

## **General Information:**

The Perry County Special Education Department provides opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in educational activities that will facilitate their achievement. A full range of services that meet the needs of all identified students with disabilities (Pre-K through Grade 12) is offered in all schools in the Perry County School System.

- We maintain a “Students First” philosophy. We structure each classroom and educational environment to meet the needs of every student.
- Our students learn, grow, and thrive in innovative programs that build independence and prepare each student for a successful transition to life after school.
- We provide and sustain a balance of life skills, academic skills, social-emotional supports, and transition curricular options based on students’ true and ever-changing/evolving abilities, interests, and future goals.
- Each student is respected as a unique individual and offered high expectations, not bound by a label. Decisions and practices will be student-driven and based on evidence and data.
- We provide support to students so that they each actively participate in their educational processes, including the IEP process, and in activities that increase self-advocacy and self-determination.
- We work with parents as partners so that they are well informed and educated about programs and supports available to students within the District as well as when they transition to young adulthood.
- We will provide the necessary support to all staff so that they are informed both of student needs and of evidence-based ways to address and support those needs.

Special education services for children with disabilities are provided in accordance with the Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, Amendments of 2004 and Alabama Act 106.

Students identified as eligible for special education services must meet Federal and state eligibility requirements as having a disability in addition to needing specially designed instruction in order to access the general education curriculum.

## **Disabilities recognized by the State of Alabama include:**

- Autism (AUT)
- Deaf-Blindness (DB)
- Developmental Delay (DD)
- Emotional Disability (ED)
- Hearing Impairment (HI)
- Intellectual Disability (ID)
- Multiple Disabilities (MD)
- Orthopedic Impairment (OI)
- Other Health Impairment (OHI)
- Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
- Speech or Language Impairment (SLI)
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Visual Impairment (VI)

## **Preschool Services:**

Preschool services are available through the Perry County Special Education Department for children ages 3 through 5 years who meet eligibility criteria as outlined in the Alabama Administrative Code. A child may begin to receive services anytime during the school year on or after their third birthday. Services may continue through the Perry County Preschool Program until the school year that the child is eligible to attend kindergarten. When entering kindergarten, a child may continue receiving services through the school age programs as long as they are still eligible for services.

Services range from specially designed instruction, speech/language therapy, physical therapy, and/or occupational therapy. Different service delivery models are available to these students ranging from a community preschool setting, a special education preschool environment, or justified homebound location. Contact the State Child Find Agency at (800) 543-3098 for children ages birth through two years of age who may need special education services.

## **Gifted Students:**

Gifted students are those who perform at or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared to other students of their age, experience, or environment. These students require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school curriculum. Students possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, gender, economic class, or nationality. In addition, some students with disabilities may be gifted.

A student may be referred by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, or any other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities. Additionally, students in the second grade participate in the state wide "2nd Grade Screening Process" in order to identify gifted students. For each student referred, information is gathered in the areas of aptitude, characteristics, and performance. The information is entered on a matrix where points earned determine if the student qualifies for gifted services.

Gifted students may receive services through a variety of service delivery options depending on the age of the student. These may include:

- Consultative services
- Curriculum compacting
- Traditional pullout
- Advanced core curriculum classes
- Electives in a variety of talent areas
  
- Counseling services for college and career preparation

The Perry County School District shall prohibit discrimination against any student on the above basis with respect to his/her participation in the gifted program. The program for gifted education shall be in compliance with the Alabama Administrative Code 290-8-9-14.

For additional information concerning the gifted program, contact the Perry County Special Education Department's Director, Sherry Saulsberry at (334) 292-5293.