

Exceptional Student Services (ESS)

ESS is in partnership with schools and the community to provide support services to students with disabilities. Our GOAL is to help all students become functional and productive citizens.

Our ESS teaching staff:

- Deliver services to the schools, specializing in Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) for students who are identified needing services in areas of academics and/or therapeutic related services based on evaluations.
- Work collaboratively with the general education teachers to support the students in the general education classroom as mandated in federal law (Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).
- Utilize the e-IEPPRO software to ensure the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) is aligned and written in accordance with the Arizona State Standards. e- IEPPRO is a customized web-based software program that provides templates to manage the special education process.
- Guide the Post-Secondary Transition Goals and assist the students with the next educational step after graduation.

Programs at Piñon Unified School District:

- Piñon Elementary has a preschool program, a life skills classroom, and two teachers who work on inclusion in the elementary classrooms. The goal is for the students to progress in basic academics and life skills.
- Piñon Middle School has a life skills classroom and three teachers who work in the general education classrooms with the teachers and students. The goal is to prepare the students for the High School with higher achievement in academics and independent life skills for each student.
- Piñon High School has a life skills classroom and two teachers who work in the general education classroom with teachers and students. The goal is to prepare the students for higher education and entry into the work force with appropriate skills.

Program Overview and Explanation of Terms

“Inclusion” Inclusion is designed for students who benefit from supplemental special education services delivered in a general education environment using five (5) approaches:

1. One Teach, One Support – One teacher may have the primary instructional responsibility while the other provides supports based on student needs.

- a. Example: Teacher A instructs the large group while Teacher B observes, takes notes, and gathers data regarding IEP goals, on task behavior, student engagement.

2. Parallel Teaching – Both educators plan jointly and teach the same information simultaneously, but they divide the class into two groups. The teachers address the same content, but may address different learning goals and levels of understanding.

a. Example: Teacher A may provide instruction for auditory learners while Teacher B is delivering instruction to the visual/tactile learners.

3. Alternative Teaching – One teacher works with a small group instruction while the other provides large group instruction. This approach can address tiers of intervention and remediation.

a. Example: Teacher A works with a large group of students while Teacher B works with a smaller group targeting specific content for remedial or acceleration, make up work, assessments. It is important that the groups are flexible.

4. Station Teaching – The teachers divide the instructional content into two or more segments and present the content at separate stations (centers) in the room. Each teacher takes responsibility for one station and a third might be created for students to work independently.

a. Example: Teacher A and B develop, instruct, and manage the centers for small groups of students. Centers can be varied by activities created for the diverse students addressing below, on grade level and above level using tiered lessons.

5. Team Teaching – Two teachers share in the process of instructing all students, whether that occurs in large group, facilitating small groups, or monitoring students working independently.

a. Example: Teacher A and B take equal present the lesson together.

Life Skills

The Life Skills Program is available at all three schools— Piñon Elementary School, Piñon Accelerated Middle School, and Piñon High School.

The Life Skills class is made up of students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities; these students show limitations in communication, social skills, and personal care. This class has many different skill areas that are addressed such as: social interactions, domestic skills, pre-vocational and vocational skills, as well as daily living skills with personal hygiene. Students progress on an individual level based on their IEP.

IEP Transition plans

IEP Transition plans for students age 16 and older. These plans are developed and implemented through job/life coaches assigned to students under the supervision of the Special Education Teacher.

Specialized Transportation

Some students are provided curb-to-curb services based their IEP. All three of our bus drivers are CDL certified. The drivers are teamed with bus monitors to ensure safety-first concept for the well being of our students.

Professional Development/Trainings:

ESS provides monthly training topics for teaching staff in FOCUS Lesson planning, AIMS-A, Brigance IEDII & CIBSII, Primary NWEA, Medicaid Training on reimbursement forms, PD360, Positive Behavior Management, Guidesteps, State requirements with the myriad of Forms; Agenda, ESY Training, AzELLA withdrawal documentation, IEP/MET page by page training, implementing Inclusive strategies, IEP development with draft, Student Data Portfolio etc.

We are thankful to have remarkable students and parents in the Piñon community. Our ultimate goal is to continue to work jointly for the benefit of all families.