

# SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

FEBRUARY 2017



# AGENDA



## Special Education

- MISSION AND VISION
- CHALLENGES AND IMPROVEMENTS
- RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

# MISSION OF NPS OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION (OSE)

**Ensure all students with disabilities are provided with rigorous academic, social, and emotional experiences to help them succeed in life.**

**We aim to do this in a few primary ways:**

- **Excellent Basic Services:**
  - Provide the services and supports students need to access the same standards and content as their peers where appropriate,
  - and/or additional services to help build skills needed for success in life outside of the classroom.
  
- **Engaging and Inclusive Environments:**
  - Engage students in high-quality learning environments that promote rigorous learning experiences,
  - and provide them with a heightened sense of possibility about their goals.
  
- **Expansive World Class Programs:**
  - Prepare students with services to be successful in the world market place with a wide range of high quality programs and supports.

# DATA SNAPSHOT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

- 15.6% of NPS students have a Special Education Classification.
- More than half (53.5%) of NPS students are not regularly learning in inclusive settings, compared with 14.7% statewide.
- 375 NPS students are placed out of district for their education services.
- NPS 20 and 90 day compliance rates currently stand at 96% and 77%, respectively. This represents significant improvement from previous years. [MA Lawsuit goals are 95%/95%. See pgs 17-18]

	July 2012	Feb. 2013	July 2013	Feb. 2014	July 2014	Feb. 2015	July 2015	Feb. 2016	Aug. 2016	Feb. 2017
20 day	84%	86%	89%	92%	93%	93%	94%	95%	96%	96%
90 day	32%	41%	32%	32%	33%	45%	48%	67%	67%	77%

# CHALLENGES AND IMPROVEMENTS

Today, our presentation will focus on a few core challenges, and what we are doing to improve in each of these areas:

## **Excellent Basic Services**

- Challenge: Compliance
- Challenge: Uneven Quality of Individualized Education Program

## **Engaging and Inclusive Environments**

- Challenge: Inadequate Inclusive Opportunities
- Challenge: Budgeting For Programs and Services Across Schools

## **Expansive World Class Programs**

- Challenge: Limited Planning to Expand Special Education Programs
- Challenge: Out of District Placements

# EXCELLENT BASIC SERVICES

## Challenge 2015-16

### Compliance

- Compliance rates have improved significantly in recent years
- Have not yet met terms of MA lawsuit (see pgs 18-19 appendix)
- 60% of compliance activities take place in Preschool



## 2016-17 Improvements

- **Working to continue progress on overall compliance through:**
  - Improved use of data systems
  - CST coaching and evaluation
- **We have reorganized preschool Child Study Teams (CSTs)**
  - Increased efficiency through new CST assignments
  - External expertise

# EXCELLENT BASIC SERVICES

## Challenge 2015-16

### Uneven Quality of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

- Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements not all aligned with students' academic abilities
- Easy IEP implementation needs continued improvement



## 2016-17 Improvements

Improving IEP Quality is a multi-step, multi-year process and Easy IEP is a core part of this solution.

1. Comprehensive cleaning of all data in Easy IEP to identify and address areas of concern
2. Continued training of principals and child study teams on Easy IEP
3. Expanded Easy IEP training this year to include all special education teachers and vice principals

# ENGAGING AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

## Challenge 2015-16

### Inadequate inclusive opportunities

- Over 50% of students educated in self-contained classes



## 2016-17 Improvements

### NPS Inclusion Plan

1. Focus on including more students with mild learning disabilities (LDM) in restrictive settings (self-contained)
2. First phase of many: 9 elementary schools
3. Build capacity (Fall 2016)
  - New Jersey Consortium for Inclusive Education (NJCIE) in pilot schools providing PD for all staff members and 1 Inclusion Coach for each school
4. Implement (Spring 2017)
  - Students in inclusive classroom settings with general education peers



# NJ CONSORTIUM FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION (NJCIE)



- Nine Pilot Schools: Abington, Rafael Hernandez, Barringer BAAH, Arts, Brick Peshine, Luis Munoz Marin, Roberto Clemente, Benjamin Franklin, Bard
- One coach for two buildings
- Intensive professional development (PD) for all teachers and leaders to build sustainable capacity
- 12 additional schools for 2017-18 school year

# ENGAGING AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

## Challenge 2015-16

### Budgeting For Programs and Services Across Schools

- Programs and services are not always effectively allocated
- Students can be assigned additional services that inhibit their growth



## 2016-17 Improvements

### We are improving Special Education Operations and Finance in a few key ways:

- Deep analysis of current and past spending resulting in win-win efficiencies: **better placements and programs that cost less**
  - **Example: Speech services** (See Appendix Slide 20 for more information)
- Looking for additional funding via grants

# EXPANSIVE WORLD CLASS PROGRAMS

## Challenge 2015-16

### Limited Planning to Expand Special Education Programs

- Not enough programs for parents of students with specific needs to always get services in their ward
- Lack of continuum from grade to grade in each ward



## 2016-17 Improvements

**Expand and Fortify:** deliberate planning of Grades preK-8 and 9-12 program continuums with demographic equity

- We are now creating high-quality programs in each ward
- Creating continuums so students do not have to change schools as often
- **Example:** Students with Autism will have a school in their ward and would attend only 1 school for PK-8 years rather than have to move schools 2-3 times.

# EXPANSIVE WORLD CLASS PROGRAMS

## Challenge 2015-16

### Out of District Placements

- Inadequate number of in-district placements for students with severe needs



## 2016-17 Improvements

### Building OOD Placement Quality and Service within NPS

- Plan for the Alpine Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Model for Grades preK-8 for autistic students (at South Street School)
- Grow and fortify programmatic continuum in schools
  - Example: Behavior Disability CI Autism MD
- Create a strong Transitional Program for students in need of School to Life/Work Program 14-21 years of age

# PLANNING FOR 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR

## Excellent Basic Services

- Conducting training with general education teachers on inclusion and EasyIEP
- Continuing to improve data use and response

## Engaging and Inclusive Environments

- Expansion of inclusion schools: 12 additional schools that build staff capacity and sustainability

## Expansive World Class Programs

- Transitional Program for 3 NPS High Schools for over-aged, under-credited students
- Implementation of Alpine Model Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Program at South Street School
- Expansion of Behavior Disability (BD) Program N.I.C.E

# SUPPORTING OUR PARENTS

- **NPS Special Education Advisory Council (SEPAC)** now meets monthly, starting in Fall 2016 (rather than quarterly)
  - Purpose of SEPAC: empower parents and community stakeholders to work cohesively for a better education of NPS children with exceptional needs by providing resources through support and training
  - For upcoming dates, visit <http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/district-calendar>
  - Monthly meetings at Science Park High School from 5:30pm-7:00pm
  - Information fair being planned for May
- **Autism Speaks Worldwide** provides workshops for parents
  - Address strategies to assist with behaviors and transitions at home
- **Mom2Mom** offers support groups, parent sessions, and 24-hour helpline to support the needs of parents

# NPS RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

- **For more information about NPS Special Education Programs, visit:**  
<http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/SpecialEducation>
  
- **Contact your student's school, teachers, Child Study Team, and community engagement specialist to learn more:**
  - NPS Child Study Teams: <http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/departments/curriculum-services/office-special-education/child-study-team>
  - NPS Community Engagement Specialists: <http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/departments/family-community-engagement/community-engagement-specialists>
  
- **Participate in monthly NPS Special Education Advisory Council (SEPAC) Meetings**
  - More Information: <http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/Departments/Curriculum-Services/Office-Special-Education/SEPAC>

# MORE RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

## Parental Support

Special Education Administrative Code:

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap14.pdf>

Statewide Parent Advocacy Network:

<http://www.spanadvocacy.org/>

NJ Children's System of Care:

<http://www.performcarenj.org>

## Learning Disabilities

National Center for Families Learning:

<http://www.familieslearning.org>

Learning Disabilities Online:

<http://www.ldonline.org>

Learning Disabilities of America:

<http://ldaamerica.org>

National Center for Learning Disabilities:

<http://www.nclld.org>

## Behavior

Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders:

<http://www.ccbd.net/home>

Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports:

<https://www.pbis.org>

## Autism

Parents of Children with Autism: <http://www.poac.net>

Autism Speaks: <https://www.autismspeaks.org>

NJ Association of Behavior Analysis:

<http://www.njaba.org>

Autism Web: <http://www.autismweb.com>

## Transition to College and Careers

College Board: <https://www.collegeboard.org>

NJ Department of Human Services-Division of Developmental Disabilities:

<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd>

NJ Transit Assistance:

[http://www.njtransit.com/tm/tm\\_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=AccessLinkTo](http://www.njtransit.com/tm/tm_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=AccessLinkTo)

Supplemental Security Income:

<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dfd/programs/ssi>



# APPENDIX

# NPS SPECIAL EDUCATION “M.A.” CLASS ACTION LAWSUIT

The Special Education Class Action Lawsuit was initiated because NPS failed to locate, identify, refer, or evaluate resident children with disabilities for special education services or to provide special education services to such children on a timely basis

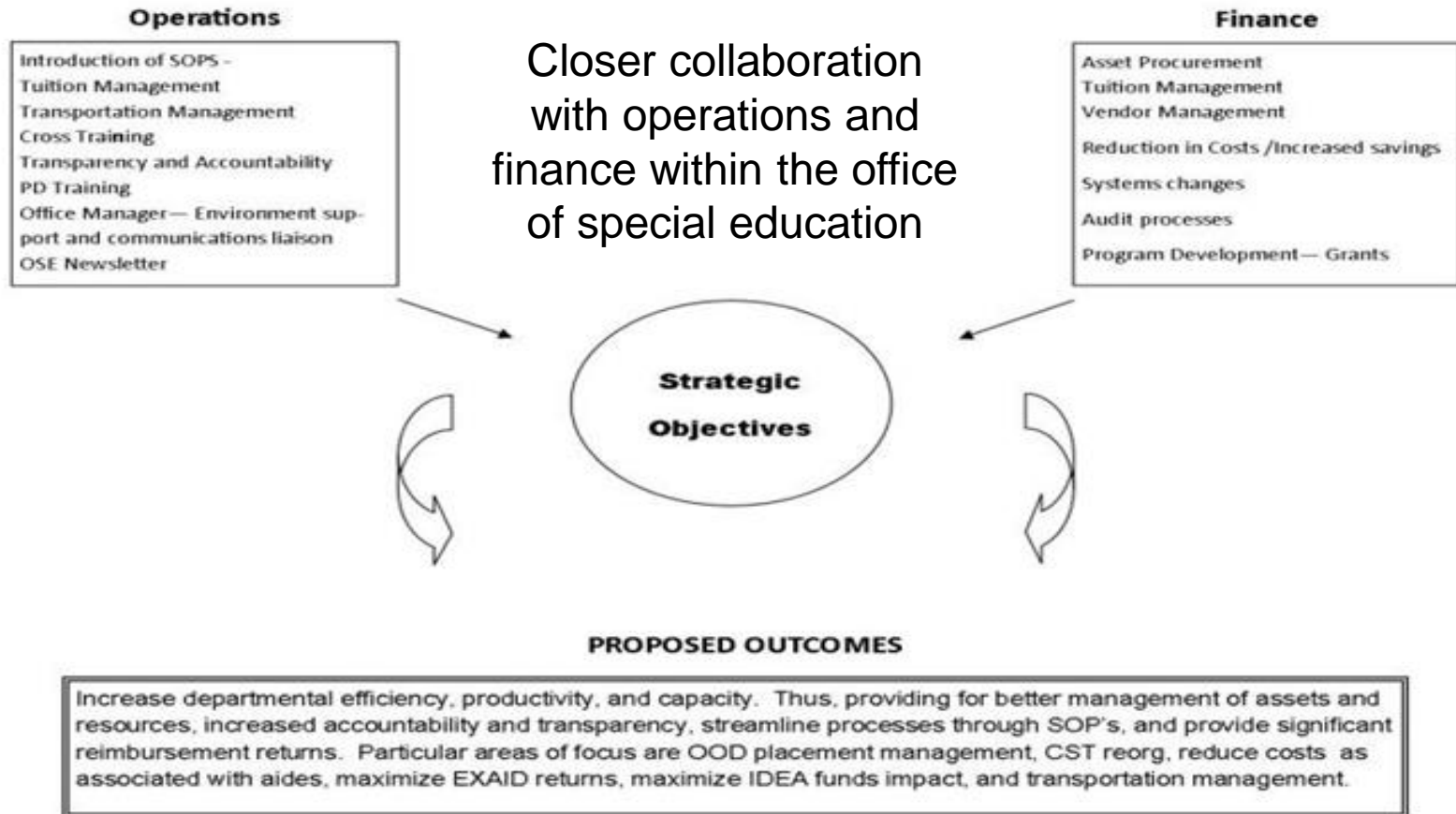
- The defendants were NPS, the New Jersey Department of Education (“the State”), and three individuals employed by the New Jersey Department of Education
- The initials “M.A.” stand for the first and last names of one of the named plaintiffs in the lawsuit

# SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT OF THE M.A. CLASS ACTION LAWSUIT

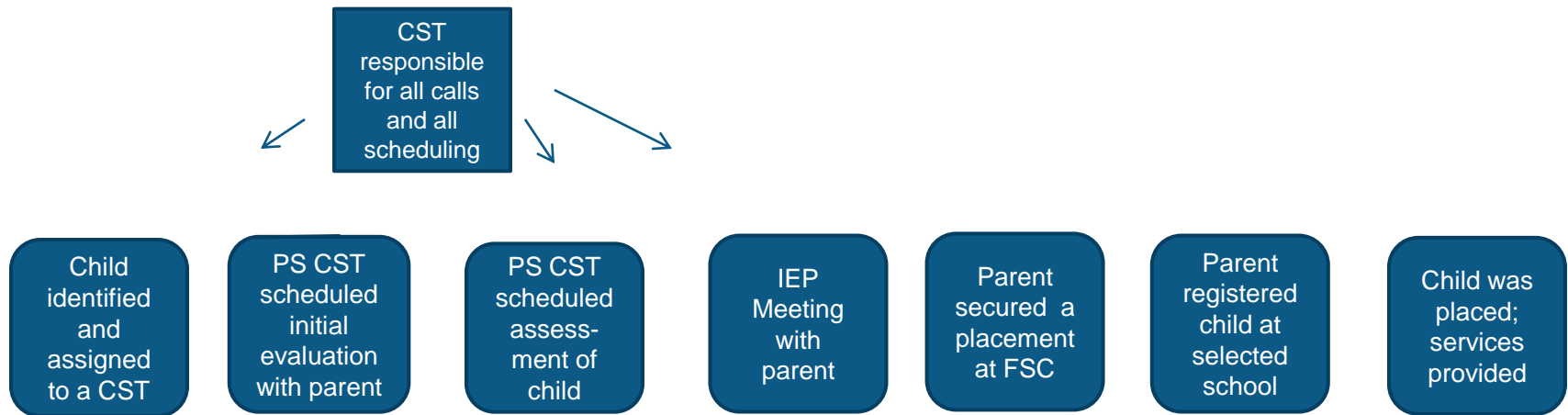
## The NPS obligations under the Settlement Agreement include:

- Achieve 95% compliance with the 20-day deadlines  
With receipt of a parent referral for special education, school district has 20 calendar days to conduct a meeting and determination for an initial evaluation
- Achieve 95% compliance with the 90-day deadlines  
School district has 90 calendar days from initial parental consent to complete all evaluations and implement student's IEP
- Annually report the steps it has taken to locate and identify resident children with disabilities, as required by law; \* providing “make-up” services (“compensatory education”) to certain students who missed services as a result of the school district’s past delays
- Report quarterly on the provision of compensatory education
- Maintain specific forms for every student for whom a request for intervention and referral services is made
- Establish an internal monitoring process to comply with state and federal special education laws

# OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION (OSE)



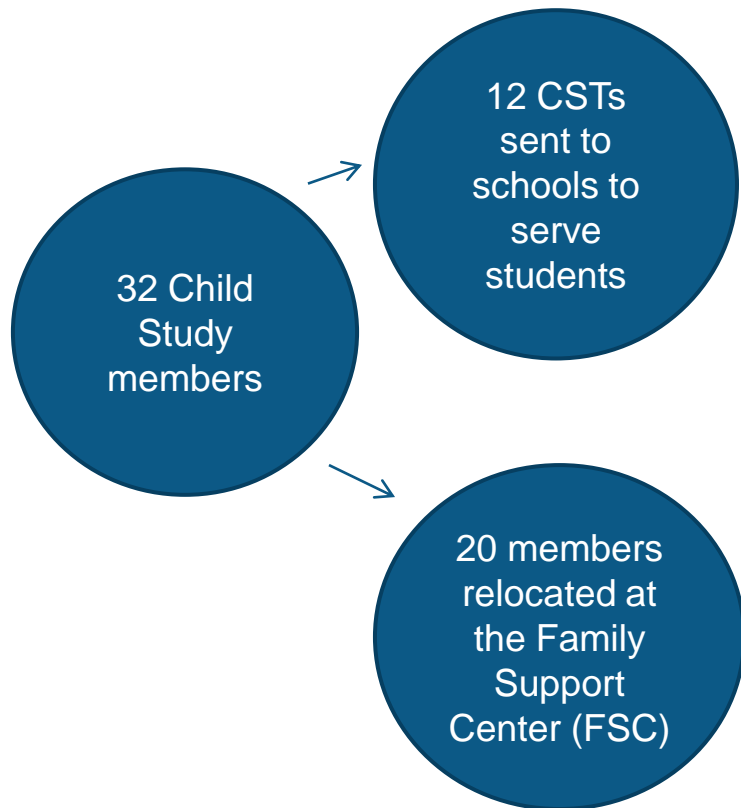
# FORMER PRESCHOOL (PS) CHILD STUDY TEAM (CST) ORGANIZATION



PS CSTs consisted of 32 members in various school throughout system.

Their only purpose was to complete an initial evaluation for child; no direct services were provided to students by these teams after the initial evaluations.

# PRESCHOOL CHILD STUDY TEAM (CST) REORGANIZATION



Special Assistant (SA) of PS CST informed of identified student

SA schedules CST for ID meeting with parent if accepted schedules all assessments with Middlesex County Education Commission



All assessments completed with a guaranteed 35-day turnaround

SA schedules an IEP meeting with CST



Parent meets with CST and FSC places child on the same day the child registers at school