

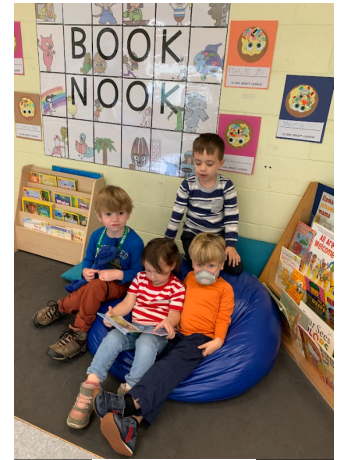
# Special Education Report

December 2023



## Accomplishments and Successes

- We have a school psychologist for the Rye School District. Welcome to Bri McCorkell!
- The PreK and Preschool programs continue to flourish. There are nine students in the full day PreK program, ten students in the morning session of Preschool and five students, soon to be six, in the afternoon session of Preschool.
- All schools have a Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS) for students.
- All districts are in compliance with special education paperwork and timelines. I check NHSIES weekly and check in with coordinators to ensure compliance.
- Shonda Thibeault, the GCS Special Education Coordinator, and I held Office Hours on December 7th. We are planning to do this on the first Thursday of every month at 10:00 am. We were able to generate topic ideas for future meetings. We also discussed ways we can communicate more with the community.
- The substitute pay has been addressed - A BIG THANK YOU!
- Rick Matte, SAU 52 Director and I meet weekly.



*Preschoolers in the Book Nook*

## Challenges

- Balancing the needs of general education students with special education. We are finding students who typically take the first six weeks of school to build routines and regulate behavior are taking longer this school year. We acknowledge that these students do not require special education, but do certainly need short-term support.

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

- A revision to the Restraint and Seclusion Policy is being brought to the boards for a first reading. During the 2022-2023 legislative session, SB 179, relative to seclusion, and HB 491, relative to physical restraint, were both passed into law. These two bills make significant changes to RSA 126-U, which regulates restraint and seclusion in schools and treatment facilities.

Restraint is the bodily physical restriction of a student. Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a child alone in any room or area, separate from their peers and from which the child reasonably believes they are not free to leave, with one or more adults who are using their physical presence to prevent egress. Our priority is that we never put our hands on students unless the student is in imminent danger of hurting/injuring themselves or others. The tool of seclusion is only used to help a student de-escalate or to preserve the student's dignity. In both of these situations, we must document every incident. Restraint and Seclusion are tools we use as part of Safety-Care, our crisis prevention program.

## Major Initiatives (Possible Future Budget Implications)

- The Functional Life Skills Classroom is a fantastic and functioning setting. We are still looking for a ventless washer and dryer.
- We are making progress in our proposal for a shared position at Portsmouth High School which will benefit our SAU 50 students and have a positive impact on ALL students who attend PHS.

## Other

- There are new [Special Education Procedural Safeguards](#).
- There are 156 identified students, from preschool to grade twelve, in SAU 50. This breaks down to 85 Greenland students, 3 New Castle students, 10 Newington students, and 58 Rye students. We also have students in the referral process.
- Disabilities, across the SAU, include: Acquired Brain Injury, Autism, Developmental Delay, Emotional Disturbance, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Other Health Impaired, Speech and Language Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, and Vision Impairment.
- Special Education Terminology - **Restraint, Seclusion, Safety-Care, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS), Special Education Procedural Safeguards**

**Restraint** - Restraint is the bodily physical restriction of a student.

**Seclusion** - Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a child alone in any room or area, separate from their peers and from which the child reasonably believes they are not free to leave, with one or more adults who are using their physical presence to prevent egress.

**Safety-Care** - Safety-Care is more than crisis management training; it provides the skills and competencies necessary to effectively prevent, minimize, and manage behavioral challenges with dignity, safety, and the possibility of change. Safety-Care delivers the tools needed to be safe when working with behaviorally challenging individuals using up-to-date and effective technologies from Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS).

Using the newest and most effective technologies from ABA and PBIS, Safety-Care provides staff with strategies to prevent and manage behavioral challenges also to effectively teach replacement behaviors. Appropriate for individuals experiencing developmental, neurologic, psychiatric, and other impairments, Safety-Care will result in a more positive reinforcement-based approach, the development of new skills, and fewer restraints.

**Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)** - ABA is a therapy based on the science of learning and behavior.

**Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS)** - School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an example of applied behavior analysis implemented at a scale of social importance. School-wide PBIS is a framework for delivering both the whole-school social culture and additional tiers of behavior support intensity needed to improve educational and social outcomes for all students.

**Special Education Procedural Safeguards** - Procedural Safeguards are a 54-page handbook that is given to parents annually. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Federal law concerning the education of students with disabilities, requires schools to provide parents of a child with a disability a notice containing a full explanation of the procedural safeguards available under IDEA and U.S. Department of Education regulations.