

Lincoln Public Schools Special Education

Oct. 21, 2021

Special Education Laws and Regulations

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):

- IDEA is a **federal law** that ensures a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive setting for eligible students identified with disabilities through special education and related services.
- Districts have a responsibility under IDEA for “child find” (a process for locating, evaluating, and identifying students)

State Laws and Regulations:

- MGL Chapter 71B-Children with Special Needs
- DESE Special Education regulations 603.CMR 28.00-Ensures eligible students the right to special education services to develop in the least restrictive environment

History of Laws that protect individuals with disabilities:

- **Chapter 766 MA (1972)**-became a model for federal legislation/provided special education and the right to inclusive settings
- **Rehabilitation Act, Section 504 (1973)** -protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs that accept federal funding
- **PL 94-142 (1975) Federal legislations (Education for all Handicapped Children Act)**-the right for children with disabilities to receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education-became IDEA
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA-1990)** -protection against discrimination

IDEA FAPE and LRE (IDEA)

What do these legal terms mean?

- Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) ensures progress and this progress is quantified through the IEP
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)-To the extent possible, children are educated/included within the general education setting with children who do not have special needs

What happens before Special Education?

Tiered Interventions- General Education

- Intervention Support Teams at the schools (academic and social-emotional)
- Inclusionary Practices within general education
- Classroom Accommodations and Strategies (DCAP)
- Reading and Math Interventions
- Behavioral Interventions/individual plans
- Goal Focused Intervention Plans (GFIP)-General ed. Short term interventions with special ed.

Responsibility for Child Find for All Students

Child Find

- The Lincoln Public Schools has a legal obligation to search for and serve students with special education needs in the town of Lincoln and the Hanscom Air Force Base. This outreach mandates frequent communication with schools, agencies, organizations and programs to learn about the needs of students.
- The notice is distributed to organizations that serve children within the Lincoln and Hanscom Communities. This notice is also mailed annually to organizations in the community by the Student Services Department.

Process of Eligibility for Special Education (IEP)

The student is referred due to a suspected disability and a comprehensive evaluation is conducted. The Team (parents and staff with knowledge of the student) must determine the following within the Eligibility Team Meeting Process:

- Does the child have a disability?: MA Categories of Disability (Autism, Intellectual Impairment, Neurological, Emotional, Communication, Specific Learning, Physical, Health, Sensory)
- Does the disability impact a child's ability to make educational or social/emotional progress?
- Does the child require specialized instruction to access learning?

Other considerations:

- Has the Team been satisfied that a disability is not due to a ELL status, curricular gaps, or socioeconomic challenges?

Special Education Services

Special Education provides a **continuum of services from least restrictive to more restrictive** dependent upon student needs

- Coordinators on each campus and Preschool
- Deaf & Hard of Hearing Supports (0.1 FTE teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing)
- Special Educators (1-2 Grade levels) working as part of grade level Teams
- Social Workers
- School Psychologists
- Speech and Language Pathologists
- Occupational Therapists
- Physical Therapists
- Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)
- Contracted Providers (Evaluation, Consultation, and Training)
- Tutor/Para support both in and out of the classroom
- Out of District Programming to Include Collaborative Programs, Private Day and Residential Settings

Special Education %

SWD-End of Year Percentages (FY'17-21) SWD-Oct.1, 2021 (19.9%)-Not finalized

Percentage by disability in order of prevalence:

	LPS	STATE
2016-17	17.8%	17.4%
2017-18	21.1%	17.7%
2018-19	20.8%	18.1%
2019-20	20.2%	18.4%
2020-21	17.6%	18.7%

- Health (17.37%)
- Specific Learning Disability (16.90%),
- Communication (16.43%)
- Developmental - Ages 3-9 (15.4%)
- Autism (11.73%)
- Neurological (11.26%)
- Emotional (7.51%)
- Sensory/hearing (1.40%)
- Physical (0.93%)
- Multiple (.469%)

[MA Categories of Disability](#)

Note: Special Ed. numbers are fluid throughout the year. Student numbers reported to DESE (SIMS) Oct.1, March 1 and End of Year. SIMS (Student Information Management System)

Caseload vs. Workload

Level of Need

- Students are classified as Low, Moderate, or High Need
- Providers who have a larger number of students with higher levels of need will have smaller caseloads, in order to provide services
 - e.g. Students requiring 1:1 or multiple hours of support by a Special Education Tutor or Special Education Teacher due to social/emotional, behavioral, or physical disabilities
 - e.g. Students in the STARR program may receive over 3 hours of specialized instruction outside the classroom daily
 - e.g. Members of the mental health team may have different roles based upon the needs of the individual students and the school community
- Students receiving substantially separate curriculum will require that multiple staff be available to teach multiple curricula during the same subject area block

Placement Type

- Students who attend Lincoln K-8, HMS & HPS are either Full Inclusion, Partial Inclusion, or in some cases, Substantially Separate due to the number of hours outside of the general education setting (Last year's data 77% of our special education students were full/partial inclusion)

Calculating Level of Need

	Primary Setting(s)	Service Provider(s)	Percent of Program Time Receiving Special Education Services
1	In GenEd Classroom	general educators and paraprofessionals with consultation.	under 25% of program time
2	In and out of GenEd Classroom	combination of general educators, paraprofessionals, special educators and related service providers.	between 25% and 75% of program time
3	Out of GenEd Classroom	special educators and related service providers	over 75% of program time

- **Low** = two or three boxes checked in Row 1
- **Moderate** - two or three boxes checked in Row 2
- **High** = two or three boxes checked in Row 3
- If one box is checked in each row, check either **moderate or high** depending on the need of the child

Lincoln K-8 Special Education: Teacher Staffing

Grades	Teacher FTE	Current Caseload	Average EOY Caseload (2018-2021)
K, 1	1.0	11	13
2, 3	1.0	12	21
4	1.0	11	13
5	1.0	8	16
6	1.0	11	15
7	1.0	15	13
8	1.0	11	14
STARR	1.0	7	N/A

NOTES:

SLPs are also Liaisons for Speech Only Students who are not reflected here

These numbers include parent placed students receiving services, but do not include OOD

Lincoln K-8 Special Education: Level of Need

Level of Need (in and out of the classroom)	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Low (<2 hours)		2		1	1	1	3		1	9
Low (>2 hours)	2		1	1		3			4	11
Moderate	2	1	3	3	9	4	9	13	7	51
High	1	1	1	1	1	2		1		8

NOTE: Includes all students receiving services at Lincoln - does not include parent placed students not accessing services

While Level of Need and Placement Type can be related, they are not synonymous. Calculation of Level of Need includes Placement Type, Service Providers, and Percent of Program Time in Special Education.

Hanscom K-8 Staffing: Teacher Staffing

Grades	FTE	Current Caseload	Typical EOY Caseload
K	1.0	6	10
1	1.0	10	11
2	1.0	8	14
5	1.0	15	12
4	1.0	10	12
5	1.0	10	10
6/7	1.0	12	16
7/8	1.0	12	13
TLC (GenEd/SPED)	1.0	10	15

NOTES:

SLPs are also Liaisons for Speech Only Students who are not reflected here

These numbers include parent placed students receiving services, but do not include OOD

Hanscom Special Education: Level of Need

Level of Need (in and out of the classroom)	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Low (<2 hours)	1	1	1	3	1	0	0	2	1	10
Low (>2 hours)	2	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	6
Moderate	3	7	7	8	10	11	8	7	8	69
High		4	2	4	3	4	3	0	0	20

While Level of Need and Placement Type can be related, they are not synonymous. Calculation of Level of Need includes Placement Type, Service Providers, and Percent of Program Time in Special Education.

Special Ed. Tutors & Paraprofessionals-in and out of the classroom support (Education Support Professionals-ESP)

	20-24 Hour ESP	28 - 30 Hours ESP
Preschool Lincoln Campus	4	1
Preschool Hanscom Campus	4	3
Lincoln K-8	0	9*
Hanscom K-8	0	17

*Lincoln K-8 typically has 8 Tutors at 30 hours, but has 1 additional Tutor at 30 hours this year to support a teacher leave

Lincoln Preschool - 8th Grade Related Services Providers

RSP Type	FTE	Current Caseload	Typical EOY Caseload (2018-2021)
Speech Language Pathologist (shared with Preschool)	1.8	42 (+5 GenEd)	43 (+6 GenEd)
Occupational Therapist (shared with Preschool)	1.0	26 (+1 GenEd)	28 (+1 GenEd)
Physical Therapist (shared with Preschool)	0.5	10 (+1 GenEd)	16 (+1 GenEd)
School Psychologist (shared with Preschool)	2.0	22	19
Social Worker	2.0	28 (+6 GenEd)	35 (+14 GenEd)

Hanscom Preschool - 8th Grade Related Services Providers

RSP Type	FTE	Current Caseload	Typical EOY Caseload
Speech Language Pathologist	2.0	59 (+1 GenEd)	73
Occupational Therapist (shared with Preschool)	1.0	34	28
Physical Therapist (shared with Preschool)	0.5	10	14
School Psychologist* (shared with Preschool)	2.0	2	8
Social Worker*	20	44	80
BCBA*	1.0	14	15-20

*School Psychologists, Social Workers, and the BCBA are involved with direct support to TLC program and the Crisis Response Team (current high volume)

Lincoln K-4 Special Education: Specialized Programs & Instruction

STARR (Strategic Targeted Academic Resource Room)

- Alternate ELA Curriculum: Language Live!
- Alternate Math Curriculum: Number Worlds

Specialized Curriculum & Certifications

- Wilson Reading System
- Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing Program for Reading Spelling and Speech (LiPS)
- Dual Certification (General Education + Special Education)
- Sensory Integration and Praxis test (SIPT)
- Behaviorist

Hanscom K-8 Specialized Programs/Services

Specialized Curriculum & Certifications

- Wilson Reading System, Orton Gillingham, Rave-O, Visualization and Verbalization, Empower
- Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing Program for Reading Spelling and Speech (LiPS)
- Autism Certification, How the Brain Learns
- Trauma Certification and Learning/Trauma Sensitivity
- Dual Certifications General Education/Special Education
- Applied Behavior Analysis
- Executive Functioning

Transitional Learning Center (TLC)

- Our population of students experience unique stressors.
- We have seen an increase in social/emotional needs in our military students that needs to be addressed.
- We want to better support students in both the general education and special education population.
- We will address social/emotional needs and behaviors that interfere with learning, allowing for practice and transfer of skills across the school setting.

Lincoln K-8 Evaluations & Impact of COVID-19

Year	Number of Open Evaluations by October 1	Total Evaluations Completed by EOY
2018-2019	9	71
2019-2020	7	55
2020-2021*	17	71
2021-2022	20	TBD

*2020-2021 Number of Open Evaluations includes those not completed during March - June 2020 closure

Evaluation Intake Process

Prior to sending consent for any evaluation, the Coordinator meets with parents for 30-45 minutes to:

- Learn about the child's strengths and gather information about parent's concerns.
- Discuss the evaluation process and timelines.

Information from these conversations are documented in N1 Notice that is sent home.

- For Initials, these meetings take place within 2-3 school days of the referral.
- For Reevaluations, these meetings are held a few months in advance of consent being sent.

Hanscom K-8 Evaluations & Impact of COVID-19

Year	Number of Open Evaluations by October 1	Total Evaluations Completed by EOY
2018-2019	8	81
2019-2020	16	53
2020-2021*	17	75
2021-2022	19	TBD

*2020-2021 Number of Open Evaluations includes those not completed during March - June 2020 closure

Hanscom K-8 Special Education Intake Process/Evaluation Process

Due to the unique population of our Military connected families, an intake process has been established whereby upon hearing about the registration or expected move of a military family, the Student Services Coordinator meets individually with each family to accomplish the following:

- Welcome families to Hanscom
- Discuss their child from their perspective. Notes are distributed to the service provider
- Sign Release and Exchange of Information to speak to the prior school district and/or any essential medical providers for the student if necessary
- Provide and receive essential documentation for their child
- Evaluation meeting - discuss evaluation assessments, talk about parent concerns and get their perspective, discuss eligibility and parents rights
- Meetings between EFMP and School Liaison (Preschool - 8th Grade)

Crisis Prevention Intervention - Lincoln Campus

Crisis Response Team (CRT) calls require a minimum of two responders in order to de-escalate and manage behavior and to support students in crisis.

Year	Number of CRT Calls as of October 18	Total Calls for the Year
2019-2020	6	8 (March Closure)
2020-2021	2	2
2021-2022	0	TBD

Crisis Prevention Intervention Data Hanscom Campus

Crisis Response Team (CRT) calls require a minimum of two responders in order to de-escalate and manage behavior and to support students in crisis.

Year	Number of CRT Calls as of October 19	Total Calls for the Year
2019-2020	25	108 (March Closure)
2020-2021	14	290
2021-2022	81 (to date)	TBD

Benefits of Current K-8 Special Education Staffing Model

Benefits of Current Model

- Caseload numbers allow for Special Educators to build strong relationships with our students and families
- Ability for Special Educators to integrate into 1-2 grade level teams, improving collaboration, curriculum planning and differentiation for all students
- Ability for Special Educators to deeply understand grade level curriculum, better supporting modification and integration
- Specially designed instruction is designed for each individual student according to their unique needs

Lincoln Preschool: Lincoln and Hanscom Campus

The Lincoln Preschool

- Is a developmentally-appropriate preschool program that addresses each individual child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth.
- Sets high standards for all children while valuing and accommodating individual differences, strengths, and needs The Lincoln Preschool provides high quality programming with flexibility in scheduling and placement.
- Is open to children of the residents of Lincoln, Hanscom Air Force Base and the children of Lincoln Public Schools faculty and staff members.
- Is a fully-integrated, inclusive program designed to meet the needs of students with and without disabilities
- Has a balance of typically-developing students and students with disabilities. Faculty and staff are expertly trained to facilitate learning for all students in the program.
- Follows standards are based on the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks that include instruction in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Technology/Engineering, History and Social Sciences, the Arts, Health Education, and social and emotional approaches to play and learning.

Early Intervention

- Early Intervention services are meant to help support families and caregivers and to enhance the development and learning of infants and toddlers through individualized, developmentally appropriate activities within the child's and family's everyday life.
- Preschool Coordinator attends Transition Planning Conferences with Early Intervention providers and families to meet the need for the Department of Public Health (EI requirement) but also to serve as a means of establishing a relationship with the families and providing them with the information they need as they transition from Early Intervention to the public schools
- Extended Evaluations:
 - Allows a student to attend a preschool program of the Lincoln Preschool while participating in an evaluation to more clearly define their needs and identify possible disabilities
 - Students who participate in the Extended Diagnostic Evaluation program have not qualified for special education services; they are in the process of completing a full educational review that will determine eligibility for special education.
 - At the completion of the Extended Diagnostic Evaluation, the TEAM will meet to discuss results and determine appropriate recommendations.

Lincoln Preschool on the Lincoln Campus

LPS at Lincoln

- Open to students who reside in Lincoln and those of faculty and staff that are enrolled through the district with School Committee approval
- Currently two classrooms that offer 4 hour programming with a choice or TEAM recommendation of 2 days, 3 days or 5 days
- One classroom teacher who is dual certified, one Special Education Tutor and one Special Education Aide, shared Special Education Tutor that supports both classrooms due to the high level of student need
- Classrooms can have up to 18 students in each class with this staffing model
- An Extended Day special education program is recommended by the TEAM for students who require additional time to work on IEP goals and objectives
- An Extended Day Program is offered to provide an on-campus, low-cost daycare option for children of faculty and staff. The program supports the district in maintaining high-level teachers and expertise. The Extended Day Program is fully funded by parent payment. If slots are available, the option is offered to other children enrolled in the Lincoln Preschool.

Lincoln Preschool on the Hanscom Campus

LPS at Hanscom

- Open to students who reside on Hanscom Air Force Base
- Currently there are two morning sections
 - 2.5 hours (Monday through Friday)
 - One afternoon session (2.5 hours M, T, TH, F)
 - Three 4 hours sections (4 hours Monday through Friday)
- Extended Day is offered for students that require additional time to address IEP goals and objectives (1.5 hours per day, 4 days per week)
- An inclusion class with a higher teacher to student ratio is available on the Hanscom Campus to meet the more individualized special education needs of students that have had challenges participating in inclusion classrooms that have full enrollment.

Lincoln Preschool Staffing

Teachers Lincoln Campus	2.0
Teachers Hanscom Campus	5.0
Speech/Language Pathologist	1.0 (Hanscom)
OT, PT, Psychologist	FTE shared with Lincoln/Hanscom K-8

- Related Service Providers for the preschool that are shared with the district have been included in earlier slides.
- Preschool classroom teachers serve as both the general education teachers and also special education teachers. In addition to the curriculum, preschool teachers are also case managers for those students in their class that required specialized instruction.

Lincoln Preschool Level of Need

Level of Need (in and out of the classroom)	PK
Low (<2 hours)	10
Low (>2 hours)	9
Moderate	4
High	15

While Level of Need and Placement Type can be related, they are not synonymous. Calculation of Level of Need includes Placement Type, Service Providers, and Percent of Program Time in Special Education.

Lincoln Preschool- Evaluations

Year	Number of Open Evaluations by October 1	Total Evaluations Completed by EOY
2018-2019	8	62
2019-2020	3	41
2020-2021*	11	39
2021-2022	8	TBD

*2020-2021 Number of Open Evaluations includes those not completed during March - June 2020 closure

Preschool Special Education Intake Process/Evaluation Process

The intake process at the preschool varies slightly based on the referral source. The majority of intakes are processed through the Early Intervention transition process. The Preschool Coordinator conducts a meeting with each family to accomplish the following:

- Welcome families to the Lincoln Preschool
- Discuss their child from their perspective
- Explain the evaluation and transition process including timelines
- Provide and receive essential documentation for their child
- Evaluation meeting - discuss evaluation assessments, talk about parent concerns and get their perspective, discuss eligibility and parents rights
- Meetings between EFMP and School Liaison (Preschool - 8th Grade)

In-District Program Development

The district looks to build programming for students in-district:

- To provide LRE
- To keep students in their community schools
- To provide inclusion opportunities for students

Challenges:

- Must have a cohort of students with similar needs and within a 48 month age range
- Programs must be sustainable
- Requires a higher staff to student ratio (medically fragile and students with more significant cognitive disabilities or more intensive needs related to Autism require 1:1 or 1:2 models)

Out of District Programming

OOD students requiring programming outside of the district require more intensive programming typically related to social-emotional/behavioral, autism, medical needs/complex learning needs and neurological disabilities (or a combination of needs). The district seeks to place in the LRE (collaboratives) before looking to private day placements.

Percentage of OOD population by Disability:

- Sensory-Deaf/Hard of Hearing 3.8%
- Specific Learning 3.8%
- Health 7.7%
- Multiple 7.7%
- Developmental Delay 7.7%
- Emotional 15.4%
- Neurological 15.4%
- Autism (intensive needs) 38.5%

OOD	Collaborative	Private Day
PK	5	0
Lincoln K-8	2	0
Hanscom K-8	17	2

Circuit Breaker Program

CB Program was established in 2004 to provide additional state funding for students who require more funding costs for programming

Reimbursement percent can change annually (typically 70-75%)

Threshold cost for districts is 4 x foundation (FY'21 \$46,704-per pupil under ch.70 funding) with any costs above the threshold to be reimbursed based upon CB reimbursement rates (some student placements do not reach threshold). FY'22 threshold is \$47,363

FY'21 submission was based on 25 OOD students

FY'22 reimbursement to district was \$755,911

- Based upon 75% tuition reimbursement
- Based upon 50% transportation reimbursement (up 25%)
- CB reimbursement is used for special education costs

Upcoming News

Interim SEPAC

- District currently has a 3 year waiver from DESE to form a SEPAC
- Meetings and events have taken place to support special education parent leadership
- Partnership between special education administration and parents
- Currently creating SEPAC bylaws and will hold elections in this school year

DESE on-site visit for Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM)–Nov 16th and 17th

- Completed a self-assessment in the spring of 2021 with additional documents provided before the site visit
- Interviews of the Interim SEPAC, faculty (gen.ed and special ed), administrators
- Tours of school facilities and programs