

Self-Contained Program

The Self-Contained Program provides a separate learning environment to students whose social, emotional or behavioral needs require highly supportive and supervised special education services throughout the school day. The Self-Contained Program is essentially a school-within-a-school. Students enrolled in the Self-Contained Program receive instruction in a two-room setting within the regular high school building. Students in the Self-Contained Program focus their attention on developing skills for meeting academic requirements, improving social interaction and developing abilities to manage their behaviors so that they can eventually participate in the larger regular high school environment.

The Self-Contained Program is more than separate classrooms. Students in the program have access to individual and group counseling and crisis intervention services are available. Students receive academic services throughout the school day from staff who are familiar with the needs of emotionally and behaviorally challenged students. The self-contained program encourages students to take an active role in identifying their progress along a structured level system. The level system helps students realize the connection between their performance and the privileges they receive.

At first, students participate in the Self-Contained Program for their entire school day, including lunch, physical education and electives. Each student's progress is reviewed regularly by the staff and parents are given frequent updates as to their student's performance. Each student's progress and IEP are formally reviewed at least one time each year. Once a student's performance demonstrates a sustained period of ability to complete academic requirements and display proper classroom behavior, the student may be considered for a gradual return to the regular education classroom and interaction with peers in the larger school environment. Once a student is recommended for gradual integration into larger high school environment, school staff members closely monitor the student's performance to consider whether the student may be ready for increased integration into the regular education environment.

Each Self-Contained class is taught by a certified special education teacher with the assistance of one or two teacher's aides or paraprofessionals. The Self-Contained Program delivers instruction covering a broad range of regular education courses and remedial special education courses. A small staff-to-student-ratio allows students to receive both behavioral and academic interventions in a highly individualized and supportive environment. A consistent staff in the small self-contained classroom can respond to a student's emotional or behavioral needs and help students develop improved classroom behaviors so that the student may eventually participate in the regular education classroom with peers. Students earn credit toward graduation for each course they successfully complete in the Self-Contained Program.

Students whose behaviors prevent them or others from learning may require behavioral interventions. Every effort is made to provide supportive and non-restrictive interventions prior to using more restrictive interventions and techniques. A student may be considered for a behavioral intervention plan if the student's behavior presents a regular pattern of disruption, negative impact on the learning environment or need for support, supervision or removal.

In order for the services provided in the Self-Contained Program to be effective, the student's participation and determination are essential. The following behaviors increase the chances that a student will be successful:

Take part in understanding the IEP, particularly the goals and objectives.

Help the teacher to identify and understand academic strengths, weaknesses and areas that need assistance.

Be prepared for classes. Have the necessary books, pens, pencils, paper, notebooks and assignments at every class.

Go to every class every day and on time.

Ask the teacher for help, extra time, or other assistance when needed.

Inform the teacher if any academic subject or skill area is particularly difficult.

Use the learning strategies that are taught.

Communicate with teachers and teacher assistants.

Assume responsibility for his or her academic performance and behavior.

The Self-Contained Program can be successful if the student exhibits the behaviors described above. While the program and its teachers provide a great deal of attention within a small environment designed to be encouraging, the ultimate responsibility belongs to the student.

building the future, one student at a time.