

# Autism education institution provides opportunity for underserved students in Huntsville

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**By Special to AL.com**

Foster Academy launches as the only school in Huntsville providing individualized spectrum-based education to students with high-functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Foster Academy was founded in 2017 to serve a population of students whose needs have not been fully met in other school environments in the area. Foster Academy is adjacent to University Baptist Church on Jordan Lane and is a ministry of the church. Foster Academy will have an official opening ceremony and celebration on Aug. 22 at 10 a.m. at Foster Academy at 809 Jordan Lane NW, Huntsville, AL 35816.

In June 2108, Foster Academy hired veteran educator Diane Leisher as Executive Director and the energy she brings to this small school with a big heart is driving exciting growth. The certified teaching staff serves students in grades five through 12. Courses are based on the Alabama Course of Study using a variety of resources in the classroom, both textbook and online. Small class sizes enable Foster educators to pursue a solid philosophy supporting a least restrictive environment (LRE) model. Foster Academy emphasizes LRE to serve the unique differences of children and teens with high functioning ASD and related symptoms. Foster Academy is important to the community as it addresses a very specific need in the Huntsville area: An individualized learning environment for high-functioning students on the autistic spectrum



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