

RIVERSIDE BEAVER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT PUBLIC AWARENESS INFORMATION

The Riverside Beaver County School District offers a full continuum of special education programs and services to all students eligible for such services. Special education programs and services are available for eligible children ages three (3) to school entry age and may be requested by contacting the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit at (724)774-7800. Services for eligible students of school entry age through twenty-one (21) years of age may be requested by contacting Mr. Mark D. White, Certified School Psychologist/Special Education Contact Person at (724)758-7512, extension 3032.

Special Education programs available include services for eligible students who are identified as having:

1. Developmental Delay (Preschool only)
2. Autism
3. Deaf-Blindness
4. Deafness
5. Emotional Disturbance
6. Hearing Impairment
7. Intellectual Disability
8. Multiple Disabilities
9. Orthopedic Impairment
10. Other Health Impairment
11. Specific Learning Disability
12. Speech/Language Impairment
13. Traumatic Brain Injury
14. Visual Impairment including Blindness

The Riverside Beaver County School District conducts ongoing identification activities to determine if students are in need of special education services.

The Riverside Beaver County School District operates the following special programs:

- Learning Support
- Emotional Support
- Gifted Support
- Speech/Language Support
- Life Skills Support
- Autistic Support

Services for eligible preschool age children are provided through the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit. In addition, the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit provides the following special education services on behalf of the Riverside Beaver County School District:

- Developmentally Delayed (Preschool only)
- Hearing Support
- Speech/Language Support
- Emotional Support
- Life Skills Support
- Learning Support
- Autistic Support
- Multiple Disabled Support
- Physical Support

The Riverside Beaver County School District has an ongoing screening process to identify students in need of special services and specially designed instruction. The screening is conducted in each building (elementary, middle, and high school) beginning in May of each year with kindergarten screening and continuing in September with review of all group achievement and ability test results. Individual screening as needed takes place throughout the remainder of the school year.

Parents or guardians may request their child be screened or evaluated for special education services. Requests for screening or evaluation should be made in writing and directed to Mr. Mark D. White, the appropriate guidance counselors, or the building principals.

If you have any questions regarding special education services, the screening or evaluation process, or any other information, please contact Mr. Mark White at (724)758-7512, extension 3032.

Printed information regarding available special education services and programs and Parents Rights as they pertain to special education is available in the building principal's office or the Central Administration Office.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR ELIGIBLE AND EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

The Riverside Beaver County School District operates programs for students identified as eligible (disabled) or exceptional (gifted) in accordance with Special Education Standards and Regulations in the following areas:

LEARNING SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Students involved in learning support programs may spend most to a part of their day in their regular grade level class. Learning support students can receive differentiated instruction in academic basic skills in a special education classroom. Learning support students participate in all subjects (except as noted in their IEP) and related classes and activities with classmates in the regular educational environment. Alternative or adaptive testing and curriculum can be included as part of the program for all students determined eligible and in need of special education support services.

LIFE SKILLS SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Students participating in life skills support programs receive services through the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit, as well as other neighboring public and private schools through middle school. Students can continue in those programs until age 21 or they can receive services in a life skills support program located in Riverside Schools in grades 5 through 12. The educational programs for these students emphasize life skills curriculum and community based experiences.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM

An emotional support program is district operated at the high school level. At the elementary and middle school levels the district utilizes the services of the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit, as well as other agencies and neighboring school districts. Emotional support programs are for those students whose behavior interferes with ability to transition into mainstream programs. Students participating in emotional support programs may be identified as seriously emotionally disturbed and/or learning disabled.

DEAF AND HEARING SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The Riverside Beaver County School District in conjunction with the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit provides an ongoing system to locate, identify and evaluate students with hearing impairments. The hearing support teacher consults with students, teachers, and interpreters for appropriate educational planning for hearing support students in regular special classes. Also, the hearing support teacher monitors needs for assistive hearing devices as well as provides appropriate training for the use of such devices.

AUTISTIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The Riverside Beaver County School District operates an autistic support program in the primary center which provides services to those students identified with autism/pervasive developmental disorder. Students participating in autistic support programs in intermediate school through age 21 receive services through local intermediate unit operated programs, as well as other neighboring public and private schools. Determination of autism/pervasive developmental disorder must include an assessment and a report by a physician qualified to give a diagnosis and by a school psychologist specifying the degree and nature of the disorder. Educational programs are outlined in each student's IEP and may include, but are not limited to, the development of cognitive, language, social or motor skills.

BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The Riverside Beaver County School District, in conjunction with the local intermediate units and private schools, provides services to those students identified as blind or visually impaired. The visual impairment must be such a nature as to adversely affect the educational performance of the student. Determination of such impairment must include an assessment and a comprehensive report by an eye specialist outlining the nature and degree of the impairment. The visual support teacher may consult with students and teachers regarding appropriate educational planning and for the training and use of assistive devices.

MULTIPLE DISABILITIES SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The Riverside Beaver County School District, in conjunction with the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit and private schools, provides services to those students identified as multi-disabled. These students have more than one (1) disabling condition including, but not limited to, profound intellectual disability, severe language disorders, vision impairments, hearing disorders, and significant health problems. The combination of disabilities results in needs which require extraordinary services. Education programs for students with multiple disabilities are outlined in the student's IEP and may include, but are not limited to, acquisition, maintenance, and generalization of function skills.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Speech and language support programs operate at each school. Speech and language therapists consult with teachers to assist with the maintenance of speech and language development. Students in need of continued work in the area of language development and speech articulation may be identified as eligible for speech and language services after participating in screening activities and involvement of the IST teacher. Eligible students may participate in speech and language small group therapy sessions. In order to be eligible for the speech and language program, the student's disability must interfere with classroom performance.

TRANSITION

Eligible students in special education support programs in ages 14 and older must have Individual Transition Plans (ITP's) written as part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP). Transition is defined as those goals that will assist students in making the transition from school to further education or gainful employment after graduation. Riverside Beaver County School District provides annual activities for students ages 14 and older in areas of vocational aptitude and vocational exploration to survey career interests.

EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

The Riverside Beaver County School District in conjunction with the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit provided an ongoing system to locate, identify, and evaluate young children, ages three (3) to kindergarten, with special needs that are likely to interfere with learning development. Once students are identified as eligible for special education services, an Individualized Educational Program is written and services are delivered through the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit.

EARLY INTERVENTION

The goal of early intervention is to prevent or improve the effects of the child's disability before entry into school. These services may be delivered in a classroom setting, at home or a combination of both. The duration of the program, in terms of hours per week, varies according to the individual need of the child and his/her family. Early Intervention Programs are provided for children ages 3 year to 5 years. The need for early intervention services must be in one of the following areas: physical, sensory, cognitive, speech and language, social-emotional, and self-help. Services must be provided by qualified personnel. The Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit provides early intervention for the children in our school district.

SURROGATE PARENTS

The school district has the responsibility of developing a surrogate parent program for school-age children with disabilities residing in the Riverside Beaver County School District. The District must see that any student with a disability who is either a ward of the state or whose parent or guardian is unknown or unavailable has a surrogate parent. The surrogate parent acts in place of the parent in matters concerning the student's education programs/services. The role of the surrogate parent is voluntary and training is provided regarding the role of a surrogate parent.

HOMELESS CHILDREN

McKinney Homeless Act – Public Law 103-382 Subtitle B Education for Homeless Children and Youth, Sec. 722 (d) (2)

The main goal of the Children's Initiative is "to provide activities and services for such homeless children including preschool-aged children, and homeless youth that enable these children to enroll in, attend, and succeed in school, or, if appropriate, preschool programs. Guidelines from the U.S. Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan has this homeless definition: Children living with parent in a domestic violence shelter; individuals and/or families living with relatives or friends due to lack of housing; run-away children and children and youth who have been abandoned or forced out of their home by parents or other caretakers; children or migrant families who lack adequate housing; and school-age unwed mothers or expectant mothers living in houses for unwed mothers if they have no other available living accommodations.

OTHER SERVICES

The Riverside Beaver County School District provides for such services as physical therapy and occupational therapy through private contractors. Determination of eligibility for the service of physical therapy shall be based upon a physician's recommendation and results of an evaluation conducted by a licensed physical therapist. Determination of eligibility for the services of occupational therapy shall be based on the recommendation of an MDE/IEP team and the results of an evaluation conducted by an occupational therapist.

GIFTED EDUCATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

The Riverside Beaver County School District operates programs for students identified as exceptional (gifted) in accordance with Gifted Education Standards and Regulations. The goal of the gifted support program is to encourage the development of

intellectual and creative ability for the exceptional student. This program provides special services and programs not ordinarily provided in the regular education program.

Participation in gifted support is based upon the individual student's eligibility and need for acceleration and/or enrichment. State and district identification criteria for the gifted support program must be met.

Riverside Beaver County School District has a system to locate and identify all students within the district who are thought to be gifted and in need of specially designed instruction. The Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) is a process to gather the information that will be used to decide if the student qualifies for gifted education and, if so, the types of programs and services needed. Part of this process includes an evaluation by a certified school psychologist.

A child may be referred for the first GMDE as follows:

Parents may ask the school to give their child a GMDE at any time, but there is a limit of one request per year. They may ask for this evaluation by sending a letter to the principal of their child's school. If an oral request is made, the school will provide a form to complete. The school must have written parental permission to evaluate the child, even if a verbal request is made. School officials cannot proceed without parental written permission. Under certain circumstances the district may request a hearing to get approval from an impartial hearing officer to conduct an evaluation.

Teachers may also ask to have students evaluated. Again, they must get written parental permission before conducting the GMDE.

All evaluations needed to determine a child's eligibility for gifted programs and services will be provided by the child's school district at no charge to parents. Parents may, at their own expense, obtain an independent evaluation by a qualified professional that the school district must consider in any decision regarding the provision of gifted education. The evaluations must look at all information relevant to the child's suspected giftedness. This includes academic functioning, learning strengths, and educational needs. The process must also include information from parents or others who know the child. Information provided by the child may also be used.

The Gifted Multidisciplinary Team (GMDT) reviews all materials and prepares a Gifted Written Report (GWR) that recommends whether the child is gifted and needs specially designed instruction. As members of the GMDT, parents may present written information for consideration. The GWR must include the reasons for the recommendations and list the names and positions of everyone who was part of the GMDT. The entire GMDE process must be completed within 60 calendar days from the date parents give permission by signing the "Permission to Evaluate" form. The GMDE must be completed and provided to parent within 60 calendar days.

Further information regarding procedures, or the gifted support program, can be obtained by calling the school psychologist at (724) 758-7512, extension 3032.

NOTICE OF NON DISCRIMINATION

The Riverside Beaver County School District, an equal opportunity employer, will not discriminate in employment, educational programs or activities based on race, gender, color, religion, age, ancestry, physical handicap, or union membership. The district policy is in accordance with State and Federal laws including Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Inquiries should be directed to David Anney, Coordinator of Title IX and Section 503/504, Riverside Beaver County School District, 318 Country Club Drive, Ellwood City, PA 16117-9340, (724)758-7512, extension 3027.

The Riverside Beaver County School District participates in the Beaver County Area Vocational Technical School. The following are vocational offerings at the Beaver County Vo-Tech to which all Riverside students, regardless of race, gender, color, religion, age, ancestry, physical handicap, or any other special needs individuals have, can participate: Air conditioning and Refrigeration, Automated Manufacturing Technology/Robotics, Automotive Mechanics, Automotive Occupations, Business Data Processing, Carpentry, Career Guidance Programs, Commercial Art, Computerized Materials Handling, Cosmetology, Drafting/Design Technology, Electrical Occupations, Electronics, Food Preparation and Services, Graphic Arts, Greenhouse Landscaping, health Occupations, Machine Tool Technology and Welding.

Any violation of the non-discrimination policy should be directed to David Anney, Coordinator of Title IX and Sections 503/504, Riverside Beaver County School District, 318 Country Club Drive, Ellwood City, PA 16117. Phone: 724-758-7512 Extension 3027.

NOTIFICATION OF THE RIGHT TO REQUEST INFORMATION

The No Child Left Behind Act 1111 (h) (6) (A) requires that parents be informed of the right to request information about the professional qualification of the teachers who teach their children. Requests should be directed to the building principal.