

SPECIAL EDUCATION, PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION

Philosophy

The mission of the Special Education Department is to support the district's goal of excellence for all students including individuals with exceptional needs. Collaboration between special education and regular program staff will be encouraged to provide opportunities for special education students to participate in the regular district program to the greatest extent possible. Student identification with the regular program is paramount to the development of self-esteem, social skills, cognitive learning skills, and participation in a democratic society.

Mission Statements

1. Special education students are provided a full range of educational services based on their individual student needs. Services include: a) programs for students ages 3 through 21, b) resource specialist, special day class, and designated instructional service programs, and c) psychological and health support services.
2. Collaborative efforts between special education and regular education are encouraged to enable students to be placed successfully in the regular education program and receive instruction in the district's core curriculum.
3. Standards for scholastic, social, personal, and vocational achievement are established at the highest level commensurate with the individual's ability and physical limitations. Special education students are challenged to use their abilities to the maximum extent possible to become educated and productive persons.
4. Special education students are provided successful transitions within special education programs, from special education to regular education, and upon graduation from the school district.
5. Positive self-esteem is developed through the instructional curriculum, teaching methodologies, and the treatment of each student with dignity, respect, caring and consideration for their special needs.
6. Special education students are encouraged to play an active role in their education, including participation in the IEP process where appropriate, assuming responsibility for their learning, behavior and health, and participation in extra-curricula school activities.
7. Ongoing program evaluation is conducted to assure the effectiveness of the special education programs and services. Emphasis is placed on student outcomes in both the cognitive and affective domains.

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8. Parents are encouraged to be active partners in the education of their special education student through participation in the IEP process and district provided parent education programs and consultation.
9. Special education staff are provided staff development activities related to the improvement of student outcomes and program effectiveness. Professional growth and job satisfaction are also an integral part of the staff development program.
10. Community and other outside district resources are utilized to enhance the District's Special Education Program.