



Fall is in the Air

Family Matters is an outreach effort from the ANN JERKINS-HARRIS Academy of Excellence— Department of Special Services --- SPED Program. Family Matters will provide parents with information about special education and other resources available to assist them to help their children.

# FAMILY MATTERS

ANN JERKINS-HARRIS ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE  
3891 Martha Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43612

A quarterly newsletter from the Department of Special Services

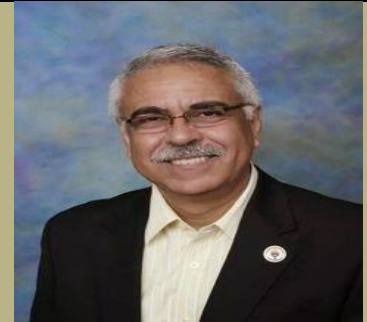
VOL. 4 Issue 01  
WORKING TOGETHER FOR FAMILY SUCCESS  
OCTOBER, 2023

## SPED PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the ANN JERKINS- HARRIS Academy of Excellence SPED Program is to create and maintain an effective learning environment by establishing behavioral supports and the social culture needed for all students in our school to achieve social, emotional, and academic success.



**THE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER**  
SPED PROGRAM AND RELATED SERVICES  
Editor—Family Matters Newsletter  
Dr. Israel I. Koppisch  
[iikoppisch@aetoledo.org](mailto:iikoppisch@aetoledo.org)



### MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES

As this school year starts, we'd like to thank you once again for your continued support and positive contributions that led to our students' success in the past. Our students, families and staff have put forth such great effort into making our school a great one in Toledo, Ohio! There is much to be proud of this school year.

With our new school location our facilities and services have improved dramatically. We welcome Personal Growth Network for their support in the Behavior and Mental Health Program. We extend our thanks for the continued support of Total Education Solutions for their assistance in the psychological and intervention specialists services. Last, but not least, to Northwest Ohio Speech and Language Rehabilitation Services for all their collaboration in the speech and occupational therapy services. Without you all our SPED program would not be able to offer our students a high-quality program.

### Updates from the Deputy Superintendent: SPED PROGRAM

If you have any topics that you would like covered in future newsletters, or if you know of someone who would like to receive the newsletter, please email [iikoppisch@aetoledo.org](mailto:iikoppisch@aetoledo.org)

# A SEARCH FOR ALL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AGES BIRTH TO 21

<http://www.education.ohio.gov/>

## What is Child Find?

Child Find is the process of identifying, locating, and evaluating children with disabilities who may need special education and related services. *The Ann Jerkins Harris Academy of Excellence* is locating and evaluating children from birth through 21 years of age in effort to serve people with disabilities, including Developmental Delays, Health Impairments, Autism and Traumatic Brain Injury. Individuals may contact the schools about children who may have a disability and may be eligible for Special Education Services. Eligibility for special education services is based on the presence of a disability that results in the child's need for specially designed instruction and/or related service such as speech, occupational, and/or physical school-based therapy, not on the possible benefit from the aforementioned instruction or services. During an evaluation (ETR), team members must be able to document the adverse educational impact of a child's needs on grade level performance. For example, a student may demonstrate communication differences, delays or even impairments, without demonstrating adverse effect on educational performance. IDEA requires that determination of a disability consider how the disability affects the progress and involvement of the student in the general curriculum. Consideration by the ETR team is given to the academic, vocational, and social-emotional aspects of a child's disability.

## Why is there Child Find?

Both state and local education agencies are given the responsibility by federal and state laws to conduct child find activities so that children who need special services could receive those services.

## What is the purpose of Child Find?

- To promote public awareness of disabilities
- To alert parents, professionals, and the public to children who may have special needs.
- To assist school districts in finding children who may have disabilities and who otherwise may not have come to their attention.
- To enable children and families to receive the special education and related services that are needed.

## What does a disability mean?

**For age Birth to 3**--An established condition known to result in delay or a documented developmental delay.

**For ages 3 through 5**-- A documented deficit in one or more of the following developmental areas: communication, vision, hearing, motor skills, social emotional/behavioral functioning, self-help skills and/or cognitive skills.

**For ages 5 through 21**--Identification of one or more of the following conditions: autism, deaf-blindness, hearing impairment including deafness, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, emotional disturbance, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and/or visual impairment including blindness.

## Who can Help?

Parents, relatives, public and private agency employees, and concerned citizens are used to help school districts find any child, birth to 21, who may have a disability, and need special education and related services. If you are aware of a child who may have special needs, please notify his/her school district. Schools can do their job better with your help.

## What happens next?

The school district will contact the parents of the child to find out if the child needs to be evaluated. Free testing is available to families to determine whether or not a special need exists. If a need is identified, the child can begin receiving the appropriate special education and related services.

AT AJHAE WE ARE COMMITTED IN:  
Empowering your child's best Advocate: YOU

Parents of a child with special needs must learn to effectively navigate the maze of special education laws and go to bat for their kids. In a nutshell, this means parents must learn to be advocates.

*Family Matters* is a community outreach effort from the  
ANN JERKINS-HARRIS Academy of Excellence  
-Department of Special Services and its SPED Program-.

*Family Matters* is here to provide parents with information about special education and other resources available to assist parents to help their children.

Information is power, and parents need to start with the facts about their child's special needs. Try and keep emotion out of it; as parents you need to have fact-based knowledge from your child's doctors, specialists, special education experts, parents of kids with similar special needs, attorneys, teachers, and anyone else who can provide information.

**ANN JERKINS-HARRIS ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE**  
FAMILY MATTERS COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM  
Department of Special Services - SPED Program and Related Services

**Dr. Israel I. Koppisch**  
Deputy Superintendent  
Director, Department of Special Services  
SPED Program and Related Services  
Editor—Family Matters Community Outreach Newsletter

**Jennifer Adkins**  
Intervention Specialist

**YOLANDA BIGIO**  
SPED Specialist

**SHARMIN SULTANA      BERLINDA BACCHUS**  
Support Staff

*Julie Shaw, School Psychologist*

*Lauren Notestine, Speech and Language Therapist*  
*Jonathan Pitts, Occupational Therapist Supervisor*  
*Katelyn Spiess, Occupational Therapist*

*Roye Durden. Behavioral and Health Therapist*



VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
SPED PAGES

[www.ajhae.org](http://www.ajhae.org)



Northwest Ohio Speech

Your #1 Source for Speech and Language  
Needs in the Toledo Area



# October is Dyslexia Awareness Month



Learning to read is a major milestone in a young child's life and fundamental for long-term success. However, for some children, the process of learning to read is extremely difficult and becomes a barrier to their academic and social-emotional development. A large and converging body of research now shows that early identification of children who may experience reading difficulties is possible and focused intervention and remediation efforts are effective for reducing negative long-term impacts. The 133rd Ohio General Assembly passed legislation concerning the screening of and intervention for children with dyslexia, effective April 12, 2021.

Dyslexia is characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and poor spelling and decoding abilities not consistent with the person's intelligence, motivation, and sensory capabilities. Early identification of these characteristics is important to prevent long-term reading difficulties.

Under Ohio's dyslexia support laws (ORC 3323.251 (C)(3)), districts are tasked with establishing a multidisciplinary team to administer screening and intervention measures and analyze the results of the measures. The team must include trained and certified personnel and a stakeholder with expertise in the identification, intervention, and remediation of dyslexia. The term "stakeholder" refers to any individual who has an interest in reading outcomes and includes district employees, parents, guardians or custodians and community members. This stakeholder is knowledgeable and experienced in guiding conversations around analyzing literacy data and planning for instruction. This stakeholder may be an educator with a structured literacy certification, a school psychologist with this expertise, a speech-language pathologist with this expertise or an individual from the community with specific expertise in dyslexia assessment. Districts may find it necessary or beneficial to reach out to partners outside of the district, such as educational service centers, when fulfilling this role.

**IN OUR FOLLOWING EDITIONS WE WILL CONTINUE TO OFFER MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE DYSLEXIA METHODS FOR INTERVENTION AND REMEDIATION.**