

MOUNT SINAI UFSD

DISTRICT PLAN

FOR

SPECIAL EDUCATION

2021-2023

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION ON: December 21, 2022

Mount Sinai UFSD District Plan for Special Education

The Mount Sinai School District has a long-standing commitment to excellence in education for all students and supports the provision of special education and related services for students with disabilities under the auspices of the Committee on Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education. The district provides a full continuum of services, as specified by law, to meet the unique educational needs of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. The continuum represents programs which are available within the district, by contract with neighboring districts, by BOCES or private educational agencies, and by State-supported or State-operated schools. The District Plan for Special Education includes, as required by law, the following:

- a description of the nature and scope of special education programs and services currently available to students and preschool students residing in the district, including but not limited to descriptions of the district's resource room programs and each special class program provided by the district in terms of group size and composition;
- identification of the number and age span of students and preschool students to be served by type of disability and recommended setting;
- the method(s) to be used to evaluate the extent to which the objectives of the programs have been achieved;
- a description of the policies and practices of the board of education to ensure the continual allocation of appropriate space within the district for special education programs that meet the needs of students and preschool students with disabilities;
- a description of the policies and practices of the board of education to ensure that appropriate space will be continually available to meet the needs of resident students and preschool students with disabilities who attend special education programs provided by boards of cooperative educational services;
- a description of how the district intends to ensure that all instructional materials to be used in the schools of the district will be made available in a useable alternative format, for each student with a disability at the same time as such instructional materials are available to nondisabled students;
- the estimated budget to support the plan;
- the date on which the plan was adopted by the Board of Education; and,

Furthermore, any change to the allocation of space for special education programs shall be made in consideration of the needs of participating students with disabilities for placement in the least restrictive environment and for the stability and continuity of their program placements.

Nature and Scope of School Age Special Education Programs and Services

A full continuum of services is available for students with disabilities throughout the district. The nature and scope of the special education programs and services are described below, ranging from the least restrictive to the most restrictive environment.

General Education with Declassification Support Services

Students who have been declassified fully participate in the general education program. Test accommodations, eligibility for the safety net, LOTE exemption, and direct or indirect related services may be provided to the student, consistent with the students' needs. In addition, transitional support services may be provided to the general education teacher(s) on a temporary basis to aid in the provision of an appropriate educational program or in a change to a less restrictive program. The services are provided by an appropriate professional who understands the specific needs of the student with a disability.

General Education with Supplementary Aids and Services

Students with disabilities fully participate in the general education program. Supplementary aids and services, such as test and program accommodations and/or assistive technology, are provided consistent with the students' disabilities and needs.

Consultant Services (Direct and Indirect)

Consultant teacher services are provided directly or indirectly to students with disabilities enrolled in general education classes to meet the specific needs of the students. Each student with a disability requiring consultant teacher services shall receive direct and/or indirect services consistent with the student's IEP for a minimum of two hours each week, except that the CSE may recommend that a student with a disability who also needs resource room services in addition to consultant teacher services may receive a combination of such services consistent with the student's IEP for not less than three hours each week. The total number of students with disabilities assigned to a consultant teacher shall not exceed 20.

Related Services

Related services mean developmental, corrective and other supportive services as are required to assist a student with a disability and include counseling, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, adaptive physical education, parent counseling and parent training, behavioral consultant services, school health services, individual and shared aides, sign language interpreters, visually impaired and hearing-impaired services. Services are designated on a student's individualized education program (IEP) to be provided for specified periods of times and frequencies, and can be provided individually or in small groups. The total caseload of speech and language teachers providing such services shall not exceed 65.

"Push-in" services are provided where possible, to avoid excessive loss of classroom time and to make these services more educationally relevant in the classroom setting. The extent of these services may range from daily sessions to less frequent contacts, depending on the individual needs of the student, as determined by the Committee on Special Education.

Resource Room Program

Resource room classes are available in each of the district's three schools. The resource room program is designed to supplement the general education program and to provide direct instruction for students with disabilities. The extent of resource room services is based upon individual needs, but at least three hours per week and not in excess of 50% of the school day, in accordance with regulations. Every attempt is made to avoid conflict with mainstream programs. Resource room is capped at twenty students for each teacher on the elementary level and twenty-five students on the secondary level. A student/teacher ratio of 5:1 is not exceeded.

Special Class 15:1

A student with a disability may be placed in a special class for instruction on a daily basis to the extent indicated in the student's IEP. Students in special classes are placed according to similarities in levels of achievement, social development, physical development and management needs, although classifications may vary. Classes are staffed by one special education teacher. Special classes are provided when students have not been able to progress in the curriculum in a less restrictive setting.

For the 2021-2022 school-year, there are three 15:1 special classes at the Mount Sinai Elementary and Middle School, grades 1-6.

Mainstreaming continues to be an important component of the special class program. It is designed to give students ample opportunities to socialize with their non-disabled peers and to participate in all aspects of the mainstream instructional program to the greatest extent possible. The majority students are mainstreamed for special area subjects, including physical education, art, music, lunch and recess.

Special Classes 15:1 (Secondary)

At the secondary level, departmentalized special classes are provided in specified subject areas (English, social studies, science and math) in grades 7-12. Classes are taught by special education teachers who parallel the mainstream academic curriculum while providing direct instruction consonant with students' individual needs and ability levels.

Students may be placed in one or more special classes but are placed in mainstream classes for other subjects, based on individual needs.

Cross-contracting with neighboring School Districts

When the nature and severity of a student's disability is such that education within the school district is not appropriate, Mount Sinai first looks to programs in neighboring school districts. Space in these programs is often limited.

BOCES Programs

When the nature and severity of a disability is such that education within the school district is appropriate and a placement is not available in a neighboring district, students are placed in various BOCES programs. BOCES district-based programs are considered first, to offer mainstreaming opportunities for the students into academic and non-academic activities with their non-disabled peers. BOCES also offers a variety of center-based comprehensive and

specific programs designed to provide an appropriate education to students who have intensive academic, physical, social, and/or management needs.

Home and Hospital Instruction

When the nature and severity of a disability is such that a student is hospitalized or homebound due to physical, emotional, social or management needs, students are sometimes recommended for homebound or hospital instruction. Placement is only recommended if it is the least restrictive environment. Home instruction is provided at a minimum of five hours per week at the elementary level and ten hours per week at the secondary level, in accordance with regulations. Related services may also be provided at home as per the IEP.

In-state and Out-of-state Private Schools and State Supported or Operated Schools

When the nature and severity of a disability, or a combination of disabilities, is such that appropriate public facilities for instruction are not available, students may be placed in private schools or state-supported or state-operated schools. Every effort is made to place students in public facilities and to enable students to benefit from instruction in the less restrictive settings. We currently have four students placed in private schools within the state. This may fluctuate throughout the year.

Twelve-month Special Service and/or Program

Students with disabilities shall be considered for 12-month special and/or programs in accordance with their special need to prevent substantial regression, if they are:

- students whose management needs are determined to be highly intensive and require a high degree of individualized attention and intervention who are placed in special classes; or
- students with severe multiple disabilities, whose programs consist primarily of habilitation and treatment and are placed in special classes; or
- students who are recommended for home or hospital instruction whose special education needs are determined to be highly intensive and require a high degree of individualized attention and intervention or who have severe multiple disabilities and require primarily habilitation and treatment; or
- students whose needs are so severe that they can be met only in a residential program; or
- students who are not described as meeting any of the above criteria but who, because of their disabilities, exhibit the need for a 12-month special service and/or program in a structured learning environment of up to 12 months duration in order to prevent substantial regression, as determined by the Committee on Special Education.

Students Parentally Placed in Private Schools

The Mount Sinai School District recognizes its responsibility to provide special education services to students with disabilities who are enrolled in nonpublic elementary or secondary schools by their parents. The public school district where the nonpublic school is located has responsibility for child find and individual evaluations, Committee on Special Education responsibilities (including the development of an Individualized Education Services Program or IESP), provision of special education services to NYS residents and out-of-state residents, consultation with nonpublic schools and parent representatives, due process responsibilities, data collection and reporting, and use of a proportionate share of federal IDEA funds. Currently, there are no nonpublic schools located within the Mount Sinai borders.

Nature and Scope of Preschool Special Education Programs and Services

The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) oversees special education services for preschool students (ages 3-5) with disabilities in the district. A full continuum of services is available to preschool students with disabilities to meet their unique educational needs in the least restrictive environment through local preschool programs and agencies. Every effort is made to place students in settings where age-appropriate peers without disabilities are typically found.

Related Services

Related services mean developmental, corrective and other supportive services as are required to assist a student with a disability and include counseling, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, behavioral consultation services, parent counseling and parent training, school health services, individual and shared aides, sign language interpreters, visually impaired and hearing-impaired services. Services are designated on a student's Individualized Education Program to be provided for specified periods of times and frequencies, and can be provided individually or in small groups, not to exceed five students. Related services shall be provided at a site determined by the CPSE, including but not limited to an approved or licensed pre-kindergarten or head start program, the work site of the provider, the student's home, a hospital, a state facility, or a child care location. If it is determined that documented medical or special needs of the preschool student indicate that the student should not be transported to another site the student shall be entitled to receive related services in the preschool student's home.

Special Education Itinerant Services

Special education itinerant services are services provided by a certified special education teacher of an approved program on an itinerant basis at a site determined by the CPSE but not limited to an approved or licensed pre-kindergarten or head start program, the work site of the provider, the student's home, a hospital, a state facility, or a child care location. Such services shall be for the purpose of providing direct specialized individual or group instruction and/or indirect services to preschool students with disabilities. Indirect services mean consultation provided by a certified special education teacher to assist the child's teacher in adjusting the learning environment and/or modifying their instructional methods to meet the individual needs of a

preschool student with a disability who attends an early childhood program. The level of service should not be less than two hours per week.

Related Services and SEIS

Related services shall be provided in addition to special education itinerant services, as deemed necessary by the CPSE.

Special Class

Special classes shall be provided on a half-day or full-day basis, with the chronological age of the students not exceeding 36 months. The maximum class size shall not exceed 12 preschool students with disabilities with at least one teacher and one or more supplementary school personnel assigned to each class. Special classes may be provided in integrated or non-integrated settings and shall be provided for not less than two- and one-half hours per day, two days per week. The least restrictive environment for special class services is as follows:

- Half-day Integrated Special Class
- Half-day Special Class
- Full-day Integrated Special Class
- Full-day Special Class

In-State Residential

In-state residential special education programs and services shall be provided to each preschool student with a disability for whom such services have been recommended for a minimum of five hours per day, five days per week.

Twelve-month Special Service and/or Program

Twelve-month special services and/or programs shall be provided to eligible preschool students with disabilities consistent with their individual needs, as specified in their individualized education programs. Preschool students with disabilities may be considered for such special services and/or programs in accordance with their need to prevent substantial regression, if they are:

- Preschool students whose management needs are determined to be highly intensive and require a high degree of individualized attention and intervention; or
- Preschool students with severe multiple disabilities, whose programs consist primarily of habilitation and treatment; or
- Preschool students whose special education needs are determined to be highly intensive and require a high degree of individualized attention and intervention or who have severe multiple disabilities and require primarily habilitation and treatment in the home; or
- Preschool students whose needs are so severe that they can be met on in a seven-day residential program; or
- Preschool students who are not described as meeting any of the above criteria but whose disabilities are severe enough to exhibit the need for a structured learning environment of 12-month duration in order to prevent substantial regression, as determined by the Committee Preschool Special Education.

Identification of the Number and Age Span of Students with Disabilities

Below, please find identification of the number and age span of preschool and school aged students to be served by type of disability and recommended setting (primary placement), as of October 6, 2021. This information was provided by data from IEP Direct. Please note that the numbers generally increase as the school year progresses.

Classification	# of students	Age Span	Recommended Setting
Autism	4	5-15	Related Services
	7	7-15	Special Class 15:1
	5	7-12	Consultant Teacher Direct
	6	11-17	Resource Room
	5	9-19	Cross Contract
	6	6-20	BOCES
	2	11-19	Private School
	2	15-21	Home Instruction
Deafness	0	N/A	N/A
Deaf-Blindness	0	N/A	N/A
Emotional Disturbance	1	17	Related Services
	2	10-12	Special Class 15:1
	1	13	Consultant Teacher Direct
	1	15	Resource Room
	4	14-17	BOCES
	1	16	Residential Program
Hearing Impairment	2	15-17	Related Services
Learning Disability	22	11-17	Special Class 15:1
	40	7-16	Consultant Teacher Direct
	50	7-17	Resource Room
	2	13-17	Cross Contract
Intellectual Disability	1	18	Cross Contract
Multiple Disabilities	2	7-14	Related Services
	3	11-16	Cross Contract
	2	13-18	BOCES
	1	19	Residential Program
	1	6	Home Instruction
Orthopedic Impairment	0	N/A	N/A

Classification	# of students	Age Span	Recommended Setting
Other Health Impairment	7	5-12	Related Services
	9	8-16	Special Class 15:1
	25	5-15	Consultant Teacher Direct
	24	11-18	Resource Room
	3	12-15	Cross Contract
	1	16	BOCES
	1	16	Home Instruction
Speech or Language Impairment	35	5-12	Related Services
	15	6-8	Special Class 15:1
	36	5-15	Consultant Teacher Direct
	18	6-13	Resource Room
	1	5	Cross Contract
Traumatic Brain Injury	0	N/A	N/A
Visual Impairment	0	N/A	N/A

DISTRICT TOTAL FOR SCHOOL AGE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: 370

DISTRICT TOTAL FOR PRESCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: 21

SECTION 504 ACCOMMODATION PLANS: 145

Methods Used to Evaluate the Objectives of the Special Education Program

The objective of the district's programs for students with disabilities is to provide each student with a disability with an individualized instruction plan designed to help each student compensate for his or her disability in order to more fully reach his or her own potential. The district will utilize a variety of direct and indirect methods to evaluate the extent to which the objectives of the district's programs and services for students with disabilities will be achieved.

Direct Evaluation

Each student is reviewed at least annually by the CSE or CPSE, at which time progress toward goals and progress in the curriculum are measured. For both preschool and school age students, individualized standardized tests may be administered in the areas for which they receive special education services. Functional performance in the classroom is also included in the annual review process. In addition, students receive a three-year reevaluation which includes a battery of individualized standardized tests in a variety of areas. Each student with a disability also receives a quarterly progress report which indicates progress toward IEP goals.

Students with disabilities also participate fully in all school-wide and state assessments in grades K-12, unless they participate in the New York State Alternate Assessments. Data from

Aimsweb, Grades 3-8 testing, Regents exams, and graduation status for students with disabilities is continually reviewed by the members of the Committee on Special Education, as well as by teachers and administrators.

Indirect Evaluation

A variety of indirect evaluations assist in the overall program evaluations for students with disabilities, including the plethora of state reports, such as the State Performance Plan for Special Education and State Report Cards.

Qualitative techniques such as teacher observations and conferences, classroom observations, walk-throughs, anecdotal reports, quarterly IEP progress reports and quarterly report cards are used in the process of evaluating the district's objectives.

The Mount Sinai School District also disaggregates and analyzes all data from state testing and uses it to evaluate the objectives and needs of Special Education Programs. In addition, all data pertaining to students with disabilities is scrutinized to identify areas of need for staff development during the process of developing the district's Professional Development Plan.

Space Allocation for Special Education Programs

In-District

It is the policy and practice of the Board of Education of the Mount Sinai School District to ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that students with disabilities residing in the district shall be educated within the school district. It is the policy and practice of the Board of Education to ensure, to the fullest extent possible, the allocation of appropriate space within the district for special education programs that meet the needs of school-age students with disabilities. Special education services shall not be denied simply because of a lack of appropriate space.

BOCES

It is the policy and practice of the Board of Education to ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that appropriate space will be available to meet the needs of resident students with disabilities who attend special education programs provided by the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). At least once per year, a staff member from the Office of Pupil Personnel Services will visit the placement of each resident student who attends a BOCES special education program to assure the appropriateness of space allocated for the placement.

Instructional Materials in Usable Alternative Formats

The district ensures that all instructional materials to be used in the schools of the district are made available in a useable alternative format for students with special instructional needs, which meets the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAC). Alternative format is defined as any medium or format for the presentation of instructional materials, other than a traditional print text book, that is needed as an accommodation for a student with a disability, including but not limited to Braille, large print/enlarged font, open and closed captioned, audio, or an electronic file. An electronic file must be compatible with at least one alternative format conversion software program that is appropriate to the needs of the individual student.

At CSE and CPSE meetings, students individualized needs are assessed and provisions are made on students' IEPs to provide alternative instructional materials, including but not limited to alternate assessments, testing and program accommodations, supplemental aides and materials, and assistive technology. Alternative instructional and test materials may include Braille and/or enlarged print/font for visually impaired students, audio books for visually impaired and severely learning disabled students, word processors, adaptive equipment, computers, computer software, and other technology. For specific types of assistive technology, it may be necessary to conduct an assistive technology evaluation or it may be necessary to work with a consultant in selecting devices. In addition, consultants provide training to the faculty, professionals and family in the use of specified assistive technology devices when necessary.

The Director of PPS orders any necessary specialized equipment, software programs, assistive technology and/or instructional materials and assures delivery of materials in a timely manner. The PPS Office works closely with the Technology Department when ordering assistive technology and/or Apps. Every effort is made to have all materials available for use by the student for the first day of school. For students who move into the district during the school year, the Director obtains the needed materials without delay.

The district has chosen to utilize Book Share to download books as electronic files, as it obtains its electronic files through NIMAC. Students who are classified as legally blind are annually registered with the NT State Department of Education for procurement of special media materials produced by the American Printing House for the Blind.

Estimated Budget to Support the District Plan for Special Education

The approved budget to support the district plan for 2021-2022 school year is \$ 4,529,520.

Availability of Copies of the District Plan for Special Education

The District Plan for Special Education for 2021-2023 is on file in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools and the Office of Pupil Personnel Services for public inspection and review by the commissioner. Request for copies should be made to either the District Clerk or the District Administrator for Pupil Personnel Services.

