



Department of Special Services Annual BOE Update

Dr. Melody Alegria- Director of Special Services
Ms. Donna Ross- Supervisor of Special Services
August 26, 2024



2023-2024 In Review

- Special Education Handbook
- Improved Family Engagement- offering virtual family workshops on the following topics in conjunction with SEPAG (Special Education Parent Advisory Group):
 - Roles and Responsibilities of CST
 - Transitioning from PK-K and 5th-6th grades
- SPIRE training for all resource room teachers and focus group support
- Inclusion coaching and focus group
- STAR training for all PSD and Autism Teachers
- De-escalation and behavior management training for IAs and related arts teachers
- Partnership with Voorhees Rotary Breakfast Club - Art Exhibit
- Districtwide Autism Spirit Week

Annual Report

Each year, Districts receive a Local District Special Education Public Report Card. This annual report displays the performance of a school district's Special Education Department on each indicator.

Indicator 5: School-age LRE

Indicator	Local Results (%)	Desired Outcome	State Target (%)	Difference (%)	Outcome
Indicator 5a: School-age LRE \geq 80%	51.30	\geq	45.50	5.80	Met Target
Indicator 5b: School-age LRE $<$ 40%	11.90	\leq	14.50	-2.60	Met Target
Indicator 5c: School-age LRE Separate Programs/ Schools	3.72	\leq	6.50	-2.78	Met Target

Indicator 6: Preschool LRE

Indicator	Local Results (%)	Desired Outcome	State Target (%)	Difference (%)	Outcome
Indicator 6a: Preschool LRE Regular Program	50.00	\geq	47.50	2.50	Met Target
Indicator 6b: Preschool LRE Separate Setting	47.22	\leq	38.25	8.97	Target Not Met
Indicator 6c: Preschool LRE Home	0.00	\leq	0.18	-0.18	Met Target

Indicators 11 & 12: Compliance

Indicator	Local Results (%)	Desired Outcome	State Target (%)	Difference (%)	Outcome
Indicator 11: Child Find	95.35	=	100.00	-4.65	Target Not Met
Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition	92.30	=	100.00	-7.70	Target Not Met

Currently Receiving Services and Referrals

- Number of students receiving special education services: 411 (415)
- Pending special education referrals: 24 (19)
- Number of students receiving speech only services: 157 (151)
- Pending speech only referrals: 3 (1)

*The number in the parenthesis indicates 2022-2023 enrollment

Child Study Team Responsibilities

- Support Teachers, Administrators, and Instructional Associates
- Classroom observation of students on their caseload
- Writing reports, IEPs and holding/attending IEP meetings
- Provide School Based Counseling and Social Skills
- Related Services to provide school based therapy in their discipline
- Many other methods of support
- Testing in their specific discipline



Michael Kotch	E.T. Hamilton Elementary
Holly Rosica	Kresson Elementary
Kiera Williams (preschool)	Kresson Elementary
Lisa Brooks (Autism and LLD @ Osage)	Kresson, Osage, Signal Hill
Amy Behnke	Osage Elementary
Amanda Packen	Signal Hill Elementary
Melissa Williams (8th Grade)	Voorhees Middle School
Dawn Danley (7th Grade)	Voorhees Middle School
Jennifer Howard (6th grade and MD, LLD)	Voorhees Middle School

Department Next Steps and Continued Opportunities for Growth...

We consistently monitor student needs and trends throughout the district. Program needs are determined by this analysis as students move from grade to grade and school to school.

This includes (but not limited to):

- WIN Mental Health Grant
- Behavioral Support and Instructional Associate assignments, Adult Support Protocols and Onboarding
- Continued alignment of the curriculum with special education programs
- Training opportunities
- Program expansions and supports
- Foster opportunities for parent engagement
- Districtwide Compliance with NJ Special Education Timelines
- Professional development for teachers and other staff: Inclusion, Frontline, IEP writing, interventions, etc
- Districtwide education and acceptance initiatives for inclusive practices

Care Solace

While there is a decline in the total cases (approximately half of the cases opened from the initial year), there are still almost 60 cases opened last year within the district and over 4,000 incoming/outgoing communications from last year alone.

Care Solace provides support anywhere from substance abuse to mental health and they work with families who have and do not have insurance to get crucial appointments and interventions that families have previously struggled to access.

To date, Care Solace has scheduled 131 appointments for families, and provided 443.3 hours of time dedicated solely to supporting children and families within the Voorhees Community.

	Total Cases	Total Communications	Total Appointments	Total Anonymous Searches
7/1/2021-6/30/2022	112	7, 213	46	78
7/1/2022-6/30/2023	61	4, 383	47	97
7/1/2023-6/30/2024	59	4, 016	38	68

Wellness Interagency Network (WIN) Grant

School Clearances, In-School Support (including an on-site therapist for in-school counseling two days per week), and Professional Development on identifying and addressing mental health concerns

The district continues to utilize the services from the WIN grant at Osage and VMS, which provides onsite support by licensed mental health clinicians.

WIN Grant

Through the district's partnership with Twin Oaks, we have an assigned therapist to work with the district at the 2 schools with the highest number of crisis referrals. The therapist(s) will continue working at Osage (Fridays) and VMS (Thursdays) throughout this school year beginning on the 1st day of school. The therapist(s) have also worked throughout the summer supporting students as well.

The therapist(s) will continue working with students in a small group setting and individually to provide counseling and follow up care for students as needed, based on the established referral process and parental consent.

As a district, this grant also allows a streamlined process for any students who are in crisis to receive support without waiting in the emergency room- which is the current process in NJ for a child in crisis.

The therapist(s) and Twin Oaks will also be providing professional development for staff and workshops for parents.

Program Options and Expectations

In-Class Support:

- Both teachers listed on the roster
- Plan lessons collaboratively; shared in Atlas
- Small group instruction
- Accommodations and modifications to curriculum
- Teacher support: ICS focus group, Administrative check ins

Resource Room:

- Differentiate Instruction
- Curriculum supports:
Wonderworks (K-2)
SPIRE
- Teacher support: Lead Teacher
Wonderworks training,
Administrative check ins

Program Options and Expectations

LLD self-contained:

- Differentiate Instruction
- Curriculum supports:
 - Reading: Wonderworks, SPIRE, EDMARK, Visualizing and Verbalizing
 - Math: Touch Math, manipulatives
 - Writing: Wonderworks, Handwriting without Tears
- Teacher support: Lead Teacher, Administrative check-ins, BCBA consultations

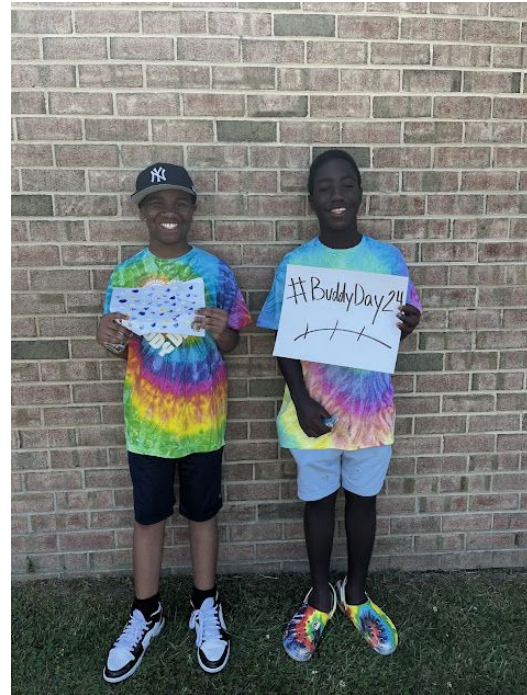
Autism self-contained:

- Individualized behavior, instructional, and functional routine plans
- Curriculum Supports: STAR curriculum, EDMARK, BOOM cards, TouchMath, Reading Milestones, Accessible Literacy Learning, Happy Numbers
- Teacher Supports: Administrative Check In, STAR Training, BCBA consultation, Pyramid Consultation, monthly collaborative meetings

Voorhees Breakfast Rotary Club Art Exhibit



Buddy Day 2024







Thank you!

