

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

July 31, 2019

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Social Emotional Special Education Services (SPC-05-01-19-01)

Question

During the discussion on the Emotional Disability Program, Ms. Wolff requested more information on the Social Emotional Support Services program availability, specifically in East County.

Response

Students in the East County who receive Social Emotional Special Education Services (SESES) are supported by the following schools: Fairland, Flower Valley, and Oakland Terrace elementary schools; Eastern and Julius West middle schools; and Richard Montgomery and Northwood high schools. SESES programs serve students in kindergarten through Grade 12 in general education buildings. These students are diploma-bound.

Students are placed in these programs because their social, emotional, and behavioral challenges impact their ability to access the curriculum in general education classes. They require instruction in small, self-contained classrooms with a low student-to-teacher ratio for academic subjects. They also require insight-based counseling and social-skills support throughout the school day. They attend electives, such as art, music, and physical education, in general education classes with support from paraeducators or coteachers. Many of these students exhibit externalizing behaviors in response to their difficulties.

SESES programs each have a full-time social worker to meet the mental health needs of these students. In addition, each of the seven elementary programs has a full-time behavioral support teacher. The elementary school programs have 3 special education teachers, 2 6-hour paraeducators for each teacher, and may serve as many as 30 students. Each middle school program has a full-time secondary school program specialist, 3 special education teachers, 2 6-hour paraeducators per teacher, and may serve as many as 30 students. Each high school program has a full-time secondary school program specialist, 4 self-contained special education teachers, 2 6-hour paraeducators per teacher, and may serve as many as 40 students.

Student challenges may include:

- Emotional regulation;
- Task initiation and completion;
- Managing stress in the school setting;
- Using appropriate skills when frustrated, angry, or sad;
- Social skills;
- Peer and adult interactions;
- Focus and attention;
- Engaging in appropriate behaviors in small and large groups;
- Coping with anxiety, low frustration tolerance;
- Organizing and planning;
- Problem-solving;
- Significant life trauma; and
- Mood regulation.

If you have questions, please contact Mr. Kevin E. Lowndes, associate superintendent for special education, Office of the Chief Academic Officer, at 240-740-3040.

JRS:MVN:KEL:pgw

Copy to:

Executive Staff
Ms. Webb