SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PITTSBURGH

PITTSBURGH-MT. OLIVER INTERMEDIATE UNIT

Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs, Services for Protected Handicapped Students, and Services for Gifted Students

Notice to Parents

The School District of Pittsburgh provides the following annual notice regarding child find responsibilities to parents and families residing within the School District in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. School districts, intermediate units (IUs) and charter schools are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) and 22 Pa. Code Chapter 14 as well as those who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and 22 Pa. Code Chapter 15. For additional information related to special education and related services, parents may refer to the IDEA and its implementing regulations, Chapter 14, and the Basic Education Circulars relating to special education. For additional information related to Section 504/Chapter 15 services, the parent may refer to Section 504, Chapter 15, and the Basic Education Circular entitled Implementation of Chapter 15. Also, school districts are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for gifted services via 22 Pa. Code Chapter 16. For additional information regarding gifted services, the parent may refer to 22 Pa. Code Chapter 16. If a student is both gifted and eligible for special education, the procedures in IDEA and Chapter 14 shall take precedence.

This notice shall inform parents throughout the School District of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh-Mt. Oliver Intermediate Unit, and charter schools of the child *identification activities* and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities and eligible young children. In addition to this public notice, the school district, intermediate unit, and charter schools shall publish written information in the handbook and on the web site (**www.pps.k12.pa.us**). Children ages three through twenty one can be eligible for special education programs and services. If parents believe that the child may be eligible for special education, the parent should contact the appropriate staff member identified at the end of this public notice.

Identification activities are performed to find a child who is suspected of having a disability that would interfere with his or her learning unless special education programsand services are made available. These activities are sometimes called *screening* activities. The activities include: review of group data, conducting hearing and vision screening, assessment of student's academic functioning, observation of the student displaying difficulty in behavior and determining the student's response to attempted remediation. Input from parents is also an information source for *identification*. After a child is identified as a suspected *child with a disability,* he or she is evaluated, but is not evaluated before parents give permission for their child to be evaluated.

The School District of Pittsburgh will be providing ongoing screening services. If you wish to learn more, have questions, or believe your child may need to be identified, please contact your child's school Principal.

Children age three through the age of admission to first grade are also eligible if they have developmental delays and, as a result, need special education and related services. Developmental delay is defined as a child who is less than the age of beginners and at least 3 years of age and is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (i) The child's score, on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas. (ii) The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional and self-help. For additional information you may contact the **Early Intervention Office of the Pittsburgh Public Schools at 412.323.3960.**

Evaluation Process

The School District of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh-Mt. Oliver Intermediate Unit, and charter schools have procedures in place by which parents can request an evaluation. For information about procedures applicable to your child, contact the school that your child attends. District telephone numbers and addresses can also be found at the end of this notice. Parents of preschool age children, age three through five, may request an evaluation in writing by addressing a letter to the **Early Intervention Office at Pittsburgh Conroy Education Center, 1398 Page Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15233**.

Consent

School entities cannot proceed with an evaluation, or with the initial provision of special education and related services, without the written consent of the parents. For additional information related to consent, please refer the Procedural Safeguards Notice which can be found at the PaTTAN website, www.Pattan.net or by contacting the **Program for Students with Exceptionalities at 2323 Brighton Road., Pittsburgh, PA 15212 or 412.529.3132**. Once written parental consent is obtained, the district will proceed with the evaluation process. If the parent disagrees with the completed evaluation, the parent can request an independent education evaluation at public expense.

Program Development

Once the evaluation process is completed, a team of qualified professional and parents determine whether the child is eligible. If the child is eligible, the individualized education program (IEP) team meets, develops the program, and determines the educational placement. Once the IEP team develops the program and determines the educational placement, school district staff, intermediate unit staff, or charter school staff will issue a notice of recommended educational placement/prior written notice (NOREP). Your written consent is required before initial services can be provided. A parent has the right to revoke consent after initial placement.

Confidentiality of Information:

The School District of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh-Mt. Oliver Intermediate Unit, and charter schools maintain records concerning all children enrolled in the school, including students with disabilities. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality. Your consent, or consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under State law, must

be obtained before personally identifiable information is released, except as permitted under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The age of majority in Pennsylvania is 21. Each participating agency must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages. One official at each participating agency must assume responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. Each participating agency must maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the agency who have access to personally identifiable information.

A parent may file a written complaint alleging that the rights described in this notice were not provided. This complaint should be addressed to:

Pennsylvania Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
Division of Compliance
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

The Department of Education will investigate the matter and issue a report of findings and necessary corrective action within 60 days. The Department will take necessary action to ensure compliance is achieved.

For additional information related to student records, the parent can refer to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Complaints alleging failures of the school district with regard to confidentiality of personally identifiable information may also be filed with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

This notice is only a summary of the special education services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents.

For more information or to request evaluation or screening of a public or private school – age child contact the responsible school entity listed below. For preschool age children, information, screenings and evaluations requested, may be obtained by contacting the Pittsburgh-Mt. Oliver Intermediate Unit or the Early Intervention Office.

The addresses of these offices are as follows:

INTERMEDIATE UNIT
Pittsburgh Mt. Oliver Intermediate Unit 1305 Muriel Street Pittsburgh, PA 15203 Phone: **412.224.4580** Fax: **412.224.4583**
SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICES
School District of Pittsburgh 341 S. Bellefield Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15213 Phone: **412.529.HELP(3457)** **www.pghschools.org** **Parent Hotline: 412.529.HELP**
Early Intervention Office Pittsburgh Conroy Education Center 1398 Page Street Pittsburgh, PA 15233 Phone: **412.529.4000**

Program for Students with Exceptionalities
2323 Brighton Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15212
Phone: **412.529.3132**
www.pghschools.org/academics/pse-special-education

CHARTER SCHOOLS

SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICES
School District of Pittsburgh
341 S. Bellefield Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Phone: **412.529.HELP(3457)**
www.pghschools.org
Parent Hotline: 412.529.HELP

The school entity or charter school will not discriminate in employment, educational programs, or activities based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, handicap, creed, marital status or because a person is a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era. No preschool, elementary or secondary school pupil enrolled in a school district, Intermediate Unit, or charter school program shall be denied equal opportunity to participate in age and program appropriate instruction or activities due to race, color, handicap, creed, national origin, marital status or financial hardship.