

Special Education Board Report

Date: 10/09/2026

To: Nome City Public Schools Board of Directors

From: Tricia Shambach, Coordinator of Special Education

1. Executive Summary

The Special Education Department continues to focus on improving academic and functional life skills and outcomes for all students. The department believes in providing quality opportunities for learning and growth while maintaining compliance with state and federal guidelines.

2. Snapshot

Total Active IEP's: 143

Active referrals/evaluations: 11

****We have successfully completed the transfer of Special Education documents from Powerschool Special Programs to Embrace and continue to train staff using the new system****

3. Student Demographics

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	11
Early Childhood Developmental Delay (ECDD)	14
Emotional Disturbance (ED)	12
Cognitive Impairment (CI)	2
Multiple Disabilities (MD)	2
Orthopedic Impairment (OI)	1
Other Health Impairment (OHI)	5
Speech or Language Delay (SL)	22
Specific Learning Disability (SLD)	74

4. Discipline

Manifestation Determinations: 0

Suspensions: 9

Expulsions: 0

Physical Restraints: 12 NES

****Proper documentation was completed and parents notified within a timely manner****

5. Staffing Updates

High School: 2 Teachers, 1 paraprofessional

Middle School: 2 Teachers, 1 paraprofessional

ACSA: 1 half time Teacher, 1 paraprofessional

NES: 5 Teachers, 1 Long Term Sub, 3 paraprofessionals

Welcome Hailey Ulroan as a new paraprofessional at NBMS!

Vacancies: 2 paraprofessionals-NES, 1 Teacher currently filled by our long term substitute

6. Parent and Community Engagement

Family Chill and Skill Nights-NES 6:00-7:00 pm

9/23 The Function of Behavior-3 parents and 6 staff attended. Flyers were distributed to Head Start, Nome Preschool, Nome Elementary, and posted in the NES newsletter. Light refreshments were provided.

The small group of people allowed for the activity scheduled and a Q&A between the parents and staff. The conversations involved concerns about past Sped practices, policies and procedures surrounding suspensions and physical restraints, and the special education referral process. Staff was also able to get some feedback from the parents about how to engage more parents in the school community. Suggestions were: provide childcare, a full meal, inviting other agencies to join. One suggestion was to use a neutral space such as the REC-which could be less intimidating for parents and centrally located to provide easier access for families.

Future Chill and Skill nights are TBD at a later date.

7. Professional Development

Embrace-the new IEP writing system has been a challenge as the team continues to develop new skills in relation to the program and continues to train
IEP writing and presentation-staff continue to receive training and feedback on the federal and state guidelines for IEP writing and the importance of the IEP presentation at the meeting

Special Education Service Agency(SESAs)- SESA personnel have started their on-site visits to observe students on their caseloads and to provide recommendation reports for the staff and training.

Magdalene Henry-Education Specialist, zoom call 9/23 with the coordinator to discuss transition plans in Alaska and SESA services

Jennifer Schroeder-Multiple Disabilities Specialist was on site from 10/5-10/9

Christy Eli Pierce-Emotional Disturbance Specialist arriving 10/14-10/16

Special Education Directors Training-Ms. Shambach will be attending the conference the week of 10/26-10/30 in Anchorage

8. Related Service Personnel

On site visits completed:

1. Jessica Hunnemeder 9/7-9/11
2. Katherine Walters, Occupational Therapist 8/24-8/28
3. Bradee Axmaker, Physical Therapist 8/24-8/25
4. Eleanor Vertel, Autism Consultant 9/21-9/25
5. Erin Page, Speech Pathologist 8/18-8/28 and 9/28-10/09

9. Challenges

****We currently have no driver for our special transportation van. The district has issued Prior Written Notices and Mileage reimbursement to all parents whose students receive this service as per their IEP. Currently the shortage is affecting 7 students and went into effect on 10/5/26.**

There was no van driver at the beginning of the school year so myself and my secretary, Rebecca Miller were driving the van until we could find a temporary driver, Mr. Holmes. Mr. Holmes was only able to drive the month of September and despite the district's efforts to secure a driver internally, we were unable to and the position is now posted to the public. The district has also contacted the local bussing company to inquire of any substitute drivers or extra drivers they may have that we could contract with.

**Our special education long term substitute at NES will only be working until December 18th, leaving a vacancy for a specialized classroom. The district has interviewed for this position and has made job offers. Due to the housing crisis currently in Nome, the district has been unable to fill this position.

**Transition planning and Infant Learning Program-the district is seeking guidance on creating and implementing transition plans for students receiving special education services. This includes students moving from the infant learning program to NPS services and also students over 14 as per IDEA to transition out of high school. These topics will be discussed at the Special Education Directors training in Anchorage.