



2011-2012

Special Education Program

**The mission** of the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School is to create a community of deeply engaged families and educators working to foster extraordinary levels of student achievement in an inclusive, constructivist learning environment that values every individual and prepares students to be effective citizens in a diverse global society.

# ANCS

**The mission** of the special education department at Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School is to work collaboratively with staff, family, and community in developing an appropriate educational program, which supports best practices in the least restrictive environment. We seek to provide exceptional support and opportunity for every student to maximize his/her potential and become a productive community member.

# Special Education

# Response to Intervention & In-School Team

## **Response to Intervention (RTI):**

- Part of the Student Support Team process (SST)
- A multi-tier approach to identify & support students experiencing difficulty.
- Functions as a part of a data-based process of identify learning disabilities.
- Begins with the universal screening of all children in general education classes.
- Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to improve a student's rate of learning.
- If the student support team determines that research based interventions are not working , a student may be referred for further testing.

## **In School Team:**

- Students that are not responding to interventions through RTI.
- Referrals for further testing.
- Students return back to SST/RTI or to eligibility for special education services.

# Response to Intervention

## Eligibility:

Once the evaluation is completed, the eligibility team, including the parent, will decide whether the student is eligible for special education services. This involves meeting eligibility requirements per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In order to be eligible to receive special education services, the student must meet the requirements of one or more of the following categories:

- *Autism Spectrum Disorder (AUT)*
- *Deaf-Blind (D/B)*
- *Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH)*
- *Emotional/Behavioral Disorder (EBD),*
- *Mild, Moderate, Severe, or Profound Intellectual Disability (MIID, MOID, SID, or PID)*
- *Orthopedic Impairment (OI)*
- *Other Health Impairment (OUI)*
- *Significant Developmental Delay (SDD)*
- *Specific Learning Disability (SLD)*
- *Speech-Language Impairment (SI)*
- *Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)*
- *Visual Impairment, including Blindness (VI)*

Students are reevaluated every three years to determine eligibility. The date of each eligibility meeting begins the next three-year reevaluation cycle. If parents and educators have concerns, students can re-evaluated one year after their previous evaluation.

# Eligibility for Special Education

## What is an IEP?

Simply put, an IEP is a written plan that will describe the program(s) and special services a student requires to be successful. It is a plan that ensures that proper programming is in place to help the student with special needs to be successful at school. School staff and parents as well as medical staff if appropriate develop the IEP collaboratively.

*An IEP includes:*

- Present Educational Levels
- Annual Goals
- Specialized Interventions
- Services and Aides
- Hours of Support
- Curriculum Modifications
- Assistive Technology
- Extended School year
- Placement Determination

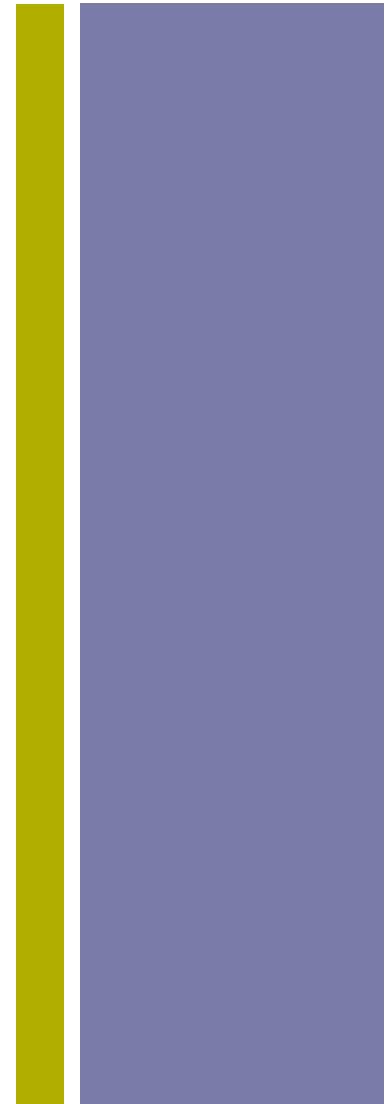
I.  
E.  
P.

# Individualized Education Plan

## **Types of Services**

Educators at Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School offer a variety of special education programs for students with special needs.

- Learning Support: for students whose primary identified need is academic learning.
- Behavioral / Social Support: for students with personal, behavioral, or emotional issues that interfere with student learning and adjustment.
- Occupational / Physical Therapy Support: for students that have fine and gross motor impairments which affect their academic achievement.
- Speech and Language Support: for students with communication impairments which affect their academic achievement.
- Hearing Impaired Support: for students with hearing impairments which interfere with the development of their communications process.
- Visually Impaired Support: for students who have visual impairments which adversely affect their educational performance.
- Nursing Services: for students who medical needs which adversely affect their educational performance.



## Responsibilities of the Special Education Teachers at ANCS

- Plan individualized instruction and highly specialized learning strategies.
- Implement the goals and objectives in the individualized Plan
- Meet all time lines related to IEP process.
- Supervise and coordinate the work of associate teacher.
- Observe students, evaluate, and collect data to present to parents and team.
- Create and implement behavior intervention plans.
- Provide interventions for students in crisis.
- Collaborate with families, teachers and specialists for student's medical, emotional, & cognitive needs.
- Assess students, collect data, and report progress on IEP goals and objectives.
- Non-violent crisis intervention response team.
- Provide assistive technology as related to IEP requirements.
- Assisting students with physical needs.
- Collaborate with classroom teachers to meet student needs.
- Collect and manage student work and assessment samples.

Teacher  
Responsibilities

# Special Education

## Responsibilities of the Special Education Coordinator at ANCS

- Consult with psychologist for all initial evaluations and eligibilities.
- Coordinate IEP meetings, eligibilities, & send notices within legal timelines.
- Assess student entry-level performances and collate eligibility data.
- Write all eligibilities and co-author IEP's and amendments.
- Chair all in-school team, eligibility, IEP, behavior plan, and transition meetings
- Responsible for meeting all federal time lines related IDEA.
- Report FTE statistics for federal funds and maintain database for ANCS.
- Maintain paperwork & student files in compliance to APS & federal standards.
- Coordinate SLP, OT, PT, and AT for students receiving services.
- Coordinate medical plans with school nurse and inform staff.
- Coordinate testing accommodations for students with IEP's.
- Maintains confidential records on all referred students and student/parent contacts in accordance with federal and state law, and APS guidelines.
- Provide thorough and timely reports, data, information as requested.
- Provides weekly and monthly enrollment reports to APS.
- Collaborate with others (e.g. district, teachers, principals, & professional staff, parent groups, public agencies, etc.) to implement and maintain services in accordance with programmatic & regulatory requirements.

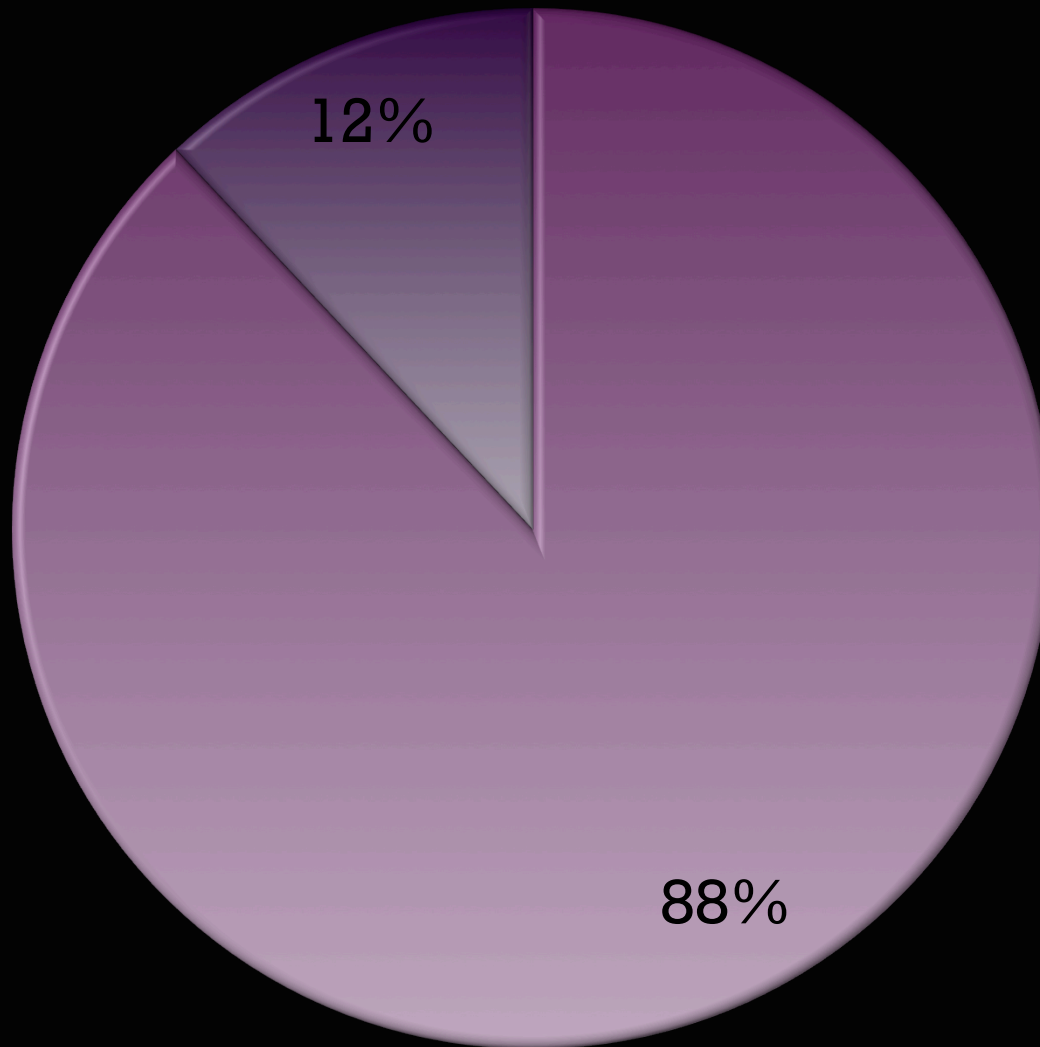
Coordinator  
Responsibilities

# Special Education



# ANCS Special Education Population

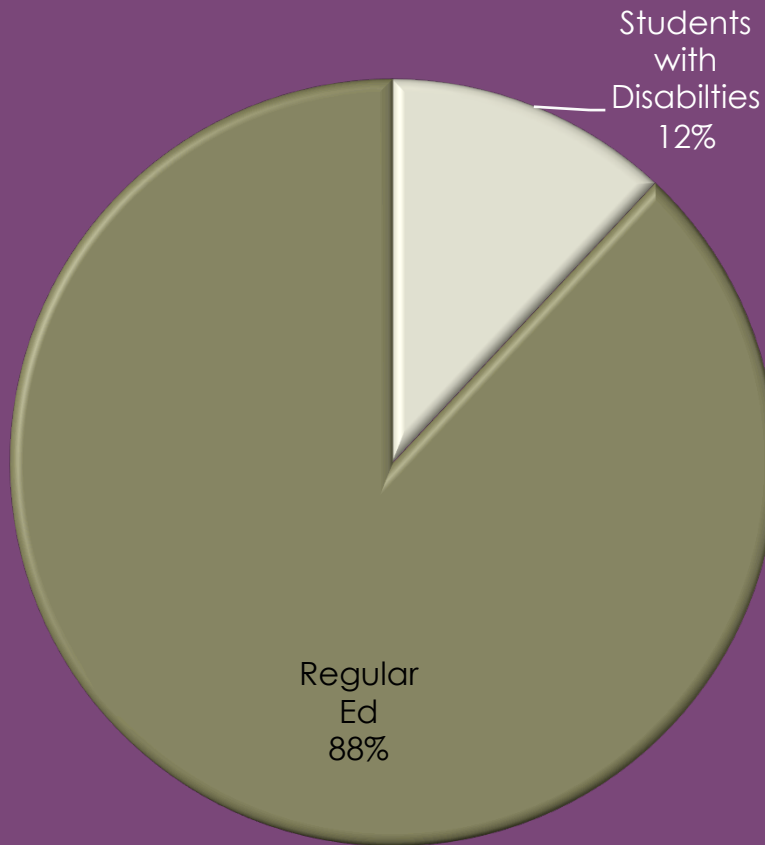
■ Regular Education   ■ Special Education



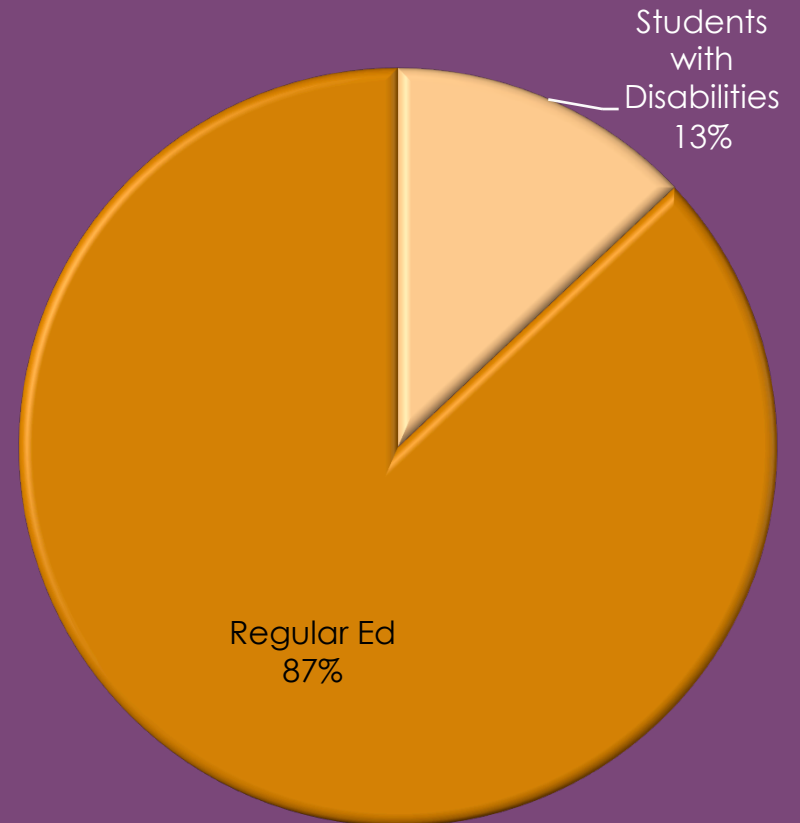
The special education program at ANCS currently works with 75 students on both campuses receiving services. That is 12% of our total enrollment.

# Comparison with a Neighborhood School

## ANCS

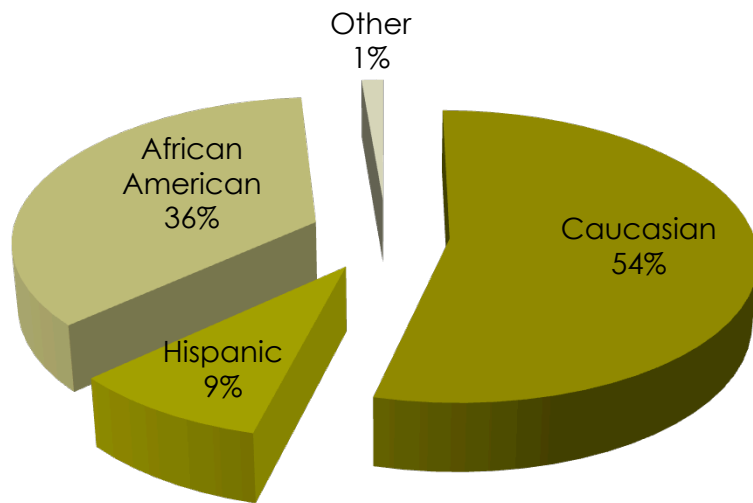


## Parkside Elementary

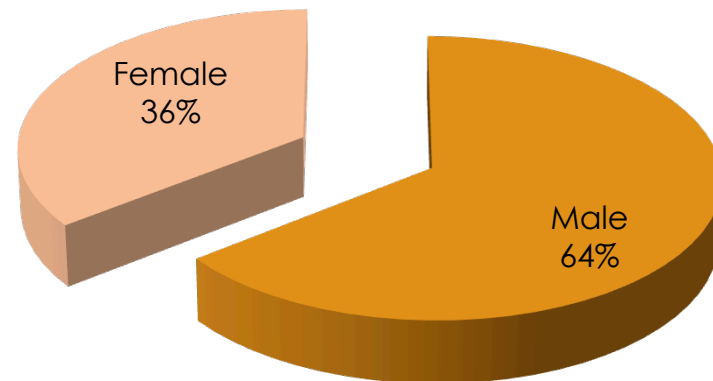


# Gender and ethnic breakdown of special education students

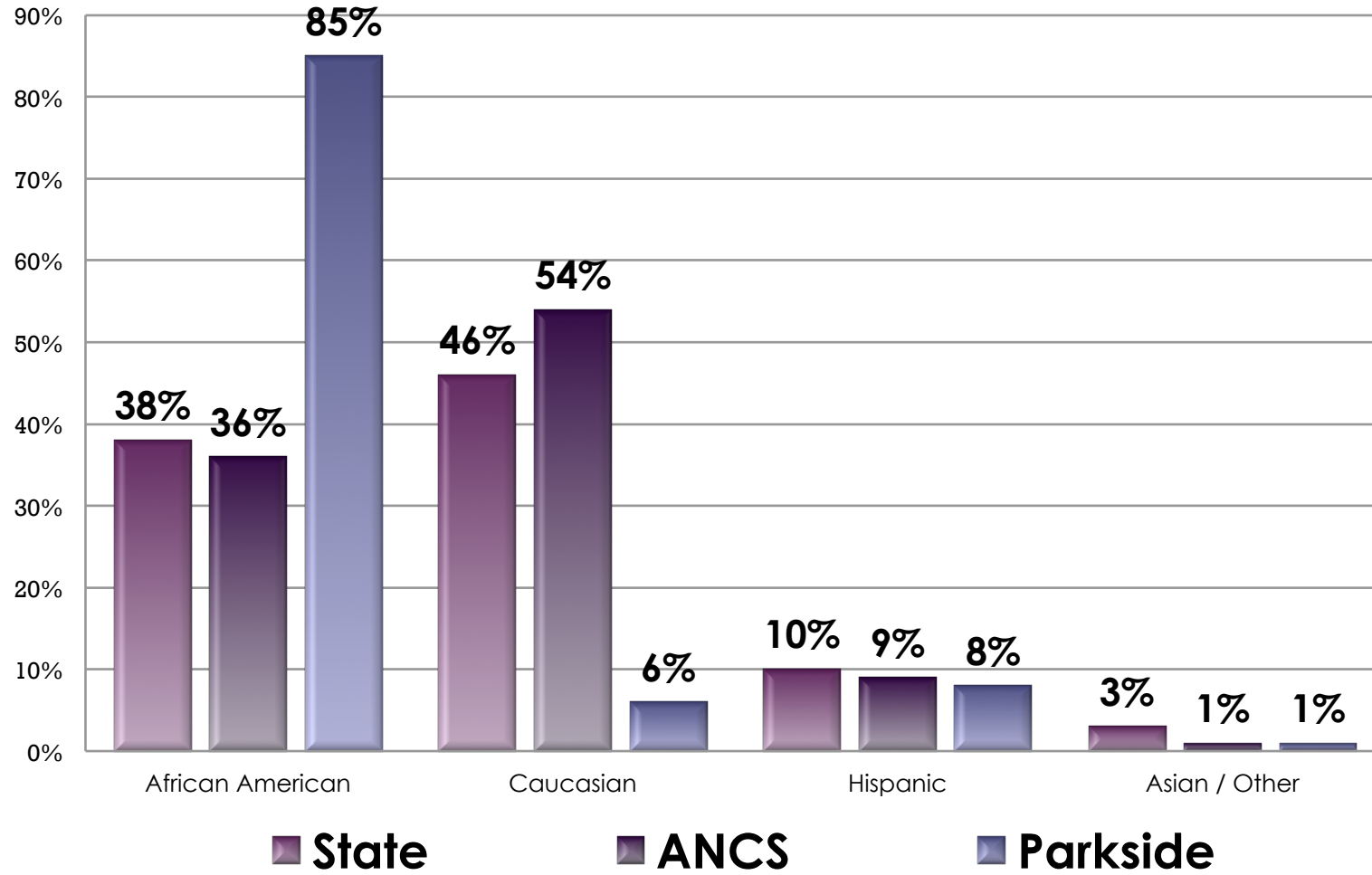
## Ethnic Breakdown

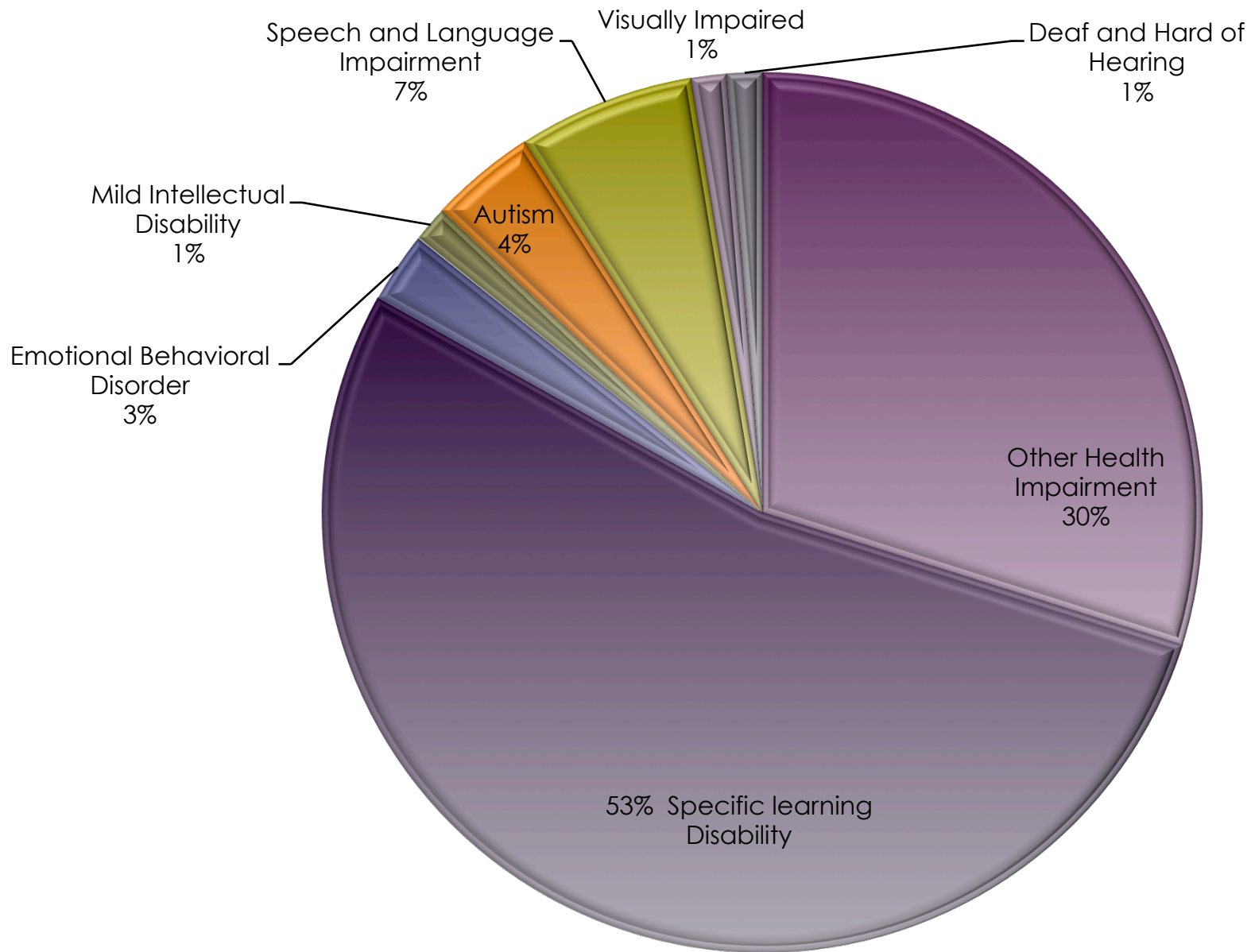


## Gender Breakdown



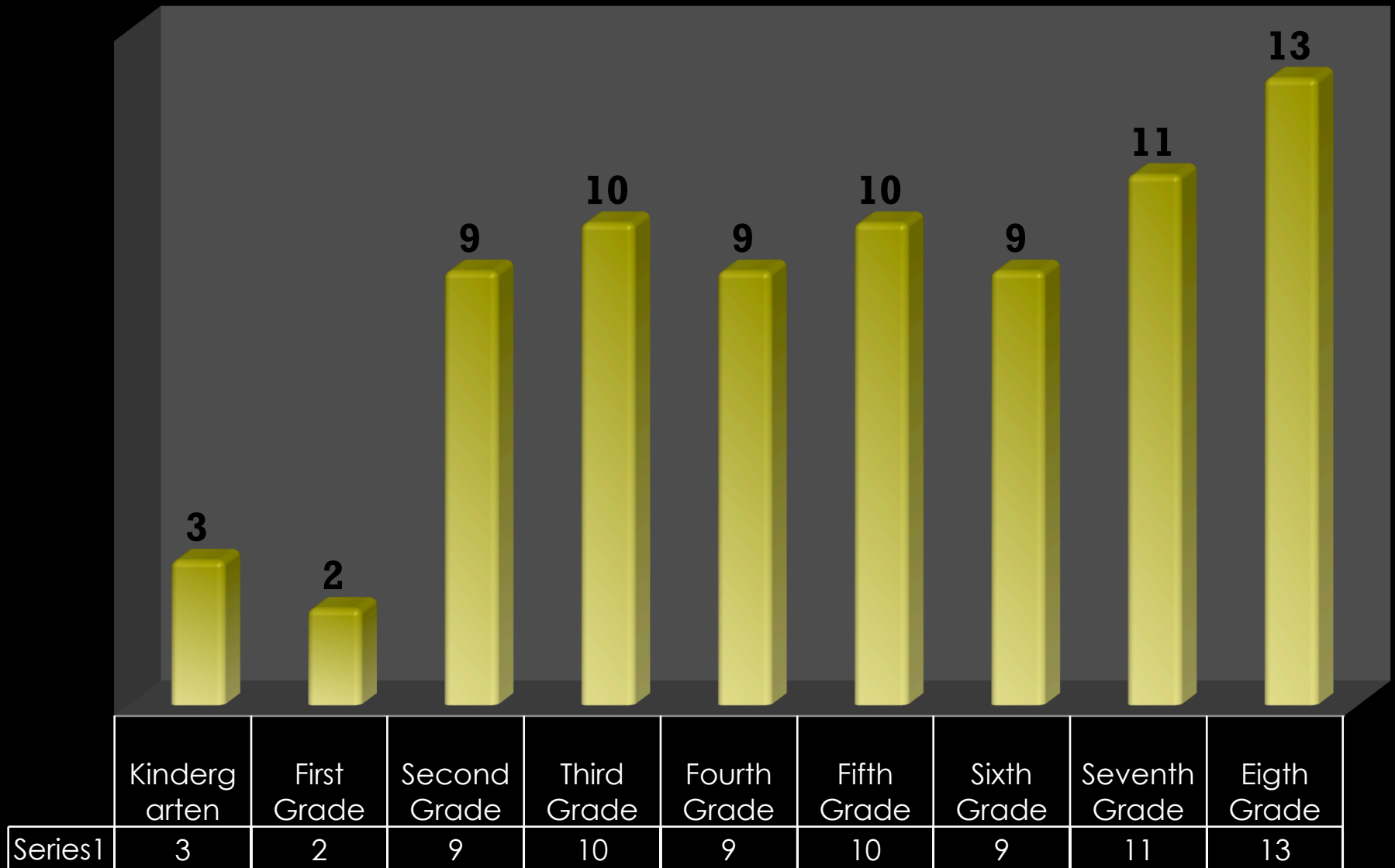
# Ethnic Breakdown Comparison





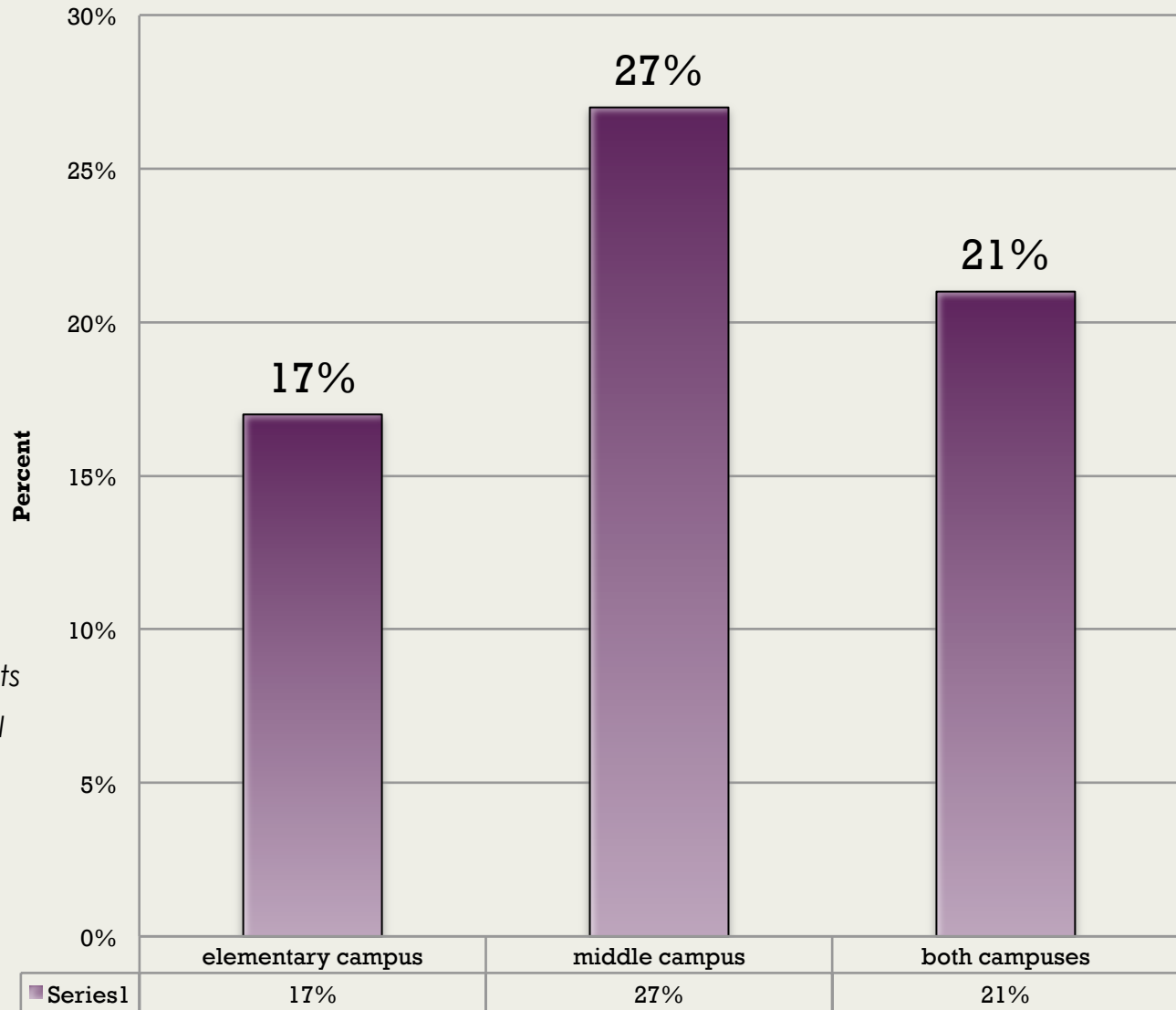
# Current Disabilities at ANCS

## Special Education Students by Grade Level



\* Expected Growth: 7-10 students this year at both campuses.

## Percentage of Students Receiving Academic Support from Special Education, SST, and 504 plans.



*Special education provides additional services, support, programs, specialized placements or environments to ensure that all students' educational needs are provided for.*

# The Elementary Campus: 395 Students

- 2 lead and 1 associate teacher.
- 43 students currently receiving services, 1:18 ratio.
- Provide instruction for 6 grade levels.
- Work with students with 7 different categories of disabilities.
- One teacher provides math instruction K-5.
- One teacher provides ELA instruction K-5.
- Average small group size is 7 (different grade levels at times)
- Average small group size for Academic Assistance is 5

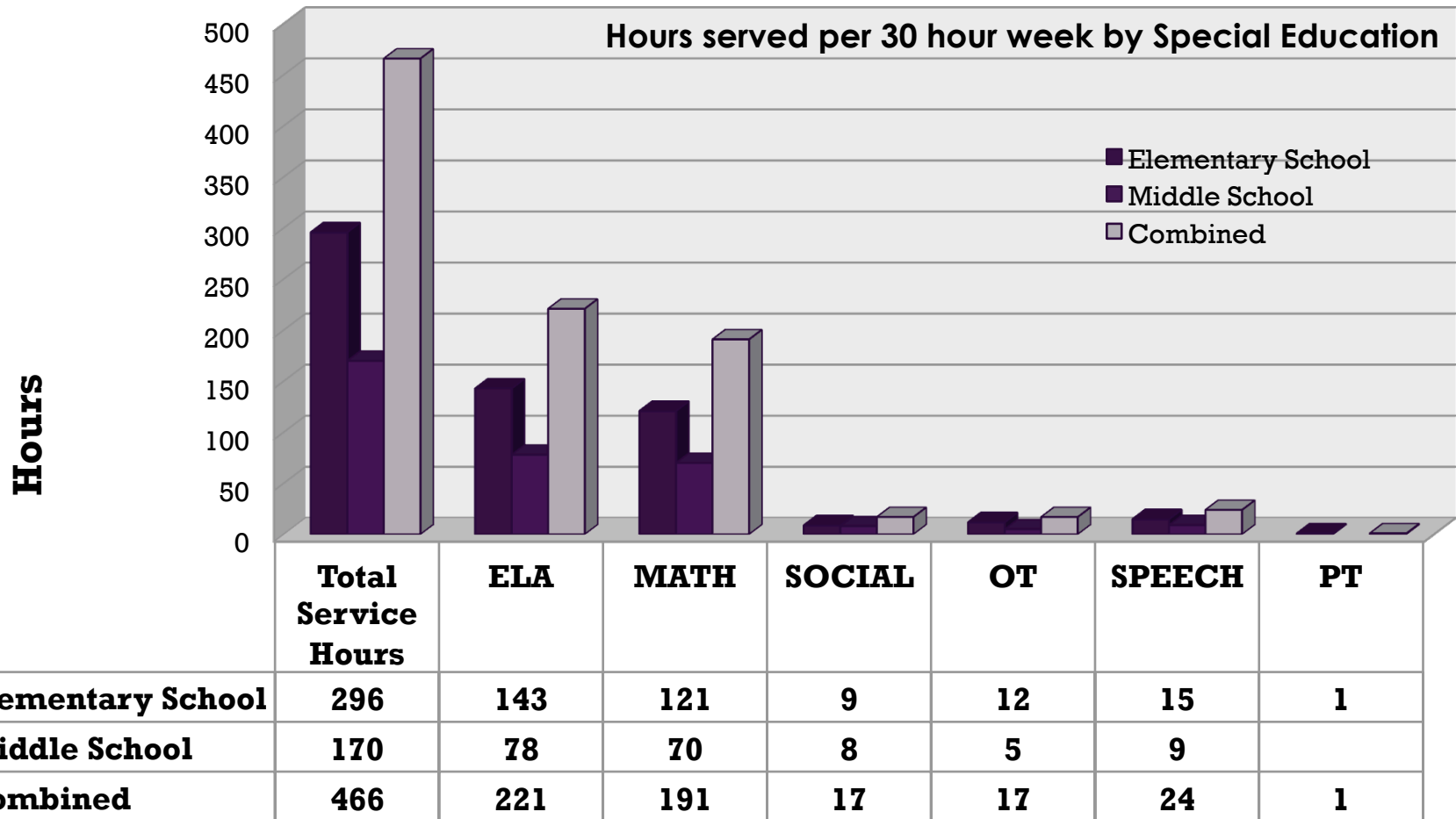


# The Middle Campus: 225 Students

- 1 lead and 1 associate teacher.
- 32 students currently receiving services, 1:24 ratio.
- Provide instruction for 3 grade levels.
- Work with students with 7 different categories of disabilities.
- One teacher and associate to provide all academic, social, and Behavioral support.
- Average small group size is 9-10 (different grade levels at times).
- Expecting rapid growth in department with launch of a more structured SST program at the middle school this year.

# Comparable Statistics from Elementary Schools in Decatur City Schools

School	Total Enrollment	Special Education Enrollment	Number of Special Education Teachers	Teacher Student Ratio
Clairemont Elementary K-3	319	11	2 Lead 2 Associates	1:4
Winnona Park Elementary	330	20 Total 11: Inclusion 5 Self –Contained	1 Lead 1 Associate  <i>1 lead/ 2 associate for the S/P Class</i>	1:8  1:3 S/C
ANCS Elementary K-5	395	43 (6 Speech only)	2 Lead 1 Associate	1:16



Classroom student to teacher ratios:

- Kindergarten: 1:8
- 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>: 1:11
- 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>: approx. 1: 25

Academic assistance teacher to student ratio:

- 1:16

Special Ed ratio at Elementary Campus:

- 1:16\*

Middle Campus:

- 1:24\*

\*Based on state count of associate as 1/3 teacher in sped

## STATE REGULATIONS FOR CLASS SIZES AND CASELOADS

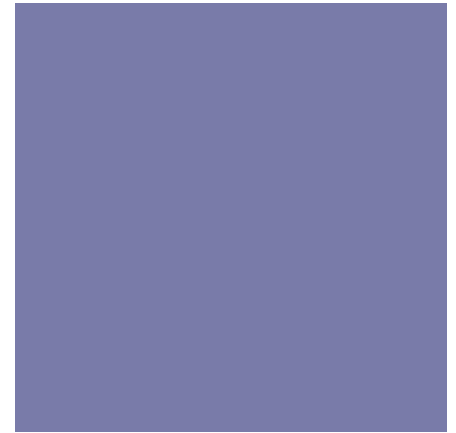
Category	Max w/Assoc	Max w/out an associate	Maximum on caseload
Mild Intellectual Disability	13	10	14
Emotional & Behavioral Disorders	10	7	26
Specific Learning Disabilities	10	8	26
Visual Impairment	4	3	13
Deaf Hard of Hearing	4	3	11
Speech and Language Impairments	N/A	7	55

- DOE states associate teachers counts as 1/3 of a teacher.
- Maximum number of associates you can have is 3.
- The elementary & middle schools have students with vision & hearing impairments, which restricts the number of students we can work with at one time.
- The DOE states that if you have students from different categories working together or on one teachers caseload that you default to the category with the smallest size. Caseloads are averaged to determine the maximum number of students a teacher can be assigned.

# Staffing Needs

Category	Max w/Assoc	Max w/out an associate	Maximum on caseload	Middle School Caseload	Elementary School Caseload
Mild Intellectual Disability	13	10	14	<b>34</b>	<b>21</b>
Emotional & Behavioral Disorders	10	7	26	<b>34</b>	21
Specific Learning Disabilities	10	8	26	<b>34</b>	21
Visual Impairment	4	3	13	<b>34</b>	<b>21</b>
Deaf Hard of Hearing	4	3	11	<b>34</b>	<b>21</b>
Speech and Language Impairments	N/A	7	55	n/a	n/a

ANCS special education program requires increased staffing to be in compliance with federal and state guidelines for our special education teacher to student ratios.




Where to go from here...



We need to begin to think about what we want our program to look like in the future...what road we will go down.

# Do we develop a program that serves a broader range of students with disabilities?

## This will:

- Include students with more significant disabilities.
- Include  creating an option of placements within our school (inclusion, full support in an interrelated classroom)
- Require increased staffing and expense.
- Promote increased diversity.
- Broaden our community.





The discussion needs to begin now for next year and our future.

