

2025 Annual Town Report:

Special Education and Pupil Services

The Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont Regional School Districts provide special education and related services to students in five buildings: Buckland-Shelburne Elementary School, Colrain Central School, Sanderson Academy, Hawlemont Regional School, and Mohawk Trail Regional School. The primary function of special education is to ensure that students with disabilities who are eligible for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) are provided with a *free, appropriate, public education* (FAPE) in the *least restrictive environment* (LRE). Students with disabilities who are not eligible for an IEP may qualify for a Section 504 Plan. A 504 plan provides accommodations for students in general education settings in order to ensure access to instruction among their peers. An IEP provides specialized instruction that is evidence-based and designed to meet the unique needs of the student, in addition to accommodations in general education settings. Under both plans, student progress is regularly monitored by teachers and specialists to ensure that students with disabilities are making effective progress given the necessary supports and services.

In addition to specialized academic instruction, special education provides related services in other areas that are critical to learning. The table below includes related services that are provided by school-based employees or for which we contract with outside providers.

Related Service	Licensed Professional
Speech and/or language (S/L)	Licensed Speech/Language Pathologist (CCC-SLP)
Reading	DESE Reading Specialist Licensure
Occupational Therapy (OT)	Licensed Occupational Therapist (MS, OTR/L)
Physical Therapy (PT)	Physical Therapist (PT) or Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT)
Counseling	Adjustment Counselor (MSW, LMHC) or School Psychologist (NCSP)
Behavior Support	Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)
Vision	Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI)
Hearing	Audiologist (CCC-A)

The Mohawk Trail District currently employs four full-time Speech/Language Pathologists who provide services to students attending Buckland-Shelburne, Colrain, and the Mohawk Trail school. Speech and language service needs at Hawlemont and Sanderson Academy are met through contracted providers. The districts share one Physical Therapist (PT), and the equivalent of 1.5 Occupational Therapists (OTs): one OT is full-time, and one OT has a 0.5 contract. In addition, to meet the rising needs of students with fine and gross motor limitations in the classroom, as well as sensory challenges, Mohawk Trail contracts with an outside provider for an additional 0.4 OT. We employ two full-time school psychologists. Every school building has an assigned mental health counselor, and there are three counselors providing services to middle and high school students at Mohawk Trail. The number of service providers in each building is based on student population, student needs, and the legal requirements of the IEP.

Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont share one Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC). This is a small group of volunteer parent leaders, in conjunction with the Director of Pupil Services, who work to build effective parent-school partnerships specifically designed for families of students with disabilities. Massachusetts state law assigns both an advisory and participatory function to SEPACs. Membership is offered to all parents of children with disabilities and other interested parties. Meetings are held monthly and are open to the public.

Buckland-Shelburne is our largest elementary school campus. On-site, we provide a substantially separate setting for students with cognitive and behavioral challenges that prevent them from being fully included in grade-level classrooms. This program, known as the HUB, is available to students across our two districts. The HUB is overseen by a special education teacher with expertise in severe-needs programming, as well as our Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). Students access this separate setting to varying degrees according to their individual learning needs. On the Mohawk Trail campus, we offer two substantially separate classrooms for students in grades 7 and above. The Mohawk Trail Supported Classroom (MTSC) provides a full-time clinician and two special education teachers for students with social-emotional challenges which prevent them from accessing grade-level instruction independently. The MTSC has both a middle school classroom, for 7th and 8th graders, and a high school program, for those in 9th grade and above. Additionally, the Mohawk Trail Vocational Program (MVP) provides life skills training and academic instruction that is modified to meet the needs of students who are working on common core curriculum standards below grade level. Students within the MVP program may receive educational services at Mohawk Trail until they are 22. All of our substantially separate programs for students with unique learning needs are designed to improve outcomes for students and promote their inclusion in classrooms among their peers to

the greatest extent possible. These programs also enable our districts to meet students' needs in their local schools.

The tables below include data reflecting special populations within our school districts. These data were provided by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in Massachusetts (DESE) and were last updated on January 8th, 2026.

Mohawk Trail Regional School District

Selected Populations: 2025-2026	% of the District	% of the State
First Language Not English	1.4%	27.3%
English Language Learner	0.5%	13.4%
Low-income ¹	41.8%	41.1%
Students with Disabilities	25.1%	21.1%
High Needs ²	54.1%	55.4%

Hawlemont Regional School District

Selected Populations: 2025-2026	% of the School/District	% of the State
First Language Not English	1.4%	27.3%
English Language Learner	0.0%	13.4%

¹ Low-income status is calculated based on a student's participation in one or more of the following state-administered programs: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); the Transitional Assistance for Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC); the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) foster care program; expanded MassHealth (Medicaid) up to 185% of the federal poverty level; students that are homeless

² High Needs status is calculated based on the number of high needs students, divided by the adjusted enrollment. A student is high needs if he or she is designated as either low income (prior to 2015, and from 2022 to present), economically disadvantaged (from 2015 to 2021), EI/former EI, or a student with disabilities. A former EI student is a student not currently an EI, but had been at some point in the four previous academic years. data as of: October 1, March 1, End of Year

Low-income	54.8%	41.1%
Students with Disabilities	37.8%	21.1%
High Needs	67.6%	55.4%

Demographic trends in special populations across both districts have largely mirrored trends at the state level, with the exception of the enrollment rate of English Language Learners and students for whom English is not their first language. Compared to the previous school year, in 2025-20206 schools within the Mohawk Trail Regional District observed a slight increase in students with disabilities, while the state observed a slight decrease. In the Hawlemont Regional School District, there is a greater percentage of students with disabilities enrolled compared to the state average. However, given the small size of the overall student body in Hawlemont, this increased percentage reflects a relatively small number of students. As a district, Hawlemont serves a larger population of students identified as High Needs compared to the state. The percentage of students identified as High Needs within the Mohawk Trail district is very near the state-wide average.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Lignori

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Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont Regional School Districts