



“Child Find” refers to identification activities performed by public education agencies such as charter schools to identify, locate, and evaluate students who are suspected of having a disability that may interfere with their learning, unless special education programs and related services are provided, in accordance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and corresponding federal and state regulations. The purpose of locating such students is so that a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) can be made available to them, regardless of the severity of their disability.

The types of disabilities that, if found to cause a student to need services, are:

- Autism
- Deaf-blindness
- Deafness
- Developmental delay
- Emotional disturbance
- Hearing impairment
- Intellectual disability
- Multiple disabilities
- Orthopedic impairment
- Other health impairment due to chronic or acute health problems
- Specific learning disability
- Speech and language impairment
- Traumatic brain injury
- Visual impairment including blindness

The identification activities, which are sometimes called screening activities, may include: review of group data (i.e., cumulative records, enrollment records, health records, and report cards), conducting hearing and vision screening, assessment of the student’s academic functioning, observation of the student displaying difficulty in behavior, and determining the

student's response to attempted remediation. Input from parents/guardians is another information source of identification.

Though scheduled annually, screening activities at First Philadelphia also occur in an ongoing fashion throughout the school year. First Philadelphia annually evaluates the effectiveness of its screening process.

Once a student is identified for suspected disability, they are evaluated by First Philadelphia, but only if the parent/guardian has given written permission to proceed with the evaluation process. Regardless of screening activities, at any time that parents/guardians feel that their student may qualify for special education, they may initiate testing procedures by forwarding a written statement stating the parent/guardian's concerns about the student, and that the parent/guardian wishes for the student to be tested. Verbal requests may be presented to administrators and staff, but should be followed up in writing as well. Before First Philadelphia may proceed with an evaluation, it must notify the parent/guardian of the specific types of testing and assessment proposed and of the parent's/guardian's rights, which are fully explained and contained in Procedural Safeguards. A copy of Procedural Safeguards must be given to parents/guardians once a year and in certain circumstances, including initial referral or parent's/guardian's request for an evaluation. Once parent/guardian has given the necessary written permission to enable First Philadelphia to commence evaluation testing, First Philadelphia has sixty (60) school days to complete the evaluation process. If First Philadelphia denies a request from a parent/guardian for an evaluation, the parent/guardian has the right to challenge the denial through an impartial hearing or voluntary alternative dispute resolution.

After the evaluation is completed and a report is prepared, a meeting will be held to discuss the results. If the student qualifies for special education and related services, the parent/guardian has the right to offer input into the educational programming and annual goals to be developed for their student. Together as a team, First Philadelphia and the parent/guardian determine the type and intensity of special education and related services according to particular student needs. Tailored to the student's unique needs, the educational program is described in writing in an individualized education program or "IEP," after joint development by an IEP team consisting of educators, parent/guardian, and other persons with special expertise or familiarity with the student.

Public schools including First Philadelphia must reevaluate school-age students receiving special education services every three years, though students with intellectual disabilities are reevaluated every two years. By agreement of the IEP team, including the parent/guardian, a reevaluation may be waived in some cases; however, waivers are not allowed in the case of a student with intellectual impairment.

Any parent/guardian wishing to initiate an evaluation may forward a written request with a statement of concerns or oral request to the Special Education Coordinator or persons listed in this notice.

OTHER IDENTIFICATION ACTIVITIES

First Philadelphia's Child Find Identification activities extend to homeless students, wards of the state, highly mobile students including migrant students, and students with disabilities enrolled by their parents/guardians in private schools necessary to provide them with equitable services.

Child Find activities are also conducted for students with a disability who may not need special education, but who may be eligible for services or accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and companion federal and state regulations. Parents/guardians who believe that their student may be eligible for disability accommodations in school may submit, at any time, a written request with a statement of concerns to the Special Education Coordinator or any person listed in this notice.

First Philadelphia engages in screening activities to identify students who may be mentally gifted and uses the data generated during regular classroom instruction to determine whether a Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDT) is warranted. Parents/Guardians may request a gifted screening or a GMDT evaluation at any time, in writing to the Special Education Coordinator or any in-person listed in this notice.

Specialeducationffpcs@ap-schools.org