

Family Matters Fact Sheet

Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education



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Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The IDEA is a federal civil rights law to protect the rights of students with disabilities who are eligible for special education services and the rights of their parents.

What is in the IDEA?

IDEA is the federal requirement issued to states and schools for the provision of special education programs and services.

Part A

Provides general provisions and definitions of the IDEA.

Part B

Guides the programs and services (special education) for students ages 3-21. (Michigan provides programs and services from birth to age 26.)

Part C

Guides the early childhood programs and services for eligible children ages birth to 3. Michigan's program is called *Early On*.

Part D

Funds for Part D are allocated based on a national competitive process and sets up parent training centers for each state. In Michigan, the parent training and information center is the Michigan Alliance for Families. Part D also provides funding for the MDE MTSS Technical Assistance Center.

Core Principles of the IDEA

Procedural Safeguards

[Procedural Safeguards Fact Sheet](#)

The IDEA's required procedures are designed to ensure each student with a disability receives a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

Parent (and Student) Involvement

[Advocating for Your Child Fact Sheet](#)

Parents and students are active members of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team and provide meaningful input.

Appropriate Evaluation

[Initial Evaluation for Special Education Fact Sheet](#)

Each student suspected of having a disability must receive a comprehensive evaluation by qualified professionals in all areas of suspected disability using a variety of assessment tools.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

[Free Appropriate Public Education Fact Sheet](#)

Each student with a disability must have access to the general education curriculum and meet the student's individual needs.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

[Educational Placement and the Least Restrictive Environment \(LRE\) Fact Sheet](#)

A student with a disability must be educated with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate to the student.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

An IEP Team determines student's needs and special education programs and services to address those needs.

June 2025



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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.



Eligibility for Special Education

In Michigan, a multidisciplinary evaluation team, which consists of a qualified professional(s), will conduct a comprehensive evaluation and make a recommendation of eligibility to the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team. The student's IEP Team then determines whether a student is eligible to receive special education and related services. The IEP Team includes the student's parent and a group of qualified professionals who are knowledgeable of the student, the meaning of evaluation data, and of the placement options.

1

Meet the criteria of one or more disability category

Part 1 of the [*Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education*](#) (MARSE) defines Michigan's 13 categories and criteria for eligibility.

2

Need specially designed instruction and related services

The disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum.

Resources



[Michigan Alliance for Families:
Law - IDEA, Sec. 504, ESSA,
ADA, MARSE](#)

- [Michigan Department of Education: Previously Released Guidance](#)

Training Curriculum on IDEA

The [Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\) training curriculum on IDEA](#) offers five family-friendly training modules:

- Welcome to IDEA
- IDEA and General Education
- Evaluating Children for Disability
- The Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Procedural Safeguards under IDEA 2004

Websites

- [Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\)](#)
Resources for parents
- [Michigan Department of Education](#)
Special education laws and regulations
- [U.S. Department of Education](#)
Information about the IDEA