

Counseling Services in NWABSD

Certified counselors serve the needs of NWABSD students at school sites as assigned and travel to various school sites on a regular schedule to work with students and staff of those schools. The Northwest Arctic Borough School District has developed a counseling service program that is based on national, state and school district standards; this program is continuing to develop in order to better serve the students and the communities of the Northwest Arctic Borough School District.

The goal of all counseling services is to help students build positive self-esteem, build character and to develop self-empowerment skills. The counselors strive to educate and inform students on personal growth, to become accountable and responsible, to be emotionally mature and stable, to promote positive self-esteem and to develop a thought process that will help them make informed decisions. Our counselors help students to focus on the core Inupiaq values that are important for a successful and healthy life with the assistance of recognized leaders and respected elders who are practitioners of these values.

In the event of an immediate need on site contact Linda Mason, Director of Special Programs at (907) 442-3472, ext. 214. You can also notify the Alaska State Troopers at (907) 442-3222, or Maniilaq Mental Health at (907) 442-7635. If you have any questions regarding the counseling program within the NWABSD, call Linda Mason at (907) 442-3472, ext. 214.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES IN NWABSD

The Special Education Department is charged with the responsibility of finding, identifying and providing services to our children with disabilities within the Northwest Arctic Borough School District. To this end the department coordinates the collaborative efforts of parents, educators, and specialized professional staff in addressing the special needs of our students with disabilities, as well as, ensure that the education provided is free, appropriate and least restrictive. The department is guided in its mission by federal laws, state regulations and district policies, all of which provide a comprehensive framework within which the Special Education Department operates.

Department staff is committed to implementing services for our disabled children, which are in compliance with the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and also in keeping with the spirit of equity in education as exemplified by the Rehabilitation Act (1973) and Americans with Disabilities Act. "Special Education" is generally understood to mean specially designed program of services or instruction recommended by the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) which are set forth in a child's Individual Education Plan (IEP). In order to qualify for special education services a child must be determined through the evaluation process to (1) have a disability and (2) be in need of special education. When a child meets both these "entry" criteria the MDT/IEP Team will then identify the specific services, which will comprise the special education program for that child.

Children are identified and evaluated through a variety of options. Annually, the NWABSD does a "Child Find" that attempts to find any children who may be in need of assistance. The Child Find process takes place in spring of each school year and is normally done in conjunction with personnel from Manillaq Health Center. Once children are referred to the NWABSD Special Education Department then the appropriate evaluations will be done, with parental permission, to determine the child's eligibility for services.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding Special Education in the Northwest Arctic Borough School District, please contact Linda Mason at 442-3472, ext. 272

Early Learning and Family Program (ELF)

The Early Learning and Family Program (ELF) is the Infant Learning Program for the Northwest Arctic Region, including Point Hope. This is a federally mandated system supported by the State of Alaska, Department of Health the Social Services, Office of Children's Services.

The program serves families of infants who experience disabilities or who are at risk for developmental delays. Funding for this program is provided by the state of Alaska from the Federal Part C of Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

The purpose of the ELF program is to enhance the developmental potential of children from birth to three years of age who may have special needs. Children who receive services early in life are more likely to obtain optimal function. Some of these early intervention services include occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech/language therapy, vision and hearing services.

Coordinating services across agency lines is another service ELF provides. ELF serves as the single point of contact for families to obtain community, medical, health and school services.

The ELF program promotes the integration of families and children into their communities. One component is to help families recognize and utilize their natural supports. In order to provide best quality services, the ELF program travels to the families' outlying villages and homes. As a result, ELF is responsive to the needs and desires of the family.

Cecelia Harmon is the coordinator for the ELF program for NWABSD. Maureen Nolan is the home visitor. The office phone number is: (907) 442-3472, ext. 263 or ext. 205. Or, you may contact Linda Mason, Director of Special Programs at ext. 268.