



Special Education 101

**School Board Work Session
May 26, 2022**





Essential Questions

- What are the **major components** of the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**?
- What special education **supports** and **services** are available to students in ACPS?
- What is the family's **perspective** in the **special education process**?





Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)



"To ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living." 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1400(d).



Students with Disabilities

- A “student with a disability” is a student who **meets the eligibility criteria for one of 13 categories** of disability and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.
- As of December 1, 2016, the ACPS special education child count included **1753 students with disabilities (SWD)**.





Categories of Disability



- Intellectual Disability
- Hearing Impairment
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Visual Impairment
- Emotional Disturbance
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Autism
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Other Health Impairment
- Learning Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Deaf-Blindness
- Developmental Disability



Child Find



- Each local school division shall **maintain an active and continuing child find program** designed to identify, locate and evaluate those children residing in the jurisdiction who are **birth to age 21**, inclusive, who are in need of special education and related services.
- Each local school division shall **coordinate child find activities for infants and toddlers** (birth to age two, inclusive) with the Part C local interagency coordinating council.



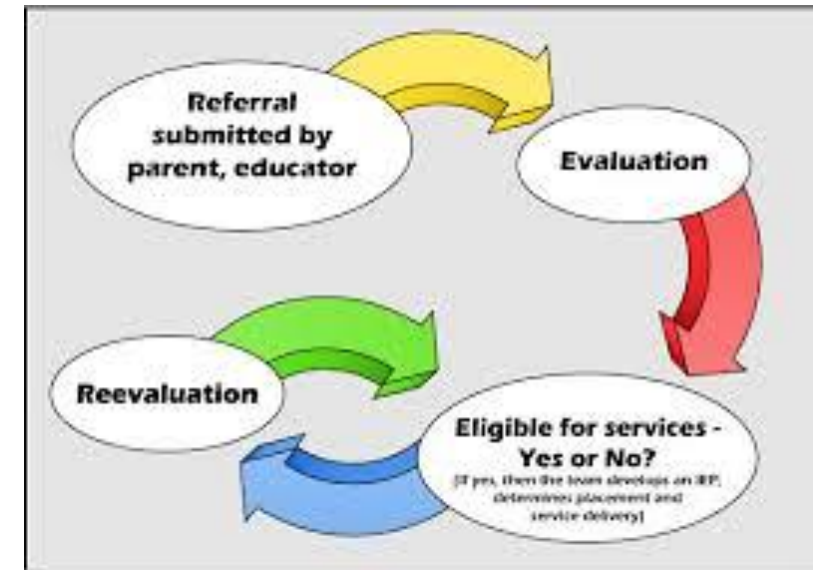
Child Find responsibilities include children who:

- Are **highly mobile**, such as migrant and homeless children
- Are **wards of the state**
- **Attend private schools**, including children who are **home-instructed** or **home-tutored**
- Are **suspected** of being children with disabilities and **in need of special education**, even though they are advancing from grade to grade
- Are **under age 18**, who are suspected of having a disability requiring special education and related services, and who are incarcerated in a regional or local jail in its jurisdiction for 10 or more days



Evaluation

- The school district must conduct a **“full and individual”** evaluation **before** the **initial provision** of special education and related services to a child with a disability.
- Parents must give **“informed consent”** to an initial evaluation.





Initial Evaluation

- ACPS **must use** a **variety** of **assessment tools** and strategies
- ACPS **may not use** any **single measure** or assessment as the sole criterion for eligibility
- The team must **review** existing evaluation data, including:
 - Information provided by the parents
 - Current assessments and classroom observations





Reevaluation

- ACPS must ensure that a reevaluation is conducted at least once **every three (3) years**, unless the parent and the LEA agree otherwise.
- ACPS must use a **variety of assessment tools** to gather relevant information, including information provided by the parents.
- **No single measure** or assessment can be used as the sole eligibility criterion.





Eligibility

- ACPS must use the **disability category criteria** adopted by the Virginia Department of Education for determining whether the child has a disability
- ACPS must have **documented evidence** that, by reason of the disability, the child needs special education and related services
- A child shall not be determined to be a “**child with a disability**” if the major factor in the eligibility determination is:
 - A lack of scientifically based instruction in reading or math
 - Limited English proficiency





Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Special education and related services that:

- Are provided at **public expense**, under public supervision and direction, and **without charge**
- **Meet the standards** of the **Virginia Board of Education**
- Include an **appropriate** preschool, elementary school, middle school, or secondary school **education** in Virginia
- Are provided in **conformity** with an **individualized education program** developed based on the student's unique needs



Special Education

Special Education

- **Specially designed instruction**, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability.



Related Services

- **Supportive services** which are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, for example:
 - Speech Language
 - Occupational Therapy
 - Physical Therapy
 - Counseling



Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

A written plan for each child with a disability that includes

- A statement of the **child's present levels** of educational performance
- A statement of **measurable annual goals**
- A description of how the child's **progress** will be measured
- A statement of the **special education and related services** and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, to be provided to the child

Additional IEP Components

- **Program modifications** or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child
- An **explanation** of the **extent** to which the child will NOT participate with non-disabled peers
- Testing **accommodations**
- **Transition** services



IEP Team

- **Parents** of the child
- A **general education teacher** of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment)
- A **special education teacher**
- A **principal or designee** who
 - Is qualified to teach or supervise special education
 - Is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum
 - Has the ability to commit resources





Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities must be educated with children who are not disabled, and removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of their disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.



Continuum of Services

- Consultative
- Special Education Services in General Education Setting
- Special Education Services in Special Education Setting
- Citywide Classes
- Private Day Placement
- Residential





ACPS Specialized Instruction School Support

Focus Areas

- Co-Teaching
- Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)
- Intensive Intervention
- Data Collection and Analysis
- Best Instructional Practices for Special Education Setting

Support Specialists

- Instructional
- Autism and Behavior Support
- Procedures and Compliance
- Career and Transition



Co-Teaching Defined

- Co-teaching utilizing high yield models is a **service delivery option**.
- Two or more **professionals with equivalent licensure** and employment status.
- Co-teachers **share instructional responsibility** and accountability for a single group of students.
- Co-teaching occurs in a **shared classroom** or workspace.
- Co-teachers' direct instructional responsibility **may vary** based upon the co-teaching model utilized as well as individual student needs.





Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)

- **Universally required** for all students who are eligible for special education services through IDEA. If a student does not need any SDI, that student should not have an IEP.
- What makes special education “special.”
- Comprised of the **steps, procedures, strategies, or other actions taken** by the teacher to promote student learning, remediate deficits created because of disability, and close the achievement gap. It is NOT actions or activities completed by the student.
- Most typically involves **changes in content, methodology, or delivery** (but not a reduction in the standards unless a student takes an alternative assessment).
- Deliberate: **planned, systematically delivered, and closely monitored** for effectiveness.
- **Specific instruction the student receives**; it is not the standards nor the typical activities implemented to facilitate all students reaching the grade level or course standards.

Adapted from Marilyn Friend, Inc. 2016



Intensive Targeted Interventions

Tier 1

- Students with disabilities who have passed the most recent SOL assessments and are making expected progress on annual IEP goals
- Universally accessible and developmentally appropriate core curriculum and related teaching-learning process
- Implementation of best inclusive practices including co-teaching, universal design for learning and specially designed instruction

Tier 2

- Students with disabilities who may have failed the most recent administration of the SOL assessment and present level of functioning in reading and/or math is one grade level below expected levels
- All components of Tier 1 specialized instruction plus implementation of focused intervention for 30-45 minutes, 3 times per week
- Progress monitoring at least once every 4 weeks to ensure student is making expected progress

Tier 3

- Students with disabilities who may have failed the most recent administration of the SOL assessment and present level of functioning in reading and/or math is two or more grade levels below expected levels
- All components of Tier 1 and 2 specialized instruction plus implementation of focused intervention for 60 minutes, 5 times per week
- Progress monitoring at least once every 2 weeks to ensure students are making expected progress



Best Instructional Practices Special Education Setting



Special Education Settings

- Targeted Interventions
- ELA/Math Courses
- City Wide Programs



Focus Areas

- Fidelity of Implementation of Targeted Interventions
- Data Collection/Progress Monitoring
- Systematic direct instruction
- Individualized Reinforcement Systems



ACPS Service Delivery Demographics

Students in General Education Setting*	%
- more than 80% of their day	72%
- more than 40% and less than 80% of their day	23%
- less than 40% of their day	5%



* As reported December 1, 2021





Career and Transition

- Transition Planning
 - Post-Secondary Goals
- Alignment of Career and Transition Programs and Services with IEP Implementation
 - Data Collection
 - IEP Goal Progress
- Focus on Self-Determination - beginning at Elementary School
- Career Awareness and Exploration beginning at Middle School
- Improved Outcomes at end of High School
 - More SWD Graduating with Standard and Advanced Studies Diplomas





ACPS Progress Monitoring Tool

- **Purpose**

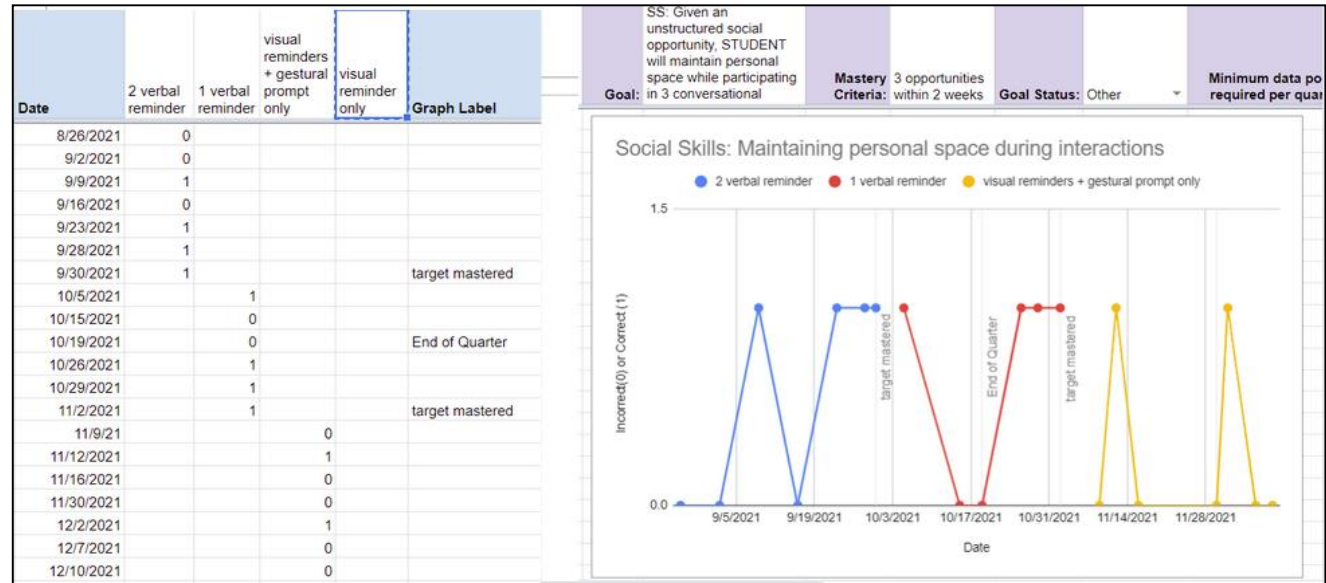
- Regulatory Requirement
- Document IEP Goal Data
- Monitor Progress

- **Benefits**

- Accurate, real time data
- Planning and delivery of appropriate instruction

- **Phased Implementation**

- Full implementation in 2022-2023 SY





Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)



SEAC is a local advisory committee for special education, appointed by the school board, that shall advise the school board through the division superintendent.



special education
advisory committee



Family Perspective

- Keeping the “I” in IDEA
- Compliance vs. Instruction
- Trust and Communication
- Equity for All





Questions?

Dr. Terri H. Mozingo, Chief of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership
Theresa Werner, Executive Director of Specialized Instruction



Superintendent

Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.

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