

## WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT, HUDSON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

ARIS<sup>®</sup> Helps Reduce Out of District Placements

Comprehensive curriculum supports the learning needs of neurodiverse students

The Language Builder<sup>®</sup> Academic Readiness Intervention System (ARIS<sup>®</sup>) by STAGES<sup>®</sup> Learning is a comprehensive curriculum for educators working with students with autism, language development delays, and other cognitive challenges. The Weehawken Township School District in New Jersey implemented ARIS<sup>®</sup> in five self-contained classrooms at Daniel Webster School in the 2022-2023 academic year with 35 students in preK 3/4 and K-2.

ARIS<sup>®</sup> is part of the district's initiative to provide high quality special education within the district and reduce out of district placements. Superintendent Eric Crespo is committed to educating the district's neurodiverse students in their home community and ARIS<sup>®</sup> offered the evidence-based curriculum he needed to meet the teachers' needs and support student learning. In 2019-2020, Weehawken had 67 students in out of district placements, which had a significant impact on their budget. By 2022-2023, only 13 students were in out of district placements due to the development of programs within the district to meet student needs. Crespo says these programs are essential for both the district's budget and to educate students within their community.

**“ARIS<sup>®</sup> has really made my school year flow a lot easier. I don't feel like I'm rushing every day to find things. You know what you're teaching each day and you're just following the guide.”**

— Allison Thum, PreK Special Education Teacher

**“The teachers worked with ARIS<sup>®</sup> and they said ‘this is what we want’. Honestly, I didn't really make the choice, my teachers did. We brought in the vendors, and my teachers said ‘this one not only makes our lives easier, but this one is also most beneficial for the students because it has all the aspects that we need.’ It's incredible that we're seeing our students developing in the manner that they are and their families are so happy.”**

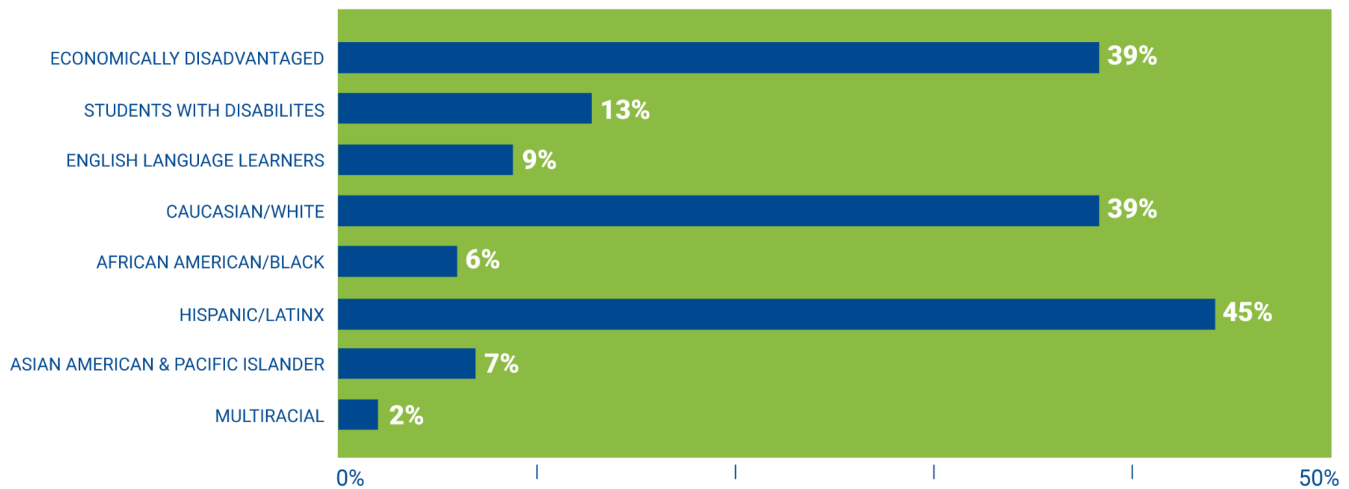
— Eric Crespo, Superintendent

### ARIS<sup>®</sup> Includes Complete Lessons and Materials to Reduce Planning Time

With ARIS<sup>®</sup>, educators can spend more time teaching and less time preparing lessons and searching for materials. Allison Thum, a special education teacher who works with preschoolers aged three and four, says ARIS<sup>®</sup> has saved her time, money, and frustration this year because each of the 202 lessons is clearly outlined, including progression, prompting, generalization, and whole child lesson ideas. All of these materials are readily available in the ARIS<sup>®</sup> kit. Additionally, each lesson is aligned to the New Jersey state standards and the VB-MAPP and ABLLS-R assessments. She says her students have made significant growth throughout the year, with some students progressing from nonverbal to being able to expressively label items by the end of the year.

**WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

1,294 Students in Grades PreK-12



**ARIS® Enables Paraprofessionals and Aides to Provide Instruction**

ARIS® lessons can be implemented by educators with a range of experience levels and training, including paraprofessionals and aides. Preschool special education teacher Kimberly Douglass says her students have received a substantial amount of 1:1 instruction this year, because all of the staff in her classroom can implement the ARIS® lessons. Crespo says that the opportunity to more fully leverage the talents of paraprofessionals was one of the factors that drew Weehawken to ARIS®.

Students in the five classrooms using ARIS® have demonstrated growth this year as they progress through the seven categories of foundational content in ARIS®, including six students who will transition into inclusion classrooms for the 2023-2024 school year.

**STAGES® Learning Offers Professional Development and Coaching**

Weehawken partnered with STAGES® Learning to provide educators with professional development and coaching about how to implement ARIS® in their classrooms. Victoria Mornhineway, a K-2 special education teacher, says the opportunities to ask questions and receive individualized support in her classroom from STAGES® Learning consultants

throughout the year was invaluable. Crespo says STAGES® Learning’s interactive and hands-on approach enabled teachers to gain a foundational understanding of the curriculum and then receive support using the lessons and materials in their own classrooms with their own students. He says the implementation of ARIS® was seamless and successful due to that support.

**“The resources that are given with the curriculum are helpful. It’s a big bin that has all the lesson plans, all the data collection sheets, all the resources and tools you need to conduct these lessons. It’s an overall great structure and it all comes in one kit, which makes it so manageable, especially for teachers that have kids on all different grade levels learning different skills. It’s a nice way to keep everything cohesive and it’s easy to transition to the next thing.”**

– Victoria Mornhineway, K-2 Special Education Teacher

Contact us at [info@stageslearning.com](mailto:info@stageslearning.com) or visit [www.stageslearning.com](http://www.stageslearning.com) to learn more about how you can bring ARIS® to your school or district.