CHILD FIND

RSU No. 5 seeks to ensure that all children within its jurisdiction who are between the ages of 4 and under 22 years of age, and who are in need of special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated at public expense. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- children who are experiencing homelessness,
- state wards,
- state agency clients,
- students who have been suspended or expelled,
- children attending private schools or receiving home instruction,
- children incarcerated in county jails,
- children who have the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year,
- highly mobile children (including migrant or homeless), and
- children who are suspected of being disabled and in need of special education and supportive assistance even though they are advancing from grade to grade.

RSU No. 5's Child Find responsibility shall be accomplished through a unit-wide process which, while not a definitive or final judgment of a student's capabilities or disability, is a possible indicator of special education needs. Final identification of students with disabilities and programming for such students occurs only after an appropriate evaluation and a determination by the IEP Team.

This Child Find process shall include obtaining data on each child through multiple measures, direct assessment, and parent information regarding the child's academic and functional performance, gross and fine motor skills, receptive and expressive language skills, vision, hearing and cognitive skills. RSU No. 5 may receive referrals to the IEP team from parents, agency representatives, Early Intervention for ME, or other individuals with knowledge of the child; such referrals will be acted on in a timely manner. RSU No. 5 may also schedule child find activities during its annual kindergarten enrollment to assist in planning for necessary special education and related services at the start of the school year.

RSU No. 5 may provide information regarding the referral process to parents and the school community at school events, publish information and relevant timelines in parent/student handbooks, school manuals, calendars, and on its website, and make information available for parents and the public in Doctor's offices, day care, library, town hall etc.

If the Child Find process indicates that a student may have a disability that requires special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education, the student shall be referred to the IEP Team to determine the student's eligibility for special education services.

School staff, parents, or agency representatives or other individuals with knowledge of the child may refer children to the IEP team if they believe that the student, because of a disability, may be in need of special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education. Such a referral should follow the school unit's pre-referral and referral policy.

Legal References: 34 C.F.R. § 300.111 (2015)
ME. Dept. of Educ. Rule Ch. 101, IV 2(A), (C-E) (2024)

Cross Reference: IHBAA - Referral Procedures and General Education Interventions
IHBAA-R - Referral Procedures and General Education Interventions

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