



Multiple Needs Program

The Multiple Needs program is a separate special education program at Hoffman Estates High School designed to meet the needs of students with significant communication deficits and other behaviors typically associated with the autism spectrum. The Multiple Needs program basically creates a school-within-a-school. The Multiple Needs program is delivered in a specialized two-room setting providing a predictable daily routine and environmental supports to students who display impaired verbal language and difficulties with social interaction.

Each course taught in the Multiple Needs program is taught by a certified special education teacher with the assistance of one or more teacher's aides or paraprofessionals. The 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 familiar with each student's unique behavior patterns and communication needs make use of a variety of assistive technology devices, communication devices and software, and numerous low-tech visual organizers that are integrated into the daily classroom routine. Students earn credit toward graduation for each course they successfully complete in the Self-Contained Program.

The specially designed classroom environment provided in the Multiple Needs program is essential to meet the needs of students with significant communication and social skills deficits. The program's two classrooms make use of environmental organizers and provide a quiet, calm space that reduces sensory distractions and limits the number of interpersonal challenges.

Students enrolled in the Multiple Needs program participate in numerous courses and experiences to develop vocational skills and independent daily living skills. Students in the program have access to a continuum of vocational experiences and training sites providing varying levels of support. Vocational experiences begin in the student's home school and as the student develops various skills, the student will then be considered for opportunities at other district schools or actual job-sites in the local community. In addition, students in the Multiple Needs program participate in numerous community-based experiences allowing students the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to an actual community setting.

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 Multiple Needs 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 own academic performance and behavior.

The Multiple Needs 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.