



*Our minds are as different as our faces; we are all traveling to one destination – happiness. But few are going by the same road.*

*~Charles Caleb Colton*

# Special Education Department and Services

## **Special Education Department:**

- Director of Special Education
- Special Education Teachers
- Special Education Administrative Assistant
- School Psychologist
- School Nurse
- Other specialized teachers are contracted through the state's Intermediate Units or other sources.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** The United States federal code regulating special education is called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004). IDEA tells us that, "to maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily." This means that PA Distance Learning works with families to ensure that students with special needs have access to the regular education classrooms and curriculum.

## **Multidisciplinary Meetings and Individualized Education Planning**

**Meetings:** At PA Distance Learning, we have our of our special education meetings in an online setting. Our families log in to a live classroom and call our conference number in order to let conversation flow freely. Once our students are of Transition age (14 or younger if needed), they attend their Special Education meetings so they can contribute to planning their life after high school.

**Related Services:** Related services such as Evaluation Services, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Counseling and others are provided to you through our school at no cost to the family. We contract though providers and Intermediate Units across the state to provide these services to students.

**Disability Categories:** Our federal government has established thirteen disability categories. Student's who are referred for an evaluation, may qualify for special education programming and services through one of these disability categories:

- |                            |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Autism                  | 8. Orthopedic Impairment          |
| 2. Deaf-Blindness          | 9. Other Health Impairment        |
| 3. Deafness                | 10. Specific Learning Disability  |
| 4. Emotional Disturbance   | 11. Speech or Language Impairment |
| 5. Hearing Impairment      | 12. Traumatic Brain Injury        |
| 6. Intellectual Disability | 13. Visual Impairment (Blindness) |
| 7. Multiple Disabilities   |                                   |

**Parental Involvement:** We recognize that parents are a child's first teacher. At PA Distance Learning, it is easier — and essential — for parents to be involved with every aspect of learning. In fact, we insist on it. We work with parents to understand students' disabilities and needs in order to develop an effective, specialized program. We believe that a successful student in an online classroom is the product of a strong curriculum and highly engaged parents and teachers.

## **For More Information:**

- Call our Special Education Department: 888.997.3352 x 142.
- Ask for our booklet, *PA Distance Learning Charter School Special Education Services*.
- Visit our Website at <http://www.padistance.org/>