

Family Matters Fact Sheet

Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education



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Nonpublic and Home Schools

A nonpublic school is not operated by a public school district. Nonpublic schools may be religion-based, private, or a home school. Eligible children in a registered and approved nonpublic school may still receive some special education services.

Special Education in a Public School Versus a Nonpublic School

When you enroll your child in a **PUBLIC** school district:

Your child, if eligible, is entitled to receive a [free appropriate public education \(FAPE\)](#) through an [individualized education program \(IEP\)](#). A FAPE may include:

- Programs
- Services
- Accommodations
- Modifications
- Specialized instruction

When you enroll your child in a **NONPUBLIC** school:

Your child does not have a right to a FAPE and will not have an IEP in a nonpublic school. Some services (such as speech or physical therapy) may be provided through a nonpublic services plan (NPSP) but the services provided may be less than what your child would receive in a public school. The services are determined through a consultation process between the public school district and the nonpublic schools. Following the consultation meeting, the public school district determines what services will be provided considering the needs identified and the required amount of funds reserved for this purpose, referred to as the proportionate share. The services are typically provided by the public school district in the nonpublic school. Nonpublic schools are not bound by special education law.

When the public school district places your child in a nonpublic school:

The public school district may, through the IEP team, choose to provide a FAPE by placing your child in a nonpublic school. In this case, your child must have an IEP to receive a FAPE.

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Family Matters fact sheets are intended to enhance public understanding of Michigan's special education system and are not a substitute for official laws and regulations.



Public School District Requirements for Nonpublic Students

Public school districts must reserve a percentage of special education funds, referred to as a proportionate share, to provide services through a NPSP for eligible nonpublic children. The percentage of funding is based on the number of eligible children in nonpublic schools. The school districts must spend the funds on allowable services described in the NPSP. However, there is no requirement to provide all the services needed by a child.

Evaluations for Students in Nonpublic Schools

Even when your child is in a nonpublic school, the public school district where the nonpublic is located is responsible for your child's [evaluation for special education](#). If you request a special education evaluation, the public school district must get your consent and then begin the evaluation process. If your child is determined to be eligible and enrolls in the child's resident public school district, he or she will receive a FAPE and an IEP. If your child is determined to be eligible and attends a nonpublic school, he or she may receive services through a NPSP.

Nonpublic Services Plan

When a child is enrolled in a nonpublic school by the parents, the public school district's obligations are different than for children enrolled in public schools. Eligible children in public schools receive individualized special education programs and services through an IEP. Eligible children who attend nonpublic schools receive services through a NPSP.

Home School Information

Home schooling is the responsibility of the parent or guardian and includes providing homework, tests, grades, report cards, and diplomas. Reporting to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is voluntary. When special education services are being requested from the public school district, parents must complete a Nonpublic School Membership Report. Local school boards set policy on whether nonpublic school children in their district can participate in their sports and club programs. For additional information, refer to the document titled [Home Schooling in Michigan](#), located on the MDE website.

Resources

- Michigan Department of Education:
 - » [Web page about nonpublic and home schools](#)
 - » [Guidance for Timeline of Initial Evaluations for Students who are Parentally Placed in Private Schools](#)
- U.S. Department of Education:
 - » [Provisions Related to Children With Disabilities Enrolled by Their Parents in Private Schools](#)
 - » [Michigan State Regulations, Private and Home Schools](#)



[Michigan Alliance for Families:
Nonpublic Schools](#)