The Role of the Special Education Department

- To promote educational equity and excellence for students with disabilities.
- To oversee the implementation of Federal and State laws and policy for students with disabilities.
- To work directly with parents and school district’s personnel to provide current information and high-quality professional development and technical assistance to improve results for students with disabilities.
- To ensure a system of due process, including special education mediation and impartial hearings upon parents’ request.
Increase Student Outcomes Through Multiple Pathways and A Data Informed Culture

- Executed all aspects of the Extended School Year (ESY) program, servicing ~150 students for 6 weeks, 7/3 - 8/11.
- Delivered tailored professional development for each Professional Learning Community: Special Education Teachers, Psychologists, Speech & Language Therapists, Nurses, Teaching Assistants & Aides. Few of the topics covered: FBA/BIP, Evaluations, Autism, CAP Dysfunctions, Trauma, Data Collection & Analysis, and The IEP is a Legal Document.
- Lead monthly meetings with the Medical Director & School Nurses to ensure students’ optimal health and wellbeing.
- Made infinite decisions via the CSE/CPSE & 504 Committees for eligibility, program and service determination based on quantitative and qualitative data from standardized assessments, anecdotals, medical documentation, social/emotional/behavioral rating scales, observations, FBAs, parent and teacher input.
- Analyzed CPSE data for the incoming K students, engaged in discourse to increase LRE opportunities and the district’s culture of inclusivity.
Improve Communication and Increase Community Engagement

- Instituted monthly Coffee/Tea Conversations for Parents.
- Maintained active and meaningful partnership with special education parents’ groups.
- Facilitated Parent University Sessions about topics related to services, processes, and rights protecting our exceptional students.
- Updated the annual bilingual CPSE to CPSE transition parent information sessions. These are forums to continue to increase parents’ knowledge about the function of the Committee on Special Education and their key role in it.
- Ensured that the student’s voice is captured in IEPs to serve as a foundation for their services and supports. Students over the age of 15 are invited and expected to actively participate in their CSE meetings.
- Followed an inclusive and productive discourse with district stakeholders via daily communication inclusive of:
  - Monthly Department meetings at all elementary schools
  - Quarterly Department meeting at the secondary schools
  - Consistent sub-committee and 504 chairperson meetings
  - Consistent meetings with central office and school administrators
Foster A Sense of Empathy, Community Connectedness, and Pride in Ram Nation

- Instituted the Annual Gala Dance & Art Gallery. Promoted a year long of collaboration and planning to include parents’ voices, special education staff, collaboration with all school leaders and central office departments.

- Collaborated with outside agencies to support the parents of our students. Hosted, in partnership with the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and Care Coordination Services, a community session for parents appreciation of the value of Life Planning for their children in tandem with support from adult agencies.

- Maintained optimall relationships with the Westchester Conservatory of Music to bring Music Therapy to acutely impacted students in special classes K- age 21.
Engage in Strategic Planning for Fiscal Responsibilities and Facilities

- Secured over one million dollars via the IDEA grant to supplement the cost of salaries, services, supplies, materials, BOCES services amongst other allowable costs to serve our students with disabilities.

- Secured approximately a quarter million dollars via the allowable Medicaid claims.

- In close collaboration with the business office, assisted with the meticulous documentation required to secured over one million dollars via NYSED System to Track and Account for Children (STAC) claims for high-cost tuition and cost meeting or exceeding the state’s threshold inclusive of Extended School Year services.