



# THE OFFICE OF EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION



## FAQs About Programs for Autism In DPSCD

### **Q. DPSCD is becoming a START District! What is START?**

**A.** Statewide Autism Resource and Training (**START**) is a state funded initiative that works with schools, community partners, and families to support students with autism by becoming active, engaged members of their schools and local communities through the implementation of evidence-based best practices. Families are provided resources that promote understanding of autism, to support their children at home/school/community and to collaborate meaningfully with school staff. DPSCD was awarded the START Technical Assistance Grant to support START and Peer 2 Peer programming within our district.

### **Q. How does DPSCD support inclusion for students with autism?**

**A.** Peer 2 Peer Programming is one way that DPSCD promotes inclusion for students on the spectrum. This initiative provides opportunities for students to have academic and social engagement with their same age, non-disabled peers throughout the school day. The ASD Programs also works in collaboration with Special Olympics Unified Sports to promote peer interactions through sports and other activities.

### **Q. What is the appropriate educational setting for the majority of students who are on the autism spectrum?**

**A.** 44% of children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) eligibility have an IQ score in the average to above average range. The majority of students with autism should be educated in their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) which is the general education setting with appropriate supports.

### **Q. How does DPSCD support Neurodiversity?**

**A.** Neurodiversity is a movement that seeks to change the way we think about autism. It rejects the idea that autism is a disorder and sees it instead as a neurological difference: one with a unique way of thinking and experiencing the world. ASD District Coaches and ASD Behavior Specialist work proactively to provide coaching and training to support students who are



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neurodiverse, and help teachers learn methods for implementing best practices. DPSCD is committed to staying informed with the needs of our community.

## **Q. What is the role of the ASD Coaches and ASD Behavior Specialist?**

A. ASD Coaches and ASD Behavior Specialist work collaboratively with District Staff to improve the educational outcomes for students with autism by supporting the implementation of evidence-based practices and universal supports. This capacity building proactive approach provides staff with the support necessary to positively impact student achievement in all areas.

ASD Coaches and ASD Behavior Specialist provide support for District Staff in the form of workshops, professional development, training and coaching. The goal of the ASD Program is to build District capacity to support our population of students with autism.

## **Q. What is PAC? How does PAC assist parents with supporting students with autism?**

A. The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is an organization of parents, educators and administrators committed to sharing information and resources in a collaborative manner to promote educational excellence for students with exceptional needs to reach their maximum potential. PAC provides resources, verbiage, classes and tools to prepare parents and students through every state of transition (preschool to post-secondary). If you would like more information, join the PAC. Meeting Dates: *April 6, May 4, June 1* by clicking the link below.

[Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

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Conference ID: 837 997 979#