

To: Kevin Stull, Superintendent

From: Wendy Congleton, Director of Special Education

Date: 3/4/2022

RE: Recommendation to hire a GMS MSD Teacher and Paraeducator for 22/23

As of 3/4/22, we will have 11 students with moderate to severe disabilities at the Garrard Middle School (GMS). CAP for sped ed MSD setting is 10 per resource setting. Seven of the 11 students are non-verbal Autism (ASD) requiring significant individualized instruction, communication and behavior support tools. One student speaks Swahili. Two students moved out of GCSD, but there is a possibility they could transfer back, which means our MSD GMS population would be 13. There are no referrals for GMS MSD at present time.

One room would focus on ASD evidence-based strategies and instruction, and the other room would work on functional skills and communication. Rooms would be next to each other, and teachers and/or students would rotate.

GMS has been approved for the KY Autism Center program for the 22/23 school year (It's FREE!). The Center will concentrate on both MSD settings and the Highly Structured Program (HSP - for behavior) settings by providing training, mentoring, and resources.

Collaborative Input: Input has been retrieved from SESC, the KY Autism Center, GMS principal (previous and most recent past), and MSD educators.

Estimating salaries in the high range by including fringes and family health benefits:

Moderate to Severe Disability (MSD) Teacher and MSD Paraeducator combines: \$100,000 per Stacy Coffey. Maintenance of Effort will not be impacted due to the increase in active MSD student enrollment.

Room Cost: To furnish, we are estimating around \$5,000, which will come from IDEA ARP funding. If plumbing has to be rerouted, Brad will let me know the cost, so the cost may go above the initial estimate.

MSD Teacher Certification: ECU just recently dropped their MSD certification program, and other colleges and universities seem to be following suit. As a member of

the State DoSE Advisory Group, I have expressed my concerns with the deletion of these programs, as well as the issues with teacher preparation programs for all special educators. For this position, we need to advertise and recruit as early as possible to employ a highly qualified MSD teacher and paraeducator..

Increase in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) from 21/22:

- 17% increase in Autism special education eligibilities. This does NOT include referrals, those diagnosed and NOT in sped, or those in sped but under a different category)
- 42% increase in Autism for preschool (includes those in referrals, First Steps transitions, diagnosed, those with characteristics of, and those eligible for sped under Autism)
- Mental Health and behavior is at its highest needs, especially at the elementary level, which is where we really need to target wrap-around services at an early age to move forward with a successful educational career.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/data/index.html>

- 2020 data: About 1 in 44 children has been identified with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) according to estimates from CDC's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network. [[Read article](#)]
- ASD is reported to occur in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. [[Read article](#)]
- ASD is more than 4 times more common among boys than among girls. [[Read article](#)]
- About 1 in 6 (17%) children aged 3–17 years were diagnosed with a developmental disability, as reported by parents, during a study period of 2009-2017. These included autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, blindness, and cerebral palsy, among others. [[Read summary](#)]