

Screening and Evaluation for Special Education Programs

The Karns City Area School district uses the following procedures for allocating, identifying, and evaluating specified needs of school-aged students requiring special programs or services. These procedures as required by law are as follows:

The Karns City Area School District, as prescribed by section 1402 of the Pennsylvania School Code, routinely conducts screenings of a child's hearing acuity in the following grades: Kindergarten, 1,2,3,7, and 11. Visual acuity is screened in every grade Speech and Language skills are screened in Kindergarten, 1, 2, and 3, as well as on a referral basis. New students are screened annually. Classroom teachers on an on-going basis assess gross motor and fine motor skills. Specified needs from all these screening sources are noted within the child's official file. School records are always open and available to parents, and only to school officials who have legitimate "need to know" information about the child. Information from the records is released to other persons or agencies only with appropriate authorization that involves written-signed permission by parents. Parents with concerns regarding their student may contact the Director of Special Education and/or your child's building principal: Director of Special Education – Mrs. Jennifer Jamison, Karns City High School - Mrs. Brenda Knoll or Mr. Michael Stimac, Sugarcreek Elementary School – Mr. Jeff Wagner, Chicora Elementary - Mr. Shane Spack, at any time to request a screening or evaluation of their child. Communication with parents and exceptional students shall be in English or in a native language of the parents. Screening information will be used by the MTSS Team within the student's school to meet his or her specific needs or to document the need for further information. If it is determined that a child needs additional services, the MTSS team will make adjustments relative to such things as the child's learning style, behavior, physical inability, and speech problems to be more in keeping with traditional classroom experiences. If a student does not make progress, parents will be asked to give written permission for further evaluations. After all evaluations are completed, a comprehensive evaluation report, (ER), will be compiled. This ER report will be compiled with parent involvement and include specific recommendations for the types of intervention necessary to deal with the child's specific needs. Parents are then invited to participate in a meeting where the results of the evaluation will be discussed. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be developed for specialized services for the student. The Karns City Area School District's ER and IEP Teams can consist of the following district staff; the Director of Special Education, the Building Principal, the Special Education teacher, the regular education teacher(s), the school psychologist, guidance counselor, other teachers or specialists as needed and other administrative staff when appropriate. A parent may request that the district initiate a screening or an evaluation of their student's specified needs at any time by contacting the building principal. Further information about these procedures may be obtained by contacting Mrs. Jennifer Jamison, Director of Special Education, 1446 Kittanning Pike, Karns City, PA 16041. Parents are an integral part of the IEP team and need to be physically present at the IEP meeting. The Karns City Area School District will make every effort to insure parent participation. The Karns City Area School District will notify the parents in writing, make documented phone calls, and make home visits if necessary, to make parents aware of the IEP- conference and the need for parental participation. Parents are then presented a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) with which they may agree or disagree. If parents disagree with the program being recommended, the issue may be taken to mediation or a due process hearing.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The Karns City School District operates the following programs: Elementary and Secondary Learning Support, Emotional Support, Speech/Language Support, and Gifted Support. The Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV operates the following programs within the Karns City Area School district: Itinerant Hearing Support, Itinerant Vision Support, and Student Physical Impairment Support. The Karns City Area School District accesses the following supports provided by the Midwestern I.U. #4, Emotional Support, Life Skills Support, Multi-handicapped Support, Hearing Support, Autistic Support, Occupational Therapy, Vision Support, Social and Emotional Learning, Multi disabilities support , and Early Intervention.

APPROVED PRIVATE SCHOOLS

An Approved Private School is licensed by the State board of Private Academic Schools where the specific special education program for certain exceptional handicapped persons is approved by the Secretary of Education, through the Bureau of Special Education. An approved private school assignment may be recommended whenever an appropriate placement cannot be provided within the Karns City Area School District or neighboring school district solely because of the nature and incidence of the disability of the child.

CHAPTER 15 PROTECTED HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

A protected handicapped student is a student who is school age with a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to any aspect of the school program. In compliance with State and Federal Law, the Karns City Area School District will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those

related aids, services, or accommodations with 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. These services and protections for "protected handicapped student" 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 provisions of services to protected handicapped students, contact: Mrs. April Christy, District School Psychologist.

PRIVACY RIGHTS OF PARENTS AND STUDENTS

The Karns City Area School District and its employees are required by Federal Law and State and Federal Rules and Regulations to protect the rights of students. The foundation of these rights comes from federal legislation entitled, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (also known as the Buckley Amendments). There are State Rules and Regulations dealing with regular and special education students' rights and privacy. All students are covered by the State Regulations contained in Chapter 12 known as Students' Rights and Responsibilities. The basic premise of the above-mentioned laws, rules, and regulation is that information about students, such as Educational Records, Personally Identifiable Information, and Directory Information, cannot be disclosed without written parental consent. Identifiable Information includes the student's name, the name of the parent or other family members and a personal identifier or a list of personal characteristics that would make the student's identity easily traceable. Educational Records and Personally Identifiable Information cannot be disclosed or released without written parental consent or if a student is over eighteen without the students consent. There is certain information that can be released without consent, which is called Directory Information. Directory Information means information contained in an education record of a student's which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy. The Karns City Area School District designates what information is labeled Directory Information. It shall include the following: The student's name, address, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student. Disclosure of information means to permit access to or the release, transfer, or other communication of education records, or the personally identifiable information contained in these records, to any party, by any means, including oral, written, or electronic means. This means that information about a student cannot even be shared in conversation without permission. This also applies to other personnel who do not have educationally relevant reason to possess knowledge of the student.

Written parental consent is necessary for disclosure of personally identifiable information and education records. The consent must:

- Specify the records that may be disclosed
- State the purpose of the disclosure
- Identify the part of class parties to whom the disclosure may be made

Furthermore, the Karns City Area School district must maintain a written record of disclosure for the parents to inspect in case information has been released.

The Karns City Area School District is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, natural origin, sex and/or handicap in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title VI, IX, and Section 504.