

Plum Borough School District  
900 Elicker Road  
Plum, Pennsylvania 15239

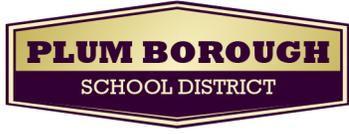
## Special Education Services

Plum Borough School District provides a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) to exceptional students consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 (P.L.108-446). To qualify as an exceptional student, the child must be of school-age, in need of specially-designed instruction, and meet eligibility criteria for one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities: autism, deaf-blindness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment including deafness, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment including blindness, and in the case of a child that is of preschool age, developmental delay.

Identification procedures ensure eligible students receive an appropriate program consisting of individualized special education and related services. At no cost to the parents, these services are provided in compliance with state and federal law and planned to ensure meaningful educational benefit and student progress.

To identify students who may be eligible for special education, various screening activities are conducted on an ongoing basis. These screening activities may include: hearing, vision, physical and speech/language screening; a review of group-based data (cumulative academic records, ability and achievement test scores, enrollment records, report cards, and health records); and a review by the building-level team. When screening results suggest that a student may need special education services, Plum Borough School District will, with parental consent, conduct an evaluation. Parents who suspect their child may need special education services may also submit a written request for an evaluation to the school principal. Services designed to meet the needs of exceptional students include: a timely evaluation and the annual development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Parents are an integral part of the IEP process and should be present at IEP meetings. Plum Borough School District will make every effort to ensure parent participation.

The extent of special education services and the location for the delivery of those services are determined by the IEP team and based on student's identified needs and abilities. Consideration also is given to the student's chronological age and level of intensity of the specified intervention. The district provides supplementary aids and services, such as transportation, physical therapy and occupational therapy, as necessary for the student to benefit from the special education program.



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Parents may obtain additional information about special education services and programs and parental due process rights by contacting the child's school principal or the Special Education Office at 412-798-6393.

## Special Education Services For School-Age Exceptional Students

### What is Special Education?

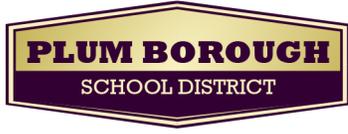
Special education is instruction that is specially designed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. It is provided at no cost to the parents and it is provided in the least restrictive environment that can meet the individual student's needs. Prior to special education, the school district attempts to meet the student's needs and address deficits through interventions and accommodations provided in the regular education classroom.

In order to qualify for special education, a student must meet two criteria.

1. The student must meet the criteria for one or more of the 13 disability categories defined by federal law.
2. The student must show a need for special education services.

To identify students who may be eligible for special education, various screening activities are conducted on an ongoing basis. These screening activities may include: hearing, vision, physical, and speech/language screening; a review of group-based data (cumulative academic records, ability and achievement test scores, enrollment records, report cards, and health records); and a review by the building-level team.

When screening results suggest that a student may need special education services, Plum Borough School District (PBSD) will, with parental consent, conduct an evaluation to determine whether or not a student meets the two criteria described above. Data collected for the evaluation includes input from parents, teachers, and other school staff who interact with the student. It includes observations of the student and rating scales, when necessary. These rating scales may explore behavior, emotional/mental health, adaptive behavior, and executive functioning. Typically, a school psychologist completes individual cognitive and academic achievement testing, as well. Finally, other professionals' expertise may be necessary to explore vision, hearing, or motor concerns. All of this information is documented and interpreted in an evaluation report (ER), which is provided to



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parents. Based on data collected, a determination is made regarding whether or not the student meets the two criteria necessary to receive special education services.

If the student qualifies for special education services, a meeting will be held to develop the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The parent is a member of the IEP team and is involved in all decisions regarding the child's education. The parent must provide signed consent before the district has permission to implement the IEP.

The extent of special education services and the location for the delivery of those services are determined by the IEP team and based on student's identified needs and abilities. Consideration also is given to the student's chronological age and level of intensity of the specified intervention. The district provides supplementary aids and services, such as transportation, physical therapy and occupational therapy, as necessary for the student to benefit from the special education program.

The Early Intervention Services Act-Act 212-entitles all preschool children with disabilities to appropriate early intervention services. The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare is responsible for providing services to infants and toddlers, defined as children from birth through two years of age. At-risk children are eligible for screening and monitoring through The Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, Inc., 412-885-6000.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing services to preschool children (ages 3-5). If your child is less than age of beginners and at least 3 years of age, they are considered to have a developmental delay when difficulties exist in the areas of cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional and self-help development.

For more information, contact:

Project DART  
Allegheny Intermediate Unit  
475 East Waterfront Drive  
Homestead, PA 15120  
412-394-5816