

Sylvan Heights Science Charter School

Policy Title: Special Education
Policy Number: 113
Adopted: December 18, 2017
Revised: January 27, 2020

PURPOSE

Each student with a disability who is a resident of Sylvan Heights Science Charter School (School) shall be offered educational programs and services that meet the student's needs for educational, instructional, transitional, and related services. The special education program shall be designed to comply with law; conform to School goals; and integrate programs of special education with the regular instructional program of the School, consistent with the rights and interests of student with and without disabilities.

A student who requires special education shall receive programs and services according to an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP shall provide access to the School's general curriculum and participation in state and local assessments, including supplemental aids and services that permit the student to be educated, to the maximum extent appropriate, with nondisabled peers. The School shall provide a continuum of placement options to appropriately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

DEFINITIONS

Students with disabilities - school-aged children within the jurisdiction of the School who have been evaluated and found to have one or more disabilities as defined by law, and who require, because of such disabilities, special education and related services. School-aged children who have identified disabilities but do not require special education may be entitled to accommodations or services, and/or enrollment in courses of study in the School, which serve students with disabilities pursuant to other law or Board policy.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) - the written educational statement for each student with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.

AUTHORITY

The Board directs that all resident students with disabilities shall be identified, located, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational programs and services, in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations. The School shall establish and implement a system of procedural safeguards and parent/guardian notification.

At no time will the parent/guardian be financially responsible for psychological or related services determined necessary to assure student received both a free appropriate public education and meaningful educational benefit per the IEP, unless services are procured privately and/or without appropriate process under Policy 113.3.

The School shall develop and submit a special education plan to the Department of Education for approval every three (3) years, and shall implement such plan as required by law and regulations. The School's special education plan shall include procedures for identifying, locating, evaluating and educating students with disabilities who are residents of the School, shall be aligned with the Strategic Plan adopted by the Board, and shall contain the components required by state code. Prior to approval by

the Board and submission to the Department of Education, the special education plan shall be made available for public inspection and comment in the School's offices for a minimum of twenty-eight (28) days.

The Board shall determine the facilities, programs, services and staff that will be provided by the School for the instruction of students with disabilities, based upon the identified needs of the School's special education population.

In order to maintain an effective special education plan, the Board may participate in special education programs of Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) 15.

The Principal/Chief Academic Office (CAO) or designee is directed to annually recommend to the Board the employment and retention of necessary staff and provision of required facilities, programs, and services to provide for the needs of students with disabilities.

The Director of Special Education shall evaluate the effectiveness of the School's special education plan and shall periodically report to the Board the criteria and results of such evaluation.

Each student with a disability shall be educated pursuant to an IEP which shall provide an appropriate education, seek to assure success in learning, and offer the least restrictive environment, in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.

The School prohibits discrimination based on disability. Students with disabilities are entitled to receive services and accommodations which will permit them to participate in School programs, services, and activities as required by law.

If the School is identified with significant disproportionality, the special education plan shall include prevention measures for inappropriate over-identification and disproportionate representation by race or ethnicity of children with disabilities.

The School shall maintain procedures and processes that implement special education programs and services, in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations, including the following areas:

1. Educational plans;
2. Child Find;
3. Special education programs that operate in the School;
4. Assessments;
5. Screening;
6. Criteria the School will use to identify specific learning disabilities;
7. Evaluation;
8. Reevaluation;
9. Individualized Education Program (IEP), including examples of supplementary aids and services provided by the School;

10. Extended School Year services (ESY);
11. Behavior support;
12. A full continuum of educational placements and evidence that placements in other than regular education settings are not based on lack of resources, facilities, staff, or for administrative convenience;
13. Disciplinary placements;
14. Facilities;
15. Early intervention;
16. Procedural safeguards;
17. Confidentiality of information;
18. Staff and parent/guardian training;
19. Highly qualified staff; and
20. Maintenance of information concerning students with disabilities, services provided, performance and discipline data, and report information as required by the Secretary of the Department of Education.

Child Find

The Principal/CAO or designee shall ensure that the School annually conducts awareness and outreach programs and activities designed to reach parents/guardians of students with disabilities who are enrolled in the School. The School's public awareness activities shall include annual publication of a written notice in newspapers and other media notifying residents about child identification activities; available special education services and programs and how to request them; and procedures used to ensure confidentiality of student information. Written information shall be published in the School Handbook and on the School's web site. Public awareness activities must include information regarding potential signs of developmental delays and other risk factors that could indicate disabilities.

Screening

The School shall establish a system of screening to identify and provide initial screening for students prior to referral for a special education evaluation, and to identify students who may need special education services and programs. Screening shall include hearing and vision screenings. Screenings shall be conducted at reasonable intervals to determine whether all students are performing based on grade-appropriate standards in core academic subjects.

Confidentiality

The School shall maintain a system of safeguards to protect the confidentiality of students' educational records and personally identifiable information when collecting, storing, disclosing, and destroying student records.

School staff shall maintain the confidentiality of student records and personally identifiable information, as required by law, regulations and Board policy.

Recording of Meetings

Except as specifically provided for within this policy, the School prohibits audio, video and electronic recording of meetings between parents/guardians and School teachers, paraprofessionals, program specialists, consultants or administrators.

An attempt to record a meeting by a parent/guardian after a verbal prohibition by School staff shall result in immediate termination of the meeting and may result in ejection from School property and a report to the police.

The School shall permit audio recording of a meeting when a participant submits, at least five (5) days prior to the meeting, documentation that substantiates that the Participant has:

1. A disability or limited English proficiency that significantly limits his/her ability to meaningfully understand or participate in the meeting's intended decision-making and recording is the only feasible means of accommodating the limitation.
2. A legitimate interest in attending the meeting, but for good cause is unable to do so, and recording is the only feasible means by which s/he can meaningfully understand and participate in the decision-making.

The School may also permit videotaping of a meeting when written consent is given by all participants at the meeting, and all of the above standards have been met.

When recording is granted, the School employee responsible for the meeting shall arrange to record the meeting by similar means. Such recording shall be considered part of the student's educational record and be subject to relevant law and regulations.

References:

20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq
29 U.S.C. 794
42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq

24 P.S. 13-1372

34 CFR Part 300

22 PA Code 14.101 et seq

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