



CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS CHARTER SCHOOL

**916 Christian Street
1242 South 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147**

Child Find

Annual Public Notice of Services for Students with Disabilities, Including Special Education and Protected Handicapped Students

In accordance with Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code, the CEO of Christopher Columbus Charter School or his designee shall ensure that all students with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") requires school districts, intermediate units, and charter schools to conduct "child find" activities for children who may be eligible for special education supports and services. Educational entities are also required to conduct "child find" activities for children who may be eligible for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The purpose of this notice is to describe: (1) the types of disabilities that might qualify a student for such programs and services; (2) the special education program and related services that are available; (3) the process by which the school screens and evaluates such students to determine eligibility; (4) the special rights that pertain to such students and their parents or legal guardians; and (5) the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities.

Students Served in Special Education Programs:

Christopher Columbus Charter School is required by the IDEA to provide a free appropriate public education ("FAPE") to children with disabilities who need special education and related services. School age children who need special education and related services are identified as children with disabilities. These students have been identified as needing specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following disabilities:

- Autism
- Intellectual Disability
- Specific Learning Disability
- Deaf-Blindness
- Deafness
- Multiple Disabilities
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Emotional Disturbance



- Orthopedic Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Hearing Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Visual Impairment, including Blindness

Description of Special Education Programs:

Christopher Columbus Charter School provides appropriate special education programs and related services that are: Provided at no cost to parents; Provided under the authority of a school entity, directly, by referral or by contract; Individualized to meet the educational needs of the students; and reasonably calculated to yield meaningful educational benefit and progress and designed to conform to an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”).

Special education is designed to meet the needs of each eligible student, including specifically designed instruction conducted in the classroom, home, community settings, hospitals, institutions, and other settings.

Related services are available to students including transportation and other supportive services that help an eligible student benefit from special education. Examples include speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, social work services, school health services, medical services for diagnosis or evaluation, parent counseling and education, recreation counseling services, rehabilitation counseling services, and assistive technology services.

Referral of Students for Screening and Evaluation:

Christopher Columbus Charter School has procedures to identify students needing special education. Those procedures are “screening” and “evaluation.” If a student is suspected of having a disability, teachers and other school personnel or parents may refer the student for a screening and/or evaluation. Parents concerned that their child may have a disability and need special education can request a screening or evaluation at any time by contacting the Director of Special Education using the contact information listed in the “Contact Information” section of this notice or by providing a written request to a school official. Basic screening activities include, but are not limited to, reviewing immediately available data sources such as health records, parent interview, and history; functional vision and hearing evaluations; and determining the student’s response to attempted remediation. Speech and language screenings are completed upon request or referral.

Some indications that a child may have a disability are:

- Consistent problems in getting along with others
- Difficulty communicating
- Lack of interest or ability in age-appropriate activities
- Resistance to change
- Difficulty seeing or hearing that interferes with the ability to communicate



- Health problems that affect educational performance, including attention problems
- Difficulty performing tasks that require reading, writing, or mathematics
- Chronic behavior or social problems that affect your child's ability to learn

If the screening leads to a recommendation for evaluation, the evaluation team will conduct the evaluation upon receiving written parental consent. Please contact the Director of Special Education for more information.

Rights and Protections:

State and federal law affords many rights and protections to students with disabilities and their parents. A summary of these rights and protections follows. Interested persons may obtain a complete written summary of the rights and protections afforded by the law, together with information about free or low-cost legal services and advice, by contacting the Director of Special Education.

Prior Written Notice ("PWN"):

Christopher Columbus Charter School must notify a parent in writing whenever it proposes to initiate or to change the identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement of a student or whenever it refuses to initiate or make a change in identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement requested by a parent. Such notice shall be accompanied by a written description of the reasons for the proposal or refusal, the options considered, if any, and the reason why such options were rejected, if applicable.

Consent:

The school cannot proceed with an initial evaluation or with the initial provision of special education and related services without the written consent of the parent. For additional information related to consent, please refer to the Procedural Safeguards Notice which can be found on the PaTTAN website (www.Pattan.net).

Once written parental consent is obtained, Christopher Columbus Charter School shall proceed with the evaluation process. If the parent disagrees with the evaluation, the parent can request an independent educational evaluation at public expense.

Protection in Evaluation Procedure:

Evaluations to determine eligibility and current need for special education and related services shall be administered in a manner that is free of racial, cultural, and linguistic bias. Evaluations cannot consist of a single test or assessment and testing must be a valid measure of the psychological, social, emotional, or other learning characteristic or behavior that the school is using it to measure. Testing and assessment shall be administered in accordance with professional standards and the criteria established by the publisher, and in the native language of the student.



Confidentiality:

The records and documents that are part of the evaluation and screening process are confidential and protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). Christopher Columbus Charter School maintains records concerning all students enrolled in the school, including students with disabilities. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality. The consent of the parent or eligible student who has reached the age of majority under state law shall be obtained before personally identifiable information is released, except as permitted under FERPA. The school protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction. At Christopher Columbus Charter School, the Chief Executive Officer assumes responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. The school maintains, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of the employees who have access to personally identifiable information.

Parents have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202- 4605.

For additional information related to student records, the parent can refer to the school's Student Records Policy and FERPA (<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>).

Program Development:

Once the evaluation process is completed, a team of qualified professionals determine whether the student is eligible. If the student is eligible, the IEP team meets, develops the program, and determines the educational placement. Once the IEP team develops the program and determines the educational placement, Christopher Columbus Charter School will issue a notice of recommended educational placement ("NOREP") or PWN. Written parental consent is required before initial services can be provided. The parent has the right to revoke consent after initial placement.

More Information:

Christopher Columbus Charter School will provide FAPE to each eligible student with a disability enrolled in the school, at no cost to parents (22 Pa Code § 12.4; 15; 4.4(c)). This includes provision of education and related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to afford each eligible student with a disability equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits from educational programs and extracurricular activities without discrimination, to the same extent as each student without a disability, consistent with federal and state laws and regulations. Christopher Columbus Charter School does not discriminate or exclude people on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or disability.

Christopher Columbus Charter School provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with the school, such as qualified language interpreters, written information in



other formats, and information written in other languages. If you need these services, please contact the Director of Special Education.

Christopher Columbus Charter School students and parents who believe that Christopher Columbus Charter School has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way should promptly report such incidents to the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer will promptly investigate complaints of discrimination or harassment and corrective or preventative action will be taken for substantiated allegations. Confidentiality of all parties will be maintained, consistent with the school's legal and investigative obligations.

Please note that this is only a summary of the special education services, evaluation, and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to students with disabilities, students thought to be disabled, and their parents. For more information or to request evaluation or screening of a student, contact the Director of Special Education.

Detailed printed information about available special education services and programs and Christopher Columbus Charter School policies are available from the school upon request. Interested persons should contact the Director of Special Education. Information and communications are in English but will be provided in the native language or other modes of communication used by parents, if appropriate. More information can also be found on the school's website.

Contact Information:

Director of Special Education

North Building: 215-925-7400

South Building: 215-389-6000