

DENTON ISD

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Annual Board Presentation — Handout

Driven by Purpose • Designed for Excellence • 2025–26 Data • 2026–27 Enrollment

Texas Education Code 29.0012 requires the Board to include, during a public meeting at least once a year, a discussion of the performance of students receiving special education services. Required reporting areas: student performance; college, career, and military readiness; stakeholder engagement; compliance; and personnel. This handout carries the detail behind the presentation.

Guiding Pillars

Student-Centered Excellence • Collaborative Culture • Growth & Innovation • Compliance with Integrity

I. WHO WE SERVE

District Enrollment Overview (2026–27)

| Program           | Students | % of District | Definition                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------|----------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Special Education | 6,288    | 19.30%        | Students with a qualifying disability who need specially designed instruction under IDEA, provided through an Individualized Education Program (IEP).    |
| Section 504       | 2,768    | 8.5%          | Students with a disability who need accommodations to access general education under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, provided through a 504 plan. |
| MTSS              | 2,037    | 6.25%         | Multi-Tiered System of Supports: a framework of tiered academic and behavioral supports that identifies and responds to student needs early.             |

Enrollment Trends

| Program           | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Special Education | 4,488   | 4,758   | 5,436   | 5,789   | 6,288   |
| Section 504       | 3,362   | 3,501   | 3,173   | 2,866   | 2,768   |
| MTSS              | 3,935   | 4,984   | 3,311   | 1,203   | 2,037   |

Special education enrollment has increased every year, up 40% since 2022–23. Growing service needs require scalable systems, strong campus capacity, and strategic staffing.

Special Education Student Profile

Disability categories: Learning Disability 39.4%, Autism 18.0%, Speech Impairment 13.4%, Other Health Impairment 11.5%, Emotional Disturbance 8.1%, all other 9.6%

Instructional settings: Resource Room 45.4%, Mainstream 23.3%, Self-Contained 16.4%, Speech Therapy 12.9%, all other 2.0%

Specialized program participation: 17.86% (AFS/AVLS, FLS, PABS, COMM, ECSE, Stepping Up, RISE 18+ Programming)

Regional Day School Program for the Deaf (RDSPD): Cluster Site 57 students, Itinerant 114, Parent Advisor (Infant/Toddlers) 12 — 3.3% of the special education population

## II. STUDENT OUTCOMES

### STAAR Performance — Final 2025–26 Results

| Grades 3–8     | 24–25 | 25–26 Final | Change   |
|----------------|-------|-------------|----------|
| Reading        | 44.9% | 47.4%       | +2.5 pts |
| Math           | 36.0% | 38.2%       | +2.2 pts |
| Science        | 32.2% | 38.8%       | +6.6 pts |
| Social Studies | 23.0% | 27.4%       | +4.4 pts |

| End of Course | 24–25 | 25–26 Final | Change   |
|---------------|-------|-------------|----------|
| English I/II  | 29.9% | 38.2%       | +8.3 pts |
| Algebra I     | 42.7% | 51.9%       | +9.2 pts |
| Biology       | 75.0% | 78.8%       | +3.8 pts |
| U.S. History  | 74.6% | 70.7%       | –3.9 pts |

Growth across nearly every tested area; U.S. History EOC is the one area that declined and remains a monitoring priority. Reading and math remain below state expectation.

### Graduation

88.2% SPED graduation rate, 2025–26 (91.0% in 2024–25; still meets the state standard)

| 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 | 2025–26 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 87.0%   | 87.5%   | 90.9%   | 91.0%   | 88.2%   |

### Post-Secondary Readiness (CCMR) — 2025–26 SPED Graduates

| Measure                                      | Students | % of 267 |
|----------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Total SPED graduates                         | 267      | —        |
| Earned a CCMR point by any method            | 219      | 82.0%    |
| CTE completers                               | 94       | 35.2%    |
| Earned an Industry-Based Certification (IBC) | 117      | 43.8%    |
| Career Readiness (completer + aligned IBC)   | 59       | 22.1%    |

IEP Continuers: 16 students.

### RDA Performance and the SPED Performance Diagnostic

Beginning in 2026–27, the TEA SPED Performance Diagnostic replaces the ASCEND self-assessment (one of four levers in January 2027, building to seven levers by 2027–28). RDA continues to drive federally required performance determinations.

**Most recent determination: SPP Compliance Indicators – Performance Level 2; Valid, Reliable and Timely Data, Status of Uncorrected Noncompliance, and Financial Audits – Performance Level 0. 2026 levels are released by TEA on 11/04/2026.**

## III. COMPLIANCE

### Compliance Update

**SPP 11A: 97.7% | SPP 11B: 98.45% | SPP 12: 87.67% | SPP 13: 100%**

100% of noncompliant student findings have been clarified and resolved. Core strategies: proactive monitoring, root-cause analysis, technical assistance, standardized procedures, and accountability.

## Cyclical Monitoring

TEA cyclical monitoring occurs on a six-year cycle. This is the district's second cycle (Spring 2027); the previous cycle was Fall 2020. The review includes a desk review of required compliance areas, including student folder review, along with stakeholder surveys.

## IV. PEOPLE AND CAPACITY

### Personnel Update

**888 Instructional Staff: 362 SPED Teachers, 79 Dyslexia Therapists, 447 Paraprofessionals/Student Support  
157 Evaluation & ARD Staff: 63 SLPs/SLP-As, 49 Diagnosticians, 23 School Psychologists, 22 ARD Facilitators  
41 Specialized Support Staff: 11 OT/PT/MT, 11 SPED Counselors, 10 Deaf Education, 4 APE, 5 VI/O&M**

### Leadership Team

Dr. Stacie Bonner, Executive Director · Dr. Pam Trocki-Ables, Director · Christie Mullenix, Director of Thrive · Kerrie Martin, RDSPD Supervisor · Michelle Brown, MTSS/Section 504 Coordinator · Jaclyn George, Compliance Coordinator · Zone Coordinators: Britnee Dangerfield (BHS), Emma Weatherford (DHS), Lynn Dluski (GHS), Dr. Laurel Geist (RHS)

## V. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

| Event                   | Date                        |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Parent Advisory Council | October 15, 2026 (held)     |
| Parent Advisory Council | December 3, 2026            |
| Parent Advisory Council | February 11, 2027           |
| Parent Advisory Council | April 29, 2027              |
| Transition Fair         | Spring 2027                 |
| SPED Graduation         | May 15, 2027                |
| Dyslexia Parent Night   | Date to be announced        |
| RDSPD Family Events     | Ongoing throughout the year |
| Special Olympics        | Ongoing throughout the year |

### Parent Advisory Council Update

The Council brings parents, community stakeholders, and district special education leadership together to strengthen communication, support continuous improvement, and enhance educational experiences for students receiving special education services. Its work focuses on systems and shared experiences, not individual student, personnel, or ARD concerns.

### Highlights from the First Meeting (October 15, 2026)

Fourteen members attended, including district special education leadership. Members accepted four norms: have honest conversations, listen to differing perspectives, create a space where everyone can contribute, and stay focused on improving systems for students and families.

- Helping families navigate special education: families asked for parent-friendly information on how to get started, whom to contact, and what to expect, including plain-language definitions and the difference between Section 504 and special education. Suggestions included a decision tree, a contact matrix, and district-level FAQs.
- Meaningful family engagement: proactive communication, transparency about student progress, and general and special education teachers working together. Partnership was described as a two-way street. All parents spoke highly of their teachers.

- Parent learning: future topics include reading an IEP, the ARD process, procedural safeguards, the continuum of services, and the 5th-to-6th and 8th-to-9th grade transitions, with information shared before ARD meetings.
- Website and resources: essential information should be easy to find without knowing special education terminology. Feedback on the parent program overviews will be gathered by email before they are finalized.

**Year One Goals**

1. Develop a Denton ISD Special Education Parent Handbook.
2. Develop Family Engagement Mission, Belief, and Core Value Statements informed by parent perspectives.
3. Strengthen parent-facing program information, including finalizing program overviews.
4. Improve the usefulness and accessibility of Special Education website content.
5. Develop and finalize disability guides for families.
6. Develop a spring parent training schedule responsive to the needs identified by the Council.

**Remaining Meetings and Invitation**

Remaining meetings: December 3, 2026 · February 11, 2027 · April 29, 2027. All meetings are 4:30–6:30 p.m. at 1303 N. Elm Street, Room 3000.

**Invitation:** Trustees are warmly invited to attend any of the upcoming Parent Advisory Council meetings to hear directly from families.

**VI. STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

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**Continuous Improvement Plan**

1) Improve Student Outcomes — increase reading and mathematics performance. 2) Strengthen Instructional Capacity — consistent SDI and evidence-based practice. 3) Strengthen Compliance and System Reliability — improve and sustain evaluation timeline compliance.

**Departmental Priorities**

Improving Educational Outcomes · Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement · Compliance with Integrity

**Looking Ahead**

Improve educational outcomes · Strengthen instructional capacity · Build meaningful family partnerships · Sustain compliant and reliable systems.