

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

In keeping with state and federal regulations, it is the policy of Pitt County Schools to provide appropriate educational services to children with disabilities as they are identified. It is the belief of the Pitt County Board of Education that all children are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

The term "children with disabilities" includes, without limitation, all children who, because of permanent or temporary mental, physical, or emotional disabilities, need special education, are unable to have all their educational needs met in a regular class without special education or related services, or are unable to be adequately educated in the public schools. It includes those who are autistic, behaviorally-emotionally disabled, deaf-blind, hearing impaired, mentally disabled, multi-handicapped, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, specific learning disabled, speech-language impaired, traumatic brain injured, and visually impaired.

The term "preschool children with disabilities" includes, without limitation, all 3- and 4-year-old children, and those 5-year-old children who are ineligible for kindergarten and who, because of permanent or temporary cognitive, communication, social/emotional, and/or adaptive disabilities, are unable to have all of their developmental needs met in a natural environment without special education and related services. It includes preschool children who are delayed/atypical or those who are autistic, deaf-blind, hearing impaired, other health impaired, orthopedically impaired, speech-language impaired, visually impaired, or traumatic brain-injured. Preschool children with disabilities become eligible for services upon reaching their third birthday.

Identification, placement, related services and all programs and operational procedures will be in accordance with the current edition of *Procedures Governing Programs and Services for Children with Disabilities*.