

# What Services are Available to Help My Child at Penn Hills Charter School of Entrepreneurship?

Updated for Online Resources July 2020

# Servicing Students

There are many different services available to you child.

Each child's needs are unique, and staff & faculty at Penn Hills Charter School of Entrepreneurship (PHCSE) want to ensure that each student is reaching their fullest potential.

We support students academically and behaviorally in many ways.

The following presentation will describe the types & ways students receive support in school.

# Faculty & Staff at PHCS

Our faculty & staff is here to serve all students. Included in our staff are:

Principal

Director of Curriculum

Dean of Students

Director of Operations & Innovation

Special Education Coordinator/School Psychologist

Social Worker/School Counselor

Speech/Language Therapist

Special Education Teachers

Classroom Teachers

Instructional Support Teachers

Reading Coach

# How Services Are Categorized at PHCSE

PHCSE divides services into 3 tiers.

Tier 1 services are given to most or all students.

Tier 2 services are given to some students and are more intense than Tier 1 services.

Tier 3 services are given to the smallest number of children and are the most intense services that are provided into the regular education program.

# Tier 1 Services

At PHCSE, we have several services in place that help to promote a positive culture & learning environment. These researched - based programs help our students to be successful scholars. They include the following:

Positive Behavior Instructional Support (PBIS) ~ This program is a state - wide program that allows the school to put positive rewards for behavior into place to create a positive school culture. This program has significantly increased the amount of positive behavior seen in school and decreased the amount of office referrals received on a yearly basis.

Olweus Bully Prevention Program - This program is a researched-based program that educates our faculty and children on what bullying is and what individuals and the school system can do to prevent and stop it. Activities through the program include weekly classroom lessons, an annual anti-bully walk, and concerts with the group *Josh & Gab*.

# Tier 1 Services Cont'd

Daily behavior points and house system

Daily & weekly academic intervention or enrichment in small groups

The STAR & CDT assessments are used to measure reading/math levels for all students and drives instruction in the classroom

# What Happens If My Child Struggles in School Even with the Tier 1 Interventions?

If your child is struggling, it is recommended that you contact your child's teacher. Teachers are generally available to meet with you before or after school. Teachers can be reached by calling the school or by emailing them. Emails are formatted [firstname.lastname@phcharter.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@phcharter.org).

If after meeting with the teacher, your child continues to struggle, they may be referred to the Child Study Program/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) program.

# MTSS Program

PHCSE engages in the MTSS model of support, as mandated by law.

MTSS is a program that assists students who are struggling within the regular education program with either academics or behavior and have not responded well to the Tier 1 interventions put into place.

Children enter the program through teacher referral.

# MTSS Program Cont'd

The MTSS Program is a team of people that meets every other Monday morning. The people on the team include:

The child's parents/guardians

Social worker/School Counselor

Teacher(s)

Special education teachers

Special education coordinator/school psychologist

Speech/Language Therapist

Principal

Curriculum Director

# MTSS Cont'd

At the initial meeting, the team discusses

- The child's strengths

- The child's needs/areas of weakness

- Whether the child is appropriate for the MTSS program

- If appropriate, the types of interventions to put into place & who is responsible for carrying those interventions out

At subsequent meetings, the team discusses:

- The child's strengths & needs

- Progress being made in the program

- Whether the child should continue in the program

# MTSS Cont'd

Interventions that are used in the MTSS program are Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.

Some examples of Tier 2 interventions that have occurred include

- Small group meetings of children to address behavioral struggles

- Morning & afternoon check - ins with a trusted adult

- Small group testing

Some examples of Tier 3 interventions that have occurred include:

- Entrance into social skills group

- Individualized behavior plans

- Small group instruction by Instructional Support Teacher

# What If My Child Still Has Difficulty?

The MTSS team will meet. If a child still has difficulty in an area and has not made any improvements, the team may refer the child for an evaluation to determine whether he/she may need special education services.

In order for a child to be evaluated for special education, the parent must give their written permission on a NOREP/Permission to Evaluate (PTE.) Thus, it is the parent's decision as to whether an evaluation occur.

Once the school receives the PTE, an evaluation can begin.

# Evaluation Report

Once the PTE is received, the school has 60 days in order to complete the evaluation.

The evaluation will determine your child's strengths, areas of need, and whether he/she qualifies for special education.

It will consist of:

- A record review

- Interviews with the child, teachers, & parents

- Classroom observations

- Individualized testing

# Evaluation Report Cont'd

Once the report is written, the Special Education Coordinator will mail you the evaluation and call you to informally go over the results.

She will also schedule a time for you to meet with your child's educational team.

At the meeting, the following will happen:

- The report will be reviewed. It will have recommendations on how to help your child at home & at school.

- It will also recommend whether your child should be in special education.

# How Sp. Education Status is Determined

According to both federal & state law (PA Chapter 14,) a child must have a disability that falls under one of the categories of special education AND show a need for specially designed services.

This means that a child must possess a disability and that that disability significantly and negatively affects his/her education or that of other students' education.

This means that if your child has a disability but is a successful student, he/she may most likely not qualify for special education.

This also means that if your child is having significant difficulty but cannot be diagnosed/identified under one the categories of special education, they cannot be enrolled in special education program.

# How Sp. Education Status is Determined

The Categories of Special Education Disability are:

Autism

Blindness

Deafness

Emotional Disturbance

Hearing Impairment

Intellectual Disability

Multiple Disabilities

Orthopedic Impairment

Other Health Impairment

Specific Learning Disability

Speech/Language Impairment

Traumatic Brain Injury

Visual Impairment

# What Happens if My Child Qualifies for Special Education?

If a child qualifies for special education, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed.

An IEP summarizes your child's educational progress and develops goals that are individualized to your child.

An IEP is the document that guides your child's education in special education.

It is reviewed at least yearly by the IEP team, which includes the parent and, if appropriate, your child.

PHCSE strongly encourages that your child participates in at least part of the meeting.

# What Happens if My Child Qualifies for Special Education? Cont'd

Your child will work with a special education teacher in individual and small groups both in and out of the regular education classroom on specific skills to help him/her.

Your child's progress is closely monitored and reported to you on a quarterly basis.

# What Happens if My Child Has a Disability or a Medical Issue that May Affect Them In School But They Don't Have/Need an IEP?

If your child has a medical issue that does not qualify him/her for special education but may affect him/her, your child may be eligible for a 504 plan.

A 504 plan, according to state law, “protect[s] otherwise qualified handicapped students who have physical, mental or health impairments from discrimination because of those impairments” (PA Chapter 15 State Law.)

# A 504 Plan

A 504 plan is for students who have a disability that is not temporary (e.g. a broken foot does not qualify for a 504 plan.)

The disability must substantially limit his/her ability to learn.

It is a plan that is less restrictive and specific than IEPs. Therefore, children who may need some assistance but not need specially designed instruction may qualify for a 504 plan.

# 504 Plan Cont'd

The 504 plan will highlight accommodations, supports, and services needed including:

- Related services (Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, etc.)

- Medical crisis plan

- Learning techniques/interventions occurring within the regular education classroom

- Behavioral interventions/individualized behavior plan

# Questions &/or Comments

Please feel free to contact Mrs Ruppert, Special Education Coordinator & School Psychologist, with any questions or comments you may have about the information provided.

Mrs Ruppert can be reached at: 412 - 793 - 6471, ext. 209 or at [heather.ruppert@phcharter.org](mailto:heather.ruppert@phcharter.org)