

Special Education for Students Ages 7 – 21



We are all born with great potential.
Shouldn't we all have the chance to achieve it?



“Our kids face more challenges than most others, but you never give up on them, even though progress may be slow and the road bumpy at times. It takes a special team of teachers and staff who work very hard every day.”

– Parent of student

Mission

At Kennedy Krieger School: Montgomery County Campus, our mission is to provide students with the opportunities and supports needed to achieve their highest potential. The unique characteristics of each student are valued and nurtured academically, socially, and behaviorally to ensure success in life.

Overview

The Montgomery County Campus is a nonpublic special education day program approved by the Maryland State Department of Education. We offer a range of educational and therapeutic services for students with a spectrum of special needs, ranging from mild to severe. Students are typically referred and funded by their local school system; however, privately placed out-of-state and international students can also be enrolled.

Our program emphasizes the development of lifelong skills through an active approach to learning, including participation in community and work-based learning opportunities. Students thrive in our intimate and structured environment. We maintain a low student-to-teacher ratio, which allows us to implement individualized education programs (IEPs) that meet the diverse needs of our students while offering the highest quality education. Our parents and families play a primary role in our team approach, which is a key component of all Kennedy Krieger School Programs and our students' success.

Who We Serve

Kennedy Krieger School: Montgomery County Campus provides education and related services to students with autism and developmental disabilities, regardless of the challenges they face or their level of impairment. Our program is certified for grades 2 – 8 for students pursuing a high school diploma. We also offer a certificate of completion program for students aged 7 to 21.





Our Approach



Kennedy Krieger School Programs are organized around professional learning communities (PLCs), based on shared decision making by those working closest with the students each day, resulting in the creation of a vibrant and energized learning environment. These communities are structured to allow students to achieve their goals in the most appropriate educational setting possible. Our community design incorporates specialized instruction, classroom structure, and behavioral interventions. Students may transition

between communities as their developmental needs change. Community assignments are based on a team review of the academic, social, and behavioral needs of each student.

We maintain a strong interdisciplinary team approach within and across communities, allowing for planning at the programmatic and individual student levels. Interdisciplinary teams have regularly scheduled meetings to monitor progress and make appropriate modifications to ensure each student's success.

Our Team

Our team includes highly trained special educators, curriculum specialists, related service providers, and paraprofessional staff who receive ongoing training in evidence-based practices, including instruction in the use of current technologies in the learning environment. Full-time related service providers are onsite daily to ensure comprehensive programming and collaboration with each student's educational team. Services provided may include:

- Art and music therapy
- Assistive technology
- Audiology
- Behavioral supports
- Counseling and mental health services
- Nursing
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Psychiatry
- Psychology
- Special education
- Speech-language pathology

Instructional Program

Our curriculum focuses on building essential skills through access to standards and curricula identified by the Maryland State Department of Education. In addition, instruction in art, music, physical education and fitness, life and social skills, career exploration and development, vocational skills, and health round out the course of study.

The eleven-month program is grounded in evidence-based methods that are supported by research and utilize the principles of Universal Design for Learning, along with accommodations, modifications, adaptations, and supplementary supports carefully chosen to meet each student's

individual needs. Classrooms are well equipped with interactive technologies, including smart boards and iPads that support instruction. Our materials are carefully selected based on their proven effectiveness and motivational appeal for our students. When appropriate, materials are customized and created by teachers to address a wide variety of learning styles.



We recognize that students with autism and other developmental disabilities may learn differently. Using the principles of applied behavior analysis (ABA) to foster independence, our team addresses sensory, communication, and behavioral needs by providing structured routines, visual supports, positive reinforcement, and technology designed to engage students with autism. In addition, our campus has a state-of-the-art multi-sensory environment designed to assist with access to instruction and regulate the sensory needs of our students.

Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning is incorporated into the school schedule through a variety of activities, beginning in the elementary grades. Instruction and training in core job skills are facilitated by our vocational teacher within the school and at off-site businesses. On-campus jobs have included working as a front office assistant, making deliveries, recycling, and participating in a student-run café. Off-campus sites have included a retirement community, a yoga studio, a farm, offices, and restaurants.



Community-Based Instruction

Our students participate in regular community-based instruction, which provides opportunities to apply academic skills outside the classroom, and develop socialization and practical problem-solving skills in a more natural environment. Students learn to shop at local stores, dine in restaurants, take public transportation, and access other community services.

Student Life

Throughout the year, students participate in various extracurricular activities designed to enhance their school experiences. Examples include musical performances, school-wide career days, community-based trips, and holiday or theme-related activities and assemblies.

Assessment of Progress

Effective, timely, and targeted assessment of student progress is critical to our instructional program. Teachers and related service staff maintain ongoing systems for evaluating the progress of each child. Through this dynamic

process of continuous assessment, we are able to make decisions about the direction and pace of instruction and the related service supports needed to facilitate progress. All students participate in mandated state- and district-wide assessments. When determined by the IEP team, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may participate in the alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards. The goal of an alternate assessment is to ensure that students achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

For many students, academic achievement may be compromised by behavioral challenges and their need for environmental support. We provide a continuum of positive behavioral supports that encourage students to maintain their focus on cooperation, completion of tasks, and appropriate social interactions. Board-certified behavior analysts oversee a highly structured school-wide behavior management system with predictable routines, rewards, and consequences. This system includes the use of a daily point sheet or log to monitor progress with individual target behaviors, as well as universal expectations for cooperative and productive behavior.

When needed, functional behavior assessment (FBA) and analysis is conducted to develop an individualized behavior intervention plan (BIP), which focuses on the development of adaptive skills that replace problem behaviors. Crisis intervention is available to students who experience behavioral difficulties and need help returning to instruction or work-based learning activities. All school staff receive extensive training annually in positive behavior management techniques to provide support for students.

Transition Planning

Students make many transitions throughout their education, from elementary to middle grades, from middle to high school, and from high school to post-secondary and post-school experiences. Transition planning begins as soon as a student enters Kennedy Krieger School: Montgomery County Campus. Transition teams, including school staff, parents, students (if appropriate), and representatives from workplace and community support agencies, approach each student's IEP with a focus on where the student is heading and the skills he or she will need to be successful.



Admission and Contact Information

Tours of the Montgomery County Campus are conducted by appointment.

For additional information, contact the Office of Admissions, Compliance, and Transition (ACT):

Kennedy Krieger School: **Montgomery County Campus**

12301 Academy Way
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Main: **443-923-4170**

Toll Free: **866-209-9420**

kennedykrieger.org/special-education