

Forest Area School District

Special Education Services and Child Find

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), special education means “specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability.” Children who receive special education and related services are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). This includes opportunities to participate in the school’s general curriculum and to make progress towards meeting annual goals. Children who receive special education will have opportunities to take part in other typical school activities that are appropriate to their individual needs.

In Pennsylvania, schools are required to serve eligible children from birth until the age of 21, or graduation from high school, whichever comes first. Services are provided by licensed personnel and include special teaching, materials, and techniques.

The Forest Area School District provides a full continuum of special education programs and/or services for students identified as exceptional. Programs/services are provided at no cost to the parents and are individualized to meet the educational needs of each and every student at Forest Area.

Forest Area School District provides students with special education services in the following disability areas:

- Hearing impairment (including deafness)
- Visual Impairment (including blindness)
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Emotional Disturbance
- Other Health Impairment
- Intellectual Disability

There are specific criteria that need to be met in order to qualify for special education. Although medical information is important to provide to your child’s educational team, know that the criteria needed to meet educational criteria may differ from medical diagnoses.

If any of the situations below are present and you are concerned, contact your classroom teacher. The teacher and/or principal can initiate the child study process.

- When birth complications or a medical disorder interferes with development and/or learning

- When a child seems to have difficulty hearing or seeing
- When you or others outside the family do not understand a child's speech
- When a child appears to be learning more slowly than other children their age
- When a child appears to have social emotional difficulties that affect their ability to learn
- When a child has motor difficulties (moving, jumping, using their hands, etc.) that interferes with their ability to keep with other children