



SPECIAL EDUCATION HANDBOOK

***A GUIDE FOR SCHOOL-BASED
STAFF***

*Benton
Harbor
Area
Schools*

Developed October, 2019
Board Approved: November, 2019
Revised August, 2020
Board Approved: September, 2020

Benton Harbor Area Schools

Superintendent, Dr. Andraé Townsel

Under the Supervision of:

Chief of Schools, Dr. LaWanna Shelton

Support Staff:

Special Education Office Manager, Alia Ruiz

Instructional Facilitator / IEP Coach (Secondary), Kimberly Glover

Instructional Facilitator / IEP Coach (Elementary), Latasha Heggler-Thomas

Contributors:

Chief of Schools, Dr. LaWanna Shelton

Director of Special Education, Lorinda Robbins

Assistant Director of Special Education, Dr. Christopher Bernick

Special Education Office Manager, Alia Ruiz

Instructional Facilitator / IEP Coach (Secondary), Kimberly Glover

Instructional Facilitator / IEP Coach (Elementary), Latasha Heggler-Thomas

Benton Harbor Area Schools

School Board

Board President

Mr. Joseph Taylor

Board Vice President

Ms. Michelle Crowder

Board Secretary

Ms. Dashuna Robinson

Board Treasurer

Ms. Lou Buchana

Board Trustee

Mr. Matthew Bradley

Board Trustee

Mrs. Denise Whatley-Seats

Board Trustee

Mr. Darwin Watson

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	5
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS	6
EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION (ECSE) PRESCHOOL	6
RESOURCE ROOM.....	6
MILDLY COGNITIVELY IMPAIRED (MCI) PROGRAM.....	7
EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENT (EI) PROGRAM	7
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES	8
LICENSED POSITIONS	8
THE ROLE OF STAFF	10
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	10
INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF.....	11
SUPPORT STAFF	13
ANCILLARY STAFF	13
CHILD FIND	16
PRE-REFERRAL PROCESS	17
STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM	17
REFERRAL PROCESS.....	17
INITIAL REVIEW OF EXISTING EVALUATION DATA (REED) MEETING.....	18
SPECIAL EDUCATION EVALUATION PROCESS.....	20
MULTIDISCIPLINARY EVALUATION TEAM.....	20
ELIGIBILITY RECOMMENDATION.....	20
INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)	21
WHAT IS AN IEP?	21
THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) TEAM.....	21
INITIAL INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)	22
IEP PROGRESS MONITORING.....	24
REVIEW IEP	25
RE-EVALUATION IEP AND REED	28
IEP DUE TO AN MDR	30
IEP FOR A CHANGE IN PLACEMENT	32
IEP AMENDMENT.....	35
DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES.....	37
BENTON HARBOR PROGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR FRAMEWORK	38

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN	38
DISCIPLINE PROTOCOL FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	41
MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION REVIEW	42
PATTERN OF REMOVAL WORKSHEET	44
FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE)	46
FAPE REQUIREMENTS FOR A SCHOOL	46
ENROLLMENT	48
REGISTRATION PROCESS:	48
PERMISSION TO PLACE PROCEDURES	49
MEDICAL NEEDS	50
TESTING REQUIREMENTS	51
NWEA BENCHMARKING	51
MICHIGAN EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (M-STEP)	51
MME, PSAT, SAT, & ACT WORK KEYS	51
MI-ACCESS – MICHIGAN’S ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM	52
SCREEN READERS AND VOICE RECOGNITION SOFTWARE	52

OVERVIEW

The Benton Harbor Area Schools (BHAS) Special Education Department is responsible for the supervision of programs and services for students with disabilities who qualify for special education. The department is responsible for the development and updates to the Individualized Education Program or IEP document for each student identified for programs and/or services. Additionally, the department is responsible for providing a safe and secure location for maintaining and archiving documents.

The department ensures compliance with federal mandates relating to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), and State of Michigan mandates as outlined in the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE). In accordance with the state's Child Find guidelines, the Benton Harbor Area School District is responsible for servicing students from ages 0 through 26.

The BHAS Special Education Handbook is designed to provide clear and concise guidelines and expectations for all district employees. The handbook provides explanations, definitions, and processes for administering the appropriate services for students with IEPs and their families.

Finally, special education is in place to provide additional services, support, programs, specialized placements or environments to ensure that all students' educational needs are met. Often, special education is understood and discussed in isolation; however, these services and programs are administered through the general education framework. Benton Harbor administrators, teachers, and staff are encouraged to become familiar with special education programming, services, and guidance to ensure that all district and school processes are aligned.

***EVERY STUDENT IDENTIFIED FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
ARE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION POPULATION!***

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Benton Harbor Area School District offers a variety of special education programs and services.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION (ECSE) PRESCHOOL

The Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Program is a special education preschool program designed to foster and develop basic learning skills for children from three through five years of age who have been identified as needing a special education program. This program focuses on developmentally appropriate school readiness skills and has been created to meet the individual needs of each child. The ECSE team at Benton Harbor Area School's Discovery Enrichment Center (DEC) prepares children to make a successful transition to the elementary school.



The Early Childhood Classroom ages 2.5-5 is limited to 12 students at one time and no more than 24 students on a caseload. A program paraprofessional is also assigned.

RESOURCE ROOM

The Resource Room is not just a place or a placement, it is also a support. When the Resource Room is used as a place or placement for services, it removes a student from the general education classroom. This is often referred to as "Pull Out." This increases the "restrictiveness" of the educational environment which is defined and proscribed by IDEIA (Individual with



Disabilities Educational Improvement Act.) Finally, the special education teacher is responsible for providing direct instruction which aligns to the student's IEP goals.

When the Resource Room is provided as a support, students typically remain in the general education setting. A special education teacher provides support to the teacher and the identified student(s). This is often referred to as "Push In" or "Inclusion."

Caseloads for special education teachers teaching elementary resource room (grades k-5) are limited to 18 students. No more than 10 students can be serviced in the Resource Room at the same time.

Caseloads for special education teachers teaching secondary resource room (grades 6-12) are limited to 20 students. No more than 10 students can be serviced in the Resource Room at the same time.

MILDLY COGNITIVELY IMPAIRED (MCI) PROGRAM

The MCI Program is designed for students with cognitive, adaptive, social, and academic delays. The delays in all areas are so severe that they are unable to make adequate progress in the general education classroom. Students participating in the program receive customized instruction to maximize their individual skills. These skills reflect self-care, daily living, social, communication, functional academic, prevocational, recreational, and leisure.

In Benton Harbor Area Schools, the goal of the program is for students to gain independence in the above focus areas while working in both classroom and community settings. At the elementary level, students work on basic academic, social, and daily living skills. At the secondary level, the focus moves to independent living and post-secondary goals. This includes the development of a transition plan aligned with the student's personal goals. Finally, students in this program work toward a certificate of completion with a seal of employability.

Mild Cognitive Impaired classrooms may not serve more than 15 students in the classroom at any one time and no more than 18 students on a caseload. At grades k-5, if there are more than 12 students assigned to the class, a special education paraprofessional must be assigned. At grades 6-12, if there are more than 15 students assigned to the class a special education paraprofessional must be assigned.

EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENT (EI) PROGRAM

The Emotional Impairment (EI) Program is a highly structured educational program designed to address the behavioral and emotional needs of qualified students. The program emphasis is on developing prosocial skills and coping strategies that will enable students to be successful in the general education setting. Additionally, this program emphasizes the development of a positive behavior intervention plan from a functional behavior assessment.

Emotional Impairment classrooms may not serve more than 10 students in the classroom at any one time. Caseloads are maintained at 15 students.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

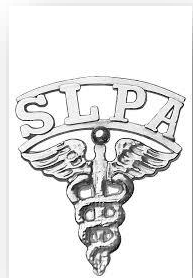
Special education services are provided through staff members or ancillary staff who are certified and/or licensed to work with special populations, settings, and environments. Often, services are provided through staff who are specialized in particular areas of expertise. These positions are typically licensed positions. The following ancillary staff currently provide Benton Harbor students with specialized services:

LICENSED POSITIONS

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST (SLP)

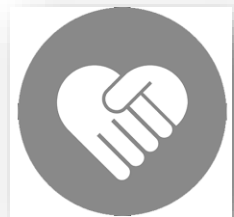
Speech & language pathologists work with students who have trouble communicating; they also may assist those who have difficulty swallowing. They work with all ages. SLPs work with children with atypical development by helping students develop social and conversational skills.

Speech & language pathologists are professionally trained to screen, identify, assess, diagnose, refer, and provide intervention for students who are at risk for articulation, fluency, voice, language, communication, swallowing, and related disabilities.



SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER (SSW)

School Social workers are professionally trained to collect information on students that help them understand which students need additional social and behavioral assistance. They help parents, students, and school staff identify needs that interfere with learning and work with students to get the services they need. School Social Workers work with general and special education students and their families to resolve social, emotional and behavioral problems. Finally, they work to provide services to students to enhance their emotional well-being and improve their academic performance.



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST (OT)

Occupational Therapists are state-licensed professionals. When working in a school setting, often OTs have special training in child development. Benton Harbor Area Schools contracts with the Berrien Regional Education Services Agency (RESA) to ensure that Benton Harbor students who qualify for OT are serviced. Occupational Therapists working in school settings mostly focus on fine motor skills and sensory integration.

The main goals of occupational therapy are to use meaningful activities, to help students participate in what they need and/or want to do in the educational setting to promote physical and mental health and well-being.

PHYSICAL THERAPIST (PT)

Physical Therapists are state-licensed professionals. When working in a school setting, therapy focuses on mobility needs related to navigating the school environment. Benton Harbor Area Schools works closely with the Berrien Regional Education Services Agency (RESA) to ensure that Benton Harbor students who qualify for PT are serviced. The main goals of school-based physical therapy are to improve strength, balance, coordination, and mobility.



DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING TEACHER CONSULTANT

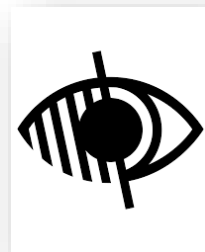
Teacher Consultants for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing or D/HH work with local school districts in providing educational support for those students with a hearing loss. A student who is deaf or hard of hearing may require accommodations and modifications to the general education program allowing for access to academic and social learning experiences. Berrien Springs Public Schools provides direct and consultation teacher consultant services in accordance with student Individual Education Plans (IEP) through contracted services.



The Berrien Springs program strives to identify and educate students with hearing loss at the earliest stages. They serve auditory/oral hearing impaired students from birth through high school graduation.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT (VI) CONSULTANT

Teacher Consultant for the Visually Impaired services are available to students whose vision deficits results in a visual impairment or blindness and is determined eligible for special education services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Students with visual impairments may require support to access the general education curriculum. Specialized instruction in skills that are not part of the standard curriculum may also be necessary.



Berrien RESA teacher consultants for students with visual impairments provide direct and consultation services in accordance with a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

THE ROLE OF STAFF

The basic goal of special education is to provide exceptional students, with disabilities which will prevent them from fully benefiting from traditional educational approaches, with specialized instruction and intervention sufficient to enable them to benefit from their education. Many people have the misconception that special education is a separate program or does not involve general education. In fact, the opposite holds true. Every staff member in both general and special education school settings are responsible for the academic and non-academic success of all students.

This section describes the roles and responsibilities of staff members as they relate to the special education process. Ultimately every staff member is responsible for the effective operation and success of the special education department and roles and responsibilities are based on student needs. Therefore, they can be modified as needed.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

DIRECTOR & ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

In Benton Harbor Area Schools, the administration and oversight of special education services are centralized through district-level directors. This organizational format ensures that processes and procedures are consistently implemented at each school campus. Directors are responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with State and Federal mandates
- Supporting and evaluating special education staff
- Overseeing the implementation of programs and services
- Developing and maintaining the department policies, procedures, and processes
- Addressing parent needs and concerns
- Determining caseloads and staff assignments
- Developing Professional Learning opportunities

PRINCIPALS & ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

The special education team relies on the building administrator(s) to be the lead administrator in ensuring that all staff are compliant with implementing a student's Individualized Education Program, discipline procedures, general education supplementary aids/accommodations, and behavior intervention plans.

In general terms, site administrators are responsible for but not limited to:

- Attending the IEP/REED/MDR or any other special education meetings
- Ensuring general and special education teachers coverage to attend the meetings
- Following all processes and protocols related to disciplinary actions



INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

General education teachers play a critical role in the success of students receiving special education services. Special education law requires that, to the extent possible, students with special education needs should be educated in a general education classroom. A student's IEP will identify the amount of time a particular student will be educated in the general education setting, as well as the accommodations and modifications that will be implemented by the general education teacher.

The general education teacher is expected to:

- Design lesson plans that will ensure the success of all students, including those with a special education diagnosis. This involves being familiar with each student's academic ability level, strengths (i.e. multiple intelligences), learning style and deficit areas. Planning curriculum activities that will allow students to capitalize on their strengths to improve deficit areas will result in success for the student who has special education needs.



- Partner with the caseload manager(s) for support and suggestions. It is especially critical to involve special education teachers in lesson planning so together, they can determine how two educators can meet the varied needs of all the students in the inclusion classroom.
- Maintain the same academic expectations for students receiving special education services as they would for those who do not receive those services.
- Implement the accommodations and/or modifications that are outlined in their respective IEP.

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

In the state of Michigan, a special education endorsement is granted to general education teachers who have pursued training in the area of special education. Special education teachers are trained to be additional support to staff and students with the ability to provide specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of exceptional students with disabilities. The special education teacher is to design and provide instruction and support that facilitates the participation of students with disabilities in the general education environment.

The special education teacher is expected but not limited to:

- Developing and implementing the IEP, Manifestation Determination Review (MDR), progress reports, IEP amendments, behavior intervention plans, pattern of removal worksheets, lesson plans, schedules, service logs, etc.
- Coordinating with ancillary staff, general education teachers, special education paraprofessionals, counselors, service providers, administrators, etc.
- Ensuring the updating and completion of all required documentation.

- Building relationships and working closely with community agencies and stakeholders.
-

INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITATOR & IEP COACH

BHAS employs instructional facilitators (IF) to assist teachers with designing instruction and classroom management. Within our district we have certified teachers, teachers in training, and substitute teachers. These teachers all come with different levels of expertise and experience. General and special education teachers can expect support from their building IF with the following:

- General instructional strategies
- Classroom management
- Understanding and implementing the curriculum
- Data review and analysis
- Professional Learning Community (PLC) support

The IEP coach is in place to assist/coach special education teachers with:

- IEP development and implementation
- Required paperwork
- Facilitation/Participation in special education meetings
- Specialized instruction
- Additional needs as required

The IF and IEP Coach is not an administrator but can serve as a district representative in meetings if a district administrator is unavailable. The district representative at an IEP must have the authority to speak on behalf of the district and its resources.

IEP Coaches are in place to help build the capacity of our teachers. They assist with paperwork but are not responsible for the completion of paperwork. Case managers are ultimately responsible for completing all required work for every student on their caseload.

COUNSELORS, ADVISORS, & COACHES

The counselors, coaches and advisors all play a vital role in exposing special education students to opportunities outside of the school and post high school. Roles can include connecting students to community agencies, guiding a student through the college application process or ensuring that a student has identified a career pathway. Maintaining regular contact with a student with an IEP can result in positive outcomes such as an increase in the number of students graduating, attending college or securing full time employment.

Counselors, coaches and advisors assist students in thinking about, creating, and updating an Educational Development Plan (EDP) beginning as young as Pre-K. The EDP must be developed by grade 7 and updated annually until a student graduates. Currently, EDPs are developed and housed in the Xello platform (formally Career Cruiser).

Counselors and advisors should participate in IEP meetings to provide information that is helpful in determining career or college options for students with disabilities. Their participation is imperative to support students who may need scheduling support.

SUPPORT STAFF

PARAPROFESSIONALS

The most common classified positions in the special education department are paraprofessionals. Special education paraprofessionals are hired and assigned according to need and program type. Paraprofessionals are supervised daily by their respective teacher. They are evaluated on a yearly basis by the director and assistant director of special education in collaboration with the special education teacher and building principal.

The paraprofessional plays a critical role in the academic success of students. A paraprofessional must be flexible in their assignment. Based on student needs things such as assignment location and essential duties could change. Some of the most important tasks and responsibilities of the special education paraprofessional are listed below:

- Work under the direction of the teacher.
- Provide instructional support in the classroom setting.
- Assist individual students in performing activities initiated by the teacher.
- Supervise students in the hallway, lunchroom, and playground.
- Assist in monitoring supplementary work and independent study.
- Reinforce learning in small groups or with individuals while the teacher works with other students.
- Assist with scoring objective tests and papers and maintaining appropriate records.
- Perform clerical tasks, i.e., typing and duplicating.
- Assist the teacher in observing, recording, and charting behavior.
- Assist the teacher with crisis and behavior management. ***Paraprofessionals do not administer disciplinary actions***
- Assist in preparation / production of instructional materials.
- Work with the teacher to develop classroom schedules.
- Operate and maintain classroom equipment including film projectors, overhead projectors, etc.

ANCILLARY STAFF

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

School Psychologists are highly trained in child development, assessment, behavior, and learning. School Psychologists are expected to actively participate with local districts to assist with data, programs, assessments, interventions, and problem-solving needs. They function as a member of the multidisciplinary evaluation team and collect, analyze, and interpret data as well as participate in the special education identification process.

In Benton Harbor, school psychologists are relied upon for:

- Support in using data to assist in problem-solving to deal with student academic and behavioral needs within Benton Harbor Area School's Multitier Systems of Support (MTSS).
- The creation, documentation and review of intervention plans.
- Evaluations for special education.
- Information on eligibility for special education as well as current levels of performance for IEP goals and intervention planning.
- Attendance at Initial and 3-year re-evaluation REEDs and IEPs, as well as, MDRs.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

School Social Workers are trained mental health professionals who can assist with mental health concerns, behavioral concerns, positive behavioral support, and classroom management support. They can provide consultation with teachers, parents, and administrators as well as provide individual and group counseling/therapy.

Benton Harbor Area Schools employs a school social worker as well as has school social workers from Berrien RESA.

School social workers from Berrien RESA function as a member of the multidisciplinary evaluation team. They collect, analyze, and interpret data as well as participate in the special education identification process. Additionally, they:

- Support in using data to assist in problem-solving to deal with student academic and behavioral needs within Benton Harbor Area School's Multitier Systems of Support (MTSS).
- Recommend or participate in the development of alternative academic and behavior strategies with staff and parents.
- Participate in the creation, documentation and review of behavior intervention plans (BIP) as well as, functional behavior assessments (FBA).
- Work collaboratively with a multidisciplinary team to determine special education eligibility.
- Provide current levels of performance for IEP goals and intervention planning.
- Attend Initial and 3-year re-evaluation REEDs and IEPs, as well as, MDRs.

The school social worker employed by BHAS is expected to provide consultation and/or direct service for students on their caseload. In addition, the BHAS school social worker will:

- Support in using data to assist in problem-solving to deal with student academic and behavioral needs within Benton Harbor Area School's Multitier Systems of Support (MTSS).
- Recommend or participate in the development and implementation of alternative behavior strategies with staff and parents.
- Participate in the creation, documentation and review of behavior intervention plans as well as, functional behavior assessments (FBA).
- Develop and implement the IEP, MDR, progress reports, IEP amendments, behavior intervention plans, schedules, service logs, etc.
- Coordinate with ancillary staff, general education teachers, administrators, and other school staff.

- Ensure the updating and completion of all required documentation.
- Build relationships and work closely with community agencies and stakeholders.

TEACHER CONSULTANTS

Teacher Consultants are certified special education teachers with at least 3 years of teaching experience. They are relied upon to collaborate with general education and special education teachers to develop and maintain academic programming for students with an Individualized Education Plan. Teacher consultants primarily serve as members of the multidisciplinary evaluation team and collect, analyze, and interpret data as well as participate in the special education identification process.

In Benton Harbor, teacher consultants are relied upon for:

- Participate in using data to assist in problem-solving to deal with student academic needs within Benton Harbor Area School's Multitier Systems of Support (MTSS).
- Participate in the creation, documentation and review of intervention plans.
- Conduct evaluations for special education.
- Provide information on eligibility for special education as well as current levels of performance for IEP goals and intervention planning.
- Attendance at Initial and 3-year re-evaluation REEDs and IEPs, as well as, MDRs.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS

Speech & language pathologists work with students who have trouble communicating. They are professionally trained to screen, identify, assess, diagnose, refer, and provide intervention for students who are at risk for articulation, fluency, voice, language, communication, swallowing, and related disabilities. Speech and language pathologists in BHAS:

- Conduct evaluations for special education.
- Provide information on eligibility for special education as well as current levels of performance for IEP goals and intervention planning.
- Attend REEDs and IEPs, as well as, MDRs.
- Develop and implement the IEP, MDR, progress reports, IEP amendments, pattern of removal worksheets, lesson plans, schedules, Medicaid billing, etc.
- Coordinate with ancillary staff, general education teachers, administrators, and other school staff.
- Ensure the updating and completion of all required documentation.
- Build relationships and work closely with community agencies and stakeholders.

CHILD FIND

Child Find is a legal requirement that schools find all children who have disabilities and who may be entitled to special education services. Child Find covers every child from birth through age 26. The school must evaluate any child that it knows or suspects may have a disability. Identifying students is a continuous process of public awareness, screening, and assessing. Child Find is designed to locate, identify, and refer, as early as possible, any child/student who is in need of special education services under the IDEIA.

In Benton Harbor Area Schools, Child Find is addressed in many ways. One method is the pre-referral process which occurs as part of Multitier Systems of Support (MTSS). Within MTSS, a Student Support Team case studies students who are facing challenges in school. These students may be identified through various avenues. The most common are through individual or team referrals.

A child/student may also be identified through external community agencies. When the district becomes aware of the identification, it is the district's responsibility to ensure that the school building team convenes a Student Support Team meeting. This includes students already identified through the IDEIA. If new information regarding a student with an IEP is provided to the district or the district becomes aware of additional diagnoses this information is provided to the school building team to convene a Student Support Team meeting.



It is important to note that if any appropriate educational service agency staff member, whose training and relationship to the student provides knowledge to reasonably suspect that a student has a disability, submits a written request for evaluation to the special education department, the district will determine whether or not to evaluate that student in writing within 10 school days.

Finally, if a parent submits a written request for a special education evaluation, the district is obligated to respond in writing to the parent within 10 school days. It is important to remember that the timeline for the district's response begins the minute any staff member from the district receives a written request from a parent. Therefore, ***any staff member who receives a written parent request must turn it in to the special education department manager immediately.***

The response must include the district's decision on whether or not to evaluate the student. It is important to understand that the 10-day response requirement does not preclude a student from benefiting from the Student Support Team process.

PRE-REFERRAL PROCESS

The pre-referral step in the special education process is more formal than providing simple and temporary accommodations for students. Pre-referral intervention is to identify, develop, and implement alternative education strategies for students who have recognized problems in the classroom before the student is referred to special education. Pre-referral intervention is typically conducted by a Student Centered Team (also called early intervention team, intervention assistance team, student support team, teacher assistance team, or instructional support team). The pre-referral team usually consists of the teacher, the parents/guardians, an administrator, other general education teachers, nurse, guidance counselor, and any other adult involved in the education of the student. The general education teacher provides background information regarding the problem exhibited by the student and the team works together to develop possible solutions.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

In Benton Harbor Area Schools, the Student Support Team is grounded in a multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) model and supports the “Whole Child” model as well. The fundamental principles of a multi-tiered approach are to ensure equity and access for all students and to differentiate supports based on the need of the student. Services and supports are provided according to each students’ unique needs, interests, and aspirations. The purpose of this document is to clearly define the framework and the various roles and responsibilities of the adults charged with ensuring all students have the opportunity for a positive and productive school experience.

It is important to remember that the **Student Support Team (SST)** is the first step of intervention for any parent or staff concern for either academic or behavioral issues. The SST develops a plan of interventions to collect written documentation on the student over a period of time, generally six to eight weeks. At the end of the established timeline, the SST reconvenes to review the data and determine next steps which could include a referral for a special education evaluation; however, if a student is referred to the SST and there is a suspicion of a disability at any time by the team, a REED can be convened immediately.

REFERRAL PROCESS

The Student Support Team may refer a student for an Initial Special Education Evaluation after a student has failed to make progress on an Intervention Plan developed by the Student Support Team. If the Student Support Team determines that further evaluation is needed, their documentation is forwarded to the special education department manager and a Review of Existing Evaluation Data (REED) meeting request form is completed. The special education

department manager schedules a REED meeting and invites the necessary participants. At this meeting, the participants will review the data collected by the SST and information the parent provides to determine if an evaluation for special education is appropriate.

A parent may initiate a Review of Existing Evaluation Data (REED) meeting by requesting an evaluation. A written request that is signed and dated by the parent can be sent to the special education department manager or designee in the central office. The special education department manager schedules the meeting. The Multidisciplinary Education Team (MET) is required to hold a REED within ten school days of the request. ***If any staff receives a letter of parent request, the letter should be scanned and emailed to the special education department manager immediately as the date of the letter is the start of the ten-day compliance.***

Outside agencies can refer or recommend students be evaluated for special education. This information is reviewed by the SST.

INITIAL REVIEW OF EXISTING EVALUATION DATA (REED) MEETING

The purpose of the REED document is to determine if there is enough data or information to make a recommendation for special education eligibility. If it is determined that further assessment is needed, the evaluation team indicates what assessments will be conducted and by whom. The completed REED document is submitted to the special education department manager for processing. General education teachers can also be part of the assessment team, but are a required participant if a student is suspected of having a learning disability. ***A parent's signature is required for the initial evaluation to proceed.*** A copy of the REED is filed in both the student's CA60 and the Special Education master file. If the parent declines the opportunity for his/her child to be evaluated, the parent must check the box that indicates refusal.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that invited teachers have substitute coverage to attend the meeting. • Attend the meeting as the building administrative representative. (May also serve as district representative) • If listed as the district representative for the meeting they must attend the meeting or contact the special education department manager to let them know they must assign a different district representative. Meetings cannot be held without a district representative. District representatives cannot be excused. District representatives enter data in the REED document at the meeting and ensure that paperwork is signed and distributed to the appropriate parties.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
IEP Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Initial REED meetings as the District Representative or as the special education teacher's mentor. • Identify the special education teacher representative. • Enter data into the REED document in Illuminate during the meeting if serving as the district representative. • Provide signed REED document and any additional meeting paperwork to the Department Manager. • Provide a signed copy of the REED document to the parent. • Provide the parent with a copy of the procedural safeguards. • Complete the notes section of the special education meeting calendar spreadsheet with the outcome and next steps from the meeting. • If more time is required to complete the assessment, discuss the extension request with the parent. If the parent consents, complete and sign the <i>Thirty (30) Day Evaluation Timeline Extension Agreement</i>
Special Education Teacher Representative and/or Speech and Language Pathologist Representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect data required in the REED document <u>before</u> the meeting from the general education teachers through the Teacher Input Form. • Input data collected in the appropriate sections of the REED document <u>prior</u> to the Initial REED meeting. • Attend REED meeting. • Aid in collection of intervention documentation if designated.
General Education Teacher/Related Arts teacher(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the <i>Teacher Input Form</i> (either electronically or on paper) and return it to the Special Education Teacher Representative and/or Speech and Language Pathologist Representative by the stated due date. • Complete the data collection as outlined by the MET Team. • Attend REED meeting
Department Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule Initial REED meeting within ten (10) school days of the date on the letter from the parent. Contact parent/guardian to establish an agreed date and time, and send an invitation to each participant. • Create a file for the student and store all documents relating to the student in the file. • Enter the meeting on the Special Education Meeting Calendar Spreadsheet. • Follow up on the notes section of the Meeting Calendar to ensure next steps are being completed and communicate status with special education administrators.

SPECIAL EDUCATION EVALUATION PROCESS

MULTIDISCIPLINARY EVALUATION TEAM

Who is considered to be a member of the MET? Any staff member who is collecting and interpreting data for the purpose of eligibility or programming is a MET member. This can include both general and special education teachers. In the case of an evaluation for a specific learning disability the general education teacher is a required MET member. The Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team completes the assessments and an IEP meeting is held within thirty (30) days of the parent signature on the REED to discuss the assessment results and determine if the student is eligible for special education services. All evaluation reports are made available to the director and assistant director of special education electronically (uploaded to Illuminate) at least three days prior to the scheduled Evaluation Results and IEP meeting. The *Individualized Education Program* documentation is reviewed during the meeting.

ELIGIBILITY RECOMMENDATION

Once the evaluations are complete the MET team reviews the state of Michigan eligibility criteria and makes a recommendation of eligible or ineligible to the IEP team. The IEP team then makes the determination of eligibility for the student. If the student is found to be ineligible, the student is referred back to the Student Support Team to develop an intervention plan to be implemented in the general education setting. If the student is found eligible, the parent must sign the IEP for services to begin. Once the parent agrees to services by signing the IEP, the IEP must be reviewed annually. Eligibility must be reviewed at minimum every 3 years through a REED and Re-evaluation IEP.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

WHAT IS AN IEP?

An individualized education program (IEP) is a written document for students with disabilities ages 3 through 26 that outlines the student's educational needs and goals and any programs and services the Local Educational Agency (LEA) and/or its member district will provide to help the student make educational progress. The IEP is created through a team effort and reviewed at least once a year. Before an IEP can be written, your child must be eligible for special education. By federal law, a MET must determine that the individual (1) is a student with a disability and (2) they require special education and related services to benefit from the general education program.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education and Improvement Act (IDEIA), a federal law, requires certain information to be included in the IEP but does not specify how the IEP should look. Because states and local school systems may include additional information, forms differ from state to state and may vary between school systems within a state.

THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) TEAM

The IEP is developed and written by an IEP Team. The IEP team is made up of individuals who bring different perspectives and expertise to the table about a student who is identified for service. Pooling their knowledge, team members set out to craft an individualized response to a specific student's needs, while taking into account that student's strengths. The meeting is fundamentally designed to share and discuss information on the student. The end product is the student's written individualized education program or IEP. **The IEP must consider all the needs of the student** whether or not they are part of the student's primary eligibility.

If information needs to be added to the IEP document or the document needs modification the IEP team may convene an IEP meeting or develop an amendment as long as parents/guardians are in agreement. Common types of IEP meetings are listed below and explained in depth:

- Initial
- Review
- Re-evaluation
- Change in placement
- Amendment to current IEP

INITIAL INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

The scheduling for all types of IEPs and the sending of IEP invitations and are coordinated by the special education department manager. Each special education teacher coordinates with the special education department manager to make sure their respective caseload is scheduled in a timely manner. All IEP meetings must be held 3-10 school days before they are due and all 3 year REEDs must be held 40 school days before they are due. The building principal is responsible for determining which general education teacher should attend.

IEP Team will include the following:

1. Parent
2. General Education Teacher
3. Special Education Teacher / Service Provider
4. District Representative
5. Individual who can interpret evaluation results (MET Representative)

A parent/guardian may invite whomever they choose to attend their child's IEP meeting. If the school needs to invite an agency outside of the school system, they must obtain parent/guardian permission before sending an invitation to the outside agency. Students should always provide input into the development of their IEP. When appropriate, the child with a disability also participates in the IEP meeting as an IEP team member. An individual who can interpret evaluation results may also be the general education teacher, special education teacher/service provider, or an individual who has knowledge or expertise regarding the student.

The team works together to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for eligible students. The IEP document is a confidential legal document that must be accurately completed and adhered to by all parties identified in the document.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend the Initial IEP meeting• Provide invited teachers with substitute coverage• Make sure a general education teacher attends the meeting• Sign all documentation
IEP Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate the Initial IEP meeting.• Monitor that the multidisciplinary evaluation report from the MET Team is provided to the Caseload Teacher 3 school days prior to the meeting so the IEP can be drafted in preparation for the results meeting.• Close the REED• If the parent is in agreement, publish the IEP at the meeting or per current state guidelines.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain parent signature. The parent must sign the <i>Notice for Initial Provision of Program and Services</i> portion of the IEP to initiate services. • Make sure that original copies are provided to the department manager with a distribution list. • Advise the Caseload Teacher and ancillary staff when the IEP is published so they can have access to the IEP through Illuminate. • If it is determined that the student does not qualify for special education services, the parent can refute the findings and request an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE). If requested, provide the parent with IEE documentation. • If the parent refuses services, the IEP will be closed and not published.
Special Education Department Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule Initial IEP meeting within thirty (30) school days of the date of the Initial Referral meeting or the date when parents provided consent to evaluate. Contact parent for agreed date and time, mail an invitation to the parent and notify district personnel, Berrien RESA team and outside agencies by electronic invitation. • Upload all required supplemental forms into Illuminate. If a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i> is created, upload it into Illuminate. • Mail and file published IEPs according to the distribution list submitted by the IEP Coach. • File the Intervention Plan documentation from the SST in the student's special education file, if applicable.
Caseload Teacher & Caseload Service Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start a <i>Parent Log</i> form for the student. The first entry should be the parent contact made at the Initial IEP meeting. • Complete a draft of the IEP 24 hours prior to the meeting • Attend meeting • Store a copy of the published IEP in the IEP Binder. • Provide a completed copy of the <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services</i> form to all of the student's general education teachers. Store the form in the student's IEP binder. • Create an IEP binder for the student to store work samples related to IEP goals and objectives. • Create initial lesson plans to address IEP goals and add student to their schedule. • If the student has a Behavior Intervention Plan, provide an electronic copy to the general education teachers, principal and

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
	<p>other appropriate staff. Schedule time to meet with them to review the plan and answer their questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the IEP period, collaborate with the student's Special Education and General Education Teachers. Update the accommodations form as IEPs are held.
For high school Caseload Teachers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer transition assessment (i.e., ESTER-J, student interview, etc...) • Include student in the development of a transition plan
Counselor/Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a schedule for the student, including the special education teacher's input and information from the student's IEP. • For high school students, create a profile to determine if the student is on pace to graduate. • Provide a copy of the student's EDP (Grades 7-12) to Caseload Teacher.
General Education Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend meeting • Store all IEP documents received from the caseload teacher in a confidential secure location. • Implement the classroom and testing accommodations that are listed on the <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services</i> form. • Use the personalized <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services</i> form to document compliance. Give a copy of the completed form to the student's caseload teacher and principal at the end of each month. • If the student has a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i>, follow the plan explicitly and make notations when needing to implement the plan. The notations should be made available for review at IEP meetings or manifestation determination review meetings. • Request a staffing (SST meeting) if the BIP is not working in a classroom setting. • During the IEP period, communicate regularly with the Caseload Teacher to address the needs of the student.

The parent receives a copy of all documents related to the evaluation.

IEP PROGRESS MONITORING

Caseload managers **must** complete progress monitoring of all goals according to the timelines listed in the individual IEPs. Caseload managers **must** be able to show evidence of progress monitoring. Most academic goals are monitored with Curriculum Based Measures (for example: AIMSweb). An Illuminate progress report **must** be available for the special education department to mail to parents before the end of each marking period.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
Caseload Teacher & Service Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor student's progress on IEP goals regularly (no less than weekly). • Keep a copy in your IEP binder for each marking period.

REVIEW IEP

Each student with a disability must have his/her IEP reviewed at least annually. It can be reviewed sooner if a parent or teacher feels that the program and services defined on the student's IEP are not meeting the student's needs. The participants at the meeting should review the student's current IEP to determine whether or not the goals and objectives have been met.

The IEP Team meets to discuss the progress of the student and to determine if the student continues to be appropriately placed. The *Teacher Input Forms* and *Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services* form are reviewed to determine the student's progress in the general education setting. The IEP document is completed in Illuminate.



Based on the progress of the student, it could be determined that the student no longer qualifies for special education services. The caseload manager will alert the Student Study Team in writing that the student is no longer eligible for special education services. A list of suggestions for supporting the student's return to general education will also be provided in writing.

In Benton Harbor Area School District, each team member and school staff play a crucial role in the annual review process. The table below describes processes and responsibilities.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
Principal/Designee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend and facilitate the annual review meeting as the district representative. • Sign all paperwork as the district representative. • Provide invited teachers with substitute coverage.
Caseload Teacher & Speech Therapists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review your Homepage on Illuminate regularly for upcoming IEPs due. • Provide the IEP Coach with a completed draft of the IEP 3-5 school days in advance of the scheduled meeting. • Print a PowerSchool copy of grades and attendance. • Bring the student's IEP binder to the meeting. This includes work samples that are related to the IEP goals and objectives. Present the data at the meeting. • Bring the student's most recent Progress Monitoring Report to present at the meeting.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute & collect BHAS Teacher Input Forms from the special education and general education teachers who cannot attend the meeting. This can be done electronically. <i>Complete the Prior Excusal Form if an essential staff member cannot be present before the IEP meeting. Remember, district representatives cannot be excused.</i> • Review the items on the <i>Pre-IEP Checklist</i> in preparation for the meeting. • Publish the IEP. • Fill out the Distribution Form and attach to all meeting documents and forward to the Special Education Department Manager. • During the IEP period, collaborate with the student's Special Education and General Education Teachers. • Provide the general education teachers with a copy of the student's published IEP. Attach a copy of the appropriate <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services form</i> and Behavior Intervention Plan, if appropriate. • Update <i>Parent Log</i> with each contact. • The IEP Coaches should have Illuminate access to the IEP DRAFT <u>three days</u> prior to the scheduled IEP meeting
Caseload Teachers (high school only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For high school students, meet with a counselor to determine if the student's schedule corresponds to the stated career path on the Transition Plan. • Complete a draft of the IEP and the Transition Plan. • The IEP Coach should have Illuminate access to the IEP <u>three days</u> prior to the scheduled IEP meeting.
General Education Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete forms provided by the Caseload Teacher, Administrator or Berrien RESA personnel. • Attend IEP meetings and share information about student's progress. • Store all IEP documents received from the caseload teacher in a confidential secure location. • Implement the classroom and testing accommodations that are listed on the <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services form</i>. • Use the personalized <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services form</i> to document compliance. Give a copy of the completed form to the student's caseload teacher and principal at the end of each month.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the student has a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i>, follow the plan explicitly and make notations when needing to implement the plan. The notations should be made available for review at IEP meetings or manifestation determination review meetings. • Request a staffing (SST meeting) if the BIP is not working in a classroom setting. • During the IEP period, communicate regularly with the Caseload Teacher to address the needs of the student.
IEP Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review IEP before the meeting.
Special Education Department Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule Review IEP meeting at least five (5) to ten (10) school days before it is due. Contact parent for agreed date and time, mail an invitation to the parent and notify district personnel, Berrien RESA team and outside agencies by electronic invitation. • Upload all required supplemental forms into Illuminate. If a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i> is created, upload it into Illuminate. • Mail and file published IEPs according to the distribution list submitted by the Case Manager. • File the Intervention Plan documentation from the SST in the student's special education file, if applicable.
Counselor / Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the student's schedule and bring a copy to the meeting. • Prior to the meeting, meet with the caseload teacher to determine if the schedule is aligned with student's career pathway. • For high school students, review the student's profile to determine if the student is on pace to graduate. • If scheduling requirements change, create a schedule for the student, including special education classes required to meet IEP goals and objectives for the upcoming semester. Use the <i>Scheduling Requirements for Special Education</i> form to determine class placement.

RE-EVALUATION IEP AND REED

A student's eligibility must be reviewed by the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team at a REED and then an IEP meeting every three years, at minimum. If a student no longer qualifies for special education services, that student's services will be terminated. The IEP Team will alert the Student Study Team in writing that the student is no longer eligible for special education services.



A list of suggestions for supporting the student's return to general education will also be provided in writing.

Termination of services is based on the data provided at the REED or additional data collected through the re-evaluation process. If the student clearly qualifies for services, the student's special education placement will continue. If further data is needed to determine eligibility, the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team will gather that information and reconvene within 30 days or before the 3-year reevaluation due date (whichever comes first) to review the results of the assessments. The re-evaluation IEP must be scheduled to accommodate the possibility of testing. As a result, re-evaluation REED meetings should be held at least forty (40) school days before the 3-year due date. The MET report will be uploaded to Illuminate at least 5 days before the 3 year IEP due date or 3 days before the re-evaluation IEP meeting (whichever comes first). If the parent is dissatisfied with the results of the evaluation, the parent has the right to request an independent education evaluation (IEE).

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
Principal/Designee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend the re-evaluation IEP and REED Provide invited teachers with substitute coverage
Caseload Teacher & Speech Therapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review your Illuminate Home Page regularly for upcoming reevaluations due. Provide the IEP Coach with a completed electronic draft of the IEP three school days prior to the scheduled IEP meeting. Print a PowerSchool copy of grades and attendance. Bring the student's IEP binder to the meeting. This includes work samples that are related to the IEP goals and objectives. Present the data at the meeting. Bring the student's most recent Progress Monitoring Report to present at the meeting. Distribute & collect <i>BHAS Teacher Input Forms</i> from the special education and general education teachers who cannot attend the meeting. This can be done electronically and uploaded to the REED on Illuminate. Review the items on the <i>Pre-IEP Checklist</i> in preparation for the meeting.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the IEP period, collaborate regularly with the student's Related Arts and/or General Education Teacher(s). • Provide the general education teachers with an electronic copy of the student's published IEP. Attach a copy of the <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services form</i> and Behavior Intervention Plan, if appropriate. • Update <i>Parent Log</i> with each contact.
For high school Caseload Teachers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For high school students, meet with a counselor to determine if the student's schedule corresponds to the stated career path on the Transition Plan.
General Education Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete forms provided by the Caseload Teacher, Administrator or Berrien RESA personnel. • Attend IEP meetings and share information about student's progress. • Store all IEP documents received from the caseload teacher in a confidential secure location. • Implement the classroom and testing accommodations that are listed on the <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services form</i>. • Use the personalized <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services form</i> to document compliance. Give a copy of the completed form to the student's caseload teacher and principal at the end of each month. • If the student has a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i>, follow the plan explicitly and make notations when needing to implement the plan. The notations should be made available for review at IEP meetings or manifestation determination review meetings. • Request a staffing (SST meeting) if the BIP is not working in a classroom setting. • During the IEP period, communicate regularly with the Caseload Teacher to address the needs of the student.
IEP Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close the REED. • If the parent is in agreement, publish the IEP at the meeting or per current state guidelines. • If the parent refuses services, the IEP will be closed and not published. • Sign all documentation and make sure that original copies are provided to the department manager with a distribution list. • If it is determined that the student does not qualify for special education services, the parent can refute the findings and request

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
	<p>an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE). If requested, provide the parent with IEE documentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A second evaluation can be given by an independent Berrien RESA team not assigned to BHAS if parent agrees prior to an IEE. • <i>If the student no longer qualifies for services, notify in writing the building principal and recommend follow-up SST meeting given information provided in the multidisciplinary evaluation report.</i>
Special Education Department Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the meeting invitation marking all appropriate purposes for the meetings. Mail the invitation to the parent 10 days prior to the scheduled meetings. • Notify district personnel, Berrien RESA team and outside agencies (if permission is signed) by electronic invitation. • Upload all required supplemental forms into Illuminate. If a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i> is created, upload it into Illuminate. • Mail and file published IEPs and REEDs according to the distribution list submitted by the IEP Coach.
Counselor / Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the student's schedule and bring a copy to the meeting. • Prior to the meeting, meet with the caseload teacher to determine if the schedule is aligned with student's career pathway. • For high school students, review the student's profile to determine if the student is on pace to graduate. • If scheduling requirements change, create a schedule for the student, including special education classes required to meet IEP goals and objectives for the upcoming semester.

IEP DUE TO AN MDR

If student discipline has resulted in a change of placement for a student a manifestation determination review (MDR) will be held. An IEP meeting may be held to make changes to the student's IEP as a result of the outcome of an MDR.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
Principal/Designee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend and facilitate the IEP meeting as the district representative. • Sign all paperwork as the district representative. • Provide invited teachers with substitute coverage.
Caseload Teacher & Speech Therapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the IEP Coach with a completed electronic draft of the IEP three (3) school days in advance of the scheduled meeting. • Print a PowerSchool copy of grades and attendance.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring the student's IEP binderto the meeting. This includes work samples that are related to the IEP goals and objectives. Present the data at the meeting. • Bring the student's most recent Progress Monitoring Report to present at the meeting. • Distribute & collect <i>BHAS Teacher Input Forms</i>. • Review the items on the <i>Pre-IEP Checklist</i> in preparation for the meeting. • Facilitate the IEP meeting. • Publish the IEP. • Fill out the Distribution Form and attach to all meeting documents and forward to the Special Education Department Manager. • During the IEP period, collaborate regularly with the student's Related Arts and/or General Education Teacher(s). • Provide the general education teachers with a copy of the student's published IEP. Attach a copy of the <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services form</i> and Behavior Intervention Plan, if appropriate. • Update <i>Parent Log</i> with each contact.
For high school Caseload Teachers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For high school students, meet with a counselor to determine if the student's schedule corresponds to the stated career path on the Transition Plan. • Discuss any changes to the schedule that may need to be made as a result of the MDR.
General Education Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete forms provided by the Caseload Teacher, Supervisor or Berrien RESA personnel. • Attend IEP meetings and share information about student's progress. • Store all IEP documents received from the caseload teacher in a confidential secure location. • Implement the classroom and testing accommodations that are listed on the <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services form</i>. • Use the personalized <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services form</i> to document compliance. Give a copy of the completed form to the student's caseload teacher and principal at the end of each month. • If the student has a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i>, follow the plan explicitly and make notations when needing to implement the plan.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
	<p>The notations should be made available for review at IEP meetings or manifestation determination review meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request a staffing (SST meeting) if the BIP is not working in a classroom setting. • During the IEP period, communicate regularly with the Caseload Teacher to address the needs of the student.
IEP Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review IEP before the meeting.
Department Manager of Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the meeting invitation marking all appropriate purposes for the meetings. Mail the invitation to the parent 10 days prior to the scheduled meetings. • Notify district personnel, Berrien RESA team and outside agencies (if permission is signed) by electronic invitation. • Upload all required supplemental forms into Illuminate. If a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i> is created, upload it into Illuminate. • Mail and file published IEP according to the distribution list submitted by the caseload provider.
Counselor / Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the student's schedule and bring a copy to the meeting. • Prior to the meeting, meet with the caseload teacher to determine if the schedule is aligned with student's career pathway. • For high school students, review the student's profile to determine if the student is on pace to graduate. • If scheduling requirements change, create a schedule for the student, including special education classes required to meet IEP goals and objectives for the upcoming semester. Use the <i>Scheduling Requirements for Special Education</i> form to determine class placement.

IEP FOR A CHANGE IN PLACEMENT

Special Education Programs and Services are provided along a continuum of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Our aim and goal always is for students to be successful in the general education setting. We consistently ask, "what supports are needed for this student to be fully involved and make progress in the general education setting?" At times, the supports that are needed are so intense that we must take the student out of the general education setting for them to benefit from the services. As we remove a student further and further from the general education setting we may end up changing their educational placement. **Changes in placement must be made by the IEP team.** Whether it's changing from having resource room support to attending a self-contained classroom or going to a self-contained facility such as Blossomland, an IEP team must determine those placements. This is why it is not possible to go to Berrien RESA and apply to county programs such as Lighthouse or Blossomland. A school district's IEP team along with the center's team is what determines placement at either of those facilities.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
Principal/Designee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend and facilitate the IEP meeting as the district representative. • Sign all paperwork as the district representative. • Provide invited teachers with substitute coverage.
Caseload Teacher & Speech Therapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the IEP Coach with a completed draft of the IEP 3-5 school days in advance of the scheduled meeting. • Print a PowerSchool copy of grades and attendance. • Bring the student's IEP Portfolio to the meeting. This consists of work samples that are related to the IEP goals and objectives. Present the data at the meeting. • Bring the student's most recent Progress Monitoring Report to present at the meeting. • Distribute & collect BHAS Teacher Input Forms from the special education and general education teachers who cannot attend the meeting. This can be done electronically. <i>Complete the Prior Excusal Form if an essential staff member cannot be present before the IEP meeting.</i> • Review the items on the <i>IEP Cover Sheet</i> in preparation for the meeting. • Publish the IEP. • Fill out the Distribution Form and attach to all meeting documents and forward to the Special Education Department Manager. • During the IEP period, collaborate with the student's Special Education and General Education Teachers. • Provide the general education teachers with an electronic copy of the student's published IEP. Attach a copy of the appropriate <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services form</i> and Behavior Intervention Plan, if appropriate. • Update <i>Parent Log</i> with each contact. • The Special Education Administrators should have Illuminate access to the IEP DRAFT <u>three days</u> prior to the scheduled IEP meeting
For high school Caseload Teachers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For high school students, meet with a counselor to determine if the student's schedule corresponds to the stated career path on the Transition Plan.
General Education Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete forms provided by the Caseload Teacher, Supervisor or Berrien RESA personnel. • Attend IEP meetings and share information about student's progress.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store all IEP documents received from the caseload teacher in a confidential secure location. • Implement the classroom and testing accommodations that are listed on the <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services</i> form. • Use the personalized <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services</i> form to document compliance. Give a copy of the completed form to the student's caseload teacher and principal at the end of each month. • If the student has a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i>, follow the plan explicitly and make notations when needing to implement the plan. The notations should be made available for review at IEP meetings or manifestation determination review meetings. • Request a staffing (SST meeting) if the BIP is not working in a classroom setting. • During the IEP period, communicate regularly with the Caseload Teacher to address the needs of the student.
IEP Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review IEP before the meeting. • Contact Special Education Administrators regarding more restrictive placements or requests for county-based programs.
Office Manager of Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the meeting invitation marking all appropriate purposes for the meetings. Mail the invitation to the parent 10 days prior to the scheduled meetings. • Notify district personnel, Berrien RESA team and outside agencies (if permission is signed) by electronic invitation. • Upload all required supplemental forms into Illuminate. If a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i> is created, upload it into Illuminate. • Mail and file published IEP according to the distribution list submitted by the Caseload Teacher.
Counselor / Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the student's schedule and bring a copy to the meeting. • Prior to the meeting, meet with the caseload teacher to determine if the schedule is aligned with student's career pathway. • For high school students, review the student's profile to determine if the student is on pace to graduate. • If scheduling requirements change, create a schedule for the student, including special education classes required to meet IEP goals and objectives for the upcoming semester. Use the <i>Scheduling Requirements for Special Education</i> form to determine class placement.

IEP AMENDMENT

There may be times when a change to the IEP is minor and IEP team members agree that the change is necessary. Maybe the student is doing very well and a reduction in their time in special education is warranted to see if they can be more independent; or they have changed their mind about an activity in their transition plan and want to update it. In these instances, if the parent or adult student and the IEP team members are in agreement with the change an amendment can be added to the IEP without redoing the entire IEP document. The amendment does not change the due dates to review the IEP or anything else other than what is included in the amendment. An amendment does not have to occur as a sit down meeting with all IEP members but it does help to show that there is agreement for the changes. If an amendment is done outside of a meeting, the conversations with parent/guardian or adult student and staff must be documented in the "other considerations" section of the amendment in Illuminate.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
Principal/Designee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend and facilitate the amendment meeting as the district representative. Sign all paperwork as the district representative. Provide invited teachers with substitute coverage.
Caseload Teacher & Speech Therapists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring the student's IEP Portfolio to the meeting. Discuss any data related to the amendment. Present the data at the meeting. Bring the student's most recent Progress Monitoring Report to present at the meeting. Publish the amendment Fill out the Distribution Form and attach to all meeting documents and forward to the Special Education Department Manager. During the IEP period, collaborate with the student's Special Education and General Education Teachers. Provide the general education teachers with an electronic copy of the student's published amendment. Attach a copy of the appropriate <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services form</i> and Behavior Intervention Plan, if appropriate. Update <i>Parent Log</i> with each contact. The Special Education Administrators should have Illuminate access to the amendment DRAFT <u>three days</u> prior to the scheduled amendment meeting
Caseload Teachers (high school only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For high school students, meet with a counselor to determine if the student's schedule corresponds to the stated career path on the Transition Plan.
General Education Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete forms provided by the Caseload Teacher, Administrator or Berrien RESA personnel. Attend amendment meeting and share information about student's progress.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store all documents received from the caseload teacher in a confidential secure location. • Implement the classroom and testing accommodations that are listed on the <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services</i> form. • Use the personalized <i>Documentation for Supplemental Aids & Services</i> form to document compliance. Give a copy of the completed form to the student's caseload teacher and principal at the end of each month. • If the student has a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i>, follow the plan explicitly and make notations when needing to implement the plan. The notations should be made available for review at IEP meetings or manifestation determination review meetings. • Request a staffing (SST meeting) if the BIP is not working in a classroom setting. • During the IEP period, communicate regularly with the Caseload Teacher to address the needs of the student.
IEP Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review IEP amendment before the meeting.
Special Education Department Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule amendment meeting according to the teacher's request on the meeting request form. Contact parent for agreed date and time, mail an invitation to the parent and notify district personnel, Berrien RESA team and outside agencies by electronic invitation. • Upload all required supplemental forms into Illuminate. If a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i> is created, upload it into Illuminate. • Mail and file published amendment according to the distribution list submitted by the Case Manager. • File the Intervention Plan documentation from the SST in the student's special education file, if applicable.
Counselor /Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the student's schedule and bring a copy to the meeting. • Prior to the meeting, meet with the caseload teacher to determine if the schedule is aligned with student's career pathway. • For high school students, review the student's profile to determine if the student is on pace to graduate. • If scheduling requirements change, create a schedule for the student, including special education classes required to meet IEP goals and objectives for the upcoming semester. Use the <i>Scheduling Requirements for Special Education</i> form to determine class placement.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

All students, including students with IEPs and 504 plans, must follow school rules. State and federal law require public schools to maintain a safe, orderly learning environment. Benton Harbor Area Schools has a Code of Conduct in place that all students and parents are expected to know and follow.

BHAS's code includes expectations such as no obscene language, no disrupting classes and no misusing of electronic devices. Our district and schools have a dress code, academic rules and attendance requirements. The BHAS Code of Conduct also provides a clear explanation of the consequences for breaking rules.

If a student breaks a rule, the school has the authority and the obligation to discipline that student. School discipline actions range from minor to very serious, and from the traditional to the more progressive.

BHAS staff are required to seek out alternative strategies to modify behavior. These strategies include but are not limited to:

- Re-direction
- One-on-One Conversations
- Parent Contact
- Conferencing
- Counseling
- Restorative Justice

Not all students respond to the above measures and/or a student's behavior may be deemed unsafe to self and others. School administrators have the obligation to evoke more severe consequences such as:

- Removal from the classroom or setting
- Assignment to In-School Suspension
- Assignment of Out-of-School Suspension
- Recommendation for Expulsion

The protections for students with IEPs and 504 plans are not an excuse for breaking school rules. They help schools and parents understand the cause of misbehavior and they require schools to help reduce misbehavior and prevent it from happening again.

The next section provides a comprehensive explanation of the discipline process for any student with an IEP or 504 plan.

BENTON HARBOR PROGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR FRAMEWORK

Key to providing all students with the opportunity to succeed is becoming and remaining a proactive district. Before behaviors result into student code of conduct violations, each and every adult in Benton Harbor Area School district must be dedicated to providing our students with the necessary tools to redirect maladaptive behaviors. This may be accomplished by implementing a foundational structure using PBIS or Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports.

Research supports that not all students will be responsive to certain types of interventions. For those students, a progressive behavior framework must be implemented. The first step begins with behavior contracts and plans.

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN

A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is designed for students who exhibit repeated behavior problems. The objective is to provide a structured plan to guide the student in monitoring and self-correcting inappropriate behavior with the goal of developing an internal locus of control. It is usually (but not always) developed using the results of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA). An FBA is typically conducted by ancillary staff after obtaining permission from the parent through a REED. Like the IEP, the BIP is a legal document that must be adhered to as outlined by all school personnel identified in the BIP. The BIP should be signed by the principal or designee, parent, student, caseload teacher and general education teachers.

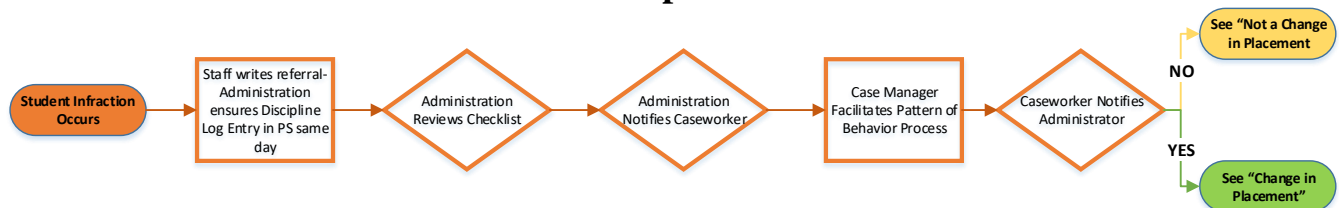
TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
Principal/Designee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend and facilitate the BIP meeting.• Sign all paperwork as needed.• Provide invited teachers with substitute coverage.
IEP Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend the BIP meeting as needed.
Caseload Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Request a BIP meeting on the meeting request form.• Participate in the development of the BIP• Review the BIP expectations with the student.• Provide all school personnel, parent and other outside agencies listed in the BIP with a copy of the document. Review expectations with them.• Provide the Department manager with a copy of the BIP to be filed and uploaded into Illuminate.• Monitor and chart the progress of the student using the documentation method outlined in the BIP inclusive of general education teachers monitoring in the classroom.• Contact the principal and the Supervisor if the student's behavior trend does not improve within three to six weeks of implementation.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
General Education Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend the BIP meeting Participate in the development of the BIP Follow the BIP requirements Support school staff in following the BIP
SEL Interventionist/Behavior Support Personnel/Dean of Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend the BIP meeting Participate in the development of the BIP Follow the BIP requirements Support school staff in following the BIP
Special Education Department Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule BIP meeting according to the teacher's request on the meeting request form. Upload <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i> into Illuminate and file a copy in student's file.

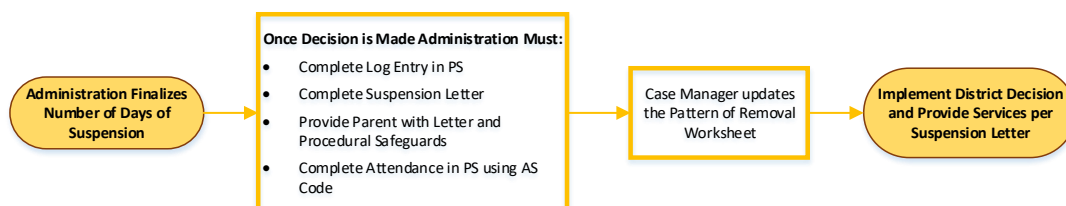
Behavior contracts and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) may not always reshape the targeted behavior. Additionally, students may find themselves in more severe situations that may or may not be outside of the scope of the behavior contracts or intervention plans.

Disciplining a student with a disability may become a complicated process. It is vital that all school personnel understand the ramifications when a student with a disability has not been properly processed. Begin by reviewing the flowcharts below to gain a fundamental understanding of the federal, state, and local guidelines when a student with a disability is being considered for disciplinary action:

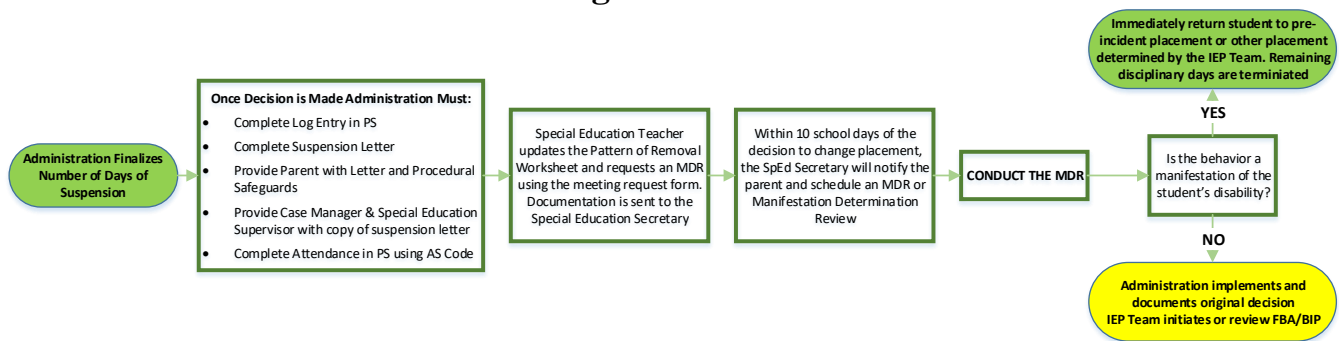
Initial Discipline Process



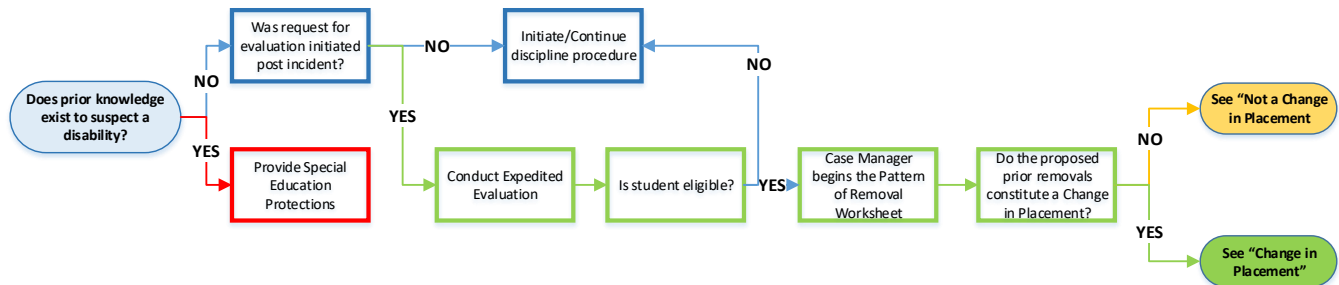
Not A Change in Placement



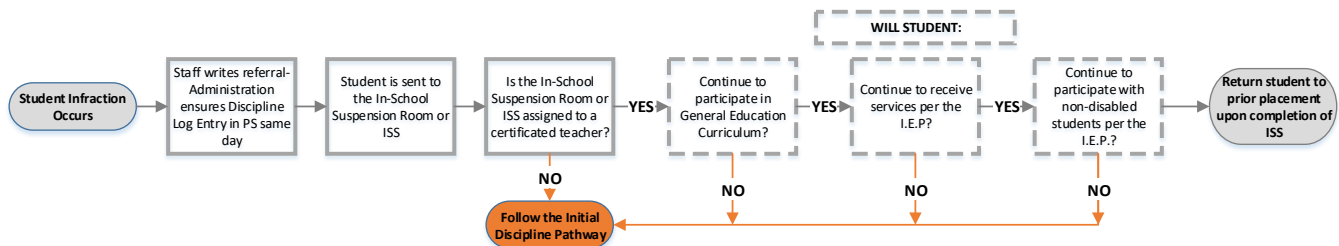
Change in Placement



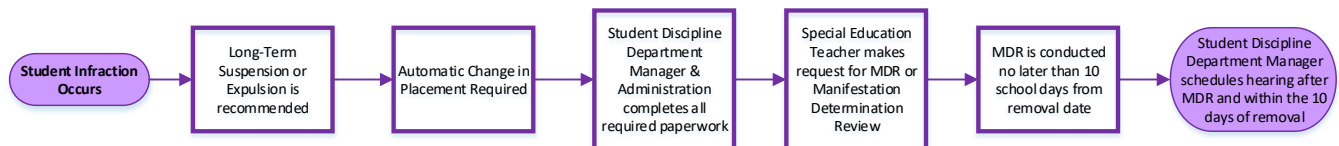
Student Not [Yet] Eligible for Special Education



In-School Suspension Room



Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion



DISCIPLINE PROTOCOL FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Follow the flowcharts above and review the steps listed below when disciplinary actions of any student with a disability may result in suspension or expulsion:

When a student infraction occurs:

Step 1 Staff writes the appropriate referral and passes on to site administration immediately.

Step 2 Site administration goes through checklist and decides if suspension will occur

If disciplinary action results in suspension:

Step 3 Site administrator notifies the District Student Discipline Department Manager and contacts the special education case manager to find out if the pending suspension is a change of placement

Step 4 Special education case manager completes pattern of removal worksheet and reports back to District Student Discipline Department Manager and Site Administrator

Once Site Administration finalizes decision of day[s] student will be suspended:

Step 5 On the date the decision, Administration and District Student Discipline Department Manager should:

- i. Complete Log Entry [action taken, # of days, etc.] Add days suspended to Log Entry Text in Power School,
- ii. Complete and provide parent Procedural Safeguards & Suspension Letter [coordinate with Sped Teacher on service details],
- iii. Provide Case Manager & Special Ed Supervisor copy of suspension letter, and
- iv. Complete attendance record for days suspended [e.g., AS]

If the removal constitutes a change in placement the special education caseload teacher will immediately:

- i. Update the pattern of removal worksheet
- ii. Request an MDR be scheduled using the meeting request form and send it to the special education secretary

Step 6 The special education secretary must contact parents and schedule an MDR as soon as possible but no later than 10 school days from the time of the decision to change the student's placement.

Step 7 The appropriate Team Members (including the disciplining staff) will conduct the MDR.

If it IS a manifestation of the student's disability:

- i. The student will immediately return to their pre-incident placement or other placement determined by the IEP team,
- ii. Any remaining days of disciplinary removal are terminated,
- iii. IEP team must initiate or review FBA / BIP and remedy any deficits in implementing the current IEP, and
- iv. Site Administration must update attendance record within PowerSchool.

If it is NOT a manifestation of the student's disability:

- i. Implement District Decision.
- ii. IEP team must [as appropriate] initiate or review FBA / BIP.
- iii. Site Administration or District Student Discipline Manager completes Log Entry data & Attendance in PowerSchool.

MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION REVIEW

The Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) process is designed to ensure equitable disciplinary treatment for students with a disability. A school district must hold an MDR when a change of placement occurs due to:

- ☐ A single removal exceeding ten (10) consecutive school days [34 CFR §300.536] or
- ☐ A pattern of removals cumulative to more than ten school days in a school year [34 CFR §300.536].

At the MDR data is reviewed in order to determine two things:

1. if the student's behavior that resulted in disciplinary action is substantially related to any identified area of disability (educationally or otherwise)
2. if the school failed to implement the IEP

If either is true than it is automatically considered a manifestation of the student's disability and they have the right to be returned immediately to their previous educational placement. If neither is true than the student falls under the general education discipline processes.

It is important to understand that **School Day** means any day, including a partial day, that a student is in attendance at school for instructional purposes. The term "school day" has the same meaning for all students in school, including students without disabilities [34 CFR §300.11]. If a student is suspended for any portion of a day, it is counted as a full day of suspension.

Bus Suspension:

The processes around suspensions also applies to students who are suspended from the bus if they do not attend school due to a lack of transportation. Absences due to bus suspension are to be recorded as suspension days (suspension letter written).

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
Principal or Designee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The days of suspension of the letter must match the days of suspension listed on the daily attendance bulletin.• Notify all the student's general and special education teachers to deliver assignments to the office within 24 hours.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the parent with the suspension letter and a copy of the Procedural Safeguards. This is a federal mandate. • If the timing of the suspension does not allow for teachers to submit assignments when parent receives the letter and Procedural Safeguards, inform the parent of the time to pick up the assignments the next day. • Record the suspension assignments on the Suspension Assignments Form. When the student returns from suspension, request to see the homework that was completed. Make a notation indicating if assignments were completed. File the form in the student's behavior file.
Principal or Designee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the suspension documentation process is adhered to. • If an MDR meeting is required, attend the MDR meeting with all the documentation needed to discuss the student's behavior in general and the discipline incident specifically. The building administrator attends the MDR as this person has given the suspension. An administrator (elementary) and/or administrative designee (high school only) required to attend MDR meetings. • If it is the intent of the principal to pursue expulsion, inform the Special Education Director and Assistant Director. In this case, an MDR meeting is mandatory. • If the student is expelled, inform the Special Education Director and Assistant Director and the Registrar so that the student can be dropped from the Special Education Roster and from Benton Harbor Area Schools. Benton Harbor Areas Schools is still responsible for providing special education services to expelled students.
Caseload Teacher & Speech Therapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 24 hours, deliver the work for the suspended student to the office for the parent to pick up. Complete the Suspension Assignments Form provided by the principal or secretary. • Correct/grade the work when it is returned. • Record the suspension on the Pattern of Removal Worksheet. • Request the MDR on the meeting request form. • Complete the MDR with the information from the student's records in PowerSchool, Illuminate, and their other school files before the MDR meeting.
General Education Teacher:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 24 hours of a student's suspension, deliver the work for the suspended student to the office for the parent to pick up. Complete

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
	<p>the Suspension Assignments Form provided by the principal or secretary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct/grade the work when it is returned. • Attend scheduled manifestation determination review meeting and be prepared to present behavior and academic information about the student. • If the student has a behavior intervention plan, be prepared to show evidence that the plan is implemented in your class.
IEP Coach or Special Education Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend and facilitate MDR. • Ensure that the suspension/MDR/expulsion processes are properly implemented in collaboration with building administrator. • Publish the MDR • Sign all documentation and make sure that original copies are provided to the department manager with a distribution list.
Special Education Department Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule MDR on the next available MET day but no later than 10 school days from the date of the change in placement. • Contact parent for agreed date and time, mail an invitation to the parent and notify district personnel, Berrien RESA team and outside agencies by electronic invitation. • Upload all required supplemental forms into Illuminate. If a <i>Behavior Intervention Plan</i> is created, upload it into Illuminate. • Mail and file published MDR according to the distribution list submitted by the IEP Coach.

PATTERN OF REMOVAL WORKSHEET

A Pattern of Removal worksheet is a form that is used to determine if a series of removals constitutes a change of placement. The worksheet serves as a record of the incidents subject to removals for a student with an IEP. Only one worksheet (add additional rows as needed) needs to be completed for a student each school year. Each incident and decision by the team is recorded on the same form. Benton Harbor Area School District requires the use of this worksheet as it provides documentation of the district process for determining a pattern of behavior if the district is monitored and involved in a hearing or state complaint.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
Caseload Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a Pattern of Removal worksheet for every student on your caseload. • Update the Pattern of Removal worksheet immediately following every removal for each individual student.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn in copies upon request. • Make sure form is completely up to date and in the student's binder when turned in at the end of the school year.
Sped Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the completion of worksheets
Special Education Department Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • File worksheets at the end of each school year.

FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE)

Students with disabilities have a legal right to a free appropriate public education, known as FAPE. The right is guaranteed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

FAPE MEANS:

Free: All eligible students with disabilities will be educated at public expense. There is no cost to parents that is different than what is expected of all students (i.e. club membership).

Appropriate: The child with a disability is entitled to an education that is appropriate to them. It will be tailored and planned to meet their needs as stated in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Public: This refers to the public school system. Children with disabilities, whatever the nature or severity of their disabilities, have the right to be educated under public supervision.

Education: Every eligible school-age child with a disability must be provided an education. FAPE ensures that the child receives a public education that includes the services outlined in their IEP. The education should prepare the child for the future – further education, employment, and independent living.

FAPE REQUIREMENTS FOR A SCHOOL

- Provide special education to meet the unique needs of our students. This means specially designed instruction. For example, a child with reading issues might be taught with a multisensory reading program.
- Provide related services to help students benefit from special education. Related services may include things like speech therapy, counseling or even transportation.
- Provide these services at no charge.
- Provide accommodations and modifications that help students learn and participate in the general education curriculum. Some examples of accommodations include audiobooks, extra time on tests and preferential seating.
- Create an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for qualified students. This is a written plan for a student's special education experience at school. By law, an IEP must include things like services, progress monitoring, annual goals and more.
- Teach students in the least restrictive environment (LRE). As much as possible, students should be learning alongside students who don't receive special education. Placement in a separate class is only allowed if it's necessary to meet a student's needs.

FAPE Does Not Require a School to:

- Provide the best services possible for the child, or "maximize" the child's potential. Rather, it must provide services that are "reasonably calculated" to help the child make progress.
- Provide a specific program or class setting that a parent/guardian may want for the child. Parents/Guardians are a member of the team that creates the IEP and can give input. However, FAPE does not guarantee the child a specific educational program, like Orton-Gillingham instruction. The IEP team makes the final decision.

- Guarantee the child a spot in an extracurricular activity or sport. FAPE does not give the child a right to preferential treatment for clubs and sports. However, the school must give the child an equal opportunity to participate.

ENROLLMENT

A student with an IEP is entitled to FAPE the moment he/she enters the school building. When a student enrolls in Benton Harbor Area Schools and has an IEP, the school district must have programs and/or services in place to accommodate that student immediately upon entering the school building for classes. This is done through a temporary placement form (Permission to Place) completed by a special education administrator. If a student has been dropped for any reason (lack of attendance, incarceration, etc.) from the district and returns, they must re-enroll through the district office so that their temporary placement paperwork can be completed immediately.

REGISTRATION PROCESS:

In Benton Harbor Area School District, all registration initiates at Central Administration via the Registrar's office. Enrollment applications are available at Central Administration. Students new to the district or students who have withdrawn from Benton Harbor Area Schools and would like to re-enroll must fill out the entire enrollment application and supply all requested supporting documentation.

Registration Procedures – Supporting Documentation

All new and returning enrollees are required to provide the appropriate paperwork:

- ☐ State Issued birth certificate and/or power of attorney or proof of legal guardianship must be provided
- ☐ Immunization Report – all immunizations must be current or waiver of immunizations must be supplied
- ☐ Proof of current address – current mail with parent/guardians name received relatively recently
- ☐ Parent/guardian's state issued identification – driver's licenses or personal identification card
- ☐ Copy of transcript for senior high student. Withdrawal grades for students 1st-8th grade.
- ☐ Students receiving special education services
 - a. Students that have an existing IEP or 504 Plan; a copy must be supplied to the registrar upon registration. If parent/guardian does not possess a copy, registrar will request such documents from student's previous school. Registrar will notify the special education department of incoming student immediately following student enrollment and forward special education documents when available. A permission to place will be completed when the special education documentation is received.

Enrollment

- ☐ Registrar will input demographic information in PowerSchool in addition to assigning an UIC.
- ☐ Registrar contacts appropriate building administrative assistant and informs him/her of incoming student.

- ❑ Students are scheduled to begin attending classes within two days of completing the registration process.

Dropping Enrollment

- ❑ If a student misses 10 consecutive school days unexcused, they must be dropped from enrollment and the registrar notified. Students attending middle school and high school must be absent ten (10) consecutive days in each enrolled class before being dropped from enrollment
- ❑ Any student sent to a juvenile detention facility must be dropped from enrollment and the registrar notified.

Re-Enrollment:

- All re-enrollments must be submitted through the Registrar's Office. Students are NOT to be re-enrolled at school buildings.

PERMISSION TO PLACE PROCEDURES

"Permission to Place" is a process that only occurs for students who are enrolling in the district (new and/or returning). Because the enrollment process in Benton Harbor Area School district is centralized, enrollees must go through the district registrar. It is important to establish a process during the registration time that identifies students with IEPs. If the parent/guardian of the student has a copy of the IEP, the registrar will collect that information during registration. If not the registrar will seek to obtain a copy of the IEP from the previous school district.

The term "Move in" refers to a student with an IEP who is "moving in" from another district. Two types of move-ins exist, a student moving in from a Michigan school and a student moving in from out-of-state school. Student's "moving in" from another school in Michigan can be accepted with their current paperwork through the Permission to Place document. Student's "moving in" from outside the state of Michigan must go through an initial evaluation for special education process. (See initial REED and IEP processes). Caseload managers, service providers, and ancillary staff must review the Permission to Place document to see what is required for each individual "move-in" student.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCESS
Registrar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete enrollment process • Notify Special Education Department of incoming students with IEPs
Director / Assistant Director of Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Permission to Place paperwork • Notify Caseload Managers, Service Providers, Ancillary Staff, and building personnel of Permission to Place • Give original documents to Department Manager to file and upload.
Special Education Department Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule meetings according to Permission to Place needs. • File and upload all documents pertaining to the Permission to Place (IEPs, MET reports, etc...)

MEDICAL NEEDS

If a student requires medication at school to be able to function at school and receive educational benefit the school must allow or provide for the administration of that medication to the student. This is part of providing FAPE.

Many students may have medical needs that the school needs to be aware of and plan for. In Benton Harbor, the process for addressing those needs is as follows:

1. Medical information is shared by the parent, doctor or another source as a need.
2. The Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Interventionist/Instructional Facilitator (IF) or designee requests parent to provide doctor's verification (Medication Request and Authorization form) each year, signed by the doctor. They also request parents provide a Plan of Care (school form) each year signed by doctor. Finally, they request any further information needed and in accordance with current Neola policies.
3. SEL Interventionist/IF or designee reviews information provided and updates PowerSchool.
4. SEL Interventionist/IF or designee refers student to the Student Support Team (SST) to review information and create the Medical Action Plan (MAP) if necessary. The Medical Action Plan will outline steps for medication administration in line with Neola policies.
5. The MAP if developed is reviewed at least annually.

TESTING REQUIREMENTS

The basic goal of special education is to provide exceptional students with disabilities which will prevent them from fully benefiting from traditional educational approaches with specialized instruction designed to meet their unique needs. In doing this we will help students make progress in the general education curriculum and be able to be measured on the same standards as all other students. With the appropriate accommodations the majority of students with disabilities will be able to take regular state and district assessments. The expectation is that all but 1% of students with disabilities will take the same state and district assessments as non-disabled students. In Benton Harbor Area Schools at the time of this publication, that amounts to no more than 3 students who will take an alternative assessment in place of the state assessment.

NWEA BENCHMARKING

All students are required to take the NWEA as part of the school districts benchmark data. There are universal accommodations available to all students, such as, audio options. In addition, students with IEPs should be provided with all testing accommodations listed in their IEP.

MICHIGAN EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (M-STEP)

All students are required to take the M-STEP in Grades 3 through 8 and 11, unless the IEP Team determines that the M-STEP is not an appropriate assessment. This is decided by going through the alternative assessment guidelines given by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

Students receiving special education services who take the M-STEP can do so with accommodations, if the IEP Team lists the specific accommodations the student is entitled to receive based on their unique special education needs. Only those accommodations that students have used in classroom testing situations should be listed. Students should not receive accommodations with which they are unfamiliar.

MME, PSAT, SAT, & ACT WORK KEYS

The MME is administered during the student's Grade 11 year. Students who were not tested in Grade 11 should be tested during their Grade 12 year. Students who take the MME have been taught by a teacher highly qualified to teach the subject being tested.

Like the M-STEP, MME allows testing accommodations for a student receiving special education services, if the student's IEP Team recommends accommodations. Only those accommodations that students have used in classroom testing situations should be listed. Students should not receive accommodations with which they are unfamiliar

For the PSAT and SAT permission from the parents or the adult student must be acquired to request approval of accommodations from the Collegeboard. Once permission is signed, the testing coordinator or designee applies for accommodations within the Collegeboard website for each individual student. Once approved, the building testing coordinators arrange for accommodations to be given according to what the Collegeboard designates.

The ACT Work Keys is a system of assessments that measure foundational skills required for success in the workplace. Students can choose to take these assessments to provide potential employers with an idea of their workplace skills.

MI-ACCESS – MICHIGAN’S ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

MI-Access provides a testing opportunity for those who, according to the extent of their disability, are not eligible to take the M-STEP or MME. MI-Access will determine progress in Math, English Language Arts and Science. A Social Studies test does not exist, therefore, the district is required to create an alternative assessment for Social Studies for grades 6th and 9th.

SCREEN READERS AND VOICE RECOGNITION SOFTWARE

Screen Readers and Voice Recognition Software for M-STEP and MI-Access Assessments Voice recognition software is incompatible with the INSIGHT system (M-STEP and MI-Access assessments). Screen readers may also be incompatible; however, educators are encouraged to test out the screen readers with the Online Training Tools (OTTs) prior to the assessment administration. Keep in mind that students who need oral presentation support have the text-to-speech or human reader (read aloud) options available to them. Students may also use a scribe for all content areas and modes. Refer to the tables included in this chapter for more information related to these supports

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
District Testing Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order the test materials for all students. • Confer with Caseload Teachers to order special test materials. • Confer with Caseload Teachers to order regular test materials.
Caseload Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the testing coordinator with the needed assessments and accommodations information for each caseload student for the following purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Materials Order • Regular Materials Order • Communicate with the building testing coordinator and principal to ensure that accommodations will be met.

TEAM MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School Caseload Teachers – Complete the PSAT/SAT/ACT Accommodations Request and provide documents to District Testing Coordinator.
IEP Coaches / Director / Assistant Director of Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure requests for accommodations are entered into College Board by published deadlines.