

# SPECIAL EDUCATION OVERVIEW

Finance Committee  
School Committee  
February 2010

# Federal and State Laws and Regulations

- Free, appropriate public education:  
Free = public expense; no cost to parents/guardians  
Appropriate = effective progress;  
meaningful educational benefit  
for...
- Students with disabilities, ages 3-22

# Eligibility

The student...

- Has a documented disability (10 defined by law)
- Is not making effective progress
- Requires specially designed instruction to make effective progress and/or related services to access the general ed curriculum

# Team determines eligibility, services, program, placement

## The “Team” is...

- Parent/s or guardian/s
- General ed teacher
- District representative (who can commit \$\$)
- Specialists with expertise in various areas related to disabilities... Evaluators and service providers

# Continuum of Services

- In class services
- Services out of general ed classrooms (up to 60% of time)
- Self-contained classes
- Private, separate day schools
- Residential schools
- Home or hospital based programs

# Within Blanchard

- Specially designed instruction
- Speech/language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Counseling (individual and small group)
- In class support by special ed paraprofessionals
- Integrated Preschool

# Our Special Educators

- 3.8 Learning Center Teachers: Screening and evaluations; In or out of class services; 1:1 or small group instruction; Individualized programs in reading, written language, and/or math; Modifications of classroom content; Consultation to general ed teachers
- 1.0 Special Educator: Design/ implementation/monitoring of programs for students with social/emotional/behavioral disabilities

# Integrated Preschool

- One program option for children with disabilities, ages 3,4,5
- Local program option
- Opportunity to learn alongside peers without disabilities
- 6 students with, 8 students without disabilities
- Adult-student ratio allows for necessary services, supports

# Why add a p.m. session?

- Only one anticipated opening in current session for students with disabilities for 2010-11
- 8-10 *known* transitions... *some* will need IP
- Children become eligible for service *on* their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday
- If we don't have space, the children's need for a program remains... we'll need to tuition them out (and transport)

# CASE Collaborative

- 14 area districts
- Self-contained classes (6-8 students with like disabilities) – more than 60% of time
- Housed in public school buildings so students can access general ed
- Cost effective – approximately \$51,000; less \$ for transportation than most private schools
- Usually closer to home than a private school

# Private day schools

- Out-of-district placements
- For students with significant needs; cannot benefit from/access general ed
- Sample tuitions:
  - Lighthouse School - \$51,219
  - Cotting School - \$67,552
  - NECC - \$68,978
  - Community Therapeutic - \$63,385
  - Melmark - \$90,951

# Residential Schools

- For students whose intensive special needs exceed a 6-hour school day/impact them throughout all aspects of their day/life

- Sample tuitions:

Brandon - \$147,433

Dr. Franklin Perkins - \$178,986

Melmark Home - \$213,447

Perkins School for the Blind - \$127,734-  
\$275,605

# Circuit Breaker

- DESE program designed to support districts financially for students with high-cost programs (in or out of district)
- Formula: DESE-determined % of the difference between the total cost of program and 4X foundation (\$37,328 in FY'09)
- Reimbursement rate has ranged from 35% - 75%
- Does not include transportation costs

# Circuit Breaker Example

- Student's total program cost = \$66,653
- Foundation amount - \$37,328
- Difference between those, or net claim amount = \$29,325
- Reimbursement = whatever % of \$29,325 is approved by DESE (law says 75%, "*subject to appropriation*")