

The background is a vibrant green with various geometric patterns. On the left, there are several parallel lines of white dots of varying sizes, some connected by thin white lines. In the center and right, there are faint, light-colored outlines of buildings and a network of lines, suggesting a city map or a data network. The overall design is modern and tech-oriented.

# Amy Shaver Hamden Public Schools

Capstone project 4/1/2023

# Description of the Problem

- ▶ 9 self-contained classrooms are currently at the Wintergreen Building
- ▶ The Mayor sold the building to ACES
- ▶ 7 classrooms need to move back to the elementary, 1 to the middle school, and 1 to the high school.
- ▶ The TWNDP rate for Hamden is low (~66%)
- ▶ There is limited criteria for entry/exit into self-contained programs.

# Capstone Project

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**Purpose:** To increase time in inclusion for students with disabilities and to develop criteria for entry into self-contained classrooms in Hamden Public Schools.

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**Vision:** Students will be included more regularly in general education. Teachers and Principals will understand the inclusion model and support students.

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**Mission:** Students with IEPs will be treated as general education students first. They will be included in school wide activities and spend time with nondisabled peers as much as possible. Entry into self-contained classrooms will be carefully considered for each student. Collaboration with PPS teams will convene to provide supports in general education for students with special needs. The consultation packet will be revised to include a process of collaboration between PPS administrators and school-based teams.

## Increase Time With Nondisabled Peers

- ▶ Students at the Wintergreen Building have no TWNDP.
- ▶ Movement to the elementary, middle, and high school buildings will create the opportunity for TWNDP.
- ▶ Space has been found in the buildings to move 2 classrooms to Church St, 1 additional classroom to West Woods, and 2 classrooms to Spring Glen. Bear Path will absorb 2 classrooms as many 6<sup>th</sup> graders are moving to middle school.

# Increase Time With Nondisabled Peers

- ▶ The preschool and kindergarten transition has been expanded to include co-taught kindergarten classrooms.
- ▶ 1 co-taught classroom will be at Shepherd Glen and 1 will be at Ridge Hill
- ▶ This creates the opportunity for kindergarten students with disabilities to be in a general education classroom while their needs, abilities, and supports can be determined by an elementary PPS team.
- ▶ Alice Peck has 42 preschool students who are transitioning to elementary school for the 23-24 school year. 10 students can be placed in co-taught classrooms which reduces the need for additional self-contained classes and increases time with nondisabled peers.

# Entry & Exit Criteria

- ▶ There is a need to create entry and exit criteria for self-contained classrooms in Hamden.
- ▶ Criteria will be established in collaboration with PPS administrators.
- ▶ Continuum of supports will be established for students with special needs in Hamden for all students, including students who can be in general education classrooms with supports (rather than self-contained).

# Projected Outcome

- ▶ Time with non-disabled peers will increase.
- ▶ Students will be included in a home school environment.
- ▶ Creation of co-taught kindergarten classroom to support the transition from preschool to kindergarten.
- ▶ This plan was in collaboration with the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary, the Assistant Director and Interim Director of PPS, and PPS Coordinators for Elementary, Secondary, and Preschool.
- ▶ A plan to move students in the Wintergreen Building was presented to the BOE on March 14, 2023.