



IMPORTANT INFORMATION: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, SECTION 504, and HOMELESSNESS

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The services of a speech and language therapist, psychologist, social worker, Special Education Educator, and Occupational therapist are available on a referral basis. If you would like more information, please contact your child's educator. The following special services are available to all students who qualify under state guidelines.

- Occupational Therapist: Provides services to students who need fine motor therapy.
- School Psychologist: Provides services to students who need evaluation for special education needs.
- School Social Worker: Provides services to students who are experiencing personal or social adjustment problems in the Academy or at home.
- Speech Therapist: Works with students who are impaired by speech and language difficulties.
- Special Education Teacher: Services are provided for students with special needs in a resource room or on a consultant basis.
- Vision and Hearing: The Wayne County Health Department provides tests annually for designated grade levels.
- Others as necessary and in compliance with IDEA laws.

SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY

The Board of Directors of Tipton Academy wants children to fulfill their ultimate learning potential. To the extent that an educator or parent feels that a child may demonstrate some learning disabilities, the following board policy to evaluate a child's academic progress shall be followed:

- After either a parent or educator expresses a concern about a child's school performance, A Multi Tiered System of Support, MTSS, plan will begin in which an educator makes documented attempts to develop strategies that increase success of students including the consideration and use of the MTSS team and interventions. If the MTSS process is not successful after all options have been exhausted, a child study meeting will be held to determine if formal testing is needed. The student's educator, special education educator, learning specialist, school social worker or counselor and principal will be in attendance at the child study meeting.

- If it is determined that formal testing is needed, within ten days, parents must be notified and a request made for their written authorization for testing.
- Once the parent provides consent for formal testing of their child, the Academy has thirty calendar days to complete the evaluation process and hold an Individualized Education Program Team (IEPT) meeting in which determines if special educational services are needed.
- For a child to qualify for special education services there must be proof that the child's academic progress is impacted by a discrepancy in achievement or other tested data.
- After a decision is made on the student's eligibility for special education services, the Individualized Education Plan Team, IEPT, meeting is held with general education educator, special education educator, principal, any other support staff, and parent in attendance.
- It will be determined at the IEPT meeting how much and what services the child will receive special education services.
- Once a child is in special education the child's IEP goals will be reassessed annually.
- Every three years the child must be reevaluated to determine continued eligibility for special education services. It is the ultimate goal for each child eligible for special education services that the achievement gap will be closed and that the special education intervention strategies have worked to no longer require services.

CHILD FIND PROCESS

At Tipton Academy, we follow the process outlined below to assist in identifying students with disabilities. At any point, if you have concerns regarding the need for special education services, please contact our special education coordinator, Heather Young at hyoung@tipton-academy.org or through the main office at 734-261-0500.

Child Find School Team Process:

After each NWEA testing interval, the Child Find Team meets to review district level data. This data includes data from the MTSS program, which identifies students that have participated, how long they have been part of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 levels of intervention.

The Child Find Team discusses each Tier of students, their progress, and any additional information found through analyzing student progress.

The Steps below are followed to identify students with disabilities:

Step 1: Academic Intervention: Students not making appropriate growth are identified and assigned to work in MTSS groups for Reading and/or Math. Behavioral Intervention: Students who have had <insert amount of behavior referrals> are provided Tiered interventions as planned and discussed with Dean of Intervention and Behavior Coach Prek-3.

Step 2: If students have not made appropriate growth in Tier 2 interventions (academic or behavior) they are discussed in quarterly meetings and referred for a Tier 3 plan, they are referred to the Dean of Intervention. Staff referring the student completes the CFT student referral Google Form.

Step 3: Dean of Intervention arranges a meeting of stakeholders (parent, student (if applicable), teacher, interventionist). Dean of Intervention speaks with parents and documents notification of concerns with progress and Tier 3 level of intervention plan. Data will be collected by the interventionist/teacher on these interventions for 4-6 weeks. Dean of Intervention monitors data collection.

Step 4: Follow up meeting is scheduled with parent invitation to review progress of Tier 3 plan. If a student is making progress, the interventions may continue. If adequate progress is not made, a special education referral may be made at this time after data review.

Step 5: If appropriate progress has been made, the student's case will be closed. If a student is not making enough progress, a revision of the Tier 3 plan may be made or the case will transfer to the special education team.

In addition to these steps, at any time a parent or teacher expresses concerns of the need for special education, the special education coordinator will be notified to contact the parent, review data, and schedule a REED meeting to formally discuss the process, parental and student rights, as well as what next steps will be moving forward.

Fact Sheets –

English:

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/ChildFind_FactSheet_728496_7.pdf

Arabic:

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/ChildFind_FactSheet_Arabic_728497_7.pdf

Spanish:

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/ChildFind_FactSheet_Spanish_728498_7.pdf

Frequently Asked Questions Pertaining to the Process:

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/rts-qa-child-find-part-b-08-24-2021.pdf>

SECTION 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is designed to prohibit discrimination based on disability in any program or activity receiving federal money. This statute obligates public schools to provide equal access and equal opportunity to otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. For a student to be eligible for a 504 plan, the student must meet all three of the following criteria. It must be because of this disability that the student is unable to gain equal access and benefit from school programs and services.

The publication, *A Parent Guide to Section 504 Of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, is a resource available to parents through their school.

- A physical, mental, or medical diagnosis
- That **substantially** limits
- One or more major life activities

If you believe that a student may be eligible for Section 504 support, please contact Mrs. Orlando korlando@tipton-academy.org for additional information.

HOMELESS STUDENTS: MCKINNEY VENTO ACT

Educational Rights of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness: *If you or someone you know is experiencing homelessness, please notify the school so we can help. This is not something to be ashamed of and there are many resources to assist families in this situation. Tipton Academy is committed to keeping all information strictly confidential.*

Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where they live or how long they have lived there. Students who are homeless must be given access to the same public education provided to other students.
- Continue in the school they attended before becoming homeless or the school last attended if that is their choice and feasible. The school district's local liaison for homeless education must assist you, if needed, and offer you the right to appeal a decision regarding your choice of school if it goes against your wishes.
- Receive transportation to the school they attended before they became homeless or the school last attended, if a request is made for such transportation and transportation is feasible.
- Attend a school and participate in school programs with students who are not homeless. Students cannot be separated from the regular school program due to the fact that they are homeless.
- Enroll in school without providing a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay school enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes in the school of their choice even while the school and student who is homeless seek to resolve a dispute over enrollment.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other students served in these programs.
- Receive transportation to school and to school programs.

These rights are established under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This act is the primary piece of federal legislation dealing with the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness in U.S. public schools. It was reauthorized as Title X, Part C, of the No Child Left Behind Act in January 2002. To qualify for these rights, children and youth must be considered homeless according to the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness.

How does the McKinney-Vento Act define homelessness?

According to U.S. Department of Education (USDE) guidance, people living in the following situations are considered homeless under McKinney-Vento: doubled-up with family or friends due to economic hardship; in motels or hotels due to lack of other suitable housing; in homes for unwed or expectant mothers because they have nowhere else to go; in homeless and/or domestic violence shelters; in transitional housing programs; on the streets; in abandoned buildings; in public places not meant for housing; in cars, trailers, and campgrounds; or awaiting foster care. Runaway and/or "throwaway" children and youth are also considered homeless under McKinney-Vento.

The description above refers to people living "doubled-up". What does that mean?

"Doubled-up" refers to people who are living with friends and relatives due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason. However, families who have chosen to move into adequate housing situations with friends or relatives for reasons of cultural preference or convenience are not covered by McKinney-Vento.

Are migrant students considered homeless under McKinney-Vento?

Migrant students are considered homeless if they meet one or more of the definitions of homelessness under McKinney-Vento. However, migrant students should not be considered homeless simply because they are migrant.

Are children in foster care considered homeless?

No. The McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness includes children who are awaiting foster care placement only. Once children have been placed in foster care, they are no longer considered homeless.

If you would like additional information on the rights of homeless students or you would like to notify us of a situation involving a homeless student, please contact the school Principal.