

**ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTIFICATION
OF
CHILD FIND, SCREENING AND
EVALUATION PROCEDURES,
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
AND SERVICES
AND
CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS**

2008 -2009 School Year

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SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
AND
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In compliance with state and federal law, Notice is hereby given by the Ridgway Area School District that it conducts ongoing identification activities as part of its school program for the purpose of identifying students who may be in need of special education and related services (eligible students). The School District, prior to any referral of a student for evaluation, utilizes one or more of the following methods to identify possible exceptional school age persons.

1. Annual survey of exceptional children ages 3 to 21.
2. Participation in the intermediate unit Child Find system or hotline service.
3. Analysis of school district achievement test / state assessment results.
4. Parent or guardian initiated referral.
5. Referrals to and from other public and private agencies. This includes referrals from the warden of the Elk County Prison.
6. School district staff referral.

Screening methods may vary based upon need, and do not require parental approval. Parental involvement is encouraged.

If the district identifies your child as possibly in need of a formal evaluation, parents will be notified of applicable procedures. The procedures used by the district will be in compliance with state and federal law.

Child Find Procedures – Birth to School-Aged

Screening and evaluation processes are available at no cost to parents who believe their infant, toddler, or young child (age 3 to school-age) may be in need of early intervention services. Parents may request screening and evaluation at any time, whether or not their child is enrolled in the District's public school program. Potential signs of developmental delays include limited:

- Gross motor skills, which include using muscles to sit, stand, crawl, walk, run, balance and change positions, etc.
- Fine motor skills, including use of hands to eat, draw, write, play, and do other tasks.
- Language skills such as babbling, speaking, using gestures and body language, communicating, and understanding what others are saying.
- Cognitive skills, which include thinking, learning, understanding, problem-solving, reasoning, and remembering.
- Social skills such as interacting with others, having relationships with family, friends, and teachers, cooperating, and responding to the feelings of others.

Other risks factors that could indicate possible disabilities include:

- Brain injury or infection before, during, or after birth
- Growth or nutrition problems
- Abnormalities of chromosomes and genes
- Babies born long before the expected birth date – also referred to as extreme prematurity
- Poor diet and health care
- Drug misuse during pregnancy, including alcohol intake and smoking
- Child abuse can also have a sever effect on the development of a child, specifically social-emotional development.

Requests for screening and evaluation are to be made in writing to any school administrator. Screening and evaluation procedures for infants and toddlers (birth to age 3) are provided by the Cameron/Elk County (CE) Early Intervention Services. CE Early Intervention services (814/772-8111) may be contacted for a schedule of screening dates and times as they occur throughout the year. The Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit Nine handles screening and evaluation procedures for children of age three to school age. Developmental screenings are also held at the local family center(s). The Intermediate Unit's Early Intervention Office (814/887-9287) may be contacted for a schedule of screening dates, times, and locations as they occur throughout the year.

School – Aged Screening Procedures

If a parent believes that their school-age child may be in need of special education services and related programs, screening and evaluation processes designed to assess the needs of the child and his/her eligibility are available at no cost to the parent, upon written request. Developmental delays and risk factors listed above or similar to those listed above may warrant the need for school-aged screenings. Other factors include, but are not limited to:

- A recent high fever of extended length
- Severe accident, especially involving head trauma
- Difficulty functioning in the school setting with academics, teachers, or other students
- Severe behavioral issues, etc.
- Difficulty paying attention
- Difficulty remembering directions and following directs, etc.

Upon kindergarten enrollment, Kindergarten screenings are offered to the parents of the kindergarten student in late March, early April. The screening addresses kindergarten readiness skills. All screening data is reviewed and a summary is provided to the child's parents and appropriate staff. Screening dates and times are provided at kindergarten registration. An appointment may also be scheduled by contacting the Elementary Office at 814/776-2176. Kindergarten screenings are also offered to students that enroll after the spring registration window. The dates and times for these screenings are scheduled directly via the Office of Student Services (814/776-4255).

All kindergarten and first grade students are provided a speech/language screening within the first two weeks of school. Any concerns are shared with classroom teachers and/or parents in order for the child's progress to be monitored prior to consideration for follow-up assessments.

At the Elementary and Middle School levels, all referrals begin with Child Study Team. This is a screening and data collection process. With the exception of referrals for giftedness, all referrals go to the Child Study Team. A parent or staff member may initiate this process by submitting a written request to the school psychologist. Screening information will be used by the Child Study Team, which includes the parents, to generate a plan to meet the child's specific needs or to document the need for further evaluation.

At the High School level, referrals are usually processed through the R. E. A. C. H. (Ridgway Educators Assisting Children's Health) program. A parent or staff member may initiate this process by completing a referral form or contacting the high school guidance counselor, school nurse, or principal. Screening information is used by the R. E. A. C. H. team to generate a plan to meet the student's specific needs or refer the student for further evaluation.

The district provides for the development and continual analysis of student portfolios. Such portfolios may include: written work by students; other demonstrations or performances by students related to specific student performance standards; examinations developed by teachers to assess specific student performance standards; diagnostic assessments; other measures, as appropriate, which may include standardized tests. Portfolios are available to parents at conferences or by appointment.

At any grade level, referrals for gifted screening can be made directly to the School Psychologist. Screenings are conducted to determine if additional assessments are needed. Pennsylvania State Regulations (Chapter 16) define mental giftedness as "outstanding intellectual and creative ability the development of which requires specially designed programs or support services, or both, not ordinarily provided in the regular education program." The term mentally gifted includes a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher and other factors (above grade level achievement, high rates of acquisition and retention, higher level thinking skills, high level of accomplishment, performance, or expertise in one or more academic areas, documented evidence that intervening factors are masking gifted ability.) If a parent or teacher suspects that a student may demonstrate gifted characteristics, a referral for a gifted screening can be made. With parent permission, the School Psychologist will administer a brief measure of intellectual functioning. If a student earns a composite score of 125 or higher, a referral for a formal Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) will be made.

PLEASE NOTE: Screening activities do not serve as a bar to the right of a parent to request a formal evaluation, at any time, including prior to or during the conduct of screening activities.

Assessments/Examinations Used in the Screening Process

Health Examinations

Although the physical and mental health of each child is primarily the responsibility of the home and parents, the school district provides not only state mandated health services but also functions to maintain and improve the health of each student while in school.

Each pupil shall receive a comprehensive health examination in first grade, in sixth grade and in eleventh grade. The school physician will conduct these examinations. A private examination conducted at the parent's/guardian's request and at their expense will be accepted in lieu of the school examination.

Each pupil shall receive a comprehensive dental examination in first grade and in grades three and seven. The school dentist will conduct these examinations. A private examination conducted at the parent's/guardian's request and at their expense will be accepted in lieu of the school examination.

Each student's Body Mass Index (BMI) is mandated to be collected in grades Kindergarten through third.

For each pupil transferring to the schools of this district, the Superintendent shall request an adequate health record from the transferring school prior to enrollment.

Beginning with pre-kindergarten vision and hearing screening and continuing through the twelfth grade, a developmental health history shall be maintained for each student in the district.

The individual pupil records of health examinations shall be maintained as a confidential record subject to statute and the policies of this district.

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS ARE URGED TO NOTIFY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THE EVENT THAT THEIR SON/DAUGHTER IS DIAGNOSED WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION. THIS INFORMATION IS VITAL AND NEEDS TO BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT THE STUDENT IS RECEIVING REASONABLE EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT.

Note to Parents: If you believe that your child's mental health condition is negatively impacting on his/her academic or behavioral performance within the school setting, please contact the Office of Student Services at 814/776-4255.

Assessments

The Ridgway Area School District has developed the following schedule for screening/assessing/testing our students' performance at strategic grade levels:

1. Pre-Kindergarten – Pre-School Screening/Readiness (when appropriate)
2. Grade 3 through 5 - Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)
3. Grade 6 - Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Career Interest Inventory
4. Grade 8 - Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Career Interest Inventory
5. Grade 9 - Career Interest Inventories or Profiles; Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) & American College Testing (ACT) tests are available, but not mandatory
6. Grade 10 – Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA); Career Interest Inventories or Profiles; Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) & American College Testing (ACT) tests are available, but not mandatory
7. Grade 11 - Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA); Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB); Career Interest Inventories or Profiles; Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) & American College Testing (ACT) tests are available, but not mandatory
8. Grade 12 - Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) – retest; Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), American College Testing (ACT), & Advanced Placement tests are available, but not mandatory; National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOTCI) - Administered to students who completed approved vocational programs.

Students with disabilities will participate in statewide and district-wide assessments in one of the three ways as determined by the IEP team:

- without accommodations
- with accommodations - accommodations provided must be allowable by the test given and be used by the students as part of his/her educational routine.
- alternate assessment - To participate in the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), students must meet specific criteria established by Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education.

The Board shall also grant parents whatever legal rights they have to excuse their child from formal district and statewide assessment tests upon receipt, by the school district, of written request from the parents.

The results of assessments shall be made available to the professional staff so that they may better understand the strengths and weaknesses of their particular students.

Additional educational/psychological testing is available through the school psychologist with parental permission. The assessments to be given are determined by a team of individuals familiar with the student. This team shall make reasonable efforts to include the student's parents.

Additional remedial testing, on a need for referral basis, is available through the Title 1 Reading Specialist or Child Study Team at the elementary or middle school levels with parental permission. Curriculum-based assessment and other screening measures such as speech/language screenings conducted by the speech clinician do not require parental permission.

Additional Assessments

For students eligible for special education services under Chapter 14 or for students thought to eligible, the district may provide the following assessments for transition planning purposes at the particular grade level listed or as needed.

1. Grade 6 - C. I. T. E. Learning Styles Inventory
2. Grade 7 - The Quick Screen Student Worksheet
3. Grade 8 - Student Transition Survey; Guidance Input Form; Teacher Questionnaire; Parent Questionnaire
4. Grade 9 - Future Planning Inventory; Talent Assessment Program (TAP); System of Assessment & Group Evaluation (SAGE); Parent Questionnaire
5. Grade 10 - Transition Planning Inventory (TPI) – Student, Parent, and Teacher Questionnaires; Talent Assessment Program (TAP); System of Assessment & Group Evaluation (SAGE); The Quick Screen Student Worksheet
6. Grade 11 - Student Self-Assessment; Guidance Input Form; Teacher Questionnaire; Talent Assessment Program (TAP); System of Assessment & Group Evaluation (SAGE); Psycho-educational Assessment (intellectual assessment, academic assessment, visual-motor screening); Psycho-educational assessment (intellectual assessment, academic assessment, visual motor screening with parental approval); Parent Questionnaire
7. Grade 12 - Final Transition Review Meeting; Psycho-educational Assessment (intellectual assessment, academic assessment, visual-motor screening with parental approval)

Educational Support Programs and Services

If a child is identified by the District as possibly in need of special education and related services, the parent will be notified of applicable procedures. Individualized services and programs are available for children who are determined to need specially designed instruction due to the following conditions:

1. Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder
2. Deaf-Blindness
3. Deafness
4. Emotional Disturbance
5. Hearing Impairment
6. Mental Retardation
7. Multiple Disabilities
8. Orthopedic Impairment
9. Other Health Impairment
10. Specific Learning Disability
11. Speech or Language Impairment
12. Traumatic Brain Injury
13. Visual Impairment
14. Mentally Gifted
15. Developmental Delay (ages 3 to the age of beginners)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) intends to provide greater access of children with disabilities to the general curriculum. It is the belief of the district that the majority of children identified as eligible for special education and related services are capable of participating in the general curriculum to varying degrees with some adaptations and modifications. All special education programs and services offered by the district reference the general curriculum and are also available at the Elk County Prison.

Description of Educational Support Programs and Services

Autistic Support – This program serves students having a developmental disability, which significantly affects verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction. These characteristics are generally evident before age 3. They also adversely affect a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are: engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistant to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance.

Blind and Visually Impaired Support – Vision support services are provided to students whose visual impairment, including blindness, adversely affects their educational performance. Determination of a visual impairment shall include a full assessment and comprehensive report by an eye specialist specifying the nature and degree of the impairment.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Impaired Support – Hearing support services are provided to students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Students serviced would have a hearing loss, which interferes with the development of the communication process and results in failure to achieve educational potential. Determination of the hearing impairment shall include a report by an audiologist or otologist, or both, specifying the nature and degree of the impairment.

Emotional Support – The Emotional Support Program serves identified students whose emotional needs or mental illnesses interfere with their academic progress in the regular education environment. Instruction is provided based upon the student’s individualized educational program. Students are included in regular education whenever possible based upon each student’s unique needs. Behavior support components are designed and exercised in all educational settings when needed

Gifted Support – The Gifted Support Program is designed to provide challenge for and meet the needs of mentally gifted students. Activities and units of study are presented in various subject areas. Overall goals include enhancing student self-esteem, building leadership, communication and interpersonal skills, and applying higher-level thinking skills.

Learning Support – The Learning Support Program provides identified students with a program of individualized learning and continuous academic support. Reading, Language Arts, Spelling, Math, Social Studies, and Science are the main areas in which educational services are provided. The program is designed to help students who require special services, develop their knowledge and skills. Students in need of learning support services are included in regular education whenever possible and, when deemed appropriate by the IEP team, these services may be provided in the regular instructional environment.

Life Skills Support – The Life Skills Support class serves students with overall delays who require multiple hands-on experiences for mastery to occur. Instruction is given individually and in small groups with aide assistance. Students are included in homeroom and special subject areas with their peers, whenever possible, as determined by the IEP team. Students are taught life-important skills in a functional setting.

Multiple Disabilities Support – This program addresses the multiple needs of students with concomitant impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness, mental retardation-orthopedic impairment, etc.), when the combination of which causes such severe education problems that the problems cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term “multiple disabilities” does not include deaf-blindness.

Physical Support – This program addresses the needs of a student with the disabilities of orthopedic or other health impairment that adversely affects one or more of the following: physical mobility, speech or other forms of nonvocal communication, writing, arm and hand movement, eye and head movement or one or more of the precursor developmental steps, which lead up to full attainment of these skills necessary for success in education.

Speech and Language Support – The Speech and Language Support Program provides specially designed instruction for students who have difficulties in communication skills. Areas of difficulty, which can be addressed include: articulation (specific speed-sound production), language skill development (form, content and use), voice quality, and fluency (stuttering). One-on-one or small group instruction is provided in the speech therapy room setting or within the child’s classroom depending upon which arrangement best meets the child’s individual communication needs as determined by the student’s IEP team.

Related Services - The IEP team determines the need for all related services. These include transportation and any developmental, corrective, or other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.

Psychological Services – School psychologists receive special training in child development, learning processes, emotional and behavioral adjustment, and psychological and instructional testing. The district’s school psychologist can provide a variety of services to students, parents, teachers, and administrators. These services include psycho-educational testing to determine a student’s academic strengths and needs, identification of students who might be in need of special education services, assistance in the development of appropriate educational plans designed to meet students’ needs, individual or group counseling based on academic, social or emotional concerns, and consultation with parents and teachers about students’ learning and adjustment. The school psychologist works cooperatively with students, parents, community members and school staff to assist with providing all students with a free and appropriate education. School-based psychological services are provided free of charge through the Ridgway Area School District.

Psychological services includes obtaining, integrating, and interpreting information about child behavior and conditions relating to learning, planning and managing a program of psychological services, including psychological counseling for children and/or children and their parents; and assisting in developing positive behavioral intervention strategies.

Psychological counseling is a continuum of services or interventions that will address an individual student’s needs when behavior interferes with his/her learning or the learning of others. Such behaviors include internalizing behaviors such as withdrawal, depression, and suicidal threat, as well as externalizing behaviors such as verbal or physical aggression, and oppositional defiant tendencies. A continuum is in place to address the needs of all students and shall include but not be limited to:

- **School-wide behavior support** is designed to serve all students and parents involving school wide prevention, early intervention, and intensive services for students with significant emotional and /or behavioral needs. A comprehensive array of supports is available from minimal interventions to highly intensive supports.
- **Classroom behavior management** involves the establishment of a set of rules, rewards, and consequences within a classroom. These procedures can be implemented daily by a teacher, personal care assistant, or educational assistant, usually under the guidance of a behavior specialist, consultant, or individual trained in classroom behavior management strategies.
- **Individual behavior support plan** includes a variety of techniques to develop and maintain skills that will enhance an individual student's opportunity for learning and self-fulfillment. Interventions used shall be the least intrusive necessary. The plan will be implemented on a daily basis by all personnel involved with the student.
- **School consultation** of a clinical provider with regular and special education teachers, school administrators, other school personnel and parents regarding the behavioral management of youth within the school setting. This is delivered as requested by or agreed upon by the school district.
- **Group psychological counseling** services include regularly scheduled face-to-face interventions with small groups of youth and/or youth and their parents designed to improve functioning that allows the youth to reasonably benefit from his/her educational program. These services can be provided by outside agencies or qualified school personnel.
- **Individual psychological counseling** services include regularly scheduled face-to-face interventions with youth and/or youth and their parents designed to improve cognitive and behavioral functioning that allows the youth to reasonably benefit from his/her educational program. This counseling may be provided by personnel from an outside agency, a certified guidance counselor, or the school psychologist.

For more information about the psychological services of the RASD, please contact Mrs. Christine Kuhar, School Psychologist, at 814/776-4255.

Behavioral Support Services – Behavioral Support Services are a component of Psychological Services and can be provided to students receiving their education in the general education population and/or students receiving special education services. Students' whose behavior is adversely impacting their academic performance within the curriculum or students' whose behavior is adversely impacting one or more areas of life functioning (peer relationships, etc.) may be candidates for Behavioral Support Services. Behavioral Support Services include, but are not limited to, the evaluation of a student's behavior within the education setting, analysis of data collected from the evaluation, the development of behavioral interventions, the implementation of behavioral interventions, and the monitoring of those interventions as they relate to the student's behavioral goals and/or objectives identified via the behavioral evaluation. Students may be referred for behavioral support services by parents or guardians, administrators, guidance counselors, and/or teachers. Behavioral support service referrals and/or inquiries about behavioral support services may be made by contacting the Office of Student Services (814/776-4255).

Extended School Year - The determination of whether or not a child with a disability needs an extended school year must be made annually on an individual basis by the child's IEP team. An eligible child is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in excess of 180 days per year if regression caused by interruption in educational programming and limited recoupment capacity, or other factors, makes it unlikely that the student will attain or maintain skills and behavior relevant to established IEP goals and objectives.

Occupational Therapy – This service addresses fine motor concerns that interfere with an identified student's ability to benefit from or gain access to his/her educational program. A doctor's diagnosis and order are necessary for evaluation and treatment. This order must be renewed annually.

Physical Therapy – Identified students who have gross motor concerns that hinder their ability to benefit from or gain access to his/her educational program may be eligible for physical therapy services. A doctor's order is necessary for evaluation and treatment. This order must be renewed annually.

Early Intervention – If you believe your infant, toddler, and/or young child (age 3 to school-age) is experiencing delays in his/her development, Early Intervention can help. (For a list of possible signs/symptoms of developmental delays, see pages 2 and 3 of this document, or speak with your child's physician, teacher, the school psychologist or other school official. Developmental delays can occur in one or more of the following areas: social and emotional development, physical development, communication (language and speech) development, cognitive development, or adaptive development (self-help skills). For more information about birth to age 3 services, contact Cameron-Elk County (CE) Early Intervention services @ 814/772-8111. The Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit Nine's Early Intervention Office (814/887-9287) is able to provide more information about services for eligible young children (age 3 to school-aged).

Title 1 Program – The Title 1 Program in the Ridgway Area Elementary School offers remedial reading services to students in grades 1-5. This support includes small group instruction and consultation services to the classroom teachers.

Chapter 15 – In compliance with state and federal law, the Ridgway Area School District will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

ESL (English as a Second Language) – The Ridgway Area School District offers an ESL program to any student with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Educating these students is the responsibility of the Ridgway Area School District. The program is designed to teach social and academic language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) to our ESL population. It is also designed to meet the cultural aspects necessary to succeed and participate in meaningful educational programs. The ESL program is mandated by the federal and state governments for full implementation beginning the 2004 – 2005 school year. For additional information, please contact the Office of the Superintendent at 814/773-3146.

Eligibility of a student to be tested:

1. Students born outside of the United States
2. Students whose family members speak another language in the home other than English

How a school determines ESL eligibility:

1. Home Language Survey
2. Child Find Activities

Assessment and Placement of Students:

1. Assess identified students with LEP for instructional needs
2. Place the student in an appropriate ESL instructional level
3. Assess students for advancement in proficiency levels or program exit

Individuals in need of further information about child find, screening and evaluation procedures, (including purpose, time, and location), provisions of special education programs and services, and/or on the rights of parents and children, including the right to due process procedures, should contact any school administrator or guidance counselor.

Confidentiality and Student Records

Student records are essential to the successful delivery of formal education at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels. The District has established a system for the maintenance, use and destruction of student records that enables the District to educate children thoroughly and efficiently and to do so in a manner consistent with the privacy rights guaranteed by state and federal law.

The Ridgway Area School District may maintain records in two categories:

CATEGORY A – This file contains the minimum personal data necessary for the operation of the school system. Identification of student (name, social security number, student identification number, etc.), names and addresses of parents or guardian, last known home address and telephone number, birth date, attendance records, classes attended and academic levels completed or services received, year of program or service completion, and when applicable, grades or marks received, grade level completed, and whether a diploma was received. The file may also include, achievement test scores, honors, awards, activities, photographs, suspension records or other similar types of information. **CATEGORY A DATA SHALL BE FILED FOR 100 YEARS.**

CATEGORY B – This file's data is verified information of clear importance such as intelligence and aptitude scores, interest inventories, health data, family information, teacher or counselor observations and reports of serious acts of misbehavior and behavior patterns. This file also contains the documents that pertain to evaluation procedures to determine if a student was eligible for special education services or for other accommodations such as Chapter 15 Service Agreements. **CATEGORY B DATA SHALL BE DISCARDED SIX YEARS AFTER THE STUDENT IS GRADUATED OR, IN THE CASE OF A TRANSFER OR DROPOUT, WHEN THE STUDENT REACHES AGE TWENTY-ONE. ELIGIBLE STUDENTS MAY REQUEST THEIR CATEGORY B FILE BEFORE IT IS DESTROYED.**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO PARENTS OR ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED IN 2003 AND TO STUDENTS WHO ARE TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF AGE THAT DID NOT GRADUATE FROM THE DISTRICT DUE TO TRANSFER OR DROP OUT THAT ALL DATA MAINTAINED IN THEIR CATEGORY B FILE WILL BE DESTROYED AFTER JUNE 30, 2009. If records are requested, the original documents will be provided. The original records will be supplied at no cost to the parent or district. However, for this to occur, records must be picked up at the Office of Student Services during normal business hours. If the district is not contacted before the designated date, the District will presume that the parent or eligible student does not want this information. For an appointment to examine your Category B file, contact: Mrs. Karen A. Scull, M.S. Ed., Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education Services at (814) 776-4255 before April 30, 2009.

Notice of Rights under FERPA for:

- 1. Elementary and Secondary Students of the Ridgway Area School District**
- 2. Parents and Eligible Students Who Reside in the Ridgway Area School District**
- 3. Parents of Incarcerated Students and Incarcerated Eligible Students Who Are Housed at the Elk County Prison**

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants parents and students over 18 years of age, or attending a post-secondary institution (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to educational records. The rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the date the District receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal or other appropriate school official a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible students of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parent or eligible students may ask the Ridgway Area School District to amend a record for reasons stated above. They should write the school principal or other appropriate school administrator, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding their request for the amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing. After the hearing, should the district still decide not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorized disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company which whom the District has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her task.

A school official has a legitimate education interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District discloses educational records, without consent, to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll upon request..

The district may also disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. In the event a parent or eligible student does not want directory information disclosed, the parent or eligible student must inform the district in writing through the appropriate school administrator within forty-five (45) days of the publication of this notice.

4. The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office,
U.S. Department of Education,
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

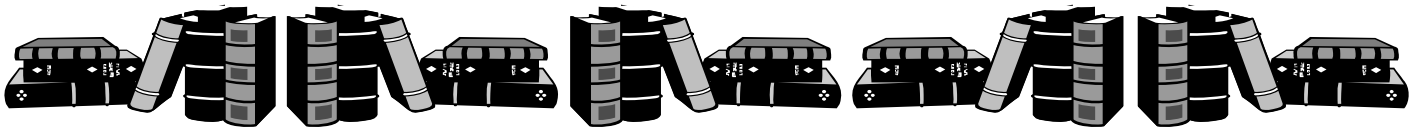
For More Information

Individuals in need of further information about child find, screening and evaluation procedures, (including purpose, time, and location), provisions of special education programs and services, and/or on the rights of parents and children, including the right to due process procedures, should contact any school administrator or guidance counselor at the following telephone numbers:

Superintendent of Schools.....	773-3146
Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education Services...	776-4255
School Psychologist.....	776-4255
High School Principal and Guidance Counselor	773-3164
Middle School Principal and Guidance Counselor.....	773-3156
Elementary School Principal and Guidance Counselor.....	776-2176

or

Visit the district's website at www.ridgwayareaschooldistrict.com



*The Ridgway Area School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicap in its programs, activities, admissions or employment practices, as required by Title IV, Title IX, Section 504 and Title II of ADA. The District has as a matter of policy a grievance procedure for the prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging discrimination. Said policy and complaints may be accessed or directed to the district's Affirmative Action Officer: **Dr. Thomas Butler, Superintendent***

**Office of the Superintendent,
P. O. Box 447
62 School Drive
Ridgway, PA 15853
814/773-3146**

The Ridgway Area School District complies with its obligations under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"). For more information or questions, contact the district's privacy officer at 814/776-4255.