Child find and public awareness policy and procedures (#233)

Freire Charter School is committed to the identification of students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Chapter 711.

Public Notice

- Freire Charter School participates in the annual Charter School Public Awareness Notice in the Philadelphia newspapers and public radio.
- Freire Charter School provides access to informational brochures detailing the special education process in Pennsylvania Charter Schools at all parent meetings and in the main office.
- Freire Charter School publishes an annual notice regarding special education on the school's website and in the school's parent and student handbook.

Academic School Year Child Find Process

Freire Charter School has created a multi-disciplinary team to determine the need for further evaluation. The process is as follows:

- Every quarter, academic deans as well as teachers compile curriculum-based performance reports for each student assigned to their caseload. This may take the form of a report card, a progress note, or some other format.
- Teachers screen these reports to determine which students are struggling academically. Any students appearing to need extra support are referred to the Co-Heads of Academics for either informal instructional support or some level of our response to intervention program, depending upon the needs of each student.
- Parents and students are notified and invited to an informal meeting to discuss student needs and teacher/parent concerns. A determination is made to refer students for response to intervention remediation and support, and/or a multi-disciplinary evaluation.
- Midway through the following quarter, academic deans check on the grades and progress of these students using a three-pronged criteria:
    - Is the student coming for extra help?
    - Is the student completing homework assignments?
    - Is the student passing?
- Teachers are then asked to determine whether the student appears to need further evaluations and/or supports. This may lead to an eventual full evaluation, conducted by a school psychologist. In the case of a full evaluation, parents, teachers and student meet to discuss the results and potential outcomes of the evaluation process. NOTE: In order for a Freire student to go through a full evaluation with a school psychologist, the parent must give consent on Freire's Permission to Evaluate form.
- A student is referred for a full evaluation only after reasonable regular education and response to intervention options have been exhausted and/or the student's needs have demonstrated significant resistance to intervention within the regular education classroom.

Summer Child Find Process

In an effort to most efficiently and proactively identify students with disabilities Freire Charter School extends its Child Find process to encompass the summer school program; as it is likely that unidentified students with disabilities will experience a degree of academic difficulty that requires the attendance of summer school.

The administrators and teachers at Freire Charter School will review the academic histories and transcripts of the students attending the summer school program. The school officials may identify students who have experienced chronic educational difficulties to be referred for a formal educational screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by our school psychologist (MDE). The following guidelines will be utilized to determine which students require assessment as a component of the school-wide Child Find process:

- If a student is enrolled in summer school for the second consecutive year or more, such students may be referred for a screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by our school psychologist.
- If the student is enrolled in summer school for the areas of science, social studies, and language arts, such students may be referred for a screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by our school psychologist.
- If the student is an eighth grader and is enrolled in two or more summer school classes, the student may be referred for a screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by our school psychologist in attempt to actively identify students with disabilities prior to the development of a chronic pattern of educational failure at Freire Charter School.
- Students who present evidence of underachievement and/or whose educational difficulties are related to factors other than a disability may not be referred for a screening and/or a Full Scale Evaluation by our school psychologist. However, efforts will be made to identify other resources and supports to assist in meeting the educational needs of such a student. Further, Freire Charter School strongly encourages the parents of such students to actively engage in working with their son/daughter to address the barriers to his/her educational success.

Parents may obtain additional information regarding special education services and programs and parental due process rights by contacting the child's Head of School. Requests for a multidisciplinary evaluation must be made in writing to the Head of School and/or CEO using the following email address: FreireCharterCEO@freirecharterschool.org.