

ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE OF
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND
GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

SPRING-FORD AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

I. INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

Spring-Ford Area School District is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") to provide a free, appropriate, public education ("FAPE") to "children with disabilities." Pursuant to the IDEA, students are considered to be children with disabilities if they need special education and related services and have one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities:

- Autism
- Deaf-Blindness
- Serious Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impairment including Deafness
- Mental Retardation
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment including Blindness

The IDEA further requires the provision of FAPE to children with disabilities between the age of three and the school district's age of beginners known as "eligible young children." The Montgomery County Intermediate Unit provides early intervention services and programs to eligible young children located within the Spring-Ford Area School District. Eligible young children are afforded the same rights as school age children including screening, evaluation and an appropriate program and services.

II. SERVICES FOR PROTECTED HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

Spring-Ford Area School District must provide services to and may not discriminate against "protected handicapped students" in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. A protected handicapped student is a student who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment. Protected handicapped students may qualify for special services to ensure equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate for the individual student.

III. GIFTED EDUCATION

In Pennsylvania, school age students qualify to receive specially designed instruction when they have been identified as "mentally gifted." A student is mentally gifted when he or she has outstanding intellectual and creative ability that requires specially designed programs or support services not ordinarily provided in the regular education program. Spring-Ford Area School District will determine whether a student is mentally gifted based upon multiple criteria, including IQ score, which indicate gifted ability. The determination of gifted ability will not be based on I.Q. score alone.

IV. SCREENING AND EVALUATION

Spring-Ford Area School District uses procedures to help identify children who may qualify for services, including parent/teacher referrals, review of student records and screening for hearing, vision and speech and language problems. If you believe that your child may be eligible for special education and related services or gifted education, screening and evaluation services designed to assess the needs of your child and his/her eligibility are available to you at no cost. You may request screening and evaluation at any time, whether or not your child is enrolled in the district's public school program.

Requests for screening and evaluation may be made in writing to the District address listed below or to your child's building principal and will be kept confidential. If you believe that your child may qualify for services as an eligible young child, you may contact the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit directly at (610) 539-8550.