

Date: July 13, 2015
For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X

Board Agenda: Yes _____
No X

FROM: Alvin L. Crawley, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Karen Graf, Chairman, and Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: School Board Brief: Special Education Plan

BACKGROUND:

On May 14, 2015, a Special Education update entitled *Ensuring Excellence for Students with Disabilities* was presented to the School Board. To operationalize this framework, the Office of Specialized Instruction is in the process of developing a detailed project plan focused on professional development that reinforces instructional outcomes and specially designed instruction to increase progress of students with disabilities. Specially designed instruction (SDI) refers to the teaching strategies and methods used by teachers to instruct students based upon their unique needs. In addition to the realignment of the special education leadership structure, there are four improvement areas currently in process:

- Developing a 3-year training plan for paraprofessionals;
- Designing and providing professional development for special education and general education teachers in specially designed instruction;
- Ensuring fully staffed classrooms; and
- Supporting implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS).

SUMMARY:

The attached brief provides details of current efforts to increase the performance of students with disabilities:

- The revised organizational structure of special education leadership reflects a commitment to specialized instruction and high-quality service delivery that will contribute to increased student achievement.
- Professional learning is being customized for special education teachers, general education teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators, to promote consistent, high-quality services across the division.
- Ongoing hiring this summer will ensure full staffing of general education and special education classrooms, Parent Resource Center, and the Office of Specialized Instruction.
- As part of implementing the Multi-Tiered System of Support, protocols and interventions are being revised to ensure effective progress monitoring.
- A summary of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats is included based on staff feedback. A parent SWOT will also be conducted in collaboration with SEAC.

Efforts continue to ensure that students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum to the greatest extent possible. As part of this work, we will be

inviting representatives from SEAC to sit on the interview committee for the Executive Director of Specialized Instruction.

CONTACT PERSONS:

Terri Mazingo, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer

Lora D'Adamo, Assistant Director of Specialized Instruction