

The Department of

STUDENT SERVICES

Parent Newsletter- December 2013

What is the Department of Student Services?

The Department of Student Services is a department under the Department of Student Learning. The Department of Student Services supports students, families, and staff across the district by providing a range of services that support students. Services include: health services, special education services, 504 services, interventions through Response to Intervention, support for homeless families, student records management, truancy, residency services, child-find (evaluation) services, supports to students attending non-public schools, and Early Childhood programming.

In addition to the certified and classified staff in the buildings, the Department is staffed by Aimée LeBlanc, Director of Special Services; Lisa Kramp, Special Services Coordinator; Margaret Wade, Special Services Coordinator; Ginny Braun, Administrative Assistant; Susan Leverenz, Secretary; and Karen Pilli, Early Childhood Secretary. Lisa and Maggie serve as liaisons to both programs and buildings within the district, working directly with staff and families to support students, and supervising staff. Lisa supervises Integrated Services, Extended Resource, the Individualized Learning Program, and Communications (6-8th). She is liaison to: Dryden, Olive, Patton, Westgate, South Middle School, and Thomas Middle School. Maggie supervises Early Childhood, Transitional Kindergarten, Communications (EC-5th grade), and Foundations (kindergarten through fifth). She is liaison to: Greenbrier, Ivy Hill, and Windsor Schools, and also works closely with the District's social workers.

Ginny Braun, Department Administrative Assistant is responsible for maintaining student IEP data and reporting student data to the Illinois State Board of Education, managing department grants, and working with staff and families around IEP concerns. Susan Leverenz is responsible for managing student records and the department budget. Karen Pilli manages enrollment and scheduling for the Early Childhood programs at Greenbrier School.

Middle School Transition Night

Do you have a student with an IEP who will transition to middle school next year? Please join us for a **Middle School Transition Night on Monday, February 3, 2014 at 7:00**. This event will be held at the Dunton Administration Building, 1200 S. Dunton. Staff and administrators will present information on the different types of special education supports and programs available at the middle schools. There will be time for questions and answers about preparing your 5th grader for middle school, the structure of middle school, as well as the specific programs. Although we will not be able to answer questions about specific students, we hope this evening opportunity for parents will answer most of your questions about the transition process and life in middle school.

Special Services Review Committee

The Special Services Review Committee has met four times since the start of the 2013-14 school year. The committee is utilizing a strategic planning process that incorporates staff and parent/community feedback, results of the NSSEO needs surveys from spring 2013, and information from the Futures Report. The purpose of the committee is to identify the strengths and opportunities for growth within the department, and to develop purpose, vision, value, and mission statements. Based on all of the data collected, the committee will design a three to five year strategic plan that addresses the identified opportunities for improvement, while aligning with the values, mission, and vision of the department. The final plan will be submitted to the Board of Education for approval by June, 2014.

The committee maintains a wiki site with agendas, meeting notes, and other important information. The site is updated after every committee meeting. For the past two meetings, the committee has focused on developing Purpose, Vision, Values, and Mission statements. These statements were finalized at the December 10, 2013 meeting and will be posted on the wiki during the week of December 15, 2013.

A link to the wiki is available on the Special Services webpage or you can visit:

<http://specialservicesreviewcommittee.ahsd25.wikispaces.net/>

Data Cohort

Arlington Heights School District 25 has been accepted into a voluntary cohort study group, facilitated by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), to study how students with disabilities are educated within our school system. Referred to as a "Data Cohort", sixteen northern Illinois districts have applied, and been selected, to participate in the study group. The purpose of the cohort is to assist districts in studying their specific student data (as related to placement/least restrictive environment), identifying areas for improvement, developing hypotheses, collecting data, and putting systems in place to address the identified areas of need. Our team consists of Aimée LeBlanc, Director of Student Services; Lisa Kramp, Student Services Coordinator; Maggie Wade, Student Services Coordinator; Dr. Denise Hildebrand, psychologist; Suzanne Quick, elementary resource teacher; Andrew Benton, data specialist; and a middle school resource teacher, to be determined. The team has two assigned mentors through ISBE who will help guide us through problem identification, data collection, and subsequent problem solving. Our first meeting was held on December 4, 2013. We meet again with our mentors in February.

For general information on the data cohort, please visit ISBE's website for a webinar at:

<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed/html/lre-data-cohort.htm>



Continuum of Services

District 25 maintains a full continuum of special education related services options, resource programs and instructional programs based on the nature and degree of the intervention needed for students with varying disabilities, including, but not limited to: Learning Disabilities, Autism, Speech and Language, Orthopedic Impairments and Other Health Impairments.

1. General Education with Supplementary Aids and Services

- Special education staff work with general education staff to adapt curriculum, develop interventions, make modifications, and implement accommodations for students in the general education setting.

2. Itinerant Services

- Students receive support in a specific area of need, such as speech-language therapy, occupational therapy or social work services either in an individual, small group, or in-class setting.

3. Resource

- Students receive special education support less than 50% of their day (including related services)
- Services may be provided within the general education setting or outside of the general education setting in a resource room.

4. Instructional Programs

- Students receive special education support more than 50% of their day.
- Students participate in alternate curriculum for elements of core instruction in reading, writing, and math.
- Students participate in general education classes, as much as appropriate, as determined by the IEP team.
- District Instructional Programs include:
 - Early Childhood: Communications, Self-Contained classrooms, Foundational Skills
 - Transitional Kindergarten
 - Communications K-2nd, 3rd-5th, 6th-8th
 - Foundations K-1st, 2nd-3rd, 4th-5th
 - Integrated Services 1st-5th
 - Extended Resource 6th-8th (formerly MAC)
 - Individualized Learning Program 6th-8th (formerly MAC)

5. Public Therapeutic Day School

- For students whose needs cannot be met in the local public school district due to intense levels of academic, behavioral, or functional needs.
- Examples of public therapeutic day schools:
 - Timber Ridge- students with emotional and behavioral needs
 - Kirk- students with the most significant cognitive/physical needs
 - Miner- students with autism and cognitive needs
 - Forrest Elementary- students with hearing impairments

6. Private Therapeutic Day School

- For students whose needs cannot be met in a public therapeutic setting due to intense levels of academic, behavioral, or functional needs.
- Examples of public therapeutic day schools:
 - The Cove School
 - Giant Steps
 - New Connections Academy

7. Residential Placement

- For students who need an intensive level of support for that cannot be provided in a day school environment.
- Students must demonstrate intense need for support in both home and school environments.
- Placement requires approval by ISBE before placement can begin.
- Placement may be out-of-state.
- Currently the District does not have any students in a residential setting.

8. Home/Hospital Services

- For students who cannot attend school due to mental and/or physical needs.
- Student must have a current doctor's note documenting the need for home/hospital service.

Middle School Transition and World Language

At the middle school level, many students who require a resource level of support receive one period of "Resource" per day. This period was previously referred to as "tutorial" or "study skills". This period often takes the place of a world language and is intended to provide students with specific instruction in their IEP goal areas outside of the general education environment.

The middle school world language night will take place on January 14, 2014 at both middle schools. This evening program provides parents with information about world language study at both buildings. Students also have the opportunity to sign up for a world language for their 6th grade year. As most of our students will not have IEP meetings that determine placement in a resource period for 6th grade until March or April, parents are encouraged to sign their children up for a world language, if they are unsure of whether their child will participate in the study of a world language. Please see your child's case manager if you have additional questions or concerns.

Looking for Information about Student Services?

Please visit our website! The Department of Student Services has a dedicated page on the Arlington Heights District website, www.sd25.org. To access the webpage directly, please go to http://www.sd25.org/pages/sd25/Departments/Menu/Student_Services.

The Special Services webpage contains many resources! In addition to flyers for upcoming local events that are offered through the District, the North Suburban Special Education District (NSSEO) and other local, non-profit organizations, there is information from different Special Services provider groups, information from the Illinois State Board of Education, and other helpful information.