



Special Education Instruction

Program and Services

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) is committed to providing special education students with opportunities along a continuum of services that offer access to and participation in the activities of the school and community environments as appropriate to the age and educational needs of the student.

In FCPS services to students with disabilities are planned with long term outcomes in mind. Annual goals and objectives consider development in the areas of cognitive/academic, communication, personal, interpersonal and career skills. Teachers are committed to their role in planning with a student and family, through these annual goals and objectives, for the student's postsecondary education, employment and residential independence.

Fairfax County Public Schools upholds the principles of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as they support the rights of students with disabilities to have decisions regarding their individual instructional program made through the collaboration of parents who know their child best and professional educators who have knowledge of instructional practices and experience in guiding students with disabilities to become productive citizens.

Fairfax County Public Schools protects the rights of students with disabilities to be educated by teachers trained to instruct through adapted curriculum, to utilize a variety of instructional strategies and to take advantage of supplementary materials appropriate for the student's individual educational program (**IEP**).

Across the continuum of special education services, Fairfax County Public Schools serves students with one or more of the following identified disabilities:

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| Autism | Intellectual disability |
| Deafness | Multiple disabilities |
| Deaf/blindness | Orthopedic impairment |
| Developmental delays | Other health impairment |
| Emotional disability | Specific learning disability |
| Hearing impairment | Speech and language impairment |
| | Traumatic brain injury |
| | Visual impairment |

Related therapy services are available to allow a student to benefit from the individualized special education program.

Program Overview: The PreK-12 Office of Special Education Instruction strategically supports the implementation of evidence-based practices to increase academic achievement and the social and emotional competence of students based on individual needs.

In collaboration with the Instructional Services Department, the PreK-12 Office of Special Education Instruction for students with high-incidence disabilities provides support to schools through:

- Training and support for schools implementing Responsive Instruction, a tiered system of support for students
- Professional development in the areas of behavioral interventions, core instruction (literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies), collaborative teaching, differentiated instruction, use of formal and informal assessments, research-based instructional strategies for teaching content, and the Mandt System of crisis intervention
- Research-based materials to match curriculum and instructional needs
- Consultations with school staff to provide school-based professional development in areas related to instruction and behavior intervention
- School consultations with administrators to address program development and staffing
- Curriculum development in areas of support for students with disabilities
- Behavioral support and planning
- Mentor coaches for new special education teachers
- ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis)

In addition, special education staff members attend school-based, cluster, division-wide professional development opportunities offered by the Instructional Services Department related to the general education curriculum and resources.

In collaboration with the Parent Resource Center (PRC), support for parents is provided through parent workshops and trainings. More information can be found at the following link: <http://www.fcps.edu/cco/prc/>

Instructional Program

The PreK-12 curriculum for FCPS is guided by the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) and the FCPS Program of Studies (POS) which includes objectives that have been identified for each grade level and curriculum area. This curriculum is a tool for planning, monitoring, and evaluating students' work and progress on a continuous basis. Specialized instructional programs for reading, writing, and mathematics, are evidence-based, providing students with targeted, systematic, and explicit instruction on a consistent basis as determined by the IEP team. These programs are used to supplement the general education instructional program and provide students with differentiated approaches to access the curriculum.

Teachers provide special education services across a continuum of delivery options, ranging from the least to most restrictive learning environments in the following areas:

- Consultation with general education teachers/employers to include co-teaching with the general education teacher
- Individual and small-group support within general education classroom
- Individual and small-group pull-out services outside of the general education classroom

- Small-group self-contained classes within a general education school
- Special education schools co-located within general education sites
- Separate special education schools

When appropriate, students may also receive services in private day and residential schools, in the home, and in hospital settings. Related therapy services are available to support students in accessing the academic environment ([Related Services](#)).

Staffing

The following staff members may provide instruction and support for students with disabilities in high-incidence programs:

Special education teachers

- plan and implement the instructional program, often in collaboration with general education teachers
- monitor student progress and direct the activities of instructional assistants

Instructional assistants

- perform teaching-related activities and non-teaching assignments at the direction of the special education teacher

Social workers and psychologists

- provide counseling services
- assist in gathering outside resources
- provide crisis intervention

Special education elective teachers

- teach elective courses with a smaller student-teacher ratio

Related service providers

- provide services to students as determined by the IEP team

Central office specialists and curriculum resource teachers

- provide support for school staff to improve student achievement
- coordinate curriculum development
- plan and conduct professional development on topics across the curriculum
- prepare and monitor budget spending
- ensure that the philosophy and design of services reflect the current and relevant research in the field

Other staff members (not necessarily school based)

- behavior intervention teachers
- procedural support liaisons
- assistive technology teachers

Interpretation of Special Needs Policy at Robinson Secondary

The mission statement of Robinson Secondary School states: “The mission of Robinson Secondary School is to create a culture of confidence in which all students are empowered with the academic, social and ethical knowledge and skills to be well-rounded citizens ready for life beyond high school.”

Open Access to IB DP

The Diploma Program at Robinson is open access and students who, with some assistance, are capable of taking IB courses are encouraged to do so. IB DP Coordinators give a presentation each January to all tenth grade students outlining the opportunity of IB courses (Certificates and Diploma options). All students are encouraged to consider taking at least one IB DP course. In addition, subject area teachers also encourage their students to continue to IB Diploma and preparatory Honors level courses when appropriate. Teachers have individual conferences with students to discuss the options available in the next level of study. Students have the option to access Honors (i.e. preparatory) courses in their middle and high school sequence. The goal of this methodology is to encourage all students to see themselves as capable at succeeding in challenging work and find an IB course that fits their interests and abilities. IB English Language and Literature HL and IB Psychology SL in particular, are courses that capable learning disabled students looking to try an IB course, take. Teachers of those courses are particularly sensitive to special needs and work closely with students who need accommodations and different deadlines. All IB DP teachers are particularly attentive to scaffolding Internal Assessments so that students who can get overwhelmed by research and lengthy writing assignments can comfortably and successfully work through the process. There are also students with learning disabilities as well as Asperger’s Syndrome and vision impairment who successfully complete multiple IB courses, including core classes such as English and mathematics.

Teacher Responsibilities

Students who have IEPs (Individualized Learning Plans based on documented discrepancies between ability and performance) or 504’s (accommodations suggested by teachers based on something that interferes with learning such as emotional problems and health issues), take IB classes. While curriculum is not modified, teachers creatively work with these students to encourage their success. Accommodations may include the use of a computer, extra time for tasks, and extra help after school.

Teacher computers are equipped with an application, GetIEP, that allows them to view individual students’ Individual Education Plans (IEP) and 504 accommodations. The attendance system that teachers use each day also includes symbols next to each student who has an IEP or 504, with a clickable link to access the plan. This ensures that teachers are constantly reminded of student accommodations and can build access to their programs for all students by addressing the needs of all learners.

Staffing to Support Student Needs

The special education staff includes the following:

- 4 vision teachers and 2 vision instructional assistants
- 5 intellectual disabilities/multiple disabilities teachers and 6 instructional assistants
- 1 emotional disabilities teacher (who also serves LD, OHI and autism)
- 26 learning disabilities (LD) teachers and 8 instructional assistants
- 2 speech/language pathologists who service all disabilities
- 1 itinerant occupational therapist who services several schools
- 1 itinerant physical therapist who services several schools
- 1 itinerant hearing impairment therapist who services several schools
- 2 assistive technology (AT) resource teachers who service several schools
- 1 behavior intervention teacher (BIT) who services several schools
- 1 applied behavior analysis (ABA) coach who services several schools
- 1 audiologist who services several schools
- 1.5 employment and transition representatives (the .5 staff member services one other school)
- 1 school based emotional disabilities (SBED) psychologist
- 1 PHA (public health attendant)
- 1 PHTA (public health training assistant)

These teachers and aides work with regular classroom teachers in a variety of capacities: team-teaching, ordering materials in larger print, and following up with students on the completion of assignments. Case managers hold annual meetings with parents and teachers to review the IEPs and make necessary revisions. Special education staff and regular classroom teachers both meet with parents to discuss the implementation of accommodations. In the case of full IB diploma candidates, one of the Diploma Program coordinators may also initiate contact with parents and sit in meetings with counselors and parents. The counseling staff is integral to the success of all students taking IB courses, working with the teachers and the coordinators to monitor student achievement and problem-solve.