

Supporting Every Student:

Introducing Our Auburn Day Treatment Program

Starting in the 2025-2026 School Year

What is the Day Treatment Program?

A specialized, school-based program designed for students who need intensive therapeutic and behavioral support in addition to special education programming to succeed academically and socially.

Students in this program will receive:

- Individualized academic instruction
- Daily therapeutic support from a therapist assigned just to this classroom
- A structured, supportive environment

Why Are We Offering This?

Because all students deserve to succeed. This program helps us:

- Keep students close to home and connected to our district
- Strengthen partnerships between families, schools, and professionals
- Provide the right support in the right setting

Who Will the Program Serve?

A small number of students with significant emotional or behavioral needs. The maximum number of students in the classroom is eight.

- Referred through a careful, team-based process involving families, school staff, and clinicians



How Is It Different from a Typical Classroom?

- Smaller class sizes (8 students)
- Higher staff-to-student ratio (1:2)
- Specialized instruction and on-site clinical support
 - Special education teacher, teaching assistant, teacher aide, therapist
- Emphasis on mental health, wellness, and skill-building

How Will This Affect Other Students?

The program operates in a designated, separate space within the school. It allows all students to learn in an environment best suited to their needs. Access to this space is limited to the students and staff assigned to the location and district-approved staff and administration.

Safety & Support Measures

- Trained professionals in therapeutic crisis intervention
- Trauma-informed practice
- Clear, structured routines for consistency and safety

Inclusion & Integration

When appropriate, and with teacher assistance or teacher supports, students may join broader school activities like:

- Lunch
- Recess
- Specials / Electives
- Assemblies

*These decisions are made carefully and individually to ensure success and safety.

Questions & Answers

Q1: How will children's safety be ensured with the new program?

A1: Children's safety remains the number one priority for every student in the school, including those enrolled in the new program.

Q2: What happens when staff members are out sick or on PTO?

A2: Coverage will follow standard district procedure: if a substitute is unavailable, a trained teaching assistant (TA) will cover the absence.

Q3: Will students in the new program be secluded from the general population or included in everyday classes?

A3: These students have already been present in the building and classrooms. What's changing is that they will now be placed in a setting with the supports they need, unlike the past year, when such a program didn't exist. This structure actually improves safety throughout the building.

- Students in the new program are required to be medicated and participate in therapy, which is not the case in the SPIRIT program.
- Most students will not ride the regular school bus; they will receive special transportation.
- The class will have a maximum of 8 students with a 1:2 staff-to-student ratio. This includes a teacher, TA, aide, and therapist.
- A program supervisor from Cayuga Counseling will oversee the entire program, functioning similarly to an additional principal.
- A nurse practitioner is assigned to the program to manage in-school medication, ensuring consistency and compliance.

Q4: Are the substitutes working in the program certified?

A4: Substitute qualifications are the same as for the rest of the district.

Q5: How is bathroom safety being handled?

A5: Students are escorted to the bathroom by a classroom staff member until they demonstrate the ability to use the facilities independently.

Q6: Will students be supervised all day?

A6: Yes. Continuous supervision is provided until each student earns independence.

Q7: Will there be an SRO stationed in the building all day?

A7: Yes, one will be present all day unless it's determined that safety is not an issue. To start the year, if the scheduled SRO is going to be absent, coverage will be arranged.

Oversight & Accountability

- Supervised by district leadership
- In partnership with licensed mental health professionals through Cayuga Counseling Services
- Monitored for student growth, well-being, and program quality

How Can You Help?

- Support a culture of kindness and inclusion for all students
- Trust in the process designed to help all students thrive
- Reach out if you have questions - we value open communication

Have Further Questions?

Babette Valentine

AECSD Executive Director of Special Education
babettevalentine@aecsd.education | 315-255-8854

Sarah Passarello

AECSD Asst. Superintendent for Student Services
sarahpassarello@aecsd.education | 315-255-8801

Sarah VanDoren

Cayuga Counseling Services Executive Director
sarahv@cayugacounseling.org | 315-253-9795

Our Commitment:

Every Student. Every Need. Every Day.

Together, we create a school community where all learners feel supported, valued, and safe.