

3/25/2025

SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATE

Special Education Focus- Planning for 25-26

Oversight

- Supervisor alignment with specialty areas:
 - Psychology
 - Autistic Support
 - Emotional Support
 - Interventions
 - Progress Monitoring
 - Related Services
- Alignment to comprehensive plan and cyclical monitoring plans
 - Created framework for training plans for next three years: teachers, support staff; families

Compliance

- Psychologist continue training
- 1:1 Coaching
Skyview/Arcola Special Education Staff

Special Education Focus- Planning for 25-26

Structure

- Planning for continued needs of Complex learner Classrooms / Low Incidence Classes
- Created a behavioral framework for elementary buildings
- Special education teacher schedule created to support student needs

3rd Party Vendors

- Review of current programs and contracts and services
- Reviewed and assessed caseloads and current schedules for contractors
- Analyzed needs and service providers for mental health services

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Resources Available for Students

1

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

2

CORE TEAM / MTSS TEAM
/ CHILD STUDY TEAM

3

SAP OR DRUG AND
ALCOHOL REFERRAL

4

MENTAL HEALTH
COUNSELING

5

REACH

6

OUTSIDE SERVICES

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

14 School Counselors:

MHS - 6

Arcola - 2

Skyview - 2

Elementary - 4

1 Career Counselor

1 Climate Counselor

- Counsels students on caseload
- Provides academic planning and goal setting
- Delivers crisis intervention and support
- Offers advocacy for students
- Acts as a liaison for parents, teachers, and administrators
- Delivers curricular lessons

Participants:

Administrator(s)

Counselor(s)

Nurse

Social Worker

Mental Health Counselors

School Psychologist

- Evaluates student's mental health and well being
- Provides short-term support and strategies through MTSS process
- Determines if a higher level of care is needed
- If required, referral to SAP or Drug & Alcohol Counselor
- Oversees progress and timelines for services

School Psychologist

School Psychologists:

District:

4 Full Time

Contracted:

2 Full time (1 through a grant)

6 Part Time (1-2 days/ week)

- Conducts psychological and academic assessments
- Identifies student learning and behavioral disabilities
- Provides diagnostic information and recommendations for determining special education services for those identified in Chapters 14, 15, and 16 of the Pennsylvania Code, including Eligible Disability Categories

**District Social Worker/
Home and School
Visitor**

**Social Worker/ Home and
School Visitor:**

District:

1 Full Time

- Provides crisis and emergency assistance to students and school
- Completes threat assessment / risk assessments of students
- Provide supportive case work to children and their families, including parent/caregiver education and self-advocacy.
- Conducts home visits to ensure student residency, attendance and support

SAP OR DRUG AND ALCOHOL REFERRAL

SAP:

Aldersgate

MHS - 1 day/ cycle

Arcola - 1 day/ cycle

Skyview - ½ day / cycle

Drug & Alcohol Counselor:

The Lincoln Center

MHS - 2 days/ cycle

Spring 2025 only. Ends in June.

Option for additional support next year.

- Referral based process from Core Team/ MTSS Team/ Child Study Team, or direct referral
- Parental permission needed for participation
- Evidence based counseling program
- Upon completion, referred back to school counselor
- If additional support is needed after completion of program, discussion through core team to additional services

Mental Health Counseling

Central:

MHS - 3

Arcola - 1

Skyview - 1

Elementary - 2

- Provides direct 1:1 counseling in a student's IEP as a related service
- Special Education Students ONLY
- Progress monitoring on a student's goal, with titration plan in place
- Coordination with school counselor and IEP team

REACH

Staff:

MHS – 2

Arcola - 2

Skyview - 1

Elementary - 1

- Extended mental health services and ongoing support
- Daily 1:1 counseling and group counseling
- Offers long-term treatment options tailored to the student's needs
- Works closely with student and family for continuous care and improvement
- Reports on student(s) progress to child study team

OUTSIDE SERVICES

Staff:

District Social Worker and Special Education Supervisor remain point of contact for student/family working with outside services

- Student's mental health needs exceeds building support
- Could be:
 - Schooling through Partial Hospitalization Program
 - Alternative School

Prevalence of Mental Health Needs

- **National Statistic:** 1 in 5 students in the U.S. experience a mental health disorder each year
- **Implication for Methacton:** This equates to approximately **917** students within our district.
- Currently we are servicing **402** students in some capacity with our mental health supports.

Source: [CDC Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2021](#)

Early Onset of Mental Health Disorders

- **Statistic:** 50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14
- **Significance:** Early intervention is critical within our K-12 system.

Source: National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

PA Youth Survey (PAYS) Data- 2023

Factors Contributing to Continued Need of Mental Health Supports:

- Suicidal ideology
- Depressive symptoms:
 - Depression
 - Food Insecurity
 - Sleeping less
- Exposure to explicit content earlier/ individual technology
- Peer and familial attitudes towards anti-social behavior

School-Based Access to Mental Health Services

- **Statistic:** 70% of youth receiving mental health services access them in school settings
- **District Context:** Schools are often the first point of contact for student mental health support

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Impact on Academic and Behavioral Outcomes

- **Statistic:** Students with untreated mental health disorders are 3 times more likely to be suspended and 2 times more likely to drop out
- **District Implication:** Addressing mental health is essential for reducing suspensions and dropout rates, along with supporting the student(s) where they are

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Return on Investment (ROI) of School-Based Mental Health Programs

- **Return on Investment (ROI) of School-Based Mental Health Programs**
- **Statistic:** Every \$1 invested in school-based mental health services yields \$2 to \$10 in savings
- **Benefits Include:** Improved academic achievement and reduced special education and juvenile justice costs.
- Alternative school placements can range from 38k-100k dependent upon need. Providing supports in school keeps students in their least restrictive environment and is more cost effective than placing out.
- *Source:* [World Health Organization](#)