

Dorothy Height Charter School

Special Education

A. Description of overall philosophy:

The philosophy of the Dorothy Height Charter School Special Education Department is to provide each student with a unique program created to meet the student's needs as an exceptional learner in compliance with the Individual with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Our goal is to empower each student to apply their abilities so that they can become a contributing member in the world. We have confidence that each student, in spite of their exceptionality, is entitled to this opportunity in the least restrictive environment.

In order for the special education program to be most effective, the staff will utilize a variety of methods and resources. To enhance the special education program, teachers and paraprofessionals will be involved in ongoing skill training.

In order to meet the needs of all students, a complete system of support services, identification, diagnosis, and placement has been developed. The special education staff at Height:

- Supports inclusion
- Enlists support from regular education teachers to ensure the success of students with disabilities
- Provides necessary skills so that students can become productive citizens
- Encourages guardians to be active participants
- Develops an atmosphere conducive to the growth and enhancement of the student's academic and social emotional development

B. Name and contact information for special education coordinator (school and, if applicable, network)

School Leader of Special Education Programming; Contact Information	LaKeysha Arthur Principal (504) 941-1810 larthur@crescentcityschools.org
CMO Leader of Special Education Programming; Contact Information (if different)	Mary Ellen Costello (504) 708-4136 mcostello@crescentcityschools.org

C. Data Snapshots	
2025-26 enrollment rate of students with disabilities served by the school	14.9%
2024-25 in school and out of school suspension rate of students with disabilities served by the school	22.7%
2024-25 number of students with disabilities who are removed for disciplinary reasons for more than 10 school days in one academic year	0

D. Description of how pupil appraisal, special education, and related services are provided by the school

Appraisal/Evaluation

Main point of contact if
a parent would like to
request an evaluation

Bre'on Kelly

Dean of Student Support

(504) 265-7073

bkelly@crescentcityschools.org

Response to Intervention Overview	Examples of universal screeners: • Aimsweb: benchmarking for Math & ELA intervention progress monitoring • Boost & Blitz, Word Gen for ELA intervention • Dibels literacy screening • MAP assessments for grades K-2 • Interim assessments for grades 3-8 • Social, Emotional, & Behavioral: comprehensive school-wide implementation of Positive Behavioral Intervention & Supports (PBIS) system with regular monitoring and analysis to determine which students may have particular behavioral or emotional concerns; the school tracks all behavior, attendance, and other relevant student data in SchoolRunner and analyzes it at least quarterly for all students (more frequently for students on a case-by-case basis); the school may also utilize the BASC and SDQ screeners for students; the Response to Intervention (RTI) process is started when necessary Examples of reading interventions: Delivery: small group and/or one-on-one Interventions used: Boost and Blitz, Word Gen, sight word recognition, phonemic awareness, letter naming ID, letter sound ID, Star Fall, guided reading, Phonics Boost, phonics Blitz, Razkids, AimsWeb Examples of math interventions: Delivery: small group and/or one-on-one Interventions used: math numbers & operations, M-School and other personalized learning software, number identification, Math Connectors, IXL, AimsWeb, Zearn Examples of behavior interventions: All behavior interventions are geared toward the child's specific behavior needs. Interventions include: point systems, token economy system, sticker charts, punch cards, counseling,
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	Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs), and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs).
School Building Level Committee (SBLC)	Members of the SBLC team: Principal, Director of Student Support, Dean of SST, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Assistant Principal, School counselor or Social Worker, Dean of Intervention and School Psychologist. Example engagements with parents: Scheduled meetings to discuss concerns and plans moving forward, phone calls, letters, home visits Example decisions SBLC team can make: If a student needs to be placed in RTI, if a student needs a behavior contract, counseling services, nursing services, change in transportation, etc.
Appraisal Team	Members of appraisal team: Members of the appraisal team, based on potential eligibilities and needs of the student, may include: School Psychologist, Speech-Language Pathologist, School Counselor, School Nurse, Special Education Teacher, General Education Teacher, Paraprofessional, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Adaptive Physical Education Teacher, Audiologist, Social Worker Example engagements with parents: Parents are invited to attend all meetings when the decision is made to open an initial evaluation. Parents are included in the evaluation process through a parent interview and other methods as needed. Parents are invited to the eligibility determination meeting and are part of the eligibility determination team. Example decisions appraisal team can make: Students may qualify for a <i>Bulletin 1508</i> exceptionality and special education services, they may qualify for a 504 exceptionality and appropriately tiered related academic and/or behavioral support services, or they may not qualify for any exceptionality but be referred for additional academic and/or behavioral supports.
<i>Instructional and Related Services Provision and Staffing</i>	

Specialized Instruction	# Special Education Teachers: 7 # Paraprofessionals: 6 # Academic Interventionists: 13 (subject to change based on student needs) Examples of curricula: Wit & Wisdom, Teach Town Curriculum
Speech/language	# On staff or contracted from external provider: 2
Audiology	# On staff or contracted from external provider: 0 If not currently providing service, plan to deliver service in future: We plan to deliver service in the future, if needed, by contracting services through an outside provider.
Counseling (mental health and other therapies)	# On staff or contracted from external provider: 3
Occupational therapy	# On staff or contracted from external provider: 2
Physical therapy	# On staff or contracted from external provider: 1
Health/Nursing services	# On staff or contracted from external provider: 1

Orientation and mobility services and accessibility (including interpreting services)	Describe accessibility accommodations are available to students: The building has an elevator and is fully ADA compliant. We have bilingual staff members who interpret for students. We currently do not have any students with orientation impairments or interpreting needs. When a student enrolls who has any orientation or mobility impairments, we will assess the student to determine his/her needs, develop and appropriate IEP to address his/her needs, and provide the required services, accommodations, and/or training. # On staff or contracted from external provider: 2 If not currently providing service, plan to deliver service in future: If any students enroll who require additional mobility, orientation, or interpreting services, we will plan to purchase, hire, or contract with an outside provider to provide the needed services.
Adaptive physical education	# On staff or contracted from external provider: 1
Specialized Transportation	Methods of transportation: 2 special education buses with paraprofessional monitor support
Assistive Technology	Examples of supports: laptop computers, tablet computers, word processors, AAC devices (big mac, go talk)

E. Description of how the school plans to provide the continuum of special education placements for students whose IEP placement is outside of the regular education setting

<i>School-based Supports (in-school)</i>			
	Description of Supports within Inclusion	Description of Supports within Resource	Description of Supports within Self-Contained

PK – 5	Special Education staff push in to the classroom to provide small group or one-on-one instruction.	Special education teachers pull small groups to teach materials in a different way, providing accommodations and modifications as needed.	Special education teachers and paraprofessionals provide intense academic supports with an almost one-on-one teacher-student ratio to support the extreme needs of the students.
6 – 8	Special Education staff push in to the classroom to provide small group or one-on-one instruction.	Special education teachers pull small groups to teach materials in a different way, providing accommodations and modifications as needed.	Special education teachers and paraprofessionals provide intense academic supports with an almost one-on-one teacher-student ratio to support the extreme needs of the students.
9/T9 – 12	n/a	n/a	n/a

Description of extended school year services:	Identification: We identify students based on 6 predictive factors: • Is the student's rate of progress such that the regression/recoupment are so great that it prevents the student from progressing on his/her goals and/or objectives? • Will the type or severity of the student's disability cause the skills learned by the student during the regular school year to be significantly jeopardized if he/she does not receive ESY services? • Will the student's behavior cause the skills learned during the regular school year to be significantly jeopardized if he/she does not receive ESY services? • Will the student's physical needs cause the skills learned during the regular school year to be significantly jeopardized if he/she does not receive ESY services? • Does the student have goals, objectives, curricular elements, and/or other IEP components that require continuous attention in order to avoid significant jeopardy to learned skills during extended breaks? • Are there other factors that present a risk that skills or knowledge learned by the student during the regular school year will be significantly jeopardized over extended breaks? Delivery: Extended school year services are provided for 2 weeks (or longer if necessary) after each regular school year. Services are provided to students in the least restrictive setting. Services are delivered by special education teachers and paraprofessionals.
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Description of specialized program(s):	Height is implementing a specialized life skills program for its highest need special education students. This program is designed to teach essential skills that will help these students succeed in life after school. The first component of the program is operating the school store. Special education students are paired with a peer buddy to perform activities such as: checking inventory, stocking supplies, and collecting the “money” when other students make purchases. The second component is regular instruction in integrated community settings. This component takes students in to a variety of real-world settings (such as grocery stores, coffee shops, restaurants, and retail stores) and provides them an opportunity to make purchases, communicate with new people, and learn how to be a safe pedestrian.
<i>Community-based Supports (out-of-school)</i>	
Key Partnerships	Partner and services provided: • HealthPro Heritage & A1 APE, – provides contracted employees for speech/language, audiological, OT, and PT services • Children’s Hospital - student health needs • Daughters of Charity - dental screenings • Multiple community mental health and behavioral health agencies – provide psychiatric services, counseling services, and medication management supports • Aurora Program- specialized setting for students with IEPs • Constellations Program- specialized setting for students with IEPs

Other out-of-school instruction and supports (e.g. special school, therapeutic placement, hospital or homebound setting, juvenile detention facility, etc.)	Methods of instruction and service delivery: If a Height scholar requires out-of-school instruction and/or service delivery because of placement in a special school, therapeutic program, or juvenile detention facility, or if the scholar is homebound or hospital-bound, the SBLC meets to discuss the scholar's needs and adjust either his/her 504 or IEP so that instruction can be scheduled and services provided. The SBLC may include representative(s) from the hospital, special school, therapeutic setting, or juvenile detention facility, as appropriate. Progress and effectiveness of services is monitored and assessed on a bi-weekly basis.
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