

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL CHILD FIND TRAINING IT'S EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Purpose of Child Find Activities

Federal and State laws require the school district:

“...have in effect policies and procedures to ensue that all children residing in the State, including children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services are **identified, located and evaluated**, and a practical method is developed and implemented to determine which children are currently receiving needed special education and related services.”
(34 CFR 300.125)

Criteria for Eligibility

To be eligible for 504 the child must have “a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities.”

To be eligible for special education services, the student must meet specific criteria in one of the 15 disability categories identified in the Alaska State Special Education Handbook and require “specialized instruction”.

Child Find Team (aka S.A.T. or S.I.T.)

Each school in the District has a Child Find Team appointed to coordinate these activities. Their responsibilities include:

- Review referral procedures with parent and staff

- Review pre-referral interventions addressed and documentation received
- Review referrals, which must be made on a standard form
- Complete or assist with the completion of required forms
- Assist team in gathering student information
- Facilitate meetings with parent, including pre-evaluation meetings
- Providing “prior written notice” to the child’s parents of decisions made including evaluation requests
- Provide parents with a copy of Procedural Safeguards

Screening

Ages 3 through 21...

“Screening is a district-wide activity done in cooperation with parents and non-public school agencies to identify children who may need further evaluation. The results of the screening process is a systematic collection of information for every child screened that helps determine whether there is need for referral and an evaluation. Screening includes general health, vision, hearing, general development, general basic skills, primary language, and culture, and daily living skills ‘in the home and community obtained through parental input’.”

Anchorage School District Child Find Plan

Documented Interventions

“The type, duration, and result of regular education interventions should be well documented. The evaluation data collected and recorded will indicate the effectiveness of various interventions. If the child is referred for an individual evaluation, this regular education intervention information will provide important additional data to determine areas of need and to make recommendations.”

Alaska State Handbook, Part 2, Section 6

General Education Interventions

“The rationale for general education intervention is to identify problems early and prevent them from becoming major problems. All schools have referral systems in place to refer children experiencing school difficulties. We try to help the students be successful in the general education classroom first with interventions such as:

- Curriculum modifications;
- Social skills training;
- Cooperative learning activities;
- Change in classroom organizations;
- Change in teaching techniques, the school placement, or schedule.”

What Every Teacher Should Know, September 2003

Referrals

- Referrals may come from the family, private schools or various community members, and/or school staff
- All referrals made on standard form
- Child find team reviews the child’s record and consults with the teacher(s) and/or parent to determine whether to proceed with an evaluation
- If the child exhibits no learning or developmental difficulties the parents are provided with written notice within 5 days of the decision not to refer for evaluation.

What Every Teacher Should Know, September 2003

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

- The concept of FAPE means regular and special education and related services that:
 - are provided without charge to the parent – **FREE**

- are provided in conformity with an appropriately developed Individual Education Program (IEP) – **APPROPRIATE**
- are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction – **PUBLIC**; and
- include preschool, elementary school, and secondary school education that meet the education standards, regulations and administrative policies and procedures issued by the State Education Agency – **EDUCATION**
- To provide FAPE, the IEP must address all of the child’s identified special education and related services needs. The needed services and placement must be based on the child’s unique needs and not on the child’s disability
- To provide FAPE for children with disabilities, suspended or expelled (removed for more than 10 days in a school year), services must be provided to enable the student to progress in the general curriculum and advance toward achieving his/her IEP goals.
- Common 504 Terminology–Free and appropriate public education (FAPE): is “the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet individual educational needs of students with impairments as adequately as the needs of students without impairments are met and is based upon adherence to procedures that satisfy Section 504 requirements pertaining to educational setting, assessment and placement, and procedural safeguards.”

What Every Teacher Should Know, September 2003
ASD Section 504 Frequently Asked Questions, January 2008

Confidentiality

“All staff working with a student need to be aware of the IEP and must have access to the IEP. It is recommended that a copy of the IEP be given to each teacher working with the student. Staff needs to keep the IEP confidential. Student information is otherwise confidential and may not be shared verbally or in writing without written parent permission.”

What Every Teacher Should Know, September 2003

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

- FERPA is a Federal Law
- Protects the privacy of a student's educational records
- Applies to all educational agencies or institutions that receive funds under any program administered by the Secretary of Education
- With parental knowledge schools may disclose "directory" information.
- FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."
 - Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Student records include any information regarding the student such as the student working files, e-mail correspondences, phone logs, and staff notes.

Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) Home

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

- As a result of the Child Find Team's findings a child may qualify for "504" or special education. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a national law that protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability.
- "Under this law, individuals with disabilities are defined as persons with a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- Major life activities include caring for one's self, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, performing manual tasks, and learning."
- For more Section 504 information:
 - Anchorage School District Web site:
<http://www.asdk12.org/depts/sped/504/>
 - Burl Oliver, ASD Compliance Coordinator, 742-4293

504 Accommodation Plan

- If a student qualifies for a 504 Accommodation Plan, the plan is reviewed at least annually or whenever a substantial change in placement occurs and eligibility is re-examined every 3 years.
- The 504 Accommodation Plan is created to address the child's needs so as to participate fully in the general education classroom.
- Teachers and others are responsible for implementing the plan.
- The 504 Accommodation Plan is not the same as a special education IEP.

Where Parents May Get Assistance

Parents or personnel in need of assistance in making referrals for special education services should contact the following:

- **Preschool Level (ages 3–5):** Child Check Program 742-4000.
- **Elementary Level (grades K–6):** Child Find Coordinator, school principal, counselor, special education department chairperson, or school psychologist.
- **Middle and High (grades 7–12):** Child Find Coordinator, school administrator, school counselor, special education department chairperson or the school psychologist.
- **ASD 504 Compliance Coordinator:** 742-4293.

Specific Information Needed?

Contact:

- ASD Early Childhood and Elementary Education – 742-2655
- ASD Secondary Special Education – 742-3888
- ASD Related Services – 742-6065
- ASD 504 Compliance Coordinator – 742-4293
- AK State School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ASSDHH) – 742-4243
- ASD Speech and Language Services – 742-6050

Disability Reference Material Needed?

The STEP Center is a disability information and resource center. Utilizing an extensive lending library and Web site, the STEP Center personnel provide a service-oriented approach to problem solving and identification of community and ASD resources. Additionally, the STEP Center develops, coordinates and provides trainings for ASD special education staff.

How to Contact Us:

ASD Education Center
5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, AK 99504
Telephone: 742-3872
Email: step@asdk12.org
Web: www.asdk12.org/depts/step/

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