



Annual Notice of Special Education Services and Programs for Protected Handicapped Students

According to state and federal special education regulations, annual public notice to parents of children who reside within Pennsylvania is required regarding child find responsibilities. School districts, intermediate units, and charter schools are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information related to Section 504/Chapter 15 services, parents may refer to Section 504, Chapter 15, and the Basic Education Circular entitled Implementation of Chapter 15.

This notice shall inform parents of the school district, intermediate unit, and charter school of the child identification activities and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities or eligible young children. In addition to this public notice, each school district, intermediate unit, and charter school shall publish written information in the handbook and on the website. Children ages 3 through 21 can be eligible for special education programs and services. If parents believe that their child may be eligible for special education, the parent should contact the staff member listed at the end of this public notice.

Children age 3 through the age of admission to first grade are also eligible if they have developmental delays and, as a result, need special education and related services. A child who is less than the age of beginners and at least 3 years of age is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (i) The child's score on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas; (ii) The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional and self-help. If you think your preschool child (ages 3-5) may need early intervention services, please contact the intermediate unit that serves your area.

Pennsylvania's 29 intermediate units were established in 1971 by the Pennsylvania General Assembly to operate as regional educational service agencies to provide cost-effective, management-efficient programs to Pennsylvania school districts. <https://www.paiu.org/Find-an-IU>

Evaluation Process

Each school district, intermediate unit, and charter school has a procedure in place by which parents can request an evaluation. For information about procedures applicable to your child, contact the school that your child attends. The telephone number and email address for the charter school can be found at the end of this notice. Parents of preschool-age children, ages 3 through 5, may request an evaluation in writing by addressing a letter to the appropriate staff member of the intermediate unit in which they reside.

Consent

School entities cannot proceed with an evaluation, or with the initial provision of special education and related services, without the written consent of the parents. For additional information related to consent, please refer to the Procedural Safeguards Notice, which can be found at the PATTAN website, www.pattan.net. Once written parental consent is obtained, the school will proceed with the evaluation process. If the parent disagrees with the evaluation results, the parent can request an independent educational evaluation at public expense.



Program Development

Once the evaluation process is completed, a team of qualified professionals and parents determines whether the child is eligible. If the child is eligible, the individualized education program team meets, develops the program, and determines the educational placement. Once the IEP team develops the program and determines the educational placement, school district staff, intermediate unit staff, and/or charter school staff will issue a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement/Prior Written Notice (NOREP/PWN). Your written consent is required before initial services can be provided. The parent has the right to revoke consent after initial placement.

Confidentiality of Information

The school districts, intermediate units, and charter schools maintain records concerning all children enrolled in the school, including students with disabilities. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality. Your consent, or consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under state law, must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released, except as permitted under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The age of majority in Pennsylvania is age 21. Each participating agency must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages. One official at each participating agency must assume responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. Each participating agency must maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the agency who have access to personally identifiable information.

For additional information related to student records, parents can refer to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

This notice is only a summary of the special education services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled and their parents. For more information or to request evaluation or screening of a public or private school child, email Associate Vice President of Special Education **Michelle Orcutt** at morcutt@ccaeducate.me or call **570-818-2200, ext. 14160**. For preschool-age children, information may be obtained and screenings and evaluations may be requested by contacting the intermediate unit.

The school entity or charter school will not discriminate in employment, educational programs or activities based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, handicap, creed, marital status or because a person is a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era. No preschool, elementary or secondary school pupil enrolled in a school district, intermediate unit, or charter school program shall be denied equal opportunity to participate in age- and program-appropriate instruction or activities due to race, color, handicap, creed, national origin, marital status, or financial hardship.