Special Programs Criteria

Wendy McCabe Special Education Supervisor Waterford Public Schools

Background

- Current prevalence of students with disabilities in the district 18.6% (2023 15.9%)
- Added behavior support classrooms in each building about 13 years ago
- Created classrooms for students with Autism about 15 years ago

Website not updated since creation

Special Programs

<u>Support Centers</u>—One classroom in each building focused on supporting the needs of students with challenging behaviors that interfere with learning

Explorers – Four classrooms (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12) focused on supporting students with cognitive and behavioral needs

Waterford Elementary Special Education Programs

Students with severe behavior interfering with learning - with or without academic concerns

Students with academics concerns or cognitive impairments with or without mild behavioral issues

Students diagnosed with ASD and who are experiencing significant behavioral concerns

SUPPORT CENTER

Level 1- Students may receive check in services and consult within the mainstream setting as appropriate and behavior programming within the regular education setting. On-call support as needed.

Level 2- Students may receive more than 1 hour per day out of class service. Consult and behavior programming within the regular education setting may be provided. Support may include in class support as well as support for behavioral episodes within the classroom.

Level 3- Students will spend the majority of their day in the support center with supported inclusion as appropriate.

concerns and behavioral issues-If this RESOURCE ROOM placement is

Students with academic

moderate

considered

contact building

support center

teacher.

SHARE

Reading

Significant Reading/Early Literacy Delays: May include daily instruction in the resource room Moderate Reading/Early Literacy Delays: May include every other day instruction in the mainstream setting or resource room

JUNIOR EXPLORERS PROGRAM

District-wide, full time self-contained classroom with opportunities for inclusion as appropriate *Contact Special Services director to facilitate this recommendation

Math

Significant Math Delays: May include daily instruction in the resource room Moderate Math Delays: May include every other day instruction in the mainstream setting or resource room

Students with Significant Cognitive Impairments

May include daily instruction in the resource room as well as possible additional adult assistance to include mainstream instruction

*In IEP Direct, select SPED teacher/Para for service implementer for all academic/behavior services on grid.

Waterford High School Special Education Programs

Students experiencing significant difficulty in more traditional educational settings due to social, emotional and anxiety concerns.

SUPPORT CENTER

Placement is based on individual student needs per the individualized Education Plan (IEP)

Students typically receive all core instruction in the Support Center through a computer based program while behavior is monitored daily.

Students have the option to attend grade specific classes or electives as determined by the PPT. As students progress, a plan to support their transition back into the general education setting is developed and monitored. Students experiencing academic struggles due to a learning disability, cognitive impairments, and/or a neurologically based health impairment

Students with multiple and intellectual disabilities.

IEP/SKILLS CLASSES

READING: Students receive reading intervention instruction focused on phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and/or comprehension based on individual skill deficits and evaluative data. Services delivered in a small group special education classroom.

COOP ENGLISH: Special Education teacher joins the regular education English class to cooperatively instruct grade level (9-12) English using scaffolding and differentiated approaches to instruction. COOP English classes are offered at every grade level. COOP PRE-ALGEBRA/ALGEBRA: Special Education teacher joins the regular education Pre-Algebra/Algebra class to cooperatively instruct grade level math using scaffolding and differentiated approaches to instruction. STUDY SKILLS: Designed to assist students develop proper study habits. communication/self-advocacy skills, and strategies for organization. Students receive skills to successfully transition to employment and post-secondary educational opportunities while reinforcing independent living skills. Grade level transitional career assessments are given to address transitional needs.

HIGH SCHOOL EXPLORERS PROGRAM

Placement based on individual student needs per the Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Student programs vary depending on individualized needs. Students will be included in general education classes with appropriate accommodations and supports. Reading, math and study skills/transitional instruction are often delivered within the program's classroom setting.

Need for Criteria and Referral Process

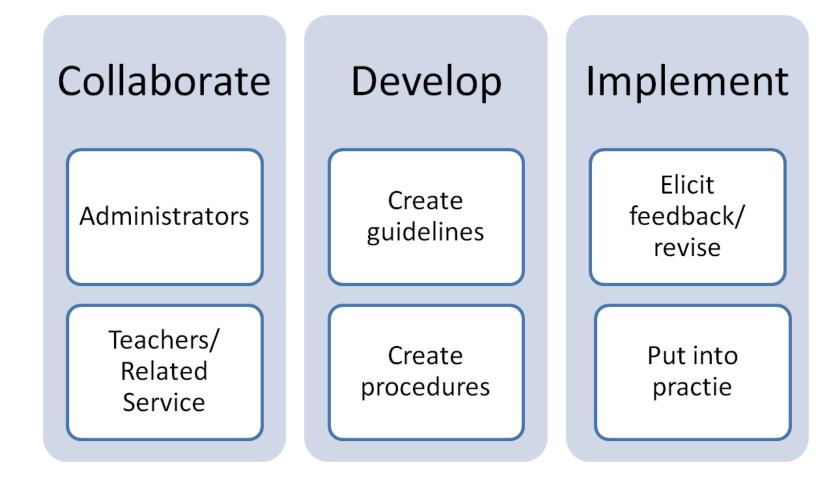
- Staff and related service providers expressing frustration
- Programs have evolved since initial inception
- Too many students placed in Support Centers without documentation of need
- New staff unaware of programs
- No procedures in place for referring to special programs

Vision

Through staff and families working together, all students will receive the programing they need to succeed socially, academically and emotionally in the least restrictive environment

Goal

Through implementing clear criteria and referral processes for entrance to special programs across the district, consistency in programming and improved staff knowledge of procedures will result in PPTs working collaboratively to ensure students are accessing the appropriate supports.



Collaborate

Administrators

- Reviewed plan with Director of Special Services
- Solicited input and set the stage for the why at elementary and secondary ad team meetings
- Met individually with elementary principal that houses Explorers classrooms
- Teachers / Related Service Providers
 - Met with BCBAs
 - Teacher teams
 - Related service providers

Develop

- Creation of guidelines for Support Centers
 - Teachers and BCBAs were very excited to work on developing a plan of non negotiables and fidelity checks to provide continuity of programs
 - Draft was created and reviewed by administrators, Director of Special Services and attorneys for the district
 - Currently being revised and will be reviewed again by all parties

Support Center Program Description and Referral Guidance

The Student Support Center, located within Waterford Public Schools, consists of special education programs designed to balance academic needs in addition to the development of social, emotional, and behavior skills.

The programs utilize various supports, including but not limited to: academic instruction and case management, provided by certified special-education teachers; social-emotional support, provided by a dedicated clinician; and behavioral support, provided by Board board-certified behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and paraprofessionals. Students have access to general education classes as well as teaching within the Support Center to increase social/emotional understanding and awareness, practice the use of pre-taught skills prior to generalization, and assist with academic needs as well.

Students referred to the Support Center are identified as having the following:

- Individualized Education Plan and Behavior Intervention Plan
- Students were referred to PPT and placed diagnostically as part of the evaluation process

In addition to above, students who access the Support Center for their special education services should also meet the following criteria: (all decision are only to be made by the PPT)

- Behavioral/ regulation concerns are the main area interfering with accessing the general education curriculum.
- The behaviors are frequent and severe resulting in disrupted learning for significant periods of the day.
- Other least restrictive strategies in the tier 1 environment have been documented, revised and have not shown an increase in positive behavior based on data collection.*
- BCBA consult was conducted, suggested strategies were implemented with fidelity and data did not show an increase in positive behavior.*

**Students serviced through 504s or SRBI plans who are exhibiting behavioral challenges will receive services through the tiered intervention model, with support from the building clinician (and BCBA as applicable).

**Students on a tier 3 plan whose data does not show effective intervention over continued time should be recommended for referral to Special Education in order to assess individual needs for access to the Support Center.

*It should be taken into consideration that when a new intervention or strategy is implemented, it often results in an increase in student behavior before the desired response.

Develop

- Creation of Referral Procedures and Criteria
 - Several individual meetings were held with various teachers regarding their frustrations in this area
 - Solicited lots of ideas! Everyone had an opinion
 - Created several drafts and had interested parties review and provide feedback
 - Validated all input (even if it didn't make its way into the plan)
 - Currently running through trial of referral for a preK student

Referral for Entrance into Waterford Public Schools Explorers

If a student is currently enrolled in the district and staff working with the student suspect services in Explorers may be appropriate the following procedure should be initiated.

•Staff member(s) inform principal and share anecdotal data supporting a possible need. •If principal is in agreement, anecdotal data to be shared with representative(s) from Explorers and Explorer's staff member(s) invited to observe student in school environments and over multiple visits. Explorers staff may request certain data be collected before team meeting. Observations Current staff members working with student are also encouraged to visit the Explorers classroom

> After initial observations, representative(s) from Explorers and current school team to review all available assessment data together (behavior, FBA, support needs, V8-MAPP, ABLLS-R -up to age 12, AFLS assessments if available) •BIP reviewed, if fidelity of implementation questioned, fidelity check by BCBA before proceeding. A measure of adaptive skills should be reviewed (functioning showing significant defecits)

Team Meetings

PPT

Initial

If team agrees a placement in Explorers should be considered at PPT, current staff working with student. notifies Special Services (before PPT is planned)

 After the first two steps are completed AND the team feels receiving services through Explorers is. appropriate, representative(s) from Explorers invited to PPT when these services are being discussed or proposed

Decisions are only to be made at PPT

Possible characteristics of a student that may benefit from their services being implemented through Explorers:

itadents with profound academic, behavioral, and/or industrial needs.

students, whose behavior requires more intensive supports with specific management plans driven by the principles of Applied Rehavior Applyin.

Mudents whose learning style requires D.D. as the primary method of instruction to support drill acquation, retention, and generalization.

itadents who require intensive 5.5 support in all areas. of the school day including activities of daily living. adal learning commanication, functional delle etc.

Students who have significant deficits in Adaptive Sec. Bit.

Explorers Staff

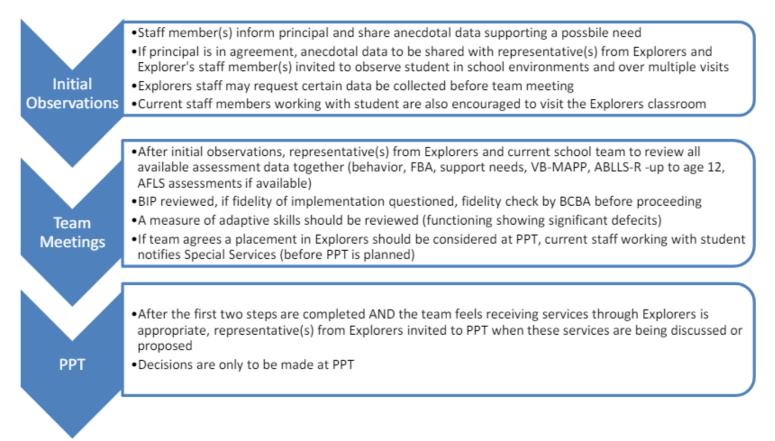
Little Explorers QH- Stephanie Brown Junior Explorers QH- Jarica Nevins Explorers CLMS Michael Nevins Explorers WHS- Mary Murphy BCBAs Quaker Hill & WHS Rosemary Grace CLMS- Bloom (Courtney Hartzler/ Rachel Guerri) Special Services Director Gina M.Wygonik

Supervisor-Wendy McCabe

Students currently enrolled in Explorers that are transitioning to a new school (elementary to middle, middle to high school), should follow the above procedures.

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Implement

- After trial, revisions will be made
- Goal to have finalization by start of the 24-25 school year
- Created a Special Services shared Google drive to allow easy access to all documents
- Will introduce formally district wide at PD day in August