



Department of Special Education Services

Academic/Instructional Programs:

- **General Special Education - inclusionary or co-teach setting.** The goal for students with disabilities is to receive special education services in the general education setting. The District obligated to the maximum extent possible, education them with non-disabled students in the general education setting, unless with supplemental supports and services the general education classroom is not their least restrictive environment. Students with disabilities who are served in the general education classroom are provided services using inclusionary or co-teaching practices. Direct services, as determined by their IEP goals must be provided by a certified special education teacher. Students receive instruction by accessing and participating in the grade-level Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Participating in this environment encourages student performance as well as prepares them to participate in the state assessment.
- **Academic and Functional Skills (AFS) - Elementary, Academic and Vocational Life Skills (AVLS) - Middle School and High School.** The purpose is to provide a more supportive setting to meet the needs of students with **cognitive disabilities**. Students receive instruction by accessing and participating in the grade-level Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) through activities that **focus on prerequisite skills**. The program is designed for students who require a special education services in a setting that provides intense, slower paced instruction; smaller student/teacher ratio; and multiple opportunities for review. The students have both academic and functional goals and objectives, and function as ones with moderate intellectual disabilities. The students have significantly delayed adaptive behaviors, are able to perform daily hygiene activities with assistance and instruction, and need direct, intense instruction in order to make progress on goals/benchmarks. Additionally, the students in the classroom require support to benefit from general education and engage in a significantly modified curriculum. Students demonstrate performance through real life applications of the TEKS. The focus is on instruction and training in functional academic, communication, self-help, motor activity, behavior, and socialization skills. At the secondary level there is an added focus of vocational training. The purpose of the instruction is to teach the students the skills they need to be independent so that they can be prepared to access the community setting successfully after leaving the public-school setting.
- **Functional Life Skills (FLS).** The purpose is to provide a more supportive setting to meet the needs of students with **significant cognitive disabilities**. Students receive instruction by accessing and participating in the grade-level Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) through activities that **focus on prerequisite skills**. Students' access all areas of the curriculum through prerequisite skills. The program is designed for students who require a special education services in a setting that provides intense, slower paced instruction, smaller student/teacher ratio, and multiple opportunities for review. The focus is on instruction and training in functional academic, communication, self-help, motor activity, behavior, and socialization skills. The purpose of the instruction is to teach the students the skills they need to be as independent as possible so that they can be prepared to access the community setting successfully after leaving the public-school setting.
- **Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE).** The purpose of the self-contained ECSE classroom is to provide a more supportive setting to meet the needs of students three to five-year old students. Students with cognitive disabilities, other health impairment, orthopedic impairment, traumatic brain injury, or autism may be candidates for this classroom. Students who receive instruction in this setting require a special education setting for the majority of the day, have both academic and functional goals and objectives, and may function as ones with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities. The students have significantly delayed adaptive behaviors



Department of Special Education Services

and are able to perform daily hygiene activities with assistance and instruction. The students may need a significantly modified curriculum and require support to benefit from general education. Students access and participate in the grade-level PreK guidelines through activities that focus on prerequisite skills. The focus is on developmentally appropriate activities. Through the use of meaningful activities and play, the students have opportunities to acquire and generalize skills necessary for success in the General Education setting. Instruction has an academic focus as well as a functional one. The purpose of the instruction is to teach the students the skills they need to be as independent as possible so that they can be prepared to engage in the school and community setting successfully.

- **Early Childhood Special Education – Blended.** The purpose of the Blended PPCD Classroom is to provide a structured, supportive setting to meet the needs of students three to five-year old students. Special education students and general education students are taught as one group with a special education teacher, general education teacher, and a special education paraprofessional working together to meet student needs. Students who receive instruction in a Blended classroom may have an emotional/behavioral need and/or academic need. The students have the potential to master grade level academic curriculum. The students in the Blended classroom have the potential to be successful in a prekindergarten classroom setting with support and have the ability to follow general education classroom procedures and routines with support. The students participate in grade level activities and programming throughout the school day. Instruction has an academic focus as well as a behavioral, structural focus. The purpose of the instruction is to teach the students the skills they need to be as independent as possible so that they can be prepared to engage in the general education classroom in a meaningful, successful manner.
- **Communication Class (Elementary Only).** The program serves students with communication, sensory, and social differences that significantly impact their educational progression. The mission of the program is to individualize the educational (academic and social) program for each student in a manner that maximizes his/her learning. The program utilizes individualized instructional, environmental, communication and behavioral interventions to bridge the gap between student strengths and deficits. Program components include highly structured, individualized programming, intensive communication and language training, social skills training, utilization of ABA strategies and methodologies, positive behavioral programming, and educationally-based sensory activities (as appropriate and as determined by the IEP committee). Support services may include speech/language therapy, music therapy, occupational therapy, in home training, parent training, and adaptive physical education.
- **Positive Behavior and Academic Support (PABS).** The purpose of the PABS classroom to provide a more structured setting to meet the needs of students with severe and chronic behavioral problems that adversely affect the student's education performance despite being provided an extensive behavioral support program that has included an appropriate and significant continuum of supplementary aids and services. In addition to having a severe emotional/behavioral need, a student should have the cognitive capacity to benefit from higher order social skill training and should not have any severe deficient in the areas of abstract or fluid reasoning. Student's data should show need for a significant part of the school day being in a pull-out special education setting in order for the student to make academic and functional progress. Student may begin in the self-contained setting per the schedule of services. When the student's data indicates the student is ready, they will gradually increase their time in the general education setting. When the student's data indicates the student is able to be fully mainstreamed into the general education classroom without direct staff support the



Department of Special Education Services

student will return to a general education setting. It is the goal of PABS program to create and implement a plan that promotes the student's return to a less restrictive setting.

- **Regional Day School for the Deaf.** Provide services to students from 3 counties and 29 districts with 26 staff members: teachers, deaf interpreters, communication facilitators, interveners (Deaf/Blind), para-professionals, audiologist. Services are provided at Ann Windle Early Childhood Center, McNair Elementary, McMath Middle School and Denton High School.
 - **Audiologist.** An audiologist is a licensed hearing healthcare professional who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of hearing loss. They specialize in management of equipment for students who are deaf and/or hard of hearing. Currently DISD contracts with UNT for these services.
 - **Communication Facilitators.** Provide sign language interpreting services and/or facilitate communication for students who are deaf and/or hard of hearing in a variety of educational settings. CFs are not certified; however, are skilled in sign language.
 - **Deaf Education Interpreters.** Provide sign language interpreting services and/or facilitate communication for students who are deaf and/or hard of hearing in a variety of educational settings. Interpreters are certified in their field of expertise.
 - **Interveners.** An intervener provides direct support to a student with deafblindness during all or part of the instructional day as determined by the student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP). The decision to designate an intervener is based on the level of support needed by a student to participate effectively in his/her instructional environment(s) as described by the IEP. The intervener works cooperatively with parents and a variety of direct service providers and consultants including: classroom teachers; teachers of children with hearing impairments, visual impairments, or severe disabilities; speech therapists; occupational and physical therapists; orientation and mobility instructors; and other professionals as well as paraprofessionals.
 - **Parent Infant Teacher of Deaf and Hard of Hearing.** Provide instruction/training to parents of young children, ages 0-3) who have been identified as having an auditory impairment in the region served by the Regional Day School Program for the Deaf. They provide instruction/support to young children with an auditory impairment who reside within the region served by the Regional Day School Program for the Deaf. Services are provided to child in their homes; therefore, traveling to multiple locations outside of DISD boundaries.
- **Speech Services.** Provided by a certified speech language pathologist. Speech pathologist provide direct speech services to eligible students either in the classroom or via pull-out. They serve as members of the multi-disciplinary evaluation and planning team that determines eligibility for special education services. They coordinate and facilitate the assessment and treatment of students who exhibit communication disorders in the area of language, articulation, fluency and voice that adversely affects educational success. Provides consultation to teachers, parents, support personnel and community agencies. This includes but is not limited to consultation concerning the individualized educational program, its implementation and strategies for learning. Denton ISD employees 39.5 speech language pathologist, of those 6 are dedicated to evaluating and providing services to second language learners.
- **Adaptive Physical Education (APE).** The focus of the APE teachers is to develop an adapted physical education programs within the hierarchy of the placement options (i.e., consult/direct services, reverse mainstreaming) based on the recommendations of the ARD/IEP committee. As part of their responsibilities, they design and implement community-based adapted physical education instructional programs. The assess and evaluate (ongoing and yearly) those students receiving special education services who may not safely or successfully participate in unrestricted activities during physical education. This group of experts



Department of Special Education Services

attend and participate in ARD/IEP committee meetings and collaboratively place students in appropriate adapted physical education programs within the hierarchy of placement options based on the recommendations of the ARD/IEP committee. They provide direct services (i.e., actual instruction to the students) for those students who have been recommended by the ARD/IEP committee. Additionally, they provide consulting services to general physical educators, special education teachers, classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, related services (i.e., occupational therapists and physical therapists), and parents/guardians involved in direct services to students with disabilities. APE teachers provide students with appropriate learning activities and experiences designed to fulfill their potential for intellectual, emotional, physical and social growth; enables students to develop competencies and skills to function successfully in society.

- Special Education Home-bound Services.** Students who are confined to home due to medical reasons, are provided special education services at home by homebound teachers. These teachers collaborate with the student’s classroom teacher to provide appropriate learning activities and experiences in the core academic subjects in order for the student to maintain progress within the general curriculum. Home-bound services are provided to students with disabilities for whom a physician has determined that they will be out of school due to medical reasons for 4 consecutive weeks (brain surgery, stomach disorders, pregnancy, medically fragile, etc...), or to those students for whom the physician has determined will be out due to medical reasons for 4 weeks over the course of the year (i.e. chemotherapy, cancer treatment, immune deficiencies, etc...). The latter are considered intermittent homebound, these students attend school when they are healthy enough to attend.
- Visual Impairment Services.** Provide services with 1 Orientation and Mobility Specialist, 1 Brailist, 1 and 3 itinerant teachers of the visually impaired.

18 – 22 Services

- Transition Centers or 18+ Programs.** The purpose of the program is to provide services to young adults with various cognitive disabilities (ages 18-22) with individualized instruction and services following the completion of a four-year academic curriculum. In the program the students transition from an educational setting toward working, living and functioning as independently as possible. Instruction will be tailored to meet individual post-secondary goals and provided in the form of life applicable learning activities and experiences designed to create independence and assist the student in fulfilling their potential for intellectual, emotional, and social growth. Areas of focus include practical employment skills, social skills training money management/concepts, independent living skills, career exploration, community awareness and vocational training through supported employment.

Related Services:

District-wide Services	Staff Count
<p>Assistive technology (AT) is an item, piece of equipment, software or product that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of students with disabilities. AT helps students having difficult, speaking, writing, remember, pointing, seeing, hearing, learning, and walking. AT can be low or high tech. These tools include any type of equipment or device that helps students to compensate for their disabilities, access the general curriculum and participate in the general curriculum.</p>	1



Department of Special Education Services

<p>In-Home/Parent Training. In-home training promotes the generalization of skills to home, as well as targets skills and behaviors mastered in the educational setting.</p> <p>The goal of parent training is to aid parents/family to become “trained” in providing specific interventions for their child to generalize skills. Parents acquire skills to assist their child in the development and mastery of specific skills and behaviors.</p>	2
<p>Music Therapy. Music Therapy focuses on using music to address physical, cognitive, emotional and social needs of child with disabilities by using active and receptive music experiences in the classroom. MT enhances a student’s curriculum.</p>	2
<p>Occupational Therapy. Occupational therapists support academic and non-academic outcomes, including social skills, math, reading and writing (i.e., literacy), behavior management, recess, participation in sports, self-help skills, prevocational/vocational participation, transportation, and more. They facilitate students’ access to curricular and extracurricular activities. They focus on the students’ strengths and can design and implement programming to improve inclusion and accessibility, such as Universal Design for Learning. They collaborate within the education team to support student success.</p>	5
<p>Physical Therapy. Their purpose is to develop motor skills and/or physical therapy in order for the student to participate and be successful in the school setting. They ensure a free and appropriate education for students with disabilities to prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living by using either expertise in movement, and function. The school-based PT promotes motor development and the student’s participation in everyday routines and activities that are a part of his or her program. They design and provide therapeutic interventions, focusing on functional mobility and safe, efficient access and participation in educational activities and routines in natural learning environments. They are required to demonstrate knowledge of eligibility criteria and procedures for identifying students who need to maximize physical or mental functioning, increase independent functioning, and/or adjust to disabilities. They must select, administer and interpret appropriate formal and informal assessments and evaluations as well as demonstrate knowledge of appropriate curricula and instructional strategies for individuals with disabilities. This highly skilled group of professionals participate on a multi-disciplinary team that determines special education eligibility for students. Finally, they serve as a resource to campuses.</p>	1.5
<p>Psychological Services. Licensed Specialists in School Psychology provide short-term therapy and consultation to students who are experiencing emotional and psychological problems that are interfering with their academic performance and personal well-being. LSSPs conduct evaluations as well as provide services to students.</p>	23
<p>Special Education Counseling. Counselors provide counseling services to students who are experiencing emotional and psychological problems that interfere with their academic performance and well-being.</p>	5

Additional District-level special education staff who provide support to students with disabilities through direct and/or indirect services or to teachers include:

District-wide Positions	Staff Count
<p>Annual Review and Dismissal (ARD) Spanish Language Interpreter. Assist special education professionals by providing accurate oral interpretation services to Spanish speaking families whose children have been referred for special education evaluation or services; during evaluation if necessary; during the Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings; and at other times as needed.</p>	1.
<p>Autism Specialist. The Autism Specialist provide guidance, support, training, and coaching to teachers who have students with a diagnosis of Autism. They observe student behavior, provide teachers with</p>	3



Department of Special Education Services

<p>feedback and model interventions. They also conduct In-Home and Parent Training evaluations as well as provide these services to families as documented in the IEP meeting.</p>	
<p>Behavior Coaches. Their purpose is to build capacity of campus staff to meet the needs of students who have extreme behavior, emotional and social needs. They consult with teachers and district personnel to design classrooms systems, including data collection, and individual programming recommendations to support students. They provide examples and coaching on social skills for specialized classrooms as well as for individual students. Finally, they provide training to teachers on how to implement behavior intervention strategies in order for students to be successful in the classroom. Their expert skills are effective in promoting desired behavior in order for the student to remain in the general education classroom to access and participate in the general curriculum.</p>	4
<p>Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) (included in the LSSP count). These experts conduct behavior analysis then offer interventions and model best practices to improve the behavior of students with concerning behaviors. Their unique set of skills are effective in promoting and reinforcing desired behavior. Their work encourages positive behavior changes.</p>	3 (included in LSSP count)
<p>Braillist. Provides adapted materials utilizing a variety of techniques: including recording texts, tactile graphics, Braille, and large print for students to remain in the least restrictive environment. The Braillist has unique skills to “braille” materials, textbooks, maps, charts, and more, in order for students with visual impairments to actively participate in the general education setting. She is a member of the district-wide educational team that assists teachers of students with visual impairments the provision of Braille and other adapted materials.</p>	1
<p>ECSE Instructional Coach. The Special Education Instructional Coach for Early Childhood works as a colleague with classroom early childhood special education teachers, general education teachers, and special education staff. The Coach works with early childhood special education teachers (in teams or individually) to refine their knowledge and skills; methods of instruction may include in-class coaching, peer observation, co-teaching, and modeling effective instruction using a gradual release model. They mentor early childhood special education teachers for the purpose of improving early childhood general education and special education instruction and build their capacity to teach others, improving behavioral support strategies in the classroom setting and models behavioral strategies to support individual student and/or whole class needs.</p>	1
<p>Educational Diagnosticians. These highly trained individuals coordinate and facilitate the assessment of intelligence, educational functioning and the collection and analysis of data. As evaluators, they select, administer, accurately score and interpret appropriate formal and informal assessments and evaluations according to testing guidelines as well as to local, state and federal regulations. They demonstrate knowledge of eligibility criteria and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and determining the presence of educational need. Having been teachers, they demonstrate knowledge of appropriated curricula and instructional strategies for students with disabilities. They serve as a case-manager and resource to campuses by updating campus personnel regarding local, state, and federal rules and regulations, and to ensure the campus/district maintain compliance with all regulations associated with special education. They prepare for, coordinate and schedule IEP meetings within required timelines and guidelines; invite required participants; address all components during IEP meetings; and demonstrate an understanding of legal procedures related to the IEP process.</p> <p>They provide consultation to teachers, parents, support personnel and community agencies. This includes but is not limited to consultation concerning the individualized educational program, its implementation and strategies for learning. Diagnosticians, acts as a source to ensure district complies with all legal and compliance issues associated with special education at the local, state, and federal level. Denton ISD employees 37 diagnosticians, 2.5 diagnosticians dedicated to evaluating second language learners.</p>	37 (2.5 Bilingual)



Department of Special Education Services

<p>Transition Specialist. Their purpose is to maintain a regular schedule of direct involvement with students in identified area of transition needs. Their responsibilities include conducting vocational and career assessment for all students with disabilities beginning at age 14 as well as writing Transition Goals for annual IEP meetings. They work with secondary students, families, campus staff, business/community members and outside agencies to facilitate success transition of students as they leave the public-school system. These specialist conduct training for parents on aspects of transition from high to post-secondary settings. The TCs provides support and guidance to secondary teachers and students at their work site or placement of employment.</p>	<p>4 (one per zone)</p>
<p>Special Education Records Clerks. The primary purpose of this position is to maintain the official special education records for the students with disabilities (3600+). They must access the special education data management system as well as the District student data system. Their duties include review documentation after IEP meetings to ensure completion and compliance. They perform routine audits of student eligibility folders to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local special education laws. They manage and maintain an inventory of student special education eligibility records including (records series, retention period, destruction date and status). They fulfill and manage records requests from campuses, parents and agencies within timelines, communicate with outside agencies (hospitals, doctors, probation offices, social security administration, local education agencies, parents) as well as from the special education attorney on retainer to upload/send requested special education records, upload special education records for high profile legal records requests from attorneys and process TREX records requests.</p>	<p>2</p>

Additional Activities/Events for Parents and the Community.

- Fishing Events (3 x)
- Ability Awareness Event
- Parent Resource Events (3 times annually)
- Parents of Children with Autism Training Nights (6 times annually)
- Family Counseling Center (Calhoun and Braswell, every Tuesday night)
- Special Olympics
- Collaboration with universities (UNT, TWU, UTA, etc...) for Speech Pathology Interns