

July 1, 2009

RE: Students with Disabilities Enrolled in Home Schools

Dear Home School Provider:

In Georgia, references to “parentally placed children in private schools” include children who are home schooled by their parents. Local school systems have the responsibility to identify all the private schools and home schools in their district and conduct Child Find activities with them to identify eligible children. A detailed explanation sheet accompanies this letter.

Under current guidelines and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), the Gordon County School District is required to allocate a proportionate share of IDEIA funds to provide some services to some students who have been placed or enrolled by their parents in private or home schools. In order to determine which services would be provided, the local system must consult with the private schools within their district, representatives of parents of student who attend those schools, and representatives of parents of home schooled students with disabilities. Toward this end, I am asking for your assistance and input.

Please complete the survey, Request for Information Concerning Students with Disabilities Enrolled in Home School, if your home school student has been identified as having a disability or if you suspect that he or she has a disability. The Gordon County School District has the responsibility to locate, evaluate, and identify all private school and home school children suspected of having a disability as defined under IDEIA. Please return the completed survey. If your student has not been identified as having a disability or if you do not suspect that her or she has a disability, please disregard this letter.

The Northwest Georgia Learning Resources Center in Rome, Georgia will also send you a packet of information annually with respect to Child Find. In addition, the school system is willing to provide opportunities for consultation. If you have any questions at this time or at anytime throughout the year, please feel free to contact me at 706-629-4474 or across@gcbe.org.

Sincerely,

Ann Cross
Director of Exceptional Student Services

Enclosures

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Counselor Signature _____ Date _____

GORDON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Exceptional Student Services
205 Warrior Path, Calhoun, GA 30701
Phone- 706-629-4474 FAX- 706-629-1107

**PARENTALLY PLACED PRIVATE SCHOOL AND
HOME SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Summary Information

In Georgia, all references to “parentally placed children in private schools” also include children with disabilities who are home schooled by their parents. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), local systems have the responsibility to identify all private schools and home schools within their jurisdiction and conduct Child Find activities with them to identify eligible children. Once the children are located, the system must conduct timely and meaningful consultation with representatives of the private and home school entities in an effort to determine what services will be provided to the identified children based upon a formula that represents a proportionate amount of federal funds attributable to those students. A worksheet for determining the proportionate share amount is provided annually with the comprehensive plan. Systems must annually report the number of children evaluated under Child Find who are either parentally placed in private schools or are home schooled, the number of those children found eligible for special education and related services and the number of children who are actually served under this provision of IDEIA.

A Service Plan will be developed for each parentally placed private school student or home school student for whom it is decided special education services will be provided. Service Plans will describe the specific special education or related services the student will receive. Personnel who provide services under a Service Plan must meet the same certification/licensure standards as those providing services in the public schools. Local school systems may not use Part B funds to finance existing levels of instruction in private/home schools nor to otherwise benefit a private/home school.

The local school system must consult with the private schools within their district, representatives of parents of students with disabilities who attend those schools and representatives of parents of home schooled students with disabilities as the system defines and designs the mechanisms for Child Find, and for identifying the services to be provided with the proportionate federal funds. In so doing, systems must:

1. Identify the child find process for private schools and for home schooled children who may be children with disabilities and explain this process to parties involved.
2. Explain the amount of federal funds to be used for the special education and related services for these children with disabilities who are in parentally placed private schools or are home schooled and how that amount was determined.

3. Explain how the consultation process will be an ongoing process throughout the year so that as students are identified as children with disabilities, they can access services, if available.
4. Explain what services will be provided, where they will be provided, and how these decisions were reached or when the school system will make the decision and why they determined to expend funds in this manner.
5. When the parents or the private schools disagree with the decision of the local system, the system must provide a written explanation to the private schools and the parents of children who are home schooled of the rationale for the decision made.

The local school system must conduct Child Find activities so that students who are either home schooled or are parentally placed in private schools can be referred, evaluated and identified as students with disabilities. The private schools and parents of home schooled children must be provided information on how to access Child Find services. The Child Find activities must be conducted in a timely manner and must meet the state required timeline for completing evaluations (60 calendar days). In addition, the costs of conducting Child Find activities for students who are home schooled or private schooled are not included in determining expenditures for the proportionate share obligation.

For further information, please contact Ann Cross, Director, Exceptional Students Educational, Gordon County Schools, at the address and phone number above.

**GORDON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT SERVICES
205 Warrior Path
Calhoun, Georgia 30701
Phone 706 629-4474 FAX 706 629-1197**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES ENROLLED IN HOME SCHOOLS**

Please complete this form if your home school student has been identified as having a disability as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) or if you suspect that he/she has a disability.

A student has a disability if he/she has been offered an Individualized Education Program (IEP) at a public school. If so, the parents/guardians would have been invited to attend IEP meetings and, prior to the provision of any services to the student, would have signed a Consent for Placement in Special Education.

Some home school students with disabilities in Georgia may be entitled to receive some public school special education services. Please see the attached information sheet for further explanation. To assist in determining if your student may be entitled to services, please provide the following information:

1. Name of Student: _____
2. Date of Birth: _____
3. Address: _____
4. Telephone Number: _____
5. Email Address: _____
6. Last Gordon County School Attended: _____
7. Last Public School Attended: _____
8. If Special Education services were provided to your child previously, for what type of disability was your child eligible? _____
9. If you suspect that your home school student has a disability, are you requesting an evaluation for services? Yes No

10. Do you have any recommendations as to how the school system could best locate and identify home schooled and private schooled children who may have special needs?

11. Currently, the Gordon County School System allots a proportionate share of IDEIA federal funds to provide speech services to home schooled and private schooled students. Do you have any recommendations as to whether this allocation should be changed to service other disabilities? If so, what are those recommendations? _____

12. In what location would you recommend that such services be provided?

13. Do you have recommendations as to when is the best time of day and/or day of the week to provide services? _____

14. How would you recommend that such services be evaluated? _____

15. The Gordon County School System currently offers two conferences per year wherein parents and private school providers can meet and discuss special education needs. Do you have any recommendations as to the location, time or frequency of these conferences? _____

16. Any other comments or suggestions would be appreciated.

If you have questions about special education services in the Gordon County School System, please contact:

Gordon County School System
Exceptional Student Services
205 Warrior Path
Calhoun, Georgia 30701
706 629-4474