

**South Middleton School District  
Special Education Office  
4 Forge Road  
Boiling Springs, PA 17007**



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### Child Find: Annual Public Notice

The South Middleton School District, along with other public agencies in the Commonwealth, must establish and implement procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate all school-aged children who need special education programs and services because of the child's disability. This notice is to help find these children, to offer assistance to parents, and to describe the parents' rights with regard to confidentiality of information that will be obtained during this process.

The content of this notice has been written in English. If a person does not understand any of this notice, he or she should contact the school district Director of Special Education and request an explanation.

### Child Find

Child Find refers to activities undertaken by public education agencies to identify, locate, and evaluate children residing in the State, including children attending private schools, who are suspected of having disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, and determine the child's need for special education and related services. The purpose is to locate these children so that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) can be made available. The types of disabilities that, if found, may cause a child to need services are: autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment due to chronic or acute health problems, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury and visual impairment including blindness. If a child is preschool age, developmental delay may cause a child to need 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 Janette Fulton, Director of Special Education at 717.258-6484, ext. 2409 at [jdf@smsd.us](mailto:jdf@smsd.us) or Eric Bostick, Supervisor of Preschool/Early Intervention, Capital Area Intermediate Unit #15, at [ebostick@caiu.org](mailto:ebostick@caiu.org), or at 717-732-8400, ext. 8619.

### Screening and Evaluation

The District, as prescribed by section 1402 of the school code, routinely conducts screenings of a child's hearing (Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 7th, and 11th grade), visual acuity (every year beginning with Kindergarten), and screenings for speech and language skills (when a referral is made by a parent, teacher, or the building level Instructional Support Team).

Gross motor and fine-motor skills, academic skills, and social and/or emotional skills are assessed by classroom teachers and support staff on an on-going basis. Screening activities include review of group-based data, such as cumulative enrollment and health records, report cards, and curriculum-based and performance-based assessments. Identified needs from these screening sources as well as information obtained from parents and outside agencies, are assessed and noted within student records. These school records are always open and available to parents, and only to school officials who have legitimate "need to know" information about the child. Information from the records is released to other persons or agencies only with appropriate authorization, which involves written permission, by parents.

Parents who have concerns regarding their child may contact the building principal or director of special education at *any time* to request a screening or evaluation of their child. Parental requests should be made in writing. Upon receipt of the written request, the building level Instructional Support Team (IST) or Teaching Team, which includes the parent, will meet to review the request and the available screening information. This information will be used to recommend interventions to meet the child's specific needs and/or to document the need for further evaluation.

If it is determined that a child needs additional services/interventions, the IST or Teaching Team will make adjustments relative to such things as the child's learning style, behavior, physical challenges, and speech difficulties to be more in keeping with traditional classroom expectancies. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the planning and implementation of intervention strategies. If a student does not make expected progress with this assistance, the team can revise the intervention plan and/or refer the student for a multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE). If a MDE is appropriate, the district will provide to the parent a completed "Permission to Evaluate" form outlining the purpose of the evaluation and the type of assessments that will be used. Parents must provide informed consent by signing and returning the permission before any evaluations can be completed. The purpose of the MDE is to establish the student's eligibility and need for special education and/or related services. Upon receipt of the signed permission, the district has 60 school days to complete the evaluation process.

After all of the evaluations are completed, an Evaluation Report (ER) will be compiled with parent involvement and the report will include specific recommendations for the types of intervention(s) necessary to deal with the child's specified needs. The copy of the Evaluation Report will be provided to the parent and the information will be reviewed with them individually and/or with the entire team. For the student who has been found to be eligible for and in need of special education services, a meeting of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team will be scheduled with parent involvement in order to develop a specially designed educational plan for the student. To be eligible for Special Education Services, as defined by federal and state law, a student must meet one of the categorical exceptionalities (i.e. autism / pervasive developmental disorder, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, developmental delay under early intervention guidelines, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, orthopedic impairment, serious emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, or speech or language impairment) and demonstrate a need for specially designed instruction as determined by the findings of evaluation.

The South Middleton School District provides a continuum of services for eligible students. Many programs are operated in the district while others are a cooperative effort between the district and a neighboring school district. If an appropriate program is not available in the district or a neighboring school district, South Middleton School District may contract with the Capital Area Intermediate Unit or a private educational agency to provide the necessary specially designed instruction.

Guidelines for special education programs and services, as well as the rules and regulations for their operation and maintenance, are mandated by the state and federal government. If you have questions regarding special education programs and services for children that reside in South Middleton School District contact the Special Education Office located at the District Administration Office or phone 717- 258-6484, ext. 2409.

*Confidentiality of Information:*

The 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 the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The age of majority in Pennsylvania is age 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.

*Services for Students in Nonpublic Schools*

Parents of nonpublic school students who suspect that their child is exceptional and in need of special education may also make a request for screening and/or evaluation. Parental requests should be made in writing and directed to the Special Education Office, 4 Forge Rd., Boiling Springs PA 17007.