



TREASURE VALLEY
CLASSICAL ACADEMY
A Classical Education for Modern Times

STUDENT SERVICES HANDBOOK

2020-2021

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For General School Policies See TVCA's Family Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

As a school authorized by the Idaho Public Charter School Commission, Treasure Valley Classical Academy (TVCA) provides a free and appropriate classical education for all its students while furnishing support for students with other learning needs through our Student Services program. TVCA employs sound “child find” practices to identify and serve such students, as through the provision of Individual Education Plans (IEP), 504 plans, English Second Learner (ELL) programs, and Response to Intervention (RTI) programs, under all applicable federal, state, and district laws, policies, and guidelines.

CLASSICAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

Difficulties strengthen the mind as labor does the body.

-Lucius Annaeus Seneca

There is a common misconception that classical education is only for academically gifted children and is therefore incompatible with the needs of students with disabilities or whose first language is other than English. Experience has proven otherwise. While it is true that classical schools like TVCA employ a rigorous and demanding curriculum of liberal arts and sciences, it is also true that when scaffolded correctly, this curriculum is accessible to all levels of learners. A wonderful example of this is Helen Keller, who approached life with seemingly insurmountable disabilities and yet persevered to receive a remarkable classical education due to the support and help of her parents and teachers.

TVCA’s literacy curriculum leads to mastery of reading and spelling by providing explicit and direct instruction in English phonograms and correct letter formation. Teachers actively use multisensory instruction to engage students to *see it, hear it, say it, and write it*. Students explore vocabulary words through analysis that requires cause and effect, inference, part-to-whole and whole-to-part thinking.

This benefits all students, but especially those who struggle with mastering language. The vast majority of students being served in special education and other remedial programs across the country struggle with the acquisition of language skills.

These students are typically placed in remedial classes before they ever encounter an authentic phonics lesson. By contrast, at TVCA, our phonics curriculum lays the foundation of language in the early years, continues into the upper elementary grades, and serves as the chief means of remediation for any students who struggle with language. The same verbiage and methodology is employed by classroom teachers and remedial teachers alike. Students receive a double dose of phonics, grammar, cursive and other traditional programs from one solid, rich vein rather than one broad method in the general classroom and a different one outside of the classroom.

Many remedial programs mistakenly presume that lessons must be highly modified or simplified to be accessible to students with special needs. This is not the case. On the contrary, special-needs students enjoy history, literature, mathematics, and science. They may need accommodations to help them access or understand the material, but they are capable of wrestling with big ideas and grasping complex subjects that are intrinsically interesting.

TVCA's classical curriculum and pedagogical practices lend themselves well to adaptation. Because teachers create the lessons themselves, they can tailor them to the needs of particular students. This also allows for ease in communicating with other teachers and remedial support, both inside the classroom and at home. Crafting or augmenting lessons from the perspective of special needs often leads to study guides, note-taking tips and other means of assistance that profit the entire class.

All students can thrive in the culture of structure and character formation that TVCA provides. The smaller school setting (a maximum of 54 students per grade level) combined with daily mentorship in the school virtues and academic habits promotes students' moral and intellectual formation. All students are taught within the regular classroom as much as possible and the clear partnership between classroom teachers and special education staff provides consistency. As a result of these things, learners often feel more at home than in other settings. This is especially true for students with academic and social or emotional struggles, the latter often finding the increased structure more predictable and conducive to self-government.

There is a greater philosophical reason behind the relative flourishing of students with special needs in a classical school. Classical education is rooted in understanding, embracing, and teaching the best principles of our Western and American heritage:

- We hold as core principles that all human beings are created equal and endowed with inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We therefore treat all members of our school community with dignity and respect.
- All are welcome to join our school community as we endeavor to train the minds and improve the hearts of our students through a content-rich, classical curriculum that fosters character formation, intellectual development and virtuous citizenship.
- Our pledge is to help all students learn the true, do the good, and in time, love the beautiful. In the end, we believe that studying the great ideas and principles and carefully building good habits in young human beings will promote human flourishing and *felicitas*—true happiness.

TVCA ultimately teaches that human achievement is the result of hard work, perseverance, and courage.

PROGRAM MISSION AND COMMITMENT

The mission of Treasure Valley Classical Academy is *to train the minds and improve the hearts of students through a classical, content-rich curriculum that emphasizes virtuous living, traditional learning, and civic responsibility.*

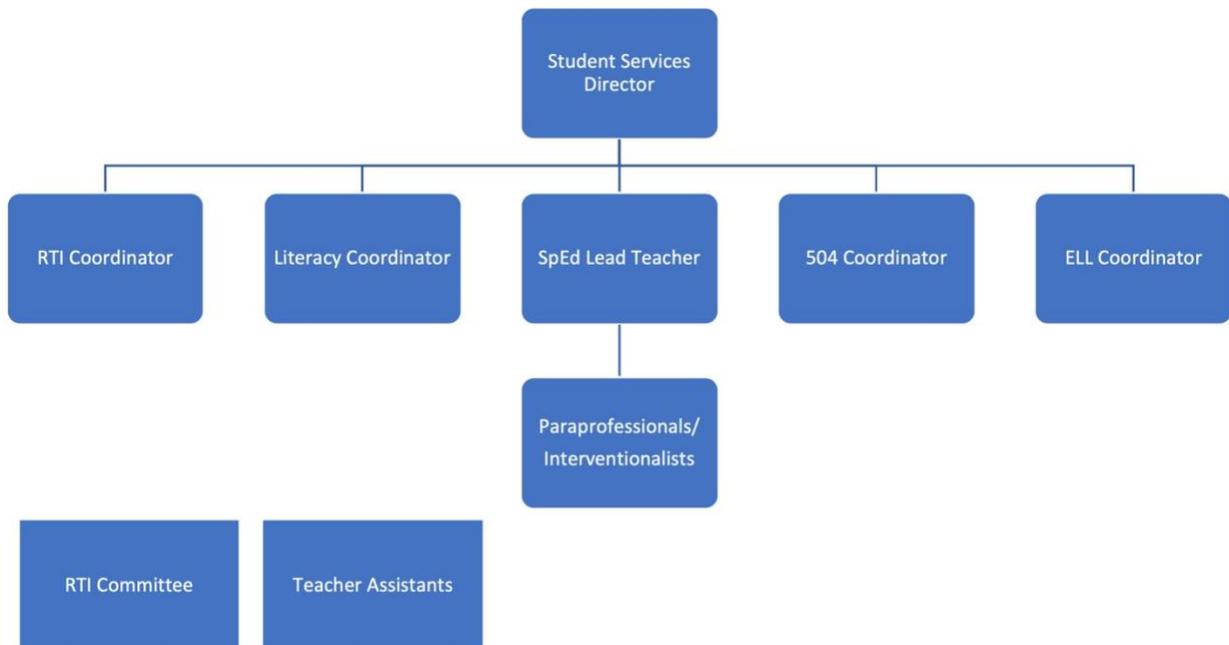
Furthermore, TVCA is committed to:

- serving all students as they develop within themselves the intellect, virtues, and skills with which they can lead responsible, independent, and productive lives;
- ensuring that all students progress towards academic independence;
- providing all students with a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment with data-driven specialized instruction throughout the school setting;
- abiding by federal and state laws governing the instruction and support of students with disabilities or learning differences, including but not limited to the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Equal Education Opportunities Act (EEOC);
- helping all students so that they make progress towards academic independence and success in their preferred career, training, and independent living plans after they complete their K-12 education; and
- consistently providing teachers with professional development opportunities in areas including but not limited to pedagogy, differentiation, and classroom management.

STUDENT SERVICES ORGANIZATION

TVCA's Student Services Team is organized around the idea that all students can make progress towards academic independence through excellent instruction, excellent content, and school-wide collaboration and mutual support. We believe that supporting the solid foundation for learning offered by a classical curriculum is essential to ultimately eliminating the development of struggling learners and "learning disabilities." This proactive approach, with the partnered support of grade-level teachers, provides for the learning needs of students with disabilities, has the potential to greatly reduce the number of students identified for special education, and enhances the learning of all students.

TVCA employs highly qualified teachers and staff to meet the needs of students with special needs. All members of the Student Services Team provide instruction and support to ensure that students are making progress towards their goals and towards academic independence in their classrooms.



STUDENT SERVICES TEAM

TVCA's Student Services Team is comprised of individuals who collaborate with classroom teachers for student progress and success.

STUDENT SERVICES DIRECTOR

The Student Services Director provides oversight and leadership for all areas within the Student Services Department.

RTI COORDINATOR

The RTI Coordinator provides oversight and leadership for the RTI Process including the RTI Committee. This position has charge of development and analysis of student data as it pertains to RTI and reports to the Student Services Director.

LITERACY COORDINATOR

The Literacy Coordinator provides assistance to classroom teachers in the execution of the Access Literacy curriculum. This position has charge of the Reading Remediation programs in Step 2 and Step 3 of the RTI process and reports to the Student Services Director.

SPECIAL EDUCATION LEAD TEACHER

The Special Education Lead Teacher evaluates, develops and coordinates the implementation of Individual Education Plans with the guidance of the Student Services Director. This position reports to the Student Services Director.

ELL COORDINATOR

The English Language Learners (ELL) Coordinator develops and implements programs for students who qualify as ELL. This position is responsible for the screening and placement of students, the development and implementation of English Language Service Plans, and the scheduling and monitoring of annual mandated ELL assessments. This position reports to the Student Services Director.

504 COORDINATOR

The 504 Coordinator leads the 504 Committee to develop and implement appropriate 504 plans for students who qualify, monitors the implementation of the 504s, and schedules the annual renewal meetings. This position reports to the Student Services Director.

STUDENT SERVICES TEAM PURPOSE: MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS

At Treasure Valley Classical Academy, we believe that all instruction should be rigorous and demanding and that students rise to the challenge given them. We accept that academic rigors can be especially challenging for our students with unique learning challenges, but that does not diminish our belief and expectation that all students should be challenged and can thrive in a classical school.

The primary way to meet the needs of students with disabilities is by ensuring that all students receive sound classroom instruction that adheres to classical ideals and is driven by a commitment to high expectations. At TVCA our goal is not to change the curriculum to meet the students where they are, but rather to provide students with supplemental resources, additional support, and reteaching to help students receive the curriculum at the highest level. This is done through the creation of well-crafted learning plans [RLP (RTI), IEP (SpEd), ELSP (ELL), or 504] and through collaborative planning between the Student Services Team and the faculty at large devoted to ensuring all students are receiving the support they need to access the curriculum.

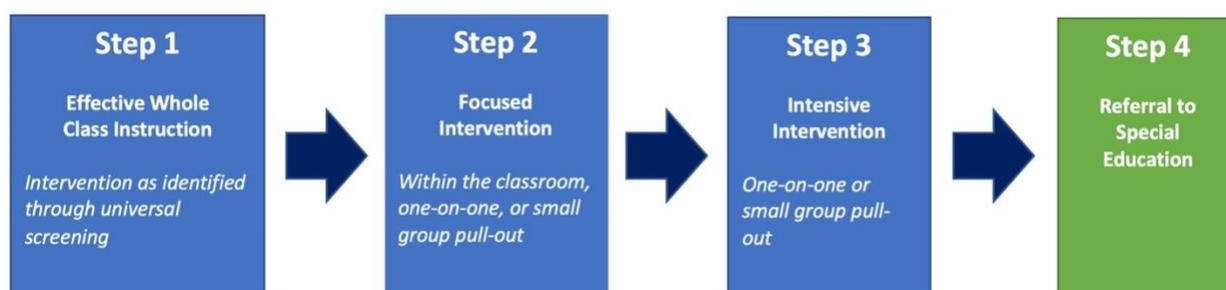
The second way TVCA meets the needs of students is by systematically collaborating to maintain the rigor of our curriculum while also ensuring that a student's failure to achieve is not due to a lack of tools and resources necessary for success.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-step approach for early identification and support of students' learning and behavioral needs. The goal of RTI is to identify and remediate specific learning needs while screening for those students with specific learning disabilities.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be provided by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students. Education decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual students' response to instruction. RTI is designed for use when making decisions in both general education and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by child outcome data.¹

Though there is no uniformly practiced “model” of the RTI process, successful ones incorporate a multi-step process of school support that uses research-based academic and behavioral interventions. Treasure Valley Classical Academy uses the following multi-step system in our RTI process:



Step 1 is effective whole-class instruction that begins with universal screening to identify students with remedial or extension learning needs. This step involves remedial or extension efforts performed in the general classroom by the classroom teacher or a teacher assistant.

Step 2 is more focused intervention provided when classroom interventions have not been effective. This step begins the formal RTI process and the involvement of the RTI Committee

¹ This statement is taken from rtinetwork.org, which explains the national RTI process.

who then directs the next level of action, which usually consists of small group remediation (either within the classroom or in a pull-out setting).

Step 3 is an intensive intervention designed by the Literacy Coordinator or another learning specialist and normally implemented in a one-on-one setting.

Step 4 is a referral to Special Education and is usually considered when extensive interventions have not yielded positive academic or behavioral results.

STEP 1: HIGH-QUALITY CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION, SCREENING, AND GROUP INTERVENTIONS

In Step 1, all students receive high-quality, differentiated instruction provided by classroom teachers to ensure that their difficulties are not due to inadequate instruction. Differentiated instruction refers to the art of teaching whereby teachers adjust the manner, presentation, or perhaps manner of output for students depending on their individual needs without reducing the content of the curriculum. Teachers often rephrase or offer additional examples to illustrate a point of confusion. Building on prior knowledge to scaffold to a new concept can bring clarity for a student who is unfamiliar with the subject being discussed. This might mean study guides, guided reading passages, adjusting time or presentation requirements, or allowing for accommodations to the process or the final product. This can be done for any student when the need arises, at the discretion of the teacher.

Students identified as being “at risk” through universal screenings or results on state and curriculum-based assessments receive supplemental instruction during the school day in the regular classroom. Throughout the school year, classroom teachers closely monitor and track whole-class outcomes with specified instruments in the areas of literacy and numeracy to detect students who may otherwise remain unidentified.

The length of time for this step can vary, but it generally should not exceed eight weeks. During this time, student progress is closely monitored using validated curriculum-based measurements, such as literacy running records, chapter assessment in mathematics, handwriting samples and phonogram assessments. At the end of this period, students who show significant progress are generally returned to the regular classroom program. Students

who do not show adequate progress are moved to Step 2. At this point, it is the classroom teacher's responsibility to bring the student's lack of progress to the RTI Committee's attention.

STEP 2: FOCUSED INTERVENTIONS

Students who do not make adequate progress in the regular classroom in Step 1 are referred to the RTI Committee and provided with increasingly focused instruction matched to their needs on the basis of levels of performance and rates of progress. This step involves moderate remedial or extension efforts performed *in addition to* the general classroom instruction. These may be provided by the classroom teacher, teacher assistant, or specialist teacher within the classroom or in a group pull-out. At this point a Remedial Learning Plan (RLP) will be created for the student and will be updated to track the student's progress within RTI.

A member of the RTI Committee will observe the student in the classroom to help facilitate and recommend classroom accommodations. Classroom teachers are expected to use specified instruments for data collection to monitor and track individual progress, with the end goal of returning the student to whole-class instruction as delivered in STEP 1.

This process usually takes 6-12 weeks. Students who continue to show little progress at this level of intervention are then considered for more intensive interventions as part of Step 3. Approximately 15% of students require remedial assistance in addition to classroom instruction.² Step 2 interventions should generally occur once or twice per week and progress is monitored biweekly by the classroom teacher and reported to the RTI Coordinator. Parents are informed by the classroom teacher of the RTI process and student participation, and classroom teachers are required to track data and meet at regular intervals with the RTI committee.

STEP 3: INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS

At this level students receive individualized, intensive interventions that target their skill deficits. Interventions are designed by the Student Services Director or Literacy Coordinator and are provided in a one-on-one setting. Students who do not achieve the desired level of progress in response to these targeted interventions are then referred for a comprehensive evaluation and considered for eligibility for Special Education services under the Individuals with Disabilities

² Per rtinetwork.org.

Education Improvement Act Of 2004 (IDEA). The data collected during the previous steps is included and used to make the eligibility decision.

At any point in an RTI process, IDEA allows parents to request a formal evaluation to determine eligibility for Special Education. An RTI process cannot be used to deny or delay a formal evaluation for Special Education.

Approximately 5% of students require whole group instruction plus intense intervention.³ Step 3 interventions should occur two to three times per week and progress must be monitored weekly by the provider of the remedial service and then reported to the RTI Coordinator. It is recommended that students remain in Step 3 interventions for approximately six weeks.

Intervention strategists and teachers are required to track and document data monitoring and intervention details. Results should be forwarded to the RTI Committee at least every three weeks. Parents must be informed of progress by the classroom teacher.

STEP 4: REFERRAL TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

Students are normally referred to Special Education for one of two reasons:

1. They show lack of response to multiple steps of intervention.
2. A parent makes a request for evaluation.

Once a referral is made, the process moves from RTI to Special Education. There is a 60-day timeline between referrals and eligibility meetings (see p. 28 of this document). During the 60-day period, interventions are continued, and a comprehensive evaluation takes place. This includes multiple academic assessments and psychological data. Data gathered during the RTI process is required and is used to inform final eligibility decisions.

³ Per rtinetwork.org.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL RTI IMPLEMENTATION

For RTI implementation to work well, the following essential components must be executed with fidelity and rigor:

- High-quality classroom instruction: all students should be receiving high-quality instruction in the general classroom.
- Student assessment: universal screening and progress monitoring provide information about a student's learning rate and level of achievement, both individually, and in comparison with the peer group; decisions for intervention are informed by qualitative teacher observations and assessment data; student progress is monitored frequently to examine student achievement and gauge the effectiveness of the interventions.
- Multi-step instruction: a multi-step approach is used to efficiently differentiate instruction for all students. The model incorporates increasing focused instruction offering specific, research-based interventions matched to student needs.
- Parent involvement: parents are routinely provided information about their child's progress, the instruction and interventions used, the staff who are delivering the instruction, and the academic or behavior goals for their child.

ROLE OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHER IN RTI

The emphasis of RTI is high quality classroom instruction. Under RTI, general education teachers are expected to assess individual student needs, identify focused goals, monitor data on students' progress and use this data to inform instructional decisions. It is sensible, proactive teaching. Within the TVCA RTI framework, general education teachers will do the following:

1. Moderate or supervise universal screening for the classroom students via indicated instruments.
2. Keep and report required data in both Numeracy and Literacy (see RTI Appendix).
3. Utilize best practices in differentiated instruction within the general classroom to meet the learning or behavior need of students of concern. Document what was implemented, how long it was implemented, and the outcome.

4. Provide data and documentation (student work samples) to the RTI Coordinator at least one week in advance of grade-level RTI meeting.
5. Attend all grade-level RTI sessions, even if none of their students is in the RTI process.
6. Implement recommended accommodations with fidelity.
7. Keep accurate and timely data on accommodations.
8. Communicate RTI process and progress with students' parents monthly at a minimum. Document communication with parents.
9. Work collaboratively with the RTI Coordinator and the Literacy Coordinator to make adjustments within the general education classroom as needed.
10. Honor the schedule for small-group or one-on-one pull-out service to allow for the amount of remediation time for each student. Minimize interruptions and distractions from the general classroom as much as possible.

RTI COMMITTEE

The RTI Coordinator, with collaboration from the Literacy Coordinator, is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the RTI process and subsequent intervention programs for every student who demonstrates a need at TVCA. Qualified paraprofessionals serve as teacher assistants and are immersed in classrooms by grade level (K, 1, 2-3, 4-6) in order to support teachers and students.

The RTI Committee is comprised of the following members:

- RTI Coordinator
- Literacy Coordinator
- Student Services Director
- Grade Level Lead Teacher(s)
- Classroom Teacher
- Parents (when appropriate)

RTI DATA GATHERING TOOLS

Recognizing the need for consistent and timely data collection, TVCA employs the following methods to track student progress for the RTI process.

TVCA UNIVERSAL SCREENINGS

1. MAP testing, administered class-wide in both the fall and again in the spring. For students identified and being served in the RTI process MAP testing may occur again mid-year.
2. IRI for grades K-3, administered class-wide both in the fall and again in the spring. For students identified and being served in the RTI process IRI assessments may occur again mid-year.
3. Singapore Math placement exams, administered in the fall.

The **MAP Skills Assessment** will be used at TVCA as a universal screener to be given for K-7 in the second full week of school. The MAP skills assessment from NWEA is an adaptive assessment and serves as an efficient and accurate universal screener. The RTI Coordinator works with classroom teachers to use MAP results to identify which students are in need of help and make instructional adjustments to meet those needs. Students will be identified as being eligible for immediate remedial assistance (Step 2) by a score <25% in reading, written language or mathematics.

The **Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI)** is administered to all K-3 public school students. IRI is an early reading screener and diagnostic assessment. The screener is mandatory for Idaho public school students in the fall and spring with optional winter administrations. Progress monitoring is available to all students. IRI data will be used from K-3 as a confirmation of remedial placement or as a secondary identifier. Initial assessments will occur as soon after the completion of MAP testing as possible, ideally by the fifth week in school. A score of 3 on the initial IRI will indicate immediate remedial assistance (Step 2).

All classes will administer the **grade-level placement exams from the Singapore Math** curriculum. A placement score of one or more full grade-levels below academic grade level will indicate immediate remedial placement (Step 2) in mathematics.

Once universal screening data is obtained, students will be placed into the following learning categories: mastery, benchmark, focused, or intensive. Students who are identified in the mastery category will be given extension in the general education classroom so as to meet their advanced learning needs. Students identified in the benchmark category will receive the general

education classroom curriculum with intentional systematic instruction as intended for all students. Students identified as being in the focused category will receive Step 1 interventions in the general education classroom and will be monitored for possible RTI service. Students who are identified in the intensive category will automatically be placed in the RTI process and will begin receiving Step 2 interventions.

Students will be rank ordered in both literacy and numeracy according to the following categories and criteria:

Mastery	Benchmark	Focused	Intensive
>95%	94-85%	84-70%	<69%

Ongoing progress monitoring will occur in all categories during the first quarter of the school year with all required data being inputted by the classroom into RTI Excel sheets and delivered to the RTI Coordinator on a bi-weekly basis.

Literacy Data will be assessed and monitored using the following internal mechanisms:

- Phonogram assessments as presented in the Access Literacy curriculum
- Reading and spelling word lists as presented in the Access Literacy curriculum
- Running records
- McCall-Harby/McCall-Crabbs
- Standard Lexile Chart

Numeracy Data will be gathered and monitored using the following internal mechanisms:

- Singapore Dimensions initial placement assessments
- Cumulative chapter review assessments
- Math facts (accuracy and timing) for grades K-5

A classroom observation will be conducted by a member of the RTI Committee when a student is initially referred to Step 2 of the RTI process. The purpose of this observation is to gain qualitative data concerning such factors as behavior, seating, and social interaction. These data will be used to help guide the classroom teacher in making and administering classroom accommodations. Additional classroom observations can be recommended or requested throughout the RTI steps as needed.

SECTION 504 – REHABILITATIVE ACT OF 1973

TVCA complies with the federally mandated services and protections of students with disabilities as it pertains to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a law that protects the rights of individuals with disabilities to access programs and instruction available to individuals without disabilities. Not all students with disabilities require specifically designed instruction; many may only need special accommodations to be able to access school programs and curriculum. An example of this would be a student with a hearing impairment who needs preferential seating and an FM system to better hear instruction. Another example would be a student with ADHD who needs assignments and homework individually explained and a desk or locker check for organization. A third example of a possible 504-qualifying impairment would be a student who has a difficulty with incontinence and requires an extra restroom break and a reminder to use the restroom. The physical needs of students vary, and it is the school's obligation to make reasonable accommodations for a student with identified disabilities so that the student has the same access to a Free and Appropriate Education as a student without identified disabilities.⁴

THE 504 PROCESS

1. Parent/Teacher Request
2. Eligibility Determination
3. Development/Implementation
4. Annual Renewal

The 504 process is initiated upon the request of a parent/guardian or classroom teacher. Upon receiving a 504 request, the 504 coordinator ensures a response within 10 school days to schedule a meeting. The 504 Coordinator creates the individual student 504 team consisting of the classroom teacher(s), parents/guardians, RTI Coordinator, the Dean of Students, and the student (5th grade and above) who collaborates to collect data and qualitative information regarding the child's academic or social functioning pertinent to the area(s) of concern.

Once data is collected, the team meets to determine the eligibility of the student for a 504 plan. By reviewing various data including teacher and parent input, the team determines whether or

⁴ For more information about 504 requirements, see <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/about-idea/#Rehab-Act>.

not the child has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits academic or social functioning within the school setting. Given that the child is found eligible, the team develops a 504 plan with individualized accommodations that ensure the child receives equal access to education.

Upon development, the 504 Coordinator will collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure that identified accommodations are being carried out according to the 504 plan. The 504 coordinator and classroom teacher will join forces with the TVCA testing coordinator to ensure any testing accommodations are implemented with fidelity.

The individual student 504 team will meet annually to review the efficacy of the plan and to determine appropriate (if any) amendments to accommodations.

Prior to the start of each new school year, the 504 Coordinator will provide classroom teachers with rosters of their incoming 504 students and shares hard copies of student accommodation plans. This practice ensures that teachers are fully aware of how to implement their students' accommodations beginning the first day of school. See Appendix 4 for 504 Plan templates.

TVCA RETENTION GUIDELINES

Retention at TVCA is considered as outlined on page 18 of the TVCA Family Handbook.

The discussion of possible retention will begin no later than the third quarter of the school year and a letter of concern will be sent to the parents. If retention is being recommended, a student must have been discussed by the Retention Committee prior to the teacher recommendation, and parents need to have been made fully aware of the possibility of retention. The decision to retain a student ultimately is made by the administrator and the parents. See Appendix 2: Retention for sample letters.

RETENTION COMMITTEE

The Retention Committee is comprised of:

- Principal
- Dean of Students
- RTI Coordinator
- Student Services Director

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) governs K–12 public education policy. This law replaced the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and modified, but did not eliminate, NCLB’s provisions relating to periodic standardized testing.

The main purpose of ESSA is to ensure that public schools provide a quality education for all students. ESSA gives states greater flexibility in accounting for student achievement, including the achievement of disadvantaged students. ESSA identifies four groups of disadvantaged students:

- Students in poverty
- Minorities
- Students who receive special education
- Students with limited English language skills

Under ESSA, states determine the education plans for their schools within a framework provided by the federal government. ESSA also offers parents the chance to weigh in on these plans. The plans must include a description of the following:

- Academic standards
- Annual testing
- School accountability
- Goals for academic achievement
- Plans for supporting and improving struggling schools
- State and local report cards

Although there are several more requirements for states and school districts, the above most directly affect the areas addressed by Student Services. ESSA also provides funding for literacy programs and other grants that can help students succeed. All of these areas fall under the Federal Programs umbrella and come with guidelines for accountability for TVCA to the Idaho State Department of Education (SDE).

The following Federal Programs, as outlined in the ESSA, are administered through the TVCA Student Services Program with oversight by the Student Services Director:

- Title I
- Title III
- Title VI-B

TITLE I

Title I is the largest federally funded program and provides supplemental funding for schools with a high concentration of students from low income families. A school qualifies for Title I dollars if 40% or more of the students are considered low income and qualify for the free and reduced lunch program. The funding assists schools in serving this population of students and is spent at the discretion of individual schools. Title I funds can be spent to serve any student in need as long as schools focus on best teaching practices and maintain adequate yearly progress on state testing.

The two main components of the Title I program are Title I: Family and Community Engagement and Title I-A: Improving Basic Programs.

TITLE I: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Family and Community Engagement is a federally funded program that acknowledges that when families, communities and schools work together, students are more successful and the entire community benefits. For schools and districts across the U.S., family engagement is becoming an integral part of education reform efforts.⁵

Family and community engagement is a central feature of TVCA. As a charter school, TVCA is a school of choice. We know that parents and families must make an active commitment in order to attend TVCA and therefore must play an active role in developing the culture of the school.

⁵ See www.edu.gov.

The TVCA administration works diligently to connect with parents, families and community members. Monthly “Principal’s Coffee” meetings permit parents and community members to interact with the administration. Each meeting involves a presentation and then the opportunity to ask questions and discuss programs.

The Mission Support Team (MST), an interdisciplinary process improvement team comprised of classroom teachers, administrators and parents, gathers feedback from parents and makes recommendations to the administration for process improvement. The MST holds annual Parent Town Hall meetings that bring parents together to present the activities of the MST and to receive feedback from interested parents. The MST sponsors an annual and mid-year parent survey to allow all parents an opportunity to offer their input and opinions on subjects important to school culture.

The “Special Events Committee” creates and maintains a Special Events Calendar and organizes opportunities for families and staff to engage in a social way outside of school. A complete calendar of current events can be found on the TVCA school website.⁶

A schoolwide newsletter, *The Sentinel*, is published and distributed bi-weekly to every family via email. *The Sentinel* communicates pertinent school information, teacher profiles, and engaging reflections on current events.

The Parent and Student compact is a written agreement between TVCA and the parents of children participating in the Title I-A program that identifies the activities that the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will undertake to share the responsibility for student academic achievement. This compact is provided and must be signed at the beginning of each school year and is found on page 44 of the TVCA Family Handbook.

TITLE I-A: IMPROVING BASIC PROGRAMS

This federally funded program helps at-risk students meet state academic standards and perform proficiently on state assessments. The program provides funding to districts and schools that can be used for professional development, extended-time programs, and other

⁶ See www.tvcacademy.org.

strategies to help raise achievement levels. Title I-A laws hold states, districts, and schools accountable for improving the academic achievement of all students.⁷

The Title I-A program provides additional instructional resources to assist students who are performing below grade level in order to obtain the necessary academic skills to reach grade-level performance in the shortest possible time. This necessitates providing sound remedial efforts. Title I-A placement and exit criteria are based on documented performance and student achievement data in Literacy and Numeracy. At TVCA, the remedial support provided through Title I-A can be found in Steps 1, Step 2, and Step 3 of the RTI Model.

Student Eligibility and Placement

Students can be identified for Title I-A support in Literacy, Numeracy or both. A minimum of two indicators from the RTI Data Gathering Tools identifying the area of concern must be used to qualify a student for Title I-A support. These indicators should reflect both student performance and student achievement.

TITLE I-A DELIVERY MODEL

TVCA has adopted a Targeted Assistive Title I-A model. In this model students receive specific targeted assistance from a trained teacher or teacher assistant in the area(s) identified in the placement data. This assistance may be provided in either the general classroom or in a small pull-out group to best facilitate learning and to meet student instructional needs.

Literacy Remediation: Literacy remediation for grades 1-5 occurs in small group pull-out during the latter half of the school day. Groups are created by common skill area deficits and lessons are focused on those specific areas. Please refer to Appendix 1b: Systematic Literacy Remediation for further details.

Numeracy Remediation: Numeracy Remediation for grades 1-6 occurs daily in the general classroom during the second math block. Grade-level mathematics instruction is separated for the second math block for targeted remediation for specific math skills. During the second math block, students who need additional skill development are periodically pulled together for small-

⁷ See sde.idaho.gov/federalprograms-basic.

group instruction. Students identified as being a full course level below grade level peers will be assigned to a level one below grade level peers for both instruction and remediation.

TITLE III: ENGLISH ACQUISITION – ENGLISH LEARNERS PROGRAM

Title III of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA of 1965), as amended by the ESSA of 2015, mandates state departments of education to support the educational needs of all English learners and mandates school districts to provide equal educational opportunities to all students regardless of English language proficiency.

The Idaho SDE English Learner Program supports school districts as they help students learn English while simultaneously meeting state academic standards. The number of English learner students in Idaho is growing. Contributing to this growth are more Idahoans speaking languages other than English combined with a more rigorous assessment of English language proficiency that must be met before students exit the program.⁸

TVCA's Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP) is overseen by the ELL Coordinator and emphasizes academic and social language development based on the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium English Language Development (WIDA) standards.⁹ It integrates grade-appropriate content to ensure the success of all ELL students. Students in TVCA's LIEP develop proficiency in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing while simultaneously acquiring academic content knowledge and skills.

TVCA utilizes data from the WIDA Consortium's screening tools or Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State (ACCESS) assessment scores, as well as data from the RTI screening process, to determine what accommodations or supplemental English language supports are necessary to assist each ELL student to become English-proficient. During the enrollment process, parents complete the TVCA Home Language Survey. The results of this survey indicate the prevalence of language(s) spoken in the home. If any language other than English is spoken prevalently in the home, the student is considered an

⁸ See uidaho.edu (Idaho at a Glance).

⁹ See <https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards>.

English Language Learner. The ELL Coordinator will screen all incoming Kindergarten students, and any transfer students who meet the qualifications but do not have an established ELL profile, using the appropriate WIDA screening tools within ten school days of the start of the school year or of completion of enrollment.

The TVCA LIEP relies heavily upon well-trained classroom teachers to adjust and accommodate lessons to meet the needs of the individual students. Because of the language-rich nature of our school-wide literacy program, ELL students are exposed to a high level of language instruction throughout the school day. This is supplemented by regular small-group and one-on-one pull-out sessions targeted to the ongoing language needs of each student.

An English Language Service Plan (ELSP) identifying the accommodations, interventions, and intensity of LIEP services will be formulated by the ELL Coordinator with input from the Literacy Coordinator, RTI Coordinator, and classroom teacher for each ELL student within the first 30 days of the school year. Once the service plan is developed, parents will be notified and given the opportunity to accept or decline ELL services. English language development progress will be monitored for all ELL students whether or not parents decline LIEP services. An ELSP template is found in Appendix 3c.

It is the responsibility of the ELL Coordinator to ensure and document the delivery of English language support and accommodations provided to each student identified as requiring English language support services. These supports may be identified as being provided in one-on-one and small-group pull-outs as well as in the general education classroom. The time, duration, and outcomes of these sessions will be documented in the ELSP and will be revisited as necessary throughout the school year.

TITLE VI-B: SPECIAL EDUCATION/IDEA

Special education includes specially designed instruction, support, and services provided to students with an identified disability requiring an individually designed instructional program. The purpose of special education is to enable students to successfully develop their fullest potential by providing a free appropriate public education in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the nation's federal special education law that ensures public schools serve the educational needs of students with disabilities.

Special Education entails a purposeful intervention designed to overcome or eliminate the obstacles that keep students with disabilities from learning. It provides students with disabilities with individualized plans of instruction to help them succeed. The provision of special education services in the public schools is a federal requirement of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA) and is enforceable through the SDE.

Below are the eight major principles of the IDEA, which pertain to the rights of students and the responsibilities of public schools with regard to children with disabilities:

Child-Find/Zero Reject: Every school district has a responsibility to seek out and identify students who have a disability and require special education. With parental permission, the school must provide appropriate education and related services. A school does not have the right to reject a student from attendance based upon disability.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): FAPE assures that all children with disabilities have available to them an appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living at no cost to them or their family.

Appropriate and Comprehensive Evaluation: The eligibility of each student for Special Education services will be determined by assessments conducted by trained and qualified professionals focused on the needs of the student. Students will not be subjected to unnecessary testing or evaluations. Assessment must be non-discriminatory in nature or presentation. All assessments must center upon the purpose of eligibility and service determination. Continued eligibility is considered on a triennial basis.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP): Once a student is determined to be eligible for Special Education services, the IEP team meets to develop a written document that outlines the student's needs, present level of performance, goals and objectives, measurement devices, and the amount and place of service for the education program. This document is revised at minimum annually.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): IDEA guarantees that students will be educated in the Least Restrictive Environment and emphasizes placement in the general education classroom

as much as possible. It is imperative that IEP teams consider many alternatives and accommodations before placing a student outside the general classroom. IEP teams and must be able to justify the reason for placement.

Parent Participation: Schools must make every effort for parents to participate in the process of writing the IEP and educational placement of their student. Parents must consent to assessment and initial placement. Parents must be provided prior written notice of any changes to the IEP or placement of their student.

Procedural Safeguards: Parents are protected by written procedural safeguards which guarantee parent access to information and written notice concerning their student's evaluation, eligibility, and placement. Parents can request an independent educational evaluation and have the right to seek arbitration or file a complaint if they disagree with a school district's decision.

Confidentiality: Special education files are stored separately from general education files. Parents have the right to reasonable access to all files related to special education that a school district has maintained on their child. Access to special education files is strictly monitored and general education personnel should be very discreet in discussing students with disabilities.¹⁰

The TVCA Special Education (SpEd) team, with leadership from the Special Education Lead Teacher with oversight from the Student Services Director, strives to support all students while developing and implementing specialized instruction for students with identified disabilities. SpEd staff aim to deliver content and material in an accessible way, taking into account specific strengths and weaknesses of each student, as outlined in his or her Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The SpEd team collaborates with classroom teachers, who should consistently demonstrate a strong commitment to delivering best classroom practices, actively providing accommodations, and working with the SpEd team to implement IEPs to drive student progress towards academic independence.

The SpEd program at TVCA is a combination of "push-in" and "pull-out" models. We recognize that for most students, learning alongside grade-level peers is generally the least restrictive environment and the best setting for learning. For this reason, TVCA students are served by

¹⁰ See <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/116019/chapters/Special-Education-and-the-Laws-That-Affect-It.aspx>.

SpEd staff in the general education classroom to the greatest extent possible. When the general classroom does not provide a particular student with the most conducive learning environment, he or she is taught in a one-one-one or small-group setting.

TVCA provides for our students' related service needs through independently contracted service providers in the areas of Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy. These therapies are provided as outlined by individual student IEPs.

The TVCA SpEd team utilizes the school's academically sound, strong curriculum and adapts it to meet the individualized learning needs of SpEd students. IEPs are crafted with our curriculum in mind to alleviate the need for additional measurement tools. Behavior plans are created with reference to the school's core virtues, as delineated on student character cards.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS

The Special Education process consists of two key parts: Evaluation and Implementation.

EVALUATION

The evaluation process begins with the formation of an eligibility team comprised of people involved with the student: parent(s), classroom teacher(s), specialist teacher(s), special education teacher, clinicians who perform assessments, school administrator, and the student (as appropriate). This team decides what and how data will be obtained and gets the parent's consent to begin the assessment. The student is then evaluated using psychological, academic and behavioral instruments by qualified, licensed professionals. School and classroom data, as well as teacher, student, and parent input are used to identify the extent of the student's disability. Once a parent gives consent for an evaluation, the team has 60 days to complete the evaluation and to make a determination of eligibility.

A student must meet three criteria to qualify for Special Education services:

1. The student must be determined as having a disability as defined by federal and state laws.
2. The disability must have an adverse effect on the student's educational performance.
3. The student must require specially designed instruction to ensure his or her access to the general education curriculum or in order to meet the educational standards that apply to all students.

IMPLEMENTATION

Once a student is determined to be eligible for Special Education service, the eligibility team has 30 days to reconvene to discuss and develop a complete Individualized Education Plan (IEP) based on the evaluation to help him or her achieve success academically or socially. This plan includes a detailed explanation of the student's needs, goals to help the student to make progress, a unique set of services (specifying times and places), and classroom and testing accommodations or modifications. The IEP team works together to ensure that the program developed in the IEP is implemented adequately. Each team member enacts and monitors their

portion of the IEP to ensure the student is successful. The IEP in its entirety is monitored by the Special Education Lead Teacher and regular progress is reported to the student's parents. If at any time a member of the team is concerned that a component of the plan is not working, an amendment meeting is called to consider adjusting the IEP for the student's benefit.

THE CLASSROOM TEACHER'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

All classroom teachers are responsible for teaching the students in their charge. Special Education supports classroom instruction. It is the goal of the TVCA Special Education team to help each student it serves to be a successful member of his or her general classroom. This requires careful planning and continual communication to ensure that SpEd service time is maximized and to ensure that students are getting what they need to be successful.

Classroom teachers and other faculty members can help ensure that students with disabilities at TVCA are successful by:

- communicating with a member of the SpEd team when there is indication that a student is having difficulty keeping up with the rigors of classroom instruction;
- consistently providing instruction and curriculum content information to the SpEd team working within the classroom to ensure they are able to support the student inside and outside the classroom (class notes, lesson outlines, etc.);
- actively monitoring classroom students so as to provide quality information regarding the students' present level of performance at IEP meetings and needs in order to improve the quality of support;
- continually developing instruction per IEP accommodations and modifications to ensure that the student's needs as identified on the IEP are being supported;
- maintaining the same high expectations for students with learning differences as for general performing students; and by
- continually working to improve instruction, allowing access to the greatest number of students possible while also maintaining the rigor and pace expected at TVCA.