

Lewisburg Area School District Annual Notice of Special Education Services and Programs

Lewisburg Area School District is committed to providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities. The District must annually provide notice to the public about special education services and procedures to identify, locate, and evaluate all students who may be eligible for and in need of special education.

In addition to public school students residing within the district, the Lewisburg Area School District considers all children with disabilities attending private school as well as children who are homeless, wards of the state, and those who are highly mobile such as migrant children.

The District operates learning support, life skills, and emotional support programs, and it provides space for the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit to operate an elementary multiple disabilities program. Lewisburg Area School District also employs one speech language pathologists, one school psychologist and one school psychologist/coordinator of special education. The District contracts with Intermediate Unit 16 for related services that students may need including occupational and physical therapy, vision and mobility services, hearing therapy and social work.

Lewisburg Area School District works in collaboration with the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit, local school districts, and agencies to identify appropriate placements for students who demonstrate a need for educational programs that are not offered within the boundaries of the school district. The District makes arrangements and pays the cost of transportation.

Identification (Child Find) Activities:

The Lewisburg Area School District works in collaboration with the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit to identify young children who may need special education services upon transition from early intervention programs to kindergarten. A parent meeting is scheduled in late winter of each school year to inform parents about the district's special education services and to obtain permissions to evaluate. Evaluations are completed, and IEP meetings are conducted in the spring of the year prior to entry into kindergarten from early intervention programs.

The District conducts kindergarten screening annually in the early spring. The elementary principal schedules pre-registration meetings and explains district services. More details are published in notices sent home and in local newspapers prior to the screening activities. Speech language pathologists are members of the screening team. They also screen second graders yearly to locate articulation and language delays.

Building level teams meet regularly at the elementary, intermediate, middle school, and high school levels to monitor concerns about student progress, to develop intervention strategies, and to identify students who may need multidisciplinary evaluations. The

teams consider a variety of academic, behavioral, speech language, and motor development information. Teachers within the district are trained in referral procedures. Guidance counselors, working in collaboration with their district colleagues at all levels are also important front line personnel in child find procedures.

Lewisburg Area School District has an assessment plan which specifies the type of evaluations that are administered at various grade levels. The analysis of assessment results is an important child find strategy, and students may be referred to the school psychologist for additional achievement screenings.

Potential Signs of Developmental Delays and Other Risk Factors for Disabilities

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) lists 13 disabilities categories. The following contains excerpts from the definitions.

1. **Autism** means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction usually evident before the age of three.
2. **Deaf-blindness** means concomitant hearing and visual impairments.
3. **Deafness** means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing with or without amplification.
4. **Emotional disturbance** is a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance 1). Inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors 2). An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers 3). Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances 4). A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression 5). A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
5. **Hearing Impairment** means a impairment in hearing whether permanent or fluctuating that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included in the definition of deafness.
6. **Mental Retardation** means a significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period.
7. **Multiple Disabilities** means concomitant impairments the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments.
8. **Orthopedic Impairment** means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
9. **Other Health Impairment** means having limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment that 1) is due to chronic or acute health problems 2) adversely affects a child's educational performance.
10. **Specific Learning Disability** is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations.

- 11. Speech Language Impairment** means a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
- 12. Traumatic Brain Injury** means an acquired injury to the brain caused by external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
- 13. Visual Impairment including blindness** means an impairment in vision that even with correction adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Initiating an Evaluation

Parents who have concerns about their child's academic or developmental growth and believe that your child may have symptoms or characteristics similar to those noted above should contact the appropriate building principal, school guidance counselor, or the Special Education Office to request screening and/or evaluation. A parental request for a multidisciplinary evaluation should be made in writing. A form is available from the building principals or through the Special Education Office.

Confidentiality of Student Records:

If a screening procedure finds evidence of a possible disability and a multidisciplinary evaluation is recommended, the district must issue a Permission to Evaluate Consent Form to parents or guardians. Written consent is required prior to conducting the evaluation. An evaluation report is prepared after the assessments are completed. The written record of the results is called an educational record and is maintained by the District. The record contains information that personally identifies a child's name, name of parents or other family members, address, and other traceable information. The school district protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information according to the district's Student Records policy and FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act).

Further information about special education is available from building principals or the Special Education Office at 522-3277.