

**ANNUAL NOTICE
OF
EDUCATIONAL
SUPPORT SERVICES**



2023-2024

Bradford Area School District

**ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTIFICATION
OF
CHILD FIND, SCREENING AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES,
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
AND
CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS**

In compliance with state and federal law, Notice is hereby given by the Bradford Area School District that it conducts ongoing identification activities as part of its school program for the purpose of identifying students who may be in need of special education and related services. The Bradford Area School District, prior to any referral of a student for evaluation, utilizes one or more of the following methods to identify possible exceptional school age persons:

1. Annual survey of exceptional children ages 3 to 21.
2. Participation in the intermediate unit Child Find system.
3. Analysis of school district achievement test / state assessment results.
4. Parent or guardian-initiated referral.
5. Referrals to and from other public and private agencies
6. School district staff referral.

Screening methods may vary based upon need and do not require parental approval. Parental involvement is encouraged.

If the Bradford Area School District identifies your child as possibly in need of a formal evaluation, parents will be notified of applicable procedures. The procedures used by the District will be in compliance with state and federal law.

Child Find Procedures – Birth to School-Aged

Screening and evaluation processes are available at no cost to parents who believe their young child (age 3 to school-age) may be in need of early intervention services. Parents may request screening and evaluation at any time, whether or not their child is enrolled in the District's public school program. Requests for screening and evaluation are to be made in writing to Jennifer Morgan, Director of Special Education, or by contacting the Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit Nine Early Intervention Office at (814) 887-5512, Option 5.

School – Aged Screening Procedures

The Bradford Area School District provides a variety of screening for students, including vision, hearing, gross and fine motor skills, scoliosis, speech, and physical examinations. School personnel assess academic and social/emotional skills on an on-going basis. If a parent believes that their school-age child may be in need of special education services and related programs, screening and evaluation processes designed to assess the needs of the child and his/her eligibility are available at no cost to the parent, upon written request.

Results from screenings are noted within a student's official file and open to parents. Information from the records is released to other individuals or agencies only with appropriate authorization.

At the Elementary and Middle School levels, all referrals begin with grade level teams through an on-going screening and data collection process. A parent or staff member may initiate this process by submitting a written request to the school administrator or guidance counselor. Screening information will be used by the team to generate a plan to meet the child's specific needs or to document the need for further evaluation.

At the High School level, referrals are processed through the guidance department. A parent or staff member may initiate this process by contacting a guidance counselor or building administrator. Screening information is used by the instructional team to generate a plan to meet the student's specific needs or refer the student for further evaluation.

At any grade level, referrals for gifted screening can be made directly to the school guidance counselor or building administrator. A screening of student performance is conducted to determine if additional assessments are needed. The screening process includes a review of the student's performance on state assessments or other standardized assessment measures, teacher and parent input, and review of report card.

PLEASE NOTE: *Parents hold the right to request a formal evaluation including prior to or during the conduct of screening activities; screening activities do not serve as the only measure.*

Assessments and Evaluations

The Bradford Area School District has board approved procedures designed to provide information concerning the proficiency of students in the district on standardized tests of academic achievement and aptitude. The following standardized assessments are given at select grade levels:

- Local Reading and Math Benchmark Assessments** – grade 2
- Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)** – grades 3-8
- Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT)** – grades 10-11
- Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)** – grades 11-12
- Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)** – grades 10-12
- Pennsylvania Keystone Exams (Algebra I, Literature, Biology)** – upon course completion

Students with disabilities will participate in statewide and district-wide assessments in one of the five ways as determined by the IEP team:

1. PSSA - Without accommodations.
2. PSSA - With accommodations – accommodations provided must be allowable by the test given and be used by the student as part of his/her educational routine.
3. Alternate assessments – to participate in the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), students must meet specific criteria established by the Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education.
4. Pennsylvania Keystone Exams – Without accommodations.
5. Pennsylvania Keystone Exams – With accommodations – accommodations provided must be allowable by the test given and be used by the student as part of his/her educational routine.

The Board shall also grant parents whatever legal rights they have to excuse their child from formal district and statewide assessment tests upon receipt by the District, by written request from the parents.

The results of assessments shall be made available to the professional staff so they may better understand the strengths and weaknesses of their particular students.

Evaluation or additional educational/psychological testing is available through the school psychologist with parental permission. The assessments to be given are determined by a team of individuals familiar with the student. This team shall make reasonable efforts to include the student's parents.

Additional remedial testing, on a need for referral basis, is available through the Title 1 Reading Specialist at the elementary levels with parental permission. Curriculum-based assessment and other screening measures, such as speech/language screenings conducted by the speech clinician, do not require parental permission.

Educational Support Programs and Services

If a child is identified by the School District as possibly in need of special education and related services, the parent will be notified of applicable procedures. Individualized services and programs are available for children who are determined to need specially designed instruction due to the following conditions:

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| 1. Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder | 8. Orthopedic Impairment |
| 2. Deaf-Blindness | 9. Other Health Impairment |
| 3. Deafness | 10. Specific Learning Disability |
| 4. Emotional Disturbance | 11. Speech or Language Impairment |
| 5. Hearing Impairment | 12. Traumatic Brain Injury |
| 6. Intellectual Disability | 13. Visual Impairment |
| 7. Multiple Disabilities | 14. Mentally Gifted |

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) intends to provide greater access of children with disabilities to the general curriculum. It is the belief of the District that the majority of children identified as eligible for special education and related services are capable of participating in the general curriculum to varying degrees with appropriate adaptations and modifications.

The legal definitions of these disabilities, which the Bradford Area School District is required to apply under the IDEA, may

differ from medical or clinical criteria. The legal definitions, moreover, could apply to children with disabilities that have very different medical or clinical disorders. A child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, for example, could qualify for special education and related services as a child with "Other Health Impairment, OHI" if the child meets the eligibility criteria under one or more of these disability categories and if the child needs special education and related services as a result.

Under Section 504 for the Federal Rehabilitation Act 173, and under the Federal American with Disabilities Act, some school age children with disabilities who do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined above might nevertheless be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities. Children are entitled to such protections, adaptations, and accommodations if they have a mental or physical disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

Description of Educational Support Programs and Services

Autistic Support – The Autistic Support Program implements teaching procedures using Applied Behavior Analysis and the analysis of Verbal Behavior to improve communication, social and other relevant skills for students identified as having a developmental disability; which significantly affects verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction. These characteristics are generally evident before age 3. They also adversely affect a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are: engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistant 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 primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance.

Blind and Visually Impaired Support – Vision Support services are provided to students whose visual impairment, including blindness, adversely affects their educational performance. Determination of a visual impairment shall include a full assessment and comprehensive report by an eye specialist specifying the nature and degree of the impairment.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Impaired Support – Hearing Support services are provided to students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Students serviced would have a hearing loss, which interferes with the development of the communication process and results in failure to achieve educational potential. Determination of the hearing impairment shall include a report by an audiologist or otologist, or both, specifying the nature and degree of the impairment.

Emotional Support – The Emotional Support Program serves identified students whose emotional needs or mental health needs interfere with their academic progress in the regular education environment. Instruction is provided based upon the student's individualized educational program. Students are included in regular education whenever possible based upon each student's unique needs. Behavior support components are designed and exercised in all educational settings when needed.

Learning Support – The Learning Support Program provides identified students with a program of individualized learning and continuous academic support. Reading, Language Arts, Spelling, Math, Social Studies, and Science are the main areas in which educational services are provided. The program is designed to help students who require special services, develop their knowledge and skills. Students in need of learning support services are included in regular education setting whenever possible and when deemed appropriate by the IEP team.

Life Skills Support – The Life Skills Support program serves students with overall delays who require multiple hands-on experiences for mastery to occur. Instruction is given individually and in small groups with aide assistance. Students are taught life skills in a functional setting. Students in need of life skills services are included in regular education setting whenever possible and when deemed appropriate by the IEP team.

Speech and Language Support – The Speech and Language Support Program provides specially designed instruction for students who have difficulties in communication skills. Areas of difficulty which can be addressed include: articulation (specific speed-sound production), language skill development (form, content and use), voice quality, and fluency (stuttering). One-on-one or small group instruction is provided in the speech therapy room setting or within the child's classroom depending upon which arrangement best meets the child's individual communication needs as determined by the student's IEP team.

Related Services - The IEP team determines the need for all related services. These include transportation and any developmental, corrective, or other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.

Psychological Services – School psychologists receive special training in child development, learning processes,

emotional and behavioral adjustment, and psychological and instructional testing. The district's school psychologist can provide a variety of services to students, parents, teachers, and administrators. These services include psycho-educational testing to determine a student's academic strengths and needs, identification of students who might be in need of special education services, assistance in the development of appropriate educational plans designed to meet students' needs, individual or group counseling based on academic, social or emotional concerns, and consultation with parents and teachers about students' learning and adjustment. The school psychologist works cooperatively with students, parents, community members and school staff to assist with providing all students with a free and appropriate education.

Behavioral Support Services – Behavioral Support Services can be provided to students receiving their education in the general education population and/or students receiving special education services. Students' whose behavior is adversely impacting their academic performance within the curriculum or students' whose behavior is adversely impacting one or more areas of life functioning (peer relationships, etc.), may be candidates for Behavioral Support Services. Behavioral Support Services include, but are not limited to: the evaluation of a student's behavior within the education setting, analysis of data collected from the evaluation, the development of behavioral interventions, the implementation of behavioral interventions, and the monitoring of those interventions as they relate to the student's behavioral goals and/or objectives identified via the behavioral evaluation. Students may be referred for behavioral support services by parents or guardians, administrators, guidance counselors, and/or teachers.

Extended School Year - The determination of whether or not a child with a disability needs an extended school year must be made annually on an individual basis by the child's IEP team. An eligible child is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in excess of 180 days per year if regression caused by interruption in educational programming and limited recoupment capacity, or other factors, makes it unlikely that the student will attain or maintain skills and behavior relevant to established IEP goals and objectives.

Occupational Therapy – This service addresses fine motor concerns that interfere with an identified student's ability to benefit from or gain access to his/her educational program. A doctor's diagnosis and order are necessary for evaluation and treatment. This order must be renewed annually.

Physical Therapy – Identified students who have gross motor concerns that hinder their ability to benefit from or gain access to his/her educational program may be eligible for physical therapy services. A doctor's order is necessary for evaluation and treatment. This order must be renewed annually.

Gifted Support – The Gifted Support Program is designed to provide challenge for and meet the needs of mentally gifted students. Activities and units of study are presented in various subject areas. Overall goals include enhancing student self-esteem, building leadership, communication and interpersonal skills, and applying higher-level thinking skills.

Early Intervention – If you believe your young child (age 3 to school-age) is experiencing delays in his/her development, Early Intervention can help. Developmental delays can occur in one or more of the following areas: social and emotional development, physical development, communication (language and speech) development, cognitive development, or adaptive development (self-help skills). The Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit Nine's Early Intervention Office at (814) 887-9287 is able to provide more information about services for eligible young children (age 3 to school-aged).

Title 1 Program – The Title 1 Program in the Bradford Area School District offers remedial reading services to students in grades K-5. This support includes small group instruction and consultation services to the classroom teachers.

Chapter 15 – In compliance with state and federal law, the Bradford 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 which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and 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.

ELL (English Language Learners) – The Bradford Area School District offers an ELL program to any student with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The program is designed to teach social and academic language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) to our ELL population. It is also designed to meet the cultural aspects necessary to succeed and participate in meaningful educational programs. The ELL program is mandated by the federal and state governments for full implementation beginning the 2004 – 2005 school year. For additional information, please contact Samuel Johnson, Assistant Superintendent, at (814) 362-3841.

Career and Technical Education Programs – The following career and technical programs are a part of the student curriculum options offered at Bradford Area High School:

Automotive Technology	Carpentry
Computer Maintenance Technology	Drafting and Design
Child Care Education	Machine Technology
Well Drilling & Petroleum Technology	Health Professions
Marketing & Business Education	Cooperative Education
Electrical	Engineering Technology

For more information regarding these programs, contact the High School at (814) 362-3845.

Individuals in need of further information about child find, screening and evaluation procedures, (including purpose, time, and location), provisions of special education programs and services, and/or on the rights of parents and children, including the right to due process procedures, should contact any school administrator or school counselor.

Rights and Protections

Notice: The public school must notify parents in writing whenever it proposes to initiate or to change substantially the identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement of a child or whenever it refuses to initiate or make a change in identification, evaluation, educational program or placement requested by parents. Such notice must be accompanied by a full written description of the parents' rights.

Consent: The public school cannot proceed with an evaluation or reevaluation, or with the initial provision of special education and related services, without the written consent of the parents, unless, after seeking such consent, it obtains the approval of an impartial hearing officer or judge following a hearing. If the parents fail to respond to a written request for permission to reevaluate, however, the public school may proceed with the proposed reevaluation without consent.

Protection in Evaluation Procedures: Evaluations to determine eligibility and current need for special education and related services must be administered in a manner that is free of racial, cultural, or linguistic bias. Evaluations cannot consist of a single test or assessment, and testing must be a valid measure of the psychological, social, emotional, or other learning characteristic or behavior that the school is using to measure. Testing and assessment must be administered in accordance with professional standards and the criteria established by the publisher. It must be administered in the native language of the child.

Independent Educational Evaluation: If parents disagree with the evaluation conducted by the public school, they may request in writing an independent educational evaluation, or "IEE", at public expense. The policy of the Bradford Area School District is to refuse payment for such evaluations if the independent evaluator is not a Pennsylvania certified or licensed professional, if the evaluation is not conducted in the same manner that the law requires of public school evaluations, or if the cost of evaluation substantially exceeds the prevailing cost of similar evaluations in the region. Exceptions to these limitations will be granted only for compelling reasons. If the public school refuses to pay the IEE, it must request an immediate special education due process hearing to defend the appropriateness of its evaluation.

Confidentiality and Student Records

Student records are essential to the successful delivery of formal education at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels. The District has established a system for the maintenance, use and destruction of student records that enables the District to educate children thoroughly and efficiently and to do so in a manner consistent with the privacy rights guaranteed by state and federal law.

The Bradford Area School District may maintain records in two categories:

CATEGORY A – This file contains the minimum personal data necessary for the operation of the school system. Identification of student (name, social security number, student identification number, etc.), names and addresses of parents or guardian, last known home address and telephone number, birth date, attendance records, classes attended and academic levels completed or services received, year of program or service completion, and when applicable, grades or marks received, grade level completed, and whether a diploma was received. The file may also include, achievement test scores, honors, awards, activities, photographs, student discipline records or other similar types of information.

CATEGORY A DATA SHALL BE FILED FOR 100 YEARS.

CATEGORY B – This file’s data is verified information of clear importance such as intelligence and aptitude scores, interest inventories, health data, family information, teacher or counselor observations and reports of serious acts of misbehavior and behavior patterns. This file also contains the documents that pertain to evaluation procedures to determine if a student was eligible for special education services or for other accommodations such as Chapter 15 Service Agreements. **CATEGORY B DATA SHALL BE DISCARDED SEVEN YEARS AFTER THE STUDENT IS GRADUATED OR, IN THE CASE OF A TRANSFER OR DROPOUT, WHEN THE STUDENT REACHES AGE TWENTY-FOUR. ELIGIBLE STUDENTS MAY REQUEST THEIR CATEGORY B FILE BEFORE IT IS DESTROYED.**

CATEGORY C – This file’s data has a short-term value and may be unverified. Category C data are maintained in the offices of the principal or guidance counselor. Category C data may be transferred to Category B if they become verified or if their continued usefulness is apparent.

Copies of the Student Records Policy and Regulations are available on the district’s website at www.bradfordareaschools.org.

Notice of Rights under FERPA for:

- 1. Elementary and Secondary Students of the Bradford Area School District**
- 2. Parents and Eligible Students Who Reside in the Bradford Area School District**
- 3. Parents of Incarcerated Students and Incarcerated Eligible Students Who Are Housed at the McKean County Prison**

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants parents and students over 18 years of age or attending a post-secondary institution (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to educational records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the date the District receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal or other appropriate school official a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible students of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parent or eligible students may ask the Bradford Area School District to amend a record for reasons stated above. They should write the school principal or other appropriate school administrator, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding their request for the amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing. After the hearing, should the District still decide not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorized disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company which whom the District has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her task.

A school official has a legitimate education interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

The District may also disclose, without consent, "directory information", such as name, address, telephone number, date of birth, honors, awards, activities, etc. In the event a parent or student does not want this type of information disclosed, the parent or eligible student must inform the District in writing through the district.

4. The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office,
U.S. Department of Education,
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

- For further information on FERPA, please visit www.bradfordareaschools.org

For More Information



Individuals in need of further information about child find, screening and evaluation procedures, (including purpose, time, and location), provisions of special education programs and services, and/or on the rights of parents and children, including the right to due process procedures, should contact any school administrator or guidance counselor at the following telephone numbers:

Assistant Superintendent:	(814) 362-3841 Ext. 2502
Director of Special Education:	(814) 362-3841 Ext. 2515
Bradford Area High School:	(814) 362-3845
Floyd C. Fretz Middle School:	(814) 362-3508
School Street Elementary School:	(814) 368-3183
George G. Blaisdell Elementary School:	(814) 362-6834

or

Visit the district's website at www.bradfordareaschools.org

Equal Opportunity

"Equal Opportunity" The Bradford Area School District does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, [sex] gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, gender identity or expression, AIDS or HIV status, or any other legally protected category. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with State Law including the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and with Federal law, including Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For additional information, contact Samuel Johnson, Assistant Superintendent at 150 Lorana Avenue, Bradford, PA 16701 (814) 362-3841 or at sjohnson@bradfordareaschools.org or Jennifer Morgan, Director of Special Education for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 at 150 Lorana Avenue, Bradford PA, 16701 (814)-362-3841 or at jmorgan@bradfordareaschools.org