

Profile and Plan Essentials

LEA Name		AUN	
Highlands SD		103024753	
Address 1			
1500 Pacific Avenue			
Address 2			
PO Box 288			
City	State	Zip	
Natrona Heights	PA	15065	
Director of Special Education Name			
Amber H. Dean			
Director of Special Education Email			
adean@goldenrams.com			
Director of Special Education Phone Number		Director of Special Education Ext	
724-226-2400		5651	
Chief Administrator Name			
Dr Monique Mawhinney			
Chief Administrator Email			
mmawhinney@goldenrams.com			

Special Education Students

Total Number of Students Receiving Special Education 482

School District Total Student Enrollment 2214

Percent of Students Receiving Special Education 21.8

Steering Committee

Name	Position/Role	Building	Email
Monique Mawhinney	Superintendent	Highlands SD	mmawhinney@goldenrams.com
Cathleen Cubelic	Other	Highlands SD	ccubelic@goldenrams.com
Catherine Russo	Director of Curriculum	Highlands SD	crusso@goldenrams.com
Kristie Gizienski	Building Principal	Highlands Early Childhood Center	kgizienski@goldenrams.com
Stanley Whiteman	Building Principal	Highlands El Sch	swhiteman@goldenrams.com
Rebecca Bragan	Building Principal	Highlands MS	rbragan@goldenrams.com
Michanel Toole	Building Principal	Highlands SHS	mtoole@goldenrams.com
Kristen Wyant	Special Education Teacher	Highlands El Sch	kwyant@goldenrams.com
Scott Silverman	Special Education Teacher	Highlands SHS	ssilverman@goldenrams.com
Jennifer Goldberg	Parent	Highlands SHS	jgoldberg@goldenrams.com
Kristie Babinsack	Board Member	Highlands SD	kbabinsack@goldenrams.com
Faith Foster	Parent	Highlands MS	ffoster@golenrams.com
Sarah Kumar	Building Principal	Highlands El Sch	skumar@goldenrams.com
Stanley Whiteman	Building Principal	Highlands El Sch	swhiteman@goldenrams.com
Bridgette Jodon	Special Education Teacher	Highlands MS	bjodon@goldenrams.com
Kailtyn Selfridge	Building Principal	Highlands SHS	kselfridge@goldenrams.com
Cory Sakolsky	Building Principal	Highlands MS	csakolsky@goldenrams.com
Angela Kennedy	Other	Highlands SD	akennedy@goldenrams.com
Rebecca Kennan	Other	Highlands SD	rkennan@goldenrams.com
Mitchell Shaw	General Education Teacher	Highlands MS	mshaw@goldenrams.com
Thomas Stanko	General Education Teacher	Highlands SHS	tstanko@goldenrams.com

School District Areas of Improvement and Planning - Indicators

Suspension/Expulsion by Race/Ethnicity (Indicator 4B)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

Disproportionate Representation by Race/Ethnicity (Indicator 9)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

Disproportionate Representation by Race/Ethnicity/Disability (Indicator 10)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

Timely Initial Evaluations (Indicator 11)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

Secondary Transition (Indicator 13)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

Graduation (Indicator 1)

Improvement and Planning Activity
Implementation of an Early Warning System and Interventions that provide targeted interventions and support services for at-risk students, such as mentoring programs, tutoring, credit recovery options, counseling services, and family engagement initiatives.
The Highlands School District is in the process of creating career pathways that will allow for expanded curriculum and course offerings aligned with student transition goals.

Drop Out (Indicator 2)

Improvement and Planning Activity
Implementation of an Early Identification and Intervention that provides targeted interventions and support services for at-risk students, such as academic tutoring, mentoring programs, counseling, family engagement initiatives, and wraparound services addressing socio-economic needs.
Positive School Climate and Student Engagement: Implement strategies to improve school climate, foster a sense of belonging, and enhance student engagement. Increase extracurricular activities, clubs, sports, arts programs, and leadership opportunities to keep students connected to the school community and motivated to stay in school.

Assessment (Indicator 3)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

Education Environments (Indicator 5)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

Parent Involvement (Indicator 8)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

Early Childhood Transition (Indicator 12)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

Post-School Outcomes (Indicator 14)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

Resolution Sessions (Indicator 15)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

Mediation (Indicator 16)

Indicator not flagged at this time.

School District Areas of Improvement and Planning - Monitoring

District has completed all monitoring corrective action/improvement plans.

Identification Method

Identify the District's method for identifying students with specific learning disabilities

Discrepancy Model

Building Name	AUN	Branch Number	RTI	Approved RTI Use
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Non-Resident Students Oversight

1. Is your district currently a host district for a 1306 facility?

No

1. Describe the host's educational oversight to ensure students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment while in the 1306 facility? (If not a host, answer as if you were.)

The Highlands School District does not have any residential facilities within its boundaries. However, should such a facility open within the district, the district stands ready to accommodate students and provide necessary services. Any student found to be exceptional and residing in such a facility will receive appropriate educational services in the least restrictive environment. The Highlands School District is committed to providing students with disabilities with an appropriate program of special education and training consistent with Pennsylvania regulations and standards. The district will take responsibility for determining goals, programming, and educational placement for each student. Additionally, it will consult with the student's resident school district for advice and keep them informed of its educational plan. All district administrators are well aware of the obligations associated with 1306 facilities, as outlined in the Basic Education Circular (BEC: Educational Programs for Students in "Non-Educational" Placements).

2. Describe the district's procedures for communicating with 1306 facilities and how the district ensures a successful transition back to school?

When the Highlands School District receives notice that another school district is educating a resident student under section 1306, the district first confirms residency. Next, the district acknowledges the resident student through the PDE 4605 form. This form provides appropriate documentation for funding to support the individual student's education. Finally, the Student Service Director or school psychologist attends the IEP team meetings and discharge planning meetings. The Highlands School District LEA ensures that the student's plan is calculated for the student to make meaningful educational progress in the least restrictive environment. During transition planning, building-level teams (special education and general education teachers, building administration, and counselors) become involved in the meetings to ensure all team members have input and can develop a plan for a successful transition. Upon return, a reintegration meeting is held, and the IEP is reviewed and revised as necessary.

Incarcerated Students Oversight

1. **Does the district have an adult correctional facility that houses juveniles within its geographical boundaries?**

No

1. **Describe the system of oversight the District would implement to ensure that all incarcerated students who may be eligible for special education are located, identified, evaluated and when deemed eligible, are offered a free appropriate public education (FAPE).**

Currently, there are no facilities for incarcerated students within the Highlands School District. If a facility opened within our district, the Highlands School District would collaborate with the facility and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit. The Highlands School District would comply with the "child-find" obligations of IDEA. Additionally, the district would utilize appropriate evaluation procedures and diagnostic/screening instruments to determine the eligibility and educational needs of residents/inmates and implement timely review or develop Individualized Education Programs ("IEPs") for eligible students in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, including compliance with procedural safeguards; and provide FAPE in conformity with the IEP. The Highlands School District would ensure ongoing communication and collaboration with any facility within our geographical boundaries to ensure any incarcerated student eligible for special education services is located, evaluated, and if eligible offered a free appropriate public education.

Least Restrictive Environment

1. Review the district's data for Least Restrictive Environment. Highlight areas of improvement.

SE Inside Regular Class 80% Or More 2022- 2023- HSD- 64.8% State- 61.6% 2021-2022 HSD 68.0%- State- 61.8% 2020-2021- HSD- 69.9% State- 62.1% 2019-2020- HSD- 70.3% State- 61.5% 2018-2019- HSD- 71.6% State- 61.5% 2017- 2018- HSD- 73.0% State- 62.0% The Highlands School District has consistently maintained inclusion rates above the state average. However, with the implementation of increased specialized instruction, we have trended closer to the state average. This implies that, for many students with disabilities, the objective is to receive the majority of their education in the general education classroom, alongside their non-disabled peers, typically defined as 80% or more of the time. SE Inside Regular Class < 40% 2022-2023- HSD8.0% State -10% 2021-2022- HSD 7.1% State - 9.9% 2020-2021- HSD-7.6% State- 9.8% 2019-2020- HSD-8.4% State- 9.6% 2018-2019- HSD- 9.0% State- 9.4% 2017- 2018- HSD-9.1% State- 9.3% The data from the Highlands School District has consistently shown figures lower than the state average. This data emphasizes the district's belief in the importance of providing students with disabilities the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE) to the maximum extent appropriate. SE in Other Settings December 2023 ChildCount differences show a decrease of outside placement by 29.27% 2022-2023- HSD- 10.7 State 4.4% 2021-2022- HSD 10.2% State: 4.4% 2020-2021- HSD-9.1% State- 4.7% 2019-2020- HSD-8.2% State- 4.8% 2018-2019- HSD- 6.9% State- 4.8% 2017- 2018- HSD-5.0% State- 4.9% The service delivery model that was implemented during the 2022-2023 school year has shown a 29.27% decrease in out-of-district placements. The district recognizes that it has additional work in this area. In response the following Comprehensive Needs Assessment: Conduct a thorough assessment of the needs of special education students currently placed in outside placements. Identify the reasons why they are not being educated within the district and determine the types of services they require. Enhanced In-District Programs: Strengthen and expand in-district special education programs to meet a wider range of student needs. Individualized Education Plans (IEPs): Ensure that each special education student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) tailored to their specific needs and abilities. Teachers will receive regular feedback on their IEPs and student progress and will be encouraged to use IEPs as instructional tools. Transition Services: Implement robust transition services to support students as they move from outside placements back to in-district programs. Provide comprehensive planning, counseling, and support to facilitate a successful transition. Family Engagement: Involve families in the decision-making process and encourage their participation in developing plans for their child's education. Provide resources and support to help families understand their options and advocate for their child's needs. Collaboration with Community Partners: Collaborate with community agencies, service providers, and advocacy groups to access additional resources and expertise. The district has established a partnership with Human Services Administration Organization to better support families. Data Analysis and Monitoring: Continuously monitor and analyze data related to special education placements, including reasons for placement outside the district, student outcomes, and trends over time. Use this information to identify areas for improvement and track progress towards reducing outside placements. Professional Development: Offer ongoing professional development opportunities for educators and support staff focused on best practices in special education, inclusive teaching strategies, and supporting diverse learners. Ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the needs of more students within the district effectively. Early Intervention and Prevention: Implement early intervention strategies to identify and address learning difficulties at an early stage, before they escalate to the point of requiring outside placements. Provide targeted interventions and support services to prevent the need for more intensive interventions later on.

2. What universal practices does the district utilize to address the academic and social/emotional needs of all students in need of accommodations to their learning environments?

The Highlands School District employs a comprehensive approach to address the academic and social/emotional needs of all students requiring accommodations in their learning environments. This approach encompasses various universal practices aimed at fostering an inclusive and supportive

educational environment. Expanding Offerings: The district offers a full continuum of services from K-12, ensuring that students at all levels have access to appropriate support and resources. Inclusive Schedule Design: Each school building's schedule is designed to accommodate a full continuum of services, allowing IEP teams to determine the least restrictive environment for each student through the IEP process. Professional Development: The district invests in professional development and coaching on differentiated instruction and Understanding by Design, equipping staff with the skills and strategies necessary to meet diverse learning needs. Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS): A robust MTSS system is in place to address academic and social/emotional needs across tiers 1, 2, and 3, providing targeted interventions and supports as needed. Community Partnerships: The district collaborates with a local mental health agency to provide community-based mental health services at the elementary school, with plans for program expansion. Additionally, various community agencies support the district in addressing mental health needs. Student Assistance Program (SAP): A well-established SAP team collaborates with outside providers to ensure students receive necessary support, facilitating timely intervention and assistance. Professional Learning Community Engagement: Staff actively participate in professional learning to enhance their capacities in addressing the needs of all students, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and shared learning among educators. Through these universal practices, the Highlands School District remains committed to providing a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment, ensuring that all students receive the support they need to thrive academically and socially/emotionally.

3. Describe the academic programming and training efforts the LEA utilizes to ensure meaningful participation of students with disabilities in the general education curriculum.

The Highlands School District implements a comprehensive approach to ensure meaningful participation of students with disabilities in the general education curriculum. Academic programming and training efforts are carefully planned each year, informed by a thorough review of student data and administrative observations. Universal design principles serve as the foundation for developing academic programming, ensuring that all students have equal opportunities for success. To support participation in the general education curriculum, the district employs a variety of evidence-based and research-based instructional approaches and programs across core academic areas. Additionally, students receive support through various supplemental programs and services identified through the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) system. Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams play a crucial role in identifying services and supports for students with disabilities to enable their participation and success in general education settings. The Supplementary Aids and Services Toolkit (PATTAN) is utilized by IEP teams to identify appropriate accommodations and supports tailored to each student's needs. Furthermore, the district collaborates with PaTTAN and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU3) to provide site-based training, consultation, and technical assistance to staff. This collaboration ensures that educators are equipped with the knowledge and resources necessary to effectively support students with disabilities in the general education curriculum. Additionally, the district contracts with outside agencies to further enhance training and support opportunities, ensuring that all students have access to meaningful educational experiences.

4. Describe the supplementary aids and services the LEA utilizes to ensure meaningful participation of students with disabilities in extracurricular activities.

Each IEP team discusses the meaningful participation of students with disabilities in extracurricular activities during the IEP meeting, posing the question: "To what extent, if any, will the student participate with non-disabled peers in extracurricular activities or other non-academic activities?" Additionally, individual teams deliberate on the supplementary aids and services required for the school day and determine the necessary support for participation in extracurricular activities. The following are examples of support that an IEP team may consider: environmental needs (such as preferential seating or planned physical space for accessibility), level of support staff (including providing paraprofessional support, nursing services, or vision/hearing teacher services), specialized equipment (utilizing assistive technology, specialized transportation, or adapted sports equipment), pace and presentation style of activity (offering breaks, creating a customized schedule for participation, or providing visuals to supplement), accessibility to materials (using assistive

technology for accessing Braille materials), social interactions (providing social stories, peer-assisted support, intentional cooperative groups, or explicit teaching of skills before the event), and executive functioning (creating and reviewing a schedule of events, allowing for additional transition time, and establishing organizational systems).

5. **Describe the District procedures, which ensure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities placed in private institutions are educated with non-disabled children and have the opportunity to participate in district lead extracurricular activities?**

The student service administrators from the Highlands School District(Student Services Director or school psychologists), attend all Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings for students with disabilities placed in private institutions by the district. During these meetings, the LEA ensures compliance with Chapter 14 regulations and, monitors for meaningful progress. Additionally, opportunities for extracurricular participation are explored, with consideration given to options for the student to be educated alongside non-disabled peers. Furthermore, parents receive regular communication from the district regarding available extracurricular activities within the district. The district collaborates with private institutions and parents to provide the necessary support for students to engage in identified opportunities, such as enrollment at Forbes vo-tech school, community-based work, participation in specific district courses, and involvement in district-sponsored sports teams. When data suggests that a student is ready to transition back to a comprehensive school setting, the Highlands School District works closely with the family and service provider to develop an individualized reintegration plan.

6. **Discuss the district's need to build capacity and expand programs and services in an effort to provide a continuum of services. (Consider the out of district placement chart)**

The district recognizes the imperative to enhance its capacity and broaden its array of programs and services to establish a comprehensive continuum of support for all students. This acknowledgment stems from a thorough examination of the out-of-district placement chart, which underscores the necessity for an expanded range of offerings within the district itself. To address this need, the district is actively engaged in strategic planning aimed at the development of specialized programming tailored to meet the unique needs of students aged 18 to 21. This initiative aims to provide transitional support and skill-building opportunities for young adults as they transition into adulthood. Furthermore, the district is committed to bolstering its emotional support services to encompass a full spectrum of interventions aimed at promoting social-emotional learning (SEL) and well-being among students. This involves integrating evidence-based practices into the curriculum to foster emotional resilience, interpersonal skills, and self-awareness. In addition to enhancing internal resources, the district recognizes the importance of collaboration with external service providers to augment its support network. By forging partnerships with community organizations, mental health agencies, and other stakeholders, the district aims to expand access to specialized services and resources that complement its existing programs. Through these concerted efforts, the district is poised to develop a robust continuum of services that caters to the diverse needs of its student population, ensuring that every individual receives the support and resources necessary to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Facility Name	Facility Type	Other	Operated By	Service Type	Number of Students Placed
Longmore Academy	Licensed Private Academic		Longmore- Mars Home for Youth	Emotional Support	9
Pressley Ridge	Licensed Private Academic		Pressley Ridge	Emotional Support	1
The Children's Institute	Approved Private School (APS)		The Children's Institute	Life Skills Support	3
Western Pennsylvania School for the Blind	Approved Private School (APS)		Western Pennsylvania School for the Blind	Blind and Visually Impaired Support	2
New Story	Licensed Private Academic		New Story	Autistic Support	2
The Hope Center	Licensed Private Academic		The Hope Center	Autistic Support	1
The Bradley Center	Licensed Private Academic		Bradley Center	Emotional Support	1
PLEA	Licensed Private Academic		PLEA	Autistic Support	2
Clelian Heights	Licensed Private Academic		Clelian Heights	Autistic Support	1
Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf	Approved Private School (APS)		Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf	Deaf and Hard of Hearing Support	1
Sunrise	Licensed Private Academic		Sunrise- Allegheny Intermediate Unit	Life Skills Support	1
PACE	Approved Private School (APS)		PACE	Emotional Support	3
Longmore Academy	Licensed Private Academic		Longmore- Mars Home for Youth	Autistic Support	3
Watson Institute WISCA	Licensed Private Academic		Watson Institute WISCA	Autistic Support	2
Merakey	Licensed Private Academic		Merakey	Autistic Support	1
Pressley Ridge Day School	Approved Private School (APS)		Pressley Ridge Day School	Blind and Visually Impaired Support	4
DePaul School	Licensed Private Academic		DePaul School	Deaf and Hard of Hearing Support	2

Positive Behavior Support

Date of Approval

2020-11-16

Uploaded Files

Highlands School Board Policy 113.2.pdf

1. How does the district support the emotional, social needs of students with disabilities?

The Highlands School District prioritizes the emotional and social well-being of students with disabilities by offering comprehensive support services across all grade levels, from Kindergarten to 12th grade. To address these needs, the district has implemented a multi-tiered system of support known as PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports). Through PBIS, students with disabilities have access to a range of services and interventions designed to promote positive behavior and social-emotional development. This framework provides a structured approach to teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviors, creating a supportive and inclusive school environment for all students. Additionally, the district offers school-based behavioral health services to further support students with disabilities. These services are available to students who require additional assistance in managing their emotional and social challenges. Trained professionals work closely with students to develop coping strategies, build social skills, and address any underlying mental health concerns. Furthermore, the district recognizes the importance of individualized support tailored to the unique needs of each student. As such, special education teachers and related service providers collaborate with IEP teams to determine the most appropriate interventions for students with disabilities. This may involve providing individual or small group instruction using evidence-based curriculum and instructional practices specifically geared towards enhancing social-emotional skills. By integrating these various supports and services, the Highlands School District ensures that students with disabilities receive the comprehensive assistance they need to thrive emotionally and socially, fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment for all.

2. Describe training provided to staff in the use of positive behavior supports, de-escalation techniques and responses to behavior that may require immediate intervention.

The Highlands School District is committed to adopting evidence-based positive approaches to behavioral management. Staff training covers various topics, including functional behavioral assessments, classroom management, school-wide positive behavioral interventions, and best practices in behavioral support. All staff members in the Highlands School District undergo de-escalation training. Moreover, each school designates a crisis response team trained in crisis management through Safety-Care (Quality Behavioral Services).

3. Describe the district positive school wide support programs.

As part of the MTSS (Multiple Tiered System of Supports), the Highlands School District implements a PBIS program K-12. The positive behavioral support policy complies with the PSBA model policy and Special Education regulations outlined in Chapter 14. This policy is posted on the district's website and is referenced in the Annual Public Notice. The Highlands School District promotes a positive behavior support model with all students. The district provides training in data collection, positive behavior support plans, and de-escalation to the appropriate staff. It supports a proactive approach to discipline and behavioral support that emphasizes teaching skills and reinforcing appropriate behaviors. The student code of conduct and student handbooks follow these principles. School-wide and classroom-based expectations are proactive and use positive principles. The district recognizes the importance of effective

communication with parents and guardians in a positive behavioral support program. The district utilizes the "Ram Reflection Room," which replaces the traditional in-school suspension room and serves as a place where students receive support from behavior specialists through direct instruction, written reflections, and regular school work with the support of a special education teacher when appropriate. The goals of the Rams Reflection Room are to: Teach reflective approaches to behavior, Teach empathy and social-emotional skills, Foster the use of coping skills and replacement strategies, Reduce the number of incidents requiring out-of-school suspensions, and Reduce the number of students returning to the Rams Reflection Room. The school district utilizes a full continuum of positive behavioral techniques and collaborates with school psychologists, behavior specialists, school counselors, paraprofessionals, and outside service providers as needed for individual students.

4. **Describe the district school-based behavior health services.**

The Highlands School District has a robust support system for school-based behavioral health services. The district employs school counselors K-12 who work with students, families, and school teams. Highlands School District partners with the Human Services Administrative Organization (HSAO) for SAP services and Case Management. Additionally, the district collaborates with The University of Pittsburgh Maximizing Adolescent Potentials (MAPs) for prevention services, including drug and alcohol prevention groups, youth leadership programs, loss groups, and youth vaping prevention programs. Individual counseling is available K-12 through Family Behavioral Resources (FBR) based on a referral for individual students. Highlands Elementary School partners with Every Child to provide Community and School-Based Behavioral Health (CSBBH) through "The Clubhouse." This program offers a higher level of support for students on an as-needed basis, supporting the connection between school and community and allowing for a more robust support system. All district counselors and behavioral specialists have training in Youth Mental First Aid, and the district plans to increase training for additional staff and high school students. In conjunction with the school-based liaison from Allegheny County of Behavioral Health, the Highlands School District revised its suicide prevention and response team. The district strives for open communication with all mental health service providers, including short and long-term placements.

5. **Describe the district restraint procedure.**

Physical management procedures (restraints) are employed only when deemed necessary for safety and are carried out with the utmost care for the well-being of the agitated individual and all others involved. Restraint procedures must adhere to the following criteria: There must be an imminent risk of serious harm to the agitated person or others. There must be no practical alternative to prevent harm without resorting to physical management. The risk of not intervening must outweigh the risk of intervening. The school-based crisis teams, consisting of trained Safety Care Specialists, respond as required and assess the situation based on the aforementioned criteria. If physical management becomes necessary, the least restrictive method of restraint is utilized, with an additional team member present to ensure safety and monitor the duration of the restraint. Throughout the restraint, de-escalation techniques are employed, and the hold is kept as brief as possible, following the safety care procedures outlined by (QBS). Following the incident, a district nurse conducts a brief post-incident assessment, and the student's family is promptly contacted. When appropriate, the school team debriefs the student. For students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), an IEP team meeting is convened within ten days to review the incident, the student's positive behavioral support plan (if applicable), and the IEP itself. The team collectively determines if any adjustments are necessary to better address the student's needs. If additional information is required, the parent is granted permission for reevaluation. The district ensures that all restraint incidents are reported through the RISC system, which includes restraints reported by Approved Private and Private School entities.

Intensive Interagency

Please address any areas of concern with students who are placed on Instruction Conducted in the Home or who are at a substantial risk of waiting more than 30 days for an appropriate educational placement.

The district acknowledges its responsibility to identify students who require intensive interagency coordination, as reported through the Special Education @ Home Reporting System. Additionally, students receiving special education services and undergoing homebound instruction, or those whose IEP team has determined Instruction Conducted in the Home as the appropriate placement, must be documented in this system. In cases where the district is unable to locate or establish a suitable special education program to provide Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), the student would be identified through the reporting system, prompting participation in the intensive interagency process. The Highlands School District fosters open and constructive relationships with various entities, including the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, the Allegheny County Behavioral Health team, PaTTAN, and external service providers. These collaborative partnerships aid in resolving any issues affecting our students. The district is steadfast in its commitment to expanding interagency relationships to better serve the needs of our students.

Special Education Support Services

1Special Education Support Services

Special Education Support Services	Numerical Value	Primary Location	Contractor or District
Director of Special Education	1	District Wide	District
School Psychologist	2	District Wide	District
Paraprofessionals	23	District Wide	District
Physical Therapist	1	District Wide	Contractor
Occupational Therapist	5	District Wide	Contractor
Guidance Counselor	7	District Wide	District
Behavior Specialist	4	District Wide	District
Other			

Special Education Personnel Development

Autism

Description of Training			
PaTTAN Autism Initiative ABA Supports Resources			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Amber Dean/ Student Service Director		2024 2025 2026 2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
2	1x per year	District Intermediate Unit PaTTAN	Special Education Teachers

Positive Behavior Support

Description of Training			
Safety Care			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Amber Dean/ Student Service Director		2024 2025 2026 2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
7	2	District	Building Administrators General Education Teachers Paraprofessionals Special Education Teachers

Description of Training			
School Wide PBIS			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Mr. Toole, Ms. Bragan, Dr. Whiteman, Ms. Gizienski/ Building Principals		2024 2025 2026 2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
1	1	District	Building Administrators General Education Teachers Paraprofessionals Special Education Teachers

Paraprofessional

Description of Training			
CPR and First Aid Training			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Amber Dean/ Student Service Director		2024 2025 2026 2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
4 hours	1x per year	Other	Paraprofessionals

Description of Training	
Various Paraprofessional Training- Yearly district training is aligned to programs offered through the AIU and PATTAN.	
Lead Person/Position	Year of Training
Amber Dean/ Student Service Director, Angela Kennedy/ School Psychologist, Rebecca Keenan/ School	2024

Psychologist		2025 2026 2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
6	6	District Intermediate Unit PaTTAN	Paraprofessionals

Transition

Description of Training			
Best practices in Transition Services for 7-12 Teachers			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Amber Dean/ Student Service Director		2024 2025 2026 2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
2 hours	1x per year	District PaTTAN	Special Education Teachers

Science of Literacy

Description of Training	
Wilson Training for Select Teachers	
Lead Person/Position	Year of Training
Amber Dean/ Student Service Director	2024 2025 2026

		2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
3 (minimum)	At least 1 (depending curriculum)	Other	Special Education Teachers

Description of Training			
RAC Training (General Education and Special Education Teachers will cycle through)			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Cathy Russo/ Curriculum Director		2024 2025 2026 2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
7	4	Intermediate Unit	General Education Teachers Special Education Teachers

Description of Training			
Structured Literacy			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Cathy Russo		2024 2025 2026 2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
2	1x per year	District	Building Administrators Central Office Administrators General Education Teachers Paraprofessionals Special Education Teachers

Parent Training

Description of Training			
Family Engagement eLibrary - Ongoing Access to elibrary			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Cathy Russo		2024	
		2025	
		2026	
		2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
1 hours per training	1	District Other	Parents

Description of Training			
Understand Chapter 14 to more effectively advocate for your child			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Amber Dean/ Student Service Director		2024	
		2025	
		2026	
		2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
2 hours per training	4	District	Parents

Description of Training	
Understanding Data, Understanding Progress Monitoring, Understanding Assessments	
Lead Person/Position	Year of Training
Amber Dean/ Student Service Director, Angela Kennedy/ School Psychologist, Rebecca Kennan/School Psychologist	2024

		2025 2026 2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
2 hours per training	4	District	Parents

IEP Development

Description of Training			
Developing an IEP from an Evaluation Plan			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Amber Dean/ Student Service Director		2024	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
7hours per training	1 times per year	Intermediate Unit	Special Education Teachers

Description of Training			
The role of the LEA in the IEP Development and Supervision of Sservices			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Amber Dean		2024 2025 2026 2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
1	4	District	Building Administrators

Description of Training

Using the IEP as an Instructional Tool			
Lead Person/Position		Year of Training	
Amber Dean/ Student Service Director		2024 2025 2026 2027	
Hours Per Training	Number of Sessions	Provider	Audience
6	2	District	Building Administrators Central Office Administrators General Education Teachers Parents Paraprofessionals Special Education Teachers Other