

[رجمة هذا المستند](#)
[traduzir este documento](#)
[traducir este documento](#)

Weymouth Public Schools

Special Education Procedure Manual

Updated August 2026



Margaret Verlicco, Executive Director of Student Services
Kristie Edelman, Assistant Director of Special Education

The Weymouth Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity,

sexual orientation, disability, age, or homelessness in admission to or participation in its programs and activities.

Table of Contents

Introduction & Purpose	Page 3
Parent/Guardian Involvement in the IEP Process	Page 3
• Communication with Non English Speaking Parent/Guardian	Page 3
• Communication about Educational Supports	Page 4
• Opportunities for Parent/Guardian Involvement	Page 4
• The Bureau of Special Education Appeals	Page 5
• Special Education Parent Advisory Council	Page 5
• Child Find Procedures	Page 6
Referral Procedures	Page 6
Evaluation Procedures	Page 9
• Initial Evaluation	Page 9
• Three-Year Reevaluations	Page 12
• Extended Evaluation	Page 12
• Unscheduled Testing	Page 12
• Privately Funded Evaluations	Page 13
• Independent Educational Evaluations	Page 14
• Expedited Evaluations	Page 14
• Determination of Eligibility	Page 15
Scheduling Team Meetings	Page 17
• Parent Participation in IEP Meetings	Page 19
The Team Process	Page 20
• IEP Team Membership	Page 21
• Special Attendees at the Team Meeting	Page 21
• Meeting Attendance	Page 22
• Team Member Excusal	Page 22
• Recording IEP Meetings	Page 23
IEP Development	Page 23
• New IEP Form and link to IEP Guide	Page 23
• Transportation	Page 24
• MCAS Alt Guidance	Page 25

Placement Determination	Page 28
Extended School Year Services	Page 30
Transition Planning	Page 32
Indicator 14 Data Collection	Page 34
Processing the IEP for Distribution	Page 35
Acceptance of the IEP	Page 36
IEP Progress Reports	Page 37
IEP Amendments ★ See Updates ★	Page 39
Reconvening the IEP Team	Page 40
Missed Special Education Services	Page 41
Special Populations	Page 41
• Students with Limited English Proficiency	Page 41
• Students Requiring ESP Support	Page 41
• Age of Majority (18 yrs)	Page 42
• Chapter 688 Referrals	Page 43
• Students Attending Private Schools or Homeschool Students	Page 44
• Students with disabilities and Bullying Prevention	Page 45
• Move In Students -	Page 45
• Preschool Students Receiving Outpatient Services	Page 46
The Consultation Process	Page 46
• Consultation Forms by School ★ New Forms ★	Page 48
• Consideration for Paraprofessional Support	Page 48
Assistive Technology	Page 49
Augmentative and Alternative Communication	Page 51
Ordering Process	Page 53
Maintaining Confidentiality	Page 54
Student Records	Page 55
Special Education Programs	Page 55
Disciplining Students with Disabilities (Manifestation Determinations)	Page 57
Restraint, Time Out and Seclusion ★ New Section ★	Page 61
Special Education Timelines	Page 66
Additional Resources	Page 67

Introduction & Purpose

The Student Services Department of the Weymouth Public Schools supports the commitment of the WPS District and the Weymouth School Committee to provide for children's educational needs in the least restrictive environment (LRE) in the provision of Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for all children. The Special Education Procedure Manual has been developed to ensure consistency and accuracy of special education practices across the district. This manual will be reviewed and potentially revised at least annually. All Special Education staff should review the manual at the beginning of each year. Additionally, revisions may be made at specific points throughout the year. Staff will be notified of the specific sections that have been revised and should review these sections. The practices and protocols in this manual are aligned with The Massachusetts Department of Education, Massachusetts General Laws ch. 71B, et seq., Special Education Regulations 603 CMR 28.00 et. seq. and IDEA 2004. This manual is designed to be used as a structured process for implementing special education procedures district wide, as a reference for answering questions on special education procedures, a staff development tool, and a resource for families.

Parent/Guardian Involvement in the Special Education Process

Communication with families is essential to a positive team relationship. Liaisons and related service providers should reach out to parents at the start of the school year via phone, email or letter home to identify themselves as the student's building contact and liaison. This communication should occur in the parent's preferred language of communication and should provide the parents with the liaison's school phone number and email for future communications.

Communication with Non-English Speaking Parents (Translations & Interpretations)

When working with families whose primary language is not English, the district is required to provide translation and interpretation services. These services may include interpreters at team meetings, as well as having documents translated.

If the "Home Language" Field indicates a language other than English, WRITTEN TRANSLATION IS REQUIRED. If the "Parent Teacher Conf Requested" Field indicates a language other than English, an ORAL INTERPRETER is required for phone calls and IEP meetings. When translation is required, all documents sent home should be translated including, the N1 forms, Evaluation consent forms, meeting Invitations, assessments, IEPs and progress reports.

All translation/interpretation requests must be submitted using one of the following three forms:

- [Bilingual Evaluation Request form](#) (Completed by School Psychologist or Service Provider)
- [Meeting Interpretation Request form](#) (Completed by Evaluation Team Secretary)
- [Document Translation Request form](#) (Completed by Staff Person responsible for form needing translation).

These forms can be found in the shared Special Education drive within the Special Ed Forms folder. As with

all Google forms, be sure to make a copy of the original and move it to **your Weymouth Google drive** for editing. *All forms and supporting documentation must be sent to the Special Education Secretary (Lisa Gookin) for processing.* Copies of all interpreted documents should be added to the student's permanent special education file maintained in each building. **Please note, there is a 24-hour (remote) and 48-hour (in person) cancellation policy for interpreters. Please try to cancel within these time frames to avoid any unnecessary charges.**

Communication about Educational Supports

Parents and Guardians should contact their student's special education liaison with any questions or concerns regarding special education, services, and student progress. Classroom questions should be directed to classroom teachers and any building based concerns can be directed to the building principals and/or Special Education Point of Contact. If a parent/guardian has a question or concern about service delivered by an ESP (formerly called paraprofessionals) they should reach out to the special education liaison. The liaison is responsible for ensuring the services are delivered and should be the point of contact for any ESP support, including 1:1 support. For questions or concerns regarding PT, OT, Speech, TVI, O&M, and adjustment counseling services, parents/guardians should contact the related service provider directly.

Opportunity for Parent/Guardian Participation

When schools and families work together, student learning and outcomes improve. Parents are vital to the IEP process. The law is very specific about what school systems must do to ensure that parents and guardians have the opportunity to participate, if they so choose. Parents and/or guardians can provide important information on the student's strengths and weaknesses at home, information on the student's history and development, and information on family and outside factors that may affect the child's learning experience. Parents/Guardians needs should be considered when arranging the Team meeting; Every effort should be made to accommodate the parent/guardian's schedule if possible. To increase access to IEP Team meetings, a parent/guardian can, at any time, choose to attend Team meetings in person, by telephone, or virtually using the district's chosen virtual platform. A translator may be used to contact parents and guardians whose primary language is not English.

Parental rights of participation can be summarized as follows:

- Parents/Guardians have the right to participate in meetings related to the evaluation, identification, and educational placement of their child.
- Parents/Guardians have the right to participate in meetings related to the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to their child.
- Parents/Guardians are entitled to be members of any group that decides whether their child is a "child with a disability" and meets eligibility criteria for special education and related services.
- Parents/Guardians are entitled to be members of the team that develops, reviews, and revises the individualized education program (IEP) for their child.
- Parents/Guardians are entitled to be members of any group that makes placement decisions for their child. If neither parent can attend the meeting where placement is decided, the school must use other methods to ensure their participation, including individual or conference calls, or video conferencing.

- Parent/Guardian rights are outlined in the [Parent Notice of Procedural Safeguard](#) This brochure is sent to families of students with IEPs in September of each year and included with the mailings for each initial evaluation referral. Additionally, the brochure is accessible on our [district website](#).

The Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA)

A parent/guardian has a right to disagree with any Team eligibility determination to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals, including a finding of no eligibility. Parents may contact the BSEA directly. Information regarding how to contact BSEA is included in the Notice of Procedural Safeguards. At each eligibility meeting, the Team Chairperson reviews the [eligibility flowchart](#) which includes a series of questions to guide the decision making of the Team. As part of this discussion, parents/guardians should be asked if they are satisfied with the evaluations completed by the school district. If parents disagree with the district's evaluation, they may have a right to an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE). If the parent requests an IEE at public expense, the district must either pay for the IEE (public rate setting only) or, within five school days, request a determination from the BSEA that the district's evaluation was comprehensive and appropriate.

Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)

The Weymouth Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is an all volunteer organization of parents of children with disabilities at all levels. The group meets monthly to learn about special education programs, issues, policies, regulations and resources and to connect families in the district. The formation of SEPAC is mandated by the Massachusetts Department of Education. Special education administration collaborates with SEPAC and attends the monthly meetings. All families are encouraged to attend SEPAC monthly meetings and can find more information on the Weymouth SEPAC Facebook page as well as on the district's website under Student Services.

Child Find

Under federal and state special education regulations, Weymouth Public Schools has a duty to locate, identify, refer, evaluate and, if eligible, provide a free, appropriate public education to students with disabilities who reside in the town of Weymouth. Child Find regulations apply to all students with disabilities, ages birth-21, who reside in the town of Weymouth, including students who are homeschooled and those attending private schools. Under the Child Find mandate, school employees who know of or have reason to suspect a child has a disability, these school employees have an affirmative duty to act on the child's behalf. When school staff suspect a student has a disability, they should contact the building's Special Education Point of Contact to discuss their concerns. If a parent or guardian shares information with any school personnel indicating the presence of a disability that could be impacting the student's access to instruction, the staff member is required to contact the Team Chairperson and building administrator immediately to initiate Child Find procedures.

Annually, in the fall, letters and flyers are mailed to community agencies, Doctor's offices, area private/parochial schools, local daycares, and churches, etc. to inform and educate the public about the need to locate and identify all children with disabilities. Pre-School screening is the initial step in the

process of identifying children with educational disabilities (ages 2.5 to 4). Those children who display difficulties during the screening may be referred for evaluation to identify eligible disabilities.

Weymouth Public Schools is also committed to identifying children before their third birthday in order to provide early intervention services for three and four year-olds with disabilities. If you have questions or concerns regarding your child's development and would like to have them screened, please contact the Weymouth Early Childhood Center.

If you suspect that your child may need an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services, you may request an evaluation, at no cost, through the Weymouth Public Schools Special Education Department.

Child Find: Private & Home School Students

It is the responsibility of the Weymouth Public Schools to identify any child who may have a disability who is either a resident of Weymouth or who attends a private school within the geographic boundaries of Weymouth even if the student is not a resident of Weymouth. This also includes students who are homeschooled. If your child attends a private school in Weymouth, but is not a resident, they are entitled to a special education evaluation if a disability is suspected. The family can choose to seek the evaluation through the district in which they reside, or through the district where the school is located. Students who are evaluated and found eligible for special education who do not reside in the town of Weymouth, will not receive IEP services in Weymouth. The Team will develop an educational service plan to be implemented by the town of Weymouth. The family can choose to share the results of the evaluation with their district of residence if they would like to discuss IEP development.

Referral Procedures

A parent/guardian or any other person in a caregiver or professional position concerned with a student's development can make a referral for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services. Referrals can be made verbally or in writing, although written documentation is preferable for tracking purposes. Once a referral is made, WPS will respond within five school days by sending a notice to the parent/guardian, seeking permission to conduct an Initial Evaluation to determine if the student is eligible for special education services. Please note, if a parent/guardian's home language is not English (as noted in Aspen) all correspondence must be translated into their home language.

Referrals

- **School Based:** If school personnel have identified an area of concern in need of intervention, the student should be referred to the building based Student Intervention Team (SIT). The SIT team determines strategies and interventions to address the areas of concern. The building administrators ensure that all intervention strategies, accommodations and instructional support services are documented along with data to demonstrate effectiveness. Ideally, intervention strategies are successful in supporting the student and an evaluation is not necessary. However, if the principal determines that all efforts have been made to meet the needs of the student within the general education program and these efforts have not been successful, a student should be referred by the school personnel for an evaluation to determine

eligibility for special education services. Evaluations may not be denied or delayed after a referral to determine eligibility for special education; however, evaluations may be conducted simultaneously with interventions through the SIT process. Documentation of the SIT process must be included with the referral paperwork. Referrals are given to the School Psychologist in order to determine specific areas to be evaluated.

- **Parent/Guardian:** When a student is referred for an evaluation by their parent/guardian, this request should be sent immediately to the School Psychologist and Evaluation Team Secretary. The School Psychologist will contact the family within 48 hours of the initial referral to provide the parent/guardian the opportunity to express any concerns, provide information on the student's skills or abilities, and have input regarding the assessments of the evaluation. The Team Chair will also confer with relevant school personnel (e.g. the student's teachers, related service providers, etc.) in order to ensure that all necessary assessments are included as part of the evaluation. When a referral is made by a parent/guardian, the student should be brought to the SIT team so that general education interventions can be implemented concurrently with the evaluation. This step is necessary to determine the least restrictive intervention for the student.

Obtaining Consent: After gathering all pertinent information, the school psychologist will then submit the [SPED 2](#) form to the evaluation team secretary for processing. The secretary must send the consent to the family within 5 days of the initial evaluation request. The Parent/Guardian must sign and return the Evaluation Consent Form before testing can begin. Verbal consent is not applicable. If the parent/guardian does not return the Evaluation Consent Form within **15 days**, the Evaluation Team Secretary will contact the parent/guardian to follow up. If after thirty **30 days**, the parent/guardian does not respond, the Special Education Department will resend the consent.

Upon receipt of the signed and accepted Evaluation Consent Form, the special education secretary will send the referral packet to each evaluator. **Evaluations must be completed within thirty (30) school days of receipt of the signed Evaluation Consent Form.** Upon receipt of the signed evaluation consent form, The Evaluation Team Secretary will schedule the Team meeting and send the invitation and attendance list to the school and family. If the student is fourteen (14) years or older or will turn 14 within the time frame the IEP would be written for, the student will be invited to the meeting and receive a meeting invitation and attendance sheet. In the event that the parent/guardian calls to change the meeting time/date*, the Evaluation Team Secretary will resend the Meeting Invitation notice with a list of invited Team members and the date of the meeting which **MUST** be within the forty-five (45) day period of completion to the central office. The Team must convene to determine if the student is eligible for special education within forty-five (45) working school days from the date of the parent's/guardian's consent. The parent/guardian may choose to waive their right to a meeting within the 45 day timeline. This waiver must be received in writing via mail or email.

WPS is also responsible for processing referrals for Weymouth residents of school-age attending private/parochial schools. The Team at the public school that the student would be enrolled in if attending the WPS is responsible for completing the evaluation.

DocuSign for Consents

Weymouth Public Schools now uses DocuSign to process evaluation consents. The School Psychologist processing the request for evaluation will use the following statement:

Weymouth Public Schools uses DocuSign to send out testing consent forms, evaluations and IEP's. This is a secure electronic platform that allows you to sign in, view the documents and electronically sign and date the document. We can send this through email, mobile phone or both. This provides a fast, safe and efficient turnaround. If for any reason you do not wish to use DocuSign, please let me know and we will send you a paper copy of the evaluation consent through either email or mail. Otherwise we will send the consent through DocuSign.

The School Psychologist will indicate the family's preference on the SPED-2 prior to sending to the ETS. The ETS will then send the consent. Evaluation Team Secretaries can use the following guide for sending consents through DocuSign: [Sending a Consent- DocuSign.pdf](#)

Please refer to the [DocuSign Rollout 2024.pptx](#) presentation for more information about DocuSign.

Receipt of Consent at the End of School Year

If consent is received within 30 to 45 school working days before the end of the school year, the school district shall ensure that a Team meeting is scheduled so as to allow for the provision of a proposed IEP or written notice of the finding that the student is not eligible no later than 14 days after the end of the school year

For consents received after the cut-off date, the timeline starts at the beginning of the following school year. It is expected that evaluation reports are completed within this period along with meeting invitation notifications.

Evaluation Procedures

Initial Evaluations

Evaluations of the student must be made in all areas of the suspected disability in order to determine eligibility for Special Education. Eligibility must not be based on a lack of instruction in the area of concern. Assessment measures should be tailored to the specific referral questions for the individual student. Measures also need to address whether or not there is a disability and if the disability affects the student's learning. Evaluations must be administered in the language and format which is likely to yield accurate information on the student's abilities and current performance (e.g. academically, developmentally, and functionally), unless it is not feasible to do so. No single test should be used as the sole criterion for determining eligibility. Rather, a variety of techniques (both formal and informal assessments), including information provided by parents/guardians, observation of the student in the classroom, work samples/portfolios, interviews, and review of the record should be used. **Evaluations are required prior to a finding that a student is no longer eligible**, except for graduation with a regular diploma or aging out. For those children, the liaison must provide a summary of academic and functional performance, including recommendations on how to assist the child to meet post-secondary goals using the Summary of Student Performance form in Aspen.

The choice of the testing instrument to be administered is made by the evaluator and is based on the referral questions.

Required Assessments

- **Assessments in all areas related to the suspected disability.**
- For students aged 14 and over, **transition needs** should be incorporated into each assessment.
- An *educational assessment*:
 - **Educational Assessment Part A**, which includes a history of the student's educational progress in the general curriculum. Such assessment shall include information provided by a teacher(s) with current knowledge regarding the student's specific abilities in relation to learning standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the District curriculum.
 - **Educational Assessment Part B**, which includes an assessment of the student's attention skills, participation behaviors, communication skills, memory, and social relations with groups, peers, and adults.

****The Educational Assessment Parts A and B are also now available as a google form. The Ed A and Ed B can still be completed via paper form if preferred. Evaluation Team Secretaries will send the Ed A and B to the appropriate staff member in paper form as well as a link to the Google Form. Google forms for each building are located here: [IEP Educational Assessment Part A and B](#). The Building Administrator, Team Chair, and School Psychologist will have access to the responses. These forms should be completed and provided with other written evaluation reports to the parents/guardians 2 days prior to the IEP meeting.

- Assessments required for **Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)**: When a specific learning disability is the suspected disability, the SLD Determination documents must be used to aid in this determination. These forms consist of a historical review and educational assessment, identification of the specific area(s) of concern and evaluation methods, an analysis of certain exclusionary factors, a mandatory observation form (which has been completed by someone other than the classroom teacher), and, finally, a Team determination of eligibility that all Team members must sign.

Additionally, all students suspected of having an SLD, must have an observation as part of their evaluation process.

- **Observations** in the child's natural environment or early intervention program are strongly encouraged for children being assessed at or before age three. An observation must be included for all evaluations of students suspected of having a specific learning disability.
- Assessments required for an **Emotional Impairment**. When an emotional impairment is the suspected disability, the School Psychologist must complete either the WPS Determination of SED form or the Emotional Decision Tree must be used to aid in the determination. These forms assist the team in identifying the required conditions for SED. As part of this determination, the student must have had a recent psychological evaluation, with social-emotional testing and a home assessment,
- Adaptive Testing must be included in all initial evaluations for students suspected of having an Intellectual Impairment. Adaptive testing may be included in reevaluations if deemed necessary.

Optional Assessments: Additional assessments may be recommended by the Team or requested by the parent/guardian based on the referral questions. These may include:

Psychological Evaluation: describes the student's learning capacity and learning style in relationship to social/emotional development and skills

Home Assessment: details any pertinent family history and home situations that may affect the student's education. A home assessment is included in evaluations for a suspected Emotional Impairment to assess the extent of the social-emotional and behavioral difficulties across settings. A Home Assessment generally includes a parent/guardian interview as well as social-emotional rating scales. The home assessment may be incorporated into the psychological assessment. As part of the Home Assessment or a Home FBA, a Home Visit may also be recommended, such as to assess reasons of non-attendance.

The following procedure should be followed for Home Visits:

- Send home consent for an in home assessment or Home FBA.
- Determine appropriate personnel to visit the home. Two WPS staff will visit the home.
- Upon receipt of signed consent:
 - Staff will notify building administrators of the date, time and address of all home visits so that building administrators know where staff members are at all times.
 - Two staff members will attend each visit and remain in each other's presence at all times. Staff should direct parents/guardians on the implementation of any trial procedures and not conduct these directly during the assessment period. The role of staff will be to advise/coach parents/guardians in implementation of the agreed upon plan.
 - Staff will conduct assessment, arranging for additional visits if needed, ensuring to follow steps three-six (3-6).
 - After the initial visit, staff will write a report, outlining observations as well as make recommendations based on the assessment including a written plan for any interventions, if appropriate.

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA): An FBA is a structured data gathering process used to identify the function of maladaptive behaviors, subsequently, develop positive behavior interventions and support the student. The FBA may target maladaptive behaviors in the home and/or school. See procedures for Home FBA above.

Related Services Assessments

Speech and Language A Speech and Language Therapist administers an assessment focusing on language development, specifically, articulation, phonological disorders, specific language impairment, and fluency. Speech and language evaluations may also include an assessment of the student's pragmatic language. The therapist may also determine current performance in four (4) areas related to the regular education curriculum: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Occupational Therapy An Occupational Therapy Assessment is administered by a Licensed Occupational Therapist (OT). Formal and informal testing procedures address the student's performance in a regular classroom. Performance components, which are assessed, include sensory processing, upper extremity coordination, and perceptual and visual-motor skills.

Physical Therapy: The Physical Therapy Assessment is administered by a licensed Physical Therapist (PT). This Assessment includes an observation as well as independently administered testing procedures. These procedures may assess one (1) or more of the following: range of motion, muscle strength, muscle tone, reflex integration, posture, endurance, gait, functional skills, and gross motor skills. The evaluation determines if the student can safely navigate the school environment and participate in all elements of the school program.

Health Assessment: When a Health Assessment is included as part of a Team evaluation, the team chairperson will send home a form to be completed by the child's physician. The school may also ask for a release to speak directly with the physician if needed.

Assistive Technology: When a Team is considering whether specific technology will be required in order for a student to access the general education curriculum, or participate more fully in the school day, providers may make recommendations based on their specific area of expertise. If the team can identify a low tech AT device (ex: core boards, visual schedules, District-approved, [software applications](#), or any other available support for reading, writing or communication) the team can make these recommendations without the need for an AT evaluation. If the team or a parent is asking for an Assistive Technology evaluation, please reach out to the Assistive Technology Specialist for a consult first. ([See Page 48](#)) The AT specialist will work with the team to review the data and information and discuss next steps; this may include a formal AT evaluation, if appropriate. For an initial referral, if AT is suspected, an AT evaluation should be included on the Consent form. For more information regarding Assistive Technology, see the [Assistive Technology Section of this manual](#).

Other Assessments Other assessments may be recommended by the Team, such as a vision, hearing, or audiological assessment. In such cases, building based providers should consult with the Special Education Point of Contact, who will Administrator of Special Education.

Evaluation Reports

Each person conducting an evaluation shall summarize results *in writing*. All evaluation reports should be written in clear, jargon-free language. Evaluators should interpret and summarize results and diagnostic impressions to help the Team determine eligibility including the student's present levels of educational performance and areas of need arising from the student's disability. Educationally relevant accommodations and modifications should be identified on every report to ensure the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum. Evaluators may provide an impression based on the referral questions, but no individual report summaries or recommendations are substitute for the Team's determination of eligibility for Special Education services.

Evaluation reports must be made available to parents/guardians at least two (2) days prior to the Team meeting. The signed report must **be uploaded to ASPEN** 3 days prior to the meeting to allow for this access. Upon parent/guardian request, reports will either be emailed home or available for pickup at the child's

school 2 days prior to the meeting. If this request is made to any staff member other than the evaluator, the staff member in receipt of the request will notify the Evaluation Team Secretary of the request. The ETS will notify the appropriate evaluator(s) and ensure reports are provided to the parent.

Three-Year Reevaluation

A reevaluation will be conducted for each student with a current IEP every three years or more frequently if requested or recommended. In general, reevaluations should not occur less than sixteen (16) months prior to the last evaluation unless both parents/guardians and LEA agree that evaluation is needed. When a student is referred for a reevaluation, existing evaluation data should be reviewed first. It is the responsibility of the District to generate the notice to reevaluate and to give the parent/guardian consent form to parent/guardian at least two (2) months before the Individual Education Plan of a student will expire.

In order to avoid unnecessary or excessive testing, a Team Chair may ask a parent/guardian to waive certain redundant or other assessments that are not needed either to write the educational plan or determine eligibility. Waivers are only appropriate when the team does not anticipate any changes to the provision of Special Education services, such as for high needs students in district-wide programs. All waivers should be in writing using the **Testing Waiver Form** and signed by the parent/guardian. If the District and parent/guardian agree that it is unnecessary to conduct testing as a part of the re-evaluation process, the District must ensure that the Team utilizes other means by which to determine continued eligibility for special education and/or related services. These other means may include work samples, class grades, tests/quizzes, data collection as a part of measuring progress toward annual goals or MCAS scores. No one source of information should be used as the basis for the eligibility determination.

If the Team decides that no assessments are needed to determine if the student is eligible for special education and/or related services, the Team may propose a record review as the assessment measure. The record review will include a summary of current educational performance, parent/guardian input, and a review of past evaluations. A record review should also include educational recommendations. A record review may not be relied upon for determining a student is no longer eligible for special education.

The parent/guardian and school may mutually agree to waive or postpone an evaluation. A waiver must be completed. The waiver must be placed in the student's special education file, and a copy must be sent home to the parent/guardian. Evaluation is **required** prior to ending an IEP service, including consultation. The assessment that is used can be a combination of standardized assessment and curriculum or classroom-based assessment data.

Extended Evaluations

In order to consider an extended evaluation, the Team must have determined the student eligible for special education services and developed a partial or full IEP but recommended further assessment. The Team should complete the Extended Evaluation form, along with the N1. Once the parent accepts the partial or full IEP, services must be implemented immediately. The extended evaluation period shall not be used to allow additional time to complete the required assessments and should not exceed 40 school days (8 school weeks).

If the parent consents to or accepts an Extended Evaluation, the Team shall document its findings and determine what evaluation time period is necessary and the types of information needed to develop an IEP, if appropriate. (EE) The Team may decide to meet at intervals during the extended evaluation, but in all cases shall reconvene promptly to develop or complete an IEP when the evaluation is complete.

**The extended evaluation shall not be considered a placement. Therefore no placement page should be issued*

for a student who is participating in an extended evaluation, even if that evaluation is occurring at a site in which students are sometimes placed for longer term out-of-district placements.

Unscheduled Testing

Unscheduled or Additional Testing should only be taking place when the Team has a question as to how to program effectively for a student or when there is evidence of a new area of suspected disability (i.e. Eligibility Determination). Thus, unscheduled testing should not be taking place because a staff member wants a measure of the student's progress. Progress can be better measured through information that is gathered on a day to day basis in the classroom, through teacher observation, formal and informal assessments, data collection, portfolio assessments, report cards and work samples etc. If unscheduled testing is taking place, then it will need to be repeated again at the time that the student is due for a complete re-evaluation even if less than three (3) years have not passed since the initial evaluation in the new area of suspected disability. If the unscheduled testing is within a year of the regularly scheduled evaluation, the Team is encouraged to consider conducting an early reevaluation for all areas, with parent/guardian approval as noted on the signed consent form.

After reviewing the referral questions, the School Psychologist should determine what type of assessment is best suited to answer the referral questions. The choice of the testing instrument to be administered is made by the evaluator and is based on the referral questions. The School Psychologist should consult with the Administrator of Special Education regarding any additional *outside* testing that may be necessary **prior to sending out the consent form.**

Privately Funded Evaluations

Parents/Guardians may elect at any time to have their child evaluated by an independent evaluator *at private expense*. When parents/guardians present the school with an outside evaluation report, if the student is already on an IEP, the Team must reconvene to consider the outside testing within ten (10) working school days of when the District receives the report. The parents/guardians must provide the Team with a complete copy of the written report in order for the Team to consider the recommendations. The Team is required to consider the results of the independent evaluation. Consideration of an outside evaluation at any time does not replace the Weymouth Public Schools responsibility or right to conduct an evaluation for determining special education eligibility. The Team will make recommendations, determine if additional testing is necessary and if possible determine eligibility for special education services. The Weymouth Public Schools are dedicated to preventing any duplication of evaluations. However, if the evaluation Team does not propose and attempt to complete a WPS evaluation, it places the District in the position of being preempted by outside testing in the future. If, after reviewing the evaluation, the Team wishes to accept the independent evaluation in lieu of completing our own testing, the Team Chair should consult with an Administrator of Special Education.

Processing an outside evaluation:

- Whoever first receives the report (teacher, office staff, nursing staff, principal, etc) will immediately (same day) scan the document and email the scan to the building's team chairperson, evaluation team secretary and building principal. The 10 day time frame begins when the evaluation report is first received.
- The Evaluation Team secretary and the team chair will discuss if any additional members need to be invited to the meeting. A school staff member should be present to read in each part of the report. If the report includes academic or psychological testing, the school psychologist must be present. If the report includes testing for any related service (speech, OT, PT, AT, AAC, counseling) then the corresponding related service staff member must be present at the meeting.
- The evaluation team secretary will schedule the team reconvene within one day of receiving the

outside report. The meeting must be scheduled within 10 school days of the initial receipt of the document by any school member. If the ETS received the report on day 3, then there are only 7 more days to schedule the meeting.

If a student has not already been identified as being eligible for special education services and is not on an IEP, WPS shall treat the receipt of the evaluation as a request for an initial evaluation to determine eligibility. WPS maintains its right and responsibility to perform an evaluation. The independent evaluation will be considered as part of Weymouth's comprehensive evaluation. The Special Education Point of Contact will contact the parent/guardian to discuss whether they would like a Special Education evaluation and subsequently refer to the School Psychologist to complete any relevant paperwork. If the parent/guardian does not want to pursue an evaluation, the Special Education Point of Contact will document this discussion and determine appropriate next steps, such as a 504 meeting with the building principal.

Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) at public expense

If the parent/guardian disagrees with a particular school assessment, parents/guardians have a right to request an Independent Education Evaluation (IEE). All requests for independent education evaluations should immediately be sent to the Administrator of Special Education's Office (attn: Lisa Gookin). Evaluations completed at public expense must abide by provisions for a sliding fee scale. The right to this publicly funded independent educational evaluation under 603 CMR 28.04(5)(c) continues for sixteen (16) months from the date of the evaluation with which the parent/guardian disagrees. Within five (5) school days of the request for a publicly funded IEE, the District shall either agree to pay for the independent educational evaluation or proceed to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals to show that its evaluation was comprehensive and appropriate. This includes functional behavior assessments and requests for independent evaluations in areas that the district has not yet completed.

For a publicly funded IEE, the parent/guardian secures the evaluator of their choice based on approved reimbursement rates. Whenever possible, the independent educational evaluation shall be completed and a written report sent no later than thirty (30) days after the date the parent/guardian requests the independent educational evaluation. If publicly funded, the report shall be sent to the parents/guardians and to the school District. The independent evaluator shall be requested to provide a report that summarizes, in writing, procedures, assessments, results, and diagnostic impressions as well as educationally relevant recommendations for meeting identified needs of the student. The independent evaluator may recommend appropriate types of placements but shall not recommend specific classrooms or schools. Within ten (10) school days from the time the school District receives the report of the independent educational evaluation, the Team shall reconvene and consider the independent educational evaluation and whether a new or amended IEP is appropriate.

If the public agency files for a hearing to prove that their evaluations were appropriate and the hearing officer determines they are, the parent still has the right to an Independent Evaluation but not at public expense (34CFR300.502(b)(3)). A hearing officer may require an Independent Evaluation as part of a hearing. If this occurs, it will be conducted at public expense 34 CFR 300.502(d)).

In Massachusetts, the public agencies may fund an Independent Evaluation according to a sliding fee scale as is determined by the family's financial status and as is outlined in 603 CMR 28.04.5. If the parent is requesting an independent education evaluation in an area not assessed by the school district, the student does not meet income eligibility standards, or the family chooses not to provide financial documentation to the district establishing family income level, the school district shall respond in accordance with the requirements of federal law.

If an evaluation is obtained at public expense, the criteria under which the evaluation is obtained, including the location of the evaluation and the qualifications of the examiner, must meet the same

criteria that the public agency uses when it initiates an evaluation, to the extent those criteria are consistent with the parents rights to an Independent Evaluation (34CFR300.502(e)).

Expedited Evaluations

Under IDEA, expedited evaluations are only required in situations where the LEA is not deemed to have knowledge that the child may have a disability and a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures under 34 C.F.R. § 300.530. See 20 U.S.C. § 1415(k)(5)(D). When the Weymouth Public Schools determines a need to expedite an evaluation, the student will receive all procedural disciplinary safeguards until the evaluation is completed. The parents/guardians are sent consents for the evaluation(s) and WPS staff is directed to begin assessments upon receipt of the signed parent/guardian consent form and depending on direct staff availability; contracted services may be utilized to expedite the process. The Team eligibility and (if eligible) the IEP development will be scheduled as soon as assessment reports are completed.

Evaluation Requests for College Testing (SAT/ACT/ETC)

In some cases, the College Board is asking that the student provide documentation of specific additional assessments or updated assessment information. However, this information is not needed by the District in order to deliver appropriate special education services to the student. The District is not obligated to provide or pay for updated or additional assessments to support a student's request for accommodation on College Board examinations if such assessment information does not already exist and is not necessary for the appropriate special education program for the student at the time of the request. The parent/guardian is responsible for paying for additional assessments that are needed for the sole purpose of supporting the student's request for accommodation on the College Board examinations.

If the parent/guardian requests an evaluation or assessment, whether or not the request describes the reason for the request, the District must respond in accordance with the requirements of state and Federal special education law. The District may either agree or disagree to conduct such an assessment and provide notice to the parent/guardian of the decision. The District's decision not to conduct the assessment is subject to the due process requirements of the law.

If a request for an evaluation is made for the purpose of demonstrating a need for accommodations on College Board tests, and the school District has no reason to believe the student has a disability or needs special education services, then the District can deny the request for an eligibility evaluation. The District must notify the parent/guardian of the decision.

Determination of Eligibility

The Determination of Eligibility is based upon the examination of data, including information provided from the parent/guardian. As part of the Team process, a flowchart sheet (ED 1) is used to answer the three questions of eligibility. The flowchart should be explained, visible, and completed at every meeting when eligibility is discussed. The Eligibility Flowchart has been designed to assist Teams in making eligibility determinations. The flowchart is a worksheet and not a notice/form. The worksheet becomes part of the student record but does not need to be mailed to parents with the Proposed IEP. This form must be completed and included in the packet sent to the Special Education Office. Assessments can be valid for use in determining eligibility for up to 18 months and as such teams are able to use previous assessments if redetermining eligibility within that time.

The state of Massachusetts identifies the following disability categories: [Click Here for MA DESE Definitions.](#)

- Autism
- Communication

- Developmental Delay (ages 3-9 only)
- Emotional
- Health
- Intellectual
- Neurological
- Physical
- Sensory: Hearing, Vision, or Deaf Blind
- Specific Learning Disability

After the presence of a disability has been determined, the team answers additional questions about effective progress and the need for specially designed instruction. Eligibility determinations are as follows:

The Student is Determined Eligible for Special Education

If the student has one or more of the disabilities defined at 603 CMR 28.0(7) and if, as a result of the disability(ies), the student is unable to progress effectively in the general education program without the provision of specially designed instruction, or is unable to access the general curriculum without the provision of one or more related services, the Team shall determine the student is eligible. If the Team determines the student is eligible for services, the Team shall develop an individual education program (IEP).

The Team must also review the definition of “to progress effectively in regular education” to determine whether there is a causal relationship between the disability and the student’s ability to progress effectively. A student is making effective progress if their progress in school is equivalent to that of a typically developing same-aged peer with similar strengths and weaknesses. The Team must consider the student’s ability to access the general curriculum as well as other facets of school life. If the disability is shown to be inhibiting the student’s ability to progress effectively in regular education and the student requires *specially designed instruction (e.g. modifications) or related services* in order to access the general education curriculum, the student is eligible for special education. As required by law, when the existence of a specific learning disability has been determined, it is necessary to document said disability. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has developed appropriate forms for the development of determination of SLD. ***Eligibility must not be based on lack of appropriate instruction or on English language learning needs.***

The Student is Determined not Eligible for Special Education

The Team must make a finding of no eligibility if the student:

- does not have a disability;
- has a disability but is making effective progress without the need of supportive services;
- shows a lack of educational progress but it is not due to a disability;
- does not require specialized instruction.

Specially designed instruction includes modifications that affect content, delivery of instruction, methodology and/or performance criteria and are necessary to assist the student in participating and learning. ***If the student only requires accommodations, then that student is not eligible for special education.*** General educators within the general education environment typically provide accommodations. Preferential seating, pencil grip use, or cooperative learning strategies are some examples of these kinds of typical accommodations. Accommodations do not involve modifying the material content, but do allow students to receive information in a more effective manner based on their individual needs. The District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) is an important document and reference for additional information about general education supports and interventions, including best practice accommodations. The DCAP is available at each building and is overseen by building administrators.

If the student has a disability but is not eligible for an IEP, then a 504 Accommodation Plan may be appropriate. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. This law protects a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

[Back to Top](#)

Determination of eligibility for a 504 Accommodation Plan is a separate process from the special education eligibility process and is coordinated through the Principal of the building. If a parent or school member wishes to pursue a 504 eligibility process, they should be directed to contact the School Principal. IEP Team members cannot determine 504 eligibility, if a 504 may be appropriate, the chairperson or counselor may work with the parent to help them connect with the building principal who will initiate the 504 process.

If the Team determines that the child is not eligible, the Team chair shall record the reason for such finding, list the meeting participants and provide written notice to the parent/guardians of their rights in accordance with federal requirements within ten days of the Team meeting. This is documented using the Notice of School District Refusal to Act (Form N2).

Scheduling Team Meetings

Meeting Days

Each building is assigned meeting days to accommodate the scheduling of staff who travel between buildings. Evaluation Team Secretaries should schedule meetings on these days unless another day is requested by the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian requests a meeting on a “non-meeting day”, they should be informed that not all team members may be available. ETS should explain the need to excuse members if needed. The parent/guardian can choose to keep the meeting scheduled on a meeting day or may change the day with the understanding that some members (tell them which) are unable to attend. Some staff may be able to attend a meeting via phone or Google Meet on a non-meeting day, but this cannot be guaranteed.

The meeting day schedule is provided to the ETS each year at the end of the summer. If an ETS does not have access to this document, they should contact [Lisa Gookin](#).

All meetings will be scheduled as in-person meetings. However, families continue to have the option to hold a virtual meeting (or phone conference) if they prefer. The ETS should include the following statement in the Details box on the Meeting Invitation form (N3)

*This meeting is scheduled at the **(Insert name of school)**. If you prefer a virtual meeting, please contact **(Insert name of ETS)** at **(email address of ETS)**.*

Time Frame

The following is a guide for Evaluation Team Secretaries for scheduling meeting:

Annual Meetings	1 hour block
Initial Evaluations	1 ½ hour block
Reevaluations	1 ½ hour block
Reconvene Meetings	1 hour block
Unscheduled Testing Meetings	1 hour block
Extended Evaluation Meetings	1 ½ hour block

Placement Meetings (separate)	1 hour block
-------------------------------	--------------

More complex meetings, including those for students in district-wide programs, meetings in which legal representatives are attending, initial evaluations for high-needs students, or BSEA-facilitated meetings should be scheduled for a two-hour window.

If more than 2 hours is needed for a meeting, Team Chairs will either bring the meeting to a close, if possible or explain the need to gather together at an additional time. The district will make every effort to reconvene the team promptly within the next 2-10 days and will consider parent/guardian, school, advocate, and/or lawyer schedules.

IEP Google Meeting Calendars

Each building has an IEP meeting calendar. Eval Team Secretaries should have full access to their Team Chair's Google Calendars. The ETS will schedule each IEP meeting ON the Team Chair's Google Calendar AND INVITE the building's IEP Meeting Calendar. This allows the Team Chair to "own" the meeting and, therefore manage the waiting room for any members attending virtually using Google Meet. It is important to invite the building IEP Meeting Calendar for report and coverage purposes. This is done by adding the IEP Calendar as the ROOM. All official IEP Calendars have a -1 in the title. These are the calendars the district backs up nightly.

Liaisons should notify the ETS of an MD meeting to ensure team members are not double booked. The meeting time should be marked on the IEP meeting calendar.

All meeting invitations will be sent to staff using only a Google Calendar invitation. **Hard copies of invitations should not be distributed to staff.**

Parents/guardians will receive a hard copy of the meeting invite and attendance sheet as soon as the meeting is scheduled, minimally 10 days in advance of the meeting. If a meeting is scheduled without 10 days notice, the parent/guardian must waive their right to the 10 days notice. The ETS should document the parent's waiver on the invitation in the "Details" section. This statement, or something similar should be used: "The parent chose to waive their right to notice 10 days prior to the meeting in order to schedule a meeting within their preferred time frame."

To avoid confusion about the format of the meeting (i.e. virtual or in person), parents/guardians should only be added to the Google calendar invite when a virtual meeting has been scheduled. When sending a Google Calendar invitation to staff and/or parent/guardian, the ETS should use the following format for naming the meeting:

Student Last Name, First Initial; Meeting Type; Grade

(School) Doe, J. Initial Gr2- VIRTUAL

(School) Doe, J. Annual Gr4-IN

PERSON

(School) Doe, J. Reeval Gr10-VIRTUAL

(School) Doe, J. Reconvene GrK

The ETS should attach the following documents to the Google Invitation:

- The Aspen Meeting invitation
- The Aspen Meeting attendance
- Sped 2A referral form (for evals)
- Blank Ed A and B (evals)

Rescheduled IEP Meetings

An IEP meeting may be rescheduled based on parent or guardian requests. IEP meetings should rarely be rescheduled due to the request of the district.

If a Team member needs a meeting rescheduled, they should email the Evaluation Team Secretary and cc the Team Chair and Special Education Point of Contact for the Building.

The original meeting date and reschedule request must be documented in the “Details” section of the new invitation (ETS) as well as in the Additional Information section of the IEP (Team Chair). Recommended Statements:

- “The original meeting was scheduled for 9/22/20 8:00 AM, but was rescheduled due to parent request.”
- “The original meeting was scheduled for 9/22/20 8:00 AM, but was rescheduled because the parent did not attend. This is the second meeting attempt.”
- “The original meeting was scheduled for 9/22/20 8:00 AM, but was rescheduled due to an unforeseen school scheduling need.”
- “The original meeting was scheduled for 9/22/20 8:00 AM, but was rescheduled, due to a snow day.”

Parent Participation in IEP Meetings

Section 300.322 of IDEA (<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/d/300.322>) details the need to ensure parent participation in IEP meetings as follows:

Conducting an IEP Team meeting without a parent in attendance. A meeting may be conducted without a parent in attendance if the public agency is unable to convince the parents that they should attend. In this case, the public agency must keep a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed on time and place, such as—

- (1) Detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted and the results of those calls;
- (2) Copies of correspondence sent to the parents and any responses received; and
- (3) Detailed records of visits made to the parent’s home or place of employment and the results of those visits.

As a general rule, the Team should attempt to hold the meetings two separate times prior to holding the meeting without the parent on the third attempt. After each scheduled meeting that the parent does not attend, the Team Chair or Evaluation Team Secretary should call the parent to attempt participation in any format that is convenient for the parent, such as a phone conference or Google Meet. Each attempt to contact the parent should be documented in the N1 after the meeting is eventually held. If WPS cancels a meeting for any reason, including staff absence, this does not count as an attempt to hold the meeting. This rule applies to Manifestation Determinations as well.

The Team Process

IEP Team Membership

The Team meeting is designed to incorporate school staff, parents/guardians and other invited personnel as a unified group to determine eligibility, development of an IEP and/or placement for a particular student. WPS is dedicated to ensuring parent/guardian involvement in the Team process.

The Team is responsible for managing three important activities:

- Eligibility Determination/Initial and Reevaluations
- Development of the IEP
- Placement decision

Other determinations, such as scheduling of classes, discipline, and 504 plans should be referred back to the appropriate point of contact within the building.

The following are **mandated members** of the IEP Team :

- Student's parent/guardian
- The Team Chairperson who is the district representative with the authority to commit district resources
- At least one general education teacher familiar with the student
 - For any student placed in a substantially separate placement who *does not* attend general education classes or specials/enrichment/essentials, a general education teacher is not required.
 - For any student placed in a substantially separate placement who *does* participate in general education classes (including specials, core classes, enrichment, even if only for short opportunities), a general education teacher familiar with the student must attend the team meeting.
- At least one special education teacher or special education provider familiar with the student
- An individual who can interpret evaluation results for each assessment completed
- Other individual(s) who have knowledge or expertise regarding the student
- If appropriate, the student may be included; **however, after the student has turned 13, the student must be invited to their IEP Team meeting.** The invitation must be sent to the student under separate cover.
- Other adult transition agencies as appropriate:
 - For students who are 14+ and have been appointed a case manager from the Massachusetts Rehab. Commission (MRC), Dept. of Mental Health (DMH), Dept. of Developmental Services (DDS), Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), or the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH), the Team Chairperson should ensure the scheduling secretary has the information to invite the case manager from the appropriate agency to the annual Team meeting(s) for the purpose of transition planning. If the Team Chairperson is unsure if an agency case manager has been assigned, they should contact the agency/family to gather more information.
 - For students who are legally blind and may be eligible for Pre-ETS (see transition planning), a member of the MA Commission for the Blind (MCB) should be invited to any Team meeting where transition planning will be discussed. The Team Chairperson in conjunction with the district Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI), should be sure the MCB representative is

invited to the Team meeting.

The Role of the General Educator in a Team Meeting: The general education teacher should report on the student's current performance in the general education setting related to the student's disability, IEP accommodations, modifications, and goals. The teacher should use the completed Ed B Form as reference if needed. The teacher should comment on any accommodations they feel need to remain on the IEP and any they believe the student no longer requires to enable Team discussion if needed.

Special Attendees at the Team Meeting

Advocate

The parent or guardian has a right to bring an advocate or consultant to the meeting. No additional steps are required.

Educational Consultant or Expert

The Team Chairperson should request a copy of any written document, if applicable, prior to the Team meeting. Team members should familiarize themselves with the content of this evaluation prior to the Team meeting.

Attorney

Parents/guardians may bring an attorney to a Team meeting, however prior notice is needed as ethics rules prohibit the attorney from having contact with the school staff without the presence of the school's attorney. When a family notifies a staff member that the family would like their attorney to attend a meeting, the staff member should ask for the attorney's name and contact information and immediately inform the Team Chairperson. The Team Chairperson will immediately contact the Special Education Administration who will share the contact information with the district's attorney. The Team meeting may need to be rescheduled to accommodate the schedules of the family and the district attorneys.

If a family unexpectedly brings an attorney to a Team meeting, the Team Chair should immediately contact their Special Education Administrator for further guidance. The meeting will likely need to be rescheduled to allow for the district to have its attorney present.

If the family notifies a WPS staff member in advance of their intention to bring an attorney to a student's IEP meeting, the following procedure should be followed:

1. The staff member should send an email to BOTH the Evaluation Team Secretary (ETS) and the Team Chair.
2. The ETS should be sure to gather all needed information from either the staff member or the family.
 - a. The student's name
 - b. The attorney's name and contact information
 - c. The date and time of the IEP meeting.
3. The ETS should then fill out this [Attorney Request form](#) which will go to Kathleen Levine in the special education office and include the required information. The ETS should be sure to email the following people to make them aware : Team Chair, building principal, and the special education administrator.
4. The Special Ed. Administrative Assistant, Lisa Gookin, will reach out to WPS attorneys via email. This email should include all relevant information listed above and a request for representation at the IEP meeting.
 - a. If the attorneys can attend the meeting as scheduled, Kay will notify the Team Chair, ETS, Principal, and Special Ed Point of Contact that the meeting can continue as scheduled and provide the attorney's name and email address.
 - b. If the attorney cannot attend the meeting as scheduled, Kay will work with them to arrange another date and time. Kay will contact the family if needed to discuss alternate days

recommended by the attorney, unless the attorneys are able to coordinate amongst themselves.

5. Once they receive the original email notification from the ETS, The Special Ed Point of Contact and the building principal will meet to review the student and case. They will include any other staff in this review if needed (i.e Team Chair).
6. The building principal will attend the IEP meeting. For all meetings with attorneys present, an administrator should also be present to support the Team as needed.
7. The Special Ed Point of Contact will be available for support to the building administrator as needed.

Weymouth Public School staff should only be in contact with a family's attorney in the presence of the District's attorney.

Meeting Attendance

Meeting attendance must be documented every time the Team convenes. Parents/guardians must be notified of all meeting attendees via the N3A. The ETS will put the school nurse on the google calendar invite as "optional" for notification purposes only. At the High School, the dean and guidance counselor will also be put on the invitation as "optional". If the school nurse, dean or guidance counselor plans to attend the meeting, they should notify the ETS. The ETS will then revise the meeting invitation to include the school nurse and resend to the parent/guardian.

Team members are expected to stay the length of the entire meeting, however if needed the Team member may be dismissed early, with parent/guardian approval. If the parent/guardian does not approve of a Team member being dismissed, then the member must stay, or the meeting may need to be postponed (in the event of an emergency need to leave a meeting). If a member is excused or dismissed from a meeting, this must be documented on the [Meeting Excusal Form](#).

For a reconvene meeting, the staff qualified to speak to any areas to be discussed must be present at the meeting. For example, if the meeting is requested by a parent/guardian to discuss lack of progress on a Communication goal, the SLP must be in attendance. If the team proposes a reconvene to discuss student progress in all areas, all service providers on the IEP must be in attendance.

Team Member Excusal

If a required Team member is unable to attend the Team meeting, the Team meeting can be held if the parent provides signed permission to excuse the Team member **and** the absent Team member provides written input (i.e.: accommodations goals/objectives, evaluation report, Ed Assessment A/B, etc).

There may be an occasion where someone is listed on the meeting attendance sheet, but is not a necessary member of the team. If an unnecessary Team member is unable to attend the Team meeting, it can be held if the parent provides signed permission to excuse the Team member. Written input is not required.

The parent/guardian should be contacted as soon as the district is aware that a Team member is unable to attend. A Team Meeting Excusal Form must be signed prior to or at the start of the Team meeting in order for the meeting to be held. If a Team Member must be excused at any time during the meeting, the parent must initial their consent to the excusal on the attendance sheet and the time the team member was excused should be recorded on the form.

If a parent/guardian does not attend a meeting, this must be documented on the attendance page. All members should sign into the meeting and a statement should be written at the bottom of the sheet indicating the parent/guardian did not attend the meeting as well as the attempts made to reach out to the family. For example, "The guardian did not attend this meeting. The Team reached out via phone within the first 10 minutes of the meeting, but could not reach the parent."

If a parent/guardian attends a meeting via phone or Google Meet, this should be documented on the attendance sheet as well.

Recording IEP Meetings

Weymouth Public Schools does not permit audio/video recordings at meetings. An exception to the prohibition of audio/video recordings at meetings will be made only in cases where such recording is necessary to ensure parent/guardian's access to the meeting; to access and understand Team meeting and IEP process; or if such recording is necessary to ensure other parental rights guaranteed by IDEA Part B.

Any requests to record an IEP meeting should be directed to the building principal. The building principal will consult with the Assistant Director of Special Education/Executive Director of Student Services to determine whether such requests fall within the exceptions listed herein. The Principal and Special Education Administrators have the discretion to request further information that may support a parent's request to record an IEP meeting. If the request is approved, Weymouth Public Schools will also record that meeting.

IEP Development

New IEP Form

Weymouth has fully transitioned to the New IEP Form. Information and resources can be found in the Special Education Drive under New IEP Form and Resources, such as various presentations and a Guide for the New IEP, also linked here: [New IEP Guide.pdf](#). The guide provides information about information required in each section as well as some examples.

The IEP must address areas of educational need based on the student's disability. The Team must also look at the student's overall involvement within the school, including participation in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities and for preschool students, participation in appropriate activities to ascertain other areas of need. The Team may consider how students communicate with others, how the students' behavior affects their learning or the learning of others, how assistive technology could support effective progress or how the students' disabilities affect transition to post-secondary activities.

When developing the IEP for a student with an existing IEP, the Team should always review the content of the existing IEP as they begin developing a new IEP. The new IEP should be revised and updated as needed to shift goals and services and to demonstrate a progression of learning. Each year's measurable goals should clearly show a step by step increase in a student's learning outcomes. Also, if necessary, any lack of expected progress needs to be discussed and addressed and documented in the N1.

Service Delivery Grid

IEP services should be determined by the Team, based on documented needs commensurate with the area of disability, and based on data collected. Overall, the services and aids should lead the student to success and to greater independence.

The school District shall ensure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who do not have disabilities, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with special needs from the general education program occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. The removal of a student from the general education setting is supported in the Nonparticipation Justification section of the IEP, which quotes the regulation describing the District's responsibility outlined above.

The service delivery grid is broken down into three sections. Each section identifies the manner in which the Special Education services are provided, as described below:

Grid A: Consultation or training for school staff and/or parents/guardians.

Grid B: Direct services delivered to students in the general education environment.

Grid C: Services provided to the student in any other type of setting

ESY: Services provided to the student beyond the regular school day, including extended day or year.

Each section of the Service Delivery must denote the type of service provider i.e. Special education teacher, Occupational Therapist. A specific amount of time per cycle needs to be identified for all areas as well as the start and end date for each service. All services, even services that WPS provides by private vendors, need to be included on the service delivery grid as District services.

If a student requires specific paraprofessional, or nursing assistance based on their disability in order to access the curriculum, this must be documented on the service delivery grid.

If a student requires extended school year services, they must be documented in the section for Extended School Year Services. If a student requires nursing or specific paraprofessional support for ESY, this too should be documented on the service delivery grid.

Adding Up the Service Delivery Grid

The Team Chairperson must make sure that the hours of service indicated in the IEP must not be greater than the hours in a school day (unless an extended day is indicated). If a Team Chairperson needs assistance with this process, they should contact a special education administrator for assistance. Additionally, the Team Chair must make sure the hours of service indicated for ESY do not extend beyond the intended service time. For example if a student requires 20 hrs/week of services, any related services that occur within that time may impact the hours.

Participation in the General Education Setting

Per IDEA, a child with a disability cannot be removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general education curriculum. Students with disabilities, including students in public and private institutions or other care facilities, are to be educated with students who are not disabled to the maximum extent possible. Special classes, schools, or other removal of students with disabilities from the general education environment should only occur if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily [34 C.F.R. § 300.114](#).

As such, the IEP team must note whether the student's educational needs can be met in the general education setting, with or without the use of supplementary aids and services. If no, the team must also provide an explanation of the extent to which the student will not participate in general education. The Team must Include a description of the specific supplementary aids and services considered before determining that the student would be removed from a general education class or activity.

Schedule Modification

Teams must describe when a student's school day is modified (i.e. if the student requires a shorter or longer day). Teams must also determine if the student requires Extended Year Services by indicating that the student requires a longer year. For more information on ESY, see the Extended School Year section of this manual.

Transportation

The Team must determine if the student requires transportation services based on the identified disability (e.g. due to physical, behavior or social-emotional needs). This determination is a data driven decision and the team should consider what is the least restrictive environment for the student. This determination must occur at each Team Meeting. Once the team has determined the need for transportation, the Team Chair should complete the [BLANK SPED 109 Transportation Request](#). * Please be sure to make a copy of the form. **Do not type directly into it.** The SPED 109 is sent to the Transportation Department and a copy is placed in the Special Education file. The SPED 109 must include any information needed by the transportation department to safely and effectively transport the student and should have any relevant behavior, safety or health care plans attached. Per 603 CMR 28.06(8)(b) and (c), the district must provide training for all transportation providers, before they begin transporting any special education student, receiving special transportation, on his or her needs and appropriate methods of meeting those needs. For any such student, the district also provides written information on the nature of any needs or problems that may cause difficulties, along with information on appropriate emergency measures. The Director of Transportation will review the information included within the SPED 109 and relay information to transportation providers as needed. The Director of Transportation will collaborate with the Team to coordinate any training needed by school providers. If the student's safety while riding specialized transportation is a concern due to unsafe behavior that may cause harm to the student or others, the driver will complete an incident report that will be provided to the school and a copy sent to the transportation department. The Team should consider any incident reports and concerns for safety by communicating with the Director of Transportation to determine what supports are needed for the student to ride safely. Considerations may be seating assignment changes, safety buckles or other accommodations such as temporarily riding with an ABA/BCBA/RBT to develop a safety plan. These considerations should be explored **before** requesting a 1:1 monitor. Any changes related to safety should be reflected on the sped 109 form.

Students who attend a district wide program (which is not located at the student's home school) or students who attend an Out of District Placement will be provided transportation to the appropriate school **but it is not considered specialized transportation**. The transportation department will assign students to available busses or vans that are transporting in that student's neighborhood.

For students attending district or out of district programs that do not require specialized transportation, the transportation box is checked off, "no", on the IEP. This indicates:

Transportation will be provided in the same manner as it would be for students without disabilities.

Please note that if the student is placed in a program located at a school other than the school the student would have attended if not eligible for special education, then transportation will be provided.

For these students, the transportation department will determine if a bus is available and, if not, a van will be arranged.

If the student requires specialized transportation then the team should indicate "yes". The Team will then note that the student needs to be transported on either a regular transportation vehicle with modifications and/or specialized equipment and precautions or on a special transportation vehicle with the following modifications and/or specialized equipment and precautions. For both, the team must also specify the disability-related need(s) that require support(s) during transportation (e.g., seizures, a tendency for motion sickness, behavioral or communication difficulties).

Pick-up and drop off locations: Students are transported between home and school based on residency. Please refrain from using "door-to-door" for students living in apartments/condos. All requests for alternate pick-up and/or drop off locations need to be made using the [Alternate pick-up/drop-off request](#) Form. All requests must be made **at least two weeks prior** to the requested start date. The form should be completed by parents and submitted to the Special Education point of contact. The Special Education point of contact

will send the request to the transportation department. The Transportation Department will determine if the request can be accommodated and notify both the parent/guardian and school.

State or District-Wide Assessments

[Team Chairs should review the MCAS Quick Look Document for important guidance.](#)

The Team is responsible for deciding how all students will participate in state and District-wide assessments. Students participate in statewide testing with accommodations outlined in the IEP. These accommodations must be consistent with accommodations students regularly receive in their curriculum. If needed, students will participate in an alternate assessment. Per DESE, “If a student with a significant disability is working *at, near, or above grade level*, but is unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on the standard MCAS tests in any subject due to the nature and severity of their disability, even with the use of accommodations, the student's IEP team (or individuals responsible for developing a 504 plan) may designate the student for an MCAS *grade-level portfolio* (in grades 3–8) or an MCAS *competency portfolio* (in high school)”

Students with **the most significant cognitive disabilities** may require the **MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt)**. This is a portfolio of materials collected by the teacher and student and includes work samples, instructional data, videotapes, and other supporting information and materials. The Team should refer to the [updated training materials](#) on the requirements to limit the number of students taking the MCAS-Alt to one percent. Teams must also complete the [Alternate Assessment Participation Tool](#) to ensure that students meet the criteria for taking the MCAS-Alt. A copy of the Alternate Assessment Participation Tool must be kept in the IEP meeting folder. Due to changes in the MCAS graduation requirement, the team no longer has to complete the MCAS-Alt Parent Notification Letter.

IEP Teams for students beginning in GRADE 2, must include MCAS accommodations on the IEP, if needed. If no assessments are planned during a particular IEP period, the Team should note that no testing would occur and leave the remainder of the page blank. Remember to explain to parents that MCAS does not include History or Reading, so those areas may not be checked.

Transition information

This section should include the student’s anticipated graduation date. If applicable, a statement of interagency responsibilities or needed linkages, the discussion of rights at least one (1) year before the age of majority, and a recommendation for Chapter 688 referral. See the Transition Planning section of this document for additional information.

Additional Information

In this section, the team should document any other relevant information which has not already been stated. The following information should be automatically included when appropriate:

- Reference to IHCP
- Efforts to obtain participation (if parent/guardian and/or student did not attend or provide input)
- A statement about ESY dates (if applicable)

When additional staffing is required and documented on the service delivery grid, a statement explaining the tasks required by the additional staff must be provided.

- Need for Educational Support Personnel (ESP) interventions & Plan to Fade ESP support
Example: [Student] requires additional support for mobility due to physical limitations, low muscle tone, and instability. The ESP should accompany the student whenever they are (moving about the classroom, transitioning from room to room/while at recess/ when on a field trip/etc). The ESP will collaborate with the Physical Therapist

to ensure the student is properly supported, that independence is promoted, and that skills are reinforced regularly. Fading Plan: As directed by the physical therapist, the ESP will fade support to increase the student's independence based on data indicating improvement in skills. The Team will reconvene to discuss terminating this support if the student is able to move safely about the classroom or school without physical assistance of another adult.

Example: [Student] requires additional ESP support due to safety concerns. The student is not yet able to regulate their emotions at this time and when dysregulated lashes out at other students (punching, kicking, biting). The ESP will work collaboratively with the BCBA to carry out a consistent behavior plan which includes positive behavioral supports and meaningful reinforcement. The ESP will fade support as the student's regulation skills increase, with collaboration from the BCBA. The Team will reconvene to discuss terminating this support when the student's physical aggressions decrease to a frequency that is manageable by classroom or program staff.

- Need for Bus Monitor or special supports

Example: [Student] requires a monitor on transportation for safety reasons. The student also requires a buckle buddy for safety. The bus monitor will maintain a positive behavior chart while on transportation to encourage development of safety skills. The monitor will also observe the student during transport as the student has a tendency of trying to unbuckle when not monitored. The Team will reconvene to discuss terminating this support if the student no longer needs the monitor to remain safely buckled and seated in the van.

***Please note that the Bullying Prevention Statements and ASD Considerations are now embedded within the IEP. The Considerations for ASD populate for students who have been designated as ASD for the disability category. The following statements may still be used within the Bullying section:

- “The Team determined the student's disability makes them vulnerable to acts of bullying, or harassment.
[choose one:] Benchmarks have been added to goal #_ to address the related skills.
 Goal #_ includes the specially designed instruction needed to address the related skills.”
- “The Team determined the student's disability affects social skills development.
[choose one:] Benchmarks have been added to goal #_ to address the related skills.
 Goal #_ includes the specially designed instruction needed to address the related skills.”
- “The Team determined the student's disability does not make them vulnerable to acts of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The student will continue to participate in the district wide, general education curriculum addressing the skills related to avoiding and responding to bullying, harassment, or teasing.”

Placement Determination

Placement refers to the categories of full inclusion, partial inclusion, substantially separate, separate day school or residential school. The specific services on a student's IEP drive the placement determination. It is important to remember that placement (or the specific program a student is assigned to) does not inform the services. If a Team member wants to discuss placement, the conversation should be postponed until after the IEP is developed.

In cases where the District proposes a placement that would be other than the child's local school, **the Team Chair should be in touch with the Special Education Point of Contact and Assistant Director of Special Education who will assist in this process.** Per 603 CMR 28.06 (2)(d)1 "The school district shall determine specific instructional personnel and shall work jointly with the Team to arrange the specific classroom or school, in order to implement the placement decision and to assure that services begin promptly when parental consent to the IEP and placement has been received". In other words, district leadership works jointly with the team to determine the location of those services, such as a district-wide program.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

MA regulations for special education require Teams to determine placement in the LRE per 603 CMR 28.06. Weymouth Public Schools shall ensure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who do not have disabilities, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with special needs from the general education program occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

In District Programs: The placement decision made by the Team shall indicate the specific program setting in which services will be provided. The Team shall first consider in-district settings such as a general education classroom, a resource setting, a separate classroom, a work setting, a vocational school program, and/or another type of setting identified by the Team as appropriate and able to provide the services on the IEP in a natural or less restrictive environment. If an in-district setting is able to deliver the services on the IEP, the Team shall identify such placement and include such determination with the proposed IEP. When an in district program is required, the Team Chairperson shall be sure to indicate the program on the details page of the IEP in Aspen. This is necessary in order to run accurate reports. If at any time, an in district placement changes or is no longer necessary, the Team Chairperson shall be sure to change the details page of the IEP in Aspen.

IDEA 2004 presumes the first placement option considered for all eligible students will be the general education classroom with the use of supplemental aids and services. Students may not be denied education in age-appropriate general education classrooms solely because the students' education requires modification to the general education environment.

The Team shall determine the specific placement according to the following requirements:

- The decision regarding placement shall be based on the IEP, including the types of related services that are to be provided to the student, the type of settings in which those services are to be provided, the types of service providers, and the location at which the services are to be provided.
- The placement selected by the Team shall be the least restrictive environment consistent with the needs of the student. In selecting the least restrictive environment, consideration must be given to any potential harmful effect on the student or on the quality of services that the student needs.
- The decision to enact a change in placement that constitutes placing the student in a more restrictive setting must come following an evaluation so that updated data may be used as a basis for the Team determination.

In addition, if in the development of the IEP, if the needs of the student and the services identified by the Team are complex, and the Team is considering an initial placement out-of-district or in a different setting for a student who has been served in an out-of-district program, the school district may schedule a separate Team meeting to determine placement. This separate placement meeting must occur within **10 school days** following the meeting at which the Team developed the IEP.

Out of District Placements and Monitoring

When an IEP Team determines that an out of district placement is necessary, the Team shall state the basis for its conclusion that education of the student in a less restrictive environment with the use of supplementary aids and services could not be achieved satisfactorily.

The Department of Education “shall determine that programs approved under 603 CMR 28.09 have appropriate policies, procedures, and appropriately credentialed staff as may be necessary to provide special education services to publicly funded students.” 603 CMR 28.06

Students in out-of-district placements shall be entitled to the full protections of state and federal special education law and regulation. Out-of-district options include, but are not limited to, special education schools approved under 603 CMR 28.09.

Individual student program oversight:

The district is required to monitor the provision of services to and the programs of individual students placed out-of-district. The Out of District Team Chairpersons will maintain the monitoring documentation including the monitoring plans and site visit plans. This documentation shall be placed in the files of every eligible student who has been placed out-of-district. To the extent that this monitoring requires site visits, such site visits shall be documented and placed in the students' files for review.

Preference to approved programs:

The school district shall, in all circumstances, first seek to place a student in a program approved by the Department pursuant to the requirements of 603 CMR 28.09. Preference shall also be given to approved programs located within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts if the choice of such program is consistent with the needs of the student and choice of such program complies with LRE requirements.

Extended School Year Services (ESY)

ESY refers to special education and related services beyond the school's calendar year for students with disabilities. All children have the potential to regress or lose progress, forget or revert to previous behaviors to some extent between school years. However, only those students who meet the criteria below will qualify for ESY programs or services. As noted in [The IEP Process Guide](#), "Not all students will require extended services and not all students who require extended services will require the same extended services." (MA DESE 2001, p. 22) Eligibility for ESY is determined by examining two global criteria: regression/recoupment and non-regression.

Determining ESY Services

ESY services will be discussed at the student's annual IEP meeting. For initial eligibility meetings, the team may reconvene to determine the eligibility for ESY. These reconvene meetings should be held by February 1 (if feasible) to allow for appropriate planning. If the student qualifies for services after February 1, the Team will decide if and when to meet to review data for ESY eligibility.

All students on an IEP should be considered for ESY by the IEP Team. Only students who are likely to experience **substantial** regression in specific goal areas and who would require a greater than usual time to recoup current level of skills are eligible for ESY. All students will regress over the summer to a certain extent (i.e. the summer slide). ESY is provided to students who will demonstrate substantial regression. ESY programs are **not** limited to students in one category, for example, a student with an intellectual impairment or only students at the primary school. ESY programs are also **not** limited to students in one program, for example, a substantially separate placement. Additional factors may be considered in terms of eligibility for ESY, such as the degree of the child's impairment, availability of alternative resources, and child's ability to interact with non-disabled peers.

ESY services can be provided for any service provided to the student during the school year, including outpatient social skills, speech, etc. Since ESY is intended to prevent regression and not to learn new skills, ESY services should not exceed those that are implemented during the school year. For example, if a student receives two hours a week of reading, then reading tutoring would generally be no more than two hours a week during ESY as well.

The following criteria should be considered for eligibility for extended school year services **at each annual review of the IEP:**

- The student has demonstrated or is likely to demonstrate **substantial regression** in their learning skills and/or experiences **substantial difficulty in relearning such skills** if an extended program is not provided. This regression should be documented using the **WPS ESY Determination Form** (updated August 2023)
- The student demonstrates significant regression/lack of recoupment status over short-term vacation periods or other breaks in their education during the school year. Short term break examples include: Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, February vacation, April vacation, or any 2 or 3 days weekend.
- Any decision regarding needed ESY programming must take into account the student's history of **significant regression and limited recoupment capability**. There should be documentation in place to substantiate the regression of the child. In other words, a child's Team must look backward and forward when considering the need for ESY programming.
- Related services are embedded within specific ESY programs as follows:
 - Speech- 30 min/wk for CEP and Life Skills .
 - OT and PT services-30 min/wk in Life Skills.
 - BCBA consult- CEP

- Counseling- consultation and direct service as needed in the TLC program.
- If students require related services beyond this, it must be designated on the service delivery grid.

All students for whom ESY is discussed will need to have a COMPLETED* [ESY Determination Form](#) which will be submitted by the Team Chairperson with the IEP packet. This form will be used to track ESY services at the district level to ensure all students are included in the ESY information sent to families in the spring.

***A complete ESY Determination form has all fields complete.

Please refer to the [DESE Q&A Guide](#) for additional information about ESY determinations.

For students with annual meetings between March and the end of the year, the district will ask for staff to submit ESY projections using the ESY Determination Form. These are not predeterminations, and will be used only for planning purposes in regards to estimated staffing and building needs. Projections are not definitive and do not replace the need for individual student IEP Team decisions. All meetings between March and the end of the school year will continue to discuss and determine ESY services as a Team. If the Team proposes services that DIFFER from the previously submitted projections, a new ESY Determination Form should be submitted, and the chair should notify Lisa Gookin in an email immediately after the meeting. This is important to ensure that staffing can be secured.

***For students in their senior year, who are expected to receive a diploma, the IEP will terminate upon graduation, so the Team does not need to complete an ESY determination form. The Team chair can write N/A on this line of their checklist.**

For IEP Meetings in September/Early October:

For students whose annual Team meetings are scheduled to occur in the early fall, ESY regression and recoupment data should be collected over April Vacation of the previous school year and turned in to the Team Chairperson by June 1st. This data will be maintained in one ESY data file by the Team Chairperson to be reviewed at the fall Team meetings along with any data from 3 day weekends if needed.

For students new to an IEP or moving in to the district:

If a student is new to the district or to special education, a Team **may not** have the data needed to make a determination for ESY services. In that event, the Team may choose to reconvene the Team to review specific regression and recoupment data prior to January 31st of the school year. If the student moves in or becomes eligible after this date, the Team will select a date to meet and review the regression and recoupment data and notify the Evaluation Team Secretary. The ETS will maintain a record of the meetings being held to discuss ESY services and will share the list with the special education office upon request to aid in the ESY planning process

Documenting ESY Services in the IEP

Service Delivery Grid: ESY services MUST be documented on the IEP grid under Extended School Year Services. Based on the data provided for each goal area, the Team will discuss the frequency needed in order for services to be delivered in order to prevent regression/maintain current level of skills. Services may not mirror the frequency provided during the academic year as that frequency is determined based on *progression of skills, not maintenance*. ESY services are provided based on the services in the prior academic

year. A student should not receive ESY services in an area that was not addressed on the IEP during the school year. If a student has additional supports such as 1:1 ESP/ABA services or 1:1 nursing services and these are also required during ESY services, this MUST be documented on the IEP service delivery grid.

Schedule Modification section: When a student qualifies for Extended Year Services the YES Longer Year box must be checked to enable appropriate running of ESY reports. The team must then provide provide a statement as to the disability related needs that require a different schedule. This statement should correspond with the data provided on the ESY determination form. The Team must then describe the schedule required for ESY.

Additional Information: Add the following statement “ESY dates are anticipated and may be changed. Specific times and dates will be sent to families by June 1, 2025. Speech services are embedded in the CEP ESY and Life Skills ESY program for 30 min/wk per service. OT and PT services are embedded within the Life Skills program. BCBA consultation is embedded into the CEP ESY program. Counseling services are embedded in the TLC ESY program through consultation and direct service as needed. “

Transition Planning

Overview of Transition Planning

The Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that mandates that transition planning occur for students in special education. IDEA defines transition services as... “A coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome- oriented process, that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The “coordinated set of activities” are individualized to the student’s needs, strengths, preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post- school adult living objectives and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.” Transition planning supports the development of a post secondary vision for students. It is a collaborative effort that involves students, their families, and school staff.

In Massachusetts, the transition planning process for students in special education begins no later than age 14. Students must be invited to their annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings beginning the year they will turn 14 during the span of the IEP dates. For example, if an IEP is dated from 10/16/2020-10/15/2021 and the student turns 14 on September 1, 2021, they should be invited to the meeting in October of 2020 at age 13. Some students may not be comfortable attending a meeting filled with adults, especially their first time. Liaisons should meet with the student prior to their IEP meetings to explain the process and help them prepare. Parents/guardians should also speak with their students prior to the IEP meeting to help the student feel more comfortable. If a student does not want to attend their meeting, they may choose to come for a brief period of time at the beginning to discuss their transition planning, concerns, and vision for the next 5 years.

For some students, a successful transition from high school to adult life may require that planning activities begin in elementary school with students exploring their interests in middle school. Starting the process early prepares students with disabilities to think about what they want to be able to do in adult life. The IEP Team, with student input, considers the student’s needs, interests, challenges, preferences, abilities, etc. The discussion should begin with the Transition Planning Form (TPF) , development of the postsecondary

(after high school) vision statement and goals. The goals and vision must be based on the student's preferences and interest, indicating his or her desired outcome in adult living, post-secondary and working environments

Planning Transition Services

The Team must determine transition activities and the most important participant is the student. The more involved students are in the transition planning process, the more successful students are. Self-determination involves students taking an active role in their lives and utilizing goal-setting, problem-solving, decision-making, and finding their own voice. The IDEA requires that the District invite the student to the Team meeting, regardless of age, if one of the purposes of the meeting is to discuss the student's transitional service needs. If the student does not attend the IEP meeting, the District must "take other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered." The District must also invite, to the Team meeting, a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services. If the agency does not send a representative to the meeting, the District must take other steps to obtain participation of the agency in the planning of transition services.

Transition Assessments

Although IDEA requires that each student's postsecondary goals should be based on age-appropriate transition assessment, specific types of transition assessments are not defined in the law. The individual needs of each student determine which transition assessments will be conducted.

*Informal transition assessments allow assessment of student performance over time, and they are useful in designing and evaluating the effects of instructional interventions. In addition, informal assessments can be used to collect data from a variety of individuals in the student's life (e.g. family, teachers, friends, employers, coaches), using a variety of non-standardized methods. Informal transition assessments are not standardized and lack formal reliability and validity measures; therefore they are less structured than formal assessments and do not allow comparison with other students.

** Formal transition assessments are standardized instruments that have guidelines for administering, scoring, and interpreting, and have been tested for reliability and validity. Scores can be compared across student populations.

More information on formal and informal transition assessments can be found on [MA DESE Transition Assessments Example Sheet](#).

Documenting Transition Services

A [Transition Planning Form \(TPF\)](#) will be completed on an annual basis and placed in the student's special education file. All students will be interviewed as to their preferences and interests either at the Team meeting or, if not in attendance at the Team meeting, by a special education teacher or Guidance Counselor. The TPF is reviewed and updated annually.

The transition services must also be documented in the IEP as follows:

- The student's post-secondary goal should be included in the Vision Statement on IEP 1 (as well as on the TPF).
- When developing annual IEP goals, the Team should consider which skills the student will need to develop to achieve the post-secondary goal.
- The IEP should also include a statement of the transition service needs of the child under the applicable components of the child's IEP that focuses on the child's courses of study (such as participation in advanced-placement courses or a vocational education program).
- The results of the discussion will be recorded in the Team meeting minutes.

Transition from School to Adult Life

The District has procedures for providing a summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance, including recommendations on assisting the student in meeting postsecondary goals, for students whose eligibility terminates because of graduation or because the student ages out. This is documented on the Summary of Student Performance Form.

For any student approaching graduation or the age of twenty-two, the IEP Team must consider the need for continuing services from adult human service agencies. Special education staff, in collaboration with the Principal and Team Chair, makes a 688 Referral to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) or MRC for all students remaining in school until age twenty-two. Follow-up to secure adult services is a critical component of the transition process in order to ensure that each student is receiving the services determined by the adult agency.

Indicator 14 Data Collection

Indicator 14 is one of the 17 Indicators that the United States Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) uses to see whether school districts are following special education law and whether special education is improving outcomes for students with disabilities. Indicator 14 reports whether our students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are in school or have a job one year after they leave high school by graduating, aging out at age 22, or dropping out.

All Massachusetts districts are required to collect Indicator 14 Data. Data collection occurs during the summer and early fall each year. Districts survey each former student with an IEP using the *Massachusetts After High School Survey*. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) offers the survey online in six languages, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Vietnamese.

In order to contact exiters one year after leaving Weymouth Public Schools, the [Student Contact Form](#) must be completed by students at the IEP meeting prior to exiting school.

Processing the Proposed IEP for Distribution

Team Chairperson

After the IEP meeting, the Team Chairperson will complete the proposed IEP and all required documents within 3 school days and send it to the Compliance Secretary. The paperwork must be complete and in the order of the items listed on the cover sheet. The Team Chairperson should review every packet prior to sending to the Compliance Secretary. They should check to be sure:

- The IEP and N1 are representative of the Team decisions
- The IEP and N1 are edited for grammar and spelling
- The IEP dates are correct and match the placement dates
- All documents are complete, included, and in order
- The proposed IEP is signed
- The proposed IEP workflow is completed and “pending approval”- IEP CANNOT BE IN DRAFT FORM

The Team Chairperson is responsible for ensuring the official IEP meeting paperwork is filed immediately upon its return from Central Office. This includes the IEP meeting file and the returned signature pages.

Compliance Secretary

Once the compliance secretary receives the IEP file from the Evaluation Team Secretary, they will:

- Record, on the cover sheet, the date the file is received
- Send the Parent/Guardian IEP packet within 5 school days of the IEP meeting date. The Parent/Guardian packet will include:
 - 2 copies of the proposed IEP and placement page
 - The administrative data sheet (ADM 1)
 - The N1 (Notice of Proposed District Action)
 - A copy of the signed meeting attendance page
 - A copy of the Transition Planning Form (where applicable)
 - Self Addressed Stamped Envelope for the return of the signature pages
- Update the Compliance Spreadsheet and Aspen to indicate the date the Parent/Guardian packet was sent home (either via mail or as requested by email)

The Compliance Secretary is responsible for RE-checking the IEP packet for the following information:

- The proposed IEP has been signed by the LEA designee
- The IEP dates align with the previous IEP dates to ensure no gap in service
- The review and reeval dates have been updated on the admin data page

Once the Parent/Guardian packet is sent home, the Compliance Secretary will send the official IEP file back to the Team Chairperson immediately. The IEP file with the official meeting paperwork should immediately be returned to the student’s permanent special education file to ensure all official documents are kept together in a secure location. The Compliance Secretary will maintain a copy of the proposed IEP in a file in Central Office to aid in signature tracking.

Once the IEP signature has been received at Central Office, the Compliance Secretary will immediately date stamp the signature pages. The Compliance Secretary will scan the IEP signature page (with signature), signed placement page, and any additional notes or letters provided pertaining to the parent/guardian’s response and upload them to the Documents section in the student’s Aspen file. Any IEP rejections, in whole

or in part, will be processed by the Compliance Secretary, and notification of the rejection will be sent to the IEP Team. Copies of the rejections will be stored in the student's Documents tab on Aspen. The paperwork with wet signatures will be sent to the Team Chairperson who will ensure they are added to the official special education file, attached to the corresponding proposed IEP.

If the parent/guardian response is not received within 20 days, the Compliance Secretary will send home a First Reminder letter. If a response is not received within 30 days a Second Reminder letter will be sent home. After 45 days, if no response is received, the district will process the IEP as rejected and submit paperwork to the BSEA, and notify the parent/guardian of the filing.

Acceptance of the IEP

The IEP must be implemented immediately upon a signed response from parents. If a new IEP includes a new service or a service that requires a change in a student's schedule, the Team Chair is responsible for notifying the building administrator and/or guidance counselor and following up to ensure the IEP is implemented immediately upon acceptance.

Upon parental response to the proposed IEP and proposed placement, the school district shall implement all accepted elements of the IEP without delay. The school district cannot delay implementation of the IEP due to lack of classroom space or personnel. Teams must provide as many of the services on the accepted IEP as possible and shall immediately inform the parent in writing of any delayed services, reasons for delay, actions that the school district is taking to address the lack of space or personnel and offer alternative methods to meet the goals on the accepted IEP. Upon agreement from a parent, the school district shall implement alternative methods immediately until the lack of space or personnel issues are resolved.

It is required that all General Education and Special Education Teachers read and become familiar with a student's IEP. All appropriate staff who are expected to read the student IEP and that the contents of the IEP have been explained to them in full. Staff has the opportunity to clarify any statements on the IEP which are unclear. The SPED Liaison must ensure that General Education Teachers and Related Service Providers have read the IEP and understand it. The WPS staff is legally responsible for implementing any and all parts of the IEP that relates to their class subject area, service area throughout the student's school day.

DocuSign ★

Weymouth Public Schools has begun utilizing DocuSign to provide families with the option to receive and sign IEP's and Evaluations consents electronically.

The Team Chair will read the following statement At the beginning of the IEP meeting:

Weymouth Public Schools is now using DocuSign to send out testing consent forms, evaluations and IEP's. This is a secure electronic platform that allows you to sign in, view the documents and electronically sign and date the document. We can send this through email, mobile phone or both. This provides a fast, safe and efficient turnaround.

If for any reason you do not wish to use DocuSign, please advise us now and we will note this on our checklist. Otherwise, all documents going forward will be sent thru DocuSign.

The Team Chair will subsequently indicate the families preference for signature on the Chairperson Checklist.

Please refer to the [DocuSign Rollout 2024.pptx](#) for additional information about processing documents using docusign. Please contact the WPS Compliance Secretary [Stacy Marrero](#) with any questions.

IEP Progress Reports

Progress Reports are required to be sent to parents/guardians at least as often as parents/guardians are informed of their general education children's progress. Each progress report must describe the student's progress toward meeting each annual goal. 603 CMR 28.00 section 3 states, "Written progress reports for eligible students shall be submitted to parents/guardians at least as often as report cards or progress reports for students without disabilities."

Progress Report Frequency: [Progress Report Schedule](#)

Progress reports will be sent home at the same time as report cards are distributed.

Pre K/Kindergarten: 2 times per year

Primary Grades 1-5: 3 times per year

Middle School: 4 times per year

High School: 4 times per year

Special Education Liaisons are responsible for collecting and submitting ALL progress reports pertaining to students goals on time to the Principal/designee on the dates specific to each school.

Progress reports should specifically address the goals that have been set by the Team and include appropriate measures of progress of their peers.

By Federal regulation, progress reports must answer the following two questions for each goal: •

1. What is the student's progress toward the annual goal? •
2. Is the progress sufficient to enable the student to achieve the annual goal by the end of the IEP period?

According to The IEP Process Guide, "Team members should respond to the mandated questions by following these steps when writing their progress reports:

1. Specify what the student has been working on.
 2. List what the student has achieved.
 3. Indicate any stumbling blocks to progress.
 4. Project whether the student will reach the annual goal if progress continues at its current pace."
- (MA DESE 2001, p. 20)

Students who attend private schools or who are homeschooled still need to receive regular progress reports based on the reporting cycle of their neighborhood school. The service provider may use the statement below or something similar to document the reporting period.

"The student is not currently accessing the service related to this goal, per parent choice. Due to this progress can not be monitored. Parent/Guardians are encouraged to communicate any concerns to the service provider at any time."

Progress reports should be based on data collected and analyzed throughout the term which identifies the progress made on IEP goals and benchmarks. Service providers should not wait for term grades to be posted to complete progress reports.

The Progress report portal is opened along with the report card window. When the portal is opened, a progress report template is created based on the IEP that was active at that time. If a pending IEP is signed

after the portal is opened, the progress report is still written based on the previous IEP, which was active when the portal was opened. Providers may wish to include the following statement if a pending approval IEP is signed after the portal is opened: *The IEP proposed on XXXX date was signed on 6/3/24. Student has recently begun working on these goals.* The provider may comment on any progress that pertains to the new goals; however, since there has been limited time to work on newly accepted goals (and subsequently limited opportunity to collect data on progress toward those goals), the provider should comment on progress towards the prior goals as well. If there are significant exceptions to this, providers should speak with their special education point of contact for further clarification.

To ensure liaisons have enough time to print and distribute progress reports at the same time as report cards, all service providers should have their progress report information complete in Aspen at least 3 work days prior to the building's established due date. Liaisons will share the progress reports with their building administrator for review. Progress Reports should be sent with a complete liaison list to the administrator for review and to ensure all the reports are complete. Liaisons will print the reports and file all progress reports in the student's special education file **each term**. As of Fall 2020, all special education progress reports will be sent home via the Aspen Parent Portal. Parents can see [this document](#) for step by step instructions.

IEP Amendments

IDEA 2004 allows parents/guardians and the District to make changes to the IEP outside the Team meeting, without convening a Team meeting and without developing a new IEP.

In most cases if the Team determines that changes to the IEP are required, an amendment must be developed. An amendment may be used to change the service delivery model when a student changes districts if this is appropriate.

 An amendment should be completed for **minor** changes to the IEP and are changes that both the parent and team agree (some examples could include: clerical error, minor adjustment of a goal, specificity of AAC software following a parent-consented trial, updating a service provider, etc) and does not require a meeting. As a general rule, if **more than three minor** changes need to be made, the Team should reconvene the Team to develop a new IEP. The new IEP should be written as if it were an annual review and the dates should be changed with the start date of the meeting and the end date 365 days later.

An amendment may not be used to change a placement. The Team must be reconvened following issuance of notification to the parent/guardian.

The dates of the IEP are not changed with an amendment unless the amendment was specifically drafted due to a clerical error with the original IEP dates.

The paperwork for an amendment must be processed similarly to an annual IEP. The Team Chair will send the file to the Evaluation Team Secretary for processing. This file should include

- The N1 form, specifically noting the reasons for the amendment(s) and documenting the meeting or conversation with the parent/guardian
- The amendment form.

 In Aspen X2, amendment fields are most commonly used in the Special Education view to modify and track IEP (Individualized Education Program) amendments.

To process a Special Education amendment:

1. Log into the Special Education view.
2. Click the Student tab and select the desired student.
3. Select the IEPs side-tab.
4. Go to the Options menu and click Amend IEP.
5. Select the IEP Amendment workflow, enter the Date of Amendment, and click OK.
6. Click the checkbox for the newly created Amendment Draft IEP on your screen.
7. Click the Workflows side-tab and launch the IEP Amendment workflow to edit the required details and finalize the process.

- The sections of the IEP that have been amended (entire IEP not necessary)
- A copy of the attendance sheet, if a meeting was held

Staff will continue to process the paperwork as they would process annual review paperwork.

Reconvening the IEP Team

Parent/Guardian Request

A parent/guardian has the right to request a Team meeting at any time to address a concern with the student's IEP and/or progress. When a parent/guardian requests a reconvene, the staff member who receives the request should notify both the Team Chairperson and Evaluation Team Secretary via email of the request. The Team Chairperson should confirm that the reconvene request is related to the IEP, such as concerns about lack of progress or potential changes to the IEP. Requests for meetings outside of the team process, such as scheduling questions/changes or requests for updates on student performance, should be directed to the appropriate staff member. If the Team Chair determines that a reconvene is appropriate, they will notify the ETS who will work with the family to determine the meeting date and time and send out the invitation within a reasonable time frame.

Lack of Progress Meeting

To initiate a Team meeting, the provider will email the ETS and Team Chairperson to request the reconvene which will be scheduled within a reasonable time frame.

If a student is not making effective progress toward their annual goals, this should be documented on the IEP progress report. The service provider should also indicate on the progress report any contributing factors, such as lack of attendance or engagement as well as strategies that will be employed to support the student's progress in the next reporting period. If the lack of progress continues, the provider must request an IEP reconvene at the next reporting period. Additionally, if the student requires additional services to make progress, the provider should request a Team reconvene meeting.

If a student is not making progress in the general education curriculum, the liaison will request a Team reconvene meeting. To monitor progress, the liaison and Team should consider a student's acquired knowledge of the [MA Curriculum Frameworks](#), their grades and any other pertinent information. Students who repeatedly fail a class or repeatedly fail courses in the same subject area will need a Team reconvene to discuss the topics bulleted below.

When the Team reconvenes, they will discuss

- The area(s) in which the student is not making progress
- Reasons why the student is not making progress
- Options for amending the IEP to support the student's need(s). Remember: we can only amend an ACTIVE IEP; if an IEP is rejected, or partially rejected, we need to repropose the IEP with the changes needed.
- Options for implementing building based tiered interventions to support the student's need(s).

If an amendment is necessary, the Team follows the steps outlined in the IEP Amendment section of this manual. If supports are put in place that are not part of the IEP, these supports must be documented, in detail, in the N1 letter following the meeting. A follow up plan should also be clearly outlined and documented in the N1.

It is recommended that a team member is identified as the staff member who will regularly check in with the student and parent/guardian moving forward. For example, if the student is failing classes because she is skipping a class regularly, the Team may make a plan to work with the teacher, liaison, and adjustment counselor to increase her attendance. The Team may determine the adjustment counselor and guardian connect at the end of the first week and then again every other week to review progress. If the intervention is not working after a reasonable time (4-6 weeks) the identified staff member would initiate another Team

reconvene to discuss alternative options for support.

If attempts to reconvene the Team are unsuccessful due to a lack of response from a parent/guardian, the Team will schedule a meeting and send home notification to the family. After three failed attempts with no family communication, the Team will meet without the involvement of the parent/guardian.

If no changes are made to the IEP based on the reconvene meeting, the Team Chair will complete the N1 in the reconvene workflow (not on the active IEP). The reconvene workflow will be discarded but will remain in the IEP view in order to document the meeting details (e.g. meeting invitation and N1).

Missed Special Education Services

When an IEP is missed due to staff availability (not student absence), providers are asked to make up sessions whenever possible, such as if there is an opening in the schedule, if another student is absent and does not attend a scheduled session, or, if appropriate, by including the student with another student/group on your caseload. Generally, an occasional missed session would not constitute a denial of FAPE. However, if there has been a pattern of missed sessions and the provider has not been able to make-up, the provider should speak with the building administrator to discuss options for addressing this.

Special Populations

Limited English Proficiency

Any student referred for a Special Education Eligibility Evaluation who has been determined to be an English Language Learner (ELL) has the right to an evaluation conducted in the student's native language. The need for a bilingual evaluation should be based on the student's level of English proficiency. The evaluator should also consider whether a non-verbal measure would be appropriate. If a bilingual assessment is needed, the School Psychologist/Team Chair will notify the Special Education Department of the need for evaluators who speak the student's native language. The Special Education Department will contract with evaluators and arrange for their assessment services within the specified timelines for Special Education Team meetings as delineated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Students requiring ESP/Paraprofessional Supports

For more specific information regarding how and when to determine ESP support, review [MA DESE Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2014-3\(revised\)](#). This advisory should be reviewed any time a Team is considering 1:1 support. According to MA DESE, "It is important that paraprofessional services continue in amount and duration only as needed. For many students, other services or supports can be substituted for some or all of a student's paraprofessional services. Therefore, whenever an assignment of paraprofessional services is initially made, the Team should discuss and develop a plan for reviewing the continued need for these services, including a process to review and monitor the student's progress and determine whether the student's need can be met with other services or supports. The Team may establish criteria which, if met by the student, will trigger initiation of the IEP amendment process to consider a change in services. The family is a critical partner in the planning process, with the family made well aware of any potential changes in the student's program and engaged throughout the process. There is no "standard" plan for fading paraprofessional services—each will be individually tailored for the particular student." Additionally, when ESP support is added to a student's IEP, the team must determine which provider will consult with the ESP

[Back to Top](#)

to oversee service delivery. The consult time must be included in Grid A.

****See Section on “Consideration for Paraprofessional Support” (page 48) for additional information.

Age of Majority

Massachusetts has established 18 as the age of majority. At that age, all students are considered adults and competent to make their own decisions. This right extends to every student with a disability who is receiving special education services. On or as soon as possible after a student’s eighteenth birthday, the student must choose an option on the 'Age of Majority' packet. If, at this time, the student chooses to take sole responsibility for their special education decisions, they must complete the choice, identifying if they wish to continue their special education services. The District must include a statement in the IEP, under “Additional Information”, that the student and parents/guardians have been informed of this transfer of rights. Parents/guardians will continue to receive written notices but will no longer have decision-making authority unless one of the following occurs:

1. Parent/Guardian receives guardianship of the student from the court.
2. The student chooses to share decision-making with the parents/guardians or other adult, including allowing them to co-sign the IEP; this choice must be made in the presence of a Team member and a witness, and must be documented in writing.
3. The student chooses to delegate decision-making to the parents/guardians or other adult; this choice must be made in the presence of a Team member and a witness and documented in writing.

The Team Chair or Transition Specialist will document the decision making status on the Details page in Aspen.

AOM District Procedures:

- **At least one year before a student's 18th birthday**, the special education office (task assigned to the Transition Specialist) will mail home the WPS Age of Majority' packet to students and parents/guardians.
- At the IEP which occurs when the student is 17 years of age, the Team Chairperson should review the age of majority decision and paperwork so the student and parent/guardian can preview the process. At this time, the following statement should be included in the additional information page of the IEP:

“At the Team meeting held on (insert date) the Team reviewed the upcoming decision regarding the student’s age of majority. On or about their 18th birthday, the student will be asked to make a determination about their decision making rights and will be asked to sign the age of majority paperwork.”

- At or immediately after the student’s 18th birthday, the district’s transition specialist will meet with the student to review their age of majority rights. The parent/guardian does not need to be present for this discussion as the student will be 18 years of age. Another staff member will also be present to witness the discussion and signing of the paperwork. This could be a guidance counselor, service provider, evaluation team member, etc.
- Using the AOM form in aspen, the transition specialist will document the student’s decision to either:
 1. Retain decision-making authority,
 2. Share decision-making authority with parents(s or another adult), or
 3. Delegate decision making authority to a parent or another adult.
- In addition to completion of the AOM paperwork, if the student retains decision making authority or shares decision making authority with the parent/another adult, the transition specialist will also obtain consent from the student to continue their education program by having the student sign the active IEP.

- Once the age of majority paperwork is completed, the transition specialist will provide a copy to the student (and parent if they are given rights), and file a copy in the special education file at the building level.
- The transition specialist will also complete the attributes section of the student's IEP tab. They will indicate the Decision Making Status (shared, delegated, own behalf, or court appt. guardian), indicate the date the paperwork was signed in the AOM Signed field, and upload a copy of the signed paperwork to the documents tab in Aspen.
- The Compliance clerk will note who has legal signing rights when they receive the file on their spreadsheet and ensure the IEP is sent to appropriate parties. Upon receiving the signed IEP back, the compliance clerk shall ensure that it has been signed by the appropriate person(s). If the IEP is lacking an appropriate signature, then the compliance clerk will send an email to the transition specialist and the team chair indicating that they will need to look at the signed IEP and connect with the student to ensure that the appropriate signatures are obtained. The Transition specialist will work with the student to obtain the appropriate signature and re-submit the IEP to the compliance clerk to be processed.

Chapter 688 Referral

Why: The primary goal of filing a Chapter 688 referral is to plan for needed adult services for students.

What: In Massachusetts, students with severe disabilities access adult service agencies through the Chapter 688 referral process. Chapter 688 provides a two (2) year coordinated planning process for students whose entitlements to special education services will end when they graduate from school or turn twenty-two (22) years of age.

When: Chapter 688 referrals should be discussed in the student's IEP meeting 2 years prior to graduating or turning 22. For students expected to meet graduation requirements at the end of grade 12, a 688 referral is discussed at the IEP meeting in grade 10. For students who are expected to continue their education until age 22, a 688 referral should be discussed at the IEP meeting 2 years prior to their 22nd birthday.

Who: Only school systems can refer students that they believe may be eligible for adult services through Chapter 688. Parents and guardians can however contact the student's liaison to request a 688 referral.

**The special education liaison and Team Chairperson work collaboratively with the parent to complete the referral forms found on Aspen and in the 688 Portal. Copies of these forms should be placed in the meeting file. Once the referral form is complete, it should be sent to the Transition Specialist at Weymouth high School to be submitted via the portal.* Additionally, the Transition Specialist will also submit copies of the 688 referral forms to the special education administrative assistant (Lisa Gookin) at the administration building to be kept on file and upload them under the documents tab on Aspen. Once the referral is submitted, the state agencies directly contact the parent/guardian. The Transition Specialist will monitor the status of the referral via the portal and assist the families with any part of the process. If a student is found eligible, they are provided a case manager from the relevant agency. The Transition Specialist will identify the case manager and communicate their contact information to the appropriate Team Chair and Evaluation Team Secretary. The Evaluation Team Secretary will ensure that the student's 688 case manager is invited to all subsequent IEP meetings.

Students who receive services in accordance with an IEP and receive SSI/SSDI are automatically eligible for Chapter 688. Other students who may be eligible are those students with severe disabilities who are in need of continued services and are unable to work twenty (20) or more hours per week in competitive, non-sheltered, non-supported employment at the time they are ready to leave school. Also, students who receive services from the Department of Youth Services (DYS) or the Department of Social Services (DSS) and are on

an IEP or a 504 Plan may be eligible.

In order to help identify appropriate potential 688 supports, the IEP Team should determine if Adaptive Scales are required during the student's Triennial Evaluation that occurs prior to their exit from the Public School System.

Automatically Eligible	Potentially Eligible
Individual receives Social Security Benefits (SSI/SSDI) based on his or her disability	Individual receives Special Education services through his or her school district
Or	Individual requires ongoing services because of the severity of his or her disability
Individual is listed in the registry for the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind	Individual is unable to work 20 hours or more per week in competitive employment
	Individual has been identified as having Autism Spectrum Disorder

Students Attending Private Schools or Homeschool Students

Students who live in Weymouth who attend a private school per parent/guardian choice or who have been approved for homeschooling are still eligible to receive special education services. Students who may not be active in Aspen due to attending a private school or homeschool, should continue to have an Active IEP Special Education status in Aspen.

If the parent/guardian chooses to access services at their neighborhood school, they may do so in the appropriate setting based on the service delivery grid (B grid in the general ed. Setting, C grid in a separate setting, etc). Students who access these services on a walk in basis will be scheduled by the service provider according to appropriate groupings. Efforts will be made to schedule the students at the start or end of the school day if possible to minimize the disruption to the school day, however this cannot be guaranteed. If the student attends a private school in Weymouth (St. Francis Xavier School, Sacred Heart School, etc) and they require transportation during the school day, the parents may request district transportation by contacting the Administrator of Special Education who coordinates these services with the Transportation Department.

If the parent/guardian chooses **not** to access the IEP services, they can still accept the IEP and placement. By accepting the IEP and statement, the family is indicating they agree with the services and if the student is re-enrolled in the District during the IEP period, the IEP will be immediately implemented. A parent/guardian should not reject the IEP or placement simply because the student attends a private school. When a student does not access services, this should be documented in the Additional Information section of the IEP, if known at the time of IEP development.

- The student status remains active.
- Progress reports continue to be written and sent home (indicating services are not being accessed)
- Annual IEP meetings are scheduled as if the student is attending WPS.
- Reevaluations are conducted as if the student is attending WPS.

At no time should a parent/guardian be asked to sign a document revoking services due to the child attending a private school or homeschool. Parents/guardians only need to revoke special education services when they no longer want their child to receive services or participate in the special education process.

Students attending private schools in Weymouth or Homeschools may be eligible for proportionate share

[Back to Top](#)

services. Proportionate Share Services are determined by the Administrator of Special Education after meaningful consultation with representatives from the schools. These meetings will be held prior to the start of the school year, and eligible students will receive a Proportionate Share Service Plan by the end of September each school year. Parents/Guardians do not have to accept proportionate share services. Students can access both proportionate share services and walk in IEP services if they choose.

Team Chairpersons should notify the Administrator of Special Education after each IEP meeting for a student attending a private school, to ensure the proportionate share database is up to date and accurate.

Students with Disabilities and Bullying Prevention

The Massachusetts Bullying Prevention and Intervention Law: Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 (*An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*) requires school leaders to create and implement strategies to prevent bullying, and to address bullying and retaliation promptly and effectively if they occur. This law has specific implications for the IEP process and for students with disabilities.

Because the IEP serves as a vehicle for improving the educational experience and achievements of a student with disabilities, the IEP Team uses a variety of information sources, including evaluations, assessment information, and its discussions of the student's present level of educational performance and social acumen, to inform the development of the IEP. The IEP Team's discussion focuses comprehensively on the student's educational needs and on the student's overall involvement in the school, including participation in the general curriculum and in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities. In this process, the IEP Team considers the student's disability and the impact of the disability on the student's interaction and communication with others.

The following student needs must be considered and documented under additional information:

- When a student's disability affects social skills development
- When the student's disability makes him or her vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing,
- Students identified with a disability on the autism spectrum

For these students, the IEP must address any skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing (G.L. c. 71B, §3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010.) This may be addressed in a variety of ways:

- IEP Teams should consider any bullying prevention and intervention programs incorporated into the school's general curriculum to determine if this is sufficient for the identified student to gain the needed skills and proficiencies. If this is sufficient, this should be documented in the IEP.
- The Team should discuss which skills and proficiencies the student would be unlikely to learn solely within the general curricular program and identify any supports the student needs to make learning possible in the general curricular program. As appropriate, the Team should include in the IEP needed accommodations to the general education program, or goals and objectives and special education services related to student's learning the necessary skills.

Because of the nature of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), progress in positive social skill development is already a likely focus within the IEP of every student with ASD. Social skills instruction should be at the student's skill level and appropriate for their age. The focus of the IEP in relation to the bullying intervention and prevention law will be to aid the student in accessing social and emotional learning to more effectively handle challenges in their academic, social, and communication realms.

Teams should refer to the WPS New IEP Guide for additional information on the Bullying Section of the IEP.

Move In Students -

When a student moves into the district at any time of year, the following protocol should be followed:

1. The family registers the student using the online system and central registration process.

[Back to Top](#)

2. The Registrar reviews the registration information. Any time a parent indicates a student has an IEP or requires special education services, the Registrar should request a copy of the IEP. If the family does not have a copy of the IEP, the Registrar/secretary should contact the sending district to obtain a copy of the full record, including the IEP. If an IEP is still not obtained, the Registrar/secretary should notice the Team Chair to help facilitate the record request.
3. When the family provides a copy of the IEP, the Registrar forwards a scan of the IEP to the Team Chair, building administrator, Evaluation Team Secretary, and Building Secretary. During the summer, the IEP is sent to the designated building administrator (i.e. principal/assistant principal or Special Ed Department Head).
4. The Team Chair completes [move-in/transfer form](#) should be completed and forwarded to the Compliance Secretary along with the student's previous IEP. Lisa will then enroll the student into Sped and notify the Team Chair and Eval Secretary when it's completed.
5. The Evaluation Team Secretary will upload a copy of the IEP to Aspen under the documents tab.
6. The Compliance Clerk will notify the Evaluation Team Secretary and Team Chair that the IEP is ready to be localized. The Team Chair completes the change in status form and submit it via [email](#). When a student moves in over the summer, Lisa Gookin will initiate the change in status form.
7. The Team Chair/Building Administrator will review the IEP to determine if the student needs to be enrolled in a district wide program. If they feel a program is needed, they should notify [Lisa Gookin](#) via email and the program assignment will be reviewed by the special education administration.
8. When a program assignment is approved, Lisa Gookin will notify the Team Chair, principal, and secretary of the home and program school. The Team Chair (or building administrator during summer months) will notify the parent/guardian and explain the need to attend a program school.
9. **IMPORTANT: LOCALIZING THE IEP** Within 30 school days of moving into the district, the IEP Team will reconvene to LOCALIZE the IEP. In most circumstances the localization meeting will be an annual IEP meeting. The Team should rewrite the IEP as they would with any annual IEP. If the Team feels services need to be added or removed, the district should reevaluate the student prior to beginning or ending any services. Services may be increased or decreased based on data and team determination as needed.
10. **IMPORTANT: Move-Ins from Out of State** Per MA regulations, when “a student found eligible in another state moves to Massachusetts, the new Massachusetts district of residence shall provide the student with a free appropriate public education, including special education services comparable to those in the IEP from the former state, in consultation with the parents, until the Massachusetts district determines if it will accept the finding of eligibility and/or the current IEP developed for the student in the former state of residence. If the Massachusetts district determines that the finding of eligibility and the IEP developed for the student continues to accurately represent the needs of the student, then the Massachusetts district shall continue to implement the IEP. If the Massachusetts district determines that a new evaluation is necessary to determine continued eligibility or services, or a parent or another person concerned with the child's development requests an evaluation, the district shall immediately provide written notice to the parents as required under 603 CMR 28.04(1).” The Team should convene within 30 school days to hold a localization/annual IEP meeting. At this meeting, the Team will need to determine if there is enough information to determine the student’s eligibility in the state of MA. If the Team determines a reevaluation is needed, the Team should propose an evaluation at the localization/annual meeting.

Preschool Students Receiving Outpatient Services

Prior to entering Kindergarten, Weymouth residents may engage in a Special Education Evaluation through the Weymouth Early Childhood Center and, if found eligible for special education services, may access those services on their third birthday following Weymouth Public Schools receiving a signed IEP.

For students in this population who are recommended for drop-in related services (OT,PT, and SLP) these services will be provided at the Weymouth Early Childhood Center in order to provide services with age-appropriate peers.

The Consultation Process

Purpose of a consultation:

The special education consultation process explores the effectiveness of services being provided through a student's active IEP and/or the need for additional supports. The consultation process is initiated after implementing student goals, modifications, and accommodations, as well as PBS/PBIS strategies and WPS DCAP; yet, the student is making minimal to no progress after a sufficient period of implementation. If the concern is related to an area that has not been identified as an area of disability, the student should be given access to the Student Intervention Team (SIT) Process to explore the tiered level of support that may promote success.

Before initiating a consultation, it is expected that staff have provided interventions with supporting data and documentation, as well as professional consultation from building-based providers already servicing the student, ELL providers, or Tier 1 & 2 providers.

Initiation of a consultation:

If the student continues to struggle after the general education teacher, special education liaison, and service providers have attempted multiple interventions, the consultation process should be completed if the providers believe that the student may require goals, services, accommodations/modifications and/or additional testing required for a more restrictive intervention/setting, such as an ESP (see [identifying need of ESP Support](#)), district-wide program, or an OOD placement. The consultation process ensures that appropriate assessments are completed and administrators are aware of any potential additional financial resources that may need to be allocated. It also ensures that students receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

Steps for the consultation process:

The following steps and associated expectations of the consultation process are below. Please note that If an observation of the student is recommended, staff should expect that the administrator will note the IEP and DCAP accommodations observed. While they may provide initial feedback directly following the observations, a full review of the observation will occur during a scheduled consultation meeting

Step 1) The Liaison completes the consultation Google Form associated with the school the student currently attends (see below). This form will also be accessible by the Principal, the Assistant Principal or Department Head, Team Chairs, and District Special Education Administrators.

Step 2) The building-based Special Education Administrator will schedule a meeting with the staff member within 10 school days.

Step 3) The building-based Special Education Administrator and liaison will discuss and review the student's current special education services, attendance, English-language status, discipline history, past evaluations, special education history, implementation of IEP accommodations, DCAP accommodations, and data that has been collected regarding the student's progress toward IEP goals. Staff are responsible for bringing the student's active IEP, any proposed IEPs, analyzed behavior data (if the area of concern is behavior), FBAs, progress reports, and recent work samples related to the area of concern to this meeting. *The consultation process cannot be conducted without data related to the area of concern.*

Possible outcomes from the consultation meeting:

1. Implementation of new strategies and accommodations that were proposed as part of a collaborative process with an agreed-upon period of time to determine the student's response and progress with these interventions;
2. Reconsideration of current IEP goals, service delivery, and accommodations/modifications that better support the student for their current needs in their current setting. These proposed changes would be discussed during an IEP team reconvene meeting;
3. Recommendations for additional data collection, collaboration with specialists, and observation of the student conducted by the building-based Special Education Administrator;
4. Additional testing for an unidentified area of need. This would be discussed with the family and a consent identifying the areas of testing will be sent home;
5. Up to two additional consultation meetings may be required to determine the need for additional data or recommendations that have been generated through further testing.

Recommendations for a more restrictive setting (district-wide program, and/or additional learning supports):

If the consultation process reveals that the student's needs require a more restrictive and/or different learning environment and supports, the following steps should be followed:

1. The Principal/Assistant Principal will connect with the Principal/ Assistant Principal whose school houses a district-wide program in which staff have expertise in the interventions that the concerned staff would like more information on. This step will not be needed at the secondary level.
2. The Principal/Assistant Principal will work collaboratively to coordinate an opportunity for the district-wide program staff to observe the student, review data, and provide feedback to the concerned Team around strategies and interventions.
3. The Special Education Administrators may coordinate an opportunity for concerned staff to observe a program, following the program staff observing the student.
4. The consultation form, as well as any other documentation, will be shared electronically with the Principal/Assistant Principal of the school that houses the district-wide program.
5. A collaborative decision will be made with both school-based administrators and the Assistant Director of Special Education and/or the Director of Student Services. Placement will be based on a student's individual level of need and will be determined through the Team process. School-based administrators, the Assistant Director of Special Education as well as the Director of Student Services may also be part of the conversation and Team process.
6. At the conclusion of the consultation process, documents pertaining to the consultation process will be placed in the student's file to ensure the process is memorialized.

 Please use the links below for each building-based consultation process forms

[WHS Consultation](#)

[Murphy Consultation](#)

[Pingree Consultation](#)

[Wessagusset Consultation](#)

[Hamilton Consultation](#)

[Academy Consultation](#)

[Talbot Consultation](#)

[Seach Consultation](#)

[Nash Consultation](#)

[WECC Consultation](#)

[Chapman Consultation](#)

Consideration for Paraprofessional Support

The following procedure should be utilized when determining the need for additional ESP support for a student. [Determination of Need for ESP Support](#). This should be used as part of the consultation process for students who do not yet have ESP support on their IEP as well as for each Annual Review of students with ESP support identified on their IEP. The procedure is completed by the Special Education Point of Contact for the building in consultation with the IEP Team. The goal of the procedure is to guide teams in IEP development. The procedure includes statements related to strengths and areas in need of intervention to assist IEP teams in determining the amount of time a student requires ESP support on the service delivery grid. The guide also ensures that IEP's include targeted interventions to increase independence, such as by identifying staff responsible for overseeing the interventions provided by the ESP as well as specific goals and objectives to increase student independence.

Please refer to the following DESE Advisory for additional information [Identifying the Need for Paraprofessional Support](#).

Assistive Technology

What is Assistive Technology (AT)?

- “Assistive technology device means **ANY item, piece of equipment, or product system**, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability”. ~IDEA Section 300.5
- IEP teams are legally required to **consider the need for AT during the development of all IEP meetings**. In addition, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require schools to provide assistive technology for students with disabilities, **if needed to assure equal access** to the schools’ curriculum, programs, and services.
- **Each team member** is legally responsible for AT consideration. **It is not the responsibility of just one person.**

Assistive Technology Examples:

- Low Technology: pencil grips, paper-based organizers, picture symbols, slant boards, etc.
- Mid Technology: headphones, switches, audio/talking books, etc.
- High Technology: software with editable graphic organizers, highlighting in digital formats, speech-to-text, screen reading, word prediction, etc.

What areas of need does Assistive Technology consider?

AT consideration provides recommendations for specific problems and does not measure academic skills. The District has vetted [technology apps](#) that you can consider. The following areas are under the umbrella of Assistive Technology in the school setting:

- **Academics-Writing, Reading, Math**
- **Executive Functioning**

[Back to Top](#)

- **Seating, Positioning, and Mobility***
- **Communication***
- **Hearing/Vision***
- **Daily Living**
- **Recreation and Leisure**
- **Pre-Vocational and Vocational**

*In conjunction with information from Occupational Therapists, Speech Language Pathologists, AAC Specialist, Physical Therapists, Audiologists, and/or Teachers of the Visually Impaired.

What are the Legal Regulations related to Assistive Technology?

- Assistive technology is any item that improves functional capability (34 CFR & 300.5). If the team can identify AT that would support a student with a particular need, they should be encouraged to try it, and determine it's effectiveness through data collection.
- IEP teams are legally required to provide AT services to students who need them. AT services legally include:
 - Functional evaluation in the child's customary environment
 - Purchasing, leasing, and otherwise providing for the acquisition of AT
 - Selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing AT
 - Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with AT
 - Training or technical assistance for the student and, if appropriate, the student's family
 - Training or technical assistance for staff, employers, or other individuals who provide services to the student or are otherwise substantially involved in the major functions of the student

How to Consider AT?

- AT every IEP meeting, teams should consider **"Would AT improve the student's performance on the activities and tasks that are difficult and/or increase their independence?"**
- Use a [consideration guide](#) to find AT features that could compensate for (augment or replace) the difficult task demands.

Consultation and Evaluation Process

Consultation: The Team would like to have the Assistive Technology Specialist meet with the team to discuss concerns, work with the student, and provide feedback and suggestions to the Team on how best to support the student in accessing the curriculum.

- Request an [AT Consultation](#) from the AT Specialist

Evaluation: Teams should **first** request an **AT Consultation** for guidance from the AT Specialist **before** initiating a formal evaluation. If the parent/caregivers would like a formal evaluation assessing the student's assistive technology needs to access the curriculum, please send signed consent to the AT Specialist.

How to document Assistive Technology and Augmentative and Alternative Communication on the IEP?

Assistive technology and Augmentative and Alternative Communication services must be documented on the IEP.

PLEP A

- AT and/or AAC accommodations should be recorded

PLEP B

- Check off Assistive Tech Devices/Services

- Record AT accommodations

Service Delivery-A Grid

- AT consultation services should only be documented if the Team (parent/caregiver and staff) needs training to utilize an AT tool. (e.g.: training is needed to use a speech-to-text).
- If training is needed
 - Please list Assistive Technology as the service
 - Please list the Assistive Tech Specialist as the service provider
 - Check with the AT Specialist regarding frequency/duration/cycle
 - Check with the AT Specialist with questions.

Additional Information for AT Consultation Services

Please include information regarding AT tools and training here. See the following for example statements.

- Training:
 - *AT services including training for staff, the student, and the parent will be available as needed. The AT consult supports will be front-loaded as needed.*
- Device/Applications
 - *The student requires the assistive technology feature of _____ and is currently using _____ and/or trailing (name specific product here).*

Notification

- Please notify the AT Specialist of upcoming meetings if they are the service provider. **Please list the AT Specialist's attendance as optional.**
- If the AT Specialist is not at the IEP meeting, please consult with the AT Specialist regarding recommended service times before adding them to the proposed IEP.
- Team chairs, please notify the AT Specialist/AAC Specialist when an IEP is signed so purchase orders can be placed if needed.

Ordering Equipment

- Once the IEP is signed, please send a copy of the IEP AT accommodations or evaluation recommendations to the AT Specialist. The AT Specialist will submit an [order form](#) to the Special Education department for approval.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication

What is Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)?

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a type of AT service. This service is to be considered when a student requires a better mode of communication to assist in communicating wants, and needs, and navigating social interactions throughout their day. There are Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions that can support a student's communication.

- Tier 1- Universal Communication Boards
- Tier 2- Universal Communication Boards and Speech Generating Devices and applications
- Tier 3-AAC Evaluation- if other invention methods have not worked

How to Determine if AAC Assessment is Needed?

Before beginning an assessment, a specific need should be identified, to determine if an AAC assessment is warranted. For example, is there something a person needs to do that they cannot and an intervention would help them? Questions to help determine if an AAC assessment is needed include; is this person communicating with who they want, what they want, and where they want. If the answer is "no" to any of these questions then an AAC assessment might be needed.

AAC Consultation and Evaluation Process

Consultation: A consultation is when the Team, the Special Education Liaison, or the classroom teacher would like to have a meeting with the Assistive Technology Specialist to discuss concerns and provide feedback and suggestions on how best to support the student.

Consultations should be requested when:

- The Team has a concern around the student's needs for AAC.
- The Team or the Student's Teacher has a concern if the current AAC program is inappropriate.
- The Team or the Student's Teacher has a concern around the effectiveness of the device.
- A student with a current dedicated device continues to struggle communicating with who they want, what they want, and where they want.

Request an [AT Consultation](#) from the AT Specialist

Evaluation: An AAC evaluation is a formal, Special Education Evaluation that the parent must consent to. Teams should first request an AT Consultation for guidance from the AT Specialist before initiating a formal initial evaluation. If the parent/caregivers would like an AAC evaluation, please send signed consent to the AT Specialist. Prior to a student's Triennial Evaluation the student's Liaison should collaborate with the AT Specialist, the student's Speech and Language Pathologist, the building based Special Education Administrator to determine if an updated AAC evaluation is required at this time.

How to document AAC on the IEP?

Augmentative and Alternative Communication services must be documented on the IEP. Due to the profile of student needs in the Communication Enhancement Program and the Life Skills program, the AAC specialist engages in a consistent program consult with each of these classrooms to discuss programmatic AAC implementation, troubleshoot any individual student concerns, and support the staff around students with a dedicated device. This program consultation should be captured on the service delivery grid under Grid A. The Team should indicate in the additional information column on Grid A that this is an embedded program consult and the following statement should be included in additional information:

"The AT specialist consults with the student's program around the implementation of both low and high tech AAC. This embedded training is a defining characteristic of this district wide program and can be targeted to general program implementation or individual student implementation. The student is afforded the support of this consultation service via placement within this program."

Should the AT Specialist believe that a student requires a consistent consultation in grid A that is solely devoted to their individual needs **or** the student is not part of the Communication Enhancement Program or Life Skills Program, this should be captured in a separate line on grid A and represent the recommendation that is made by the AT specialist for frequency and duration. In this case, the Team should indicate in the additional information column on the service delivery grid that this is a student specific consultation and include the following statement in additional information:

"The AT specialist will provide a student specific consultation regarding the student's use of AAC as captured in the A Grid which will include training for staff, the student, and the parent as needed."

In addition to information around services, the Team should capture the following information in the IEP:

PLEP A

[Back to Top](#)

- AAC accommodations should be recorded

PLEP B

- Check off Communication Services
- Record AAC accommodations

Additional Information for AAC Device/Application

Please include information the following information if a student requires a dedicated device following an evaluation:

- Device/Applications
 - **An AAC evaluation was completed on _____ and the recommendation for a dedicated iPad with only the communication app(s): _____ The device will travel between home and school but is considered the property of WPS in the event the student moves or the device is no longer needed.**

Notification

- Please notify the AT Specialist of upcoming meetings if they are the service provider. **Please list the AT Specialist's attendance as optional if the student receives their support via a District Wide Program consultation. If the student has an student specific consultation service, please list the AT specialist as a required member of the Team.**
- If the AT Specialist is not at the IEP meeting, please consult with the AT Specialist regarding recommended service times before adding them to the proposed IEP.
- Team chairs, please notify the AT Specialist when an IEP is signed so purchase orders can be placed if needed.

Ordering Equipment

- Once the IEP is signed, please send a copy of the IEP and AAC Evaluation recommendations to the AT Specialist. The AT Specialist will submit an [order form](#) to the Special Education department for approval.

Ordering Process

To purchase items needed such as protocols, devices determined necessary for a student by the IEP Team, and certain items needed for your classroom, SPED staff should submit the SPED Order Form to the financial analyst, Kellie Krawciw, at kellie.krawciw@weymouthps.org and CC Lisa Gookin atlisa.gookin@weymouthps.org. This form can be found on the SPED Drive under “Forms” and is linked here: [SPED Order Form](#)

Please note that printers and ink are no longer purchased through the Special Education Department due to the installation of new color printers within each buildings. Some single use printers are still available as part of the districts new printer plan. Please speak with your building principal to determine which printers may be available to you for color copying.

Please make a copy of the form and save it to your drive. Do not use the main copy of the form. If you need assistance to create a copy of the form, please reach out to the SPED Admin assistant Lisa Gookin at lisa.gookin@weymouthps.org or dial ext 20328.

Please note: All item vendors must be located in the United States and must accept Purchase Orders (PO's).

Fill out the SPED Order Form to the best of your ability. **Please include the following information:**

1. The quantity of the item(s)
2. Size, color, shape (etc) in the description
3. A link to the item(s) in the description
4. The total dollar amount per item
5. The total dollar amount for all items being requested

Submit the completed form to Kellie Krawciw via email at kellie.krawciw@weymouthps.org.

Kellie will submit the form for approval by the Executive Director of Student Services and complete the ordering process with the town. Please note that this can take several days to complete.

After the order has been placed Kellie will email the staff member who submitted the order request form to let them know that the order has been placed.

The order will be sent to the Administration building, 111 Middle Street Weymouth and Kellie or Kay will notify you once the order has been received.

Maintaining Confidentiality

Each staff member working with students is expected to maintain a high level of confidentiality regarding information received while working for WPS. This includes student observations, reviewing students' records, attending Team meetings, or discussing a student's strengths and weaknesses with teaching staff. Parents/Guardians entrust WPS staff with personal information about their child, their family history, and their fears and hopes for their child's future. We are expected to respect this privileged information and guard it carefully. Student information should only be shared with colleagues that require that specific information. Confidentiality extends to all WPS staff and must be maintained both in and out of school.

When discussing confidential information with appropriate staff members, all staff should ensure they are in a private location where the conversation could not reasonably be overheard by students, other staff members, or any visitor to the building.

At the same time, WPS staff must remember that information gathered during the provision of services should be shared with appropriate providers and administrators when both educationally relevant and appropriate. Furthermore, all WPS staff are mandated reporters and any information which suggests a reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect should be brought to the attention of the building principal.

In addition to verbal exchanges, staff should not communicate with parents, guardians or students using their personal email or cell phones. Staff should use district email for all electronic communications and school phones for all phone information. Teachers and families should use email in lieu of texting so a record of all communications is retained per applicable regulations.

Special Education Student Records

Student records are defined as the transcript and the temporary record, including all information recordings and computer tapes, microfilm, microfiche, or any other materials regardless of physical form or characteristics concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way that such student may be individually identified, and that is kept by the public schools of the Commonwealth. Information does not need to be in one location to be categorized as part of a student's records.

Documentation as it pertains to the special education process is considered part of the student's records. This includes, but is not limited to, consent forms, evaluations, meeting invitations, IEP's, N1's, N2's, 688 referrals, transition forms, and progress reports. The regulations captured in MA 603 CMR 23 which outline policies around the maintenance, access, adding information, amending, and the appeals process are applied to any special education documents which are encompassed in the student record.

Maintenance of Records

The school principal/or their designee, shall be responsible for the privacy and security of all student records maintained in the school. Student records are periodically reviewed by the building principal or their designee. Following a predetermined amount of time and a pre-identified process, portions of students' records can be destroyed. Please see MA 603 CMR 23.06 for further information around student record maintenance.

Access to Records

All eligible students and parents shall have access to the student record. Additionally, a third party, such as an advocate or attorney, can access a student's record with written consent. Upon a request to access the student record, the district will provide all components of the record (regardless of where they are located) as soon as possible but no later than 10 days. The student and/or parent has the right upon request to meet with professionally qualified school personnel to have any contents of the record interpreted. For more information around access to student records, including restrictions to access, please refer to Ma 603 CMR 23.07.

Amending Records

The student and/or parent has the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant written information to the student record. The eligible student or the parent shall have the right to request in writing deletion or amendment of any information contained in the student record, except for information which was inserted into that record by an Evaluation Team. Such information inserted by an Evaluation Team shall not be subject to such a request until after the acceptance of the Evaluation Team Educational Plan, or, if the Evaluation Team Educational Plan is rejected, after the completion of the special education appeal process.

It's the principal's responsibility to review any request to amend student records, including special education documents. If a request is made to amend/change a special education document that falls outside the typical special education process (for example changing an N1), please refer this request to the principal. For more information around amending student documents and the appeals process should the family not agree with the principal's decision, please see Ma 603.23.08 and MA 603.23.09.

Special Education Programs

Communication Enhancement Program (CEP):

- **Preschool Program housed at Weymouth Early Childhood Center**
- **Substantially separate:**
 - **Grades k-5 housed at Wessagusset Primary School;**
 - **Grades 1/2 class also housed at Hamilton Primary School**
- **Partial-inclusion strand:**
 - **Grades K-4 housed at Hamilton Primary Schools**
 - **Grade 5 housed at Wessagusset Primary School;**
- **Chapman Grades 6-8**
- **Weymouth High School 9-12**

The CEP Program is designed to meet the learning needs of students who require significant behavioral, social, communication, and/or academic supports based on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) in order to access the curriculum. This program primarily serves students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Social-Communication Disorder, or related developmental disabilities who require individualized instruction based on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis to address their unique learning and behavioral needs. Eligibility is not based solely on student diagnosis or cognitive abilities; rather, evaluation data is required to show evidence that the student requires structured teaching approaches based on an ABA methodology to acquire new skills, learn appropriate behavioral regulation strategies, and generalize skills across settings prior to the IEP Team's recommendation for CEP Program placement as the least restrictive environment (LRE). Inclusion opportunities are provided for all students on an individualized determination focusing on the child's specific strengths, and may include participation in the general education classroom for academics (e.g. math, science), specials, lunch and recess. The goal of inclusion is to support students in generalizing their skills with same-age peers and to foster connections between students and the larger school community. Specific classes at the elementary level support students with a higher degree of inclusion on their IEP's.

Language Based Learning Center (LBLC) Program

- **K-5 housed at Hamilton Elementary School**
- **Grades 6-8 at Chapman Middle School**
- **Grades 9-12 Weymouth High School**

The LBLC Program (formerly named LBLD) is designed for students who have been determined by the Team as presenting with a Language Based Learning Disability. Students in the program qualify under a primary educational disability category of either Communication Impairment or Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) in Reading/Writing. Students are referred to the LBLC Program through the IEP Team process if they have not demonstrated effective progress after being provided with substantial supports utilizing an evidence-based phonics program embedded within the general education classroom (e.g. inclusion supports, pull-out services). Students referred to the LBLC Program require intensive specialized instruction in decoding/encoding in addition to at least one of the following other areas of language: fluency, reading comprehension, written expression.

RISE (Readiness, Independence, Skill-Building and Engagement) Program:

- **Preschool Program housed at Weymouth Early Childhood Center**
- **K-5 housed at Talbot Elementary School**
- **Grades 6-8 at Chapman Middle School**
- **Grades 9-12 Weymouth High School**

This program is designed for students who have been determined by the Team to exhibit the following: significantly deficient intellectual functioning (i.e. an IQ below 70) on an individually administered IQ test and significant impairments on a scale of adaptive functioning in at least two (2) of the following areas: communication; self-care; home living; social/interpersonal skills; use of community resources; self-direction; functional academic skills; work; leisure; health and safety. In addition, the student must require intensive, direct systematic and alternative instruction/programs in order to learn and acquire new skills. The focus of instruction is primarily on functional academics and access/entry level skills as delineated in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks utilizing a multisensory, language based instructional approach. A speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, and physical therapist consult to the program regularly and provide direct service as recommended by the Team.

Student Achievement and Individualized Learning (SAIL):

- **Grades K-5 housed at Murphy Primary School**
- **Chapman Grades 6-8**
- **Weymouth High School 9-12**

Weymouth Public Schools' SAIL program (formerly named IRC) is designed for students who require individualized, direct and explicit instruction with extensive curriculum modifications in order to make effective educational progress. The Program is designed for students who meet the eligibility criteria for an educational disability as a primary result of a global Developmental Delay, mild Intellectual Impairment, or Specific Learning Disabilities. Students generally have great difficulty accessing the curriculum in the general education setting even when provided with special education supports (e.g. inclusion supports and pull-out service delivery models) due to their cognitive delays, and require substantial modifications at the "entry points" level of the curriculum frameworks. Students also have weaknesses in adaptive functioning, including social skills and some daily living skills. Students may have a secondary disability in categories such as Health Impairment or Emotional Impairment; however, these disabilities are not the students' primary area of disability nor primary need.

Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC)

- **K-5 housed at Pingree Elementary School**
- **Grades 6-8 at Chapman Middle School**
- **Grades 9-12 Weymouth High School**

Weymouth Public Schools' *Therapeutic Learning Center* ("TLC") program is a therapeutic program continuum for students with a primary educational disability of Emotional Impairment. Students in this program have difficulty with developing age-appropriate social relationships with adults and/or peers, self-regulation of behavioral responses to typical school demands, ability to appropriately make transitions from one activity to another, ability to handle frustration in an age-appropriate manner, and/or ability to fully access the curriculum and instruction due to emotional/social/behavioral challenges. While cognitive abilities are generally commensurate with their peers, students in the program may exhibit some reduced academic achievement primarily resulting from disruptions to learning due to behavioral or emotional challenges. The TLC Program is *not* designed to be only a substantially-separate program, and students may participate in the general education setting for any ratio of time as deemed appropriate by the IEP Team. The goal of the program is to provide a safe, supportive therapeutic setting to support students' development of effective social, emotional and behavioral regulation skills, while also providing academic instruction and supports to help students access the general education environment to the maximum extent possible. The TLC Program is *not* designed to be a short-term stabilization program; thus, students referred to the TLC Program should have a documented need for substantial therapeutic supports that are expected to be required for at least one year. Students in crisis due to a traumatic event, acute mental health need, or extreme behavioral escalation requiring stabilization may be referred for other in-district options.

Related Services Available:

Currently, in the WPS District the following related services are accessed:

- Psychological Services
- Speech and Language
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Counseling
- Orientation and Mobility
- Vision Services
- Assistive Technology
- Medical and/or Nursing Services
- Behavioral Support via BCBA
- Therapeutic Recreation
- Specialized Transportation
- Parent Training Services
- Interpreting Services

Disciplining Students with Disabilities

** Procedural Steps and Forms can be found in the Special Education Drive under Manifestation Determination**

Procedures for suspension up to 10 days and after 10 days

Any eligible student may be suspended up to 10 days in any school year. After a student with special needs has been suspended for 10 days in any school year, during any subsequent removal the public school provides sufficient services for the student to continue to receive a free and appropriate public education. The school provides additional procedural safeguards for students with disabilities prior to any suspension beyond 10 consecutive days or more than 10 cumulative days (if there is a pattern of suspension) in any school year.

Procedures for suspension of students with disabilities when suspensions exceed 10 consecutive school days or a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative days

A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive days or a series of suspensions that are shorter than 10 consecutive days but constitute a pattern are considered to represent a change in placement. When a suspension constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities, district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team, as determined by the parent and the district, convene within 10 days of the decision to suspend to review all relevant information in the student's file.

When a suspension constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities,

A Manifestation/ Determination Team must convene within 10 days of the decision to suspend to review all relevant information in the student's file to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP. A student with disabilities **may not** be suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year without convening an MD Team. For the purpose of the MD process, the number of in school suspensions and out of school suspensions are combined for the total suspension days. If a parent chooses to dismiss their student from school, this **is not** considered a suspension in the MD process. If a parent/guardian is not given an option and is told the student must be dismissed from school due to a behavioral incident, this **is** considered a suspension for the purposes of the MD. ***The days that a student has been suspended in another district during the current school year prior to enrolling in the Weymouth School District also must be counted in the 10 cumulative days of suspension allowed for any school year.***

Steps to Convening a Manifestation Determination Meeting

1. Principal/Admin: Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the building administrator notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with the **written notice of procedural safeguards along with the written notice of discipline.**
2. Liaison: The liaison notifies the Evaluation Team Secretary (ETS) of the need and time frame for scheduling a manifestation meeting. The building administrator should be involved in this notification as well. Meeting Attendance should include:
 - a. A building administrator
 - b. A school psychologist and/or School Adjustment Counselor
 - c. The parent/guardian
 - d. A general education teacher
 - e. A guidance counselor
 - f. A special education teacher, typically the liaison
 - g. The student if appropriate
 - h. Any other relevant member
3. Eval Team Secretary: The ETS creates the invitation and attendance sheet and sends it home electronically and via US mail. The ETS sends the Google invitation to all invited Team members. The building administrator is likely to request a specific date and time due in order to meet prior to the 10th day.
4. Liaison:
 - a. The Liaison prepares for the MD Team meeting by ensuring the administrator shares all the discipline information (including notices of suspension) with the necessary Team members for review.
 - b. The Liaison chairs the MD Team meeting, completes the Manifestation Determination paperwork, MD checklist, N1 and other needed IEP documents.
 - c. Within **5 days** of the meeting, the Liaison completes the paperwork and checklist, and submits the MD folder to the building administrator for review. At the Middle School/High School level, the Special Education Department Head should review the file.
 - d. Principal/Admin: The designated administrator will review the MD folder to be sure the paperwork is complete and timely. The administrator will also ensure that copies of all pertinent suspension letters and hearing letters are included in the folder. They will sign and date the front of the folder to document review and send a copy of folder to Lisa Gookin in special education for processing and sending home. They will ensure the originals are submitted to the special education file.
5. Compliance Secretary, Stacy Marrero, will send the N1 and any needed paperwork (revised IEP etc) home

Manifestation Determination Discussion:

The **Manifestation Determination checklist** should be used to ensure the completion of all relevant paperwork. During the MD meeting, the team reviews all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, assessment reports, any teacher observations, and relevant information from parents. The team must then determine if there is a relationship between the student's disability and the student's behavior by addressing the following questions:

1. Does the conduct have a direct and substantial relationship to the disability?
2. Is it a direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP?
3. Discuss the need to complete a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and develop a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) if one has not already been developed. If a BIP is already in place, the Team must review the BIP and identify interventions that will assist the student from continuing to engage in the same behaviors that led to the need for the Manifestation Determination.

The Team discussion should be documented on the [MD Procedures and Next Steps](#) Form.

Regardless of the outcome of the MD, the student may be unilaterally placed by the district in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES), determined by the Team, for up to 45 calendar days, in accordance with federal law, under the following circumstances*:

- The behavior involves weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances, or the student has inflicted serious bodily injury on another person while at school or a school function. (37H) *Serious bodily injury is defined as* bodily injury, which involves substantial risk of death; extreme physical pain; protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.
- A hearing officer orders the IAES based on evidence from the district that the student is substantially likely to injure him/herself or others.

*In either case, the IAES enables the student to continue in the general curriculum and to continue receiving services identified on the IEP, and provides services to address the problem behavior.

A Functional Behavioral Assessment is required when a student is being unilaterally removed to a 45 day Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) as determined under Federal regulations. The building principal must notify the parent the day the decision is made to place the student in an IAES.

If the parent chooses to appeal to the BSEA or the school district requests a hearing through the BSEA because it believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise.

The behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the disability

When the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability, the student **may not** be suspended for more than 10 days. The Team must review and revise, if needed, both the IEP and BIP, if one is in place in order to address the behavior. If an FBA has not been conducted, and a BIP has not been developed, the Team must determine a plan for conducting a FBA and developing a BIP in collaboration with the district behavior specialist. If the MD Team determines the behavior is a result of the district's failure to implement the IEP, the Team must review and revise the IEP as needed and document the efforts to ensure adherence to the plan in the N1 letter sent home after the MD Team meeting. Except when he or she has been placed in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) **the student returns to the original placement** unless the parents and district agree otherwise or the hearing officer orders a new placement.

The behaviors is NOT determined to be a manifestation of the disability

When the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, the suspension or expulsion **may go forward** consistent with policies applied to any student without disabilities. In this case, the Team must identify appropriate alternative education services during all periods of suspension beyond ten days. The identified services must provide the student with a free and appropriate education (FAPE) and enable the student to participate in the general education curriculum as well as make progress toward their IEP goals. The Team must determine these services and describe them on page 4 of the [MD Procedures and Next Steps](#) Form. As appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications should be offered in order to address the behavior so that it does not recur.

Documenting the Manifestation Determination Process

Immediately following the Manifestation Determination meeting, the liaison should complete an N1 letter to the parents summarizing the outcome and recommendations from the meeting. If the Team determines a need to conduct any assessments, including an FBA, then an evaluation consent form should also be completed and sent home. If the Team determines the need to revise the IEP, a summary of the new proposals should be included in the N1 and 2 copies of the newly proposed IEP should be sent home for signature. The run dates of the IEP should remain the same as the active IEP. If any new services are added to the IEP, the start date of the new service should match the date of the MD Team meeting.

Within 5 days of the meeting, a copy of the Manifestation Determination Procedure Form, the meeting invitation, signed attendance sheet, N1, Notice of Procedural Safeguards, and if appropriate the revised IEP and/or completed Evaluation Consent Form should be sent to the building administrator who will review it, sign off, and submit one copy of the paperwork packet to the special education department for review and processing within 2 days. The originals folder and paperwork should be placed in the student's official special education file.

Procedural requirements applied to students not yet determined to be eligible for special education

If, prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:

- a) The parent had expressed concern in writing; or
- b) The parent had requested an evaluation; or
- c) District staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

The district may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility.

If the district had no reason to consider the student a student with a disability, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.

If the student is found eligible, then they receive all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

Physical Restraint, Time Out and Seclusion

DESE Definitions:

Physical restraint is direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include; brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Physical escort is the temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

Time-out is a behavioral support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. **The student must be permitted to leave.** The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving.

Physical Restraint

DESE Regulation on when to use Physical Restraint

Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint (a) To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious physical harm; and (b) To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

Physical restraint shall not be used as a means of discipline or punishment; as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm; or as a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

Only public education program personnel who have received training pursuant shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint.

The following types of restraints are prohibited:

- Mechanical restraint shall mean the use of any physical device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. Mechanical restraint does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and are used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed. Examples of such devices include: adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle; restraints for medical immobilization; or orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm.
- Medication restraint shall mean the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.
- Prone restraint shall mean a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face-down position. Prone restraints are prohibited except where permitted under 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b)
- Seclusion shall mean the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined in 603 CMR 46.02.

The training requirements contained in 603 CMR 46.00 shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

De-Escalation Program in WPS: WPS has adopted Safety Care as its de-escalation and physical management system. In collaboration with district leadership, building administrators identify staff requiring Safety Care Training. WPS has several Safety Care trainers that offer training throughout the school year.

Reporting of Physical Restraints: DESE provides specific requirements for the duration and procedures for notification and reporting as well as procedures for periodic review of restraint data by principals ([603 CMR 46.00](#))

WPS staff should follow the following steps to report a restraint:

- 1: Make a reasonable effort to orally inform the guardian the day of the incident prior to the student leaving for the day.
- 2: Staff involved in the incident should complete a written report using the [Confidential Restraint Reporting Form for Incident of Restraint](#).
- 3: The Building Administrator enters the required documentation into the DESE security portal under “Restraint Data”.
- 4: Written documentation must also be sent home to the parent/guardian using the [Written Report to Parent or Guardian re: Physical Restraint](#). This should be sent to an email address provided by the parent for communications about the student, or by regular mail postmarked no later than three school working days of the restraint.

Time Out

WPS Staff should follow the following procedures with the use of time-out rooms in schools:

1. Proactively implement strategies, interventions and supports that promote social social-emotional well-being of students.
2. Use alternative strategies whenever possible to reduce or eliminate the use of time-outs.
 - a. Clear the room.
 - b. Switch staff if someone is specifically being targeted.
 - c. Actively move to evade physical contact with students.
 - d. For students who do not typically experience crises, do whatever it takes (within reason) to help them de-escalate.
 - e. Rapport building.
3. Before the school uses a time-out room as a behavioral support strategy for a student with disabilities, the IEP Team, including the student’s parents/guardians, are encouraged to consider the advantages and disadvantages of such a behavioral support strategy and any alternatives that may be effective. A functional behavioral assessment may assist with selecting the appropriate behavior interventions for students with and without disabilities.
4. Staff should remain with the student at all times and continue to engage the student, as appropriate, to reassure them that there is an adult with them who cares about them and their well-being. When deciding who will accompany the student, consider the staff most familiar with the student’s needs and would be most effective at helping the student emotionally regulate and return to class. A school counselor or BCBA should also be immediately available to help the student emotionally regulate. As needed, obtain additional support such as from the district-level counseling team, Aspire mobile crisis team or the student’s parents/guardians.
5. Whenever a designated time-out room is used, a [Time Out Log](#) should be completed using the WPS log. A comparable log may be used if approved by district administration based on the school /program needs.
6. A time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed. Staff supervising the student should support co-regulation and closely monitor the student’s physical cues, tone of voice, and

demeanor to determine whether the student has calmed. Students should not be required to complete a specific task to demonstrate that they have calmed if their physical body, tone, and demeanor demonstrate regulation.

7. Parents/guardians should be notified verbally before the student returns home from school if the time-out room was used for any instance that is not outlined in the student's daily schedule. Written notification should be provided to the parents or guardians, ideally within three school-working days or as agreed upon with the parents or guardians.
8. Staff should debrief with the student after the use of a time-out room.
9. Staff should debrief as a team to problem-solve alternatives and antecedent strategies.
10. Principals should conduct weekly and monthly reviews of time-out data. Reviews should analyze specific student data, including:
 - a. whether the time-out room is being repeatedly used for the same student(s);
 - b. whether the time-out room is being used for periods longer than 30 minutes;
 - c. whether there are multiple uses of the time-out room for students from the same classroom;
 - d. whether the same teachers or staff are repeatedly initiating the use of the time-out room;
 - e. whether the time-out room is being used more frequently for students with particular demographics, such as race, gender, or ethnicity.

Depending on the results of the analysis, the principal may convene the student's team of providers to discuss the student's individual needs and any alternative interventions needed to support the student. Similarly, the principal may consider whether school staff need re-training or additional training on evidence-based alternatives to the use of time-out rooms as a behavior support strategy.

11. Any room or area that is used for time-out must be of appropriate size for the age and the needs of the student; appropriately lighted, ventilated, and heated or cooled, consistent with the remainder of the building; free of objects or fixtures that are inherently dangerous to the student; in compliance with any applicable local fire and building code requirements; and in compliance with any other standards listed by the Department in guidance.

Seclusion: *The involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving.* The term does not include: a classroom or school environment where, as a general rule, all students need permission to leave the room or area, such as to use the restroom; a behavior support technique that is part of the district's, school's or program's designated procedures for behavior support which involves the monitored separation of a student in an unlocked setting, from which the student is allowed to leave and it is implemented for the purpose of calming; or placing a student in a separate location within a classroom with others or with an instructor, so long as the student has the same opportunity to receive and engage in instruction.

Emergency Seclusion: Criteria prior to use

1. The student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff.
2. The student is not responsive to directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances.
3. Other forms of interventions have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or the safety of

others.

4. There are no medical contraindications as documented by a licensed physician.
5. There is a psychological or behavioral justification for the use, and there are no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional.
 - a. **No Medical Contraindications:** Before an emergency intervention of seclusion is used, a licensed physician must confirm that no medical conditions make its use unsafe. This includes considering respiratory, seizure, cardiac, or other physical health conditions. The physician must document that no medical contraindications exist.
 - b. **Behavioral or Psychological Justification:** Before an emergency intervention of seclusion is used, a licensed mental health professional must confirm that seclusion is psychologically appropriate for this student. The licensed mental health professional should review the student's trauma history, behavior patterns, and mental health needs to determine whether seclusion would be harmful. The clinician must provide written documentation affirming the justification and lack of psychological contraindications.
6. The program has obtained consent to use seclusion from the student's parent or guardian and, if appropriate, the student, and such use has been approved in writing by the principal.
7. Any individual using it has received training about alternative behavior interventions and management techniques.

Additional Changes to the Regulations:

1. The emergency use of seclusion must cease as soon as the student's behavior no longer poses a threat of assault or immediate serious physical harm.
2. Build in various safeguards when such an emergency intervention is used, such as parental notification of use, conducting weekly and monthly reviews of data relating to the use of such an emergency intervention, and documenting and reporting such use to the Department.
3. Any schools or programs that utilize such an emergency intervention must examine alternatives and strategies for reducing and eliminating its use no later than 3 years from the effective date of the proposed regulations.

During Emergency Seclusion

1. A staff member continuously observes and remains immediately available to the student.
2. The student is observable in all areas of the room.
3. Staff actively use calming and de-escalation strategies, unless unsafe or counterproductive to do so.
4. Seclusion is not used for punishment or routine behavior management.
5. Seclusion ends immediately once the imminent threat has subsided.
6. If used for a period of longer than 30 minutes, obtain approval from the principal.
7. The room or space meets all physical safety standards under 603 CMR 46.07(1).

Reporting (Template for parent/guardian notification available in Special Education Drive)

- Parents are notified verbally and in writing in accordance with 603 CMR 46.06(3)–(4).
- The principal is notified as soon as possible and provided a written report by the next school day.
- DESE Reporting: While all programs are encouraged to report **all incidents** of seclusion in real time, the minimum requirement is to annually report and certify the data to the Department through the designated portal no later than June 30th each calendar year. The exception to this annual timeline is when an emergency seclusion results in an injury to a student or program staff

member. In those instances, the program shall submit a copy of the Emergency Seclusion Incident Report to the Department **no later than three school-working days following the emergency seclusion**. Documentation of all reported incidents of emergency seclusion, including formal incident reports, parent notifications, and records of any required reviews, must be maintained by the program. The principal shall maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances of emergency seclusion and ensure that records of required weekly and monthly reviews are maintained in accordance with 603

Administrative Oversight Responsibilities (Forms available in Special Education Drive)

- Weekly review of students with multiple uses of emergency seclusion.
- A review team is convened for repeated use, when applicable.
- Monthly review of school-wide seclusion data is conducted.
- Use of seclusion is reported to DESE[1] in the required format and frequency.

Physical Space Inspection (Checklist available in Special Education Drive)

To provide for the safety and well-being of students, any room or space used for the purposes of emergency seclusion must meet the physical space requirements outlined in 603 CMR 46.07(1). In accordance with 603 CMR 46.07(2)(n), these spaces must be inspected by the public education program at least once per week during any period of use to verify ongoing compliance. The inspection must confirm that the environment is clean, safe, and sanitary; appropriately designed for student age and needs; properly lit and ventilated; free of dangerous objects; and compliant with all applicable fire and building codes. The checklist below supports programs in conducting and documenting these weekly inspections.

Inspection Checklist Definitions

- Clean, Safe, Sanitary: Free of spills, clutter, sharp objects, or contaminants.
- Age-Appropriate Design: Size, materials, and aesthetics suitable for students using the room.
- Lighting/Ventilation: Functional lights, windows or vents for airflow, appropriate heating or cooling.
- No Dangerous Objects: No furniture or equipment that poses a risk of harm (e.g., loose wires, electrical outlets, broken ceiling tiles, hard corners).
- Fire & Building Code Compliant: Exits, alarms, and structural components meet local laws, which may be demonstrated through up to date certificates from proper local authorities.

Additional information about de-escalation and the full restraint procedures can be found here: [WPS Restraint Procedures](#)

Please also refer to the following DESE Guidance, which are located in the Special Education Drive:

[use-of-seclusion-faq.pdf](#)

[DESE Guidance: Prevention of Physical Restraint and Requirements If Used](#)

[Time-Out Practices: Guidance on the Implementation and Regulatory Amendments to 603 CMR 46.00 and 603 CMR 18.00](#)

[Back to Top](#)

Special Education Timelines

Request for an Evaluation

When a student is referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education, the school district shall send written notice to the student's parent/guardian within **five school days** of receipt of the referral.

Initial Evaluation and ReEvaluation

Evaluations must be conducted **within thirty school days** upon receipt of parent/guardian signed consent.

***After receipt of the written consent to an initial evaluation or reevaluation, the district shall hold and eligibility meeting and provide the parents with two copies of the proposed IEP and proposed placement along with the required notice **within 45 school working days**

If consent is received within 30 to 45 *school working days* before the end of the school year, the school district shall ensure that a Team meeting is scheduled so as to allow for the provision of a proposed IEP or written notice of the finding that the student is not eligible no later than 14 days after the end of the school year

Proposed IEP

The school district will send home the proposed IEP, placement page, N1 Letter, and transition plan (if applicable) **within 5 school days** after the IEP meeting.

The Team Chair will send the proposed IEP with the file to the evaluation team secretary **within 3 school days** of the meeting.

See the updated DESE guidance here: [Implementation of 603 CMR 28.05\(7\): Parent response to proposed IEP and proposed placement](#)

Placement Meeting

If the Team needs to reconvene the Team after eligibility to determine placement, the Team must reconvene within **ten school days** following the meeting when the Team developed the IEP.

Parent/Guardian Response to Proposed IEP and/or Placement

The parent/guardian shall respond to the IEP and Placement **no later than 30 calendar days** after receipt of the proposed IEP.

School District Response to Rejected IEP and/or Placement

Within five school days of receipt of rejection, the school District shall send written notice to the BSEA. The Team Chair will immediately call parents/guardians to resolve the portions that are rejected. The Team will conduct a reconvene meeting to resolve issues within 10 school days when necessary.

If a response to the IEP or Placement is **not received within 30 calendar days**, the district has the right to assume the IEP has been rejected and send written notice of the rejection to the BSEA.

Annual Review Meetings

WPS Special Education Department requires that annual IEP meetings shall be scheduled and conducted at least **thirty school days** in advance to the ending date of the IEP.

3-Year Reevaluation

WPS will reevaluate a student to redetermine eligibility, **every three years or no less than twelve months** from the previous evaluation date, if agreed upon and needed.

Localization Meetings

Students moving into WPS with IEPs from other districts or states should have a localization meeting within 30 school days of their move in date. During the first thirty (30) days, the district will follow the sending IEP to the extent possible. The localization meeting should be held as the annual IEP meeting. The next annual IEP date should be set a year from the localization annual meeting.

Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE)

Within ten (10) school days from the school District's receipt of IEE report, the Team must convene to consider the findings of the evaluation and determine if new or revised IEP is needed.

Extended Evaluation/Additional Assessment

With parents'/guardians' consent, an extended evaluation may be conducted and shall extend no longer than eight (8) school weeks.

Submission and Completion of all IEP Meeting Documentation

Within 1 week of the IEP meeting, all documents pertaining to the meeting and development of the IEP will be submitted to the Evaluation Team Secretary. The documentation should be complete and organized in the order of the IEP Meeting Cover Sheet.

Additional resources

- [DESE IEP Improvement Project](#)
- [DESE Special Education Advisories](#)
- [WPS District Curriculum Accommodation Plan \(DCAP\)](#)
- [504 Plan Overview](#)
- [WPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan](#)
- Resources for WPS Staff:
 - [New IEP Guide](#)
 - [IEP Goals and Objectives](#)
 - [Accommodations versus Modifications](#)