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To: Shawn Petri, Superintendent

From: Melisa Akers, Director of Special Education

Date: September 3rd, 2024

Subject: Special Education Department Update

A Message from our Director, Melisa Akers

School is officially in session! We are still filling staff positions so please check out our openings on the COOR website and encourage anyone you know who is qualified to please consider working for COOR.

Students in Ms. Angie’s classroom received COOR Adult Transition Center t-shirts to wear while on job sites. Each student received two t-shirts and they will be kept at school to change into each day before they go to their job assignment.



A Message from Joe Moore, School Principal

The 24-25 school year is off to a great start! Our staff has been doing a wonderful job of getting all of our students back into the routine. The students have been excited to return to familiar happy faces and get back to learning! A big thanks goes out to Jared, Tim, and our cleaning crew for getting the floors cleaned and waxed over the summer. New life has been brought to the wood flooring in the ATC classrooms as they needed some TLC for quite some time. Please take some time to check out their hard work!



We are starting to see more EduStaff subs pick up assignments for staff that put in for sick and personal days. The EduStaff subs that have worked for us so far have done a fantastic job working with our students and staff. Our staff is becoming more accustomed to the Red Rover system and it is helping to streamline the timekeeping and PTO processes.

A Message from Nicole Grace, Special Education Technical Assistance

Our Special Education Student Support team is off to a great start. Districts will be given a flowchart that will help guide them on how to request assistance regarding Least Restrictive Environment support, coaching/mentoring for special education staff and/or 1:1 coaching for independence facilitators. This chart not only guides the referral process, but also provides districts with the information they need to begin implementing supports right away in the classroom. Amber Larrison, Thalma Hibbard and I will be meeting with elementary and secondary principals this month to discuss services and the referral process.

We have also started consultation for our four registered and approved Non-Public schools as required yearly by MDE. This process helps both local districts and the Non-Public schools understand how to support students and what services are available for eligible special education students. Registered and approved Non-Public schools and homeschools are eligible for a percentage of the IDEA Flowthrough funds based on calculations from the previous October's special education count. The districts then determine how to use these funds to get the most benefit for students, and typically will include providing ancillary services like speech, OT, PT and consultation to these programs.

Ancillary staff have quite literally hit the ground running. While we still need in person speech, occupational therapy and social work, our teams are working together to provide support in all seven districts. We appreciate the energy, knowledge and passion our teams bring to supporting students and are excited to see what the 2024-2025 year will bring.