

Educational Support Programs and Services

If a child is identified by the District or an Early Intervention provider as possibly in need of special education and related services, the parent will be notified of applicable procedures and receive a copy of the Procedural Safeguard Letter/Notice. Individualized services and programs are available for children who are determined to need specially designed instruction due to the following conditions:

- Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder
- Deaf-Blindness
- Deafness
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Developmental Delay (ages 3 to the age of beginners)
- Mentally Gifted
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment (Including Blindness)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) intends to provide greater access of children with disabilities to the general curriculum. It is the belief of the district that the majority of children identified as eligible for special education and related services are capable of participating in the general curriculum to varying degrees with some adaptations and modifications. All special education programs and services offered by the district reference the general curriculum. Such programs are also available at the Elk County Prison.

If a parent/guardian disagrees with an evaluation conducted by the District, the parent/guardian has a right to an independent educational evaluation at public expense unless the LEA demonstrates, in a hearing, that the evaluation conducted is appropriate.

If a parent obtains an independent educational evaluation at private expense, the results of the evaluation must be considered by the district if it meets the District's criteria in any decision made with respect to the provision of FAPE to the child and may be presented as evidence. (34 CFR §300.502)

Description of Educational Support Programs and Services

Autistic Support – This program serves students having a developmental disability, which significantly affects verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction. These characteristics are generally evident before age 3. They also adversely affect a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are: engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistant to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance.

Blind and Visually Impaired Support – Vision support services are provided to students whose visual impairment, including blindness, adversely affects their educational performance. Determination of a visual impairment shall include a full assessment and comprehensive report by an eye specialist specifying the nature and degree of the impairment.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Impaired Support – Hearing support services are provided to students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Students serviced would have a hearing loss, which interferes with the communication process and results in failure to achieve educational potential. Determination of the hearing impairment shall include a report by an audiologist or otologist, or both, specifying the nature and degree of the impairment.

Emotional Support – The Emotional Support Program serves identified students whose emotional needs or mental illnesses interfere with their academic progress in the regular education environment. Instruction is provided based upon the student's individualized educational program. Students are included in regular education whenever possible based upon each student's unique needs. Behavior support components are designed and exercised in all educational settings when needed

Gifted Support – Gifted Support Services enable the provision of specially designed instruction, which is based upon each identified student's individual needs and abilities. These services are to ensure that the identified student benefits meaningfully from the rate, level and manner of instruction. Gifted Support Services may also provide the student with opportunities for acceleration or enrichment, or both. These services go beyond the program the student would receive as part of his or her general education. Programming may include the following:

- **Individualized Acceleration** – in which instruction is matched to the competence level of the student;
- **Individual Enrichment** – in which opportunities for the investigation of areas of interest allow the student to delve deeper into the curriculum. Instruction is matched specifically to the student's achievement, abilities and interests.

Learning Support – The Learning Support Program provides identified students with a program of individualized learning and continuous academic support. Reading, Language Arts, Spelling, Math, Social Studies, and Science are the main areas in which educational services are provided. The program is designed to help students who require special services, develop their knowledge and skills. Students in need of learning support services are included in regular education whenever possible and, when deemed appropriate by the IEP team, these services may be provided in the regular instructional environment.

Life Skills Support – The Life Skills Support class serves students with overall delays who require multiple hands-on experiences for mastery to occur. Instruction is given individually and in small groups with aide assistance as needed. Students are included in homeroom and special subject areas with their peers, whenever possible, as determined by the IEP team. Students are taught life-important skills in a functional setting.

Multiple Disabilities Support – This program addresses the multiple needs of students with concomitant impairments (such as intellectual disability-blindness, intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment, etc.), when the combination of which causes such severe education problems that the problems cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term "multiple disabilities" does not include deaf-blindness.

Physical Support – This program addresses the needs of a student with the disabilities of orthopedic or other health impairment that adversely affects one or more of the following: physical mobility, speech or other forms of nonvocal communication, writing, arm and hand movement, eye and head movement or one or more of the precursor developmental steps, which lead up to full attainment of these skills necessary for success in education.

Speech and Language Support – The Speech and Language Support Program provides specially designed instruction for students who have difficulties in communication skills. Areas of difficulty, which can be addressed include: articulation (specific speed-sound production), language skill development (form, content and use), voice quality, and fluency (stuttering). One-on-one or small group instruction is provided in the speech therapy room setting or within the child's classroom depending upon which arrangement best meets the child's individual communication needs as determined by the student's IEP team.

Related Services - The IEP team determines the need for all related services. These include transportation and any developmental, corrective, or other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.

Psychological Services – School psychologists receive special training in child development, learning processes, emotional and behavioral adjustment, and psychological and instructional testing. The district's school psychologist can provide a variety of supports to students, parents, teachers, and administrators. These supports include psycho-educational testing to determine a student's academic strengths and needs, identification of students who might be in need of special education services, assistance in the development of appropriate educational plans designed to meet students' needs, and consultation with parents and teachers about students' learning and adjustment. The school psychologist works cooperatively with students, parents, community members and school staff to assist with providing all students with a free and appropriate education. School-based psychological services are provided free of charge through the Ridgway Area School District.

Behavioral Support Services – Behavioral Support Services are a component of Psychological Services and can be provided to students receiving their education in the general education population and/or students receiving special education services. Students' whose behavior is adversely affecting their academic performance within the curriculum or students' whose behavior is adversely affecting one or more areas of life functioning (peer relationships, etc.) may be candidates for Behavioral Support Services. Behavioral Support Services include, but are not limited to, the evaluation of a student's behavior within the education setting, analysis of data collected from the evaluation, the development of behavioral interventions, the implementation of behavioral interventions, and the monitoring of those interventions as they relate to the student's behavioral goals and/or objectives identified via the behavioral evaluation. Students may be referred for behavioral support services by parents or guardians, administrators, guidance counselors, and/or teachers.

Behavioral support is a continuum of services or interventions that will address an individual student's needs when behavior interferes with his/her learning or the learning of others. Such behaviors include internalizing behaviors such as withdrawal, depression, and suicidal threat, as well as externalizing behaviors such as verbal or physical aggression, and oppositional defiant tendencies. A continuum is in place to address the needs of all students and shall include but not be limited to:

- **School-wide behavior support** is designed to serve all students and parents involving school wide prevention, early intervention, and intensive services for students with significant emotional and /or behavioral needs. A comprehensive array of supports is available from minimal interventions to highly intensive supports.

- **Classroom behavior management** involves the establishment of a set of rules, rewards, and consequences within a classroom. These procedures can be implemented daily by a teacher, personal care assistant, or educational assistant, usually under the guidance of a behavior specialist, consultant, or individual trained in classroom behavior management strategies.
- **Individual behavior support plan** includes a variety of techniques to develop and maintain skills that will enhance an individual student's opportunity for learning and self-fulfillment. Interventions used shall be the least intrusive necessary. The plan will be implemented on a daily basis by all personnel involved with the student.
- **School consultation** of a clinical provider, such as a wrap-around service provider or specialist, with regular and special education teachers, school administrators, other school personnel and parents regarding the behavioral management of youth within the school setting occur based upon student need. This is delivered as requested by or agreed upon by the school district.
- **Group psychological counseling** services include regularly scheduled face-to-face interventions with small groups of youth designed to improve functioning that allows the youth to reasonably benefit from his/her educational program. These services can be provided by outside agencies or qualified school personnel.
- **Individual psychological counseling** services include regularly scheduled face-to-face interventions with youth designed to improve cognitive and behavioral functioning that allows the youth to reasonably benefit from his/her educational program. This counseling may be provided by personnel from an outside agency, a certified guidance counselor, or the school psychologist.

Extended School Year - The determination of whether or not a child with a disability needs an extended school year must be made annually on an individual basis by the child's IEP team. An eligible child is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in excess of 180 days per year if regression caused by interruption in educational programming and limited recoupment capacity, or other factors, makes it unlikely that the student will attain or maintain skills and behavior relevant to established IEP goals and objectives.

Occupational Therapy – This service addresses fine motor concerns that interfere with an identified student's ability to benefit from or gain access to his/her educational program. A doctor's diagnosis and order are necessary for evaluation and treatment. The order must also specify the medical diagnosis. This order must be renewed annually.

Physical Therapy – Identified students who have gross motor concerns that hinder their ability to benefit from or gain access to his/her educational program may be eligible for physical therapy services. A doctor's diagnosis and order are necessary for evaluation and treatment. This order must also specify the medical diagnosis. This order must be renewed annually.

Early Intervention – If you believe your infant, toddler, and/or young child (age 3 to school-age) is experiencing delays in his/her development, Early Intervention can help. (For a list of possible signs/symptoms of developmental delays, see pages 2 and 3 of this document, or speak with your child's physician, teacher, the school psychologist or other school official. Developmental delays can occur in one or more of the following areas: social and emotional development, physical development, communication (language and speech) development, cognitive development, or adaptive development (self-help skills). For more information about birth to age 3 services, contact Cameron-Elk (CE) Early Intervention services at 814.772.8111. The Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit Nine's Early Intervention Office at 814.887.5512 is able to provide more information about services for eligible young children (age 3 to school-aged).