

# Sensory Education, Exploration and Discovery (SEED)

## Program Overview

In support of students as they return to their schools in September 2021, the NYC DoE will be providing Students with Disabilities (SwDs) with an opportunity to participate in an enrichment based sensory movement program. Using specialized sensory equipment and a curriculum designed by Occupational Therapist experts in sensory based interventions, this program will provide supports for students who display intensive sensory needs that impact academics, social-emotional learning and behavior.

Children learn best and retain the most information when they engage their senses. Providing opportunities for children to actively use their senses as they explore their world through 'sensory play' is crucial to brain development; helps to **build nerve connections in the brain's pathways**.

The Sensory Education, Exploration and Discovery (SEED) program will be offered after school hours Monday – Thursday and Saturdays, in 10-week cycles over the course of the SY, at 10 designated public-school locations.

SEED will be led by Occupational Therapists in collaboration with Special Education teachers.

The program will be implemented in an intentionally designed therapeutic space, incorporating the use of accessible therapeutic sensory equipment.

## Benefits

- School Building will be outfitted with a sensory space that can be used by the host site during the school day, M-F in collaboration with their assigned occupational therapist and/or occupational therapy supervisor. School-based occupational and physical therapists may utilize the SEED space when providing IEP recommended services to host site students on an on-going basis and may also use the space to implement whole class activities as their workloads allow.
- SEED program will provide opportunities to support students with intensive sensory needs across areas of academic, social emotional and behavioral functions
- Opportunity for specialized family engagement as a direct component of the SEED program
- SEED program will be entirely Centrally funded, including equipment, materials and staff per-session/over time, and not via school budgets
- Will provide schools with a facility that will continue to benefit students in the longer term

## School Expectations/ Commitments

- Host after-school and Saturday Sensory and Related Services Saturday Recovery Services Program November through June 2022
- Designate a large/full-size classroom in a fully accessible and location
- Installation and maintenance of sensory equipment to be completed by DSF/ODP
  - Daily cleaning by custodial staff
  - Timely repair of any broken/ damaged equipment
  - Identification and hiring of special education teacher
- Collaborate with SEO in identification and hiring of Occupational Therapist(s)
  - If school-based OT(s) not available, SEO will support in posting/hiring OTs
- Collaborate with SEO with payroll management for all participating staff (including overtime waiver and Cybershift entry for Occupational Therapists)



- Manage any/all COVID test/trace, situation room communications
- Manage family communications in collaboration with SEO (SEO will lead cohort definition and scheduling)

## High Level Talking Points

The SEED Initiative is a part of the Special Education Recovery Services Implementation plan for the 2021-2022 school year.

In support of students returning to school in September 2021, the NYC DoE will be providing students with disabilities with an opportunity to participate in an enrichment-based sensory movement program.

Using specialized sensory equipment and a curriculum designed by Occupational Therapist experts, in sensory-based interventions, this program will support students who display intensive sensory needs that impact academics, social-emotional learning, and behavior.

10 SEED host sites; 2 per borough

Accessibility, space availability and community needs were considered for site selection

## Operations

- Program will operate M-Th and Saturdays
- Host site students receive priority enrollment for M-Th
  - Students within the borough receive priority enrollment for Saturdays

Host site OT/PT providers to use the SEED space during the school day as part of IEP recommended related services and whole class activities

- Schools will be provided with the [SEED Student Selection Guidance](#) to support their identification of SEED students
- Schools will be provided with a link to SEED Family Survey to initiate enrollment process with final student enrollment confirmed by SEO (capacity and grouping)
  - Wait-list managed by SEO, in collaboration with host sites
- Host site will also host Saturday Related Services (OT/PT/SP) in addition to SEED (Managed and funded by SEO) for students within the Borough not able to attend after school recovery services and/or eligible for make-up services
- Program staffed with OT and Special Education Teacher
- SEO will post for, and hire OTs for each site
- SPED will be hired in collaboration with host site

Centrally funded in its entirety

Additional Information: [SEED PowerPoint for School Administration](#)

## SEED Sites

Borough	DBN	Address	City	Zip
X	10X023	2151 WASHINGTON AVENUE	BRONX	10457
X	12X463	1180 TINTON AVENUE	BRONX	10456
K	16K026	1014 LAFAYETTE AVENUE	BROOKLYN	11221
K	TBD		BROOKLYN	
M	01M134	293 EAST BROADWAY	MANHATTAN	10002
M	04M007	160 EAST 120 STREET	MANHATTAN	10035
Q	28Q040	109-20 Union Hall Street	Queens	11433
Q	30Q092	99-01 34 AVENUE	QUEENS	11368
R	31R057	140 PALMA DRIVE	STATEN ISLAND	10304
R	75R037	15 FAIRFIELD STREET	STATEN ISLAND	10308

### Sample Structured Sensory Spaces

