

NORTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PROGRAMS

TITLE: SPECIAL EDUCATION

ADOPTED: March 10, 1997

REVISED: May 12, 2003

113. SPECIAL EDUCATION	
<p>1. Purpose SC 1371</p> <p>Title 22 Sec. 14.42</p>	<p>It is the policy of the Northern Lehigh School District to provide appropriate educational programs for suspected and identified exceptional students who are residents within the school district. It is the intent of the School Board that exceptional students be provided with quality special education services and programs. The School Board, administration, and professional staff shall disseminate information about and promote the use of research based practices and innovative programs to meet the needs of exceptional students.</p> <p>All efforts to identify exceptionality in children shall take place at the earliest possible age level. Upon recommendation of appropriate school personnel and/or parent request, children are referred for evaluation to the school psychologist. The evaluation results are presented for review to the multidisciplinary team.</p> <p>In addition, it is the philosophy of the school district to provide programs for exceptional students in the least restrictive environment. All exceptional students, or those thought to be exceptional, should have individual education programs and due process procedures provided to them in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.</p>
<p>2. Authority SC 1372</p>	<p>The Board will determine which facilities for the instruction of exceptional children shall be furnished by this district.</p> <p>In order to maintain a more effective program of special education, the Board may participate in special education programs of Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21.</p>
<p>3. Guidelines</p>	<p>The school district is committed to the development and operation of quality special education programs. The school district's goals for special education programs include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To locate and identify all exceptional students in the school district in accordance with federal and state special education regulations and standards. 2. To provide a full continuum of services for the education of exceptional students.

3. To ensure that special education standards and regulations are met regarding the education of exceptional students.
4. The program to which each student with a disability is assigned shall be one that provides an appropriate education, seeks to assure success in learning, and offers the least restrictive environment, in accordance with federal and state regulations.

Objectives

The district's objectives for special education programs include:

1. Screen all students thought-to-be eligible for special education services through the IST team or a similar early intervention model.
2. Evaluate all students thought-to-be eligible for special education services.
3. Place all exceptional students in appropriate programs.
4. Develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each exceptional student to determine appropriate and meaningful progress.
5. Instruct each exceptional student in a carefully planned program of instruction.
6. Evaluate each exceptional student to determine appropriate and meaningful yearly progress.
7. Counsel parents regarding each student's individual program of instruction.
8. Reevaluate each student's program as prescribed by federal and state laws and regulations.
9. Provide an evaluation of each student as prescribed by federal and state laws and regulations.
10. Provide educational opportunities for exceptional students in the least restrictive environment.
11. Keep an accurate, up-to-date list of all approved private schools and students from the school district in approved private school placements.
12. Keep an accurate, up-to-date list of all supportive agencies in the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21 and Pennsylvania.

13. As part of the district's census, to identify all special needs preschool students in the school district.
14. Employ special education teachers and highly qualified paraprofessionals who possess the competencies needed to provide a quality learning environment for exceptional students.
15. Work closely with the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21 and other agencies regarding special education programs.
16. Communicate, on a regular basis, with the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21 regarding students who are placed in IU special education programs and services.
17. Evaluate and place students by means of a multidisciplinary evaluation team.
18. Provide direct supervision of each program.
19. Evaluate temporary professional and permanent professional staff members on a regular basis.

Recommendations for appropriate primary and secondary programs and services for students with special needs shall be determined by a multidisciplinary evaluation team. The team, may be composed of, but not limited to, a certified school psychologist, social worker, education related service provider, administrator, regular education teacher, special education teacher, and parent is responsible for identifying the student's needs, how best they can be met, the least restrictive setting for meeting those needs, and the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

The IEP is reviewed and revised annually. While the student is in a special education program, the Director of Special Education is responsible for the student's appropriate education.

Child progress in programs/services as IEPs are implemented is monitored continuously. Review and updates of the IEP are made as needed, with a minimum review and update occurring once a year. Report cards are issued and two (2) conference periods are conducted annually as with regular education students.

Referrals can be made by teachers, counselors, or administrators. Parents may also initiate referrals by written request.

The rights of the child and parents are guarded in this process. Referrals are made with parental, or where appropriate, student consent or notification. The process is in full compliance with both federal and state laws and regulations.

The initial screening process to determine if a school-age student needs to be evaluated for special education programs/services is through an early intervention model as prescribed by federal and state laws and regulations.

All evaluations and reevaluations completed by the school district are consistent with the multidisciplinary team concept. The school psychologist, as chairperson of the team, determines which professionals are appropriate for the team evaluation. The following district personnel are all potential team members: the referring classroom teacher, guidance counselor, building administrator, and special education teacher are usually members of the team. In addition, the following intermediate unit personnel are potential team members: language consultant, hearing therapist, and vision therapist. When an IU special education program is being considered, the appropriate supervisor of that program becomes an ex-officio member. District staff and community professionals may also be utilized in the team evaluation process.

Assessments are conducted in an appropriate and nondiscriminatory manner. Each professional utilizes judgment in selecting instruments that are appropriate. A wide variety of instruments are available to each evaluator. The team process provides a check on the appropriateness and cultural fairness of the evaluation data.

All evaluations and reevaluations are conducted with the rights of the parent and student in mind. Procedures outlined in federal and state laws and regulations are followed.