

Child Find - Identification System

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates that every school district in the country develop a system to identify children with disabilities, birth through age 21, who live in the district. The law requires each district to conduct a "vigorous" search for children with disabilities. The Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children adopted by the Ohio Board of Education, direct that, in addition to a three-year intensive search, school districts must conduct an annual in-school effort to identify and provide services to children with disabilities.

Every year the Perry School District continues its effort to identify in-school children with disabilities. Perry School District has conducted and will continue to conduct an intensive awareness campaign throughout the community to locate and identify children with disabilities under the age of twenty-two. The assistance of all staff members and agency personnel is needed to accomplish this task.

Any child that you suspect has a disability should be referred to the child's building principal or myself, Amy S. Harker, Director of Student Services for Perry Local School District. I can be reached at 259-9201. Either of these individuals will provide additional information about the differentiated referral system.

Few legislative mandates of the federal government have such far-reaching implications for local school districts. The district is committed to working with the community in providing services that meet the individual needs of each child. We request your cooperation and assistance in meeting this challenge.

Thank you.

SEARCH FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES UNDERWAY Perry Local School District Lake County, Ohio

School districts across the state of Ohio are participating in an effort to identify, locate and evaluate all children from birth through 21 years of age who may have disabilities. Disability, in this instance, means such conditions as hearing impairments, visual impairments, speech or language impairments, learning disabilities, behavioral disability, or multiple disability, mental retardation, other health impairments, physical impairments, autism, and traumatic brain injury. Perry Local School District has responded vigorously to federal and state mandates requiring the provisions of a free appropriate public education regardless of a child's disability. But before school districts can serve children, they must be found. Many children with disability are not visible because they do not function in the mainstream of the community. Also, many unidentified children with disabilities are preschoolers. Parents may not be aware that their child has a disability or that there are programs and services available.

The school district will ask for information about the child, asking such questions as: What is the problem(s)? What has already been done about the problem? What background information is available? This information may be collected in several ways, including interviews, observations, screening, and testing. This information may be obtained from parents and the student, or from other agencies that have information about the student. This information will be used to decide whether the child has a disability and needs special services.

All information collected will be held in strict confidence and released to others only with parent permission or as allowed by law. For example, the school district will send records on requests to another school district or other educational agency in which a student intends to enroll. The parents may have a copy of those records upon request.

The school district will keep a record of all persons who review the records with the exception of authorized school employees, or other educational personnel. The school will also maintain a list of those employees who are authorized to review records.

The school district along with other educational agencies shall inform the parents when personally identifiable information collected, maintained, or used is no longer needed to provide educational services to the child. All personally identifiable data will be kept for at least five years or longer if required for audit purposes.

Parents and students have rights in this process. Parents have the right to:

- Review their child's records
- Refuse permission to release information (except as required by law to be released); and
- Request that information they believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their child's privacy or other rights to be changed. The district has a process to resolve disagreements about information collected.

The school district has appointed one person to make sure that information about students is kept confidential. Contact your school district's board of education office for this person's name.

The school district policy and procedures for special education are available. Contact the school district superintendent.

School districts are interested in meeting the needs of children with disabilities. If you have or know of a child who may have a disability, contact your local school for more information.

The Perry Local School district is participating in an effort to identify, locate and evaluate all children from birth through 21 years of age who may have disabilities. Disability, in this instance, means such conditions as hearing impairments, visual impairments, specific learning disabilities, behavioral disability, developmental disabilities, speech and language disabilities, orthopedic and other health disabilities caused by such conditions as epilepsy, or cardiac illness and other severe or multiple disabilities.

Although many school aged disabled children are identified and currently being served by the Perry School System, preschool children ages 3-5, with disabilities may be unidentified because parents may not be aware that programs and services are now available through the public schools. Community members can help us with this important effort. If you know of a child in our district with a disability that is not presently attending school or receiving services from another agency, please contact Amy S. Harker, Supervisor of Student Services at the Perry Local School System, at 1-440-259-3881.