

**DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION OFFICE  
SOUTHERN YORK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
GLEN ROCK, PENNSYLVANIA**

**August 1, 2007**

**Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs**

It is the responsibility of the Pennsylvania Department of Education to ensure that all children with disabilities residing in the Commonwealth, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are located, evaluated, and identified.

A full range of special education services are provided by the Southern York County School District. Programs provided directly by the District include those for students who have a specific learning disability, emotional disturbance, mental retardation, speech or language impairment, a hearing impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, or other health impairment. Students are also provided for mentally gifted students. Additional services provided by the Lincoln Intermediate Unit #12 for the District include those for early intervention, deafness, deaf/blind, blind, or multiple disabilities. Other related services are also provided, such as Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy, for those who require them in order to access a free and appropriate education.

Efforts to identify special needs students in Southern's schools are varied. Preschool students between ages 3 and 5 are identified through services provided by the LIU #12. Kindergarten students are screened formally and informally in vision, hearing, health, and speech/language areas. Kindergarten teachers also informally screen during the fall of each year for motor and academic skills. Kindergarten registration is scheduled by appointment at the elementary school in which the student would attend. During the 2007-2008 school year, Kindergarten registration is scheduled in April 2008. On-going screening is conducted for new resident students at the building level through a review of school records and parent/student interviews at the time of enrollment.

When teachers, staff, or parents suspect that a student might be in need of specially designed instruction due to difficulty in school, a school team reviews screening data, educational records, and diagnostic data. A pre-referral team recommends instructional interventions, adaptations, or modifications to the student's educational program to address the student needs. If the student continues to have difficulty, a referral for a multidisciplinary evaluation and further assessment with written and informed parent consent may be made.

Parents may request a multidisciplinary evaluation at any time in writing to their child's building Principal. A formal response to the request is made in a timely manner by the building Principal. Parents must give informed consent by signing Permission to Evaluate form provided by the school. Parents of resident students not attending Southern's schools follow the same procedures, but should send the written request to the Supervisor of Special Education.

A multidisciplinary evaluation must be conducted in accordance with specific timelines and follow protection-in-evaluation procedures. The evaluation must be conducted within 60 school days of obtaining Permission to Evaluate from the student's parents. The evaluation is conducted by a team, which includes the parents, and is conducted through the use of a variety of assessment measures individually selected for the student. A single test or procedure cannot be the sole factor in determining that a child has a disability. The results of the evaluation are summarized in an Evaluation Report with conclusions and recommendations specifying the educational program that is appropriate to meet the student's educational needs. Parents also have the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation if

they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the district's multidisciplinary evaluation. Southern will provide, upon request, information about where an independent evaluation may be obtained. Such an evaluation may be obtained at public expense under certain circumstances, but parents may choose to have an independent evaluation conducted at private expense following the district's evaluation criteria. The outcome of an independent evaluation must be considered by the school district in respect to the provision of a free and appropriate education to the child.

If the student is determined to have a disability and is in need of specially designed instruction based on the results of the Evaluation Report, the IEP Team that includes the parents develops a written educational plan called an Individual Educational Program (IEP). The IEP identifies the type of services, level of intervention, and location of intervention within the least restrictive environment. It also describes the current educational levels, goals, and related services the student will receive. All students must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with students who are not disabled as determined by the IEP team. The IEP is reviewed on at least an annual basis.

For additional information, contact Southern York County School District Supervisor of Special Education at 235-4811, Extension 7229.

### **Procedural Safeguards**

Procedural safeguards protect the rights of parents and students. These safeguards include parental consent for evaluations, re-evaluations, release of information, and placement of a child with a disability in a special education placement. The District must notify parents when special education services are changed or discontinued or when parent requests for an evaluation, an independent evaluation, or a change in an IEP are refused. Safeguards also include dispute resolution procedures such as the right to pre-conference meetings, mediation, or impartial due process hearings. Such requests are made on a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement form or by letter. A full explanation of procedural safeguards is given on the "Procedural Safeguards Notice" which is available upon request by calling the Special Education Office at 717-235-4811, Extension 7229.

### **Annual Notice to Parents of Protected Handicapped Students**

In compliance with state and federal law, the Southern York County School District will provide each "protected handicapped student", without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order 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. Such services are distinct from those provided to students with a disability and eligible for special education programs. The school may initiate an evaluation of a student with informed parental consent. Parents may also request an evaluation by contacting the Supervisor of Special Education at 717-235-4811, Extension 7229.

### **Confidentiality**

Southern York County School District protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information for all students screened for or enrolled as a child with a disability in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and other applicable federal and state laws.

Parents have the right to inspect and review their child's educational record. If parents request copies of the records, a copying fee may be charged. The District will respond to parent requests for inspections, explanations and interpretations of the records within ten days. Parents may request amending the student's records if they believe the educational record is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of their child. The District will respond to such requests in writing. Confidential records will not be released to outside parties without the written consent of the parents, except under limited circumstances outlined in Board Policy 216. Consent means that parents have been informed of the activity requiring consent, that they agree in writing to the activity, and that consent is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time. Consent is transferred to the student when the student is 21 years of age and has graduated from a school program or has withdrawn from a school program. Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if it is believed that the district fails to comply with FERPA. The District will provide a copy of its confidentiality policy upon request.

### **Parent Right to Know**

Section 1111(h)(6) of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) outlines "parent-right-to-know" requirements. It requires that school districts receiving Title 1, Part A funds notify parents at the beginning of each school year of their right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of the child's teacher and/or paraprofessional.

Parents are entitled to have access, upon request, to the following information:

- Whether the teacher has met State qualifications for licensure in the grade levels and subject areas in which they teach;
- The level of State teacher certification: Emergency, Instructional I, Instructional II, etc. held by the teacher;
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher and the field of discipline of the certification or degree, and;
- Qualifications of the paraprofessionals working with the child.

Parent right-to-know requirements also state that a school district must provide timely notification to parents when a teacher who is not highly qualified for more than four consecutive weeks has instructed their child. Additionally, parents must be given information regarding the level of achievement their child has attained on the PSSA.

All parent right-to-know notifications must be written in a format that is easily understandable by parents and, if practicable, in a language that parents understand. Any questions or inquiries in this regard should be directed to your child's building Principal.