



SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFFING POLICY
PPSD POLICY

General Belief	<p>The Providence School Board is committed to providing a high quality education to every student, consistent with its core beliefs and commitments, most of which is that all Providence students can and must learn at high levels, reach their full potential and succeed in school and in life. Further, the Providence School Board strives to continuously improve the quality of education to all students and recognizes that every student has unique learning needs.</p> <p>The Providence School Board takes very seriously its legal and moral obligation to ensure that students with disabilities are provided a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. A key element in the provision of FAPE for students with disabilities is the availability of highly qualified teachers, related service personnel, and support staff to implement each student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP).</p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of Section 300.157 of the Regents’ Regulations, the school district convened a process to solicit the input from both internal and external stakeholders, including teachers, staff, parents/guardians and community partners to assist in the development of the Special Education Staffing Plan and Policy.</p>
Purpose and Scope	<p>This policy is intended to govern the implementation of Providence Schools’ Special Education Staffing Plan.</p>
Definitions	<p>FAPE: Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)</p> <p>IEP: Individualized Education Program (IEP)</p> <p>Parent/Guardian : Any individual who has legal custody over a minor student within the District</p> <p>Students with Disabilities: Children or students who require special education because of: autism; communication disorders; deaf-blindness; emotional disturbances; hearing impairments, including deafness; intellectual disability; orthopedic impairments; other health impairments; specific learning disabilities; traumatic brain injuries; or visual impairments, including blindness. For further reference, also see 34 CFR 300.8 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">Act of 1973, and the Rhode Island Regulations Governing the Education of Children with Disabilities</p>
<p>Guidelines and Implementation Strategies</p>	<p>In order to deliver quality instruction and services to each student with a disability, the Superintendent will develop administrative regulations to implement the Special Education Staffing policy.</p> <p>An appropriate Staffing Plan will include but is but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessment of the needs of students with disabilities ● Assignment of personnel in accordance with the needs of students with disabilities ● Evaluation of the delivery of services to determine whether the school district’s programs conform to the requirements of state and federal laws and regulations <p>The Special Education Staffing Plan that will ensure that appropriate personnel are available to deliver the services and instruction required to fully implement each student’s Individual Education Program and provide FAPE in the least restrictive environment. The Staffing Plan will be based on the needs of students with disabilities and will adhere to the following guiding principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All students can learn and the academic achievement of all students will increase. ● Due to the unique needs of individual learners, children must be provided with positive learning opportunities that are supported with special education and related services that are specially designed to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities. ● Special education programs and services must be aligned with school improvement efforts set forth by the Providence School Department. ● A full continuum of special education and support services must be available to students with disabilities. ● All children must have access to the general education curriculum, and special education services must be provided in the least restrictive environment. ● Parents/guardians are a pivotal part of their child’s educational program and every effort must be employed for their participation in the development and implementation of an IEP for their child. Familial involvement is a crucial part of the special education program and school activities. ● In making special education staffing decisions and determining special education teacher caseloads, priority must be placed on providing the services necessary to fully implement the IEP of every student with a disability.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student needs rather than numbers or specific category of disability will be the central basis for staffing considerations when determining special education teacher caseloads. • Special education services required by the students' IEP are crucial factors in determining caseloads. There must be flexibility in special education staffing to address any changes that may occur in student needs throughout the school year across the district. • Special education staffing must be in compliance with Rhode Island State Law governing students with disabilities. • All staff hired and assigned to work with students with disabilities will possess the necessary qualifications to fully meet the needs of the students assigned to those individuals. • Professional development and training will be given to personnel to ensure the effective delivery of research based practices used to provide appropriate education for all students, as well as thorough understanding of the requirements and intent of all state and federal laws and regulations.
Training, Oversight, and Communication	This policy will be reviewed annually by the School Board. In conjunction with this review, the Superintendent or his designee will present the findings of the annual evaluation of the Staffing Plan, including but not limited to, a review of student achievement data, caseload information, input from school administrators and staff, Special Education staff, the District's Local Advisory Committee (LAC), parents/guardians and other community stakeholders.
Compliance with Laws, Confidentiality Requirements	The Superintendent will ensure that all PPSD employees and all PPSD contractors comply fully with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations, and with all Board policies. In the event any part of any policy is unlawful, the Superintendent will report such event to the Board as soon as practicable and request of the Board a modification of the policy.
Legal Reference	Section 300.157 of the Regulations of the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Governing the Education of Children with Disabilities. § RIGL 16-24: Children With Disabilities 220-RICR-20-30-6
Cross Reference	401 - Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports Policy
History	Approved by Board: 10/5/13 Amended: 9/21/21