



PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

REVISED OCTOBER 2023

JACKSON COUNTY INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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JCISD Statement of Purpose

The Jackson County Intermediate School District is committed to the success of all students. The JCISD provides educational leadership, services, programs, and resources in partnership with local schools and the community.

The Jackson County Intermediate School District is an educational service agency chartered by the State of Michigan to work in collaboration with local public school districts and charter schools. Our mission is focused on improving student success in Jackson County, and we do that by improving the quality of education in Jackson County, making it more cost-efficient and helping students, parents, educators and community members get the most out of public education.

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected category, (collectively, "Protected Classes"), in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. The Superintendent shall appoint and publicize the name of the compliance officer(s) who is/are responsible for coordinating the District's efforts to comply with applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including the District's duty to address in a prompt and equitable manner any inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination or denial of equal access. The Compliance Officer(s) shall also verify that proper notice on nondiscrimination for Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended), Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended), and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act is provided to staff members and the general public.

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Your Resource Contacts

At your student's initial IEP meeting gather the following information and keep for future needs. There is a duplicate of this form at the end of this handbook that may be copy and use at subsequent IEP meetings.

My student's eligibility for special education is _____

My student's school building telephone number is: _____

Names and contact information of persons working with my student:

Principal	E-mail	Telephone
Primary General Ed. Teacher	E-mail	Telephone
Special Education Teacher	E-mail	Telephone
Teacher Consultant	E-mail	Telephone
Special Education Supervisor	E-mail	Telephone
Bus Garage/Driver	E-mail	Telephone
Other	E-mail	Telephone
Other	E-mail	Telephone
Other	E-mail	Telephone

Dear Parents,

This handbook has been developed by the Jackson County Intermediate School District Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) to give you an introduction to the special education process and to acquaint you with special education programs and services.

Special education services are available to eligible students in the state of Michigan from birth through high school graduation or age 26, as appropriate. Understanding the special education system can help you work with your student's school and teachers to develop the program that is needed for your student to succeed.

The members of the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) are passionate about the value and significance of special education for special needs students. We believe that parents must play a major role in this venture in order for the process to thrive. But first, parents need to have insight about the programs and services, which make up the special education system. It's with this idea in mind that we have developed this manual.

Our goal is to provide parents and caregivers with factual information, along with various resources, to understand and negotiate the special education process.

Always remember that you are your student's best advocate. We believe that the best possible scenario occurs when parents and teachers form a partnership, which places the student's needs first.

The additional responsibilities that are placed on a parent of a student with special needs cannot be understated. However, along with the burdens and challenges come some of the greatest joys in life. Whether it is regular education or special education, students who are exposed to a wide variety of opportunities and challenges have the best chance to succeed in life. We know the special education system works! We hope this manual will help you make the most out of your student's special education experience.

We walk together as we help our students to grow from a dependent student to an independent adult.

Come celebrate your student's educational years with us at the Jackson County Intermediate School District.

Information Disclaimer

The information provided in this handbook is only intended to be a general summary. It is not intended to take the place of Federal or Michigan law and regulations. The PAC takes reasonable measures to ensure the accuracy of the information made available in this publication. However, largely due to the evolving nature of case law and modifications to rules, policies and procedures, the PAC and Jackson County Intermediate School District makes no warranty, expressed or implied, nor assumes any liability or responsibility for the accuracy, correctness or completeness of information contained within this publication.

Questions, comments or concerns regarding the contents of this manual are welcomed by editor: Amy Rogers, Assistant Director of Special Education (voice: 517.768-5129; email: amy.rogers@jcisd.org).

WELCOME

JCISD Parent Advisory Committee Representatives

The JCISD Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is comprised of parents representing the local districts and public charter schools in Jackson County. The PAC meets on a regular basis to receive and share information about issues related to students with special needs and to perform the advisory functions described in the Michigan Special Education Rules. PAC members are resource persons for other parents of students with special needs.

We welcome all parents and interested parties. Please call the JCISD Special Education office at 768-5206 if you would like to be involved. The JCISD also maintains a website with PAC information at: www.jcisd.org



Jackson County Intermediate School District
Instruction • Leadership • Service • Community • Equity

Special Education-What You Should Know

The schools and residents within the Jackson County Intermediate School District (JCISD) have a long-standing belief that all students are entitled to the full benefits of a public education. State and Federal laws, e.g., the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, known as IDEA, supports this belief. These laws recognize that every individual is unique. While everyone can learn, the rate at which each individual learns varies. Michigan Law, under ACT 451 of the Public Acts of 1976, requires that special education be available to all eligible students, from birth to high school graduation or age 26 where appropriate.

Persons residing within the JCISD, and qualified to receive special education, will be provided with appropriate programs and/or services by a local educational agency, the intermediate school district, and /or through an approved contract agreement. The types of supports provided for each student vary depending on individual need. The most recent revision of the federal special education law,

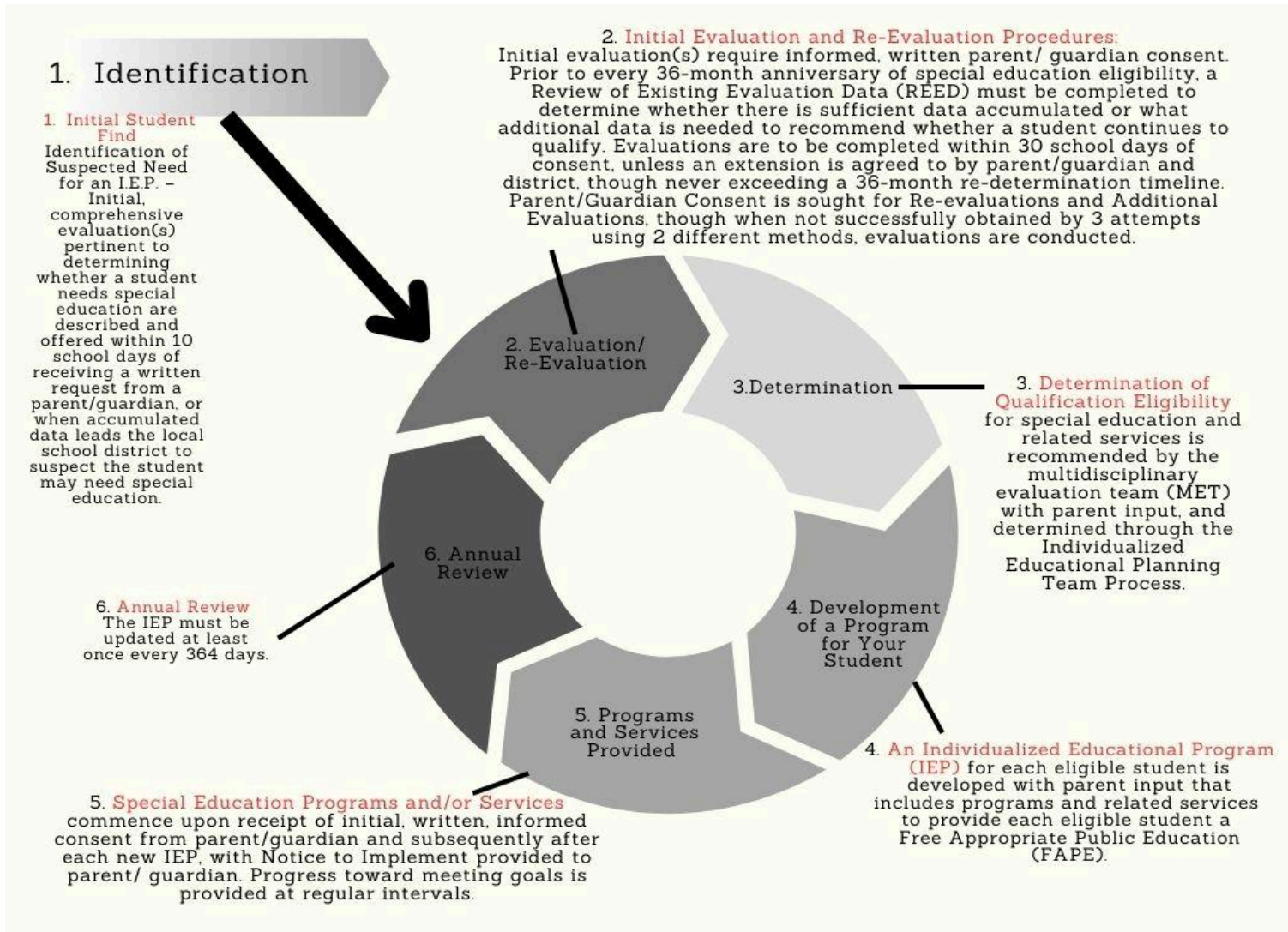
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) and subsequent amendments affirms the mandate for special education, and in the state of Michigan this is provided according to the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE) which forms the basis of this document.

How a disability impacts functioning and outcomes differs for each eligible student, requiring individualized educational plans. Every disability has one thing in common: There is a substantial impact on typical development and learning to the degree that special education is necessary. **Special education is specially designed instruction to help eligible students overcome barriers to accessing curriculum and instruction and close the gap with typically developing peers.**

As you read through this handbook, you will find a description of the special education process. This process is based on specific state and federal laws that protect you and your student.

Understanding the Special Education Process

Note: A parent/guardian or student over 18 years old receives formal written notice for each proposed school district action and **written Procedural Safeguards are provided at least one time per year.**



Eligibility for Special Education Service

The Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education define eligibility for special education within thirteen categories of disability listed below. **In addition to meeting specific criteria unique to each disability category, to be eligible for special education a student must “need” special education. Students known to have a disability but do not need special education programs or services may be eligible for accommodations under a Section 504 Accommodation Plan, which is not special education law but intended to prevent disability discrimination.**

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) – Students eligible under the ASD category are thought to have a lifelong, developmental disability that may include disturbances in thinking, socializing, and communication. These students may have difficulty relating to others in typical ways, depend on routines, and show absent or delayed communication skills, have unusual responses to sensory stimuli (hearing, seeing, touch, etc.), and/or exhibit stereotyped play patterns and repetitive movements. **Rule 340.1715**

Cognitive Impairment (CI) – Students eligible under this category were formerly named educable mentally impaired (EMI), trainable mentally impaired (TMI), or severely mentally impaired (SMI). Students eligible as cognitively impaired have significantly underdeveloped intellectual skills generally impacting fund of general knowledge, reasoning, problem solving skills, mental processing speed, memory, severe underachievement in basic reading and mathematics as well as impairments in adaptive independence levels compared with peers of the same age. Instructional activities typically focus on academic and vocational skills, daily living skills, health, and communication. **Rule 340.1705**

Deaf-Blindness (DB) – Students eligible under this category are both hearing and visually impaired, causing severe communication and developmental problems that cannot be accommodated by special education programs without additional supports to address the unique needs specific to deaf-blindness. **Rule 340.1717**

Early Studenthood Developmental Delay (ECDD) – Students eligible under this category are 3-7 years old who does not qualify under any other special education eligibility category and whose development is significantly delayed in at least two areas with one being at or below half the expected rate of development. **Rule 340.1711**

Emotional Impairment (EI) – Students eligible under the emotional impairment category display behavioral problems in the affective domain, over an extended period of time, that may be manifested by significant interpersonal problems, withdrawal,

depression, anxiety, physical complaints, and inappropriate behaviors that negatively impact learning. **Rule 340.1706**

Hearing Impairment (HI) – Students with a hearing loss that adversely impacts development or learning. These persons may have mild, moderate or total hearing loss. **Rule 340.1707**

Other Health Impairment (OHI) – Students with chronic or acute health conditions (e.g. ADHD, asthma, epilepsy, etc,...) where there is limited strength, vitality or alertness, or heightened alertness, that results in limited alertness in the educational environment. **Rule 340.1709a**

Physically Impairment (PI) - Students with severe orthopedic impairments have physical challenges which affect the ability to learn and may require adapted and/or special materials or equipment. **Rule 340.1709**

Specific Learning Disability (SLD) – Students eligible under this category display disorder in psychological processing adversely impacting one or more areas of learning including language usage or understanding, reading, written expression or mathematics. JCISD determines eligibility under this category utilizing a Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses Model. Social, emotional and behavioral problems may be present, but the primary special education needs are in school learning. **Rule 340.1713**

Severe Multiple Impairment (SXI) - Students with multiple impairments have more than one disability in intellectual, physical and/or functional abilities at a severe magnitude. They typically require intensive intervention and supports for the activities of daily living. **Rule 340.1714**

Speech and Language Impairment (SLI)- Students eligible under this category display a communication disorder that adversely affects educational performance including problems with speaking clearly, difficulties with understanding or using oral language. This may interfere with learning and/or social adjustment in school and elsewhere. Typical symptoms may include poor listening skills, unclear speech, slow vocabulary development, immature grammar, difficulties with social conversation, unusual loudness or quality of voice, or stuttering. **Rule 340.1710**

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)-Students who have an acquired injury to the brain (closed head injuries) and need special education are certified as having traumatic brain injury impairment. **Rule 340.1716**

Visual Impairment (VI)- Students who have severe problems with vision, whether partially sighted or blind, which interfere with development and learning. Characteristics may include visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye after

correction, or a peripheral field restricted to not more than 20 degrees or having a diagnosis of a progressively deteriorating eye disease. **Rule 340.1708**

The Problem-Solving and Referral Process

What do parents do when they suspect their student has a disability?

When parents suspect that their student has a disability, it is helpful to contact the student's teacher to review their concerns, learn what resources the district has to support the student's learning, and to develop a plan to address the concerns. This will be the beginning of a problem solving process that may lead to special education evaluation. The problem solving process may prevent the need for special education and assists in making decisions that are based on data collected over time, in response to instruction and interventions. This process of interventions collects information needed to determine eligibility, particularly when the primary concerns involve suspected learning and/or emotional disabilities where interventions and their outcomes are required for eligibility determination.

However a parent has the right to request special education evaluation at any time during this process and should do so in writing. Within ten (10) school days of receiving the parent's written request or upon the district determining your student may need special education, the school district will contact the parent to review their concern(s), describe a plan for special education evaluation that is understandable to the parent, and request their informed written consent to evaluate the student. A parent has the right to refuse to consent to evaluations. When this happens, or when a student has been recently found not eligible for special education or the district does not perceive a need for special education evaluations, further problem solving procedures are followed to insure parent rights to due process.

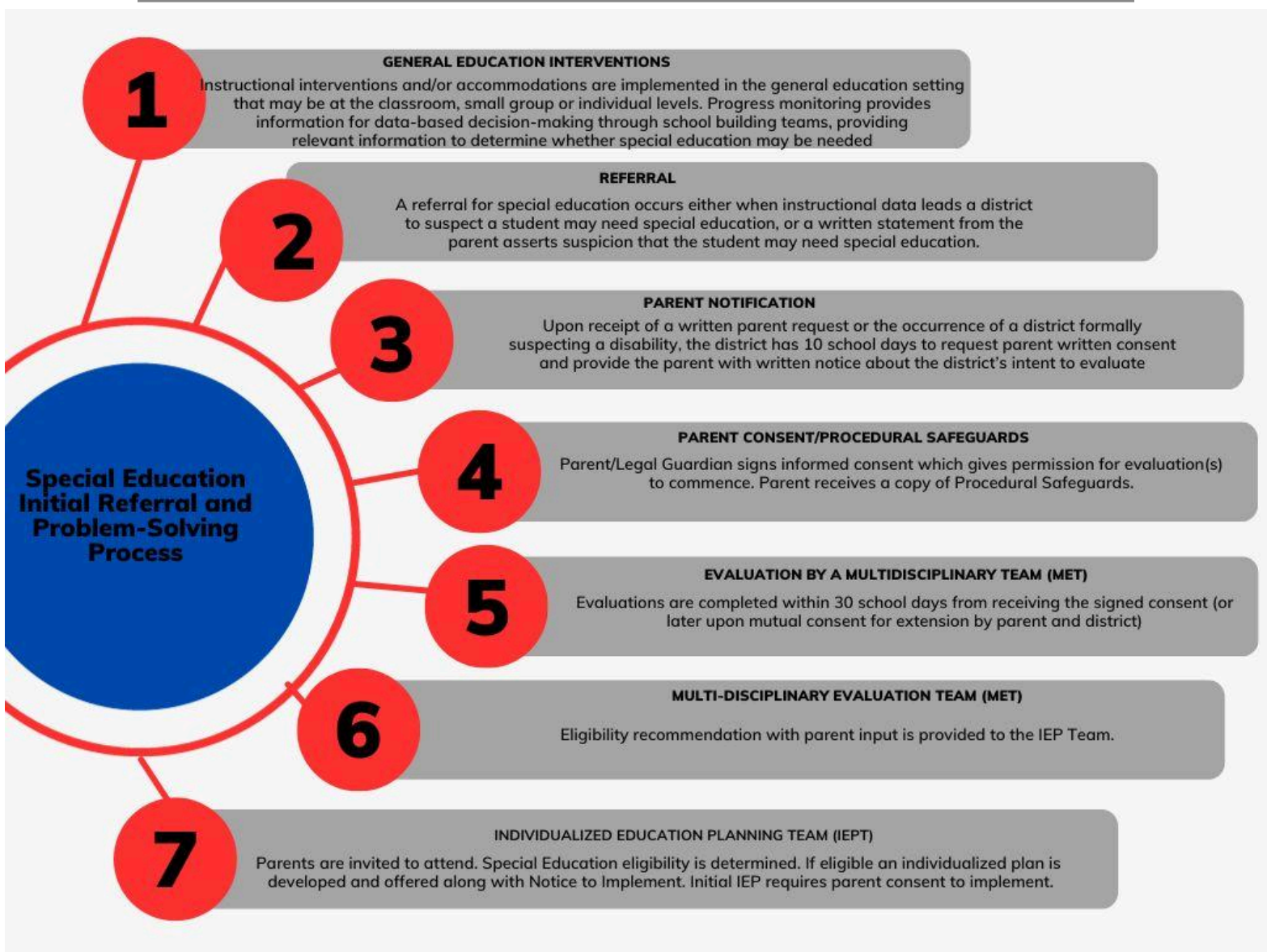
When more than one student shows similar needs, schools often utilize grade level teams and/or "Teacher Assistance Teams" to develop curriculum and instruction to meet diverse groups of student's needs that supplements core instruction. It is important to insure that students receive high quality instruction prior to determining if a student needs special education. When classroom and small group level interventions provide insufficient benefit for individual students, even more intensified interventions and progress monitoring is indicated. Schools often have "student study teams" or "student assistance teams" where the student's learning and/or behavior concerns are addressed over time with individualized strategies and interventions including monitoring of progress at regular intervals. If those interventions are not sufficiently beneficial, and the student's learning and/or behavior are significantly different from same-aged peers, the parents and/or the teacher may make a referral for an evaluation for eligibility for special education.

The following page offers a flow chart depicting the aforementioned process.



REMEMBER: A referral is the starting point of the special education process. It does not guarantee special education placement.

Special Education Initial Referral and Problem-Solving Process



The Evaluation Planning Process

The Review of Existing Evaluation Data (REED) is a formal, written means of collecting what is known about a student that may have implications for special education eligibility determination and the provision of special education. While federal and state rules require a REED for planning re-evaluation needs but not initial evaluations, the JCISD utilizes this procedure for all evaluations. Together, the team of school staff and parents will review and record all pertinent existing evaluation data about the student to facilitate decision-making about next steps.

The REED procedure is used to obtain informed consent from parents for the need to collect additional evaluation data or conversely the determination of no additional data needed in order to maintain eligibility and provide appropriate special education. This procedure must be completed at a minimum of one time prior to every 36-months of eligibility for special education which renews this triennial cycle. This procedure may also be completed more frequently based on individual student needs.

The REED involves gathering, reviewing and documenting existing information about the student that has relevance to educational needs. This includes consideration of current and prior assessment data, observations, and information provided by the parents or legal guardian and school staff, as well as from a review of school records and other pertinent documents. Parents and legal guardians have the right to submit and include privately obtained evaluation reports, medical and psychological information as well as pertinent history as part of the REED process. All appropriate and relevant data are reviewed during the REED procedure in order to assess educational needs of the student at that point in time.



REMEMBER: The Review of Existing Evaluation Data (REED)

is a procedure in which parents may ensure special education decision-making considers all of a parent or guardian's concerns, including any additional documentation such as privately obtained reports provided by parents.

Evaluation by the Multidisciplinary Team

The first step in identifying a student with a suspected disability and in need of special education programs and/or related services is the evaluation of the student. This is done by a Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET). This team is made up of educational specialists with knowledge in the area of your student's suspected disability. They may be teachers, school psychologists, speech & language therapists, social workers, or other specialists.

The MET will evaluate the strengths and needs of your student. The team will review important information such as school records, test results, medical history and information you may provide about your student. If you have had any outside evaluations of your student, it would be good to share the information with the MET.

Based upon the individual needs of your student, one or more of these could be evaluated:

- Cognitive/Intellectual (knowledge, thinking, reasoning, memory, information processing)
- Academic (educational skills such as reading, math, written expression)
- Motor-Visual-Auditory (control, coordination and responses of body systems)
- Social-Emotional (feelings and social adjustment)
- Speech and Language (understanding and using language and communication skills)
- Adaptive Behavior (independence level to perform tasks of daily living)
- Health (physical conditions interfering with school performance)
- Development in early studenthood milestone attainment

Once the MET evaluation is finished, a written report with an eligibility recommendation is presented at an Individualized Educational Planning Team (IEPT) meeting. Using the evaluation information, an IEPT determines whether or not your student is eligible for special education services.



REMEMBER: Parents have the right to have input on the MET evaluation.

Individualized Educational Planning

What is the Individual Education Planning Team?

The Individual Education Planning Team (IEPT) is required by law and is one of the most important teams in your school. The IEPT is a special team formed to review the needs of your student. Its job is to make sure that your student's learning program meets your student's individualized needs. As a parent, you are a very important member of this team.

What does the Individualized Education Planning Team do?

An IEPT must be held to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for every student receiving special education. The IEPT determines the eligibility of a student and the appropriateness of programs and/or services to be provided. In short, the IEPT meets to:

1. Determine whether your student is eligible for special education
2. Develop an appropriate special education plan for your student
3. Revise, or review your student's Individualized Education Program (IEP)

What is included in the IEP?

1. A statement of the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP);
2. A statement of measurable annual goals and short-term objectives that address:
 - a. how to help the student be involved in and progress in the general curriculum,
 - b. how to meet each of the student's other educational needs related to his/her disability;
3. A statement of how the student's progress toward the annual goals will be measured and how the parent will be regularly informed of that progress;
4. A statement of special education program/services and supplementary aids to be provided to the student, and any program modifications or supports for the school personnel;
5. The projected starting date for services as well as the duration, anticipated frequency, and location of where programs and services will be delivered;
6. An explanation of when the student will not participate with non-disabled students in the regular class and other activities;
7. A statement of any modifications the student needs in order to take the state and/or district-wide assessment tests; (If the IEP Team determines that the test is not appropriate for the student, a different assessment will be used.)
8. A statement of transition needs that focus on the student's course of study beginning at

age sixteen or younger, if appropriate. At age sixteen, transition services include other aspects of adult life and often involve other agencies.

What does parental consent mean on an IEP?

Parents have up to ten (10) days to review an initial or first time IEP. If after ten (10) days the parent does not sign, or has not requested to reconvene the IEP, the services cannot begin. All initial IEPs must be signed by parents before services are implemented.

At all other IEP meetings the district will offer programs and/or services that provide a Free Appropriate Public Education, called FAPE with a “Notice for the Provision of Programs and Services” form provided to the parent within 7 school days. All IEP’s other than the initial do not require a parent’s signature. Unless a parent has filed an appeal under the district shall initiate the proposed special education individualized education program as soon as possible and not more than 15 school days after the parent’s receipt of written notification, or not more than 15 school days after receipt of written parental consent for initial IEP’s. The parents and district may agree to a later initiation date if the later date is clearly identified in the individualized education program. An initiation date later than 15 school days shall not be used to deny or delay programs or services because they are unavailable and shall not be used for purposes of administrative convenience.

A parent also has a right at any time to withdraw and remove their student from special education. The parent must notify the district in writing. At that time the student will be considered a general education student and will not be eligible for any special education services or accommodations provided to other non-disabled students. The student will also be subject to the same disciplinary procedures and timelines in disciplinary procedures as other students. If a student fails to make progress in general education curriculum, a parent always have the right to request an initial evaluation for special education, though this process begins as an initial evaluation as if the student had not been previously eligible.

How do I prepare for the IEPT meeting?

Obtain as much information as you can before the IEPT meeting. Talk with your student’s teacher and collect information about your student’s progress. If your student has been evaluated (initial, re-evaluation, or additional evaluation) talk to the person(s) who evaluated your student and read your student’s evaluation report(s). Write down your questions and concerns for the meeting. If you are having communication problems, maintain your own records regarding your student. Keep a copy of all emails and letters that you send. If you make a telephone call, make a record of the call and follow it up with a letter or email message.

Should my student attend the IEPT meeting?

Students often provide valuable insights regarding their strengths and needs. Attending the IEPT meeting will depend on a number of factors including the student's age and developmental factors. Ideally all students will participate in at least a portion of their IEPT meeting to contribute and be a part of the planning process and to understand at their level of ability, what will take place and why subsequent to the IEPT meeting. When students are involved in determining their own goals and objectives and how they will be measured (which can include student involvement in this measurement, they may be more committed to achieving them). If the purpose of an IEPT meeting is transition planning, the student must be invited. The district must make sure the student's preferences and interests are considered in transition planning. Transition plans must be in place when the student is 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and are updated annually as part of the IEP. Students who are age 17 are notified that their rights will be transferred to them upon reaching the age of majority (18). At age 18 both the student and parents are notified that the rights are transferred to the student.

What should I do if I have a problem?

Remember that communication is the key to resolving any problems. Regular meetings with your student's teacher(s) and team of school personnel can keep things running smoothly. **It is essential that you become a part of your student's team.** If a problem does develop, try to work on it as soon as possible. Listen to what the other members of the team have to say and communicate your point of view calmly and clearly.

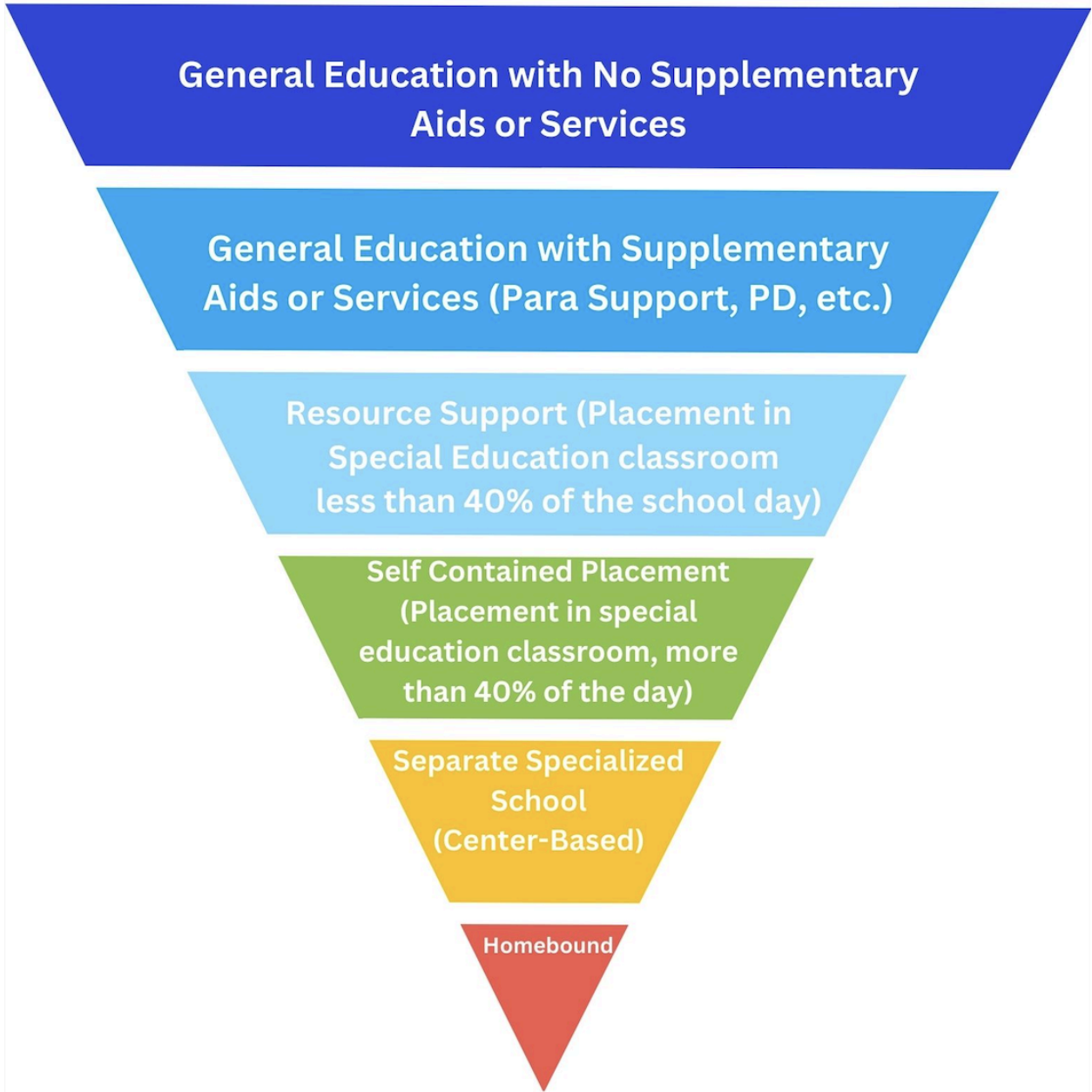
- Your first step may begin with scheduling a meeting with your student's teacher(s). Identify the problem(s), discuss options and look for a solution.
- Support staff such as teacher consultant, social worker, psychologist, speech & language therapist, occupational and physical therapist and/or other team members may also assist with finding a solution.
- The building principal and special education supervisor are also available to ensure productive problem-solving, as is the district's superintendent.
- The JCISD Parent Advisory Committee www.jcisd.org and the Michigan Alliance for Families (<http://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/>; 1-800-552-4821) are two resources available to support parents by making resource information and advocacy available to parents.

What is a “Free Appropriate Public Education” (FAPE)?

FAPE means that education and related services are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge. The services provided must meet the standards of the Department of Education for all students and be designed to meet the student’s IEP goals.

What is Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)?

LRE looks at the setting in which the student receives an education. The law presumes that students with disabilities are most often appropriately educated with their nondisabled peers in the general education setting. Attending special classes or separate schools, or removing students with disabilities from the regular classroom occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability prevents the student from achieving satisfactorily even when supplementary aids and services are provided.





**JCISD Operated Levelled
Special Education Classrooms**

***The consideration of programs/educational placement should be made by the IEP Team; based on the student need(s) and data; and not based solely on educational eligibility.**

District	Building	Type of Program
Columbia School District	Columbia Middle School	Self-Contained Special Education Classroom for Students with Emotional Impairment
	Columbia High School	Self-Contained Special Education Classroom for Students with Emotional Impairment
Jackson Public Schools	JCISD Operated at Northeast Elementary, Dibble Elementary, and Hunt Elementary	Self-Contained Special Education Classroom
	JCISD Operated at Parkside	Self-Contained Special Education Classroom
	JCISD Operated at JHS	Self-Contained Special Education Classroom
Michigan Center School District	Jr./Senior High School	Self-Contained Special Education Classroom
Northwest School District	Northwest Upper Elementary	Self Contained Special Education Classroom
	Northwest Middle School	Self Contained Special Education Classroom
	Northwest High School	Self Contained Special Education Classroom
Western School District	Western Middle School	Self Contained Special Education Classroom
	Western High School	Self Contained Special Education Classroom

Jackson County Intermediate School District	Central Campus Ravens	Self Contained Special Education Classrooms for students Kindergarten-High School. Students will be given regular opportunities for Peer to Peer interactions with same-age peers.
	Central Campus Redhawks	Self Contained Special Education Classrooms for students Kindergarten-High School with Emotional Impairments
	Central Campus Bulldogs	Self Contained Special Education Classrooms for students 18-26 years of age
	Classrooms Located at North Campus (Lyle A. Tarrant Center and Kit Young Building)	Self Contained Special Education Classrooms for students with significant disabilities from preschool through Age 26

**Local District Operated
Special Education Classrooms**

*The consideration of programs/educational placement should be made by the IEP Team; based on the student need(s) and data; and not based solely on educational eligibility.

District	Building	Type of Program
East Jackson Community School District	East Jackson Elementary	Self-Contained Special Education Classroom MiCI
	East Jackson Secondary	Self-Contained Special Education Classroom MiCI

Jackson Public School District	Cascades Elementary	Self-Contained Special Education Classrooms MiCI EI
	Hunt Elementary	Self-Contained Special Education Classrooms MiCI (2)
	Northeast	Self-Contained Special Education Classrooms MiCI ASD ASD Resource Room
	Middle School at Parkside	Self-Contained Special Education Classrooms MiCI (2) EI ASD Resource
	Jackson High School	Self-Contained Special Education Classrooms MiCI EI
Michigan Center School District	Keicher	Self-Contained Special Education Classroom - MiCI
Western School District	Western High School	Self-Contained Special Education Classroom- MiCI

What is extended school year (ESY)?

Extended school year must be considered for every student with a disability at each IEP Team meeting. ESY services must be provided if the IEP Team determines that such services are necessary to the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education.

If considering Extended School Year service, the IEP would determine if there are one or more annual goals where significant concerns exist regarding skill maintenance during a break in services. ESY is not needed for a Free Appropriate Public Education if there is no concern. For each goal area of concern, answer the following questions if there is a concern:

1. Is there information that indicates to the IEP Team that in this goal area there is a serious potential for regression of skills beyond a reasonable period of recoupment? What data support this? **Or**
2. Is there information regarding the nature and/or severity of disability of the student that indicates to the IEP Team that there is a need to provide services in the identified goal area(s) of concern during breaks in the school year? What data support this? **Or**
3. Is there information that indicates to the IEP Team that in the identified goal area(s) of concern the student is at a critical stage of learning and/or in a critical area of learning where failure to provide a service beyond the normal school year will severely limit the student's capacity to acquire essential skills?

To answer this question, first answer the following questions:

- a. Is there a skill that needs to be mastered immediately? If the student does not master the skill immediately, is the degree of mastery likely to be permanently reduced? What data support this? **Or**
- b. Is the student at a critical stage of development where there is a window of opportunity that will be lost if services are not provided? What data support this? **Or**
- c. Are there changes in the student's medical, physical, or sensory status that makes it possible to predict an accelerated rate of learning during the ESY period (critical stage)? What data support this? **Or**
- d. Is the skill in a critical area of learning and will a break in services result in the loss of a window of opportunity for mastering the skill? What data support this?

If the answer to all of these questions is no, ESY services are not needed for a Free Appropriate Public Education. If the answer to one or more these questions are yes, the IEP Team needs to consider a plan for ESY services.

Other factors that must be considered in determining ESY:

- The determination of the need for ESY must be based on data.
- The determination of the need for ESY services cannot be based on a formula.
- ESY services can be provided in a variety of ways.
- LRE requirements for ESY services are not identical to LRE requirements for the normal school year.
- ESY services are only provided for those annual goals identified as an area of concern and which are determined to require ESY services.
- New annual goals are not developed for ESY services.
- Consideration of ESY services needs to be made in a timely manner.

What transportation service does a district provide for special education students?

The same transportation services available to general education students are available to special education students. In addition, specialized transportation services are provided by school districts if the IEP Team determines that the student needs those services to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The school district's responsibilities related to transportation include providing safe and efficient transportation for students, furnishing any specialized services documented on a student's IEP (such as a lift bus or safety harness), and following appropriate safety, medical, and traffic rules and procedures.

What are my responsibilities related to transportation of my special needs student?

It is important for parents/guardians to read transportation policies and procedures provided by their district or transportation office and to discuss those policies with your son/daughter, when possible. Besides reinforcing safety rules, it is the responsibility of parents to assist their student to the bus if he/she cannot travel independently between the residence and the bus due to physical problems, immature development, or inaccessibility of the residence. When a student is returned from school, a responsible person must be at home unless the parent/guardian has given written permission to leave an older student alone. Teamwork, communication, and cooperation between parents and schools are important in achieving safe transportation of students.

What are procedural safeguards?

Procedural Safeguards are legal safeguards that protect the rights of students with disabilities and their parents. It provides the information that parents need in order to make decisions about their student's education. Procedural Safeguards explain the procedures used to resolve disagreements between parties.

The Parent Handbook of Procedural Safeguards referenced in this handbook is from state and federal rules and regulations. Sometimes it is difficult to understand. If you have any questions regarding them, please contact the ISD, your local school district, a PAC member, or other sources listed in this handbook.

This document provides parents of students with disabilities, from birth through age twenty- six, an overview of their educational rights with respect to special education. This document incorporates all procedural safeguards to parents and students with disabilities afforded under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) and the IDEA implementing regulations.

What is an IEP Amendment?

The purpose of the IEP Amendment is to make minor changes to the IEP during the year the IEP is in effect. If substantial or comprehensive changes need to be made to a student's IEP, an IEP Team meeting should be convened to develop a new, complete IEP Team Report.

The parent must participate in the development of the amendment. The student's current IEP will remain in effect until the next review or re-evaluation date. The parent is entitled to a full review of the IEP upon request.

How does a student's disability status affect school discipline?

Every school in Michigan is also expected to provide Positive Behavior Supports (PBS). Positive, proactive approaches diminish the likelihood of behavioral interference with the operation of schools and benefit all students, especially those at greater risk of behavior problems. Seek out information about what PBS strategies are used within your student's school and how parents may be able to contribute to a positive and productive school environment for all students. Each public school district also has its own suspension and expulsion policies regarding when and for how long a student may be

removed from their normal school activities in response to the most serious rule violations. However, if your student has either a known or suspected disability, federal and state laws may provide certain protections when it comes to suspension or expulsion. For up to 10 days removal in a school year students suspected or known to have a disability may be disciplined like all other students. However, beyond 10 days removal in a school year requires additional procedures and protections for students suspected or known to have a disability. A school district is not required to provide special education services to your student if he/she has been removed from their current school placement for ten (10) school days or less in a school year however, when the student has been removed for over 10 days in a school year the district must provide services so that your student can participate in the general education curriculum (although potentially in a different setting) and the services provided must assist your student to progress towards meeting the goals of their IEP. If your student is removed over 10 days in a row (11 days or more consecutively) or it is determined that there is a pattern of removals (similar behaviors, close proximity, etc...) within a school year, the district must hold a meeting to determine if your student's misconduct subject to discipline was caused by or is substantially related to your student's disability, within ten (10) school days of a decision to remove your student from school (e.g. change your student's placement). This team meeting is called a **Manifestation Determination Review (MDR)**. Keep in mind that you have the same rights as you do when you attend an IEP meeting. You may dissent, ask for mediation, or request a hearing if you disagree with the team's decision. You also have the right to make a request for relevant team members to be present at the meeting.

What can be done if my student's behaviors cause removals from school?

When a student's behaviors negatively impact the student's learning or that of others your student's educational team may seek consent to conduct a **Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)**. The perspective of the student, parents, teachers and others are important to gather through this process as well as when, where, with whom the behavior problems occur as well as when, where and with whom they do not. This collection of data on factors surrounding the student's behavioral problem(s) may be helpful in order to develop a **Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)** that provides positive behavior supports to make the problem behavior(s) less likely to impact the student's and other's learning. The BIP may be modified over time based on student needs and responses to interventions.

What education records are kept on my student?

Michigan law requires that school districts maintain records on all students enrolled in or receiving special education from the public schools. These records include such factual data as date of birth, residence, health records, attendance and achievement in school.

Students enrolled in special education programs have records including the above data, in addition to factual information on required special education procedures such as: referrals, evaluations, and educational planning team meetings. You should expect to be provided written copies of any evaluation reports and Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) along with a written notice to you upon any changes being planned to your student's program which allows you the opportunity to disagree with the district's proposed plan.

In regards to your student's education records, you have the right to:

- Receive, upon request, a list of the types of education records kept on your student.
- Expect that your student's records, including information stored on computers, will be kept confidential.
- Inspect and review any of your student's records.
- Receive copies of the records. You may be charged for the cost of duplication.
- Have someone at your student's school explain any item you do not understand.
- Have a person of your choosing inspect and review the records.
- Ask for a change in any record on the grounds that it is inaccurate, misleading, or violates privacy rights.
- Request a formal administrative review on the issue if the district refused to make a change.
- Receive notice when the personally identifiable information collected, maintained, or used is no longer needed. The information must be destroyed at your request.

What happens if my student turns 18 years old?

Age of majority (age eighteen) means that a student is a legal adult who makes decisions at his/her IEP team meeting as well as in other areas of life. At this time, the rights of the parent transfer to the student unless guardianship, partial guardianship or power of attorney is obtained through the County Probate Court of the student's residence. School personnel will provide each student and his/her parents with information on this topic at least one year before the student reaches the age of eighteen. If rights will be transferred to the young adult,

encourage the school to assist in training the student in the IEP process and, if possible, in chairing the IEP team meeting before the age of majority. Participation in the IEP will be easier if the student has already been an active member of the IEP team and has had training in self-advocacy and self-determination. After age eighteen, the student will help determine participants in the IEP team meetings, which may or may not include his/her parent(s) and/or an advocate.

How does Graduation impact my student's IEP?

In Michigan, a student with disabilities, who is eligible, may receive services from the public school agency until age twenty-six, unless that student fulfills the graduation requirements of the school or achieves his/her transition goals. If graduation requirements are fulfilled and the student receives his/her diploma, the student is no longer eligible for services. Remember, there is a difference between participating in a graduation ceremony and the actual awarding of the diploma. Your student may wish to participate in all senior activities, even if he/she may continue with his/her education in a transition program.

What Can Be Done to Plan for Life Beyond School?

Transition (as defined by the IEP) refers to an organized set of activities designed to help a student with disabilities prepare for adult roles and responsibilities. At age sixteen, the IEP Team must consider the need for transition services. This is documented on the transition page of the IEP and includes a statement of transition service needs.

Post-secondary vision planning focuses on the student's course of study (whether the student will participate in classes leading to a diploma or a certificate of completion). Some student's teams will plan for post-secondary training (e.g. vocational training, college, university) while others will work to support student's entry into the adult community and workforce at a level they are able to perform. Referral(s) to outside agencies should be considered for needed transition services, such as the Michigan Department of Rehabilitation Services. The local educational agency must invite the student and will ask for written consent to invite a representative of any agency that is likely to be responsible for providing post- secondary transition services.

If the student does not attend, the student's preferences and interests must be considered. If an invited agency does not attend, the school district should take other steps to ensure the agency's participation in transition planning. A written transition plan should be part of the IEP every year beginning at age sixteen, or younger if appropriate. Transition plans should address all aspects of a student's life including high school and post-secondary education, vocational training, daily living skills, housing, recreation, community involvement and employment.

What does Medicaid have to do with Special Education?

Michigan's **School Based Services (SBS)** program has its legal basis in the 1988 amendment to the **Social Security Act** [42USC1396b(c)]. This Act allows for partial reimbursement to schools for health services. These are provided to Medicaid eligible students with disabilities who qualify under the federal **Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA)**.

Nationally, more than 25 million students rely on Medicaid for health care and 43 states participate in the SBS program. In Michigan, nearly 900,000 students rely on Medicaid for health care. **All 56 Michigan intermediate schools districts participate in the SBS Program.**

In Michigan, The Medicaid School Based Services program:

- Provides partial reimbursement for services such as
 - Occupational therapy
 - Physical therapy
 - Speech therapy
 - Psychological services
 - Social work services
 - Orientation and mobility services
 - Transportation
 - Nursing services
 - Case management
 - Assistive technology services

- **Does not affect a family's Medicaid insurance benefits or the family's private health insurance benefits.** There is **NO COST** to the family, now or in the future. No private insurance companies will be billed for reimbursement for school-based health services.

- **Helps school districts** because it offsets some of the costs of health care that schools provide to students.
- **Is voluntary and requires parents/guardians to provide written consent** to release information about their student in order to bill Medicaid. This consent may be revoked at any time by the parent or guardian.

SECTION 504

Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in any program that receives federal financial assistance. The United States Department of Education has issued revisions to the requirements of Section 504 with emphasis on procedural safeguards and other protections that would prevent discrimination against individuals with disabilities, effective March, 2011.

All students eligible for special education are afforded protections against discrimination under Section 504. For a student to qualify for Section 504 protection, the student must: **(1) have a mental or physical impairment (2) which substantially limits (3) one or more major life activities.** All three criteria must be met before the student is eligible for Section 504 protection. Some students who do not qualify for special education may qualify for Section 504 accommodations. For example, students with symptoms of medical conditions (e.g. ADHD, Epilepsy, etc,...) may not need special education but do require accommodations (e.g. preferred seating, breaks, behavioral support, etc,...).

Section 504 requires that a school district make “reasonable accommodations” to insure the eligible student’s access to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) free from being discriminated against due to the symptoms of a disability. For example, a student using a wheelchair might need accommodations that allow him or her barrier-free access to school restrooms and to the playground at recess. You can play a central role in asking for specific accommodations to make sure your student’s needs are met.



Remember that even if the school district finds that your student is ineligible for special education services, he or she may still be eligible for accommodations under Section 504.

Appendix A

Appendix B

This is a partial listing of some of the acronyms you may come in contact with:

ADA Americans with Disabilities Act	LRE Least Restrictive Environment
AD(H)D Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder	MDE Michigan Department of Education
AG Annual Goal	MET Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team
ASD Autism Spectrum Disorder	MiCI Mild Cognitive Impairment
CBI Community Based Instruction	OHI Other Health Impairment
CI Cognitive Impairment	O & M Orientation & Mobility
CP Cerebral Palsy	OSE Office of Special Education
ECDD Early Childhood Developmental Disorder	OT Occupational Therapy
EI Emotional Impairment	PAC Parent Advisory Committee
ESY Extended School Year	PI Physical Impairment
FAPE Free Appropriate Public Education	PT Physical Therapy
FTE Full Time Equivalency	PBS Positive Behavior Support
HI Hearing Impairment	SEAC Special Education Advisory Committee (Michigan)
IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	SLI Speech & Language Impaired
IEE Independent Educational Evaluation	SLP Speech & Language Pathologist
IEP Individualized Educational Plan	SSW School Social Worker
IEPT Individualized Educational Planning Team	STO Short-Term Objective
IFSP Individualized Family Service Plan	SXI Severe Multiple Impairment
ISD Intermediate School District	TBI Traumatic Brain Injury
JCISD Jackson Intermediate School District	TC Teacher Consultant
LEA Local Education Agency	VI Visual Impairment

Appendix C

Possible Accommodations/Modifications to be included in IEPs

Supplemental aids and services; necessary to enable your student to participate successfully in the general curriculum

<p>Pacing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust deadlines or amount of work to meet requirements • Vary activity often • Omit assignments requiring timed copying • Provide home set of text/material for preview/review • Other: 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangement of material on page • Note-taking assistance/copy of lecture notes • Use supplementary materials • Recorded text and/or other class materials • Typed copy of teacher material • Word Processor/Computer, Calculator, Spellcheck , Video record, Tape/voice recorder • Augmentative communication device • Other:
<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan seating strategically: Bus, classroom, lunchroom, auditorium • Alter physical room arrangement • Define areas concretely • Reduce distractions: Visual, Auditory, Spatial • Allow movement in defined area • Teach positive rules for use of space • Other: 	<p>Self-Management/FollowThrough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow visual daily schedule • Use calendars • Check often for understanding/review • Reinforcement Schedules • Have student repeat directions • Teach study skills & Self-Monitoring • Use study sheets to organize material • Design/write/use long-term assignment time lines • Review and practice in real situations • Plan for generalization • Teach skill in several settings/environments • Other:

<p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give directions in small distinct steps and/or use alternative modality (picture, verbal, written) • Provide print copy for oral directions • Reduce difficulty level • Shorten assignments • Reduce paper and pencil tasks • Read or tape record directions • Give extra cues or prompts • Allow student to record or type assignments • Adapt worksheets, packets • Provide alternative assignment/strategy when demands of class conflict with student capabilities • Limit penalizing for errors that reflect student's disability • Provide samples of what an "A" assignment looks like • Other: 	<p>Testing Adaptations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read test to student; text-to-speech on computer • Preview of test language and item types • Extended time; more frequent breaks • Modify Output: Oral/scribed, Multiple choice, reduce choices, • Modified format: Shortened questions – key words • Administered in smaller, less distracting setting • Other:
<p>Presentation of Subject Matter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach to student's learning style: Visual, Auditory, Tactile, Experiential • Use individual/small group instruction • Utilize specialized curriculum • Tape lectures/discussion for replay • Provide notes • Apply academic skills to practical situations • Present demonstrations (model) • Utilize manipulatives • Highlight critical information • Pre-teach vocabulary • Make/use vocabulary files • Reduce language level or reading level of assignment • Use total communication/interpreter • Share activities • Other: 	<p>Motivation and Reinforcement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Goal Setting; Graphing – Charting Progress • Tap Intrinsic motives, strengths, and interests • Contingent, Reinforcement (verbal, tangible, intermittent) • Student, Teacher, Parent and Peer Activities • Other:

Home/School Communication

- Team meeting(s)
- Daily Reports
- Other:

Social Interaction Supports

- Peer Support Groups
- Social Justice Programs
- Peer Tutoring
- Partial/negotiated participation
- Prioritize social processes rather than activity/end product
- Structured shared experiences in school extracurricular
- Cooperative learning groups
- Use of multiple/rotating peers
- Teach social skills (friendship/sharing/negotiations, etc)
- Teach social communications skills (eye contact, conversational turn taking, perspective taking, etc)
- Structured activities to create successful social interaction
- Other:

IEP Preparations

The IEP should help determine how your student gets from “here to there.”

• **First and foremost, come prepared.** Discuss your thoughts with the teacher/team prior to the IEP. The team should have solid ideas about the plan prior to the IEP. The IEP meeting should be the time to discuss and put that pre-plan in writing! When possible, include your student in the planning and IEP to promote self-advocacy.

• Begin to think about **LIFE SKILLS**, not only the assists needed in the school for your student to succeed each day... but also where the student is headed beyond one school year. What do we need to plan to get there?

• While a student matures prioritize **TRANSITION** planning from one building or program to the next as well as post-secondary goals.

• Once the IEP is completed, be sure to monitor activities stated within the plan, such as number of speech and language or occupational therapy sessions per month.

• Ask how you can work on skills at home with your student to achieve the stated goals.

• Consider problems or concerns you have. If possible, address these **PRIOR** to the IEP so teachers can be prepared.

• Take a few minutes and review previous IEPs and/or progress reports.

• Review what your expectations are for your student’s education.

• Review the need for a behavior supports.

• Review or reconsider what your student’s strengths are.

• When thinking of your student’s needs, don’t be limited by what you think may or may not be available at the school. It’s called an IEP because each program must be individualized for each student.

• If your student takes medication, review any changes in medication with the teacher.

Ten Questions to ask at the IEP

1. Did my student make the expected progress this past year?
2. If not, why not?
3. Did any particular problems occur at school this last year?
4. What are the school’s goals for this next year?
5. How will these goals be measured?
6. To what extent will my student be included with general education students?
7. Are transition services necessary at this point?
8. Are there any other services my student needs to be successful in school?
9. Is my student getting along with his/her peers?
10. What can I do at home to support my student’s progress at school.

Your Resource Contacts

At your student's initial IEP meeting gather the following information and keep for future needs. There is a duplicate of this form at the end of this handbook that may be copy and use at subsequent IEP meetings.

My student's eligibility for special education is _____

My student's school building telephone number is: _____

Names and contact information of persons working with my student:

Principal	E-mail	Telephone
Primary General Ed. Teacher	E-mail	Telephone
Special Education Teacher	E-mail	Telephone
Teacher Consultant	E-mail	Telephone
Special Education Supervisor	E-mail	Telephone
Bus Garage/Driver	E-mail	Telephone
Other	E-mail	Telephone
Other	E-mail	Telephone
Other	E-mail	Telephone