

Office of Exceptional Education

NEWSLETTER

March 2024

Virginia Department of Education's Video Guide to the Special Education Evaluation Process for Families

In response to legislation passed by the Virginia General Assembly as well as feedback and collaboration with the field, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has released a Video Guide to the Special Education Evaluation Process for Families as additional guidance to support accurate and consistent eligibility determinations and access to special education services across school divisions. These video modules will provide parents, families, and other stakeholders with a brief but comprehensive overview of the special education process on the following topics: Introduction (Overview of Series), Identification, Evaluation, Eligibility, Individualized Education Program (IEP), Reevaluation, Early Intervention, and What's Next. Each module is designed to be viewed as a stand-alone resource or viewed in succession.

For questions regarding the video modules, please contact Bonnie English, Specialist-Related Services, Evaluation and Eligibility, at (804) 750-8187 or Bonnie.English@doe.virginia.gov; or Dr. Zenia Burnett, Director of Instructional Services, at (804) 750-8666 or Zenia.Burnett@doe.virginia.gov. For general inquiries, email spedinstruction@doe.virginia.gov.

What's In This Month's Issue?

- TBI Tid Bit
- AT Tip of the Month
- BCBA Update
- Speech/Language Pathology
- Intensive Support
- Transition Mentor Teachers
- Shout-Outs

Check It Out!

There will be a combined ICC Meeting at Norrell on March 22nd 1-2:30 PM. Please leave yourself enough travel time to park and get settled in your seat so that we can start right at 1PM.
~ Thank you!

R-SEAC will have an in-person meeting on March 22nd at the Ginter Park Branch of the Richmond Public Library (1200 Westbrook Avenue). We will be meeting in the Ginter Park Conference room in that library. Please let your families know that we would love to see them there.

TBI TID BIT

The revised definition of the TBI disability category (in Virginia) includes both traumatic and non-traumatic brain injuries. Both types of brain injuries are acquired brain injuries (ABI). Brain tumors are one type of non-traumatic acquired brain injury. Children with brain tumors have unique developmental, psychological, and medical needs.

Treatment of pediatric brain tumors may include biopsy, surgical resection, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy. These treatments may impact a child's cognitive and learning abilities and the child may have ongoing medical appointments impacting their attendance at school. Students undergoing treatment for a brain tumor will likely need supports at school provided as part of an IEP or 504 plan.

The student's health care team may include a hospital education coordinator who can help school staff with the child's transition back to school and any ongoing educational needs. To the right, are two resources for school professionals supporting a student with a brain tumor.



CHILDHOOD
CANCER

Read more

**Children's Health- School Guide for
Students with Brain Tumors**

**Children's Healthcare of Atlanta - Brain
Tumor: An overview for school
professionals**

AT TIP OF THE MONTH

ARE USING FONTS IMPORTANT?

Absolutely!

How easy is it to read this?

Consider readability when choosing fonts for digital and printed material. The font itself can be a barrier to decoding text. The size, color and shape of character and the space between characters impact how the brain interprets the material. (printed with Arial)

Use Sans Serif fonts, such as Arial and Comic Sans, as letters can appear less crowded. Alternatives include Verdana, Tahoma, Century Gothic, Trebuchet, Calibri, Open Sans. Font size should be 12-14 point (printed with Comic Sans)

Best Fonts for Dyslexia

Resources

Vistaprint 12 easiest fonts to read (with samples)

<https://www.vistaprint.com/hub/design-decoded-top-12-easy-read-fonts>

Best fonts for Dyslexia

<https://www.weareteachers.com/best-fonts-for-dyslexia/>

Font type and size for OCR

<https://www.capturebites.com/2016/03/15/ocr-font/>

The basics of fonts and readability

<https://business.scope.org.uk/article/font-accessibility-and-readability-the-basics>

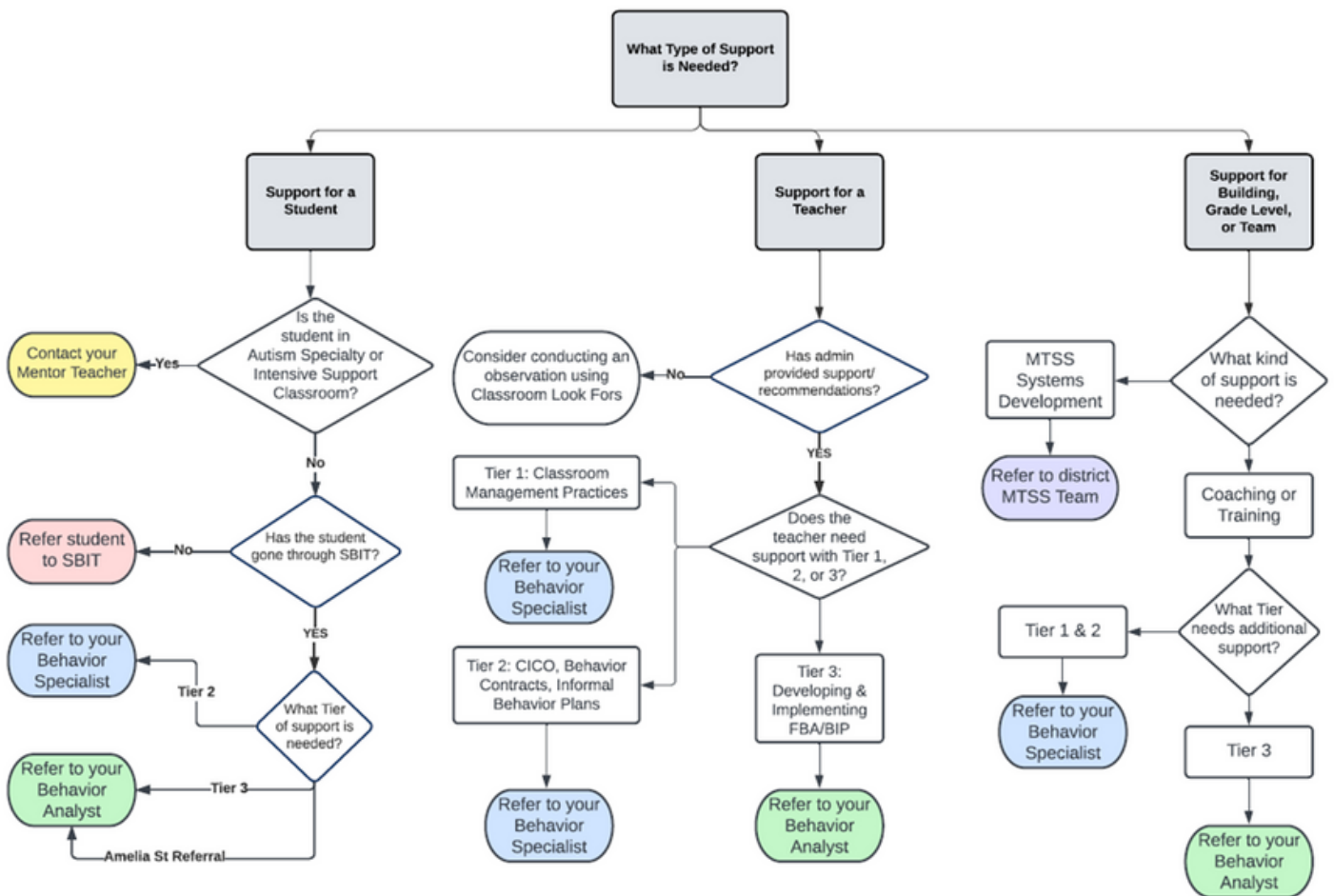
BEST FONTS FOR SCANNING TEXT-TO-SPEECH

The OCR (optical character recognition) engine is capable of recognizing text with many different fonts. However, standard fonts, such as Arial and Times New Roman, provide better recognition results than fonts that have more unusual character shapes. (printed with Times New Roman)

BCBA UPDATE

This is a visual guide to help determine what type of support is needed for an individual student, classroom, or school. Use this as guidance when accessing behavior support across the district.

District Behavior Support Flowchart: A Guide for Accessing Behavior Supports



RESOURCES

Ways to Access BCBA Support:

Staff can request support for an FBA/BIP for an individual student through the [BCBA Referral form](#).

Professional Learning Options:

ICCs and/or Administrators can request professional learning for their specific building, using the [BCBA Referral Form](#).

Staff are invited to attend a full day FBA/BIP training on March 29, 2024 to learn the new FBA/BIP process from start to finish. This professional development will help you to walk away feeling confident in supporting your school in the new process. New ICCs and Special Education Designees are strongly encouraged to attend. [Click here](#) to register through KickUp.

SPEECH / LANGUAGE

What does it mean when a child has some degree of hearing loss? Are all hearing losses the same? Does this really matter if your child has some ear infections and some "hearing problems"? Do hearing and speech/language skills have a connection to one another? The lists of questions are many and unique to each and every person, and soon after parents and caregivers learn that their child had a "hearing problem" families seek out answers to help guide them with their understanding and decisions. Educators take on an important role for students who come to us with hearing loss.

Around 12 in 10,000 children are born with a moderate or greater hearing loss in both ears, and at least another 20 in 10,000 will need aids for long-term hearing loss by the age of 17 years. In 1999, we passed legislation federally to get money to states, so that allowed other states to develop their universal newborn hearing screening program. Universal Newborn Hearing Screening has helped to identify many babies with hearing deficits who previous to this legislation would have gone by unnoticed.

Types of hearing loss

Hearing loss falls into four types: sensorineural, conductive, mixed (sensorineural and conductive) and auditory neuropathy spectrum disorder (ANSD).

- Conductive hearing loss: In this hearing loss, something keeps sound from passing through your outer ear (ear canal) or your middle ear. Usually fluid and infection.
- Sensorineural hearing loss: This hearing loss happens when something damages your inner ear over time. Noise is a large contributor to this hearing loss.
- Mixed hearing loss is a combination of both sensorineural and conductive hearing loss
- Auditory neuropathy spectrum disorder (ANSD) is a hearing problem in which the ear detects sound normally, but has a problem sending it to the brain.



Showing love to our students with Hearing loss in the school

WHY DOES THIS ALL MATTER?

It matters because hearing loss has several effects on speech and language development.

Hearing loss in children can lead to:

- Delayed speech and language skills
- Learning problems in school
- Feeling bad about themselves
- Having trouble making friends
- Children with hearing loss do not learn words as fast as those who have normal hearing.
- Children with hearing loss may have trouble understanding and using sentences
- Children with hearing loss cannot hear sounds well. They may have problems speaking clearly.
- Children with hearing loss have trouble in school. Reading and math may be the hardest for them
- Children with mild to moderate hearing loss are at risk for learning difficulties, especially as they grow older and are in the upper elementary years when they transition from learning to read, to reading to learn.
- Children with more severe hearing loss may not learn past the third- or fourth-grade level and the gap grows larger over time.

Tips for Teaching Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Obtain the student's attention before speaking. ...
- Clue the individual who is hearing impaired into the topic of discussion. ...
- Speak slowly and clearly; but do not yell, exaggerate, or over pronounce. ...
- Look directly at the student when speaking.

What you should do if you suspect a student is not hearing

If you suspect a student is not hearing, ask your school nurse to conduct a screening. Screenings take a few minutes to complete, and are a crucial step in identifying children who need intervention and support to gain language and learning skills!

INTENSIVE SUPPORT

Quillo Connect

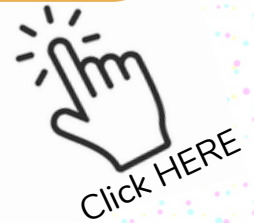
https://www.thearcofva.org/quillo_connect

Quillo provides an empowering platform for sharing stories, resources and knowledge for people with disabilities, support staff, and their families.



Center on Transition
Work-Based Learning Fast
Facts


WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY



ROCK YOUR SOCKS

— FOR —

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

 3.21



TRANSITION MENTOR TEACHERS

Transition Tip:

Perhaps one of the most challenging times in a young adult's life is when they are ready to leave the routines of high school and transition to adult life. This can be even more daunting for students who receive special education services. They are leaving secure supports that are mandated by law and moving into a system where services are less certain.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ensures that all children with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education that prepares them for transition to further education, employment, and adult living. Some key components of services under the act include:

Transition planning beginning at the age of either 14 or 16, depending on the state:

- A coordinated set of activities
- A results-oriented process
- Instruction, community experiences, planning for employment and other outcomes, daily living skills, and vocational evaluation.

Once transition planning begins, the roles of special education teachers, students and families shift. School transition services are provided by secondary special educators, transition specialists, guidance counselors, and others are identified by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. Families and students are also a critical part of the process, outcomes, daily living skills, and vocational evaluation.

School Support Locations

Darlene Slade: Huguenot High School, River City Middle School, Lucille Brown Middle School
dslade@rvaschools.net

Selina Wilson: John Marshall High School, Thomas Jefferson High School, RAS, Henderson Middle School, Albert Hill Middle School
swilson3@rvaschools.net

Karen Young: Richmond High School for the Arts, Richmond Technical Center, Boushall Middle School, Thrive
kyoung2@rvaschools.net

Rebecca Parks: Armstrong High School, Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, Dogwood Middle School
rpelleti@rvaschools.net

MARCH EVENTS

Armstrong High School:

- March 11th 11:00am- YMCA Workforce Readiness Session
- March 15th 11:00am-Careers in the Arts Session
- March 20th 11:00am- Career Fair
- March 27th 9:30am Summer Employment Interest Session

Huguenot High School:

- March 4th- 8th - 9am-3:30 pm Headshots! for 11th and 12th grade students. School Forum. Students will receive digital headshots for resumes, applications and professional correspondence.
- March 13th 11:30am - Mayor's Youth Academy (MYA) Presentation, School Auditorium
- March 15th 10 am - Electrician's Apprenticeship Aptitude Testing
- March 28th, 9 am - College Tour, Richard Bland College

Thomas Jefferson High School:

- March 13th- Resume Writing Workshop
- March 14th- JSRCC (J. Sargent Reynolds Community College) underclassman Tour
- March 20th- VCU (Virginia Commonwealth University) Field Trip
- March 21st- VCU (Virginia Commonwealth University) Career Pathways presentation 10:00am
- March 25th- ASVAB(Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) Testing
- March 26th- SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) Day
- March 28th- DMV (Division of Motor Vehicles) Field Trip

Richmond High School For the Arts:

- March 8th-5pm to 7pm-College Night for Juniors-During this session the Juniors will be educated on the college application process, financial aid and scholarships Cafeteria A.
- March 14th-2:30pm to 3:45pm-Scholars in the classroom-Financial Literacy Workshop, Future Center
- March 26th-11am to 3pm-Boushall Middle School College and Career Fair, Gymnasium

John Marshall High School:

- March 12th- Resume Writing Workshop
- March 26th- SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) Day
- March 28th- DMV (Division of Motor Vehicles) Field Trip

Mr. Fernando Pinheiro, Huguenot High School

Mr. Fernando Pinheiro is a new Exceptional Education Teacher and Casemanager at Huguenot High School. He has quickly become a favorite among our students and a trusted advocate. He is knowledgeable in many subjects and an example of how to get it done! Mr. P can be counted on to ensure IEPs are done timely and thoroughly; he refuses to take NO for an answer when it comes to making sure each IEP is done to perfection. Thank you Mr. P, and welcome to the TEAM!



**Teach, Lead,
Serve with
Love**

MS. TWANNA GRAY, HUGUENOT HIGH SCHOOL

Ms. Twanna Gray at Huguenot High School is a phenomenal asset. In addition to case manager responsibilities, she has taken on the task of maintaining our 504s and ensuring our students are well taken care of, and their files are compliant. Ms. Gray makes excellence look easy! She is an amazing mentor and role model for case managers throughout our school.