



Fauquier County Public Schools

Office of Special Education
Warrenton, VA 20186-3037
(540) 422-7140-phone
(540) 422-7059-fax

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www.fcps1.org

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The Department of Special Education is responsible for a wide variety of programs and services available within the Fauquier County Public School system. Certain programs, such as counseling services are available to the entire school population. While others, such as speech/language services are available only to special education students who qualify and such services are necessary for the student make educational progress. These programs represent our assurance that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities in the Fauquier County Public School system.

Pre-School Program

Fauquier County's program for pre-school children serves eligible children who have reached the age of two by September 30th of each year. Children assigned to the special education pre-school program have a wide variety of physical, cognitive, developmental and behavioral disabilities. The program provides an array of service delivery models.

- Drive-in services for preschoolers who have speech/language delays only
- Home-based services, in which a special educator works with the student in his/her home and provides consultation to the parent
- School-based services, which includes mainstreaming with non-disabled peers to the extent appropriate
- Services to Head Start classes, which may include teacher consultation and/or the provision of related services

Resource Program

Fauquier County's resource program serves special education students who remain primarily within the general education setting and participate in the same curriculum as their grade level peers. Special education teachers may provide resource services either in the general education classroom or in a resource classroom. The services provided by the special education staff in the resource program varies tremendously and can include: direct individual or small group instruction to address a skill deficit, supervision of test taking in a small group setting, modification of instructional material to address disability areas, assistance with organizational and study skills, and consultation with the general education teaching staff concerning adaptations and/or accommodations of the curriculum materials or classroom environment. In fulfilling these duties, the special education teaching staff works very closely

with the general education staff, parents and auxiliary staff to provide a strong network of support.

Self-contained Program

FCPS's self-contained program options for students with disabilities vary widely in an effort to meet each individual's educational needs. Services are provided in the least restrictive environment to the maximum extent possible by using individualized curriculum materials, specialized assistive technology, and/or additional classroom assistance. In all cases, children are placed in programs formed to meet their unique instructional and behavioral needs and not merely on the basis of their disability category.

In the elementary level programs, students receive instruction beginning with intensive readiness and progressing to skill development in language arts (listening, speaking, reading, writing and spelling), mathematics, social studies and science. Language and social skills instruction is integrated into the curriculum across grade levels and subject areas. In addition, students at the high school level receive vocational preparation by visiting a variety of work sites and eventually working, under supervision, in the community. These preparations reflect Fauquier County's commitment to encouraging independence and productivity in students.

Programs for Students with Emotional Disabilities

FCPS's ED program is designed to offer a full continuum of placements, ranging from consultation to a day treatment facility to residential placement. All placements address the unique behavioral needs of students with emotional difficulties by incorporating behavior management plans into educational curriculum delivery. The following program features are incorporated into the range of services to better address the needs of students with emotional difficulties and subsequently reduce the number of students who require a more restrictive placement outside of the community.

- Psychological services: Clinically trained School Psychologists and School Social Workers provide teacher and program consultation as well as direct individual/group counseling when warranted. The psychologists/social workers meet regularly in peer consultation and lead the crisis intervention team in responding to crisis situations involving students with emotional difficulties.
- ED Program meetings: A system wide monthly meeting of teachers in the ED program led by a clinically trained psychologist to provide assistance and address issues related to the ED program on an individual class and division wide basis.
- School-based meetings: Teachers in the ED program meet monthly with special education peers in the same school to discuss student and school service related issues. Meetings are attended by special education supervisors assigned to the schools.

Speech/Language Program

FCPS offers a speech-language program inclusive of all grades, disabilities and placements. All speech-language pathologists are professionally trained to prevent, screen, identify, assess, diagnose, refer, and provide intervention for, and counsel persons with or who are at risk for articulation, fluency, voice, language, communication, swallowing, and related disabilities. Speech language pathologists provide services such as consultation, direct individual and group speech therapy, and preventative/therapeutic early intervention programs. In addition to engaging in activities to reduce or prevent communication disabilities, speech-language pathologists also counsel and educate families or professionals about these

disorders and their management. These services are provided within as well as outside the classroom.

Programs for students with deafness/hearing impairment

In FCPS, the program for students with hearing impairments (including deafness) provides an array of services and placements, determined by the needs of each student. These services and placements range from self-contained classes with a full-time interpreter to total immersion in general education with collaborative, consultative and monitoring services. Children with mild and fluctuating hearing loss are monitored.

Fauquier County employs a full-time hearing specialist to screen, identify, assess and provide services to students with hearing impairments. The hearing specialist also acts as a resource for educational staff in matters pertaining to deaf education and deaf culture and maintains a library of resource materials for teaching staff and parents throughout the district. The hearing specialist will also provide interpreting services for deaf parents of children attending school in Fauquier County.

Functional Skills Program

Fauquier County's Functional Skills Program is predicated on the belief that a severe impairment does not denote a lack of learning potential and that all students are capable of and have a right to involvement in the school community. This program is not limited to any singular disability category or severity level for qualification.

The goal of this program is to maximize students' full potential for meaningful participation and contribution to society upon graduation from the educational system. To achieve that purpose, the curriculum of this program is functional rather than academic. It is designed to encourage the acquisition of skills needed to live as fully and independently as possible. Students begin the program with a focus on communication acquisition and building a foundation of social, emotional and physical health in elementary school. Students advance to exploration of interest and potential followed by acquisition of pre-vocational skills in middle school. Ultimately, students enter high school prepared for a program which focuses on the development of independent living skills and vocational skills. These are often acquired under the auspices of a work program within the community established with one of the many businesses contributing to the creation of a true community education program.

Guidance and Counseling Program

School guidance counselors provide developmentally appropriate individual and group guidance and counseling activities for students in pre-school through grade 12. These activities support the goal of educational achievement by assisting students in developing a better understanding of themselves as well as the rights and needs of others. Counselors help students learn to resolve conflicts and define individual personal and vocational goals which reflect personal interests, abilities and aptitudes.

Counseling activities promote the development of student's study skills, test-taking strategies and responsible school attendance. At every grade level, counselors help students and their parents/guardians to acquire knowledge of the curricular choices available to students, to develop an appropriate program of studies, to arrange and interpret academic testing and to maximize academic and social growth opportunities. Counselors provide individual, group and classroom guidance activities to assist students and staff in acquiring information, planning vocational training, jobs, apprenticeships and post-secondary educational and career opportunities.

Working with teachers, parents, guardians, school psychologists, social workers, community agencies, and school administrators, counselors foster the development of a more effective learning climate for children.

School Social Worker Services

School social workers serve as the school's liaison to the home and other community education partners. Their work encompasses multiple programs.

School Social Workers (SSW) serve on both school and community based problem-solving teams. These include Child Study teams, which focus on individual children experiencing school related difficulties and multi-agency teams such as FAPT (Family Assessment and Planning Team), which deal with youth who have multi-faceted problems and require interagency cooperation to affect a solution.

SSW participate in the special education eligibility process by interviewing the student's parent/guardian and reporting on the student's developmental history, health, adjustment to the community and overall domestic situation. They participate in the eligibility committee meetings and school discipline committee meetings. In addition, SSW address attendance issues, provide supportive counseling, serve on the crisis management team, assist families in utilizing community resources and assist in securing alternate placements outside the school system when necessary. As appropriate, they accompany families to various types of meetings concerning their children and interpret school information to them.

Homebound Services

Homebound instruction is provided to students within the school system whose medical needs, physical and/or psychiatric, are of a nature to prevent or preclude school attendance. Homebound instruction is available to both special and general education students who meet the requirements. The tutoring is primarily provided in the home setting, although that is not a requirement.

To be eligible for homebound instruction, the student must provide a physician's or psychiatrist's documentation that the student is unable to attend school as well as a plan for recovery to return to the school setting. Instruction is offered in varying time increments to meet the needs of the individual student. The homebound instructor works closely with the school social worker and the teaching staff of the student's home school to provide instruction consistent with the curriculum being taught in the home school.

Home-based Services

Home-based services are frequently confused with home-bound services. However, home-based services are offered only to students receiving special education services (the student has an IEP or 504 Plan). These services are intended to provide short-term academic training to students who have been removed from the school setting for disciplinary reasons. These services must be recommended by an IEP or 504 team and provided by a licensed teacher. Services do not mirror the educational program provided in the student's home school, but are intended to maintain academic progress during long-term suspensions.

Transition Services

A transition specialist serves as a resource for students in special education to assist them in preparing for adult life. The transition specialist works directly with teachers, as needed, to develop the transition portion of the IEP and services that can be provided to support students in

reaching their post-secondary goals. The transition specialist serves as the school contact for adult service providers by referring students, arranging meetings and acting as a liaison between the student and adult service provider. Developing business partnerships with employers in the community for the special education work programs is a component of the transition specialist's duties as well as being a point of contact for any transition related question or concern.

The transition specialist provides information to families regarding Social Security, Medicaid insurance, Medicaid waivers and other resources available to eligible students. The transition specialist updates/develops appropriate material to be distributed to families, including FCPS' Transition Handbook and plans and implements transition focused activities for families and students, including a transition fair.

Vocational Program

Fauquier County Public Schools offers work experiences for students in Special Education. The Employment Training Program is a two-part elective that prepares student for employment in the community. Employment Training I is a semester long, one block course that instructs students in the skills needed for employment and other employment related topics (ex: job searching, resume writing, preparing for interviews, soft skills, etc...). Employment Training II is a semester long, two block course in which students are matched with community employers and serve as unpaid interns to gain authentic work experience.

High school aged students in the Intellectual Disabilities/Autism program have the opportunity to participate in the Work Experience Program. In this program, students are instructed in pre-vocational and vocational job skills at a community employer job site with the support of FCPS staff.

Psychological Services

Psychologists offer both direct student's services and indirect teaching staff support services within the school division. The psychologists serve both general and special education students. As part of the eligibility process, the psychologists provide specific intellectual, academic, personality and behavioral assessments of students being considered for special education services. In addition, school psychologists provide individual and group counseling utilizing psychological, cognitive and behavioral approaches to assist students with individual developmental difficulties which impact educational process.

Psychologists also participate in crisis intervention and assist in organizing support services for various groups of at-risk students. As members of multi-disciplinary teams, school psychologists provide the educational and psychological background information needed to better understand student difficulties, identify appropriate educational and psychological interventions, evaluate the success of interventions, and assess the intellectual, behavioral and emotional dynamics of student performance. School psychologists also provide ongoing consultation to teachers, administrators and parents regarding the academic, emotional and behavioral development of students.