


Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

July 9, 2008

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jerry D. Weast, Superintendent of Schools 

Subject: Update on Secondary Learning Center Transition

Executive Summary

On February 13, 2007, the Board of Education passed the Superintendent's Recommended Operating Budget FY 2008 which included the plan to phase out the secondary learning centers over a six year period.

The secondary learning center transition has successfully supported 70 students during this first year of implementation through the intensive central office case management, effective ongoing two-way communication with parents, collaboration with school-based staff, and close monitoring of students. Through a coordinated, collaborative effort, 42 rising Grade 6 elementary learning center students, 9 rising Grade 6 students from other programs who may have been considered for a secondary learning center placement, and 19 secondary learning center students who chose to return to their home or consortia schools have had an opportunity to succeed in 37 different secondary schools during the 2007–2008 school year.

The secondary learning center transition has been monitored closely throughout the year to ensure that students are adjusting to their new instructional environments, to make modifications to the process as needed, and to support the success of individual students and schools. Results of these ongoing monitoring efforts indicate that overall, transitioning students have been successful in the least restrictive environment (LRE) and parents, students, and school staff members have been satisfied with the transition process.

Preparations have begun for students who will transition during the 2008–2009 school year. As of May 30, 2008, 55 new rising Grade 6 elementary learning center students, 9 rising Grade 6 students from other programs who may have been considered for a secondary learning center placement, and 10 secondary learning center students who have chosen to return to their home or consortia school are projected to attend 28 middle schools and six high schools. Intensive case management, planning for professional development, staffing adjustments, and increased instructional resources are in place to ensure the success of the students involved in this process.

Professional Development

In the summer of 2007, in collaboration with the Office of Organizational Development, the Department of Special Education Services (DSES) provided mandatory professional development for all Grade 6 middle school general and special education core content teachers, Learning and Academic Disabilities (LAD) teachers, and resource teachers responsible for providing services to students with disabilities in the general education environment. Voluntary professional development was provided for paraeducators during the summer as well.

Professional development for teachers and paraeducators focused on coteaching strategies, best practices for inclusion, and utilization of technology in the classroom. Throughout the school year, special education itinerant resource teachers provided additional school-based professional development and coaching sessions to address needs identified by summer participants and feedback from school visits.

Professional development held in December 2007 for elementary special educators, middle school mathematics co-teachers, Grade 6 reading teachers, high school algebra co-teachers, and English 10 co-teachers focused on strategies to make the curriculum more accessible to students with disabilities in a general education environment. Plans for summer 2008 include mandatory systemwide professional development for Grade 7 and Grade 9 co-teachers and paraeducators on best practices for co-teaching.

Transitioning Student Progress

During the course of the year, the progress of transitioning students was monitored using grade reports and quarterly case manager progress reports.

Quarterly Grades

Quarterly grades for the middle school transitioning learning center students, as documented in Table 1, indicate that their overall progress is comparable to other middle school students who receive more than 15 hours of LAD or resource room special education services. In addition, the transitioning learning center students were as likely to be eligible for extracurricular activities (72.22% eligible) as students receiving resource room services (76.92% eligible) and more likely to be eligible than students receiving LAD services (66.64% eligible) during the fourth quarter.

Table 1
Quarterly Grade Point Averages and Eligibility
Middle School Resource Room, LAD, and Transitioning Students
Receiving More than 15 Hours of Special Education Services

	Marking Period 1 Grade Point Average	Marking Period 2 Grade Point Average	Marking Period 3 Grade Point Average	Marking Period 4 Grade Point Average	Percent Eligible For Extra- Curricular Activities
Resource 15+ hours	2.84	2.41	2.41	2.42	76.92
LAD 15+ hours	2.34	2.21	2.25	2.26	66.64
Transitioning Students	2.51	2.27	2.33	2.32	72.22

Data Source Grades: DSA RCARD File 4th Marking Period. Data Source Special Education Students: Encore. 2007-2008

Mathematics was the only subject area in which the transitioning students received grades below both the LAD and resource room students during all quarters. This is consistent with case managers' and other special education staff members' observations that math is an area of significant need for many students. As a result, the Office of Special Education and Student Services will continue to explore avenues that will ensure academic achievement of students with disabilities in math, including the implementation of research-based mathematics interventions and systemwide professional development for elementary special educators, middle school mathematics and high school algebra teachers and special educators, focused on making mathematics instruction accessible for students with disabilities.

As indicated in Table 2, the transitioning high school students had grade point averages (GPAs) comparable to or higher than students receiving LAD services. In addition, the transitioning learning center students were more likely to be eligible for extracurricular activities (69.23% eligible) as students receiving resource room services (65.85% eligible) and more likely to be eligible than students receiving LAD services (52.38% eligible) during the fourth quarter.

Table 2
Quarterly Grade Point Averages and Eligibility
High School Resource Room, LAD, and Transitioning Students
Receiving More than 15 Hours of Special Education Services

	Marking Period 1 Grade Point Average	Marking Period 2 Grade Point Average	Marking Period 3 Grade Point Average	Marking Period 4 Grade Point Average	Percent Eligible for Extra Curricular Activities
Resource 15+ hours	2.64	2.21	2.45	2.26	65.85
LAD 15+ hours	1.99	1.86	1.99	1.95	52.38
Transitioning Students	1.96	1.89	2.24	2.08	69.23

Data Source Grades: DSA RCARD File 4th Marking Period. Data Source Special Education Students: Encore. 2007–2008

Case Manager Quarterly Progress Reports

In addition to using grades to measure the adjustment of the transitioning learning center students, case managers provided their assessment of several indicators of positive learning and behavioral skills quarterly (Attachment A). Fourth quarter results indicate more than 87 percent of the transitioning students exhibited positive classroom and school behaviors “always” or “much of the time.”

In addition, the quarterly reports contained case managers’ perceptions regarding parents’ satisfaction with the support they have received from school staff during the transition process. Case managers remained in contact with all parents throughout the school year to discuss their satisfaction with the communication and support provided by the school. Fourth quarter results indicate more than 98 percent of parents feel that schools met the following indicators “always” or “much of the time” (Attachment A, page 2):

- School staff communicate with me about the supports/interventions being used
- School staff listen and respond to my concerns
- School staff share with me things to do at home to assist my child in school

Impact on Least Restrictive Environment

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004* mandates that “(t)o the maximum extent appropriate” children with disabilities must be “educated with children who are not disabled.” The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) sets targets by which to monitor Maryland school systems for compliance with this LRE requirement in LRE A (general education classroom more than 80 percent of the day) and for LRE C (general education classroom less than 40 percent of the day).

One of the goals of the secondary learning center transition is to increase opportunities for students with disabilities to be educated in the LRE in order to provide greater access to a high quality education based on rigorous academic standards. During the 2006–2007 school year, middle and high schools with learning centers had a higher percentage of students with disabilities receiving special education services in self-contained classes (LRE C) than did schools without learning centers (Attachment B).

The impact of the learning centers on the LRE data can be seen at both middle and high school levels in Attachment B. Middle and high schools without learning centers have significantly higher numbers of students in general education classrooms (LRE A) and significantly lower numbers of students in restrictive, self-contained classrooms (LRE C), far exceeding the targets set by the MSDE.

Assessing School Change—Office of Shared Accountability Preliminary Survey and Classroom Observation Results

The Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) is completing an evaluation of the secondary learning center transition that will be presented in a report to the members of the Board of Education in Fall 2008. The OSA evaluation report will include a final analysis of all observations and surveys, as well as an analysis of student outcome data. Preliminary findings from classroom observations, a survey of classroom teachers and paraeducators, as well as a survey of parents will be highlighted in this report.

Parent Surveys

OSA developed a survey to measure parents’ satisfaction with the transition of their child from a learning center to their home/consortia school. The survey was distributed in Fall 2007 to the parents of the 70 students who transitioned to their home schools at the 30-day periodic Individualized Education Program (IEP) review meeting, with a response rate of 37 percent. The spring survey was distributed to parents of transitioning students, parents of Grade 7 and Grade 9 learning center students, and a sample of parents of students in Grade 6 and Grade 9 who receive special education services in the home schools. The results of this survey will be included in the final report.

Overall, the parents who responded to the Fall 2007 survey appear to be very satisfied with their involvement in the transition process and the support that their child has received in making the transition to a LRE in his/her home school. The majority of respondents reported that their child's attendance, independence, motivation to learn, confidence in abilities, relationships with teacher and classmates, and academic performance had improved or stayed the same.

Staff Surveys

All classroom professionals (general and special education teachers, paraeducators, and related service providers) who work with the transitioned students in their classrooms were the target population for the staff survey. The survey was distributed online to 418 classroom professionals, with a response rate of 50 percent. A preliminary summary of the survey results is included here, with the final results and analysis to be included in the final evaluation report.

The preliminary data from the survey of classroom professionals indicate the following:

- The most common classroom supports available to transitioned students are extended time, preferential seating, and small group instruction.
- Classroom professionals most frequently modified their teaching strategies this year by modifying the pace of instruction and increasing the use of differentiated activities.
- Respondents considered themselves most prepared to implement co-teaching strategies, differentiated instruction, and behavioral strategies in their classrooms with transitioned students and least prepared to implement assistive technology.

Plans are underway to respond to this input by incorporating training on assistive technology in future professional development activities.

Classroom Observations

Staff from OSA conducted observations in 63 secondary school classrooms from March to early May 2008. The selected classrooms included those with transitioned students and current secondary learning center classrooms. Criteria for the observations included subject area (with priority to mathematics and English classes), the number of transitioned students included, grade level, and the classroom environment (i.e., co-taught, supported, or self-contained).

The preliminary data from the classroom observations indicate the following:

- Strategies observed most frequently in the classrooms were the use of multiple modalities to present information to students and for students to convey their learning, individual or small group assistance, and frequent and specific feedback to students.

- Differentiated instruction and the use of cooperative work groups were the instructional strategies observed least frequently.
- Support teaching (where one teacher teaches the lesson while the other provides assistance and feedback) was observed as the only co-teaching model in half of the co-teaching environments observed.

Preliminary results of the staff survey and classroom observations indicate that school staff made good progress in facilitating student transitions. Ongoing professional development, coaching, and school-based support will be required to implement effective inclusive practices systemically. These results are not unexpected given that implementing co-teaching models and differentiated instruction in inclusive classrooms is a complex change process that requires a sustained, intensive effort. Areas of focus for the professional development will include utilizing a variety of co-teaching models, implementing differentiated instructional activities, using cooperative work groups and assistive technology, and the use and reinforcement of instructional strategies throughout lessons to support students with a variety of learning needs.

Efforts to Improve Instruction in the Remaining Secondary Learning Centers

As part of the comprehensive plan to phase out all secondary learning centers, an action plan was developed to improve the quality of instruction at the secondary learning centers for students who remain through their high school graduation. Input for this plan was obtained from staff members in the Department of Special Education Services; the Office of School Performance; secondary principals; staff members from learning centers; parent representatives from the Special Education Advisory Committee, the Montgomery County Council of Parent Teacher Associations, the ARC of Montgomery County; and community members at-large. As part of this plan, supervisors of special education, instructional specialists, and itinerant resource teachers from the DSES have provided supports including, but not limited to, professional development, informal observations, and support with the development of IEPs at the existing learning centers at the elementary, middle, and high school levels throughout the year.

Professional Development and Consultation

On-site professional development was conducted at each school to ensure an effective instructional program. Meetings with learning center coordinators and/or principals were conducted quarterly to address instructional strategies, differentiated instruction, the use of technology to access the curriculum, grading and reporting, behavior management, the effective use of paraeducators, and guidance on scheduling to maximize the options for students with disabilities to participate in a general education classroom. Staff members in the Division of School-Based Special Education Services conducted *Comprehensive Behavior Management* professional development for all secondary learning center teachers to provide strategies to address the social and emotional needs of students with disabilities. Additionally, central office staff served on school-based monitoring teams to review the performance and progress of

students remaining in the secondary learning centers. They also collaborated with grade level and content department staff to facilitate ongoing dialogue regarding effective instructional practices.

Walkthroughs

In order to systematically improve the quality of instruction at the secondary learning centers, formalized walkthroughs, based on the *Special Education Curriculum Quick Reference* document developed by the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs, were conducted at each of the middle and high school learning centers. Focusing on English and mathematics/Algebra 1 instruction, walkthrough participants included supervisors and instructional specialists from DSES, as well as school-based administrators, English resource teachers, reading specialists, math resource teachers, and learning center coordinators.

The following instructional criteria were identified as strengths in both the middle and high school learning centers (Attachment C):

- Instruction corresponds with grade level curriculum/course objectives.
- Learning strategies to help students overcome academic challenges are explicitly taught.
- Students connect with previously learned material and/or real world experiences.
- Students use computational skills and mathematical processes to solve meaningful problems with real world connections.
- Students are actively engaged in challenging and relevant instructional tasks and assignments.

Instructional criteria that were identified as strengths in some classes and as needs in others include the use of —

- instructional and assessment accommodations and modifications;
- assistive technology;
- questioning to promote higher order thinking and problem solving;
- paraeducators to provide support during instruction;
- differentiated materials, methods, or formats to present curriculum content; and
- whole class, small group, and individual instruction.

Transition Planning for Fiscal Year 2009

Case Management

The process of transitioning students to their home or consortia schools for the 2008–2009 school year began in late fall 2007. Meetings with elementary learning center principals and coordinators to discuss the needs of students who potentially will attend their home or consortia schools for the 2008–2009 school year have been held. Central office case managers have been overseeing the transition process for each identified student by observing the student, contacting the student's family, meeting with staff at the receiving school, and attending the student's annual review meeting. Intensive case management will continue for these students throughout the coming school year.

Professional Development

During summer 2008, professional development will be provided for Grade 7 and Grade 9 general and special education core content teachers, as well as new Grade 6 general and special education core content teachers. The sessions will focus on effective co-teaching strategies, universal design for learning, and access to the general education curriculum that meets the needs of all learners.

Resources

FY 2009 staffing has been recommended for all schools based on the number and needs of projected incoming students, including learning center students transitioning to their home middle or high schools. *Understanding Math* will be provided to all middle schools that receive transitioning learning center students to support the development of math concepts.

Summary

Significant improvements have been made in serving more students with disabilities in their home or consortia schools with their nondisabled peers and in providing a rigorous instructional program to these students. We have learned from staff surveys, classroom observations, and walkthroughs that there is still work to be done to incorporate best instructional practices for inclusive education into all classrooms. Ongoing professional development and coaching will be provided to ensure that general and special education teachers have the skills needed to implement a variety of co-teaching models as well as to incorporate differentiated activities, instructional supports, technology, and cooperative work groups into daily classroom instruction. With a focused, sustained, systemwide commitment to this effort, Montgomery County Public Schools will continue to make progress toward improving instructional outcomes for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Carey M. Wright, associate superintendent, Office of Special Education and Student Services, at 301-279-3604, or Ms. Mary Lee Phelps, learning center project manager, at 301-279-3413.

JDW:mrs

Attachments

Copy to:

Executive Staff

Ms. Phelps

Ms. Cullison

Ms. Cuttitta

Dr. Newman

**Secondary Learning Center Transition
CASE MANAGER QUARTERLY REPORT
SUMMARY PERCENTAGES**

For Students Returning to Home Schools

Date of Report: First Quarter - 11/30/07	Totals: (70 students)	Regular Print
Second Quarter - 2/05/08	(71 students)	<i>Bold Italic</i>
Third Quarter - 4/04/08	(70 students)	Regular Print
Fourth Quarter - 6/13/08	(69 students)	<i>Bold Italic</i>

I. STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Indicators	Always	Much of the Time	Rarely
Participates in whole class lessons, works in small groups and individually	26.4%	53.6%	20.0%
	29.6%	52.8%	17.6%
	29.3%	50.7%	18.6%
	28.9%	57.2%	13.8%
Demonstrates learning in multiple ways according to his/her own strengths and needs	21.4%	58.6%	20.0%
	23.2%	50.0%	26.8%
	25.7%	49.3%	25.0%
	26.1%	53.6%	20.3%
Actively engages in challenging and relevant instructional tasks	18.6%	51.4%	30.0%
	25.4%	46.5%	28.2%
	22.9%	42.9%	34.3%
	24.6%	48.6%	26.8%
Completes homework	25.7%	52.1%	22.1%
	19.7%	45.8%	34.5%
	21.4%	47.1%	31.4%
	22.7%	48.1%	29.2%
Uses assistive technology materials or devices appropriately	21.5%	55.8%	18.7%
	19.7%	54.9%	16.9%
	21.4%	48.6%	20.0%
	21.7%	50.2%	17.0%
Interacts with classmates appropriately	38.6%	50.0%	7.1%
	35.2%	47.9%	14.1%
	32.9%	54.3%	12.9%
	38.6%	48.1%	13.3%
Complies with classroom rules and procedures	61.4%	31.4%	7.1%
	56.6%	35.5%	6.5%
	62.4%	30.3%	6.4%
	60.4%	35.7%	3.9%
Complies with school rules and procedures	60.0%	32.9%	5.7%
	69.0%	24.6%	4.9%
	64.3%	25.0%	10.7%
	62.3%	34.1%	3.6%
Actively participates in reading intervention	54.3%	34.3%	4.3%
	53.5%	27.5%	6.3%
	54.5%	28.8%	6.0%
	57.9%	33.3%	1.4%

Actively participates in math intervention	11.4%	8.6%	1.0%
	9.9%	9.9%	8.5%
	14.3%	40.0%	7.1%
	29.0%	48.5%	10.9%

II. PARENT REPORT OF PROGRESS/CONCERN

Indicators	Always	Much of the Time	Rarely
School staff communicate with me about the supports/interventions being used	51.4%	45.7%	1.0%
	52.8%	34.5%	4.2%
	60.1%	33.4%	3.0%
	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%
School staff listen and respond to my concerns	60.0%	33.6%	3.6%
	65.3%	28.3%	4.0%
	63.0%	31.6%	3.4%
	75.4%	23.2%	1.4%
School staff share with me things to do at home to assist my child in school	48.6%	42.9%	5.7%
	42.3%	41.5%	6.3%
	51.6%	38.7%	8.7%
	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%

III. STAFF COMMENT

Indicators	Always	Much of the time	Rarely
Student interacts with other students appropriately	38.6%	52.1%	9.3%
	31.7%	50.7%	16.2%
	31.4%	55.7%	12.9%
	33.3%	57.2%	9.4%
Student actively participates in instructional tasks	25.7%	60%	14.3%
	26.7%	57.0%	16.2%
	27.9%	52.1%	20.0%
	23.2%	59.4%	17.4%
Student demonstrates appropriate behavior	38.6%	52.9%	5.7%
	32.4%	61.3%	6.3%
	44.3%	48.6%	7.1%
	34.8%	60.9%	4.3%
The instructional interventions and supports have been effective	32.9%	48.6%	15.7%
	22.5%	57.7%	19.7%
	27.1%	45.7%	27.1%
	25.4%	57.2%	17.4%
Student is making progress on IEP goals	37.1%	47.1%	14.3%
	23.9%	57.0%	19.0%
	25.7%	56.4%	17.9%
	30.4%	58.7%	10.9%

NOTE: The response rates not shown include those questions to which there was no response or those questions to which responses were checked "not applicable."

**Montgomery County Public Schools
All Students with Disabilities by
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and School Level
2007-2008**

	Students with Disabilities in General Education >80% of the Day (LRE A) (State Target is \geq 58.75%)		Students with Disabilities in General Education <40% of the Day (LRE C) (State Target is <16.97%)	
	Number of Students	Percentage	Number of Students	Percentage
Elementary	3,637	72.5%	990	19.7%
Middle	2,527	67.4%	550	14.7%
High	2,849	59.3%	969	20.2%
Total	9,013	66.4%	2,509	18.5%

**All Students with Disabilities in Schools with
Secondary Learning Centers by LRE and School Level
2007-2008**

	Students with Disabilities in General Education >80% of the Day (LRE A) (State Target is \geq 58.75%)		Students with Disabilities in General Education <40% of the Day (LRE C) (State Target is <16.97%)	
	Number of Students	Percentage	Number of Students	Percentage
Middle	248	44.4%	176	31.5%
High	224	29.9%	330	44.1%
Total	472	36.1%	506	38.7%

**All Students with Disabilities Receiving
Special Education Services in
Secondary Learning Centers by LRE and School Level
2007-2008**

	Students with Disabilities in General Education >80% of the Day (LRE A) (State Target is \geq 58.75%)		Students with Disabilities in General Education <40% of the Day (LRE C) (State Target is <16.97%)	
	Number of Students	Percentage	Number of Students	Percentage
Middle	3	1.8%	125	77.2%
High	9	3.0%	229	78.4%
Total	12	2.6%	354	77.8%

**All Students with Disabilities Receiving
Special Education Services in Schools *without*
Secondary Learning Centers by LRE and School Level
2007–2008**

	Students with Disabilities in General Education >80% of the Day (LRE A) <i>(State Target is >= 58.75%)</i>		Students with Disabilities in General Education <40% of the Day (LRE C) <i>(State Target is <16.97%)</i>	
	Number of Students	Percentage	Number of Students	Percentage
Middle	2,279	71.4%	374	11.7%
High	2,625	64.8%	639	15.8%
Total	4,904	67.7%	1,013	14.0%

**Secondary Learning Center Walkthrough
Feedback and Action Steps
May 2008**

Middle School Walkthrough Feedback and Action Steps

Criteria	Area of Strength	Area of Need	Action Step
Instruction corresponds with grade level curriculum/course objectives.	√		
Cooperative teaching models are used to increase levels of active participation during instructional delivery.		√	Provide ongoing professional development on the models of coteaching, how to embed small group instruction into the class period, and how to effectively use cooperative learning activities during the class period.
Paraeducators provide support during instruction.		√	Provide ongoing professional development to teachers and paraeducators defining their roles and how they can be effectively utilized to provide instruction in small groups and cooperative learning activities.
Instructional and assessment accommodations and modifications provided to students.*	√	√	Provide ongoing professional development on the use of modifications and supplementary aides and services that improve a student's access to and progress in the general education curriculum.
Assistive technology is used to increase and support students' access to information and participation in the lesson.*	√	√	Provide ongoing professional development on the use and integration of assistive technology such as <i>Kurzweil 3000</i> , United Streaming, Draft Builder, Inspiration, Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, Solo Suite, and Promethean tools (if applicable) to enhance student access to and progress in the general education curriculum.
The curriculum content is presented using different materials, methods, or formats.		√	Provide ongoing professional development of differentiated instruction and differentiated instructional tasks including teacher made formative assessments, class work, and homework.
The level of questioning is adjusted to promote higher order thinking and problem solving.*	√	√	Provide ongoing professional development on questioning strategies and samples of higher order questioning stems/techniques.
Learning strategies to help students overcome academic challenges are explicitly taught.	√		
Students connect with previously learned material and /or real world experiences.	√		

Criteria	Area of Strength	Area of Need	Action Step
Students participate in whole class lessons, small group lessons, work in pairs, and individually.		√	Provide ongoing professional development on differentiation of instruction, coteaching models (station teaching and parallel teaching), student discourse, and small group instruction.
Students use computational skills and mathematical processes to solve meaningful problems with real world connections.	√		
Students are actively engaged in challenging and relevant instructional tasks and assignments.	√		

High School Walkthrough Feedback and Action Steps

Criteria	Area of Strength	Area of Need	Action Step
Instruction corresponds with grade level curriculum/course objectives.	√		
Cooperative teaching models are used to increase levels of active participation during instructional delivery.		√	Provide ongoing professional development on the models of coteaching, how to embed small group instruction into the class period, and how to effectively use cooperative learning activities during the class period.
Paraeducators provide support during instruction.*	√	√	Provide ongoing professional development to teachers and paraeducators defining their roles and how they can be effectively utilized to provide instruction in small groups and cooperative learning activities.
Instructional and assessment accommodations and modifications provided to students.	√		
Assistive technology is used to increase and support students' access to information and participation in the lesson.*	√	√	Provide ongoing professional development on the use and integration of assistive technology such as <i>Kurzweil 3000</i> , <i>United Streaming</i> , <i>Draft Builder</i> , <i>Inspiration</i> , <i>Microsoft Word</i> , <i>Microsoft PowerPoint</i> , <i>Solo Suite</i> , and <i>Promethean</i> tools (if applicable) to enhance student access to and progress in the general education curriculum
The curriculum content is presented using different materials, methods, or formats.*	√	√	Provide ongoing professional development of differentiated instruction and differentiated instructional tasks including teacher made formative assessments, class work, and homework.
The level of questioning is adjusted to	√		

Criteria	Area of Strength	Area of Need	Action Step
promote higher order thinking and problem solving.			
Learning strategies to help students overcome academic challenges are explicitly taught.	√		
Students connect with previously learned material and/or real world experiences.	√		
Students participate in whole class lessons, small group lessons, work in pairs, and individually.*	√	√	Provide ongoing professional development on differentiation of instruction, coteaching models (station teaching and parallel teaching), student discourse, and small group instruction.
Students use computational skills and mathematical processes to solve meaningful problems with real world connections.	√		
Students are actively engaged in challenging and relevant instructional tasks and assignments.	√		

*Criteria checked as both an area of strength and an area of need were identified as strengths in some classes and areas of need in others.

