



Neil Hellman School

Neil Hellman School offers a continuum of education options that helps children from kindergarten through grade 12 find success.

Kris Youmans

Chief Education Officer &
Superintendent
518.369.6913
Kris.Youmans@nrfs.org

Jennifer Giufre

Senior Program Director &
Principal
Neil Hellman School
518.426.2628
Jennifer.Giufre@nrfs.org

Renee Kingsley

Program Director
Neil Hellman Preschool
518.292.5510, ext. 5539
Renee.Kingsley@nrfs.org

For more information on our programs or to find out how Northern Rivers can help students, contact:

Michelle Miller

Director of Intake
office, 518.372.9423, ext. 7393
mobile, 518.337.6278
Michelle.Miller@nrfs.org

Getting Started

School districts' CSE can refer public school-aged youths with related handicapping conditions. NHS is best able to serve youth who live within a 50-mile radius of the facility.

Once a student is referred to the Neil Hellman School by a local educational agency, a comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation is completed using academic testing and social/behavioral assessments. The team provides a treatment plan for the youth within 30 days from the date of admission.

These services are provided by Northern Rivers Family of Services and member agencies.

**NORTHERN
RIVERS**

Neil Hellman School (NHS) provides students in kindergarten through grade 12 with integrated educational services 46 weeks per year and clinical services 52 weeks per year. The school is certified as an 853 special education facility by the NYS Education Department and serves residential and day students with emotional, behavioral, and learning challenges. Staff members provide therapeutic, educational, and vocational services to empower students to reach their maximum potential using hands-on, alternative, and experiential teaching methods in conjunction with traditional instruction to ensure student success.

Neil Hellman School programs engender a sense of community among students and to promote therapeutic learning throughout the school day.

Student Profile

Students referred to NHS are considered emotionally handicapped by their home school districts. Many have various secondary handicapping conditions such as ADD, ADHD, autism spectrum disorders, and learning disabilities. Students have displayed significant behavior/emotional problems in previous educational placements and some have been recently discharged from inpatient hospitalization for psychiatric disorders and require a transitional placement before returning to their home school.

Enriched staff-to-student ratio (8:1:2) allows for a supportive environment in which instruction is highly individualized. Staff members meet or exceed certification requirements outlined by the NYS Education Department. Upon admission to Neil Hellman School students are scoring significantly below their peers in standardized achievement tests, as well as those tests required by the Education Department for yearly school report cards. The school's state-of-the-art approach enables students to show substantial gains. Close partnerships with parents and local Committees on Special Education (CSEs) allow students to meet their goals to return to less-restrictive, community educational settings. On average, this occurs in 18 months.

Services

- Special programming provided to students includes:
- Prevocational training and school-to-work placements
- Guidance counseling
- Positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), including functional behavioral assessment and Ties 2 and individual behavioral intervention plans
- Mediation/conflict resolution strategies
- Trauma informed care (TCI) and restorative practices
- Occupational and speech therapy
- Individual, group, and family counseling
- Structured recreational and creative arts activities in a therapeutic and supportive school setting

Transportation is provided by the home school district; youth are picked up at their respective schools or homes and are returned home each day after the end of the school day.

(over)

Northern Rivers Family of Services provides a spectrum of early enrichment, child development, and primary and secondary special educational services to help youth reach their academic potential. Our education programs, located in Albany and Schenectady, serve youth from throughout the region through a nurturing, Our Schenectady-based NYS Education Department certified 853 special education program helps students in grades 6 through 12 who live within 50 miles of our Schenectady campus overcome academic, behavioral, and social challenges through an integrated of intensive clinical and educational supports.

The Northern Rivers Difference

We work with every youth and family in our care to provide person-centered, client-driven services that helps everyone in our educational programs work toward meaningful goals and achieve success. With small class sizes, a culture based on respect, and our use of hands-on, alternative, and experiential teaching methods in conjunction with traditional traditional instruction, we do everything in our power to ensure student success.

Northern Rivers is guided by a set of universally accepted principles that guide the actions of every member of our family. We organize these values through the acronym **HOPE**.

Honor: To help others is the highest calling; we strive to do what is right for those in our care.

Optimism: We believe things can get better if we work together, aim higher, and set meaningful goals.

Progress: Every day provides an opportunity to improve, and we promise to continue striving.

Excellence: We hold ourselves to the highest standards, because our communities deserve the best from us.

