
Pennsylvania Department of Education



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Student Services Report **Monday, April 07, 2008**

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Organization Description

The building organizational structure of the Ferndale Area School District is elementary (K4-6); junior high school (7-8); and high school (9-12). Within that structure the educational program is organized as:

- K4 through 3rd grade = Primary Program
 - 4th through 6th grade = Intermediate
 - 7th through 8th grade = Junior High School
 - 9th through 12th grade = High School
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Core Purpose

Mission

As a result of a consensus building process involving professional staff, school board, community, parents, and business representatives, the strategic planning steering committee retained the district's mission statement:

“BIG ENOUGH TO CHALLENGE, SMALL ENOUGH TO CARE”

“FERNDALE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT - WHERE CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS FIRST”

Vision

To accomplish this mission the Ferndale Area School District will strive to provide a safe and nurturing community for excellent teaching and learning where students prepare for a life of continual learning, and acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to solve problems, communicate effectively and to be responsible citizens.

Shared Values

- We believe that all students can learn.
 - We expect students to learn the skills, concepts, and values necessary for them to be successful in both their personal and professional lives.
 - We ensure the academic success and personal growth of all students through modeling and instruction by providing individualized opportunities.
 - We hold ourselves to a standard of excellence in our professional practices.
 - We will promote a caring environment of mutual respect and trust.
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Current Student Services

Service	Comment
Health Services	Health services are provided to the entire school population. Student health services include physical examinations, vision, hearing, and scoliosis screenings, measuring, recording, and reporting growth patterns of students, as well as the day to day maintenance of overall health within the district (safe administration of medicines, care and case management of health problems, and interventions for health needs).
Transportation Services	The Ferndale Area School District operates a student transportation system for elementary students living more than 1.5 miles from the school, and to secondary students living more than 2 miles from the schools.
Breakfast/Lunch Programs	Our cafeterias offer nutritional meals that qualify under the U.S. Department of Agriculture recommended guidelines for federal subsidy/reimbursement. Students whose parents qualify based on federal income guidelines are eligible for free or reduced priced meals.
Guidance Services	Counselors work with students, parents, and teachers in a variety of ways to help students develop positive character traits, adjust to the school setting, develop healthy life skills, and develop college/career plans. Individual counseling sessions, small groups and classroom guidance programs assist students directly, while parent conferences and parenting programs help parents better understand students' individual personal and educational needs. In an effort to keep abreast of student issues and interventions, guidance counselors receive on-going and relevant professional development.
Cambria County Mental Health	MH/MR supports the Student Assistance Program.
Student Assistance Program	The Student Assistance Program (SAP & ESAP) is a program for the identification, intervention, and referral of students who are believed to be at risk of suicide, show signs of extreme depression, or who are having school-related problems because of alcohol and/or drug use. Attendance, behavior, and academic difficulties are also addressed through SAP. Using a systematic process of referrals and general assignments, the team determines which students are having problems and direct them to community organizations for help. The District complies with all aspects of the PA SAP requirements which include training, meetings, and agency support.
Title I Services	The Ferndale Area Elementary School is a schoolwide building. All guidelines are followed in relation to the identification of students and the implementation of services.
Four Year Old Kindergarten	The FASD offers a four year old kindergarten to district residents. Enrollment in the program is provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Approximately 40 students are served in the program each year.
Tutoring	Tutoring services are offered to students (K-12) in need of remediation throughout the school year. Services range from during to after school programs.
Summer School	A summer school program is offered within the school district for secondary students who have failed a course. Students who are interested in accelerating their education are also offered the opportunity to enroll in courses.
Cambria County Child Development Corporation	Cambria County Child Development Corporation operates before and after school latchkey programs, inclusive of summer months, at the FASD Elementary School
Family Support	At Ferndale Area, Family Support (K-6), and Family Support/Staffings (7-12) involvement is a measure that involves parents as an integral part of our educational team. At the elementary level, a Family Support Coordinator is employed. All academic tutoring is arranged via the family support team. Team members include the parent, teacher, guidance counselor and principal.

	Meetings review all areas of student development including: social, emotional, academic, cognitive, and family dynamics. Personal home visits are arranged when a parent is unable to visit the school for a meeting. Principal, family support coordinator and guidance counselor are able to meet with parents in their home throughout the school year. A family support plan is developed, implemented and reviewed within 30 days. The family support team will intervene with at-risk students to bridge their gap toward successful learning, provide the link to academic tutoring, identify students who are experiencing behavior and/or academic difficulties which pose a barrier to their learning and success in school while offering support to the student and their family. Family support refers students for assistance as indicated by individual need, functions as an advocate for the student, and works in conjunction with teachers, parents, family members to increase student success.
Health Curriculum	Planned instruction is currently in place for grades 8 & 10.
Social Work Services	The Ferndale Area School District provides school social work services to all students based upon individual need. The school social worker, provided through IU08, is a link between home, school, and community. As a member of the educational team, the school social worker promotes and support students' academic and social success by providing specialized services.
Special Education	A full continuum of special education services is available for qualifying students.
Gifted Education	Enrichment and acceleration opportunities are available for qualifying students.
Career Development	Career exploration and guidance is provided to students in grades 7-12.
Psychological Services	A certified school psychologist is shared with a neighboring district. The school psychologist serves as a resource to our district, providing developmentally appropriate services, diagnostic, intervention & referral, and consultative services.
Cambria County Drug & Alcohol	Provides consultative services to our student assistance teams.
Northern Point Learning	Provides alternative education to students experiencing difficulties.

Needs Assessment

While the majority of parents and students across the district reported that they liked and felt liked by other students, as well as felt respected, welcomed, and safe at district schools, there were reports of bullying. An elementary anti-bullying program has been in place for 6 years. The junior-senior high school staff is currently investigating an anti-bullying program for implementation.

PA Youth Survey results support the need for comprehensive drug and alcohol education K-12. Additionally, a recent audit through Safe and Drug Free Schools requires that planned instruction be developed for all grade levels across the district.

Finally, a recent review of career education activities indicated a gap at the elementary level. Planned instruction will be developed to integrate state Career Education and Work Standards into the elementary curriculum.

Action Plan - Narratives

Developmental Services

Student Services Overview for Ferndale Area School District

By preventing and removing learning barriers that interfere with student success, the Ferndale Area School District is committed to providing students with all of the services they require to have a successful educational experience. The Ferndale Area School District ensures that the six components of resilient schools, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, are active in each of their buildings. To ensure that appropriate supports are in place to maximize student success, Ferndale Area School District also incorporates three tiers of interventions for students and families. Ferndale Area School District's trained and certified staff is a significant part of the identification process that allows students and families access to appropriate supports, interventions, and/or consultation services.

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

1. Elementary Developmental Services:

Pre-kindergarten

Overview

The elementary pre-kindergarten program helps students prepare for the social and educational aspects to be a successful kindergarten student. The program utilizes creative hands-on learning, cooperative learning, small group learning, and individual learning to incorporate a variety of learning situations. There is a full time teacher and aide in each classroom. Throughout the school year, teachers and aides do at least three home visits for each of their students. An initial home visit, introducing parents to the staff, setting student expectations, and providing information related to school supports, helps build an open relationship between the home and school. The second home visit is done at the half way point of the school year to personally inform each parent of their child's progress through the program. The third home visit is an exit visit that allows the teacher and aide to give the parents a descriptive overview of how their child progressed from the beginning to the end of the school year.

Nutritional Services

Federal and State funded school meal programs

Families may apply online or to the school in writing by the end of September to receive free or reduced meals for their children. To apply online families can go to the COMPASS website and apply to receive free or reduced lunches.

Special supplemental feeding program for Woman, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Food Stamp Program

Families may apply online using the COMPASS website to apply for Food Stamps and Children's Health Insurance Program. If a family needs further assistance in applying for state or federal programs our guidance counselors, school social worker, family support teacher, or principal will help them with each step of the process.

Guidance Counseling

Overview

Ferndale Area Elementary School has developed and implemented a developmental guidance program. Our developmental guidance program is a comprehensive, balanced, and sequential plan that is based on the results of a building-wide needs assessment regarding the students in the Ferndale Area Elementary School. The needs assessment reviews the social, personal, academic, and career needs of students in our school. Programming is then directed to meet the needs in each grade level as well as the National Standards for School Counseling Programs. Teachers, counselor, and the principal then develop class activities and counseling initiatives. Home visits are conducted to assist in meeting the needs of children and families in the Ferndale Area School District. Orientation materials and tours are provided to new students and parents, in an effort to provide smoother transitions. Transition services are also provided for all students moving from grade 6 to 7 within the school district.

-Anti-Bullying Program: "JACKETS"

Judgment and Responsibility:

The capacity to make good choices. Taking personal responsibility to uphold what is pure, right and true when making decisions.

Attitude and Respect:

Developing a positive awareness of thoughts/words and their impact on others. Honoring and esteeming another person and their feelings.

Cooperation:

Demonstrating a willingness to work together towards a common goal. Being caring in the context of being careful helps everyone.

Knowledge and Keeping Good Habits:

Becoming acquainted with facts, truths or rules through study and investigation. Using an effective decision making process to maintain good habits.

Empathy and Caring:

Being able to consider other's feelings and life circumstances. Demonstrating regard and kind concern towards others, self and the environment.

Talents and Citizenship:

Doing your share to make our school and community a better place to live. Recognizing your talents and interests and sharing them with others.

Self control and Relationships:

Bringing my thoughts, words, actions and attitudes into constant obedience in order to benefit the choices I make towards myself, others and my relationships.

Incentive Program — “Thumbs Up Award”

The “Thumbs Up” Award is a student incentive program to reward positive behaviors and acts of good choices that occur throughout the school year. Every staff member has the opportunity to reward students for exceptional acts of honesty, kindness, and responsibility etc... The program follows the philosophy of “Catch'em Being Good”. “Thumbs Up” Cards are rewarded to students that demonstrate a positive act of character.

2. Junior/Senior High Developmental Services

Guidance Counseling

Overview

All new students and incoming 7th grade students participate in the Junior/Senior High School orientation program to minimize students' transitional anxieties of attending a new school. The program includes a tour of the school, a review of school procedures, an introduction to staff, and allows students to meet the school's guidance counselors and administrators, to have a point of contact when they attend the school. A 6-week developmental guidance class is scheduled for all grade 7 students. Content includes communication skills, decision making, self-esteem, goals and visions, and careers. The junior/senior high school guidance department also provides students assistance with positive social skill and self awareness development, scholarship searches, college searches, financial aide, and career planning. Some of the online resource websites used for career planning are Fastweb, Acinet, and Bridges. These sites along with the guidance department allow students to do a complete exploration of career and educational options that would meet each individual student's needs.

Career Education

Overview

All 7th grade students complete the Self Directed Search, during their participation in the grade guidance cycle. These self-directed searches then become a part of the 8th grade career portfolio. Mini career fairs, college fairs (on- and off-site), and ASVAB Testing are provided to students during grades 9-12. All seniors participate in a week-long Career Linking Academy, providing them with job shadowing, interviewing, and other necessary school-to-work skills.

Keys2Work Program

Keys2Work is a career-based skill improvement program built around [WorkKeys system](#). Keys2Work integrates career exploration, WorkKeys-based skill remediation, and the WorkKeys Assessment into a motivational career development program. Keys2Work helps to link academic achievement with workplace opportunity. Keys2Work is introduced to all students in grade 9.

Greater Johnstown Career and Technology Center

Beginning in grade 8, representatives from GJCTC visit the Ferndale Area School District to discuss program offerings. In grade 9, all students tour the GJCTC, receiving more specific information on programs of interest. Any Ferndale Area student who wishes to attend the GJCTC, is able to participate in a half-day about program beginning in grade 10. Some students are afforded this opportunity beginning in grade 9.

3. Districtwide Health Services

Overview

Ferndale Area School District provides health services to all students in need of medical assistance. If warranted, the school nurse will notify a parent/guardian to make appropriate recommendations for further treatment. Ongoing screening, in accordance with FASD Policy 209, is completed for oral hygiene, vision, hearing and growth measurements for all students. Comprehensive health and dental records are maintained on every student. All health information is kept confidential in individual student health records.

Administration of Medication

All students who require medications during school hours have their medication administered in accordance with the district's medication policy (#210). Asthma inhalers are permitted to be carried and self-administered by students who are in need of such medication as prescribed by a physician. The district's policy on asthma inhalers (#210.1) provides direction to staff and students.

Nursing

Screenings

The school nurse conducts vision, hearing, and growth screenings for all students that attend Ferndale Area Junior/Senior High School, as required by PDE. The school nurse will notify the parents/guardians of students who fail screenings and help the families make contacts with the appropriate medical practitioner and secure any needed assistance.

Immunizations

The school nurse maintains up to date immunization records on all students, in accordance with the requirements established by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

DIAGNOSTIC, INTERVENTION, AND REFERRAL SERVICES

1. Elementary Diagnostic, Intervention, and Referral Services:

Guidance Services

Overview

Based upon student need, individual counseling services are provided to students through insight-oriented counseling, play therapy, mental status screens, crisis intervention, and developmental screens/checklists. Group counseling, where the counselor meets with several students with similar concerns to assist in school functioning, is also provided. Additionally, parent education to groups of parents with similar concerns is offered throughout the year.

Star Readers Program

The Star Readers Program promotes social skill building, academic success, self confidence, and a self positive outlook for students who participate. Each morning a 5th or 6th grade student will go into a kindergarten or 1st grade classroom and work with younger students by reading to them and helping them with their academic struggles.

Peer Tutoring Program

The Peer Tutoring Program promotes social skill building, academic success, self confidence, and a self positive outlook for students who participate in the program. Each morning upper level elementary students go to their designated homerooms to help lower level elementary students gain academic skills and concepts that they are struggling with in their daily lessons. Often the upper level students will work individually with a lower level student and act as a role model for that student.

Family Support

Overview

At Ferndale Area Elementary School, Family Support is a program that involves parents as an integral part of the educational team. Family Support refers students for assistance as indicated by individual need, functions as an advocate for the student, and works in conjunction with teachers, parents, and family members to increase student success and remove barriers to learning. Team members include the parents, teachers, guidance counselor, family support coordinator, and principal. Meetings review all areas of student development including: social, emotional, academic, cognitive, and family dynamics. Personal home visits are arranged when a parent is unable to visit the school for a meeting. The principal, family support coordinator, and guidance counselor are able to meet with parents in their home throughout the school year, as needed, to ensure parent involvement. A family support plan is developed, implemented and reviewed every 30 days until the student demonstrates consistent success over an extended period of time as determined by the team. A MDE is conducted for students who have not responded appropriately to classroom interventions.

Title I Services

Math

The Ferndale Area Elementary School provides Title I Math services via a school wide model. Currently, Ferndale Area Elementary is Using "Everyday Math" in grades K4 through grade 5 and Prentice Hall/Connected Math in grade 6. These programs provide a balance of instruction in computation and problem solving. Teachers and staff have been trained in this educational model and information pertaining to the program is shared with parents throughout the year.

Reading

The Ferndale Area Elementary School provides Title I reading services via a school wide model. Homogeneous reading groups have been established in grades 1 through 6. These groups allow children to participate in reading instruction at their developmental levels. Guided reading practices allow students to receive instruction in targeted areas of need. Leveled reading libraries are used to expose students to real literature at their instructional levels. These classroom libraries provide a rich selection of both fiction and nonfiction titles. This provides teachers with a scope and sequence for instruction that aligns to Pennsylvania State Standards.

School Based Tutoring Programs

Overview

The Ferndale Area Elementary School has a number of no cost tutoring services available to students before, during, and after school. Not only does Ferndale Area Elementary have adult tutors, but the elementary administration also embraces peer tutoring to help build an interactive and positive culture within the school. Students can either participate in an individual tutoring program or multiple tutoring programs based on each student's educational needs.

Before School Tutoring

Each morning after students eat breakfast they can meet with their tutor and receive either 1:1 or 1:2 tutoring for up to twenty minutes per morning to work on specific educational concepts.

Lunchtime Tutoring

Each week teachers update their individual lunchtime tutoring bins with materials related to concepts that they will be teaching in their classes. These materials are then used to help students who are struggling in their classes. Students can attend lunchtime tutoring either on a M, W, F schedule or a T, TH schedule. Lunchtime tutoring can be requested through the family support process by a teacher or parent. The school has Ameri Corps workers and education majors from a local college that help tutor students during this time period.

After School Tutoring

The after school tutoring program is one full hour of tutoring by certified classroom teachers. Students are provided with a snack before tutoring and transportation to their home when tutoring ends. Students who stay for after school tutoring focus their time on strengthening PSSA concepts that they are having difficulty grasping.

Peer Tutoring

The Peer Tutoring Program promotes social skill building, academic success, self confidence, and a self positive outlook for students who participate in the program. Each morning upper level elementary students go to designated homerooms to help lower level elementary students gain academic skills and concepts that they are struggling with in their daily lessons. Often the upper level students will work individually with a lower level student and act as a role model for that student.

Cambria County Foster Grandparent Program

Ferndale Area Elementary School works in cooperation with Cambria County to allow senior citizens to come to the school to work with the students. The "Grandmas" often work one on one with individual students to specifically remediate an academic area.

After School Homework Help Program

The after school Homework Help program specifically targets students that are struggling to complete their homework correctly or on a consistent basis. This program has AmeriCorp workers, local college students who are education majors, teachers, and paraprofessionals to help students understand and complete their homework. The Homework Help program is active Tuesday through Thursday and it provides a snack and transportation home for all students that attend.

Home Visits

Overview

Home visits are done by the principal, guidance counselor, family support coordinator, and where necessary, pertinent staff, to close the gap of communication between the school and the student's family. While on a home visit, the team may conduct a family support meeting, parent interview, or just inform families of the services that the school may provide to them or their children. Home visits are also used as a productive way to help educate parents about effective parenting techniques.

2. Junior/Senior High Diagnostic, Intervention, and Referral Services:

Guidance Services

Based upon assessments of student needs, individual and small group sessions are held to address topics of concern. Referrals to outside agencies are made, if necessary. The guidance department also collaborates with local agencies to work with students who are in need of additional supports.

Family Support (Staffings)

Overview

At Ferndale Area Junior/Senior High School family support (staffings) is a measure that involves parents as an integral part of the educational team. A parent, teacher, counselor, or administrator may request a meeting to discuss a student's behavior, grades, attitude or attendance. When a family support meeting is scheduled, the parents, student, counselor, teachers, and administrator is present. In some cases community supports are also invited to attend, especially when students are involved with probation or military recruiters. Topics of discussion include current grades, missing assignments, behaviors, attendance, upcoming assignments or assessments, and anything else that might be of relevance. The goal of a staffing is to devise a plan to help the student improve and be successful at school. The student and parents are included in the plan and take a major part in implementation. During the staffing, a form is completed by the counselor or administrator, noting discussions and plan of action. All participants involved in the meeting sign-off, and a copy of provided to all teachers, the parents, the student, and administration. A copy is filed with the counselor. If a plan of action needs revised, another staffing is called to revisit the plan.

School Based Tutoring Programs

After School Tutoring

Students are recommended by teachers or parents to stay for the after school tutoring program. The after school tutoring program can be used for remediation of educational concepts or it can be used as a time when students can get help completing homework assignments. Transportation home is provided to students.

Technology Based

Study Island

The Study Island program is completely web-based. Students simply logon to www.studyisland.com to access the program. The academic material is organized in topics which contain a lesson and assessment questions with explanations. For each subject the students must take a pre-test, complete all content groups covering all the assessment anchors, and pass a post-test in order to complete the program. The program is organized into topics covering all of the Pennsylvania Assessment Anchors that are tested on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). Teachers have access to a private page where they can view usage statistics and results for each student, a group of students, and the school as a whole. In addition, teachers can compare their students' performance against other students in Pennsylvania.

Home Visits

Overview

Home visits are done by the administration, guidance counselors, and other pertinent staff to close the gap of communication between the school and the student's family. While on a home visit, the team may conduct a meeting, check on a student, conduct a parent interview, or inform families of services that the school may provide to them or their children. Home visits are also used as a productive way to help educate parents about effective parenting techniques.

3. District Social Work Services

Overview

Ferndale Area School District's social worker is contracted through Intermediate Unit 8. In an effort to identify and eliminate barriers to educational success, the social worker helps to assess student needs through observation, interviews, and testing. At times, the social worker identifies and reports cases of child abuse and neglect. Other services of the social worker include participation on child study teams, designing and implementing behavior management plans, and crisis prevention and intervention strategies.

4. District Psychological Services

Overview

Ferndale Area School District shares psychological services with another school district. The school psychologist serves as a member of every special education multi-disciplinary evaluation team, conducting psychological testing to determine eligibility for special education or gifted programming, including conducting classroom observations. The school psychologist also consults with staff and families in planning interventions to meet the needs of children. The school psychologist writes evaluations and participates in IEP meetings. The school psychologist also helps to develop behavior plans, as needed.

5. District Special Education Services

Overview

The Ferndale Area School District provides a full range of special education programs and/or services for students identified as exceptional. Students who are experiencing academic, social-emotional, behavioral, and/or communication difficulties, are screened at both the elementary and secondary levels.

Referral Process

Prior to referral for multidisciplinary evaluation for possible special education services, a screening process is available for students. At the elementary, this screening is called Family Support (discussed previously in this section). Currently known as "staffings", a similar process is utilized at the secondary level. Parents who wish the screening/pre-referral process may request a multidisciplinary evaluation for possible special education services, but placing the request in writing.

Due Process

Before a student can be considered for special education programs or services, his/her parents must grant permission in writing. The request for permission includes a full description of the proposed evaluation and is accompanied by a copy of the "Procedural Safeguards Notice". This outlines the parental rights and the safeguards to be followed in providing a free appropriate public education. Any time parents feel the program the district is providing is not appropriate, they may request any of the options outlined in the "Notice".

Evaluation

The evaluation is conducted by a "multidisciplinary team" to determine such things as the child's learning ability, achievement levels, behavior patterns, physical abilities, and communication skills. The team is comprised of the child's parents, teacher(s), school psychologist, and the school principal/designee. It may also include a special education teacher and other staff, as necessary. The IEP team reviews the results of the ER (Evaluation Report) and makes a recommendation concerning both eligibility and need for special education programs/services. For student who qualify, re-evaluations are conducted at least once every two years, or at the request of any member of the team, including parents, to recommend continuing eligibility and need for services.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION SERVICES

1. Guidance Services

Overview

Guidance counselors often ensure that students and their families experiencing chronic problems, involvement with outside agencies is often necessary. In order to provide professional continuity of services, counselors provide written psycho-educational summaries to community agencies, and physicians to which the school has relationships with/release of information that assist student learning and success. Our guidance departments also collaborate with local agencies to work with students who need intensive interventions through programs or counseling through programming outside of the school setting. Our guidance and administrative staff keep in close contact with agencies such as Children and Youth, Juvenile Probation, and mental health providers.

2. District Social Work Services

Overview

Ferndale Area School District's social worker is contracted through Intermediate Unit 8. The social worker ensures that parents are educated about student options outside of school, that there is a direct link between school and community resources, and that students and families are able to access community resources. Acting as an advocate for students and parents, the social worker collaborates and consults with community agencies and organizations, and other professionals, coordinating service delivery for students through cooperative interagency activity.

3. District Psychological Services

Overview

The school psychologist conducts re-evaluations of identified students. Assistance in the development of behavior plans and psychological counseling as a related service, are also responsibilities of the school psychologist. The district also supports students and families in their use of psychological services through private contractors to give students access to extended counseling, family counseling, behavior management plans, and TSS services that will help students succeed by removing barriers to learning in and out of the school setting. These services are at parental discretion and all related costs are assumed by the guardian.

4. District Special Education Services

Overview

An IEP (Individualized Education Plan) is developed for students who qualify for special education. The IEP team includes the parents, at least one regular education teacher of the student, at least one special education teacher/provider, and a district representative. Others may be included, as appropriate. The IEP team reviews the recommendation from the MDE and makes a final determination of eligibility and need for services. If it determines a student is eligible and in need of services, an IEP is written which summarizes the educational program/services developed specifically for the student. This plan is reviewed at least once each year to ensure it continues to meet the child's needs. Before an initial IEP can be implemented, parents are asked to give approval for special education placement by signing a NOREP (Notice of Recommended Educational Placement), summarizing the special education placement or services the child will receive.

The Ferndale Area School District provides a full range of special education programs/and or services for students identified as exceptional. Services are operated by the district, or contracted from Appalachia Intermediate Unit 08 or other districts. Programs/services are provided at no cost to parents/guardians and are individualized to meet the educational needs of each student.

Programs operated within the district include:

Learning Support Services

Learning support services are offered to students who meet the requirements for special education as established by IDEA 2004. It is determined that a student either meets or does not meet the requirements of being a student with a disability through a Multidisciplinary Evaluation that is conducted by the school psychologist. Once determined that the student is in need of special education services, an IEP is formulated by an appropriate team to meet the student's specific needs as outlined in the evaluation report. Services that Ferndale Area provides to their disabled students typically include, but are not limited to: placing students in a part time resource room setting, giving students accommodations and modifications within the regular education setting, providing students with the least restrictive environment, tracking student's progress on their goals and keeping their families informed of the progress on a consistent basis.

Autistic Support Services

Autistic support services are offered to students who meet the requirements of being a student with pervasive developmental disorder. It is determined that a student either meets or does not meet the requirements of being a student with PDD through an evaluation that is conducted by a medical practitioner. Once determined that the student is in need of special education services an IEP is formulated by an appropriate team to meet the student's specific needs as outlined in the evaluation report. Ferndale Area School District has an autistic support teacher that works for the district. Services that Ferndale Area provides to their students that qualify for autistic support typically include, but are not limited to: working with an autistic support teacher on specific goals outside the regular class setting, giving students accommodations and modifications within the classroom setting, providing students with the least restrictive environment, tracking students progress on their goals and keeping their families informed of the progress on a consistent basis.

Emotional Support Services

Emotional support services are offered to students who meet the requirements of being a student with an emotional disturbance. It is determined that a student either meets or does not meet the requirements of being a student with an emotional disturbance through a Multidisciplinary Evaluation that is conducted by the school psychologist. Once determined that the student is in need of special education services, an IEP is formulated by an appropriate team to meet the student's specific needs as outlined in the evaluation report. Ferndale Area School District has two emotional support teachers that work for the district. There is an emotional support teacher at each building in the district. By Ferndale Area School District having their own emotional support teacher in each building, it allows the district flexibility in scheduling and continual support for students in the emotional support programs. Services that Ferndale Area Elementary provides to their students that qualify for emotional support typically include, but are not limited to: working with an emotional support teacher on specific goals outside the regular class setting, giving students accommodations and modifications within the education setting, providing students with the least restrictive environment, tracking student's progress on their goals and keeping their families informed of the progress on a consistent basis.

Speech and Language Services

Speech and language services are offered to students who meet the requirements of being a student with a speech and language impairment. It is determined that a student either meets or does not meet the requirements of being a student with a speech and language impairment through a speech pathologist evaluation that is conducted by the school. Once determined that the student is in need of special education services an IEP is formulated by an appropriate team to meet the student's specific needs as outlined in the evaluation report. Ferndale Area School District employs a full time speech pathologist that serves students in the elementary and junior/senior high school. Services that Ferndale Area provides to students that qualify for speech and language typically include, but are not limited to: working with the speech and language teacher on specific goals outside the regular class setting, working directly with

students in the classroom, tracking students progress on their goals and keeping their families informed of the progress on a consistent basis.

Hearing Support Services

Hearing support services are offered to students who meet the requirements of being a student with a hearing impairment. Once determined that the student is in need of special education services an IEP is formulated by an appropriate team to meet the student's specific needs as outlined in the evaluation report. Ferndale Area School District contracts a hearing support teacher through Intermediate Unit 8. Services that Ferndale Area provides to their students that qualify for hearing support typically include, but are not limited to: working with the hearing support teacher on specific goals outside the regular class setting, providing students with the least restrictive environment, working directly with students in the classroom setting, tracking students progress on their goals and keeping their families informed of the progress on a consistent basis.

Vision Support Services

Vision support services are offered to students who meet the requirements of being a student with a hearing impairment. Once determined that the student is in need of special education services an IEP is formulated by an appropriate team to meet the student's specific needs as outlined in the evaluation report. Ferndale Area School District contracts a vision support teacher through Intermediate Unit 8. Services that Ferndale Area provides to their students that qualify for vision support typically include, but are not limited to: working with the vision support teacher on specific goals outside the regular class setting, providing students with the least restrictive environment, working directly with students in the classroom setting, tracking students progress on their goals and keeping their families informed of the progress on a consistent basis.

Physical and Occupational Therapy Services

Physical and occupational therapy services are offered to students who meet the requirements of being a student with a physical or occupational disability through Chapter 14 or Section 504. Eligibility is determined through an evaluation conducted by a certified occupational or physical therapist. Ferndale Area School District contracts physical and occupational therapy services through CAMCO Physical and Occupational Therapy, LLC.

Transition Services

One hundred percent of all special needs students are provided transition services upon reaching the age of 14. Transition services target post graduation outcomes. Transition services help special needs students make a successful transition to post secondary education, to work, or to adult life as shown by post graduation follow-up surveys. Keys2Work is utilized with all students as a part of transition services.

Extended School Year

Extended School Year is in place for special education students that show a significant regression or lack of recoupment of what they have learned after an extended break in their instructional time. Overall, Ferndale Area Elementary follows all of the laws set by codes 22 Pa. Code 14.132(ESY) and 22 Pa. Code 711.44(ESY) dealing with Extended School Year.

5. District Gifted Education

Overview

Gifted support services are made available to students who qualify. If a student is found eligible, a Gifted Individualized Education Plan is developed, and the program implemented for the student. Both enrichment and acceleration opportunities are explored. Guidance staff assist in the referral process, and GIEP development and monitoring.

6. Homebound Instruction

Overview

Physicians of students with long-term medical needs may request homebound instruction. All requests are directed to the building principal, who reviews the request and coordinates the instruction. Instruction is provided for up to five hours per week at no cost to the family.

7. Home Visits

Overview

Home visits are done by administrators, guidance counselors, the family support coordinator, and as necessary, pertinent staff, to close the gap of communication between the school and the student's family. While on a home visit, the team may conduct a family support meeting, parent interview, or just inform families of the services that the school may provide to them or their children. Home visits are also used as a productive way to help educate parents about effective parenting techniques.

Student Assistance Program

The Ferndale Area School District has a Student Assistance Program available at all levels (K-12) to support students and their families. Support is provided in situations requiring school-and community-based supports to address problems adversely affecting academic achievement.

The **Junior/Senior High School Student Assistance Program (SAP)** is a voluntary and supportive program for students and their parents. The program is designed to support students and to provide opportunities for change. A SAP team consists of teachers, counselors, administrators, and the school nurse, along with representatives from Cambria County Drug & Alcohol, and Cambria County Mental Health. The team maintains a page on the district web site, is available at Open House night, and Parent/Teacher Conferences. It provides a brochure for parents and students, is described in the Student Handbook, and has made presentations to the student body and faculty.

SAP Team members are available to listen to students, assisting them in identifying options and personal strength, discussing steps toward improvement, and teaching students how to choose the best options. The role of the SAP Team is to gather data on referred students, make decisions, locate appropriate referral sources, and provide follow-up services.

Referral Process - The SAP Team process starts when a referral is made by a staff member, parent, or other student, based on at-risk behaviors. At-risk behaviors may include drug/alcohol abuse, death in the family, attendance, mental health issues that affect the student's social/emotional well-being, etc. A sub-team of SAP members is then assigned the case and a case manager is appointed. The sub-team then gathers information on the student, makes the parent contact, and obtains written permission from the parent/adult student to continue with the process. The SAP team will not work with a student until they receive such permission.

Strict confidentiality is maintained to protect the students' and family's privacy.

Team Planning - The SAP Team meets once a week as a whole, and once a week in sub-teams. Representatives from Cambria County Mental Health, and Cambria County D&A attend meetings once a week then the Team meets as a whole. Each year the SAP Team attends a Team Maintenance to complete a "checks-and-balances", discuss the team's progress and procedures, and develop an improvement plan for the following year. At the end of the year, the SAP Administrators reports all cases to the PASAP On-line reporting system.

Intervention & Recommendations - Once a student is referred, parent permission is obtained, and a sub-team assigned, the sub-team interviews the student and gathers information. Data is gathered through behavior checklists completed by school faculty, self-assessment forms completed by the student, relevant school data (attendance, nurse reports, discipline, counselor reports, etc), student conference, and parent conference. Based on the gathered information, the sub-team makes a recommendation to the SAP Team. The SAP Team makes decisions based on the seriousness of the behavior, the patterns of observed behavior, and the support of the parents. The SAP TEam will help to locate appropriate referral sources from in-school services and groups, and out-of-school services or agencies. The SAP Team provides follow-up services by monitoring the students' performance and progress, facilitating aftercare/support groups, and maintaining ongoing contact with agencies.

The **Elementary Student Assistance Program (ESAP)** works in conjunction with the Family Support Team to identify and design action plans for students who are experiencing difficulty in school due academic, behavioral, social, and/or emotional issues. The team consists of the principal, the guidance counselor, the school nurse, and teachers. The ESAP Team is designed to work with families of elementary aged students. The Ferndale Area School District has maintained an active and successful Family Support Program for the last 6 years. There is a full time Family Support Teacher at the elementary school who coordinates the action plannin process, works directly with students, families, and teachers to help students experience success. There is an overlap between Family Support and ESAP. Family Support consists of the full time Family support teacher (team coordinator), the principal, classroom teachers, and the counselor. ESAP is coordinated by the counselor. In addition to working with individual students and families, these team promote positive school behavior and successes through an anti-bullying program, and a school-wide behavior program.

Referral - Students may be referred by a staff member, family member, or by the student. Permission is obtained from the parent before the team proceeds. At times, the Family Support Team may make a referral to ESAP, when it determines that the action plan for the student should include community-based assistance, or when school-based interventions are not being successful. Strict confidentiality is maintained to protect the student and family. When the parent decides that sharing information is in the best interest of the child, a release of information is obtained.

Team Planning - The Family Support Team meets weekly. Since the counselor is a member of the team, she determines when there is a need for ESAP to meet and become involved. She also schedules a meeting when a referral is made. This might occur when an elementary student or family experiences an acute problem such as an accident, death, or major health issue. The ESAP Team assigns a case manager who will communicate with the student, family, and gather information. The case manager arranges for a meeting to develop a plan, and will then help to implement the plan. If community agency involvement is warranted, the case manager, counselor, or school nurse will assist the family in finding and contacting them. While there are no community agency representatives on ESAP, the liaisons to the Junior-Senior High School SAP Team are available to consult with the ESAP Team, and to make recommendations to them. The ESAP Team holds annual maintenance meetings.

Intervention & Recommendations - The action plan that is developed at the team meeting might include school-based and/or community-based assistance. Examples of school-based assistance are assigning student mentors/tutors, participation in a small group, and individual counseling. Community-based assistance includes referrals to MH/MR services, crisis intake services, private counseling services, etc.

Support & Follow-up - The case managers will continue to support the family until the team decides that the support is no longer needed. Often in the elementary school setting, remedial and counseling services continue for an extended period during the school year. Plans can be amended based on student progress. Case managers communicate with the appropriate school personnel and with the parents, as needed.

Communication

The Ferndale Area School District believes that communication with parents, students, and the

community is critical to the implementation of its strategic plan, and the fulfillment of its mission: Big Enough to Challenge, Small Enough to Care. Information is provided in a number of ways, but the district website is a tremendous source of information related to district policies and procedures, building level procedures, educational opportunities, and extracurricular activities.

1. At both the elementary and junior-senior high levels, information about education opportunities is provided to parents and students through building handbooks. These handbooks, distributed at the beginning of the school year and upon new student registration, describe the educational programs at each level. Additionally, at the junior-senior high school, Course Guides are provided to students and parents/guardians on an annual basis. These guides identify and describe course offerings, as well as opportunities for distance learning, dual enrollment with Penn Highlands Community College, and work study. With assistance from guidance counselors, teachers, and parents/guardians, students utilize these guides to design courses of study. The junior-senior high school counselors and the special education transition coordinator meet with students as needed to help them access available educational opportunities. More specific information is also provided during Back-to-School Night. During this evening event, parents at each grade/subject area are provided with specific information about the district's curriculum, student expectations, and available supports.

Ferndale Area's programs for specific student populations are also described in building handbooks, as well as on the district's website. Information related to how parents can access help for struggling students is described, as are the various programs that are available. Additionally, tutoring opportunities are discussed personally with parents.

2. Career education is provided more intentionally at the junior-senior high school level, than at the elementary. Beginning in 7th grade, all students participate in a guidance class, which includes career exploration and the beginning of each student's self-directed search. As of the 2007-08 school year, all students are completing a career portfolio. Guest speakers will be invited in to talk with students about career options. Targeted guests will be alumni and parents. In grade 9, all students are introduced to Keys2Work. This online tool is available at both home and school, allowing students and parents to share information. Grade 9 students and parents are also invited to participate in the Greater Johnstown Career and Technology Center's Open House and orientations. Mini career fairs, on-and off-site college fairs, and a week long Career Linking Academy (seniors) are also held for students in grades 9-12. Additionally, scholarship postings are available in the office. The Special Education Transition Coordinator utilizes Keys2Work with all students age 14+. She visits both GJCTC and students in alternative education as a part of her regular schedule.

3. Parents are informed of health policies and services through the building handbooks, as well as the district's web site. Specific policies, including the district's wellness policy, are available in full on the district's web site. Health screenings are performed annually per state regulations, and feedback is provided to parents for physician follow-up, as needed. Individual student records are maintained. Throughout the year, information pertinent to specific health issues is provided by the nurse. As needed, letters are sent to parents when specific health concerns arise.

4. FASD utilizes its "Students Rights/Surveys Policy", along with its "Age of a Majority" policy to comply with regulations associated with protection of student privacy. The District's policies address procedures regarding the use and administration of surveys, voluntary participation in surveys, and the process for parents/adult students to follow in declining survey participation. While all policies are fully available on the district's website, the first district newsletter of each year always includes the content of the students rights policy. Likewise, the policy is addressed in each building's handbook.

5. The strategic planning process is one that can only be successful with communication among stakeholders. Various groups are represented on each sub-plan's committee, enabling the process to be one that has gathered input from the community. The strategic plan is accessible to all, either through a "hard copy" located in each building, or through the district's website. Administrators and teachers communicate through letters, phone calls, newsletters, and the webpage. Back to school nights, teacher conferences, and parent workshops are other methods of communicating.

6/7. Modes of communication in the FASD include, but are not limited to:

- District Newsletter (twice per year)
- Elementary Newsletter (monthly)
- Back to School Nights (once per year)
- Parent Conferences (once per year)
- District Website (ongoing)
- Individual parent/teacher conferences/family support meetings, etc. (ongoing, as needed)
- Building Handbooks (distributed annually and upon new registration)
- District Calendar (distributed annually and upon new registration)
- Mailings (ongoing, as needed)
- Extracurricular/Athletic Participation Policies (parent meetings per event season)
- Report Cards (four times per year)
- Progress Reports (four times per year)

Action Plan

Goal: CAREER EDUCATION

Description: Students will meet the Career Education and Work Standards as defined by PDE.

Strategy: Curriculum Development

Description: A comprehensive K-12 career education program will be integrated into the district's curriculum.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
K-6	A K-6 Career Education curriculum will be developed to meet the PDE standards.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Christine Oldham	Start: 1/28/2008 Finish: 6/3/2013	\$1,500.00

Goal: FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE (for districts and schools that graduate seniors)

Description: Graduation rate will meet an 80% threshold and/or show growth.

Strategy: Dropout Intervention

Description: Provide knowledge and guidance to students to prevent dropouts

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Career Awareness	As a Project 720 school, emphasis will be placed on developing career awareness through the following options: * career counseling * Keys2Work program * on-site college fair * college visits * career fairs * job shadowing * coordination with GJCTC * senior participation in the FASD Career Linking Academy	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Christine Oldham	Start: 8/29/2007 Finish: 8/1/2013	\$60,000.00

Activity	Description	
Student Advisory	Through enhancing systems already in place at the junior/senior high school, programs such as Family Support and SAP, will develop into on-going student advisory networks which will create stronger relationships between individual students, staff, and families.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Christine Oldham	Start: 8/27/2008 Finish: 8/28/2013	\$7,000.00

Strategy: Examine Graduation & Dropout Data

Description: Annual examination of graduation/dropout data

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Chart Trends of Graduation & Dropout Rates	High School administrators and counselors will chart trends of graduation and dropout rates and compare them historically, as well as to the state.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Christine Oldham	Start: 8/30/2007 Finish: 1/6/2013	\$0.00

Goal: SAFE SCHOOLS

Description: A safe and supportive environment will be provided to students.

Strategy: Curriculum Development

Description: A comprehensive K-12 drug and alcohol program will be implemented.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Drug & Alcohol Education	The Safe & Drug Free Schools Committee will investigate and recommend an appropriate D&A curriculum for implementation K-12.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Christine Oldham	Start: 9/3/2007 Finish: 6/3/2013	\$5,000.00

Strategy: Personal Development

Description: Development of positive personal attributes will be stressed throughout the school district.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Peer Relationships	Programs will be implemented throughout the school district to assist students in identifying appropriate skills designed to strengthen interactions among students and between students and adults.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Christine Oldham	Start: 8/30/2007 Finish: 8/7/2013	\$3,500.00

Activity	Description	
Student Advisory Program	A Student Advisory Program will be implemented at the Ferndale Area Junior/Senior High School.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Christine Oldham	Start: 8/27/2008 Finish: 8/28/2013	\$8,550.00

Goal: STUDENT ATTENDANCE (any school that does not graduate seniors)

Description: Student attendance will meet a 90% threshold and/or show growth.

Strategy: Examine Attendance Data

Description: Elementary administrator and counselor will monitor trends of student attendance

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Chart Trends in Attendance Rates	Elementary administrator will monitor attendance data through AYP data, and will intervene with programs, if necessary	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Edward Moran	Start: 8/30/2007 Finish: 8/30/2013	\$0.00

Strategic Planning Process

The Ferndale Area School District Strategic Planning Committee participated in meetings during the 2006-07 school year to draft the district's mission and vision statements, identify shared values, examine data, and respond to district subcommittee reports. Strategic planning subcommittees assessed data and collected input from teachers and students to determine goal areas, strategies, and activities. Reports were periodically provided to the Board of Directors through the Superintendent's "District Highlights" reports.

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Christine Oldham	Ferndale Area School District	Administrator	Administrators
Christopher Theys	Ferndale Area School District	Other	Superintendent
Edward Moran	Ferndale Area School District	Administrator	Administrators
Eileen Zanke	Ferndale Area School District	Ed Specialist - School Counselor	Education Specialists
Judy Virgin	Ferndale Area School District	Ed Specialist - School Nurse	Education Specialists
Steven Brown	Ferndale Area School District	Administrator	Administrators

Assurance for the Collection, Maintenance, and Dissemination of Student Records

By checking each of the boxes below, the local education agency assures compliance with the requirements of 22 PA Code Chapter 12 and with the policies and procedures of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE will specify, in writing, policies and procedures to be followed. Requests for any deviations from these regulations, policies, and procedures must be made in writing to PDE (electronic mail may be directed to ra-chapter12@state.pa.us).

The Local Education Agency (LEA) assures the following:

- The LEA has a local plan, including policies and procedures, in place for the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of student records in compliance with §12.31(a) and §12.32
- The plan shall be maintained in compliance with §12.31(b) and made available to PDE in compliance with §12.31(c)

Assurance for the Operation of Student Services and Programs

By checking each of the boxes below, the local education agency assures compliance with the requirements of 22 PA Code Chapter 12 and with the policies and procedures of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE will specify, in writing, policies and procedures to be followed. Requests for any deviations from these regulations, policies, and procedures must be made in writing to PDE (electronic mail may be directed to ra-chapter12@state.pa.us).

The Local Education Agency (LEA) assures that there are local policies and procedures in place that address:

- Free Education and Attendance (in compliance with §12.1)
- School Rules (in compliance with §12.3)
- Discrimination (in compliance with §12.4)
- Corporal Punishment (in compliance with §12.5)
- Exclusion from School, Classes, Hearings (in compliance with §12.6, §12.7, §12.8)
- Freedom of Expression (in compliance with §12.9)
- Flag Salute and Pledge of Allegiance (in compliance with §12.10)
- Hair and Dress (in compliance with §12.11)
- Confidential Communications (in compliance with §12.12)
- Searches (in compliance with §12.14)
- Emergency Care and Administration of Medication and Treatment (in compliance with 35 P.S. §§ 780-101 - 780-144)

The LEA acknowledges that the above policies shall be maintained locally and be made available to the public upon request. The policies are not to be submitted to the Commonwealth except upon specific request by PDE.

In addition, the LEA assures the following:

- The Student Services Report complies with §12.41(b), §12.41(c), and §12.42 (consistent with the Early Intervention Services System Act (11 P.S. §§875-101 - 875-503))
- Consistent with §445 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C.A. §1232h), parents or guardians are informed regarding individual survey student assessments and provided a process for refusal to participate (in compliance with §12.41(d))
- Persons delivering student services shall be specifically licensed or certified as required by statute or regulation (in compliance with §12.41(e))

Supporting Documents

- 1422.1 of Act No. 114 of 2006