

Child Find: Public Notice — Screening and Evaluation

In compliance with state and federal law, the Penn-Trafford School District is responsible for locating, identifying, and educating school-aged students requiring special programs or services.

The District, as prescribed by section 1402 of the school code, routinely conducts screenings of a child's hearing (Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 7th, and 11th grade), visual acuity (every year beginning with Kindergarten), and screenings for speech and language skills (when a referral is made by a parent, teacher, or the building ICT).

Gross motor and fine-motor skills, academic skills, and social and/or emotional skills are assessed by classroom teachers and support staff on an on-going basis. Screening activities include review of group-based data, such as cumulative enrollment and health records, report cards, curriculum-based and performance-based assessments, and ability and achievement test scores. Identified needs from these screening sources as well as information obtained from parents and outside agencies, are assessed and noted within student records. These school records are always open and available to parents, and only to school officials who have legitimate "need to know" information about the child. Information from the records is released to other persons or agencies only with appropriate authorization, which involves written permission, by parents.

Parents who have concerns regarding their child may contact the building principal at *any time* to request a screening or evaluation of their child. Parental requests should be made in writing to the building principal. Upon receipt of the written request, the building level Instructional Consultation Team (ICT), which includes the parent, will meet to review the request and the available screening information. This information will be used to recommend interventions to meet the child's specific needs and/or to document the need for further evaluation.

If it is determined that a child needs additional services/interventions, the ICT will make adjustments relative to such things as the child's learning style, behavior, physical inabilities, and speech problems to be more in keeping with traditional classroom expectancies. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the planning and implementation of intervention strategies. If a student does not make expected progress with this assistance, the team can revise the intervention plan and/or refer the student for a multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE). If a MDE is appropriate, the district will provide to the parent a completed "Permission to Evaluate" form outlining the purpose of the evaluation and the type of assessments that will be used. Parents must provide informed consent by signing and returning the permission before any evaluations can be completed. The purpose of the MDE is to establish the student's eligibility and need for special education and/or related services. Upon receipt of the signed permission, the district has 60 days to complete the evaluation process.

After all of the evaluations are completed, an Evaluation Report (ER) will be compiled with parent involvement and the report will include specific recommendations for the types of intervention(s) necessary to deal with the child's specified needs. The copy of the Evaluation Report will be provided to the parent and the information will be reviewed with them individually and/or with the entire team. For the student who has been found to be eligible for and in need of special education services, a meeting of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team will be scheduled with parent involvement in order to develop a specially designed

educational plan for the student. To be eligible for Special Education Services, as defined by federal and state law, a student must meet one of the categorical exceptionalities (i.e. autism / pervasive developmental disorder, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, developmental delay under early intervention guidelines, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, orthopedic impairment, serious emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, or speech or language impairment) and demonstrate a need for specially designed instruction as determined by the findings of evaluation.

Services for Students in Nonpublic Schools

Parents of nonpublic school students who suspect that their child is exceptional and in need of special education may also make a request for screening and/or evaluation. Parental requests should be made in writing and directed to the Nonpublic School Director/Principal who, in turn, will contact and forward a copy of the request to Gregory N. Karazsia, Director of Student Learning Supports (724)744-4496.

Services for Protected Handicapped Students / Chapter 15 Regulations

In compliance with state and federal law, the Penn-Trafford School District will provide to 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 programs and extracurricular activities to the 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.

Services for Preschool Age Children

Act 212, the Early Intervention System Act, entitles all preschool age children with disabilities to appropriate early intervention services. Young children experiencing developmental delays or physical or mental disabilities are eligible for early intervention services.

The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare is responsible for providing services to infants and toddlers, which is defined as children from **birth through two years of age**. Contact: CONNECT Information and Referral number: 800-692-7288 (for TTY, dial 711 for Relay Service) for local information and referral. CONNECT staff are able to assist families in a variety of health, education, and welfare issues.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing services to preschool age children from **ages three through five**. For more information, please contact the Westmoreland Intermediate Unit #7 at (724)836-2460 and ask to speak with the Early Intervention Supervisor.

Additional Resource Information

Penn-Trafford School District - Gregory N. Karazsia, Director of Student Learning Supports (724)744-4496.

State Level Resource : www.pattan.k12.org.