

POAC-NoVA Department of Special Services (DSS)

**Back to School Updates
September 20, 2022**



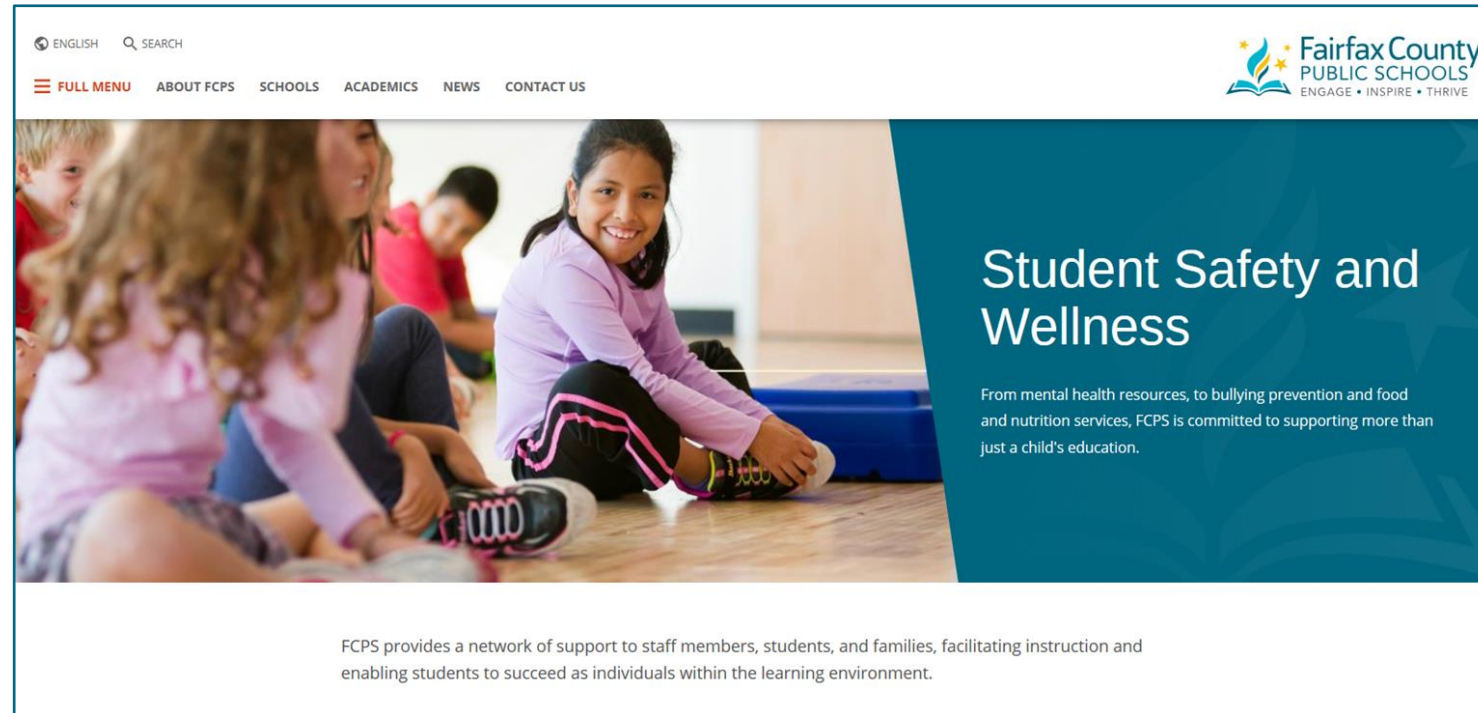
Agenda

- **Introductions**
- **Department of Special Services Overview**
- **Behavior Education Professional Development Plan**
- **Adapted Curriculum Resource Updates**
- **Assistive Technology (AT) Resource Updates**
- **Recruitment and Retention Updates**
- **IEP Updates**
- **Questions?**

Department of Special Services

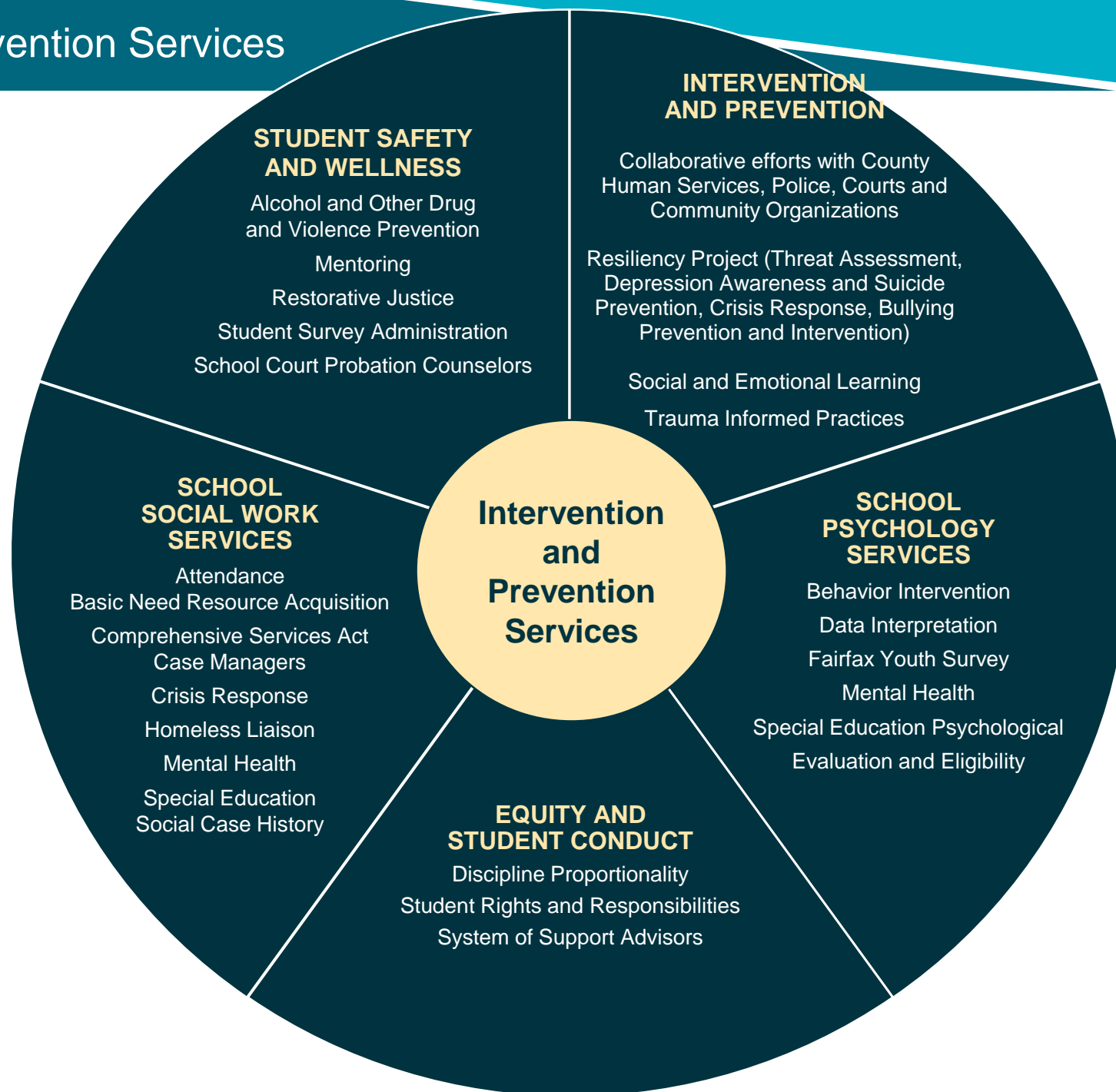
Michelle Boyd, Assistant Superintendent

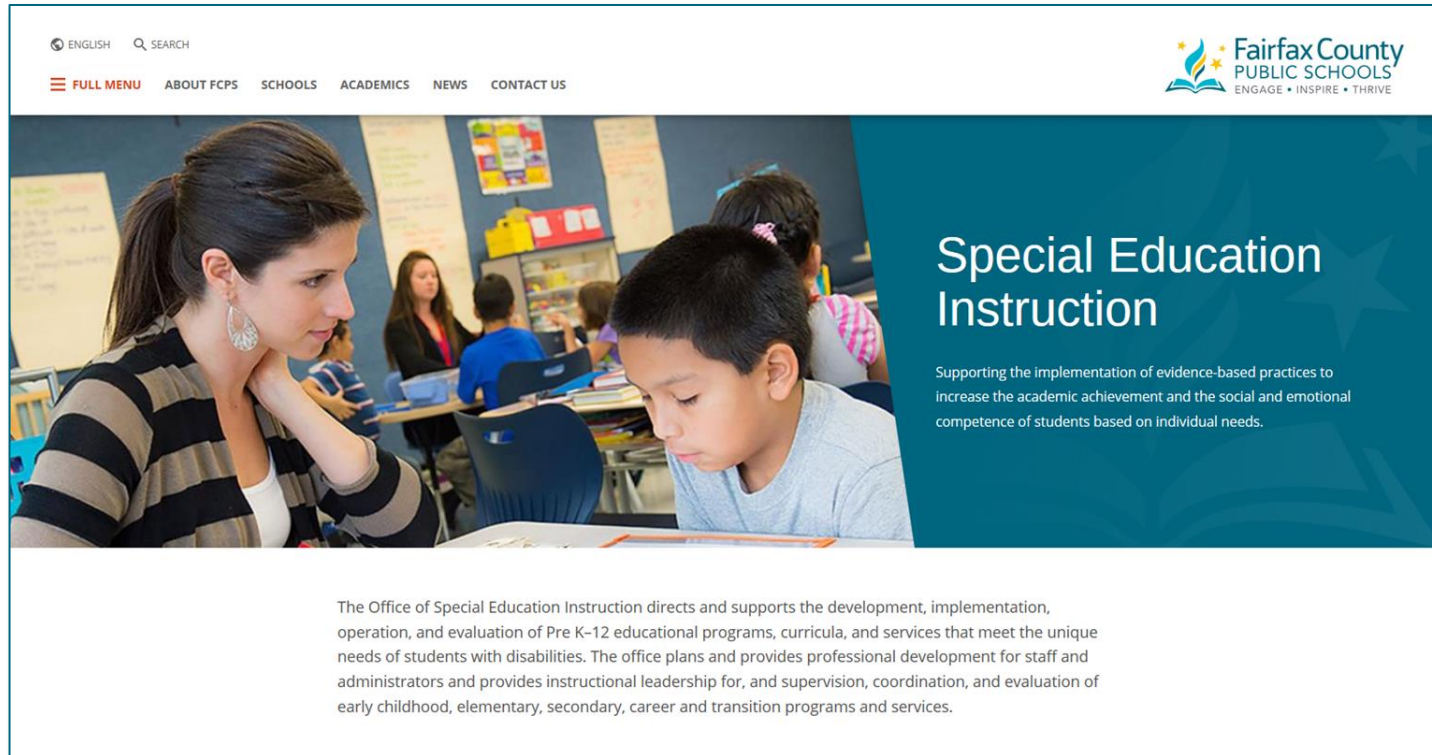
- **Office of Intervention and Prevention Services**
Michael Axler, Acting Director
- **Office of Special Education Instruction**
Mike Bloom, Director
- **Office of Operations and Strategic Planning**
Lea Skurpski, Director
- **Office of Special Education Procedural Support**
Dawn Schaefer, Director
- **Special Projects Administrator, Student Wellness**
Saray Smalls



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Fairfax County Public Schools website. It includes a language selector for 'ENGLISH', a search icon, and a 'FULL MENU' button. The main navigation menu contains links for 'ABOUT FCPS', 'SCHOOLS', 'ACADEMICS', 'NEWS', and 'CONTACT US'. The Fairfax County Public Schools logo is in the top right corner, with the tagline 'ENGAGE • INSPIRE • THRIVE'. The main content area features a photograph of a teacher and students sitting on the floor in a classroom. To the right of the photo, the heading 'Student Safety and Wellness' is displayed in large white text on a dark blue background. Below the heading, a paragraph states: 'From mental health resources, to bullying prevention and food and nutrition services, FCPS is committed to supporting more than just a child's education.' At the bottom of the page, a white box contains the text: 'FCPS provides a network of support to staff members, students, and families, facilitating instruction and enabling students to succeed as individuals within the learning environment.'

The Office of Intervention and Prevention Services is responsible for Psychology Services, Social Work Services, and Student Safety and Wellness. The Office ensures that services are available to every student and provides a network of support to staff, students, and families. The goal is to eliminate obstacles, facilitate instruction, and enable students to succeed as individuals.





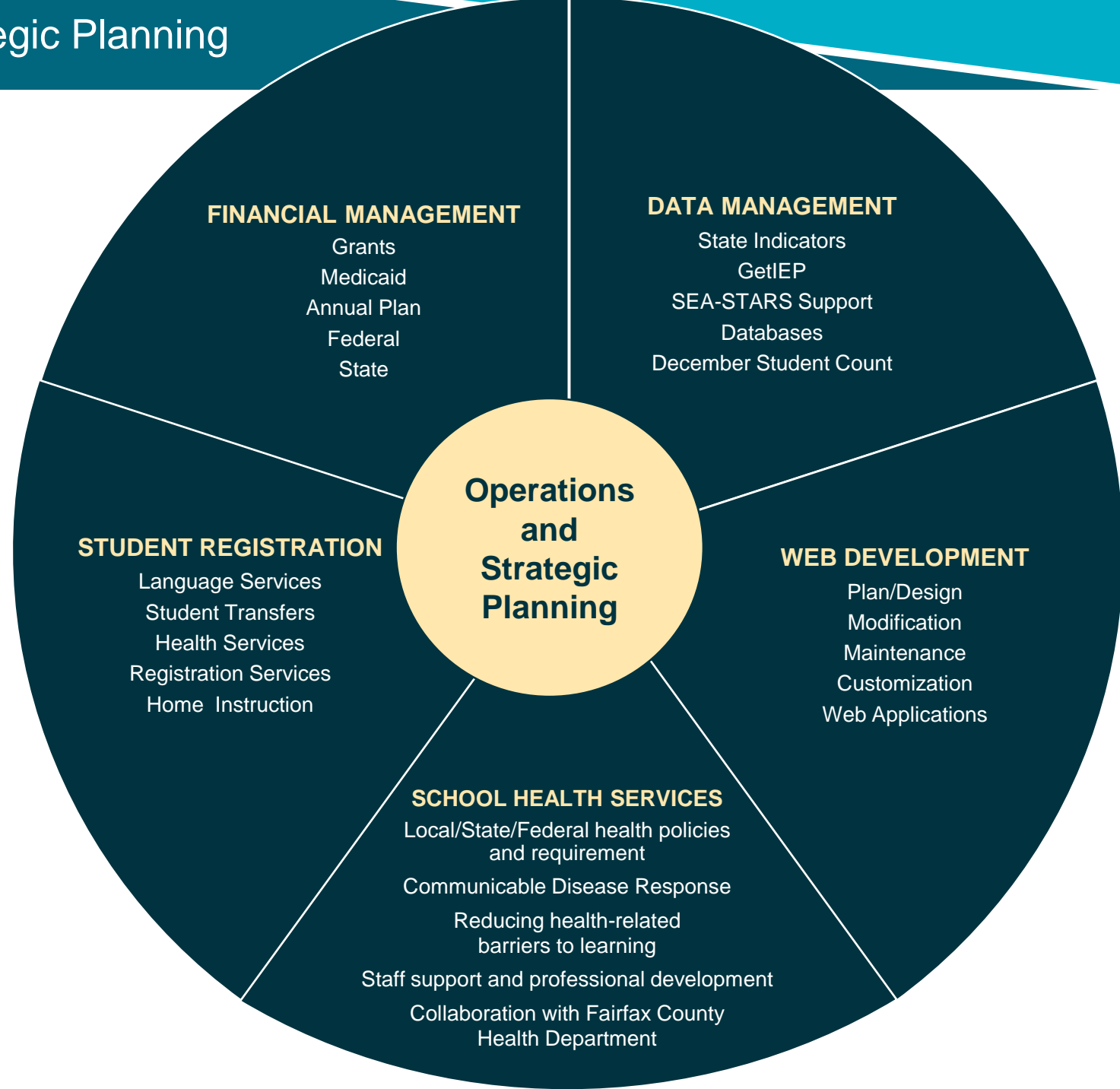
The screenshot shows the website for the Office of Special Education Instruction at Fairfax County Public Schools. The top navigation bar includes links for ENGLISH, SEARCH, FULL MENU, ABOUT FCPS, SCHOOLS, ACADEMICS, NEWS, and CONTACT US. The Fairfax County Public Schools logo is in the top right corner, with the tagline "ENGAGE • INSPIRE • THRIVE". The main content area features a photograph of a teacher interacting with a student in a classroom. To the right of the photo, the text reads "Special Education Instruction" followed by a mission statement: "Supporting the implementation of evidence-based practices to increase the academic achievement and the social and emotional competence of students based on individual needs." Below the photo, a paragraph describes the office's role: "The Office of Special Education Instruction directs and supports the development, implementation, operation, and evaluation of Pre K-12 educational programs, curricula, and services that meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. The office plans and provides professional development for staff and administrators and provides instructional leadership for, and supervision, coordination, and evaluation of early childhood, elementary, secondary, career and transition programs and services."

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The Office of Operations and Strategic Planning ensures that Department of Special Services programs and special education students are adequately supported in their fiscal, data, and information requirements. Operations and Strategic Planning services include data management, financial management, web development, school health services and student registration.





The Office of Special Education Procedural Support provides guidance to staff, families, and students in areas related to the implementation of and compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended. Personnel serve as intermediaries and resources to internal and external programs to facilitate the implementation of federal, state, and local regulations supporting students who have a disability or are suspected of having a disability.

Special Education Procedural Support



Behavior Education Professional Development Plan

- The Department of Special Services has developed a Behavior Education Professional Development Plan, which is a teaching and learning plan that is designed to build the capacity of school-based staff to support the social, emotional, and academic development of all students in FCPS.
- As part of the plan, FCPS staff have been assigned required professional development opportunities designed to ensure that they receive evidenced-based training that focuses on skills related to positive behavior support, student mental wellness, conflict prevention, de-escalation, and crisis response.
- The courses that have been assigned to staff as part of this plan are designed to enhance educator skills and to help ensure that every student experiences a thriving school culture and a safe and supportive learning environment.

Adapted Curriculum Resources


- Development of pacing guides and additional resources to support instruction on the **Virginia Essentialized Standards of Learning (VESOL)**
- Development of **Equitable Access to Literacy** supports for teachers working with students on an adapted curriculum
 - **Science of Reading (SOR)** training for teachers working with students who are accessing an adapted curriculum
 - Guidance document to help teachers scaffold the K-2 lessons developed by ISD for **phonics and phonemic awareness** instruction
- Continued access to asynchronous professional development and resources for literacy, mathematics, high-leverage best practices, and **evidence-based practices**

Assistive Technology (AT) Resources

- Approximately 2,700 students in FCPS receive Assistive Technology (AT) as part of their IEP or 504 plan.
- AT allows students access to the general education curriculum and settings, provides opportunities for active participation with same age peers, and facilitates progress toward their educational goals.
- The Office of Special Education Instruction Assistive Technology Services team has developed training for staff, students, and families in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices, systems, strategies and tools.
- AAC tools support approximately 1300 students in FCPS who have difficulties communicating using speech, by increasing independence, providing greater participation in school, and supporting richer, more frequent social interactions.
- Individualized AAC training for staff, students, and families continue to be provided through the school's assigned Assistive Technology Coach.

Special Education Recruitment & Retention

- The Office of Talent Acquisition & Management has hired a Special Projects Administrator to support special education recruitment and retention.
- Areas of focus will include:
 - promoting and advertising special education positions in FCPS
 - recruitment events
 - university engagement
 - financial support and incentives
- Additional Efforts
 - Great Beginnings Teacher Induction Program
 - FCPS Grow Your Own (GYO) Program
 - Instructional Mentor Coaches
 - FCPS University Cohort Partnerships



IEP Updates Supporting Collaboration and Documentation

Fall 2022



Meeting Objectives & Agenda

Meeting Objectives:

Review and discuss pending updates to the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) section of the individualized education program (IEP) being proposed to foster collaboration of all members of the IEP team and ensure all IEP components, outlined in the *Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia* is documented, are documented.

Receive participants' questions or feedback on the content embedded in the presentation.

Provide reminders regarding PWN and draft IEPs

Agenda:

- Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance*
- Consider Parental Input* (documentation)
- Meeting Minutes
- Prior Written Notice*
- Special Education Reminders

*Requirements in the *Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia*

Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

Note: An implementation date has not yet been finalized

Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

Virginia Regulations at 8 VAC 20-81-110.G.1

A statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general curriculum or, for preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities.

- a. The statement shall be written in objective measurable terms, to the extent possible. Test scores, if appropriate, shall be self-explanatory or an explanation shall be included.
- b. The present level of performance shall directly relate to the other components of the IEP.

What is the PLAAFP?

The Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance summarizes the results of assessments that identify the student's interests, preferences, strengths and areas of need, including assistive technology and/or accessible materials. This includes the student's performance and achievement in academic areas such as writing, reading, mathematics, science, and history/social sciences. It also includes the student's performance in functional areas, such as self-determination, social competence, communication, behavior, and personal management. Test scores are to be self-explanatory or an explanation is to be included, and the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance is to be written in objective measurable terms, to the extent possible. There is to be a direct relationship among the desired goals, the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance, and all other components of the IEP.

What type of information is included the PLAAFP?

- Eligibility statement about most recent eligibility
- Current assessment testing information must include:
 - Last available assessment results with dates and scores, with an explanation
 - SOL, DRA, informal reading inventory, etc.
 - Consideration of parent provided reports and/or independent educational evaluations (IEE)
- Input from teachers (e.g., ask teachers to complete *Teacher Narrative (SS/SE-22)* prior to the meeting and summarize input), which includes examples of:
 - Self-determination
 - Social competence
 - Communication
 - Behavior
 - Personal management

What type of information is included the PLAAFP? (continued)

- Current course schedule and grades
 - Graduation status, if applicable
- Current services
 - IEP service type(s), amount, and setting
 - Any assistive technology/accessible materials, support, or devices the student currently has or uses
- Progress on current IEP goals and objectives
- Strengths, and interests in the home, school, and community, if not included on the transition pages
- Parent input - to include oral or written input from private providers**

Any items drafted prior to the meeting must be included when sending the draft IEP to parents, at least two business days before the meeting.

**If parents provide input prior to the meeting via the *Parent Information* form, an email, or verbally, that information should be included in the draft IEP.

Examples of Other PLAAFP Components

- AIM-VA (accessibility supports)
- LEP Statements
- Medical Statements
- Other (CTE, CPR, etc.)

PLAAFP

What changes are
being proposed?



Proposed Changes

Proposed Changes:

Change in terminology from Present Level of Performance (PLOP) to Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

PLAAFP will include information regarding students' academic and functional performance

PLAAFP will serve as the location where parent input is universally documented along with documentation of other considerations outlined in Virginia special education regulations

PLAAFP will no longer serve as the location for meeting minutes (e.g., summary of other discussion that is not related to the student present level of academic and functional performance.

Note: Summary of the the meeting discussion will be captured in meeting minutes.

Rationale (The Why?)

- Brings FCPS practice in alignment with VDOE special education regulations [e.g., ensures documentation of parental input, academic achievement (test scores, grades, progress toward goals)]
- Provides universal direction for documenting consideration of parental input across the division

Meeting Minutes



Note: An implementation date has not yet been finalized

Meeting Minutes

What are Meeting Minutes?

Meeting minutes (notes) is a mechanism to capture the essence of the discussion during meetings.

Meeting minutes are not:

- A replacement for any section or component of the IEP. All components required to be documented in the IEP will be documented in respective section of the IEP
- A verbatim transcription of discussion during a meeting
- A regulatory requirement for special education

Question: If meeting minutes are not required, why are they being implemented?

Answer: Meeting minutes capture the essence of the discussion at meetings. Having information regarding the overall essence is especially helpful in cases where more than one meeting is required to complete the development of an IEP.

Question: Why not continue to use the present level section to capture the essence of the discussion instead of meeting minutes?

Answer: The PLAAFP is to document a student's present level of functioning - how the student is currently performing, the student's current strengths, current needs, etc. During the the course of the meeting, the discussion shifts from talking about a student's current state to what a student needs moving forward (e.g., proposed services, accommodations, state assessment participation, least restrictive environment, etc.). Separating the current state and discussion around the potential future state clarifies what the IEP team is conveying and aligns the content in the PLAAFP with the expected PLAAFP outlined in the state special education regulations.

Special Education Reminders:

Prior Written Notice (PWN)

Draft IEP

Prior Written Notice (PWN)

Prior written notice shall be given to the parent(s) of a child with a disability within a reasonable time before the local educational agency: (34 CFR 300.503(a))

- Proposes to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement (including graduation with a standard or advanced studies diploma) of the child, or the provision of a free appropriate public education for the child; or
- Refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child, or the provision of a free appropriate public education for the child.

Prior Written Notice Requirements

The notice shall include: (34 CFR 300.503(b))

- a) A description of the action proposed or refused by the local educational agency;
- b) An explanation of why the local educational agency proposes or refuses to take the action;
- c) A description of any other options the IEP team considered and the reasons for the rejection of those options;
- d) A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the local educational agency used as a basis for the proposed or refused action;
- e) A description of any other factors that are relevant to the local educational agency's proposal or refusal;
- f) A statement that the parent(s) of a child with a disability have protection under the procedural safeguards of this chapter and, if the notice is not an initial referral for evaluation, the means by which a copy of a description of the procedural safeguards can be obtained; and
- g) Sources for the parent(s) to contact in order to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of this section.

Draft IEP

Fostering Collaboration

Any items drafted prior to the meeting must be included when sending the draft IEP to parents, at least two business days prior to the meeting.

