

## Functional Skills High School Classroom

There are two High School Functional Skills Classrooms that our 7 school districts are able to utilize for students who require such a placement. The purpose of these classrooms is to provide students with moderate to severe disabilities an intensive functional skills curriculum. Due to the severity of needs of the students in these classrooms and the intense nature of instruction, administrators and IEP teams must be extremely careful when considering this restrictive placement.

IEP teams should carefully consider each student's particular disability, needs, and abilities. These classrooms are **not** appropriate for students who have significant academic difficulties, but whose coursework is able to be modified to create a level playing field for a reading, math, or writing disability. For example, a 10<sup>th</sup> grader may read at the 1<sup>st</sup> grade level, but has adequate listening comprehension and is able to participate in regular coursework with accommodation/modifications. A functional classroom setting would not be appropriate for this student.

IEP teams should maintain high expectations for students and be careful to not place a student in these functional classrooms, merely because the student is lower than other students on their caseload.

### Guiding Questions for IEP Teams

- Is the student working from the Extended Standards and taking the Alternate Assessment in at least one area?
- Are the student's Adaptive Behavior Skills *significantly* below average?
  - Does the student need intensive instruction with Daily Living Tasks and Independent Living?
- Has the student been identified with the educational label of Mental Retardation?
- Are the student's IEP goals primarily functional in nature?
- Will the student likely need some type of supported living post-high school?
- Is general education curriculum unable to be modified to the extent necessary to allow the student to participate and benefit from the regular classroom instruction/curriculum?
- Consider the student's social functioning: Does the student have appropriate peer relationships? Does he or she have a peer group in his/her current school?
- Is the student able to communicate with peers or adults? Does he/she need instruction in this area to be able to have needs/wants known?