



Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education
Revised 6/4/2020

Criteria and Procedures for Determining Eligibility and Counting Pupils for Section 53a Funding

The following information is required to verify eligibility of special education pupils to be counted for Section 53a on the SRSD. Verification must be sent to the intermediate school district (ISD) for each pupil whose name is listed on the A Worksheets. The ISD will check the information, keep it on file, and provide it to the Department of Education upon request.

1. Court or state agency placed pupils.

A letter from the court or state agency on agency letterhead is required. The letter must contain enough information to verify the pupil lived in another ISD at the time the pupil came under the jurisdiction of the court or state agency. This will require the address where the parents lived, when the pupil came under the jurisdiction of the court or state agency, and verification that the court or state agency placed the pupil at the present location. This may be documented by supplying a copy of the court order or individualized service agreement from the Department of Human Services (DHS).

While the Department of Education prefers copies of the court order or DHS individualized service agreement be submitted, other forms of documentation may be acceptable provided the Department is able to discern that the court or DHS is the agency making, and responsible for, the placement of the pupil. This documentation must also meet the qualifications listed in the above paragraph.

Pupils placed by a Care Management Organization (CMO) from Wayne County are eligible as Section 53a provided that such youth are placed as consent or accepted cases. Documentation required to validate these pupils is both the initial court order and the CMO individual service agreement with the contracting provider.

Examples of Care Management Organizations are:

- Black Family Development
- Bridgeway
- Central Care Management Organization
- Growth Works
- Starr/Vista

Pupils placed by private agencies, such as Catholic Family Services or Lutheran Social Services, and pupils placed by Community Mental Health Boards **do not qualify** under this category unless there is evidence that they are wards of the state and placed by the agency on behalf of the court or state agency.

2. Pupils residing in institutions operated by the Department of Community Health.

Provide verification to the ISD that the pupil was a resident of a Department of Community Health (DCH) Institution for the Developmentally Disabled. A list of these institutions is attached. Such verification would include written confirmation from the DCH or the Community Mental Health Board that the pupil was a resident of a DCH institution and the dates the pupil was institutionalized. The letter containing the dates of institutionalization needs to verify pupil was fully institutionalized in the facility on the pupil count day.

3. Pupils who are former residents of DCH Institutions for the Developmentally Disabled who are placed in community settings other than the pupil's home.

Provide verification to the ISD that the pupil was a resident of a DCH Institution for the Developmentally Disabled. A list of these institutions is attached. Such verification would include written confirmation from the DCH or the Community Mental Health Board that the pupil was a resident of a DCH institution and the dates the pupil was institutionalized.

Pupils who only received diagnostic services, counseling, placement, or respite care **do not qualify** under this section.

4. Parent placed pupils.

The term "parent" is defined in R 340.1701b(e) as follows:

"Parent" means mother, father, or legally designated guardian of the student or youth with a disability. "Parent" also means the affected student or youth with a disability when the student or youth with a disability reaches 18 years of age if a legal guardian has not been appointed by appropriate court proceedings.

Parent placed pupils qualify for Section 53a if the placement was for the purpose of providing a suitable home and the parent resides in another ISD. Verification of such placement will include the pupil's birthdate, the parent's name, address and school district of residence, and the statement that the placement was for the purpose of providing a suitable home. This information must be signed by the parent.

The following pupils **do not qualify**:

- a) Pupils over the age of 18, unless there is documentation that the court has established a full legal guardian who is a resident of another ISD.
- b) Pupils placed for the purpose of seeking a suitable education (the pupil is only residing in the district during the school year, the parent says they placed the pupil for educational purposes, or a guardian has been assigned to oversee the pupil's education). This also includes pupils placed in a district for a day program who live in another district at night.
- c) Pupils placed for the purpose of adoption or pupils who have been adopted.