



## Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The IDEA is a federal civil rights law to protect the rights of children with disabilities who meet requirements for special education services and the rights of their parents.

### What's in the IDEA?

The IDEA guides states and schools in providing special education supports and services.

#### Part A

Provides general provisions and definitions of the IDEA.

#### Part B

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

#### Part C

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

#### Part D

Sets up parent training centers for each state. Michigan's parent training and information center is the Michigan Alliance for Families.

### Core Principles of the IDEA

#### Procedural Safeguards

The IDEA's required procedures are designed to ensure students receive a free appropriate public education.

#### Parent (and Student) Involvement

Parents and students are active members of teams and provide input.

#### Appropriate Evaluation

Students must be properly evaluated by qualified professionals.

#### Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Students with disabilities must have access to the general education curriculum but it may look different depending on the student's individualized needs. Access may be acquired through alternate achievement standards.

#### Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Students must be with their non-disabled peers as much as possible.

#### Individualized Education Program (IEP)

An IEP team creates a documented program to meet the unique needs and strengths of the individual.

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Family Matters fact sheets are intended to enhance public understanding of Michigan's special education system and are not a substitute for official laws and regulations.



# Eligibility for Special Education

A team of qualified professionals and the child's parent(s) determine eligibility. In Michigan, the child's individualized education program (IEP) team determines a student's eligibility to receive special education programs and services.

## 1

### Meet the criteria of one or more disability category

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

## 2

### Need specially designed instruction and related services

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

## Resources



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

### Training Curriculum on IDEA

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

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

### Websites

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