

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 Coordinator of Special Education for further evaluation of their child.

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 multidisciplinary evaluation. The multidisciplinary evaluation 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 Coordinator of Special Education.

Once the evaluation is completed 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 multidisciplinary evaluation 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, a special education teacher, a regular education teacher, the Coordinator 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 that describes 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.

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 (412-532-0036).