



Center for Spectrum Services

Parent Handbook 2022 – 2023

**Mailing and Street Address:
4 Yankee Place
Ellenville, NY 12428**

Telephone: 845-647-6464

Website: centerforspectrumservices.org

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Last fall, I introduced myself as the new Program Director. After completing a full year, I want to share with you how amazing the year was. Starting a new job can be stressful, but I have to say that my experience was not as such. Staff were welcoming and provided tremendous support, as did parents. I feel that I was successful in establishing a foundation built on trust and mutual respect. This, by far, was the smoothest professional transition in my career.

Most of this year was spent observing and taking in the established culture of the program. I did the best that I could to learn all of the staff and students names in both Kingston and Ellenville, and immersed myself into the daily operations whenever possible. I am thrilled to be starting my second year, and hope that I have the chance to meet as many of you as possible.

We consider the parents of our students an essential ingredient to the success of our efforts. I hope you will be able to participate actively in your child's educational program. Please let your family service coordinator know how else we can support your parenting efforts.

We invite you to visit our agency website, centerforspectumservices.org. The parent section contains ongoing information and necessary forms. Our homepage shares recent news and events as well as fundraising opportunities.

This handbook will hopefully answer many questions about your child's program and our policies and procedures. Please note that this parent handbook contains a recently revised version of our 2022-2023 school calendar which is also posted on the website.

We appreciate the trust you have given us and look forward to working collaboratively to ensure that our students are provided with the best educational experience possible.

Warm Regards,



Charlotte Mennona
Program Director

Elizabeth Forte
Program Coordinator

Laura Nelson
Family Service Coordinator





CENTER FOR SPECTRUM SERVICES

OUR VISION AND MISSION

Our VISION is to be an exemplary educational, treatment, and diagnostic center offering evidence-based programs which lead to optimal outcomes for individuals and families impacted by autism spectrum disorders.

Our MISSION is to evaluate individual needs, develop nurturing, therapeutic learning environments and foster professional growth. We believe that family, staff, and community collaboration is the cornerstone of our success.

OUR CORE VALUES

History of Excellence: we are regional leaders who have consistently developed programs that set the standard for quality person-centered services for over four decades.

Innovation: we explore and selectively utilize progressive, carefully-researched treatments and interventions.

Respect: we honor the diversity and embrace the unique perspective of our students, families, staff, board members, and volunteers.

Collaboration: we foster a creative approach to teamwork throughout our organization.

Integrity: we promote fairness, sincerity and honesty through ethical principles.

CENTER FOR SPECTRUM SERVICES

2022-2023 School Year

| | |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>September 5, Monday</i> | <i>School closed - Labor Day</i> |
| <i>September 6, Tuesday</i> | <i>School closed to students - Staff Development</i> |
| <i>September 7, Wednesday</i> | <i>First Day of School for students – full day</i> |
| <i>September 26, Monday</i> | <i>School closed-Rosh Hashanah</i> |
| <i>October 4, Tuesday</i> | <i>11:30 dismissal for students – Staff Development</i> |
| <i>October 5, Wednesday</i> | <i>School closed – Yom Kippur</i> |
| <i>October 10, Monday</i> | <i>School closed – Columbus Day</i> |
| <i>October 24, Monday</i> | <i>Early Dismissal 11:30 – Parent Conferences</i> |
| <i>November 11, Friday</i> | <i>School closed - Veteran's Day</i> |
| <i>November 15, Tuesday</i> | <i>Early Dismissal 11:30 - Parent Conference</i> |
| <i>November 23-25, Wednesday-Friday</i> | <i>School closed - Thanksgiving Recess</i> |
| <i>December 26- January 2, Monday-Monday</i> | <i>School closed - Winter Recess</i> |
| <i>January 16, Monday</i> | <i>School closed - Martin Luther King Day</i> |
| <i>January 25, Wednesday</i> | <i>Early Dismissal 11:30 – Staff Development</i> |
| <i>February 20, Monday</i> | <i>School closed - Presidents' Day Holiday</i> |
| <i>March 23, Thursday</i> | <i>Early Dismissal 11:30 – Staff Development</i> |
| <i>April 3-April 7, Monday-Friday</i> | <i>School closed – Spring break</i> |
| <i>May 29, Monday</i> | <i>School closed - Memorial Day</i> |
| <i>June 19, Monday</i> | <i>School closed - Juneteenth</i> |
| <i>June 23, Friday</i> | <i>Early Dismissal 11:30 - Last Day of school</i> |

SUMMER SCHOOL

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>July 3rd, Monday</i> | <i>First Day of Summer Program</i> |
| <i>July 4th, Tuesday</i> | <i>School Closed – Fourth of July</i> |
| <i>August 11th, Friday</i> | <i>Last Day of Summer Program</i> |

Full Day hours for students: **9:00am – 2:30pm**
 Half-Day hours for students: **9:00am – 11:30pm**

Inclement Closing Days: **7**

Decisions concerning inclement school closings are made by the school district in which Center for Spectrum Services is located:

- Center for Spectrum Services in the Town of Ulster will be delayed or closed when the Saugerties School District delays opening or closes.
- Center for Spectrum Services in the Town of Ellenville will close when the Ellenville District delays opening or closes.

Prioritized Make-Up Days: Should all inclement closing days be exhausted, we will pivot to remote instruction for all students.

If inclement closing days are not used, school days canceled in this order: Monday April 10th, Friday May 26th, Tuesday May 30th

Center for Spectrum Services 2022-2023 Calendar

| September 2022 | | | | | | |
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| October 2022 | | | | | | |
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| November 2022 | | | | | | |
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| December 2022 | | | | | | |
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| January 2023 | | | | | | |
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| February 2023 | | | | | | |
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| April 2023 | | | | | | |
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| May 2023 | | | | | | |
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| June 2023 | | | | | | |
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| July 2023 | | | | | | |
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| August 2023 | | | | | | |
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 School Closed/Holiday
  Teacher Professional Development
  Half Day
  First/Last Day of School

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WHO WE ARE

The Center for Spectrum Services is a private, non-profit day program, with schools in Kingston and Ellenville as well as community and home-based services throughout the Mid-Hudson Valley. Our programs are specifically designed for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs). Children of preschool age (3-5 years) and school age (5-12 years) may be eligible for the school programs. Our school has served students from as many as 55 school districts and seven counties throughout the Mid-Hudson Valley.

The program focuses on the individual student's unique educational and social-emotional profile. Each classroom at Spectrum Services has a small class size, a structured environment, and individualized teaching methods and materials. Our goal is to use research-based strategies to teach the skills and to provide the experiences that will enable each child to reach their highest potential, and to attend a less restrictive, more typical educational setting whenever possible.

The staff at Center for Spectrum Services are highly trained and have expertise working with students with special needs. Special educators and classroom assistants, speech and language therapists and pathologists, adaptive physical education instructors, occupational and physical therapists, family service coordinators, behavioral specialists, psychologists, music therapist and a school nurse all work together to help provide a program to meet each child's individual needs. All our teachers, therapists, classroom teacher assistants and lead teacher assistants are certified and/or licensed by the State of New York. Parent support/discussion groups, educational seminars and sibling groups are also available to our students' families as part of the program.

Tuition and transportation are provided at no cost to parents of eligible children.

The Spectrum Services Outreach Program also offers developmental diagnostic evaluations, consultation services to public and private agencies, trainings, and workshops addressing best practices educating students with Autism Spectrum Disorders. We also provide individual and family counseling and after-school social skill groups to students served in other programs. All these services are available on a fee-for-service basis to the community. Our home and community-based program offers services to eligible children as young as 12 months who are not requiring an intensive full day program.

Center for Spectrum Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, color, age, national or ethnic origin or disability in the admission of students or the administration of its policies and programs. Our facilities are fully accessible to individuals with disabilities.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

1. **HOURS FOR STUDENTS:** Students attend from 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.,

Unless otherwise noted on the school calendar. Half day dismissal is at 11:30.. Some bus companies may request early pick up or drop off times. Students are considered tardy if they come to school after 9:30. Any student pickup before 2:00 is also recorded. Student attendance information may be reported to the school district and the county of residence. Please refer to our school calendar for the schedule of school closings and early student dismissals.

2. **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation to and from school is provided at no charge to parents. It is arranged by your county of residence for preschoolers and by your school district for school age children.

If your child is transported by bus, the following information is important:

1. Please check your child's temperature each morning. If there is any sign of fever or evidence of illness, you must keep your child home. If a child has a temperature of 100.0 degrees or higher, they will be taken to a separate area and closely supervised until the parent or caregiver can pick them up. **A prompt pick up is essential.**
2. Be sure to have your child ready promptly when the bus comes. A member of the Spectrum Services staff will be greeting your child at the bus and will take your child back to the bus in the afternoon. Make sure someone is at home to meet him/her after school.
3. Children must wear seat belts, safety vests, or use car seats at all times on the bus. Most bus companies do not allow food on the bus ride to or from school.
4. Although Center for Spectrum Services does not hire bus drivers or contract with bus companies, please report any bus problems to us as soon as they occur, and we will assist you in working with the school district or bus company.
5. If you plan to pick your child up from school, please call us. If you plan to have someone other than the parent pick your child up, write a note naming the person and giving your permission. We will ask that person for photo identification. We will never allow your child to leave school with anyone unless we have your permission.
6. If, on a specific day, your child is not going to be attending school or will be driven by parents, bus companies appreciate being contacted whenever possible to avoid sending the bus unnecessarily.
7. If your child is brought to school by you in the morning, please notify your bus company if your child will be riding the afternoon bus home. Please call the school by 9:00 if you plan to bring your child to school later 9:15am.
8. Do not ask the bus driver to convey any important information to school. Please call or email anything you would like us to know..
9. Please do not ask the bus driver for information on your child's school day. Spectrum services staff have the most accurate overview of this educational information.
10. Parents must inform the bus company or drivers directly for any changes in transportation (i.e., parent pick-up from school, changes in drop-off location).
11. Bus routes are carefully planned according to pick-up and drop-off sites of many students and cannot be easily altered once set. Please do not request that your child be picked up from or delivered anywhere other than the designated site.
12. . If you are planning to move, or must change a permanent pick-up or drop-off site, please notify the school so that we can complete the required paperwork for the transporter. Please let us know several weeks in advance so that proper arrangements can be made for your child's uninterrupted transportation to and from school.

PARENTS DRIVING STUDENTS

Parents of students may elect to transport their child. Please drive very slowly and cautiously in the parking lot. **Do not pass busses** that have their lights on or stop sign out.

Please be mindful of the following guidelines:

1. Please let us know ahead of time if you will be arriving late or leaving early.
2. Our school day runs from 9:00 - 2:30. Due to team meetings and class responsibilities, staff are not available to receive children before 8:40 or to care for them after 2:40. Generally, students should not be picked up any earlier than 2:15.
3. We appreciate your promptness when dropping off or picking up your children. Many class activities or therapy sessions begin promptly at 9:00, and children who arrive late will miss important educational opportunities and take staff attention away from the activities already in progress.
4. Please refrain from extended conversations with staff during arrival or departure time as we need to keep traffic flowing smoothly. If you would like to arrange a time for this discussion, please let us know. We would be happy to arrange a phone call or a virtual parent conference.
5. Please be patient, we are only able to unload the first 3 buses in the queue for safety reasons.

3. RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES: Center for Spectrum Services is non-sectarian and therefore there are no religious activities planned for the students. We do plan seasonal activities and celebrate birthdays. If you do not wish to have your child participate in these activities, please inform your family service coordinator.

4. CHANGE OF CLOTHES: Please include at least one complete change of clothes for your child to be left in school for use as needed. Include a shirt, pants, sweater, underwear, and socks. Hats, mittens, snowsuit and boots are requested for the winter months. The school is air conditioned in the summer so a sweater should be provided. Due to the composition of the playground surface, shoes and socks are recommended for outdoor playground time. Sneakers are requested for gym days. If your child has occasional toileting accidents, two or more sets of clothing are recommended. Soiled clothes will be returned to you. Your prompt assistance in replacing returned clothing with clean substitutes is greatly appreciated. **Please label all belongings with initials or name.**

5. DIAPERS AND UNSCENTED WET WIPES: **Must be supplied by the parents for all students who are not toilet trained.** When your child is ready, we will work closely with you to design a toilet training program.

6. PHONE CALLS: **about your child's program should be directed to your family service coordinator.** This person is in regular, on-going contact with the classroom and will share important information. Your family service coordinator will also be able to answer your questions and to relay information to the classroom. This allows our classroom staff to provide their undivided attention to the students. If the family service coordinator is not immediately available, voice mail messages will be answered promptly. If you need immediate attention, you may also dial "0" (operator) and ask to speak with your child's classroom coordinator. **Please do not ask us to put your calls through to the classroom as our teachers devote 100% of their attention to the children at all times.**

7. AFTER SCHOOL MESSAGES: Voice mail is also in operation when the school is closed. Someone will get back to you as soon as possible, usually the next weekday. Emails will be addressed when possible during the school day. Please be patient. Special Educators are asked to avoid interrupting the school day to respond during instructional time.

8. INCLEMENT CLOSINGS & DELAYS: When the weather conditions are very bad, the school may be closed. If Ellenville Schools are closed for weather related reasons, then Center for Spectrum Services in Ellenville will also be closed.

Sometimes your home school district may have an inclement weather closing for the day, even if Spectrum Services is open. If this happens, then there will be no bus transportation provided. If you feel it is safe to drive, you may transport the child to/from school on these days.

In Ellenville, we will also follow the delayed openings of the Ellenville School District. Whenever Ellenville has a two-hour delay, Center for Spectrum Services will have a two-hour delay. If our school program has a two-hour delayed opening on a scheduled half-day for students, school will be cancelled for students. Please listen to the radio stations listed below for this information. At times, a bus company may choose to delay busing longer if weather conditions are poor. Please check with your transporter regarding their policy. On rare occasions, we may need to close for other reasons not weather related. We have 7 days that can be used as snow emergency closings. If we exceed this number of days we will then pivot to remote instruction on any additional emergency closing days.

9. MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEM – SCHOOL MESSENGER Our mass notification system will be used in the event of a non-scheduled closing, delayed opening, early dismissal or other emergency events and as a reminder for scheduled closings. **It will also be used for alerting parents of important information regarding school information, including health alerts.** Our system will be programmed to call, text message, and/or send an email to the primary caregiver. Parents will be asked to complete a form providing contact information. Your contact information is secure and will not be shared.

We will also broadcast school closings and delays on local radio/TV stations, www.cancellations.com, on the Spectrum Services’ answering machine and on our website, centerforspectrumservices.org. The radio stations are as follows:

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------|------------|
| <u>Radio Stations:</u> | WRRV 92.7 / 96.9 | Mix 97.7 | WDST 100.1 |
| | Wolf 94.3 / 97.3 | WPDH 101.5 | |
| <u>Radio Stations:</u> | Oldies 1340/1390 | | |
| <u>T.V. Station:</u> | RNN Channel 62 | | |

10. EARLY DISMISSALS: Our Ellenville program is required to follow the Ellenville School District’s closing schedule since we are located within that district. Please be aware that the Spectrum staff does not make these decisions independently. Ellenville may choose to close in the event of inclement weather **or** the prediction of inclement weather.

If the forecast is poor:

- We must have current emergency phone numbers in order to reach you or a responsible person who can take responsibility for your child. Please turn on your cell phones or pagers. It would also be helpful if you would notify us which number you can be reached at if you are not going to be at home/work. Listen to your radio stations or log on to www.cancellations.com. Information about early emergency closings for our building will be sent out through School Messenger.
- Remember that your district or bus company determines actual bus pick-up times. These may be earlier than our school’s dismissal time or your district’s dismissal time.
- If you receive a phone message from us or hear a closing on the radio, be sure to call your family service coordinator to acknowledge that you will be home when your child arrives.
- If schools are closing early, we will do our very best to reach you. However, your child will need to be sent home at the designated time even if we have not been able to contact you.

11. STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: To maintain the highest quality services for your child, Center for Spectrum Services offers comprehensive, regularly scheduled professional development on relevant topics to the staff working with your child. Full day and half day staff professional development are noted on your school calendar. If scheduled calendar closings must be changed to accommodate staff training goals, advanced notice of these

changes will be given. Additional training is made available to particular disciplines by topic. We recognize that through regular exposure to information on current practices and new strategies, our staff can best meet each child's individual needs.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY AND ACCESS TO RECORDS: Information about your child is confidential and will only be shared outside our agency with written permission from the custodial parents or legal guardians. This permission allows Spectrum staff to review, monitor and reevaluate your child's enrollment status and educational progress carefully and thoughtfully. Your permission is necessary to release records which will include only documents written by our agency.

It is the Spectrum Service policy not to release your child's medical or educational information written by other agencies or practitioners. Legal guardians may request access, copies, or amendment to their child's educational records. Call the school for more information on obtaining access to your child's records or your rights under the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974" (FERPA). Your child's educational records are secure in locked files until your child is 21 years old. When our staff review current students' files, they must always sign them out, review them in the building, and return them promptly.

13. PARENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS FOR DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY: The New York State Education Department requires all schools to share information about parents' rights to access and protect educational records for their child. This information is in compliance with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). To read this policy in its entirety visit Spectrum Services' website (centerforspectrumservices.org) and click on the *For Parents Section Information and Resources*. This policy is also available upon request.

14. ELECTRONIC MEDIA: Spectrum Services employs internet filters to protect confidential student information and to prevent access to or transmission of inappropriate material via the internet and electronic mail as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act. Please remember that Social Media sites such as Facebook and Twitter are public domains. Everything that is written on these sites may be viewed by a larger audience, not exclusively limited to your "friends". We strongly advise parents to refrain from posting confidential or sensitive information about their child or their child's program on these sites.

Spectrum Services staff is not permitted to post any information or photographs regarding students or their families on their personal social media pages and are strongly advised not to participate in social media exchanges with our students' families. With your permission, Center for Spectrum Services may post photographs on the agency Facebook page.

15. PARENT COLLABORATION: Each family plays an important role in the educational success of our students. Parent involvement is central to the philosophy of Center for Spectrum Services. With the trust and cooperation of our families, our students can make maximum progress toward realizing their fullest potential. Every effort will be made to collaborate to the fullest extent possible with each student's family. If a parent has a concern about his/her child's educational program, the parent should discuss the concern with their family service coordinator. The coordinator may address the concerns with the appropriate administrative or educational staff. If needed, a direct meeting between the parent, service coordinator and administrators, and/or school district, may be arranged. Written information on parental rights, due process, and mediation is available upon request.

16. CONSIDERING MOVING? Please notify us immediately if you are considering moving. If you are staying within the same school district we will help with arranging new transportation. If you are changing school districts we will help you through the process. Also please let us know immediately if you are planning to take an extended vacation or if your child will not be attending some, or all, of our summer program.

17. ATTENDANCE POLICY: Good school attendance will greatly help your child learn and grow. New York State Education Law requires all students with disabling conditions to receive the services identified on their Individual Education Plan (IEP). As per the IEP, this includes attending class during **both** the 10 month and 6 week summer

program and receiving mandated therapies. Prompt attendance allows your child to receive maximum benefit from enrollment.

If your child is going to be absent, please contact us and let us know why. School Districts will be notified when students have missed two consecutive weeks of school or shown a pattern of excessive absenteeism. For Preschoolers we are required to report absences that exceed 5 days in a given month. Regular attendance is required for students to fully benefit from their Spectrum Services school placement in the 10 month and summer programs. For three or more days of absence due to illness or other medical reasons, information from your health practitioner is requested. **Chronic unexcused student absences are a violation of New York State Compulsory Attendance Law and will be reported to students' school districts and, when necessary, Children's Protective Services.**

The following are reasons for absence that State Education Department recognizes as excused:

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| Illness | Doctor appointments | District closing | Death in the family |
| Illness in the family | Quarantine | School suspension | Legal proceedings |
| Religious observance | Inclement closing | Scheduled school calendar closings | |

Any other reason than the ones above shall be considered unexcused.

Examples of unexcused absences are:

| | | | | |
|------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Family vacations | Traveling | Shopping | Working schedules | Summer camp |
| Needed at home | Cold weather | Child care coverage | Private lessons/activities | Missing the bus |

In advance, please call 845-647-6464 to report your child's absence or late arrival. Clearly state the date, child's full name, class name and reason for the absence. Arrivals after 11:30 or departures before 12:30 will be considered ½ day absences. You can also report an absence online. To access the online Student Absentee Form, on your browser type in <https://tinyurl.com/m9m2jn5x>

You can also access it from our website by clicking the Parent Info tab, and it's the first link in the right-hand navigation bar.

SUMMER SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY: A six-week summer program is approved for most Spectrum Services students to prevent regression. The summer program is a continuation of your child's educational program and is not a summer camp experience. If the student is approved to attend the summer program, **it is required that students will attend all six weeks of the summer program.** Dates of summer program will be shared with parents as soon as they have been finalized so that vacation/camp plans can be made for the time between the end of the ten-month program and before summer program or after summer program and before the start of the new school year. **Please notify us as soon as possible if your child will not be attending all the summer program session.**

If summer school is mandated on your child's IEP, it is essential to make **a commitment for the full six week period.** There is a waitlist for summer school vacancies and it is important to offer these spaces to children who will be in regular attendance. Please note that Center for Spectrum Services cannot begin to receive tuition payment until the student has been present for 3 days in the week beginning the 10 month and the summer program. Similarly, Center for Spectrum Services loses tuition if the student does not attend 3 days in the last week of either program. We need this tuition to pay the teachers and therapists who have been hired to serve your child. If your child is absent for an extended period of time, we must inform the school district.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

MEDICAL RELEASE: We have a school nurse available to treat a child who has an injury or illness. If your child becomes ill or injured at school, we will try our hardest to reach you and tell you if emergency medical care is needed. A signed medical release will be kept in the child's file. We will not notify you about minor bumps or booboos which are common for all children both at home or at school.

It is imperative that we have correct phone numbers (home, work, cell, emergency contact, etc.) so that we may reach you in an emergency. Parents must report any phone number changes to the school immediately. A new emergency contact form must be signed on a yearly basis or more frequently if numbers change.



MEDICATION:

1. Spectrum Services must have **written permission from the parent and the physician** to administer any form of prescription or over the counter medication. This includes pain relievers, cough medicine or cough drops, Benadryl, sunscreen, liquid skin, topical ointments, homeopathic remedies, etc. Do not give your child medications to self-administer or carry with him/her.

2. State regulations also require **written permission from the parent and the physician** for school administration of any specialized treatments that are prescribed through licensed physicians, or from information gathered by independent research. The term "treatment" includes any medically prescribed agent (prescription or over the counter), dietary or nutritional supplement, homeopathic treatment, metabolic agent, chelating agent, topical ointment, inhalers, nebulizers, etc.

3. The physician order must indicate the name, dosage, and time that the medication or treatment is to be administered, as well as the start and end dates. A pharmacy label cannot be used in place of the physician's written order.

4. We cannot begin, increase, decrease, or discontinue prescription medication without the written or verbal consent from you and your child's doctor.

5. All medication (prescriptions, over the counter, alternative, homeopathic, etc.) must be in a properly labeled container, and when possible it should be delivered, directly to the nurse or teacher by the parent. Another option is to have the package sent by Fed Ex to the school.

6. If sending medication to school by bus:

- Make sure that transporting medication in the student's bag is allowed by the bus company. If it is allowed, communicate to the bus personnel that medication is in the bag and that they must maintain control of the bag until school staff take your child off of the bus.
- Send medications in original, labeled medication bottles. The label must contain the student's name, the correct strength and dose, the time that it is to be administered and the prescribing doctor.
- The student cannot be entrusted with their medication.
- Do not send medication premixed in the child's drink or food.
- Please call the nurse's office at (845) 336-2616 x 128 to make us aware that medication has been sent to school in the student's bag.

7. All medication/treatments are kept in a secure place and is administered at school by an RN or LPN.

8. Doctor and parental permission must be given to change medication/treatment administration time more than one hour to allow the student to participate on field trips.

9. To maintain each child's safety, we will not be able to administer medication in school unless the above guidelines are followed.

10. It is vital for Spectrum Services to maintain a current record of all medications/treatments your child receives both in and out of school. **The school nurse must be aware of all medications and dosages in case of emergency as well as to monitor possible side effects.** Report any changes or additions regarding home administered medication promptly or ask your prescribing doctor to provide a written update, so we may have a full picture of your child's needs,

11. The school can be a resource in sharing information with medical professionals regarding your child's behavior. If a parent and doctor determine that medication is an appropriate part of your child's behavioral treatment plan, the Spectrum Services' staff can provide behavioral feedback regarding school functioning.

12. Center for Spectrum Services in Kingston has a medical consultant, Dr. Monica Meyer, who consults to our classes two mornings a month. We are fortunate to have the expertise of this experienced Developmental Pediatrician for child specific program planning.

ABSENCES: Only healthy children should be in school. Parents are requested to take the child's temperature in the morning before transporting them to school. You must keep your child home if he/she has a temperature over 100.0 (without the use of fever-reducing medication), vomiting, runny/pink eye, bad cold symptoms, diarrhea, head lice or any other contagious condition. Call the bus company so they will not come and pick up your child. DO NOT GIVE YOUR CHILD FEVER REDUCING MEDICATION BEFORE SCHOOL, we need to be able to assess symptoms such as a fever.

General Health Policies for Student Attendance

As of 8/31/22

I wanted to provide you with information regarding our opening of school and COVID protocols. Please know this information is based on current conditions in our community and the recommendations from the various groups who advise school districts.

As health experts expect another surge this autumn, here's what families should know about the changes in COVID-19 protocols during the third school year under the pandemic.

Are students required to be vaccinated for COVID-19?

There is no current system-wide requirement for students to be vaccinated against COVID-19. However, COVID-19 vaccination helps protect eligible people from getting severely ill with COVID. All individuals 6 months of age and older are eligible and encouraged to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

My child has symptoms of COVID-19. What now?

Students or staff with symptoms of respiratory or gastrointestinal infections, such as cough, fever (100.0 or greater), sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea who display symptoms are asked to stay home and take a COVID-19 test.

If any of these symptoms occur at school, you will be contacted to pick up your child immediately.

In both cases, individuals with symptoms will be required to have a negative test result or complete a 5-day isolation protocol before they can return to school.

Additional information can be found in the *Parent Handbook* that will be sent home within the first couple of weeks of school.

My child tested positive. How long do they need to isolate at home? How long do they need to wear a mask?

If they test positive, your child will need to isolate and stay home for five days. They can return to school on Day 6 if they are not experiencing symptoms or if their symptoms are improving, which mirrors the CDC's policy on isolation.

They will be encouraged to wear a mask at school as tolerated until Day 10 after symptom onset or the positive test, whichever is earlier.

Note: After having ended isolation, if COVID-19 symptoms recur or worsen, restart isolation at day 0. Day 0 of isolation is the day of symptom onset. Staff and student's parents/guardians are advised to talk to a healthcare provider about their symptoms or when to end isolation.

My child was exposed at school, or outside of school to someone who tested positive for COVID-19. Do they need to quarantine?

No. Quarantine is no longer recommended for people who are exposed to COVID-19. In schools, staff and students who were exposed should follow CDC recommendation to wear a well-fitting mask as tolerated, and get tested.

Students can still attend school after an exposure, though the CDC advises students and staff to stay home should symptoms appear. You should monitor your child for fever and other COVID-19 symptoms for 10 days after first exposure. Your child should get tested.

OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Students with the symptoms of conjunctivitis must be seen by their physician and may return to school 72 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment

If head lice are present on a child, parents will be contacted and the child must go home. He/she may return to school following treatment with a note from the parent documenting the brand of shampoo treatment and the date that it was used. The school nurse will monitor the child for the next week to determine if the child has been re-infested.

You will be informed of any contagious diseases your child may have been exposed to in school or on the bus. Your cooperation in not sending children back to school until they are no longer contagious helps maintain the health of all students and staff. Please contact our school nurse as soon as you know that your child has been diagnosed with any of the following communicable diseases:

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Fifth's disease | Cytomegalovirus | Chickenpox |
| Measles | Mumps | Rubella |
| Cryptosporidiosis | Head Lice | Impetigo |
| H. Flu Meningitis | Conjunctivitis | Pinworm |
| Ringworm | Roseola | Scabies |
| Scarlet Fever | Shingles | Strep Throat |
| Herpes Simplex 1 | Pertusis (whooping cough) | Covid-19 |
| Hand, Foot, and Mouth disease (Coxsackie virus) | | |

After receiving a diagnosis of one of the above communicable diseases, your child will need a note from his/her physician indicating the date that it is permissible to return to school.

Any time your child is seen in a hospital emergency room, has been admitted, is absent for 3 or more days due to illness or has any injury requiring medical intervention, a note is also required from the doctor. This note must indicate that the child is able to return to school and any applicable medically indicated restrictions or limitations resulting from the illness or injury.

PHYSICALS, PRESCRIPTIONS FOR SERVICES & IMMUNIZATIONS: We are required to have a copy of a recent well child physical prior to admission. Each child is required to have a physical examination before entering Preschool, Kindergarten, First, Third, Fifth, Seventh, Ninth and Eleventh grade.

If your child requires Occupational or Physical Therapy, Skilled Nursing Services, Psychological Counseling, or Speech and Language Therapy, we must have a doctor's signature and stamp showing consent on the Spectrum school form "Physician Recommendation for Health Related Services" at the beginning of each IEP period. THESE SERVICES CANNOT BE DELIVERED TO STUDENTS WITHOUT A CURRENT ACCURATE PRESCRIPTION.

All immunizations must be current and recorded by your doctor. **YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL IF IMMUNIZATIONS ARE NOT UP TO DATE.**

According to NY state law, in order for your child to attend school, he/she will need to have proof of all required immunizations or a letter from the health care provider stating the scheduled date of the missing immunizations, regardless of whether school is in person or remote. After 14 calendar days from the first day of classes, if requirements are not met, your child will not be permitted to attend until the missing immunizations have been administered. If your child does not have the required immunizations for his age, you and your doctor will be asked to sign a form stating when these will be given.

Religious exemptions are not accepted in New York State. Medical exemptions must indicate the specific vaccine, contraindication information and the date the exemption ends. It must be reviewed annually by the physician.

Due to the special population served by our agency, we are asking parents to discuss the need to have a Hepatitis Screening and Lead Screening with their primary care practitioner.

EXCLUSION POLICY: If your child has been hospitalized for a serious illness or non-routine surgical procedure, before returning to school we will need the following:

- *Full discharge summary, including current medications (prescribed and P.R.N.)
- *Activity restrictions/limitations
- *Physical therapy/Occupational therapy/Speech therapy protocols as appropriate
- *Expected outcomes
- *Dates for expected follow-up medical evaluations

SPECIAL MEDICAL NEEDS: If your child has any special medical needs such as a seizure disorder, or environmental allergies, we will ask you to keep us updated on symptoms and circumstances and work closely with you and your child's doctor to review which school activities may need to be modified or monitored for appropriateness. A doctor's letter stating whether your child can safely participate in particular school activities may be requested. You may be asked to sign some additional permission forms and or do some record keeping of home-based health needs to assist us in keeping your child safe. Please refer to the section on Specialized Diets for more information on dietary needs.

OSHA REGULATIONS: Both home and center based staff are required to comply with all health, safety, and sanitation guidelines as defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) regulations including infection control procedures and universal precautions.

CHILD SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

We are always concerned about your child's safety, and welcome any suggestion you have to improve the safety of our students and staff. To help avoid any possible accidents, please cooperate with us remembering the following:

1. FOLLOW ALL GUIDELINES IN HEALTH SECTION

2. Do not send the following items to school: unwrapped medicine, knives, matches, lighters, glass jars, weapon toys (knives, toy guns, etc.) or any toys with sharp edges or rusty broken parts.

3. Like all schools in New York State, possession of any weapon on school property or during school events is prohibited.

4. The Spectrum Services staff are, like educators in every other school, mandated reporters. This means we are required by Social Service law to report any suspicions of child abuse, maltreatment or neglect to the proper authorities (i.e., Child Abuse Hotline, Child Protective Services, or the police) or be guilty of a class A misdemeanor. More information on the Center for Spectrum Services' mandated reporter responsibilities are available upon request.

5. To maintain your child's safety at school, our staff will closely supervise children at all times. All visitors to Center for Spectrum Services, including parents, must sign in and out at the front desk, are issued a visitor's pass, and are accompanied through the building by staff. Children will only be released under safe circumstances. The transporter must have parental consent and show identification. We are required to consider the legal guardian as the primary responsible adult. We cannot release the child to a non-custodial parent without written consent from the legal guardian. If legal custody is not established, either parent has the right to pick the child up from school.

6. Do not dress your child in restrictive clothing, clothing with drawstrings or with loose parts (i.e., jewelry) that could catch on things, be swallowed or possibly injure your child. Sneakers are recommended.

7. Do not allow your child to bring in toys, computerized games or other possessions from home without the express permission of your child's teacher. Spectrum Services school cannot assume responsibility for replacing or repairing lost or broken items. Toys, weapons and games with violent themes are prohibited, as are music recordings or written material with adult themes.

8. Due to the fact that many of our students are heat and sun sensitive because of seizure activity and/or medications, students will need to remain indoors if the heat index is 90 degrees or above, as per the Weather Channel website. This will be monitored by the school nurse, and an announcement will be made if students are to remain indoors.

9. Center for Spectrum Services is a smoke-free environment. Smoking and vaping are prohibited

- In the school building at all times.
- On school property (including private vehicles) at all times whether or not school is in session.
- During any school function on or off grounds where students are present.
- In agency vehicles.
- In private vehicles when transporting students.

10. Center for Spectrum Services has regular meetings to review building status and policy for safety concerns. School safety plan has been developed following Federal and State security guidelines.

SCHOOL SECURITY SYSTEM: All doors to the building remain locked at all times. All visitors must enter and exit through the front door and buzz the receptionist when the door is locked. Video surveillance allows us to maintain an overview of who is entering and exiting the building. Door alarms let us know of unauthorized exits.

PESTICIDE NEIGHBOR NOTIFICATION LAW: New York State Education Law requires all schools to provide written notification to all parents regarding the potential use of pesticides periodically throughout the school year.

We will keep a list of all Spectrum Services caregivers who want to receive 48 hour prior notification of pesticide applications. To be on this list and also receive a list of pesticides not subject to prior notification, please fill out the form in the back of this manual and send it to the school.

MEDICAID: As many of our school districts and counties bill Medicaid, all our related service staff must comply with regulations from The Office of the Medicaid Inspector General (OMIG) Families are encouraged to contact our Spectrum Services Medicaid Compliance Officer (845-336-2616 ext 120) or the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General at (518) 473-3782 with any concerns about service provision. Spectrum Services maintains a commitment to service delivery and quality improvement.

ELOPEMENT POLICY/PROCEDURES: Student safety is our upmost priority. Our educational practices are designed to minimize opportunities for student elopement. Classroom doors are closed whenever possible. Throughout the school day, students receive appropriate level supervision from trained staff. Classroom instruction emphasizes compliance training and student engagement with high rates of reinforcement. In conjunction with local law enforcement, Spectrum Services has developed a written procedure should a student be found missing during the school day. This procedure includes immediate notification to parents and contact with local police. In addition, parents are asked to complete an Emergency Alert Form to keep at home and send to school which would be shared with first responders. Elopement drills are conducted to ensure program readiness should the need arise.

TRACKING DEVICES: Some parents choose to use a GPS activated tracking device to determine their child's location in the event of an emergency. Some of these devices come with a "listen in" capability. Due to privacy of our students and HIPPA guidance, this "listen in" function may not be used during school hours unless there was an emergency event.

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES: Due to increasing incidents of violence in schools around the country, lockdown procedures are in place and drills are practiced several times annually. A lockdown is used to secure the buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence in or around the school. Our exterior and some interior doors will automatically lock once the alarm is activated. Students and staff immediately shelter in place, secure the room door and windows, create interior barricades and remain in place until law enforcement release them. These practices support our strong commitment to the safety of our students and comply with best practice guidelines and input from our local police.

FIRE DRILLS: These drills are practiced on a routine basis, following the frequency required by New York State Education Department.



CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

STAFF AND MANAGEMENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

A Code of Conduct and Ethics applies to all staff, management, directors and agents of Center for Spectrum Services. All programmatic and business affairs are conducted with integrity based on these sound ethical standards.

All employees are expected to maintain the highest level of professionalism, integrity, collaboration and competence and to apply their professional knowledge to promote student success. Maintaining confidentiality is of the highest importance. Our staff, volunteers and Board Members are expected to respect the inherent dignity and worth of their students, students' families and their colleagues.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The student body attending the Center for Spectrum Services self-contained day programs is comprised of a diverse group of children with educational needs ranging from moderate to significant who may be classified as autistic, multiply disabled, emotionally disturbed, or a preschooler with a disability. It is the right of our students to receive an appropriate individualized education in accordance with each Individual Educational Plan in a safe, orderly school environment that is structured for success.

Suspension of a student may occur on rare occasions for issues related to weapons, drugs and serious bodily injuries. In those circumstances, the suspension could occur for up to 10 consecutive school days. Whenever a Spectrum Services educational placement is no longer considered appropriate, the parent, the School District and/or County will be notified and a change of placement may be recommended.

DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS:

Center for Spectrum Services is committed to providing all students with a safe school environment in which all students are treated with dignity and respect. Harassment and bullying of students is against Federal and State law. Bullying or harassment of students by staff, volunteers or other students are not tolerated under any circumstances. This policy is in effect while students are on Spectrum Services property, in school-operated vehicles, engaging in agency-sponsored activities, and while away from agency property if misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the agency.

Harassment and bullying may include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors and circumstances:

- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature
- Implied or explicit threats concerning academic performance, achievement, property, etc.
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities
- Unreasonable interference with a student's performance

Harassment and bullying means any electronic, written, verbal or physical act or conduct toward a student based on any of the following or actual perceived traits or characteristics, including but not limited to age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical attributes, physical or mental ability, socioeconomic status or familial status.

All reported concerns will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. If, after an investigation, an individual is found to be in violation of this policy, appropriate therapeutic or disciplinary action will be taken.

PARENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a day program for students with disabilities, Center for Spectrum Services recognizes the importance of involvement of our students' caregivers in their children's educational program. It is expected that our parents will participate in a trusting, cooperative relationship with the Spectrum Services staff. Home to school communication greatly enhances our understanding of a student's current status, strengths and needs. It is the expectation that our students will attend school punctually every day unless they are excused.

As regular attendance is important for a child to benefit from their educational program, it is expected that parents will ensure that their children attend school regularly, on time and ready to participate and learn. School personnel need to be informed of changes in the home situation or health of the child that may affect school performance including changes in phone number, address or emergency contacts.

THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS is shared on our website in the parent section.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM

At Center for Spectrum Services, we believe that one of the most important ways in which we can help our children perform better in their classrooms is to provide them with the nutrition necessary for the healthy growth of their minds and bodies.



Our school nutrition program can provide breakfast and lunch daily to children in attendance. A menu will be sent to you each month. This program is free of charge during this school year. If you choose not to participate in the school program or if your child does not enjoy a specific meal, please send lunch in with your child. When there is a ½ day of program, a healthy snack will be provided prior to dismissal.

Lunch is an important component of our instructional program. Students remain in their classrooms and staffing remains the same. Students receive a therapeutic meal program mid-day focusing on feeding skills, communication, social and self-help areas and expanding food choices. **Breakfast** is offered at parent request. If recommended for educational reasons, breakfast may become a second therapeutic meal program. However, whenever possible, we encourage parents to provide breakfast at home. This allows us to begin the educational program as soon as the child arrives.

For children not participating in our school nutrition program, we ask parents to send a healthy lunch each day. We know it's not easy to think of foods your child will eat that are convenient to buy, prepare, and pack, but we have lots of suggestions! Nutritious foods and drinks that kids often enjoy (carrot sticks, celery sticks, apples, bananas, and other fruits, yogurt, sandwiches, popcorn, cheese and crackers, raisins, soup, muffins, milk, 100% fruit juices) along with many others you may think of! If it's easier for you to send in a large can of juice, we can put it in our refrigerator until your child uses it up.

New York State Health Department does not permit us to heat up children's food in the classroom. Please send heated food in a good quality thermal container.

Please send in snacks and edible reinforcers for your child. This is a very helpful tool to encourage your child's participation in the programming.

SPECIAL DIETS: We will make special accommodations to a child's meal program **if required for medical purposes**. Please notify the school of any allergies or medical concerns regarding the child's diet. Parents and physicians must complete a specialized dietary form which is reviewed annually. We cannot make substitutions due to a child's preferences of food. **We are not permitted to heat foods in the classrooms.** For children on restricted diets, we require parents send in appropriate snacks which can be used as reinforcers or for special activities.

1. Parents are requested to send food in from home, including snacks, drinks and reinforcers.
2. If parents choose the school lunch and if our menu for that day is medically appropriate, it will be served as is. Cheese or sun butter sandwiches can be available as an alternative if appropriate for an individual child.
3. If the menu is not medically appropriate, our cook will automatically substitute part of the meal with a similar, but medically approved alternative. For example, if the child is on a wheat free diet and pasta is being served, then wheat free pasta could be substituted. If a similar substitute is not available, then our cook will serve an alternative food such as chicken, or a cheese sandwich on wheat free bread.
4. **We cannot heat food in the classrooms.** We are only able to heat food in the school's main kitchen and only if medically indicated to do so by the physician because it is a required medical necessity. If you plan to send your child to school with hot lunch please do so in an insulated thermos.

EDUCATIONAL INSTRUCTION

Each student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which is developed to meet their specific learning needs. We use a variety of research based educational techniques. As new and innovative methods are discovered and developed, our approaches continue to expand to incorporate the most effective, research-based strategies. A variety of instructional materials including standard curricula and teacher-made materials may be used in instructing your child. Depending on your child's age and educational profile, specific teaching strategies, techniques and materials are selected on an individual basis and will be assessed and changed as appropriate. Some of the specific strategies that may be used are described below:



COMMUNICATION INSTRUCTION: Center for Spectrum Services uses verbal and augmentative communication techniques with children showing language delays. Augmentative communication methods such as communication devices, sign language, picture exchange communication and other visual communication systems provide another way for students to show us what they know and share their thoughts and feelings. We continue to work on verbal behavior development while offering students an opportunity to sign or point to objects, letters, and words independently or with support. We find that for many of our students, oral language development is enhanced when additional communication options such as these are offered. If recommended on the I.E.P., we can evaluate your child for assistive technology use. iPads are available for student use during speech and language therapy and in our classrooms and may be loaned to students for home use if the device is required for communication purposes.

STRUCTURED, ROUTINE ACTIVITIES: Teachers will incorporate predictable, structured activities into the child's day to enhance their ability to attend, learn, and gain independence. Students should have the opportunity to practice their new skills in naturally occurring situations and environments as often as possible. We encourage our families to incorporate a similar structure in the home environment whenever possible.

FUNCTIONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT: Teaching functional skills in the context of where they will be used is a necessary approach to building skills. Individual teaching is valuable when there is a direct link between the skill being taught and its functional use. We encourage our parents to let us know if there are adaptive living skills they would like us to focus on.

APPLIED BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS: A science of behavioral principles, ABA instruction is individualized in all our classrooms. Attention is carefully given to stimulus control, task presentation, and reinforcement for student responses. Skills may be broken down in small components and taught sequentially. Discrete drills may be used to build students' skills. Data is collected to measure student learning and aid in new task selection. For some students there is a special emphasis on developing verbal skills through the techniques of Verbal Behavior instruction.

VERBAL BEHAVIOR: Especially designed for early learners, Verbal Behavior employs the techniques of Applied Behavior Analysis. We will periodically evaluate students for whom these strategies are selected using an assessment called the VB-MAPP (Verbal Behavior – Milestones Assessment and Placement Program).

The first steps of instruction using Verbal Behavior is for your child's teachers and therapists to build rapport with your child in a process called "pairing with the reinforcement". We will ask your help us do this by learning exactly what your child likes through your regular feedback and a Reinforcer Assessment that we will send home annually. The ultimate goal of successful pairing is for the child to want to be with the teacher.

To help your child attend to the teacher we try to "sanitize the environment." This means putting all the toys and other reinforcers away and out of reach so the child must request preferred items from the teacher. It is also important for the teacher to choose instructional opportunities when the child is most motivated and make teaching as fun as possible.

Helping early learners acquire functional communication is an important goal with this approach. Using the terminology of Verbal Behavior, the functional units of student's behavior are called *mands* or requests, *tacts* or labeling an item, *intraverbals* or answering questions and filling in the blanks, and *echoics*: repeating something already heard.

In addition to discrete trial instruction, verbal behavior teaching often occurs in the natural environment. Natural environment teaching, (called the NET), is more loosely structured, and occurs using a student's motivation and activities instead of exclusively teacher-selected set of materials as the basis for the lesson.

T.E.A.C.C.H.: Many of our classes employ strategies of the T.E.A.C.C.H. program (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication Handicapped Children). These methods include visual schedules, visually cued instruction, a highly structured classroom, and emphasize building independence with skills which students will need in their adult lives.

SOCIAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT: Systematic instruction will occur for various specific social skills, with generalization promoted in the classroom and home settings. Developmentally appropriate strategies, individualized to assist each student in developing improved social and emotional understanding, will be implemented to promote the development of appropriate relationships with family, staff, and peers. Proactive social communication skills are promoted across settings and in all areas of instruction.

SENSORY PROCESSING STRATEGIES: Sensory experiences that provide therapeutic and organizing input are incorporated throughout the day to address not only motoric development but to facilitate improved self-regulation, attention span, body awareness and motor planning skills. By emphasizing vestibular input (balance/equilibrium) as well as proprioception (orienting information that is sent from the joints and muscles to the brain) and touch input; the students are supported in achieving an improved state of awareness as a solid foundation for the academic and social skills. These strategies are used proactively throughout the day, so that students can receive the sensory input that their nervous systems require.

FOOD EXPLORATION: Eating a healthy, whole-foods diet has positive benefits across the lifespan. Many of our students on the autism spectrum have a lot of resistive behaviors around food. The reasons are many: fear, unfamiliarity, rigidity, limited exploratory oral play as babies, as well as taste, texture and other sensory issues. For this reason, the Center for Spectrum Services classrooms create safe and gentle ways for our students to increase their comfort levels around common everyday foods. We incorporate a variety of foods during simple and enjoyable activities to help our students explore the textures, smells, and tastes of wholesome food. We want them to have good feelings about the food we introduce and to tolerate its presence. Our goal is to create a fun and safe space where they will eat those foods when *they* feel ready.

GROSS MOTOR DEVELOPMENT: Our goal is to provide opportunities for student to engage in activities which improve gross motor abilities. Activities may focus on strength and endurance including running climbing, or riding bicycles; or focus on balance and coordination for instance climbing, ball play with feet or hand, and the use of mobile equipment in varying positions. It is important for growth and development that our students not only experience these activities but that they, through repetition, become comfortable with them in a functional capacity.

STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT: New York State requires all students' progress to be evaluated at specific times during their school enrollment. If students are not participating in the Statewide Testing Program, they are required to participate in the New York State Alternate Assessment.

For students who are qualified, Spectrum Services will administer statewide testing with appropriate modifications. Students with greater needs will receive Alternate Assessment. This is a computer based assessment given by the student's teacher.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT:

At Spectrum Services, social and emotional development is considered an important area of instruction. Teaching children to pay attention, follow directions, and get along with others is an important part of each child's school day. As part of their educational program, students will be taught relationship building and social skills to help them succeed in their communities and interact appropriately with others. We ask for your help to complete a Reinforcer Survey which lets us know what food, toys and activities motivate your child at home. Teachers will reinforce your child's positive behavior with lots of encouragement and individual motivational systems. These techniques are used to teach new skills and change an undesirable behavior. Proactive strategies, positive programming, choice making, reinforcement, and other methods are used to increase communication and teach new and alternative skills. Parents may be asked to assist in supplying special sensory, play, or edible reinforcers that will encourage your child's optimal learning potential.



Our educational team will put a special program together for one child or a whole class to help foster positive behaviors and skills. These behavioral programs can be adapted or developed for home use, as well. Behavioral programs are individualized for your child and will be reviewed with families. Parent consent is obtained to collect data, and before plans are used with students. Data is maintained and monitored on an ongoing basis to determine effectiveness of each behavioral program. School districts will be given copies of all behavioral programs used by your child. Feeding programs may also be developed with parent input and consent.

Our behavioral programs consider each child's strengths, interests, and long-term goals, positive prevention strategies, and the teaching of alternative skills. We analyze each student's behaviors to understand how we can alter teaching strategies, the physical environment and reinforcers. Your child's team may determine that a functional Behavioral Analysis (FBA) is necessary. If this is the case, you will be contacted to obtain your permission. If a behavioral consequence is indicated, our staff may use a variety of interventions which may include planned ignoring, wait strategy, "time-out" in a quiet chair in the classroom or in a quiet room with supervision. This may help the child regain control. If necessary a child may be held to prevent them from hurting themselves or others. All Spectrum Services staff are trained yearly in safe intervention procedures using a nationally recognized behavior management program. Use of the quiet room or behavior plan may be included on your child's I.E.P. We do not use aversive interventions to address challenging behaviors. A handout on timeout policies is available to parents whose child's behavior plan includes a timeout as a strategy.

If the team who works with your child feels that the approved behavior plan is not providing the necessary structure your child needs to learn, we may ask you to give us consent to perform an extinction procedure with your child. Extinction is a research-based verbal behavior strategy where we attempt to eliminate an interfering behavior by not responding to it. Your child's team will explain the particulars of this method if it has been recommended for your child.

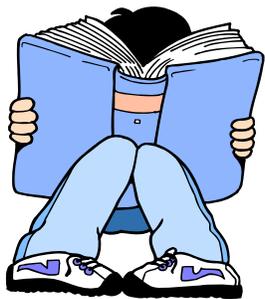
If a student shows discipline problems which are severe and persistent, and which interfere with educational programming, or student and staff well being, a team will meet to decide how to maintain a safe environment and improve the student's ability to function. This decision making process may include parents, medical practitioners, and/or school district staff. A CSE meeting may be requested to review the continued appropriateness of the current Spectrum Services placement.

We wish to work closely with parents so that your child can learn to express his/her desires and needs in productive and positive ways. If you would like additional information on our behavior management techniques, please call your family service coordinator.

1:1 AIDES: 1:1 aides are assigned to a child when required by the IEP. The staff members in the classroom will rotate this responsibility to promote generalization. The aide can be used to ensure safety, monitor medical needs, and promote educational opportunities. Our teams will also teach the student skills enabling them to have greater

level of independence and will provide opportunities to generalize skills to small group situations, therefore reducing the child's dependence on the aide. The use of the 1:1 aide will be reviewed on a regular basis.

RESEARCH PERMISSION: Parents may be asked to sign informed consent forms if your child participates in a program where data or videos are used for research or validation.



STUDENTS' PLACEMENTS: Your child's educational team is likely to change from year to year. Our students are grouped in a classroom in consideration of a number of factors including age, social, communication, behavioral, personal, and physical needs. Each team includes the entire classroom staff as well as the related service staff serving students in the classroom. As you may guess, developing and balancing the team as well as the classes is quite challenging due to the many factors we must consider. We also try to minimize the number of teams

each staff person participates on so that communication and collaboration between staff will be maximized for the students' benefit.

As an agency, our goal is to provide quality services to all of our students and a satisfying work environment for all our staff. To meet this goal, we must make programming decisions that maximize the functioning of all the classes and each of their students. We are strongly committed to the team process because we know its effectiveness. As a team, we can work collaboratively to meet the diverse needs of our students. As a team, we know the dynamics of the classroom as well as the dynamics of integrating our therapeutic techniques throughout the entire school day. As a team, we coordinate our schedules to ensure that the students get the maximum contact with our related services staff.

Although your child's class and team members will change periodically, each class employs similar classroom structure, schedules, teaching techniques, behavioral expectations, and record keeping.

Classroom coordinators are "hands on" supervisors of each class team working hard to maintain instructional quality. This school wide structure contributes to a smooth transition between team members and classes and greatly assists in creating a positive, productive year for students and staff alike.

Due to the complexities of our decision making in the assignment of staff and placement of students, it is not possible for us to respond to parent's requests for specific classes, teachers or therapists. We do recognize and respect the strong bonds that our parents and students form with individual staff members. However, as an agency, we strongly believe that our emphasis must be on maximizing school wide collaboration to ensure that each team member and every student has the most productive year possible.



A TYPICAL SCHOOL DAY AT CSS

Your child's day will be filled with many experiences to learn and grow. Although each classroom has a different schedule, your child's day will probably include:

INDIVIDUAL AND SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION - This is a chance for your child to build social and academic skills. Please let us know if there is anything special you would like your child to learn, we can discuss the appropriateness of new goals and objectives during parent-teacher conferences. Every child at Spectrum Services has an individual program designed especially for their needs. We emphasize, whenever possible, the use of real situations and life skill instruction to help students develop mastery and generalize abilities.



SPEECH THERAPY, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, PHYSICAL THERAPY, PLAY THERAPY, AND/OR COUNSELING For children who show a need for extra help with language, social emotional development, sensory integration, or self-help and fine motor skills, certified staff provide training in these areas. These services are specified on your child's Individual Educational Plan.

CLASSROOM GROUPS - Your child and his/her classmates will be involved in social and instructional groups on a daily basis. Circle activities such as song, dance, movement, art, and cooking are all integrated into classroom planning.

OUTSIDE PLAY - We have specially designed playgrounds and an assortment of riding toys. Outdoor walks give children a chance to appreciate and learn from the world around them. Students will be given teacher support to develop appropriate play skills, social interaction, and leisure activities.

ADAPTIVE PHYSICAL EDUCATION - These activities are designed to improve motor skills, balance, coordination as well as cooperative play. These lessons are required by New York State Education for school age students. A doctor's note will be needed to excuse school age children from their physical education classes.

COMMUNITY TRIPS – At times, we may go on special trips into the community, for fieldtrips or other educational activities. We feel it is important for our students to be aware of the world around them and learn appropriate behavior in a community context. Your financial assistance may be requested to help pay for admission to parks or programs.

TECHNOLOGY - Center for Spectrum Services has computers available for student use in each classroom, iPads in many classrooms and in speech and occupational therapy. Smart Boards, special software and touch windows have been selected to best address the special needs and learning styles of our students. A computer coordinator is available to help classroom staff individualize their computer use.



PARENT PARTICIPATION

We like to think of programs at Spectrum Services as a family affair. We believe that the best outcomes for children happen when parents and professionals work as partners with mutual respect and shared decision making. As parents, you have a bond with your child, and you are the true authorities with information to contribute that no one else has access to. You are the ones who will be actively involved throughout your child's life. Our educators and therapists, by virtue of their training, education, and expertise will provide a broad perspective about educational and treatment methodology and then individualize it for each child. Therefore, each of us only has partial knowledge. Complete expertise is only possible when we develop a parent-professional partnership, valuing the input of both. We know that collaboration between the home and the school will enhance the life skills of your child. Here are just some of the ways we can work together.

1. **CONTACT WITH FAMILY SERVICE COORDINATOR:** The family service coordinator is the liaison between home and school and is available to help the home and school work together, share information regarding behavior management, arrange classroom visits, provide referral information to other agencies for needed services, and to help you in many other ways. The family service coordinator will be contacting you as needed throughout your child's stay at Spectrum Services school. If you have questions or desire more information on any aspects of your child's educational program, please contact your family service coordinator. Keep your family service coordinator's extension accessible. Voice mail messages will be promptly returned. Your family service coordinator can relay information to your child's teacher or arrange conferences with educational staff.

2. **PARENT COUNSELING AND TRAINING:** This service may be included on your child's IEP and can include many aspects of our work together. Please talk to your family service coordinator about your own needs and goals and how the Spectrum school can provide support and how your input can be used to enhance your child's program.

3. COMMUNICATING WITH THE SCHOOL: 1. **Report absences (or late arrival) by calling 845-647-6464** as early as possible – state child's full name, classroom, and reason for the absence. You can also report an absence online. To access the online Student Absentee Form, on your browser type in <https://tinyurl.com/m9m2jn5x> You can also access it from our website by clicking the Parent Info tab, and it's the first link in the right-hand navigation bar.

2. Your Family Service Coordinator is your primary link to the school. Their name and phone number is on the cover of this book. Please communicate any areas of concern, questions, or information about home life. Your coordinator can address these concerns, relay important information to the classroom team, and support you with community resources. Your coordinator will also be reaching out to you on a regular basis to share any new school related information.

3. Your child's classroom teacher or therapists will be sending you email updates on a regular basis. HOWEVER, they will not be able to read or respond to emails when children are in attendance. Therefore be sure to include **your Family Service Coordinator and your child's Program Coordinator** in all classroom email communication so that we can respond in a timelier manner and maintain an overview of your child's pertinent information. We will also be sure to share this information with your child's therapist or the school nurse as is appropriate. For some parents, we can easily use a hand written notebook (Homebook) instead of email for this communication. This can travel to/from school on a daily basis. Staff are not expected to respond to emails when school is closed.

4. School Messenger is an automated message service which will be sent to you via text, email or voice (depending on how you have asked us to set it up). This will have general information about the school, emergency closing information, a school newsletter, and reminders about schedules. School Messenger will also send you the reminder for your weekly Health Screenings.

4. **PHONE CALLS:** We will be calling you periodically, as needed so that we can keep in touch with you about your child's program. To limit disruptions during class time, your calls will be forwarded to your family service coordinator who will relay important information to the classrooms. We do not put phone calls directly through to the classroom so that the staff may dedicate 100% of their time to teaching the students.

If the family service coordinator is not available, please leave a voice mail message so your call can be returned as soon as possible. If we cannot speak to you at that time, we will be sure to return your call promptly. If a call cannot wait, please ask to speak to program coordinator.

5. **PROGRESS REPORTS:** Four times yearly you will be sent a written update on your child's progress in meeting individualized education plan goals and objectives. These progress reports will form the basis of the annual review reporting at your child's CPSE or CSE meeting. We will also share progress information at fall parent conferences.

6. **MEETING WITH SPECTRUM SERVICES STAFF:** Parent-teacher conferences maybe scheduled beginning each Fall during a day when school is closed specifically for this purpose. Conferences can be scheduled through the school year, as needed. Informal meetings can occur after classroom visits or at parental request. You will have opportunities to speak with your child's classroom teacher or speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, counselor, family service coordinator and/or administrator during remote sessions.

7. **VIDEOS:** On occasion we may wish to share a video recording of your child's program. This will be done through a secure on-line video method.



8. **CAREGIVER DISCUSSION GROUPS IN KINGSTON:** Each year Center for Spectrum Services has an on-going schedule of evening parent groups. All our parents and extended family members are encouraged to attend these support groups, and childcare is provided at no cost. These meetings provide the opportunity to share information and discuss important issues regarding educational programs, alternative therapies and treatments, community resources, current research and many other aspects of caring for and raising children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. We offer parents an opportunity to share mutual concerns and offer each other support. Free childcare is provided to our students, siblings and our alumni.

9. **SIBLING GROUPS IN KINGSTON:** Center for Spectrum Services offers groups for school age siblings of our students concurrent to evening caregiver groups. These groups provide an opportunity for the brothers and sisters of Spectrum Services students to learn about special needs and discuss their feelings with clinically trained staff. Childcare is provided free of charge for our students and their siblings during our evening parent groups.

10. **EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS:** Each year a series of educational workshops are offered to our students' caregivers. These trainings may be offered by experts from our faculty or from the community. Topic suggestions are welcome. Childcare is provided for our students and their siblings during evening workshops. Parents may also participate using their home computer and a free application called "Zoom".

11. **HOME VISITS** - On occasion, staff may ask to visit students' families in their homes to better understand your child's needs. Parents may also request a home visit to address specific concerns. By understanding each student's home setting we can provide more consistency in your child's day.

12. **COORDINATION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES:** If your child receives additional related services, is involved with another agency, or has regular respite care, our staff may request regular contact with these service providers to coordinate our efforts.

Center for Spectrum Services offers a range of programs and services to meet the needs of our students as outlined in the I.E.P. Since our center-based services are appropriate to each student's need, we cannot advocate for services that are in addition to the full time school-based program.

13. **COMMITTEE ON PRESCHOOL SPECIAL ED (CPSE)** (Ages 3-5)
COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION (CSE) (Ages 5-12):

These review meetings are scheduled at least one time each year by your School District or every six months by the Early Intervention Program for all children. These meetings are used to review your child's progress and to work with parents to determine the program and services the students will need the following year. You will be informed when these meetings are scheduled and encouraged to attend. We will be preparing progress reports on your child that will be shared at this time. You may also request a CSE or CPSE meeting at any time to address issues or concerns.



14. **PARENT FEEDBACK SURVEY**: We care about your opinions regarding our services. Periodically we may ask you to complete a survey on your child's progress and/or parent satisfaction to help us understand how well we address your child and family needs. The information you give us may be used in future planning.

15. **SPECTRUM SERVICES' WEBSITE**: Visit our website at centerforspectrumservices.org. The website includes advice from our expert staff, closings and delays, parent workshops, information on coming events and links to related sites. There is a special section for parents where you can download the calendar, lunch menus, forms and this handbook.



FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM: Center for Spectrum Services has both Facebook and Instagram pages that are updated regularly with school updates and photographs of agency events, student activities and staff news. We hope our parents will become fans, visit regularly, and share with family and friends. Due to confidentiality and professional guidelines, our staff are requested not to communicate with parents through Social Media.

16. **MONTHLY CALENDAR and PARENT NEWSLETTER**: This calendar will be sent home regularly with information about school closings and other items of interest. To save paper and with your consent, we would like to send this information by e-mail. It is also posted on our website monthly.

17. **SPECTRUM SERVICES NEWSLETTER**: Twice yearly, this newsletter is circulated widely to agencies, professionals and parents with information on Spectrum programs fundraising activities, spotlights on students, staff and community members.

18. **AUTISM LIBRARY**: Center for Spectrum Services in Kingston has a beautiful library containing a large collection of books, journals, and DVDs that may be borrowed by caregivers. These resources include many topics related to general information, curriculum, and support for families having a member on the autism spectrum. An easy to use software bibliography with descriptions of the resources is available on the library laptop. Searches may be made by topic, author or title. A hard copy of the bibliography is in the library. Materials must be signed out and returned within 30 calendar days.



19. **PARENT NIGHT OUT**: Parent Night Out is a grant-funded three hour, free respite program provided at Center for Spectrum Services. We can provide childcare for up to 30 of our students and their siblings at the school. Our program typically occurs on the second Friday of the month from 5:00 – 8:00 PM. Activities may include indoor or outdoor play time, arts and crafts, music, games, and other activities for the children. An intensive staff to student ratio is maintained. This program is provided at both the Kingston and Ellenville sites.

20. **MAINSTREAMING INTEGRATION & INCLUSION**: The following steps are considered the building blocks of successful integration.

- CSE reviews student's progress and decides the appropriateness of integration opportunities for Spectrum Services student.
- Information on student's needs is shared with school district staff who may be working with Spectrum Services student. School district staff are encouraged to observe the student in Spectrum Services placement.
- Involved Spectrum Services staff and parents visit school district setting options.
- Setting and activities for integration experience are selected by school district, Spectrum Services staff and parent. Goals and benchmarks for the individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) are written.
- Where appropriate one-to-one aide and/or other support staff are selected by school district and trained by Spectrum Services.
- Center for Spectrum Services makes presentations to school district staff on best strategies for integration planning and meeting the needs of Spectrum Services student with special needs.
- Transportation arrangements to the integrated setting are made by the school district.
- Once part-time integration experience begins, coordination meetings are scheduled as needed. The meetings may be facilitated by Center for Spectrum Services.
- Decisions to increase or modify the integration plan are made through collaborative decision-making involving Spectrum Services staff, district staff, and parents. When appropriate, the CES approves IEP changes.

Preparation for return to school district program: When a school age student's progress indicates a return to a school district program may be beneficial, every effort will be made to arrange regularly scheduled integration with the new class before the placement begins. Spectrum staff will work closely with your child's future teacher to make the transition between programs proceed successfully. Once a child begins a new class in another program, continued involvement with our expert staff may be arranged by the school district through contracts with Center for Spectrum Services.



22. CHANGES IN PROGRAM: At Center for Spectrum Services, we try, whenever possible, to address the individual needs of each child with a special regard to consistency of their staff and class. However, we also need to look at the programmatic needs of all the students in our program. In addressing this larger picture, there are times we may need to make changes in a child's class, teacher, therapists or family service coordinator. If and when a change occurs, the staff will work closely with the child and family to promote a smooth transition. If you have any concerns or questions about how these periodic changes may affect your child, please give us a call.

23. AGING OUT OF THE CENTER FOR SPECTRUM SERVICES: The Center for Spectrum Services in Kingston school program serves children until age 12 and in Ellenville until age 8. Program appropriateness is reviewed at least annually. Some students move on to alternative placements before they age out of our school program. If you plan to move out of your school district at any time, please promptly notify your family service coordinator.

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL EVENTS

As a non-for profit agency we depend on the assistance of family and community members through fundraising and events.

Fundraising opportunities and events are fun and a great way to meet other parents and socialize. Your participation is welcomed and encouraged.

Harvest Hop Dance in November – Autumn 2022

The Harvest Hop is a bountiful night of fun, frolic, and friends, as we celebrate the harvest season here in the Hudson Valley. Guests enjoy sumptuous fare, live music for dancing by The Phantoms, a silent and live auction, and more.

Request for Pesticide Application Notification **School Year 2022 - 2023**

If you wish to receive this notification, please complete this form and return it to Susan Buckler at Center for Spectrum Services. If you have any questions on this information, please contact Susan Buckler, Administrative Director.

Please print your information.

Child's name: _____

Child's class or teacher: _____

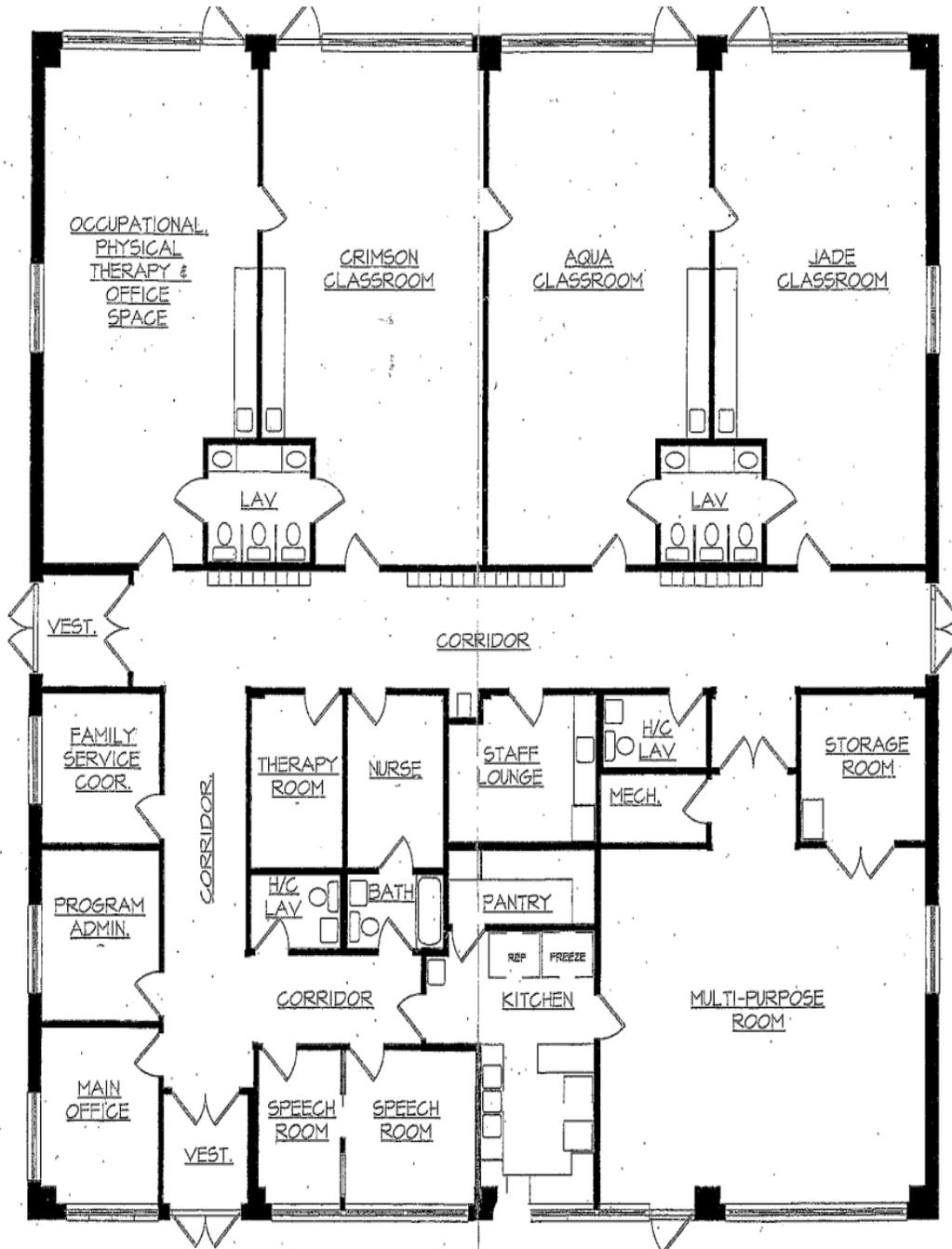
Your name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail address: _____

Day phone: _____ Evening phone: _____

Map of Ellenville Center for Spectrum Services



**CENTER FOR SPECTRUM SERVICES (CSS)
ALPHABET SOUP**

ES – Ellenville Site

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ABA | Applied Behavior Analysis |
| ABLBS | Assessment of Basic Language & Language Skills |
| AAC | Augmentative/Alternative Communications |
| ADI-R | Autism Diagnostic Interview (revised) |
| APE | Adaptive Physical Education |
| ASD | Autism Spectrum Disorder |
| BSSS | Behavioral Support Services Staff |
| COHORTS | Self contained group of staff and students |
| (C)OTA/L | (Certified) Occupational Therapy Assistant / Licensed |
| CFO | Chief Financial Officer |
| CPSE | Committee on Preschool Special Education |
| CSE | Committee on Special Education |
| DASA | The Dignity for All Students Act |
| DT | Discrete Trial |
| Echoic | Vocal imitation |
| ED | Emotional Disability |
| ED | Executive Director |
| EFL | Essential for Living |
| FBA | Functional Behavior Assessment |
| FSC | Family Service Coordinator |
| GOOGLE CLASSROOM | An education platform that allows teachers, parents and students to share teaching materials and information |
| HYBRID OR BLENDED MODELS | Combination of long distance and in-person instruction |
| IEP | Individual Education Plan |
| IFSP | Individual Family Service Plan |
| Intraverbal | Answering “wh” questions |
| LRE | Least Restrictive Environment |
| LTA | Lead Teaching Assistant |

KS – Kingston Site

| | |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mand | Request |
| MD | Multiple Disabilities |
| NET | Natural Environment Teaching |
| NYSAA | New York State Alternate Assessment |
| OSHA | Occupational Safety & Health Act |
| OPWDD | Office for People with Developmental Disabilities |
| OT (R) | Occupational Therapist |
| PD | Preschooler with a Disability |
| PS | Preschool (3-5 years) |
| PT | Physical Therapist |
| PTA | Physical Therapist Assistant |
| SA | School Age (5-15) |
| SED | State Education Department |
| SEIT | Special Education Itinerant Teacher |
| SI | Sensory Integration |
| SLP | Speech Language Pathologist |
| SPD | Sensory Processing Disorder |
| SYNCHRONOUS VS ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING | Real time teaching VS viewing something prerecorded or completing an assignment |
| TA | Teaching Assistant |
| Tact | Label |
| TD | Transdisciplinary Assessment |
| TEACCH | Treatment and Education of Autistic Children with Communication and Related Handicaps |
| TSSLD | Teacher of Students with Speech & Language Disabilities |
| VB | Verbal Behavior |
| VB-MAPP | Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program |
| ZOOM | Remote meeting platform |