



PARK RIDGE-NILES SCHOOL DISTRICT 64

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On April 13, 2020, the Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Student Services Department released an iMovie detailing a proposal for a new program called the Structure Learning Community program to the parents, staff and community. Additionally, a form was supplied to gather feedback from the viewers. The department wished to address several of the questions and concerns that were being posed and has developed a “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQ) document which begins below.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me for any other questions. Thank you!

FAQ on the Structured Learning Community Program

<i>Cost</i> What is the cost of this program?	It is difficult to put an exact cost to this program. Once students are identified for this program, their needs will drive the staffing allocation; we anticipate staffing to account for approximately 75% of the cost.
<i>Staff Allocation</i> How will staff be allocated? When will staff be notified if they are working in this program? Is one teacher and one TA enough?	Staff will be allocated based on student need. Factors that will be considered: student IEP minutes, team collaboration time, home communication, and classroom support. Related services will not likely be full time within the SLC classroom and will more than likely support other students. We will follow the normal procedure for transfer requests. At this time, we have had several staff express interest in being assigned to this program. Staff will be notified as soon as possible. At this time, one teacher will be enough as well as a minimum of one TA. There may be more TAs, but that will be determined based upon each student's

<p>What will collaboration look like amongst the staff members?</p>	<p>needs. The students who will potentially be in this program classroom may already have current TA support and in those situations the current TA may be considered to continue the support.</p> <p>Staff will be afforded time to collaborate as a team. The special education staff meet regularly. TAs will be included in collaboration based on their schedules. General education teachers will be given training to support students.</p>
<p><i>Programming</i></p> <p>What is a program classroom?</p> <p>Do other districts have this type of programming?</p> <p>How is this program different from the current instructional classroom model in D64 and how will the current plan stay the same?</p> <p>Why can't we have this classroom in each building?</p> <p>Did D64 have this program in the past? If so, why was it eliminated?</p> <p>What happens to these students after grade 3?</p>	<p>A program classroom services all students within the district that meet the entrance guidance regardless of their home school. Oftentimes this means that the program classroom is not offered in every building.</p> <p>Yes. Numerous local area school districts and cooperatives have similar types of programming. District 207, 62, and 63, for instance, offer different types of program classrooms.</p> <p>Currently and moving forward we will have resource and instructional level programming in each school. The Structured Learning Community program will be available at Washington School for students within the D64 community. The Structured Learning Community Program is much more specialized than the instructional program in curriculum, teaching techniques, and environment.</p> <p>We currently offer resource and instructional classrooms in each building. At this time, there are not enough students, within grade level groupings, to offer this classroom in more than one location.</p> <p>The district did have a comparable program called STRIVE that was eliminated approximately 9 years ago. Staff who previously serviced this program are unsure as to why it was discontinued, but they have expressed that it was a successful program for students.</p> <p>The Structured Learning Community program will grow upward as the students progress grade levels.</p>

<p>What about building a D64 program for students with emotional disabilities?</p> <p>Will this eliminate the need for outplacements?</p> <p>Does this program promote lower expectations for this group of students?</p> <p>What is the percentage of students this classroom will impact?</p> <p>What will specials look like?</p> <p>What age ranges will the students in the Structured Learning Community program engage with?</p> <p>What about other students who may benefit from some of the support, such as a “break room?”</p>	<p>The Structured Learning Community program will have tight grade level groupings. In the future, it is projected that there will be a K-2/3, a 3-5, and a 6-8 program.</p> <p>In order to build effective and quality programs, the district must have time to carefully plan each new program. Building a program for students with emotional disabilities is being considered.</p> <p>We hope that the Structured Learning Community program will support students returning and remaining in the district which should limit the need for outplacements. However, we will keep a continuum of services which includes outplacements.</p> <p>The Structured Learning Community program keeps and maintains the district's high standards for all students. This program does not alter expectations, but provides for different teaching techniques and environments for students to learn. Student achievement is individually monitored through their IEP. This program allows for staff to be trained and provide support so that students will be successful and achieve.</p> <p>The Structured Learning Community program will service less than 1% within its walls, but will make an impact on an entire community. This program will allow for supported inclusion so that all students have an opportunity to learn and grow from each other.</p> <p>Specials will be individualized based on student strengths and needs. In most student situations, there will be opportunities for inclusion.</p> <p>The students in the Structured Learning Community program will have specials with students in like grade levels.</p> <p>The break room will support all students within Washington. Supports that are specially designed for the Structured Learning Community program</p>
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<p>Will this program be an option for only Park Ridge students?</p> <p>What does specialized transportation look like?</p> <p>What happens when a parent disagrees with placement? How will it impact the student's services in home school? Does the Structured Learning Community program then get replicated at home school?</p>	<p>will be available to students based on IEP team recommendations.</p> <p>Yes, we will only serve D64 students.</p> <p>Specialized transportation is door to door. The accommodations and supports that are supplied while on the bus are determined by an IEP team. That may mean there are bus attendants.</p> <p>All placement decisions are made by an IEP team. In specific situations where a student already has an established home school, the parent will have the ability to decline the offer of the Structured Learning Community program. If a student does not have a previously established home school, then the IEP team, in coordination with the parent, will make the recommendation. At this time, the Structured Learning Community program will not be replicated outside of Washington.</p>
<p><i>Space</i></p> <p>Does Washington School have the space to house this program?</p>	<p>Yes, we have ensured there will be space at Washington School.</p>
<p><i>Placement</i></p> <p>How will placement be determined?</p> <p>Is K-3 corresponding to grade level?</p> <p>When will these discussions begin for potential students?</p> <p>What happens if we have more</p>	<p>Placement will be determined by an IEP team at an IEP meeting. Students who meet the entrance guidelines will be <i>considered</i> for the Structured Learning Community program. Entrance guidance is important to create as it assists in keeping the intent of the program and keeping it focused on those for whom this program was developed.</p> <p>K-3 is corresponding to grade level.</p> <p>Discussions will begin upon Board of Education approval for the Structured Learning Community program.</p> <p>The maximum capacity of the classroom will be 8</p>

<p>students who qualify than the program allows?</p> <p>What is the entrance criteria?</p> <p>What will an integration plan look like?</p> <p>Can a student be in the Structured Learning Community program because they need <i>some</i> of the support?</p> <p>Can parents volunteer in the Structured Learning Community program?</p>	<p>students. At this time, we are not anticipating more students to be recommended for this program.</p> <p>The district is not using “criteria” but “guidance” in determining appropriateness of the program. The student must have special education services. The student will have significant needs in the areas of academics, cognitive, social, adaptive functioning, emotional regulation, and/or communication needs. The IEP team will determine that the student needs will be best served in the Structured Learning Community program.</p> <p>An integration plan will be individualized based on student needs and abilities. Factors that will be determined in the plan: the level of inclusion, the amount of support the student needs to be successful in general education, and if the student will remain at Washington or if the student will return to their home school. In all circumstances an integration plan will be gradual to ensure student success as student independence is increased.</p> <p>Initially students who will be in the Structured Learning Community program will need a high level of staff support to be successful. The goal is that as a student achieves successful independence he/she will start their integration plan and their inclusion will increase so that he/she is only partially supported within the Structured Learning Community program walls for portions of their school day.</p> <p>Prior to offering parent volunteer opportunities, we would want to provide specific training to parents.</p>
<p><i>Future</i></p> <p>What is the expansion plan for the program?</p>	<p>The classroom will grow upward as the students progress through grade levels. The Structured Learning Community program will have tight grade level groupings. In the future, it is projected that there will be a K-2/3, a 3-5, and a 6-8 program. The timeline for opening additional grade levels, will depend upon students entering the program and when they move into the next grade level. Right</p>

	<p>now it is projected that the K-3 and future 3-5 program will remain at Washington School and the future 6-8 program will go to Lincoln. Establishing and maintaining consistent general education peer relationships is a component of this program.</p>
<p><i>Timeline</i></p> <p>Will this start in August even with the current state of remote learning?</p>	<p>Upon board approval, the process for opening the classroom in August 2020 will begin.</p>
<p><i>Siblings</i></p> <p>Can siblings transfer to Washington School when it is not their home school?</p>	<p>The district will use the procedure it has in place for parents to request a transfer of a student to a different district school. That being said, we do want to work with families to make Washington a home for the whole family if that is what's desired.</p>
<p><i>Alternative Options</i></p> <p>What alternative options have been explored? Who was involved in that process? Is the Structured Learning Community program the best option?</p>	<p>PT3 and the Special Education Advisory Group reviewed 4 options - our current instructional model, a modified instructional model, a cluster program model, and a full inclusion model. After consideration of all models, it was determined that the district would continue with its current instructional model and create a specialized program.</p>