

Special Education



Highly Structured Programs

Garrard County Schools
322 W. Maple Ave
Lancaster, KY 40444
Phone: 859.792.3018

August 2026

Rationale for Highly Structured Programs (HSP)

Expand the continuum of services to provide additional support for students with varying degrees of behavioral need.

General Guidelines for continuum of placements and services from least restrictive to most restrictive environments

- ↓ General education classroom all day
- ↓ General education classroom all day with Instructional Assistant (collaboration) ↓
General education classroom all day with Special Education Teacher (co-teaching) ↓
Part-time general education and part-time special education classroom (co-teaching and resource)
- ↓ Special education resource room all day
- ↓ Special education resource room with additional support

Goals of Highly Structured Programs (HSPs)

- To increase social/behavioral competency
- To increase academic success
- To teach appropriate behaviors and strategies; reducing behaviors that prevent full participation in learning activities.
- To maximize the amount of time students are able to participate in the general education classrooms with their typical peers.

Special Education Highly Structured Program (HSP) Quick Description

Special Education students only
Teacher must be Special Education certified and hired as Special Education Teacher
Additional student support services from school Guidance Counselor and/or Psychologist
Admission and Release Committee (ARC) chaired by the Director of Special Education or certified administrator chair will make the determination of the appropriate Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for placement or exit.

Instruction and Supervision

- General Education teachers will communicate regularly with the Special Education teacher to ensure covering grade level content and for smooth transition as the student returns to the general classroom setting.
- To provide optimum consistency, the same General and Special Education teachers and Instructional Assistants will provide instruction and supervision daily within the

HSP classroom. It is not advisable to have a rotating schedule of several teachers (with the exception of special area teachers).

- Highly Structured Program (HSP) teachers will have the same amount of planning time as other teachers without sacrificing the necessary supervision and structure of the HSP classroom routine. This can be accomplished by scheduling the HSP class as a group with an appropriate general education classroom during related arts/special activities.
- Duty free lunch for the HSP teaches may be accomplished by trading supervision duties with the other adult in the HSP program, another special education teacher in the building supervising during that time, or eating lunch at a different time than the students' lunch time.
- Instructional Assistants will be provided with a duty free lunch and two 10- minute breaks during the day without sacrificing the necessary supervision of students and structure of the program.

Placement Process and Criteria

Highly Structured Programs (maximum of 15 eligible students) are most appropriate for students who need intensive instruction in social competency and whose behaviors necessitate an environment with a high degree of structure, predictability, and reinforcements. Students considered for placement in the HSP will meet the following criteria:

- The student exhibits behavior patterns severe to the degree that it is interfering with his/her own progress and/or the learning environment of other students AND
- The student has documentation that provides evidence of the implementation of an individual Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) and several appropriate interventions with unsatisfactory results, as documented by progress monitoring behavior sheets AND
- Prior to consideration for HSP, a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) Screener will be completed by teacher(s) – the results of the screener presented to the ARC considering HSP; ARC revises BIP for HSP AND
- Consultation with district support personnel (e.g., DoSE, Psychologists) for the purpose of further intervention has been requested and suggested strategies with results have been well-documented AND
- The ARC must consider the category of disability under which the student is currently being served. A student with an intense and consistent pattern of behaviors would be most likely placed under the categories of Emotional Behavior Disability (EBD), Autism, Other Health Impairment for significant and consistent alertness deficits, or being currently re-evaluated to determine most appropriate placement.
- The student is not likely to be adversely affected by the existing HSP composition AND/OR
- The student likely receives outside wrap-around services (e.g., counseling, medication management, social skills training, family preservation, or behavioral interventions, and etc.)
- An Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) convenes to review supporting evidence and HSP eligibility. The ARC determines the services times and location.

After HSP Placement and ARC Decision

The principal will assign general education teachers to ensure covering core content, adherence to the curriculum map, and facilitating systematic transition to the general education classroom. General Education Teacher(s)' responsibilities will include:

- Collaborating and sharing instructional information and materials with the HSP classroom teacher, as needed.
- Maintaining daily/weekly contact with the student/family.
- Participating in parent conferences, ARCs, and team/agency meetings.

Exit Criteria:

District HSP students will exit the HSP on an individual basis, according to the least restrictive environment for the student and the requirements of the Individual Education Plan (IEP), as determined by the ARC.

- Students may be considered for exit upon completing successful transition to a general education classroom and/or resource rooms (LRE as determined by the ARC).
- HSP teacher will document all individual strategies taught and daily behavior/academic data for the student. HSP teachers will use the students' Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) when transitioning them into their least restrictive environment (LRE - general education classroom and/or resource classroom). The students' ability to maintain appropriate behaviors will determine his/her progress through the HSP.
- An ARC will convene to review progress and determine placement. The ARC will review all interventions, BIP, present data to determine if the student should exit the program.
- The ARC will develop a comprehensive transition plan to put systems (e.g., behavior plans, contracts, mentors, and etc.) in place to help student maintain success in the general classroom/resource room.

Parent Involvement:

- Parents will be notified and invited to participate in developing interventions/strategies as soon as the student begins having difficulties at school and prior to referral to the HSP.
- Parents will be notified through the ARC process when the student is being considered for referral to the HSP.
- Parental consultation is necessary for HSP placement.
- Parents will be notified before any placement transition.
- School and HSP staff will keep documentation of ALL parent contacts.

Critical Features and Best Practices of a Highly Structured

Program • Significantly and consistently structured

- High expectations
- Classroom management plan
- Safe Crisis Management (SCM) and De-escalation required for faculty and staff of the HSP

- Daily Social and Executive Functioning skills instruction
- Specialized academic instruction
- Monitoring daily data collection and analysis
- Structured work states and visual supports
- Consistent materials across the district
- Sensory area/safe space (regroup/refocus)

Resources and Supports:

- South Central South East Educational Cooperative
- The Kentucky Autism Training Center
- The Behavior Institute
- University of Louisville's Academic and Behavioral Response to Intervention (ABRI) Program
- Mental Health Counseling within the Schools
- School and District Autism Problem-Solving Team
- School Psychologist
- Guidance Counselors
- Occupational Therapists
- HSP Meetings with District Support Staff
- Provide positive opportunities for parent communication/trainings
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) RtI Framework Manual

Evidence-Based Programs:

- The Incredible 5 Point Scale (social interactions and emotional responses) • Why Try? (social-emotional)
- Precision Request (systematic "if, then" program promoting the use of same language across settings)
- Minds in Motion (sensory and behavior regulation)
- The Ziggurat Model (framework for designing comprehensive interventions for high functioning individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders)
- Explicit Instruction (instructional design and delivery procedures)

HSP: Highly Structured Program

ARC: Admissions and Release Committee

LRE: Least Restrictive Environment

FBA: Functional Behavior Assessment

EBD: Emotional Behavior Disability

OHI: Other Health Impairment

BIP: Behavior Intervention Plan