

CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

Least Restrictive Environment

The placement of students with disabilities in special classes, separate schools or other removal from the general education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that, even with the use of supplementary aids and services, education cannot be satisfactorily achieved.

In-District Services

Cohoes City School District has a continuum of services available to meet the varied needs of students with disabilities. This continuum represents services and program options that are available within the district and outside the district through BOCES, approved private educational agencies and other state-supported or state-operated school programs.

General Education Programs

In this setting, students with a disability receive the same services and supports available to all students. These services include, when necessary, academic intervention services in the content areas, specialized reading instruction (i.e. Reading Recovery, Wilson, Lindamood), Speech Improvement). Behavioral support is also provided through the school psychologist and/or social worker. The general education teacher may also receive consultation from designated instructional support specialists, special education staff and/or administrators.

Related Services

Students with disabilities may receive a number of periods per week of related services provided by appropriate specialists. These services include counseling, physical therapy, occupational therapy, teacher of the visually impaired/hearing impaired, mobility training, and behavioral support. The extent of these services may range from daily sessions to less frequent contacts depending upon the delivery plan outlined in the IEP.

Consultant Services

Consultant teacher service is direct or indirect consultation provided by a certified special education teacher to the general education teacher(s) within the general education environment. This service is the least restrictive and can be implemented as a direct service during instruction of the content or as an indirect service for the teacher outside of instructional time. The purpose is to assist the classroom teacher in adjusting the learning environment and/or modifying instructional methods to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Consultant teacher services are provided at a minimum of two hours per week but may be more depending on individual needs or less if they are provided in conjunction with other services. The IEP must indicate areas of the general education program in which the student will receive consultant teacher services and the frequency in which the service will be delivered. Regulations require that the general education teacher of the student shall be given the opportunity to participate in the planning conference to discuss the objectives, methods and schedule for service.

Resource Services

The resource room is designed as a congruent support system to the general education class program for students with disabilities. The student's specific learning needs are such that he/she needs specialized supplementary instruction in an individual or small group setting. Emphasis is on collaboration between the special education teacher and the subject teacher in the learning process. This instruction is provided to the student for at least three hours per week, not to exceed 50% of the school day. Services are provided with no more than five (5) students in each period, with a total caseload not to exceed twenty-five students.

Declassification Support Service

When a student is being declassified, he/she may continue to receive support services for up to **one** year from the date of declassification. The pre-determined testing accommodations may also be provided throughout the remainder of the student's school career if necessary. The purpose of these services is to provide support to general education teachers during the student's transfer from special education to general education.

Special Class Integrated/Non-Integrated

When it is deemed necessary, students receive primary instruction in math, reading and writing. This service can be delivered within the classroom (integrated-co-teaching) or as a pullout program (non-integrated). This type of instruction generally occurs on a daily basis for 30 to 60 minutes at a time. The group size is not to exceed fifteen (15) students.

Special Class

Special class options are provided in district if a student's needs are such that a combination of other services within the general education environment is not successful. This is the most restrictive service available in the district. Students in a special class setting receive primary instruction in all core content areas and are integrated for specials such as music, art, technology, physical education, etc. The class size varies depending on the nature of the classroom and the specific class types may vary from year to year depending upon the needs of the student population.

******Communication and Social Development***

This program option is designed specifically to improve social interactions along with expressive and receptive communication skills. The program serves students with significant language skill delays due to a medically diagnosed processing disorder or autism spectrum disorder. Instruction involves the use of visual supports for communication and social skill development. The program serves students in grades equivalent to kindergarten and first grade with no more than eight students in the class. A speech therapist is assigned to each classroom and works collaboratively with the special education teacher to provide a consistent integrative approach for each student.

******Developmental Skills***

This program serves students in grades Kindergarten through first grade with multiple needs including low cognitive ability, physical impairments, communication deficits, medically fragile etc. The class size is limited to eight in order to provide intensive instruction in basic skills. The students are integrated for specials when appropriate or provided adaptive instruction by special area teachers.

*****Functional Skills**

The program uses a modified curriculum to serve students who require more individualized attention due to their low cognitive ability usually accompanied by language delays and impaired adaptive behaviors. The focus is on functional curriculum and activities necessary for successful adult living. Class size is limited to twelve students and instruction is provided outside the general education environment. Opportunities for academic integration are afforded the student if appropriate. At the secondary level, vocational training is incorporated into instruction through the internship program or vo-tech classes. Students involved in this program often participate in the New York State Alternate Assessment and are eligible to receive an IEP diploma. Students who are not eligible for the alternate assessment must sit for the Regents Exams and/or the RCT's in English and Mathematics as required by the NY State Education Department.

*****Academic Skills**

This program option is designed for students with significant learning difficulties. A modified general education curriculum is offered with emphasis on reading and written language in the content areas. Students are integrated in core subject areas that are appropriate. The class size is limited to fifteen in order to meet the individualized needs of the students. Students enrolled in this program must sit for the required Regents Exams and take the RCT's in order to meet the requirements for a school diploma. Vocational training is an integral part of this program at the secondary level.

*****Behavior Development/Support**

This program option provides individualized instruction for students with significant social and emotional needs. It offers the structure and adult support necessary for students who require intensive management systems for their combined social, communication and academic needs. The class size is limited to eight students. Counseling and social skills training are an integral part of the program. Students are integrated into special class areas if their behavior is at acceptable levels.

Students enrolled in this program must sit for the required Regents Exams and take the RCT's in order to meet the requirements for a school diploma.

*****School to Work Transition Services**

This program is usually combined with an Academic or Functional Skills program and available to students in grades 10, 11 and 12. The emphasis is on obtaining employability skills by participating in 2 to 3 work experiences at different job sites throughout the year. Students who plan to graduate with an IEP diploma must complete a vocational component in their junior and senior years as part of their graduation requirement. This option fulfills that requirement.

Out of District Services

Career and Technical Education

There are several options offered through the Capital Region Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES). Services include vocational assessment, vocational training programs, worksite placements and job coaching. Several occupational courses are geared specifically to the special needs of students with disabilities. These programs are accessed through school counselors or the CSE committee. Completion of a Vo-tech course fulfills the graduation requirement for an IEP diploma.

Home and/or Hospital Instruction

This program provides education on an individual basis to students confined to their home or hospital for more than 10 days due to severe medical or psychological debilitating condition. Children at the elementary level must be instructed a minimum of five hours per week, and students at the secondary level must be instructed a minimum of two hours per day or a maximum of ten hours per week. The district views this as a temporary service and does not support long-term home instruction.

BOCES Special Education Classes

Classes are provided through Capital Region, Questar, and/or WSHWE BOCES for students with low incident disabilities (i.e. deaf and hard of hearing, orthopedic impairments etc.), and for students who cannot be served within the district. These services are only available when the district has eliminated other less restrictive placement options. Students served in BOCES are considered Cohoes residents and are observed and reviewed on at least an annual basis.

Approved Private Schools

Local private school options are available for students who require a specialized or therapeutic program approach that is not available within the district. Recommendations for these programs are made by the CSE and must be approved by The State Education Department prior to the child attending a private school placement. Students in private school placements are considered residents of the district and are observed and reviewed on at least an annual basis by the Office of Special Programs.

Approved private day providers in the area:

- Center for Disability Services (UCP)
- LaSalle School for Boys
- Northeast Parent and Child Center
- Parsons Child and Family Center
- St. Anne's Institute
- St. Coleman's
- St. Catherine's Center for Children
- Vanderheyden Hall
- Wildwood School
- Berkshire Union Free School
- Oakwood

Residential Programs

These programs are limited to students with dual-diagnosis or other unique needs that cannot be met in any other environment. Determination is made on a case-by-case basis and must have approval from The State Education Department prior to placement. Location of program depends on student needs and availability.