

Notice of Special Education Services and Programs
Child Find
All Fayette County School Districts

The Frazier School District, along with all school districts in Pennsylvania, and other public agencies in the Commonwealth, must establish and implement procedures to identify, locate and evaluate all children who need special education programs and services because of the child's disability. This notice is to help find these children in our districts; offer assistance to parents; and, describe the parents' rights regarding the confidentiality of information that will be obtained during this process.

The content of this notice has been written in English. If a person does not understand any of this notice, he or she should contact the district's LEA (see list below) to request an explanation.

Identification Activity

Child find refers to activities undertaken by public education agencies to identify, locate, and evaluate children residing in the State, including children attending private schools, who are suspected of having disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, and determine the child's need for special education and related services. The purpose is to locate these children so that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) can be made available. The types of disabilities that, if found, cause a child to need services are: autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment due to chronic or acute health problems, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury and visual impairment including blindness. In the case of a child that is of preschool age, developmental delay is a type of disability.

The Albert Gallatin School District, Brownsville School District, Connellsville Area School District, Frazier School District, Laurel Highlands School District and Uniontown Area School District, along with other school districts in the state, are required to annually provide notice describing the *identification* activities and the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of *personally identifiable information*. This notice is intended to meet this requirement.

Identification activities are performed to find a child who is suspected as having a disability that would interfere with his or her learning unless special education programs and services are made available. These activities are sometimes called *screening* activities. The activities include: reviewing group data; conducting hearing and vision screenings; assessing the student's academic functioning; observing the student displaying difficulty in behavior; and, determining the student's response to attempted remediation. Input from parents is also an information source for *identification*. After a child is identified as a suspected *child with a disability*, he or she is evaluated, but not before parents give consent for the evaluation to be conducted.

Protected Handicapped Students' Identification

In compliance with state and federal law, the Albert Gallatin School District, Brownsville School District, Connellsville Area School District, Frazier School District, Laurel Highlands School District, and Uniontown Area School Districts will provide to each protected handicapped student-without discrimination or cost to the student or his/her family-those related aids, services or accommodations which are necessary to provide the student equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits from the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities.

To qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

Gifted Identification/Services

The Albert Gallatin School District, Brownsville Area School District, Connellsville Area School District, Frazier School District Laurel Highlands School District and Uniontown Area School District provide services for mentally gifted students which enable them to participate in acceleration or enrichment programs, or both, as appropriate, and to receive services according to their intellectual and academic abilities and needs. The gifted support coordinators also plan a variety of enrichment opportunities and learning extensions outside of the classroom through educational trips, conferences, workshops and competitions. Students may be referred for evaluation to determine mental giftedness through a teacher or parent nomination or when their performance meets established criteria. To identify a student with mental giftedness, the district secures permission to evaluate from parents. A team comprised of district staff and parents then gather information for the evaluation which is summarized in the gifted written report (GWR) and used by the gifted individualized education program (GIEP) team to determine if the student meets criteria for mental giftedness and needs specially designed instruction. The GIEP team develops a program for the student.

Referral for a gifted multidisciplinary evaluation shall be made to the building principal when the student is suspected by teachers or parents as needing referral for a gifted evaluation. Parents who suspect that their child is gifted may request a gifted multidisciplinary evaluation of their child at any time, with a limit of one request per school term. The request must be in writing. Parents may obtain additional information regarding Gifted services for students by contacting the child's school principal or the Supervisor of Special Education.

Confidentiality

If disability is suspected following the screening, your child will be evaluated, given your consent. A written record of the results is called an Evaluation Report, which is directly related to your child and is maintained by the school district. These records are personally identifiable to your child. *Personally identifiable information* includes the child's name, the name of the child's parents or other family members, the address of the child or their family, a personal identifier such as social security number, and other information that would make the child's identity easily traceable.

Your school district of residence will gather information regarding your child's physical, mental, emotional and health functioning through testing and assessment, observation of your child, as well as through a review of any records made available to the district through your physician and other providers of services, such as day care agencies.

The school district protects the confidentiality of *personally identifiable information* by assigning one school official as the person responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of those records. This official is responsible for training all persons using this information and for maintaining for public inspection a current list of employees' names and positions who may have access to this information.

When the school district no longer needs this information for the provision of educational services, you will be notified. And, the district will destroy this information at your request—with the exclusion of general information such as your child's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, and grade levels completed, which may be maintained without time limitation.

As the parent of the child, you have several rights regarding the confidentiality of your child's records. You have the right to inspect and review all educational records related to your child that are collected, maintained, or used by the school district. Your district will comply with a request from you to review the records without unnecessary delay. You may also review the records before any meeting regarding planning for your child's special education program (IEP meeting) and before a hearing (should you and our school district disagree about how to educate your child who needs special education services). In no case, shall the district take more than 45 days to furnish you the opportunity to inspect and review your child's records.

You have the right to an explanation and interpretation of the records; to be provided copies of the records if failure to provide the copies would effectively prevent you from exercising your right to inspect and review the records, and; the right to have a representative inspect and review the records.

Upon your request, the school district will provide you a list of the types and location of education records collected, maintained, or used by the agency. The district may charge a fee to search or retrieve information.

You have the right to request an amendment to your child's education records if you believe they are inaccurate or misleading, or violate the privacy or other rights of your child. The school district will decide whether to amend the records within a reasonable time of receipt of your request. If the district refuses to amend the records, you will be notified of the refusal and your right to a hearing. You will also be given additional information regarding the hearing procedures; and, upon request, the district will provide a records hearing to challenge information in your child's education files.

Parent consent is required before personally identifiable information contained in your child's education records is disclosed to anyone other than officials of the school district. School officials collect and utilize such information for purposes of identifying, locating, or evaluating children and to provide a free appropriate public education to children. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if he/she needs to review an education record in order to fulfill a professional responsibility. The school district may also, upon request, disclose records without consent to the officials of another school district in which your child seeks or intends to enroll. Further information regarding the Policy of the Collection, Maintenance, and Dissemination of records is available through the principal's office.

When a child reaches age 18, the rights of the parent regarding confidentiality of personally identifiable information is transferred to the student.

A parent may file a written complaint alleging that the rights described in this notice were not provided:

Pennsylvania Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
Division of Compliance
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

The Department of Education will investigate the matter, issue a report of findings and necessary corrective action within 60 days. The Department will take necessary action to ensure compliance is achieved.

Complaints alleging failures of the school district regarding confidentiality of personally identifiable information may also be filed with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

In accordance with 34 CFR § 300.624, please be advised of the following retention/destruction schedule for the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), and Keystone Exam related materials:

- PSSA, Keystone Exam, and PASA test booklets will be destroyed one year after student reports are delivered for the administration associated with the test booklets.
- PSSA and Keystone Exam answer booklets and PASA media recordings will be destroyed three years after completion of the assessment.

Early Intervention Identification

In Pennsylvania, a child between three years of age and the school district's age to begin school who has a developmental delay or one or more of the physical or mental conditions listed above is identified as an "eligible young child." The parents of these children have the same rights described above.

*The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing programs and services to eligible young children under Act 212 of 1990, the Early Intervention Services System Act. Screening for preschool children is available upon request. For additional information or to schedule an appointment for screening call the Supervisor of Early Intervention Services, Intermediate Unit 1 at 724-938-3241.

Potential Indicators of Weaknesses In The Developmental Domain Areas And Other Risk Factors That Could Indicate A Disability (Requirement of Section 14.212(b))

A developmental delay is determined by the results of a developmental evaluation. The results of one or more domain areas (adaptive, personal-social, communication, motor or cognitive) must show at least a 25% delay or a score of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean (Standard Score of 77 or below). The delay results in the need for specially designed intervention/instruction (SDI) to participate in typical activities and routines.

Children with a developmental delay may show weaknesses in the following areas:

Adaptive – Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty dressing/undressing; using utensils to eat; removing shoes without assistance; distinguishing between nonfood/food substances; or, with toileting needs. They may also have difficulty moving independently around the house; understanding that hot is dangerous; putting away toys when asked; indicating an illness or ailment to an adult; or demonstrating caution to avoid common dangers.

Personal-Social – Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty responding positively to adult praise, rewards or promise of rewards; greeting familiar adults spontaneously; enjoying simple stories read aloud; helping with simple household tasks; initiating social interaction with familiar adults; expressing affection/liking for peers; playing cooperatively with peers; stating first name, last name, age, or gender; using objects in make-believe play; using 'I' or 'me' to refer to self; or recognizing facial expressions of common emotions.

Communication - Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty following 2-step verbal commands; associating spoken words with pictures; recalling events from a story presented orally; engaging in extended and meaningful nonverbal exchanges with others; using words to get needs met; responding to 'yes' and 'no' questions appropriately; or asking 'wh' questions.

Motor - Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty running without falling; kicking a ball without falling; walking up and down steps; alternating feet without assistance; walking backward; imitating the bilateral movements of an adult; pointing with the index finger independent of the thumb and other fingers; scribbling linear and/or circular patterns spontaneously; using the pads of fingertips to grasp a pencil; holding a paper with one hand while drawing or writing with the other hand; fastening clothing without assistance; cutting with scissors; copying a circle; or imitating vertical and horizontal markings.

Cognitive - Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty attending to one activity for 3 or more minutes; reciting memorized lines from songs or TV shows; showing interest in age-appropriate books; matching/naming colors; responding to one and one more; giving three objects on request; matching shapes; identifying objects by their use; identifying items by size; identifying colors of familiar objects not in view; or identifying simple objects by touch.

Other Factors That Could Indicate a Disability

Developmental disabilities are birth defects related to a problem with how a body part or body system works. They may also be known as **functional** birth defects. Many of these conditions affect multiple body parts or systems.

Researchers have identified thousands of different birth defects. Birth defects can have a variety of causes, such as: genetic problems caused when one or more genes doesn't work properly or part of a gene is missing; problems with chromosomes, such as having an extra chromosome or missing part of a chromosome; environmental factors that the expectant mother is exposed to during pregnancy, such as Rubella or German measles; or if drugs or alcohol are used during pregnancy.

If you wish to learn more, have questions, or believe your child requires evaluation services, please contact the person listed for the district in which you reside:

Supervisor of Special Education
Frazier School District
724-736-9507