

## **OVERVIEW OF SERVICES**

The Special Education Department provides an array of services and supports designed to meet the Individual Education Programs (IEP's) of students. The primary service approaches described below:

- Illustrate District 86's commitment to an inclusive education for students with disabilities,
- Reflect currently accepted best practices within the field of education,
- Meet the IEP requirements of HCHS students, and
- Use school and district resources as effectively and efficiently as possible.

### **Transition Services**

All students eligible for special education receive transition services and supports throughout high school. By law, transition planning must begin at age 14, and address the following areas each year:

- A student's post-school vision/ goals in the areas of education, employment, community living
- Instructional services designed to assist the student attain personal goals
- Employment/vocational services that may be needed to progress toward goals
- Community experiences that may be needed to progress toward goals
- Adult services for employment and independent living that may be needed in the future

### **Supported Education Services**

Students who experience more significant learning or multiple disabilities can require comprehensive modifications across all or many aspects of their school experience. The Multi-Needs Inclusion Facilitator(s) works in partnership with regular education teachers and Para-educators to design a student's individualized program of supports and services and assists in identifying relevant course/unit goals and objectives and creating individualized materials, and assessments. The Multi-Needs teaching team also works with faculty, staff and students to identify natural adult and peer supports that can foster a student's successful membership in the classroom, non-academic and extra-curricular aspects of school life.

## **Study Skills & Learning Strategies (Resource Services)**

Many students with IEP's receive direct services outside the regular education classroom instead of attending a typical "study hall". Depending on student's year, student's grade and level of independence with applying learning and study strategies, these resource services are implemented in a Study Skills or Learning Strategies class or through the Academic Center. During this regularly scheduled time, students work directly with Educational Services faculty and staff in areas specified in their IEP. For example, students may receive direct instruction in the development and refinement of specific study skills. Students may also need direct assistance to meet the written language expectations of their courses, or need guided practice applying reading comprehension strategies. Many students also need opportunities outside the regular classroom for content and concepts to be previewed or re-taught.

Teaching students to use and apply contemporary technology, the Resource Program also places an emphasis on student development of effective self-advocacy skills, understanding one's educational strengths and learning challenges, and preparing for life after high school.

## **Specialized Classes**

There are times a student's education needs require instruction outside the regular education environment, through classes taught by a special education teacher. Course goals and objectives meet state, school and course learning standards, HCHS graduation requirements, and reflect a student's IEP.

When a student whose emotional/behavioral disorder interferes significantly with their learning or that of other classmates, the student may then be instructed outside the regular classroom. Often, this instructional arrangement is necessary only for short durations while new interventions are planned. However, there are also circumstances when a semester or year long special education class placement is appropriate. This IEP decision is a collaborative one. In these situations, regular and educational services teachers work together to address curriculum expectations, grading, etc. The timing of a student's return to the regular class is also a collaborative IEP decision and involves the student and parent.

## **Collaboration Teaching Services**

Most students with identified learning and/or emotional disorders attend regular education classes, with individualized curriculum, instruction and assessment differentiation facilitated directly in the classroom. Educational

Services teachers work directly with regular education colleagues as teaching partners in the classroom and outside the classroom to plan and develop the necessary teaching and learning tools to reach a diverse classroom of learners.

### **Vocational Services**

Vocational Services provides support for students' who are looking to get a jump start in the work force while in high school. Some student's paths may not include college right after high school and some students need support in helping them participate in the world of work. A student's individual program may therefore also include instruction and support regarding career planning and direct on-the-job instruction both in school and in the community. Students might also support their career goals by attending the Technology Center of DuPage (TCD) in a specific career field of interest. These vocational services are facilitated by the Vocational Coordinator and provide students the opportunity to earn elective high school credit.

### **Related Services**

Some students require the support of specialized faculty such as a speech and language pathologist, social worker, therapist, nurse, etc. Often, these services are best provided in an integrated manner within the regular education environment. Sometimes, it is necessary for the student to work with the related service faculty individually outside the classroom.

### **Adult Opportunities**

When students have fulfilled their academic requirements toward graduation yet still require instruction, employment, independent living and community experiences to meet their IEP, they are eligible to continue receiving public education until the age of 22. The **Adult Opportunities Program** is a stepping stone designed to support young adults in developing, expanding, and working towards their post high school goals and aspirations. The program offers participants the opportunity to practice skills and work towards their adult life goals, in adult environments, with adult expectations. Adult Opportunities participants actively participate in setting their own goals and developing meaningful education, community, or employment activities to help them meet those goals. Adult Opportunities participants spend the majority of their days in natural, community environments such as their job, local community college, home, or local neighborhood establishments. The participant's "team" provides instruction, support and facilitates needed linkages. Participants are expected to demonstrate self-determination and make decisions to the best of their ability that foster attainment the adult lifestyle goals they set.

## **Post-Secondary Planning and Services**

All students eligible for special education receive transitional services and supports throughout high school to facilitate movement from school to desired post school activities. These activities may include post-secondary education, vocational education, employment, independent living or community participation. By law, this future planning must begin at age 14.5, be on-going and include:

- A student's post-school vision and goals in the areas of education, employment, and where appropriate independent living
- Age appropriate transition assessments to assist in development of goals
- Instructional services designed to assist the student in attaining personal goals
- Employment/vocational services that may be needed to progress toward goals
- Community experiences that may be needed to progress toward goals
- Linkages to adult services for employment, training/education and/or independent living that may be needed in the future

Upon exit from high school, a personalized summary of performance is finalized with the student in order that they can use this information as needed in the future for planning of supports and services.