

BCPS Early Intervention Guidelines

Office of Special Education

Early Intervention Programs for Students with Characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder Ages 3 - 5

The Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) Office of Special Education and the Law Office have developed the following guidelines for services for students eligible for Early Intervention for Autism Programs. These guidelines become effective September, 2006.

- Individualized Educational Program (IEP) teams will determine the supports and services necessary to appropriately meet the individual educational needs of students with characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder, ages 3 to 5, using classroom and/or community/home-based services.
- The IEP team will develop an IEP, which includes goals and objectives in each identified area of need.
- BCPS staff from the Office of Special Education must be present at the IEP team in order for community/home service hours to be discussed and approved.
- When IEP goals and objectives are addressed through community/home services, the program will be developed and monitored by a designated BCPS teacher and provided by early intervention assistants hired through BCPS.
- In order to meet the individual needs of each student, the use of a combination of research-based instructional and behavior strategies proven to be effective for students with characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder will be identified and implemented to achieve the IEP goals and objectives.*
- The IEP team will determine the manner in which progress data will be collected by early intervention assistants and the designated BCPS teacher and how that progress will be reported to the parents.
- The IEP will be reviewed at least once a year at the annual review or more frequently at the request of any member of the IEP team.
- At the IEP team, when BCPS 3 and 4 year-old programs are deemed to be appropriate for the student, early intervention home hours will only be an option if the IEP team determines home services are necessary for Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) criteria,
- At the IEP team, if BCPS 3 and 4 year-old programs are deemed to be appropriate and offered to students and parents choose to either educate their children at home

or to place them in a private pre-school program, a Service Plan will be written instead of an IEP. Students may be eligible for services documented in the *Notices of Services for Private Parochial Students* or *Notices of Services for Home School Students*.

- The BCPS full day programs meet the recommendations of the MSDE Task Force on Early Intervention for Autism Executive Summary. Children eligible for such programs will not be provided additional home service hours unless the IEP team determines the additional service hours are necessary for FAPE.
- Early intervention assistants will be utilized for community/home intervention hours only. An IEP team may determine that a student requires additional adult support within a BCPS program, and that additional adult support will be provided consistent with BCPS' procedures.
- Children who are currently receiving services from agency personnel will be transferred to BCPS early intervention community/home-based services at the start of the 2006-2007 school year.

June 28, 2006

- * Stahmer, A. C., & Ingersoll, B. (2004). Inclusive programming for toddlers with autism spectrum disorders: Outcomes from the children's toddler school. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 6, 2, 67-82.