

# Special Education Report

December 21, 2022



## Accomplishments and Successes

- We are contracting with Northeast Rehabilitation Hospital Network to provide physical therapy services to our students throughout the SAU.
- A special education teacher worked with general education students to help them understand their classmate's communication needs. Through this education and new understanding, the student can communicate with and be more involved with peers throughout the school day.
- Our preschool is growing. We have had eight new referrals, sixteen students attending, and two additional students meeting weekly with our speech pathologist.
- SAU Preschool Staff are helping where needed on Fridays - either on the playground or working with a group of students on an academic intervention.



## Challenges

- Inconsistent substitute pay is a challenge between the four districts. It is difficult to find substitute teachers, even more, difficult when paras are paid a different amount.
- We still have open para positions (in Rye).
- The LEA Determinations from the State for special education were shared with districts in May 2022. The areas reported on are Results, Assessment, Compliance, and Other. Newington and Rye were found to meet the requirements and purposes of IDEA. Greenland was found “*in need of assistance.*” New Castle was found “*to need intervention.*” The SAU completed a root cause analysis of the data and found that the student population is the root cause of the problem for New Castle needing intervention in the area of Assessment. The sheer number of students at each grade level impacted the results. Participation in state assessment is low throughout the SAU. It is expected that 95% of students participate in the state assessment and we do not hit that benchmark. The other areas on the determinations all met the rubric criteria.

## Work Related to School, School Board, and SAU Goals

- MTSS - Multi-Tiered System of Supports works! From a staff perspective-

*As I'm going over my notes for my kiddos today, there is one thing I noticed that is worth mentioning...*

*The two kiddos that Sarah has been seeing for the past couple of months have “graduated” from her!!!! 🎉*

*With that, it is clear to me that:*

- 1. Sarah does awesome stuff with her kiddos*
- 2. This MTSS process may work after all 🙌*

- All hands on deck helping students! Students who need intervention from our speech and language pathologists or our occupational therapists are getting the help they need as part of our system of support.
- Referrals are down from the start of school last year compared to the start of school this year.
- Safety-Care Training continues to take place in school districts.
- It was a busy Fall preparing FY 24 budgets!

## Major Initiatives (Possible Future Budget Implications)

- Greenland is completing an application with the Department of Education for a new Special Education Program. Currently, each district has a resource room program however there is a need for a program for students with higher needs. The program will be at Greenland Central School and potentially can be a program accessed by students in the other three districts.
- Grant Projects-
  - the 2021-2022 IDEA/Preschool Grant supports an IEP Team Coordinator at the high school level, equipment, supplies, psychological testing (Greenland employee), occupational therapy (Rye employee), BCBA (Rye employee), and Teaching Gold at the preschool level.
  - the 2022-2023 IDEA/Preschool Grants are supporting the purchase of a Goalbook program to be shared between school districts, a collection of decodable books, and a teacher, paraprofessional, speech pathologist (contracted), and physical therapist (contracted) in our preschool.

## Other

- There are currently 154 identified students, preschool to grade twelve, in SAU 50. Rye has 2 preschool aged students, 13 elementary aged students, 30 middle school aged students, and 19 high school aged students for a total of 64. Disabilities for these identified students include autism, developmental delay, emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities, other health impairment, speech and language impairment, specific learning disability, and vision impairment.
- Special Education Terminology - **MTSS**

**Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)** is a systemic, continuous-improvement framework in which data-based problem solving and decision-making is practiced across all levels of the educational system for supporting all students academically and behaviorally.

MTSS is designed to help schools identify struggling students early and intervene quickly. It focuses on the “whole child.” That means it supports academic growth, but many other areas, too. These include behavior, social and emotional needs, and absenteeism.

The key components of MTSS include:

- Universal screening of all students early in the school year
- Tiers of interventions that can be amplified in response to levels of need
- Ongoing data collection and continual assessment
- Schoolwide approach to expectations and supports
- Parent involvement

For more information about MTSS check out this article:

<https://www.understood.org/en/articles/mtss-what-you-need-to-know>