



Q. What is The Keystone Academy Philosophy?

The goal of The Keystone Academy is to provide a number of special education and related services to children with varying exceptionalities. The Keystone Academy is a day-school setting for students ages 3 to 18 with a wide range of learning, emotional, physical, neurological, and developmental disabilities. Special education services focus on the development of academic, social, emotional and behavioral skills through trans-disciplinary comprehensive instruction in an environment that assists students to recognize and capitalize on their individual strengths.

The Keystone Academy is a premier, independent, educational institution, focusing on developing an individualized academic program where children progress through a curriculum of concepts and skills at their own pace. We believe that individuals with learning differences can be taught effectively only when instructional methods and curricula are tailored to each student's unique learning needs. We utilize a variety of instructional techniques and methods, believing that no one system is ideal for every child. Study and organizational skills are embedded in the curriculum to promote self-reliance and future academic success. Students develop an internal sense of organization and motivation through choice-making, experiencing the results of hard work, and academic inquiry. The Keystone Academy focus is on how each child can learn best, rather than on having the group "cover" a specific quantity of material. Consultation between classroom teachers, assistant teachers, and other specialists is continuous, so that each child's program can be modified to meet his or her specific needs.

Q. What makes The Keystone Academy different from other private schools?

- The Keystone Academy is the only clinic-based school in Northeast Florida
- Instructors are both certified teachers and BCBA™ (Board Certified Behavior Analyst) and BCABA™ (Board Certified Associate Behavior Analyst)
- Year-Round, Full-Day Instruction
- Research-based Interventions and Curricula
- Individual Learning Plans (ILP's)
- Open-door policy for parents and outside therapists
- Extracurricular enrichment programs

Q: How much time do children spend on academics per day?

Generally, Lower School students spend two hours on language arts in the morning and an hour on math in the afternoon. The students have a 45-minute block in the afternoon that

alternates between social studies and science. Students have PE twice weekly and library, music, computer, and art once a week. The academic program varies from group to group based on the needs of the children. Many factors go into adapting the academic program for our students. For this reason, the academic schedule is not the same for every class everyday.

Q: What is the staff to student ratio?

In all programs, the student-to-teacher ratio is never more than 5:1 but is frequently lower. The class size depends on the developmental needs of the students. Each classroom has at least one lead teacher and one assistant teacher.

Q. How are classroom placements decided?

Children are placed in classrooms that will best meet their developmental and academic needs. Teaching and learning styles are taken into consideration, as well as the maturity of age of the student.

Q. What is the modified/year-round school calendar?

A modified school calendar reorganizes the school year to provide more continuous learning by dividing the long summer into smaller breaks throughout the year. Learning is continuous with a modified school calendar. The extent of learning loss that results from interruptions in learning due to school closure is reduced when learning is spread out over extended periods. Research shows that there are many benefits to a modified school calendar.

- Studies show that children do not maintain the same rate of learning over the summer as they do during the traditional school year. Low-achieving students are more seriously affected by this decline than average and high achievers.
- Studies also show that students remember more information, especially in reading and math, which means increased performance in the classroom.
- Schools who have adopted the modified school calendar report increased student attendance, fewer discipline problems, and a reduced student dropout rate for older students.
- The new calendar provides families with a more flexible way to plan family gatherings and vacations.
- Intersessions result in less stress and burnout for teachers and students. The break refreshes teachers and students and increases enthusiasm and motivation for teaching and learning.

Students attend school for the same number of days (183) as the traditional calendar but the modified school year begins in early August and ends in June. Students have the opportunity to attend up to 25 additional days of instruction during intersessions. Some students will be strongly encouraged to participate in the intersessions if they need

additional support. For those that do not require remediation, a variety of enrichment classes will be provided during intersessions (e.g. pottery, taekwando, drama, etc.).

Q. What is an intersession?

An intersession is a two-week or a one-week session where students can return to school for additional support (remediation) and enrichment opportunities. Sample course offerings for intersession will be available on the school website.

Q. What is the cost of an intersession?

The cost of intersession is \$300 per week. Additional fees may apply for specially offered classes.

Q. What if my child does not need remediation?

If your child does not need remediation, they may choose two enrichment classes to attend per day.

Q. What about summer school?

Under the modified calendar, there is no summer school. The 183 days that students are to be in school are being redistributed throughout the year. Students identified as summer school candidates are required to attend at least one intersession class in October. Many of our students attend Keystone Camp, which includes direct instruction, social skills, team sports, and arts/music. Camp is held over seven weeks of the summer from 10am-3pm.

Q. What are the school hours?

School hours are from 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Q. Is there before school and after school care?

Yes. Students are able to participate in a number of extracurricular or therapeutic activities in our after school enrichment program. Before care is offered from 7:00 - 8:30 a.m., and after care is offered until 6:00 p.m. daily.

Q. What is the admissions deadline?

The application and all supporting credentials are due March 26, 2010. If space is available after the deadline, the admissions committee will review a student's completed application on a space available basis.