

Minnetonka School District #276

PARENT HANDBOOK

FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION



The District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability.

WELCOME!

In 2003 the Minnetonka Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) developed a Parent Handbook for Special Education with support from Minnetonka District #276. The intent of the Parent Handbook was to provide parents with information needed to help them be active participants in their child's unique special education programming and planning.

Parents and staff found this handbook helpful in understanding the complicated special education process. District staff updated the handbook in 2009 to reflect the changes in District, State and Federal guidelines.

We encourage parents to take an active role in their student's education planning and the steering of their education careers. It has been proven that the most successful children had the largest amount of parent participation.

We hope that this handbook helps provide the information parents need to be advocates for their child.

Please direct questions about the Parent Handbook to Jan Bootsma, Executive Director of Student Support Services, at 952-401-5017.

We wish to acknowledge those responsible for making the initial Parent Handbook for Special Education possible.

- **Barb Sorum** for her invaluable advice and encouragement. Her enthusiasm for this project inspired us all.
- **Minnetonka District 276** for support of this manual, especially to Jan Bootsma for her personal involvement.
- **Thank you to Minnesota Department of Education (formerly Minnesota Department of Children, Families & Learning) for providing the funds for this project.** A grant was given to SEAC to cover the cost of creating this handbook and the funds to buy resource books available at all schools.
- **Special thanks to the administrators, teachers and parents** that took the time to read and edit this manual. Their help was critical.
- **Thank you to Lynn Youngquist** for volunteering her time and talent. Her assistance in putting the handbook into the final format is greatly appreciated.
- **Thank you also to Beth Duffy, Jeryl Chiappetti, Barb Sorum, and Mary Jo Gordon** for their work on the handbook and preparation of the grant request.

Dear Parents,

As a parent of a child receiving special education, you know how confusing, baffling and, at times, even intimidating the special education process can be. What is an IEP and how does it differ from an evaluation? Can I ask for an evaluation? Can I ask for an IEP meeting? Does the school have to assess my child and under what conditions? At times, the role of parent of a student with special education needs can be demanding.

This resource was originally developed in 2003 by the district SEAC (Special Education Advisory Council) and updated in 2009. It is my hope that this handbook will help you navigate the special education system. Even more, the handbook will provide parents with information that will help you be active and effective members of your child's educational team.

Sincerely,

Jan Bootsma, Ph. D.
Executive Director of Student Support Services

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2009-10 School Contacts

Below is a list of Special Education Leads (SEL), Principals and Special Education Department Chairs in the district. SEL provide information about programs and options in their building or the district. They also know about the "process" of special education. If you have a specific concern about performance in general education classroom/curriculum, contact the specific teacher to resolve the concern. For concerns regarding your child's IEP or special education services contact the child's IEP manager. If that does not resolve the issue, the next step would be to talk to the building principal and then, if necessary, the Director of Student Support Services.

Building	Phone	SEL	Principal	Dept. Chair
Clear Springs	952-401-6950	Delette Lemon	Curt Carpenter	
Deephaven	952-401-6900	Julie Hines	Bryan McGinley	
Excelsior	952-401-5650	Jeri Braun	Lee Drolet Cook	
Groveland	952-401-5600	Sue Odt	David Parker	
Minnewashta	952-401-5500	Kris Pakkala	Cindy Address	
Scenic Heights	952-401-5400	Angie Elliott	Joe Wacker	
Middle East	952-401-5200	Mary Kay Burmesch	Mark Larson	Mary Kay Burmesch
Middle West	952-401-5300	David Gondeck-Becker	Bill Jacobson	D. Gondeck-Becker
High School	952-401-5700	Kathryn Wipperling	David Adney	Amy Stafford

Dr. Jan Bootsma - Director of Student Support Services	952-401-5017
Deb Anderson - Supervisor of Student Support Services	952-401-5036
Shelly Hayes - Supervisor of Student Support Services	952-401-5087
Mary Miller - Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator	952-401-6808

What is Special Education?

Under the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA), special education means “Specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with disability.”

Children who receive special education and related services are entitled to a [free, appropriate public education](#) (FAPE). This includes opportunities to participate in the school’s general curriculum and to make progress towards meeting annual goals. Children who receive special education must have opportunities to take part in other typical school activities that are appropriate to their individual needs.

In Minnesota, schools are required to serve eligible children from birth until the age of 21, or graduation from high school, whichever comes first. This may be a topic for the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team to discuss in planning transition from high school. The Team may determine that it is best to hold the student’s diploma, as the student needs more services before transition to adult services can take place. It is possible for the student to participate with the rest of the class in the graduation ceremony and pick up a “blank” diploma -this is an IEP Team decision.

Services are provided by licensed personnel and include special teaching, materials, and techniques. Services may also require special equipment at buildings.

The Minnetonka School District assures students with special education needs access to appropriate services in the following disability areas:

- [Speech or Language Impairment](#) (S/L)
- [Developmental Cognitive Disability](#) (DCD, Mild to Moderate or Severe to Profound)
- [Physically Impaired](#) (PI)
- [Deaf -Hard of Hearing](#) (D/HH)
- [Visually Impaired](#) (VI)
- [Specific Learning Disability](#) (SLD)
- [Emotional/Behavioral Disorders](#) (EBD)
- [Deaf Blind](#)
- [Other Health Disabilities](#) (OHD)
- [Autism Spectrum Disorder](#) (ASD)
- [Developmental Delay](#) (DD) (was [Early Childhood Special Education](#) ECSE)
- [Traumatic Brain Injury](#) (TBI)
- [Severely Multiply Impaired](#) (SMI)
- [Developmental Adapted Physical Education](#) (DAPE)

There are specific criteria that need to be met in order to qualify for special education. The current Minnesota criteria are available on the MN Department of Education website: http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Accountability_Programs/Compliance_and_Assistance/Special_Education_Monitoring/Traditional_Review/Criteria_Checklists/index.html

What are Related, Direct and Indirect Services?

[Related services](#) are services that are necessary for a child with a disability to benefit from special education. Related services can include transportation, speech-language pathology, audiology services, physical and occupational therapy, and social work services, to name a few. These services may be direct or indirect. Direct services are provided directly to the student from a professional. Indirect services are provided from the professional to the teacher, parents, or others that work directly with the student. Indirect services can include counseling, progress reviews and discussing strategies to help the student function better.

What is IDEA-97?

The [Individuals with Disabilities Act](#) (IDEA-97) is the federal special education law. Congress will revise and reauthorize the IDEA statute periodically. There may be some changes because of this. You should be aware of your rights under these regulations, as they will affect the placement of your child and the curriculum in the school. The most recent reauthorization was in 2004 (IDEIA-2004 the Individual with Disabilities Educational Improvement Act)

Children with disabilities are entitled to receive a free, appropriate public education (FAPE). There are [procedural safeguards](#) in place so that each student receives an appropriate evaluation and an individualized education program that meets specific needs. Parent and student participation is encouraged and parents are important resources in developing these programs.

Your child should be educated with his or her peers as closely as possible. You should only consider alternative programming when the needs of your child cannot be met within the regular school setting with supplementary aid and services. This is referred to as the [least restrictive environment](#) (LRE).

Each state has special education laws. IDEA-97 is the minimum and some states offer more. In Minnesota, the Department of Education is responsible for the rules and regulations affecting special education. More detailed information about laws, regulations, and statutes are available on their website (www.state.education.mn). Their phone number is 651-582-8200.

What is a Referral?

Children may be eligible for special education services at birth. In these cases, your child's services are provided through the Minnetonka School District and Hennepin/Carver County. Identification of school-age children is usually based on the child's performance in school.

Pre-referral: Before referring a school aged child for an evaluation, the classroom teacher may plan strategies to see if his or her performance improves with simple changes in curriculum or environment. These are called "pre-referral interventions." At least two pre-referral interventions must be tried and documented. If your child's performance improves, an evaluation may not be needed. If problems continue, an evaluation will help identify more specific ways to help your child learn. A pre-referral intervention does not require parent permission.

Parents: It is important to know what interventions are to be tried and the amount of time that they will be attempted before it is decided if they are working or not. If parents refer their child, pre-referral interventions may not be necessary.

Referral: When classroom interventions are not successful, the classroom teacher may make a referral for a Child Study Team to consider whether the child should receive further evaluation. This team decides the areas to be evaluated and the types of evaluation(s) to be completed.

The referral is the starting point of the special education process. A referral is simply a written document requesting an evaluation. This referral can be made by a parent or guardian, the classroom teacher, any member of the school district (public or private), a judicial officer, or a student (18 years or older, or an emancipated minor). A meeting may be scheduled to voice concerns.

Parents may initiate a request for an evaluation. In order to do this, you should submit a **written** request for an evaluation to the school. One copy of the letter should go to the school principal, one to the Director of Student Support Services and one should be kept for your files. This document should include the reason for the referral and details describing academic or behavioral concerns. You may also be asked to provide additional details regarding the concerns about school performance.

A referral does not mean the student has a disability. It is the first step to determine if concerns are due to a disability. Following the referral, the school district will invite you to an evaluation planning meeting. You will work with the school team to determine what areas will be evaluated, what tests will be used and who will do the testing. The evaluation can **not** take place without your written consent. Once the school district receives consent, the evaluation must be completed within 30 school days.



What is an Evaluation?

About the Evaluation

When an [evaluation](#) is recommended, it means that your child's academic team of teachers feels that your child may have issues at school that are interfering with his or her ability to learn.

Your child's teachers may not have identified any particular area of concern, but they would like to have a team of learning/behavioral specialists (the Child Study Team) review your child's records and make recommendations to them about how best to work with your child or how a special evaluation might be helpful.

The purpose of the evaluation is to determine if the student qualifies for special education. This starts with the evaluation of the child in all areas of concern. The evaluation should examine all areas of suspected disability and provide a detailed description of your child's current educational performance and needs. This evaluation may include formal tests, informal observations, and evaluations. Evaluations may also include review of the student's educational and medical history. Several professionals may be involved, and may include, but are not limited to, the general education teacher, a special education teacher, the school nurse, the school psychologist, a speech/language pathologist, an adapted physical education teacher, occupational therapist, physical therapist, or a vocational counselor. The evaluation will attempt to determine if factors related to a disability are affecting your child in school.

Teachers can refer a student to a Child Study Team without your authorization; however, no special education evaluation can take place without your written consent. The school district will invite you to an evaluation planning meeting. You will work with the school team to determine what areas will be assessed, what tests will be used and who will do the testing. A form requesting permission to evaluate your child will be sent to you for your signature, shortly after the Child Study Team has met to review records with your child's teachers. The form will indicate what areas are to be tested, who will be doing the evaluation and specifically what types of tests they are going to administer.

The school district has 30 school days (not including holidays and weekends) to complete the testing. This time period is determined by state rules in order to provide schools with enough time to conduct an appropriate evaluation of your child's needs.

The following personnel may be involved with your child's evaluation:

- School Psychologist
- School Nurse
- Counselor
- School Social Worker
- Speech/Language Pathologist
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Special Education Teacher

The specialists involved will depend on the area(s) of concern regarding the student. There **MUST** be more than one test performed by more than one evaluator during the evaluation.

You must give your consent in writing before the evaluation can take place. Some questions you may want to ask the school staff:

- *Why do you want to do an evaluation?*
- *What kind of information will we find out from the evaluation?*
- *What kind of testing will be done?*
- *What areas will be tested?*
- *What will happen if I say no?*
- *Will I get a copy of the evaluation results?*
- *What if I would like a specific test?*
- *What do I do if I disagree with the results?*

There are additional federally regulated steps taken when a specific learning disability is suspected. The district must have at least one Team member, other than the student's teacher, complete a classroom observation of the student's academic performance. When a child is less than school age, a Team member should complete the observation of the child in an age-appropriate environment. If the child qualifies for special education services, the results from the evaluation will be used as a guide to develop your child's educational program (IEP). If you disagree with any part of the evaluation, you need to resolve the issues before proceeding to the next step (see the section "What if I Disagree or Have Concerns with my child's IEP" for more information).

After the Evaluation

After the [evaluation](#), the IEP manager assigned to your child will contact you. This person will coordinate a date and time for you to come in to discuss the results of your child's evaluation. Along with you, members of the evaluation team along with at least one classroom teacher, and sometimes the student may be present at this meeting. The student's participation is determined on an individual basis and is up to you. Generally, students in middle school and high school attend. This is determined before the meeting with the Team. Student participation is important and his/her input can be very valuable.

The results will be summarized in an Evaluation Report (ER). A draft of the report may be given to you at the meeting. Upon your request, it may be possible to get the report before the meeting. You will be able to have input into the final report.

You also may choose to have an independent evaluation done privately and at your own expense. The results of these evaluations must be considered by the School District. If you disagree with the evaluation done by the school, you may exercise your right to request an [Independent Educational Evaluation \(IEE\)](#). This is an evaluation provided by a mutually agreed upon independent professional at no cost to you or your family. The school district is required to give you several choices of qualified professionals who can perform the IEE. You select which professional conducts the IEE. To request an IEE, you must notify the Director of Student Support Services of your disagreement, in writing. It is recommended that you make a copy of the request for your own file.

If the child does not meet the specific eligibility requirements for special education services, a [Team may override](#) an eligibility decision. The team must document why the assessment did not accurately identify the disability. Documentation must be provided with signatures of all team members.

Parents: It may be beneficial to hold a pre-meeting conference with a member of the evaluation team to be better prepared for the meeting with the evaluation team.

The MN Department of Education has issued a set of guidelines for schools to follow when evaluating children who may have special education needs. Children must meet specific criteria to receive special education services. These guidelines or criteria specifically indicate what kind of profile children need to have in order to qualify for special education services in any area.

If it is determined that the student qualifies for special education services, then an IEP is created by the IEP Team.

If a student does not qualify for special education and still struggles in school, there are other options that may be available to him or her. General education supports including title services, guidance counselors, 504 Plan or other building support may help. The student's classroom teacher may also be able to provide more information. (See section "What is a 504 Plan, RTI, and ILP?" for more information.)



What are IEPs, IFSPs, and IIIPs?

Parents and students are involved in planning for the special education evaluation and with the development of the special education program. The student's plan is formalized using a document called the Individual Family Services Plan (*IFSP*) for children in Early Childhood Special Education (birth through age 2) or the *Individualized Education Program (IEP)* for school-age children. Families may also choose to use the *Individual Interagency Intervention Plan (IIIP)* form for students from age birth to 21.

The term IEP will be used throughout this document. Unless specified it is meant to include IFSP and IIIP. The forms are different; however, the process is the same.

Development of the "Team"

The IEP requirements under IDEA-97 (an important law to know!) emphasize the importance of working cooperatively as a Team. The Team is facilitated by the school district. The Team brings together parents, students, general educators, special educators and administrators. Important educational decisions for students with disabilities are made with this approach. With the combined knowledge and resources of these individuals, students will be assured greater support and subsequent success. Under IDEA-97, the following people are required to be on the Team and at the meetings:

- At least one parent.
- At least one general education teacher.
- Special education teacher.
- District representative (This person is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction, is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of school district resources).
- The student, if appropriate.

There may be other Team members as appropriate. Parents can bring anyone they wish to the IEP meetings. As a courtesy, advise the school district if you are bringing additional guests or participants. The school will let you know whom they plan to have attend via the Team Meeting Notice that is sent out. All people invited may not attend. The district can invite only persons with direct educational involvement with the student.

The Team process should be a collaborative process between parents, school staff members and other professionals who are involved with your child. As a parent, you have a unique and critically important perspective on the child's learning style, strengths and needs. The school staff should ensure that you feel comfortable when communicating with school staff.

You have the right to be involved in ALL meetings that discuss the identification, evaluation, IEP development and educational placement of your children. The law insures that you and school personnel are equal partners in all steps during the Team process.

Student participation is important and students are considered important members of Team meetings. As students get older, they should become more and more active at Team meetings, and their interests and preferences should determine the direction for the identified goals and services in the IEP. Supporting active student participation in the Team process assists students in developing self-determination skills. Such skills are necessary in adult life. When students turn 17, school districts are required to advise students of their rights, including the right to attend Team meetings and the importance of the corresponding responsibilities. If the student does not attend the meeting, the district must take other steps to insure that the student's preferences and interests are considered. It is not mandatory for the student to attend. The decision to attend is up to the student and his/her parents. A student should be encouraged to attend the IEP meetings when he/she reaches the age of 14, or younger if appropriate.

What is the Role of the Team?

The Team process has important, integrated steps. Under IDEIA-2004, the IEP process is a focal point for reaching improved outcomes for students with disabilities. This process, critically important to children with disabilities, must be carefully managed to ensure that the unique needs of the student are addressed. An appropriate evaluation, development of the IEP, appropriate services and periodic progress reports are crucial.

Re-evaluation

A student who receives special education must have a [re-evaluation](#) at least every three years or more often if necessary. The purpose is to determine if your child still requires special education and related services. You will be invited to a meeting to develop an evaluation plan. Again, the IEP manager will request your permission to complete the re-evaluation.

Development of IEP, IFSP, and IIP Documents

An IEP is a legally binding contract detailing special education and related services to be provided for the student. Once the Team has determined that the student is eligible for special education services, the type of Individualized Education Program (IFSP, IEP, IIP) is decided on, and then the document is developed. There are three possible forms that can be used in planning:

IFSP

An [Individual Family Service Plan](#) (IFSP) is for children under the age of 3 with a disability and the family, based on needs developed by a multidisciplinary Team, including parents. The IFSP should contain an assessment and program development, periodic review (i.e., 6 month interval), content of the plan, and parental consent. The development of the IFSP should be completed within 45 calendar days from the initial referral.

IEP

An [Individualized Education Plan](#) is for a student ages 3 up to 21. Services need to begin within 30 calendar days from the date the student was found eligible.

IIIP

The Triple IP (IIIP or [Individual Interagency Intervention Plan](#)) is available to children birth to age 21, or graduation from high school. This document is an option for students that receive services from two or more agencies such as school, Department of Health, etc. Signatures are required from all agencies. The development of the IIIP must be completed within 30 school days from completion of the evaluation.

An IEP manager will be determined. Contact the IEP Manager if you have questions or concerns. IEP Managers can be any school personnel on your child's Team.

If the Team is in agreement on the IIIP, services for the child should begin as soon as possible but not later than 30 calendar days. It is okay to disagree with the proposed plan, however, this will affect when the child will start receiving services. (See section "What if I disagree or have concerns with my child's IEP?")

Before the meeting

Some things to think about before the meeting (you might want to write them down):

- What are the educational goals you have for your child, short and long term?
- Any concerns you may have.
- How your child learns, what does and doesn't work?
- How does your child's disability affect his/her education? Learn all you can about your child's disability.
- Request the evaluation results before the IEP meeting.
- What are your child's strengths, interests and needs?
- Consider involving your child, when appropriate.
- Consider bringing someone with you such as a friend, relative, spouse, or advocate.
- Consider inviting other professionals involved in your child's care (doctor, therapists, PCA, etc).

During the meeting

- Be a respectful listener.
- Share your thoughts.
- Ask questions - make sure you understand.
- Remember the meeting is about your child.
- If there is a completed IEP, take the document home and review it. You have 14 calendar days to sign it.

After the meeting

- Review your notes.
- Clarify any concerns.
- If there were things that were agreed upon at the meeting, make sure they are in writing, in the IEP.

Contents of the IEP

By law, there are certain things that an IEP must include about the student and the educational program designed to meet his/her needs. This information includes:

Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP): The IEP must state how the student is currently doing in school. This information comes from many sources and may include the evaluation of classroom tests and assignments, formal tests used to decide Special Education eligibility and observations from staff, teachers and parents. The “functional performance” includes how the student’s disability affects his or her involvement and progress in the general education curriculum.

Goals and Objectives: Define the areas of focus for educational planning. Goals describe what the student is expected to accomplish within a year of writing the IEP. The goals should be measurable. You should let the Team know what goals are priorities for your family. Short-term objectives are the steps that help the student reach the goals. There must be at least two objectives for each goal.

Special Education and Related Services: This area lists all services the district has agreed to provide. This is where direct and indirect services would be defined. It needs to be written here, if it is a service your child will receive. Indirect Service means your child doesn’t actually see that person, but someone on the Team receives consultative services in regards to the student. Direct service is the time that the child is personally involved with the specified professional. This area defines what the special education service is, where the child will receive services, the amount of time and the frequency of the service.

Dates and places: The IEP must state what services will be provided, where the services will be provided, when they are to begin and how long they will last.

Participation with Non-disabled Children: The IEP must explain the extent (if any) that the student will not participate with non-disabled students in the general classroom and other school activities.

Participation in state and district-wide tests: Most states require achievement tests to be given at various grade levels. The IEP must state what modifications or accommodations are to be provided when the test is administered to the student. If the test is not appropriate to be given to a student, the IEP must state the reasons why and what alternative testing will be used instead.

Course of Study: When the student turns 14, or reaches grade 9, whichever comes first, the IEP must address the courses, services, etc., planned to help the student reach his or her post-high school goals. (This may begin at a younger age, if appropriate.) Transition needs must be addressed in each subsequent IEP.

Transition activities and services: At the age of 16 (or younger if appropriate), the IEP must state what transition activities and/or services are needed to help the child prepare for leaving school.

Transfer of Rights at Age of majority: Beginning at least one year before the child reaches the age of majority (18 years old), the IEP must state that the student has been informed of any rights that will transfer to him/her at that time.

Progress Reporting: The IEP must indicate the frequency, method and when student's progress on goals will be reported to the parent/guardian. Parents should be informed of progress at least as often as parents of children without disabilities.

Program Placement Decisions

Once all the elements of the IEP are determined, including services and supports, a placement decision must be made. The first placement option considered for each student with a disability must be the general education classroom with the provision of needed aids and services. This is termed the least restrictive environment. The law requires that students not be placed outside of the general education classroom, unless their disability requires another setting. The Team must always consider the unique needs of the student before making the final placement determination.

While the goal is to have children taught in their neighborhood school, this is not always possible. A student with specific needs will be placed in a program that best addresses their needs. That may mean that the student will attend a school within the district but not their neighborhood school. It may be worthwhile to check into available programs within the whole school district. Another school in the district may have a program geared towards a specific disability that may be more appropriate for the student.

Monitoring IEP Progress

It is important to monitor the progress of your child! Take the IEP home and read it over, compare it to the last one and make sure you understand and agree with the goals and objectives. It is also important to review the amount of time that each specialist designates to serve your child. You **DO NOT** need to sign the IEP at the meeting. You have 14 calendar days to sign and return it. You can disagree with the IEP and state your concerns, which is your right as a parent. Put your disagreement in **writing**. The district needs to respond to your concerns within 14 calendar days. You are the best advocate for your child. Ask questions.

Progress reviews for special education students must occur as often as they do for general education students. A parent may request reviews more often if the situation warrants. If a general education student receives three report cards then a student in special education should get three progress reports on their IEP goals.

What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive technology provides devices and services to students with disabilities to increase their independence. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as reauthorized in 1997 (IDEA-97) requires that the IEP Team “consider” assistive technology for *all* students with an IEP. School districts must provide for assistive technology to ensure that the student receives a free and appropriate public education.

Assistive technology is composed of devices and services that help to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a student with a disability. Assistive technology devices can range from low-tech pencil grips to high-tech computer systems. Assistive technology services may include the following:

- Evaluation of student’s needs.
- Device selection.
- Aid in acquisition of the device.
- Training and technical assistance for the student using the device.
- Training and technical assistance for those involved with the student.

The term “consideration” is not clearly defined in IDEA-97. The State of Minnesota recommends that school districts utilize the SETT framework (Student, Environment, Tasks, Tools) to aid IEP Teams. The goal of the framework is to guide teachers, specialists, clinicians, and parents on how to describe the student’s needs when selecting assistive technology. The IEP Team collects data on the student in the following areas:

- Student’s strengths, abilities and skills.
- Environments in which the student functions.
- General education curriculum needs to meet IEP goals.
- Information about devices and services to meet the goals.

Many devices may be tested before the device that most benefits the student is found. When the essential assistive technology device is identified, it should be written into the student’s IEP. There may be more than one assistive technology device identified to help the student.

If the Team determines that more help is needed, an Assistive Technology Evaluation can be requested.

Accommodations and Modifications

Some students with disabilities may be able to participate in the general classroom and be successful with the use of some “[accommodations](#)” or “[modifications](#).” An accommodation allows students to do the same work as the other students but with a change that allows them to be more successful. An example is taking a test in a quiet room rather than in the classroom. An accommodation does not alter the rigor of the material.

A modification lowers the rigor of the material and changes what a test or assignment measures, as compared to the rest of the class. An example would be a student only completing work on a portion of the material covered.

Accommodations and modifications should be written into a student’s IEP. The agreed upon changes should fit the student’s individual needs. It is important to involve the student, as appropriate, in this process to get his/her ideas on what changes would be helpful.

Educational Records

You have the right to look at your child’s [school records](#). Talk to the school principal and ask to review the records. You may also want to follow up the request in writing. These records include all the information that is collected, maintained or used by the staff. The district must let you review the records. [Minnetonka’s student record policy](#) (policy #515 section 14) is to respond to your request within 10 school days.

Your right to inspect and review records includes the right to an explanation of your child’s records. You may also request that others be able to inspect and review the records.

You may also request copies of your student’s records. There may be a fee charged for the cost of copies. No fee can be charged for retrieving or searching for records.

The district must keep a log of everyone that accesses your child’s records. This log must list the name of the person looking at the records, date of review and the purpose of the review.

Parental consent is needed for records to be released to unauthorized persons or agencies. Records cannot be released to a medical agency without your consent.

If you feel there is information in your child’s records that is incorrect or misleading, you have the right to request that the information be removed or changed. If the district does not agree with your request, it must inform you in writing that the changes will not be made. If the district does not agree with your request, they will offer a meeting to resolve the differences. If all else fails and you and the district cannot come to an agreement, you have the right to a hearing to challenge the district’s position. A hearing officer will make a decision. You can also add your information to what is in question in the student’s file.

Before any educational records regarding your child are destroyed, the district needs to inform you of its intent. This may be communicated via school newsletters (hard copy or email) or other district-wide mailings. You will not receive an individual letter.

What if I Disagree or Have Concerns With My Child's IEP?

An IEP is a legally binding contract. Items agreed to at a Team meeting should be included in writing in this document. If services that are in writing in the IEP are not being administered, the school district is in non-compliance. You should contact the IEP manager if the IEP is not being followed. If the IEP manager is unable to help, the next step is to speak with the school principal. If necessary, the Special Education Director should then be contacted. If all else fails you can contact MDE. They will provide you with information on steps to address the [non-compliance](#). Their phone number is 651-582-8200. MDE periodically monitors each school district for compliance.

You have the right to disagree with the school district's decisions concerning IEPs, evaluations or educational placements for your child. It is not uncommon for differences to arise between members of the student's IEP Team. It is important to remember that everyone on the Team has the child's best interest in mind and wants the student to be successful. With that said, disputes do arise. There are many options available to help resolve differences. These options are available to you and the school district. **It is important that you put your requests in writing and keep a copy for yourself.**



Resolving Disputes

These are a few options available for resolving disputes. (Chart reprinted with permission from the Dept. of Education.)

Dispute Resolution Options	Determining Which Alternative Dispute Resolution Option Is Appropriate	How to Access the Option Selected
Conciliation	Conciliation must be offered to parents if they object to a proposed IEP as an attempt to resolve any disputes between the parties that are creating barriers to developing an appropriate IEP. Conciliation does not necessarily involve a neutral third party and does not require all IEP team members to be present.	If a parent objects to a proposed IEP, the district must offer conciliation to the parent. Ask the case manager or a district administrator for a conciliation conference or let them know you agree to go to conciliation after they offer it.
Mediation	A trained, neutral mediator assists the parties in resolving the underlying conflicts and problems creating a barrier to agreement. Mediation is useful when the IEP team has more substantial problems because of mistrust, miscommunication, or a history of difficulty coming to agreement.	If both parties agree to use a mediator, one may be requested by contacting: Patricia McGinnis MNSEMS 651-582-8222
Facilitated IEP Meeting	A facilitated IEP team meeting is an IEP meeting that is facilitated by a neutral party. This process is useful when the IEP team is having communication difficulties that prevent agreement over one or more issues concerning the IEP. A facilitator can help the team improve communication and come to agreement.	If both parties agree to use an IEP facilitator, they may request one by contacting: Patricia McGinnis MNSEMS 651-582-8222
Complaint Investigation	A complaint is a formal, state investigation process used when any person believes an education agency has violated state or federal special education law. A complaint is generally a less expensive, less adversarial, and faster option to resolve a perceived violation of law than a due process hearing.	Anyone may file a signed, written complaint alleging a violation of special education law by writing: Due Process Supervisor Division of Accountability & Compliance 1500 Hwy. 36 West Roseville, MN 55113. An optional complaint form is available on the internet at http://education.state.mn.us/ or by calling 651-582-8689.
Due Process Hearing	A due process hearing may be used when there is a dispute over issues involving the delivery of special education services, evaluation, or placement. Parents have the right to go directly to a due process hearing (unless they voluntarily waive that right). It may also be used by the district to challenge a parent's refusal to: allow an initial evaluation, agree to the provision of certain services, agree to the placement of the student, or when the district declines the parent's request for an independent educational evaluation.	A parent may make a written request to the school district for a due process hearing when the parent objects to: assessment, or denial of assessment, placement, provision of services, or the denial or removal of special education services. Contact your local school district or case manager for information about requesting a hearing.

Extended School Year

School districts are required to provide [extended school year](#) services (ESY) to students if the IEP Team determines that the services are necessary during a break in instruction in order to provide a free appropriate public education. The criteria used to determine ESY eligibility should be reviewed yearly. A student qualifies for ESY if he/she meets any of the following criteria:

- There will be significant regression of a skill or acquired knowledge from the student's level of performance on an annual goal that requires more than the length of the break to recoup (a shorter time frame to recoup may be agreed upon by the IEP Team).
- Services are necessary to attain and maintain self-sufficiency skills.
- The IEP Team otherwise determines that given the student's unique needs, ESY is necessary.

The Team decides eligibility for ESY using information from prior observation of the student's regression and recoupment over breaks, either summer break or scheduled breaks in the school year. The Team may also look at the student's degree of impairment and rate of progress, among other things.

504 Plan and RTI

504 Plan

[Section 504](#) is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individual with disabilities in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Section 504 provides: "No qualified individual shall, on the basis of a disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance..."

Section 504 falls under the responsibility of the general education program. A student is considered to have a disability within the definition of Section 504 if he or she: has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities; has a record of such impairments; or is regarded as having such impairment. If your child is evaluated and does not qualify for special education they may qualify under Section 504 if their disability substantially limits one or more major life activities. A team decision is required to make this determination. A 504 plan may provide for regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the student's needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met. Contact the 504 Coordinator located at MHS if you have questions: 952-401-4033.

RTI

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a 3 tiered model of instructional support available for all elementary students. It includes providing high quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make changes in instruction, and applying child response data to important educational decisions. For more information, contact the reading teacher at your elementary building.

Statewide Testing Guidelines for Students with IEPs

Minnesota measures school and students' progress through different grade/subject level tests called the [Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments](#) (MCA). The MCA are accountability tests to see how well schools are performing. At the high school level, students are required pass the MCA tests or the GRAD portion of the writing and reading test for graduation. Students with disabilities are included in these tests.

The MCA tests occur in grades 3, 5, 10 and 11; additional grades may be added in the future. The data collected from these tests is used to compare groups of students over time.

The Writing test is given initially in 9th grade and then repeated until it is passed. The Reading test is initially given in 10th grade. Students who do not pass are required to complete remediation and retest until the reading test is passed. The Math test is initially given in 11th grade. Students who do not pass are required to complete two remediation and two retests.

The district also uses the NWEA tests for grades K-8 in early October and again each March. These tests measure what children already know in math and reading and what a child still needs to learn to better assist teachers in targeting instruction to the child's learning level. More information can be found at the Minnetonka website:
www.minnetonka.k12.mn.us/academics/test/NWEA/pages/default.aspx.

Students with special education services are included in these testing requirements and it is up to the IEP Team to determine what is appropriate for the student regarding these tests. If the Team determines that the material has been taught to the student and the student is capable of taking the test without any necessary accommodations then the test will occur under standard conditions. The Team may decide that the student would not be able to participate in the testing without accommodations. If that is the case then the appropriate accommodations need to be implemented. An accommodation does not alter the rigor or reliability of the tests. Examples of accommodations that are allowable would be in the areas of:

- Setting
- Timing
- Presentation form
- Response format

All students must be included in the statewide accountability system. [Alternate Assessments](#) are for the very few students whose goals and objectives on their IEPs do not address the material that is on the MCA. Some of the reasons for an Alternative Assessment may be:

- Lack of ability to participate in learning the material.
- Lack of exposure to the material being tested.
- Severe anxiety in testing situation, a reaction beyond normal levels of nervousness.

The MCA are accountability tests that are required by the federal government. A student that can not take the MCA test(s) needs to be evaluated using an alternate assessment (IDEA-97). Minnesota has developed an alternate assessment system that rates the student's progress in developmental academic skills or functional living skills. The student's special education teacher will conduct the [MN Test of Alternative](#) (MTAS).

- Please note that the MCA test allow accommodations but do not allow modifications to be implemented.

The accommodations, modifications and/or alternative assessment associated with MCA test(s) need to be written in the student's IEP.

Graduation Standards

Minnesota has adopted a set of standards that are required for graduation. The graduation standards expect students to demonstrate their knowledge through application. These standards are believed to be important to the education of all students in Minnesota – including students in special education. Graduation standards are embedded in the curriculum (course offerings). All students are expected to complete the standard as part of meeting the class requirements. If students have accommodations or changes via their IEP, those apply to the standards as well.

Disciplining Students with Disabilities

There is nothing in IDEA-97 that restricts schools from [disciplining a student with a disability](#). School systems have the legal responsibility to provide a safe, violence-free environment including a code of conduct containing specific consequences for violating the code. School systems have the legal right and responsibility to discipline students and to ensure all students and parents are familiar with the discipline code. Some students may need specialized services to change disruptive or dangerous behavior and to prevent reoccurrences. Consequently it may be necessary to develop some goals to achieve proper behavior, which would then be included in the student's IEP.

Remember, special education students are subject to the same rules and codes of conduct as non-special education students. The only difference is that the consequences for misbehavior by

students in special education are decided on an individual basis. (From the Office of Monitoring and Compliance Newsletter)

The law states that schools shall consider strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, and supports to address the behavior that impedes learning. It is the responsibility of the IEP Team to review the discipline code and develop a behavior plan if it is needed. Behavioral goals should be measurable, reviewed and modified as necessary. When students with disabilities develop a new pattern of problematic behavior, an IEP meeting should be scheduled to determine if additional interventions or modifications are necessary and the team may consider a functional behavioral assessment.

When the disciplinary action rises to the suspension level, especially a five-day suspension or greater, the IEP Team needs to determine if the behavior is related to the disability by completing a manifestation determination. If it is not related to the student's disability, the consequences from the code of conduct will apply.

A manifestation determination establishes whether the inappropriate behavior is a result of the student's disability, which must be conducted:

- At a parent's request.
- If a student is suspended for five or more consecutive school days.
- If a student is removed for 11 cumulative school days in a school year or more.

The IEP Team determines if the misconduct is related to the disability and if the current placement is appropriate.

When a suspension exceeds five consecutive days the district must provide alternative educational services to students with IEPs.

A special education student may be placed in a 45-day interim placement by the school if a drug or weapons violation occurs. A team meeting will be conducted to complete a [manifestation determination](#) and to discuss a [functional behavioral assessment](#) prior to the interim placement.

Functional Behavior Assessment

A [Functional Behavior Assessment](#) (FBA) is a tool used by the IEP Team to:

- Develop better, quantifiable goals and objectives for conduct and social skills.
- Understand why behavior happens and why it doesn't happen.
- To help improve the selection of what to teach, and how best to teach it, working with the individual student in his/her environment.

An FBA allows a behavior to be broken down into its components and allows the Team to:

- Complete a clear description of the problem behaviors.
- Identify the events, times, and situations that predict when the problem behavior will and will not occur.
- Identify the consequences that maintain the problem behaviors; that is, what functions do the behaviors appear to serve for the individual.
- Develop one or more summary statements or hypotheses that describe the specific behaviors, identify where they occur, and identify the outcomes or reinforcers that maintain the behaviors in those situations.

Additionally, a positive behavior support plan is developed by the IEP team utilizing the data collected in the FBA to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of any positive behavioral supports that can be implemented in the school setting.

An IEP Team must meet to develop an FBA plan in the following situations:

- Parent request.
- Student is suspended for 10 or more school days in a school year.
- Student is exhibiting challenging behavior or a *new* challenging behavior whereby the IEP team determines an FBA would be warranted to gather data on:
 - Behavior that results in self-injury or injury to others.
 - Behavior that causes damage to the physical environment.
 - Behavior that interferes with learning by the student or others.
 - Behavior that socially isolates the student.
- Student is undergoing an initial EBD evaluation.
- Student is undergoing a three year re-evaluation (EBD student) and has not previously had a FBA.
- Student is being referred for a more restrictive special education placement.
- During development of a Behavior Intervention Plan for the student.

A [Behavior Intervention Plan](#) (BIP) may then be developed after an FBA has been completed, if the student demonstrates behaviors that may require procedures such as physical restraints to help maintain the student's and staff members' safety or if a student needs time-outs/isolations. The BIP may also include a description of recommended interventions and a hierarchy of consequences utilizing a positive and proactive approach.

Minnetonka Special Education Programs

The Minnetonka Special Education Department serves our students with special education needs from birth to age 21. The disability categories approved by state and federal guidelines are:

Disability	
Speech or Language Impairment (SpL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation • Fluency • Language • Voice
Developmental Cognitive Disability (DCD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild to Moderate • Moderate to Severe
Physically Impaired (PI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spina bifida • Cerebral palsy • Other
Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deaf or hard of hearing
Visually impaired (VI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visually impaired
Specific Learning Disability (SLD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Mathematics • Written Language • Information Processing
Emotional/ Behavioral Disorder (EBD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional and/or behavior
Deaf-Blind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing and vision loss
Other Health Disability (OHD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourette's • Attention Deficit • Other
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDD – Pervasive Developmental Disorder • Asperger's Syndrome
Developmental Delay (DD) was Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental Delay
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brain injury
Severely Multiply Impaired (SMI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe leaning and/or developmental problems resulting from two or more specific disability conditions

There are several unique programs within the Minnetonka School District to serve students with special education needs. It is important to note that this overview is to provide information to the parents of special education students. **It is up to the individual IEP Team to decide the best placement option for the student.**

Early Childhood Special Education Service

Home Based Services

In Minnesota, services for special education may begin at birth. For children under the age of three, services are usually provided in the child's natural environment, which is the home. The services that are provided may include Physical Therapy, ECSE teacher, Occupational Therapy, and Speech Therapy, to name a few. The services provided are based on the child's needs and are documented in an IFSP.

Consultation

Minnetonka provides consultation for others involved in the child's life. Staff may consult with parents, childcare providers, private therapists, or other staff members. Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) may request help from the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) staff. Parental permission is required for ECSE to observe the child.

Special Education Classrooms

Special education classrooms are designed for children with disabilities who are of pre-kindergarten age. These classrooms range from non-inclusion to full inclusion depending on the needs of the child.

Small Group Instruction and One-on-One Instruction

There are a variety of groups that help serve the needs of the child. Small group instruction is available to help children work on targeted skills, like social groups. One-on-One instruction can be speech therapy, time alone with the special education teacher or a variety of other services, depending on the needs of the child.

Elementary Special Education Services

Consultation

Each student's designated IEP manager/special education teacher consults with the general education classroom teachers in regard to the student's IEP accommodations and /or modifications.

General Education Classroom Setting

The first goal for every student with a disability is to keep him or her in the general education classroom if possible. Special education teachers and paraprofessionals work with the students within the general education classroom.

Resource Room

An option for students is to receive services from the special education teacher in a small group setting. The student is usually pulled out of the general education classroom for individual and/or small group instruction and then returns to the classroom. The amount of time is determined based upon each child's individual needs.

District Special Education Elementary Classroom Program Options

The district provides special education classrooms for students who need significantly more support than can be offered in the general education classroom. These classrooms provide for a smaller ratio of students to teachers than the typical general education classroom. Students' receive the majority of their educational service in the special education classroom. Students participate in general education classes as appropriate based on their individual needs and skills.

These district classrooms are housed in a specific school, but are district-wide options. **The placement of children in any setting is an IEP Team decision.**

Learning Center – Scenic Heights

This self-contained classroom is for students who need intensive help with emotional and/or behavioral issues.

Skipper Room – Clear Springs

This self-contained classroom is for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, focusing on Asperger's Syndrome.

Developmental Cognitive Delay/Multiply Impaired

Minnetonka Schools DCD programs serve children and adolescents grades K-12 (ages 5-21) with developmental and cognitive disabilities (medically known as mental retardation) and often one or more secondary disabilities. Our DCD programs foster students' development of academic, functional, social, emotional, and vocational skills. These skills are tailored to fit each student's individual needs as determined by the IEP team. Students are provided with specialized curriculum, inclusion opportunities, community outings, and support from other professionals as needed. Some of these supports may include speech and language clinicians, occupational therapists, physical therapists, hearing and vision specialists and technology specialists.

Sites: Clear Springs
Excelsior
Groveland Elementary (2 rooms)

It is important to note that students go through the district referral process and must meet certain criteria. The IEP team determines the placement and level of support based on student needs. In addition to the teacher, there are paraprofessionals helping students in the DCD classroom, depending on the child's needs. Specialists come in and out of the classroom during the day.

Middle School Special Education Services

Consultation

Each student's designated IEP manager/special education teacher consults with the general education classroom teachers in regard to the student's IEP accommodations and/or modifications.

General Education Classroom Setting

In middle school, the special education teachers may work with students within the general education classrooms. The general education teacher and special education teacher collaborate to provide instruction and accommodations that will meet the student's specific special education IEP goals and objectives.

Resource Room

The resource room is designed as a small classroom where students can get assistance from their special education teachers with a smaller group of students. The special education teachers follow the IEP and its accommodations to provide specialized instruction for each child.

District Special Education Middle School Classroom Program Option

Again, the district provides specific classrooms for students who need significantly more support than can be provided in the general education classroom. The IEP team determines the placement and level of support based on individual student needs. Students' receive the majority of their educational service in the special education classroom. Students participate in general education classes as appropriate based on their individual needs and skill levels. Please note that these programs are housed at either MME or MMW and are an option for the entire district.

Autism Center Based Classroom

This self-contained classroom is for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, focusing on Asperger's Syndrome. There are typically eight to twelve students in a classroom and students are in general education classes, as appropriate, based on their individual needs and skill levels.

Site: Minnetonka Middle School West

Developmental Cognitive Delay/Multiply Impaired

Minnetonka's DCD programs serve children and adolescents grades K-12 (ages 5-21) with significant developmental and cognitive disabilities (medically known as mental retardation) and often one or more secondary disabilities. Our DCD programs foster students' development of functional academic, independent living, social, emotional, and vocational skills. These skills are tailored to fit each student's individual needs as determined by the IEP team. Students are provided with specialized curriculum, inclusion opportunities, community outings, and support from other professionals as needed. Some of these supports may include speech and language clinicians, occupational therapists, physical therapists, hearing and vision specialists and technology specialists.

Site: Minnetonka Middle School East and Minnetonka Middle School West

Energy EBD Classrooms

This self-contained classroom is for students who need intensive help with emotional and/or behavioral issues. There are typically eight to twelve students in a classroom and students are in general education classes, as appropriate, based on their individual needs and skill levels.

Site: Minnetonka Middle School East and Minnetonka Middle School West

REC – Resource Education Classroom

This self-contained classroom is for students with significant neurological based processing disabilities. There are typically eight to twelve students in the classroom. Students are in general education classes as appropriate based on their individual needs and skill levels.

Site: Minnetonka Middle School East

High School Special Education Services

Consultation

Each student's designated IEP manager/special education teacher consults with the general education classroom teachers in regard to the student's IEP accommodations and /or modifications.

General Education Classroom Setting

In high school, the special education teachers may work with students within the general education classrooms. The general education teacher and special education teacher collaborate to provide instruction and accommodations that will meet the student's specific special education IEP goals and objectives.

Resource Room

The resource room is open throughout the day to any student on an IEP. Students can get extra help from a paraprofessional and/or a special education teacher.

Learning Center Class

The Learning Center is a scheduled class where students can work on IEP goals, study skills, academic skills, communication skills, behavior, transition skills and help with class work. In this setting the student has daily contact with their IEP manager or another special education teacher. Students earn .25 elective credit per quarter for this class.

Learning Center Reading Class

This is an elective credit class that is designed for students who have significant needs in the area of reading that require specialized instruction, modified instruction rate and adaptive curriculum.

District Special Education High School Classroom Program Options

Again, the district provides specific classrooms for students who need more support than can be provided in typical general education classroom. The IEP team determines the placement and level of support based on individual student needs.

ALP 9 – Alternative Learning Program

This program is open to ninth grade students who are struggling to be successful and have a desire to succeed. Following a referral and decision by the ALP team, students are enrolled in team taught general education English and History classes, and a special education study skills class. Students learn reading, writing and study skill strategies to help with the transition to high school as well as assistance with class work. ALP 9 class enrollment is half general education students and half students with special education needs.

ALP 10 – Alternative Learning Program

ALP 10 is similar to ALP 9 but for 10th grade students needing continued support and skill development to transition to general education classes.

In the following classrooms, students need significantly more support and receive the majority of their educational service in the special education classroom. Students participate in general education classes as appropriate based on their individual needs and skill levels

REC – Resource Education Classroom

This special education classroom offers support to high school students with a variety of disabilities who require a more intensive educational approach. The program offers support in academic areas by providing small group specialized instruction in core curriculum as well as support in regular education inclusion classes and assistance with social/emotional, independent living, job and functional skills. Individual support is based on student need. The REC classroom also provides additional transition skill education through community participation and instruction for students during grades 11 and 12. Support from other professionals including speech and language clinicians, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and hearing/ vision specialists are provided as needed.

Autism Classroom (Communication Interaction Learning Center

The Communication Interactions Learning Center (CILC) is for students identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder. It provides support in general and special education classes. Students work on academic, behavioral, communication, transition and social skills.

Developmental Cognitive Disability

Minnetonka's DCD programs serve children and adolescents grades K-12 (ages 5-21) with developmental and cognitive disabilities (medically known as mental retardation) and often one or more secondary disabilities. Our DCD programs foster students' development of academic, functional, social, emotional, and vocational skills. These skills are tailored to fit each student's individual needs as determined by the IEP team. Students are provided with specialized curriculum, inclusion opportunities, community outings, and support from other professionals as needed. Some of these supports may include speech and language clinicians, occupational therapists, physical therapists, hearing and vision specialists and technology specialists. A typical component of the DCD program for 11th and 12th graders is the MHS based Career Education Training which provides job training and experience.

SPANS – Student Programming for Alternative Need Students

SPANS serve students in grade 9-12 with emotional and behavioral disorders that significantly impact learning. Students take core academic classes taught by SPANS staff and some general education classes, Hennepin Technical College and/or work experience as appropriate. This program works closely with social work, chemical health and other supports within the building.

Flexible Day Program

Flex Day serves juniors and seniors that receive special education service who are significantly behind in credits toward graduation or are struggling even with current special education support. The Flexible Day Program offers students an opportunity to attend school in a smaller supportive environment while working specifically towards IEP goals and graduation requirements. Students earn credits through completion of classroom work, tests, general education classes, and community experience.

IEP Manager/Special Education Teacher

In the spring of a student's 8th grade year the IEP manager for the student's ninth grade year is assigned. Parents can call during fall teacher workshop days to find out the name of their child's IEP manager.

At the beginning of the school year the IEP manager connects with the student's general education teachers. The general education teacher receives a copy of the student's special education goals and accommodations. This is then repeated at the beginning of second semester and/or as the student enrolls in, or begins, new classes.

Please note: Parents are encouraged to meet and communicate with general education teachers throughout the school year. Curriculum night is an excellent opportunity to meet your child's classroom teacher; conferences are also important avenues of communication. E-mailing teachers has become a fast and effective way of communicating with teachers.

Other Resource People

Sometimes students and parents need extra support and/or advice. Other advocates that are available are:

- Social worker
- Guidance Counselor and College Counselor
- Chemical Health Specialist
- District student advocate
- Parent support person

Special Education Services for Ages 18-21

Transition Plus

Transition Plus serves students that are 18-21 years old and who have not received their high school diploma because they continue to have transition needs. Transition Plus is a joint program between Hopkins, St. Louis Park, and Minnetonka school districts that works with young adults with disabilities.

Students continue to work on Transition IEP goals in the three transition areas: Education or Training, Employment and Independent Living (including Community, Recreation and Leisure and Home living). Students are able to earn their high school diploma by achieving their IEP goals.

Transition

In Minnesota, there are laws that require school districts to prepare students with disabilities to progress and move from high school to community life and employment. These are the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA-97), the Rehabilitation Act and its amendments as well as the most recent reauthorization IDEIA-2004. Under the IDEA-97 law there are two parts of the transition. The first part is the planning for a student's future, which is written into the IEP. The second part of the transition is the providing of transition services.

Transition Planning

When a student with a disability receiving special education services reaches ninth grade the IEP will begin to incorporate three transition areas. These transition areas are to help plan what skills the student will need to work on to prepare for life beyond high school. The three transition areas are:

1. Education or Training
2. Employment
3. Independent Living (incorporates home living, recreation and leisure and community participation)

The student and the IEP Team will establish the "Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) in each of the three transition areas and the individual "Educational Needs" of the student.

When the IEP Team determines a student has a transition need, it must be written into the IEP. Support for these needs may include instruction, services, activities, accommodations, supplementary aids, resources, community experience and other assistance.

Transition Services

Beginning at the age of 16, and sometimes younger, a student in special education may need significant services outside of the school district with functional skills to help the student move from high school to adult life. Services focus on the students' needs, interests, education or training goals, employment and independent living skills. Examples of transition services are: transportation, community links with other services, job skills, supported employment experience, etc.

Transition services may be provided for students younger than 16 if the student is at risk for dropping out of school or if services could help with other educational needs.

Transfer of Parental Rights

Before a student in special education legally becomes an adult (in Minnesota the legal age is 18), the school district must notify the student and the student's parents or guardians that the parental rights and procedural safeguards will transfer to the student at the age of majority. This needs to occur at least one year before the student turns 18.

Advocate/Parent Support Information

Student Advocate

Minnetonka School District is unique in that it is one of the few districts that contracts with a Student Advocate. Barb Sorum is an advocate for students in the Minnetonka School District. Barb is knowledgeable in special education and 504 matters. She is available to answer questions and will provide support to students and their parents. She can attend meetings and offer consultations, support, and information.

Phone: 952-401-5777, mailbox # 5005097

Email: Bbsorum@aol.com

ARC of MN

This is a private, non-profit, statewide voluntary organization that supports and advocates for people with disabilities.

Phone: 1-800-582-5256

Website: <http://www.thearcofminnesota.org/>

PACER

Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights works to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life of children and young adults with disabilities and their families, based on the concept of [parents helping parents](#).

Phone: 1.800.537.2237 or 952.838.9000

Website: <http://www.pacer.org>

Conservatorship and Guardianship

A parent is considered a child's natural guardian until the age of 18. Once your child turns 18 he/she is considered an adult and the parent is no longer able to make decisions on the child's behalf. Legally, your child can make his/her own decisions and you may have no say in what decisions are made and you will not be able to access school records. For some families this may not be in the child's best interest. There are options that parents may wish to explore.

In 2003, the legislature made major changes in the state guardianship law. One important change is that there no longer will be guardianship or conservatorship of the person and guardianship or conservatorship of the estate. From now on, all guardianships will be guardianships of the person and all conservatorships will be conservatorships of the estate.

A guardian of the person has the power to make certain personal decisions for a person who is incapacitated. A conservator of the estate makes financial decisions for that person.

Under the new law, a person under guardianship is still called a ward. A person for whom there is a conservatorship of the estate is now called a protected person.

A medical record is considered confidential at age 18; there are narrow exceptions to this rule. In some circumstances where the student's cognitive ability is impaired the parents/guardian may consider conservatorship/guardianship.

Contact the Disability Law Center for no-cost legal protection and advocacy for persons with disabilities. <http://www.mylegalaid.org/mdlc>

Government and County Assistance

In addition to school based special education services, your child may qualify for county services. Please contact the following county agencies for specific information:

Hennepin County Social Services Front Door Access	612-348-4111
Carver County Community Social Services	952-361-1600

Resources

[Arc Minnesota](#)

2446 University Avenue W Suite 110

St. Paul, MN 55114

Phone: 952-920-0855

Web: www.arcgreatertwincities.org

Arc Minnesota is a private non-profit, statewide voluntary organization that is dedicated to ensuring the full participation in the communities of people with developmental disabilities and to improving their lives and the lives of their families by:

- Promoting a system of support and self-sufficiency.
- Advocating for basic civil rights.
- Increasing public awareness.
- Improving public policies.
- Providing information and referral resources.
- Developing opportunities and services, enabling people to become contributing members of their communities.

[Autism Society of Minnesota \(AuSM\)](#)

2380 Wycliff Street, Suite 102

St. Paul, MN 55114

Phone: 651-647-1083

Web: <http://www.ausm.org/>

E-mail: info@ausm.org

Serving the needs of Minnesotans with autism and their families through advocacy, education, and public awareness since 1971.

[Blind, Inc.](#)

100 E. 22nd St.

Minneapolis, MN 55404

Phone: 612-872-0100

Web: <http://www.blindinc.org/>

E-mail: info@blindinc.org

This organization is affiliated with the National Federation of the Blind which believes blind people are seeking the same goal as all American's: independence, self sufficiency and satisfying and gainful employment.

[Brain Injury Association of Minnesota](#)

34 13th Avenue NE

Minneapolis, MN 55413

Phone: 612-378-2742

Web: <http://www.braininjurymn.org/>

E-mail: info@braininjurymn.org

The Brain Injury Association of Minnesota provides help, hope and a voice for the 94,000 Minnesotans who live with a permanent disability as a result of brain injury.

Carver County Human Services

602 East 4th Street
Chaska, MN 55318
Phone: 952-361-1500

Web: <http://www.co.carver.mn.us/>

Carver County Community Social Services provides a wide variety of services that reach out to assist the population of Carver County.

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)

Twin Cities Chadd
Phone: 952-922-5761 or 1-800-233-4050

Web: <http://www.chadd.org/>

CHADD is the nation's leading non-profit organization serving individuals with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD). Through collaborative leadership, advocacy, research, education and support, CHADD provides science-based information about AD/HD to parents, educators, professionals, the media and the general public.

Courage Center

3915 Golden Valley Road
Minneapolis, MN 55422
Phone: 1-888-846-8253

Web: <http://www.courage.org/>

E-mail: Courageinfomation@courage.org

Courage provides a full range of more than 70 programs and services of rehabilitation, mental health, community living, vocational and recreational services at its two main campuses in Minneapolis and Stillwater, Minnesota. They offer selected services in client homes and at more than two-dozen sites across the region, including clinics, senior living facilities, schools, and other community facilities. Courage also operates two permanent camp locations and several regional day camps.

Down Syndrome Association of Minnesota

668 Transfer Road
St Paul, MN 55114
Phone: 651-603-0720 or 800-511-3696

Web: <http://www.dsamn.org/> Email: dsamn@dsamn.org

The Down Syndrome Association of Minnesota is a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all individuals with Down syndrome and their families receive the support necessary to participate in, contribute to and achieve the fulfillment of life in their community.

Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota

1600 University Avenue West, Suite 300
St Paul, MN 55104
Phone: 651-287-2300

Web: <http://www.efmn.org/>

E-mail: bloro@efmn.org

The Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota is a non-profit organization focused on enhancing the quality of life of those affected by seizures.

Fraser Community Services

2400 West 64th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55423
Phone: 612-861-1688

Web: <http://www.fraser.org/>

E-mail: fraser@fraser.org

Fraser is a non-profit organization serving children of all abilities and adults with special needs. Fraser provides services, information, recommendations, and support to families and individuals.

Front Door Access - Hennepin County Disability Services

Phone: 612-348-4111

Web: <http://wwwa.co.hennepin.mn.us>

E-mail: CFAS.Frontdoor.Screener@co.hennepin.mn.us

Hennepin County Disability Services provide a full range of social services to the residents of Hennepin County. Their mission is to ensure the safety and stability for children and adults who are at risk or have been abused and/or neglected; for vulnerable seniors; and for individuals with disabilities. Services are provided to all residents, from children to adults to seniors.

Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota

University of Minnesota
102 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Drive SE
Minneapolis MN 55455
Phone: 612-624-6300

Web: www.ici.umn.edu

Their mission is to improve the quality and community orientation of services and social supports available to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families

LDA Learning Disabilities Association of MN

6100 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley, MN 55422
Phone: 952-922-8374

Web: <http://www.ldaminnesota.org/>

E-mail: info@ldaminnesota.org
The mission of LDA Minnesota is to help children, youth, and adults with learning difficulties learn successfully, dream of possibilities, and achieve their goals. LDA is a private, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) agency located in Minneapolis.

Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health

165 Western Avenue, Suite 2
St. Paul, MN 55102
Phone: 651-603-1570

Web: <http://www.macmh.org/>

The mission of the Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health is to enhance the quality of life for children with mental health disorders and their families.

Minnesota Association for Hearing Impaired (MAHI)

P.O. Box 480046

Coon Rapids, MN 55448

Phone: 763-755-3790 (V-TTY)

E-mail: Debbieepe@juno.com

A metro association that provides support to children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families.

Minnesota Children with Special Needs

Minnesota Department of Health

85 East Seventh Place / PO Box 64882

St. Paul, MN 55164-0882

Phone: 651-215-8956 OR 1-800-728-5420

Web: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/fh/mcshn/mcshn.html>

E-mail: mcshnweb@health.state.mn.us

Minnesota Children with Special Health Needs (MCSHN) is a public program, which seeks to improve the quality of life for children with special health needs and their families. They promote the optimal health, well-being, respect and dignity of children and youth with special health needs and their families. They provide statewide support to achieve:

- *Early identification, diagnosis and treatment.*
- *Family centered services and systems of care.*
- *Access to health care and related services.*
- *Community outreach and networking.*
- *Collection and dissemination of information and data.*

Their goal is healthier children, youth, families and communities.

Minnesota Comprehensive Epilepsy Program (MINCEP) Epilepsy Care P.A.

5775 Wayzata Blvd., #255

Minneapolis, MN 55416

Phone: 952-525-2400

Web: <http://www.mincep.com/>

A clinic dedicated to seizure control.

Minnesota Department of Education

Web: http://education.state.mn.us/html/mde_home.htm

A helpful website that includes the laws and rules regarding special education in Minnesota. Lists disabilities and criteria, information for parents and students, and much more.

Minnesota Department of Human Services-Metro

85 East Seventh Place Suite 105

St. Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 651-431-5940 or 1-888-206-6513

TTY: 1-800-627-3529

Web: [Page 38 - 7/29/11](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/The Minnesota Department of Human Services in cooperation with county partners, helps people meet their basic needs so they can live in dignity and achieve their highest potential.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Minnesota Office of the Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities

121 7th Place E. Ste 420

St. Paul, MN 55101

Phone: 651-757-1800

Web: <http://www.ombudmhm.state.mn.us/>

The Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities assists with the following three areas:

- *Client services.*
- *Medical review*
- *Civil commitment training.*

Minnesota Speech-Language-Hearing Association

1821 University Avenue W Suite 5256

St. Paul, MN 55104

Phone: 651-999-5350

Web: <http://www.msha.net/>

Email: office@msha.net

Founded in 1936, the Minnesota Speech-Language-Hearing Association, MSHA, is a nonprofit organization of speech-language pathologists and audiologists that promotes the welfare of individuals with communication disorders and represents the professionals who serve them.

Minnesota State Council on Disability

121 E. 7th Place, Suite 107

St. Paul, MN 55101

Phone: 651-296-6785

Web: <http://www.disability.state.mn.us/>

The Minnesota State Council on Disability (MSCOD) is an agency that collaborates, advocates, advises and provides information to expand opportunities, increase the quality of life and empower all persons with disabilities. Services are provided to individuals with disabilities and their families, the Governor and Legislature, government and private agencies, employers and the general public.

Muscular Dystrophy Association

7401 Metro Boulevard Suite 325M

Edina, MN 55439

Phone: 952-832-5716

Web: <http://www.mdaua.org/>

MDA provides extensive services for those with neuromuscular diseases.

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill-Minnesota (NAMI-MN)

800 Transfer Road # 31

St. Paul, MN 55114-1414

Phone: 651-645-2948

Web: www.nami.org <http://www.mda.org/lps.org>

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is a nonprofit organization working to improve the lives of children and adults with mental illness and their families.

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities

1825 Connecticut Avenue NW Suite 700

Washington, DC 20009

Phone: 800-695-0285

Web: <http://www.nichcy.org/>

NICHCY is the national information center that provides information on disabilities and disability-related issues. Anyone can use their services—families, educators, administrators, journalists, and students. Their special focus is children and youth (birth to age 22).

PACER Center (Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights)

8161 Normandale Boulevard

Minneapolis, MN 55437

Phone: 952-838-9000

Web: <http://www.pacer.org/>

PACER's mission is to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life of children and young adults with disabilities and their families, based on the concept of parents helping parents.

PACER has a technology center that allows parents to try out hardware and software to see if it is appropriate for their child.

Project Soar

5621 County Road 101

Minnetonka, MN 55345

Phone: 952-401-5077

Web: www.minnetonka.k12.mn.us

The Minnetonka School District, along with three other western metro school districts, provide a service for young adults/students going through the transition from student to adulthood. This organization is called Project SOAR. Project SOAR provides a wide range of resources to individuals with disabilities in our community. Examples include:

- *Interpreters.*
- *Classroom aides/note takers.*
- *Financial aid.*
- *Assistance with problem solving regarding transportation needs.*
- *Information on other agencies and organizations.*
- *Provide disability related resources and other agency referrals.*
- *Advocating for people with disabilities within the four district areas (Minnetonka, Wayzata, Hopkins & St. Louis Park).*
- *Collaborating with community organizations to provide services and identify needs.*

Social Security Administration

Office of Public Inquiries

Windsor Park Building

6401 Security Blvd.

Baltimore, MD 21235

Phone: 800-772-1213

Web: <http://www.ssa.gov/>

The mission of the Social Security Administration is to promote the economic security of the nation's people through compassionate and vigilant leadership in shaping and managing America's Social Security programs.

Spina Bifida Association of Minnesota

P.O. Box 29323

Brooklyn Center, MN 55429

Phone: 651-222-6395

Web: www.sbamn.com

The mission of the Spina Bifida Association of America is increase awareness about spina bifida and enhance the lives of those affected.

Tourette Syndrome Association Minnesota

2233 University Avenue W Suite 338

St. Paul, MN 55114-1657

Phone: 651-646-0099

Web: www.tsa-mn.org

Email: director@tsa-mn.org

Tourette Syndrome Association is a group dedicated to serving families and individuals affected by Tourette Syndrome.

United Cerebral Palsy of Minnesota, Inc.

1821 University Avenue West #219

St. Paul, MN 55104-2892

Phone: 651-646-7588

Web: <http://ucpmn.org/>

E-mail: ucpmn@cpinternet.com

The mission of UCPM is to advance the independence productivity and full citizenship of people with cerebral palsy and similar disabilities.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs

Office of Special Education Programs

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.

Washington, DC 20202-7100

Phone: 202-245-7459

Web: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep>

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is dedicated to improving results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities ages birth through age 21 by providing leadership and financial support to assist states and local districts.

Helpful Links

State And District Information

[Minnetonka School District #276](http://www.minnetonka.k12.mn.us/)

<http://www.minnetonka.k12.mn.us/>

[Minnesota Department of Education](http://education.state.mn.us/)

<http://education.state.mn.us/>

[Children's Defense Fund](http://www.cdf-mn.org) – information about programs in Minnesota, including tax credits.

<http://www.cdf-mn.org>

Specific To Disability

[Down Syndrome: Health Issues](http://www.ds-health.com/)

<http://www.ds-health.com/>

[LDA Learning Center](http://www.ldlearningcenter.com/)

<http://www.ldlearningcenter.com/>

[Children with Diabetes](http://www.childrenwithdiabetes.com/)

<http://www.childrenwithdiabetes.com/>

[Sensory Processing Disorder Foundation](http://spdfoundation.net/)

<http://spdfoundation.net/>

[One ADD Place](http://www.oneaddplace.com/)

<http://www.oneaddplace.com/>

[Deaf Blind Service Minnesota, Inc.](http://www.dbsm.org/)

<http://www.dbsm.org/>

[International Dyslexia Association](http://www.interdys.org/)

<http://www.interdys.org/>

[Trainland](http://trainland.tripod.com/) - a LOT of autism information and links.

<http://trainland.tripod.com/>

Legal Resources

[Minnesota Alternative Dispute Resolution](http://www.education.state.mn.us)

www.education.state.mn.us

[WRIGHTSLAW](http://www.wrightslaw.com/)

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/>

Advocacy And Support Groups

PACER - Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights

<http://www.pacer.org/>

ARC of MN

<http://www.thearcofminnesota.org>

St. David's Center Child & Family Development

<http://www.stdavids.net/>

952-939-0396

Autism Society of Minnesota - Offers many support groups as well as classes.

<http://www.ausm.org/>

Advocating Change Together

An organization run by and for people with developmental disabilities. Advocating Change Together (ACT) started in 1979 in response to the growing concern that individuals with developmental disabilities were being isolated and excluded from decisions regarding their lives.

<http://www.selfadvocacy.com/>

Local chapter telephone: 651-641-0297

Miscellaneous

American Sign Language – this site demonstrates words being signed.

www.alspro.com

Closing the Gap – this site deals with assistive technology.

<http://www.closingthegap.com/>

Direct Ability – a directory devoted to disability related products, services, resources and information in Minnesota.

<http://www.directability.com/>

QualityMall - an international web site with lots of free information about the best person-centered supports for people with developmental disabilities.

<http://www.qualitymall.org/>

Special Education Legislation Links

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

<http://www.fape.org/>
www.fapeonline.org
www.ed.gov

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/504.html>

The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)

<http://www.adagreatlakes.org/>

Minnesota state law on special education, Minnesota Statutes M.S. 125A and Regulations Chapter 3525

<https://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/statutes/?id=125A>
<https://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/rules/?id=3525>

Minnesota Department of Education special education policies

https://www.education.state.mn.us/MDE/Learning_Support/Special_Education/index.html

PACER (Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights)

Contact PACER Center's advocates for fact sheets and specific questions about important laws, or visit the Web site.

<http://www.pacer.org/>



Community Services

[Adaptive Recreation & Learning Exchange \(ARLE\)](#)

952-563-8899 Bloomington

952-949-8452 Eden Prairie

952-826-0433 Edina

612-861-9361 Richfield

Web: http://www.ci.edina.mn.us/pages/L5-22a_ARLE.htm

The cities and school districts of Edina, Eden Prairie, Bloomington and Richfield work together to provide recreation and education for people with disabilities. This cooperative is known as the Adaptive Recreation & Learning Exchange (AR&LE).

[Division of Rehabilitation Services](#)

Rehabilitation Services provide transition information and resources and their focus is on jobs. Counselors are able to provide access to funds to pay for assessments, equipment, and post-secondary training. Offices in Hennepin County are:

Downtown	3 rd Avenue North	(612) 341-7100
Northeast Minneapolis	312 Central Ave SE	(612) 347-7130
Brooklyn Center	3300 County Road 10	(763) 341-7140
Edina	3201 West 69 th Street	(952) 347-7150

<http://www.deed.state.mn.us/rehab/>

[Life Pages](#)

Web: <http://www.lifepages.org/>

This site was developed to help a person find information about recreation and leisure activities, services, advocacy, and other useful things about life in Minnesota. Life Pages offers information for Minnesotans of all ages and abilities that want to enrich their leisure lifestyle as well as their connections to the greater community.

[Minnesota State High School League](#)

2100 Freeway Boulevard

Brooklyn Center, MN 55430-1735

763-560-2262

Web: <http://www.mshsl.org/>

The Minnesota State High School League provides educational opportunities for students through interscholastic athletic and fine arts programs and provides leadership and support for member schools.

Project SOAR

Phone: 952-401-5077

Web: <http://www.minnetonka.k12.mn.us/mces/soar>

Project SOAR is committed to empower adults with disabilities in their efforts to participate in community education programs and services. Participating school districts include Minnetonka, Wayzata, Hopkins, and St. Louis Park.

REACH for Resources

1001 Highway 7, Suite 217

Hopkins, MN 55305

Phone: 952-988-4177

Web: <http://www.reachforresources.org/>

REACH for Resources provides service for persons with developmental disabilities and their families. They offer social events, athletic programs and a variety of other opportunities for youth, teens and adults.

REACH for Resources can help you find programs and locate services necessary for successful community participation. Their inclusion consultation service can help you find programs and access the many resources available throughout the metro area. If needed, inclusion aids can attend programs with residents of: Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Chanhassen, Chaska, Crystal, Golden Valley, Hopkins, Maple Grove, Minnetonka, New Hope, Plymouth, Robbinsdale, and St. Louis Park.

Special Olympics Minnesota

400 South 4th Street, Suite 915

Minneapolis, MN 55415-1423

Phone: 612-333-0999

Web: <http://www.somn.org/>

Special Olympics' goal is to provide a year-round program of sports training and competition for people with mental disabilities that contribute to lifelong physical fitness, personal growth and achievement.

Acronyms

ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
AT	Assistive Technology
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
CST	Child Study Team
D/HH	Deaf and Hard of Hearing
DAPE	Developmental Adaptive Physical Education
DCD	Developmental Cognitive Disability
EBD	Emotional or Behavioral Disorders
ECFE	Early Childhood Family Education
ECSE	Early Childhood Special Education
ER	Evaluation Report
ESY	Extended School Year
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA	Functional Behavior Assessment
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEE	Independent Education Evaluation
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IFSP	Individual Family Service Plan
IIP	Individual Interagency Intervention Plan
ILP	Individual Learning Plan
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MCA	Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments
MDE	Minnesota Department of Education
OHD	Other Health Disabilities
PCA	Personal Care Attendant
PI	Physically Impaired
S/L	Speech or Language Impairment
SEAC	Special Education Advisory Council
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SMI	Severely Multiply Impaired
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
VI	Visually Impaired

Frequently Used Terms

Accommodation – allows the student to do the same work as the regular education students with a change (i.e. taking tests in a quiet room) . This change does not change the rigor of the material being taught.

Adaptations – word used interchangeable with accommodation.

Assistive Technology Device – any item, piece of equipment, or product system, which is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of children with disabilities.

Assistive Technology Service – any service that directly assists a student in the selection, acquisition or use of an assistive technology device.

IEP Manager – the person who coordinates a student’s IEP and sees that it is carried out. This person is the first point of contact for any issues or concerns that you may have.

Child Study Team – Team that determines if an evaluation is warranted.

Consent – means that you say “yes.” Consent means that you understand and agree in writing to the activity that is being requested, such as an evaluation or an IEP.

Curriculum – the coursework being taught.

Direct service – service provided directly to the student from the professional.

Evaluation – testing and observations used to determine the eligibility of the student for special education services.

FAPE – Free, appropriate public education.

IDEA-97 – the Individuals with Disabilities Act is the federal special education law that defines the rights of the student.

Inclusion-Full – student that qualifies for special education who spends the entire school day in the general education classroom.

Inclusion-Partial - student that qualifies for special education and spends part of the school day in the general education classroom.

IEE (Independent Educational Evaluation) - This is an evaluation provided by a mutually agreed upon independent professional at no cost to you. The school district is required to give you several choices of qualified professionals to perform the IEE. You can then choose which professional conducts the IEE. To request an IEE, you need to notify, in **writing**, the Director of Student Support Services that you disagree with the district’s evaluation and are requesting an IEE. Keep a copy for yourself as well.

You also have the right to a second opinion at any time at your own expense. The school district must consider this information.

IEP – An Individualized Education Plan is for a student ages 3 up to 21. Services need to begin within 30 calendar days from the date the student was found eligible.

IEP TEAM – the group of people responsible for defining a student’s educational plan. The Team must include:

- A parent.
- A representative of the district who is authorized to assign resources.
- At least one of the student’s special education teachers.
- At least one of the student’s general education teachers.
- Student, if appropriate

There may be more team members as appropriate.

IFSP – an Individual Family Service Plan is for children in Early Childhood Special Education (birth through age 2). The development of the IFSP should be completed within 45 calendar days from the initial referral.

IIIP – Individual Interagency Intervention Plan (IIIP) form is for students from age 3 to 21. The development of the IIIP should be completed within 30 school days from completion of the assessment.

Indirect service – time spent conferring and coming up with ideas to help the student.

LRE (Least Restrictive Environment) – the educational setting that provides an appropriate program, including special supports needed for the student, in as typical a school environment as possible.

Modification – a change that lowers the rigor of the material and changes what a test or assignment measures.

PCA (Personal Care Attendant) – a person hired to help a child learn skills so he or she can be more independent at home and in the community.

Positive behavior intervention – a plan to address problem behaviors; it addresses both the source of the behavior and ways to deal with the behavior so the student can behave more appropriately.

Pre-referral interventions - before referring a child for an evaluation the classroom teacher may plan strategies to see if your child’s behavior improves with simple changes in curriculum or environment. These are called “pre-referral interventions”. At least two pre-referral interventions must be tried and documented. If the child’s performance improves, an evaluation may not be needed. If problems continue, an evaluation will help identify more specific ways to help the child learn.

Referral - anyone can make a referral for a special education evaluation. Often, when classroom interventions are not successful the classroom teacher may make a referral for a Child Study Team who will consider whether the child should receive further evaluation. The Team decides the areas to be evaluated and the types of evaluation to be completed.

Related Services – services required to make a child benefit from special education. An example may be transportation or occupational therapy.

Respite Care – care provided for the child so parents can have a break.

Resource room – a student may receive his or her special education and related services in the resource room, rather than a general education classroom.

Section 504 – a Federal Civil Rights Law. It protects the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

Special Education – instruction specially designed to meet the unique needs of a student with disabilities, at no cost to parent(s).