



*Continuum of K-12  
Special Education Services*

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# Overview of SPECIAL EDUCATION

Students with disabilities shall be provided with an education in the least restrictive environment. To enable students with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate, specially designed instruction and supplementary services may be provided in the regular class. Special education programs including, but not limited to, related services, resource room, direct/indirect consultant teacher and special classes can be provided within the district setting, as appropriate.

Student program and/or service recommendations are made by the Special Education Committees and are based on the identified needs of the student. Recommendations for each student are reviewed at least one time per year.

The Croton-Harmon School District follows federal and state guidelines when making recommendations for students with disabilities. The district offers an extensive array of services and programs on its continuum.

The programs and services described on the following pages are provided by the school district for the 2015-2016 school year.

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## CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND OCCUPATIONAL STUDIES COMMENCEMENT

**Available to:** Students with disabilities other than those who are assessed using the NYS Alternate Assessment (NYSAA).

### Requirements:

- Completes a career plan;
- Demonstrates attainment of the commencement-level Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) learning standards in the area of career exploration and development, integrated learning and universal foundation skills;
- Satisfactorily completes the equivalent of two (2) units of study (216 hours) in Career and Technical Education coursework and work-based learning (including at least 54 hours of work-based learning); and
- Has at least one (1) completed employability profile;

### OR

Student meets criteria for a national work readiness credential. Credential may be a supplement to a regular diploma, or, if the student is unable to meet diploma standards, the credential may be awarded as the student's exiting credential, provided the student has attended school for not less than 12 years, excluding kindergarten.

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## SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENT COMMENCEMENT CREDENTIAL

**Available to:** Students with severe disabilities who are assessed using the NYS Alternate Assessment (NYSAA).

**Requirements:** All students with severe disabilities who attend school for not less than 12 years – excluding kindergarten – exit with this credential, which must be accompanied by a summary of the student's levels of achievement in academic and career development and occupational studies.

## EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The Committee on Special Education (CSE) must determine whether a student requires extended school year special education services in order to prevent substantial regression. Substantial regression would be indicated by a student's inability to maintain developmental levels due to a loss of skill, when the period of review or re-teaching required to recoup the skill or knowledge attained by the end of the prior school year is beyond the time ordinarily reserved for that purpose at the beginning of the school year. The typical period of review for re-teaching ranges between 20 and 40 school days. As a guideline for determining eligibility for an extended school year program, a review period of eight weeks or more would indicate that substantial regression has occurred. In accordance with the commissioner's regulations, students must be considered for 12-month special services and/programs to prevent substantial regression if they are:

- Students whose management needs are determined to be highly intensive, who require a high degree of individualized attention and intervention, and who are placed in special classes;
- Students with severe multiple disabilities whose programs consist primarily of habilitation and treatment and who are placed in special classes; or
- Students receiving other special education services who, because of their disabilities, exhibit the need for a special service and/or program provided in a structured learning environment for up to 12 months duration in order to prevent substantial regression.

The CSE reviews pertinent data and ultimately makes the recommendation for services.

The Extended School Year (ESY) program is taught by certified Special Education teachers and runs for 30 days each summer. Croton-Harmon offers the following ESY options:

- Related Services
- ½ day (3 hours) Special Class 12:1:1
- ½ day (3 hours) Integrated Special Class (comprised of students with and without disabilities and taught by two teachers when larger than 12 students.)

## CONSULTANT TEACHER SERVICES (CTS) *Direct or Indirect Services*

**Description of Direct CTS:** Special Educator provides specially designed individualized or group instruction on academic skills and/or compensatory strategies to a student with a disability so such student can benefit in his/her mainstream content area classes. The support is provided directly to the student in the mainstream classroom. The Special Education teachers collaborate with the mainstream teacher.

**Description of Indirect CTS:** Special Educator consults with general education teachers to assist them in adjusting the learning environment, modifying instructional methods and/or implementing other accommodations/modifications as needed to meet the individual needs of a student with a disability who attends their classes.

**Frequency:** A minimum of 120 minutes per week.

**Characteristics of a Typical Student:** Student with low average cognitive functioning or higher who displays mild to moderate deficits in reading, writing, math and/or study skills that have a measurable impact on academic performance in the general education curriculum and will require mild to moderate support, modifications and/or accommodations.

**Consideration for Move to Less Restrictive Setting:** Student will develop academic skills and/or compensatory strategies that will allow him/her to successfully participate in general education without direct or indirect support.

## RESOURCE ROOM/CONSULTANT TEACHER SERVICES

*Resource Room and Consultant services can be combined*

**Description:** Special Educator provides specially designed individualized or group instruction on academic skills and/or compensatory strategies to a student with a disability so such student can benefit in his/her mainstream content area classes

Based on Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals, the student also requires time in Resource Room for specialized supplementary instruction in an individual or small group setting to remediate specific skill deficits. Special Educator consults with general education teachers as an Indirect Consultant teacher to assist them in adjusting the learning environment, modifying instructional methods and/or implementing other accommodations/modifications as needed to meet the individual needs of a student with a disability who attends their classes.

**Frequency/Ratio:** Combination of services for a minimum of 180 minutes per week. The Resource Room maximum is five students to one teacher (5:1).

**Characteristics of a Typical Student:** Student with low average cognitive functioning or higher who displays mild to moderate deficits in reading, writing, math and/or study skills that have a measurable impact on academic performance in the general education curriculum and will require mild to moderate support, modifications and/or accommodations.

**Consideration for Move to Less Restrictive Setting:** Student will develop academic skills and/or compensatory strategies that allow successful participation in general education without direct or indirect support.

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## RESOURCE ROOM

**Description:** Special Educator provides specialized supplementary instruction, individual or small group, designed to enable the student to benefit from learning in general education academic classes. Instruction in Resource Room includes remediation of skill deficits, study skill and organizational strategies to reinforce primary instruction.

**Frequency/Ratio:** A minimum of 180 minutes per week. Resource Room maximum is five students to one teacher (5:1).

**Characteristics of a Typical Student:** Student with average or above-average ability who displays mild to moderate disability in reading, writing, math and/or study skills that interferes with the ability to access the general education curriculum.

**Consideration for Move to Less Restrictive Setting:** Gaps in academic and/or study skills have decreased. Student has developed compensatory strategies that enable participation in the general education program, without support, based on measurable data.

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## SPECIAL CLASS

*Class design is reflected in the staff-to-student ratio*

**Description:** Special education teacher provides direct instruction in one or more of the following academic subjects: ELA, math, social studies, science and reading. Materials, facets of the curriculum and assignments are modified to meet the needs of individual students. Students are mainstreamed as appropriate.

For students working toward the Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (Skills Credential), a high level of supervision throughout the school day is required to ensure safety and well-being. Academic instruction is individualized according to cognitive and developmental levels. A non-equivalent, modified curriculum that includes daily life skills, behavior management support, vocational training and social skills training is provided with mainstreaming opportunities for electives and physical education.

## ENHANCED STAFFING

A recommendation for an individual aide is a significant programmatic decision and one that should be made after a comprehensive discussion of other options and with clear documentation as to why those options are not appropriate. While some students may temporarily need the support of a one-to-one aide to receive a free appropriate public education, the assignment of a one-to-one aide on a long-term basis must be clearly justified.

A goal for all students with disabilities is to promote and maximize independence. Committees on Preschool Special Education (CPSEs)/CSEs are responsible for developing and implementing an IEP that promotes such independence. When a CPSE/CSE determines that a student needs a one-to-one aide, it should always be considered a time-limited recommendation and specific conditions/goals must be established to fade the use of the one-to-one aide over time.

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## CONSIDERATIONS FOR DETERMINING IF A STUDENT NEEDS A ONE-TO-ONE AIDE

Each decision to recommend one-to-one aide support must weigh the factors of both the student's individual needs and the available supports in the setting where the student's IEP will be implemented. There are a number of important considerations that must be made by the CPSE/CSE in regard to each of these factors. These include, but are not limited to, consideration of each of the following:

- The student's individual needs that require additional adult assistance;
- The skills and goals the student is planned to achieve that will reduce or eliminate the need for the one-to-one aide;
- The specific role that the aide will provide for the student;
- Other natural supports, accommodations and/or services that could support the student to meet the needs;
- The extent to which the student would need the assistance of a one-to-one aide; and
- The special class size the CPSE/CSE has recommended for the student.

Special class size recommendations are made in consideration of the student's management needs. For a student in a special class, an additional aide should only be recommended when the CPSE/CSE has determined the recommended special class size in the setting where the student will attend school, other natural supports, a behavioral intervention plan, etc., cannot meet the student's needs.

# FOREIGN LANGUAGE EXEMPTION GUIDELINES

Students identified as having disabilities may be exempted from the foreign language requirement if their IEP indicates an exemption is appropriate. Only those students whose disabilities specifically and severely impair receptive and/or expressive language skills, or exhibit other behavioral or learning problems that would impact their ability to benefit from the foreign language requirements, qualify for an exemption. The reason for any exemption will be specified in the IEP. Please note this exemption may impact a student's postsecondary goals. Foreign language courses are often required for admission to college.

At the appropriate grade level annual review meeting, the CSE will consider the youngster's area(s) of disability and may determine that foreign language exemption is appropriate in relation to the following guidelines:

- Severe auditory processing and/or severe auditory memory deficit;
- Significant discrepancy (more than 20 points) between the verbal and performance areas on intelligence testing, where profile suggests verbal difficulties (verbal scores lower than 80, working memory lower than 80);
- Functioning four (4) years below age or grade-level expectations in language and/or reading comprehension;
- Hearing impairment of a significant degree;
- Inability to express ideas in written form; expressive writing skills four (4) years below age and grade-level expectations; significant speech impairment;
- Severe emotional factors that may be relevant to the youngster's ability to benefit from foreign language instruction; and/or severe physical handicaps and/or limitations with regard to strength, vitality or alertness.



## Ratio:

Grades K-4 – 12:1:2

Grades 5-8 – 15:1:1

Transitional Alternative Program (TAP) Grades 9-12 – 15:1:1

Real Individualized School Experience (RISE) Grades 9-12 – 12:1:2

**Characteristics of a Typical Student:** Student displays significant deficits in reading, written expression, math, social skills and/or study skills that interfere with the ability to function productively in a general education classroom. Student requires small group, individualized and direct instruction and significant curriculum modifications in order to meet with academic success.

**TAP:** Students are supported through modified curricula to complete Regents level courses. There is a strong emphasis on transition planning and vocational planning. Many students in TAP classes also participate in technology course instruction at BOCES. Many students take a combination of TAP classes, resource room and mainstream classes, depending on their individual learning needs. Students in TAP classes have access to support during the day as needed.

**RISE:** Student may require functional academics and life skills in an alternate curriculum. Students may be alternatively assessed on the high school level and may be working toward the Skills Credential. There is a strong emphasis on transition and vocational planning for students working toward the Skills Credential.

**Consideration for Move to Less Restrictive Setting:** Student has developed appropriate social skills as well as academic skills in one or more areas, enabling him/her to benefit from general education instruction with appropriate support.



## FLEXIBLE SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Flexible Support Program was created in response to an identified need to provide individualized supports to students experiencing social/emotional and/or attendance issues that interfere with school performance. The program is intended to be a resource to students who require a supportive and nurturing environment as they work to transition back to school from a therapeutic placement, deal with anxiety related to personal or family issues, return to school after an absence due to medical needs, and/or grapple with specific stressors related to the school setting.

- Students, grades 7-12, spend as much time as needed in the program on any given day with the goal of following their academic schedule to the greatest extent possible.
- The flexible support program is staffed by a special education teacher, a psychologist and an aide.
- Counseling is provided on an individual basis as needed.
- Private space for counseling needs is available.
- A psychiatrist provides consultation to the program on a monthly basis.
- The program supports both classified and non-classified students.
- Students are provided with the opportunity to complete missing work and/or receive support with current classwork.
- Referral to the program is made by the building or district level At-Risk Committee and/or the CSE.
- Once the program is recommended by the above committees, an intake process takes place with the student and the student's family.
- Supplemental instruction materials are available to meet individual academic student needs.
- The Flexible Support Program staff maintains ongoing communication with all stakeholders; i.e., student's teachers, parent, outside providers, etc.

### Treatment Plans

Once the student is deemed appropriate for the Flexible Support services, a treatment plan is developed and carefully monitored.

- Goals for each student are established
- Interventions are documented in RTI Direct
- Flexible Support hours are logged
- Progress is documented
- Program is individualized for each student

## RELATED SERVICES

Related services are developmental, corrective and other supportive services required to assist a student with a disability and include, but are not limited to, speech-language therapy, audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling services, orientation and mobility services, medical services, parent counseling and training, school health services and school nurse services.

Related services shall be recommended by the Committee on Special Education to meet the specific needs of a student with a disability as set forth in the IEP. The frequency, duration and location of each such service shall be in the IEP, based on the individual student's needs for the service. When a related service is provided to a number of students at the same time, the number of students in the group shall not exceed five. A student with a disability may be provided with more than one such service in accordance with the need of the student. Related services may be provided in conjunction with a regular education program or with other special education programs and services.

Related services may also be offered to non-classified students as a building-level support.



## DECLASSIFICATION

**Description:** Foreign language exemption, testing accommodations and safety net provisions can continue through graduation as recommended at the final Committee on Special Education (CSE) meeting when declassification is determined.

**Frequency:** As per IEP (declassification support services are limited to one year).

**Criteria:** Based on updated evaluations and performance data, the CSE has recommended declassification, as the student no longer presents with a disability that adversely affects his/her educational performance.

