

**Pioneer Central School District - Special Education Plan**  
**Updated 1-7-14**

Pioneer is committed to providing special education services and programs to students with disabilities in the least restrictive education setting appropriate for each student. We currently provide a range of school-age special education programs spanning the placement continuum, as follows:

Regular education setting with special education Consultant Teacher support, including a Teacher of the Blind and Partially Sighted (“TBPS”), as well as a Teacher of the Deaf (“ToD”), when/if indicated. In some instances an integrated co-teaching model is used (district-wide). The *TBPS* as well as the *ToD* are BOCES employees. Also, when indicated, paraprofessional assistance is used to support inclusion of students with special needs in the regular education setting.

Resource Room services, sometimes in combination with Consultant Teacher services (district-wide).

15:1 classes, Pioneer-operated, subject-specific, for grades 9-12 in the high school and grades 7-8 in the middle school. These classes are taught by special education teachers also certified in the respective core content area.

15:1 Pioneer-operated classes in grades 5 and 6, through two middle school special education teachers.

12:1:1 Two Pioneer-operated classes in Arcade and one in Delevan;  
12:1:1 One BOCES-operated class in Delevan;  
12:1:1 One Pioneer-operated class in the middle school;  
12:1:1 One BOCES-operated class in the high school.

8:1:1 One BOCES-operated class in Arcade and two in Delevan;  
8:1:1 One BOCES-operated class in the middle school;  
8:1:1 classes in the high school (one BOCES-operated and three Pioneer-operated core subject classes in the high school, taught by special education teachers who are also certified in the respective content area; working collaboratively, in conjunction with a BOCES *on-team* Counselor, as the “Panther Project” for grades 9-12). The teachers also provide / assist with some electives within the Panther Project.

6:1:1 classes (one operated by Pioneer in the middle school for students with autism spectrum disorders; one operated by BOCES in Delevan and two in the middle school for students with intensive emotional and behavior management needs).

12:1/3:1 class (one Pioneer-operated, multi-age class in the high school, for students with significant developmental and/or physical disabilities);

When in-district options are not sufficiently structured, specialized and/or self-contained to meet the needs of school-age students with severe disabilities, the district utilizes out-of-district programming options, including (but not limited to): BOCES; Buffalo School 84; Aspire's Center for Learning; the Stanley Falk School; Randolph Academy; Autism Services; The Cantalician Center for Learning; The Kessler (residential) Center; and St. Mary's School (day and residential) for the Deaf.

When needed, Pioneer provides Home Instruction and related services for medically fragile students.

Pioneer is also responsible for identifying and fulfilling the special education needs of students who are home-schooled and those who attend the one private school located in the district.

When needed to ensure placement in the least restrictive setting, we provide 1:1 aide services. We also provide related services (e.g., occupational therapy, speech therapy, physical therapy, counseling, adapted physical education, orientation and mobility training, assistive technology, and music therapy services) when indicated.

When necessary, small vehicles are used for transportation to/from school; bus aides are utilized when needed. Wheelchair vans are used as needed.

Some neighboring school districts have contracted directly with Pioneer for programming unavailable to those districts. Six current students were placed by the CSE's of other districts in Pioneer's more intensive special class settings.

Pioneer also endeavors to enable students with special needs to have equal access to participation in school-sponsored activities that occur after school. We recently partnered with The Advocacy Center to initiate the *Together Including Every Student* ("TIES") program to provide trained student volunteer assistance to enable students with disabilities to be included in after-school and community-based activities.

Pioneer is responsible for coordinating preschool special education evaluations, programs and services, which are mostly provided by approved private agencies. Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) services, separately or in combination with related services, are designed to enable students to participate in normative early childhood settings. Some preschool students with a disability require only related services. Currently two NYSED-approved private agencies are utilized when students require a special class in an integrated setting or a special class in a separate setting. Pioneer recently became responsible for some provision of preschool special education services, including SEIT, related services and 1:1 aide services.

We evaluate our programs and services in three ways: through student performance on NYSED assessments; by monitoring individual student progress toward accomplishment of IEP goals and objectives; and by monitoring program achievement relative to

NYSED's special education performance indicators, including parent satisfaction surveys.

As an integral aspect of the budgeting process, the district annually projects special education program, service, staffing and space needs, and, as part of that process, collaboratively plans with BOCES to fulfill those needs.

The district ensures that all instructional materials are available in a usable alternative format for each student with a disability at the same time as such instructional materials are available to non-disabled students. In particular, we have extensive material and equipment, software and specialized personnel resources to help us fulfill these important responsibilities to students with visual impairments.

### Challenges ahead

*We cannot simply design services and fit students into what we have available.*

The structure of our individualized services must continually change as the quantity and nature of student-specific needs change. Consequently, it is difficult to plan far in advance. That said, there are several challenges looming on the horizon:

- Need for an additional, Pioneer-operated 12:1:1 classroom starting in 2014-15 for 14-16 year old students pursuing the new CDOS credential in the high school;
- Possible need for a new primary-level classroom in 2014-15 for students with autism;
- Anticipated need in 2015-16 for BOCES to operate an intensive 6:1:1 therapeutic classroom in the high school for students with extensive mental health needs;
- Anticipated need in 2015-16 for the Pioneer 6:1:1 class for students with autism (that we initiated in 2004-05) to move from the middle to the high school (and the associated need for suitable space);
- Desire to consistently provide preventive occupational therapy and speech/language services in the early grades (ideally including UPK);
- Ongoing challenge to timely identify the need for and complete mandated CSE evaluations;
- Possible NYSED-mandated need to directly provide evaluations of preschool students suspected of having a disability;
- Increasing demand for special education supports in all regular education classes due to the increased academic rigor associated with the Common Core, high stakes testing and graduation requirements.