

Mission Statement

With a mantra of "proactive for students", the Mount Union Area School District prepares all children for success and productivity in a global society by fulfilling student educational goals.

Getting Help for Your Child

If you suspect your child may have special needs that influence his or her ability to learn, interact socially or emotionally in the school environment, you should first schedule a meeting with school personnel to review your concerns. Special education services are coordinated in Mount Union by the Director of Student Services to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.

To have your child evaluated for the suspected need(s), you must complete a written request to the Mount Union Area School District (MUASD) as per Pennsylvania law. A letter that states the facts and the suspected problem(s) can achieve this. You may also obtain a “**Parent Request for an Evaluation/Reevaluation**” form that is available at each school building within the district. Your written request should be sent to the following:

Mount Union Area School District
Kristen C. Streightiff, M.Ed.
Director of Student Services
706 N Shaver Street
Mount Union, Pennsylvania, 17066

Know Your Rights

All children who are of school age are entitled to a **Free Appropriate Public Education** (FAPE) under state and federal regulations. MUASD strives to ensure the educational rights of your child are being met. Parents are encouraged to obtain a free copy of the “Procedural Safeguards Notice” from the district that outlines your child’s educational rights.

Parents are further encouraged to contact the Director of Student Services to review specific questions, concerns, and disagreements with referrals, evaluations, and placements.

- Parents should clearly understand that no child can receive specially designed instruction without the parent’s consent. In addition, parents need to understand the concept of FAPE. An appropriate education with specially designed instruction can range from placement in regular education to more restrictive settings. There is a difference between what is appropriate and what may be desired.
- **Caution** is suggested with the vocabulary associated with special education. For example, the term “multidisciplinary” refers to the concept of assembling a team of individuals across several disciplines or professions to collect and evaluate data on your child. The term “multidisciplinary” does not relate to behavior or discipline problems. There are numerous terms and acronyms in special education that can be confusing.

You Are A Team Member

As a parent, you are a valuable member of the “**IEP Team**.” This team is a collection of people from across several disciplines (fields of study or having knowledge of the student) that meet routinely to collect data, evaluate educational progress, and to make recommendations regarding the student’s needs. Members of the team include: the parents, the child’s regular education teacher, special education teacher, LEA, the child (when appropriate), and others who may have knowledge of your child such as the school psychologist, specialists, and support personnel.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

In September of 1973 Congress passed a law that prohibited discrimination on the basis of physical or mental handicap in every federally assisted program or activity in the country. That law is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 states: “No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the US...shall, solely by reason on his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” The MAUSD upholds all requirements set for by the Section 504. If you feel your child is a child with a protected handicap as defined by Section 504, please contact the building principal where your child would attend.

Levels of Support

The level and type of support your child may need can depend on many factors. Levels and types of support vary depending on the child’s needs. MUASD is committed to providing services in the least restrictive environment that will appropriately meet the child’s needs. An example of the least restrictive environment could be a placement in the regular classroom and an example of a more restrictive environment could represent placement in a special school. Below is a listing of the levels of support that exist.

- **Itinerant:** Special education supports and services provided by special education personnel for 20% or less of the school day.
- **Supplemental:** Special education supports and services provided by special education

personnel for more than 20% of the day but less than 80% of the school day.

- **Full-Time:** Special education supports and services provided by special education personnel for 80% or more of the school day

Location of Intervention

Specially designed instruction can occur at different locations based on the student’s needs, availability of programs and services, and appropriateness. Parents should know that it is not always possible to have every program in every school due to factors such as exceptionality population, availability of certified staff, and appropriateness. MUASD contracts for services with other school districts and Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 11 (IU 11) for some programs in an effort to strategically place programs and services and to share costs.

Examples of locations include:

- The regular school the student would attend if not exceptional.
- An alternate school as close to the student’s home as possible.
- An alternate school in a neighboring school district.
- Instruction in the home.
- Approved Private School on a day basis
- Approved Private school on a residential basis.
- Out-of-state placement.
- Other residential facility.
- Area Vocational-Technical School.

Types of Programs and Services

- **Autistic Support (AS).** MUASD operates two ABA classrooms within the school district to support students with Autism

- **Blind or Visually Impaired Support (BVIS):** The MUASD contracts with IU 11 to provide blind or visually impaired support
- **Physical Support (PS):** The MUASD can provide physical support as needed. Where necessary, physical therapists contracted through IU 11 can offer support to students in need of PS.
- **Deaf and Hearing Support (DHIS):** The MUASD contracts with IU 11 for the Deaf and Hearing Support program.
- **Emotional Support (ES):** The MUASD operates its own Emotional Support program. An itinerant teacher is assigned to students in need of ES in the district. Students who have greater ES needs may be placed in programs offering a highly structured full-time emotional support class outside of their regular school setting.
- **Gifted Support (GS):** MUASD operates its own GS programs in the elementary and secondary schools for students with high intellectual and creative ability.
- **Learning Support (LS):** MUASD operates its own LS programs. This programming is designed to provide varying levels of support for students experiencing academic difficulty.
- **Life Skills Support (LSS):** The MUASD operates an elementary and Jr/Sr high school level LSS programs. Students from both inside and outside the school district attend this program.
- **Speech and Language Support (SLS):** The MUASD operates its own SLS program. Additionally, the MUASD contracts with Raisetown Care Connect to support additional speech needs.

- **Multi-Disabled Support (MDS).** MUASD operates its own MDS programming at the elementary and Jr/Sr high schools. Students both inside and outside the district attend our classrooms.
- **School Health Services.** MUASD employs school nurses to provide health services.
- **Guidance Counseling.** MUASD employs guidance counselors to assist students with their needs.
- **Transportation.** MUASD provides regular school bus transportation to all eligible students. Specialized transportation is arranged when determined to be appropriate through educational programming.
- **School Psychologist.** MUASD employs a school psychologist for psychological services. Psychological evaluations are required under state and federal regulations to be eligible for special education.

Other programs and services available when appropriate include:

- Adaptive Physical Education
- Assistive Technology Devices
- Audiology
- Behavior Management Programs
- Early Identification and Assessment of disabilities
- Extended School Year
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Student Assistance Programs
- Transition Services
- Vocational Education

Interagency Agreements

- MH/MR
- CASSP
- UCBH
- Children’s Behavioral Health
- Children & Youth
- JRC
- YAP
- PA State Police
- CareerLink
- Huntingdon County Sheriff’s Office

Resources/Phone Numbers

Mount Union Area High School	814-542-2518
Mount Union Jr. High School	814-542-9311
Shirley Township Elementary	814-542-9381
Kistler Elementary	814-542-2595
Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 8	814-542-2501
Huntingdon County CYS	814-643-3270
Penn Highlands - BHU	814-643-8880
Huntingdon Dyslexia Center	814-644-7111
Blind and Visual Services	814-946-7330
Home Nursing Agency	814-643-5585
Hunt. Cty. Literacy Coalition	814-643-5199
Office of Vocational Rehab	800-442-6343
State Health Center	814-623-2001
Huntingdon County CareerLink	814-641-6408

Mount Union Area School District



A Guide to Special Education & Gifted Support Programs and Services

For more Information:
Mount Union Area School District
Mrs. Kristen C. Streightiff, M.Ed.
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706 N Shaver Street
Mount Union, Pennsylvania 17066
Phone (814) 542-2518 ext. 162
Fax (814) 542-2964
Web-site: www.muasd.org