

NEEDHAM HIGH SCHOOL GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The **Personalized Learning Center (PLC)** is a regular education class at Needham High School. The goal of PLC is to improve student academic performance by building strong organizational and study skills. It is a Pass or Fail class. When students consistently meet the guidelines of the class, they earn 4 credits for a full year or 2 credits for a half-year. Students may earn a maximum of 8 credits in PLC during their high school experience. The PLC teacher is a support for students who:

- are not achieving their academic potential
- require academic support in a structured environment
- need to improve their organizational and study skills
- need to improve their self-advocacy skills
- need strategies for improving classroom participation

TRANSITIONS, a short-term program, supports the needs of students reentering high school from a lengthy absence. Entrance into **TRANSITIONS** begins with a reentry meeting in which an individual plan is designed to include communication with classroom teachers, making up work for return to classes from the student's original schedule or possibly a changed schedule if the student is unable to return to his/her original schedule.

Students enter **TRANSITIONS** through a formal referral and/or reentry meeting from the high school guidance department, school nurse and/or school administrators.

R²ISE (Return or Remain In a Structured Environment) homeroom is a co-ed group composed of students from grades 9 through 12 who are returning to school after a psychiatric hospitalization or who are struggling to attend and/or succeed in school due to a variety of psychological or psychosocial difficulties (including depression, anxiety, eating disorders, etc.) A personal counselor and academic counselor co-lead this group. Homeroom assignments are made through an assistant principal or a member of our guidance staff.

NEEDHAM HIGH SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Special education teachers serve students with special needs at Needham High School who are registered into general education Standard, Honors or Accelerated academic classes.

9-12 ACADEMIC SKILLS

is designed to work with students with mild to moderate learning or other disabilities. Students who attend this Skills Center Program require specialized instruction to help them access the general education curriculum. The goals of the Skills Center Program are to teach strategies through academic support, teach students how to learn and how to use their strengths to compensate individual area(s) of difficulty, help students develop self-awareness/advocacy, and

support students to gain independence in managing their academic responsibilities. There are group lessons to teach skills to the small or large group of students assigned to the Skills Center Program. The Skills Center Program is not a study hall, and students are not permitted to use this classroom time as a routine way to “do homework”. However, academic work assigned by classroom teachers is the focus of discussion, dialogue, and interpretation in the Skills Center Program context as it relates to student’s individual IEP goals. Assignments function as a springboard to skills work or as a pathway to becoming more confident learners.

CONNECTIONS is an alternative therapeutic program developed to meet the needs of a diverse group of learners, with or without an Individualized Education Program (IEP), whose needs cannot be met by the traditional Needham High School program. **CONNECTIONS** provides a safe, structured and nurturing environment to facilitate students’ academic and social/emotional growth. Typically, **CONNECTIONS** students are dealing with a range of mental health issues including anxiety, depression, school phobia and adjustment issues. There is a range of supports available through **CONNECTIONS** —individual and group counseling, Skills program, academic classes in English, math, and science. The **CONNECTIONS** program is available for students who:

- need an alternative classroom schedule in order to be successful
- need therapeutic support to achieve their academic potential
- need individual and group counseling
- require educational and emotional support in small group instruction
- require an adjusted school day

FOUNDATIONS CLASSES are special education classes provided in English, math, biology and social studies for students who need curricular modifications, pre-teaching and re-teaching, repetition and a spiraling in order to access curriculum. Classes provide for individualized and group instruction providing for the individual needs of students.

INSIGHT SKILLS PROGRAM

This program is for 9th through 12th grade students with social communication deficits that directly affect their ability to access the high school curriculum and transition needs. Some of these students have diagnoses of Asperger Syndrome (AS) or Nonverbal Learning Disabilities (NVLD). These students have cognitive abilities that range from average to superior alongside social pragmatic, social emotional, and executive function skills that are oftentimes far below grade level expectations. Students are enrolled in Standard, Honors or Accelerated level classes, and the general education teacher provides the academic curriculum, aligned with the state frameworks. Special education teacher and/or teacher assistants support the IEP needs of students in classes or through a consultative format. The special education teacher is the liaison for the students, and teaches the Skills classes, providing support for developing organizational strategies, re-teaching, breaking assignments down into manageable parts, clarification of directions, breaking down and simplifying language, etc. The Speech and Language Pathologist provides individual and group lessons and consults to the program. The district wide Autism Specialist consults to the program. Elective classes within General Education are offered as appropriate.

LANGUAGE BASED SKILLS PROGRAM

This program is for students who require a language-based approach to learning. Students are grouped together in one or more of the following Standard or Honors Level, English, math, social studies and science classes with certified General Education teachers, one special education teacher or teaching assistant. Class size is on average 10-18 students. The general education teacher provides the academic curriculum, aligned with the state frameworks while the special education teacher or teacher assistant weave specialized instruction techniques throughout the classes. Classes are well paced for students with attention and/or language based disabilities with structured, infused systematic language based educational strategies employed addressing both attention and organization needs. Students are typically scheduled into a Skills class and/or in related services as discussed at the student's IEP meeting and as indicated on the student's IEP.

SKILLS AND CAREER PROGRAM

is a special education program designed to facilitate the successful transition of youth between the ages of 14 and 22 to meet the demands of adulthood. The program provides a continuum of classroom and community based services designed to foster the development of functional academics, social pragmatic language, independent living skills and career development. The students have disabilities which include, but are not limited to expressive and receptive language processing disorders, intellectual impairments, autism spectrum disorders and attention difficulties that significantly impact their overall functioning.

TEACHER ASSISTANTS are an important component of our special education programs. TA's are placed in general education classes and Skills Center classes to support students in a variety of areas so that students can access the curriculum.

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND SUPPORTS

General Education:

Personalized Learning Center
Transitions
Math Tutoring
Writing Center
Peer Tutoring
MCAS Review

Special Education:

Skills Programs and Related Services
Transitions
Math Tutoring
Writing Center
Peer Tutoring
MCAS Review
Foundations classes
Connections Program
Insight Program