

**THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS  
IN MICHIGAN**

**A HANDBOOK  
FOR  
PARENTS**



**Parent Advisory Committee for Special Education  
Copper Country Intermediate School District  
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**COPPER COUNTRY INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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Dear Parents/Family,

Welcome to the Copper Country Intermediate School District (CCISD).

This handbook was developed for parents of students with disabilities. It serves as one source of information about state and federal special education laws that have been written to protect the rights of students.

The special education process can be overwhelming, complicated and challenging. This handbook can serve as an excellent reference guide to special education. If you would like additional information, please contact your local school district, the Copper Country Intermediate School District or a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) representative.

We believe the best outcomes are achieved when parents, schools and community work together. The PAC meets during the school year. We welcome you to attend our meetings. A schedule is available from the CCISD Special Education Office.

Sincerely,

Copper Country Intermediate School District  
Parent Advisory Committee for Special Education

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## Parent Handbook

### What is Special Education?

Special Education is specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique educational needs of a child with a disability.

### Who is a “Child with a Disability?”

The definition includes the following qualifications:

- Children from birth through age 25 who have not graduated with a regular high school diploma.
- Children who have the characteristics for a specific disability as defined in the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (See the special education categories listed in this handbook.)
- Children who, because of that disability, need special education and related service support.

### Why does my child need an evaluation?

The evaluation is done to answer these questions:

- Does the child have a disability?
- How is the child currently performing in school? (present level of academic achievement and functional performance)
- What are the child’s educational needs?
- Does the child need special education and related services?
- What additions or modifications, if any, are needed to enable the child to meet annual goals in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum?

### What are the steps in the evaluation process?

Before a child is evaluated for the first time, the school must notify the parent and describe any evaluation the school proposes to conduct. The parent must give informed consent for the child to be evaluated. The next step involves gathering and reviewing existing information on the child by an IEP Team (IEPT) and other qualified individuals. This includes consideration of current classroom assessments, observations, and information provided by parents and school staff. For a child who has been receiving special education services, every 36 months the IEPT must review existing data (the REED process) and identify what additional information, if any, is needed to make a determination about continued eligibility for special education. The ongoing eligibility recommendation is taken to an IEPT meeting, at which time eligibility and programs/services are reviewed and revised.

### How is a child evaluated for the presence of a disability?

A “Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team” (MET) is responsible for evaluating a student suspected of having a disability. The team will include at least 2 members, one of whom is a specialist in the suspected area of disability. The team may include other persons, when appropriate, to include the areas of health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communication skills and motor ability. The testing is done individually in the child’s native language, unless clearly unnecessary to do so, using a variety of assessment tools and strategies. Any standardized tests must be used correctly and fairly and be administered by trained, knowledgeable personnel.

### Who decides if a child is eligible for Special Education?

After the evaluation has been completed, the IEP Team (IEPT), consisting of qualified professionals and the parent, will decide if the child is eligible for Special Education. The IEP Team will include the parents, a representative of the school district, a general education teacher, a special education teacher or provider and someone who can interpret evaluation results (e.g., a MET team member). You may invite a person(s) who has knowledge of your child to attend the meeting.

### How do I learn the results of my child's evaluation?

You will be involved in your child's evaluation. Your input will be sought and a member of the MET will report the team's finding to you via phone, mail or conversation and again at the IEPT meeting. The members of the evaluation team must provide a written report. You are encouraged to ask questions if you do not understand. Keep a copy of the MET report for your records.

### What happens after a child/student is found eligible?

Another role of the IEP Team is to develop the student's program, or Individual Education Program (IEP). As stated earlier, the IEP Team is comprised of the parents, school professionals, and the student when appropriate. After the IEP is developed and the parent gives written consent, the student begins to receive special education and related services.

#### Time Line for "Initials" (Initial Evaluation and Initial IEP)

<b>Day zero</b>	<b>A written request for evaluation of a child suspected to have a disability is given to school district personnel.</b>
<b>Within 10 school days</b>	<b>The district must provide written Notice for Proposed Evaluation and request written Parental Consent to Evaluate.</b>
<b>Within 30 school days*</b>	<b>A Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET) conducts a full and individual evaluation and makes a recommendation to the IEP Team. The IEP Team meets to make a determination of eligibility and, if appropriate, develop an Initial IEP. (Counted from the date the district receives Parental Consent to Evaluate to the district's offer of a FAPE.)</b> <b>Note:</b> The district makes its offer of a FAPE by giving the parent a copy of the IEP and the Notice for Initial Provision of Special Education Services and Programs. This Notice will either indicate that the child is ineligible for special education or that the district is offering a FAPE and requesting the parent's Consent to begin providing special education. <b>*If the parent and district agree in writing, the time line for the Initial Evaluation and IEP may be extended beyond 30 school days.</b>
<b>Within 7 school days</b>	<b>The district's Notice for Initial Provision of Special Education Services and Programs must be provided within 7 school days of the IEP Team meeting. (This 7-day period falls within the 30-school-day or extended time line above.)</b>
<b>Within 10 school days</b>	<b>Written Consent of the parent must be received before the district is allowed to begin providing special education for the first time. (Counted from the date of the Notice for Initial Provision of Special Education Services and Programs.)</b>
<b>Within 15 school days</b>	<b>As soon as possible but not more than 15 school days after receiving written Consent for the Initial Provision of Special Education Services and Programs, the district implements the child's IEP. (Counted from the date the district receives the parent's written consent.)</b>

### What is an IEP?

An "Individualized Education Program" means a written plan for a student with a disability that spells out the special education and related services the student will receive. The IEP is developed at a meeting that is scheduled at a mutually agreeable time. The written document is a record of the IEP Team meeting. The IEP is reviewed at least once a year.

## **What is included in an IEP?**

The requirements include:

- A statement of the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance.
- A statement of measurable annual goals and short-term objectives that address:
  1. How to help the student be involved in and progress in the general curriculum, and
  2. How to meet each of the student's other educational needs related to his/her disability.
- A statement of how the student's progress toward the annual goals will be measured and how the parents will be regularly informed of that progress.
- A statement of special education programs/services and supplementary aids to be provided to the student, and any program modifications or supports for the school personnel.
- The projected starting date for services as well as the duration, anticipated frequency and location where programs and services will be delivered.
- An explanation of when the student will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class or other activities.
- A statement of any accommodations or modifications the student needs to take state- and/or district-wide assessments.
- A statement of transition services beginning at age 16. Transition services include aspects of adult life and often involve other agencies.

## **How can I prepare for the IEPT meeting?**

Obtain as much information as you can before the IEPT meeting. Talk with your child's teacher, the person who evaluated your child and read your child's evaluation report. Write down your questions and concerns for the meeting. If possible, both parents should attend.

Note: If you are having communication problems, maintain your own records regarding your child. Keep a copy of all letters that you send. If you make a telephone call, make a record of the call and follow it up with a letter.

## **How does a parent participate in the decision-making process?**

Parents are encouraged to be involved in many ways:

- Parents are key members in all decision-making meetings such as meetings that determine the identification, evaluation, educational placement, reevaluation and the appropriate education of the student.
- Parents give consent for initial evaluations and reevaluations.
- Parents will receive regular reports on their student's progress.
- Parents must notify the school district if they intend to remove their student from the public school or plan to request a due process hearing.
- Parents are encouraged to be involved in parent groups at the local level or at the ISD level through an advisory group called Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). The Michigan Department of Education also involves parents in planning, implementing and reviewing activities.

## **Should the student be involved in the IEP?**

Students often provide valuable insights regarding their strengths and needs. When they are involved in determining their own goals and objectives, they may be more committed to achieving them. If the purpose of an IEPT meeting is transition planning, the student must be invited. The district must make sure the child's preferences and interests are considered in transition planning. Transition plans must be in place when the child is 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and are updated annually as part of the IEP. Students who are age 17 are notified that

their rights will be transferred to them upon reaching the age of majority (18). At age 18 both the student and parents are notified that the rights are transferred to the student.

### **What are the Procedural Safeguards?**

They are legal safeguards that protect the rights of students with disabilities and their parents. They provide the information that parents need to make decisions about their student's education. They explain the procedures used to resolve disagreements between parties. The Procedural Safeguards inserted in this handbook are from state and federal rules and regulations.

### **What should I do if I don't understand my rights?**

If you have any questions regarding the Procedural Safeguards Notice or do not understand your rights, please contact the administrator of your child's school or the CCISD Director of Special Education and request further explanation so that you do understand. If an interpreter is needed, the school will provide one. The list of organizations and resources in the appendix will be helpful as well.

### **How do I obtain assistance in understanding notices or the proceedings of the IEPT meeting?**

If you have questions or need an interpreter, contact the administrator of your child's school and request assistance. It is the school's responsibility to make sure that you understand any notice and proceedings.

### **When will the IEP be reviewed?**

The IEP must be reviewed annually at an IEPT meeting and revised as appropriate. If the child's needs change before the annual review, another IEP may be requested by contacting the administrator of your child's school. Changes to an IEP may be made either by the entire IEP Team at an IEPT meeting or, if the annual review is not due, the parent and district may agree to amend the current IEP without a meeting.

### **What is Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)?**

LRE looks at the setting in which the student receives an education. The law presumes that students with disabilities are most appropriately educated with their nondisabled peers in the general education setting. Special classes, separate schools, or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular education environment occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes cannot be achieved satisfactorily, even when supplementary aids and services are used.

### **What is a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)?**

FAPE means the education and related services are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge. The services provided must meet the standards of the Department of Education for all students and be designed to meet the student's IEP goals and short-term objectives.

### **Will special education benefit my child to the point where he or she won't need it?**

That is a difficult question to answer as it depends on many factors. One factor is the severity of the disability. However, early identification may result in a child's being better able to cope with the impairment, requiring fewer services as he or she matures. Parents and others should keep in mind that the goal of special education is not to "cure" the disability; rather, it is to assure that the child receives an appropriate education.

**How do I see my child's educational records?**

Contact the administrator of your child's special education program or school building and ask to see the records. It is your right as a parent to review all information contained in your child's school record.

**What should I do if I am not satisfied with my child's special education services or program?**

Most problems about your child's education can best be solved by the person responsible for special education in your local school district. You should first contact that person, as he or she can usually assist you in getting the solution you need. You can request an IEPT meeting.

**What is a Surrogate Parent?**

A surrogate parent is an adult volunteer assigned by the school to act in place of a student's parent when the parent cannot be identified, the parent cannot be located after reasonable efforts, the child is a ward of the state or the student is unaccompanied and homeless. For a child who is a ward of the state, the judge overseeing the student's case may appoint a surrogate. A surrogate parent should be appointed not more than 30 days after the need is determined.

**INFORMATION FOR PARENTS REQUESTING INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATIONS (IEE)**

- A. Criteria for qualified examiners shall be the same as examiners employed by the public agency as stated in Rule 340.1723c of the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education.
- B. Sources include, but are not restricted to, Gogebic-Ontonagon Intermediate School district, Marquette-Alger Intermediate School District, Dickinson-Iron Intermediate School District, Delta-Schoolcraft Intermediate School District, Menominee County Intermediate School District, and Eastern U.P. Intermediate School District.
- C. Procedure for reimbursement shall be as follows: Parent forwards bill for reimbursement to the School District. After it is reviewed, reimbursement will be given provided criteria of the examination has been met and charges are within reasonable limits.
- D. Reasonable expected cost is up to \$90 per hour of testing.

**How do I obtain an independent educational evaluation?**

If you disagree with the evaluation provided by the public school, you may request an independent educational evaluation by contacting the school district's director of special education. The school must provide you with information as to where this evaluation can be obtained. The school either pays for this evaluation or requests a hearing to show that their evaluation is appropriate. (See the Procedural Safeguards Notice included in this handbook.)

**SCHOOL-BASED MEDICAID SERVICES**

Federal law permits the public agency to bill Medicaid, with parental Consent, for some school-based health services provided to Medicaid eligible children. Personnel, who are employed or contracted by the school district to process information for such billing are authorized employees who will access confidential records to document that reimbursable services are provided. Services such as, but not limited to evaluation, physical and occupational therapy, speech services, social work services and service coordination may be covered.



**Special Education Eligibility Categories, Programs and Services:**

A student with a disability who is eligible for special education meets a definition in the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education. The disability must affect educational performance to the degree that special education programs or services are needed. The IEP Team determines which programs and/or services are appropriate for each student. IEPT decisions are based on a student’s needs and not on his or her category of eligibility. See the table below for brief descriptions of eligibility categories, programs and services:

Special Education Eligibility Categories	Examples/Types of Special Education Programs and Services
<p><b>Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)</b> – A lifelong developmental disability that adversely affects a student’s educational performance in 1 or more of the following areas: Academic, Behavioral, Social</p> <p><b>Cognitive Impairment (CI)</b> – Children who are delayed in their cognitive development and overall functioning (adaptive behavior).</p> <p><b>Deaf Blindness (DB)</b> – Children who have both hearing and visual impairments.</p> <p><b>Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)</b> – Children with any type or degree of hearing loss that interferes with development or learning.</p> <p><b>Early Childhood Developmental Delay (ECDD)</b> – Children through age seven with significant development delay(s) whose impairment cannot be identified under any other category.</p>	<p>Services provided for students with ASD are designed to develop language and communication, academic accommodations and personal adjustment.</p> <p><b>Mild Cognitive Impairment (MiCI) programs</b> provide services designed to develop academic and personal adjustment skills.</p> <p><b>Moderate Cognitive Impairment (MoCI) programs</b> provide services designed to develop cognitive, social, motor, communication, functional life and vocational skills. The <b>Program for Students with Severe Disabilities (PSSD)</b> provides services for students with severe cognitive impairments or severe multiple impairments designed to promote participation in leisure and productive activities, communication cycles, personal care, health and safety routines.</p> <p>Services for students who are deaf or hard of hearing are designed to provide regular academic support for students who require specialized teaching techniques and/or adaptive equipment due to a hearing impairment.</p> <p>Before kindergarten, Early Childhood Special Education Services bring family and school together to develop learning, motor and developmental skills for children with disabilities from birth through five years of age. According to Rule 340.1755, services are provided for a minimum of 2 hours per week but not less than 72 clock hours within 180 school days. Programming takes place in the child’s natural setting, such as home, day care, Head Start Preschool. The IEPT determines appropriate programs/services for school-age children with ECDD.</p>

<p><b>Emotional Impairment (EI)</b> – Children who demonstrate behaviors and/or emotional issues, over an extended period of time, that interfere with their learning.</p> <p><b>Other Health Impairment (OHI)</b> – Children with chronic or acute health issues that adversely affect educational performance.</p>	<p>The <b>Social Skills Teaching Program (SSTP)</b> is designed to develop academic and social skills for students with disabilities when they are unable to learn in a general education classroom, even with resource program support and/or positive behavior supports and collaborative behavior planning, due to inappropriate behavior patterns and emotional responses. It is the philosophy of the SSTP that students return to less restrictive settings as soon as they are able to meet their established behavioral goals.</p> <p>Services for students with other health impairments are designed to support an academic program for students who require special teaching techniques or academic accommodations due to a health impairment.</p>
<p><b>Physical Impairments (PI)</b> – Children with physical impairments that interfere with educational performance.</p> <p><b>Severe Multiple Impairment (SXI)</b> – Children with two or more significant impairments and intensive educational needs.</p> <p><b>Specific Learning Disability (SLD)</b> – Children with a disorder in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language, which may manifest in ways that adversely affect learning in reading, writing and math.</p> <p><b>Speech and Language Impairment (SLI)</b> – Children who have not developed appropriate speech, language, or communication skills.</p> <p><b>Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)</b> – Children with an acquired head injury that interferes with educational performance.</p> <p><b>Visual Impairment (VI)</b> – Children who are partially sighted or blind. Among the characteristics are visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye after correction, or a peripheral field of vision restricted to not more than 20 degrees.</p>	<p>Services for students with physical impairments are designed to support a regular academic program for students who require special teaching techniques and/or adaptive equipment due to a physical impairment.</p> <p>The <b>Program for Students with Severe Disabilities (PSSD)</b> provides services for students with severe cognitive impairments or severe multiple impairments designed to promote participation in leisure and productive activities, communication cycles, personal care, health and safety routines.</p> <p><b>Elementary and Secondary Resource Programs</b> provide direct and/or supplemental instruction to students and support needed for their participation in general education classrooms.</p> <p>Speech and language support services provide specialized teaching techniques and supports for students whose impairment interferes with communication and/or comprehension, formation and use of functional language, adversely affecting educational performance.</p> <p>Visual impairment support services provide students with instruction in the use of adaptive equipment as well as specialized teaching techniques.</p>

	<p><b>Orientation &amp; and Mobility Services</b> are services provided to blind or visually impaired students to enable them to attain systematic orientation to and safe movement within their environments in school, home and community.</p> <p><b>Ancillary/Related Services</b> include transportation and other developmental, corrective and support services (e.g., psychological and social work services, speech therapy, counseling services, orientation and mobility services, etc.).</p> <p><b>Homebound &amp; Hospitalized Services</b> means a minimum of two hours of instruction per week may be provided to a special education student who is confined due to medical or physical reasons, subject to certain requirements.</p> <p><b>Transition Services</b> are a coordinated set of activities, often with other agencies, designed to facilitate movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation.</p>
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The continuum of programs and services provided by local school districts and the Copper Country ISD is included in the CCISD Special Education Plan, available from the CCISD Special Education office and on line at [www.copperisd.org](http://www.copperisd.org).

## GLOSSARY

**Accommodations** Tools and procedures in the areas of presentation, response, setting and timing/scheduling that provide equitable access during instruction and assessment for students with disabilities. Accommodations are intended to reduce or eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce the learning expectations. (See Modification).

**Achievement Test** A test that measures competency in a particular area of knowledge or skill.

**Adaptive Behavior** Practical, everyday skills required to function and meet environmental demands, including effectively and independently taking care of oneself and interacting with other people. Examples of adaptive skills that individuals use on a daily basis include those related to eating, dressing, expressing needs, taking care of personal possessions, making purchases, interacting with peers, controlling one's behavior, following a schedule and communicating with other people.

**Age of Majority/Transfer of Rights** When a student with a disability reaches the age of 18, all rights accorded to a parent transfer to the student. The parent and student must be informed of the transfer of rights at least one year prior to the student's 18th birthday.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** A federal law requiring accommodations/protections for people with disabilities in the community and workplace.

**Ancillary Services** See Related Services.

**Annual Goals** Statements in an IEP describing what the student can be expected to accomplish within a 12-month period. Goals are measurable and meaningful (based on need and reasonable, yet challenging).

**Assessment** Systematic method of obtaining information from tests or other sources; a broad term used to describe the gathering of information about what a student knows and can do in a particular area.

**Assistive Technology** Any service or device that is used to maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. Assistive technology needs are determined by the IEP Team.

**Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD or ADHD)** Persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development and that interferes with developmentally appropriate social/academic functioning.

**Auditory Discrimination** Ability to detect differences in sounds; may be gross ability, such as detecting the differences between the noises made by a cat and dog, or fine ability, such as detecting the differences made by the sounds of letters "m" and "n."

**Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA)** A trained professional who works under the direction of the occupational therapist and may be responsible for services specified in an IEP.

**Child Find** Ongoing activities undertaken by states and local school districts to locate, identify and evaluate all children residing in the state who are suspected of having disabilities so that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) can be made available to them.

**Child Study Team** See Student Assistance Team.

**Chronological Age** Age determined by birthdate.

**Cognitive Ability** Refers to general mental capability and involves the ability to reason, plan, solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly and learn from experience.

**Complaint/State Complaint** A written and signed allegation that a public agency is not in compliance with the IDEA and its implementing regulations, the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE), the ISD Plan, an administrative law judge (ALJ) decision or Michigan's application for federal funds under the IDEA.

**Consent** Voluntary written permission from a parent for a district to conduct a proposed activity with a particular student. Before obtaining consent, the district must give written notice that explains the proposed activity to the parent.

**Content Areas** Academic subjects including reading, mathematics, science, social studies and writing. (Content areas can also include languages, art, music, theatre arts and other disciplines not typically assessed on statewide assessments.)

**Content Standards** Statements of the knowledge and skills that schools are expected to teach and students are expected to learn.

**Continuum of Services** The range of supports and services that must be provided by a school district to allow students with disabilities a free appropriate public education.

**Course of Study** Courses and educational experiences that align with the student's postsecondary vision (goals) leading to a diploma or alternate path of school completion.

**Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM)** Tools for measuring student competency and progress in the basic skill areas of reading fluency, spelling, mathematics and written language.

**Departmentalize** A delivery system in which 2 or more special education teachers teach groups of students with disabilities by instructional content areas.

**Differentiated Instruction** An approach whereby teachers adjust curriculum and instruction to maximize the learning of all students; framework teachers can use to implement a variety of strategies. Differentiated instruction might not be enough to allow some students to succeed.

**Direct Instruction** An instructional approach to academic subjects that emphasizes the use of carefully sequenced steps that include demonstration, modeling, guided practice and independent application.

**Due Process** A procedure guaranteed by federal law for resolving disputes regarding special education services.

**Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)** Michigan Early Childhood Special Education services include special instruction and related services provided to young children, ages three through five, who qualify under the IDEA.

**Early Intervention Services** A comprehensive statewide program of services for infants and toddlers with disabilities, aged birth through age 2 years, and their families. Early intervention services include multidisciplinary evaluation of needs of children and family-directed identification of the needs of each family as set out in an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

**Early On** Early On assists families with infants and toddlers from birth to 36 months of age who have a diagnosed disability or a delay in their development. This can include physical, mental, communication, adaptive, social or emotional development.

**Eligibility** The determination that a student is a child with a disability and needs special education.

**Extended School Year (ESY) Services** Special education and related services provided to a student with a disability beyond the normal school year in accordance with the student's IEP at no cost to the parents. The need for ESY Services is determined by the student's IEP Team according to federal and state requirements.

**The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** A federal law that protects the privacy of students' personally identifiable information, including student education records.

**Fine Motor Skills** They involve the small muscles of the body that enable such functions as writing, grasping small objects and fastening clothing. They involve strength, control and dexterity.

**Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)** Special education and related services provided in conformity with an IEP to students with disabilities by the Local Education Agency (LEA) at no cost to the student's parents. **Full and Individual Initial Evaluation** A variety of assessment tools and strategies used to gather relevant functional, developmental and academic information about a child, including information provided by the parents to determine whether a child has a disability. Such evaluation is focused on the child, and only that child, and is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs.

**Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)** A problem-solving process used to identify the reasons for a specific behavior in order to help select interventions.

**Functional Skills** Skills needed for independent living, such as cooking, comparison shopping, working with or managing money, using public transportation and knowing how to be safe in the community.

**General Education Curriculum** The body of knowledge and range of skills that all students in the state are expected to master.

**Graphic Organizers** Graphic organizers are often known as maps, webs, graphs, charts, frames, etc.

**Gross Motor Skills** They involve the large muscles of the body that enable such functions as walking, kicking, sitting upright, lifting and throwing a ball. A person's gross motor skills depend on both muscle tone and strength.

**Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE)** An evaluation conducted at public expense by a qualified examiner who is not regularly employed by the school district.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP)** The written plan that details the special education and related services that must be provided to each eligible student. It must be reviewed and revised every year.

**Individualized Education Program Team (IEPT)** A group of individuals responsible for developing, reviewing or revising an IEP for a child with a disability. The group includes the parents, a representative of the school district, at least one general education teacher, at least one special education teacher or provider, a professional who can interpret any evaluation results, others who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child if invited by the parent or school district and, whenever appropriate, the student.

**Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)** A written plan for providing early intervention services to an eligible child and to the child's family.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** The federal law that guarantees all children with disabilities access to a free and appropriate public education.

**Intervention** A change in instructing the student in the area of difficulty to improve learning and achieve adequate progress.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are to be educated with children who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schooling, or other ways of removing children with disabilities from the regular educational environment should only occur when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes cannot be achieved satisfactorily with the use of supplementary aids and services.

**Local Education Agency (LEA)** The school district or public school academy (charter school) that is directly responsible for providing special education services.

**Mediation** A confidential, voluntary process that allows parties to resolve disputes without a formal due process hearing. The impartial mediator's role is to facilitate discussion and help parties reach an agreement — not to recommend solutions or take positions or sides.

**Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS)** A publicly funded state agency that provides direct and indirect services to youth with disabilities as they transition from school to work.

**Modification** A change in curriculum or instruction that substantially alters the requirements of the class or the content standards and benchmarks.

**Modified Achievement Standard** An expectation of performance that is challenging for eligible students, but may be less difficult than a grade-level achievement standard. Modified achievement standards must be aligned with a state's academic content standards for the grade in which a student is enrolled.

**Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET)** A group of professionals that conducts an evaluation of a student suspected of having a disability.

**Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)** A framework with structures that will provide all students with opportunities to succeed academically and behaviorally. MTSS includes a high quality instruction, intervention matched to need databased decision making and use of evidence based practices.

**No Child Left Behind (NCLB)** Elementary and Secondary Education Act, reauthorized in 2015 as ESSA, Every Student Succeeds Act.

**Nonstandard Accommodation** An accommodation that changes the construct being measured on a state assessment and, thus, results in an invalid test score.

**Notice/Prior Written Notice** Written information a district gives the parent to explain an action it wants to take, or is refusing to take, with a student who has a disability or is suspected of having a disability. Notice provides the reason/s the district is proposing or refusing an activity related to special education eligibility, evaluation, educational placement or provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

**Office of Civil Rights (OCR)** An agency within the U.S. Department of Education that enforces Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the ADA. OCR investigates allegations of discrimination based upon disability.

**Occupational Therapist (OT)** A trained professional that focuses on the development of a student's fine motor skills and/or the identification of adapted ways of accomplishing activities of daily living.

**Orientation & Mobility Specialist (O & M)** A trained professional who evaluates, treats and/or makes recommendations to allow eligible students with visual impairments to travel safely and efficiently through their environments under varying conditions. Their services may include direct instruction in travel skills for independent movement appropriate in the school and/or community.

**Parent** Parent, guardian, foster or surrogate parent; may include grandparent or stepparent with whom a child lives.

**Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) for Special Education** Parents of children with disabilities from each local school district within the CCISD. PAC provides advisory input on matters appropriate to the improvement of special education services within the ISD.

**Physical Therapist (PT)** A trained professional who assists, treats and/or makes recommendations to improve or maintain a student's level of functioning within the school environment. Physical therapists make recommendations for orthotics, range of motion exercises, positioning and mobility.

**Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA)** A trained professional who works under the direction of physical therapists and is responsible for services recommended by physical therapists.

**Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)** An approach to behavior that works to address behavior through an ongoing assessment and intervention process to develop supportive environments for student learning. It is based on a functional behavior assessment (FBA).

**Postsecondary** Graduation from high school or completion of special education in a public school.

**Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)** Statements in the IEP that provide academic and functional performance data, an overview of factors impacting the student and descriptions of how the child's disability affects involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (participation in appropriate activities for preschool children). All other IEP components are developed based on information in the PLAAFP.

**Prior Written Notice** A written notice that the school must provide to the parents of a student with a disability within a reasonable time if they wish to evaluate the student, determine whether the student is eligible for special education services, change the student's evaluation or educational placement or educational plan (IEP) or refuse the parents' request to evaluate their child or change their child's educational plan (IEP) or placement.

**Progress Monitoring** A scientifically based practice used to assess students' academic performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. Progress monitoring can be implemented with individual students or an entire class.

**Public Expense** The public agency either pays for the full cost of the evaluation, program or services including transportation and room and board, or ensures that such is provided at no cost to the parent.

**Related Services** Special education services required to assist an individual with disabilities to benefit from special education, including but not limited to: transportation, OT, PT, Speech, and School Social Work.

**Response to Intervention (RTI)** See MTSS

**School Psychologist** A trained professional who assists in the identification of needs regarding behavioral, social, emotional and educational functioning of individuals.

**School Social Worker (SSW)** A trained professional who supports the educational program of individuals by assisting in identification and assessment of the individual's educational needs including social, emotional, behavioral and adaptive needs and provides intervention services.

**Section 504** A section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which prohibits discrimination of people with disabilities by any entity that accepts federal funds.

**Self-Advocacy** The development of specific skills and understandings that enable children and adults to explain their specific disabilities to others and cope positively with the attitudes of peers, parents, teachers and employers.

**Short-Term Objectives** Intermediate steps between the student's present level of performance and an annual goal in the IEP.

**Special Education** Specially designed instruction and/or adaptations at no cost to parents to address the unique needs that result from a child's disability and to ensure access to the curriculum.

**Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)** A trained professional who analyzes speech and language comprehension and production to determine communication competencies and provides intervention strategies and services related to speech and language development as well as disorders of language, voice, articulation and fluency.

**Standard Accommodation** An assessment provision given so that the effect of a disability is minimized and the student is provided an opportunity to demonstrate the degree of achievement he or she actually possesses. It does not change the construct being measured and, therefore, yields valid scores on state assessments.

**Standardized Tests** Test that are uniformly developed, administered and scored. Most standardized achievement tests are norm-referenced (designed to compare a child's scores to scores achieved by children the same age who have taken the same test).

**Student Assistance Team** A team of educators and parents that meets to support the needs of students with academic, social or behavioral concerns. The focus of the team is to provide support to classroom teachers to implement interventions, accommodations and modifications so that students can be successful in general education.

**Summary of Performance** A summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance that includes recommendations to assist the student in meeting his or her postsecondary goals.

**Supplementary Aids and Services** Aids, services and other supports provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate.



**Teacher Consultant (TC)** A certified special education teacher who provides support services to children with disabilities and/or provides consultation to the regular classroom teacher.

**Transition Services** A coordinated set of activities that promote movement from school to post school activities. Transition services are determined by the IEP Team beginning at age 16 or earlier and are based on student needs and vision, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences and interests.

**FREQUENTLY USED ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS**

AD(H)D	Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder	MEAS	Michigan Educational Assessment System
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder	MET	Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team
AT	Assistive Technology	MI-Access	A Michigan alternative assessment
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress	MiBLSi	Michigan’s Integrative Behavior and Learning Support Initiative
BAA	Bureau of Assessment and Accountability	MICI	Mild Cognitive Impairment
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan	MI-TOP	Michigan Transition Outcomes Project
CCEE	Common Core Essential Elements	MIT	Michigan’s Integrative Technology Supports
CCISD	Copper Country Intermediate School District	MME	Michigan Merit Exam
CCSS	Common Core State Standards	MOCI	Moderate Cognitive Impairment
CEC	Council for Exceptional Children	MME	Michigan Merit Exam
CEN	Center for Educational Networking	MPAS	Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service (MP&A)
CEPI	Center for Educational Performance and Information	MRS	Michigan Rehabilitative Services
CI	Cognitive Impairment	MSD	Michigan School for the Deaf
CMH	Community Mental Health	MSDS	Michigan Student Data System
COTA	Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant	M-STEP	Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress
CP	Cerebral Palsy	OHI	Other Health Impairment
DHH	Deaf or Hard of Hearing	O+M	Orientation and Mobility
DIBELS	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills	OSE	Office of Special Education
ECDD	Early Childhood Developmental Delay	OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs (federal)
EGLCE	Extended Grade Level Content Expectations	OT	Occupational Therapy
EHSCE	Extended High School Content Expectations	P	Participation
EI	Emotional Impairment	PAC	Parent Advisory Committee
ELA	English Language Arts	Part B	Children and youth (ages 3-21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B.
ELPA	English Language Proficiency Assessment	Part C	Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth-2) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C.
EO	Early On	PBIS	Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports
EOT&TA	Early On Training and Technical Assistance	PDD	Pervasive Developmental Delay
ESA	Educational Service Agency	PECS	Picture Exchange Communication System
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act	PI	Physical Impairment
ELL	English Language Learner	PLAAFP	Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
ESL	English as a Second Language	PSA	Public School Academy/Charter School
ESY	Extended School Year	PT	Physical Therapy or Physical Therapist
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education	REED	Review of Existing Evaluation Data
FBA	Functional Behavior Assessment	RESA	Regional Educational Service Agency
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	SAIL	Superior Alliance for Independent Living
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year	SBE	State Board of Education
FI	Functional Independence	SEA	State Education Agency
FM	Focused Monitoring	SEAC	Special Education Advisory Committee
FTE	Full Time Equivalent	SEMS	Special Education Mediation Services
GLCE	Grade Level Content Expectation	SI	Supported Independence
HSCE	High School Content Expectations	SI	School Improvement
IDA	Infant/Toddler Development Assessment	SICC	State Interagency Coordinating Council
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	SLD	Specific Learning Disability
IEE	Independent Educational Evaluation	SLI	Speech and Language impairment
IEP	Individualized Education Program	SPP	State Performance Plan
IEPT	Individualized Education Program Team	SSW	School Social Worker
IFSP	Individualized Family Service Plan	START	Statewide Autism Resources and Training
IQ	Intelligence Quotient	SWIS	School Wide Information System
ISD	Intermediate School District	SXI	Severe Multiple Impairment
K-12	Kindergarten through Grade 12	TA	Technical Assistance
LEA	Local Education Agency	TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
LICC	Local Interagency Coordinating Council	TC	Teacher Consultant
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment	UDL	Universal Design for Learning
MARSE	Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education	USED	United States Department of Education
MDE	Michigan Department of Education	VI	Visual Impairment
MEAP	Michigan Educational Assessment Program		
MEAP-Access	A Michigan alternative assessment		

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**Local Resources**

B-H-K Child Development Board (Head Start) Houghton: 906-482-3663 L'Anse: 906-524-7300 <a href="http://www.bhkresources.org">www.bhkresources.org</a>	Bureau of Services for Blind Persons Escanaba Regional office 906-786-8602 800-323-2535 (voice)	Copper Country Community Mental Health 906-482-9400 <a href="http://www.cccmh.org/">www.cccmh.org/</a>
Copper Country Great Start Collaborative 906-482-9365 <a href="http://www.ccgreatstart.org/">www.ccgreatstart.org/</a>	Copper Country Intermediate School District 906-482-4250 800-562-7618 <a href="http://www.copperisd.org">www.copperisd.org</a>	Copper Country ISD Parent Advisory Committee <a href="http://www.copperisd.org/special-education/parent-advisory-committee/">www.copperisd.org/special-education/parent-advisory-committee/</a>
Department of Human Services Baraga County: 906-353-4700 Houghton County: 906-482-0500 Keweenaw County: 906-337-3302	Early On, Copper Country ISD 906-482-4250 <a href="http://www.copperisd.org/earlychildhood/early-on/">www.copperisd.org/earlychildhood/early-on/</a>	Equipment Loan for Kids 906-482-4250 ext. 181
Keweenaw Bay Child Development Center (Head Start, Early Head Start) 906-524-6626	Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Tribal Center Offices: 906-353-6623 Tribal Social services: 906-353-4201 <a href="http://www.ojibwa.com">www.ojibwa.com</a>	Keweenaw Family Resource Center 906-482-9363 <a href="http://www.kfrckids.org">www.kfrckids.org</a>
Michigan Alliance for Families Regional Parent Mentor: 906-779-5695	Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service Marquette Office: 906-228-5910 1-866-928-5910 (Toll Free) <a href="http://www.mpas.org">www.mpas.org</a>	Michigan Rehabilitation Services 906-482-6045
Superior Alliance for Independent Living Marquette, MI: 906-228-5744 800-379-7245 <a href="http://www.upsail.org">www.upsail.org</a>	Upper Peninsula Audiology 906-523-7120 <a href="http://www.upperpeninsulaaudiology.com">www.upperpeninsulaaudiology.com</a>	Western U.P. District Health Department Baraga County: 906-524-6142 Houghton-Keweenaw Counties: 906-482-7382 <a href="http://www.wupdhd.org">www.wupdhd.org</a>

**Statewide or National Resources**

The Arc of Michigan 800-292-7851 <a href="http://www.arcmi.org">www.arcmi.org</a>	Autism Alliance of Michigan 313-964-2620 <a href="http://autismallianceofmichigan.org">http://autismallianceofmichigan.org</a>	Brain Injury Association of Michigan 810-229-5880 800-444-6443 <a href="http://www.biami.org">www.biami.org</a>
Bureau of Services for Blind Persons Toll-Free: 800-292-4200 (voice); TTY 888-864-1212 <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/mcb">www.michigan.gov/mcb</a>	The Center for Educational Networking <a href="http://www.cenmi.org">http://www.cenmi.org</a>	Children's Special Health Care Services 616-632-7066 <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/cshcs">www.michigan.gov/cshcs</a>
Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan 517-485-8160/888-597-7809 <a href="http://www.laofmichigan.org">www.laofmichigan.org</a>	MI Child (affordable health insurance) 888-988-6300 <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs">www.michigan.gov/mdhhs</a>	Michigan Alliance for Families 800-552-4821 <a href="http://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org">www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org</a>
Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health 734-785-7705 <a href="http://www.mi-aimh.org">www.mi-aimh.org</a>	Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council 517-335-3158 <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/ddcouncil">www.michigan.gov/ddcouncil</a>	Michigan Federation for Children and Families 517-485-8552 <a href="http://www.michfed.org">www.michfed.org</a>
Michigan School for the Deaf Voice: 810-257-1400 VP: 810-515-8243 <a href="http://www.deaftartars.com">www.deaftartars.com</a>	Michigan Speech-Language-Hearing Association 517-332-5691 <a href="http://www.michiganspeechhearing.org">www.michiganspeechhearing.org</a>	National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities <a href="http://www.nichcy.org">www.nichcy.org</a>
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services- U.S. Department of Education 202-245-7468 <a href="http://www.ed.gov/osers">www.ed.gov/osers</a>	Office of Special Education-MDE 517-373-0923 <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/mde">www.michigan.gov/mde</a>	Special Olympics Michigan <a href="http://www.somi.org">www.somi.org</a>
Spina Bifida Association <a href="http://www.spinabifidaassociation.org">www.spinabifidaassociation.org</a>	State Board of Education 608 W. Allegan St. P.O. Box 30008 Lansing, MI 48906 The U. P. Assistive Technology Center 906-226-9903/517-373-3900	Statewide Autism Resources and Training 616-331-6480 <a href="http://www.gvsu.edu/autismcenter">www.gvsu.edu/autismcenter</a>
United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan 1-800-828-2714 <a href="http://www.ucpmichigan.org">www.ucpmichigan.org</a>	University of Michigan Health System Sound Support 734-936-4934	

## MY PERSONAL DIRECTORY

My Parent Advisory Committee representative is \_\_\_\_\_

The Director of Special Education in my ISD is \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

My child attends \_\_\_\_\_ school in \_\_\_\_\_

The principal of the school is \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

My child's teacher's name(s) is/are \_\_\_\_\_

### Other names and contact information important to me include:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
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