



Annual Notice of Special Education Services

Child Find Independence Charter School West

Each school district and public education agency in the state of Pennsylvania must establish and implement procedures for identifying, locating, and evaluating children suspected of having a disability. The purpose of this notice is to: 1) describe the types of disabilities that might qualify a child for programs and services under IDEA, 2) describe the special education programs and related services that are available, and 3) describe the process by which ICS West may screen or evaluate students to determine eligibility. According to state and federal special education regulations, annual public notice to parents of children who reside within a school district is required regarding child find responsibilities. School Districts (SDs), Intermediate Units (IUs), and Charter Schools (CSs) are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. 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.

Children Served in Special Education Programs

Special education services are available to children who have one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities:

- autism
- deaf/blindness
- emotional disturbance
- hearing impairment including deafness
- intellectual disability
- multiple disabilities
- orthopedic impairment
- other health impairment
- specific learning disability
- speech or language impairment
- traumatic brain injury
- visual impairment, including blindness

Description of Special Education Programs

Independence Charter School West provides appropriate special education programs and related services that are:

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- provided at no cost to the parents;
- provided under the authority of a school entity, directly; by referral or by contract;
- individualized to meet the educational needs of the child;
- reasonably calculated to yield meaningful educational benefit and progress and designed to conform to an Individual Education Program.

Related services available to students include transportation, speech pathology, physical and occupational therapy, school health services, hearing services, and vision and orientation and mobility services.

Referral of Children for Screening and Evaluation

Independence Charter School West has procedures to identify children needing special education. Those procedures are “screening” and “evaluation”. If a student is demonstrating a need for additional supports, the teachers, other school staff, or parents may refer a child for SST (Student Success Team). Through the process of SST, a variety of interventions may be tried, including but not limited to a screening if deemed warranted. Attempted interventions and remediation may require time to determine progress or responsiveness. This process may take 30, 60 or 90 days depending on the level of remediation and other known factors. Parents who suspect that a child may have a disability and need special education can request a screening or evaluation at any time by contacting the school Principal.

ICS West screening procedure includes but is not limited to: reviewing immediately available data sources such as health records, parent interview and history, functional visual and hearing, student’s response to attempted remediation and interventions as part of SST process, diagnostic academic assessments, and/or speech, OT, or PT screenings as needed. If the screening indicates any suspected disability, an evaluation will be recommended, and the parent must consent in writing in order for the evaluation to be conducted. No evaluations may be conducted without written parental permission. Consult the school Principal or Special Education Coordinator for more information.

Confidentiality

If a child is referred for SST and/or a screening is conducted, a written record, directly related to the child, is maintained by ICS West. These records are personally identifiable to your child. Identifiable information includes the child’s name, parents or other family members, the address, a list of characteristics, attendance records, and a record of the presented concerns. ICS West protects the confidentiality of a child’s identifiable information and is responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of these records.

ICS West may gather information regarding the child’s physical, mental, emotional, and health functioning through testing and assessment, observation of the child, as well as through a review of records made available to ICS West through healthcare providers or service agencies. ICS West may request a release of records from the parent for additional information regarding the health, physical, and emotional health of a child in order to proceed with screening or evaluation. ICS West may require a physician to provide a consent for a child to be evaluated by ICS West or its contracted agents if a physical, mental, or other health requirement is so severe that ICS West deems it warranted to acquire such consent from a medical professional before conducting screening or evaluation.

Parents of the child have rights regarding the confidentiality of these records. The right to inspect and review the educational records related to his/her child that are collected, maintained, or used by ICS West. ICS West will comply with a request to review the records. Parental consent must be obtained before ICS West is able to disclose these records to anyone outside of ICS West, unless the records are requested via a court mandate. ICS West may disclose records without consent to another school district or school in which the child is seeking intent to enroll.

The records and documents that are part of the evaluation and screening process are confidential and protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). School districts, intermediate units, 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 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 who have access to personally identifiable information. For additional information related to student records, the parent can refer to FERPA. 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.

[More Information](#)

For more information regarding a child's disability, screening or evaluation procedure, related services, educational records, or general questions, please contact Fatimah Johnson, Special Education Coordinator, at 215-724-5600.