

Attachment A

Special Education Service and Program Descriptions

School-based Program Delivery Model

Resource Room Services

Resource Room Services, available in all MCPS schools, provide students with disabilities with the support they need in order to be academically successful in the general education environment. Resource room teachers provide an array of services to students with disabilities including direct instruction in reading/language arts, writing, mathematics, and organizational skills.

Speech and Language Programs

The goals of Speech and Language services are to diagnose and remediate communication disorders, facilitate the development of compensatory skills, and enhance the development of language, vocabulary, and expressive communication skills to support student access to the general education curriculum. The type and frequency of services provided are determined by individual student needs. For students with less intensive needs, educational strategies are provided to the student's general education teachers and parents for implementation within the classroom and home environments. Students with more intensive needs receive services individually or in small groups.

Secondary Learning and Academic Disabilities Program

Secondary Learning and Academic Disabilities programs, available in all secondary schools in MCPS, provide services to students as a result of a disability that impacts academic achievement. Students served by this model have previously received a considerable amount of special education support, but need additional services to enable progress toward the IEP goals and objectives. These services are provided in a continuum of settings that may include components of self-contained classes, co-taught general education classes, and other opportunities for participation with non disabled peers.

Transition Services

Transition Services are provided to special education students, age 14 or older, to facilitate a smooth transition from school to post-school activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and/or community participation. Services are based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences, and interests. Transition services are delivered through direct and/or indirect support coordinated by a transition support teacher.

Quad-cluster/Regionally-based Program Delivery Model

Learning for Independence (LFI) Program

The Learning for Independence (LFI) program is designed for students with complex learning and cognitive needs, including mild to moderate mental retardation. Services support the implementation of the Fundamental Life Skills (FLS) curriculum, or a combination of the FLS and accommodated general education curricula. Students are provided with many opportunities for interaction with general education peers, including inclusion in general education classes as appropriate, peer tutoring, and extracurricular activities. They learn functional life skills and functional academics in the context of the general school environment and in community settings. Community based instruction and vocational training are emphasized at the secondary level so that students are prepared for the transition into the world of work upon graduation or exit from the school system.

School/Community-based Program

School/Community-based Program (SCB) services serve students with moderate, severe, or profound mental retardation and/or multiple disabilities. Students typically have significant needs in the areas of communication, personal management, behavior management, and socialization. The program emphasizes individualized instruction, utilizing the Fundamental Life Skills (FLS) curriculum, or a combination of the FLS curriculum and accommodated general education curricula, in comprehensive schools and related community and work environments. The School/Community-based Program model includes the following components: age-appropriate classes, heterogeneous groupings, peer interactions, individualized instruction, and transition, and is available in all quad-clusters. The goal of the program is to prepare students to transition into the world of adult living upon graduation or exit from the school system.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication

The Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) classrooms provide intensive support for students who are non verbal or have limited speech with severe intelligibility issues. Students use augmentative communication devices in order to access the curriculum. Emphasis is on the use of alternative communication systems to enhance language development, vocabulary development, and expressive communication skills. Services and supports are often provided within the general education environment to the greatest extent possible.

Emotional Disabilities Cluster Program

The Emotional Disabilities (ED) Cluster Model provides services within comprehensive schools to students with social, emotional, behavioral, and learning challenges that adversely impact their success in school. The majority of students are identified with an emotional disability. Some students are identified other disabilities, such as other health impairments, language disabilities, and learning disabilities. Students demonstrate average to above average cognitive abilities yet may not demonstrate commensurate academic achievement due to a history of emotional and behavioral difficulties that interfere with their ability to participate successfully in the general education curriculum. The program provides services in a continuum of settings that may include self-contained classes and opportunities for participation in general education classes with non disabled peers as appropriate. The model also has an alternative structure component that provides levels of containment to respond effectively to students' inappropriate and disruptive behavior.

Bridge Program

The Bridge Program is designed to meet the needs of students who demonstrate significant social, emotional, learning, and/or behavioral issues that make it difficult for them to be successful in a large school environment. Many of the students are identified as having an emotional disability. Some students are identified with disabilities such as other health impairment, autism (Asperger's Syndrome), language disability, or learning disability.

Comprehensive behavior management is utilized in the model which includes proactive teaching and rehearsal of social skills, as well as the use of structured and consistent reinforcement systems. Individualized and comprehensive behavior management strategies and systems are used to promote students' acquisition of skills that allow them to be successful in school. The program provides services in a continuum of settings that may include self-contained classes and opportunities for participation in general education classes with non disabled peers as appropriate.

Learning Disabled/Gifted and Talented Classes

Students receiving learning disabled/gifted and talented (LD/GT) services demonstrate superior cognitive ability in at least one area and typically have production problems, particularly in the area of written expression. LD/GT services provide students with specialized instruction, adaptations, and accommodations that facilitate appropriate access to rigorous instruction in the least restrictive environment, which may include placement in Honors or Advanced Placement classes, and access to the acceleration and enrichment components in the MCPS instructional guidelines. Some students may receive services in specialized classrooms.

Secondary (School-based) Learning Center

The Secondary Learning Center (SLC) provides comprehensive special education instruction and related services. The program offers a continuum of services at the middle and high school level. Students are served in a combination of self-contained and co taught classes, as well as having opportunities to be fully included with non disabled peers. Related services are integrated into the delivery of specialized instruction through a team approach. *To improve instructional outcomes for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, the MCPS Board of Education passed the FY 2008 Superintendent's Recommended Operating Budget which included the plan to phase out the secondary learning centers over a six year period. During the 2007–2008 school year Grade 6 secondary learning center classes were phased out. In the 2008–2009 school year, Grade 7 secondary learning center classes will be phased out. Each subsequent grade will be phased out in succession until the transition is complete.*

Countywide Program Delivery Model

(Because of low incidence, these programs are based in central locations and serve students from the entire county. In some cases the programs are provided regionally when the level of incidence increases.)

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program provides comprehensive educational services to students with a significant hearing loss. This program enables students to develop effective language and communication skills and provides them with equal access to the general education environment. Students with significant needs receive services in centrally-located classes. Services are provided in three communications options: oral/aural, total communication, and cued speech. Students with less intensive needs receive services from itinerant teachers at neighborhood schools or other MCPS facilities. Assistive technology and consultation also are provided to students and school staff.

Services for Students with Physical Disabilities/Occupational/Physical Therapy

Occupational and physical therapy provide comprehensive supports that facilitate access to the general education curriculum for students with physical and health-related disabilities. These services address the needs of students whose physical disabilities are causing a significant impact on educational performance in the general education class. Students exhibit needs in motor development and information processing. Services include special education instruction, consultation with classroom teachers, and occupational and physical therapy. Occupational and physical therapy services are provided as related services to students with other educational disabilities. These services are provided at elementary, middle, and high schools throughout MCPS.

Assistive Technology Services

Assistive Technology Services provides support for students from birth–age 21. Augmentative communication and technology services support non verbal students who are severely limited in verbal expression or written communication skills due to physical disabilities. These services are provided for students at their elementary, middle, or high school, whenever the individual need is identified.