relevant functional and developmental information about the student and information related to enabling the student to participate and progress in the general education curriculum. The individual evaluation will include the following at no cost to the parent: [1]

- an individual psychological examination;
- an observation of the student in the student's learning environment;
- a social history;
- other appropriate assessments or evaluations, including a functional behavioral assessment for a

student whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, as necessary to ascertain the physical, mental, behavioral and emotional factors which contribute to the suspected disabilities.

The evaluator will use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors. Test will be administered in the student's native language or other mode of communication, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. The tests will be validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and will be administered by trained personnel. Tests will be administered so as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory. The CSE will arrange for specialized evaluations where necessary, using appropriate resources outside of the district. These assessments may include, but are not limited to, bilingual evaluations, psychiatric and neurological examinations, audiological evaluations, visual evaluations, vocational evaluations and assistive technology assessments. Specialized evaluations are not limited to the initial evaluation process; they may be indicated at any time. The CSE shall maintain a list of appropriate resources and certified professionals for this purpose.

A variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional and developmental information, including information provided by the parents, will be used in determining whether the student is a student with a disability and the content of the student's individualized education program, including information related to enabling the student to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum. No single procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining whether a student is a student with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for a student. The evaluation will be sufficiently comprehensive in order to identify all of the student's special education needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the student has been identified. Existing evaluation data on the student will be reviewed, including evaluations and information provided by the student's parents, current classroom-based assessments and observations, and teacher and related service providers' observations. The evaluation will be sufficiently comprehensive in order to identify all of the student's special education needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the student has been identified. Assessment tools and strategies are used to provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the student.

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

In making a determination of eligibility for special education and related services, a student may not be identified as a student with a disability if the determinant factor is lack of instruction in reading, math or limited English proficiency. A student with a disability remains eligible to receive special education services even if the student is advancing from grade to grade.

When an evaluation is completed, a CSE meeting is scheduled. Reasonable measures will be made to ensure the parent attends the meeting. This means:

- A written notice will be sent to the parent at least five days prior advising them of the meeting
- At least one additional attempt will be made to notify the parents. This may mean additional written notice or a telephone call. The attempts will be documented.

Parents are provided with copies of the evaluation reports prior to the CSE meeting. At the CSE meeting, the results of the evaluation will be provided to the parent in their native language or other mode of communication. The CSE reviews the results to determine eligibility and submits a recommendation to the Board of Education. A student may not be determined to be eligible for special education if the determinant factor for the eligibility determination is lack of instruction in reading or math or limited English proficiency. A student with a disability remains eligible to receive special education services even if the student is advancing from grade to grade. If the Committee determines

the student is ineligible for special education, written notification is sent to the parent/guardian and to the principal, indicating the reasons for the finding.

If the Committee determines that a student has a disability, an IEP (Individualized Education Program) is prepared which specifies the classification of the disability. In developing the recommendations for the IEP, the Committee must consider the results of the initial or most recent evaluation, the student's strengths, the concerns of the parents, the results of the student's performance on any general, State or district-wide tests, and other factors unique to the student's disability. These recommendations shall include:

- the student's present performance and individual needs in the following areas: academic or educational achievement and learning characteristics, social development, physical development and management needs including how the disability affects student involvement and progress in the general curriculum;
- measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives for only those students who are working towards meeting alternative learner standards and all preschool students, related to enabling the student to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum and meeting each of the student's other educational needs that result from the student's disability;
- special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the student, or on behalf of the student, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel in order for the student to advance appropriately toward attaining annual goals, to be involved and progress in general curriculum, and to be educated and participate in activities with other students with and without disabilities;
- the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with non-disabled students in the general education class and in other activities;
- if a student is not participating in a regular physical education program, the extent to which the student will participate in specially designed instruction in physical education including adapted physical education;
- any individual testing accommodations to be used consistently by the student in the administration of State or district-wide assessments of student achievement and in accordance with the State Education Department policy, that are needed in order for the student to participate;
- if the Committee determines that the student will not participate in a particular State or districtwide assessment or part of such assessment, a statement of why the assessment is not appropriate and how the student will be assessed;
- the projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services and modifications;
- how the student's progress towards the annual goals will be measured, how the student's parents will be regularly informed of their student's progress towards annual goals, and the extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the student to achieve the goals by the end of the year;
- indicate the general education classes in which the student will receive consultant services; and a description of assistive technology devices or services needed for the student to benefit from education.

The IEP must also include:

- Beginning the school year the student will turn 15 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the Committee) a statement of needed transition services and post-secondary goals for the student, including, a statement of the responsibilities of the school district and, when applicable, a statement of the interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages.

Consideration of Special Factors:

1. in the case of a student whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, consider, when appropriate, strategies, including positive interventions, and supports to address that behavior;

2. in the case of a student with limited English proficiency, consider the language needs of the student as such needs relate to the student's IEP,

3. in the case of a student who is blind or visually impaired, provide for instruction in Braille and the use of Braille unless the CSE determines after an evaluation of the student's reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the student's future needs for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille), that instruction in Braille or use of Braille is not appropriate for the student; and

4. consider the communication needs of the student, and in the case of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the student's language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the student's language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the student's language and communication mode.

5. consider whether the student requires assistive technology devices and services, including whether the use of school-purchased assistive technology devices is required to be used in the student's home or in other settings in order for the student to receive a free appropriate public education.

IEP IMPLEMENTATION

If the Board of Education agrees with the Committee's recommendation, the parents will be notified of the decision. Placement of the student in the appropriate special education program or provision of appropriate services will take place within 60 school days of receipt of consent to evaluate a student not previously identified as having a disability or 60 school days of referral for review. If the recommendation is for placement in an approved in-state or out-of-state private school, programs and services shall be provided within 30 school days of the BOE receipt of the CSE recommendation. Initial placements require the written consent of the student's parent/guardian. The CSE ensures that each regular education teacher, special education teacher, related service provider, and other service provider who is responsible for the implementation of a student's IEP shall have electronic access to a copy of the IEP; and each teacher and provider is informed of his or her specific responsibilities related to the implementing the student's IEP and the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the student in accordance with the IEP. A copy of the IEP shall be provided to the student's parents at no cost to them.

The school district must provide special education and related services to a student with a disability in accordance with the student's IEP and must make a good faith effort to assist the student to achieve the goals and objectives or benchmarks listed in the student's IEP. If the Board of Education disagrees with the Committee's recommendation, it may remand the recommendation to the Committee for further review.

ANNUAL REVIEW, REEVALUATION AND DECLASSIFICATION

An annual review is conducted for every resident student who has been classified as having a disability. Parents are notified by mail of the meeting; reasonable measures will be taken to ensure that the parent attends the meeting. The review is conducted to determine the student's present levels of performance and educational needs, continued eligibility and need for special education services and whether any

modification or additions to the special education and related services are needed to enable the student to meet the measurable annual goals of the IEP and to participate, as appropriate, in general education. If a revision of the IEP is recommended it must address:

- any lack of expected progress toward the annual goals and in the general curriculum, if appropriate;
- the results of any reevaluation and any information about the student provided to, or by, the parent;
- the student's anticipated needs;
- or other matters, including a student's need for test accommodations and/or modifications.

As part of any reevaluation, a review of existing evaluation data, including evaluations and information provided by the student's parents, current classroom-based assessments and observations, teacher and related service provider's observations, is conducted to determine what additional data, if any, is needed. The group may conduct its review without a meeting. If no additional data is needed to determine whether the student continues to be a student with a disability, the parents are notified of the determination and the reasons for it. The parent is notified of the right to request an assessment and that the district is not required to conduct such an assessment unless requested by the students' parents.

A comprehensive reevaluation is conducted at least once every three (3) years by a multidisciplinary team or group of persons, including at least one teacher or other specialist with knowledge in the area of the student's disability. The reevaluation shall be sufficient to determine the student's individual needs, educational progress and achievement, the ability to participate in instructional programs in general education and the student's continued eligibility for special education, assess the appropriateness of classification, program and placement. Reevaluations are also initiated prior to the triennial requirement if requested by the student's parent or teacher.

Parental consent is retained prior to conducting any new test or assessment as part of a reevaluation of a student with a disability. It the district takes reasonable measures to obtain such consent and the student's parent fails to respond, reevaluation may take place without parental consent.

If the Committee determines that no additional testing is needed, the CSE will notify the parent of that determination, the reasons for it, and the right of the parent to request an evaluation. The Committee will also indicate that it is not required to conduct such assessment unless requested by the student's parent.

Before determining that a student is no longer eligible to receive special education services, an evaluation must be conducted. When the CSE determines that a student no longer needs special education services, the Committee may recommend declassification support services for no more than the first year in general education. Such services may include psychological, social work, speech and language services or non-career counseling or they could consist of assignment of an aide or consultant to the classroom teacher. Continuation of test modifications upon declassification is not automatic. The CSE may determine that test modifications previously documented in a student's IEP must continue to be consistently provided to the student for the balance of his or her public school

education. A school district is not required to conduct a reevaluation of a student before the termination of a student's eligibility due to graduation with a local high school or Regents diploma or exceeding the age eligibility for a free appropriate public education.

CLASSIFICATIONS

Students who have been identified by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) as having a disability will be identified using one of the following classifications:

1. Autism means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3, that adversely affects a student's educational performance. Other characteristics often associate with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a student's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the student has an emotional disturbance as defined in paragraph 4 of this subdivision. A student who manifests the characteristics of autism after age 3 could be diagnosed as having autism if the criteria in this paragraph are otherwise satisfied.

2. Deafness means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification that adversely affects a student's educational performance.

3. Deaf-blindness means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for students with deafness or students with blindness.

4. Emotional disturbance means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a student's educational performance:

   (i.) an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;

   (ii.) an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;

   (iii.) inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;

   (iv.) a generally pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or

   (v.) a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

   The term includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to students who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance.

5. Hearing impairment means impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects the child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of ***deafness*** in this section.

6. Learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which manifests itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are

primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

7. Intellectual Disability: means significantly sub average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a student's educational performance.
8. Multiple disabilities means concomitant impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness, mental retardation-blindness, mental retardation-orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which cause such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in a special education program solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.
9. Orthopedic impairment means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a student's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputation, and fractures or burns which cause contractures).
10. Other health-impairment means having limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that is due to chronic or acute health problems, including but not limited to a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning leukemia, diabetes, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or Tourette syndrome, which adversely affects a student's educational performance
11. Speech or language impairment means a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a student's educational performance.
12. Traumatic brain injury means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force or by certain medical conditions such as stroke, encephalitis, aneurysm, anoxia or brain tumors with resulting impairments that adversely affect educational performance. The term includes open or closed head injuries or brain injuries from certain medical conditions resulting in mild, moderate or severe impairments in one or more areas, including cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem solving, sensory, perceptual and motor abilities, psychosocial behavior, physical functions, information processing, and speech. The term does not include injuries that are congenital or caused by birth trauma.
13. Visual impairment including blindness means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a student's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

CSE CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

1. TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

When specified in a student's Individualized Education Program, transitional support services are provided to a teacher on a temporary basis to aid in the provision of an appropriate educational program to the student with a disability who is transferring to a general education program or to a less restrictive program or service. These services do not continue beyond one year. These services may be provided by the building psychologist, a special education teacher, a speech/language therapist, physical therapist, occupational therapist or other appropriate professional who understands the specific needs of the student with a disability.

2. CONSULTANT TEACHER SERVICES

Consultant teacher services will be for the purpose of providing direct and/or indirect services to

students with disabilities enrolled full-time in general education classes including career and technical education. Such services shall be recommended by the Committee on Special Education to meet specific needs of such students and shall be included in the student's individualized educational program (IEP). Consultant teacher services shall be provided in accordance with the following provisions:

- Each student with a disability requiring consultant teacher services shall receive direct and/or indirect services consistent with the student's IEP for a minimum of two hours each week.
- The total number of students with disabilities assigned to a consultant teacher shall not exceed 20.

3. RELATED SERVICES:

Related services means developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a student with a disability and includes speech and language pathology, audiology, psychological services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, medical services as defined by regulations, parent counseling and training, school health services, school social work, assistive technology services, other appropriate developmental or corrective support services, appropriate access to recreation and other appropriate support services.

The frequency, duration and location of each service shall be in the IEP, based on the individual student's need for the service.

- Speech/language services will be provided based on the recommendation of the Committee on Special Education. The teacher's caseload will not exceed 65.
- When a related service is provided to a number of students at the same time, the number of students in the group will be recommended by the Committee on Special Education.

4. RESOURCE ROOM PROGRAM

The resource room program is for the purpose of supplementing the general or special classroom instruction of students with disabilities who are in need of such supplemental programs. Resource room services shall be provided in accordance with the following provisions.

- The instructional group in each resource room period does not exceed five students. Each resource room period is instructed by a special education teacher.
- Students shall spend a minimum of 3 hours per week and not more than 50 percent of the day in the resource room program.
- The total number of students assigned to a resource room teacher will not exceed 20 at the elementary level and 25 at the middle and high school levels.
- Resource room services may be provided either in a pull-out or push-in program or a combination of both.

5. INTEGRATED CO-TEACHING

Students in integrated co-teaching classes are fully included into the general education environment but are in need of a more intense level of support than can be provided in resource room. Integrated co-teaching classes contain a general and special education teacher full time.

6. SPECIAL CLASS

A special class is defined as a class consisting of students with the same disabilities or with differing disabilities who have been grouped together because of similar individual needs for the purpose of being provided a special education program. The chronological age range of students who are less than 16 years of age will not exceed 36 months. A student with a disability shall be placed in a special class

to the extent indicated in his/her IEP.

7. ADAPTIVE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students who require 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.

8. TRAVEL TRAINING

Students requiring instruction, as appropriate, to students with significant cognitive disabilities, and any other students with disabilities who require this instruction, to enable them to develop an awareness of the environment in which they live; and learn the skills to move effectively and safely from place to place within that environment.

9. OUT-OF-DISTRICT PLACEMENT

Students with disabilities whose needs are too intensive to be addressed appropriately in an in-district special education program, may be placed in one of the following, listed from least restrictive to more restrictive:

- special class operated by another school district
- a BOCES program
- an approved Private School (day)
- 4201 or State Operated school
- an approved Residential Placement

10. HOME AND HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION

Students with disabilities who are recommended for home and/or hospital instruction by the CSE shall receive instruction as follows:

- Instruction for elementary school students (K-6) will be provided a minimum of 10 hours per week;
- Secondary school students (7-12) will receive a minimum of 15 hours of instruction per week, preferably 3 hours daily.
- Students who are awaiting placement may be assigned, on an interim basis and with their parent's consent, to alternate-site instruction. This instruction is identical to home teaching except that the actual instruction takes place outside the home.

11. DECLASSIFICATION SUPPORT SERVICES

Students exiting special education may be considered for declassification services. Declassification support services are defined in the Part 100 Regulations. Testing modifications may be continued as recommended by the CSE.

If a student has been receiving special education services but the Committee on Special Education determines that the student no longer requires such services and can be placed in a general education program on a full-time basis, the recommendation shall:

- identify the declassification support services if any
- indicate the projected date of initiation,
- frequency and duration of such services, not to be continued for more than one year

Current Special Class CSE Programs (2025)

Grade	12:1:1	15:1 Reading	15:1 Math	15:1 English	15:1 Soc. St.	15: Inst. Skills	15:1 Trans. Skills	APE
K	X	X						X
1	X	X						X
2	X	X						X
3	X	X						X
4	X	X						X
5	X	X						X
6	X	X	X	X		X		X
7	X	X	X	X		X		X
8	X	X	X	X		X		X
9	X		X	X	X	X		X
10	X		X	X	X	X		X
11	X		X	X	X		X	X
12	X		X	X	X		X	X
U	X							X

Current Integrated Co-Teaching CSE Programs (2025)

Grade	ICT – Half-Day	ICT -Full Day	ICT -Math	ICT - English	ICT – Soc. St.	ICT – SCI
K	X					
1		X				
2		X				
3		X				
4		X				
5		X				
6			X	X	X	X
7			X	X	X	X
8			X	X	X	X
9			X	X	X	X
10			X	X	X	X
11			X	X	X	X
12			X	X		X

Students With Disabilities – Classification (September 2025)

The following tables identify the number of students with disabilities to be served by type of disability.

Disability Classification	Number of Students
Preschool Student with a Disability	42
Autism	59
Deafness	2
Emotional Disability	9
Hearing Impairment	2
Intellectual Disability	4
Learning Disability	116
Orthopedic Impairment	0
Multiple Disabilities	5
Other Health Impairment	86
Speech or Language Impairment	43
Traumatic Brain Injury	1

Special Education Program Evaluation

The Highland Central School District aims to provide special education supports to provide the necessary academic, social-emotional, physical, and management needs of all students with disabilities. The Pupil Personnel Services Department reviews progress of every student annually to determine the appropriate level of supports necessary for continuous growth and achievement. The tools to evaluate the level of achievement of the special education services are below:

- Graduation rate for Students with Disabilities (for graded SWDs)
- Attainment of Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (for ungraded SWDs)
- Annual achievement of Individualized Education Plan goals
- STAR Assessment (ELA and Math)
- New York State English Language Arts Assessment (Grades 3-8)
- New York State Mathematics Assessment (Grades 3-8)

Estimated Budget – Special Education (September 2025)

Budget Code	Description	Current Appropriation
2250-150-01-0000	Special Ed Teaching Salary 9-12	$716,868
2250-150-02-0000	Special Ed Teaching Salary 6-8	$577,125
2250-150-05-0000	Special Ed Teaching Salary K-5	$1,257,923
2250-150-06-0000	Special Ed Director	$165,125
2250-150-06-2101	Student Services Tutoring	$12,100
2250-150-06-2132	Special Ed Speech Salary	$247,122
2250-150-06-2133	Special Ed OT/PT Salary	$288,606
2250-151-01-2101	Special Ed Teaching Assistants 9-12	$127,780
2250-151-02-2101	Special Ed Teaching Assistants 6-8	$173,549
2250-151-05-2101	Special Ed Teaching Assistants K-5	$102,671
2250-160-01-0000	Special Ed Aides 9-12	$24,786
2250-160-02-0000	Special Ed Aides 6-8	$0
2250-160-05-0000	Special Ed Aides K-5	$22,417
2250-160-06-0000	Special Ed Non-Instructional Salary	$44,410
2250-413-06-0000	Association Dues	$2,000
2250-418-06-0000	Travel/Conference	$3,913
2250-449-06-0000	Contractual	$42,165.96
2250-471-06-0000	Tuition Public NYS	$0
2250-472-06-0000	Tuition Other	$1,305,292.44
2250-480-01-0000	Textbook HS	$0
2250-490-03-0000	BOCES Services	$2,737,146
2250-501-01-0000	Supplies HS	$943.21
2250-501-02-0000	Supplies MS	$3,034.91
2250-501-06-0000	General Supplies	$4,295.66
2250-512-06-0000	Testing Materials	$4,694.54
	Total	$7,863,967.72