

# Baldwin-Whitehall School District

## District Administration

4900 Curry Road • Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15236-1817

Telephone: 412-884-6300 • FAX: 412-885-7802 • [www.bwschools.net](http://www.bwschools.net)

## Notice of Special Education Services & Programs

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 describes the parents' rights with regard to confidentiality of information that will be obtained during this process. The content of this notice has been written in English but can be translated into other languages. If a person does not understand any of this notice, he or she should contact the Student Services Department (412-885-7583) and request an explanation.

### Identification Activities

Baldwin-Whitehall School District provides free, appropriate public education to eligible students. To qualify as an eligible student, the child must be of school age, in need of specially designed instruction and meet the eligibility criteria for one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities, as set forth in the Pennsylvania State Regulations: Specific Learning Disability, Emotionally Disturbed, Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Blindness/Visual Impairment, Deaf-blindness, Deafness, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Neurological Impairment, Other Health Impairment and Speech and Language Impairment. Information regarding the appropriate developmental milestone descriptors for infants and toddlers may be found at the Center for Disease Control website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) website at [www.parentcenterhub.org](http://www.parentcenterhub.org).

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, conducting 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 child with a possible disability, he or she is evaluated, but not before parents give permission for their child to be evaluated.

### Confidentiality

The school district maintains records concerning children enrolled in the school district, including students with disabilities. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality. 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 Pennsylvania is 21. Each participating agency must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction states. One official at each participating agency must assume responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information.

For additional information related to student records, the parent can refer to the [Family Education Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#).

This notice is only a summary of the Special Education services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents. For more information or to request evaluation or screening of a public or private school child, contact:

Marissa Gallagher, Director of Student Services  
412-885-7583  
[mgallagher@bwschools.net](mailto:mgallagher@bwschools.net)

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

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 and 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 Avenue SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

## **Services for Protected Handicapped Students – (504)**

Students who are not eligible to receive special education programs and services may qualify as protected handicapped students and, therefore, be protected by other federal and state laws intended to prevent discrimination. The school district must insure that protected handicapped students have an equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate for the individual student. In compliance with state and federal law, the 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.

## **Early Intervention Identification**

In Pennsylvania, a child between 3 years of age and the school district's age to begin school who has a developmental delay or one or more of the physical or mental conditions listed above is identified as an "eligible young child." The parents of these children have the same rights described above. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing programs and services to eligible young children under Act 212 of 1990, the Early Intervention Services System Act. Screening for preschool children is available through the Allegheny Intermediate Unit #3. For more information, contact the Allegheny Intermediate Unit's Preschool Early Intervention "DART" Program at 412-394-5904.

Susan Sams, Ph.D., Program Director  
Phone: 412-394-5816  
Email: [susan.sams@aiu3.net](mailto:susan.sams@aiu3.net)

## **Educating Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and English Learners (EL)**

The education of students whose dominant language is not English is the responsibility of every school district/charter school in Pennsylvania. English language learners must be enrolled upon presentation of a local address and proof of immunization. The school district/charter school must administer a home language survey (HLS) to all students as required by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR). The results of that survey must be retained in the student's permanent folder. For those students whose primary language is other than English (PHLOTE), the district must also determine the student's English language proficiency. Then, if appropriate, ESL instruction will be provided for the limited English proficient student with local/state funds.

The Baldwin-Whitehall 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:

Marissa Gallagher, Director of Student Services  
412-885-7583  
[mgallagher@bwschools.net](mailto:mgallagher@bwschools.net)

## **Services to Students Who Are Mentally Gifted**

In compliance with state law, the Baldwin-Whitehall School District provides services designed to meet the unique needs of gifted students. The Baldwin-Whitehall School District identifies "gifted" students on a case-by-case basis based on state law and District procedures. Such students may possess superior IQ scores and meet multiple criteria indicating gifted ability. Gifted ability is not determined by IQ score alone. Additional criteria include but are not limited to indicators of classroom performance and grades, standardized test scores, and teacher ratings. If your child is suspected to be in need of such services, you will be notified of evaluation procedures. If you believe your school-age child may qualify for gifted education services, you may contact in writing your child's principal or Marissa Gallagher, Student Services, at any time to request determination of eligibility. An evaluation is conducted with parent permission. Please note that entitlement to gifted services includes only those rights provided by Pennsylvania law.

Marissa Gallagher, Director of Student Services  
412-885-7583  
[mgallagher@bwschools.net](mailto:mgallagher@bwschools.net)