

## **Swampscott Public Schools**

### **Special Education Programs and Services**

#### **Integrated Preschool**

#### **Ages 3-5**

##### **Integrated Preschool**

The Integrated Preschool is designed to provide our youngest learners with an educational environment specially designed to meet the developmental needs of 3-5 year olds. Children at this age learn by doing and are rapidly adding to their repertoire of skills, especially in the areas of language, social-emotional-behavioral regulation, and motor skills. Our integrated preschool program meets the needs of not only our special education students, but also the learning needs of typically developing children. Our preschool program consists of six classes comprising of preschoolers with not only typically developing skills, but also a range of disabilities including developmental delays and autism spectrum disorder. The preschool program uses principles of applied behavioral analysis including positive reinforcement, direct teaching of social skills and redirection. Related services include social skills, speech and language therapies, occupational and physical therapy. Students are referred from early intervention, parents, private preschools, as well as other sources who contact us through our child find search. The integrated preschool program has two substantially separate programs and is designed to meet the needs of students who need an intensive approach to their education, including a smaller group setting and opportunities for more individualized instruction. A more comprehensive description can be found in the preschool handbook on the school district website.

#### **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

#### **Grades K-4**

##### **Discovery Learning Center Stanley Elementary School - Grades K-4**

This program services children in the elementary grades with diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder, and other developmental and learning challenges. The program relies upon the principles of Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), which is used to help students gain skills in all areas including academics, communication, social skills and activities of daily living. A board certified behavior analyst (BCBA) consults to the program. A certified special educator, ABA tutors and ESP's assist in administering services throughout the school day. Each student's program is designed on an individualized basis to fit the needs of that student in accordance with his/her IEP. The students require modifications and accommodations to the general schedule, and often behavior support plans, to be successful in school. Many of the students in the program also receive services from the Speech/Language Pathologist, the Occupational Therapist and the Physical Therapist. The students are integrated into the mainstream classroom as appropriate. The Discovery Learning Center also incorporates a focus on activities of daily living, where students learn functional life skills to advance their independence in all areas of their daily lives

including feeding and self-care. This program has allowed students success in a public school environment in his or her own community.

### **SOAR Inclusion Program Stanley School - Grades K-4**

The SOAR inclusion program supports students with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder and other disabilities that impact social, emotional, and behavioral regulation. Students in this program are fully included in the general education classroom with the support of an Education Support Professional or ABA Tutor. A special educator provides inclusion support to the program including modifications to curriculum as needed. The school psychologist and District BCBA work closely with the support staff, classroom teachers, and therapists to address each student's individual social-emotional, developmental and academic needs according to their Individual Education Plans. Many inclusion students benefit from frequent sensory and movement breaks and support in completing academic tasks. Students are also supported in their social skills development, and receive social skills training as well as on-going facilitation with peer interactions. Staff use behavior management and intervention strategies based on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) combined with a structured social skills curriculum. The SOAR program strives to build a classroom climate that promotes understanding and acceptance of differences, and where every child feels successful and reaches his or her full potential.

### **Language Based Learning Center – Primary Program - grades K-2**

### **Language Based Learning Center – Intermediate Program – grades 3-4**

#### **Clarke Elementary School**

The Language Based Learning Center is a highly structured classroom for students diagnosed with a language based learning disability (i.e. dyslexia and/or communication) for students in grades 2-4. Students may also have additional disabilities which impact learning. Reading, written language and math are taught in a small group setting with emphasis on an individualized programming, skill building and structured direct teaching. Students are pre-taught vocabulary and concepts for science and social studies in which they join the general education classroom with supports. In addition to specific training in the diagnosis and remediation of reading disabilities, the special educator also has expertise in various specialized literacy instructional methodologies including *Wilson Reading*, *LIPS*, *Project Read*, *Visualization and Verbalization and Framing your Thoughts*. At times, student may have a language processing disability that impacts their ability to fully understand the language exchanges and conversation of typical peers and may also participate in a weekly social skills group and receive speech and language therapy. These related services are important to assist these students in developing pragmatic language skills and strategies for self-advocacy. Occupational therapy and physical therapy are available for students who need these services.

### **STRIVE – Clarke School**

The STRIVE program is a therapeutic classroom environment that addresses each student's unique individual learning style and behavior needs, as well as their social and interpersonal skills. The class is for students who are unable to meet their potential in a general education

classroom. Students enrolled in this class are often diagnosed on the autism spectrum and have a wide range of significant learning challenges. The classroom emphasizes structured teaching and positive behavioral supports. The curriculum is based on state core standards but generously allows for modifications and adaptations regarding pace, style, implementation and individualization. The classroom is a small, nurturing, structured setting with a high staff to child ratio. The curriculum and environment aim to stimulate enthusiasm for learning and positive self-esteem. Students in this class are also included in class with their typically developing peers to the greatest extent possible. The mission of this class is to create an inspiring and life changing learning experience through direct instruction, hands on learning, technology, and academic skill development while weaving in needed therapies and individualized goals and objectives. The STRIVE program endeavors to create a school culture that promotes acceptance, patience, diversity and inclusion.

### **Learning Academy**

#### **Hadley Elementary School**

The Learning Academy is a therapeutic program designed to meet each student's social-emotional needs including teaching emotional regulation strategies and social skills while providing a challenging grade level curriculum. Students in this program have access to a quieter setting and a small staff to student ratio to support the development self-regulation skills and to provide behavioral interventions. Students have access to services that may include social skills groups with peers, counseling, and individual social coaching opportunities. The Learning Academy team works closely with all students' team members, such as the general education teacher, special education teacher, school psychologist, BCBA and parents, to ensure that all behavioral interventions are consistent across multiple learning settings to allow the student to access the curriculum to their fullest ability. Students are integrated into the inclusion settings with supports to generalize emotional regulation strategies into the general education setting when possible. The mission of this program is to provide students skills and strategies to self-monitor and regulate their behavior to be successful in the school community with inclusion in the general educational classroom and the school community as a goal.

#### **Elementary Resource Room Services - Clarke, Hadley, Stanley Elementary Schools**

All three elementary schools provide support for special education students through a combination of in-class, small group, and resource room support with a certified Special Education Teacher and Educational Support Personnel and/or Instructional Tutors. Each school supports an inclusion model when appropriate to address student needs and also provides individual and small group pullout sessions when more direct services will best facilitate a student's academic growth. Services are decided upon through collaboration of a team comprised of teachers, therapists, the principal, and the parents. In conjunction with individualized academic programs, the elementary Special Education program also addresses student needs through related services. Speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling as well as vision therapy services are delivered through inclusion and pull-out settings to support the whole child through their Individualized Education Program. The elementary special education teams strive to provide our students with the least restrictive, comprehensive individualized program to encourage academic and personal growth.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Grades 5-8

### **Intermediate Discovery Center**

This program services children in the middle school grades with diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder, and other developmental or intellectual disabilities. Each student's school day is designed on an individualized basis to fit his/her unique needs. Learning takes place in one to one and small group settings throughout the school day utilizing the principles of applied behavior analysis (ABA) which is used to help students gain skills in all areas including academics, communication and social skills. Teachers focus on experiential learning, promoting competence and independence in Activities of Daily Living (ADLs), functional skills and pre-vocational skills. A Board Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA) oversees the program, a special education teacher, and ABA tutors with training in data collection and discrete trials help administer the services. Students participate in activities in the general education setting with support from ABA tutors throughout the school week. Students work collaboratively with peers in the Strive Program on project based learning. Related services such as speech, occupational therapy and physical therapy may also be part of a student's program.

### **STRIVE**

The STRIVE program is a therapeutic classroom environment that addresses each student's unique individual learning style and behavior needs, as well as their social and interpersonal skills. The class is for students who are unable to meet their potential in a general education classroom. Students enrolled in this class may be diagnosed on the autism spectrum and have a wide range of significant learning disabilities and/or learning challenges. The classroom emphasizes structured teaching and positive behavioral supports. The curriculum is based on state core standards but generously allows for modifications and adaptations regarding pace, style, implementation and individualization. The classroom is a small, nurturing, structured setting with a high staff to child ratio. The curriculum and environment aim to stimulate enthusiasm for learning and positive self-esteem. The mission of this class is to create an inspiring and life changing learning experience through direct instruction, hands on learning, technology, and academic skill development while weaving in needed therapies and individualized goals and objectives. Students work collaboratively with peers in the Discovery Program on project based learning. The STRIVE program endeavors to create a school culture that promotes acceptance, patience, diversity and inclusion.

### **SAIL (*Supported Academic Inclusive Learning*)**

The Swampscott Middle School SAIL program provides supported academic inclusive learning to students. SAIL assists students in full-day social and academic support to specific students with autism spectrum disorder and social emotional difficulties with a focus on social pragmatics

and social interactions. A special educator oversees the programming, and each classroom has full-time support personnel to provide assistance to students based on their Individualized Education Programs. Content area teacher, special educators and inclusion support staff work collaboratively to individualize instruction as needed. For students who require more personalized attention and instruction, a pull-out class may be offered. Services are offered based on an individual's needs which may include speech, occupational therapy, and facilitation in appropriate social interaction with their peers in and out of the classroom as well as social skills groups. The school psychologist consults to the program, provides skill based instruction in the area of executive functioning and social skills.

### **Inclusion-Resource Model**

The Swampscott Middle School offers an inclusive Special Education Program where students' individual needs are considered as the program is designed. Content area teachers and special education teachers work collaboratively to co-teach classes in math and language arts. For students who require more personalized attention and instruction, a pull out self-contained language arts class and a pull-out math class may also be offered. In-class support is available to students in social studies and science. Guided study support time is offered to students for pre-teaching skills, previewing reading and further developing organizational skills. Services are offered based on an individual's needs and may also include speech, occupational therapy, counseling and social skills. The Middle School program is designed to meet the students' academic needs in addition to considering the unique social and emotional developmental needs of middle school students. This program strives to instill confidence and independence in students to enable them to become self-sufficient learners.

### **Language Based Learning Program**

The Middle School offers an inclusive Language Based Learning Program for students who require such a program. Special education teachers provide high quality small group instructional programs in English-language arts, reading and mathematics and collaboration with general education teachers in the content areas. The teachers work closely to insure essential content is provided with the agreed upon modifications necessary to bring the content to the students. The teachers also collaborate to provide in class support and content co-planning and collaboration in social studies and science. Teachers are trained in various specialized reading models of instruction including *Visualization and Verbalization*, *Wilson Reading*, and *Project Read*, as well as organizational and written language skills. Social and communication skills are developed within these services through active social interaction and verbal participation. This program is designed to allow the middle school aged student the opportunity to be an active part of the middle school community and still have their learning and social and emotional needs met.

### **HARBOR PROGRAM**

The Harbor program is a new program at the Swampscott High School. The Harbor Program will provide a supportive learning community with direct case management to facilitate student progress. Students will work with staff to develop emotional regulation skills as well as manage academic expectations and pressures. Counseling and supports will be integral parts of the program, along with close home-school communication. Harbor will also serve as a home base for students throughout the school day should they need assistance outside of their scheduled

academic block. Staff will be monitoring progress of students to proactively manage obstacles before they turn into crises. A specific focus on developing executive functioning skills is emphasized.

## **HIGH SCHOOL                      Grades 9-12**

### **Task Management Classes                      Grades 9-12**

Task Management is a 5-credit course based on the resource room model of special education instruction. Each task class is made up of a small group of students on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) with mild to moderate disabilities, and one special education teacher. During class time, students are expected to work toward their IEP goals and are offered assistance with the material from their content area classes. In addition, each student is taught study skills appropriate for each individual's learning style. The goal is to not only increase student learning and achievement, but also for each student to develop a repertoire of study skills and strategies they can use independently in high school and beyond.

Swampscott High School is split into a "lower house" of freshmen and sophomores and an "upper house" of juniors and seniors. Likewise, in task management, students are assigned to task management teachers by grade level in order to address the different needs of each grade level:

- Freshmen work on the transition from middle school to the new rigors of high school by becoming more familiar with their own learning styles and learning study and organizational skills.
- Sophomore students learn how to advocate for themselves. Within the task management class, they are given lessons on understanding their disability, dealing with test anxiety, good study habits, usage review, organization, English and Math MCAS review. Ultimately, as students, they become more accountable for their learning and responsibility within the classroom.
- Juniors and seniors are encouraged to become more independent by becoming effective self-advocates and applying learned skills and strategies to content area work. Time is also spent on transition planning which includes completing college applications and making plans for post-secondary education.

### **Co-teaching Classes**

The co-teaching program at Swampscott High School consists of a group of content -specific and special education teachers who collaborate to teach subject-area classes together within the general education classroom. Here at SHS, co-teaching resides within four content areas: Math, Science, English, and History. Numerous studies have documented the effectiveness of the co-teaching model in increasing overall student achievement. By combining the learning

strategies of special education with the rigor of a mainstream classroom, teachers are able to not only accommodate those students on an IEP, but also offer universal design to students who do not receive special education services but benefit from alternative, brain-centered approaches to content and organization within the curriculum. In addition, the presence of two certified and licensed teachers not only improves the practice of each teacher through extensive planning and collaboration, it cuts the student/teacher ratio in half, allowing for more one-on-one attention for all students.

### **Inclusion Program – High school Grades 9-12**

This program was developed for students whose primary disability negatively impacts his/her social thinking abilities. Many students have diagnoses on the autism spectrum or social emotional difficulties. A key goal of this program is to support and provide assistance with social pragmatics and social interactions throughout the school day. Students are supported in the mainstream classes and in small group settings. Students also receive small group instruction for study and organizational skills as well as interpreting and developing appropriate responses to a variety of social interactions. This access to a safe supportive environment is a key component for students' success.

### **Language Based Learning Center                      Grades 9-12**

This program offers a Task Management class in which we focus on the following skills: time management, organizational needs, writing, self-advocacy, reading comprehension, study techniques, academic support in content-area classes, test taking strategies and communication skills. Special and general education teachers engage in ongoing communication in order to assess progress or problems in each class. Home to school communication is also a component of Task Management.

The program ALSO offers a modified English class. The class aligns with the national English anchor standards, but is offered at a more manageable pace and follows a more explicit instructional approach and sequence of essential skills and standards. The class is a small group and employs a variety of teaching techniques in order to ensure success for each student. The class primarily focuses on the following topics: reading comprehension, detailed writing skills, using templates/graphic organizers for brainstorming and/or developing an essay, making inferences, analyzing literature, identifying symbolism, understanding imagery, using and understanding figurative language, processing complex language, understanding various literary devices, improving grammar skills, understanding parts of speech, analyzing word origins, following the writing process, developing a thesis statement, writing persuasive essays, writing expository essays, writing narrative essays, as well as developing and presenting debates on an assigned topic.

Each student's program is individualized to their specific area(s) of need per their IEP goals and objectives.

### **High School Strive**

The AIM Program is a comprehensive academic and vocational program for high school students who have diverse learning styles. The AIM Program focuses on helping young adults discover and develop their individual strengths and interests with a focus on functional academics,

activities of daily living, social skills and pre-vocational skill building. To meet the diverse needs of our multifaceted population, classes are held in a variety of settings including the mainstream and small group settings. Students are provided with varying degrees of academic support, social / emotional support, and therapies depending on their individual needs. Some students pass MCAS to obtain a high school diploma while others move on to the IVY Program (below) following senior year to receive additional transition planning and vocational services.

### **IVY (*Institution for Vocational Training of Young Adults*)**

The IVY Program is a transition program for young adults, ages 19 to 22 with diverse learning styles and a range of special needs. The IVY program focuses on helping young adults discover and develop their individual strengths and interests while preparing each student for an independent and fulfilling life in the community.

Our students have a wide range of strengths, interests, and personalities that are developed through a variety of individualized lessons, assessments, and internships. To meet the diverse needs of our multifaceted population, our students are provided with varying degrees of supports and therapies. A continuum of services is offered that is a collaboration of students, families, school, and the community.

The IVY program offers a wide selection of challenging and diverse courses that are geared toward each student's strengths and needs. Classes range in size from two to five, with an instructor-to-student ratio of better than 1:3. The curriculum includes conventional lesson plans such as the *Transitions Curriculum for Young Adults*, *Job Survival Technology*, and *the Moving On Curriculum*. Other lessons are personally designed depending on the needs of the individual student. The IVY Program curriculum focuses on functional academics, social skills, health and wellness, and activities of daily living that will help promote self confidence and self-esteem while promoting independence.

### **HARBOR PROGRAM**

The Harbor program is a new program at the Swampscott High School. The Harbor Program will provide a supportive learning community with direct case management to facilitate student progress. Students will work with staff to develop emotional regulation skills as well as manage academic expectations and pressures. Counseling and supports will be integral parts of the program, along with close home-school communication. Harbor will also serve as a home base for students throughout the school day should they need assistance outside of their scheduled academic block. Staff will be monitoring progress of students to proactively manage obstacles before they turn into crises.