

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Directors of Special Education and Pupil Accounting Auditors

FROM: Jacquelyn J. Thompson, Ph.D., Director

DATE: April 17, 2002

SUBJECT: Clarification for Counting Membership for Special Education Pupils IEP'd to Less than a Full School Day

This memorandum is in response to the questions that we have been receiving regarding the criteria for counting special education pupils in membership who have a shortened school day as found in the special education directions which accompany the DS-4061 Pupil Membership Count Form.

The section of the special education directions reads as follows:

“A pupil is counted for a full membership if attending school for less than the total required hours if the IEPC has determined that the pupil is not capable of attending school the required number of hours. This does not apply to preprimary pupils.”

Special education programs are governed by rule R340.1733 of the Michigan Administrative Code. This rule requires in part:

R340.1733(g) Special education programs and services shall be provided for at least the minimum number of hours and days of teacher-pupil contact in conformance with the pupil accounting rules, being R340.1 to R340.12, but the number of hours and days for a special education program or service shall be not less than those required for regular education programs.

Thus, special education pupils are required to attend school the same number of days and hours as is required of any pupil to be counted for a full membership. The qualifying factor in the special education directions is the word “capable.” This word here is used to imply medically or emotionally capable to attend school. In this context, the directions are supported by the pupil accounting rule R340.5(f) that describes a pupil convalescing from illness or recuperating from a physical injury. The medical or emotional reason a pupil cannot attend a full day should be documented in the pupil’s record or IEP.

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Such reasons should be documented by medical or psychological personnel. The intent of this section is to transition a medically fragile or homebound/hospitalized special education pupil back to the classroom. This section of the special education directions does not apply to pupils disciplined for behavior problems or pupils who are suspended or expelled.

Special education pupils, like any other pupil, who do not need a full day of instruction to acquire enough credits to graduate, who choose to spend part of their day working, or for a number of other reasons choose not to attend a full day are counted as part-time pupils. Such pupils will receive a prorated membership. Refer to Section 11 – Part-Time Pupils of the Pupil Accounting Manual.

Special education pupils in grades 9-12 may also qualify as reduced schedule pupils. Pupils qualifying under the reduced schedule option may be counted as a full membership if the local school district has determined that the reduced schedule best serves the educational needs of the pupil and the pupil is scheduled to receive at least 80% or the required minimum number of hours of instruction. Refer to Section 7 – Reduced Schedule Pupils of the Pupil Accounting Manual.

JJT:DE:lvh