

Parents' Rights and Responsibilities Presentation

Jessica DeLorenzo
Director of Student Services
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Special Education Department

Special Education
Teachers/Liaisons

- Building Level Special Education Teachers/Service Providers

Special
Education
Team Chairs

- Traci Costa: Bryantville
- Ashley Cross: Hobomock
- Valerie Charpentier: NPES and PK
- Tom Walsh: PCMS
- Meghan Collum: PHS/ODP (Secondary Coordinator)

Office Of
Student
Services

- Director of Student Services:
- Jessica DeLorenzo

Goals of Presentation

Provide

Provide information to parents/caregivers regarding the special education process

Educate

Educate parents/caregivers on their rights regarding special education

Reiterate

Reiterate the importance of a collaborative team including the partnership between home and school personnel

What is Special Education?

the practice of educating students with special needs in a way that addresses their individual differences and needs

specially designed instruction provided to a student in order to support the student in accessing curriculum/instruction

Special Education Laws/Terms

IDEA–Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

General Law–71B–Massachusetts General Laws

603 CMR Section 28.00–Special Education Regulations

FAPE–Free and Appropriate Education

LRE–Least Restrictive Environment

Parents' Notice of Procedural Safeguards

Provided to all parents once a year

Provided each time an evaluation is proposed

Provided if anything is rejected/denied

When is a student eligible for special education?

- ▶ Eligibility is determined using a flow chart
- ▶ A student is eligible if all three of the following are answered “yes”:
 - The student has one or more disabilities
 - The student is not making effective progress in school as a result of the disability (ies)
 - The student requires specialized instruction in order to make effective progress

Referring a Child for an Evaluation to Determine Eligibility for Special Education

- ▶ Parents / caregivers can request an evaluation if they feel that their child is not making effective progress and they suspect their child may present with a disability
- ▶ Instructional/Student Support Team
 - Building based team
 - DCAP/interventions

Process

After referral, or parent request for testing is made, the district has 5 days to issue a consent for testing

Once consent is received signed and returned, the district has 30 days to complete testing

The district has 45 days to meet and issue either an IEP or a letter of no eligibility

When an IEP is received back signed, an IEP is immediately implemented

Evaluation Process

- ▶ Testing in the area of suspected disability
 - Academic
 - Psychological
 - Behavioral
 - Occupational Therapy
 - Physical Therapy
 - Speech and Language
 - Social Pragmatics
 - Vision/Hearing
 - Orientation and Mobility
 - Educational Assessments
 - Observations

The Team

- ▶ Team consists of a chairperson (someone who can commit to resources), special education teacher, related service providers, general education teacher, parent/caregiver(s) and students over the age of 14

Parent and Student Participation

Parents have the right to participate in all special education planning and decision making

Students are the focus of special education and students age 14 and over are invited to participate

It is the obligation of the school district to make strong efforts to ensure parental and student participation

Determining Eligibility

- ▶ Special Education Flow Chart
 - Determine if a disability is present
 - Determine if the student making effective progress (general educator key role/ED B)
 - Determine if the lack of progress is a result of the disability
 - Determine if a student requires specially designed instruction in order to make effective progress

Types of Disabilities

Autism

Developmental
Delay

Intellectual
Impairment

Sensory
Impairment–
hearing/deaf/blind

Neurological
Impairment

Emotional
Impairment

Communication

Physical

Health

Specific Learning

Parents' Rights

- ▶ Right to discuss proposed evaluations with evaluators
- ▶ Right to consent or refuse an evaluation (s)
- ▶ Right to request an independent evaluation if you feel that the evaluation (s) was not comprehensive or appropriate
- ▶ Right to reject an IEP (in whole/part) and right to appeal a decision of no finding
- ▶ Right to request mediation/hearing

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- ▶ If a student is found eligible, an IEP will be created
- ▶ An IEP is a road map that designs a plan to enable students to access the curriculum/instruction
 - Parent/caregiver concerns
 - Vision Statement
 - Accommodations and Modifications
 - Goals
 - Services
 - Participation in statewide assessments
 - Related Services (transportation, extended school year)
 - Placement

Next Steps



IEPs are generally written for one year



They can be written for less time but cannot be written for more than one calendar year



The Team will meet at least annually to discuss progress and propose a new IEP



At least every three years the team must reevaluate the student for eligibility



Progress reports on student's progress towards their goals will be given each time a report card is issued to all students

504 Accommodation Plan

- ▶ Section *504* is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits discrimination based upon disability. Section *504* is an anti-discrimination, civil rights statute that requires the needs of students with disabilities to be met as adequately as the needs of the non-disabled are met
- ▶ Documented Disability
- ▶ Disability significantly impacts a life function
- ▶ 504 Plan outlines the accommodations (and or modifications) that are necessary for a student to access their day-to-day routines, learning and environment
- ▶ Building based

Eligibility

- ▶ Sources of Data (diagnosis/disability)
- ▶ Does the student have a physical or mental impairment? (neurological, digestive, mental/psychological, physical, emotional, specific learning)
- ▶ Does the impact substantially limit one or more major life activities? (walking, speaking, standing, thinking, concentrating, communicating, respiratory, digestive)
- ▶ What accommodations (or supports) are necessary to support the student's access to the major life function

Section 504

