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The Henderson School Case

Introduction

The Henderson Inclusion School became an inclusive school more than two decades ago and nowadays is recognized as a reference in the US. Through the years, the teachers and leaders at the Henderson School have developed a model of inclusive education that has been proven to provide an equal education to students of differing abilities. This case study establishes how teachers at the Henderson School effectively implement inclusive education by outlining the structure of the school, pedagogy and curriculum, use of technology and collaboration among teachers and specialists. Now the school is facing the challenge of how to develop a disciplinary policy that allows students to express themselves in a way that acknowledges their different needs while minimizing disruptive or inappropriate behaviors.

A day in the life

At 9:05 am on a sunny June morning Ms. Bennett, a fourth grade teacher at the Henderson Inclusion School, stands in front of her classroom to begin her day. Her nine to ten year old students are piling into the classroom from all walks of life; some come from upper class families and some from middle class families, some with interested families and others with seemingly absent or uninterested parents. Six students out of 22 students in Ms. Bennett’s class have diagnosed disabilities, four students are English Language Learners (ELL), and two students are gifted and talented, exhibiting 8th to 9th grade literacy skills. This highly diverse classroom requires Ms. Bennett to differentiate instruction and make modifications to the curriculum to benefit all students equally.

Ms. Bennett starts her day by writing the daily schedule on the board and getting the laptops set up for morning typing practice. “It is absolutely essential that we start every day the same so students know what to expect when they walk through those doors. How that day starts transfers to the rest of the day so a lot of energy goes into the morning” she explains. Students come in every morning and practice their typing skills on laptop computers for the first twenty minutes. Without being asked or directed, most of the students take their laptop from a cart, log in, and get started. Ms. Bennett and her teaching partner,

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Ms. Foster, designate twenty minutes in the morning to learning to type because students with a diverse range of needs rely heavily on technology that requires knowledge of using a keyboard.

Having structured routines and procedures throughout the day helps Ms. Bennett and Ms. Foster better handle unanticipated student needs. Morning work has to be something that all students can comfortably complete so it does not become a trigger for some students. For instance, some students with learning disabilities may become very agitated and discouraged and possibly give up if it is a task they cannot successfully accomplish. Ms. Bennett and Ms. Foster also use this morning time to check in with students who need encouragement to start the day off on a positive note and to provide a preview of the day to ensure that students requiring a sense of structure are able to plan for the day ahead. On this particular morning, one student with social and behavioral problems enters the classroom, throws his backpack on the floor, ties his hood tight over his head, and makes his way stomping to his seat. Ms. Bennett walks over to Jonny and engages him in a conversation: “How are we doing today? How come the hood is up? Today is going to be a good day. How can I help you prepare for it to be a good day? Is there something that happened at home that you want to talk about? This is a new day, a new start, lets make it a good one.” Jonny asks to step out in the hall with Ms. Bennett to vent some of his frustration and receive personal attention. After their conversation, Jonny reenters the classroom in a noticeably better mood. He picks up his backpack and quickly gets started on his morning work.

Tim, a student with Aspergers Syndrome, does not want to come to school today. When the bell rang after the morning play period he decided to stay on the playground. As this is an issue on most mornings, a protocol has been developed in which Tim can choose to go to the office to decompress while the other students are doing morning work. He takes twenty minutes in the office and after spending some time with the principal, with whom he has a strong relationship, he feels ready to join the rest of the class. He is not the only student that is taking a bit longer to make it to class; on this particular day, several students who did not eat breakfast at home are finishing up, starting their typing about ten minutes after the rest of the class.

After the twenty minutes of typing is finished the class gathers up for morning community circle. In the circle they talk about the day’s schedule, make clear the expectations for the day, and finish by repeating the school wide announcements. Jonny is the student of the day and is therefore the facilitator of the morning circle. This tradition was started to provide an opportunity for a students to work on their oral language and communication skills. Jonny reads the class creed, “failure²” and talks about the class code of conduct. The class code of conduct is in place and reiterated on a daily basis so students know success is expected from them and that success can look different for different people. The class has now settled in and is ready to start a successful day at school.

² The class creed “failure is not an option” is to instill in students that they should not give up. Frustration is something that all people experience but all work through it, do not give up and in the end succeed.

History of Special Education and the Henderson School

Ms. Bennett teaches at an elementary school called the Henderson Inclusion School. Since the spring of 1989, Henderson Inclusion has been pursuing a surprisingly simple, and highly successful, strategy of inclusion, which rests on the belief that all children, disabled and nondisabled, benefit from being taught together. An inclusive school means that students with mild, moderate and severe disabilities learn alongside general education as well as gifted and talented students. In the United States today inclusion is increasingly becoming the norm and standard of practice. However, this has not always been the case.

Education for people with disabilities in the United States has improved in the last 30 years. In the 1970's institutionalization where people with disabilities were forced to live in homes cut-off from society and given very little interaction, was standard practice and many were denied access to an equal education or even an education at all.³ This improvement was a result of progressive laws such as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (EAHCA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 1990 and amended in 2004. Both laws have made the education of people with disabilities a right and are a movement toward equal education.

EAHCA was the first major law that guaranteed the right to a public education for all children, ages 5 to 21. EAHCA required that students with disabilities be given public education, which meant that students were placed in public schools, but usually in segregated classrooms. This policy did not encourage a climate of inclusion, simply a free and public education (FAPE)⁴. Many people realized the need for a more inclusive education than was not mandated under EAHCA.

In 1990, changes were made to EAHCA that extended FAPE to the least restrictive environment (LRE) provision to require that children with disabilities be educated with children without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate. "Least restrictive environment" means that a student who has a disability should have the opportunity to be educated with non-disabled peers, to the greatest extent appropriate. This act included provisions that required that students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum, through individualized education plans (IEPs⁵). To determine the appropriate setting for a student, a team will review the student's needs and interests and write out an IEP ⁶. In the

³ Willowbrook State School

⁴ Karger, J. (2006). *What IDEA and NCLB suggest about curriculum access for students with Disabilities*. (pp. 69 – 100). In Rose, D.H., Meyer, A., Hitchcock, C., & Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST). *The universally designed classroom: Accessible curriculum and digital technologies* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

⁵ See an example of IEP used in Henderson School in Appendix 1.

⁶ Hehir, T., & Gamm, S. (1999). *Special education: From legalism to collaboration*. In J. P. Heubert (Ed.), *Law and school reform: Six strategies for promoting educational equity*.

IEP, teachers are required to write out learning objectives for students with disabilities and the units and lessons designed to ensure students meet those learning objectives. With the differences in needs and interests among students with disabilities, there is no single definition of what an LRE will be for all students. When LRE was included in the law, EAHCA was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Many schools in the United States have moved in the direction of inclusion but have not implemented it with success. Adrienne Asch, a professor at Wellesly, writes about many students with disabilities and their experiences in the public school system. According to Asch⁷, “Those (disabled students) in regular classes see themselves better off than segregated disabled students, but they frequently feel disadvantaged compared to their nondisabled classmates”. How is inclusion best implemented to successfully include students with disabilities in the mainstream classroom?

Henderson Inclusion School provides a model for other inclusion schools to follow. Since it made its commitment to inclusionary practices almost two decades ago, the Henderson School has become a leader of innovation, collaboration and high expectations for students with disabilities.

The Henderson School is located in Dorchester, a large working class neighborhood of Boston, Massachusetts and serves an ethnically, linguistically and racially diverse group of students. It is a kindergarten through fifth grade elementary school (ages 5 to 12) with 230 students, 21 certificated teachers, 11 paraprofessionals along with many occupational therapists and specialists. Approximately 33 percent of the students have a disability, many of which are labeled significant. The school day goes from nine twenty-five in the morning to three fifteen in the afternoon. The Henderson School is a high performing school, based on test scores, within Boston.

For the past ten years the Henderson School has been a sought after elementary school in the Boston Public School System because of its performance on the MCAS, a state standardized test that all elementary students are required to take. In the Boston Public School system families are able to enter a lottery of a school they choose for their student. Henderson has a high pass rate (See Appendix 1), compared to the state average for public schools, especially a school where 30 percent of the student body has a diagnosed disability.

There are two certified teachers in every classroom. In Ms. Bennett’s fourth grade classroom, her teaching partner Ms. Foster is certified in moderate and severe special education and general elementary

New Haven: Yale University Press. pp. 205-243
⁷ Asch, A. (1989). *Has the law made a difference?* In D. Lipsky & A. Gartner (Eds.), *Beyond separate education: Quality education for all* (pp. 181-205). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes. Quote in text taken from pg. 183.

education. Ms. Bennett is certified in moderate special education, general elementary education, and English as a second language. Their classroom also has a one-to-one paraprofessional who works full-time in the classroom with a student whom, because of the severity of her needs, needs one-to-one support and instruction. Ms. Bennett and Ms. Foster have the following types of disabilities in their classroom:

- *Student A* - global delays (generally delayed in all aspects of development), agenesis of the corpus callosum (underdeveloped portion of the brain), ventricular septal defect (heart issue), and spastic quadriplegia (paralyzed)
- *Student B* – Down’s Syndrome and cognitive delays
- *Student C* - attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, combined type (both ADD and ADHD), anxiety sensory integration disorder, and language-based learning disability
- *Student D* – emotional behavioral disability and expressive communication disorder
- *Student E* – Asperger’s Syndrome
- *Student G* – dysnomia disorder (difficulty retrieving the correct word from memory)

Two-teacher teams are effective in an inclusive classroom. When one student is having a difficult day and needs extra attention one teacher can provide that support while the other teacher continues working with the other students. Both teachers are hands-on and able to attend to all the students.

Henderson Inclusion is known for promoting high standards in all students. Everyday talk at the school is centered on what success looks like and what it means to be successful. “It is much less about the specific disability and so much more about the individual child” said Ms. Bennett. Success and achievement are celebrated in not traditional measures such as increasing self-esteem, and teaching students to be supportive and cooperative with each other.

In addition to high academic performance the Henderson School has relatively few discipline referrals. This is a result of their proactive approach to ensuring the students accept diversity. The Henderson School includes disability as part of the schools’ overall diversity efforts. “Here everyone is different. Everyone is unique in their own way. It makes me feel really happy because this is an inclusion school and basically everyone is everyone’s friend.” said Briana Sapienza, fourth grade student at Henderson Inclusion School. Students are taught from kindergarten that all children are different in their own unique way. Patricia Lampron, the current principal reiterated, “Here we are teaching children that it is normal to be different because IT IS normal to be different. Here students are forced to learn how to work together in order to be successful.”

Technology

Meeting the needs of special-education students is a constant challenge for educators. Special education is specialized and there are professionals at the school who have the education and a great deal of experience educating students with particular disabilities. In addition to the education and experience, the most efficient way that teachers at the Henderson School provide accommodations for students with disabilities is through the use of technology. “The beauty of our school is that we spend a lot of money on technology. Every teacher is fully committed to universal design for learning (UDL)” said Ms. Bennett. With UDL, teachers use multiple ways of presenting the lesson, engaging with the material and allow students multiple ways of expressing what they have learned⁸. Teachers report that technology is essential to UDL and the work that inclusion teachers do. Some of the programs that teachers use on a daily basis at the Henderson School include Microsoft Office (primarily Word and PowerPoint), Kidbiz3000, First in Math, Writing with Symbols, IXL, Bookshare, and Kurzweil⁹.

Kurzweil is a text-reader, and is an excellent resource for struggling readers, including individuals with learning difficulties such as dyslexia and attention deficit disorder, as well as those who are English Language Learners (ELLs). It is an interactive computer program allowing students to engage with digital text. Through this computer program, the computer audibly reads text (any text, downloaded or scanned), and provides visuals to accompany the text and word definitions. Students with dyslexia often read slowly and concentrate so hard on phonics that they forget what they have read and it is difficult for them to comprehend¹⁰. Kurzweil audibly reads the text to the dyslexic student allowing them to comprehend the passage, and understand and learn in their own way. The dyslexic student, through Kurzweil, is given access to the curriculum and content with the rest of the class.

In addition to Kurzweil, the Henderson School has invested in a reading program called Achieve/Kidbiz 3000. First, each student takes a pre-test. Then, they read the same non-fiction story at their own reading level. This allows all students to learn the same content, but at the ability level at which they are able to work. According to Ms. Bennett, Achieve/Kidbiz 3000 and Kurzweil are relatively easy ways that teachers differentiate instruction for students.

Curriculum

All teachers at the Henderson School employ concepts of universal design. Dr. William Henderson,

⁸ For more on UDL and example lessons see CAST’s website <http://www.cast.org/udl/index.html>

⁹ There is more information on these programs in the Appendix.

¹⁰ Kurzweil, <http://www.kurzweiled.com/default.html>

founder of the school and former principal, wrote, “There can be no pretense of teaching all students in inclusive classrooms by using the exact same curriculum materials and instructional strategies. This ‘one-way fits all’ would not be good pedagogy even in homogeneous or tracked classes. At the Henderson School where there are students working at, above, slightly below and well below grade level in every room, a single approach was never an option”¹¹. The pedagogy is designed in a way that allows for differentiated instruction. All subjects are taught using center-based learning¹², where teachers utilize learning stations to enable children to learn independently through hands-on activities. “In math we might teach a mini group lesson on fractions then students will break into smaller groups, either computer led, or a teacher led group depending on their ability level and whether they need more guided instruction.” said Ms. Bennett. Some students may play a less difficult version of the fraction game but they are all working on the same concept.

Integral to giving students with disabilities access to the curriculum is the use of accommodations. These accommodations such as extra visuals, technology such as text to speech for students with dyslexia, or additional time for content learning, enable inclusion to be successful for students with disabilities. According to Thomas Hehir, inclusion specialist and professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, accommodations “minimize the impact of disability and maximize the opportunities for children with disabilities to participate in general education in their natural community”¹³.

Generally the instruction that is required to teach students with disabilities is good instruction for all students¹⁴. Students benefit from the scaffolding, small group instruction and individual instruction that special education students may require. For example, some students with disabilities require concepts to be presented visually with pictures or graphs. Since the visual representations are necessary for some students to learn, content is always presented in Ms. Bennett’s class using text and visuals, which is helpful for the general education students as well.

In order to meet the unique needs of each student, most teachers at the Henderson have adopted a small group/ station-teaching model, in which students move throughout the classroom and participate in different activities (self-directed, teacher-led, engaging multiple modalities). As a result, all students receive small group instruction (7 students to 1 teacher) an average of 30 minutes out of every 60-minute lesson block.

¹¹ Henderson, W. (2003). Inclusion at the O’Hearn. p. 4

¹² In center based learning teachers choose a subject area and learning objectives. Teachers set up learning centers where children will be at a given center for an allotted period of time and then switch to a different center. The teacher monitors by walking around the room. Each learning center operates separately, which makes it easy for students to select an activity.

¹³ Hehir, T. (2005). *New directions in special education: Eliminating ableism in policy and practice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. Quote in text taken from pg. 49.

¹⁴ Hehir, T. (2010). Week 8: Accessing the curriculum. Harvard University lecture slides: Implementing inclusive education.

Some students, because of their disability, may require extra instruction from specialists. However, providing those extra is a challenge for teachers and specialists, as it is not ideal to pull students out of classes where they might miss content or social activities. To rectify this problem, therapists and specialists at the Henderson School do most of their work with students in the classroom, thus eliminating the need for pull out services. However, not all services are appropriately given in the classroom. For example, counseling for autistic students and teaching Braille to blind students should be given in a more private setting. Although services in the classroom are ideal for most, it also requires more planning and collaboration from both the teacher and specialists.

At the beginning of the school year, teachers sit with the specialists to look over the class lists and coordinate content with services that students need. For example, in Ms. Bennett's class, if the speech therapist is working on reading goals, she makes sure that students with speech needs are seen by her during classroom reading time. Ms. Bennett and Ms. Foster build in small group work for reading time to enable the speech therapist to do her job. Importantly, the small group of students that require services from the reading specialist looks identical to the other small groups. The therapist is able to work on her goals within the context of what the entire class is doing. This set up ensures that the content is still being covered for all students during that time.

Providing services for students is just one of many examples where it is absolutely necessary for teachers to collaborate and communicate with specialists and other teachers. "Communication is the key to ensuring an inclusive school will run smoothly. If you are the type of teacher that likes to run your classroom like an island, separated from the rest of the school, then inclusion is not going to be the type of school you will be successful in" said Ms. Bennett. The teachers are constantly collaborating with other teachers and therapists/specialists. They have a team of teachers brainstorming ideas on how best to educate a particular student. If a teacher is having a problem with a particular student, s/he will seek out other teachers for ideas and guidance. Ms. Bennett emphasized that "It is important to remember that when teaching a child with a disability, you are part of a team including therapists, administrators, parents/ family members, all teachers, and often times doctors. Everyone must work together."

At the beginning of the school year teachers spend time reading records from previous years about all of their students. "It is much less about the specific disability and so much more about the individual child," said Ms. Bennett. By law, teachers are required to make detailed educational plans for their students with diagnosed disabilities, called individualized education plans (IEPs), that cover learning objectives, aspects of how the student learns and responds to discipline. Through the records teachers learn what teaching strategies, discipline plans and routines and procedures work with their new students. If they are receiving a brand new student, one that no one at the school has not worked with before, they spend the

time talking with parents and specialists to get to know the student before school begins.

“The most difficult thing about working at the Henderson School is that everyday we must put so much thought into how each student learns and how we are going to teach the lesson and accommodate so every student is included and learns to the best of their ability” said Ms. Bennett. According to the teachers they are always thinking strategically how students with different abilities can function in the same classroom. “Everyday I am constantly learning on the job” she said. “I learn different things about each student everyday and in the back of my mind, I am constantly thinking how I am going to improve instruction based on that new information.”

According to parents and teachers, the teachers at the Henderson School work tirelessly. Teaching in the United States is not a high stature profession and likewise, is not a highly paid profession. Many teachers at the Henderson School put in extra hours grading papers, talking with parents, collaborating, and researching that are unpaid. From the beginning of the school, Dr. William Henderson, chose teachers who were willing to work in a school that required them to think diligently about each child. He led the school, teachers and students by example. He got to know each teacher and student and was highly involved in the daily activities of the school.

Looking forward

As this June school day comes to a close, Ms. Bennett is left to assess how the year went and to ponder what improvements she can make in the coming year. She will spend a good portion of the summer researching her students, reading their past teachers’ notes so that she knows what to expect. “My biggest challenge this year is: how do I figure out the right schedule and routine that will enable my students to flourish and succeed?” she said. She and her partner teacher will plan routines and procedures to facilitate their classroom in an efficient and enabling manner.

There are a few areas in which the school is seeking to make large strides. Discipline is the first of these areas. At Henderson Inclusion School, there is no school wide system of behavior management or positive behavior reinforcement. Many believe that they are not doing enough modeling of appropriate behavior. This summer, all school staff members are reading a book called “One, Two, Three Magic” by Dr. Thomas Phelin on positive discipline strategies. In the fall, all teachers will get together and brainstorm what they can do as a school around behavior. Currently, everyone is doing their own disciplining in their individual classrooms, and there is no whole school cohesion around the discipline of students. How can the Henderson School develop a disciplinary policy that allows students to express themselves in a way that

acknowledges their different needs while minimizing disruptive or inappropriate behaviors?

Another aspect of the teaching that teachers plan to improve on is differentiating instruction for gifted students and ELLs. Next year, nearly half of the incoming kindergartners will consist of native Spanish speakers. The school has already formed an ELL task force to help teachers improve instruction for ELLs. How can the school's leadership adapt to the increasing number of English Language Learners?

Inclusion is a difficult ideal to achieve. A school must have adequate resources, strong leadership, teacher experience and specialists in house to provide a good education for students with disabilities. The Henderson School uses teaching teams, technology, and communication systems effectively among teachers and specialists to allow for a successful model of inclusive education. They have the experience, passion, leadership and critical resources to provide a quality education for all students of differing abilities.

Appendix 1 – Individualized Education Plan

SECONDARY TRANSITION COMPONENT

Duration of Special Education and Related Services: From: 00 / 00 / 2000 To: 00 / 00 / 2000

Student: Student Name

DOB: 00 / 00 / 2000

School: School Name

Grade: Grade

Has the student been informed of his/her rights, if age 17 and older? Yes N/A

Section A - Student Needs, Strengths, Preferences and Interests (Beginning at age 14 and updated annually)

The following people gave information about the student's needs, strengths, preferences and interests and course of study selection:

- Student
- Parent(s), Guardian(s) and Family Members
- Adult Service Agency Representatives (specify): _____
- School Staff
- Other (Explain): _____

Indicate which age appropriate transition assessments were conducted for the development of measurable postsecondary goals and transition activities and the date they were conducted:

INFORMAL ASSESSMENT(S):

- Interest and Skill Inventories _____
- Observations/Situational Assessments _____
- Rating Scales _____
- Interviews _____
- Other (Explain): _____

FORMAL ASSESSMENT(S):

- _____
- Other (Explain): _____

Section B - Course of Study (Beginning at age 14 and updated annually)

The student is following a course of study that leads to the high school diploma:

- Future Ready Core Course of Study (effective with the 9th grade class of 2009/2010)
- College/University Prep Course of Study*
- College Tech Prep Course of Study*
- Career Preparation Course of Study*
- Occupational Course of Study

(*Not applicable to students entering 9th grade beginning with the freshman class of 2009-2010.)

The student is following extensions of the standard course of study and pursuing the graduation certificate _____.

The student is in middle school and is following the North Carolina Standard Course of Study _____; or the extensions of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study _____.

Section C - Postsecondary Goals (Beginning at age 16 and updated annually)

Indicate the student's measurable post-secondary goals in each of the following areas on an annual basis:

Education/Training: _____

Employment: _____

Independent Living (if appropriate): _____

SECONDARY TRANSITION COMPONENT

Duration of Special Education and Related Services: From: 00 / 00 / 2000 To: 00 / 00 / 2000

Student: Student Name

Section D – Transition Services (By age 16 and updated annually)

Transition Areas	Transition Activities	Responsible Person and/or Agency	Anticipated Completion Date
Instruction			00 / 00 / 2000
Related Services			00 / 00 / 2000
Community Experiences			00 / 00 / 2000
Employment			00 / 00 / 2000
Adult Living Skills			00 / 00 / 2000
Daily Living Skills (if appropriate)			00 / 00 / 2000
Functional Vocational Evaluation (if appropriate)			00 / 00 / 2000

Appendix 2 – Basic statistics of the Henderson School

In the spring of 1989, the O’Hearn School became an inclusion school. Grades kindergarten through fifth grade, ages 5 to 12 are offered at the school.

Scores from standardized official tests (MCAS), data from 2010

Grade	Subject	Pass rate
3	English (ELA)	91%
3	Math	91%
4	English (ELA)	85%
4	Math	88%
5	English (ELA)	80%
5	Math	70%
5	Science	75%

Total enrollment: 218 students

Regular Education: 69.2% Special Education: 30.7%

There is a total of 34 adults on staff.

There are 24 teachers and 100 percent of them are credentialed in the state of Massachusetts.

The student to staff ratio is 1:10 with an average class size of 22.

The school website is <http://boston.k12.ma.us/Henderson/>

Appendix 3 – Basic statistics of Boston Public Schools (BPS)

There are 134 schools in the BPS: 6 early learning centers (K–grade 1) 53 elementary schools (K–5), 23 elementary & middle schools (K–8), 10 middle schools (6–8), 2 middle & high schools (6–12), 29 high schools (9–12), 1 elementary through high school (K-12), 3 “exam” schools¹⁵ (7–12), 6 special education schools (K–12), 1 alternative (at-risk) program and 4 inclusion schools (3 elementary and 1 high school)

Average pass rate from standardized official tests (MCAS) compared to the State average

Grade	Test	Boston Public Schools	State Scores
3	Read	37%	63%
3	Math	42%	65%
4	ELA	30%	54%
4	Math	8%	48%
5	ELA	40%	63%
5	Math	39%	55%
5	Science	21%	53%
6	ELA	44%	69%
6	Math	38%	59%
7	ELA	48%	72%
7	Math	28%	53%
8	ELA	59%	78%
8	Math	37%	51%
8	Science	10%	40%
10	ELA	60%	78%
10	Math	60%	75%
10	Science	36%	65%

¹⁵ These are schools that require a high score on a test for admission

2011 student enrollment is 57,050 including:

27,420 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 5; 11,580 students in grades 6 through 8; 18,050 students in grades 9 through 12

Students with Disabilities

About 10,950 students ages 3 to 21 with disabilities (19% of total enrollment) are enrolled in special education programs in BPS schools, including:

- 56% with mild to moderate special needs who spend at least 60% of the school day in general education classrooms
- 44% with more severe special needs who spend at least 60% of the school day in "substantially separate" classrooms
- 460 students are enrolled in out-of-district (private) placements, and 300 non-BPS students receive some special education services in BPS schools.

The 2010-2011 8,035 staff positions (FTE):

- 4,220 teachers
- 2,251 other school based staff
- 6,471 total school based staff
- 1,564 central staff

Qualifications of BPS Teachers (School Year 2010):

- 98.8% are licensed in their teaching assignment
- 96.2% of core academic classes are taught by teachers who are highly qualified