



Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston

St. Francis of Assisi School

Specialized Learning Program

May they always be able to go to schools where the love of Jesus can be proclaimed and lived.

Vision:

Teaching All, the Teachings for Life

Diocesan Mission Statement:

Working in partnership with our communities, the schools of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston will open the opportunity for all students to explore superior education, grounded in the Lived Gospel Values of the Catholic Faith.

Goals:

Keeping our vision and mission at the forefront, our goals as educators in the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston are to:

- *Include all students in our school community to the best of our ability.*
- *Evaluate and be knowledgeable of our resources, how we use them and how we can expand them.*
- *Collaborate with families to establish realistic goals for each child and encourage continued support at home.*
- *Work to the best of our ability with public schools and other agencies to advocate for our students, collaborate, and build professional relations so that students can receive the services they need.*
- *Celebrate and value the gifts that each member of our community brings.*
- *Promote learning and growth for all students across all curricular and extracurricular areas.*
- *Provide support to students struggling academically, socially, emotionally or behaviorally.*
- *Prepare students to be successful, contributing members of their church and community.*

Diocesan Policy on Students with Special Needs

Administrative Manual Policy 5110

No child whose parents desire to enroll him/her in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston shall be denied admission on the basis of race, gender, national origin, or age (in accordance with the law). Notwithstanding the foregoing, students with disabilities will be considered for admission subject to the discretion of the principal, considering the extent of the disabilities and special needs of the student and the resources and accessibility of the school to meet such needs.

Catholic schools are exempt from compliance with the public accommodation provisions of the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act).

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The Specialized Learning Program was created to individualize education for students in a Catholic school. The teacher for the program is Ms. Maria Phillips. Ms. Phillips holds a Master's Degree in Special Education and is fully certified in Learning Disabilities and Autism. Additionally, she is certified in the Orton-Gillingham Approach, which is a teaching method used for students who have difficulty in the areas of reading, writing, and spelling.

Students accepted in the program will receive instruction in the specialized learning program classroom, a general education classroom, and special subject classrooms.

Faculty Credentials:

Ms. Maria Phillips, M.A.

West Virginia Department of Education Endorsements:

Elementary Education K-6

Multi-Categorical (LD, BD, MI) K-6

Autism K-6

Mrs. Elizabeth Conrad, M.A.

National Board for Certified Counselor – Retired

Mrs. Erin Sikora, M.Ed.

West Virginia Department of Education Endorsements:

Superintendent (PK-AD)

Supervisor General Instruction (PK-AD)

Principal (PK-AD)

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Admission:

Before admitting students, St. Francis of Assisi School (St. Francis) must receive complete information from the student's parents and from all prior early childhood programs and schools. The information is then used to determine the steps that are necessary and feasible to meet the student's educational needs without undue risk to the student seeking admission or to other students or staff. When a special need becomes evident only after a student has been admitted, St. Francis will likewise obtain appropriate information related to the special need. St. Francis will then ascertain what is necessary to address the need and whether it is feasible for the school to meet the need.

If St. Francis finds that it cannot properly educate the student after implementing supports, or if the student's abilities were misunderstood or misrepresented and the school does not have the resources to accommodate the student's special needs, St. Francis will reevaluate the student's enrollment. If after reevaluation St. Francis determines that they are not able to meet the student's needs, they will refer the family to Kanawha County special educators to assist the family with the placement of their child in another educational program, and participate in any necessary referrals.

If a student enrolls with an active IEP or a 504 Plan, the parent must inform the school and provide a copy. St. Francis School's ISP Team will thoroughly and carefully review the document to determine if the school is able to reasonably provide for the child based on the child's diagnosis and need. For the student who enters with an IEP, the ISP Team will determine which supports, if any, as described in the document can be reasonably and appropriately written into the student's St. Francis School support plan.

Individualized Student Plan (ISP):

An ISP is developed to assist the student who is experiencing academic difficulties or who may only need changes to the regular curriculum and/or educational environment. Components of the ISP include student strengths, present levels of development, measurable annual goals with benchmarks, documentation of progress, and modifications and other supports that would be most appropriate to ensure the effectiveness of the plan and the progress of the student.

The Individualized Student Plan Team (ISP Team):

For those students needing educational goals, the ISP is developed and implemented by the Individualized Student Plan Team, which consists of the parents, administrator, special education teacher, and the classroom teacher. Other participants may include the Title I teacher, counselor, speech clinician, occupational therapist, a paraeducator (where applicable) and other individual specialists, if appropriate.

Educational Needs:

Ethical and responsible decision making requires that St. Francis School make every reasonable effort to provide a fair education for all children. A fair approach to teaching doesn't mean that all children are educated in the same way; rather, it means that all children receive what they need to succeed. Educational provisions include consideration of the student's preferred learning style, teaching methodology and assessments.

Each student's needs will be evaluated on an individual basis, and the ISP will be reviewed annually or on an as needed basis. Parents and teachers will maintain ongoing communication regarding the effectiveness of the ISP. Student progress will be reported on progress reports and report cards indicating modified curriculum if applicable.

Students will spend a portion of their school day in the Specialized Learning Program classroom, and a portion in a general classroom, based on their needs. The Specialized Learning Program is not a self-contained classroom. Students in the program will participate in all special subject classes and weekly Mass. If needed, they will receive speech or occupational therapy services, etc. The special education teacher will oversee their education and ensure all educational needs are met.

Addressing Behavioral Concerns:

The St. Francis School Specialized Learning Program is not able to serve students with serious behavior difficulties. This includes behaviors that may cause harm or threaten the student, other students or staff members through actions or words. It may also include behaviors that interfere with the learning of other students.

If minor behavior difficulties arise that interfere with the student's academic and/or developmental progress, a member of the ISP Team will collect data using a Functional Behavioral Assessment. The Assessment looks beyond the demonstrated behavior and focuses, instead upon identifying biological, social, affective and environmental factors that

initiate, sustain, or end the target behavior. This approach is important because it leads the observer beyond the behavior to the underlying motivation for it.

A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is developed and implemented. The BIP includes the behaviors of concern, the function of the inappropriate behaviors, possible replacement behaviors, intervention strategies, natural and logical consequences, and avenues of monitoring effectiveness. If the behavior does not improve with interventions, St. Francis will reevaluate the student's enrollment. If after reevaluation St. Francis determines that they are not able to meet the student's needs, they will contact Kanawha County special educators to assist the family with the placement of their child in another educational program, and participate in any necessary referrals.

Parent Student Handbook:

The information contained herein is supplemental to the Parent-Student Handbook. All school policies contained in the St. Francis School Parent Student Handbook apply to students and families in the Specialized Learning Program.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE.
Due Friday August 13, 2016

As a parent or guardian of a student in the St. Francis Specialized Learning Program, I acknowledge that I have read the policies contained herein and further certify that I understand the requirements of these policies and agree to comply with them. Non-return of this signature page implies acceptance.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____