



Autism Therapeutic School Rockford

Frequently Asked Questions

What grades are going to be at this school?

The school will be for children ages 3 to 21. The school will be organized in terms of age groups rather than grades: a 3 to 7 age group, 8 to 12 and 14 to 21 age group. Each child's placement is based not only on age but also on the services and goals listed on his or her IEP, developmental level and the strengths and needs of each child.

How do parents get a child enrolled?

Initiate a discussion with the special education personnel, perhaps the social worker, in your child's school district or educational cooperative regarding a placement in Easter Seals' Autism Therapeutic School. The placement needs to be part of the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) recommending a tuitioned-out therapeutic day school. The school will be approved by the Illinois State Board of Education as a school that will serve the following disabilities with an emphasis on autism: autism, emotional behavior disorder, learning disability, speech and language delay and cognitive delay. This discussion can be initiated at any time with the parent requesting a meeting regarding their child's IEP. Spring is an especially important time as placements for the next year are being discussed and determined.

Are there requirements for entry into the school?

For a child living with autism, autism needs to be the primary diagnosis on the IEP. Children with other disabilities are also served by the school, including cognitive delay, speech and language, specific learning disabilities and emotional behavioral disorders.

Has a location been decided upon? Will there be bus service available?

The school will open in September 2007 at the Easter Seals Children's Development Center at 650 North Main Street in Rockford. The availability of bus service needs to be discussed with the child's school district. School districts are mandated to provide transportation to all children attending non-public private schools. Some school districts may find it more reasonable to use special transport vans, cabs or another type of approved transportation.

How much will it cost for a child to attend the school?

The tuition rate that school districts pay to send a child to a non-public private day placement like Easter Seals is established by the Illinois Governor's Purchase Care Review Board (IGPCRB) on an annual basis. Each private school has a different tuition rate established which is always based on expenses the school had experienced in the previous school year.

There is no cost to the parent at all for their child to attend the Easter Seals Therapeutic Day School in Rockford!!!! All tuition costs are paid for by the school district as long as a non-public private therapeutic day school is written and approved on the child's IEP.

Does Easter Seals anticipate a waiting list for placement in its Autism Therapeutic School Rockford?

Easter Seals is in the process of working with local school districts and special education cooperatives to determine estimates of ages and interests of children who might be appropriate for an out-of-school placement at the Autism Therapeutic School. Those estimates will guide plans for initial enrollment numbers. The current estimate is 15 to 20 children. Our plan is to provide an educational and therapeutic program for up to 50-60 children at the 650 North Main Street, Rockford facility.

Will there be after school programs? Can children not enrolled in the school participate in the after school programs?

After school programs will be part of the Autism Therapeutic School Rockford. They will be added later after the initial opening of the school, perhaps three to four months into the school year. There will be a fee for this program since the school district is not responsible for any before or after school programs.

Will the Autism Therapeutic School be open in time for the fall semester of 2007?

Yes, the school will be open for the fall semester of 2007.

Will there be medical staff affiliated with the school?

Yes, there will be medical staff affiliated with the school. A medical doctor affiliated with the school provides the initial as well as quarterly reviews. There is also a nurse who will administer medications as well as address any medical emergencies that may happen. The nurse will review all medical information including immunizations and medications.

Will there be sports, music, art and computers?

Sports will probably be done in conjunction with Easter Seals' partnership with the Rockford Park District. There will be art and music therapy added in during the first year the school is open as well as computers.

Will there be summer school?

There is an extended school year. The placement for an extended school year needs to be written into the child's IEP. Easter Seals schools are closed six weeks throughout the year which are as follows: the last two weeks in June, the last two weeks in August, one week for Christmas break and one week for Spring break. The schools are closed for the major holidays as well. The school should be in session approximately 217 school days which includes the summer session.

Hours of operation will be from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Will students enrolled in the school receive credits toward graduation from their school district?

The curriculum at the Autism Therapeutic Schools follows the Illinois learning standards. Students enrolled in the school will earn credits toward graduation. The curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of each child attending the school. The following services and programs will be offered and provided at the Easter Seals Autism Therapeutic School Rockford:

- Art and Music Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech and language Therapy
- Behavior Management
- Functional Living Skills Instruction
- Social Stories Groups
- Sensory Integration
- School to Work Transition
- Assistive Technology
- Nursing Services
- Pre-vocational and Vocational Programming
- Parent and Family Support

Professional Staff includes:

- Certified Special Education Teachers – Emphasis on Autism
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Behavior Management Specialists
- Art and Music Therapists
- Social Workers – School Social Work and Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) Certified

- Pediatric Nurse
- Teacher Assistants
- 1 to 1 Aides Approved by the School District
- Occupational Therapists
- Child Psychiatrist / Medical Director