



CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS CHARTER SCHOOL
916 Christian Street
1242 South 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147

Child Find Policy

Procedures for location, identifying and evaluation of children with disabilities.

Purpose

According to state and federal Special Education regulations, annual public notice to parents of children who reside within a school district is required regarding child find responsibilities. School Districts, intermediate units and Charter Schools are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via the Individuals with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Legal Standard

To enable the Commonwealth to meet its obligations under 34 CFR 300.111 (relating to child find), each charter school and cyber charter school shall establish written policies and procedures to ensure that all children with disabilities who are enrolled in the charter school or cyber charter school, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located and evaluated (22 Pa. Code 711.21(a)).

Screening

Purpose- identify students who are suspected of having a disability and who, as a result, may need Special Education services.

Screening and Evaluation Procedures for Children to Determine Eligibility

Screening

The Charter School has established a system of screening which may include pre-referral intervention services to accomplish the following:

1. Identification and provision of initial screening for students prior to referral for a special education evaluation.
2. Provision of peer support for teachers and other staff members to assist them in working effectively with students in the general education curriculum.
3. Identification of students who may need special education services and programs.

The screening process includes:

Hearing and vision screening in accordance with the Pennsylvania Public School Code for the purpose of identifying students with hearing or vision difficulty so that they can be referred for assistance or recommended for evaluation for special education.



Screening at reasonable intervals to determine whether all students are performing based on grade-appropriate standards in core academic subjects.

The Charter School has established and implements procedures to identify, locate, and evaluate all children suspected of being eligible for special education. These procedures involve screening activities which may also include but are not limited to review of data and student records; motor screening; and speech and language screening. The school assesses the current achievement and performance of the child, designs school-based interventions, and assesses the effectiveness of interventions. If the concern can be addressed without special education services or is the result of limited English proficiency or appropriate instruction, a recommendation may be made for interventions other than a multidisciplinary team evaluation. Parents nevertheless have the right to request a multidisciplinary team evaluation at any time, regardless of the outcome of the screening process.

Except as indicated above or otherwise announced publicly, screening activities take place in an on-going fashion throughout the school year. Screening is conducted at the Charter School unless other arrangements are necessary or arranged.

The screening of a student by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation is not to be considered an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services.

If parents need additional information regarding the purpose, time, and location of screening activities, they should call or write to the Director of Special Education.

Evaluation

An evaluation under IDEA involves the use of a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent that may assist in determining whether the child is a child with a disability and the content of the child's IEP. The Charter School does not use any single measure or assessment as a sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child. Technically sound instruments are used to assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors in addition to physical or developmental factors.

Parents who think their child is eligible for special education may request, at any time, that the Charter School conduct a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation. Requests for a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation must be made in writing to the Director of Specialized Services at the Charter School.

If a parent makes an oral request for a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation, the Charter School shall provide the parent with a form(s) for that purpose. If the public school denies the parents' request for an evaluation, the parents have the right to challenge the denial through an impartial hearing or through voluntary alternative dispute resolution such as mediation.

Reevaluations are conducted if the Charter School determines that the educational or related services needs, including improved academic achievement and functional performance, of the child warrant a reevaluation; or if the child's parent or teacher requests a reevaluation. A reevaluation may occur not



more than once a year, unless the parent and the Charter School agree; and must occur once every 3 years, unless the parent and the Charter School agree that a reevaluation is unnecessary, Students with an intellectual disability must be reevaluated every two years under State law.

More information regarding the evaluation process is contained later on in this Handbook.

Educational Placement

The determination of whether a student is eligible for special education is made by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. The IEP team includes the parents of a child with a disability; not less than one regular education teacher, if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment; not less than one special education teacher, or when appropriate, not less than one special education provider; a representative of the school who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities, is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the School; an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the team described above; other individuals, at the discretion of the parent or the agency, who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate; and whenever appropriate, a child with a disability. IEP team participation is directly addressed by the regulations. If the student is determined to be eligible for special education, the IEP team develops a written education plan called an IEP. The IEP shall be based in part on the results of the Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation. The IEP team may decide that a student is not eligible for special education. In that instance, recommendations for educational programming in regular education may be developed from the ER.

Placement must be made in the “least restrictive environment” in which the student's needs can be met with special education and related services. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with children who are not disabled.