

NORTH SCHUYLKILL SCHOOL DISTRICT

ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

I. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2004

The North Schuylkill School District is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA") to provide a free, appropriate, public education ("FAPE") to "children with disabilities." Pursuant to the IDEA, students are considered to be children with disabilities if they need special education and related services and have one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities:

- Autism
- Deaf-Blindness
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impairment including Deafness
- Mental Retardation
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment including Blindness

The IDEA further requires the provision of FAPE to children with disabilities between the age of three and the school district's age of beginners known as "eligible young children." The Schuylkill County Intermediate Unit provides early intervention services and programs to eligible young children located within the North Schuylkill School District. All children learn and grow at different rates. Children who are developing more slowly than other children their age may need Early Intervention Services. Delays in the following developmental milestones can alert parents to the potential need for Early Intervention Services:

1. Physical Development (ability to move, see, and hear)
2. Language Development (ability to talk or express needs)
3. Social and Emotional Development (ability to relate to others)
4. Self-Help Development (ability to eat, dress, and take care of themselves)
5. Cognitive Development (ability to think and learn)

Parents who feel their young child may not be reaching developmental milestones should contact the Schuylkill Intermediate Unit for the purpose of screening, evaluation and appropriate program and services if necessary. Eligible young children are afforded the same rights as school age children.

II. SERVICES FOR PROTECTED HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

The North Schuylkill School District must provide services to and may not discriminate against "protected handicapped students" in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. A protected handicapped student is a student who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment. Protected handicapped students may qualify for special services to ensure equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate for the individual student.

III. GIFTED EDUCATION

In Pennsylvania, school age students qualify to receive specially designed instruction when they have been identified as "mentally gifted." A student is mentally gifted when he or she has outstanding intellectual and creative ability that requires specially designed programs or support services not ordinarily provided in the regular education program. The North Schuylkill School District will determine whether a student is mentally gifted based upon multiple criteria, including I.Q. score, which indicates gifted ability. The determination of gifted ability will not be based on I.Q. score alone.

IV. SCREENING AND EVALUATION

The North Schuylkill School District uses procedures to help identify children who may qualify for services, including parent/teacher referrals, review of student records and screening for hearing, vision and speech and language problems. Pre referral intervention through the Instructional Support Team Process is available in grades k through 6, along with Child Study Team interventions in grades k through 12. If you believe that your child may be eligible for special education and related services, or gifted education, screening and evaluation services designed to assess the needs of your child and his/her eligibility are available to you 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 and evaluation may be made in writing to the District address listed below or to your child's building principal and will be kept confidential. If you believe that your child may qualify for services as an eligible young child, you may contact the Schuylkill County Intermediate Unit directly at (570) 544-9131.

North Schuylkill School District
Special Education Department
15 Academy Lane
Ashland, PA 17921