

GRACE STUDENT SERVICES PROGRAM

The following article was contributed by James Cullen, GRACE Director of Student Services.



Supporting students and teachers to ensure each child receives a meaningful and responsive GRACE Catholic School learning experience is the call of our GRACE Student Services Program. Comprised of a Supportive Consultant at each of our school campuses that make up GRACE (Green Bay Area Catholic Education System), and overseen by our Director of Student Services, students of varying disabilities are serviced at each of our nine schools.



Students of need have individualized student plans that contain specific measurable goals, objectives, measurements of progress, and needed accommodations/modifications that drive the services provided to our identified students. These include those diagnosed autistic, having behavioral needs, identified with an intellectual disability, specific learning disability students, speech/language, hearing impairments, ADD/ADHD, or other health impairment needs, as well as, English Learner students.

Opportunities for our higher achieving students exist via participation in on-line and face-to-face meeting opportunities through the Wisconsin Center for Academically Talented Youth (WCATY) program. Also, our involvement in the Odyssey on-line learning tool program provides opportunities for all of our students to enhance their learning skills based on their Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) scores throughout the school year and during the summertime.

In a working relationship with our teachers, principals, Supportive Consultants, Director of Student Services, and parents, individualized student plans are discussed, written, and shared amongst all. Student progress on their plan goals are reported each trimester to parents, so they can clearly see the progress their child is making on their individualized goals.

Student support is provided in the classroom, Supportive Consultant resource room, and where support is needed. Each teacher is provided a Student Services Program Binder to help them work with their classroom's students of need that contains various Student Services material including a list of items from the GRACE Student Services Resource Materials Library.

In a working relationship with the public schools, meetings are held when concerns exist of a student having a possible disability and implementation and progress of the student on their GRACE School Service Plan helps in the determination if a referral for a disability is warranted.



Implementation of RtI (Response to Intervention) as reflected via the Student Service Plan is very helpful in making this determination as evidence of what was tried and the success thereof. We have established a communication protocol with the four public school districts that our schools reside in to ensure representatives and advocates for our students and parents are at the consultation and IEP meetings that include the classroom teacher, and either the Principal, Director of Student Services, and/or the Supportive Consultant.

Although we are not obligated to develop plans for our identified and non-identified students of need, it is the right thing to do. We are leaders in the parochial system of schools in our services and established program to our students of need, and receive complements from our public school colleagues for the services provided in our student focused GRACE School Service Plans.

The GRACE Student Services Program has been a part of GRACE since 2011 and each trimester Supportive Consultant meetings are held to discuss GRACE wide student service topics. Individual bi-monthly meetings are also held between the Director of Student Services and the Supportive Consultant to discuss school specific items. Yearly discussions with the Supportive Consultant, their school's Principal, and our Director of Student Services pertaining to their role takes place to help enhance the program and the services provided by the Supportive Consultant.

We provide a valuable service to our children of need. We advocate for them. We make a difference. At the end of the day that's what it's all about. We need to open up our arms and our doors to all students as God would want us to do.

Feel free to contact me if you would like to further discuss.

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