



EASTSIDE CATHOLIC

2023-24

OPTIONS PROGRAM PROFILE

The Options Program

at Eastside Catholic School supports the belief that high school-age students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities deserve an opportunity to maximize their academic, social and spiritual potential.

President

Gil Picciotto

High School Principal

Ryan Aiello

High School Assistant Principal

Soonja Larsen

Director of Options Program

Michele Barton

Director of Admissions

Laura Leach

Director of Campus Ministry

Lynn Kittridge

Director of Student Life

Elisha Pa'aga '14

232 228th Avenue SE
Sammamish, WA 98074

eastsidecatholic.org
eastsidecatholic.org/options
info@eastsidecatholic.org

“...no child should be denied his or her right to an education in faith, which in turn nurtures the soul of a nation.”

- Pope Benedict XVI

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Options Program at Eastside Catholic School recognizes and strongly supports an inclusive, safe environment. We offer a faith-based, individualized special education program for high school students (grades 9-12) with diagnosed intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Our inclusive model encourages community involvement, social engagement, life skill development, career exploration and academic growth through participation in academics, school events, activities, retreats, clubs, campus ministry and athletics.

PROGRAM COMMITMENT

The Options Program is a special education program of choice for families seeking a faith-based, inclusive model with individualized academic and life skill learning instruction. We strive to serve all students who desire a school environment that celebrates the whole student through the integration of Catholic values, community and specialized instruction to maximize each student's unique potential.

ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

The Option Program offers specialized instruction geared toward an individual student's needs using research-based methodology to maximize each student's potential. Students in the Options Program attend courses with their general education peers throughout the school day while receiving specialized instruction in Option Program classrooms.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum places a significant emphasis towards vocation and transitional exploraton. Core courses within the program include language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, religious studies, life skills, career exploration and social skills. Students are encouraged to participate in general education elective courses, including visual arts, drama, theater, choir and physical education.



ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETICS

Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities, including school plays, liturgies, assemblies and sports. Athletic opportunities include participation in Special Olympics and ECHS athletic teams.

RELATIONSHIPS

Students maximize the academic and social skills necessary to become independent adults through their relationships with each other, peer tutors and the broader EC community.

SERVICE TO OTHERS

Students complete service projects throughout their high school experience. Service projects include participation in the schoolwide Peace and Justice Day, food and clothing drives and other opportunities in the local community.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Through small group instruction, Options Program teachers specialize in providing individualized instruction using a wide variety of teaching tools and methods to meet students where they are in their social, academic and adaptive skill development. Collaboration between general education teachers is foundational to our successful inclusive approach.

PEER TUTORS

A beloved aspect of our school is the Peer Tutor program. General education students selected for the Peer Tutor course serve as advocates and aid in the path of inclusion. Peer tutors work one-on-one and in small groups in the Options Program classroom or general education classes to assist students in learning, serve as positive role models and form meaningful friendships. Our peer tutors often develop bonds with students in the Options Program lasting far beyond their high school years.



COMMENCEMENT AND OPTIONS PROGRAM CREDENTIAL

The Options Program is a non-diploma program. Students participate in commencement exercises with their peers. In lieu of a high school diploma, students are awarded a Certificate of Completion after completing this four-year modified high school program.

POST-SECONDARY COUNSELING

Our College Counseling Department supports students in the Options Program interested in post-secondary exploration and planning. Our support services include:

- Individual meetings with families
- Annual planning presentation with valuable information about trends in post-secondary opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities
- Exploration in two- and four-year colleges, vocation-technical programs, adult education, continuing education programs and life skills programs

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

- Diagnosed intellectual and/or developmental disability, or other diagnosis indicating a need for an integrated special education program
- Minimum levels of academic achievement indicating past successes in learning environments
- Appropriate behavior patterns for school environment to ensure success
- Willingness to partake in the spiritual opportunities provided by the school
- Exhibit responsible and socially adaptive behavior without one-on-one support from an adult or aide
- The ability to function independently throughout the school day including schoolhouse navigation, sitting through 50- to 70-minute classes, independently logging on to a computer, maintaining personal belongings and attending to individual needs and hygiene
- Ability to independently perform all activities of daily living, such as toileting, self feeding, dressing and washing



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