

CHILD FIND NOTICE 2026-2027

Services for School-Age Students with Disabilities

Esperanza Academy Charter School ("Charter School") provides a free, appropriate, public education ("FAPE") to eligible students. To qualify as an eligible student, the child must be of school age, in need of specially-designed instruction, and meet eligibility criteria for one or more physical or mental disabilities as set forth in the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") and Chapter 711 of the Pennsylvania State Regulations.

The Charter School uses identification procedures to determine eligibility of students and provide an appropriate educational program consisting of special education and related services, individualized to meet student needs at no cost to the parents. To identify students who may be eligible for special education, various screening activities are conducted on an on-going basis regarding potential signs of developmental delays and other risk factors that could indicate disabilities. These screening activities include: review of group-based data (cumulative records, enrollment records, health records, report cards, ability, and achievement test scores); hearing, vision, physical, and speech/language screening; and review of data by applicable Charter School Teams. When screening results suggest that the student may be eligible for special education services, the Charter School seeks written parental consent to conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation because the Charter School cannot conduct an evaluation or provide an initial provision of special education services without this written permission. For additional information related to consent, please refer the Procedural Safeguards Notice which can be found at the PaTTAN website, www.Pattan.net.

However, Parents who suspect that their child is eligible for special education services may request a multidisciplinary evaluation at any time through a written request to the Principal or Special Education Coordinator. If the parent disagrees with the Evaluation Report, the parent may request an independent education evaluation ("IEE") at public expense. (See IEE Policy and IEE Administrative Procedures attachment).

Once the evaluation process determines eligibility, an Individualized Education Plan ("IEP") Team of Charter School professionals and Parents meet to discuss and determine services to meet the needs of the student and include the annual development of an IEP, bi-annual or tri-annual multidisciplinary re-evaluation, and a full continuum of services, which include Itinerant, Supplemental, or Full-Time Levels of Intervention. The extent of special education services and the location for the delivery of such services are determined by the IEP team and are based on the student's identified needs and abilities, chronological age, and the level of intensity of the specified intervention. The Charter School also provides related services, such as transportation, speech and language therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy, required for the student to benefit from the special education program.

See the School's Child Find Policy, Special Education Policy, and Section 504 Plan Policy for more information regarding Child Find, and regulations, definitions, and education programs for students with disabilities.

Services for Protected Handicapped Students

In compliance with the state and federal law, namely Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Charter School will provide a free appropriate public education to qualified students with disabilities. Section 504 is applicable to charter schools that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education for programs and activities. The Charter School is under an affirmative duty to locate all students who are eligible for Section 504 accommodations pursuant to its Child Find duties. (34 C.F.R. §104.32(a)). The school program consists of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the individual educational needs of students with disabilities as adequately as the needs of students without disabilities are met. The school program also includes extra-curricular activities to the extent that same are offered by the Charter School to students without disabilities. These related services or accommodations are provided without discrimination or cost to the student or family. In order to qualify as a Section 504 protected student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. Services and safeguards for protected Section 504 students are distinct from those applicable to IDEA exceptional students enrolled or seeking enrollment in special education programs. Parents may request screening and evaluation for services under Section 504 by making such requests in writing to the Charter School to the attention of the CEO, or the CEO's designee. The CEO shall appoint a Section 504 Coordinator (34 C.F.R. §300.104.7(a)), to establish standards and procedures for initial and continuing evaluations and

placement decisions regarding persons who, because of a disability, need or are believed to need special education or related services.

See the School's Child Find Board Policy, Special Education Board Policy, and Section 504 Plan Board Policy for more information regarding Child Find, and regulations, definitions, and education programs for students with disabilities.

Confidentiality of Student Records

The Charter School protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information for all students in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), state law and the Charter School's student records policy.

Contacts

For additional information regarding any child find, special education or Section 504 issues, please contact the Charter School Coordinator of Special Education at

Jen McHose- Special Education Coordinator High School
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215-457-3667

Kelly Knecht- Special Education Coordinator Middle School
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Thomas Miller- Director of Special Education
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For preschool age children residing in the School District of Philadelphia, contact Elwyn SEEDS at (215) 222-8054 for information about pre-school screenings and evaluations.