

Special Education in WSD

Woodbridge Board of Education

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Jonathan S. Budd, Ph.D., Superintendent

Cheryl Kiesel, Director of Special Services

Tonight's Presentation Goals

- To provide Board of Education members a common understanding of key elements of special education law
- To highlight specific areas of WSD special education programming
- To answer questions from BOE members related to special education in WSD

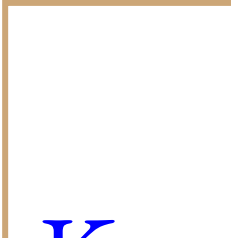


WSD Special Education October Enrollment


	Total BRS Students	# BRS Students with IEPs	# BRS Students with IEPs as % of Total
2017-18	742	88	11.8%
2018-19	843	87	10.3%
2019-20	838	88	10.5%
2020-21	816	93	11.4%
2021-22	847	104	12.3%

WSD Special Education October Enrollment

	Total BRS Students	# BRS Students with IEPs	# BRS Students with IEPs as % of Total
2021-22	847	104	12.3%
Predicted 2022-23	847	109	12.8%



Key Elements of Special Education Law



Positive Outcomes of Special Education

- Meeting the diverse needs of students who need individualized programming above and beyond the general education program
- Students learn how to speak
- Students learn how to read
- Students learn how to interact and socialize with peers
- Students learn how to count, how to gain a number sense, how to multiply and divide
- Students learn how to write, how to zip a zipper, how to tie their shoes, how to feed themselves
- Students learn how to walk, how to skip, how to hop, how to run

Differentiated Instruction

- “Differentiation means tailoring instruction to meet individual needs. Whether teachers differentiate **content, process, products, or the learning environment**, the use of ongoing assessment and flexible grouping makes this a successful approach to instruction.” (Carol Ann Tomlinson)

The Law

- 1975: Education of All Handicapped Children Act
- Has been reauthorized every five years
- Provides for a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for all students with disabilities

Referral Process

- SRBI team referral (early intervention process)
- Parent referral
- 504 team referral
- Birth to Three referral
- New student with current IEP from another district

Planning and Placement Team (PPT)

- Referral
- PPT convened with required team members
- Evaluation process
- Eligibility determination
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Timelines
- Annual Reviews and Triennial Evaluations
- Completely individualized

Disability Categories for Special Ed. Eligibility

● Autism	● Multiple disabilities
● Deaf-blindness	● Orthopedic impairment
● Deafness	● Other health impairment
● Developmental delay (3-5 year olds)	● Physical impairment
● Dyslexia *	● Specific learning disability
● Emotional disturbance	● Speech or language impairment
● Hearing impairment	● Traumatic brain injury
● Intellectual disability	● Visual impairment including blindness

Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

- Written document identifying special education services required to meet the student's individual needs
- Legally binding document
- Must be reviewed annually
- Must re-evaluate every three years to determine continued eligibility

Related Services:

Speech and Language Instruction

- Can be a related service or a special education service
- Addresses areas such as articulation, language development for receptive and expressive language, phonological awareness, and pragmatic language

Related Services:

Occupational Therapy (OT)

- Addresses areas such as fine motor and visual perceptual skills
- To qualify for OT, data is used to determine how a student's performance is impacted on a daily basis, including whether the student can access special education services

Related Services:

Physical Therapy (PT)


- Addresses gross motor skills
- To qualify for PT, data is used to determine a student's safety, accessibility, and mobility within the school environment

Least Restrictive Environment


- “To the maximum extent appropriate children with disabilities . . . are educated with children who are not disabled.”
- “Removal of children with disabilities from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in the regular class with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.”

Out-of-District Servicing

- When a student moves into district with an out-of-district placement on the IEP
- When WSD has exhausted all options to meet a student's needs in district
- When an out-of-district placement is the least restrictive environment for the student



Specific Elements of WSD Special Education Programming



WSD Special Education Team

- Director of Special Services
- Administrative Assistant
- Special education teachers
- Speech and language pathologists
- Occupational therapist
- Physical therapist
- Teachers' Assistants
- School psychologists
- School social worker
- BCBA (Board-Certified Behavior Analyst)
- Librarians & technology specialist teachers (for gifted & talented servicing)

Preschool Program

- Mandated program for students eligible for special education services
- Serves students of ages 3 & 4
- Typical peers' families pay tuition

Specialized Programs

- All allow students to have access to peers in the home school for the portion of the day they are able to access
 - Primary Skills Classroom
 - Intermediate Skills Classroom
 - Primary SEL Classroom
 - Intermediate SEL Classroom

Gifted Programming

- CT Statute 10-76d-1: “Each board of education shall be required to provide referral, identification, and evaluation services only for gifted and talented children enrolled in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, in a public school under the jurisdiction of such board of education.”
- Referrals may come from any source, including a teacher, administrator, parent/guardian, or child

TAG (Talented & Gifted) Programming at BRS

- Supported by librarians & technology specialist teachers
- Grade-level cohorts
- Focus on divergent thinking, problem solving, & collaboration
- Servicing once per six-day cycle



In Conclusion



Impact of the Pandemic on Special Education

- Increased referrals
- Increased number of students exhibiting challenges with behavior
- Increased number of families relocating with children with existing IEPs
- More flexible staffing needed

Celebrating Each & Every Student's Successes

- With parent permission, a video of personal celebration



Questions?

