

Introduction: The Special Education department serves students who have been evaluated to determine if they have a qualifying disability and a need for specially designed instruction. Special Education services can be appropriate for children with emotional/psychological, cognitive, academic, and/or physical needs.

Birdville ISD ensures that a continuum of placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services. The continuum must include instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, and home instruction. The District also makes provisions for supplementary services such as a resource room or itinerant instruction to be provided in conjunction with regular placement.

Bond Presentation Overview: Programs that would be impacted by the potential move to the Wisdom Center property are:

- TEAMS (Teaching for Educational, Academic and Motivational Success);
- TAB (Transition Academy of Birdville); and
- BASES (Behavior Academy for Social and Essential Skills), a new program for students with low incidence behavior that was introduced during the bond presentation. *Creation of this program is contingent on having appropriate space to house it.*

The **TEAMS** program focuses on instructional and behavior management/social adjustment needs of students who have not been successful in less restrictive settings such as PASS (Positive Approach to Student Success), which is currently provided at nine of our campuses. This program is structured for students to enter and exit based on how quickly students learn and consistently use replacement behavior and coping skills. Students who benefit from this setting require a high level of structure and systematic behavior management procedures.

The **TAB** program is designed for students who have completed all requirements for graduation but need additional training for post-secondary goals. The Birdville ISD Transition Academy of Birdville offers three tracks for students: employment track for students leading to jobs in the community; supported employment track for students who need additional assistance in obtaining and maintaining employment; and day habilitation track for students who need assistance with acquiring daily living skills.

The bond proposal also includes the addition of a new program (BASES) for students with low cognitive functioning who are experiencing significant behavioral issues. These students could also have physical limitations requiring specialized facilities.

All three of these are high-cost programs due to the recommended teacher to pupil ratio, the need for highly specialized and trained staff, plus the facility requirements due to the challenging behavioral and physical needs of students. Additionally, federal and state law for students with special needs has stringent requirements which can also lead to a district incurring the cost of residential placement if the district cannot provide the necessary required services. The program needs and supports are determined by an ARD (Annual Review Determination) committee that is charged with developing an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) that is legally binding.

Utilizing bond funds to develop this centralized facility for students with intense specialized needs will have a positive impact on the district in the following ways:

1. **Financial consideration:** The District's General Fund will continue to be used to retrofit old facilities to meet the physical, emotional, and behavior needs of students in these programs unless bond funds can be provided for a more appropriately designed facility. As we see these particular programs grow in intensity, there is a greater need to move these programs to a more specialized and centralized facility. We also know that a centralized facility that is designed with these programs in mind has greater functionality and can help contain costs.
2. **Utilization of specialized staff:** A centralized location allows behavior support staff as well as other itinerant staff, (i.e., occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech pathologists, assessment personnel, and psychologists), to spend more time with students and less time traveling throughout the District.
3. **Administrative:** Moving these programs will provide additional classroom space on campuses, allow administrators to decrease the amount of time spent on intense behavioral interventions, and provide more uninterrupted support to campuses from their specialized staff who are assigned to provide services to special needs students assigned to the campuses.

In conclusion, a description of the specialized programs in Birdville ISD which explains each one in more detail is provided.