

Norwin School District
Special Education Handbook

Child Find

**NORWIN SCHOOL DISTRICT
CHILD FIND AND
ANNUAL NOTICE TO PARENTS**

In compliance with state and federal law, the Norwin School District will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

For further information on the evaluation procedures and provision of services to protected handicapped students or eligible students, contact Margaret Zimmer, Director of Pupil Services and Special Programs at 724-861-3000 x 1113 throughout the school year.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Child Find
Norwin School District
Pupil Services and Special Programs
281 McMahan Drive
North Huntingdon , PA 15642
Phone 724-861-3000 x1113 Fax: 724-863-9467

Each school district, along with other public agencies in the Commonwealth, must establish and implement procedures to identify, locate and evaluate all children who need special education programs and services because of the child's disability. This notice is to help find these children, offer assistance to parents and describe the parent's rights with regard to confidentiality of information that will be obtained during the process.

The content of this notice has been written in English. If a person does not understand any of this notice, he or she should contact the school district (see contacts) and request an explanation.

IDENTIFICATION ACTIVITY

Child Find refers to activities undertaken by public education agencies to identify, locate, and evaluate children residing in the State, including children attending private schools, who are suspected of having disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, and determine the child's need for special education and related services. The purpose is to locate these children so that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) can be made available. The types of disabilities, that if found to cause a child to need services are: Autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, due to chronic or acute health problems, specific learning disabilities, speech or language, traumatic brain injury and visual impairment including blindness, in the case of a child that is of preschool age developmental delay.

The Norwin School District provides educational services for all eligible students either through district- operated classes, contracts with Intermediate Unit #7, or Approved Private Schools. Classes providing Learning Support, Life-Skills Support, Emotional Support, Physical Support, Multiple Disabilities Support, and Autistic Support are available for students at beginning school age through age 21, if necessary. Additional services include hearing, vision, and speech and language support.

Each school district is required to annually provide notice describing the identification activities and the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of personally identifiable information. This notice is intended to meet this requirement.

Identification activities are performed to find a child who is suspected as having a disability that would interfere with his or her learning unless special education programs and services are made available. These activities are sometimes called screening activities. The activities include: Review of group data, conduct hearing and vision screening, assessment of student's academic functioning, observation of the student displaying difficulty in behavior and determining the student's response to attempted remediation. Input from parents is also an information source for identification. After a child is identified as a suspected child with a disability, he or she is evaluated, but is not evaluated before parents give permission for their child to be evaluated.

The Norwin School District follows procedures outlined in the special education regulations (Chapter 14) for determining eligibility and need for special education services.

CONFIDENTIALITY

If after screening, a disability is suspected, upon your permission, your child will be evaluated. Written records of the results are called an education record, which are directly related to your child and are maintained by the school districts. These records are personally identifiable to your child. Personally identifiable information includes the child's name, the name of the child's parents or other family member, the address of the child or their family, a personal identifier such as social security number, a list of characteristics that would make the child's identity easily traceable or other information that would make the child's identity easily traceable.

The school district will gather information regarding your child's physical, mental, emotional and health functioning through testing and assessment, observation of your child, as well as through review of any records made available to the school district through your physician and other providers of services such as day care agencies.

The school district protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information by one school official being responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of the records; training being provided to all persons using the information and; maintaining for public inspection a current list of employee's names and positions who may have access to the information. The school district will inform you when this information is no longer needed to provide educational services to your child and will destroy the information at designated intervals, except general information such as your child's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance record and classes attended, grade level completed, may be maintained without time limitation.

As the parent of the child you have a number of rights regarding the confidentiality of your child's records. You have the right to inspect and review any education records related to your child that are collected, maintained, or used by the school district. The school district will comply with a request for you to review the records without unnecessary delay before any meetings regarding planning for your child's special education program (called an IEP meeting). Should you and your school district disagree about your child's Special Education Supports and Services and a Due Process Hearing is requested, the school district will furnish you with the opportunity to inspect and review your child's records, within 30 days.

You have the right to an explanation and interpretations of the records; to be provided copies of the records if failure to provide the copies would effectively prevent you from exercising your right to inspect and review the records and; the right to have a representative inspect and review the records. This review is conducted with the assistance of an appropriate school district staff member.

Upon your request, the school district will provide you a list of the types and location of

education records collected, maintained, or used by the agency. Additionally, the Norwin School District will charge a fee for copies of records made in response to your request except, it will not charge a fee if doing so will prevent you from inspecting and reviewing your child's records. A current list of reasonable fees relative to records request is available in the district's central office. The district will not charge a fee to search or retrieve information.

You have the right to request in writing the amendment of your child's education records that you believe are inaccurate or misleading, or violate the privacy or other rights of your child. The school district will decide whether to amend the records within 45 school days of receipt of your request. If the school district refuses to amend the records you will be notified of the refusal and your right to a hearing. You will be given at that time, additional information regarding the hearing procedures. Upon written request, the district will schedule and provide written notice of the hearing to challenge information in your child's education files.

Parent consent is required before personally identifiable information contained in your child's education records is disclosed to anyone other than officials of the school district collecting or using the information for purposes of identification of your child, locating your child and evaluating your child or for any other purpose of making available a free appropriate public education to your child. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Additionally, the school district, upon request, discloses records without consent to officials of another school district in which your child seeks or intends to enroll.

A parent may file a written complaint alleging that the rights described in this notice were not provided:

Pennsylvania Department of Education

Bureau of Special Education
Division of Compliance
333 Market Street
Harrisburg , PA 17126-0333

The Department of Education will investigate the matter; issue a report of findings and necessary corrective action within 60 days. The Department will take necessary action to ensure compliance is achieved.

Complaints alleging failures of the school district with regard to confidentiality of personally identifiable information may also be filed with:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington , DC 20202-4605

The Norwin School District will provide ongoing screening services. If you wish to learn more, have questions, or believe your child may need to be identified, please contact:

Margaret Ford Zimmer, M.Ed.

Director of Pupil Services and Special Programs at 724-861-3000 x 1113

[Individual Education Plan Process](#)

As a parent, you are an expert when it comes to understanding your child. If your child is struggling, you have a variety of options to pursue. Your child may need assistance in his or her general education program, which can take the form of extra help in a subject area, such as reading or math.

Or your child may have a disability that requires specially designed instruction through the special education system to address his or her learning issues. This page describes the special education options available to you and how you can access them for your child

What is Special Education?

Special education is specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, which meets the unique needs of a child with a disability. Specially designed instruction means that the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction is adapted to meet the needs of the child that result from the disability. The instruction helps the child access the general education curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards that apply to all children.

Under Pennsylvania and federal law, a student with a disability has a right to special education and related services that are provided:

- At public expense
- Under public supervision and direction
- Without charge to preschool, elementary or secondary school students, and
- In conformity with an Individualized Education Plan (*IEP*)

This means that students with disabilities who need special education must receive a free appropriate public education (*FAPE*). *FAPE* includes related services that help students get to school and benefit from the special education program, such as:

- Special transportation
- Physical or occupational therapy
- Other services which help or support students as they grow and learn

How Do I Know if My Child Needs Special Education?

To be eligible for special education a child must

- 1) have a disability, and
- 2) have the need for special education confirmed by an evaluation team.

Some indications that your child may have a disability in order to meet the first part of the two-part definition are:

- Exhibits an emotional disturbance over a long period of time that affects his or her ability to learn
- 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
- Difficulty performing tasks that require reading, writing or mathematics

As a result of such disabilities, to make progress in school your child may need specially designed instruction that typically is not needed by other students in the general education classroom.

This need for special education is the second part of the two-part decision to qualify a student for special education services. Pennsylvania has screening and evaluation processes in place to assess your child and confirm his or her need for special education.

Evaluation

The evaluation process gathers the information used to determine if your child needs special education, and the types of programs and services needed. A school may evaluate your child through reading, writing, and math assessments. Other evaluations may include tests by a hearing specialist for a child with a hearing problem, or an evaluation from a doctor for a child with a health concern. The evaluations must also include input from a therapist if certain related services, such as physical or occupational therapy, may be needed.

A student may be referred for the first evaluation in several ways. You may ask your school to evaluate your child for special education at any time by sending a letter to your child's school principal. The school should will respond to your written request in a timely manner and provide you with a notice of their decision. You may also receive a Permission to Evaluate form and a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice, which describes certain rights and protections provided under the special education laws.

The school will contact you to ask for written permission to evaluate your child. Without your written consent the evaluation will not proceed. If you do not give permission and the school continues to find that an evaluation is necessary, they may ask for a due process hearing to get approval from an impartial hearing officer to evaluate your child. Opportunities for Resolving Disagreements provides additional information about due process hearings.

All evaluations to determine your child's need for special education are provided by your child's school district at no charge. The district will make the results of the evaluations available to you for your review.

An evaluation team typically consists of the student's parents, the student's teachers, and the school psychologist, language pathologist, and/or remedial reading teacher. Generally, the evaluation team members will also participate in developing the student's individualized education program (*IEP*). The team reviews all materials and writes a report, called an Evaluation Report. The Evaluation Report, sometimes just called an **ER**, determines if your child has one or more disabilities and if he or she needs special education. It may recommend specific programs and services based on your child needs. The *ER* may also state that your child is not eligible and does not need special education services.

If your child is being evaluated for a learning disability, parents, as members of the evaluation team, are given an opportunity to sign the report and indicate whether or not you agree with it. If you do not, you may submit a statement of your own conclusions. This is called a dissenting opinion, and will become part of the final *ER*. You will receive a copy of the final *ER*.

You may also get evaluation reports from professionals outside the school system and send them to your child's school. The district will consider the results of these outside evaluations in determining if your child has a disability and needs special education. If you request the school to pay for an Independent Educational Evaluation, your request must be in writing.

A reevaluation to confirm your child's need to continue special education occurs at least every three years, unless your child is disabled due to intellectual disability/mental retardation, in which case reevaluations occur at least every two years. When the school needs additional information to complete a reevaluation, then the school must seek your permission to obtain it. If reasonable attempts have been made to secure your permission but failed to do so, it may proceed with the reevaluation. Each school district decides what reasonable attempts are. They may include:

- Telephone calls
- Registered letters with return receipts required
- Visits to the home or parents' places of business

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The document that guides the education of a student with disabilities is called an **Individualized Education Program** or **IEP**. Every child who receives special education services must have an *IEP*. This document is developed by the *IEP* team and includes information about your child's present level of educational performance along with goals that have been set for your child to achieve during the school year. The *IEP* specifically defines where, what kind of services, and how often special education and related services will be provided. It identifies the tests or other methods of assessment that will be used to decide if your child is meeting the annual goals. The *IEP* includes information about how and when your child's progress will be reported to you. IEPs are reviewed at least one time each year and more often if needed. You or another member of the *IEP* team may request an *IEP* meeting

When the evaluation process determines that your son or daughter is in need of specially designed instruction, you will receive an [Invitation to Participate](#) in an Individualized Education Program (*IEP*) team meeting. The Invitation to Participate is a written notice of when, where, and why the meeting will be held, and a list of the people who are invited to attend.

The *IEP* team will write your child's Individualized Education Program (*IEP*). It includes a description of all the programs and services that are necessary to help your son or daughter to be successful in school. In writing the *IEP*, the team uses the information that is contained in your child's Evaluation Report (*ER*). (See samples below.)

[Sample IEP \(pdf\)](#)

[Sample ER \(pdf\)](#)

As a parent, you are a valuable *IEP* team member, so it is important for you to attend these meetings. Meetings are scheduled to fit your schedule and the school officials' schedules, at a mutually agreed upon location. If the date or time is not convenient, you may ask for a change. Parents may also participate by telephone if it is impossible for you to attend the meeting in person.

Who Develops the IEP?

Required members of each *IEP* team are:

1. The child's parent(s)
2. At least one of the child's general education teachers (if your child is, or might become, part of general education classes)
3. At least one special education teacher
4. A representative of the school district who:

- a. Is qualified to provide or supervise special education programs
 - b. Knows about the general education curriculum
 - c. Knows about the resources the local educational agency (*LEA*) can offer
5. Someone who can interpret the evaluation results, who may already be a member of the team
 6. At your request or that of the school district, other people who know your child well or who have worked with your child. You may bring an advocate to advise you or anyone else who will be able to add information about your child's educational experiences
 7. Your child at age 14 when planning for life after graduation, or any time before that age when you want your child to be present
 8. A representative from a vocational-technical school if a vocational-technical program is being considered for your child

One person may fill more than one of the roles described above. The minimum number of people at the *IEP* meeting should be four in most circumstances:

- Parent
- The local education agency (*LEA*) representative
- A special education teacher
- A general education teacher (if your child will participate at all in general education)

Regulations stipulate that if you choose not to attend the *IEP* meeting, it may be held without you.

What Will the *IEP* Include?

The *IEP* team will review the evaluation report and will determine how your child is performing in school now. The *IEP* team will then write measurable annual goals and short-term learning objectives to meet your child's needs. Annual goals describe what your child can be expected to learn during the year. If appropriate for your child's *IEP*, short-term objectives are the sequential steps your child must take in order to reach those goals.

Specifically, the *IEP* team will determine:

- The special education services and programs your child will receive to meet his or her needs
- Where, what kind of, how much and how often special education and related services will be provided
- The date such programs and services will begin and how long they will last

- The tests or other methods of evaluation that will be used to decide if your child is meeting the annual goals and learning objectives, and how and when this progress will be reported to you
- Whether, and to extent, your child will not participate in the general education class or in the general education curriculum
- Whether your child will be in settings with other special education students only
- Whether your child will not be studying skills or knowledge that are directly linked to the skills and knowledge studied by the children in general education
- The adjustments in the general education setting (also referred to as supplementary aids and services) if any, necessary for your child to succeed in a general education class
- The accommodations needed, if any, for your child to participate in state-wide or district-wide tests
- A description of any Extended School Year services to which your child may be entitled

What are the *IEP* Timelines?

- Your child's first *IEP* must be completed within 30 calendar days after the evaluation team issues its Evaluation Report. The *IEP* must be put into action as soon as possible, but no later than 10 school days after the *IEP* is completed.
- Your child's program is reviewed annually at an *IEP* meeting, or more often if requested by you or any other *IEP* team member. The team conducts additional evaluations (reevaluations) at least every three years, or every two years if your child has mental retardation

What is a **NOREP**?

Once the *IEP* team develops your child's Individualized Education Program, you will receive a [Notice of Recommended Educational Placement \(*NOREP*\)](#). The *NOREP* explains the recommended educational placement or class for your child, and explains your rights. You must approve the *IEP* and your child's educational placement in writing before the school is allowed to begin implementation.

If the school district gave notice of their intent to evaluate your child for special education before you removed your child from public school, reimbursement may be reduced or denied if you did not make your child available for the evaluation. Reimbursement may also be reduced or denied for the private placement if a court thinks your actions have been unreasonable. An exception to the reduction or denial of reimbursement will be made if:

- You are unable to read or write in English
- Physical or serious emotional harm to the child may result if the parent adhered to the prior notice requirements
- The school prevented the parent from providing the notice to the school
- The school failed to give the parent notice of these rights and procedures

See a [sample *NOREP*](#).

Information About Disabilities

The [National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities \(NICHCY\)](#) offers fourteen fact sheets and three briefing papers on specific disabilities. Each defines the disability, describes its characteristics, and offers tips for parents and teachers. Each includes a very helpful list of print and video resources, as well as links to disability organizations that can offer more information and assistance.

The Pennsylvania Training & Technical Assistance Network's website also provides disabilities information, as well as information on Pennsylvania's approaches to education children with disabilities.

- [Autism](#)
- [Blind/Visual Impairment](#)
- [Deafblind](#)
- [Deaf/Hard of Hearing](#)
- [Developmental Delay](#)
- [Emotional Disturbance](#)
- Intellectual Disability ~ [Mental Retardation](#)
- [Multiple Disabilities](#)
- [Orthopedic Impairment](#)
- [Other Health Impairment](#)
- [Specific Learning Disability](#)
- [Speech Language Impairment](#)
- [Traumatic Brain Injury](#)

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Extended School Year

What is ESY?

Extended School Year (ESY) services are special education and related services that are provided to students with disabilities beyond the 180-day school year. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the federal special education law, states that school districts, intermediate units, and charter schools must provide ESY services if a student needs these services to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). In some cases, interruptions in the school schedule, such as summer break, may result in some students with disabilities losing basic skill level and taking a much longer time to regain those skills than their peers without disabilities once school is back in session. ESY services are provided during breaks in the educational schedule to prevent this loss.

ESY services are not day care or respite services. ESY services are not a summer recreation program or other programs or services that are not required to ensure the provision of FAPE to a student – even if they provide some educational benefit.

As a teacher, you may be part of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team that will determine eligibility for ESY services for students with disabilities who receive special education services.

How Is ESY Eligibility Determined?

Every student who is eligible for special education has an IEP that describes the programs and services necessary for the student to receive FAPE. One of the issues discussed and decided upon at the IEP team meeting is whether or not the student requires ESY services as part of the student's special education program. ESY must be considered each year for every student with a disability.

In addition, the Pennsylvania Department of Education offers guidance regarding students with severe disabilities, such as autism/ pervasive developmental disorder, serious emotional disturbance, severe intellectual disabilities, degenerative impairments with mental involvement, and severe multiple disabilities. Students in this group, known as the Armstrong Target Group, must have an IEP team review of ESY eligibility no later than February 28 of each school year, with a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) issued no later than March 31 of each school year. Students whose disabilities are not in the target group will not be held to the same timelines; however, determinations must be made in a timely manner.

Introducing the Norwin Special Education Staff

“We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It’s easy to say, “It’s not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem. Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider these people my heroes.”

~ Fred Rogers

DIRECTOR OF PUPIL SERVICES & SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Administrative Offices	724-861-3000	
Maggie Zimmer	mzimmer@norwinds.org	x1127

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

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Stacey Snyder	ssnyder@norwinds.org	x1906

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FAX 724-863-4380

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AUTISTIC SUPPORT

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Amanda Zajac

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LEARNING SUPPORT

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x1718

SUNSET VALLEY ELEMENTARY

724-861-3035

FAX 724-863-4096

Principal	Mrs. Natalie McCracken	nmccracken@norwinsd.org	x1900
Guidance Counselor	Doug Colcombe	dcolcombe@norwinsd.org	x1904
<u>Life Skills Support</u>			
	Alice Needham	aneedham@norwinsd.org	x6411
<u>Learning Support</u>			
	Melissa Pauly	mpauly@norwinsd.org	x6429

STEWARTSVILLE ELEMENTARY

724-861-3030

FAX 724-863-4096

Principal Ms. Doreen Harris

dharris@norwinsd.org

x1800

Guidance Counselor Doug Colcombe

dcolcombe@norwinsd.org

x1804

Learning Support

Jodi Lape

jlape@norwinsd.org

x6334

HAHNTOWN ELEMENTARY

724-861-3020

FAX 724-863-3429

Principal	Mr. Daryl Clair	dclair@norwinsd.org	x1600
Guidance Counselor	Tammy Edmonds	tedmonds@norwinsd.org	x1604
Learning Support	Sandy Slafka	sslafka@norwinsd.org	x6134

HILLCREST INTERMEDIATE

724-861-3015

FAX 724-864-7203

Principal	Mrs. Rosmarie Dvorchak	rdvorchak@norwindsd.org	x1500
Vice Principal	Mr. Brian Henderson	bhenderson@norwindsd.org	x1500
Guidance Counselor	Mrs. Victoria Dowling	vdowling@norwindsd.org	x1504
	Mr. Robert Conrad	rconrad@norwindsd.org	x1509

Life Skills Support

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Learning Support

Mrs. Aimee McIntosh		amcintosh@norwindsd.org	x5242
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Mrs. Pamela Carnes		pcarnes@norwindsd.org	x5137
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Mrs. Pamela Sipos		psipos@norwindsd.org	x5115
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NORWIN MIDDLE SCHOOL

724-861-3010

FAX 742-863-5408

Principal	Mr. Robert Suman	rsuman@norwinsd.org	x1400
Vice Principal	Mrs. Heather Newell	hnewell@norwinsd.org	x1400

Guidance Counselor	Ms. Jennifer DiVittis	jdivittis@norwinsd.org	x1406
	Ms. Kiersten Venderlic	kvenderlic@norwinsd.org	x1404

Learning Support

Mr. Brian Carlton	bcarlton@norwinsd.org	x4203
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Mrs. Denise Eagleson	deagleson@norwinsd.org	x4213
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Mrs. Barbara Rinefierd	brinefierd@norwinsd.org	x4138
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Emotional Support

Mrs. Shawna Tennant	stennant@norwinsd.org	x4144
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NORWIN HIGH SCHOOL

724-861-3005

FAX 742-861-0581

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Mrs. Nicole Stoops		nstoops@norwinsd.org	x3831
Mrs. Ashley Tatman		atatman@norwinsd.org	x1264
Mrs. Debora Tray		dtray@norwinsd.org	x3144
<u>Emotional Support</u>			
Mr. Ryan Lynn		rlynn@norwinsd.org	x3143
Ms. Elaine Palmieri		epalmieri@norwinsd.org	x3145

SPEECH & LANGUAGE

What is the Speech & Language Support Program?

The Speech & Language Program assists students whose classroom performance is affected by speech and/or language difficulties. The following areas are addressed in the program:

- ▶ Apraxia: difficulty sequencing and saying sounds, syllables, and words.
- ▶ Articulation: the production of sounds.
- ▶ Auditory Processing: reduced ability to discriminate, recognize or comprehend complex sounds, although the student has normal hearing.
- ▶ Fluency or stuttering: an interruption of the flow of speech.
- ▶ Language: the use or interpretation of the symbols of speech. This includes vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, etc.
- ▶ Social Language or pragmatics: difficulty using language to communicate in social settings. Ex. Turn taking, eye contact, interpreting emotions.
- ▶ Voice: a problem with the quality of voice. Ex. Raspiness, breathiness, excessive or diminished loudness

How is my child placed into the Speech & Language Support Program?

The Speech Language Pathologist conducts an informal observation of the child. If a communication need is identified, parental permission is obtained and further testing is completed. Placement in the Speech & Language Support Program is based on the results of this evaluation.

What happens next?

After a student qualifies for enrollment in the Speech & Language Support Program, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed by the Speech Language Pathologist. This is a plan that addresses the areas that the child is having difficulty with and states goals to monitor progress.

When will my child exit the program?

Dismissal from the Speech & Language Support Program can occur whenever remediation is no longer necessary and the therapist, classroom teacher, and parent agree to dismissal.

Mrs. Amy McLaughlin	amclaughlin@norwinds.org	x6219
Mrs. Kerry Pringle	kpringle@norwinds.org	x6115
Mrs. Colleen Weaver	cweaver@norwinds.org	x6403
Ms. Mary Derro	mderro@norwinds.org	x5148

DEAF/HARD OF HEARING SUPPORT

Students residing in the Norwin School District, with an identified hearing loss, may be eligible for hearing support services. Parents, who suspect that their child has a hearing loss, must provide an audiological report from a clinical audiologist to the school district. The hearing support teacher would then determine if the hearing loss was significant enough to warrant an educational evaluation. In order to assure appropriate hearing support programming for these students, there are several areas in which the hearing support teacher would consider. Eligibility and level of hearing support would be contingent upon: age at which hearing loss was identified; severity of hearing loss; presence of additional disabilities; hearing aid history; social-emotional development; and educational performance.

Stephanie Colinear

scolinear@norwinsd.org

x3731

OCCUPATIONAL & PHYSICAL THERAPY

What is the referral process for Occupational and Physical Therapy?

Students can be referred for a school based occupational and/or physical therapy evaluation by a teacher, parent, health service professional or team member of the IEP. If the student's disability is affecting the student's educational performance then an evaluation may be appropriate. Students are usually referred to OT and PT if they demonstrate difficulty maneuvering in the school setting, difficulty with visual/motor skills, have balance/coordination concerns or equipment needs.

In order for the student to be evaluated, the family must complete and sign a consent form for the evaluation. This form must also be completed by the student's physician and be signed and dated by the physician. The OT and PT will not be able to evaluate or provide services to the student until both the family and the physician have provided written permission.

How does my child qualify for Occupational and Physical Therapy?

School-age students are assessed on their ability to function as independently as possible in the school setting based on their potential abilities within their disability. Occupational therapists assess the student's fine motor skills, visual-perceptual-motor skills, sensory processing skills and self-help skills. Physical therapists assess the student's walking (ambulation) skills, ability to transfer, ability to utilize classroom desks/lockers, ability to access the cafeteria and restrooms.

Occupational and physical therapists also use clinical observation, clinical judgment, information from teachers, family and student along with standardized testing, as needed, in order to determine a student's eligibility for services.

What happens next?

Occupational and Physical Therapy are considered related services. OT and PT can enter a student's IEP when it is essential to meet appropriate special education goals. As an IEP team member, the OT and PT can help to identify the student's strengths and needs, assist with planning goals for educational performance, implement strategies within the educational program, help to project functional outcomes for the student's future, help to explain the students medical disabilities and their affect on the

student's expected educational performance and act as a liaison between the medical and educational providers.

Service frequency and duration of OT and PT are determined by the ongoing needs of the student.

When will my child be discharged from Occupational or Physical Therapy?

Occupational and/or physical therapy services may be discontinued once the student achieves his IEP goals or the IEP team feels that the student no longer requires the services or is not benefiting from the services. The IEP must be amended to show that the student is no longer receiving the related service of OT and/or PT.

The IEP team may consider the following conditions when determining that the student no longer needs Occupational and/or Physical Therapy to benefit from their educational program.

1. The student is functional within the educational environment or has met goals targeted on the IEP, and therapy services are no longer indicated.
2. The student's disability does not negatively affect his educational program.
3. Other educational personnel are able to assist the students in areas of concern addressed by OT and/or PT, and the student has achieved maximum benefit from OT and/or PT.
4. Student performance remains unchanged despite multiple efforts by the therapist to remediate the concerns or to assist the student in compensating.
5. The student continues to make progress in the areas being addressed by OT and/or PT consistent with developmental progress in other educational areas despite a decrease in OT and/or PT services.
6. Therapy is contraindicated because of the change in medical or physical status.
7. The student's parents request the termination of services.

From time to time, you may need additional resources or assistance outside of your school district. The following list includes brief descriptions, along with websites, of available support systems within the commonwealth.

[Pennsylvania Department of Education \(PDE\)](#)

PDE is the state agency that holds the ultimate responsibility for the state supervision of all schools and educational programs in the commonwealth. PDE offers many resources for teachers to help create the most beneficial learning opportunities for all Pennsylvania students. PDE's website, www.education.state.pa.us

[Bureau of Special Education \(BSE\)](#)

BSE is responsible for the education of students with disabilities from ages three through 21. The Bureau provides professional leadership and management in the provision of special education services and programs. BSE administers the special education contingency fund and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds. Staff provides technical assistance and consultation to local education agencies to support them in meeting the requirements of state and federal special education requirements, and, also works with the U.S. Department of Education regarding federal requirements. For the latest information about BSE's activities, visit their website at www.education.state.pa.us,

John J. Tommasini | Director
Bureau of Special Education

James Palmiero, Director
Carol Good, Assistant Director

Web Address:

http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/bureau_of_special_education/7340

Address:

333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126

Phone Number: 1-717-783-6913

[Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network \(PaTTAN\)](#)

PaTTAN is an initiative of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education. Under the direction of the BSE, PaTTAN is responsible for professional development, offers technical assistance, and provides resources to build the skills of intermediate unit and school district personnel. With three regional offices located in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and King of Prussia, PaTTAN works in partnership with families and local education agencies to support programs and services to improve student learning and achievement.

Visit PaTTAN's website at www.pattan.net

Address:

3190 William Pitt Way
Pittsburgh, PA 15238

Phone Number:

412 826-2336

Parent's Rights

Parents are valuable members in their child's educational process. State and Federal laws are put into place to protect individuals with special needs. Parents have certain rights when it comes to their child's education. You will be provided with the rights in the form of Procedural Safeguards. An excellent source for understanding the special education process is the Pennsylvania Parent Guide to Special Education for School Age Children. This document can be ordered through the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) 610-265-7321 www.pattan.net

SPECIAL EDUCATION GLOSSARY

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
APS	Approved Private School
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ASL	American Sign Language
Assistive Technology Device	A piece of equipment or product which is used to increase, maintain or improve the way a child with a disability interacts and communicates with the world around them
Assistive Technology Services	Services to help a child with a disability use an assistive technology device. These services include evaluating the needs of the child; providing the device; and then training the child, the child's family and the professionals who work with that child in the use of the device.
AVTS	Area Vocational Technical School
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress
BEC	Basic Education Circular
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
BSE	Bureau of Special Education
Chapter 14	The state law pertaining to the delivery of special education services and programs. It is called a regulation or sometimes called a rule
Child with Disability	A child evaluated as having: mental retardation, a hearing impairment including deafness, a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment including blindness, emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, another health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities. And who, as a result of the disability, needs special education and related services.
Due Process	The procedures that parents can use to disagree with the decisions of school district officials concerning special education. The parent is informed of this

right by written notice, which describes the options of a pre-hearing conference, a formal hearing, and appeals.

ED Emotional Disturbance

ER Evaluation Report

ESL English as a Second Language

ESY Extended School Year

Evaluation The process used to determine if a child has a disability and if special education is needed. The evaluation looks at how the child learns, the kinds of instruction that would be successful and the kinds of instruction that have been tried and have not resulted in success.

Evaluation Report (ER) The report that is compiled and written by the evaluation team (which includes parents) following an evaluation. It contains all of the information gathered from the team members, including the results of assessment. From the report, the evaluation team determines the student's eligibility and need for special education programs.

Evaluation Team A team of educators, other professional individuals, and the child's parents that reviews all formal testing of a child and all other evaluation material. The evaluation team must issue a written report stating if the child is a child with a disability who needs special education and making suggestions about the programs and services needed.

FAPE Free Appropriate Public Education

FBA Functional Behavioral Assessment

FERPA Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) A program of education and related services for a child with a disability that is designed to meet the child's special education needs and which allows the child to make meaningful progress in the educational setting. It is provided without charge to parents.

IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEE Independent Educational Evaluation

IEP Individualized Education Program

IFSP Individualized Family Service Plan

Individualized Education Program (IEP) The plan written by the IEP team (including parents) that specifically describes the programs and services necessary for a free appropriate public education for the child with a disability

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA or IDEA 97) The federal law that governs the provision of special education services and the rights of parents of a child with a disability

LEA	Local Educational Agency
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
LTCC	Local Transition Coordinating Council
LTF	Local Task Force
MA	Medical Assistance
MD	Multiple Disabilities
MDT	Multidisciplinary Team
MR	Mental Retardation
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
NOREP	Notice of Recommended Educational Placement
Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP)	The form issued to parents to inform them of the placement recommended by the IEP team

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O&M	Orientation and Mobility
OCD	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
ODD	Oppositional Defiant Disorder
ODR	Office for Dispute Resolution
OHI	Other Health Impairment
OI	Orthopedic Impairment
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
OT	Occupational Therapy
OVR	Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
Parent	IDEA 2004, which goes into effect July 1, 2005 defines Parent as a natural, adoptive, or foster parent of a child (unless a foster parent is prohibited by law from serving as a parent); a guardian (but not the State if the child is a ward of the State; an individual acting in the place of a natural or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the

child's welfare; or a surrogate parent)

PASA Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment

PaTTAN Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network

PDD Pervasive Developmental Disorder

PDD-NOS Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified

PDE Pennsylvania Department of Education

PSSA Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

PT Physical Therapy

Related Services Services necessary to provide specially designed instruction to ensure the child benefits from the special education programs. Examples are special transportation, counseling, school health services and physical therapy

SLD Specific Learning Disability

Special Education An educational program individually designed to meet the unique education needs for a child with a disability. A special education professional is directly involved as either a consultant or a provider of services.

Specially Designed Instruction Adapting the content, methods or delivery of the instruction as is appropriate based on the unique needs of the child with a disability

Transition Services Specific planning in school that helps to prepare students with disabilities to participate more effectively in higher education or job training, community participation, independent living, continuing and adult education, and employment when they leave school

VI Visual Impairment

Recreational Activities
Norwin & Surrounding Areas

sleith11227@msn.com

Adaptive cheerleading (Steel City AllStars
in Murrysville)
Costs \$20.00 a month
Volunteer Instructors are high school girls
Thursdays 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

CONTACT:
Pam DeGeorge
724-864-9135
pamdegeorge@comcast.net

**Allegheny Bulldogs,
Special Olympics team
BASKETBALL**

Harrison City United Methodist Church Rt. 130
Tues. 6:00 pm – 7:15 pm

CONTACT:
Pam DeGeorge
724-864-9135
pamdegeorge@comcast.net

SWIMMING

Norwin HS
Friday 7:45 pm – 8:45 pm

CONTACT:
Ruth Miele
724-875-2813
rmiele07@comcast.net

Adaptive Baseball Program

Norwin Police Athletic League Field
Shafton
April-May
Cost: \$10.00
Sunday 5:00 pm

The players are divided by age into 6 teams
and play on 3 fields. Players have a "buddy" to
assist with fielding, hitting, base running etc.
End of season picnic and awards celebration

CONTACT:
Johnna Sleith
724-861-5655 or 412-607-4479

Adaptive Soccer

Nike Site Oak Hollow Park
Spring Seasons

CONTACT:
Website www.norwinsoccer.org

Top Soccer

Hempfield Parks & Recreation Commission
Stanwood Elementary School

Age 8+
Soccer for physically/mentally challenged
participants.
Learn basic skills/team concept using adapted
equipment
for indoor play

CONTACT:
Rich Felton
724-836-7900

Special Olympics

Greensburg
Age 8+
Golf, track & field, swimming, skiing, bowling

CONTACT:
Chris Riddell
724-837-6111
www.westspol.org

**Physically Challenged Bow Hunters of
America, Inc**

New Alexandria
Assist person with physically disabled with bow
hunting/archery sports

CONTACT:
724-668-7439
mkvought@comcast.net
www.pcba-inc.org

**PA Sportsman for the Disabled, Inc
(PSFTD)**

Latrobe
Outdoor sports, hiking, camping, bird-watching,
fishing, photography for sportsmen women and
children

CONTACT:
724-539-3095

**Clelian Heights School for Exceptional
Children**

Greensburg
Day Camps, social activities and recreational
camps

CONTACT:
724-837-8120

Special Day for Special Kids

Latrobe
Fishing Derby, petting zoo, clowns, boat rides,
prizes, puppet show
Last Sunday June
Keystone State Park

CONTACT:
Harry Miller
724-539-3095

Boy Scout of America

Greensburg
Educational and recreational activities for boys
and adults to build character, develop personal
fitness and responsibilities

CONTACT:
724-837-1630
bsainfo@wfbsa.org
www.wfbsa.org

Girl Scout Council of Westmoreland

Camping, meetings, art and trips year round

CONTACT:

724-834-9450
1-800-834-9519
dhepler@gscwestmoreland.org
www.girlscouts-wpa.org

Muscular Dystrophy Association

Summer camp
Monroeville

CONTACT:
Sandra Thompson
412-823-4094
www.mdausa.org

**Outside in School of Experiential
Education, Inc.**

Bolivar
Recreational and therapeutic camps

CONTACT:
724-837-1518

The Arc of Westmoreland County

Greensburg
Recreational and social programs

CONTACT:
724-837-8159
www.arcwestmoreland.org

Westmoreland Blind Association

Greensburg
Social Activities

CONTACT:
724-837-1250

**Autism Society of America of
Westmoreland County**

Greensburg
Bowling, picnics and swimming

CONTACT:
Lisa Vinck
724-834-0597
Wasa.lcv@verizon.net or wasalvc@aol.com

Greensburg YMCA

Greensburg

Swimming; wheelchair accessible

CONTACT:

724-834-0150

www.greensburgymca.org

YWCA of Westmoreland County

Greensburg

Computer classes, health & wellness classes
and summer day camps

CONTACT:

724-834-9390

ywcagbg@usaor.net

www.ymcawestmoreland.org

Norwin Public Library

Irwin

Story hour, videos, crafts and summer reading
program

CONTACT:

724-863-4700

The Susan Yadamec Dance Co.

Greensburg

724-838-7570

Willow Tree Gymnastics Academy

Latrobe

Aides permitted

CONTACT:

724-539-0899

www.willowtreegymnastics.com

Twin Lakes Park

Greensburg

Sled riding, fishing, boating, picnicking,
horseshoes, walking trail, swims

Saddles of Success

Bitner (near Connellsville/Uniontown)

Equestrian therapy; call for an appointment

CONTACT:

Karen Hull ~ certified therapist

724-438-0909

Equestrian Therapy

Equestrian Therapy

Regency Horse Ranch

CONTACT:

724-832-7735

Blind Outdoor Leisure Development of Western PA

Pittsburgh

Cross country skiing at Laurel Ridge State Park
Age 18+

CONTACT:

412-882-3965

www.wpabold.org

Hidden Valley Resort

Hidden Valley

Skiing for certain level of disabilities

CONTACT:

1-814-443-8000

www.hiddenvalleysort.com

Laurel Mountain Ski

Ligonier

Private adapted ski lessons

CONTACT:

888-547-3388

webmaster@thespingsatlaurelmountain.com

Stoney Ridge Stables

Youngwood area

Therapeutic riding and horseback riding
Evening appointments

CONTACT:

Becky Laufer

724-925-7282

CONTACT:

George Hoffman, PT

724-837-5703

