

Board of Education Regular Meeting

Tuesday, March 21, 2023 7:30 PM

Town Campus Hammonasset Room/Zoom, 10 Campus Drive , Madison, CT 06443

I. Call to Order / Attendance

I.A. Pledge of Allegiance

II. School / Community Session

II.A. Public Participation

III. Presentation - Special Education

Speaker(s): Elizabeth Battaglia, Ed.D.

IV. Board Member Comments

V. Audience Response to Information Presented (Ref. Bylaw #9540.10)

VI. Adjournment

VII.

The Town of Madison does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and the meeting facilities are ADA accessible. Individuals who need assistance are invited to make their needs known by contacting the Town ADA/Human Resources Director, Debra Ferrante, at 203-245-6310 or by email at ferranted@madisonct.org at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting.



Madison Public Schools

Special Education

Leadership

Director of Special Education
Dr. Elizabeth Battaglia

High School Special
Education Coordinator
Kim Dunn

Middle School Special
Education Coordinator
Kristin Skelly

Elementary School Special
Education Coordinator
Sherry Farmer

Role of the Special Education Coordinator

Responsibilities include:

- Facilitate Planning and Placement Team Meetings
- Review and finalize document
- Collaborate with parents and students
- Provide support to general educators, special educators, administrations, and support staff about particular students.
- Evaluate special education staff
- Participate in and/or facilitate meetings for the department and special programs
- Determine purchasing needs with individual school budgets
- Review evaluations and determine appropriate services
- Oversee implementation of the students IEPs.

General Education

- ✓ All students are entitled to general education.
- ✓ General education supports include Scientifically Research Based Supports (SRBI)
 - ✓ Tier 1
 - ✓ Tier 2
 - ✓ Tier 3



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Section 504

- Section 504 are considered general education supports.
- To get a 504 plan, a student must have a “physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity.”
- Students are provided with accommodations to assist them in accessing the general education curriculum.
- Includes individual with life threatening allergies.

Disability categories which could qualify an individual for a 504 Plan:

- ✓ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- ✓ Life threatening bee allergy
- ✓ Diabetes
- ✓ Cancer
- ✓ Dyslexia
- ✓ Anxiety

Special Education

- Special education means specially designed instruction, *at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability.*
- **Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under this part, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction**
- **(i)** To address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability; and
- **(ii)** To ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children.



Sec. 300.39 Special education

300.39 Special education. (a) General. (1) Special education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with ...

 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Modifications vs. Accommodations

Modifications

- Refer to changes made to the curriculum expectations in order to meet the needs of the student.
- We change **WHAT** we teach.
- Usually made when the expectations are beyond the students level of ability and must be clearly acknowledged in the IEP.
- Examples:
 - Reduce spelling/vocabulary words
 - Tests do not cover all of the standard material

Accommodations

- Accommodations are alterations in **HOW** tasks are presented that allow children with learning disabilities to complete the same assignments as other students.
- Accommodations do not alter the content of assignments, give students an unfair advantage or in the case of assessments, change what a test measures.
- Examples:
 - Allow for answers to be dictated to a scribe
 - Extend allotted time for a test
 - Administer a test in several timed sessions or over several days

Continuum of Special Education Services



School
Psychologist

Physical
Therapist

Occupational
Therapist

RELATED SERVICES

Board Certified
Behavior Analyst

Nurses

Social Workers

Speech and
Language
Pathologist

	Special Education	Program Coordinator	SLP	Psychologist	Social Worker	Nurse	Health Aide
TCLC	3.0		1.0	1.0		1.0	
Jeffrey	5.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	
Ryerson	6.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	
Brown	6.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	
Polson	8.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
DHHS	9.0	1.0	1.0	1.6	1.0	1.0	1.0
Total	34.0	3.0	6.0	6.6	5.0	6.0	2.0

	Total # Non-disabled	Total # Disabled	% Spec. Ed.
2013	2933	358	10.88%
2014	2815	355	11.20%
2015	2659	352	11.69%
2016	2558	371	12.67%
2017	2454	367	13.01%
2018	2356	362	13.32%
2019	2235	379	14.50%
2022	2113	358	14.49%
2021	2090	350	14.34%
2022	2068	358	14.76%

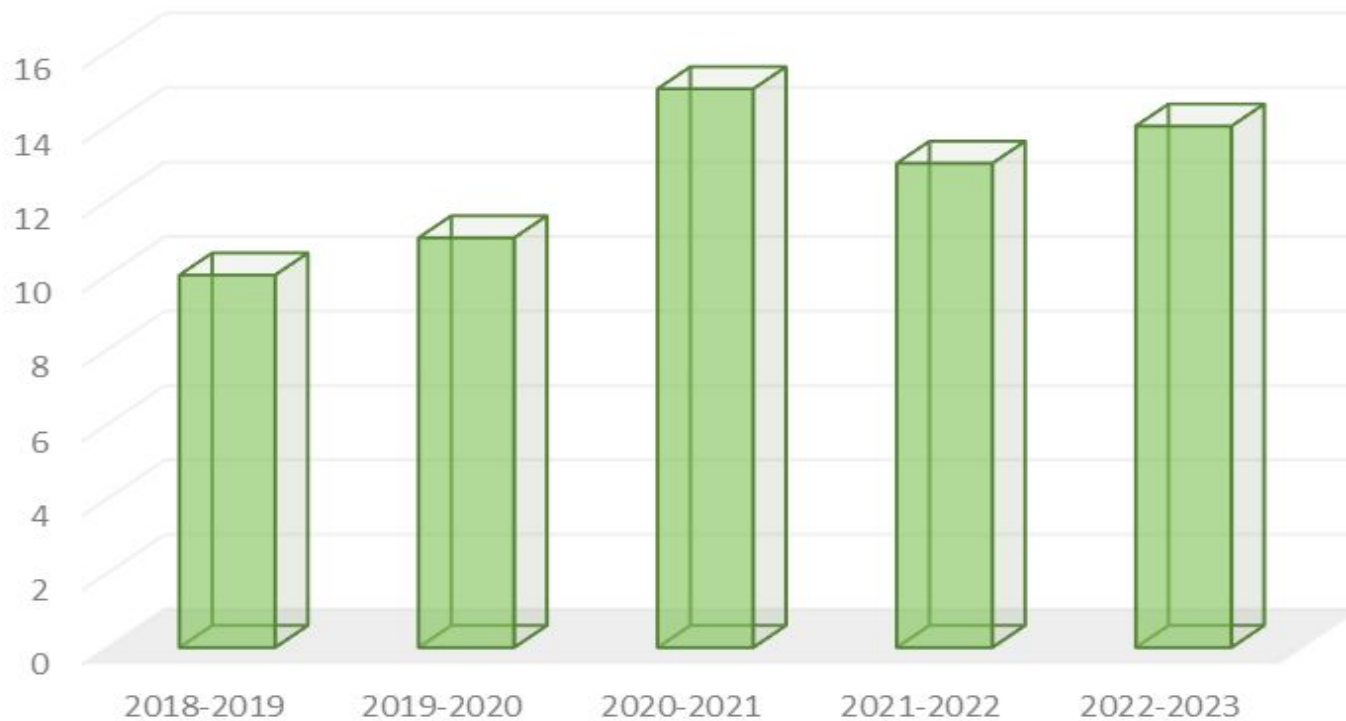
Child Find

- Districts have a child find obligation for students ages 3-21 years old.
- June 2020 decision, stated Districts need to provide special education services through a student's 21st year.
- Town Campus Learning Center provides multiple Child Find Screenings per year.



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Number of Students in 18 to 22 Year Old Programs



Private Schools

- Madison Public Schools has a Child Find responsibility for all students who are being educated in Madison from 3 years old through 22 years old.
- District is responsible for testing students to see if they qualify for special education services and continuing to qualify every three years.
- The Individuals with Disability Education Act provides funds which are shared with the private programs in town to provide consultation for students who qualify for special education at their programs.

FUNCTIONAL ACADEMIC SKILLS EDUCATION (FASE) PROGRAM

The FASE Program provides students functional instruction in the areas of communication, academic, social-behavioral and emotional regulation skills. The FASE Teams in each school provide specially designed direct instruction for its students in order to address concerns which have either already been taught (i.e. developmental delays) or are never taught (i.e. life skills) in the general education classroom. The goal of the program is to create independent learners, holding high standards for success academically, socially and emotionally.



FUNCTIONAL ACADEMIC SKILLS EDUCATION (FASE) PROGRAM

- ❖ Ready to learn skills.
- ❖ Discrete skill instruction.
- ❖ Instruction linked to the Applied Behavior Analysis methodology.
- ❖ Explicit instruction and repetitive practice with academic, communication and/or social skills and concepts.
- ❖ Whole class instruction, one-to-one instruction and/or small group work.
- ❖ Small classes for students who are significantly below grade-level skills.
- ❖ Functional skill instruction.
- ❖ Pre-vocational skills development.
- ❖ Community based instruction.
- ❖ Community based work experiences.

PROGRAM OF ALTERNATIVE LEARNING (PAL)

The Program for Alternative Learning is a district wide program that services students in grades K-6 experiencing social and emotional difficulties that significantly impede their educational performance and social development.

- PAL offers a safe place to develop and practice coping skills and social skills. The goal of the program is to return each student to successful and independent functioning with the regular education community.
- Students can access PAL for earned breaks, to de-escalate when upset, and/or to complete work.
- Students in PAL range from those who are completely self-contained to those who access PAL infrequently on an as-needed basis.
- For students in PAL, the case manager, classroom teacher(s), paraprofessional(s), and related service providers collaborate to form an individualized program for each student.

PROGRAM OF ALTERNATIVE LEARNING (PAL)

Before a student can be taught academics, they need to be in control of their behavior. This can be a lengthy, challenging and ongoing process.

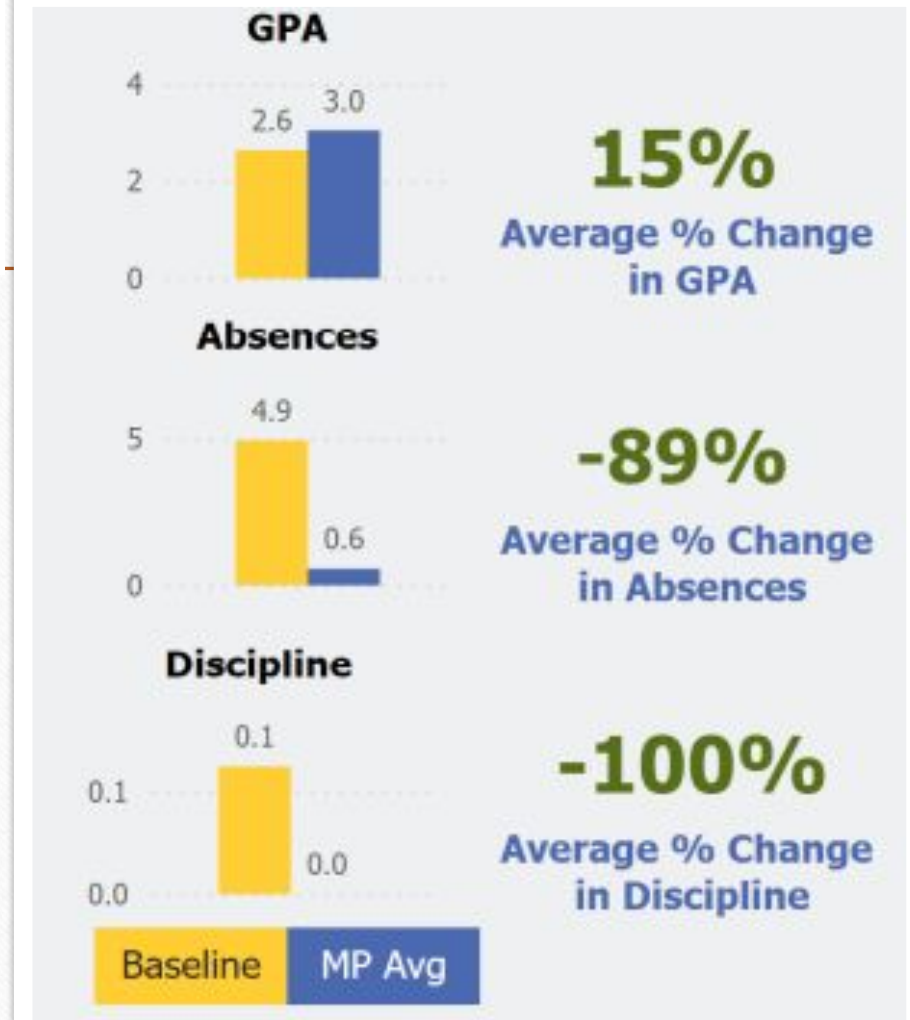
Students behave based on what they have learned, on what is functional and effective (no matter how inappropriate)!

Behavior change is achieved through the teaching of replacement behaviors. This is typically a gradual process involving numerous steps in order to move from the undesired to the ultimately desired behavior.



Effective School Solutions

- An intensive therapeutic program.
- Program components include: individual therapy, group therapy, and parent training.
- Students who benefit from the program have challenges in areas such as: coming to school, going to class, and participating appropriately at school.
- Program starts in 6th grade through 12th grade.
- Each counselor has up to 9 students on their caseload.



What parents are saying...



Having the services available to my child in school is very helpful. Outpatient therapy have not work due to scheduling issues and requires parents to be present at all sessions is time consuming which prevent steady work leading to financial insecurity.



This program has been a life saver for my child. It has made all the difference in her school experience . Tori and Kara have been an invaluable support for her. Deep gratitude!



'In the winter and spring of 8th grade, my daughter refused to attend school - in person or online. She failed every class and spent the day alone in her room. Any attempt at conversation, no matter how non-confrontational, was met with hostility. I felt helpless and was at a loss. I worried all the time.

At the very end of the school year, we were introduced to Hannah from ESS. She made an immediate connection with my daughter. I could see we were in the hands of someone with a special gift. Hannah visited us several times over the summer and, with enormous patience and kindness, coaxed my daughter to the school, first to campus, gradually inside...When we left, my daughter said she was excited to start high school. Knowing the months of pain and loneliness she had gone through, this was a miracle. I don't know who was more relieved, my daughter or me. Since school started ... it's only gotten better. She's doing well academically, has close friends - both in and out of her ESS group - and there's no trouble getting her to school. The problems we have now are the same issues any parent faces with a 15 year old. When something bigger does arise, my first call is to Hannah, to give her a heads up, but just as importantly to get advice. I don't know where we would be if Hannah hadn't come into our lives last spring. She's given my daughter her life back.

STRIVE PROGRAM

The STRIVE Program is a community-based program for students with disabilities ages 18 to 22 years old. Students will spend a portion of their day developing independent living, social, and employment skills. The students will also participate in a community-based work experiences based on their strengths, interests, and preferences. Each student's program will be individualized based on their unique needs and the decisions made at the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings.



Outplacements

Currently, 36 students are outplaced:

- **5** of these students are at **local magnet or vocational** programs.
- **13** of these students are in **18--22 year** old programs.
- **2** of these students were **expelled**.
- **16** students are placed for more **intensive programming** K-12 grade.

Secondary Transition

- Prior to a student turns 14 years old, transition planning must be included in their Individual Education Plan (IEP).
 - Every student must have a Post-School Outcome Goal Statement in the areas of post-secondary education/training, employment, and (if applicable) independent living skills.
- Secondary transition activities can include:
 - Completing applications
 - Developing resumes
 - Budgeting
 - School based work experiences
 - Community based work experiences
 - Understanding their rights under IDEA and ADA
 - Connection to adult service agencies

Supporting High Needs Sub Group Grades 3 through 8

- Writing standards based goals and objectives.
- Data team meetings with special education teachers.
- Professional development on state testing and resources.
- All Students take 4 or 5 Interim Assessment Blocks.
- Students will use the accommodations during the Interim Assessment Blocks.
- Changes have been made to add specific accommodations for eligible students.
- Joint data team meetings with Gen Ed Special Ed, coaches, and interventionists.
- Regular Special Ed and Gen Ed PLCs during department meetings.
- Special education teachers participate in bi-weekly department meetings.

Role of the Paraeducator

- “The paraeducator works under the direct supervision of the teacher or other certified or licensed professional. The ultimate responsibility for the design, implementation and evaluation of instructional programs, including assessment of student progress, is a collaborative effort of certified and licensed staff.”
- Prioritize students with health and safety needs which require an additional individual to keep a student safe.
- Important support for assistance with implementing the goals and objectives in a student's IEP.

Next Steps

- Continue to review and expand on our programs such as FASE.
- Increasing co-teaching across the district.
- Redefining how we use paraeducators.
- Increasing reading instruction for all special education staff.
- Expand on the services schools staff can implement through professional development.
- Increase parent participation and training.

**“Every student can
learn just not on the
same day or in the same
way”**

A white rectangular card is centered on a dark brown wooden surface. The card is held in place by two black clips, one at the top center and one at the bottom center. The text 'Thank You' is written on the card in a vibrant, multi-colored cursive font. The colors transition from red on the left, through orange, yellow, green, cyan, blue, and purple, ending in magenta on the right. The letters have a slight 3D effect with shadows.

Thank
You