

Emerging Needs Program

Pasadena Christian School accepts students who are achieving at or above the national grade level, however we recognize that some students who are admitted to PCS, may develop the need for support in academic, behavioral or social-emotional areas, beyond what the classroom teacher is able to undertake. The Emerging Needs program supports students, teachers and parents with information and resources, as a guide, to help our students reach their full potential and thrive.

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In 2009, Pasadena Christian School introduced the "Emerging Needs" program, for the sole purpose of supporting students who experience learning differences and challenges. Understanding that approximately 10% of our student population, is Neurodiverse, and would benefit from educational support, the Emerging Needs program was carefully designed to help meet the unique needs of our Neurodivergent students.

Although the program is made available to qualifying students currently enrolled at PCS, not all students needs can be met, and not all students qualify. Our program is not a special needs program. We specifically cater to students who are able to work independently, but who need on-going support, in their area of need. PCS has had years of success in coordinating support, for our students, families, teachers, and the PCS community. In addition, the Emerging Needs program provides information and resources, to help guide our students to reach their academic, social, and emotional potential.

In terms of early intervention, our preschool and TK classes accept children who are meeting expected milestones, however, we also recognize that some children, who are admitted, may require extra support in various developmental areas. Our preschool and TK program will encourage and help parents seek out resources through an observation and referral process, so that they are able to assess and develop a plan for the emerging needs of their child(ren).

At grade level, each Neurodiverse student is required to be professionally evaluated/assessed, and complete reports need to be sent to the school, in conjunction with their student application. This will allow for the administration, and the Emerging Needs Coordinator, the opportunity to identify the needs of the student and determine whether PCS can successfully serve them. Upon submitting your application, know that we are unable to make any modifications, or offer any accommodations for entrance exams or tests. We do this, so we can get a true baseline for the student's academic capabilities, strengths, and challenges. If testing reveal that a student is more than 1.5 grade levels behind, in reading, math or written expression, it is our recommendation that the student work with an Educational Therapist, an Educational Specialist, or a cognitive developmental specialist, to build those baseline skills. Our curriculum is challenging and leans on the side of depth and rigor. We want parents to have a clear understanding of our academic expectations, and what is required from each student, in order to be successful here at PCS.

In the event that PCS is not a good fit for your child(ren), we will gladly provide referrals and resources, that we believe would be helpful for you, in finding the right school. We welcome any questions or concerns that you may have. It is our hope that each child finds a school that can teach to their genius and if we can help with that in any way, please let us know.

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Student and Family Support

As the students and their family's journey through the grades at PCS, it is our hope that the Emerging Needs program, can make that process easier to navigate and more efficient. The following information should be used as a general guide, and will provide pertinent resources to help families determine the best route, supports and resources for their child(ren).

Process for Support

The process of attaining support, through the Emerging Needs program has been streamlined, and is made available to students who have been identified as having a learning difference, learning challenges, or a diagnosed disability. The process for student support is as follows:

1. An administrator, classroom teacher or parent may express concern for a student's academic, social or emotional needs by contacting the Emerging Needs Coordinator.
 - Parents may submit the Emerging Needs Parent Request Form to request support or intervention for their child.
2. After the parent or teacher submits the request form, the Emerging Needs Coordinator will contact the parent or teacher to discuss possible professionals or organizations from the Support Services and address their concerns.
3. Once the parent has chosen a professional or organization to support their child, continue to update the Emerging Needs Coordinator with the progress on evaluations or names of professionals offering support.
4. After support services are arranged, the Emerging Needs Coordinator will convene a meeting for the Student Evaluation Team. (*Members of the S.E.T. may include the child's teacher, administrator, Emerging Needs Coordinator and the parent. At the discretion of the administrator and with parental approval, the team may include a professional who is familiar with the specific needs of the student.)
5. Some possible discussion topics during an initial Student Evaluation Team meeting are:
 - The specific concerns related to the student
 - New strategies that may prove beneficial both at home and school
 - Classroom accommodations or modifications for the student
 - Set goals to be met by the student and family
 - Determine an agreeable means of routinely communicating progress towards set goals or lack of progress to parents
6. Following the S.E.T. meeting, the educational plan will begin in the student's classroom. The plan will detail all strategies, timelines, accommodations and modifications and will indicate who is responsible for implementation of each goal.
7. Weekly classroom visits will be made by the Emerging Needs Coordinator to assess the student's progress and determine if the accommodations/modifications are sufficient for the student to meet his/her potential.
8. The Student Evaluation Team will reconvene annually or as necessary to discuss the student's progress towards meeting the agreed upon S.E.T. goals.

Screening Information

Standardized tests, used for screening, measure key skills related to a specific area of difficulty, such as reading or math; screeners **do not** collect data that will lead to a diagnosis. This informal process shows whether there is a probability that the person might have an undiagnosed learning disability. The results from the informal assessments, provide information about the areas of challenge or deficiency. In addition, these tests may indicate whether more formal and thorough diagnostic tests, should be conducted.

Individualized Services & Resources

Students who are officially enrolled in the Emerging Needs program, will receive specific support, based upon the class/grade they are in. Below is a break-down for individualized support.

Pre-school / TK: In-class observations

Kindergarten: Reading Lab

Grades 1 – 3: Reading Lab

Grades 4 – 5: Classroom observations & In-class support

Supports and Service Providers

Please note that the individuals, businesses and organizations listed below, are not necessarily endorsed by Pasadena Christian School. This is a compilation of resources that are made available to all PCS families. It is the responsibility of the family to investigate whether or not a specific service or provider, will benefit their child(ren). If you want your child to receive accommodations or modifications in the classroom, please complete an **Emerging Needs Parent Request Form** and submit that in conjunction with a current Educational and Psychological Evaluation, that is not older than 3 years.

Below are brief descriptions/definitions of the services and the service providers.

PCS Academic Tutors: Current PCS Teachers who tutor after or before school.

Academic Tutors: A person who gives additional, special, or remedial instruction for specific academic remediation individually or in groups.

Educational Therapists (ETs): A professional who combines educational and therapeutic approaches for evaluation, remediation, case management, and communication/advocacy on behalf of children, adolescents and adults with learning disabilities or learning problems.

Medical Diagnostic Evaluations: Medical evaluation provided by either a medical doctor or neuropsychologist who evaluates a person for ADD, ADHD or other developmental challenges that may benefit from medicinal therapy.

Occupational Therapists (OTs): A professional who promotes health, enhances development, and increases independent functioning in children and adults through activities involving work, play, and self-care. Occupational therapists help persons with both physical and emotional problems as well as learning difficulties.

Vision Screening & Developmental Optometrist: A Doctor of Optometry who diagnoses poor focusing that may cause blurring, fatigue or poor muscle balance. A Vision Therapist may work to promote total eye coordination to lengthen attention span and speed of reading.

Speech & Language Pathologists (SLPs): A specialist who evaluates and treats communication disorders and swallowing problems. A speech-language pathologist is sometimes called a speech therapist or speech pathologist.

Auditory Screening: An audiologist is a licensed health care professional who diagnoses, evaluates, and treats hearing disorders and communication problems.

Educational & Psychological Evaluations: Educational and psychological testing that is used to assess a variety of mental abilities and attributes, including achievement and ability, personality, and neurological functioning.

Marriage & Family Therapists (MFTs): Marriage and family counselors provide therapy for people who wish to solve emotional conflicts. Their goal is to modify people's perceptions and behavior, improve communication, and prevent individual and family crises.

Counselors: Clinicians who work in mental health centers, clinics, hospitals, social service agencies, and private practice.

Psychiatrists: A physician (an M.D.) who specializes in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of mental illness. They may also have additional training in a psychiatric specialty, such as child psychiatry or neuropsychiatry. They can prescribe medication, which psychologists cannot do.

Social Skills Therapists: A therapist that may offer a form of behavior therapy to help persons who have difficulties relating to other people during social interactions.

Private High Schools: Private high schools in the San Gabriel and San Fernando Valley that offer academic support programs for students with learning challenges.

Forms

[District Special Education Evaluation Request Letter](#)

[PCS Parent Authorization for onsite professional evaluation](#)

[PCS Authorization to Disclose or Receive Information](#)

[Professionals & Clinicians Referral list](#)

[Explanation of Public-School Screening Process](#)

Public School / District Information

Please choose the appropriate school district, based upon where your home resides

Arcadia Unified School District
Special Education Department
234 Campus Drive, Arcadia, CA 91007
626-821-8371, ext. 239

Glendale Unified School District
Special Education Department
223 North Jackson Street, Glendale, CA 91206-4334
818-241-3111, ext. 205

La Canada Unified District
Special Education Dept
4490 Cornishon Ave., La Cañada, CA 91011
818-952-8397
Fax: 818-952-8394

Los Angeles Unified School District
Division of Special Education
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 17th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 241-6701
Fax: (213) 241-8915
TTY (213) 241-6854
email: spec-ed@lausd.k12.ca.us

Monrovia Unified School District
325 E. Huntington Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016
626-471-2041

Pasadena Unified School District
Special Education Department
351 S. Hudson Ave., Room 121, Pasadena, CA 91109
626-229-0901(Pre-K)
626-795-6981, Ext. 280

FAQs

1. My child's teacher mentioned a few academic, behavioral or sensory-centered concerns, what should I do?

Contact Vikki Mele, Emerging Needs Coordinator at 626-791-1214, ext. 277 or email her at vmele@pasadenachristina.org You may also contact Aisha Duncan, Emerging Needs Assistant Coordinator at 626.791.1214 ext. 279, or email her at ADuncan@pasadenachristian.org

2. What is the Emerging Needs Program?

It is a supportive program for teachers and parents who are looking for information, resources, guidance and support that is centered around the student reaching their academic, behavioral and social-emotional potential.

3. Who benefits from the Emerging Needs Program?

Our program benefits the PCS community as a whole, with the focus on meeting the needs of the students in our care.

4. How soon can I request student support?

Support can be requested at any time, by submitting the Emerging Needs Parent Request form.