



NORWALK SPECIAL EDUCATION REVIEW

December 15, 2015





Background

- Special Education Reviews in 2008 and 2012
- Special Education Review August-Nov. 2015
 - Evaluation Questions
 - Progress since 2012 report
 - Recommendations for Organizational Structure
 - Data Sources
 - Parents, Staff, Classroom Observations, IEP and In-Depth Reviews, State and Local Information
 - CREC Evaluation Team





Findings

- Little to no progress on the seven goals and related activities recommended in 2012 CREC report
 1. Increase focus on teaching and learning
 2. Implement and monitor consistent standards
 3. Centralize the preschool programs
 4. In-district options for students with autism and emotional disturbance
 5. Obtain and reallocate funding for special education
 6. Special education department decision making authority
 7. Improve communication between parents and school staff





Additional Findings

- Recruitment, hiring, training, and retention of highly qualified staff

- Budget and program oversight





Recommendations

- The current situation is critical and the district will need to act with a sense of urgency
- 3 Year Strategic Plan
 - Integrated into district plans, staff evaluation and goal setting
 - Regularly monitor the strategic plan
 - Stakeholder involvement and support
 - Six goals and related activities to be completed by June 2016





2015-16 Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 1 Improve recruitment, hiring, supervision, training, scheduling, and retention of high quality special education staff

Staffing

- Chief Special Services Officer
- Special Education Administrators job descriptions, work year and assignments
- Special education preschool coordinator
- Out of district coordinator
- Special education office staff
- Special education aide assignments
- Teacher assignments and recommendations for additional SPED teacher(s)





2015-16 Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 1 Improve recruitment, hiring, supervision, training, scheduling, and retention of high quality special education staff

Processes

- Implement procedures for hiring, assignments, caseloads, tracking, and retention of high quality staff
- Monitor special education staff and provide regular reports
- Building and SPED administrators collaborate in the hiring, supervision and evaluation of all certified special education staff





2015-16 Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 1 Improve recruitment, hiring, supervision, training, scheduling, and retention of high quality special education staff (cont'd)

Recruitment

- Staffing agencies, RESCs, colleges

Training

- 2 year PD plan





2015-16 Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 2 Implement an organizational structure that provides tiered school supervision, support, and authority of the special education office to create and implement consistent standards and processes

- School clusters
- 504 responsibilities
- Coordinator of evaluation and assessment
- Tiered system of school support and supervision





2015-16 Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 3 Increase the focus on teaching and learning, high quality services, sufficient resources, fidelity of implementation, full continuum of services and least restrictive environment for students with disabilities.

- SPED Administrators-Instructional Leaders
- Instructional materials and equipment inventory
- Research-based special designed instruction
- Continuum of services and entry/exit criteria
- Community based 18-21 year old program and high school program for students with ED





2015-16 Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 4 Implement and monitor standards for special education across the district and achieve compliance with IDEA requirements

- Update procedures manual, train and monitor
- Professional development of writing IEPs and admin review of every IEP
- Monitoring system aligned with School Tiered System of Supervision and Support





2015-16 Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 5 Improve control and more effective use of the special education resources

- Develop a plan to reduce cost for out of district tuition and transportation and consulting services
- Weekly meetings with central office departments of special education, business services and human resources
- No special education expenditures without approval of Chief Special Services Officer





2015-16 Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 6 Improve parent and staff communication

- Conduct school cluster special education staff meetings regularly
- Strategic Plan committee- parents, staff and community
- Centralize parent contact information
- Procedure for handling parent concerns and communication changes in child's program





Discussion and Questions

