

Minersville Area School District

Annual Public Notice of Special Education Programs and Services and Gifted Education Programs

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004

The Minersville Area School District is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) to provide a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities. The Minersville Area School District, either directly or through Schuylkill Intermediate Unit 29, provides special education and related services to children with disabilities who are ages three to twenty one. Pursuant to the IDEA, children qualify for special education and related services if they have one or more of the following disabilities and, as a result, demonstrate a need for special education and related services: Autism, Deaf-Blindness, Emotional Disturbance, Hearing Impairment including Deafness, Intellectual Disabilities, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Speech or Language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, Visual Impairment including Blindness.

The following types of programs/services are available:

- Learning Support- for students who primarily need assistance with the acquisition of academic skills
- Emotional Support- for students who primarily need assistance with social or emotional development
- Life Skills Support- for students who primarily need assistance with development of skills for independent living
- Deaf or Hearing Impaired Support- for students who primarily need assistance with deafness
- Blind or Visually Impaired Support- for students who primarily need assistance with blindness
- Speech and Language Support- for students who are speech and language impaired
- Physical Support- for students who primarily require physical assistance in the learning environment
- Autistic Support- for students who primarily need assistance in the areas affected by autism spectrum disorders
- Multiple Disabilities- for students who primarily need assistance in multiple areas affected by their disabilities

IDEA further requires the provision of FAPE to children with disabilities between the age of three and the school district's age of beginners known as "eligible young children". The Schuylkill County Intermediate Unit provides early intervention services and programs to eligible young children located within the Minersville Area School District. All children learn and grow at different rates. Children who are developing more slowly than other children their age may need Early Intervention Services. Delays in the following developmental milestones can alert parents to the potential need for Early Intervention Services:

1. Physical Development (ability to move, see, and hear)
2. Language Development (ability to talk or express needs)
3. Social and Emotional Development (ability to relate to others)
4. Self-Help Development (ability to eat, dress, and take care of themselves)
5. Cognitive Development (ability to think and learn)

Parents who feel their young child may not be reaching developmental milestones should contact the Schuylkill Intermediate Unit for the purpose of screening, evaluation and appropriate program and services if necessary. Eligible young children are afforded the same rights as school age children. Contact information is listed at end of the notice.

Services for Protected Handicapped Students

The Minersville Area School District must provide services to and may not discriminate against "protected handicapped students" in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. A protected handicapped student is a student who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment. Protected handicapped students may qualify for special services to ensure equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate for the individual student.

Gifted Education

In Pennsylvania, school age students may be eligible for gifted services via 22 Pa Code Chapter 16. Students qualify to receive specially designed instruction when they have been identified as "mentally gifted". A student is mentally gifted when he or she has outstanding intellectual and creative ability that requires specially designed programs or support services not ordinarily provided in the general education program. The Minersville Area School District will determine whether a student is mentally gifted based on multiple criteria, including I.Q. score, which indicates gifted ability. The determination of gifted ability will not be based on I.Q. score alone.

Screening and Evaluation

The Minersville Area School District uses procedures to help identify children who may qualify for services, including screenings for hearing, vision, speech and language problems, a review of student's records, parent/teacher referrals and in-depth, comprehensive educational evaluations. Pre-referral intervention through the Short Term Remediation Process is available in grades K-6, along with Child Study Team and Student Assistance Program interventions in grades K-12.

The Minersville Area School District does conduct a screening for those children who will be entering kindergarten. The screening takes place each March/April prior to the start of each school year. The screening takes place at the Minersville Early Childhood Center, Llewellyn building. Parents can contact the school district at 570-544-1400 Ext. 4001, for the time/date of kindergarten screening.

If you believe that your child may be eligible for special education and related services, or gifted education, screening and evaluation services designed to assess the needs of your child and his/her eligibility are available to you at no cost. You may request screening and evaluation at any time, whether or not your child is enrolled in the district's public school program. Contact information is listed at the end of this notice.

Confidentiality

Procedural Safeguards serve to protect the rights of your child who is a child with a disability or thought to be a child with a disability. You will be given a copy of the procedural safeguards upon initial referral or parental request for evaluation.

The Minersville Area School District has procedures to maintain the privacy of your child's education records. Your 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 PA is 21. The Minersville Area School District through the use of its' document titled "Plan for the Collection, Maintenance, and Dissemination of Students Records" ensures that your child's education record be kept confidential.

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.

Requests for screening and evaluation may be made in writing to your child's building principal at the addresses listed below. If you believe that your child may qualify for services as an eligible young child, requests for screenings and evaluations can be done by sending a letter to the Intermediate Unit 29 staff listed below.

Mr. James Yacobacci, Elementary Principal
Minersville Elementary School
PO Box 787
Minersville, PA 17954

Mr. Steve Bressi, High School Principal
Minersville Junior-Senior High School
PO Box 787
Minersville, PA 17954

Ms. Lynda Yordy
Supervisor of Early Intervention Program
Schuylkill IU 29, Maple Avenue Campus
PO Box 30
Marlin, PA 17951