

IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In compliance with state and federal law, the Middletown Area School district conducts on-going identification activities as part of its school program, for the purpose of identifying students who may be in need of special education and related services. If your child is identified by the District as possibly in need of such services, you will be notified of all applicable procedures.

If you believe that your school-aged child may be in need of special education services and related programs, there are processes designed to assess the needs of the child and to determine his/her eligibility for special education services. Upon written request these services are available to parents at no cost. You may request screening and evaluation at any time, whether or not your child is enrolled in the District's public school program. Requests for screening or evaluations are to be made in writing to the Director of Special Education.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

All students are entitled to a free, appropriate public education. The Middletown Area School District provides a variety of supports for students who are determined to be eligible for special education. When a student is experiencing significant difficulties in school, and has not responded to research based interventions, a multidisciplinary team may request parent permission to conduct an evaluation to determine whether a student is eligible for, and in need of special education services. Additionally, a parent may request a multidisciplinary assessment for their child. The District will review the parent request and the needs of the student, and will respond in writing as to whether the District will honor the request. If a child is found to be eligible for special education services, an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) will be developed by a team consisting of the parent and school personnel. In many cases, the student is also a member of the IEP team.

The District is committed to providing support and services within the general education setting whenever possible. If that is not appropriate, the IEP team determines how best to meet the student's needs. The District operates the following programs under Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines* learning support, speech and language support, life skills support, multiple disabilities support, autistic support, and itinerant emotional support. If the student has needs that cannot be programmed for with the District, they may attend programs operated by the Capital Area Intermediate Unit, consortium district classrooms, or other providers. Most students attend regular classes for a majority of their day. Related services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech and language, social work, and behavior support are also provided within the District. All of these services are provided at no cost to the parent.

If you have any questions regarding special education services, please contact Mrs. Krystal Palmer, Director of Special Education, at 948-3300, option 5.

****Please note that not all programs are located within each school or building within the District.***

PROTECTED HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

The Middletown Area School District provides related services or accommodations to all students identified as “protected handicapped” in accordance with state and federal law. These services are provided without discrimination or cost to the students or family. 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.” If a student qualifies as a “protected handicapped student”, a service plan will be developed, as required under Federal Law 504 and Pennsylvania Chapter 15.

These services and accommodations for “protected handicapped” students are distinct from those applicable to children with disabilities who are eligible for special education programs and services. If a child is eligible for special education, accommodations and services are provided through the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) rather than through the development of a service plan.

For further information on the evaluation procedures and provisions of services to “protected handicapped students,” please contact Mrs. Krystal Palmer, Director of Special Education, at 948-3300, option 5.