

Berkshire Local Schools Inclusion Based Service Model for Serving Students with Exceptional Needs

Inclusive education happens when children with and without exceptional learning needs participate and learn together in the same classes. Research shows that when a child with exceptional learning needs attends classes alongside peers who do not have disabilities, good things happen.

For a long time, children with exceptional learning needs were educated in separate classes or in separate schools. People got used to the idea that “special education” meant separate education. We now know that when children are educated together, positive academic and social outcomes occur for all the children involved. At Berkshire Local Schools we believe in the three guiding principles when including all students;

All children belong.

Inclusive education is based on the simple idea that every child and family is valued equally and deserves the same opportunities and experiences. Inclusive education is about children with disabilities – whether the disability is mild or severe, hidden or obvious – participating in everyday activities, just like they would if their disability were not present. It’s about building friendships, membership and having opportunities just like everyone else.

All children learn in different ways.

Inclusion is about providing the help children need to learn and participate in meaningful ways, sometimes help from friends or teachers works best. Other times, specially designed materials or technology can help. The key is to give only as much help as needed, teaching a child to problem solve and be independent is a huge component to success.

It is every child’s right to be included.

Inclusive education is a child’s right, not a privilege. ESSA(Every Student Succeeds Act) clearly states that all children with disabilities should be educated with non-disabled children their own age and have access to the general education curriculum.

With every child being included, our intervention staff is with students throughout the day in all classrooms. To keep individuals from being singled out we have the intervention staff not only support exceptional learners but all individuals in the student body. Their unique expertise is a huge benefit to all students! If your child should mention working with another teacher that is different from their homeroom teacher, this staff member is most likely one of our exceptional staff her to support. Below is a list of staff by building that help children throughout our district succeed and grow.

Ledgemont Elementary	Burton Elementary	Berkshire JR/SR High School
Rebekah Martin	Michelle Burnett	Tamra Beitzel-Rowe
Tara Houser	Sara O’Connor	Shannon Moore
Mandy Townsend	Marla Benevenci	Ruth Moore
Rebecca Weema	Judy Lester	Kelsey Kempert
Kristen Boyd	Joy Christopher-Reed	Maria Huber
Allison Lintern	Nancy Tiber	Brianne Vitalanni
Kim Hauser	Karen Kirby	Karen Peterson
Lori McBurnie	Karen McCandeless	Johanna Kowalski
		Joy Sidley

