

Child Find

RASD establishes and implements procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate students suspected of being a child with a disability who is eligible for and in need of special education programming and related services. RASD utilizes various screening methods across grade spans to determine a student's needs and to identify instructional interventions, supports, and services that will enable students to make reasonable academic progress in the general education curriculum despite challenges.

In general, screening activities include but are not limited to: review of group based data (cumulative records, enrollment records, health records and report cards), hearing screening, vision screening, motor screenings, and speech and language screenings. In the event that instructional interventions, supports and services do not result in a student making reasonable academic progress in the general education curriculum, the data collected through the screening activities, in addition to evidence obtained through a formal educational evaluation will be used to assist school staff and parents in determining if a student is a school aged person thought to be exceptional, eligible for and in need of special education programs and related services.

Screening

Early Intervention (Birth to School Aged)

Evaluation processes are available at no cost to parents who believe their infant, toddler, or young child (age three to school age) may have a developmental delay or be in need of early intervention services. Parents may request an evaluation at any time, whether or not their child is enrolled in the District's public school program. Developmental delays can occur in one or more areas: physical, adaptive (self-help skills); communication (language and/or speech); cognitive (thinking, learning, reasoning, problem solving) or social and emotional development (relationships, interactions with others, responding to others' feelings). Other risks factors that could indicate possible disabilities include: brain injury; infection before, during, or after birth; growth or nutrition problems; abnormalities of chromosomes and genes; babies born prematurely; poor diet and health care; substance abuse during pregnancy; and child abuse can also have a negative effect on the development of a child.

Requests for an evaluation may be made in writing to any school administrator. Evaluation procedures for infants and toddlers (birth to age 3) are provided by the Cameron/Elk (CE) Early Intervention Services. CE Early Intervention services (814-772-8111) may be contacted for a schedule of screening dates and times as they occur throughout the year. The Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit Nine handles screening and evaluation procedures for children of age three to school age. The Intermediate Unit's Early Intervention Office (814-887-5512) may be contacted for a schedule of screening dates, times, and locations as they occur throughout the year.

Francis S. Grandinetti Elementary School (Transitional Kindergarten to Grade 5)

Upon Kindergarten enrollment, Kindergarten screenings are conducted. The screening addresses Kindergarten readiness skills including literacy, numeracy, fine motor, gross motor, social/emotional and speech and language skills. Kindergarten screenings are conducted in the spring of the year, prior to the school year that the student will be admitted. All screening data is reviewed and a summary is provided to the child's parents and appropriate staff. Screening dates and times are provided at Kindergarten registration. Kindergarten screenings are also offered to students that enroll after the spring screenings. An appointment can be scheduled by contacting the FSG office at 814-776-2176.

Kindergarten students' whose speech and language screening at Kindergarten registration (spring prior to admission) indicates delays are screened again within the first two weeks of school. At that time, existing concerns are shared with parents and appropriate staff. The progress of students indicating a concern is then monitored to determine if there is a need for a follow-up evaluation for speech and language services.

FSG Elementary School conducts local assessments at each grade level. These local assessments include common assessments (grade level specific), STAR early literacy, STAR reading, STAR math, and Classroom Diagnostic Tests. Student data from local assessments is analyzed and reviewed in the context of grade level data team meetings. Through data analysis at data level team meetings, students' in need of academic and/or behavioral supports/intervention are identified. The student's parents/guardians are notified regarding the concerns and the data is discussed with the student's parent/guardians. Instructional/behavioral interventions are put into place to meet the students' needs. The implementation of interventions occurs through a system based on the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Model.

MTSS is a tiered process of interventions and supports for students in the regular education environment. Parents are informed of their child's academic progress and response to interventions at each tier level through parent teacher conferences, letters, and participation in individual conferences with the elementary administration as warranted. All FSG students are on tier I of the system. Tier I includes standard supports provided within the regular education environment by the regular education teachers or paraprofessionals. With parental consent, students are placed on Tier II and Tier III based upon data that demonstrates a consistent delay in performance that is below the 25th percentile. Students participating at Tier II or Tier III receive increased amounts of individualized instructional support and intervention that focuses on child specific needs in academic skills and/or behavioral deficits indicated through the data.

When a student is provided with interventions through the model, the student's progress and achievement continues to be monitored to determine whether the interventions are effective at meeting the student's needs and whether the student is showing academic progress within the general education curriculum. The student's response to the interventions will continue to be monitored to determine if reasonable progress is being made. If reasonable progress is not being made, parents will be notified regarding a need for an evaluation (as described on page 4). An evaluation will assist school staff and parents in determining if the student is eligible for and in need of special education programming and related services.

A child's participation in the model of support does not preclude them from proceeding through an evaluation, as participation in the model and an evaluation to determine eligibility and need may occur simultaneously. At any time, a parent may initiate a referral for an evaluation that will determine if there child is eligible for and in need of special education programming and specially designed instruction. Referrals at FSG may be initiated through the elementary principal or by contacting the assistant superintendent.

Ridgway Middle School (RMS) and Ridgway High School (RHS)

At the Middle and High School, student progress, growth, and achievement are monitored through curriculum based assessment data analysis and through local/standardized assessment data (including Common Assessments, PSSAs, study island, and Classroom Diagnostic Testing (CDT) analysis. Student data is analyzed approximately every four and one half weeks at RMS and every nine weeks at RHS. Following each grade level team meeting, parents are notified if their child is demonstrating academic and/or behavioral concerns that are interfering with the student's ability to make reasonable academic progress in the general education curriculum and interventions are discussed. Based on data analysis and parental discussions, interventions are recommended and implemented by grade level teams. The effectiveness of interventions is monitored via grade level team meetings. If, through grade level team meetings it is determined that students are not making progress or showing growth within the regular education curriculum, students are referred to the Secondary Instructional Support Team.

More specific and individualized interventions are implemented. Data continues to be collected and analyzed by the team to determine if the interventions are meeting the student's specific needs. In the event that the student is not making reasonable academic progress in the general education curriculum, the parents are contacted by school staff and the students is referred for further evaluation to determine if the student is eligible for and in need of special education programming and related services. A parent may initiate a referral for an evaluation by contacting the middle or high school guidance counselor or principal or by contacting the assistant superintendent.

RASD Gifted Screenings

RASD conducts Gifted Screenings at 3rd grade. Students who indicate the potential for being eligible for and in need of Gifted Education services as indicated by an overall screening score of 125 or higher are referred for a Gifted Evaluation.

In addition, students can be identified as potential candidates for a Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) by classroom teachers, parent/guardians, or other school personnel. Referrals are made by written request to the building principal or the assistant superintendent. The building principal or the lead teacher for special education will immediately, upon receipt, give the written request to the School Psychologist. Within 10 calendar days of receipt of the written request, the School Psychologist will acknowledge the referral in writing by sending a letter to the parents/guardians explaining the gifted screening process, including procedural safeguards.

PLEASE NOTE: Screening activities do not serve as a barrier to the right of a parent to request a formal evaluation, at any time, including prior to or while conducting screening activities. Informed parental/guardian consent is required prior to the initiation of a formal evaluation process.