

Swann Special Care Center Elementary School Program Description

1. Program History

Swann Special Care Center Elementary School is a nonpublic school designed for children, ages 3-21, who have very severe or profound intellectual disabilities, other health impairments, traumatic brain injury and multiple disabilities. The students communicate nonverbally via facial expressions, body movements, vocalizations, adaptive voice switches or devices, touching basic pictures or symbols and in some cases very simple modified signs. Most utilize customized wheelchairs due to their physical needs. In addition, all of the students have some type of complex medical need and require extensive daily care in addition to their educational program.

The school opened in 1975 at 109 Kenwood Road Champaign, IL as a part of Champaign Children's Home in conjunction with a residential long-term skilled nursing facility. Both the residential and school programs were housed in different wings of the same building at that time. The name of the facility was changed in 1994 to Swann Special Care Center in memory of a man named John Swann after he passed away. Mr. Swann was a beloved benefactor of the Champaign Children's Home. Also in 1994, the residential facility began accepting adults for placement after being granted an exemption to its license by the Illinois Department of Public Health. As a part of this, Swann opened an off-site adult day training work program called Page II. The school remained in the same building as the residential facility until the summer of 2000 when it moved off-site to a location at 2418 W. Springfield Avenue in Champaign.

In the fall of 2001 for administrative reasons and with ISBE approval, the school was divided into separate Elementary and Secondary facilities. These are the current Swann Special Care Center Elementary School and Swann Special Care Center Secondary School which are a part of a larger entity, Huston Wood.

In August of 2019, construction started on a new school addition at the 109 Kenwood Road address. The construction for this new addition was finished in 2022. The ISBE relocation review and approval for the new school site was completed on September 20, 2022, after which Swann Elementary School moved to the new site.

The Swann Special Care Center Elementary School provides its students with the necessary educational, daily living, and medical supports in order to participate to the fullest extent possible in their learning and in their life. As a part of this mission, we are always striving to create and participate in programs and activities that will help us accomplish this task.

For example, over the past 24 years, we have had our own Special Olympics team which competes in the ramp bowling tournament and in the track & field competitions

(specifically the softball/tennis ball throw, wheelchair races, and the assisted walking events). In addition, for the last 21 years, we have also had our own team in the Tom Jones Challenger Baseball League. This is an adaptive baseball program through the local Kiwanis Little League program. As a part of it, each player is assigned a "buddy" who helps them bat, field and get around the bases during each three inning game.

Also, for the past 17 years, we have had a volunteer art program at the school. One of the gross/fine motor and recreational/sensory activities in which students participate in their classrooms is the creation of basic expressive art projects. These are abstract designs in which students make basic choices about the materials and colors to be used and then utilize their own individual physical abilities to manipulate the materials to create the artwork. If a student has very limited physical abilities, he or she will still make the basic choices of color, materials, etc. and then a staff member will help the student complete the art. This artwork is then used in the making of cards and prints. Over the years, our students have had their artwork exhibited at various places in the community, including at the University of Illinois, Parkland College, at Indigo Studios in downtown Champaign, at Clark Lindsey Village, and at various arts and craft fairs. In addition, we have one print which is on permanent exhibit at the University of Illinois and another print which is in the lobby of large medical firm in downtown Chicago.

More recently, we have expanded our volunteer program at the school and are working on getting our students out in the community on a greater basis. Community field trips can be difficult at times due to the extensive medical and nursing care that our students require. However, we have taken trips to the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts to see various performances through their school youth series program. In addition, we have developed a relationship with the Urbana Park District and have gone to both the Meadowbrook Park Prairie, Busey Woods and the Anita Purvis Nature Center for activities as a part of their school educational program. We also have had Urbana Park District Naturalist in the Classroom programs at the school during the winter time when we are not able to get outside. These programs have been about such things as birds, reptiles, earthworms, animal tracks, etc. and have involved visits by some of their resident animals including an owl, a snake, and turtles.

Swann Special Care Center Elementary School is completing this application for approval as a nonpublic educational program so that it can continue to provide quality educational services to its students, families, and school districts in order to meet their unique needs. This is especially true for our student population as they would not function very well or have their complex needs, especially medical and personal care, met in a typical classroom or public school setting. At this time the severity of their needs and the overall level at which they are functioning preclude this from happening. Swann Special Care Center Elementary School has had a rich and long history of meeting the needs of its unique population of students and would like to be able to do so in the future.

2. Mission/Vision Statement

The mission of Swann Special Care Elementary School is to promote learning, dignity, and quality of life for its students in an environment that furthers individuality. As a result, all students are encouraged to participate to the fullest extent possible in their learning and in their lives.

The following are viewed as positive outcomes for students following participation in the Swann Special Care Center Elementary School program:

1. Transition to the Swann Special Care Center Secondary School or a similar such program.
2. Continued residence at Swann Special Care Center with the educational component transferred to the local public school program.
3. Return to residence in the parent/guardian home with school attendance in the student's home school.

For further information please go to www.swanncare.org.

3. Purpose and Scope

The program at Swann Special Care Center Elementary School is an alternative setting to the regular public school educational environment. Potentially eligible students may come to the attention of Swann Special Care Center through referral from the public school district or by another agency that has determined the need for placement. Most of the students live residentially at the Swann long term skilled nursing facility. This residential placement is paid for through the Illinois Medicaid program.

The students come to Swann for a variety of reasons. However, the main one is that their families are no longer able to provide the 24 hour/7 day a week care needs (especially medical) that our students require. In addition, some of the students are wards of the State of Illinois through the Department of Children and Family Services or the Office of State Guardian and there is no appropriate foster placement for them which is able to meet their extensive needs.

These significant needs in all areas, but especially the medical, prevent our students from participating in a regular school environment. In addition, they require a functional adaptive curriculum to progress which is dissimilar to the general education curriculum. When these items are considered, placement in the alternative setting is necessary so student needs can be met.

In order to meet these needs of its student population, Swann Special Care Center Elementary School utilizes an adaptive functional curriculum for its program. This curriculum uses sequential and developmental educational instruction in a variety of areas. In addition, the program has a low staff/student ratio with the required nursing services being able to be done in the classroom. This allows teachers the ability to

provide both individual and small group instruction to the students. This is a must considering the severity and complexity of the disabilities that our students have as well as the time that it takes our students to learn and master skills. Further, the classrooms at Swann Special Care Center Elementary School are designed with both the space and specialized equipment necessary to provide the education and care that our students require. This includes but is not limited to various types of adaptive equipment for students to access their environment and interact with others, mat tables that allow students to get out their wheelchairs and lie down when needed but still participate in classroom activities, adapted computers and iPads that can be activated via adaptive switch or other alternative means, and sensory areas that allow students to participate in sensory integration activities.

Again, a part of our mission at Swann Special Care Center Elementary School is to make sure that all students are encouraged to participate to the fullest extent possible in their learning and in their lives. As an element of this philosophy, we are dedicated to devising and creating the necessary accommodations for our students to achieve this no matter the level at which they are functioning.

4. Program Overview

Swann Special Care Center Elementary School is designed for children, ages 3-21, who have very severe or profound intellectual disabilities (ID), other health impairments (OHI), traumatic brain injury (TBI), Developmental Delay (DD), and multiple disabilities (MD). As result of their disabilities, the students at the Swann Special Care Center Elementary School also have various types of medical needs and function at a developmental age of 3 months to 2-3 years. Most are in wheelchairs and all need assistance with daily care activities. Most of the students live at Swann Special Care Center, a long-term skilled nursing facility, and come from across the State of Illinois. However, the school does accept students who live with their families in the surrounding communities when appropriate if they are placed through their local school district.

Currently, the program has a maximum number of 30 students divided into 3 self-contained cross categorical classrooms. Current class sizes range from 2 to 3 students with a ratio of 5:1 in two classrooms and 10:2 in the other classroom. The educational staff consists of a head teacher, teachers, paraprofessionals and related services staff for physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech/language, and nursing. The educational staff works in conjunction with the nursing program and other support staff employed by Swann Special Care Center to assure that each child's physical, medical, nutritional, intellectual, emotional, and social needs are met. As a part of the program, a nurse is present at the school each school day.

Swann Special Care Center Elementary School provides a year-round program for its students. This is to maximize the instructional time that they receive and to help prevent regression of skills that may have taken months or even years to learn During the 2023-2024 school year, the regular school year was 181 days with the extended school year being 63 days. The calendar submitted to ISBE for the 2024-2025 school year has 180

days for the regular school year and 63 days for the extended school year. The amount of instructional time per day is 5 hours during both the regular and extended school year terms.

5. Disability and Instruction Style

The overall curriculum at Swann Elementary School is that of an adaptive functional curriculum. This type of curriculum focuses on improving functional skills of the student and getting them to participate as fully as possible in their daily lives. Academic skills are not focused on due to the developmental age and needs of the students. However, some modified and adapted reading, math, and science activities are utilized each day. Assistive technology is used extensively throughout each classroom to help students access and interact with people and objects in their environment including using computers and iPads. In addition, we have a sensory room for the students to utilize for sensory integration by initiating and maintaining appropriate responses and interactions to various types of sensory input.

Sequential and developmental educational instruction is at the heart of this curriculum including:

1. Basic learning skills/Intellectual development
2. Communication/Language development
3. Personal/Self-help skills
4. Gross motor development
5. Fine motor development
6. Social Development
7. Sensory Integration
8. Leisure and Recreation
9. Prevocational

This type of curriculum is the most appropriate for our students based on their profound disabilities and medical needs as well as the developmental levels at which they are functioning. The students function at a developmental age of 3 months to 2-3 years.

Assessment of the students is completed in a variety of ways. The main method is through observation of the student's performance by the teacher and staff. Observed performance is then recorded for each goal and objective. Data showing overall performance levels are then compiled and included on the student's report cards quarterly and at the end of the extended school year. Other assessment methods used include the Inventory for Client and Agency Planning (ICAP), the Illinois Alternate Assessment (Dynamic Learning Maps) and various developmental scales.

Although, the overall curriculum for all of the students in the program is an adaptive functional curriculum, due to a student's specific disability, unique instructional approaches may need to be utilized.

For students with intellectual disability, instruction focuses on the development of functional daily living skills as well as some pre-academic skills. Students with multiple disabilities focus on the same skill development as those students with only intellectual disabilities. However, their instruction goes further in order to accommodate the aspects of multiple disabilities which can include physical/motor deficits, visual or auditory problems, medical issues, etc. The same holds true for those students with Other Health Impairments although these instructional accommodations may be based more on their medical and nutritional needs with the physical/motor deficits and visual or auditory problems being Elementary.

For students with developmental delay, instruction will need to focus on developing skills in the areas that have been identified as being delayed for the student. This will involve individualized and small group instruction in both pre-academic and academic areas, the use various adaptations or accommodations to help the student develop the delayed skills and frequent data collection/testing in order to determine if the student is progressing and when he or she is performing back at appropriate developmental levels.

For students with TBI, the instructional approach takes into account the need to accommodate these students for varying awareness levels, possible short attention spans, processing deficits (which can lead to cortical blindness, auditory issues, medical problems and physical/motor deficits), and for the development of behavioral issues as a result of the brain injury. In addition, instruction for students with TBI may need to focus on relearning or adapting skills previously mastered as opposed to learning new skills depending upon at what age the brain injury occurred.

The therapeutic philosophy that Swann Special Care Center Elementary School adheres to is a philosophy in which all students are encouraged to participate to the fullest extent possible in their learning and in their lives. As a result, we foster and promote the educational and necessary medical and life sustaining supports for our students. As such any required medical interventions or treatments, related services, evaluations, exams, etc. will be provided. In addition, we support good nutrition for our students (whether they eat orally or via g-tube), proper and timely repositioning, individualized and small group instruction and the use of various types of assistive technology so they can both access their environment and interact with others.

Generally, our students do not exhibit behavioral issues nor do they need behavior programs. However, if such a need arises, the behavior program will be developed in conjunction with the residential long term skilled nursing facility so that it may be put in place in all environments for the student. Any such behavioral program will need to be approved by the student's IEP team as well as the Swann Medical Director and the Swann Human Rights Committee. Data collection for such programs will use a format which utilizes the basic ABC's of behavior management and will include data regarding the antecedent to the behavior, the behavior itself and the consequence of the behavior. Both short term/long term objectives will be included as a part of the behavior program.

6. Related Services

Swann Special Care Center Elementary School provides Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT), Speech Language Therapy (S/L), and Nursing as needed for students according to their IEP's.

Since the school and residence are now located in the same building there is now longer daily busing to and from school for the residents who live at Swann Special Care Center. Resident school districts would provide transportation for any students coming from the community at large. Swann Elementary School does provide busing for field trips. For the field trips, adaptive buses with AC/heat and hydraulic lifts/ramps are utilized. Appropriately licensed drivers and bus assistants are on the bus and help get the students on/off and strap/unstrap their wheelchairs. The assistants also stay with the students when the bus is in motion. Students with a medical condition that may require frequent immediate emergency care must ride the bus with a nurse.

Vision and auditory exams as well as any follow-up are handled through the residential nursing facility.

Related Services Personnel provide these services at the school either directly or through consultation/ training.

Currently all of the students at Swann Special Care Center Elementary School have OT, PT, and S/L consultation, including a yearly evaluation completed by the licensed related services staff in each area that shows current levels of functioning and programming recommendations. Related Services Personnel work closely with the classroom staff to ensure that these recommendations are utilized on a daily basis with each of the students. This is to guarantee that the students are receiving the maximum amount of interventions possible. All consultation services are scheduled as required with the appropriate staff.

Direct Services are provided at the school either on an individual or group basis. Most of these services are provided within the classrooms. However, in some cases they are done in other areas of the building if there is a need to minimize distractions. Currently, our physical therapy aide comes 3 days per week to complete gross motor maintenance programs (stander, sitting, assisted walking, range of motion, etc.). Direct OT and Speech services are provided for students by appropriately credentialed staff (OT/COTA or Speech Language Pathologist) when indicated by the IEP team.

Nursing is an integral part of the program for all of our students and is built into the basic structure of the school program and school day. These services are completed by a licensed nurse within the classrooms. Due to the complexity and integration of the nursing services provided at Swann Special Care Center Elementary School specific nursing minutes are not usually listed. Instead, a statement is included in the IEP that the nurse is at the school throughout the day and will complete the prescribed medical procedures (giving medications, g-tube feedings, flushes, suctioning, tracheostomy care, etc.) as well as respond to any emergency situations that may arise. For those students

who live at the residential nursing facility, the nurse follows the orders of the Swann Medical Directors. These orders are reviewed, updated, and sent out to the school on the Physician Order Sheets (POS) and Medication Administration Record (MAR) sheets on at least a monthly basis or sooner if needed. For students who live in the community, the nurse follows the orders of the student's personal physician.

7. Programmatic Outcomes

- A. Swann Special Care Center Elementary School will continue to promote the educational and necessary medical and life sustaining supports for its students. As a result, at least 80% of eligible students will either return to an appropriate public school program or transition to the Swann Special Care Center Secondary School or a similar such program.
- B. To foster students' overall social development, emotional well-being, and appropriate interactions, the number of community interactions for students at Swann Elementary School will be increased by at least 25%.
- C. Even though an adaptive functional curriculum remains the main focus for the students at Swann Elementary school due to their overall needs, it is important to promote balanced development for our students. Therefore, at least 80% of them will participate in and work towards developing some sort of basic pre-academic skills.

8. Data Collection

Each student enrolled has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) with goals and objectives that are addressed in the classroom and in other settings as appropriate. These goals focus on intellectual development, communication, motor abilities, sensory activities, social skills, independent functioning, and if applicable vocational skills. All IEP goals are aligned with appropriate state standards.

Assessment of the students is completed in a variety of ways. However, the main method is through observation of the student's performance by the teacher and staff. Observed performance is then recorded for each goal and objective. Data showing overall performance levels are then compiled and included on the student's report cards quarterly and at the end of the extended school year. Other assessment methods used include the Inventory for Client and Agency Planning (ICAP), the Illinois Alternate Assessment (Dynamic Learning Maps), various developmental scales and evaluations completed by related services personnel. The data compiled from these assessments is utilized by teachers, staff, and related services personnel to develop and modify instructional techniques and interventions as well as to determine developmentally appropriate IEP goals and objectives.

Behaviorally, our students do not generally have behavioral issues nor do they need behavior programs. However, if such a need arises, the behavior program will be developed in conjunction with the residential long term skilled nursing facility so that it

may be put in place in all environments for the student. Any such behavioral program will need to be approved by the student's IEP team as well as the Swann Medical Director and the Swann Human Rights Committee. Data collection for such programs will use a format which utilizes the basic ABC's of behavior management and will include data regarding the antecedent to the behavior, the behavior itself and the consequence of the behavior. Both short term and long-term objectives will be included as a part of the behavior program. Behavior data that is compiled will be utilized in order to determine what might be causing the behavior, whether or not the current behavioral interventions are working and if the behavior program might be able to be discontinued.

9. Philosophy and Methodology for Reintegration

When looking at reintegration into a less restrictive environment, we have to consider the fact that the students at Swann Special Care Center Elementary School have very severe/profound multiple disabilities and complex medical needs that require extensive daily care in addition to their educational program. As a result of their disabilities, the students function at a developmental age of 3 months to 2-3 years. Further, some of the students have degenerative diseases that affect the brain and nervous system which leads to a decrease in skills and an increase in needed supports as the student ages.

Also, when contemplating reintegration into a student's home school, we have to consider that most of our students come from all over the State of Illinois and live residentially at the Swann long term skilled nursing facility which is quite a distance from their home schools. Thus, not only would school reintegration have to be considered, but we also have to look at whether or not the individual can be successfully reintegrated with the family. This is a big concern as the main reason that most of the individuals were initially placed in the long-term skilled nursing facility is that their families were no longer able to provide the 24 hour/7 day a week care needs (especially medical) that our students require. In addition, some of the students are wards of the State of Illinois through the Department of Children and Family Services or the Office of State Guardian and there is no appropriate foster placement for them which is able to meet their extensive needs.

The significant needs in all areas, but especially the medical, have in the past prevented our students from participating in a regular school environment. In addition, they require a functional adaptive curriculum to progress which is dissimilar to the general education curriculum. When these items are considered, especially the medical and care needs, placement in the alternative setting has been necessary by the IEP team so that a student's current needs can be met.

Thus, when the IEP team does consider the possibility of reintegration into a less restrictive environment during the discussion of placement options at the annual review, it is not just the skill levels of the student that need to be considered, but most importantly, it's the medical and care supports required. If there has been a significant change in the medical, care, and educational supports required by the student based on the information, assessments, and reports at the time of the meeting, the team will consult

further with the student's parent/guardian and primary care physician as well as others at the school district in order to determine if some type of reintegration is appropriate and feasible.

Currently, Swann Special Care Center Elementary School has had one successful reintegration to a less restrictive environment. This student was able to return home to live with her mother and attend her home public school.

If reintegration is deemed appropriate and feasible, Swann Special Care Center Elementary School will provide any and all supports necessary during the process. This will include providing information, attending meetings, working with staff at the new placement during the transitional process, providing transportation as necessary while the student is still enrolled at our school, etc.

The reintegration process at Swann Special Care Center Elementary School is tracked annually as a part of the IEP review process for each student. If a student is successfully reintegrated into a less restrictive environment, our staff work with the new placement to make the transition a success. Follow up is done periodically to determine if the reintegration is still working. If a student also moves out of the long-term skilled nursing facility as a part of the reintegration, the social services director also follows up with the family in order to ensure that everything is going all right.

As a part of this process, we want to make sure that all of our students are encouraged to participate to the fullest extent possible in their learning and in their lives. As an element of this philosophy, we are dedicated to devising and creating the necessary accommodations for our students to achieve this no matter the level at which they are functioning.

Updated March 2024