

Date: March 9, 2017

For ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

For INFORMATION  X

Board Agenda: Yes  x   
No \_\_\_\_\_

**FROM:** Theresa Werner, M.ED., J.D., Executive Director of Specialized Instruction

**THROUGH:** Terri H. Mazingo, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer  
Alvin L. Crawley, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

**TO:** The Honorable Ramee A. Gentry, Chair, and Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**TOPIC:** Special Education 101

**BACKGROUND:**

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) work plan emphasizes outreach and communication. The SEAC members recognize the importance of an informed community regarding the issues affecting students with disabilities. This presentation is designed to provide School Board members information regarding: the requirements mandated by special education legislation, the implications for practice in Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), and the parent perspectives regarding programming for students with disabilities.

**SUMMARY:**

This presentation covers the following topics related to Special Education:

- Legal Foundations
- Child Find
- Eligibility
- Evaluation
- Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development
- ACPS Specialized Instruction Practices
- Parent Perspectives

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board reviews the presentation.

**IMPACT:**

School Board members will gain additional insight regarding the provision of Specialized Instruction services in ACPS.

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**ATTACHMENTS:** 170309\_Special\_Education\_101\_v1

# Special Education 101



Theresa Werner, M.Ed., J.D. – Executive Director Specialized Instruction  
Janet Eissenstat – Co-Chair, ACPS SEAC

**School Board Presentation, March 9, 2017**



***Every Student Succeeds***

# Essential Questions

1. What are the major components of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)?
2. What special education supports and services are available to students in ACPS?
3. 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

# 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



# 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

# 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

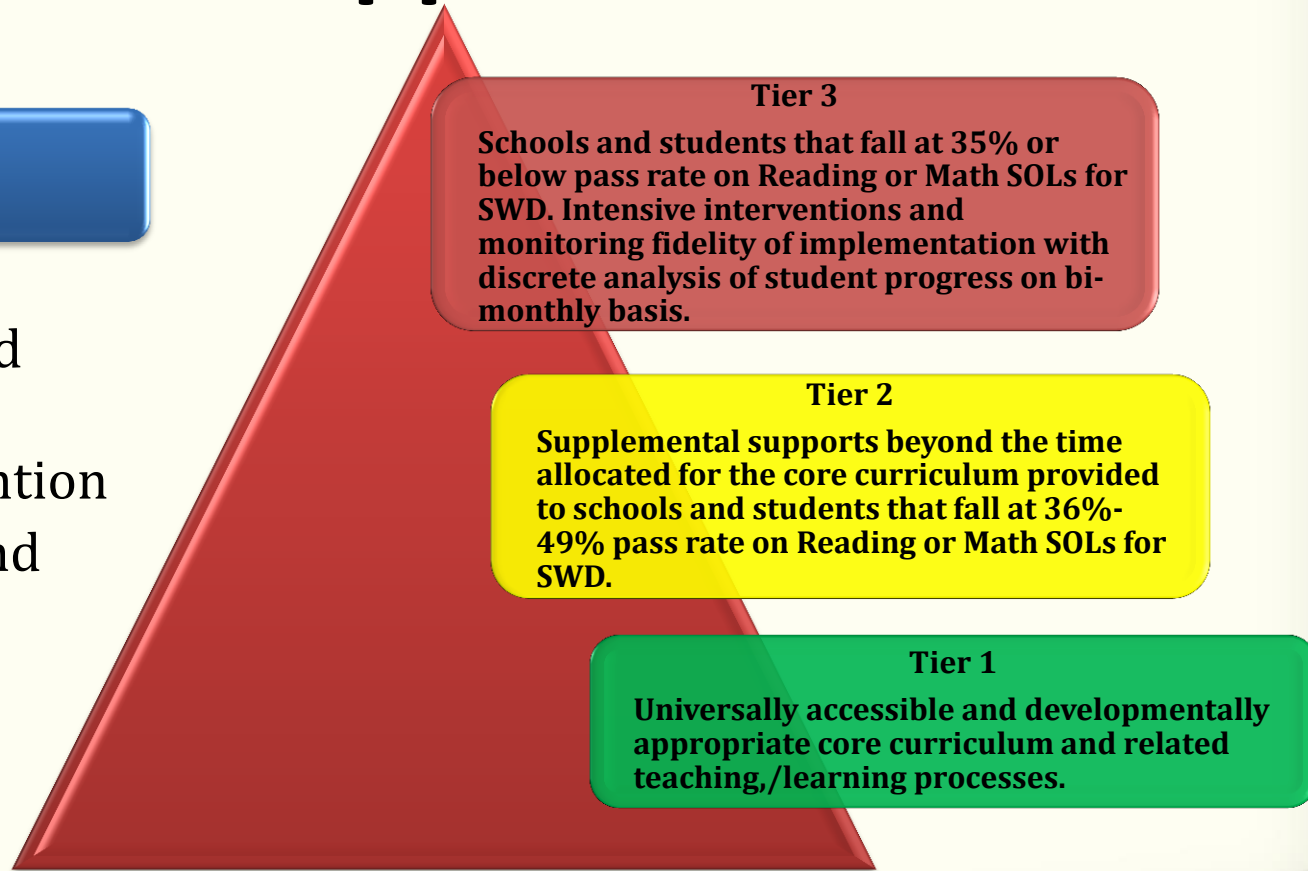
- Consultative
- Special Education Services in General Education Setting
- Special Education Services in Special Education Setting
- Citywide Classes
- Private Day Placement
- Residential



# ACPS Specialized Instruction School Support Plan

## Focus Areas

- Co-Teaching
- Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)
- Intensive Intervention
- Data Collection and Analysis



# Co-Teaching Defined



- Co-teaching is a **services delivery option**.
- Two or more **professionals with equivalent licensure** and employment status are the participants in co-teaching.
- Co-teachers **share instructional responsibility** and accountability for a single group of students for whom they both have ownership.
- Co-teaching occurs primarily in a **shared classroom** or workspace.
- Co-teachers' specific level of participation **may vary** based on their skills and the instructional needs of the student group.

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# 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.

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# Intensive Intervention Program

## 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

# Data Collection and Analysis

## Types of Data

- SOL SDBQ
- AimsWeb
- Intervention Data
- IEP Progress Reports



## Data Analysis

- Based on the data, who has the greatest need?
- What need is highlighted by the data?
- What has been done thus far to address this specific need?
- What information do you have about student performance in response to the intervention?
- Going forward, what adjustment(s) are necessary?

# 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
- Every Student Succeeds





# Questions and Discussion



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