

Special Programs Overview

RENEE FUNDERBURG

DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROGRAMS



Special Programs

Meet our Team



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Special Programs Overview

English as a Second Language - Emergent Bilingual

The English as a Second Language (ESL) program is designed to help students whose primary language is not English develop proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English. The goal of the program is to support students in acquiring the language skills needed to succeed academically and socially in an English-speaking environment, while also valuing and supporting their native language and culture. Instruction is tailored to meet students at their level of English proficiency and often integrates language development with grade-level academic content.

Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS)

The purpose of the Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS) is to identify children who are struggling in school and ensure each child who is identified receives the right instruction or intervention to be successful. Think of it like a support ladder with three levels (or “tiers”):

Tier 1: Support for Everyone

This is the **foundation**. All students get strong, high-quality teaching in the classroom. Teachers check in regularly with all students to make sure they’re doing okay. The majority of students are successful in Tier 1.

Tier 2: Extra Help for Some

Some students may need a little **extra support**—maybe in reading, math, or behavior. These students get small-group help in addition to regular class time. Teachers monitor how they’re doing and adjust as needed.

Tier 3: Intensive Help for a Few

A small number of students may need **intensive, individualized help**. They may get one-on-one instruction or support tailored just for them. The goal is to give them what they need to catch up and succeed.

Section 504

Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* is a federal civil rights law that protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination. In schools, it ensures that students with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities receive the accommodations and supports they need to access the general education curriculum. Students with a 504 Plan may receive services such as preferential seating, extended time on tests, behavior supports, or other modifications, depending on their individual needs.

Special Education

Special Education serves students who meet criteria for an educational disability condition and by reason thereof need specially designed instruction in order to access and progress in the curriculum and meet the standards of the district that apply to all students. This includes students that have dyslexia, speech, and other related services.



ESL Overview

In Argyle, we believe that Emergent Bilinguals' success relies upon:

- The value placed on the first language and culture.
- Mutual respect and collaboration with other educators and administrators.
- Having high expectations of teaching and learning for both staff and students.
- Strong professional development and guidance.

Students previously known as **English Learners (ELs)** are now referred to as **Emergent Bilinguals (EB)**.

Federally, students continue to be referred to as **English Learners (EL)**. The program is called an **ESL Program**.



ESL Program Model - Elementary

PRE-KINDER:

ESL specialist will give initial assessment to students to indicate their level of proficiency. ESL Specialists with LPAC will recommend linguistic accommodations. ESL specialists at the end of the year will revisit with students to reevaluate to see language growth and which accommodations will best help students in Kindergarten.

Kindergarten and 1st Grade: Pull-out/Push-In

ESL Specialists work with classroom teachers to look at grouping students on their proficiency levels to help in Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Pull-out will be determined by the formative and informal assessment, LPAC committee, and/or MTSS committee. ESL Specialists will develop strategies, linguistic accommodations, and regular visits in classrooms to coach and guide teachers and students in language learning.

2nd-5th: Push-in

ESL Specialists work with classroom teachers to look at grouping students on their proficiency levels to help in Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Pull-out will be determined by the formative and informal assessment, LPAC committee, and/or MTSS committee. ESL Specialists will develop strategies, linguistic accommodations, and regular visits in classrooms to coach and guide teachers and students in language learning.



ESL Program Model - Secondary

6th - 12th Grade

ESL Specialists continue to support students in the classroom setting as needed. Primary support is focused on newcomers who move in directly from other countries and need the language acquisition support.

Students are exited from the ESL Program when they meet the following criteria:

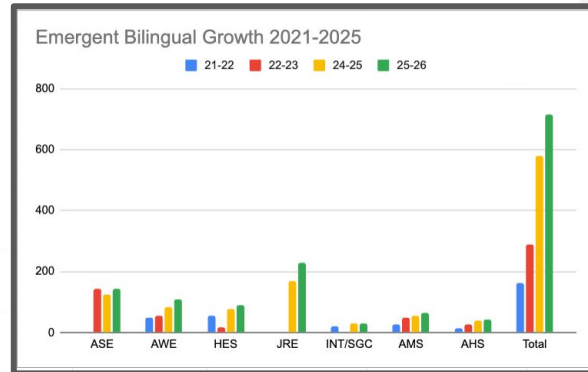
- **Language Proficiency** - Composite Score of Advanced High on TELPAS
- **Academic Performance** - Approaches, Meets or Masters on STAAR Reading/English EOC or
- **Academic Performance** - 40th percentile or above for students on Iowa test who didn't take STAAR/EOC (Grades 1, 2, 11, or 12).
- **Teacher Subjective Evaluation**

***Students are monitored for two years upon exiting the program. The state tracks them for four years.**



EB Enrollment Trends

Emergent Bilingual Growth	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	% increase
ASE	NA	144	192	126	144	0%
AWE	48	54	82	83	110	129%
HES	54	18	44	78	91	66%
JRE	NA	NA	NA	170	229	35%
INT/SGC	20	NA	29	31	31	55%
AMS	26	48	37	54	66	154%
AHS	15	26	29	39	44	193%
Total	163	290	413	581	715	339%
% change previous year		78%	42%	41%	23%	Avg - 46%

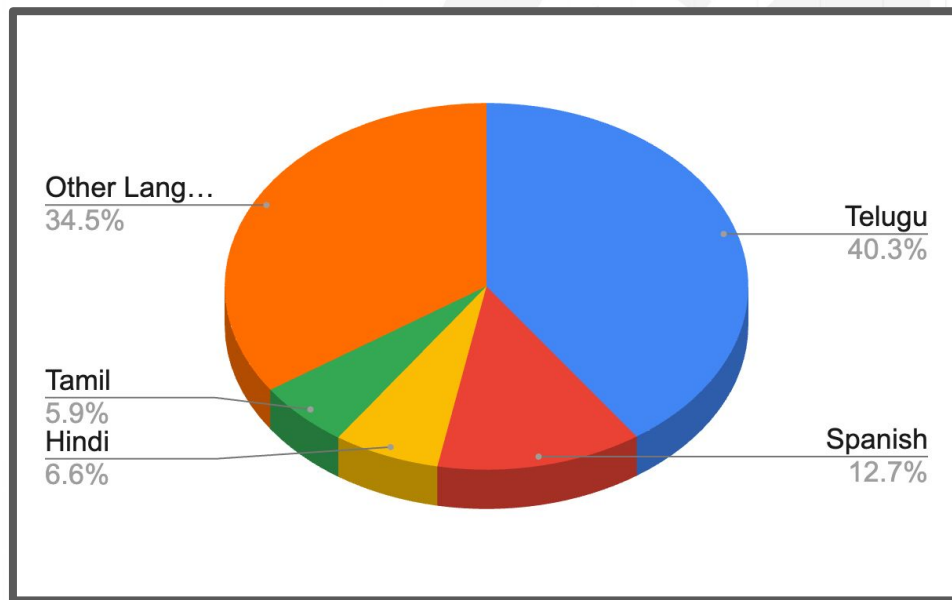


Languages

Currently we have **37** different languages represented in our English as a Second Language Program.

Other Languages in the district:

Akan	Malayalam
Albanian, Tosk	Mandarin
American Sign Language (ASL)	Marathi
Amharic	Nepali
Arabic	Oriya
Bengali	Panjabi
Chinese	Polish
English	Portuguese
Farsi	Russian
French	Swahili
German	Thai
Gujarati	Ukrainian
Indonesian	Urdu
Japanese	Vietnamese
Kannada	Yoruba
Korean	
Lingala	



ESL/EB Staffing Allocations

- 4 Elementary ESL Specialists - one per campus
- 2 Secondary ESL Specialists
 - One serves SGC and GMS
 - One serves AMS and AHS
- 5 EBL Paraprofessionals
 - 2 JRE
 - 1 AWE
 - 1 ASE
 - AHS
- One ESL coordinator - Ally Tooley (AMS and AHS)



Section 504 Overview

Each school district or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's Section 504 program.

Who is eligible for services?

An eligible student is a student who

1. Has a record of having, or
2. Is regarded as having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, such as learning.

The designated contacts regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services are the campus counselors at the elementary level and 504/Testing Coordinators at the secondary level.

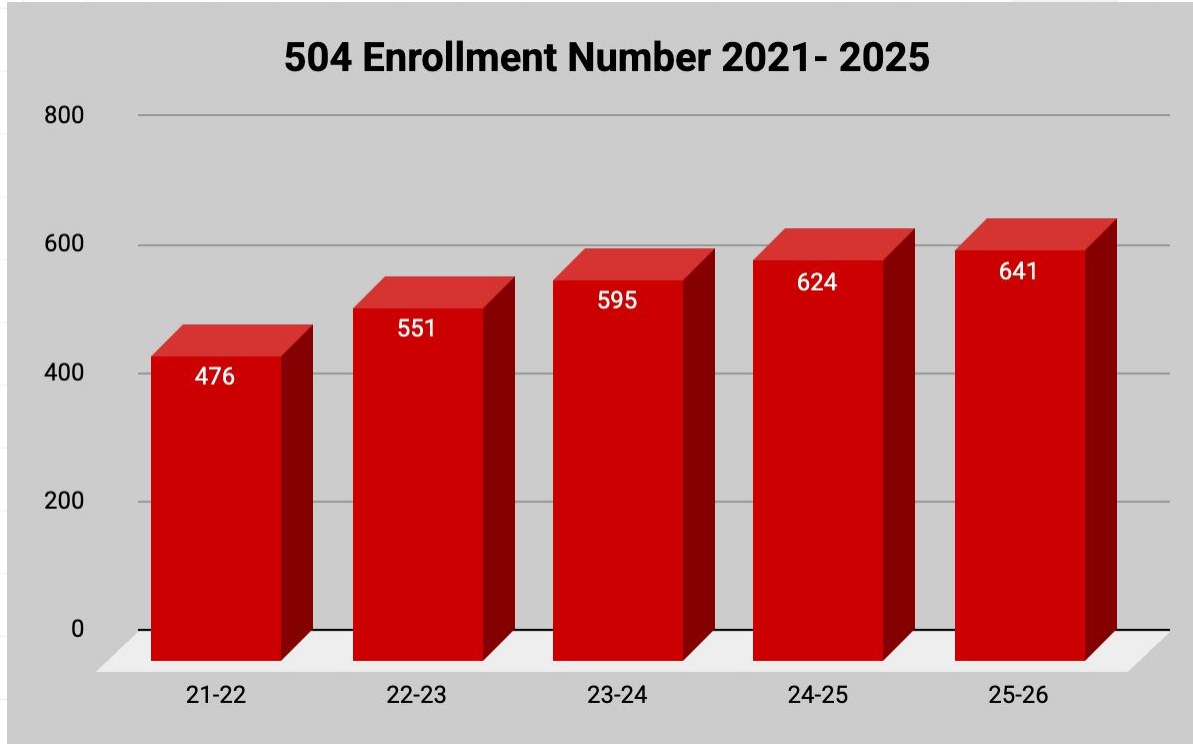


Section 504 vs. Special Education

	Special Education	VS	Section 504
Law	IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act		Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
Purpose	Individualized Instruction and services		Access to learning through accommodations
Qualifier	Disability that requires specialized instruction		Disability that affects major life function like learning
Services	Specialized instruction, therapy, goals, accommodations and/or related services		Accommodations (extra time, breaks, etc.)
Team	IEP Team: Diagnostian, admin, teacher, parent, specialists, therapy providers		counselor, admin, teacher, parent



Section 504



Dyslexia

Texas education law regarding dyslexia changed significantly with the passage of House Bill (HB) 3928 during the 2023 legislative session. Signed into law on June 10, 2023, the legislation took effect for the 2023–2024 school year.

These legislative updates brought several major changes to public education:

- **Special Education Integration:** Dyslexia services are now classified as Specially Designed Instruction (SDI), ensuring students are fully covered under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- **Improved Identification:** Districts are required to involve staff with specialized dyslexia expertise in evaluation teams and ARD (Admission, Review, and Dismissal) committees
- **Expanded Protections:** Students are guaranteed clearer academic goals and legal safeguards that transition them away from limited Section 504 plans toward more comprehensive special education plans.

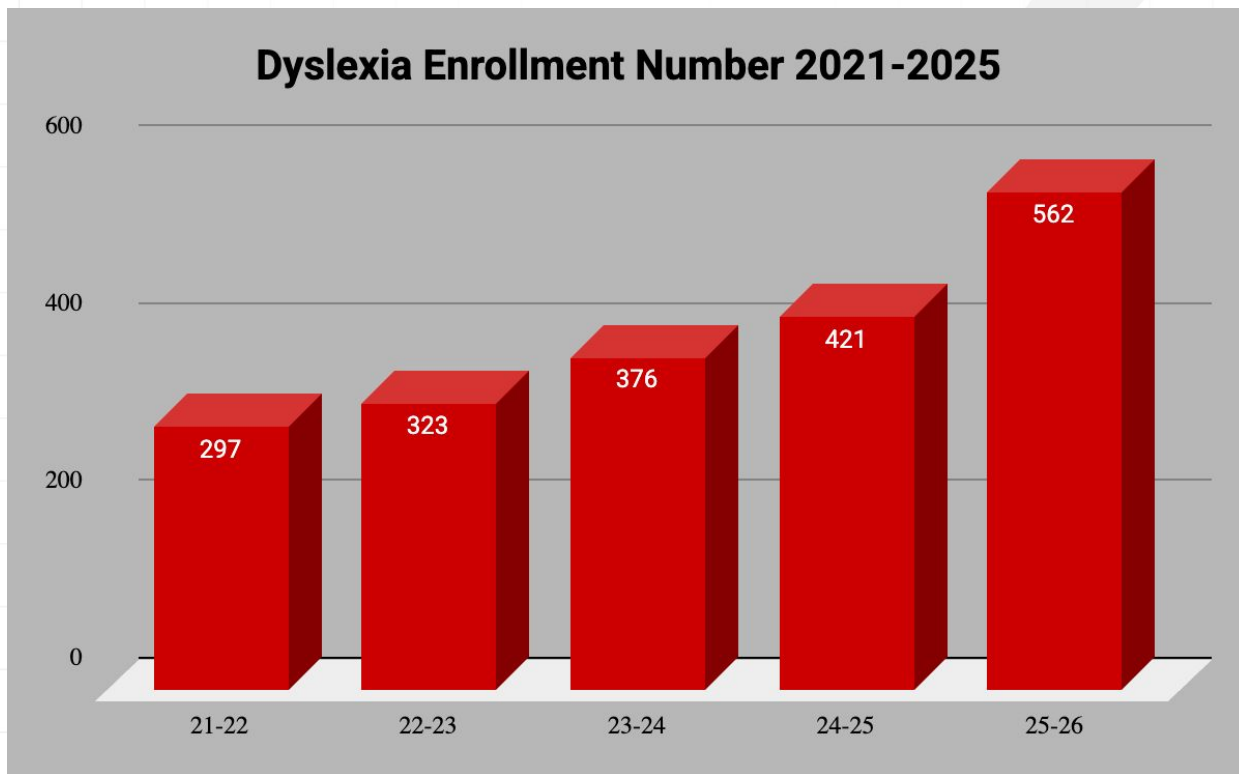


Dyslexia Programs

- **BUILD (K-1)** is a 100-lesson early reading intervention designed for Kindergarten and first-grade students who are identified with dyslexia prior to second grade.
- **Take Flight (2-6)** is an evidence-based, multisensory reading intervention developed by [Scottish Rite for Children](#) in Dallas, Texas. It is specifically designed to treat dyslexia in individuals ages 7 and older by teaching phonics, fluency, and comprehension through the Orton-Gillingham methodology.
- **Turbo Start (Interim)** is a nine-week (36 lessons) reading intervention curriculum designed as a "jump start" for newly identified students of all ages.
- **JET (7-12)** (A Fast-Paced Reading Intervention) program is a one-year, evidence-based dyslexia curriculum developed by the Luke Waites Center for Dyslexia and Learning Disorders at Scottish Rite for Children. It is specifically designed to meet the needs of older students—typically ages 14 and up—who are newly identified with dyslexia.
- **Reading by Design** is a systematic, multisensory literacy intervention program designed primarily to help students with dyslexia and other reading difficulties. Developed by Region 4 Education Service Center, it offers structured and explicit instruction to build foundational reading, writing, and spelling skills.



Dyslexia Numbers



History of SPED in Argyle

Argyle was a part of the Denton County Special Education Cooperative along with Aubrey ISD, Krum ISD, Pilot Point ISD, Ponder ISD and Sanger ISD.

In the 2020 school year the district decided to leave the Co-op and start the planning for their own program. The first director was hired in February of 2021.

The district's first SPED department began operation in the 2021-22 school year.

The Denton County Co-op is disbanding as of May 2026. Each district will now have their own SPED department.



Vision

Our mission is to **support, inspire, and empower** students with disabilities by providing **individualized services**, removing barriers to learning, and promoting **equitable access** to educational opportunities.

We are dedicated to building **strong partnerships** with families and staff to ensure every student develops the skills, **confidence**, and **independence** needed to thrive in school, in the community, and in life.



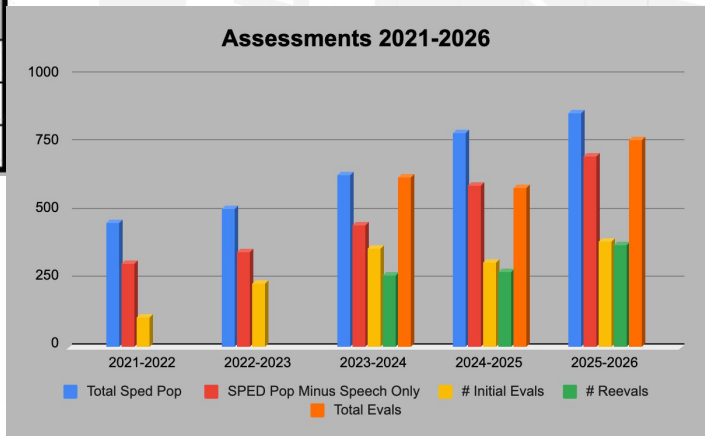
SPED Numbers

INSTRUCTION												
Year	DISTRICT Pop	Sped Pop	% of Total Enroll	Speech Only	Sped Pop Minus Speech Only	#DISTRICT Teachers	# Gen Ed Teachers	# SpEd Teachers	# Paras	Gen Ed Staff : Student Ratio	SpEd Staff : Student Ratio	Yearly SPED Growth
2021-2022	4,338	459	11%	152	307	285.98	222.2	21	63.49	1:18	1:15	11%
2022-2023	4,966	510	10%	160	350	341.63	272.2	24.2	56.47	1:17	1:14	11%
2023-2024	5,414	633	12%	186	447	355.17	285.8	23.5	65.43	1:17	1:19	24%
2024-2025	6,166	788	13%	192	596	367.99	300	25	74.81	1:19	1:24	24%
2025-2026	6640	861	13%	159	702	415	325	29	83	1:18	1:24	9%
											Avg. Growth	16%
Year Span	DISTRICT Pop Growth	DISTRICT SPED Pop Growth	Avg. % of Enroll		DISTRICT Sped Instructional Pop Growth (No Speech Only)	DISTRICT Overall Teacher Growth	DISTRICT Gen Ed Teacher Growth	DISTRICT Sped Teacher Growth		Diff Sped		
2021-2025	53.07%	87.58%	12%		128.66%	45.12%	46.26%	38.10%		90.56%		



SPED Numbers

Assessments Overview					
Year	Total Sped Pop	SPED Pop Minus Speech Only	# Initial Evals	# Reevals	Total Evals
2021-2022	459	307	108		
2022-2023	510	350	232		
2023-2024	633	447	363	262	625
2024-2025	788	596	312	274	586
2025-2026	861	702	390	380	770



Current SPED Numbers

Instructional Setting	# Classrooms	Campuses	# Students
BASES	1	HT	5
ECSE	3	ASE, AWE, JRE	27
Life Skills	14	All	99
Mainstream	All	All	148
Resource/SDI	24	All	419
Speech Only		All	149
Liberty Christian/Homeschool			39
Total SPED			886



Least Restrictive Environment

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is a legal rule stating that students with disabilities must be taught alongside kids without disabilities as much as possible.

Continuum of Services for Students



Curriculum

Resource/Inclusion - regular general education curriculum

- HMH - ELAR K-8
- Stemscopes - Math K-5
- HMH - Science K-8
- Social Studies Weekly K-4
- TCI - SS 5th
- Agile Minds - Math 6-12
- HMH Social Studies 6-12
- Savvas - 9-12
- Character Strong - social skills



SPED Curriculum

Elementary Life skills units - STAR Autism

- The STAR Program includes detailed lesson plans, teaching materials, data systems and a curriculum-based assessment for teaching in the six curricular areas of receptive language, expressive language, spontaneous language, functional routines, academics, and play & social skills.

Secondary Life Skills Units - Everway (Unique/News2U)

- Unique Learning provides differentiated instruction in math, science, and social studies, ELA, for life skills through transition. These lessons are designed to meet each student's needs, ensuring equal learning opportunities. With customizable support tools, it offers flexible delivery.

BASES/Behavior Classrooms - Character Strong

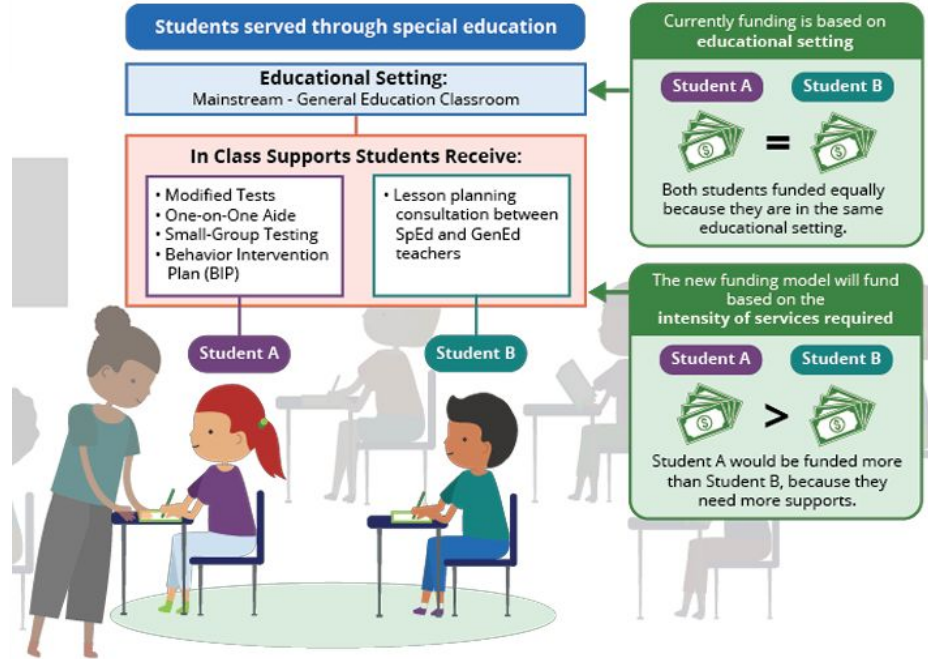
- Lessons and activities that support students in acquiring knowledge and skills in four areas: Coping, Regulation, Relationships, and Self Management



Special Education Funding

Historically, Special Education has been funded based on the instructional setting and not the relative cost of services provided.

Starting in 2026-27, HB changes funding to be based on intensity of services, alongside an \$250M overall funding increase.



Foundations of the New System

Statute requires 8 tiers of intensity – TEC 48.102

- bookends are established by statute –
- Tier 1 = students who receive speech therapy as their ONLY instructional service;
- Tier 8 = residential placement by ARD committee

Statute requires at least 5 service groups – TEC 48.1021

- add-on ancillary funding;
- flat dollar amounts;
- lower dollar amount (service group 1) to higher dollar amount

General education (regular program) offset – TEC 48.051

- time spent outside of general education setting
- TSDS/PEIMS data element added for 2026-2027 for minutes of instructional day spent in special education setting; that will be used to calculate offset
- When accounting for all of these changes, total spending on special education must be \$250M higher statewide in 2026-27 than under the prior system



Current System (Instructional Arrangement)

vs.

New System (Intensity of Services)

Current Law Inputs for Example Student

- BA = \$6,215, Small-Mid Adjusted BA = \$6,420
- 170 days present (0.944 ADA)
- **Instructional Arrangement = Resource Room (2.89 contact hours, FTE weight 3.0)**
- **FTE 0.45, weighted FTE 1.35**

Total Sped Funding
\$8,668



Reg Pgm Allotment
\$3,070



Total FSP Tier I
Entitlement \$11,738

New Law Inputs for Example Student

- BA = \$6,215, Small-Mid Adjusted BA = \$6,420
- 170 days present (0.944 ADA)
- **Tier Weight* = 1.5**
- **21% of the day in sped (average daily minutes = 75 / 360 minutes)**
- **Service Group Dollar Amount* = \$400**

Total Sped Funding
\$9,491



Reg Pgm Allotment
\$4,635



Total FSP Tier I
Entitlement \$14,126



Funding Transition Implementation

- Every SPED students' IEP must be reviewed to determine their Tier and Service Group.
- The state implemented a \$10M stipend support grant with federal funds to assist with off-contract or extra duty pay; Argyle received \$10,000.
- 10% of students must be reported by August 14th
- 50% by October 8th
- Remainder of students reported by December
- On average it takes 45-60 minutes to review an IEP to determine Tier and Service group.



Current District SPED Staffing

Special Education Coordinator - 1	Dyslexia Therapists - 8
Diagnosticians - 7	Life Skills Teachers - 14
ARD Facilitator - 2	District Behavior Coach/BCBA - 1
Speech Therapists - 11	Elementary Behavior Specialist - 1
School Psychologists - 4	Secondary Behavior Specialists - 1.5
Occupational Therapists - 2.5	BASE Teachers - 1
Part Time Physical Therapists - 1	ECSE Teachers - 3
Transition Specialist - 1	Resource/SDI Teachers - 24

 New positions approved last year approved

