**Section 1**

**CHILD FIND**

Ed 1105

The Litchfield School District ensures that all children who have disabilities, from 2.5 to age 21, who reside in the District, and who are in need of special education and related services are identified, located and evaluated. This applies to all children with disabilities, including highly mobile children (such as migrant and homeless children), children placed in homes for children, health care facilities, or state institutions*,* and children who are suspected of being eligible under IDEA, even though they are advancing from grade to grade. In addition, this applies to those children attending approved, non-public private schools within the geographic boundaries of the District. The District will maintain in the NHSEIS system and up-to date count of children ages 3 through 21 who are or may be educationally disabled.

For those students who are transitioning from Early Supports and Services to preschool, the District will participate in a transition planning meeting for the purposes of affecting a smooth and timely transition and implementing an Individual Education Program or Individual Family Support Plan by the child’s third birthday.

All data and information collected and used under this section are subject to confidentiality requirements as described in Section 2 - Confidentiality.

The Litchfield School District child find program includes, at a minimum, the following:

* 1. The District has established referral procedures, which ensure that all students who are suspected or known to be a child with a disability are referred to the special education evaluation team for further evaluation. These procedures are found in Section 8 – Pupil Evaluation to Placement.
  2. Any parent, teacher, administrator, or community member may refer a child to the IEP team for reasons including but not limited to the following (list is not exhaustive):
  3. Failing to pass a hearing or vision screening;
  4. Unsatisfactory performance on group achievement test or accountability measures;
  5. Receiving multiple academic and/or behavioral warnings or suspensions/expulsions from a child care or after school program; and
  6. Repeatedly failing one or more subjects.
  7. Inability to progress or participate in developmentally appropriate preschool activities; and
  8. Receiving services from family centered early supports and services.

To facilitate such referrals, a brochure describing the Special Services’ philosophy, programs and related services of the Litchfield School district is sent to community agencies. Preschool special education staff members speak at PTO, kindergarten registration and other parent meetings relative to the Litchfield Special Education program. Each year the district contacts parents whose children are on the Childfind roster to offer service anew.

At the time of a child’s referral to the team for evaluation, parents receive a copy of the *New Hampshire Special Education Procedural Safeguards Handbook* and a thorough explanation of its content. (*New Hampshire Special Education Procedural Safeguards Handbook* is included in the forms section of this manual.)

* 1. On an annual basis, the District contacts all approved nonpublic private schools (including religious elementary and secondary schools) within its geographic boundaries regardless of where the child resides. The District shall conduct a consultation meeting and advise school officials of the District’s responsibilities to identify and evaluate all students who are suspected of or known to be a child with a disability enrolled in such schools. The District shall conduct child find activities that ensure equitable participation of private school students with disabilities and provide an accurate count of those students. All child find activities conducted for children enrolled in private schools by their parents shall be similar to those activities conducted for children who attend public schools in the District. Referrals from approved nonpublic schools shall be forwarded to an appropriate special education team for further consideration.

In the spring of each year, a member of the Referral Team at the elementary level visits each local day care center and private kindergarten. The team member observes in the classroom and consults with teacher and directors regarding potential referrals.

* 1. On an annual basis, the District sends brochures to all community agencies and programs within its geographic boundaries that provide medical, mental health, welfare, and other human services, to advise them of the District’s responsibility to identify and evaluate all students who may be a child with a disability. This includes homes for children, health care facilities, or state institutions within the boundaries of the District that may have knowledge of children with disabilities who are involved with the state court and for whom a special education program may be appropriate. Referrals from these agencies shall be forwarded to the special education evaluation team for further consideration.
  2. On an annual basis, the District publicizes and disseminates information, which describes its Child Find Program. This includes a description of the District’s special education program, supports and services, including a contact person, his/her functions, and the manner by which he/she might be contacted for further information or referral.

In addition to the direct mailings, the Litchfield School District disseminates information and solicits referrals by:

1. Publishing periodically in local newspapers, such as *The Hudson-Litchfield News* (HLN), articles that describe the district’s childfind responsibilities, referral procedures, and special services programs. In addition, the name and telephone number of the Director of Special Services is provided as the local contact person.
2. Sending representatives of the district to local preschools and kindergartens to describe the district’s special services responsibilities, procedures, and programs.
3. Describing the district’s childfind responsibilities, special services referral and evaluation procedures, and special education programs to all parents gathered for the kindergarten registration day and local parent-teacher meetings.

The Litchfield preschool offers regular childfind screening days to all Litchfield children, ages three through six years. Results are shared with parents, and with parental consent, students who appear to be at risk of educational disabilities are referred to the preschool case coordinator for special education evaluation. These childfind screenings are publicized in local newspapers, at local preschools, early intervention programs and with area physicians.

* 1. The District shall annually provide all parents of children with disabilities information regarding their rights and responsibilities under federal and state special education laws. *New Hampshire Special Education Procedural Safeguards Handbook* is reviewed at each annual planning session, during which time the Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the year is designed.
  2. The District ensures that all referrals from parents and others who suspect or know a child with a disability are forwarded to the IEP referral team. The District shall provide the parents with a written notice of any referral other than one initiated by the parent.

A. Ensure there are continuing efforts related to cultural competency in relationship to public awareness and child find activities, such as the ability to communicate with and relate to parents and families in ways which are appropriate to their individual racial, ethnic, and/or cultural backgrounds.

* 1. The District shall coordinate with area agencies and family centered supports and services to establish a process of district notification of children served by these programs consistent with the interagency agreement between the District and the area agencies providing family centered supports and services.
     1. Ed 1105.04(a): The LEA shall develop a written early transition process for children exiting family centered early supports and services which assures that any child who is potentially a child with a disability is evaluated and eligibility for special education is determined prior to the child’s third birthday. If a child is determined to be a child with a disability eligible for special education and related services, the LEA shall ensure that an IEP is developed and implemented on/before the child’s third birthday.
     2. Ed 1105.04 (b): The transition process in Ed 1105.04(a) shall include a written interagency agreement between the LEA and the local area agencies, as defined by RSA 171-A:21-b, responsible for the provision of family centered supports and services in that community.

**CHILDFIND ARTIFACTS:**

* [Memorandum of Agreement-Greater Nashua Area Interagency Agreement for Early Childhood Transitions](../1.%20Childfind%20Artifacts/Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF/Memorandum%20of%20Agreement%20-ECTransitions.pdf)
* [Integrated Preschool Program Guide](file:///S:\SPED\Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF\Preschool%20Handbook1%2010-11.pdf)
* [Child find letter sent to physicians, area private schools and local agencies.](file:///S:\SPED\Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF\Childfind%20letter%20to%20Physicians%2011-1-2010.pdf)
* [Childfind brochure sent to physicians, area private schools and agencies.](../1.%20Childfind%20Artifacts/Childfind%20Brochure%2011-2010.docx)
* [Parent and Teacher Referral Form](../1.%20Childfind%20Artifacts/Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF/Parent%20and%20Teacher%20Referral%20form.pdf)s
* [Affirmation of Consultation with private schools in district.](../1.%20Childfind%20Artifacts/Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF/Affirmation%20of%20consultation.pdf)
* [Child find letter to home schooling parents](../1.%20Childfind%20Artifacts/Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF/Home%20School%20Childfind%20Letter.pdf)
* [Childfind Letter to Private Schools](../1.%20Childfind%20Artifacts/Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF/Childfind%20letter%20to%20Private%20Schools.pdf)
* [Letter to parent/adult student not accessing services.](../1.%20Childfind%20Artifacts/Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF/Childfind%20letter%20to%20parents%20of%20previously%20identified%20students.pdf)
* [*McKinney-Vento Homeless Act*](../1.%20Childfind%20Artifacts/Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF/McKinney%20Vento%20Homeless%20Act.pdf)
* Litchfield School District forms to identify homeless students
* [Student in Transition Questionnaire](../1.%20Childfind%20Artifacts/Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF/STUDENT%20IN%20TRANSITION%20QUESTIONNAIRE%2011-07.pdf)
* [Student in Transition Questionnaire-Spanish](../1.%20Childfind%20Artifacts/Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF/STUDENT%20IN%20TRANSITION%20QUESTIONNAIRE%2011-07-SPANISH.pdf)
* [Verification of Guardianship/Residency](../1.%20Childfind%20Artifacts/Section%201-Childfind%20Artifacts%20PDF/Verification%20of%20GuardianshipResidency%20(Homeless)%20REVISED%2011-07.pdf)
* [Procedural Safeguards Handbook](http://www.education.nh.gov/instruction/special_ed/documents/procedural_safeguards.pdf)
* Policies
  + [Education for Homeless Students (JLG)](file:///Z:\District%20Admin\District%20Policies\Policy%20Manual%20Revised\Section%20J\jlg%20homeless%20policy.pdf)
  + [Procedures for the Education for Homeless Students (JLGA)](file:///Z:\District%20Admin\District%20Policies\Policy%20Manual%20Revised\Section%20J\jlg%20homeless%20policy.pdf)
  + [Nondiscrimination on the Basis of handicap/Disability (ACE)](file:///Z:\District%20Admin\District%20Policies\Policy%20Manual%20Revised\Section%20A\ace-non-discrimination%20of%20handicap-disabled%20persons.pdf)