

Section 2 – Services and Supports

Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) State Board Rule 160-4-7-.15

The Psychoeducational Network is known as the **Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS)**. GNETS programs support the local school system's continuum of services by providing comprehensive special education and therapeutic support for the children served. The purpose of the GNETS is to prevent children from requiring residential or other more restrictive placements by offering cost-effective comprehensive services in local areas. Families have the opportunity to be engaged in all aspects of service planning. Child specialists (educators, psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, behavior support specialists, or etc.) from a variety of professions collaborate on behalf of the children served. All programs may serve children ages 3 through 21 years by the program staff in classes, with direct therapeutic services, evaluation and assessment or other services as appropriate.

The Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) is comprised of 24 programs which support the local school systems' continuum of services for students with disabilities, ages 3-21. The programs provide comprehensive educational and therapeutic support services to students who might otherwise require residential or other more restrictive placements due to the severity of one or more of the characteristics of the disability category of emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), autism, and in some instances other health impaired (OHI).

This program is the *most* restrictive environment for students within the public school system. Typically a student goes through the continuum of services available prior to being referred to the GNETS program. All GNETS referrals must begin by contacting the special education director.

Eligibility and Placement

Students receiving services through a GNETS Program are referred by Towns County Schools through the Individual Education Program (IEP) process. The home school continues to be actively involved in the progress of the student attending GNETS throughout the child's tenure there. A case manager from the student's home school remains in place at Towns County Schools in order to remain an active part of the student's IEP progress and return to the home school.

Transportation and Location

Towns County students who attend the GNETS program are transported from Towns County Schools to and from Union County Schools. Students are transported from their homes to Towns County Schools as they would normally be. Students then board a bus to be transported to the Union County Schools GNETS classroom. This is a shared classroom between Towns and Union Counties. At the end of the school day, students are transported by the Towns County bus back to Towns County Schools and board their regular bus to be transported home.

Documentation of On-Going Effectiveness and Improvement

All GNETS programs must have an on-going system for documenting effectiveness and program improvement based on Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) requirements and guidance from stakeholders. Data is kept on each Towns County student to validate program effectiveness through measurement of annual goals/short-term objectives and statewide assessment results.

Recommended Class Size by Level

The recommended maximum class size for GNETS classes at the preschool, elementary and middle school level is eight. The recommended maximum class size for high school classes is ten.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

GNETS programs utilize evidence-based positive behavioral interventions, supports and other strategies designed to increase children's resilience and social, emotional competence.

Academic Curriculum

The academic curriculum for all children participating in the GNETS program is Georgia's general education curriculum.

Non-Academic and Extracurricular Settings

Towns County Schools ensures that each child with a disability has the opportunity to participate with nondisabled children in the extracurricular services and activities (including meals, recess periods, and other services and activities) to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of that child. The school system ensures that each child with a disability has the supplementary aids and services determined by the child's IEP Team to be appropriate and necessary for the child to participate in nonacademic settings. Nonacademic and extracurricular services may include counseling services, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by the school system, referrals to agencies that provide assistance to individuals with disabilities, and employment of students, including both employment by the public agency and assistance in making outside employment available. Towns County Schools ensures that supplementary aides and services determined appropriate by the IEP team are provided in order to allow children with disabilities an equitable opportunity for participation in nonacademic and extracurricular activities.