



SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORT

SEBAGO SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

By: Kate Sterling

Director of Special Education



Special Education Report 12/14/2021

Important Historical Special Education Laws

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed by Congress in 1975 which requires that all public schools accepting federal funds must provide equal access to education for children with physical and/or mental disabilities. Public schools must provide children with special needs with the same opportunities for education as other children. It also mandates public schools to evaluate children with disabilities and create individualized educational plans that closely emulate the educational experiences of non-disabled students while still accommodating their unique needs.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA was created in 1990 and is a modification of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. This law ensures that special needs students receive appropriate free public education in the least restrictive environment necessary to meet those student's needs. It helps students receive the extra assistance they need but allows them to participate in the same activities as children without special needs whenever possible.

The Special Services Department at the Sebago School District is committed to provide high quality instruction to its students.

Programming Options

The Sebago School Department offers its students a continuum of special education services for eligible students in grades Kindergarten through the 12th grade including:

General Education Level /Regular Classroom with Support (Students spend 80% or more of their school Day in the General Education Setting)

Specially designed services and supports within the general education setting provides educational experiences in the least restrictive environment. These supports may also include accommodations and/or modifications to assist students in the learning process. Special education supports are provided directly within the regular classroom.

Resource Room Level (*Students spend 40%-79% of their school day in the general education Setting*) Specially designed instruction from special education staff in the special education classroom for those students who require a more supportive environment to receive special education services. The special services are designed to accommodate individual student's learning needs in a smaller group setting.

Self-Contained Level (Students spend 39% of their day or less in the general education setting/regular classroom). Students with multiple or more intensive needs are provided specially designed instruction within the special education setting.

Private Separate School Level (Students spend 0% of their day in the General Education Classroom) This is the most restrictive placement where students are provided with clinical level services. Students with severe deficits such as in performing activities of daily living, behavioral skills, and communication skills require a high staff to student ratio to address his or her significant needs.

Special Education Staff at Sebago Elementary School

1 Special Education Director (three days per week)

1 Full Time Special Education Teacher

3.5 Full Time Ed Techs

1 Social Worker (three days per week)

Speech Therapist (two days per week)

Occupational Therapist, (two days per week)

School Psychologist (as needed)

Special Education Services for Sebago Students in Grades 6-12 and Students attending other schools, including Special Purpose Private Schools

Students in grades 6-12 attend school at Lake Region Middle, Lake Region High, and the Vocational School. They are provided with the same levels of special education supports and services that they would receive if they were attending our elementary school. Students with IEPs or students who are referred for special education services, are represented by the Director of Special Education for the Sebago School Department. The Director of Special Education at Sebago has full access to student records at the Lake Region School District. The Director is invited to and attends **every** IEP meeting. The Sebago Director has the responsibility for ensuring special education oversight over the special education programming for its resident students. The IEP and accompanying documents such as the Written Notice are developed in collaboration with the staff at the attending school. All evaluations, observations, progress reports are provided to the special education director for review before being placed in the student's educational record. This ensures the protection of the educational rights of children with disabilities who reside within the Sebago town lines. For the last year and a half, Lake Region staff have been an excellent partner to the Sebago Special Education Department.

Updates

The Office of Special Education Services will visit Sebago Elementary School on March 23, 2021, as part of their Triennial Monitoring System. The monitoring process is heavily involved and will include a review of records, review of policies, a school inspection, survey to parents, and interviews with staff. They will observe teaching and learning taking place at Sebago Elementary School. Parents, please note that the survey will be emailed to you in the early part of the 2022 School year. The State of Maine is undergoing their federal monitoring as well this year. This is a procedural requirement that occurs in all states, school districts, and private schools in the United States.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach me at 888-9331 or email me at ksterling@sebagolearners.org.

Sincerely,

Katherine Sterling

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