

Special Education Services

In 1975, the United States Congress passed landmark legislation known as Public Law 94-142, The Education of All Handicapped Children's Act. This education act provided federal financial assistance to state and local education agencies to guarantee special education and related services to eligible children with disabilities. This law assures that all students with disabilities who attend public school in states that receive federal financial assistance receive a free and appropriate public education. Public Law 94-142 was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) in 1990. IDEA guarantees a free and appropriate education to children from the age of three to the age of twenty-one and provides a system of early intervention for infants and toddlers with disabilities or developmental delays from birth to age three.

Special education is defined as specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals, and institutions, in other settings, and in physical education.

Related services means transportation, and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services (including speech language pathology and audiology services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, social work services, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services) as may be required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education. (The Special Education Handbook for Kentucky School Administrators, Patricia M. Guthrie, 2002).

The Carlisle County Public School System shall make a free and appropriate public education available to all children with disabilities aged three to twenty one residing within its district's boundaries, including children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled for more than ten days in a school year and who have not graduated with a general education diploma. A free and appropriate education shall be provided to each child based on the child's unique needs and not on the child's disability. The Carlisle County Public School System provides and uses local, state, federal, and other fiscal resources as needed to provide the specially designed instruction and related services needed by children with disabilities.

Upon completion of the tests and other evaluation materials, the Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) shall determine whether the child is a child with a disability who meets one or more of the eligibility categories as defined in 707 KAR 1:280 to the extent that specially designed instruction is required in order for the child to benefit from education. (Carlisle County Public Schools District Procedures for Special Education May 2002).

A student may be deemed eligible for special education services by meeting certain eligibility criteria. The areas of eligibility for special education services are Autism, Deaf/Blind, Developmental Delay, Emotional Behavioral Disability, Functional Mental Disability, Hearing Impaired, Mild Mental Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedically Impaired, Other Health Impaired, Specific Learning Disability, Speech Language, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Visually Impaired.

Definitions of Exceptional Children Categories

- Autism- A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected because the child has an emotional behavioral disability.
- Deaf-blind- Combined hearing and visual impairments that have an adverse affect on the child's education performance, the combination of which causes severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with hearing or visual impairments, unless supplementary assistance is provided to address educational needs resulting from the two disabilities. Specially designed instruction is required to address needs of both disabilities.
- Developmental delay- Within the ages of three through eight and has not acquired skills or achieved commensurate with recognized performance expectations for one's age in one or more of these developmental areas: cognition, communication, motor development, social-emotional, or self-help/adaptive behavior.
- Emotional-behavioral disability (EBD)- A condition characterized by behavioral excess or deficit when compared to peers and cultural reference groups which significantly interferes with a child's interpersonal relationships or learning process to the extent that it adversely affects educational performance; the comparison is across settings, over a long period of time and to a marked degree.
- Functional Mental Disability (FMD)- A deficit or delay in intellectual functioning (at least three or more standard deviations below the mean) and adaptive behavior (at least three or more standard deviations below the mean), which is typically manifested during the developmental period. A severe deficit exists in overall academic performance and specially designed instruction is required for the child to benefit from education.
- Hearing Impaired (HI)- A hearing loss that has an adverse affect on educational performance to the extent specially designed instruction is required- whether permanent or fluctuating, ranging from mild to profound (a loss of 25 decibels or greater exists through speech frequencies of 500, 1000, and 2000 Hertz in the better ear), and of a degree that the child is impaired in the processing of linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification.
- Mild Mental Disability (MMD)- A deficit or delay in intellectual functioning (at least two but no more than three standard deviations below the mean) and adaptive behavior (at least two standard deviations below the mean), which adversely affects overall academic performance to the extent that specially designed instruction is required, and which typically manifests during the developmental period.
- Multiple Disabilities- A combination of two or more disabilities (e.g., mental disability-blindness, mental disability-orthopedic impairment, etc.) resulting in significant learning, developmental, or behavioral and emotional problems, which adversely affect educational performance and cause severe educational needs that

cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. A child is not considered to have a multiple disability if the adverse effect on performance is solely the result of deaf-blindness or the result of a speech language disability and one other disability.

- Orthopedically Impaired - A severe physical impairment that adversely affects educational performance to the extent that specially designed instruction is required; includes an impairment caused by a congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of limb, etc.), a disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, etc.), and from other causes (cerebral palsy, amputations, etc.).
- Other Health Impaired (OHI)- Having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli that is due to a chronic or acute health problem and adversely affects educational performance to the extent that specially designed instruction is required. Examples of such chronic health problems include heart condition, tuberculosis, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, nephritis, asthma, lead poisoning, leukemia, diabetes, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or acquired immune deficiency syndrome.
- Specific learning disability (SLD)- Not achieving commensurate with age and ability level; has the intellectual ability but there is a substantial discrepancy between achievement and that intellectual ability in one or more of these areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills/comprehension, or mathematics calculation/reasoning; the discrepancy between ability and achievement is not due to a mental disability, visual, hearing or motor impairment, emotional-behavioral disability or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. It includes conditions like dyslexia, developmental loss of the ability to speak, and perceptual disabilities.
- Speech or language impairment- A communication disorder, including stuttering, impaired articulation, delayed acquisition or absence of language, a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)- An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, which adversely affects educational performance and causes temporary or permanent and partial or complete loss of cognitive functioning, physical ability or communication or social-behavioral interaction (e.g., memory, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, psychosocial behavior, speech, problem-solving, etc.). The term does not mean a brain injury that is congenital or degenerative, or brain injuries induced by birth trauma.
- Visually Impaired (VI)- A vision loss, which, even with correction, adversely affects educational performance to the extent specially designed instruction is required. The loss is as follows: visual acuity even with prescribed lenses that is 20/70 or worse in the better eye; or visual acuity that is better than 20/70 and the child has one of these conditions- a medically diagnosed progressive loss of vision, a visual field of 20 degrees or worse, a medically diagnosed condition of cortical blindness, or a functional vision loss.

The Carlisle County School System offers a wide range of special education services depending on the student's educational needs. Students may receive specially designed instruction through a collaborative setting with the special education teachers and regular education teachers working together to provide services, a pull-out setting where special education teachers work in a small group with students with disabilities in a resource room setting, or a combination of both. Students with special needs may require modifications and accommodations to be successful in an educational setting. The Admissions and Release Committee comprised of educators and parents will work together to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that is unique to each child's individual needs.

Related services received through the Carlisle County School District include speech language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and orientation and mobility services. Related services are provided for a student with disabilities that requires these services to meet educational goals.

ARC Meetings....What are they all about?

If you have a child who has been referred for special education services through specially designed instruction or speech therapy, you may have received an ARC notice from the school and wonder what it means. ARC stands for the Admissions and Release Committee. This committee consists of your child's teacher, a special education teacher, possibly the school's guidance counselor, the principal, the parent, and any one else who may have an educational interest in your child's education. This committee makes all evaluation and placement decisions. Your child's classroom teacher may have referred your child for an evaluation because they are having difficulty in a particular subject area or the teacher notes speech concerns.

If a child qualifies for specially designed instruction through special education services after the parent gives the school district permission to evaluate their child, the ARC will develop a written Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP is written especially for your child. The committee works as a team to develop and review the IEP. As parents, you are an important part of this team. The IEP addresses the following:

- what your child can and cannot do (present level of performance)
- what your child is going to be working on during the coming year (annual goals and short term objectives)
- what special services will be provided (specially designed instruction and related services)
- what special supports and services your child will need to function in the classroom
- when special services will start and how long they will last
- how and when they will measure your child's progress and how and when they will share this information with you; and who is responsible for implementing short term objectives

After developing the IEP, the ARC will decide where the services will be provided. This is called placement. The school district will have a continuum or range of how services can be delivered. This includes mainstream classes, special classes, etc. Placement can change year to year depending on what the ARC, including the parents, decides best meets your child's needs.

A parent's attendance and participation at ARC meetings are important because parents are their child's best advocates. This is your opportunity to exercise your decision-making rights as a member of the ARC.

Good communication is the key to any successful relationship. Build your relationship with the school district by becoming involved in your child's education and through attending ARC meetings. Please let the schools Director of Special Education know how everything is going and any questions or concerns you might have. Please also contact the school's Director of Special Education with GOOD things that are happening too. You can contact Lisa Canler, Director of Special Education for Carlisle County Schools, at (270) 628-3800 extension 6028 with any questions or concerns.

ARC Meeting - A Checklist for Parents

Reprinted from the Kentucky Department of Education, Exceptional Children Services

The following information may help you become more active in Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) meetings. The questions and suggestions deal primarily with IEP meetings and do not cover all the activities that could happen at an ARC meeting.

Before the Meeting (If you answer no to any questions, call or visit your child's school or contact the Director of Special Education):

- Do I know the purpose of the ARC meeting?
- Do I know when and where my ARC will meet?
- Do I know who is supposed to be at the meeting? Will transition be discussed?
- Have I seen my child's records, including IEP, evaluation and progress reports?
- Do I understand what is in the records?
- Have I thought about goals for my child? (Talk with family or friends about it and make a list to take to the meeting.)
- Do I know what my child is interested in? (Talk about it and make a list to take to the meeting.)
- Do I know what my child can and can't do at home? (Talk about it and make a list to take to the meeting.)

At the Meeting:

- Ask questions when things are not clear.
- Do I know how my child will participate in the regular program with children who are not disabled? (Participation in the regular education program.)
- State your concerns.
- Speak up if you disagree.
- State the goals you want for your child.
- Describe what your child is like at home. (Share list of what your child can or can't do and how it affects home.)

- Ask school staff to explain the disability your child has and explain how the disability affects your child's education.
- Share list of goals you think should be included. (Annual goals and benchmarks).

At the End of the Meeting (If you answer no to any questions ask school staff for information):

- Do I know what special services my child will get? Do I know how often and the length of the services? (Specially designed instruction and related services)
- Do I know how my child's progress will be measured and reported? (Progress reports)
- Do I know when we will review the IEP? (Schedule for review)
- Do I know where educational and related services will be provided? (Placement)
- Do I know how my child will participate in statewide testing and assessment programs, including what accommodations and modifications might be needed?
- If my child is between the ages of three and five, do I know what steps will be taken to make sure there is a smooth transition from preschool to the primary program?
- If my child is 14 years of age or older, do I know what is in his or her plan for transition from school to work, additional training or higher education, and to community living?
- Do I know if my child needs extended school year services to prevent regression?

After the Meeting (If you answer no to any questions, call or visit your child's school):

- Did I receive a copy of the meeting summary and IEP? (If no, call the school and ask for copies)
- Did I give written consent for services? (Prior to implementation of the IEP)
- Am I in agreement with the IEP?
- Do I want to talk with the committee before the next scheduled meeting and do I know how to do this?

The booklet *Your Child's Education* gives additional information about Admissions and Release Committees, as well as other topics related to special education. To obtain a copy, contact:

Division of Exceptional Children Services
 Kentucky Department of Education
 Capital Plaza Tower
 500 Mero Street
 Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
 Phone (502) 564-4970