

SOUTH PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

Procedures to Locate, Identify, and Evaluate Students

As prescribed by Section 1402 of the School Code, the South Park School District routinely conducts a visual acuity screening for all students at each grade level and a hearing acuity in kindergarten and grades 1, 2, 3, 7, and 11. Speech and language skills are screened for all students in kindergarten, for all newly enrolled students, as well as on a referral basis. Gross motor and fine motor, and academic skills, and social/emotional development are continuously assessed by classroom teachers. A Home Language Survey is completed for all students at registration to screen for English as a Second Language services. Specific needs from screening are recorded in the child's official file. Screening information may be used by the Student Assistance Program (SAP) Team at each school to plan, implement, and monitor appropriate interventions. Screening information may also indicate a need for further evaluation. Parents that have concerns about their child may contact the school Principal to request a screening or SAP Team intervention, or may contact the Director of Special Education for further evaluation of their child (412 655-3111).

Interventions are designed by the SAP Team to provide for a child's learning including their academic, sensory, physical, speech, social, and behavioral needs, so that students can be successful in the general curriculum. If a student does not demonstrate progress, then a parent/guardian may be asked for written permission so that the School District may conduct a multi-disciplinary evaluation (MDE). The MDE is a process of gathering information and completing assessments necessary to design a program for a child's educational needs. Parent input is requested and tests, interviews, and other assessments are conducted by teachers and specialists as necessary to obtain information about a student's functioning and needs. A parent may request in writing that the school district initiate a screening or evaluation of their child. The reason for referral should be stated in the letter and it should be submitted to the school Principal or Director of Special Education.

Once the evaluation is complete, an Evaluation Report (ER) is prepared. The ER includes findings from school records, observations, and testing information about the child's strengths and needs, a statement as to whether a child is exceptional, and if so, specific recommendations necessary to provide an appropriate educational program. The ER is distributed to team members for review and signature. The School District will then notify and invite parents and students in writing, or through a series of documented telephone calls or home visits, of the opportunity to participate in an Individual Education Program (IEP) meeting during which the MDE will be discussed and an educational plan developed. The IEP Team may consist of the following members: the parents/guardians, the student, a school Principal (LEA), a special education teacher, a regular education teacher, the Director of Special Education, and other teachers or specialists as necessary and appropriate. The parents and student, if age 18 or older, or younger if a transition plan is to be discussed, are required members of the IEP Team and efforts will be made to ensure their participation.

In advance of the IEP meeting, a packet of procedural safeguards is provided to parents, which describe rights and protections afforded to parents and students related to identification, evaluation, and placement of special education students. These include the parents' right to be notified about a child's program, progress, and any changes in program, the right

to approve or reject programs and testing, and the right to privacy. If the child is determined to be eligible for special education, the team will develop a written IEP document, which is the plan for the education of an exceptional student. The IEP in part includes information about the child's current functioning, strengths and needs, and identifies annual goals and objectives, modifications, and related services that are necessary for the student. Upon completion of the meeting and development of the IEP the parents are presented with the school district's Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) which indicates the placement, class, or services that are recommended for your child. Parents may choose to agree or disagree with the recommendation of the NOREP. There is an opportunity to resolve disagreements through informal meetings, conferences, mediation, a pre-hearing conference, or due process hearing.

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

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

Information about early intervention, parent's rights, mediation, or due process procedures, the Student Assistance Team, specific special education services and programs offered by the District is available upon request from the school Principal or Director of Special Education (412-655-3111, Option 5).

Special Education Services

The South Park School District provides special education and related services to meet the needs of identified, eligible students. The school district also provides programs and services to mentally gifted students. The following types of services/supports are available for student placement either at a school building located in or outside the school district: learning support, emotional support, life skills support, sensory support, speech and language support, physical support, autistic support, multiple disability support, gifted support, and English as a Second Language support. Children with different disabilities can be placed together in one class if their learning needs are similar and if they can benefit from the same level and type of instruction. The individualized program and services that are provided to eligible students are determined by the IEP Team. At the elementary level (grades K-6), a class cannot have children who are more than three years apart in age. At the secondary level (grades 7-12) an age range that does not exceed more than four years is allowed. Learning, emotional, autistic, life skills, multiple disabilities, speech/language, hearing, vision, gifted as well as English as a Second Language support services are available at each school building. Students who require autistic, emotional, life skills, sensory, physical, or multiple disabilities support programs may attend classes in other alternative sites, however, the District makes every effort to provide supplementary aids and services to maintain students in the regular class and in their regular public school. All services and programs are offered to the child at the South Park School District's expense.

Protected Handicapped Students (504)

In compliance with state and federal law, the South Park School District will provide to each protected handicapped student

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without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. These aids, services, and accommodations may include, but are not limited to, special transportation, modified equipment, adjustments in the student's program, or the administration of needed medication. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a

physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

Nondiscrimination Policy

The South Park School District, an equal opportunity employer, will not discriminate in employment, educational programs, or activities based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, ancestry, physical handicap, or union membership.

This policy of nondiscrimination extends to all other legally protected classifications. Publication of the policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1978, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

For more information, contact the South Park Title IX Coordinator, Kevin Monaghan, at 412-655-3111.

These services and protections for "protected Handicapped students" are distinct from those applicable to all disabled students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

For further information on the evaluation procedures and provision of services to protected handicapped students contact the school Principal or Ms. Kathleen Wooddell, Director of Special Education, South Park School District, 2001 Eagle Pride Lane, South Park, PA 15129 (Phone: 412-655-3111).

Standardized Testing Program

During enrollment within the South Park School District, various standardized tests are administered to students. The results of the tests provide a continuous record of achievement that is used for educational planning purposes. Test results are also valuable to the Student Assistance Team, teachers, and counselors in identifying a student's strengths and weaknesses, to

provide more effective instruction, and plan for course selection. The results of these tests, as well as scores received from academic aptitude tests taken by elective at the secondary level, are maintained and made part of the education record. This record also consists of grades, academic work completed and attendance. The School District's standardized testing program consists of the following tests:

Education Records/Privacy Rights of Parents and Students

The South Park School District and its employees are required by federal law, and state and federal rules and regulations to protect the rights of students. The foundation of these rights comes from federal legislation entitled Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (also known as the Buckley Amendment). There are also state rules and regulations regarding regular and special education student' rights, including those related to privacy. All students are protected by the State regulations contained in Chapter 12, known as Students Rights and Responsibilities.

The basic assurance of the above-mentioned laws, rules, and regulations is that information about students cannot be disclosed without written parental consent. There are three different categories of information maintained by the school including: education records, personally identifiable information, and directory information.

The District's policy on student records is in compliance with Pennsylvania State Board of Education regulations and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) which affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records.

A copy of the school district education records policy is located in the Principal's office of each school building, as well as in the District Administrative Offices and is available for inspection upon written request.

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

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

<u>Test</u>	<u>Grade Level Administered</u>
AIU Screener	Kindergarten
STAR 360	K, 1, 2
Otis-Lennon School Ability Test	1, 6
Classroom Diagnostic-Testing (CDT's)	3-8
PSSA's Reading/Math	3-8
PSSA's-Writing	3-8
PSSA's Science	4, 8
Keystone Exam in Algebra, Literature, completion of and Biology courses	7-12-At the each of the
IDEA Proficiency Tests	Participants in ESL
Stanford English Language Proficiency	Participants in ESL