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AN INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

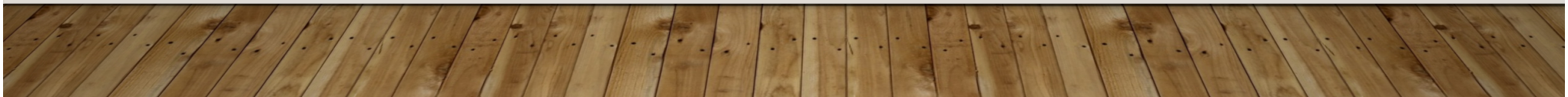
DERRY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT (DTSD)

<http://www.hershey.k12.pa.us/domain/18>

WELCOME DERRY TOWNSHIP FAMILIES

We would like to introduce you to our special education services and your child's educational team.

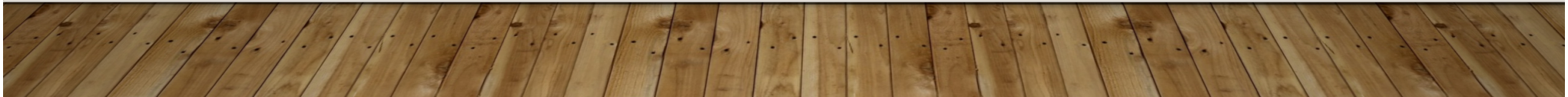
We are honored to work with you and your child. Our staff takes immense pride in the special education services we provide. As your child begins to receive special education supports and services, you may have many questions. Our team considers it a privilege to guide you through this process and will answer your questions along the way. Thank you for placing your trust in us as we work together to build upon your child's strengths and develop areas of need.



WHAT EXACTLY IS SPECIAL EDUCATION?

Special education is **specially designed instruction, support, and services** provided to students with an identified disability requiring an individually designed instructional program to meet their unique learning needs.

The purpose of special education is to provide students with programs and services by adapting content, teaching methodology and delivery of instruction to meet the appropriate needs of each child in the least restrictive environment.



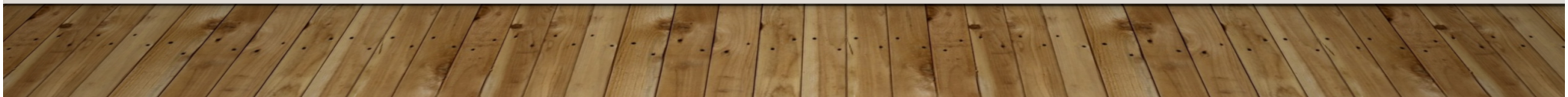
HOW DOES A STUDENT QUALIFY TO RECEIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION?

- In order to qualify for special education, a student must be evaluated by the school and determined to meet **both** of the following:
 - ✓ Eligibility criterion for one or more of 13 disabilities outlined in the law (PA Chapter 14 and IDEA-IA).
- And**
- ✓ The disability must adversely (negatively) affect the child's educational performance such that the child needs specially designed instruction in order to make progress in the general education curriculum.
- Either the school district or a parent can request an educational evaluation.

NEXT STEP: DEVELOP AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

Once your child is identified as eligible for special education services an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed by a team comprised of relevant educational staff and **you**.

An IEP is an important legal document. It spells out your child's learning needs, the services the school must provide and how progress will be measured towards the goals identified by the educational team.



WHO IS ON THE IEP TEAM?

- Mandatory IEP Team members include:
 - ✓ The child's parent or legal guardian
 - ✓ A general education teacher
 - ✓ A special education teacher
 - ✓ An LEA (A school representative who knows about the resources the district can offer and has the authority to commit resources)
 - ✓ Your child (when appropriate and after age 14)
- Anyone can be a part of the IEP team, including outside agencies, advocates and anyone a parent or guardian would like to invite.

WHO IS ON THE IEP TEAM?

You are an **essential** part of the IEP team. As a member of the IEP team, it is essential that you share important information and communicate with the team through the case manager, ask questions, and provide input regarding strategies that work with your child, general information and home/community observations.

WHAT'S IN AN IEP?

The IEP includes:

- ✓ Your child's present levels of academic and functional performance (non-academic skills such as behavior, social, daily living, etc.)
- ✓ Annual goals that are measurable
- ✓ Specially Designed Instruction: (SDI) services your child will receive through special education and from related service providers
- ✓ When services will begin, how long they last, and the location of the services
- ✓ Supports for teachers
- ✓ The amount of time your child will be in the general education classroom
- ✓ Transition planning for students ages 14 and older

WHEN WILL I GET UPDATES ON PROGRESS?

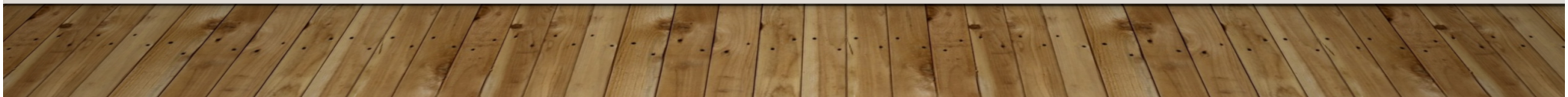
- Updates are provided to parents throughout the school year.
- Annual IEP Meetings
- Each trimester or quarter with report cards
- Ongoing communication with your child's case manager

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

- The IEP team will meet at least once annually; however, **any** team member, including you can request to have an IEP meeting at any time.
- The IEP can be revised at any time to reflect your child's changing needs.
- The IEP team is an educational resource for your family. Your child's case manager is the designated point person and first contact for any questions or concerns.

YOU WILL HEAR MANY TERMS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION. HERE ARE SOME COMMON TERMS YOU WILL HEAR AND THEIR DEFINITIONS.

- **Free Appropriate Public Education: (FAPE):** Special education services are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge; Meet the standards of PDE; Include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education in the State involved; and are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP).
- **Evaluation Report (ER):** This document summarizes the information and data that indicates whether your child has a disability and is in need of special education supports and services.
- **Case Manager:** A special education teacher or related service provider who is a member of the IEP team and is responsible to coordinate instruction and related services for your child. This person is your main point of contact.
- **Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP/PWN):** Is the document that summarizes the school's educational recommendations including placement. When you sign it, you are indicating your agreement to the recommended supports and services.
- **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** This is a guiding principle that children with disabilities are educated with children without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.



DTSD STAFF - OUR ADMINISTRATION

Director of Special Education – coordinates special education services K-12
(534-2501 x9)

Principal for grades K-5 (531-2277)

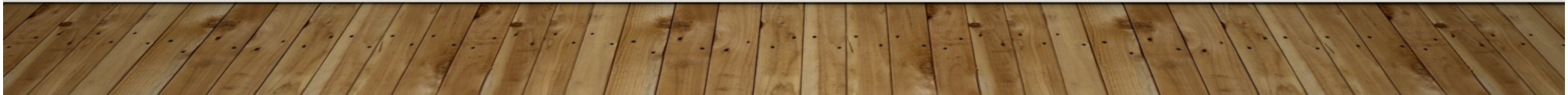
- **Assistant Principal for K-1:** Early Childhood Center (531-2211)
- **Assistant Principal for 2-3:** Hershey Primary Elementary (531-2277)
- **Assistant Principal for 4-5:** Hershey Intermediate Elementary (531-2277)

Principal for grades 6-8 (531-2222)

- **Two Assistant Principals**

Principal for grades 9-12 (531-2244)

- **Two Assistant Principals**

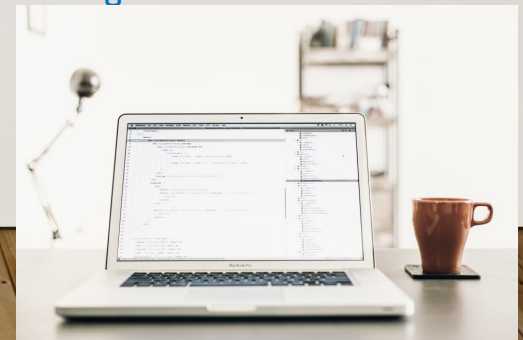


DTSD STAFF - OUR SPECIALISTS

School Psychologists – provide support for mental health, learning, and behavior, to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally in partnership with families, teachers, school administrators, and other professionals.

Educational Consultants – provide assistance to regular and special education teachers with curriculum and instructional practices for students receiving special education services.

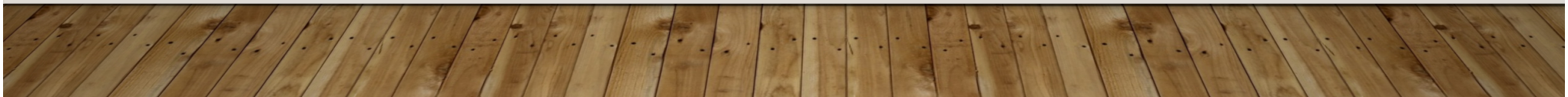
Behavioral Specialists - create plans to manage behaviors that affect a student's learning; they work with the team to provide a comprehensive approach to behavior management that includes evaluation, data collection, interventions and regular monitoring.



DTSD STAFF - SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Special Education Teachers

We provide instruction and support to your child academically, behaviorally, and socially. We will work closely with you and the other IEP team members to implement the IEP.

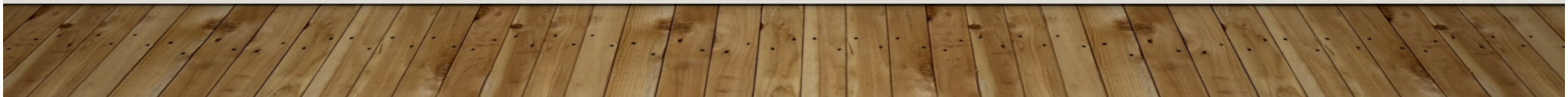


DTSD STAFF - RELATED SERVICE PROVIDERS

Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists, & Physical Therapists

When a child's functional skills impact his or her education, we support your child and the IEP team in providing services within the school such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.

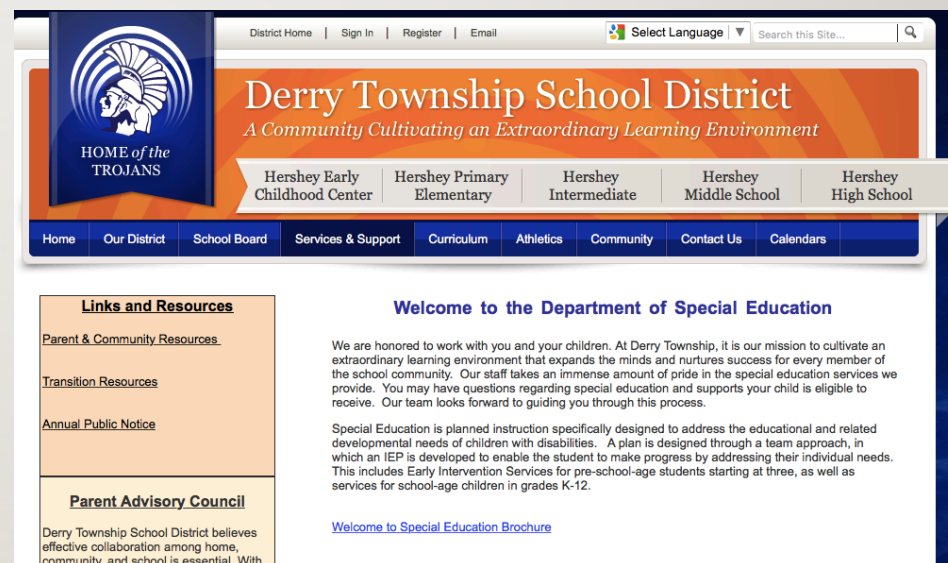
Our services differ from those provided by community based clinicians as our focus is on supporting your child in areas that directly impact them educationally.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND TO CONTACT US

<http://www.hershey.k12.pa.us/domain/18>

(717)534-2501 x9



A COMMUNITY CULTIVATING AN EXTRAORDINARY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

