



TWICE-EXCEPTIONAL (2e) HANDBOOK



Guidance for families and schools to support the identification, instruction, and social-emotional wellness of 2e learners.

Acknowledgments

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) wishes to acknowledge those who contributed to the development and review of the *FCPS Twice-Exceptional (2e) Handbook*. This collaborative effort between FCPS Instructional Services and Special Services departments began in 2017 with an original 2e Handbook committee and has continued to evolve. The collaboration and results are thanks to the contributions of FCPS staff as well as parents and advocates of 2e students in FCPS students.

This resource was created to provide schools and families with insight and general guidance to support the identification, instruction, and social-emotional wellness of 2e learners. Within FCPS, each student is met as an individual. No handbook can anticipate all questions or concerns. Each student's dual programming needs are best discussed collaboratively based on their individual profile.

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Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS)

Twice-Exceptional (2e) Handbook

Introduction

The FCPS Twice-Exceptional (2e) Handbook was developed to provide schools and families with insight and guidance associated with the identification, academic success, and social-emotional wellness of students who are gifted and have learning challenges or disabilities. The content reflects a division-wide commitment to effectively address the needs of 2e learners through a model of shared understanding, responsibility, and collaboration among 2e students, families, and school staff.

The handbook is organized by the following categories:

- **Part I: Overview of 2e Learners**
- **Part II: School Resources**
- **Part III: Students and Families**
- **Part IV: Additional 2e Resources**

In 2007, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) shifted from a focus of labeling students as “gifted” to a focus on identifying student strengths and providing a continuum of advanced academic services designed to develop talent and nurture students’ academic strengths over time. The [Virginia Regulations Governing Gifted Education](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/divisions/academic/academic_services/gifted/2019-2020%20Virginia%20Regulations%20Governing%20Gifted%20Education.pdf) ask each local districts to describe whether gifted programs address General Intellectual Ability (GIA), Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA), Career and Technical Aptitude (CTA), or Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA). FCPS’ Local Plan for the Gifted addresses GIA and SAA, which are both academic areas. For that reason, FCPS’ gifted services articulated in the FCPS Local Plan for the Gifted are named Advanced Academic Programs. Throughout this document, the term advanced academics will be used except when describing the broad category of “gifted” in relation to discussing VA regulations or research citations.

Table of Contents

Twice-Exceptional (2e) Handbook.....	0
Acknowledgments.....	1
Introduction	2
Part I: Overview Of 2e Learners	5
FCPS Beliefs and Commitments To 2e Learners.....	6
Who Are 2e Learners?.....	8
2e Identification Considerations	11
Potential Challenges with 2e Identification	14
The Influence of Language and Culture on Identification.....	14
Common Myths & Facts About 2E	15
Legislation Regarding 2e Students	17
Part I References	19
Part II: School Resources.....	22
Best Practices for Instruction of 2e Learners.....	23
Accommodations	27
Assistive Technology	30
504 Plans	33
Special Education Services	33
Disability-Specific Information	36
Interventions and Specialized Supports.....	41
Collaborative Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights	43
Part II References	55
Part III: Students and Families	57
Social-Emotional Impacts of 2e.....	57
Family and Schools as Partners.....	60
Part III References	62
Part IV: Additional 2e Resources	63
FCPS Points of Contact.....	64
FCPS Printable Resources.....	65

FCPS Web Resources.....	65
Books	66
Resources	66
2e Communities	66

Part I: Overview of 2E Learners



TWICE-EXCEPTIONAL (2e) HANDBOOK



Guidance for families and schools to support the identification, instruction, and social-emotional wellness of 2e learners.

Part I: Topics

- FCPS Philosophy
- Who Are 2e Learners?
- Identification Considerations
- Common Misconceptions
- Legislation

FCPS Beliefs and Commitments To 2e Learners

FCPS believes that each student is entitled to an excellent education that meets their individual needs, and that partnerships among students, parents, educators, and the community are critical to student success. The district is committed to evidence-based identification processes, interventions, and instructional practices designed to meet the diverse needs of 2e students.

FCPS embraces a student-centered, strengths-based approach to educating all students. For 2e learners, the focus is on addressing the students' high abilities while supporting their unique learning needs.

Twice-exceptional (2e) students in FCPS may participate in advanced academic programs and courses and receive accommodations, specialized instruction, modifications, and/or services through individualized education programs (IEP) or 504 Plans in a variety of academic settings based on the needs of the students. In a *Dear Colleague Letter* <<https://tinyurl.com/ocr-letter>> (2007), the U.S Department of Education affirmed that a student with a disability is entitled to admission to an accelerated class or program and may not be excluded solely because of that student's need for special education or related aids and services, or because that student has a plan under Section 504.

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) has developed an Enhancement Plan for Students with Disabilities <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/46871>> to strengthen outcomes for students with disabilities and support the goals in the Division Strategic Plan. The Enhancement Plan for Students with Disabilities centers on the following four goal areas: instructional delivery, special education processes, communication, and staff capacity.

The Enhancement Plan sets forth assumptions and beliefs related to core values <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/47359>> of inclusivity, collective responsibility, equity, engagement, focus on strengths, and consistency.

One focus of the instructional delivery goal is to ensure quality instruction in inclusive settings. As part of this effort, FCPS is developing an Inclusive Education Plan, a

resource for school administrators with FCPS inclusive education commitments and guiding principles. Additionally, FCPS will create resources to support academic and social components of inclusion, including core classes, specials/electives, and non-academic parts of the day, as well as developing resources that provide clarity around the identification of and programming for twice-exceptional learners. Fulfillment of these initiatives and commitments will be particularly beneficial to twice-exceptional students, who are historically underserved by special education or advanced academic services or both due to their complex presentations.

The Education of Students with Advanced Learning Needs in FCPS

FCPS follows the Virginia Regulations Governing Education Services for Gifted Students (8VAC20-40-10 <<https://tinyurl.com/va-law>>), which defines gifted students as “those in public elementary, middle, and secondary schools beginning with kindergarten (through twelfth grade) who demonstrate high levels of accomplishment or who show the potential for higher levels of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment.” The regulations further state, “Their aptitudes and potential for accomplishment are so outstanding that they require special programs to meet their educational needs.”

In FCPS, advanced academic services are available to students who exhibit exceptional performance capability in the “general intellectual aptitude” or “specific academic” domains, through a continuum of Advanced Academic Programs (AAP). The K-12 AAP continuum builds upon students' individual strengths and skills and maximizes academic potential for all learners. When a student is screened for AAP, the school division considers a student's performance in one or more of the four core academic subject areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. FCPS also considers the diverse characteristics and behaviors associated with advanced learning needs and uses a holistic review of multiple and varied assessments that provide opportunities to highlight student strengths.

FCPS is committed to developing excellence and recognizes that children identified for advanced academic services have the potential to achieve at high levels in one or more academic areas. Advanced learners require a differentiated curriculum that addresses their cognitive and social-emotional needs and develops their abilities through instruction that is differentiated in depth, complexity, and pace.

FCPS has policies and procedures in place that are grounded in equity and inclusion. All students receive instruction to develop critical and creative thinking skills from kindergarten through grade 12. For more information, see [FCPS Advanced Academic Programs](https://www.fcps.edu/node/33070) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/33070>>.

The Education of Students with Disabilities in FCPS

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) <<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>> guarantees a free appropriate public education to all eligible children with disabilities. The Commonwealth of Virginia defines special education as “specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent(s), to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability” (34 CFR 300.39(a)(1)). According to the statute, specially designed instruction" means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability; and to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the educational standards that apply to all children” (34 CFR 300.39(b)(3)).

Additional protection for students with disabilities is provided by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 <<https://tinyurl.com/sec-504>>, a civil rights statute designed to “eliminate discrimination on the basis of handicap in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance” (34 CFR 104).

The mission of the FCPS Department of Special Services is to provide a planned program of instructional, psychological, social, and related services to help schools meet the unique needs of identified students and their families. Through instructional leadership, curriculum development, program evaluation, and staff development, FCPS Special Services provides a network of support for staff, students, and families that eliminates obstacles, facilitates instruction, and enables students to succeed as individuals within the learning environment.

Who Are 2e Learners?

VDOE defines twice exceptional (2e) students as “children, kindergarten through twelfth grade, who are identified as gifted by the identification and placement committee for the school division’s gifted education program and are also identified as a child with a disability as defined by Virginia’s special education regulations.”

- The advanced academic identification qualifies the student for educational service options that support performance at increasing levels of complexity that differ significantly from those of their age-level peers.
- Identification as a child with a disability entitles the student to an individualized education program (IEP) in accordance with state and federal guidelines or a 504 Plan.

In Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), 2e students are those who have been identified for subject-specific, part-time, or full-time advanced academic program (AAP) services at any time and who are currently identified as a child with a disability with either an IEP or a 504 Plan.

Characteristics of 2e Learners

Twice-exceptional (2e) students' learning and behavior profiles are often complex, with strengths and needs occurring on a continuum. Students may demonstrate characteristics of advanced learners as well as characteristics of students who have cognitive, physical, behavioral, or emotional challenges.

The chart below provides examples of potential strengths and challenges 2e students may experience. Many of the potential challenges relate to deficits in executive functioning skills experienced by many 2e learners. It is not an exhaustive list, and individual 2e students will not demonstrate all the characteristics.

Potential Strengths	Potential Challenges
Highly advanced in one or more academic areas, e.g., verbal skills, conceptual understandings, early reading development	Uneven or inconsistent academic performance; working in a modality that is not a strength; emotional immaturity compared to same-age peers
Ability to memorize large amounts of information as compared to peers	Working memory (i.e., retaining information to complete multi-step tasks)
Highly imaginative, curious, unusual sense of humor	Social awareness: ideas may seem bizarre to peers; difficulty seeing other points of view; may discount or minimize views of others
Develops complex ideas and solutions to problems	Organization; time management; following multi-step directions and plans
Advanced moral reasoning about issues related to fairness and justice	Extreme emotional intensity and oversensitivity; regulating emotions

Potential Strengths	Potential Challenges
High level reasoning powers and problem-solving abilities	Systematically approaching problems (e.g., organizing, prioritizing, initiating tasks)
Very focused interests (i.e., has passion and deep knowledge about a specific topic of interest)	Focus on a particular area (often not school-related) to the exclusion of others (often school-related); unable to shift focus and be flexible with thinking/ideas
Able to concentrate for long periods in areas of interest	Sustaining attention on less preferred tasks
Often able to engage with adults in high-level conversations on topics of interest	Difficulty initiating and sustaining daily social conversations with peers and adults; may not have language and self-regulation skills to engage in reciprocal conversations with peers and adults
Outstanding critical and creative thinking abilities; often independently develop compensation skills	Executive functioning skills; may require frequent teacher support and feedback in deficit areas

Possible Indications of Twice-Exceptionality

Twice-exceptional children are highly individualistic, and there is no single profile of a twice-exceptional child. If twice-exceptionality is suspected, it is helpful for parents and teachers to keep records and collect evidence to show the ways in which the child excels and struggles. Parents and teachers may advocate for the child to be evaluated for advanced academic services, special education services, or both, as one exceptionality does not preclude the other.

Below are some examples of characteristics* of twice-exceptionality (VDOE 2022):

- Impulsivity
- Organizational weaknesses
- Significant strengths and advanced knowledge in one or more specific areas of content
- Difficulty with emotional regulation

- Emotional intensity
- Significant issues with perfectionism and frustration
- Difficulties with social interactions and social awareness
- Difficulties with visual or auditory processing
- Wide range of differences between academic areas of strength and areas of challenge
- Widely different levels of motivation and persistence between areas of strength and challenge
- Wide differences between verbal and performance abilities but has slower processing speeds; or the converse
- High levels of anxiety and existential angst

**This is not intended as a diagnostic tool.*

2e Identification Considerations

According to the National Education Association's publication, *The Twice-Exceptional Dilemma* (2006), an estimated six percent of students with disabilities are also academically gifted. It is important to note that the prevalence of twice-exceptionality may be even higher, as the data does not capture students who have not been identified for gifted or special education services (due to masking) or those who have a 504 Plan rather than an individualized education program (IEP). In FCPS, students with an IEP or a 504 Plan who have been identified through FCPS AAP screening processes as having advanced academic abilities are twice-exceptional learners.

Twice-exceptionality is not explicitly addressed by any federal, state, or local regulations. FCPS does not have a formal 2e identification process, but rather provides a continuum of advanced academic services, and concurrently delivers special education services or 504 Plans to students who need both. Advanced academic services and special education services can be provided in a variety of educational settings, depending on the needs of the student and their IEP. Eligibility for services is independently determined by the Advanced Academic Programs (AAP) office and the Department of Special Services, following procedures outlined in state legislation and local regulations.

Identification for Advanced Academic Programs

FCPS Advanced Academic Programs (AAP) provides services along a continuum and matches a student's needs for rigor in one or more content areas beginning in

kindergarten and continuing through high school. FCPS AAP identification procedures are designed to find and nurture advanced academic potential, so every student can participate at the appropriate level of challenge in specific core content areas. The [AAP screening process](https://www.fcps.edu/node/26225) is based on local norming and considers multiple criteria to ensure a student has services that connect them to an academic peer group with similar needs as well as a match to intensity of challenge in one or more subject areas.

Identification and placement practices are guided by an understanding that intelligence develops over time, can be nurtured, manifests itself in different ways in different cultures, is complex, and is affected by both genetic and environmental influences. This understanding drives the holistic approach to screening and identification that allows teachers to recognize and nurture advanced academic potential over time to promote continuous intellectual growth.

Fairfax County Public Schools offers a continuum of advanced academic services (AAP) for students K-12 that builds upon students' individual strengths and skills and maximizes academic potential for all learners, matching services to students' strengths, and interests.

Twice-exceptional students who receive AAP services are provided with accommodations, specialized instruction, modifications, and/or services, as detailed in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan in a variety of academic settings in response to the student's individual needs.

K-12 Advanced Academic Services

Access to Rigor: Grades K-6

All students receive talent development lessons with critical and creative thinking strategies and AAP curriculum lessons.

Subject Specific AAP: Grades K-6

Identified students receive AAP curriculum lessons in the general education setting in a specific area or areas of academic strength.

Part-Time AAP: Grades 3-6

Identified students receive AAP curriculum lessons with increased depth and complexity in multiple academic content areas. Students work with the Advanced Academic Resource Teacher (AART) and similar academic peers on weekly lessons in addition to differentiation in specific content areas in their general education setting.

Full-Time AAP: Grades 3-6

Identified students receive AAP curriculum lessons full-time. Programming has increased depth, complexity, and pace in all academic content areas.

Middle School

Advanced academic services are implemented in middle schools using a school-based model through open enrollment Honors coursework, and, for students found eligible through central screening, Full-time AAP services in core courses.

High School

Advanced academic services in high school are implemented using a school-based model through a variety of rigorous programs and coursework open to all students. Course offerings vary by each school and may include Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programs (IB MYP), International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB DP), and dual enrollment.

Identification for Special Education and/or 504 Plans

The FCPS Department of Special Services provides a planned program of instructional, psychological, social, and related services to help schools provide services to identified students. Identification as a child with a disability in one or more of the 13 disabilities listed in IDEA and the disabilities affects the student's educational performance or ability to learn from the general curriculum which entitles the student to an individualized education program (IEP), or a 504 Plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These accommodations and services may include, but are not limited to, consultative services, accommodations, and specially designed instruction. A student's education includes academic, social-emotional, and adaptive functioning. For all areas of need, appropriate interventions support 2e students in developing their full potential.

If there is a reason to suspect a student has a disability, a request for evaluation can be made to the local screening team. A Multi-Purpose Referral (SS/SE-5) form may be completed by the requester or the appropriate school staff members. The local screening committee (LSC) will follow mandated procedures to determine if there is sufficient evidence to suspect a disability. If the student undergoes a formal evaluation, a group of qualified professionals and the parents look at the child's evaluation results. Together, they decide if the student meets the criteria to be identified as a student with a disability, as defined by IDEA, with a need for specialized instruction and/or accommodations.

Students found eligible for special education services will receive an IEP, written by the IEP team, which includes parents and the student (when appropriate). These

individuals pool knowledge, experience, and commitment to design an educational program that will help the student progress in the general curriculum.

In some cases, the student may not be eligible for special education, but may be eligible with a disability under Section 504. A 504 Plan is developed for the 504-qualified student, and this plan will include all necessary accommodations, modifications and/or services necessary for the student to obtain equal access to FCPS programs and activities. Some examples of accommodations include extended time, graphic organizers, positive reinforcement systems, chunked quizzes/tests, and audio texts.

Potential Challenges with 2e Identification

Twice-exceptional learners are at risk for under-identification for advanced academic services, special education services, and 504 Plans due to the complex interaction of exceptional abilities and exceptional learning challenges. Students with concurrent advanced learning needs and learning challenges or disabilities may fall into one of the following categories:

The strengths mask the disability.

These students can use their strengths to compensate for their areas of challenge, especially in the early grades, and they are identified for advanced academic services; however, as compensation becomes more difficult, these students may be perceived as underachievers who lack motivation as they fall behind their advanced academic peers due to their undetected learning disabilities.

The disability masks the strengths.

These students' learning challenges are clear, and often the focus of instruction is remediation. They may be found eligible for special education services or 504 Plans, but not for advanced academic services. Subsequently, if the student is cognitively under-stimulated, they may develop negative behaviors, learned helplessness, or low self-esteem.

The disability and strengths mask each other, and neither is recognized.

These students are not found eligible for either advanced academic services or special education programs. They have exceptional abilities yet appear to have just average ability due to the effects of the disability. Subsequently, they do not receive support for their challenges or opportunities to demonstrate their strengths and abilities.

The Influence of Language and Culture on Identification

Perceptions of advanced learning needs are influenced by both language and culture. Screening measures alone may not capture students with high potential who are in the early stages of acquiring English. Consequently, teachers and parents play a key role in the identification of Multilingual Learners (ML) for Advanced Academic Programs. It is imperative that English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers participate in the process of identifying and serving MLs. In addition to classroom observations and assessment results, teachers should be aware of potential indicators of high ability in Multilingual Learners. Indicators of advanced academic potential in Multilingual Learners are often masked in the earlier stages of English fluency. These include, but are not limited to, rapid acquisition of English and/or rapid acculturation, high ability in mathematics, efficiency in switching between languages, leadership, demonstration of critical thinking and creativity when sharing verbally/orally, but might not transfer into writing, and strong interpersonal skills.

Due to the complexity of identifying and serving the needs of multilingual learners who have advanced academic potential and learning challenges, school teams collaborate to implement the following practices:

- Assessments are administered in the language most likely to yield accurate results. For Multilingual Learners, English Language Proficiency (ELP) Level 1-4 and 9, a dual language assessment is required.
- Ensure that the student's parent(s)/caregiver understands the proceedings of the eligibility meeting and provide interpreters and translations when needed.
- Include an ESOL teacher on the team and consider how the student's language, culture, and background may be impacting assessment results when screening or determining eligibility for special education.

Students from culturally and linguistically diverse populations may face additional challenges in identification for both advanced academic and special education services. Educators' perceptions may shape how strengths and challenges are recognized. These students may also experience greater stigma and discrimination associated with disabilities, which can lead to underreporting or reluctance to seek assessment and support.

Common Myths & Facts About 2E

Below are some common misconceptions, or myths, about students with advanced academic learning needs who also have a learning challenge or disability.

Unaddressed, these misconceptions may prevent access to appropriate learning experiences and necessary support required for academic success and social-emotional wellness.

Myth 1: A student cannot need advanced academics and have a learning disability.

FACT: 2e learners have high cognitive abilities and learning challenges or disabilities. Understanding the needs of these students can be difficult because strengths may mask disabilities, disabilities may mask strengths, or they may mask each other. It is important to provide instruction based on a student's strengths while providing support for areas of challenge.

Myth 2: A student cannot receive special education services in advanced academic programs or courses.

Fact: 2e learners who need accommodations and/or specialized instruction and services cannot be denied access to appropriate high-level curriculum. Individualized education programs (IEP) and 504 Plans can be delivered in a variety of settings, including advanced academic classes. At the secondary level, a student and their parents/caregivers have the right to select any course for which the student has satisfied the course prerequisite(s)

Myth 3: A student with good grades is not eligible for special education services.

Fact: Teams consider the whole child when making an eligibility decision, and grades are not the sole indicator of progress or ability. The United States Department of Education specifies that all students with disabilities are protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and that schools must evaluate a student if a disability is suspected. IDEA §300.304(b)(1) and (2) requires the use of "a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent," and prohibits the use of "any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child."

Myth 4: It is not fair to reduce work or provide extra support for 2e students since they have been identified for advanced academic services.

Fact: Teachers make instructional decisions and build classroom culture based on an equitable, student-centered approach to education in which every student is treated as an individual. Fairness does not mean all students get the same thing, but rather all students get what they need. Students with disabilities, including those who also have advanced learning needs, are entitled to receive accommodations or specialized instruction as detailed in their IEP or 504 Plan. These documents are written to "level the playing field" and to empower students to learn and demonstrate understanding without the interference of a disability.

Myth 5: The student’s areas of weakness must be remediated before having access to advanced learning opportunities.

Fact: A student does not have to master basic skills before engaging in high level curriculum and instruction. Focusing on remediation of skill deficits at the expense of access to interesting, relevant, emotionally engaging activities is typically unsuccessful, and may result in students becoming bored and unmotivated. Rather, a strength-based approach using advanced curriculum with supports and accommodations is more likely to result in higher achievement. Areas of need should be supported so students’ learning challenges do not prohibit them from full, active participation in cognitively advanced tasks.

Myth 6: 2e students develop cognitively and emotionally at the same level and pace.

Fact: Twice-exceptional students are advanced in terms of intellect; however, their social-emotional maturity may not match their advanced intellectual development. This uneven development is referred to as “asynchrony.” Asynchronous learning can happen with any student identified for advanced academics, but uneven learning profiles are often more pronounced in 2e students. The best way to address asynchrony is to focus on and further develop the students’ areas of strength, while continuing to support the areas of need through explicit instruction and accommodations.

Myth 7: Students with advanced learning needs are self-motivated, and high-achievement comes easily to them.

Fact: If the evaluation of a student’s academic abilities is influenced by the expectation of high motivation, strong executive functioning skills, and advanced reading and writing skills, a 2e student may appear unable or unwilling to handle challenging academic tasks. Twice-exceptional students have advanced learning needs yet may not perform at a high level due to insufficient academic support or social-emotional challenges. Over time, they may develop low self-esteem and become less willing to take academic risks. Students who receive needed support and feel understood by their teachers are more likely to take academic risks, persevere through inevitable challenges, and achieve up to their potential.

Legislation Regarding 2e Students

There is no legislation that specifically addresses “twice-exceptional” students; however, the U.S. Department of Education has clarified its position that students who have both high cognition and disabilities are protected under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Below are summaries of the federal and state legislation regarding both gifted education and special education that govern and guide FCPS in serving the needs of 2e students.

Legislation Regarding Special Education and Section 504

FCPS abides by the procedures required for Implementation of Special Education Regulations <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/32532>> in Virginia's Public Schools and complies with the following legislation regarding protections for students with disabilities.

Legislation	Summary
<p><u>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)</u> <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/></p>	<p>IDEA makes available a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to eligible children with disabilities and ensures special education and/or related services designed to meet the child's unique needs.</p>
<p><u>Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973</u> <https://tinyurl.com/sec-504></p>	<p>Section 504 is designed to eliminate discrimination based on disability in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. It requires schools to provide to students with disabilities appropriate educational services designed to meet the individual needs of such students.</p>
<p>Virginia Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities (8VAC20-81 <https://tinyurl.com/va-law2>)</p>	<p>This list of regulations outlines requirements for the education of students with disabilities, including, but not limited to: referral, eligibility, FAPE, <u>individualized education program (IEP)</u> < https://www.fcps.edu/node/32532>, least restrictive environment placement, due process, and compliance with Section 504.</p>

Legislation Regarding Gifted Education

FCPS complies with the following legislation regarding protections for gifted students:

Legislation	Summary
Virginia Regulations Governing Education Services for Gifted Students (<u>8VAC20-40-10</u> < https://tinyurl.com/va-law >)	This list outlines what each school division needs to include in its comprehensive plan for gifted education, including, but not limited to: definitions, screening, referral, identification, services, parental rights, and the local plan. The <u>FCPS Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted</u> < https://www.fcps.edu/node/34510 > meets the Virginia regulations and is approved by the FCPS School Board. This document provides specific explanations of FCPS' implementation of the regulations. It includes a commitment to recognize and address the needs of children who have been identified as gifted and those who have high potential, including twice-exceptional learners.

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Part II: School Resources



TWICE-EXCEPTIONAL (2e) HANDBOOK



Guidance for families and schools to support the identification, instruction, and social-emotional wellness of 2e learners.

Part II: Topics

- Best Practices for Instruction of 2e Learners
- Accommodations
- Assistive Technology
- 504 Plans
- Special Education Services
- Disability Specific Information
- Interventions and Specialized Supports
- Collaborative Roles, Responsibilities, & Rights

Best Practices for Instruction of 2e Learners

FCPS promotes strengths-focused, dually-differentiated instruction that fosters academic success and social-emotional well-being. Teachers develop 2e students' strengths and support them in areas of challenge through accommodations, specialized instruction, modifications, and/or services, and the development of compensation strategies that allow access to advanced learning opportunities.

Fostering Academic Success and Social-Emotional Wellness

Pre-assessments

Pre-assessments for twice exceptional (2e) students serve to understand their individual strengths, interests, challenges, and existing knowledge before instruction. Pre-assessment also allows teachers to make instructional decisions for twice-exceptional students based on evidence. This information guides personalized instruction, supports differentiation, and helps identify areas to challenge students and for targeted intervention to facilitate meaningful learning experiences and academic growth.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an educational framework that promotes flexible learning environments to accommodate diverse learner needs. UDL supports twice exceptional (2e) students by providing a flexible framework that addresses their diverse needs. UDL offers multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression, allowing 2e students to access advanced content in various formats, engage with material in ways that suit their strengths, and express their

understanding using preferred methods. This flexibility helps accommodate the unique learning profiles of 2e students to support success in their areas of strength while also mediating the barriers that may be caused by their disability.

Strengths-based Approach

A strength-based approach is crucial for 2e learners because it recognizes and nurtures their exceptional abilities while mediating the barriers caused by their disability. By focusing on strengths, educators can harness the potential of 2e students, building confidence, motivation, and resilience. This approach empowers 2e learners to leverage their strengths to overcome obstacles, leading to increased academic achievement, self-esteem, and overall well-being.



FIGURE 1- STRENGTH-BASED APPROACH (VANTASSEL-BASKA, 1986)

Dual Differentiated Instruction

Dual differentiated instruction is beneficial for 2e students because it addresses both their advanced abilities and their learning challenges simultaneously. Dual differentiation allows teachers to differentiate up to develop students' academic strengths and talent, while also providing necessary scaffolds to accommodate their areas of challenge. This approach ensures that 2e students are neither left unchallenged by their strengths nor held back by their disabilities, fostering a supportive and enriching learning environment that promotes their overall academic and personal growth.

Ongoing assessments

2e students often come to the classroom with previous knowledge and a high capacity for learning. They also may have gaps in academic or social skills that require support to access higher level content. Ongoing assessments will allow teachers to understand 2e students' needs so they can adjust instruction to support students in meeting or exceeding learning goals.

Flexibility

2e students perform better with teachers who, whenever possible, are flexible in instruction rather than rigid. Flexibility in time, materials, teaching and learning styles, student grouping, ways of expressing learning, and ways of assessing learning promotes student engagement and success in the classroom.

Respectful learning tasks and learning environments

2e students need relevant and engaging assignments with varied task complexity that offer choice based on interests and areas of strength. A respectful learning environment promotes appreciation of diversity, consistent structures, and routines, and includes materials that reflect the interests and cultures of all students in the class. Teachers who understand asynchronous development and who emphasize growth over achievement create a learning environment that encourages academic risk-taking.

Teacher-student partnership

2e students are empowered when the adults in their lives involve them in exploring what having exceptional ability and a disability means to them. A trusting partnership with the student is the key to successful differentiation. Teachers need to know the 2e student's strengths and interests, preferred learning environments, and the kinds of support the student needs or does not need. A student can be a stronger self-advocate with a teacher who is open to listening and collaborating.

Interventions and Specialized Instruction

A student's twice-exceptionality may impact multiple areas including reading, writing, mathematics, behavior, executive functioning, and social-emotional wellness. School teams work to identify students' strengths and needs as early as possible and use this knowledge to match students with the necessary interventions. School teams may develop a targeted plan with special education strategies or an evidence-based program to meet students' needs. As much as possible, interventions should be concurrent with advanced-level programming in the areas of strength and provide flexibility in pacing.

Accommodations that Empower

Accommodations help students compensate for their areas of weakness and allow high-ability students to move forward in learning in the moment, rather than interrupting learning to engage in remediation. For example, a student who has difficulty with written expression may be given a copy of class notes, which could help with preparation for academic conversations with peers.

Accommodations are outlined in a student's individualized education program (IEP or 504 Plan, while some accommodations are standard best practices that can be offered to any student, as needed.

Compensation strategies can be explicitly taught, embedded in curriculum, and/or developed by students as they move through school and discover what works. Accommodations are most effective when students understand their own disabilities and the benefits of support. Parents and teachers can support successful development of self-advocacy in the following ways: foster resilience and persistence through challenges, teach organization and study skills, avoid unhealthy pressure for high grades, nurture talents and interests, reframe a learning disability in a positive manner, frame academic and self-regulation skills as skills that can be learned.

Acceleration

Many 2e students learn at a faster pace, and in some cases, more independently than their same-age peers; most gifted students can benefit from some form of acceleration during their K- 12 school years (Assouline, et al 2015). Accelerating 2e students in areas of strength allows them to move through the curriculum more quickly, resulting in more time to deeply explore content and personal interests related to the material. FCPS offers a variety of acceleration options that can be effective in meeting the needs of students with advanced learning needs (e.g., compacting, subject matter acceleration, dual enrollment). When exploring acceleration for 2e students, it is important to ensure that areas of need are addressed. Additionally, potential academic and social-emotional issues are carefully considered, as failure to address possible unintended consequences may diminish the benefit of acceleration.

Social-Emotional Support

The combination of having advanced learning needs and one or more disabilities may intensify the emotional challenge for 2e students and could increase their vulnerability to social-emotional struggles.

School factors that contribute to the social-emotional well-being of 2e students include a psychologically safe learning environment, school staff who model patience and tolerance of learning and behavior differences, and strengths-based learning experiences.

The home-school partnership is vital in managing students' social-emotional needs. FCPS school teams and families proactively plan to address concerns and collaborate on effective strategies. Creating a supportive learning environment with input from parents/caregivers, who know the student best, will help 2e students grow academically, emotionally, behaviorally, and socially.

Accommodations

Under federal law, students with disabilities have the right to equal access to learning. Accommodations are practices and supports provided to help a student access the curriculum and validly demonstrate learning.

Accommodations are based on individual learning needs of students and may be provided by classroom teachers, special education teachers, and/or other support staff. Accommodations included in the student's individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan ensure the student receives necessary support and/or services in all learning environments. By law, these accommodations must be provided to students when completing classroom and standardized assessments to ensure that a student's knowledge is being assessed, not their ability (or inability) to communicate that knowledge. In addition, English learners are entitled to receive English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) accommodations and services in addition to special education and AAP services.

Student Role in Accommodations

Regular discussions about accommodations and their effectiveness for the student are important to ensure their continued appropriateness. Students are encouraged to play an active role in decisions about the provision of accommodations, as their insights are important in selecting specific supports they find most useful and effective.

Accommodations vs. Modifications

Classroom accommodations change how a student learns the material, while modifications change what material is to be learned. Testing accommodations change how a student expresses understanding of material, while modifications change what material is tested. For example, dictating answers to an essay test would be an accommodation. Requiring that only a portion of the content be assessed would be a modification. Modifications and accommodations should be revisited often, as the needs of 2e students change.

Accommodations for 2e Students

The needs of each student are considered when selecting appropriate classroom and testing accommodations for 2e students. Below are examples of accommodations that

may be considered to help 2e students access advanced curriculum. For more information about your child's specific accommodations or needs, contact your child's school.

Examples of Accommodations

Accommodations are individualized to meet students' needs. This list provides examples and is not intended to be exhaustive.

Materials

- Visual Aids (e.g., picture schedule, graphic organizers, charts)
- Audiobooks (e.g., Learning Ally, Bookshare, Storynory, audible.com, AIM-VA)
- Text-to-Speech tools (e.g., NaturalReader, Reading Pen, Voice Dream Reader App)
- Speech-to-Text tools (e.g., Dragon, Siri, voice recognition software)
- Note-taking supports (e.g., voice recorder, copy of class notes)
- Spelling and grammar software
- Calculator

Instruction

- Maintain classroom routines and schedules
- Simplify directions (e.g., step-by-step instructions, highlight key words)
- Repeat directions and check for oral language comprehension of presented information
- Provide written information, including copies of teacher presentations and notes, to avoid copying from the board
- Provide opportunities for hands-on learning; pair tactile learning with text
- Provide opportunities for small group learning
- Teach strategies for working collaboratively with others

Classwork, Homework, and Testing

- Read aloud or reduced language level text
- Extended time
- Frequent breaks

- Options for response during testing (e.g., multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, allowing the student to respond orally rather than in a written format)
- “Chunking” assignments and assessment
- Options for demonstration of learning (e.g., posters, oral reports, blogging, slide presentations, video presentations)
- Separate testing space
- Scribe to record dictated responses
- Provide guided lecture notes or a note taker

Linguistic Accommodations for English Learners

- Audio access to material
- Use of a bilingual dictionary
- Use of a scribe to record dictated responses
- Use of an English dictionary
- Visual aids (graphic organizers, whiteboards, etc.)
- Flexible schedule

Executive Functioning

- Use technology or a planner to track assignments
- Frequent reminders of due dates
- An extra set of books at home (when available)
- Reduce the number and/or length of homework assignments
- Divide large assignments into smaller units (chunking)
- Use a checklist of tasks to be completed

Behavior

- Use non-verbal cueing strategies
- Provide positive behavior supports (e.g., positive reinforcement strategies, behavior modification strategies)
- Flexible breaks (e.g., flash pass)
- Provide a place in the classroom where a student can go to regain control
- Allow a distraction-free work space

- Communicate expectations in clear, literal language

Assistive Technology

IDEA defines assistive technology as any technology that can “increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with disabilities” (Individuals with Disabilities Act Amendments, 2004). There are many assistive technologies available to support access to the curriculum and increase capabilities for students with reading, writing, and organization difficulties. Many of these technologies are readily available in the classroom and can also be used at home to support a student who struggles with reading, writing, math, and executive functioning.

AT is never meant to replace instruction, but when paired with research-based instructional methods, it can bridge the gap between students’ current skills and the material that they need to access. While they continue to build on their current skills, students can use AT to gain access to higher level reading material, capture their ideas in writing, and organize for studying and writing.

Assistive Technology in FCPS

Assistive technology tools available to students and families are listed in the FCPS Digital Ecosystem Library. School teams should work with the School Based Technology Specialist (SBTS) and Assistive Technology (AT) Coaches to identify currently approved software and application titles.

Examples of inclusive tools and resources to support all learners can be found on the FCPS public website. Tools include those to support keyboarding, reading, writing, math, and captioning.

Executive Functioning

Executive functioning refers to a set of skills that support a students’ capacity to plan ahead and meet goals, display self-control, follow multiple-step directions, and stay focused despite distractions, among others. Below are specific categories of executive functioning skills and examples of assistive technology to support students with challenges in these areas.

Organization

- G-Suite and FCPS 24/7 (share assignments with teachers to turn in work)
- Email (turn in assignments)
- Electronic organizer software
- Online calendars
- Personal device options (reminders, calendar, take photos of assignments/notes)

Working Memory

- Word processor (with annotation tools)
- Highlighting tool (for digital materials)
- Graphic organizer software
- Flashcard software/applications
- Personal device options (camera to record assignments, notes)

Cognitive Flexibility/Shift Attention

- Timers
- Watch (with vibration reminders)

- Personal device option (timer)

Goal-Directed Persistence

- Calendars (Google Calendar, calendar on personal device)
- Personal device options (reminders and notes applications)

Metacognition

- Multimedia software (capture thinking)

Attention and Focus

- Personal device options (clock and timer)

Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)

Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) are printed textbooks, trade books, and other educational materials that are converted to alternate formats (Braille, Large Print, Electronic/Digital Text, and Audio Recordings). Students with a documented visual, physical, or print disability may require accessible instructional materials (AIM) if the limitations of print materials are the barrier to their success. IEP teams are required to consider whether a student requires materials in an alternate format. Students with a 504 Plan do not qualify for AIM-VA.

Finding an Assistive Technology Match

AT staff members work in collaboration with school teams to ensure that all students with disabilities who require AT have the technology tools and training necessary in order to access the curriculum, narrow the achievement gap, gain essential life skills, and reach their full potential. The art of AT is in finding the right amount of support to help a student based on their needs. For example, using a calculator would provide a 2e student with a math disability access to higher-level problem-solving tasks without being slowed down by struggling with basic calculations. The decision regarding an appropriate AT match is individualized and takes into consideration specific student needs, the environment where learning is taking place, and the types of tasks that are required.

How Can a Student Get Access to Assistive Technology?

The types of assistive technology tools available to a given student are based on his/her documented need, given relevant assessment and classroom-based data. Access to the tools may be provided through general education, 504 Plans, IEPs, and

AIM-eligibility. Every FCPS school has an AT coach who supports schools and IEP teams with AT considerations for students with disabilities. The AT Coach can provide professional development to teachers about the effective use of AT and how it can also be used to benefit students in diverse educational environments.

The AT coaches may be asked to evaluate students regarding required assistive technology accommodations considered by school IEP or 504 teams. Assessment starts with an evaluation of student needs. Assistive technology tools are chosen, and data is collected regarding their impact. As a result of this assessment, the IEP or 504 teams documents the recommended technological supports that make the identified classroom function(s) less difficult for the student.

The IEP or 504 Plan team makes decisions regarding appropriate assistive technology accommodations. Training is provided to the student and teacher. Given that a student's needs and available technologies change frequently, AT is an ongoing assessment process.

Universal Design for Learning and Assistive Technology

All FCPS students receive an FCPS-issued computing device to access dynamic resources and participate in learning tailored to the student's individual needs. FCPS' initiative to provide one-to-one technology makes AT more convenient and less conspicuous for 2e students who require it to access learning since all students are using technology at various times to learn.

Most schools also allow students to bring personal technology devices into the school setting. These personal devices can provide additional support for any student. For example, the Google Apps for Education suite offers tools that can be used to support deficits in reading (e.g., speech to text), writing (e.g., outlining), and organization (e.g., graphic organizers).

FCPS provides an array of technology resources to ensure students experience a digitally rich learning environment that meets their instructional needs. What designates technology as "assistive" is that a student requires it in order to access the curriculum. For example, all students have access to FCPS eBooks, but for students with decoding or comprehension difficulties, using eBooks is considered assistive technology.

Student Voice in Assistive Technology

Because of the shifting nature of needs for AT, it is important for the student, especially at the secondary level, to be involved in the process of reflecting on the use of different tools and updating the plan for which ones will best support them. Students are much more dedicated to using the tools that they have chosen and view as helpful.

Technology abandonment becomes less of an issue when a student's preferences are considered during the AT assessment process.

504 Plans

Some 2e students may qualify with a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. <<https://tinyurl.com/sec-504>> Section 504 is designed to eliminate discrimination based on disability in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. This act requires that no qualified student who demonstrates a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (e.g., self-care, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, learning, eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, operation of a major bodily function, and communicating) shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subject to discrimination in any program or activity offered FCPS. An impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it substantially limits a major life activity when active.

What is a 504 Plan?

A knowledgeable committee composed minimally of the principal or designee and a teacher of the student develops the 504 Plan for qualified students. The 504 Plan reflects the unique needs of the student and is related directly to the impairment. Only the accommodations, modifications, and/or services necessary for the student to have an equal opportunity to access programs and activities should be included. A knowledgeable committee must meet at least once a year to review the 504 Plan and update as appropriate. The committee determines if the student continues to qualify as a student with a disability under Section 504.

A complete description of the Section 504 identification, evaluation, and reevaluation process can be found on the Section 504 Information page on the FCPS website. Additionally, a presentation offered through the Family Resource Center <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/31225>>, 504 Plans: What Parents Need to Know, can be viewed on the PRC YouTube Channel.

Special Education Services

Some 2e students may qualify to receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Special Education Parent Handbook <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/39533>> is an additional resource that is available for parents.

What is IDEA?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) < <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>> makes available a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to eligible children with disabilities and ensures special education and/or related services designed to meet the child's unique needs. Public school students found eligible to receive services under IDEA will receive appropriate services in accordance with an individualized education program (IEP). IEPs are unique, individualized documents that address the specific educational needs of the child. The IEP creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related services personnel, and students (when appropriate) to work together to improve educational results for children with disabilities.

The following disabilities may qualify a student to receive services under IDEA: autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disability, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment (including ADHD), specific learning disability (including dyslexia), speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment.

Procedures for Identification of Students with a Disability

The process for consideration of special education eligibility begins with a referral to the local screening committee (LSC) initiated by an educator, parent, or guardian. This referral may be based on any number of academic, social-emotional, adaptive functioning, and/or behavioral concerns from parents or school staff.

At this meeting of the LSC, information and data about the student's progress in academic areas are shared and reviewed. A decision is made whether formal testing is necessary to address concerns relating to a possible disability. The assessment battery that is considered by the committee may include a psychological, educational, or sociocultural evaluation, as well as other related evaluation components. No evaluations are conducted unless there is written parental consent.

Upon completion of evaluations, the LSC and the parent(s) will reconvene to review all results and complete the process for determining whether the student qualifies as a student with a disability. The eligibility committee will use the FCPS Basis for Committee Decision (BCD) forms to discuss and review the criteria for any areas of eligibility for which the student may be suspected to qualify. Each disability has specific identification criteria, including the need for specialized instruction to address the educational impact of the identified disability.

To qualify for special education services, students must require, as a result of the disability, specially designed instruction that cannot reasonably be provided solely through general education.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 defines specially designed instruction as “adapting, as appropriate, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the student that result from the disability and to ensure student access to the general curriculum.” Specially designed instruction is more than short-term participation in specialized programs. A student may have a disability that requires accommodations and interventions but does not require specially designed instruction. In this case, the student would not qualify for an IEP.

Parents who disagree with an eligibility determination have the right to appeal a decision made by the eligibility committee. The [Due Process & Eligibility](https://www.fcps.edu/node/32530) office can assist parents and staff when conflict arises regarding eligibility decisions.

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

For students found eligible for special education services, an individualized education program (IEP) must be developed to address the special education and related services the student will receive during the year. Services in special education will be addressed through an IEP for students with disabilities who qualify. Services will differ from student to student depending on the identified areas of needs and severity of the disability. To address the identified needs, the IEP team will propose targeted goals and specially designed instruction.

The IEP team, which includes a school administrator or designee, the parents or guardians, the student’s general education teacher, a special education teacher, and related service providers as needed, reconvenes at least annually to report on progress and set new goals, propose service hours and delivery options, and discuss accommodations. Other educational professionals may include the Advanced Academic Resource Teacher (AART), to provide the IEP team information related to the student’s participation in Advanced Academic Programs, or a representative from English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) to speak to the impact of the student’s English language development and its impact on his/her learning. As appropriate, the student can be included as a member of his/her own IEP team.

Teams crafting IEP goals for 2e learners focus on developing specifically needed skills rather than rule compliance (Delahooke, 2017); for example, framing personal goals such as improving self-regulation, self-understanding, and self-advocacy rather than simply measuring how well the students adhere to age-normed expectations. Students with strong academic skills may have weak executive functioning skills, poor social skills, self-regulation difficulties, and other uneven skills that may need to be taught for the students to make meaningful academic progress.

Disability-Specific Information

Twice exceptional (2e) learners have high academic abilities and a disability that results in a discrepancy between potential and performance. Below are descriptions of four categories of disabilities, including examples of how each disability may interfere with learning and accommodations, specialized instruction, modifications, and/or services students may need.

Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

Specific learning disability (SLD) means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken, or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of intellectual disabilities, of emotional disabilities, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

Dyslexia, for example, is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin and distinguished from other learning disabilities due to the weakness occurring at the phonological level. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

First Step Act of 2018 (public law no. 115-391) provides an updated definition of dyslexia that reads "the term 'dyslexia' means an unexpected difficulty in reading for an individual who has the intelligence to be a much better reader, most commonly caused by a difficulty in the phonological processing (the appreciation of the individual sounds of spoken language), which effects the ability of an individual to speak, read, and spell."

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Autism means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. Autism does not apply if the child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance, as defined in IDEA. A

student who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three could be identified as having autism if the criteria in this definition are satisfied.

Emotional Disabilities (ED)

An emotional disability (ED) means a condition in which an individual exhibits one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects educational performance:

- an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;
- an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;
- inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;
- a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or
- a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

The term includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disability.

Other Health Impairment (OHI)

Other health impairment (OHI) means having limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that 1) is due to chronic or acute health problems such as a heart condition; tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis; arthritis; asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia; epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes and Tourette syndrome; and 2) adversely affects a child's educational performance. The characteristics and examples provided below are not exhaustive. Twice-exceptional students who are identified as having OHI will not display all of the characteristics listed.

Individualize Instructional Considerations Based on Student Profiles

Each twice-exceptional (2e) person has a unique profile of strengths and talents and will require individualized, ongoing instructional consideration to support their continued success in advanced coursework. The chart below lists examples of possible strengths, struggles and instructional considerations for students with advanced academic needs and also have a documented disability.

Possible Strengths	Possible Struggles	Instructional Considerations
High verbal ability	Written expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offer opportunities for oral expression ● Provide graphic organizers and assistive technology supports ● Grade written work on content, not language conventions
High comprehension	Decoding text and/or reading fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide audio support for written text at cognitive level ● Target phonological skills instructionally
Strong problem-solving skills	Mathematical calculations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide assistive technology ● Access to manipulatives and graphic organizers
Attention to detail, excellent rote memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grasping the big picture ● Flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Break big concepts into smaller parts ● Task analysis to systematically connect detail to the whole picture ● Make explicit connections between factual knowledge and complex concepts to build conceptual understanding ● Build on areas of strength regarding rote memory ● Incorporate visual supports and interventions to develop comprehension skills and fluency

Possible Strengths	Possible Struggles	Instructional Considerations
Highly skilled in one area	Asynchronous development: strength in one area with weakness in another; may be academically advanced and emotionally immature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help build strengths and assess areas of needs for more targeted interventions and supports ● Highlight strengths for high-level programming ● Teach social skills and self-regulation strategies
In-depth knowledge in areas of interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Motivation to learn and retain areas not of interest; ● Appropriately participating during group tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expose students to activities, studies, and careers that connect to their strengths and passions ● Visual scheduling to support transitions from preferred to non-preferred activity ● Positive acknowledgement for engaging with non-preferred areas of interest; highly structured protocols for group activities
Intense emotional responses	Behavioral manifestations of mental health diagnoses (e.g., anxiety, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a plan based on student-specific triggers, including nonverbal cues, de-escalation strategies, and alternative spaces ● Provide student time to de-escalate prior to engaging student ● Explicitly teach skills for self-regulation across environments

Possible Strengths	Possible Struggles	Instructional Considerations
Awareness of surroundings; strong observational skills	Hypersensitive to environmental changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a plan based on student-specific triggers, including nonverbal cues, de-escalation strategies, and alternative spaces
May be receptive and engaged with teachers and peers	Difficulty regulating emotional and behavioral responses when triggered or overstimulated which can result in behavioral escalations and/or emotional responses that do not appear to match the context of situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help students set their own behavioral goal before class and self-reflect during or towards the end to build fluency across environments ● Proactively teach self-regulation skills (e.g., breath techniques, taking a break) ● Provide positive feedback for specific desired prosocial behaviors (e.g., token economy)
Interested in multiple ideas or subjects	Maintaining attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access to cognitively challenging learning tasks, courses, resources, and programs in areas of interest ● Allow for flexibility in pacing ● Provide choice and opportunities for movement
Keen observational skills	Attention to detail in productive work (e.g., following multi-step directions, initiating task, or persisting through obstacles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide multi-modal supports (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) ● Teach task analysis and goal-setting skills

Possible Strengths	Possible Struggles	Instructional Considerations
Sustained attention when interested	Transitioning from one task to the next due to hyper-focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a plan to support transitions ● Provide multi-modal supports (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) ● Teach task analysis and goal-setting skills ● Provide positive feedback for specific desired prosocial behavior
Strong critical and creative thinking abilities	Behavioral issues due to disengagement with unstimulating environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offer choice and alternative ways to demonstrate thinking ● Provide opportunities for movement and academic conversations with intellectual peers

Interventions and Specialized Supports

In collaboration with the Instructional Services Department, the PreK-12 Office of Special Education Instruction provides support to 2e students through:

- Training and support for schools implementing a tiered system of support for students
- Professional development in the areas of behavioral interventions, core instruction (literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies), collaborative teaching, differentiated instruction, use of formal and informal assessments, and research-based instructional strategies for teaching content
- Research-based materials to match curriculum and instructional needs
- Consultations with school staff to provide school-based professional development in areas related to instruction and behavior intervention
- Curriculum development in areas of support for students with disabilities

The PreK-12 curriculum for FCPS is guided by the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) and the FCPS Program of Studies (POS) which include objectives that have been identified for each grade level and curriculum area. This curriculum is a tool for planning, monitoring, and evaluating students' work and progress on a continuous basis.

Specialized instructional programs for reading, writing, mathematics, and executive functioning are evidence-based, providing students with targeted, systematic, and explicit instruction on a consistent basis as determined by the IEP team. These programs are used to supplement the general education instructional program and provide students with differentiated approaches to access the curriculum.

Special education services for 2e students are designed for those who participate in the general education curriculum with accommodations, specialized instruction, modifications, and/or services as indicated in their IEP. These students are generally found eligible for special education services under the disability categories of autism (AUT), emotional disabilities (ED), specific learning disabilities (SLD), and other health impairment (OHI). Students may or may not experience other disabilities that have a secondary impact on their educational progress.

Continuum of Interventions for 2e Students

The interventions that serve the needs of 2e students as a part of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) occur on a continuum. Interventions to support the academic, behavior or social-emotional needs of students, whether in elementary or secondary schools, may be delivered in a variety of settings (e.g., in the classroom, small group, an intervention period). The strengths and instructional needs of each student are regularly considered in order to ensure the intervention provides the right combination of instructional components and intensity of implementation.

- **Tier 1: Needs-based instruction in classroom**
- **Tier 2: Targeted explicit instruction or specialized programs**
- **Tier 3: Intensive/comprehensive specialized programs**

Specialized Programs

FCPS offers several evidence-based, specialized programs for students who require targeted or intensive intervention with reading, math, executive functioning, and social-emotional needs. School staff have access to scheduled training opportunities for these specialized programs throughout the year.

Instructional Matching

One size does not fit all with specialized programs for 2e students. A match must be made between the students' areas of need and the program that is developed to target

that area. It is important that families and educators discuss the identified needs and build consensus on the services to address them.

Fidelity

If a school team decides to use a specialized program to provide intervention for a student, the program should be used with fidelity for maximum efficacy. Fidelity means the program is implemented in the way the research indicated the program will be most effective according to the publisher.

IEP teams determine the number of services a particular student will require to have the program implemented with fidelity. There are three important elements of fidelity: frequency, duration, and pacing. Frequency is how often the program is offered. Duration means how many minutes each lesson takes. Pacing is the recommended schedule for introduction of each lesson and/or unit of study. Appropriate pacing will enable students to make expected progress over the course of program implementation.

Progress Monitoring

Monitoring students' progress by measuring the targeted skills at regular intervals is important in ensuring that the specialized program continues to be the appropriate instructional match. It is best practice to notify parents/guardians of progress at regular intervals, and of any proposed changes to intervention programming.

Key Components for Successful Interventions

- Student needs are specifically identified; interventions are matched to the underlying skill deficits and are delivered by a trained professional.
- Instruction is well planned, sequenced, and implemented with fidelity.
- Students improve by building necessary skills/strategies.
- Progress is monitored on the specific skill/strategy and discussed on a consistent basis.
- Communication occurs between the interventionist and all other stakeholders, including families.
- Students continue to receive high quality core instruction.

Collaborative Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights

Collaboration and continual communication among 2e students, their families, and school staff are essential for meeting the diverse programming needs of twice-exceptional students. Below are some examples of roles, responsibilities, and rights

of a variety of stakeholders who play a part in the education and social-emotional wellness of twice-exceptional students in FCPS.

Stakeholder	Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognize and accept their strengths and learning challenges and gain understanding of how they learn best ● Over time, develop the skills and maturity needed to become partners in making decisions for their IEPs and overall learning. ● Participate in the IEP transition planning by attending meetings before the age of 14. ● At age 14 or in 8th grade, students must be invited to attend their IEP meeting to participate in transition planning. ● Participate in 504 Plan meetings to ensure that the Plan reflects the unique need of the student.
Parents/Guardians/ Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborate with student and school staff to share background, observations, and other relevant information to identify needs, foster student success, and monitor progress. ● Help students understand their strengths and needs and how to communicate effectively with school staff. ● Help the child develop self-advocacy skills to support their autonomy and self-confidence and learn to be a partner in their own learning. ● Support communication between school staff and other professionals (e.g., doctors and therapists) who work with the student. ● Celebrate growth and success, while acknowledging and supporting identified areas of need, to include mental wellness. ● Help the child develop skills and build resilience through positive peer and adult relationships, participation in extracurricular activities, connections to supportive adults, and engagement in their community

Stakeholder	Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents/Guardians have the right to be notified when a child is being considered for a 504 Plan/IEP and to see all the records used to make decisions. ● Parents/Guardians have a right to dispute the IEP/504 process. ● Stay involved to make sure that the 504 Plan/IEP meets the student's needs.
Director of Student Services	<p>Provide leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implementation of the school counseling program at the school. ● Integration of school counseling programs with the total educational curriculum of the school, district and/or state. ● Hiring of qualified, diverse school counselors in individual and group supervision to school counselors in practice. ● Responsible for working on the master schedule to ensure the best placement and schedule to meet unique needs of students ● Organizes and presents at curriculum night. <p>Advocate for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2e students' needs, based on school and district data ● elimination of barriers to access to a rigorous education for all students. ● equity in policies and procedures that have an impact on 2e students ● policies supporting the implementation of school counseling programs for 2e students ● school counselors to participate in school leadership teams. ● programs and services that foster 2e students success and achievement <p>Collaborate with:</p>

Stakeholder	Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● school counselors to assess the professional development needs of school counselors in the school. ● other administrators, special education school team leaders, other mental health team members. ● school and community officials regarding crisis response efforts
Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a school climate that fosters respect for individuals and ideas, innovation, and openness to different learning styles and teaching strategies. ● Use creative problem solving and flexibility to ensure least restrictive environment for meeting students' advanced and special education needs simultaneously. ● Consider the unique learning needs of all students and offer continued support and learning opportunities to teachers. ● Provide organizational structures to support teachers in implementing strategies, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), curriculum differentiation, accommodations, and if needed, IEP. ● Ensure that teachers are engaging in research and evidence-based practices to meet the needs of all students. ● The principal or designee ensures that IEP/504 Plans are reviewed annually. ● Align resources to build flexibility and facilitate collaboration across advanced academic, special education, English language, support personnel and families. ● Provide a continuum of services through collaboration and communication. ● Collaborate with the district twice-exceptional specialist and other specialists and school-based instructional leaders to provide professional development to all staff to build a

Stakeholder	Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights
	<p>common understanding of the characteristics and needs of students who are twice-exceptional.</p>
<p>Special education department chairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Serve as the instructional leader of the special education department. ● Coordinate special education services for the school. ● Lead special education staff on determining the right accommodations and strategies needed to meet the special education instructional needs of twice-exceptional students. ● Lead or assist with professional development (PD) needs of school staff focusing on district initiatives, philosophy, and goals. ● Lead regular weekly/monthly meetings with all special education teachers. ● Act as a point person to coordinate services and transition with feeder schools. ● Assist teachers in the department in performing their instructional and related duties. ● Oversee the eligibility and IEP process and adherence to the team decision and plans based on eligibility guidelines and in accordance with State and Federal requirements. ● Responsible for seeing that all timelines are met, and all required paperwork is completed. ● Recognize that twice-exceptional students' learning as with other students is a strength-based lens and not a deficit model. ● Work cooperatively with the Director of Student Services (DSS) in developing schedules for students with disabilities including twice-exceptional education students. ● Meet regularly with instructional assistants to facilitate their success regarding assigned students and classroom duties.

Stakeholder	Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide leadership in articulation with other departments in the school on how to best meet the special education instructional needs of twice-exceptional students. ● Ensure that teachers are trained in the use of researched based instructional aids that have been proven to be beneficial to meeting the needs of twice-exceptional students. ● Assist site assessment coordinator in ensuring that testing accommodation needs are used for each end of course state standards of learning (SOL) assessments as specified in students' IEPs and 504 Plans. ● Strengthen home/school connection for parents about the implications of their students being 2e; providing resources or strategies.
General education staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborate with special education staff to differentiate and provide necessary accommodations to meet the needs of 2e students. ● Nurture advanced learning needs by providing necessary accommodations while still ensuring the appropriate level of acceleration and enrichment by differentiating content, process, and product expectations. ● Expose students to advanced materials and concepts that require students to make connections and extensions to previous knowledge. ● Use a range of research and evidence-based practices from the fields of gifted and special education to address the diverse learning styles of students. ● Focus on building students' confidence and developing their talent while attending to their disability.
Special educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure access to challenging and rigorous curriculum.

Stakeholder	Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help school staff to develop an understanding of how to best use the students' areas of strengths to best meet their individual instructional needs and their areas of deficits. ● Involvement at the annual review-and annual meeting held by the IEP committee to discuss the progress of each child with and to plan the next year's IEP. ● Monitor implementation of IEP accommodations, modifications, and services. ● May provide explicit instruction in the areas of need, model and teach executive functioning skills, and assist the student in the development of the skills.
<p>School-based Mental Health Team Members (SBMH)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help students develop an understanding of their strengths and needs. ● Facilitate communication and collaboration between and among SBMH team members, parents, and teachers. ● Provide needed school-based mental health supports and share information on community resources. ● Support the student, teachers, and their families in identifying specific compensation strategies that can lead to success in their academic and personal lives. ● Organize individual and small group counseling and social skills intervention groups to focus on strengths with the goal of reducing anxiety and depression.

Stakeholder	Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights
Special education case manager or 504 coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand the characteristics of the student’s advanced learning needs. ● Monitor students’ overall progress. ● Contact parents regularly about students’ progress. ● Work with the special education department chair to ensure adherence with all special education related tasks and timelines. ● Develops IEPs or 504 Plans. ● Consult with classroom teachers. ● Help solve problems related to students’ programming needs and refer unresolved issues to other team members or appropriate individuals. ● Collaborate with the AART to ensure that the dual programming needs are met. ● Involve students in secondary school (6-12) in identifying appropriate accommodations that work for them and that they consistently use (IEP or 504). ● Increase focus on executive functioning and social skills development = (social skills groups ES/MS- involve school counselors).
Advanced Academic Resource Teachers (AART) at elementary and middle school levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand the characteristics of the student’s disability. ● Determine if the student’s strength is being maximized. <p>Works with the school team to ensure that 2e students are in a challenging learning environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offer professional PDs for other teachers on how to incorporate higher level thinking skills in the curriculum. ● Help in identifying of new students. ● Train staff on the identification process.

Stakeholder	Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Serve as a resource for information on strategies for meeting the needs of advanced learners. ● Collaborate with the special education team to ensure that the student’s dual programming needs are met. ● Collaborate with the special education team in the development of IEP goals and to ensure that appropriate supports and/or IEP/504 accommodations are in place. ● Consider 2e students for designation as a Young Scholar* <p>*The Young Scholars Model is designed to identify and nurture students with high academic potential who may face additional barriers to access and success in Advanced Academic Programs (AAP) and courses. This may include students who are the first in their family to attend college in the U.S., multilingual learners, students who are economically disadvantaged, and students who are twice exceptional.</p> <p>Ask the IEP or 504 team members to consider the following questions <i>prior to designating a student a Young Scholar</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What accommodations are appropriate to support the IEP needs or 504 Plans of the child? How are these accommodations being applied in the <i>advanced academic</i> settings? ● Are the identified accommodations appropriate for addressing both the social and emotional needs of the student? ● Do the accommodations address the explicit teaching of executive functioning skills necessary for the student to access and be successful in the advanced academic setting? <p>Once the appropriate accommodations are in place, and the committee can speak to all of the above questions, ask the team to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Does the child face additional barriers to access and success (<i>e.g., identity/belonging, disproportionate exposure to</i>

Stakeholder	Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights
	<p><i>advanced academic opportunities, social barriers, stereotype threat</i>) in advanced academics?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If so, then this child can be designated a Young Scholar to mitigate these barriers in advanced academics.
School-based AP Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Serve as the liaison with the College Board to ensure that 2e students can take the assessments with the accommodations they need.
School-based IB Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Serve as the liaison with the International Baccalaureate to ensure that 2e students can take the assessments with the accommodations they need.
Related Service Providers (e.g. Speech Language Pathologists, OT, PT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide related services ● Administer evaluations ● Evaluate progress ● Develop IEP goals ● Support classroom teachers ● Collaborate with student, families, AART, and special education case manager, classroom teacher
Special Education Instructional Assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support classroom instruction. ● Support special education instruction. ● Under the classroom teacher supervision, provide additional support and instruction when needed ● Under classroom teacher supervision, provide accommodations for students ● Assist with remedial teaching ● Work with small group of students to enhance the learning process

Stakeholder	Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assist teachers in any way necessary to ensure a well-run classroom environment
Behavior Interventions Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Problem solve behavior concerns with school teams ● Attend student staffing to support proactively ● Coach school staff in data collection and analysis ● Conducts student/classroom observations ● Coach and models Collaborative Proactive Solutions ● Facilitate the FBA/BIP team process ● Coach and model evidenced based strategies in the classroom ● Provide district, region, and school based professional development training
School-Based Technology Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide teachers with the support they need to integrate technology to enhance learning ● Create professional learning plan that is aligned to the district's instructional goals and supports students learning ● Act as the liaison between the school staff and division-wide technology resources/offices ● Support teachers in managing classroom digital resources and student accounts ● Coach teachers around the integration of instructional technology to support twice exceptional students in performing tasks that would otherwise be difficult or impossible given the nature of the disabilities ● Collaborate with teachers to plan lessons using the UDL framework to enhance learning for all students ● Support administrators and teachers in using digital resources to engage and communicate with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students

Stakeholder	Roles, Responsibilities, and Rights
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Parents○ Community

Part II References

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Part III: Students and Families



TWICE-EXCEPTIONAL (2e) HANDBOOK



Guidance for families and schools to support the identification, instruction, and social-emotional wellness of 2e learners.

Part III: Topics

- Social-Emotional Impacts of 2e
- Self-Advocacy and Student Voice
- Family and Schools as Partners

Social-Emotional Impacts of 2e

Several decades of writing and research on emotional characteristics of gifted learners has pointed to the unique social-emotional challenges facing gifted learners with disabilities (Beckman, E. and Minnaert, A., 2018). Despite their considerable strengths, 2e students are prone to low self-esteem, perfectionism, performance anxiety, social isolation, and underachievement (Assouline, S.G. et al, 2010; Webb et al, 2010). Some 2e students have a disability that is primarily emotional, such as an anxiety disorder or depression (Probst, 2011). Severe anxiety and depression, when not addressed, can lead to chronic absenteeism, school phobia, school refusal, and dropping out (US Dept. of Ed, 2013-14).

Due to their capacity for high level cognition, 2e students may have heightened awareness about the impact of their disabilities. They may worry excessively about disappointing teachers and parents due to their inconsistent performance, may doubt their own abilities, and may disengage from school if they are not performing to their potential (Weinfeld et al, 2011).

Supporting Students' Social-Emotional Needs

It is important for families and educators of 2e students to recognize and support students' feelings, thoughts, and ideas by discussing how they are impacted by dual exceptionalities. Trusted adults can help 2e students identify achievable goals, celebrate successes, and recognize and celebrate effort and progress.

When working with 2e students, it is essential to help them come to understand that all students have a variety of abilities and challenges across educational and non-academic areas. Being understood and supported by educators and families can help these students understand they need not be limited by their challenges. Schools and families can work together to support the development of resiliency, which is defined as the capacity to withstand or recover quickly from difficult circumstances. When 2e students learn to be resilient, they can face their challenges and find ways to overcome or manage them.

The school environment includes potential stressors such as transitions, crowded hallways, changes in schedule, fire drills, assemblies, group work, and/or social interactions. Twice- exceptional students may struggle in the school environment due

to sensory overload, hypersensitivity, and managing emotions. Communication between families and school staff is important when working to mitigate stress factors in the school environment.

Social Challenges

Navigating friendships and social situations can be difficult for 2e students. Students with disabilities, including 2e students, are bullied at a higher rate than non-disabled students (Horowitz, et al 2016). Twice-exceptional students may feel like they do not fit in with typical peers, peers with advanced learning needs, or peers with disabilities. They may gravitate toward older or younger students and adults, have difficulty making friends, or be targets for bullying. Consequently, some 2e students, especially those with autism, social anxiety, or difficulty reading social cues, may require direct and explicit instruction in social skills and/or additional supports to access some classwork and inclusion in clubs and extracurricular activities (Weinfeld, et al 2011).

Parents and schools should be attentive to changes in the 2e student's emotional state and address them as appropriate. School counselors, psychologists, and social workers can provide parents with referrals to outside agencies when necessary. Parents may also wish to consult with their insurance providers and community agencies to find needed resources.

Self-Advocacy and Student Voice

Twice exceptional (2e) students are empowered when the adults in their lives involve them in exploring what having exceptional ability and a disability means to them, advocating for the supports that help the most, and celebrating effort, progress, and strengths.

Self-advocacy provides students with the skills needed to speak up for their needs. When 2e students identify and communicate their needs in the learning environment, they are more involved in shaping their own educational experiences, ultimately leading to greater confidence, self-awareness, and success. Studies have shown that students who are given the chance to participate in decisions being made about their lives are more likely to earn higher incomes one year after graduation (Wehmeyer, 2004). Promoting students' self-determination has been identified as a best practice in special education. Research on students with disabilities demonstrates that self-determination promotes goal attainment and access to the general education curriculum (Shogren, Palmer, Wehmeyer, Williams-Diehm, & Little, 2012). Self-advocacy, like other skills, is learned and takes time to develop.

Students must come to understand their own experience with their unique learner profile, so they can seek out the support to maximize their strengths and minimize their

limitations. This self-advocacy, taught as early as possible, will be essential for success in college, career, and relationships in adulthood.

Student Voice

Student voice is present when adults value students' expertise, opinions, and ideas, and solicit their contributions to shape and create school and classroom experiences. When students believe their voices matter, they are more likely to be invested and engaged (Quaglia & Corso, 2014). Encourage students to describe, in their own words, how their dual exceptionalities affect them in all areas of their lives, including how they learn best, and what strategies can be used to support them. This awareness will empower them to be self-advocates and partners in their learning.

Developing Self-Advocacy and Promoting Student Voice

Creating emotionally safe environments is vital to promoting learning (Quaglia & Corso, 2014). Students who feel safe are more likely to pose questions and advocate for their learning needs. Examples of ways families and educators can support the development of self-advocacy and the empowerment of student voice are listed below.

Engage in Active Listening

- Dialogue with students about how they learn best. Implement some of their ideas at home or in the classroom to honor their input.
- Support students in learning to articulate how their unique learning profile affects them in all areas of their lives.
- Learn about students' aspirations for the future in order to support the development of self-worth, engagement, and purpose (Quaglia & Corso, 2014).

Facilitate Collaboration

- Encourage students to find their voice. Ask them to describe what being 2e means to them, and to identify their strengths and areas for growth.
- Facilitate opportunities for students to explore and share what strategies help most.
- Familiarize students with the goals and accommodations on their IEPs or 504 Plans.
- Encourage students to contribute to or participate in their IEP or 504 meetings, as appropriate.

- Practice dialogue and the use of “I” statements through role-play to make finding words easier; this also provides opportunities for feedback (Jones, 2014).

Foster a Growth Mindset and Risk-Taking

- Promote a growth mindset, the belief that students can continue to learn and overcome challenges through hard work and perseverance (Dweck, 2016).
- Teach students to evaluate their own efforts and set ambitious yet achievable goals.
- Help students reflect on the learning strategies they use and explore alternative ones when they struggle.
- Encourage students to take calculated risks by communicating that mistakes are an essential part of learning.
- Teach students to ask for help. There is value in recognizing when we need support (Jones, 2014).

Family and Schools as Partners

Effective school partnerships recognize expertise of both parents and school staff as they partner together to create a holistic plan for the student which addresses all of the student’s needs and considers their experience at school, home, and in other settings.

Collaborative Partnerships

It takes the expertise of numerous individuals to determine what works best for each child. The goal is for schools and families to work together toward self-understanding for the student to help them self-advocate and experience success in school and in life.

Many structures are available in the school setting that allow 2e students to negotiate the social- emotional and academic demands of their day. Outside of school these structures may be different. Parents bring information from home and other social settings, including the impact of school requirements on the student outside of school. Schools bring information from the school setting. An effective home-school partnership can support 2e students’ access to and success in advanced academic programs and courses.

The FCPS Family Resource Center offers a welcoming environment for parents, educators, and community members to access information and resources to support the success of all students, including those with learning challenges. Free workshops, tutoring information, confidential consultations, and a lending library including a variety of

books about twice-exceptionality are available to help ensure that all students are inspired, engaged, and thriving.

Communicating with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Families

Culturally and linguistically diverse families may bring expectations and experiences that differ from those who have only experienced the American school system. Effective partnerships demonstrate respect for different points of view and a mindfulness around explaining the FCPS educational system, expectations, opportunities, and procedures. Conceptualization of giftedness and special education differ between educational systems and cultures. Additionally, many educational terms do not translate directly and may require additional explanation.

Parent liaison support is available through the schools and is targeted to the needs of individual school communities. Parent liaisons focus on facilitating home-school-community communication, encouraging parent involvement in children's education, and connecting parents to what their children are learning. Additionally, parent liaisons help to build relationships with and among parents, staff members, and community members. They provide FCPS information and resources, promote understanding of families' cultural diversity, provide information about and connect parents to human services, and make parents feel welcome, trusted, and valued by the school.

FCPS [Parent Information Phone Lines](https://www.fcps.edu/node/28411) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/28411>> are available in eight different languages to assist parents who do not speak English as their first language. A school system employee will respond to calls in the preferred language within 24 hours, Monday through Friday. The caller will provide requested information and arrange for individuals to speak with the appropriate school employee who will provide access to resources.

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PART IV: **ADDITIONAL 2E RESOURCES**



TWICE-EXCEPTIONAL (2e) HANDBOOK



Guidance for families and schools to support the identification, instruction, and social-emotional wellness of 2e learners.

Part IV: Topics

- FCPS Points of Contact
- FCPS Printable Resources
- FCPS Web Resources
- Books
- 2e Communities

FCPS Points of Contact

School-Based Points of Contact

Parents who have questions or concerns should begin by contacting the child's school, beginning with the classroom teacher(s), followed by other school-based staff, as needed. Contact information for each school can be found on the FCPS website by searching Schools and Centers <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/31008>>. Below are school-based staff who can support parents with questions or concerns:

- Classroom teachers
- Advanced Academic Resource Teacher (elementary schools)
- Special Education Case Manager or 504 Plan Case Manager
- School Administrators
- School Counselor
- School Psychologist
- School Social Worker

FCPS Central Offices

Parents and school staff may contact FCPS central offices for assistance. Staff will work collaboratively with schools, parents, and other central office departments to answer questions and address concerns.

Office of Advanced Academic Programs

Webpage: <https://www.fcps.edu/node/33070>

Phone: (571) 423-4740

Office of Special Education Instruction

Webpage: <https://www.fcps.edu/node/28804>

Phone: (571) 423-4100

Office of the Family and Student Ombuds

Webpage: <https://www.fcps.edu/ombuds>

Phone: 571-423-4014

Office of Special Education Procedural Support

Webpage: <https://www.fcps.edu/node/32894>

Phone: 571-423-4290

Procedural Support Liaisons (by pyramid)

Webpage: <https://www.fcps.edu/node/31223>

Phone: 571-423-4290

Regional Office inquiries

Webpage: <https://www.fcps.edu/contact-us>

FCPS Printable Resources

- [Characteristics of 2e Learners](https://www.fcps.edu/node/37839) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/37839>>
- [Common Misconceptions about 2e Learners](https://www.fcps.edu/node/38286) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/38286>>
- [School to Home Communication Tips](https://www.fcps.edu/node/37840) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/37840>>
- [School-Based Intervention Programs for Behavior and Wellness](https://www.fcps.edu/node/37842) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/37842>>
- [Strategies to Support Homework and Classwork](https://www.fcps.edu/node/37846) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/37846>>
- [Supporting 2e Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder \(ASD\)](https://www.fcps.edu/node/37841) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/37841>>
- [Supporting Social-Emotional Needs of 2e Learners](https://www.fcps.edu/node/37843) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/37843>>

FCPS Web Resources

- [Advanced Academic Programs](https://www.fcps.edu/node/33070) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/33070>>
- [Dyslexia Handbook](https://www.fcps.edu/node/33285) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/33285>>
- [Family Resource Center](https://www.fcps.edu/node/34437) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/34437>>
- [Special Education Instruction](https://www.fcps.edu/node/28038) <<https://www.fcps.edu/node/28038>>

Books

- *Interventions that Work with Special Populations in Gifted Education* by Ariel Baska & Joyce VanTassel-Baska
- *School Success for Kids with High-functioning Autism* by Stephan Silverman
- *Smart Kids with Learning Difficulties* by Rich Weinfeld
- *Twice Exceptional: Supporting and Educating Bright and Creative Student with Learning Difficulties* by Scott Barry Kaufman

Resources

- [8 Steps to Help Your Child Learn Problem Solving Skills](https://tinyurl.com/8-steps-wendt) <https://tinyurl.com/8-steps-wendt>
- [Identifying Gifted and Talented English Language Learners \(PDF\)](https://tinyurl.com/ell-pdf) <https://tinyurl.com/ell-pdf>
- [Supporting the Identification and Achievement of The Twice-Exceptional Student \(PDF\)](https://tinyurl.com/vdoe-pdf) <https://tinyurl.com/vdoe-pdf>
- [Problem Solving: How to Teach Young Children](https://tinyurl.com/problem-solving-2023) <https://tinyurl.com/problem-solving-2023>
- [Promoting Problem Solving](https://tinyurl.com/problem-solving-vkrp) <https://tinyurl.com/problem-solving-vkrp>

2e Communities

- [2e News](https://www.2enews.com/) <https://www.2enews.com/>
- [Davidson Institute for Talent Development](https://www.davidsongifted.org/) <https://www.davidsongifted.org/>
- [National Association for Gifted Children \(NAGC\)](https://nagc.org/) <https://nagc.org/>
- [Understood: for learning and attention issues](https://www.understood.org/) <https://www.understood.org/>