



**Mexico Academy and Central School  
District Special Education Plan  
2024-2026**

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Educate and motivate our students to be  
successful, responsible citizens.

Recognized as a school district that inspires excellence and  
leadership in all!

#### Core Beliefs:

- We put students first.
- All students can learn.
- We provide a safe, secure environment for all.
- Collaboration among students, staff, families and the community is essential to our success.
- Our schools are the heart of our community.
- We value creativity and innovation.
- We lead with honesty and integrity.
- Our supportive and rigorous learning environment nurtures the whole child.
- All are treated with dignity, respect and compassion.



## Introduction

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) requires that students with disabilities have access to and the opportunity to make progress in the general education curriculum.

Federal and State government mandates that each board of education or board of trustees adopt written policy that establishes administrative practices and procedures that ensure that students with disabilities residing in the district have the opportunity to participate in school district programs that enable students to progress in the general education curriculum.

Part 200.2 (c) of the Regulations of the New York State Commissioner of Education require that each school district board of education shall prepare biennial special education plans. The plan must describe:

- 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 to be used to evaluate the extent to which the objectives of the program 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 non-disabled students;
- The estimated budget to support such plan;
- The date on which such plan was adopted by the board of education.

This plan is designed to meet Federal and State government mandates that require each board of education or board of trustees adopt a written policy that establishes administrative practices and procedures that ensure that students with disabilities residing in the district have the opportunity to participate in school district programs that enable students to progress in the general education curriculum.



## **I. CONTINUUM OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

Special education means specially designed individualized or group instruction or special services or programs and special transportation, provided at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities.

- Such instruction includes but is not limited to that conducted in classrooms, homes, hospitals, institutions and in other settings.
- Such instruction includes specially designed instruction in physical education, including adapted physical education.

Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of the eligible student, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs that result from the student's disability; and to ensure access of the student to the general education curriculum, so they can meet the educational standards that apply to all students.

Students approved by the District Committee on Special Education to receive special education services participate in programs appropriate for their special education needs. Programs for students with disabilities are operated by Mexico Academy and Central School and include self-contained classes, inclusion programs, resource rooms, consulting services, as well as related services of speech therapy, and counseling services. With consideration for providing services in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), programs for students with more significant disabilities may be provided by the CITI BOCES on a contractual basis. The district provides Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Teacher of the Deaf and Audiological services through contracts with CITI BOCES, Pemberton Associates and various independent contractors. Using district and BOCES programs, we provide a continuum of services for our students with special education needs. The following is a non-comprehensive list of services that are provided on a contractual basis.

- CITI: Audiology, Teacher of Visually Impaired, Teacher of the Deaf, Interpreting Services, Job Coach
- CITI: A+ Program, Stepping Stones Day Treatment, Vocational Enrichment Program, Behavior Intervention Programs
- Pemberton: OT and PT services
- Milestones: Preschool Special Class in an Integrated Setting, Speech Therapy, Itinerant Special Education Teacher Services
- Residential Placements
- Private contracts: Music Therapy, Augmentative Communication Evaluations, Assistive Technology Evaluations, Behavioral Specialists, Speech Therapy



## **LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT AND CONTINUUM OF SERVICES**

Special education placements available to students in the Mexico School District range from regular class placement to home instruction. This continuum ranges from least to most restrictive. To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with children who do not have disabilities. Removal from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. The placement of a student with a disability in the least restrictive environment shall:

- Provide the specially designed instruction needed by the student
- Provide for the education of the student to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student alongside other students who do not have disabilities; and
- Be as close as possible to the student's home

Students will participate in the general education program with the necessary use of supplementary aids and services to the maximum extent possible. A more restrictive environment will be considered when no educational progress of the student with a disability or educational harm to other students is demonstrated.

## **PROGRAMS**

### **1. Declassification (Transitional) Support Services**

These services are provided to students and the students' teachers to assist the students when they are ready to move from special education programs and services to a full-time general education program. The services offered to the student may include special education services, behavior intervention services, counseling or speech and language improvement services. Students who become declassified may continue to have testing modifications as indicated in their IEPs. In addition, services may be provided to the student's general education teachers in order to assist the students.

A student's need for declassification support services is determined by the CSE at the time of a recommendation that a student, who has been receiving special education, no longer needs such services and can be placed in the general education program on a full-time basis. Throughout the year that the services are implemented, progress will be monitored using qualitative and quantitative data.

### **2. Regular Program**

In this setting, the child receives regular classroom instruction available to all children. When students, who are identified as having a disability, attend regular education classes it is called mainstreaming. Regular education generally consists of screening programs, regular education classes, extra-curricular activities and an opportunity to participate in the Response to Intervention program which includes supplemental instruction, counseling, psychological services, school health programs and speech and language services.



Indirect services in the form of consultation to the classroom teacher may also be available from instructional specialists, administrators or other members of the instructional staff. Specific suggestions for certain children may include procedures related to modifications of curriculum, individualizing instruction or use of specialized methods or materials. Indirect services may also be provided through in-service training. This program is offered in each of our buildings.

### **3. Consultant Teacher**

Consultant teacher services shall be for the purpose of providing direct and/or indirect services to students with disabilities enrolled full-time in a regular program including occupational education. Direct consultant teacher services are specially designed individualized, or group instruction provided by a special education teacher to a student in a regular education class. Indirect consultant services provide consultant services to regular education teachers to help them adjust the learning environment or modify instruction to meet the needs of students with disabilities in their classes. Such services shall be recommended by the Committee on Special Education to meet specific needs of such students and shall be included in the student's IEP. This program is offered in each of our buildings.

### **4. Integrated Co-Teaching Services**

Integrated co-teaching services means the provision of specially designed instruction and academic instruction provided to a group of students with disabilities and nondisabled students. The number of nondisabled students should be more than or equal to the number of students with disabilities in the class in order to ensure the level of integration intended by this program option, unless a variance is issued. School personnel assigned to each class shall minimally include a special education teacher and a general education teacher. This program is offered at the Mexico Middle School and Mexico Elementary School.

### **5. Resource Room Instruction**

A resource room program provides specialized supplementary instruction in an individual or small group setting. Supplemental instruction through the resource room program must be provided for a minimum of three hours of the school week. The resource room program may supplement instruction in regular or special education classes for up to fifty percent of the instructional day. Instructional groups in the resource room cannot be larger than five and must be composed of students with similar academic, social, physical, and management needs. The resource room teacher, in cooperation with classroom teachers, provides instruction to maintain or improve academic performance in other areas. The amount of time, the frequency and the type of instruction is indicated on the IEP. Since a resource room is supplemental to the student's regular or special education program, it occurs as a "pull-out" program and such instruction is noncredit bearing. This program is available at all buildings.



## 6. Special Class Instruction

Special class instruction, if needed, must be provided as indicated in the IEP. There are generally six class size options for special class recommendations that our students will be utilizing:

- a. **15-1:** 15 students with one teacher (offered at Elementary, Middle & High School levels)
- b. **8-1-1:** 8 students with one teacher and one paraprofessional (offered at Elementary & Middle levels)
- c. **8-1-3:** Special Class in an Integrated Setting- 8 students with one teacher and three paraprofessionals (offsite, Milestones operated, CPSE only)
- d. **6-1-1:** 6 students with one teacher and one paraprofessional (offsite, CITI BOCES operated)
- e. **12-1-1:** 12 students with one teacher and a paraprofessional (offered at Mexico High School)
- f. **12-1-4:** 12 students with one teacher and an additional adult for every 3 students in the class (offered at Elementary, Middle & High School levels)

Students must be grouped together for special class instruction based on similar individual needs. They may have the same or different disability, but their individual instructional needs must be similar. Grouping by needs is based on levels of academic or education achievement and learning characteristics, levels of physical and social development, and the management needs of the students in the classroom. Students are generally grouped within a three-year chronological age span.

## 7. Home or Hospital Instruction

Children provided home instruction are those who are homebound or hospitalized for an extended period due to the nature of their disability. Home or hospital instruction shall be provided for a minimum of five hours per week at the elementary level and ten hours per week at the secondary level. Instruction in a home or hospital setting is temporary or is a short-term placement except under unusual circumstances.





## **8. Special Day School Program**

This program is similar to special class placement except that it is in a special school serving only students with disabilities. Placement in this setting is based on the severity of the disability. These programs may be provided by a school district, BOCES, or an approved private school or agency. In this setting, the child is able to continue to live at home and is transported to and from school on a daily basis.

## **9. Residential Program**

The needs of the child in this setting indicate intensive instructional programming that cannot be provided within the instructional school day. This program involves the provision of comprehensive services in a residential setting. The State Education Department will review applications for purposes of excess cost aid reimbursement for approved residential school placements.

## **10. Twelve-Month Special Service and/or Program**

Students shall be considered for 12-month special services and/or programs in accordance with their need to prevent substantial regression due to highly intensive management needs, or severe multiple disabilities requiring habilitation and treatment.

## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS AND SERVICES**

### **11. Itinerant Services**

Itinerant services are offered to our CPSE students. They include special education or related services that focus on the nature of the child's disability. Itinerant services may be provided in the child's home or in a pre-school setting for not less than two (2) hours per week and the total number of students with disabilities assigned to the special education teacher should not exceed 20.

### **12. Related Services**

This includes speech and language therapy, hearing services, vision services, audiology, psychological services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling services, music therapy, medical services for diagnostic purposes, parent counseling and training, school health services, and other appropriate support services.

A student with a disability may receive related services from appropriate specialists based on individual needs. The extent of these services may range from regular daily sessions to less frequent contacts depending on the student's IEP. These services assist students in special or regular education classes. Students receiving these services shall be grouped with no more than



five students during any instructional period and shall be grouped according to similar service needs.

### **13. Supports for School Personnel on Behalf of the Student**

These include supports that would help school personnel to work more effectively with the student. These could include, for example, special training for a student's teacher or consultations with related service providers to meet a unique and specific need of the student.

### **14. Paraprofessional Support**

A teaching assistant, under the general supervision of the special education teacher, can assist in the delivery of special education services but cannot serve in place of a special education teacher. Some duties that may be appropriate for a teaching assistant include: assisting students in the use of available instructional resources and development of instructional needs; assisting in providing testing accommodations; assisting in related instructional work as required by a student's IEP; assisting students with specific health-related activities as appropriate; and other duties as assigned by the building principal.

Teacher aides perform non-instructional duties in accordance with Civil Service Law. Some duties that may be appropriate for a teacher aide include: assisting in physical care tasks and health-related activities, assisting students with behavioral/management needs; reading to and playing audio-visual material for children in lower grades; supervising students; assisting in proctoring and other tasks related to the administration of examinations; and other duties as assigned by the building principal.

### **15. Adapted Physical Education**

Adapted Physical Education (APE) is a specially designed program of developmental activities; games, sports, and rhythms suited to the interests, capacities and limitations of students with disabilities who may not safely or successfully engage in unrestricted participation in the activities of the regular physical education program.

### **16. Special Transportation**

Special transportation means services and supports necessary for the student to travel to and from school and between schools; in and around school buildings; and includes specialized equipment (such as special or adapted buses, lifts and ramps), if required to provide special transportation for a student with a disability. Examples of special transportation include: special seating; vehicle and/or equipment needs; adult supervision; type of transportation; and other accommodations.



## **17. Transition Services**

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability beginning not later than the first individualized education plan (IEP) to be in effect when the student is age 15 (and at a younger age, if determined appropriate), designed within a results-oriented process that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate the students' movement from school to post-school activities.

### **PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS, ACCOMMODATIONS & SUPPLEMENTARY AIDS AND SERVICES**

Supplementary Aids and Services means aids, services and other supports to enable students with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate in the least restrictive environment (e.g. a note taker; assignment of paraprofessional staff; study guide outlines of key concepts).

Accommodations means adjustments to the environment, instruction or materials (e.g. instructional materials in an alternative format such as large print or Braille, fewer items on a page; extra time to complete tasks) that allow a student with a disability to access the content or complete assigned tasks. Accommodations do not alter what is being taught.

Program modifications may be used to describe a change in the curriculum or measurement of learning, for example, when a student with a disability is unable to comprehend all of the content an instructor is teaching (e.g. reduced number of assignments; alternate grading system).

Supplementary aids and services, accommodations and/or program modifications can be provided in general education classes, special classes or other education-related settings, including extracurricular and non-academic settings.

### **CONTRACTING OF SERVICES**

Mexico Academy and Central School will employ appropriately trained special education staff members to ensure that all special education services, as indicated on the student's IEP are provided. The district shall enter into contractual arrangements with appropriate public or private service providers whenever:

- There is insufficient district staff to provide a service or there are insufficient numbers of students to warrant the employment of additional staff to provide the service.
- The needed service is of a highly specialized or unique nature and the employment of district staff to provide this service is not feasible.
- The needed service requires specialized facilities or equipment that are not available within the district.

When a special education service is not available, after exploring all available supports within the district, the district shall secure the service from:



- the employment of additional staff
- CITI BOCES
- a neighboring public-school system
- other appropriate public or private service providers as directed by the Committee on Special Education with notification to the Board of Education



## **II. SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND PERSONNEL**

The following depicts programs and services currently existing within the Mexico Academy and Central School District:

<p><b>Mexico Elementary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 Special Education Teachers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Integrated Co-Teaching Services</li> <li>o Consultant Teacher Services</li> <li>o Resource Room</li> <li>o 12:1:4 Special Class</li> <li>o 8:1:1 Special Class</li> </ul> </li> <li>- 2 Speech/Language Pathologists</li> <li>- 1 School Psychologist</li> <li>- Paraprofessional staff dependent upon student needs</li> </ul>	<p><b>New Haven Elementary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 Special Education Teachers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Consultant Teacher Services</li> <li>o Resource Room</li> </ul> </li> <li>- 1 Speech/Language Pathologist</li> <li>- ½ School Psychologist (Shared with Palermo Elementary)</li> <li>- Paraprofessional staff dependent upon student needs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Palermo Elementary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 Special Education Teachers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Consultant Teacher Services</li> <li>o Resource Room</li> <li>o 15:1 Special Class</li> <li>o 12:1:4 Special Class</li> </ul> </li> <li>- 1 Speech/Language Pathologist</li> <li>- ½ School Psychologist (Shared with New Haven Elementary)</li> <li>- Paraprofessional staff dependent upon student needs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mexico Middle School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 11 Special Education Teachers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Integrated Co-Teaching Services</li> <li>o Consultant Teacher Services</li> <li>o Resource Room</li> <li>o 15:1 Special Class</li> <li>o 12:1:4 Special Class</li> <li>o 8:1:1 Special Class</li> </ul> </li> <li>- 1 Speech/Language Pathologist</li> <li>- 1 School Psychologist</li> <li>- Paraprofessional staff dependent upon student needs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mexico High School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 11 Special Education Teachers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Consultant Teacher Services</li> <li>o Resource Room</li> <li>o 15:1 Special Class</li> <li>o 12:1:1 Special Class</li> <li>o 12:1:4 Special Class</li> </ul> </li> <li>- 1 Speech/Language Pathologist</li> <li>- 1 School Psychologist</li> <li>- Paraprofessional staff dependent upon student needs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Districtwide</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 Behavior Specialist</li> <li>- 1 School Psychologist</li> </ul>



### III. SUMMARY OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

<b>Summary of Students with Disabilities K-12, BEDS 2023</b>	
<u>Disability Classification</u>	<u>Total in District</u>
Learning Disability	119
Speech or Language Impairment	104
Other Health Impairment	67
Autism	21
Intellectual Disability	9
Emotional Disability	3
Multiple Disabilities	3
Hearing Impairment	2
Orthopedic Impairment	1
Traumatic Brain Injury	1
Visual Impairment (Includes Blindness)	1
Deaf-Blindness	0
Deafness	0
<b>Total Students with Disabilities</b>	<b><u>331</u></b>

<b>Placement of Students with Disabilities K-12, 2/7/2024</b>	
Mexico Elementary	51
New Haven Elementary	31
Palermo Elementary	41
Mexico Middle School	110
Mexico High School	98
CITI BOCES	17
Other Placements	3

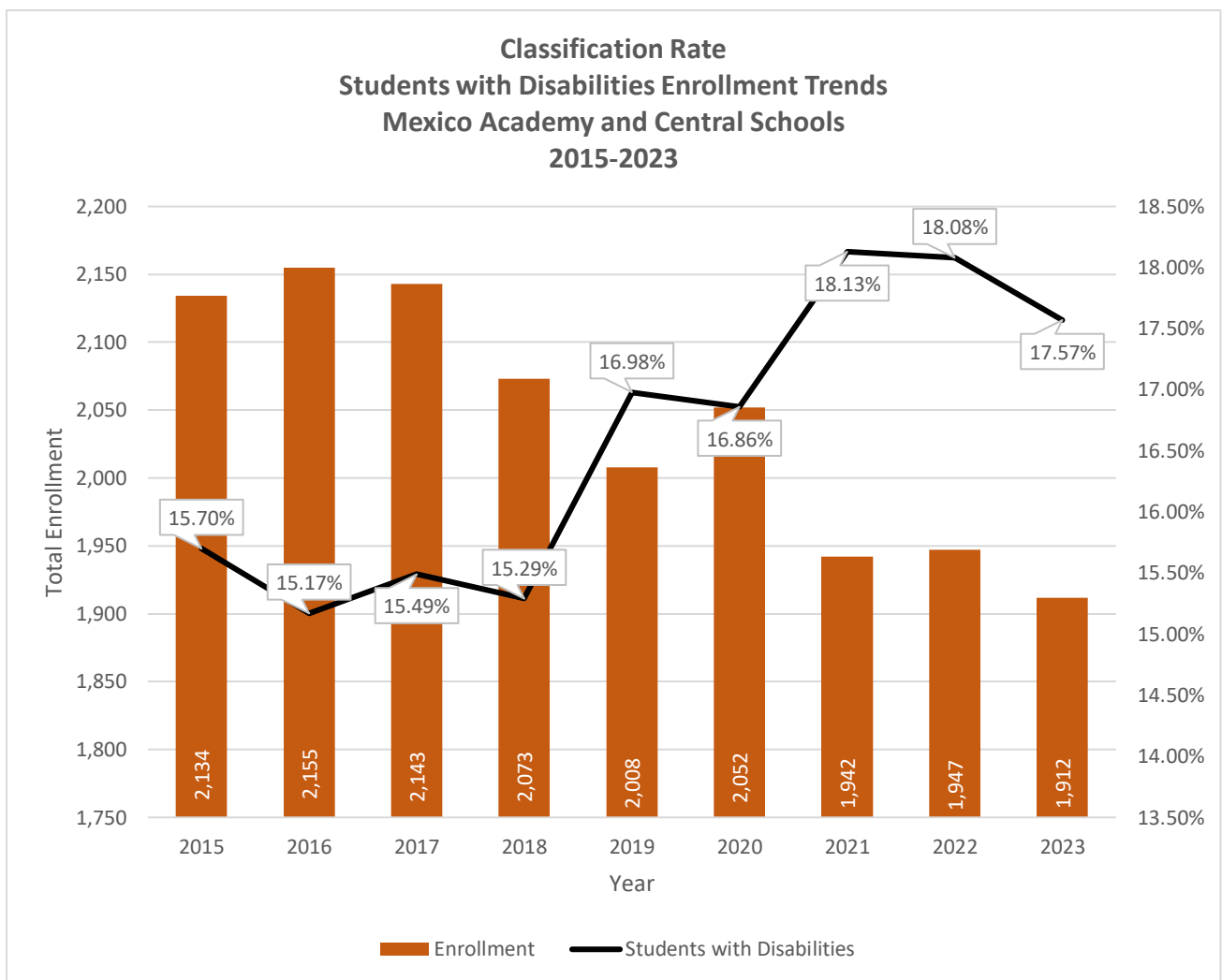
<b>Summary of Preschool Students with Disabilities, BEDS 2023</b>	
Aged 3	10
Aged 4	17
<b>Total Preschool Students with Disabilities</b>	<b><u>27</u></b>



#### **IV. CLASSIFICATION RATE**

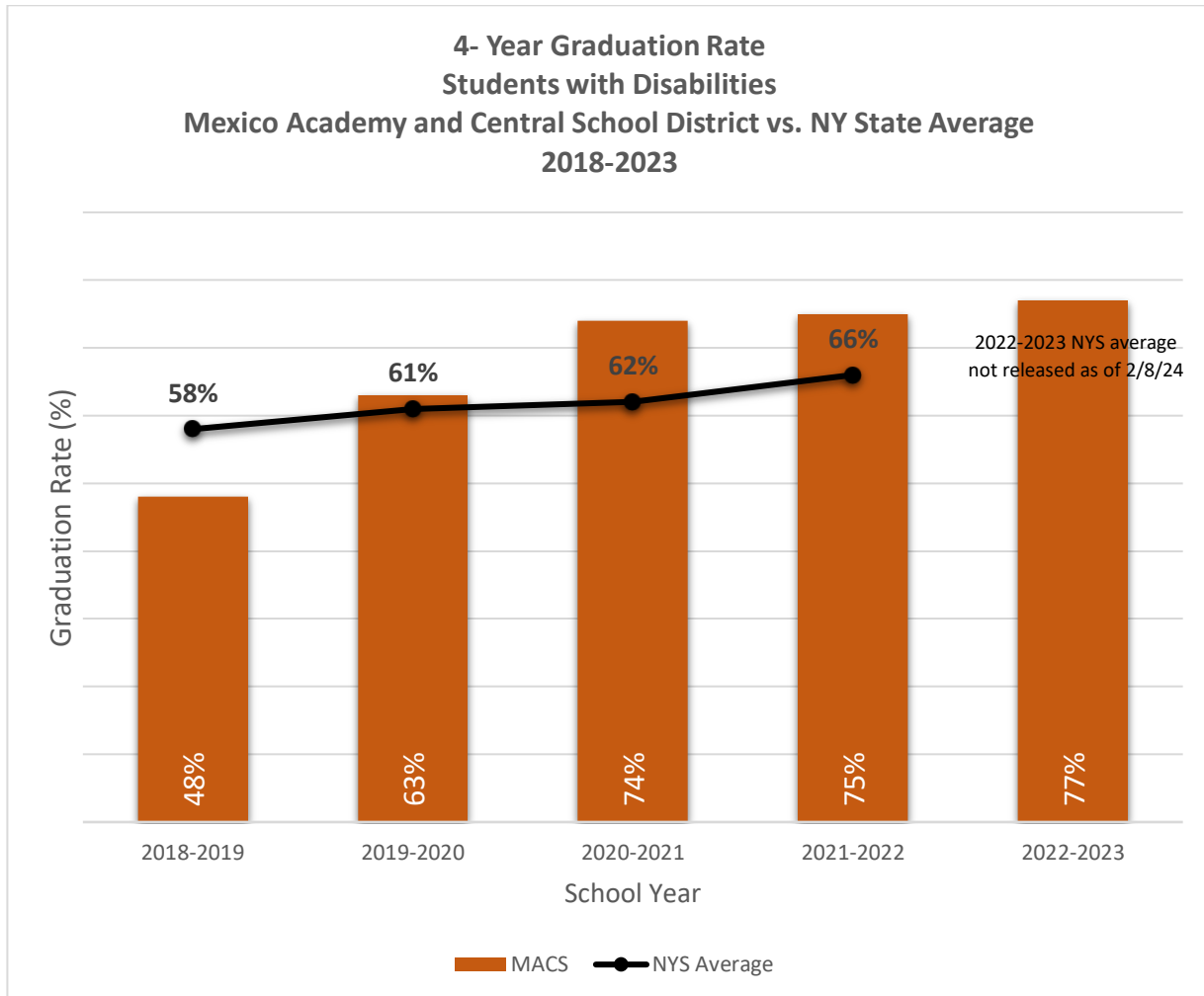
In recent years, school districts in NY State have seen an increase in the classification rate of students with disabilities. The Mexico Academy and Central School District’s classification rate decreased from 2022 to 2023. An area of focus for the Office of Pupil Services is further reducing the classification rate in coming years by supporting and encouraging a robust Multi-Tiered System of Support Program that encourages student growth through targeted interventions in the general education setting.

The classification rate in 2023 was 17.57% of our 1,912 total students; 336 of our students were identified as students with disabilities.



## V. GRADUATION RATE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The NY State Department of Education has set a graduation rate target for students with disabilities at 70%. The Mexico Academy and Central School District has exceeded this goal in recent years. However, this will continue to be a focus for improvement in the 2023-2024, 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years.





## **VI. EVALUATION OF STUDENTS: COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION (CSE)**

Pursuant to the regulations of the State Commissioner of Education, the CSE makes recommendations to the Board of Education on the needs of those students referred to the CSE.

### **CSE Membership**

The required members of the CSE are:

- The child's parent(s)
- The child's general education teacher
- A special education teacher
- A school psychologist
- A parent member (only when specifically requested by the parent)
- A school district representative (CSE Chairperson)
- The school physician, as needed, (with at least three days' notice)

Sometimes the CSE meets as a subcommittee. The CSE subcommittee includes the child's parent(s), his/her general education teacher and the special education teacher. The subcommittee meets for routine case reviews and annual reviews. If the CSE plans on declassifying a student or placing the student in a more restrictive setting, e.g. from resource room to special class placement, they meet as a full committee.

### **CSE PROCESS**

#### **Pre-Referral Interventions**

Generally, when a student is experiencing academic or social difficulties in school, the child's teacher will refer the student to the building MTSS team.

Students with mild speech and language problems are provided speech improvement services. Similarly, students with mild occupational or physical therapy needs are provided a screening with recommendations by the therapist. These students are generally not classified as disabled.

#### **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)**

MTSS represents an important educational strategy to close achievement gaps for all students, including students at risk, students with disabilities and English language learners, by preventing smaller learning problems from becoming insurmountable gaps.

Part 200.2(b)(7) and Part 200.4(d) of the Commissioner's regulations describe the requirement to use pre-referral instructional strategies in the general education setting and the need to describe and document the student response to attempts to remediate a student's performance prior to a referral to the CSE. MTSS is an effective and instructionally relevant process to inform a decision to refer a student to the CSE by continuously monitoring student response to the core curriculum and strategic and intensive instructional interventions provided to a student.

Instruction provided to students should vary in intensity, based upon the individual student's needs. The MTSS team routinely reviews multiple measures of student performance data that informs the building about the progress of students and guides the development of curriculum



and instructional strategies. The building-level inquiry process assists teachers in differentiating instructional strategies so that classroom instruction may meet the needs of students with diverse learning needs and contributes to the decision-making process in determining the intensity of services needed by individual students.

### **Referral**

Pursuant to the regulations of the State Commissioner of Education, the Board of Education must approve the staff persons who may make referrals to the CSE. Students suspected of having a disability should be recommended for a referral. A written referral is required and is submitted to the building Principal, who has been designated by the Board of Education to make referrals to the CSE. The recommendation for a referral may be made by the teacher or other professional staff member, a judicial officer, or the student himself if over 18 years of age. Parents are encouraged to make a recommendation for referral to the building Principal. Parents may also make a direct referral to the CSE chairperson in writing.

The written referral should state the reasons why the student is suspected of having a disability. Assessment results, records and reports should be cited. Attempts to remediate the student's educational difficulties and the student's response to those efforts should also be stated. Data obtained through periodic benchmarking and progress monitoring in the area of concern is to be included in those referrals made by the principals.

### **Evaluation**

An individual psycho-educational evaluation shall be commenced by the CSE once parent consent is obtained. The evaluation must include a variety of evaluations including a psychological evaluation, achievement testing, a social history, a medical examination and an observation of the student in his/her current educational placement.

### **Eligibility Determination**

The CSE makes the determination on whether the student has a disability after reviewing the evaluations, prior interventions, the student's response to interventions, teacher reports, and parental statements.

A student can be identified because of mental, physical, or emotional needs as having one of the following 13 educational disability classifications:

- Autism
- Deafness
- Deaf-Blindness
- Emotional Disability
- Hearing Impaired
- Learning Disabled
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury



- Visual Impairment

### **Development of Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

Prior to developing a recommendation to the Board of Education for special education services, the CSE must ensure that the student is receiving general education services including participation in academic intervention services as appropriate. A child having an IEP does not negate the right to receive services through the MTSS process.

The CSE must develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each student with a disability. The IEP must list the student's academic, physical, social and management needs and present levels of performance (PLEPS) for each major goal area. It must also include:

- The classification of the disability
- Measurable annual goals and benchmarks
- Evaluation criteria for each goal
- The recommended special education program and services, including Extended School Year, when appropriate
- Recommended placement
- The class size
- Supplementary aides and services the student needs
- Program modifications or supports for school personnel
- A statement of transition needs for students 15 and older including a description of the recommended transition services
- Assistive technology devices needed
- Testing modifications
- Date of initiation of services

### **IEP Implementation**

It is the district's responsibility to implement the IEP within 60 school days of the date that the parent signed consent for CSE evaluation of the student. That means the services described on the IEP must be delivered within the timeline stated above. Each student's parent, teachers and staff, including paraprofessional staff, must be provided access to the IEP for a student they are working with (electronically or in hard copy).

### **Annual Review and Reevaluations**

The CSE must review the IEP of each student with a disability at least annually and make recommendations for an updated IEP. The review will include a consideration of the progress the student has made in general and special education. Test and instructional modifications will be reviewed and changed as needed.

Students will be reevaluated at least every three years to document if they continue to be eligible for special education services. If the student remains eligible for special education services, the IEP will be updated as needed.



If a student is no longer eligible to be classified as a student needing special education services, (s)he may be declassified with no further services or (s)he can receive a year of declassification support. These declassification services typically consist of a reduced amount of consulting teacher support, possibly related services, and continuation of testing modifications provided with the expectation of a successful transition into a regular education program. The Principal is responsible for seeing that these services are implemented.

### **Mediation and Impartial Hearing Processes**

If parents disagree with the recommendations of the CSE they can request a mediation session to resolve their differences with the District or they can request an Impartial Hearing. Should they request an impartial hearing, the Board of Education appoints an impartial hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The decision of the impartial hearing officer is final unless it is appealed to the State Review Officer.



## **VII. EVALUATION OF STUDENTS: COMMITTEE ON PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION (CPSE)**

The term *Preschool Student with a Disability* refers to a preschool student who has been identified by the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) who is eligible to receive preschool programs and services and is not entitled to attend the public schools of the district. Preschool special education services can support children ages three to five with disabilities or delays in development. To be identified as having a disability, a preschool student shall:

- Exhibit a significant delay or disorder in one or more functional areas related to cognitive, language and communicative, adaptive, social-emotional or motor development which adversely affects the student's ability to learn. Such delay or disorder shall be documented by the results of the individual evaluation which includes, but is not limited to, information in all functional areas obtained from a structured observation of a student's performance and behavior, a parental interview and other individually administered assessment procedures, and, when reviewed in combination and compared to accepted milestones for child development, indicate:
  - A 12 month delay in one or more functional area(s), or
  - A 33 percent delay in one functional area, or
  - A 25 percent delay in each of two functional areas, or
  - If appropriate standardized instruments are individually administered in the evaluation process, a score of 2.0 standard deviation below the mean in one functional area, or a score of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in each of two functional areas; or
  - Meet the criteria as Autistic, Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing, Orthopedically Impaired, Other Health Impaired, Traumatic Brain Injury, or Visually Impaired

### **Referral**

Preschool services can start the year a child turns 3 years old. How the process begins will vary depending on whether the student is transitioning from Early Intervention (EI) or is being referred by the parent/guardian or another professional.

Children are referred to the school district's CPSE if they are suspected of having a disability which impairs their learning and development. Referrals are made in writing by parents, professionals, caregivers, program providers or other individuals who are concerned about a child's development. Specific cultural and linguistic information must be considered when assessing the need to refer a child to the CPSE for individual evaluation. Children transitioning from the Department of Health's Early Intervention Program that serves infants and toddlers, birth through age two may be referred to the CPSE by the early intervention service provider, upon parental consent.

The evaluation of the preschool child requires information gathering and for individually administered assessments and behavioral observations to be conducted to determine the



physical, mental, behavioral and emotional factors that contribute to a suspected disability. A variety of assessment tools and procedures are used to gather relevant functional and developmental information related to the child's participation in age-appropriate activities. Evaluators seek parents' concerns, observations and relevant information regarding the developmental milestones, levels of performance and individual needs of the child. A full written report must be provided to the parents prior to the scheduled CPSE meeting. The final determination of eligibility and recommendations for special education programs and/or services are determined by the CPSE. The parents of the child are members of the CPSE and are expected to fully participate in the decision-making process.

## **Evaluation**

The evaluation of the preschool child requires information gathering and a series of individually administered assessments and behavioral observations. The individual evaluation must include a physical examination, a social history, a psychological, an observation of the child in his or her natural setting and other appropriate assessments and evaluations.

### Components of the Individual Evaluation:

- Social History, including Health History
  - The social history includes interpersonal, familial and environmental factors, which influence a child's general adaptation to the learning environment. These may include, but are not limited to, data on family composition, family history, developmental history of the child, health of the child, family interaction and adjustment of the child to preschool or other learning environments. A history of the child's health involves a comprehensive review of health and medical factors that may affect the normal learning process of the child.
- Physical Examination
  - A physical examination, in accordance with Section 903, 904, 905 of the Education Law, is required of all children referred to the CPSE for evaluation. This may include a report from the child's pediatrician or any other specialists who have recently examined the child if it fulfills the requirements of the physical examination. For children whose suspected area of disability may have a medical etiology, a comprehensive medical examination may be needed. When necessary, specialized examinations, such as ophthalmological or neurological evaluations, are required. An audiological examination may be needed if concerns about hearing loss arise during any part of the evaluation process or the presenting problem involves speech and language development.
- Psychological Evaluation
  - A psychological evaluation assesses a student's cognitive, neuropsychological, developmental, behavioral and emotional status. These areas may include the following: general intelligence, mental and emotional functioning; developmental status; learning strengths, weaknesses and styles; instructional needs; personality characteristics; and social interactions and relationships. The



psychological evaluation process can use a variety of formal and informal assessment strategies.

- Observation
  - Observing the behavior of a child in a natural setting is a required part of the evaluation process. A natural setting may include the classroom, playground, restroom, bus, or home. Observations should occur in places familiar to the child where he or she is comfortable and will have the opportunity to demonstrate typical behaviors.
- Other Appropriate Assessments /Evaluations
  - The individual evaluation must include the above, and other appropriate assessments or evaluations, including a functional behavioral assessment for a student whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, as necessary to ascertain the physical, mental, behavioral and emotional factors which contribute to the suspected disabilities. Another example of an area that may require evaluation is a child's need for assistive technology devices and services. This assessment may be conducted as a separate component of the evaluation or within other assessments, such as in the language/communication and motor domains.

### **Meeting**

After evaluations are complete, a CPSE meeting will be held. At the meeting the CPSE team will review the evaluation results and determine if the child is eligible for preschool special education services.

The CPSE team includes:

- The parent;
- A district representative;
- A special education teacher and/or provider (if applicable);
- A general education teacher (if applicable);
- A representative from Oswego County (invited); and
- A school psychologist if the student is transitioning to CSE;
- Others with knowledge about the child or special expertise (evaluator, psychologist, doctor, etc.)

If found eligible, the CPSE will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP outlines the child's current skills and abilities, goals, and the supports and services that will be provided. Under CPSE and IDEA regulations, the CPSE is required to notify the Board of Education of the child's eligibility for special education services.

If the child is recommended to receive services, the school district, in collaboration with Oswego County, will solicit services from approved providers. Such services will commence when a provider is located. Currently, students are often placed on wait lists for services such as Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT) and Speech Therapy due to a shortage of



providers in our geographic area.

**Transition from CPSE to CSE**

Some children currently receiving preschool special education services will move on to receive special education services under the Committee on Special Education (CSE). Others who no longer need specialized services will be declassified. At the annual review meeting prior to entering kindergarten, the CPSE will refer a child to the CSE to determine continued eligibility for school-age special education programs and services.





## **VIII. EVALUATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMING**

The Mexico Academy and Central School district utilize student performance on Statewide ELA and Math assessments, building and district benchmark assessments, report cards, and Regents Exams to measure student progress toward graduation. New York State Special Education Performance Plan Indicator data also assists in providing feedback regarding student achievement and graduation rates. Curriculum based measures also are used to measure a student's progress toward meeting their goals. Data is also collected related to progress towards IEP goal masteries. For some students, the New York State Alternative Assessments provides information regarding progress towards meeting their individual educational goals. Additionally, data collection for the Skills and Achievement Credential and the Career and Occupational Studies (CDOS) credential will provide information regarding student progress.



## **IX. SPACE PLANS**

### **Special Education Classroom Space**

The district provides appropriate space for special education programs. All special education teachers and related service providers have adequate classroom space considering the type of services they provide to students. Resource room and related services classes are placed in smaller classrooms appropriate for the small groups they serve. Each building within the district provides space for special education programs based on the number of students who need services. Collaborative planning at the administrative level, along with individual problem-solving strategies at the building level, allows us to develop appropriate solutions regarding space needs. The administrative team works very cooperatively to plan for changes when necessary.

Currently, special education staff who work in the inclusion rooms may share a classroom or have a smaller classroom space available to them. Rooms are provided for speech therapy and counseling that allow for privacy and assurance of confidentiality.

A county planning committee, consisting of Superintendents and Special Education Administrators, has developed a required five-year plan that cooperatively addressed the issue of ensuring appropriate space for BOCES special education programs.

Some students with specialized needs are placed in the CITI BOCES programs located within public schools in Oswego County, the CITI Campus or CITI 4<sup>th</sup> St. location.



## **X. ALTERNATIVE FORMAT PROCEDURES**

In accordance with Chapter 377 of the Laws of 2001 and amendments to Section 200.2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner, the District has implemented procedures to ensure that every student with a disability who needs his or her instructional materials available in an alternative format will receive those materials at the same time that they are available to non-disabled students.

- Alternative format is defined to mean any medium or format for presentation of instructional or assessment materials, other than traditional print materials, that are needed as an accommodation for a student with a disability enrolled in the school district. It would include, but not be limited to Braille, large print, open and closed caption, audio or electronic file.
- The need for alternative format materials will be determined by the Committee on Special Education and specified in the student's IEP or by the Section 504 Team and is specified in the student's Accommodation Plan.
- The CSE or Section 504 Team will identify a case manager who will collaborate with school personnel, the building administration and/or the CSE chairperson to obtain alternative format materials, including state assessments.
- Material in alternative formats will be ordered or produced with enough lead time to ensure that they will be available at the same time as regular format materials are providing to other students.
- The district will give preference in the purchase of instructional materials to those vendors who agree to provide such materials in alternative formats.





## BUDGET REVENUE

Special education programs are funded through a combination of federal aid, state aid, and local support.

### 1. Federal Aid

The Pupil Services office submits several grants, which secure monies to support our programs. These funds cover some of our operational expenses such as salaries, BOCES consultant services, professional development, supplies, instructional materials, technology, etc.

### 2. State Aid

There are three levels of state aid to support required programs for students with disabilities:

- a. Regular operational aid determined by the per student formula
- b. Weighted aid for students with disabilities by the per student formula depending on the level of service
- c. High-cost reimbursement is tracked through this office with the State Education Department on STAC forms for those students whose program costs exceed the state formula.
  - STAC (System to Track and Account for Children) provides reimbursement for preschool and school-aged students placed in special education programs. It also includes reimbursement for students who have been determined to be homeless or runaway youth, and for educational services provided to incarcerated youth.

## Mexico CSD

460901

### Financial Summary

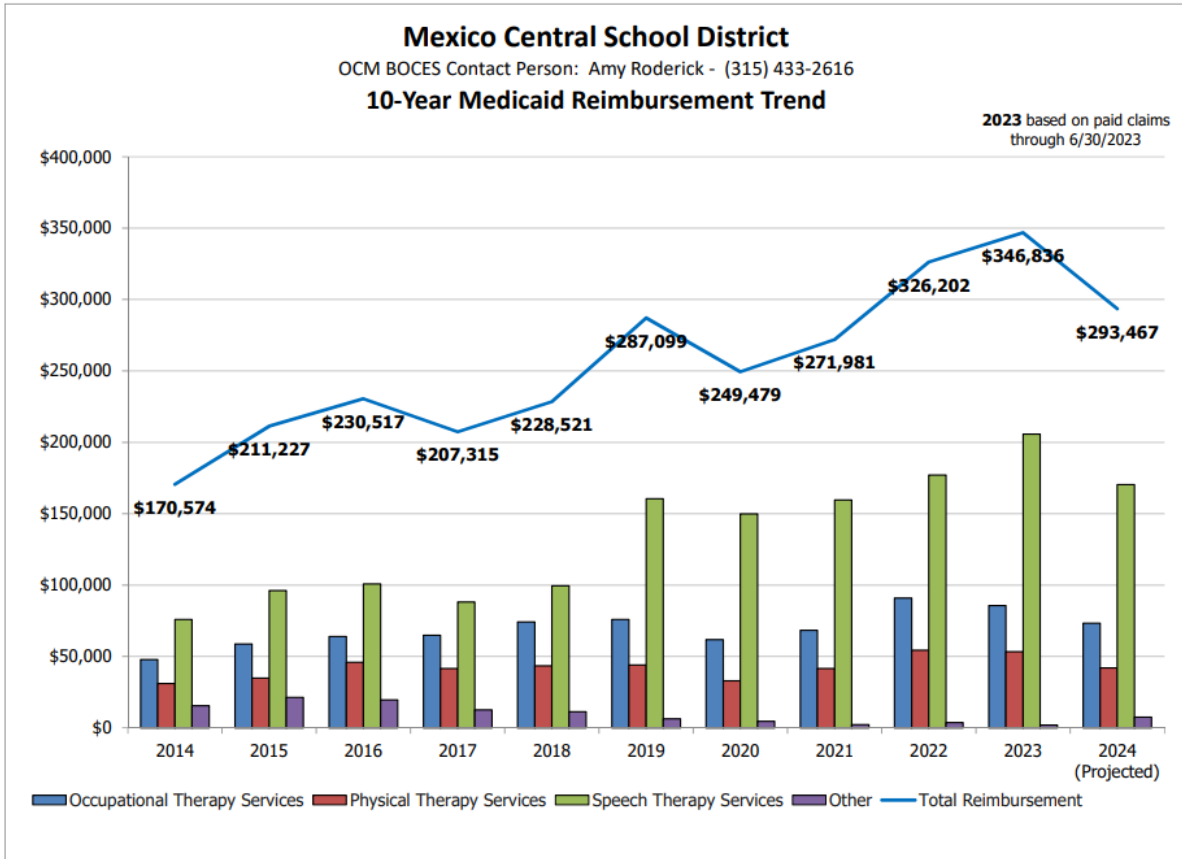
Updated as of: 1/10/24

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	<i>Projected</i> 2022-23	<i>Projected</i> 2023-24
<i>Threshold</i>	<b>\$50,517.00</b>	<b>\$50,454.00</b>	<b>\$50,400.00</b>	<b>\$53,514.00</b>	<b>\$54,348.00</b>
Public Excess Cost	\$951,526.09	\$925,440.10	\$1,056,001.62	\$1,165,171.56	\$1,340,686.50
Private Excess Cost	\$1,805.51	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Summer 4408	\$314,116.80	\$163,661.60	\$254,507.20	\$300,501.60	\$213,646.40
Non resident Homeless	\$15,736.50	\$6,845.00	\$35,335.50	\$5,477.03	\$84,272.15
<b>Total STAC (by attendance year)</b>	<b>\$1,283,184.90</b>	<b>\$1,095,946.70</b>	<b>\$1,345,844.32</b>	<b>\$1,471,150.19</b>	<b>\$1,638,605.05</b>



### 3. Medicaid Reimbursement

The district can bill Medicaid for some services and transportation costs for students with disabilities and receive reimbursement for these services. This revenue returns to the district and is accounted for in the general fund.



## **XII. BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES RELATED TO SPECIAL EDUCATION**

The Board of Education has adopted several policies to support students with disabilities and to ensure a free appropriate public education to students. These include:

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Policy Name</b>
3211	<a href="#"><u>Use of Assistance Animals</u></a>
5413	<a href="#"><u>Alternative Formats for Instructional Materials</u></a>
5720	<a href="#"><u>Transportation of Students</u></a>
7210	<a href="#"><u>Student Evaluation, Promotion and Placement</u></a>
7222	<a href="#"><u>Diploma Options or Credential Options for Students with Disabilities</u></a>
7313	<a href="#"><u>Suspension of Students</u></a>
7314	<a href="#"><u>Students Presumed to Have a Disability for Discipline Purposes</u></a>
7350	<a href="#"><u>Corporal Punishment/Emergency Interventions</u></a>
7611	<a href="#"><u>Students with Disabilities</u></a>
7612	<a href="#"><u>Grouping by Similarity of Needs</u></a>
7613	<a href="#"><u>The Role of the Board in Implementing a Student's Individualized Education Plan</u></a>
7614	<a href="#"><u>Preschool Special Education</u></a>
7615	<a href="#"><u>Least Restrictive Environment</u></a>
7616	<a href="#"><u>Pre-Referral Intervention Strategies</u></a>
7617	<a href="#"><u>Declassification of Students with Disabilities</u></a>
7620	<a href="#"><u>Students with Disabilities Participating in District Programs</u></a>
7630	<a href="#"><u>Committee on Special Education (CSE)/Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE)</u></a>
7640	<a href="#"><u>Student Individualized Education Program (IEP): Development and Provision</u></a>
7641	<a href="#"><u>Transition Services</u></a>
7642	<a href="#"><u>Extended School Year Services and/or Programs</u></a>
7643	<a href="#"><u>Transfer Students with Disabilities</u></a>
7650	<a href="#"><u>Identification and Register of Children with Disabilities (Child Find)</u></a>
7660	<a href="#"><u>Parent Involvement for Children with Disabilities</u></a>
7670	<a href="#"><u>Due Process Complaints; Selection and Board Appointment of Impartial Hearing Officers</u></a>
7680	<a href="#"><u>Independent Educational Evaluations</u></a>
7690	<a href="#"><u>Special Education Mediation</u></a>

