

BPS Integrated Preschool



Presented By:
Tanya Kalantari
Early Childhood Director

Agenda

- History of the BPS Preschool
- BPS Integrated Preschool Program
- Preschool Students
- Preschool Program Schedules
- Preschool Team Members
- Sample Preschool Day
- High School Internships
- Community Supports



A Little History...

- Prior to the BPS Integrated Preschool, the preschool program was primarily a “High School Lab” program for students at BHS run by the BHS faculty.
- In 2008, the program changed over to an integrated preschool program in order to support children with disabilities.
- Over the years, the program grew from 1 classroom to 4 classrooms given student enrollment and the lack of appropriate private placements out of district (e.g. no inclusion opportunities, long commutes).
- As of today, there are no children privately placed at the preschool level. All children are provided with customized programming as needed within the BPS Preschool.



School Year	BPS Preschool Programs	Approximate Students-Special Ed vs Neighborhood; Out of District		
2008/2009	5 Morning Integrated Preschool	4 SpEd; 9 Neighborhood:	11 Students Total	
2009/2010	5 Morning Integrated Preschool	6 SpEd; 7 Neighborhood	13 Students Total	OOD: 9
2010/2011	5 Morning Integrated Preschool	7 SpEd; 7 Neighborhood	14 Students Total	OOD: 11
2011/2012	5 Morning Integrated Preschool 3 Morning Integrated Preschool	12 SpEd; 15 Neighborhood	27 Students Total	OOD: 11
2012/2013	(2) 5 Morning Integrated Preschool 3 Morning Integrated Preschool	15 SpEd; 25 Neighborhood	40 Students Total	OOD:13
2013/2014	(2) 5 Morning Integrated Preschool 3 Morning Integrated Preschool	17 SpEd; 20 Neighborhood	37 Students Total	OOD: 4
2014/2015	4.5 Full Day Preschool Program 5 Morning Integrated Preschool 3 Morning Integrated Preschool	17 SpEd; 18 Neighborhood	35 Students Total	OOD: 1
2015/2016	4.5 Full Day Preschool Program 5 Morning Integrated Preschool 3 Morning Integrated Preschool	18 SpEd; 17 Neighborhood	35 Students Total	OOD: 1
2016/2017	4.5 Full Day Preschool Program 5 Morning Integrated Preschool 3 Morning Integrated Preschool 4 Afternoon Sub-Separate (Mid year start due to enrollment)	25 SpEd; 17 Neighborhood	42 Students Total	OOD: 0
2017/2018	(2) 4.5 Full Day Preschool Program 5 Morning Integrated Preschool 3 Morning Integrated Preschool	23 SpEd; 29 Neighborhood	52 Students Total	OOD: 0

BPS Integrated Preschool Program

- The Bedford Public Schools has integrated preschool classes for children between the ages of three and five who require special education programming per their Individualized Education Plan. Special Education programming is required for this age group per part B of IDEA which covers students starting at age 3.
- Typically developing, neighborhood children are enrolled in the preschool programs to ensure integrated classrooms with peer models. The preschool staff believes that the interaction of students with and without special needs is mutually enriching. It provides an opportunity for the neighborhood students to develop leadership qualities as well as compassion, patience, and acceptance of differences.
- The BPS Preschool prides itself on celebrating differences. Our students and families come from unique cultures and backgrounds and speak 9 different languages.
- The BPS Preschool believes in inclusion for all students, regardless of disability. All preschool programs have an inclusive component. The team is dedicated to ensuring that all children of varied abilities are able to successfully participate alongside their peers.
- Our program differs than private preschools in that they follow laws/regulations by the Department of Early Education & Care while we follow IDEA & the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) laws/regulations.



BPS Integrated Preschool Program

- There is a strong commitment to ensuring that families are an integral part of the preschool. There are multiple opportunities for parental involvement throughout the year including parent volunteering, field trips, mystery reader opportunities and seasonal all school events.
- Our classrooms strive to incorporate positive behavior support strategies into all aspects of the school day for every child. The preschool team believes in this proactive approach to supporting students social emotional and behavioral skills.
- Our programming is multifaceted as we value each child as an individual and work to differentiate lessons to each learner. Our teachers strive to create a language rich environment that encompasses a total development model to ensure that children develop their cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, social, emotional and language skills.
- In addition to this, curriculums utilized include Zoophonics, Handwriting Without Tears, Preschool Life Skills, Alert Program, and TouchMath. All activities align with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.
- Our program has evolved over the years in many ways (e.g. schedule, curriculum) given community/family input, studies of community preschools, and similar district integrated preschool models. The program has proven successful as evidenced by the team's ability to successfully integrate students of varying abilities.



Students

“Services Only”

Children who have minimal goal areas (e.g. 1-3), may receive what is referred to as “Walk In Services” or “Services Only”. Parents bring students into the service provider location and wait while children receive related services (e.g. speech, OT, PT) at a determined time each week.

Integrated Preschool Students

Children who have multiple goal areas, require access to a special educator and need specialized instruction may be served in an Integrated Preschool Program. Days of attendance are based upon level of need as outlined in a child’s IEP. Students are recommended for this setting if it is determined through evaluation/observation that they can not make effective progress in a typical preschool setting.

Neighborhood Students

Parents in the community may choose to enroll their child as a “neighborhood child” in the preschool. These students serve as the peer models for the children with special needs and pay tuition to attend. Students attend a screening the January before a school year begins for potential enrollment.

Preschool Program Schedules

Students with Special Needs

- Schedules for students with special needs vary depending on services outlined in a child's IEP.
- Sample schedules may include 3 AM, 5 AM, or 5 Full Day. Programming is customized depending on student's IEP needs.
- Students do not pay tuition as this falls under FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education)

Neighborhood Students

- Neighborhood students attend one of the following programs:
 - **3 AM** MWF 8:30 to 11:30 am
 - \$3200/year
 - **5 AM** M-F 8:30 to 11:30 am
 - \$5200/year

*Children are referred from early intervention all throughout the year. If a child is eligible, services must begin at age 3 regardless of when it is.

Preschool Team Members

- Early Childhood Director oversees all aspects of the integrated preschool program and supports families in receiving special education services or enrolling as a neighborhood student. Provides coordination of Child Find, Early Intervention Transition, Special Education Services, the IEP process, curriculum and programming and provides supports to local area community preschools.
- Preschool Administrative Assistant supports both the special education and neighborhood student families. Examples of administrative tasks include processing all early intervention paperwork/referrals/evaluations, preschool/kindergarten screening, supporting preschool inquiries, preschool/kindergarten registrar, coordinating preschool tuition, etc.
- Teachers develop and implement programming for children with and without disabilities. This includes lesson development, IEP development, and ongoing assessment of children.
- Teaching Assistants support special education teachers by working individually or in small groups with children.
- Speech/Language Therapist: The speech/language therapist works on the acquisition of/or compensations for deficits in speech and language skills, including articulation, receptive and expressive language, and social pragmatics.
- Occupational Therapist works on a child's fine motor skills, visual motor skills, and activities of daily living.
- Physical Therapist is a specialist who works on mobility including balance, strength & endurance, functional positioning, safe accessibility of school environment, and activities of daily living (such as transfer training and body mechanics).
- Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) oversees apply behavior analysis programming (ABA) for children with Autism Spectrum and related disabilities. Also assists in developing behavior intervention plans and classroom wide behavior systems.
- Additional contracted services are provided on an individual basis depending on a child's disability and IEP need (e.g. Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Teacher of the Deaf, Orientation and Mobility).



Who's Who?

Early Childhood Director



Miss Tanya

Admin Assistant



Mrs. Lilly

Related Services Providers



Mrs. Courtney, OT



Mrs. Carrie, SLP



Mrs. Danielle, BCBA



Mrs. Margo, PT



Mrs. Samantha



Miss Kerry

Integrated Preschool Teachers



Mrs. Schissler



Mrs. Amanda

Who's Who?

Paraprofessionals



Miss Stephanie



Miss Chris



Mrs. Becky



Mrs. Shannon



Mrs. Elizabeth



Mrs. Kathy



Mrs. Kate



Mrs. Katie

Sample Preschool Day

- Morning Routines (Unpacking, taking care of belongings, signing in, check ins)
- Morning Movement (Morning greeting, movement activity, schedule review)
- Learning Centers (15 minute structured center rotations)
- Morning Meeting/Circle (Calendar, weather, songs, stories)
- Snack (Self feeding, self help, social skills work)
- Playground (Gross motor, social skills work)
- Large Group Activity (Curriculum or theme related)
- Closing Circle (Recap of day)
- Schedules are customized and individualized depending on a child's unique needs (i.e. related services, ABA)



High School Internships

- Prior to the BPS Integrated Preschool, the preschool program was primarily a “High School Lab” program for students at BHS. In 2008, the program changed over to an integrated preschool program in order to support children with disabilities.
- BHS students now take a pre-requisite early childhood course for one year which includes collaboration with the preschool team (EC Director Presentation, Related Services Presentation) and go through an application process, including an interview with preschool and high school staff, in order to be enrolled as a preschool intern. This began the fall of 2017.
- Each BHS intern is assigned a classroom that they are in for the school year. Each preschool classroom has up to 2 interns each.
- The BPS Integrated Preschool provides the high school students taking early childhood classes an opportunity to put learning into practice by supporting students in carrying out activities with the children.
- High school students gain an understanding of the developmental stages of childhood and an appreciation for the importance of early childhood education.
- BHS interns also have the opportunity to work with related service providers if they have an interest in speech/language, occupational therapy, or behavior specialist work.



Child Find Services & Community Connections

- Children are referred to the Early Childhood Director primarily through Early Intervention, parent referrals, or our screening process.
- One of our “Child Find” activities is to offer private screenings to community children. Screenings are usually done in one of the following areas: speech/language, fine motor, gross motor, and/or academic.
- Following a screening, recommendations by the specialist are made for either parent strategies, a follow up appointment or a formal special education evaluation.
- Parents bring their children into the preschool for a formal evaluation. In most cases, an observation of the child is conducted at the child’s private preschool or daycare to gather information about that child’s participation in preschool activities.
- The Early Childhood Director and/or other preschool staff may also observe children at private preschools as part of the special education process and/or to provide positive behavior support strategies to the community preschool staff.

Questions?

Thank You!

Please contact me at Tanya_Kalantari@bedfordps.org should you have further questions.