

Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs for Protected Handicapped Students

Notice to Parents

According to state and federal special education regulation requirements, annual public notice to parents of children who reside within a school district is required regarding child find responsibilities. School districts (SDs), intermediate units (IUs) and charter schools (CSs) are required to conduct “child find” activities for children who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information related to Section 504/Chapter 15 services, the parent may refer to Section 504, Chapter 15, and the Basic Education Circular entitled Implementation of Chapter 15. Also, school districts are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for gifted services via 22 Pa Code Chapter 16. For additional information regarding gifted services, the parent may refer to 22 PA Code Chapter 16. If a student is both gifted and eligible for Special Education, the procedures in IDEA and Chapter 14 shall take precedence.

This notice shall serve as official notification to all Franklin Towne Charter High School parents/guardians and families of the child identification activities and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities or eligible young children. In addition to this public notice, FTCHS shall publish written information in the handbook and on the web site. Children ages three through twenty-one can be eligible for special education programs and services. If parents believe that the child may be eligible for special education, the parent should submit a written request for testing to Dr. Sharmon James, Director of Student Services at Franklin Towne Charter High School, 5301 Tacony Street, Philadelphia, PA 19131.

Evaluation Process

As mandated by the PA Department of Education, each school district, intermediate unit, and charter school operating within the commonwealth is mandated to establish a procedure by which parents can request an evaluation. For information about procedures related to your child and/or to request an evaluation, please contact Dr. Sharmon James, Director of Student Services at Franklin Towne Charter High School, 5301 Tacony Street, Philadelphia, PA 19131.

Consent

School entities cannot proceed with an evaluation, or with the initial provision of special education and related services, without the written consent of the parents. For additional information related to consent, please refer the Procedural Safeguards Notice which can be found at the PaTTAN website, www.Pattan.net. Once written parental consent is obtained, FTCHS will proceed with the evaluation process. If the parent disagrees with the evaluation results, the parent can request an independent education evaluation at public expense.

If neither the parent of a child who is eligible, or thought-to-be-eligible for special education, nor an individual who meets the definition of parent per 34 CFR § 300.30 a “parent” can be located, the host school must appoint a surrogate parent per 34 CFR § 300.519 Surrogate parents.

Program Development

Once the evaluation process is completed, a team of qualified professional and parents determine whether the child is eligible. If the child is eligible, the individualized education program team meets, develops the program, and determines the educational placement. Once the IEP team develops the program and determines the educational placement, school district staff, intermediate unit staff, or charter school staff will issue a notice of recommended educational placement/prior written notice. Parent/guardian written consent is required before initial services can be provided. The parent has the right to revoke consent after initial placement.

Confidentiality of Information:

Franklin Towne Charter High School will maintain records concerning all children enrolled in the school, including students with disabilities. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality. Parent/guardian consent, or consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under State law, must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released, except as permitted under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The age of majority in Pennsylvania is 21. Each participating agency must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages. One official at each participating agency must assume responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. Each participating agency must maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the agency who have access to personally identifiable information.

In accordance with 34 CFR § 300.624, please be advised of the following retention/destruction schedule for the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), and Keystone Exam related materials:

- PSSA, Keystone Exam, and PASA test booklets will be destroyed one year after student reports are delivered for the administration associated with the test booklets.
- PSSA and Keystone Exam answer booklets and PASA media recordings will be destroyed three years after completion of the assessment.

For additional information related to student records, the parent can refer to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

This notice is only a summary of the Special Education services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents.

Franklin Towne Charter High School will not discriminate in employment, educational programs, or activities based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, handicap, creed, marital status or because a person is a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era. No preschool,

elementary or secondary school pupil enrolled in a school district, intermediate unit, or charter school program shall be denied equal opportunity to participate in age and program appropriate instruction or activities due to race, color, handicap, creed, national origin, marital status or financial hardship.

OVERVIEW OF THE FTCHS CHILD FIND PROCESS

Tier I

The academic and emotional welfare of each and every student is of the utmost importance. The primary responsibility for the Guidance Staff is: Academic monitoring, Attendance protocols, and IEP compliance.

Academic Monitoring

Monitoring - In order to support the academic success of our students the guidance department will tend to the academic status of each student through the use of online grading system.

- General academic reports will be extracted from the system on a regular basis (minimum once per week). Information on students' grades will also be addressed from report card grades.
- Each counselor will prioritize the students on their caseload whose academic standing, and other possible factors, need to be investigated. As a guideline, students will be seen using the following priorities:
 - Students failing multiple classes
 - Students continuously failing a class without signs of improvement
 - Students who are in jeopardy of failing a class
 - Students whose grades have dropped
 - Students with attendance and discipline issues
 - Students who are in need of non-academic/medical support
- Counselors will contact teachers for information regarding the student's progress
- Based upon the information received, counselors will schedule meetings as necessary.

When necessary, the Guidance Department will keep detailed notes and logs that contain the information obtained during the student meetings. These information sheets are kept in the student's folder located in the counselor's office.

- Comprehension of material
- Completion of assignments
- Social/Emotional barrier
- Physical barrier
- Attendance
- Behavioral
- Attention

- After school tutoring with teacher
- Additional school supports already in place

Referrals of this nature should include:

- The reason for the referral
- Observations of the student's behavior
- Any background information teachers have gleaned that is pertinent to the referral reason.
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Once the major contributing factor(s) have been determined a collaborative decision will be reached as to what improvement/intervention strategies will be implemented (and monitored) during the specified intervention period.

Collaboration and agreement on intervention strategies may take place between:

- guidance counselor
- student,
- teacher
- parent
- psychologist
- administration

Interventions can include:

- Teacher tutoring
- Peer tutoring
- Referral to Friday Homework remediation sessions
- Referral to tutoring by NHS
- Referral to tutoring by academic extracurricular clubs (e.g. math club) – Prep Zone
- Referral to psychologist
- Parent phone call
- Non-verbal cues to redirect off task behavior
- Preferential seating
- Merit points
- Issues or concerns regarding student who already have an IEP/504 should be referred to the Special Education Coordinator

The Guidance Department will refer any student who needs further intervention to the Child Find Team. The Child Find Team consists of CEO, Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Students, Psychologist, and the Special Education Coordinator. An Administrative Assistant will be present at each meeting to take notes.

Tier II

Tier II is the next level of multi-tiered support at FTCHS. Tier II interventions are utilized when a student does not respond to Tier I interventions over a sufficient period of time.

Counselors will present the status of their cases to head of guidance or the administrative team on a regular basis. Cases will be presented to the Child Find team on a bi-weekly basis. The head of guidance will report any student issues that need immediate resolution as soon as the issue is reported. During the bi-weekly meetings the Child Find team will discuss various student issues.

- Present for these meetings are the Child Find Team and an Administrative Assistant.
- The agenda for each meeting is as follows:
 - Review prior case notes
 - Follow up activities from previous meetings will be presented for discussion and possible interventions.
 - New Student Referrals (discipline, attendance, special education, psychologist, or guidance)

Based on discussions and student referrals, the following are possible Tier II interventions that will be considered:

Tier II Interventions

- To continue current intervention protocols with newly established timelines
- Meet with parents
- Meeting with student
- Meeting with teacher
- Meeting with School Psychologist
- Roster change
- Behavior Contract
- Attendance Contract
- Classroom observations
- Positive reinforcements
- Recommend moving to Tier III

Based on discussions and student referrals, the following are possible Tier III interventions that will be considered:

Tier III Interventions

- Multi-disciplinary meeting
- Functional Behavior Assessment/Positive Behavior Support Plan
- 504 Service Agreement
- Issue a Permission to Evaluate

When a student has not responded to Tier I and Tier II interventions, Tier III interventions, which are more directly targeted to individual student needs, are implemented. Tier III is the final level of intervention prior to referral to the special education team.