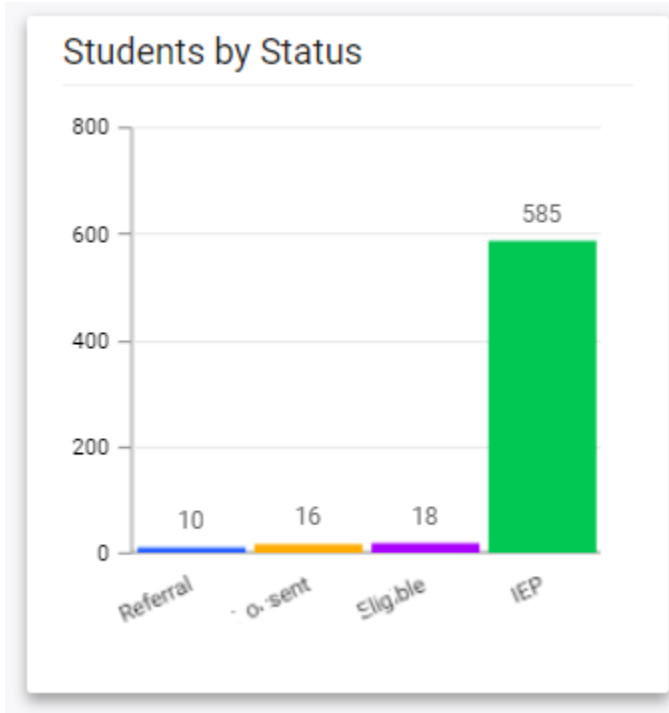


May 2024 Special Education Board Report

The Special Education Department has been busy wrapping up paperwork and referrals as we come to the end of the school year. Our current special education numbers are represented in this diagram below:



585 being served on IEPs
18 that are eligible for services and the staff have 30 days to implement an IEP
16 students that have consent for assessment signed and are in the process of evaluation
10 that have been referred for an evaluation, but the team as not yet moved forward with a signed consent.

The consortium currently has **603** students eligible for special education services of which 585 are on current IEPs. If all the students are found eligible in referral and consent our total number of special education students across the consortium would total **629** students on IEPs. This places us at **14%** of our total population across the consortium eligible for special education services. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the national percentage of students in public education eligible for special education is 15%.

PD and Paperwork Stipends:

As we look at staffing for the 2024-2025 we will need to continue to try to be competitive with our compensation. Our special education staff are the staff that need the most training and support as they hold us legally responsible for the actions and paperwork. I am proposing that we provide \$2500 for each certified teacher staff member for a total of \$60,000 out of our IDEA School Aged Budget for additional training days and for paperwork responsibilities. I would propose to add 3 additional Fridays to the certified teachers' calendars for PD in September, October, and November to front load teachers with more training than traditionally provided to be successful. Due to our turnover these months were determined to be more beneficial than later in the year training where staff feel overwhelmed with referrals and ISAT/IRI testing.

Staffing:

Based on our current resignations/retirements we are seeking 5 additional certified special education teachers for the 24-25 school year and 10 classified staff. The 10 classified staff is elevated due to the potential of moving 3 classified staff members with bachelor's degrees into open teaching positions, which would have been in addition to the 4 we still need to replace. I have two potential teacher candidates to reduce the number of teaching positions to 3.

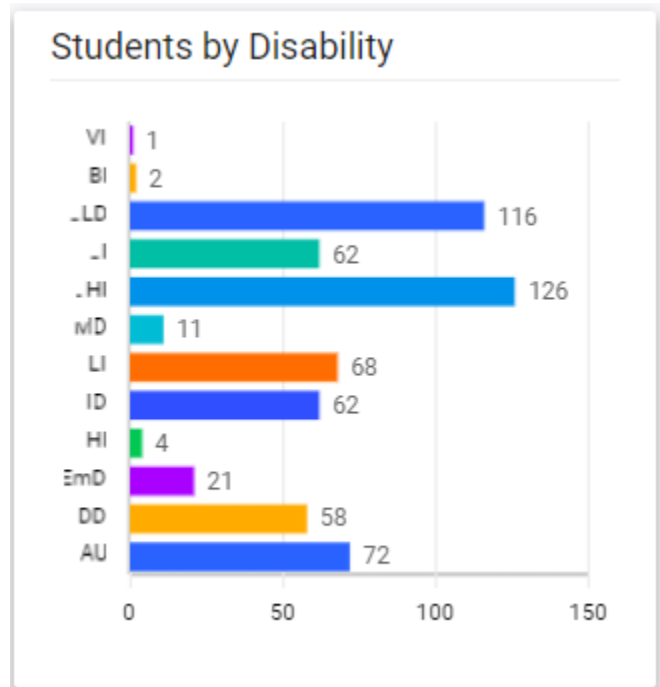
In doing informal exit interviews with teachers and classified staff the two biggest reasons for leaving COSSA has been higher pay elsewhere, better insurance provided elsewhere. With the Nampa School District moving to a 4 day a week schedule, we have even more competition for qualified special education teachers and staff than ever before.

Where did our teachers go?

- 1 to Middleton School District for higher pay and better insurance
- 1 to ISucceed for higher pay and better insurance
- 1 to Caldwell for higher pay and better insurance
- 1 to Parma leaving special education
- 3 Resignation no longer going to be teaching
- 1 Going back to BI/Paraprofessional work
- 1 Retire

Changes to the SLD Eligibility Criteria

The two highest categories of which students qualify for service within the consortium are Other Health Impaired and Specific Learning Disability. The criteria for SLD will be changing effective July 1, 2024. With this change it will be critical to bring building administrators on board with the criteria and data required to find students eligible. One of the most critical pieces of data required will be evidence that the core curriculum is effective for most students. that 50% +1 of all students are proficient in the area of concern. Example would be 50% +1 of students are proficient in reading fluency on the IRI if a student is being referred for services for reading fluency. Included is the proposed new criteria for SLD for review. We will need to consider monthly administrator meetings with COSSA special education leadership to support understanding of this new criteria as they lead their MTSS/RTI processes in their building and they look to determine if a student should be referred for an evaluation for services.



Included below are some slides from the Director's Webinar highlighting changes and requirements for the new SLD Criteria, which the flowchart below provided by the SDE describes.

#1- Exclusionary Factors

The student's lack of achievement is not primarily the result of:	Evidence Required
A visual, hearing, or motor impairment	No Change
Intellectual disability	Evidence that the student does not have an intellectual disability
Emotional behavioral disorder	No Change
Environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage	No Change
Limited English Proficiency	No Change
A lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading; and/or	Evidence that the following are not the primary factors in the student's learning difficulties in reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance • General Education Instruction • Qualified Personnel
A lack of appropriate instruction in math	Same as above for reading

Directors' Webinar 4/17/24

Instruction and Intervention Prior To, or As Part of, the SLD Referral

All students being evaluated under SLD must participate in grade-level instruction and evidence-based intervention in general education in a tiered system of support prior to or as part of the referral process.

Provide documentation of either failure to respond to scientific, evidence-based intervention (RtI) or the presence of a pattern of processing strengths and weaknesses that impact learning.

Directors' Webinar 4/17/24

#4-Parent Notification of General Education Instruction and Intervention



Documentation that prior to or as part of the intervention and referral process, parents were notified about:

- The state's policies regarding the amount and nature of student performance data collected and the general education services provided;
- Strategies for increasing the student's rate of learning; and
- The parent's right to request an evaluation.

Evidence Required

This requirement may be met by providing notification to parents using the document provided by the Idaho Department of Education or through an LEA-created document that addresses the above-listed requirements.

- ❖ The Department will have a sample form ready by the Fall.

#5- Effectiveness of Core Curriculum



Provide documentation that instruction in the core curriculum is effective for most students.

Evidence Required:

- Using current data that helps establish that the grade-level standards-aligned core curriculum is effective for most **(50% plus 1)** students based on:
 - Growth and/or
 - Proficiency
- If the referred student belongs to a population of students whose performance is regularly disaggregated, data for the disaggregated group shall also be reviewed.

2024 Proposed Specific Learning Disability Revised Criteria

The following criteria must be met for a student to be found eligible as a student with a Specific Learning Disability as of July 3, 2024

Exclusionary Factors

The student's lack of achievement is not primarily the result of: A visual, hearing, or motor impairment; Intellectual Disability; Emotional behavioral disorder; Environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage; Limited English Proficiency; A lack of appropriate instruction in reading; and/or A lack of appropriate instruction in math.

AND

Evidence of Low Achievement

The student demonstrates low achievement in the area(s) of suspected disability as evidenced by a norm-referenced, standardized achievement assessment.

AND

Observation

An observation has been conducted in the student's learning environment to document academic performance and behavior in the area(s) of concern.

AND

Response to Intervention

The student does not make sufficient progress in response to effective, evidence-based instruction and intervention in the area(s) of concern.

OR

Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses

The student demonstrates a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in psychological processing skills that impact learning.

Teams may choose to report on both

AND

Adverse Effect

The disability adversely impacts the student's educational performance.

AND

Need for Specially Designed Instruction

The student requires specially designed instruction.