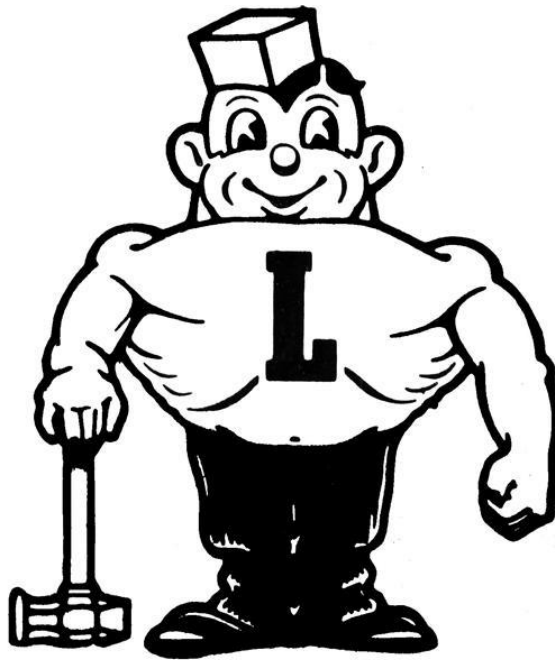


# **LACKAWANNA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT PLAN 2018-2019**



**Board Approval November 15, 2018**

### ***Introduction:***

Commissioner's regulations 200.2(c) require that each Board of Education shall prepare satisfactory plans as required by subdivision 10 of section 3602 of Education Law. Each plan shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- A description of the nature and scope of special education programs and services currently available to students and preschool students residing in the district.
- Identification of the number and age span of students and preschool students to be served by type of disability and recommended setting.
- Method to be used to evaluate the extent to which the objectives of the program have been achieved.
- Description of the policies and practices of the Board of Education to ensure the continual allocation of appropriate space within the district for special education programs that meet the needs of students and preschool students with disabilities.
- Description of the policies and practices of the Board of Education to ensure that appropriate space will be continually available to meet the needs of resident students and preschool students with disabilities who attend special education programs provided by Boards of Cooperative Education Services.
- Description of how the district intends to ensure that all instructional materials are used in the schools of the district will be made available in a usable alternative format.
- Estimated budget to support such plan.
- The date on which such plan was adopted by the Board of Education.

District plans should be kept current and be reviewed periodically by the Board of Education to ensure that the plan reflects the appropriate use of State aid for the purposes of making special education programs and services available to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities in the district. Therefore, this plan will meet the requirements indicated above for the period of 2018-2019. A requirement of this plan is the data included must be from the State submitted reports.

### ***Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities:***

In the fall of 2018, the Office of Special Education revised its set of guiding principles to align with New York State Education Department's ***Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities***. The purpose of these principles is to ensure that students with disabilities have opportunities to benefit from high quality instruction, to reach the same standards as all students, and to leave school prepared to successfully transition to post-school learning, living and working. In addition, the principles lay the foundation for improved instruction and results for students with disabilities.

The Blueprint focuses on seven research and evidence-based core principles and practices for all students with disabilities. Improving results for students with disabilities requires a renewed focus on these core principles. Underlying these principles are the following essential understandings:

- Communities, boards of education, district and school leaders must provide systemic supports and professional development for teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities, including appropriate identification and ensuring classrooms have necessary supports, rigorous and relevant learning environments and classroom and school-wide approaches are created to maintain a positive climate.
- School principals and special education administrators are fundamental in the roles as instructional leaders for students with disabilities.
- All teachers are teachers of students with disabilities and every teacher needs to be skilled in how to support and provide differentiated and specially-designed instruction to students with disabilities.
- Students with disabilities must be held to high expectations and given the appropriate supports and services to meet those high expectations.
- Students and parents of students with disabilities need information and support to be meaningfully involved in the special education process.
- Students with disabilities should participate, to the maximum extent possible, in making recommendations for supports and services needed for their academic success and to meet their post-secondary transition goals.

### ***Special Education Guiding Principles:***

The Lackawanna City School District will use the following principles to review practices and to identify and act on areas where improvement is needed.

#### ***➤ Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own educational goals and plans.***

This is evident when:

- Students participate in individualized education program (IEP) meetings.
- Students create and monitor their progress towards academic and social goals.
- Students engage in career planning and selection of courses of study to prepare them for post-secondary living, working and learning.

#### ***➤ Parents, and other Family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.***

This is evident when:

- Parents report that they understand the special education process and their due process rights and actively participate in the development of their child's IEP.
- Parents understand what their child is expected to know and be able to do at each grade level.
- Parents and educators engage in frequent, respectful and open discussion of the educational needs of the student.
- Families are invited into and feel welcomed in all school environments.
- Parents have the information they need about effective strategies to support their child's learning and support transition from school to post-school activities.

- ***Teachers design, provide and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide access for students with disabilities to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.***

This is evident when:

- All teachers are responsive to the pedagogical needs of students with disabilities.
- All students receive instruction in curriculum aligned with the States Learning Standards.
- IEPs are developed in consideration of grade level standards.
- IEPs are implemented and reviewed by educators, families and students to ensure that students are meeting their annual goals.
- Special and general education teachers of students with disabilities engage in intentional collaborative lesson planning to meet the needs of each individual student with a disability.
- Individual student data are used to inform and design instruction for students with disabilities to progress toward grade level standards.
- Students with disabilities receive instructional materials in alternative formats at the same time as other students in the class receive their instructional materials.

- ***Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.***

This is evident when:

- All teachers develop lessons that allow multiple entry points and multiple modes of engagement for students with diverse needs.
- All teachers of students are knowledgeable and skilled in providing explicit instruction in academics and social-emotional learning.
- Students with disabilities are taught strategies for self-regulated learning across the content areas.
- All teachers continually assess students' understanding of lessons to improve and target instruction to student needs.
- Students' individualized needs for assistive technology devices and services are considered and accommodated.

- ***Schools provide multi-tiered systems for behavioral and academic support.***

This is evident when:

- Educators collect and analyze student outcome data to plan, organize and evaluate the effectiveness of school-wide programs and instruction for all students.
- Educators disaggregate and analyze outcomes for students with disabilities to improve school-wide programs and interventions.
- Educators collect and analyze data to identify individual students in need of additional support.

- Evidenced-based interventions are provided in a timely manner to students needing more support.
- Progress monitoring data are collected and inform decisions about the effectiveness and/or need for modification to those interventions.

➤ ***Schools provide high quality inclusive programs and activities.***

This is evident when:

- Educators use the full continuum of services to ensure that students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment.
- The needs of the students are the primary consideration in the configuration of special education programs and services to be provided to students with disabilities.
- District/school leaders allocate human and financial resources to support scheduling and the continuum of special education programs and services.
- Students with disabilities in inclusive settings are provided the accommodations and explicit and specially-designed instruction needed to progress in the curriculum.

➤ ***Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.***

This is evident when:

- Students are provided age-appropriate transition assessments, guidance, courses of study and work-based learning opportunities to meaningfully engage in early and ongoing career planning exploration.
- Students with disabilities and their families are provided early and clear information on graduation requirements.
- Students with disabilities receive instruction toward the Career Development and Occupational Studies Learning Standards beginning in the early grades.
- Students are provided instruction to develop lifelong learning skills such as self-advocacy, social-emotional skills, higher order thinking, employability skills and consumer and life skills.
- Students and their families actively participate in the transition planning process.
- Schools facilitate timely student and family connections to post-secondary supports and services through ACCES-VR and other State agency programs and services.

***Implementation of School-Wide Approaches & Pre-Referral Interventions:***

In accordance with the IDEA and Part 200 of the Commissioner's Regulations, the district must develop a policy and implement a plan to establish pre-referral interventions to assist a student's education process before consideration of referral to the Committee on Special Education (CSE). It is the responsibility of the school's principal and Student Support Team (SST) to investigate all possible avenues of general education support services that would enable the student to achieve the Learning Standards. Such services may include, but are not limited to, Response to

Intervention services. **All** students who do not meet the minimum designated standards on State assessments and to English Language Learners (ELL students) who do not achieve the annual CR Part 154 performance standards must be afforded these services. Response to Intervention (RTI) services supplements the instruction in English Language Arts and Math. Additionally, RTI provides support services to deal with barriers to student performance such as attendance, discipline, health, family, nutrition, and mobility/transfer issues.

All school-wide approaches to provide remediation activities for students who are at risk of not meeting State Learning Standards or meeting graduation requirements will be considered prior to making a referral to the CSE. The school shall notify each student's parents whenever RTI services are provided. These school-wide approaches shall serve as pre-referral interventions prior to consideration of special education programs through the Committee on Special Education (CSE).

The District's CSE referral form requires staff to describe the pre-referral strategies implemented such as intervention services/programs used to remediate the student's performance, instructional methodologies, including any supplementary aids or support services provided, or the reasons why no such attempts were made. The principal and the building's Student Support Team shall maintain a record of pre-referral interventions implemented for each student. Each referral shall be reviewed to determine its appropriateness and whether pre-referral interventions have been adequately utilized, and if further interventions are deemed necessary.

Within ten (10) days of receipt of referral to the CSE, the building principal may request a meeting with the parent or person in parental relationship to the student, the student, and the referring person to determine whether the student would benefit from additional general education support services as an alternative to special education. These services may include, but are not limited to, Speech and Language Improvement Services, Resource Room Services (Educationally Related Support Services), RTI and any other services designed to address the learning needs of the student and to maintain the student's placement in general education. At this meeting, if there is a written agreement that with the provision of additional general education support services the referral is unwarranted, the referral shall be deemed withdrawn and the building administrator shall provide a copy of this agreement to the Special Education Principal, the referring person, the parent or person in parental relationship, and the student, if appropriate. A copy of the agreement will be in the native language of the parent and will name the additional general education support services that will be provided as well as the length of time of each service. This agreement will be placed in the student's cumulative educational record file. If there is no written agreement reached at this meeting, the required timelines of the CSE will be maintained.

These pre-referral interventions will not be utilized as a barrier to prevent appropriate referrals for special education services, but shall be used to assess the ability of the student to benefit from regular education services.

### ***Response to Intervention:***

- In accordance with part 100.2 (ii), A school district's process to determine if a student responds to scientific, research-based instruction shall include appropriate instruction delivered to all students in the general education class by qualified personnel.

Appropriate instruction begins with a core program that provides:

- \* high quality, research-based instruction to all students in the general education class provided by qualified teachers;
- \* differentiated instruction to meet the wide range of student needs;
- \* curriculum that is aligned to the Common Core State learning standards and progression documents; and
- \* instructional strategies that utilize a formative assessment process.

Appropriate instruction is defined in the following areas as:

- \* Appropriate instruction in reading means explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills), and reading comprehension strategies [8NYCRR 100.2(ii) and 200.4(c)(2)(i)].
- \* Appropriate instruction in mathematics includes instruction in problem-solving, arithmetic skill and fluency, conceptual knowledge/number sense and reasoning ability [The University of New York The State Education Department. Response to Intervention Guidance for New York State School Districts. 2010, 4].
- \* Appropriate behavioral supports and intervention is evidenced by a school-wide positive behavioral system which reflects a systems approach to discipline that emphasizes prevention and data-based decision-making to both reduce problem behavior and improve academic performance [The University of New York The State Education Department. Response to Intervention Guidance for New York State School Districts. 2010, pg. 4].
- \* Culturally responsive instruction uses the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, performance styles, and strengths of students from diverse backgrounds to make learning more appropriate and effective for them. Culturally responsive teaching incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools [The University of New York The State Education Department. Response to Intervention Guidance for New York State School Districts. 2010, pg. 5].
- \* Appropriate instruction for limited English proficient/English language learners (LEP/ELL) students must be both culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate. This includes research-based instruction that has been validated with LEP/ELL students and bilingual and

English as a New Language (ENL) instruction, at levels pursuant to Part 154 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. It is also important to determine if adequate support in English language development has been provided and to what extent a student may be struggling due to their lack of proficiency in English [Response to Intervention, Guidance for New York State School Districts, October 2010, pgs. 5-6].

\* The same basic requirements for implementing RTI with all general education students apply to situations in which cultural and linguistic diversity may be a factor: screening, progress monitoring, qualified instructors (for reading/literacy and content areas, including instructors providing English Language Arts (ELA), ENL, and bilingual instruction), and application of instruction and interventions with fidelity [The University of New York The State Education Department. Response to Intervention Guidance for New York State School Districts. 2010, pg. 6].

### ***Nature and Scope of Special Education:***

The Lackawanna Board of Education has allocated the necessary fiscal and human resources to ensure a full continuum of Special Education Programs and Services for resident school age and preschool Students with Disabilities, ages 3 – 21 years as defined in the New York State Part 200 Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. The district also provides access to the all general education programs and extracurricular activities for students with disabilities. The 2018-2019 General Fund Budget includes staffing information for special education.

The Lackawanna City School District is committed to providing all students, including students with disabilities with a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. The New York State Learning Standards apply to all students, regardless of their experiential background, capabilities, developmental learning differences, interests or ambitions. All students deserve the opportunity to meet these standards.

All programs and services for preschool and school age students with disabilities are based on their individual needs as recommended by the CPSE or CSE. Each student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

### ***Preschool Programs and Services:***

The Lackawanna City School District's Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) is responsible for arranging for evaluations of any student who is suspected of having a disability, who meets the age eligibility requirements specified in the Part 200 Regulations, and is a resident of this school district. Referrals can be made at any time during the year. When the CPSE receives a referral the chairperson will write to the parent, describing the evaluation procedures and requesting parental consent for evaluations. A list of Erie County approved evaluation sites will be included. The District provides special education programs and services to preschool students with disabilities through a contract with the Erie County Department of Health. Recommended preschool programs may include special class or special class in an integrated



setting. The district also recommends Special Education Itinerant Services (SEIS) in preschool/daycare settings, neutral sites and at home. The related services provided to preschool students include: Speech/Language Therapy, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Music and Art Therapy, Hearing Itinerant, Vision Itinerant and Counseling. These services can be delivered in any of the settings noted above.

The Lackawanna City School District Board of Education also approves the agencies approved by the New York State Education Department to educate preschool students with disabilities. A list of such agencies is available in the special education office.

The CPSE evaluations are conducted by agencies approved as evaluators by the New York State Education Department. The evaluators' list is maintained and distributed to the school district by Erie County, Department of Health, Special Needs Division. A listing of such evaluating agencies is available in the special education office.

### ***School-Age District Services:***

The following special education programs and services are available to students within the Lackawanna City School District:

#### ***➤ Declassification Support Services:***

- These services are provided to students who are ready to transition to full-time general education programs. Upon recommending that a student be declassified, the CSE shall identify any declassification support services including the projected date of initiation of such services and the duration of these services.

#### ***➤ Related Services:***

- This is the lowest level of special education services on the least restrictive environment continuum. Related services are developmental, corrective, and other supportive services that are required to assist the student with a disability. Lackawanna offers related services in each school building. Such related services are provided to students so that an educational benefit is derived from the primary instruction provided in special and/or regular education programs.

Certified providers offer a range of services to students with disabilities. Such services include, but are not limited to the following:

- Speech/ Language Services
- Psychological Counseling
- Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy – *provided by contract with Associated Physical and Occupational Therapists*
- Hearing Itinerant/Vision Services – *provided by Erie 1 BOCES*
- Orientation Mobility Services – *provided by contract with Olmstead Center for Sight*
- Specialized Transportation/Aides/Nursing Services – *provided by contract with WNY Bus Company*

The district employs the following specialists to provide the above listed services:

- 4.0 FTE Speech and Language Pathologists
- .6 FTE Speech and Language Pathologists
- 1.0 FTE Speech Teachers
- 3.0 FTE School Social Workers
- 1.0 FTE Behavioral Specialist/School Social Worker
- 2.0 FTE School Psychologists

➤ ***Consultant Teacher:***

- Special Education teachers work directly with general education teachers to provide specially designed instruction to meet the individual needs of the students with disabilities while the content specific general education teacher instructs the general education class. Students who may receive consultant teacher services attend public and non-public schools.

➤ ***Resource Room Program:***

- Special Education teachers provide supplemental instruction to students with disabilities enrolled in a public and a nonpublic school who receive all primary instruction in general or special education classes. The Resource Room services can be provided within the regular classroom environment or in a separate location. Resource Room services are provided at Truman, Martin Road, High School, Middle School, and Our Lady of Victory.

➤ ***Special Education Classes:***

The District is operating the following types of special education classes:

- Truman School (Prekindergarten-1):
  - Self-Contained
  - Integrated Co-Teaching Class
  - Resource Room
- Martin Road (1-5):
  - Self-Contained
  - Integrated Co-Teaching Class
  - Resource Room
  - Adaptive Physical Education
- Middle School (6-8):
  - NYSAA Life Skills Self-Contained
  - Self-Contained
  - Integrated Co-Teaching Class
  - Resource Room
  - Adaptive Physical Education
- High School (9-12);
  - NYSAA Life Skills Self-Contained
  - Self-Contained
  - Resource Room

- Consultant Teacher Services: The District provides direct Consultant Teacher Services in grades 9–12 English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science Labs and Social Studies classes to students with disabilities in general education classrooms to in-district students. Special education teachers collaborate with general education teachers to plan instructional accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities in the general education setting.
- Adaptive Physical Education

Students with disabilities that are educated in self-contained classes receive their specials/electives in the general education setting with non-disabled peers. Age ranges in special classes are similar to the age ranges in general education classes. The age ranges for all content specific special classes at Lackawanna High School are calculated during August of each year so that a three-year age range is maintained.

Students with disabilities who receive Resource or Consultant Teacher services participate in core subject instruction in the general education setting. These classes are content specific and are provided in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

Many of the students with disabilities at the High School level participate in general education and special education occupational education programs provided by Erie 1 BOCES.

### ***Erie 1 BOCES:***

The Committee on Special Education will recommend students with disabilities to Erie 1 BOCES programs when in-district programming cannot appropriately meet the instructional and/or behavioral needs of these students. Special programs exist specifically to meet the needs of students with autism, behavior disorders and students who have previously not been successful in a traditional public school setting.

### ***Approved Private, Special Act School Districts, State-Supported Schools and State-Operated School Placements:***

The Committee on Special Education may recommend a placement for students with disabilities in a specialized school or program when it determines that the student cannot be appropriately educated in its home school district, a neighboring district or in the programs of a Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).

### ***Home/Hospital Instruction:***

For students with disabilities, home and hospital instruction (Part 200.1) is provided for either medical or intensive educational/behavioral needs. A certified teacher works with students individually. Such instruction is done in the home, neutral site, McKinley School or other school buildings based on the needs of the student and parent.

***Residential Placements:***

The decision to place a student in a residential school, either in or out of State, must be based on the committee on special education's (CSE) determination that there is no appropriate nonresidential school available to meet the educational needs of the student.

***Special Education Data:***

The Lackawanna City School District is committed to providing special education services within the district for as many of our students as possible. The district's current school-age special education classification rate is 23.6%, which is based upon the October 2016 BEDS data of the district's total enrollment and number of students with a disability.

***Age Span by School Buildings:***

<b><u>School:</u></b>	<b><u>Grades:</u></b>	<b><u>Age Span in Special Classes:</u></b>
Truman	K-1	4-7
Martin Road	2-5	5-12
Lackawanna Middle	6-8	11-15
Lackawanna High School	9-12	14-21

***Declassification:***

The Lackawanna City School District has made concerted efforts to appropriately declassify preschool and school age students with disabilities. The majority of students who are declassified are students who had a classification of Speech or Language Impairment. Each student will receive, if appropriate, declassification support services and/or transition support services.

***Facilities for Special Education Programs:***

The District ensures that adequacy and appropriateness of the facilities space is available to house special education programs in the geographic area served by the BOCES, consistent with the needs for placement in the least restricted environment (LRE) and for the stability and continuity of program placements for participating students with disabilities. The District ensures that special education programs and services located in appropriate facilities will not be relocated without adequate consideration of the needs of participating students with disabilities.

***Alternative Format for Instructional Materials:***

The Lackawanna City School District's Special Education Office orders materials and supplies for classroom use based on a written request from a building principal or special education personnel. Instructional materials are ordered through the Office of Curriculum & Staff Development for all students within the district. If needed, alternative format instructional materials are ordered through the Office of Special Education as an accommodation for a student with a disability enrolled in the district in June, so materials are available for the student in September for the start of the school year.

***School Budget 2018-2019:10,116,884.00***