

The summer will be over before we know it, and your local school district is preparing for a successful school year.

This notice is meant to inform all parents and community members of the school districts listed below that comprehensive special education programs and services for all students with disabilities are currently available through your own local district or through the other districts of the L.E.A.S.E. special education joint agreement, (the LaSalle/Putnam County Educational Alliance for Special Education). The following is a list of the 27 member school districts of L.E.A.S.E.:

Leland Comm. Unit Dist. #1	Ottawa Twp. High School #140
Serena Unit Dist. #2	Ottawa Elementary #141
Earlville Comm. Unit #9	Marseilles Elementary #150
Streator Twp. High School #40	Seneca Twp. High School #160
Streator Elementary #44	Seneca Comm. Cons. #170
Allen/Otter Creek Comm. Cons. #65	Dimmick Comm. Cons. #175
Tonica Comm. Cons. #79	Waltham Comm. Cons. #185
Deer Park Comm. Cons. #82	Wallace Comm. Cons. #195
Grand Ridge Comm. Cons. #95	Miller Twp. Comm. Cons. #210
LaSalle-Peru Twp. High School #120	Rutland Comm. Cons. #230
LaSalle Elementary #122	Mendota Twp. High School #280
Peru Elementary #124	Mendota Comm. Cons. #289
Oglesby Elementary #125	Lostant Comm. Unit #425
	Putnam Co. Comm. Unit #535

Within the L.E.A.S.E. Cooperative, all member school districts establish, maintain or have access to special education instructional programs, resource programs and related services which meet the educational needs of children with the following challenges when they restrict appropriate educational functioning: 1.] auditory/visual/physical/health impairments; 2.] speech/language impairments; 3.] deficits in the essential learning processes of perception, conceptualization, memory, attention or motor control; 4.] deficits in intellectual development or mental capacity; 5.] affective/behavioral disorders; 6.] adaptive behavior delays; 7.] traumatic brain injury or autism.

Referrals of students for special education services may be made by parents, community service agencies, persons having the primary care and custody of the child, other professional persons having knowledge of the child's difficulties, the child, the State Board of Education as well as by local school personnel. Referral forms are available from your local principal, superintendent or school psychologist.

Parents may also access a copy of the "Illinois Administrative Code, Part 226 - Special Education Rules and Regulations", by writing to the Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001, or by visiting the ISBE website at www.isbe.net. A copy of the document, entitled "Educational Rights and Responsibilities: Understanding Special Education in Illinois", may also be obtained by writing to ISBE at the above address or by visiting their website. These documents are also available by writing or calling the L.E.A.S.E. Office at 1009 Boyce Memorial Drive, Ottawa, Illinois 61350; phone 815-433-6433.

Students who qualify for home or hospital instruction during the course of the school year should be referred to their local school. Parents making such a referral will be required to include a report from a licensed medical physician which delineates the nature of the temporary mental, physical or health impairment and explains the need for home or hospital instruction. It will then be the responsibility of the school district to determine if such instruction is warranted based upon the physician's estimated length of the student's absence from school and the projected nature of the student's academic loss.

Students enrolled in school for the first time will be informally observed or screened to determine any possible need for an evaluation to assess any specific need for special education services. Parent notification of any district intent to initiate an evaluation or to provide direct special education services is required for any child being considered for either of these.

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, your school district recognizes its responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination regarding any person with a disability will be knowingly permitted relative to admission, access to services or employment in any of the programs and activities of the school.

If you have any questions about the availability of special education services in your local school district, please contact your local district. If you have any questions about State or federal special education requirements or about programs within the L.E.A.S.E. Cooperative, please call the L.E.A.S.E. Office at 815-433-6433 for this information.

We look forward to a very positive school year and, as always, L.E.A.S.E. appreciates your cooperation and assistance in helping local school district staff to provide a high quality education for your child and for all students.