

# **Bath Central School District's Special Education Handbook**

**2023-2024**



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## **Special Education Handbook Goal**

This handbook is intended to provide basic information to staff, students, parents and community members. The handbook is a reference and should be used to help aid understanding of the process of special education. Please feel free to contact the special education office at any time with questions.

Bath Central School is committed to educating students with disabilities to their fullest potential in a setting that is integrated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent possible while encompassing their needs and developing skills for independent living.

## **Special Education**

Special Education is a specially designed program which may consist of group or individualized instruction, special services or programs and/or transportation that is provided at no cost to the parent(s) to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities.

A student with a disability is a student whose academic, physical, or emotional difficulty adversely affects his or her education and ability to navigate the educational setting even with interventions.

There are thirteen categories of disabilities. These categories include the following:

- Autism
- Deafness
- Deaf-Blindness
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impairment
- Learning Disability
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disability
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Speech or language impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visually Impaired which includes Blindness

The Committee on Special Education, as a team, determines whether a student has a disability based on teacher data and psychological evaluations. If the committee determines that the child has a disability, they then decide which classification above best describes the disability of the particular student and what services may be necessary to support this child in his or her educational setting.

# The Committee on Special Education

The committee on Special Education in accordance with the provisions of Education Law, Section 4402, involves a multidisciplinary team of people. This team ensures a timely evaluation and placement of the student.

The committee should be made up of but not limited to the following:

- The parents or person in parental relationship to the student.
- Not less than one General Education Teacher of the student whenever the student is or may be participating in the general education environment.
- Not less than one Special Education Teacher of the student, or, if appropriate, a special education provider of the student (speech therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, etc.)
- A School Psychologist
- A representative of the school district who is qualified to supervise special education and who is knowledgeable about the general curriculum.
- A physician when appropriate or is specifically requested by the parent at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.
- An additional parent member, if requested
- Student, if appropriate
- Other persons who have knowledge regarding the student.

In Bath, the following people are mandated members:

- The parent of the child
- General education teachers
- Special education teachers
- School Psychologist
- Committee on Special Education Chairperson

# Roles and Responsibilities

**Director of Special Education** - the Director of Special Education is responsible for scheduling, facilitating and following up on all CSE and CPSE meetings. The director works with building principals to ensure all students in their building receive appropriate services and programs necessary. The director oversees special education programs, staff and budget and ensures compliance to all special education laws and regulations. The Director completes all state reports in special education.

**The School Psychologist** - The school psychologist is responsible for initial evaluations and re-evaluations of students with disabilities. The school psychologist is a required member of the committee and is considered an expert on evaluation information.

**Special Education Teacher** - The Special Education Teacher provides special education services to students with disabilities. A special education teacher assists general education teachers with modifying curriculum, providing appropriate test accommodations to students with disabilities and when necessary, plans behavior modification programs. The Special Education teacher will collect information prior to annual reviews and re-evaluations and prepare portions of the student's IEP with input from the general education teacher prior to a CSE meeting. The Special Education Teacher will present the information collected for the student's present levels of performance at the Committee meeting and will make recommendations based on the needs listed in the present levels of educational performance.

**General Education Teacher** - The General Education Teacher provides the general education curriculum for all students and assists with modifying curriculum for students with disabilities. The General Education Teacher will attend committee meetings and provide input for the present levels of performance for students with disabilities. The general education teacher is responsible for the child as a whole.

## Terms related to Support Services:

**Adapted Physical Education (APE)** - a specially designed program of developmental activities suited to the 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.

**Assistive Technology** - Any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a student with a disability. FM system, spell check device, word processor, communication device, prone stander, are some examples.

**Declassification Support Services** - Students who are declassified may continue to receive services for up to one year from the date of declassification. If the student is at or above 8th grade he/she may be able to receive test accommodations and a safety net for the remainder of their school years.

**Extended Year Program (EYP)/ Extended School Year (ESY)** - A special education service and/or program provided on a year-round basis for students requiring a structured learning environment for up to twelve months duration to prevent substantial regression.

**Substantial Regression** - a student's inability to maintain developmental levels due to a loss of skill or knowledge of such severity following breaks from school including weekends, holiday vacations and summer months of July and August as to require an inordinate period of review at the beginning of the school year.

**Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)** - Process of determining why a student engages in behaviors that impede learning and how the student's behavior relates to the environment.

**Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)** - A plan designed for a child's individual needs to allow success when inner controls are not enough to allow for self-control, safety, and/or appropriate behavior in school.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP)** - a legally binding, written document developed and reviewed by a Committee on Special Education team, which includes components to meet the unique needs of a student with a disability.

**Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS)** - This credential will recognize each individual student's preparation and skills for post-school employment. Where in the past, many students graduated with an individualized education program (IEP) diploma, this credential provides a more meaningful substitute for these students. For students with disabilities who are exiting with a regular high school diploma, it provides them with the additional opportunity to exit school with a credential that also recognizes the students' work readiness skills. (NYSED)

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act** - is a federal statute, which guarantees the rights of disabled people to a fair and equal opportunity in all programs and activities. It is required that school districts remove any barriers that prevent a student from participating in or benefiting from activities for their education. Some examples of the need for 504 plans include a temporary need for classroom or test accommodations due to a medical concern such as a broken arm. 504 plans are used for students with medical concerns that prevent a child from participating in their educational setting. Some medical concerns include seizure disorders, diabetes, Cystic Fibrosis, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. For the most part, students with 504 plans do not have a need for special education services but rather need classroom or testing modifications. Building principals are responsible for and are able to request 504 plans for students if they deem it necessary including in emergency situations.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** - requires schools to meet certain guidelines for serving children with disabilities, providing a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** - means that placement of students with disabilities in special classes, separate schools or other removal from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature and severity of the disability is such that education cannot be achieved in the regular public school. It is critical and legally required that upon classification the district try the least restrictive environment for all students with a disability.

## Ongoing Service Coordination Policy and Procedure

Bath Central School will provide Ongoing Service Coordination to students with Disabilities. This Service Coordination will be for the purpose of assuring that all service providers communicate about the needs of the students and the Individualized Educational Program on a regular basis.

- The ongoing Service Coordinators will be a district employed special education teacher.
- BOCES special education teacher for students in BOCES placements.
- The ongoing Service Coordinator will be responsible for the IEP of each student they are servicing.
- The ongoing Service Coordination and the provider assigned will be placed on the student's Individualized Educational Program under service notation and/or be listed in the follow up letter following the CSE meeting.
- The student or parent agrees to the Service Coordination by accepting the current Individualized Educational Program of the student.
- A list of the service coordinators and the student's assigned to them will be kept in the CSE office and updated regularly.
- All staff involved with the student will be notified of the service coordinator assigned to each student.
- 408 distribution forms will be used to assure service providers have read and understand each IEP.

## Types of Special Education Support

Bath Central School's Special Education Department offers several options of programs that assist in meeting the needs of students with disabilities. The instructional options are determined in accordance with New York State and Federal guidelines and in accordance with the district mission and vision.

### Related Services

#### Counseling

A program that strives to improve social, emotional and behavioral concerns as they relate to a child's academic functioning. These services may be provided in a group or individual setting.

#### Speech and Language Therapy

A program that strives to improve a child's language or articulation skills as they relate to the child's academic functioning. A child may receive this service in a group or individual setting within the general education classroom or in a therapy room. This service requires a prescription.

## Occupational Therapy

A therapy to meet the fine motor, visual-perceptual, and sensory integration needs of students when they adversely affect a student's educational performance. A child may receive this service in a group or individual setting within the general education classroom or therapy room. This service requires a prescription.

## Physical Therapy

A related service provided to ensure the students ability to participate physically in the educational environment. This includes navigation of the school building and classroom. A child may receive this service in a group or individual setting within the general education classroom or therapy room. This service requires a prescription.

## Consultant Teacher Services

Direct or indirect services provided by a special education teacher to a student with a disability who attends regular education classes. Consultant Teacher Services must be provided for a minimum of two hours per week.

### Indirect Consultant Teacher Services

The least restrictive service provided to students with disabilities. It is most often used as a consultation between the child's general education teacher and a certified special education teacher to assist them in adjusting the learning environment and or modifying their instructional methods to meet the individual needs of the student.

Some possibilities of Indirect Consultant Teacher Services include:

- Teachers working together to modify class work, tests, or homework to meet the needs of an individual student.
- Meet with teachers weekly or daily to provide strategies, differentiation of instruction and show ways to help meet IEP goals.
- Coordinate and communicate remediation with Academic Intervention teacher, reading teacher and/or related service provider.
- Provide ideas on how to remediate behavioral concerns within a general education setting. This may include developing a behavior modification plan with the classroom teachers.

### Direct Consultant Teacher Services

A specially designed individualized instruction provided by a certified special education teacher. Instruction is provided to a student with a disability and allows such student to benefit from a general education class.

- Work directly with an individual student or small group of students in the area or areas specified on the IEP.
- This service takes place inside the general education setting.
- Special education teachers can provide alternate instruction or alternate curriculum in extreme cases.
- IEP goals are a priority for the particular student.

## Resource Room

A special education program for a student with a disability who attends either a special class or a general education class and is, in need of, supplementary instruction in an individualized or small group setting for a



minimum of three hours per week and a maximum of five students per instructional group. The three hour requirement can be a combination of consultant teacher services and resource room time.

## Integrated Co-teaching

Integrated co-teaching is a service model which means a general education teacher and a special education teacher jointly providing instruction to a class that includes both students with and without disabilities to meet the diverse learning needs.

## Special Class

This service is the most restrictive for students with more significant disabilities. It is a class that consists of students with disabilities who have been grouped together because of similar needs for the purpose of being provided specially designed instruction. This class shall not exceed the number of students specified. Bath currently has 15:1, 12:1:1 and 8:1:1 self-contained classrooms at all levels throughout the district. 12:1 (3:1) classrooms are also available though not across all levels. All other special classes are currently available in other districts and through BOCES.

## One on one aide

This is a very restrictive service. It is only provided to students with disabilities when a student is proven to be unsuccessful or unsafe in his academic setting without constant supervision due to significant academic and/or physical delays or when no gains are being made by the student. A one on one aide should be considered only when absolutely necessary and when all other options have been exhausted. The IEP should be very specific regarding the responsibility of the aide. A plan for the expectations of this person should be put in place as the aide is added to any student's IEP. A One on one aide request should be completed and provided to the director prior to requesting the one on one aide.

## Enhanced Staffing

An additional support person (aide or teaching assistant) may be placed in a particular instructional group to help general education teachers meet the needs of students with disabilities in the general education classrooms. A plan for the expectations of this person should be put in place if the staff member is placed on the IEP.

### Types of General Education Support

Bath Central School District believes that students with disabilities should be a part of our school environment to the maximum extent possible.

## Rtl

Response to Intervention (Rtl) is a proactive preventative approach to education where teachers provide high quality instruction and interventions that are matched to student needs. Through a three-tiered model, practitioners gather and monitor data about how the student is progressing, and finally they problem solve and apply that data to important decisions about what instructional changes are needed or what new goals should be set for the student.

It will be used as a method of consistent monitoring of progress in achievement for all students as well as to determine eligibility of students with Learning Disabilities. Response to Intervention provides immediate visual results. The program is student oriented and individualized. Students and teachers can see immediately

whether students are moving toward their target. Multiple assessment tools will be used at various grade levels. These results will determine the level of service the student may need.

## Student Support Team Problem Solving Team (SST)

The Student Support Team provides a system for tracking student progress in academics. Students of concern are referred by classroom teachers. Strategies are provided in order to improve student progress prior to a special education referral. The SST follows an Rtl approach and meets regularly to assess student progress.

## Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategies (PBIS)

The PBIS team provides a system for students who display behavioral concerns in their classrooms. PBIS offers teachers and staff strategies to improve student behaviors prior to a referral to special education. PBIS is another Rtl approach and meets regularly to assess student progress.

## Learning Centers/Advisement Periods

At the middle school and high school levels, this service offers students a structured study hall period with a small student to teacher ratio which allows for individualized attention including academic and organizational support.

## Academic Intervention Services

This service is instruction and/or student-support services which supplement the instruction provided in the general curriculum and are designed to help students meet or exceed the NYS Standards. Academic Intervention Services are intended to assist students who are at risk of not achieving the State Standards or who are at risk of not gaining the knowledge and skills necessary to meet or exceed college and career readiness. Academic Intervention Services shall be made available to students with disabilities on the same basis as non-disabled students, provided, however, such services shall be provided to the extent consistent with the student's Individualized Educational Program.

## Pre-Referral Service Options

Prior to referral for special education services there are many services and accommodations that can be offered to a student on a temporary basis. At times, a child may have external forces such as death, divorce or lack of food which may create difficulties for them in the academic setting. These environmental factors should be ruled out prior to referral. Examples of options include but are not limited to:

- Contact with the parents on a regular basis
- Agenda checking
- Use of a word processor
- Test accommodations (with the exception of State and Standardized tests)
- Extended time
- Separate location
- Modified assignments
- Additional Reading and Math support
- Speech
- Counseling

- AIS
- Afterschool Study Hall
- Before and After school time with the teacher

A referral made to the Committee on Special Education should be a last resort and should be made through the SST or PBIS Committees. When a professional decides to refer the child to the CSE team, it is the professional's obligation to complete the written referral thoroughly and contact the parents to discuss their intent. A copy of the referral may be obtained from the Director of Special Education.

## Referral

Once the SST and/or PBIS team determines that the child should be referred to the Special Education Committee, the committee should meet with the director with supporting documentation. The referral must be put in writing to the Building Principal or the Director.

Any referral submitted by a staff member must:

1. State reasons for the referral.
2. Include any test results, records, or reports upon which the referral was based.
3. Describe in writing any intervention services, programs, or instructional methodologies that were used to remediate the student's performance.
4. Demonstrate the lack of progress in the area of concern.
5. Explain the extent of parental contact or involvement prior to referral. The staff member must contact the parents prior to making a referral.

### Referral by parents:

A referral to the CSE may also be made by the parent, district designee, commissioner, a designee of a public education agency with responsibility for educating the student or a judicial officer. Parents should contact the director to schedule a meeting. If a teacher knows of a parent requesting a referral it is imperative that the teacher have the parent request a meeting with the director of special education as soon as possible.

## Evaluations

Once the referral is made, the evaluation will be initiated by the Committee and will include a variety of assessment tools and strategies. The evaluation will include information from the parent as well.

Consent to evaluate must be obtained by the parent prior to evaluation.

The following are examples of what is included in all initial evaluations:

- A Psychological evaluation will be performed
- A Social History
- A Classroom Observation
- Any other appropriate evaluations and assessments, including a Functional Behavioral Assessment for students whose behavior impedes his or her learning.

- Assessment tools are chosen based on the referral request and what the school psychologist deems necessary for the committee to make an informed decision.
- Evaluations will only take place when it has been directed by the Committee on Special Education or approved by the Building Administrator AND a parental consent, in writing, has been obtained. This includes Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech evaluations.

## Determining Eligibility

After all evaluations are completed, the committee and other qualified individuals must determine whether the student is a student with a disability under one of the thirteen categories listed earlier or under section 504 of the Education Law. A student may not be determined eligible if the determinant factor for the disability is lack of instruction, environmental in nature or limited English proficiency.

## CSE Meetings

Parents are an important part of their child's educational plan. The Committee on Special Education of Bath Central School encourages parents to actively participate in CSE meetings. Parents with questions or concerns should contact the Special Education Office prior to their child's meeting and at any time throughout the year.

### **Responsibility of case managers (special education teachers) and related service providers-**

- Write a draft Individualized Educational Plan prior to the CSE meeting
- Communicate changes that are being considered to the special education office prior to the meeting
- Participate actively in the meeting
- Work with staff to ensure that the IEP is implemented appropriately
- Monitor progress toward IEP goals
- Communicate with parents regarding the child's progress

**Amendments-** Changes to the IEPs should, whenever possible, occur during annual review meetings. Amendments should be rare and based solely on the student's needs or any changes in needs.

## The Individualized Educational Program (IEP)

If the student is found to be eligible, an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) must be developed.

The IEP includes such information as:

- Demographics
- Present Levels of Performance in the child's academic, social, physical, and management areas of development - this section is completed as a collaborative effort between special education teachers, general education teachers, and related service providers.
- The IEP must explain how the disability affects the success in the classroom.
- Indicate the area of classification
- List measurable annual goals that are consistent with the needs of the student. The goals must include objectives or benchmarks that are measurable.
- It must include a recommended special education program.
- It must indicate whether the child will participate in state or local exams.
- The IEP provides a statement as to how parents will be notified of the student's progress. (Progress reports quarterly).

- It will give the date of initiation of services
- Describe any assistive technology if applicable
- Provide a statement of test accommodations
- A statement of special factors, classroom accommodations, and interventions.

## Bath CSD Special Education Programming

### Grades K - 4

At this level inclusion will be used to the maximum extent possible.

This is where it begins! Students at this age need to be included in a general education setting to learn from peer role models.

Academically all students at this level need to learn similar basic concepts in reading and math.

Students learn more in early intervention programs and with peers their own age.

Socially this is most appropriate for young children.

Our job is to teach our youngest Rams everything they need to know. Academics are critical but children at this age need lessons in appropriate behaviors and age appropriate social skills.

Most students at this level progress to where they are not in need of services later.

### Grades K-12

Services provided in-district include Consultant Teacher Services Indirect, Consultant Teacher Services Direct, Resource Room, Speech, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy. These services will be provided to students in the least restrictive environment with the continuum of services being the following:

- General Education Classrooms
- Special Reading and Math Support/ AIS
- Improvement services
- Related Services- Speech, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, counseling
- Consultant Teacher Services Indirect
- Consultant Teacher Services Direct
- Resource Room
- Special Class

### 15:1

This program is for students who require more intensive academic support. (ELA, Math, Social Studies and Science)

- Curriculum has become much more challenging and the student needs to have it modified.
- Students at this level become frustrated with school and are not progressing in general academic courses.
- The students need the skills necessary to become independent productive citizens.
- Students sometimes begin to lose their positive self-concept.
- Some students demonstrate disruptive behaviors due to academic frustration.

## 12:1:1 Life skills

This program is for students who require the most intensive academic, foundational and functional skills.

- Students that require this program are typically academically and cognitively delayed.
- Students in this program are learning skills to prepare them toward a career or tech school.
- A few students with low cognitive ability and weak achievement will need functional academic programs that focus on independent living and social needs.

This is not recommended until lesser restrictive environments do not work.

## 8:1:1

At times there are students whose behavior impedes not only their own learning but also the learning of others. It is essential that we provide a safe environment for students with these needs. Academics are essential but behavioral, emotional and social needs must be met first. When these basic needs are not being met, learning is not taking place. This is not recommended until lesser restrictive environments do not work.

## 12:1 (3:1)- Academic Social Communication

The ASC program is designed for students with below average to low cognitive abilities. Students must also display significant social and communication delays and may require sensory treatment. This program includes specialized programs that meet the physical, academic and communication needs of our students. Students with a diagnosis of developmental disabilities including Autism and/or Down's Syndrome may be appropriate for this particular program. These students are not successful in the general education classroom due to the lack of social and communication skills and the need for therapeutic treatment. The program will focus on academics, including reading, writing and mathematics as well as social behaviors, communication, fine and gross motor skills. OT and Speech Therapy will be a part of this program and integrated within the classroom setting to the maximum extent possible.

### One-on-one Aide

A one-on-one aide is requested for those students who are unable to function and navigate safely in the classroom environment. When a one on one aide must be considered, a written plan for the aide should be completed by the teachers who are requesting the support. The plan must give detailed job duties of the aide and provide a schedule of events for each day. Goals and a phase out plan must also be included in the plan. This plan is located in the CSE office.

This is not recommended until lesser restrictive environments do not work.

## Contacts

**Please feel free to contact the Special Education Office with any questions or concerns.**

**Ms. Terri Tompkins- Secretary- 776-3301 extension 1081**

**Mr. Derek Ortiz- Director of Special Education- 607-776-3301 extension 1082**

**Dr. Brad Ervin- School Psychologist- 607-776- 3301**

**Mrs. Courtney Jackson- School Psychologist- 607-776-3301**