



What is the First State School?

The First State School (FSS) is a specialized public school that is focused on managing children with chronic illnesses whose needs are not able to be met in a traditional school setting. FSS is a collaboration between ChristianaCare and the Red Clay Consolidated School District. The goal of the program is to support students living with a chronic illness medically, academically, and psychosocially.

What is the referral process for the FSS?

There are 2 paths for referral:

1. Letter of medical necessity from a child's Primary Care Physician/Nurse Practitioner or Specialist. A template is available for medical providers.
2. Parent, current school, or other healthcare provider can also reach out to FSS (302-320-5858) to assist with initiating step one.

What disease processes are typically seen at FSS?

- Students with any disease process will be considered at FSS.
- More common disease processes: Sickle cell disease, Hemophilia, Type 1 Diabetes, Cystic Fibrosis, Chronic Kidney disease on dialysis, organ transplants, various cancers, severe asthma.

If I provide a letter of medical necessity, does that mean my child is automatically accepted?

- No, there is an evaluation process that is required by the FSS team.
- If your child meets the medical and academic criteria, then your child will be accepted based on medical severity compared to other students on the referral list.
- The FSS program can hold a maximum of 24 students. If your child is appropriate for the program, but space is not available, they will be placed on the waiting list and accepted as soon as a spot is open.

Does my child meet the medical criteria?

- Your child would need to have a chronic illness that is unable to be managed in the traditional school setting.
- The FSS would determine if there was a need for continuous, skilled nursing services that they would be able to provide above and beyond the traditional school setting (i.e., administering Intravenous medications, administering g-tube feeds, providing respiratory support, maintaining a safe environment for immunocompromised patients, providing medication support and education for students with complex medical needs).

Does my child meet the educational criteria?

- The typical student at FSS is on track to receive a high school diploma.
- A student may have a learning disability or mild intellectual disability.



What grades does the FSS serve?

The FSS program is a K-12 program.

Where does my child have to live to be a part of the FSS program?

The FSS can service students who live in New Castle County.

How long will my child attend the FSS program?

- Each student, once accepted, stays at least one academic year.
- Each year, the students are reviewed and will either continue in the program or transition back to their traditional school setting, based on medical necessity.

Are there criteria that would inhibit my child from attending the FSS Program?

Students that have a history of hands-on threatening or violent behavior will not be considered for the program. The FSS has a zero-tolerance policy for physical violence and/or aggression.

Are there any additional services offered at FSS during the school day?

- All students received individual and group counseling to assist with coping with living with a chronic illness.
- The FSS offers Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech/Language Therapy to all students who qualify.

Does the FSS program follow a school calendar?

- Yes, the FSS follows the Red Clay School District academic calendar for holidays and teacher in-service days.
- In addition to the academic year, the FSS has a 4–5-week summer school and 3-week summer camp program. The summer session is a mandatory part of the program.

Where is the FSS located?

The school is located inside the ChristianaCare Wilmington Hospital.

What are school hours?

- School day: Monday – Friday, 7:10am-2:00pm during the traditional academic year.
- Summer program: Monday – Thursday, 8:30am-1:00pm.

Are the students transported by bus?

Yes, the students are transported to and from school by Red Clay Transportation. The bus picks students up as close to the home as possible.

How do I get more information about the program?

If there are any other questions, please contact Elizabeth Houser, Program Coordinator at 302-320-5858