

Special Instructional Programs and Accommodations

The M.S.A.D. #3 Board of Directors recognizes and understands the importance of equal educational opportunities for all children, including exceptional children. This is to identify the areas of policy relating to special education services and programs. These policies are intended to be consistent with the Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (PL 94-142).

All students in M.S.A.D. #3 are screened in order to identify those with handicapping conditions. Handicapping conditions are defined as impairments of vision, auditory, speech and language functions, specific learning disabilities, physical mobility functions, behavior, mental development or maturation, multiple functions, pregnancy and temporary traumatic injuries.

Each student has the right to nondiscriminatory evaluation and diagnosis and the right to due process under the law. All students diagnosed as handicapped have available to them, within the time limits specified, a free appropriate public education which emphasizes special education and related services designated to meet their unique needs. This educational program must be the least restrictive educational alternative for the child.

The right to due process includes the following legal rights for parents:

1. Written notification before evaluation. In addition, the right to an interpreter, translator if the family's native language is not English (unless it is clearly not feasible to do so).
2. Written notification when initiating or refusing to initiate a change in educational placement.
3. Opportunity to present complaints regarding identification, evaluation, placement or the provision of a free appropriate education.
4. Opportunity to obtain an independent education evaluation of the child.
5. Access to all relevant records.
6. Opportunity to impartial due process hearing including the right to:
 - a. Receive timely and specific notice of the hearing;
 - b. Be accompanied and advised by counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training with respect to the problems of children with handicaps;
 - c. Confront, cross examine and compel the attendance of witnesses; and
 - d. Present evidence.
 - i. Written or electronic verbatim record of the hearing;
 - ii. Written findings of fact and the decisions.
7. The right to appeal the findings of the decisions of the hearing.

The child's educational program is called Individual Education Plan (IEP) and includes the following:

1. A statement of the child's present level of performance.
2. A statement of goals and short-term instructional objectives.
3. A statement of special services afforded within the framework of the mainstream.

4. A statement of the projected date of initiation, duration and how and when the child will be reevaluated.
5. A statement of why the program is the least restrictive educational alternative.

The IEP will be determined by the Pupil Evaluation Team which may be composed of school administrators, school nurse, classroom teachers, special education teachers, school psychologist, selected consultants and parents.

Operating guidelines and forms for operation of PET, for the development of IEP, and for parent participation can be found in Pupil Evaluation Team Handbook and Special Education Regulations published by Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services.