



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING


GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 21, 2025

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Michele A. Harmala, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent 
Division of Educator Excellence, Career Technical Education,
Special Education, and Administrative Law

SUBJECT: Family Matters Resources and Information

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) Office of Special Education (OSE) requests your help sharing Family Matters resources that provide parents and families with information about Michigan's special education system.

The resources are on the [Family Matters webpage](#), which offers multiple Family Matters fact sheets. The fact sheets are easy to read, give links to more in-depth resources intended to enhance public understanding of Michigan's special education system, and are available in English, Spanish, and Arabic.

MDE OSE developed Family Matters resources in 2017 in response to the Special Education Reform Task Force recommendations and continues to develop Family Matters fact sheets on a variety of topics. At the same time, MDE OSE keeps past fact sheets up-to-date with current information per [Section 350 of Public Act 166 of 2022](#).

The [final report from the task force](#) advised MDE to improve access to resources for families with children who receive special education programs and services. The recommendation specifically called for MDE to promote the resources and for intermediate school districts (ISDs) to "use this information to proactively contact the families of students regarding procedural safeguards and the resources available to them." The resources available are the Family Matters fact sheets that outline procedural safeguards, which protect the rights of children and families receiving special education services.

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The goal of MDE is that during the initial Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting, local education agencies (LEAs), both traditional public school districts and public school academies, will distribute information on behalf of MDE to families. This information includes a [Family Matters flyer](#), a [letter to parents](#) from the MDE OSE director, and a [Family Matters Procedural Safeguards fact sheet](#). The Family Matters Procedural Safeguards fact sheet does not replace the [Procedural Safeguards document](#) provided to parents by the ISD, but supplements it with a brief overview of the topic.

Additionally, letters are being sent to all ISD special education directors to seek directors' support in distributing these resources. The ISD letter explains the importance of Family Matters and includes directions for ISD use and distribution of this information to families of children with disabilities.

Sharing this information is an opportunity for ISDs, LEAs, and MDE to collaborate to support families aligned with [Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan](#) Goal 1, to expand early childhood learning opportunities, and Goal 3, to improve the health, safety, and wellness of all learners.

Thank you for your attention and support of this effort. If you have any questions regarding Family Matters, please contact the MDE OSE information line at 888-320-8384 or email MDE-OSE@Michigan.gov.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Departments